

BRISMARKSGÅRDEN

environment – happiness - caretaking at the old-age housing in Hoting

Brismarksgården is a staff managed cooperative nursing home with room for 15 elderly people.

In the autumn of 1993 three women, with backgrounds in the field of old-age care, started a discussion on local development and the fact that there was no old-age housing in the area, though the need for one was great. People were moving from the area, very few children were being born, and in the long run, schools and day-nurseries were threatened. So eventually, work began on starting a cooperative old-age home. Ahead lay a lengthy struggle with many political turns. Despite the struggle, Brismarksgården was finally ready for its first tenants on April 1st, 1997.

The municipality commissions the old-age care, which is characterized by;

- The surroundings are as homelike as possible. The care is to be carried out on the conditions of the residents. Relatives are looked upon as a valuable recourse.
- Rehabilitation twenty-four hours a day.
- Music, joy, warmth, security and companionship are key concepts.
- The kitchen is the natural centre of the building. The residents are welcome to participate in the activities there.
- To develop the old-age care by being open to try alternative forms of treatment, such as music therapy, massage, relaxation, et c.
- Make the home a meeting place for people living in the area.

The cooperative has been a success with;

- creating jobs, especially for women
- attracting new inhabitants to move into the Hoting area, mostly families
- supporting the economic life of the area
- developing a new atmosphere, for example culture life

The members of the cooperative believe the fact that they have managed to make their idea come true in spite of resistance, can give others the courage to try...

Anna Hildebrand, adviser at the Cooperative Development Agency (CDA) in the County of Jämtland, 030828