

Sustainable Behaviour, the Citizen-Consumer and the Role of Social Marketing

Gareth Shaw and Stewart Barr

Structure of Presentation

- Sustainability and the citizen-consumer
- Social marketing in a policy context (Defra)
- Our research context and extending the role of social marketing

Consumption, Citizenship and Sustainability

“The act of consumption is becoming increasingly suffused with citizenship characteristics and considerations. Citizenship is not dead, or dying, but found in new places, in life-politics” (Scammell, 2000, p. 351)

- The Citizen-Consumer is the major framing device for encouraging sustainable lifestyles (Berglund and Matti, 2006; Spaargaren, 2004), through a range of intellectual and pragmatic approaches (Spaargaren and Mol, 2008), e.g social marketing (McKenzie-Mohr, 2000 DEFRA, 2008).

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A FRAMEWORK FOR PRO- ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOURS

REPORT

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“We have broadly followed a social marketing methodology, moving from the initial scoping through to more detailed consumer insight, segmentation and strategy.”
(DEFRA, 2008, p. 14)

“Social marketing... underscores the importance of strategically delivering programs so that they target specific segments of the public and overcome the barriers to this segment’s engaging in the behavior”
(McKenzie-Mohr, 2000, p. 594).

Segment willingness

Ability to act

High

High ability and willing

7: **Honestly disengaged**
Maybe there'll be an environmental disaster, maybe not. Makes no difference to me, I'm just living life the way I want to.
18%

2: **Waste watchers**
'Waste not, want not' that's important, you should live life thinking about what you are doing and using.
12%

3: **Concerned consumers**
I think I do more than a lot of people. Still, going away is important, I'd find that hard to give up..well I wouldn't, so carbon off-setting would make me feel better.
14%

1: **Positive greens**
I think it's important that I do as much as I can to limit my impact on the environment.
18%

5: **Cautious participants**
I do a couple of things to help the environment. I'd really like to do more, well as long as I saw others were.
14%

6: **Stalled starters**
I don't know much about climate change. I can't afford a car so I use public transport.. I'd like a car though.
10%

4: **Sideline supporters**
I think climate change is a big problem for us. I know I don't think much about how much water or electricity I use, and I forget to turn things off..I'd like to do a bit more.
14%

Willing to Act

High

Low potential and unwilling

Low

Source: DEFRA (2008)

The Sustainable Citizen-Consumer?

Citizen-consumers indicative of (Slocum, 2004, p. 765):

“...an outgrowth of classical liberal theory that universalises the logic of the market for all institutions”, creating ‘passive’ citizens and challenges to progressive politics.

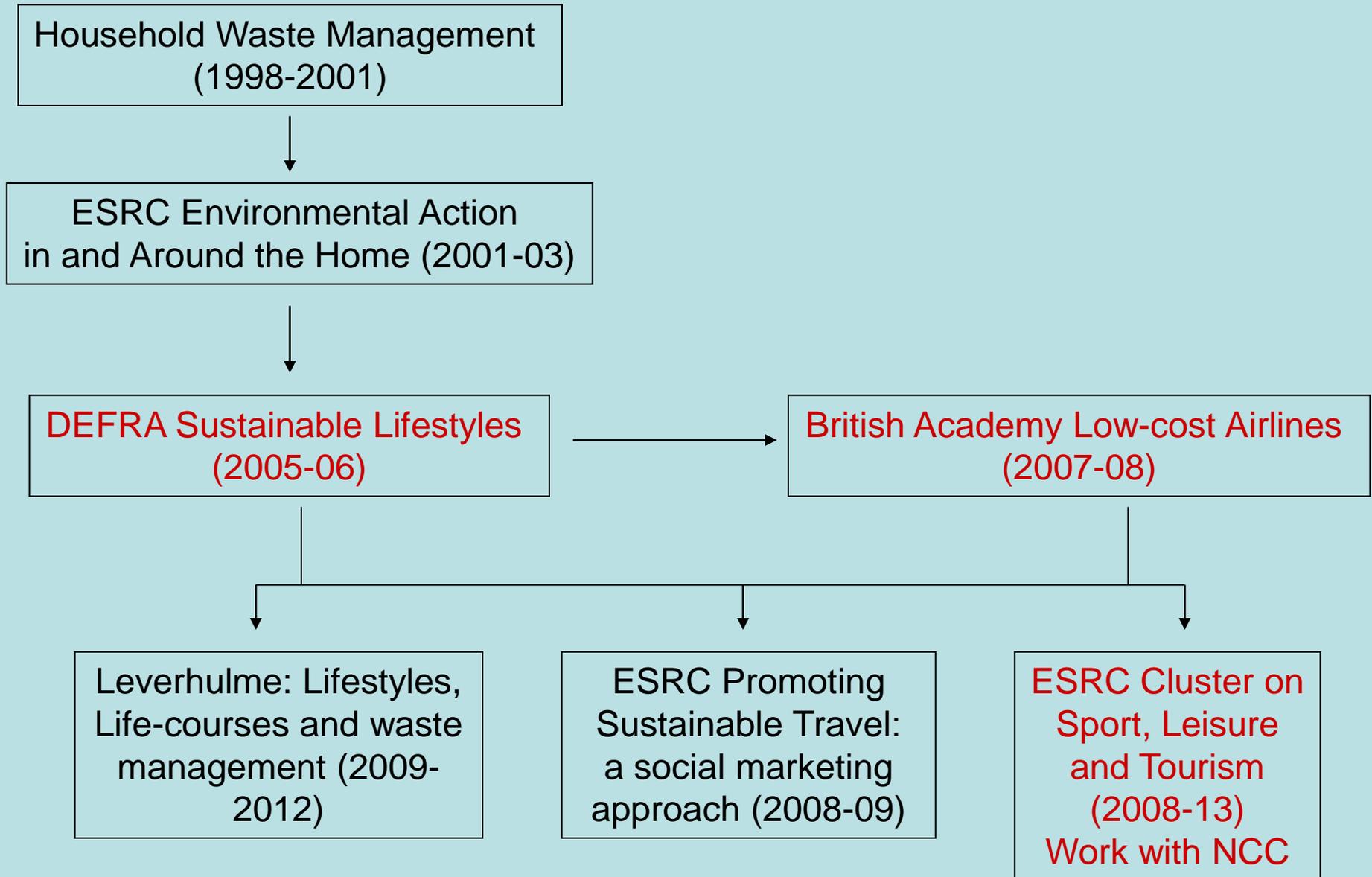
Social Marketing: a pathway to consumption reduction? (Peattie and Peattie, 2009, p. 261):

