



Innovation: designing for a sustainable future

What drives innovation in sustainable technologies.

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Consumers are now seen as initiators of innovation, not just the recipients of it. That's quite a surprising conclusion. It's not the intuitive one you assume – that innovation comes from this big shiny organisation that throws the stuff over the wall into the retailer, letting you pick it up. The argument is being put at least whether it is completely convincing is certainly being put that consumers are much more involved and much more choosy, but they're actually more active in shaping the products that emerge and certainly shaping which is successful or not.

It's not just consumers of course. There's a lot more actors in the game. There's people like local authorities who act on behalf of their residents and we have a look at Woking, the council, and what they've done. That's an interesting location because they come out of not participative, it's not the consumers actually engaged in the process, but they are to some extent consulted on the issue.

That issue, whether you're directly involved, or just consulted or participating is one of the big issues in the debate about where innovation comes from.