



## 10 Minutes For The Planet

### Stockholm - a city as hip as it is green©

by Pierre Vercueil

Vocabulary & pronunciation study by Catherine Balter Kendall©

Words are explained alongside the text

Stressed syllables are underlined and in bold\*

Hi there and welcome back to our weekly environmental series here on EnglishWaves, Ten **Minutes** for the Planet. Our current theme has us taking a look at the greenest cities on the planet by looking at the world's top 5 list as reported by the *Economist* Intelligence Unit's Green Cities Index. Just **to jog your memory**, we started off with number one on the list, Copenhagen, and last time we saw why Amsterdam takes **spot** number two. Today we **move on to** number three on the list, none other than the Swedish capital of cool, Stockholm.

There are few cities in the world that **match** Stockholm's **wealth** of green areas. **It is surrounded** by more than 200 nature **reserves** across the region, the nearest one just a 10-minute metro ride from the city center. The many parks are part of the high quality of life that **defines** the Stockholm brand, and every resident has a **favorite** spot **to get away** from it all – whether for a picnic, sporting activity or simply to **relax**.

In **total**, Stockholm **offers** its residents access to **roughly** 1000 parks, which **make up** an incredible 30% of the city's area. **On top of that**, when the city's **nature** reserves are taken into account, this proportion rises to 40%. Ask any local and they will also proudly tell you that the **harbour's** water is so clean that you can eat the fish caught in the city center. There are extensive plans **to bolster** the city's **image** as a beach destination by adding to the current 24 official beaches for swimming.

**Apart** from its leafy visage and **despite** its northern, cold location together with an increasing population, Stockholm

**to jog one's memory** (exp.) to remind someone of sth. they may have forgotten

**spot** (n.) position, place

**to move on to** (phrasal vb.) to go on to the next subject

**to match** (vb.) to equal, to be as good as

**wealth** (n.) richness

**it is surrounded by** (exp.) it has around it

**to get away** (phrasal vb.) to escape

**roughly** (adv.) approximately

**to make up** (phrasal vb.) to account for, to constitute

**on top of that** (exp.) in addition to

**harbor** (n.) port

**to bolster** (vb.) to strengthen, to boost

has very low **greenhouse gas emissions** **compared** to its **peers**. **Between** 1990 and 2009 the city cut its emissions by 3.4 tonnes per **person**. This was made possible by reducing **traffic congestion** and adding more clean vehicles. Most trips in the city are made by **public** transport during morning **peak hours**, and a **staggering** 68% of all trips within the city center are made on foot or by bicycle. Like Copenhagen and Amsterdam, Stockholm too has a vision to be **fossil fuel free** in the near future, with the Swedish capital aiming for 2050.

More **significantly** however, the city **managed** to **achieve** a high proportion of renewable energy for heating houses by **turning waste into** a valuable **resource**. Stockholm has a rich tradition of waste incineration in order to **convert** household waste to energy. In 1909, the city's first incinerator **plant** started operating with the **aim** of reducing the household rubbish that ended up in **landfills**. This idea of using household waste for producing heat and electricity, whilst reducing the **amount** of waste sent to landfills has continued to develop since. The result? Almost zero household municipal waste ends up in the city's landfill. This has made it possible for more than 70% of Stockholm's households to have **access** to district heating.

Stockholm is consistently regarded as a Scandinavian center of excellence, reflected no less in its **commitment** to sustainability and its green economy. Join us again next time when we continue our look at the world's greenest cities.

Stay tuned to Ten Minutes for the Planet on EnglishWaves

**greenhouse gas emissions** (exp.) carbon emissions

**peers** (n.) others (cities) like it

**traffic congestion** (exp.) high density of vehicles on the road

**peak hours** (exp.) busy periods of travel

**staggering** (adj.) surprisingly high

**fossil fuel free** (exp.) not using any fossil fuels (coal, petrol or gas)

**significantly** (adv.) importantly

**to achieve** (vb.) to succeed in doing sth.

**to turn into** (phrasal vb.) to transform

**waste** (n.) rubbish

**plant** (n.) factory

**aim** (n.) objective

**landfill** (n.) large deep hole where rubbish is buried

**commitment** (n.) belief in and promise to do sth about

### \*Tip!

2-syllable words with their stress on the first syllable:

**minutes, favourite, total, offers, nature, image, person, public, managed, access**

2-syllable words with their stress on the second syllable:

**reserves, defines, relax, apart, despite, compared, between, resource, convert, amount**