“Creating meaningful progress towards sustainability requires more radical solutions than just the development of new products and product substitutions amongst consumers...The anti-consumption challenge poses some critical questions about how to promote such concepts to make them acceptable to consumers”.

The Sustainable Citizen-Consumer?

- Most studies focusing on environmental practice have been undertaken in the 'home' context and explored routineised practices, related to energy, water, recycling (Shove, 2003; 2006; Southerton et al., 2004; Gregson et al., 2007);
- The role of social practice in different (spatial) contexts (work, leisure, tourism) provides a way of exploring how citizen-consumers deal with environmental behaviours in alternative (and conflicting) 'sites of practice';
- Within these contexts, issues such as climate change are prominent discourses for 'behaviour change':
 - **Do alternative sites of practice (re)produce different forms of environmental practice (and potential conflicts) and what implications emerge for 'citizen-consumers', social marketing and tackling climate change?**

Research Programme



Climate change as conflicting discourse

- **Knowledge and denial**
(Stoll-Kleeman et al 2001) 'I don't actual believe mankind is making a lot of difference. The earth is a purely natural process' (BA Dan)
- 'I do feel concerned about climate change ...but a little person like me can't stop the Americans driving their cars' BA Gemma)



Conflicting Sites of Practice: climate change, air travel and tourism

The ‘conflict’ of climate change and tourism:

“Yeah well we’re not too happy because like my children have told me all about flying and its bad for the environment and everything”. (BA, Jane)

Air travel ‘beyond the reach’ of environmental practice:

“Well when we live in an age of travel...I don’t really see how we’re going to go back from that” (DEFRA, FG 1A)

The challenges of reduced consumption:

“And like, my eldest daughter lives in Darlington and I can go with FlyBe for £60 to Newcastle and it takes one hour or I can go on a coach for eleven hours or train for six hours and that’s more expensive, so that’s the choice I make” (DEFRA FG 5A)

The contested knowledge base:

“Which is more efficient: a plane half full with executives flying abroad for a conference or a low cost airline, full to the brim with people on holiday?” (DEFRA FG 4F)

Conflicting Sites of Practice: climate change, air travel and tourism

Tourism as an 'exempt' context and site of practice:

“I suppose people think a holiday is a holiday and that they go there to relax and do their own thing. And you know, it sounds a bit nasty but you know, when you're holiday, you're really thinking about yourself aren't you because it's your time away” (DEFRA FG 1A)

The 'Paradox'?

