



# Annual Report 2024



**STENKROSSEN**  
mycket  
**SNACK &**  
mycket  
**VERKSTAD**

# WELCOME

to our 2024 Annual Report

Let us introduce ourselves. Circle Centre is a non-profit organisation that runs a Library of Goods in Lund, Sweden, where our members can borrow items instead of buying them.

We organize educational events promoting sustainable living and reuse, and offer a common workspace for the local community to share creative skills and ideas.



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# WHY IS THE SHARING ECONOMY IMPORTANT?

Sharing economy allows society to create more value without growing the economy. In the case of our organisation, value is added by means of highly motivated volunteers from the local community and by our members. Thus, costs are low though outcomes are large: less waste, more affordable usage of material items, more thoughtful consumption. Prolonging the life of the library items means minimising social and environmental impact.

Thousands of students move to Lund every year and they are often forced to buy new items, which they soon have to leave behind. If we choose to share items instead, we can avoid unnecessary consumption and waste, and thus save space and contribute to creating a stronger sharing community.



Circle Centre actively contributes to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 12



## OUR MISSION

The mission of Circle Centre is to challenge the dominant trend of overconsumption. We do that in two ways. First of all, through our Library of Goods we create a community that prioritises sharing over ownership. Secondly, we prioritise culture and intellectual growth over material goods by creating a space where people can gather, work on their creative projects, share skills and ideas. We have three values that lead our vision: sustainability, equity and community.

# A WORD FROM THE BOARD

Wow... what an incredible year it has been for Circle Centre!

At the start of the year the Board got together to develop a **long-term vision and strategy** for Circle Centre. We told each other to dream big, and to bring up the most ambitious ideas. To me, several of the visions we discussed back then seemed like things that were simply impossible to achieve in the near future. Yet, now as the year has come to a close, it feels unbelievable to say this: but many of those large dreams and visions have actually come true, already!

During 2024, Circle Centre was awarded two very significant grants, which have helped us take huge steps towards the shareable future that we envision for Lund. The first grant is a project by the European Commission titled **Communities for Climate (C4C)**. The second grant is an environmental project-grant given to Circle Centre by **Lunds Kommun** at the end of the year. With the help of this second grant, Circle Centre will also be able to hire its very first paid employee!

This year has also been characterised by struggles and a lot of hard work. As our five year agreement at our old location is coming to an end, we had to start looking for other physical locations for Circle Centre. As a non-profit organisation, which lacks the funds to pay full rent, this has required lots of networking and a large dose of creativity.

Overall, this has been a year of growing and developing. Whereas for example businesses depend on continuous growth for their survival, we at Circle Centre work from the principles of sustainability and sharing, where we are continuously experimenting with ways to develop and expand our accessibility without depending on growth. For us accessibility and inclusivity are the key drivers for our development, which at times also require growing the organisation, but doing so in a way that is both conscious and sustainable. The past year has definitely been a step in the right direction, and we can't wait to continue this work moving forward.

And of course, none of the exciting developments this year would have been possible without **you**, all of our amazing members! It is thanks to you that we can show our partners, funders and the municipality that sharing is popular, and that the people of Lund want to share items! It is thanks to you that we can prove year after year, that circularity and shared ownership is the future of our society. So thank **you** for being part of this powerful community, and for helping us transform our local society, one loan at a time.

Wishing you an exciting 2025!

**Ronja Karvinen**  
*on behalf of the  
Board of  
Circle Centre*



# HOW DID WE GROW UNTIL TODAY?



## 2018

Circle Centre's story started in October 2018, when a group of five students proposed the concept of a place for sharing rather than individual ownership as a way to tackle overconsumption. This happened during **Climathon Lund**, a 24-hour sustainability hackathon competition hosted by Climate-KIC.

Encouraged by positive feedback, the students kept pursuing Circle Centre as their **local action project** for a course within their master's degree in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science. By the end of November, the **first Circle Centre meeting** took place, precisely on Black Friday, November 23rd 2018.

Around the same time, the founding team that in the meantime had grown to seven students started to look for ways to make Circle Centre a reality, and submitted an application to **Stenkrossen**, the cultural hotspot of Lund run by Lunds Kommun. In December 2018, the application was accepted, and in March 2019 Circle Centre officially moved into a recently renovated Stenkrossen.

