SPECIAL REPORT

Älmhult makes things simpler and better!

*Originally, Älmhult was just a farmstead alongside an old route between Sweden and Denmark, but today it has around 17,000 residents. Älmhult farmstead was later split into four farms and the village grew up slowly until 1862, when a railroad station to the southern mainline was erected there. From then on, the old country village quickly grew into an expanding railroad community. Many companies set up shop in Älmhult during the 20th century, the most significant of which arrived in 1953 when Ingvar Kamprad opened his first store and showrooms there – the company that was to become **IKEA**.*

Photo: Jan Norrman, Swedish National Heritage Board / Wikipedia

Älmhult is one of the latest municipalities to connect to Infracontrol to simplify the working process in its technical department. The ability of residents to report comments and faults and the availability of an effective case management tool will allow the municipality to streamline and assure the quality of its service. At the same time, it has access to valuable statistics and is thus better able to control and follow-up its operation, specially the many external contractors deliveries.

Emelie Lindholm from the technical administration in Älmhult municipality talks about why they chose Infracontrol:

- *We chose this service in order to make it easy to receive fault reports from the municipality's residents. We currently have no equivalent system, which means people wishing to submit observations have to get hold of us by phone or email, which is often seen as too much fuss.*
  By using a system that clearly shows who is responsible for what, we prevent cases from falling between the cracks, and our residents all receive feedback from the right person.

Simpler handling, better follow-up

The technical department in Älmhult is responsible for the municipality's street, park water and sewerage operations. The department takes care of a broad range of cases, many of which are seasonal. Emelie Lindholm tells us:

- *When the nights are drawing in, street lighting pops up as frequent cases, and when the snow arrives, many cases concern snow clearance and gritting. Cases that constantly recur are vegetation blocking visibility – both our own and that of private property owners – and cases concerning traffic signs that are twisted, knocked over or similar.*

She says that now it will be easier to handling these cases thanks to Infracontrol Online.

- *Above all, I can foresee a major advantage in being able to extract statistics, says Emelie Lindholm. The statistics will tell us the total number of cases received and how quickly we rectified the problems. It will be easier for us to make the right decisions in many regards when we have hard facts to go on.*
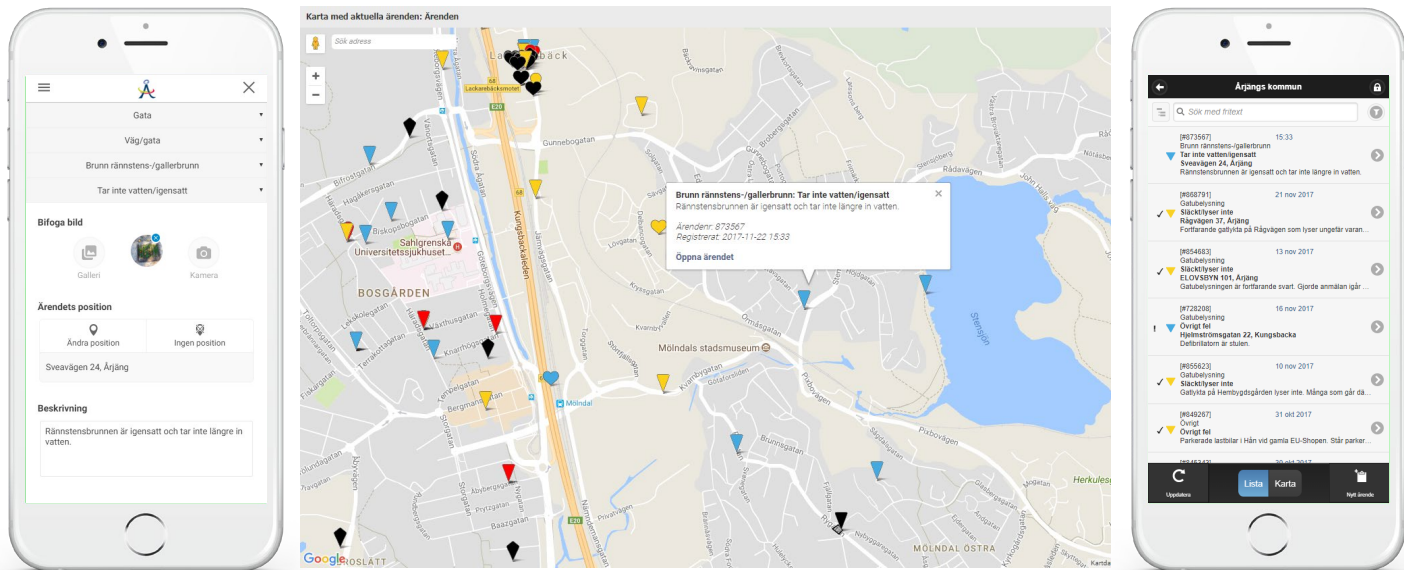
Infracontrol Online benefits many small municipalities by providing full control and making everything from alarms and fault reporting to taking action simpler.

A smart city platform for both residents and technical installations

Infracontrol Online went into operation in 2003 and there are now many who take advantage of the system.

- *We now have just over 150 customers in national and local government who use our service and we foresee a continued steady increase moving forward, says Simon Höglund, business developer at Infracontrol. We unite them as a group through something we call Infracontrol Community where they can exchange experiences and help us continue improving the service.*

Most Infracontrol Community members use the service for handling fault reports. But an important reason behind the choice of Infracontrol is the ability to connect technical installations, as Simon Höglund tells us:

- *The technical installations in society's infrastructure come from many suppliers and comprise different technologies in a variety of generations, functions and architectures. Furthermore, the responsibility for rectifying faults is spread across many different operators within maintenance personnel, contractors and control centers.*

By having a single service that handles both fault reports from residents and alarms from technical installations, all information is available in a single place and the municipality is in full charge of any possible breakdown.

Want to know more?
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