



SEMINAR: Guidelines for Local Participation in Windpower



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The Thy Model and Local Participation in the Green Transition

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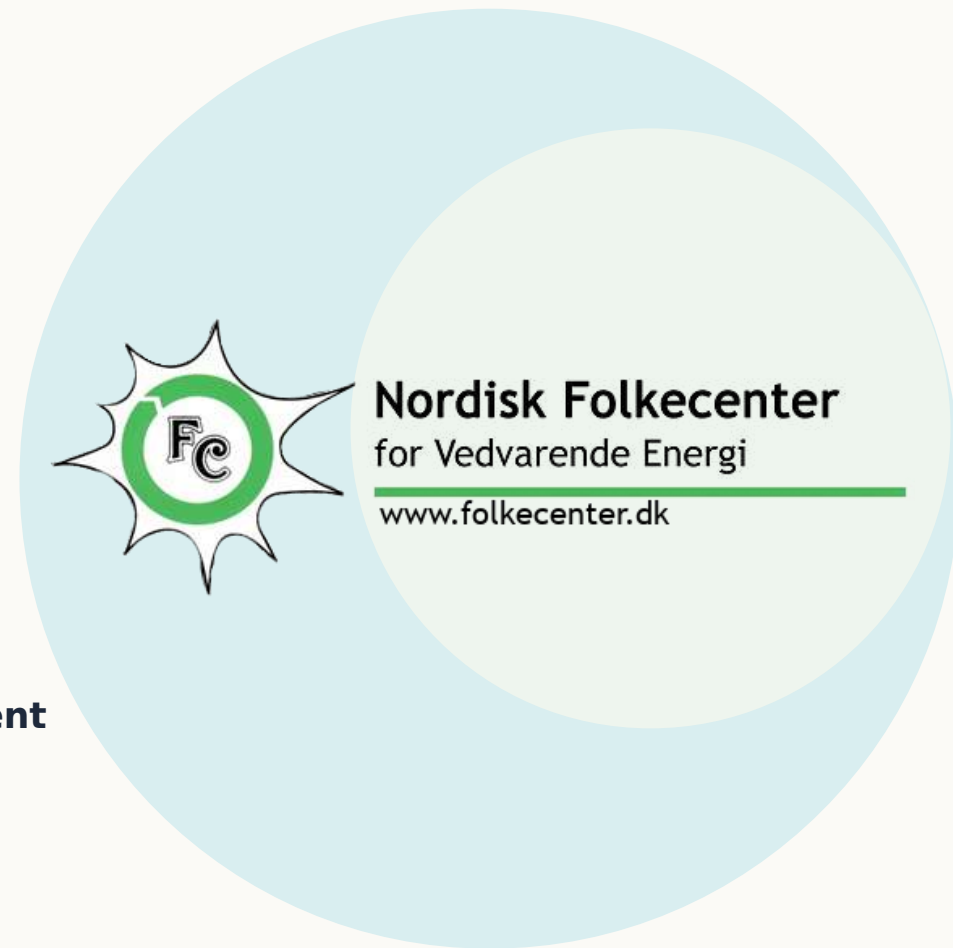


The Thy Model and Local Participation in the Green Transition

Insights from the DEEP project and Nordic Folkecenter qualitative interview study

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13 October 2026 | Seminar on Guidelines for Local Participation in Wind Power in Denmark



DEEP and our Role

02

Designing Community Collaboration for Sustainable Energy Parks

The project

DEEP explores how citizens and local communities can play a stronger role in the green transition. The Thy Model is a central Danish case.

Nordic Folkecenter's contribution

Local knowledge and networks
Interviews with people connected to the projects
Analysis of how citizens experience the information given and there participation and influence

Project partners



From the Earlier Process to Six Projects under the Thy Model

03

Two political decision rounds under the Thy Model

1

Before the Thy Model

An earlier process met strong local resistance. Politicians initially continued with only one of 27 proposals.