“I'm concerned about the sheer volume of air traffic but at the same time, I sometimes like to go on an aeroplane, which is a paradox isn't it?” (DEFRA FG 3A)

Low cost Airlines survey

- **Eco-conscious**(26% total;2.6 flights/year;36% carbon offset)
- **Eco-hypocrites** (52%;2.3; 11%)
- **Eco-spendthrifts** (22%;2.3;0%)

What's green and flies? An eco-hypocrite

THEY recycle obsessively, insist on real nappies and compost every scrap of organic vegetable peeling and used Fair Trade teabag – and they're not slow to tell you about it.

But when it comes to sacrificing their jaunts to Tuscany and weekend breaks in Prague, it seems that even the most pious of green crusaders waver in their zeal for saving the planet.

A study by Exeter University has unearthed the phenomenon of supposedly environmentally-friendly Britons who refuse to give up low-cost flying despite the damage to the planet.

The authors of the study say this 'eco-hypocrisy' shows how difficult it will be for governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by urging people to cut down on air-travel.

'The addiction looks hard to break'

Environmental campaigners argue that cheap short-haul flights have fuelled a massive hike in carbon emissions over the past few years.

Although pollution from flights accounts for just 7 per cent of the UK's total greenhouse gas output, the figure is predicted to reach 25 per cent over the next few decades.

Celebrities in particular are criticised for struggling to reconcile their well-meaning efforts to develop green credentials and the demands of the modern world.

Only last week, Sienna Miller admitted she 'can't avoid flying' as she toured the world promoting climate change awareness.

And the actress isn't the only one. Coldplay frontman Chris Martin, who uses his lyrics to urge environmental

By David Derbyshire
Environment Editor

responsibility, flies home between gigs while George Clooney – who drives a low-emissions Tango car – also uses private jets.

The latest findings on eco-hypocrisy were presented at the Royal Geographical Society yesterday.

The researchers carried out in-depth interviews with members of the public last year, ranging from climate change cynics to those who believed they were dedicated environmentalists.

Professor Gareth Shaw, a co-author of the study, said: 'These people were not occasional environmentalists – they also defined their lifestyles by being committed to environmental causes.'

'There is currently a big debate going on about sustainable tourism – and this perhaps shows that that debate hasn't yet stretched to the public.'

'There seems to be a gap between sustainable behaviour in the home, and sustainable behaviour on holidays.'

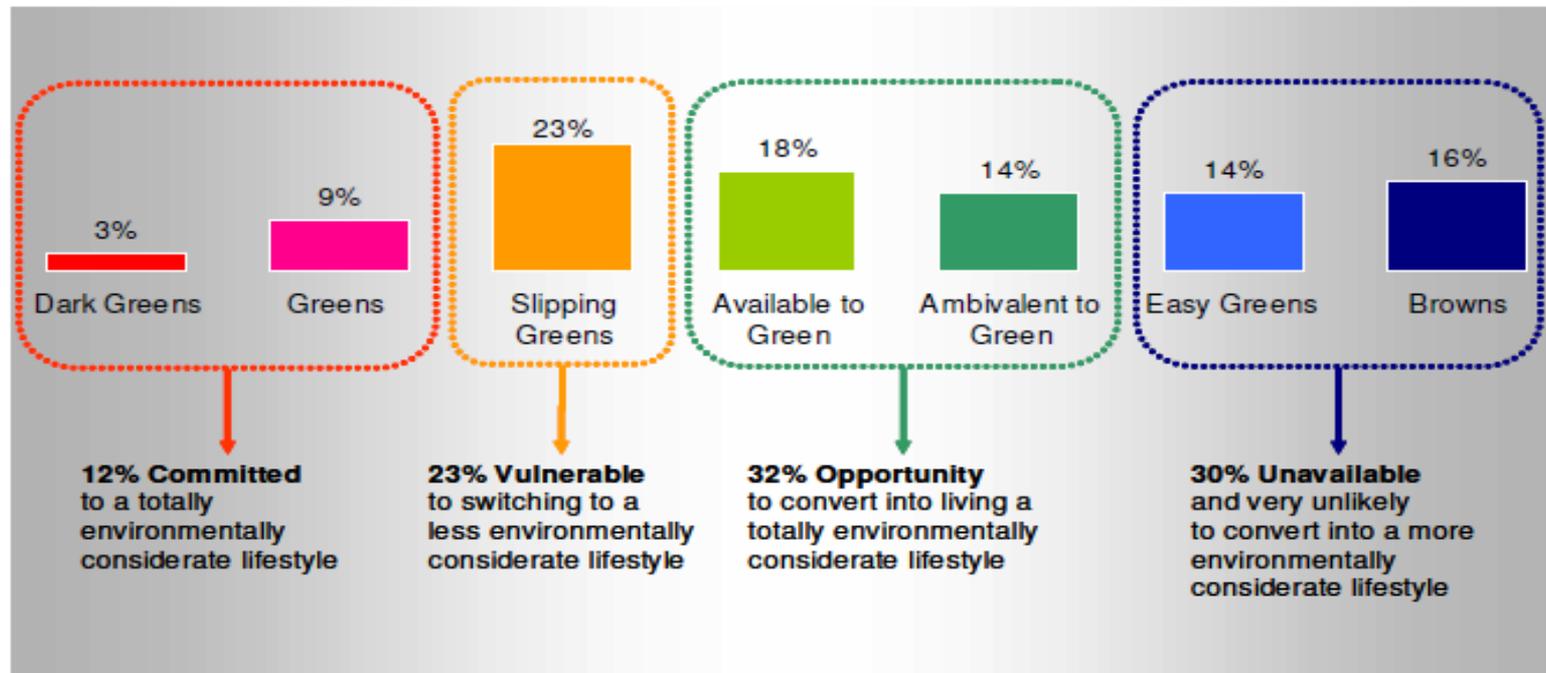
Dr Stewart Barr, who led the focus group study, said that although the study was based on only 64 people, the findings reflected a widespread trend among those professing to be green-friendly.