## 2019

The rest of the winter between late 2018 and early 2019 saw the Circle Centre team **applying for funding** and **collecting items** for the Library of Goods. The items were acquired mainly through donations and the first of them was the famous **CC doughnut maker!** The efforts to collect items through donations, dumpster diving and small purchases continued throughout spring 2019. Around the same time, two other important milestones were set, as **Circle Centre hosted its first event** and was officially **registered as a Swedish NGO!**

In autumn 2019, Circle Centre participated in the **Lund University Arrival Days** for the first time, which would become a tradition until today. The **first opening hours** as we know them took place at Stenkrossen, and a call for applications was also published for a new officer team, yet another tradition that lives on today as our officer team changes every year.

## 2020-2021

As 2020 arrived, the **new officer team** stepped up. Sadly, the Covid-19 pandemic meant the new team had to deal with restrictions, but this did not shake their motivation, as throughout spring 2020 **events kept happening online**. In autumn 2020 and spring 2021, as the world was still battling with several infection waves and lockdowns, Circle Centre was always active through **hybrid events and opening hours**, finally adopting **Lend Engine** as its online platform for loans and inventory.

## 2022

In 2022, Circle Centre bounced back from the pandemic even stronger, through **larger events and a growing interest** and recognition by the local community of Lund. This recognition was shown through the environmental prize **Lund Miljöpris 2022** awarded to Circle Centre by Lunds Kommun and the funds obtained through the **Viable Cities** program. In the summer, Circle Centre participated in the LU Arrival Days once again, this time offering its now famous **bedding kits!**

## 2023

2023 saw Circle Centre growing even more, in size but most importantly in impact. With an **enlarged officer team and sub-teams** to better distribute the work and expertise, 2023 was a year full of events, outreach and collaborations in Lund and beyond. Highlights from the year include the **15 events** hosted or co-organised, the **Circular Roundtable** gathering local organisations working for a common goal, the move to **Petroleumhuset**, a new (temporary) location next to Stenkrossen, as well as the **first Circle Centre Annual Meeting** open to all members.

All of this and more of our 2023 was captured and summarised below, to form the first **Circle Centre Annual Report!**

## 2024

In 2024, we welcomed **the highest number yet of new members** joining in August, bringing a wave of fresh energy into our community. We made significant strides in **improving our Lend Engine**, and tackling inventory challenges to make borrowing smoother and more reliable for everyone. Our dedication was honoured with **a prestigious C4C nomination**, highlighting the growing impact of our work. Another highlight of the year was hosting **researchers at Circle Centre**, fostering new connections and exchanging ideas that further solidified our role as a hub for collaboration and innovation.





# LIBRARY OF GOODS

## 2024 in numbers

Here we gathered statistics from our online platform Lend Engine to celebrate the growth of our Library of Goods and of our sharing community in 2024. Data was collected starting from January 1st 2024 to December 31st 2024.

**486** new members joined our community      Our items were loaned **1190** times during the year

**14** items were recycled and **12** items were repaired,  
for a total of **1517** items in our Library of Goods!

**278** new members joined and our items  
were loaned **331** times in August

Our busiest month!



Our bedding kits  
(small and big)  
were loaned **62**  
times in total

The most loved single item  
was the Air Mattress  
CCTR0590, loaned **13** times



The most popular category of single  
items was our pillow inserts. They were  
loaned **47** times in total

On average, items in our inventory were loaned **1.56**  
times. This, however, includes loans of 1 whole year.

Excluding 1-year loans, our estimate  
becomes **2.85** use cycles per item in 2023!

...and all of this would not have been  
possible without the **2059** members of  
our sharing community!

# NEWS IN OUR LIBRARY OF GOODS

## Co-evolving with and for our sharing community

As we continue lending items to and learning the habits of our community, we started in 2024 a series of changes and optimizations in the ways we manage our library inventories. This is for our LoT to co-evolve with our community, to ensure that the system is effective and enabling for officers, and that the borrowing journey is convenient and user-friendly for our members.

### Improved categorization logic

With increased items available in our catalogue, some of the original categories have become too general, creating unnecessary hurdles in both navigating and managing. For a smoother experience, we optimized the groupings so that function-based subgroups and availability overviews are shown before detailed lists of all individual items.

### Better borrowing journey

A key benefit of using an online system is that it allows our members to reserve before coming into the library, which has been generally beneficial for both our members and officers, given our limited space and opening hours. However, we've also recognized that with certain goods, such as those that require frequent repair and those that are more generic, allowing reservation online has often resulted in hectic and time-consuming searchings, sometimes followed by lengthy explanations to replace the reserved items with another.

