Behaviour Change and its impact on delivering a Low-Carbon Society

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Overview

- Leadership
- Instruments to drive Behaviour Change
- Tools for Behaviour Change
- Markets
- Psychology of Behaviour Change
- Timely and appropriate Behaviour Change
- Engagement

Leadership

- **Governments are expected to play a leading role by creating enabling frameworks**
  - business want a framework with an appropriate balance of incentives and penalties and with long-term policy certainty
  - consumers welcome leadership and clear vision from governments rather government inaction
- **Each group sees the onus to act first as being the responsibility of the others (government / business / individuals)**

Instruments to drive Behaviour Change

- **Regulation**
  - standards – e.g. worst choices made less attractive or removed
  - obligations – e.g. mandatory emissions reduction targets
- **Monetary**
  - fiscal (taxes and incentives – e.g. London congestion charge)
  - procurement – e.g. C40 (energy efficiency purchases for public buildings)
  - emissions trading
- **Exemplar projects**
  - low-carbon, low waste housing (e.g. BedZED)

Tools for Behaviour Change

- **Information / guidance**
  - product labelling – e.g. life-cycle costs, energy ratings
  - household- and company-level emission inventory – e.g. energy meters & accounting
  - web resources – e.g. carbon calculator
  - support on how to change behaviour – e.g. advice helpline
  - learning networks
  - mass media
- **Availability of suitable alternatives / choices**
  - product versus service choice
  - transport modal shift

Markets

- **Recognise the value of market-based instruments to influence behaviours in the medium to long-term**
  - need a price on carbon (i.e. value on emission reduction)
  - power of informed consumer choice (e.g. consumer-durables)
- **Supply (production) and Demand (consumption)**
  - decarbonising energy supply (e.g. renewables, CCS, nuclear)
  - the benefit of incremental efficiency improvements may be offset by increased consumption (rebound effect) and switching to more energy intensive alternatives

Psychology of Behaviour Change

- **Encourage positive attitude**
  - not “don’t” but “let’s do”
  - small individual actions can be cumulatively powerful (e.g. recycling)
  - turn aspirations to be greener into actions that matter
  - Change should be desirable – fashionable and fun!
- **Change mind-set**
  - consumer items not as important as the service they provide
  - become aware that ownership carries responsibility
  - focus on quality-of-life rather than on mass-consumption and disposal
- **Social responsibility and peer pressure**
  - family, neighbours, colleagues

Timely and appropriate Behaviour Change

- **Need more than incremental changes to rapidly transition to LCS**
  - move LCS philosophy from the periphery into the mainstream
  - likely to involve paradigm shifts

- **Recognising difference in circumstance**
  - strategies for LCS will vary for different countries – depending on national circumstance (resource endowment, development level etc)
  - city-level action may also differ due to varying opportunity to act
  - leapfrogging – assistance to develop on a low-carbon pathway through appropriate technology transfer, financing and investment, joint venture exemplar projects etc

Engagement

- **Broad participation is needed to achieve a LCS**
  - actions are required by all stakeholders – citizens, corporations and government
- **Government**
  - city plans should be at least enabled and preferably supported by national frameworks
  - advanced city-level action can be used as pilots for national action