'Most of the committed environmentalists said they still travelled by low-cost travel, even though they realised it was problematic,' he said. 'But they couldn't see a way around it.'

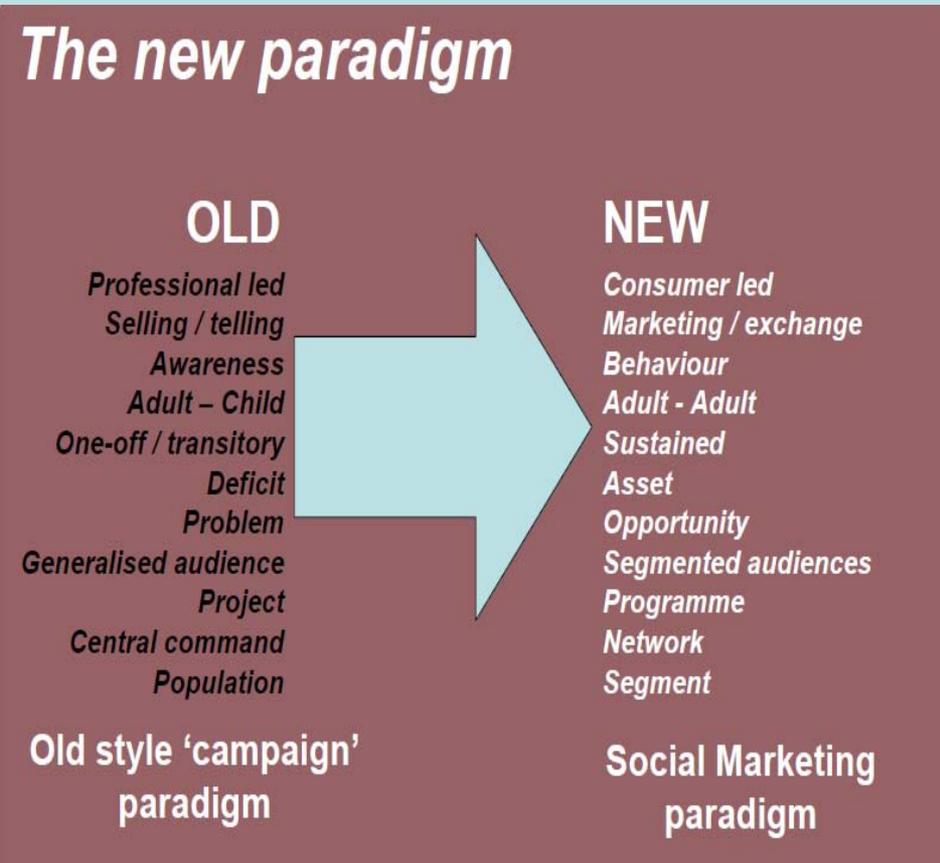
'We were surprised because we thought that people would transfer their attitudes towards environmentalism in the home to their holidays, but the difference was more stark than we had imagined.'

'The UK's addiction to cheap flights looks hard to break.'

Social marketing and environmental commitment (Hjelmar 2005)



Shifting to S-D Logic ?



- Project with NCC ESRC CASE award
- S-D Logic –customer as an operant resource; ‘a collaborative partner who co-creates value’ (Lusch et al 2007:6)
- Vargo and Lusch (2004) **relevant to social marketing through the lens of co-creation**

Co-production and Social Marketing in a tourism context

- Customers and suppliers as operant resources (collaborative partners)
- Building connections with customers
- Developing collaboration at resort level-co-production between producers, customers and resort managers
- Sites of practice issues