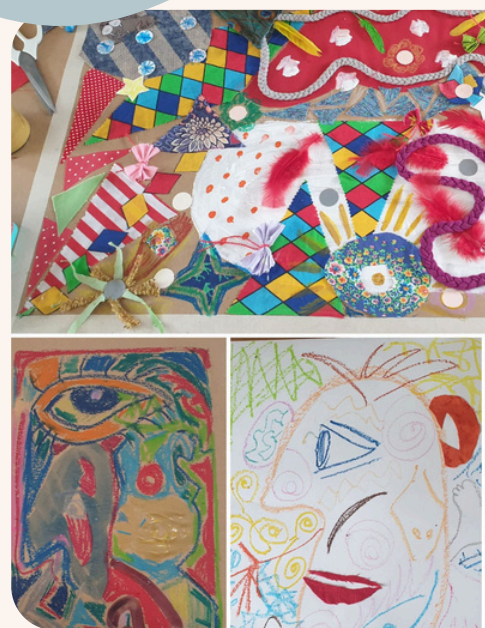
To tackle this challenge, we identified items with this inclination and replaced the reservation function with information on general availability and opening hours. Members can come to the library and choose the exact items from what we have available at the moment. This facilitates a more reliable and satisfying borrowing journey.

While the major enhancements are on the categorization logic and borrowing journey for certain goods, we also initiated continued efforts to improve the clarity and precision of item descriptions and presentations according to feedback from our members.



# COMMUNITY

This year, we were grateful to see our community come together with enthusiasm and a shared spirit of creativity, collaboration, and care. Through a variety of events and workshops, we witnessed a heartfelt interest in our sharing culture and a genuine willingness to take part in building and nurturing a vibrant, inclusive space for all.



Craft Café:  
"Craft a Picasso" Edition



Circle Centre X Lund Matvarukooperativ  
Anti-Black Friday Gift & Wrapping  
Craft Café





At this year's **Kulturnatten**, Circle Centre hosted a variety of engaging activities that brought the community together in the spirit of sustainability and creativity.

We expanded our **Goods Swap** to include clothes, plants, and books, which were warmly received by participants. The event also featured a creative challenge with sustainable arts activities, a seasonal **eco-friendly crafts exhibition**, and a lively Craft Café where attendees created decorations from recycled materials and exchanged ideas with local artists.

♻️ Around **40** Goods Swap items found new owners

♻️ About **15** unique artworks were crafted from scrap and recyclable materials

An art contest rounded off the day, inspiring creativity and exploration of upcycling techniques, all in a wonderful atmosphere of collaboration and engagement.

Many attendees discovered Circle Centre for the first time, shared their support, and expressed interest in our activities.





We not only just share things, but we also share skills and ideas. Throughout the year, we hosted **seasonal workshops** that brought the **community** together by sharing and learning new techniques when either repairing or creating items. Each workshop was creatively inspired by the season whether it was Easter, Halloween, Christmas, or simply celebrating everyday moments throughout the year.

Among these was the launch of our daytime **Craft Café**, which quickly became a lively hub for creativity and **social connection**. From students to seniors, internationals to stay-at-home parents, people from all walks of life found a welcoming space to explore sustainability in a hands-on way.

We also launched a series of special editions of Craft Café, with which creativity exploration and skill sharing were brought to the next level.

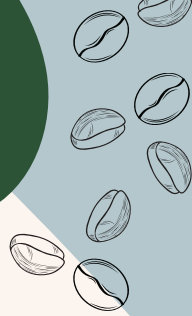
Among them is our sustainable jewelry workshop where participants crafted friendship bracelets and friendships at the same time.

The workshop allowed attendees to develop and learn new creative skills. Through introducing new methods of beading and crocheting, we are not only building skills but also strengthening the bonds that make our community thrive.





# BROADER LANDSCAPE



As we continue growing and strengthening our local community, we see ourselves amidst a global movement cultivating a culture of sharing to combat the dominating but destructive consumption culture. In this effort, we aspire to reach a broader landscape with our local initiative, through collaborating with other organizations, reaching out online and involving external actors, for a wider adoption of mindful consumption and collaborative living practices.

## TUESDAY'S CRAFT CAFÉ!



STENKROSSEN  
2023 &  
2024

Through **social platforms and official websites**, we engage with our local community with ongoing events and updates, and have the opportunity to communicate with interested audiences who might not have or no longer have the possibility to physically engage in Lund. This not only helps us grow and strengthen our community but also holds the potential for LoTs to be born in other parts of the world. In 2024, we posted 53 times on instagram and our most loved content was a recap of our popular Craft Café event!

