

Public interest in the private sphere: how far into the home can local policy making reach?

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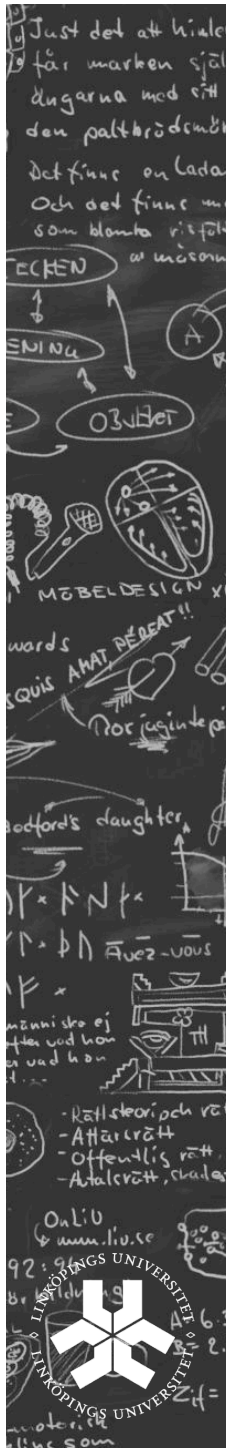
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Public/private in the liberal model and in green theory

- **The liberal–economistic model:** public/private divide is found between the public sector and the private sector and usually refers to the distinction between governmental and non-governmental.

(Weintraub, Jeff & Kumar Krishan (red. 1997) *Public and Private in Thought and Practise. Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press)

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Bedford's daughter
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- 23 home-owners and 3 tenants that have been in contact with an energy consultant
- 14 energy consultants in the counties of Östergötland and Dalarna





Results

The energy consultants

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- In general, they said that because they only *inform*, they did not interfere in people's personal lives.
- Another reason why energy guidance was seen as impersonal was that technology was often the focus.



[illegible]

- 

[illegible]

- "And this with showering and bathing. Yeah, ok, you should know that it costs six, seven kilowatt hours to take a bath and it costs two, three kilowatt hours to shower. If you know that, then it is ok whatever you do. If you want to lie there and have a nice time with a drink and candles or whatever you do, then it is ok. Then the bath has another value. You are not there just to be clean, but to enjoy the moment. ... **It is a cost you choose.** It is not that you are not allowed to use energy, but it is the **awareness that energy costs money.** That is what I want to achieve; that is the message". (energy consultant N)*

Technology often in focus

- Technology was a 'safe' area for the consultants. If they could advise the households to consume energy-efficient technology, then both they and the householders were happy and felt they had contributed to sustainable development.





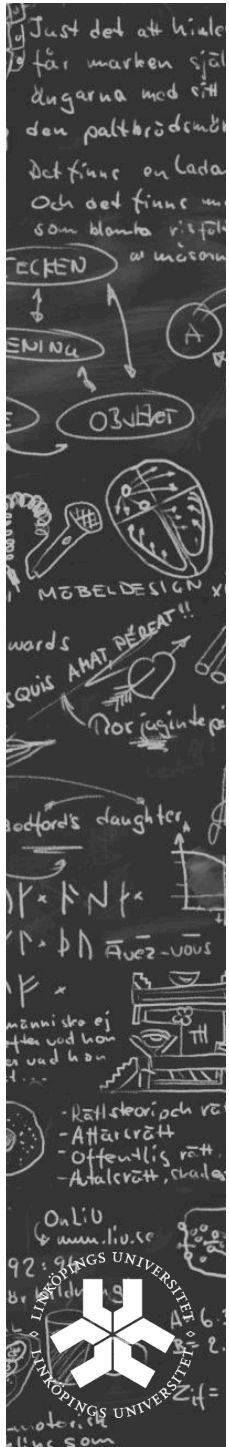
Results

Householders

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- “All measures are OK to use to reach people, but they must be mediated through free and independent sources”.*
(householder C)



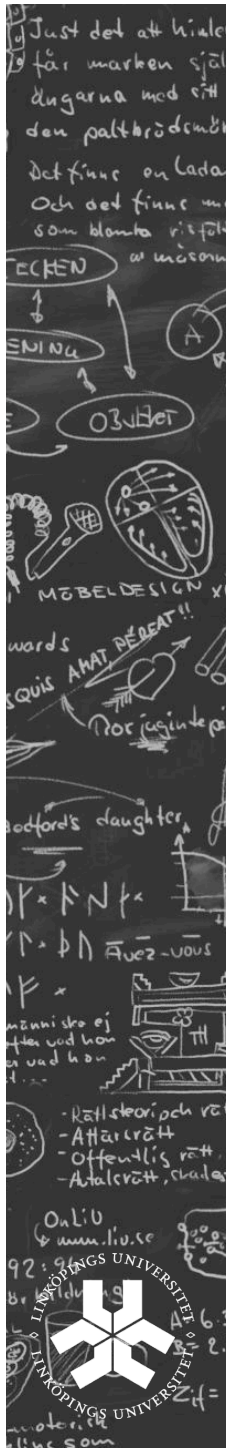


Other people need...

A common householder view was that *other* people needed to become aware.

The interviewees felt themselves to be conscious of their energy use and they knew and sympathized with the importance of reducing energy consumption to save the environment





Individual inspections and feed-back

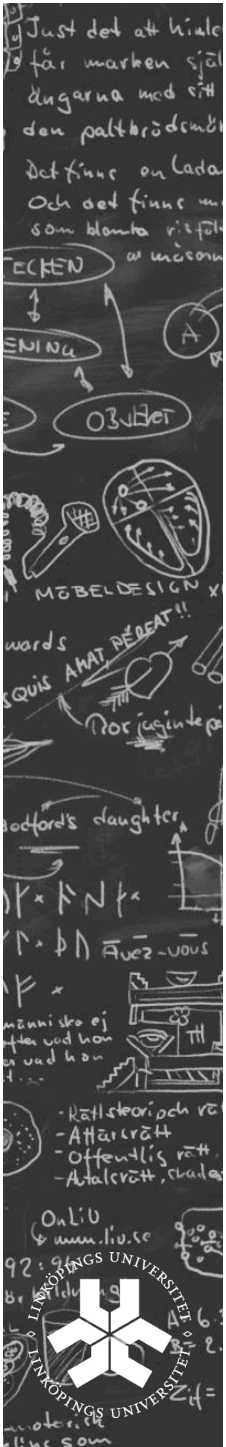
- Several householders said they wanted more individual inspections where the consultants measured all energy-related activities and appliances in their homes and gave them feedback on what they could do to reduce their energy consumption.
- That these inspections would result in figures seemed to make such advice neutral and could explain why the householders did not feel such supervision threatened their private sphere.

“No sentimentality, but straight on, easy and simple information about your energy use and costs” (householder N).

Finances important

- Often the measures suggested were expensive. Finances were more important than environmental concerns, and one householder said:

“We don’t do a lot of unnecessary things to pretend that we are environmentally aware. There must be some logical thinking involved and also economic benefits”.
(householder F)



Summary of the arguments the consultants and the households agreed and disagreed on

Agreements	Disagreements
In general energy policy uncontroversial	Interference in consumption patterns
Information acceptable	Need of more prohibitions
The householders have decision power, because they pay	Energy reduction measures only for environmental concern
Cannot force people to implement measures that reduce quality of life	If you can pay for your consumption no one else should care
Energy reduction of economical reason	
Information must be personal	