2

A new approach

The municipality redesigned the process around earlier dialogue, local energy associations and five assessment themes.

3

April 2025

The council advanced four of eight projects. All four had received a local majority in favour.

4

May 2026

The council approved Røjkær and Spolum despite local majorities voting against both projects.

Current status: the council has allowed planning and authority work to proceed for six projects.

What is the Thy Model?

Early dialogue, local organisation and political assessment



Early dialogue before plans are fixed

Local value, co-ownership and public support inform the political decision.

Five Municipal Assessment Themes / Criteria

05

What should an energy project contribute?

01

Local ownership

Target of at least 50% local ownership

02

Compensation

Fair compensation, with the most affected receiving the most

03

Nature

Projects should contribute to improving nature

04

Landscape

Design should respect existing landscape qualities

05

Local support

Broad support, informed in part by local votes

The criteria guide an overall political assessment. They are not five automatic pass-or-fail tests.

Participation in Practice

06

Participation extends beyond a single public meeting

32,000

Adult residents received a questionnaire

4,000+

Responses were submitted

Local dialogue

Meetings with associations and communities

Site walks

Discussion of physical design in the landscape

Local votes

An indication of public support

Negotiation

Ownership, compensation and local value

Participation develops through meetings, conversations, organisations and local initiatives.

Nordic Folkecenter's Qualitative Study

07

25 interviews with people connected to local energy projects

25

qualitative interviews

Visby
Bjerre
Røjkær and South
Thy

Interview topics

Experience of the process and information
Opportunities to be heard and influence decisions
Local conversations and sources of information
The role of local energy associations
Effects on everyday life and the community

The participants had different relationships to the projects. Some were close neighbours, while others lived farther away. They could vote or took an active role in the debate.

The study is qualitative and It shows different experiences, arguments and concerns.

What Did the Interviews Show?

However, Information does not always create a sense of influence

Positive experiences

The Bjerre process was described as open and dialogue-based.

One participant felt well informed and personally involved despite opposing the project.

Direct dialogue produced concrete agreements on compensation and local value.

“The process involved good participation, open dialogue and comprehensive information.”

Critical experiences

Several participants experienced public meetings as information or sales meetings.

They wanted clearer answers on finance, compensation and ownership.

Some found the role of local votes unclear and technical material difficult to understand.

“I do not feel involved. I feel more like a spectator at a sales presentation.”

Cross-Cutting Themes in the Questionnaire Responses

09

Representation, knowledge and local fairness

Who represents the community?

Some participants viewed local energy associations as an important link. Others questioned their mandate, the way representatives were appointed, and whether immediate neighbors were represented - and felt they were not sufficiently informed..

Who has access to understandable knowledge?

People used municipal information, public meetings, developers, energy associations, neighbours and social media. Local networks strongly shaped how projects were understood.

How are benefits and burdens shared?

Criticism often concerned location, nature, landscape, settlement, compensation, ownership and the distribution of economic gains rather than renewable energy itself.

Support grew when people experienced genuine dialogue, fair compensation and clear local benefits.

When Does Participation Become Meaningful?

Participation involves more than meetings and attendance figures

1

Formal participation

People receive information and are invited to meetings.

2

Experienced participation

People feel heard and understand the process.

3

Real influence

People's contributions can be traced in decisions or project changes.

Useful tests

- Is the information understandable and accessible?
- Can different groups be heard, including the people most affected?
- Do people know how their input is used?
- Did their proposals lead to specific changes?

What Do We Take Forward?

- Early involvement improves dialogue but does not guarantee agreement.
- Communities need knowledge and independent advice to negotiate on fair terms.
- A local energy association may not represent every interest.
- The role and consequences of local votes must be clear.
- People experience real participation when they can see how their input changes the process.
- Local experience should guide continued development of the Thy Model.

Good participation depends on who is heard, how their knowledge is used and what influence they actually gain.

<https://missiongreenfuels.dk/project/deep/>