2024 also saw Circle Centre continue increasing its external relations activity in and outside Lund. In three key areas—**youth, governance, and academia**—Circle Centre has reached new audiences and deepened its impact. As an organisation strongly rooted in community and collaboration, we are extremely grateful for all our **local and international partners**, as well as all like-minded organisations with whom we had the pleasure to exchange ideas throughout the year.

Youth, one of the largest and most dynamic groups in Lund, has long been a central focus. In 2024, Circle Centre was invited to participate in the **LU Arrival Days** once again, offering students the opportunity to kickstart their student life in Lund sustainably by borrowing one of our bedding kits and/or wifi routers.



Circle Centre at LU Arrival Day 2024, with our bedding kits and wifi routers



Circle Centre meeting new students at LU Arrival Day 2024

This would not have been possible without the help and resources offered by LU and its **Division of External Relations**. The **Lund University International Desk** has also been supporting us by introducing Circle Centre to international students through the orientation program. Circle Centre was also invited by LU's **Sustainability Forum** to participate in its event designed to introduce to new students ways of sustainable living in Lund. We are grateful for the support received and excited to collaborate more in the future!

In 2024, Circle Centre was selected as one of the projects for the **Community for Climate (C4C)** European initiative. This initiative is supporting 50 community based projects, helping them to engage in citizen's climate actions and developing innovative ideas for more sustainable and resilient neighborhoods.

Circle Centre's project is to assist communities around Europe to start their own Library of Goods by creating an international network of LoTs to foster a global presence of the culture of sharing. We have started the journey by developing starter toolkits and sharing lessons with people who want to start these types of initiatives in other parts of Europe.



Elinor's first field visit at Circle Centre

In this work we have been assisted by **Elinor Askmar**, national expert in sharing economy and member of the transition network and Jack McQuibban, Head of Local Zero Waste implementation for Zero Waste Europe. During the field visits, we welcomed Elinor at Circle Centre to share our vision and welcome her advice on how we can achieve it.



From the very start, the City of Lund has been providing crucial and steadfast support. In 2024, **Lunds Kommun** has been hosting us in Petroleumhuset and Chimney House, and supporting us throughout the year in finding a new place for Circle Centre. With a growing attention on the circular and sharing economy, its recurring sustainability-focused event **HållBAR** invited us to speak at its panel, offering us an opportunity to share and connect with other organisations and actors in Lund's business life, associations and civil society.



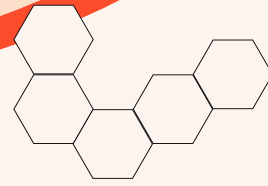
HållBAR panelists  
after the event

Circle Centre speaking at  
HållBAR event in March

This year also marked a special year for Circle Centre as we hosted a study visit from academia. A group of researchers and PhD students from the **Centre for Innovation Research (CIRCLE)** visited Circle Centre on their study trip in June. Sharing our vision, work, and obstacles with the researchers, we sincerely value the opportunity for practice and academia to meet, and hope for more exchanges in the future!

Dialogue and exchange continue outside of special occasions, with organisations such as **Fixa till, Repair Café, Cohabit, Pluto, Lund Mat Kooperativ** and **Lund Fontänhus** to share and learn from each other. We are extremely grateful for the opportunities to grow together with other organisations in the area and hope the networks of synergies continue to strengthen and grow wider to collectively foster a more resilient and sustainable future.

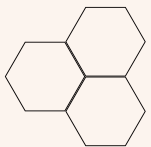
# VISION 2040



Through Circle Centre, we aspire to cultivate a mindset of mindful consumption and collaborative living, ultimately contributing to a flourishing and resilient community.

## A constellation of sharing neighbourhoods

By 2040, Circle Centre will become Circle CentreS: a network of sharing neighbourhoods where people can conveniently borrow anything that could be shared and reused. These local centres will be adapted to the neighbourhood population (student/family oriented...) in terms of the types of items available and the types of events organised. We will partner with item producers to improve the maintenance, repairability, and overall circularity of the items.

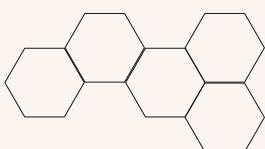


## Circular products

As a sharing organisation, our impact on the circularity of the actual items is limited. The donated items can be difficult to repair and maintain and have poor recycling properties when reaching end-of-life. On the other side, item producers don't have access to feedback from sharing organisations and few opportunities to shift from linear to circular business models. We believe we can be part of a circular system as a middle agent managing the borrowing and maintenance of the items while providing feedback on the circularity of the items.

## Strengthening community

By being present in every neighbourhood, and by adapting to the local neighbourhood populations, we aim to create a greater sense of belonging. This should lead to greater participation in the projects of the centres and an improved performance of the library (more loans, less overdue, better care of the items...).



# TESTIMONIALS

We're incredibly proud to share the experiences of everyone who makes Circle Centre what it is—our partners, members, volunteers, and event participants. Their words highlight the heart of what Circle Centre is all about—creating a space where sharing, learning, and connection thrive. From stories about resource-sharing successes to meaningful community-building moments, each testimonial reflects the impact we strive for every day.

Here are just a few of the inspiring experiences that bring Circle Centre to life:

20/10/24

Great concept, I love the idea! Very convenient for students who don't want to spend too much money on things they only need for a limited period of time. Also very sustainable and progressive! Everything went really well, I can recommend it and would always borrow something again. Thank you very much and good luck for the future!

"I think that Circle Centre is a wonderful and helpful association for students to settle up easier and quicker in Lund. Amazing service. Keep going."

"Great concept, I love the idea! Very convenient for students who don't want to spend too much money on things they only need for a limited period of time. Also very sustainable and progressive! Everything went really well, I can recommend it and would always borrow something again. Thank you very much and good luck for the future!"

"Good concept as I am not wasting money to buy a whole toolkit that I am only going to use once, but really need for a short period of time. Particularly as a student that just moved in, I was able to fix my stuff without breaking the bank on tools. Highly recommend particularly for things I need for the short term!"

"Really helpful volunteers and really appreciate this borrowing concept that saves us not only money, but the effort to sell or throw bulky items after graduation. Keep it up and thanks for the commitment to a more sustainable environment!"

20/10/24

Great concept, I love the idea! Very convenient for students who don't want to spend too much money on things they only need for a limited period of time. Also very sustainable and progressive! Everything went really well, I can recommend it and would always borrow something again. Thank you very much and good luck for the future!

29/10/24

Really cool do it yourself initiative for building a sustainable future for everyone, buy less, waste less, do with your heart.  
Polijo

## EVENT PARTICIPANTS TESTIMONIALS

“Absolutely lovely initiative. Love the combination between the soup making workshop and the crafty gift wrapping workshop. More activities like this!”

“I had a wonderful time at the sustainable crafts activity - filling jars with different coloured beans + decorating presents in creative ways. I really appreciate the knowledge that was shared by Katia and Olga. "Thank you!"

## VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIALS

“I have been a volunteer in Circle Centre since 2023 and for me, joining this organisation allowed for personal development to happen. Especially for this year, when new officers came, I had a fun time getting to know each other, which also helped strengthen the team. The organisation itself taught me how important it is to reuse items if possible and how it can improve sustainably.”



# PARTNER TESTIMONIALS

"I have had the pleasure of supporting Circle Centre as Country Expert Facilitator through the international Communities 4 Climate (C4C) projects that links together a lot of Citizen led movements and initiatives throughout Europe. The C4C is conducted through Citizen led organizations on contract directly from the European Commission, since they see the importance of involving and anchoring citizens in the European Green Deals.

I am very impressed with the ambition, communications, skills, and community building abilities of Circle Centre. I have worked with citizen led initiatives on the societal transformation to a post carbon, circular economy within the planetary boundaries for the last fourteen years. My experience is that many times the strong leadership on complex crisis comes from the margins, and therefore often from civic society. Many times, the deep knowledge, the brave leadership, the realistic future visions, and the innovation is stronger there than in rooms of power and physical and economical resources.

**I think Circle Centre can really be a key actor in the Lund area in building a local strategy toward a circular economy that involves the citizens.** I hope the municipality and other actors in the local community will realize the potential of a deep collaboration."

**Elinor Askmar Cederholm**

Country Expert Facilitator, Communities 4 Climate project

The collaboration with Circle Centre within Klimatneutrala Lund 2030 has been very valuable for us in the municipality, helping us understand how we can support this type of initiative. **We are grateful and proud of the effort Circle Centre puts in and the commitment they show towards real transition.** Actors like Circle Centre are extremely important for the transition work we are facing, and we want to continue supporting and promoting this in the best possible way. The city of Lund is committed to exploring new ways of strengthening collaboration with civil society in the green transition, in which Circle Centre is an important actor in Lund."

**Juliet Leonette**

Project manager, Klimatneutrala Lund 2030

**THANK YOU!**





## Contact us

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