



# **Nudge, Budge, Reduce** **Managing demand in public** **services**

Mo Baines

Head of Communication and  
Coordination



# The problem

- Demand on public services are rising
- Budgets are being squeezed
- Need to balance resources against demand
- Inevitable need to dampen demand?
- Environmental services – you're not sexy and you know it!



# Ways to control demand?

- Offer statutory services only?
- Campaigns
- Enforcement?
- Charging?
- Looking differently at demand through behaviour change



# Statutory only?

- Often unpopular with elected members and officers
- Difficult to do – many services are co-dependent on non-statutory elements
- ‘What am I paying my taxes for’?
- Often non-statutory services that are the most popular!



# Campaigns

- Can be resource intensive
- Often need to be repeated
- Do we talk to the people that are already the 'least demanding'
- We need evidence of success



# Enforcement

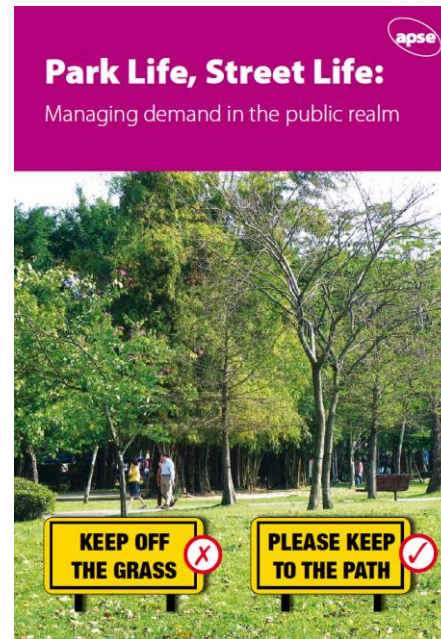
- Unpopular – car parking fines, littering fines
- Following through from initial notice to legal action riddled with problems
- Resources and reputation

# Charging



- Dampening demand by imposing a charge (where lawful) to stop people using a service in the first place
- Conversely – many choose charging to increase income to help meet demands elsewhere
- Need to have back office systems and processes in place to make charging work
- Does it impact more on those least able to pay?

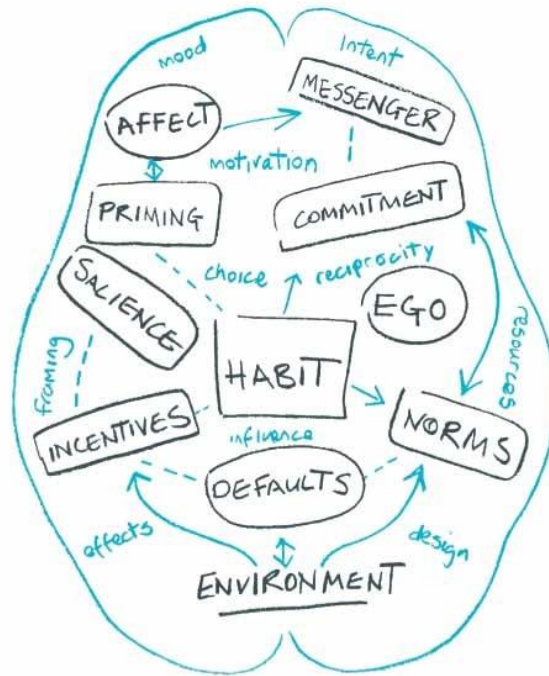
# Using behaviour change





# The science bit





**Any smokers in the room?**



# We do not always behave rationally!



- **Incentives** – often losses feature more highly than gains  
– but immediacy has more of an impact
- **Social norms** – people often follow what they think their peers are doing
- **Social messengers** – responding to the person giving the message - authority



- **Affects** – people in a bad mood will behave more irrationally than others – people in a good mood may respond much better
- **Salience** – people like novelty!
- **Planning** – identifying the gaps between actions
- **Priming** – sites, words sensations, smells – subconscious primers cause us to act

# Where does behaviour change fit into public service reform?



- Demand management ?
- All tried out?
- No new money..
- So more for less?





**“If a man sees a fly, he aims at it”**

***“Schhpillage was down by 80%...”***



# Changing behaviour



- Original experiment in Copenhagen reduced littering by 46%



# Calderdale Home To School Transport





# The eyes have it



Thoughtless dog owners  
**We're watching you!**

9 out of 10 dog owners clean up after their dog, are you the one who doesn't?

A close-up photograph of a dog's eyes, which are a striking blue color. The dog's face is partially visible, showing its fur and whiskers. The image is used to draw attention to the text below.

# Edinburgh bulky waste



recycle for Edinburgh

EDINBURGH

## Getting rid of furniture or large items?

Dumping items such as furniture, washing machines, TVs and mattresses on the street or beside bins is illegal. If you are caught, you can face a **£200 fine**.



Contact the National re-use phone line on **0800 0665 820** to arrange for a local charity to uplift reusable items for free, or call the Council on **0131 529 3030**.

**ZERO WASTE**

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/flytipping](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/flytipping)

National re-use phone line  
0800 0665 820



# What could we apply in Environmental services?



## Affects

- Affects – how are calls received? Bad moods = failure demand!

## Positive enforcement

87% of Newtowns tenants recycle their paper?

## Reward?

Social value?

Simplification



# Simplification – Lambeth and council tax



# Simplification and positive reinforcement



## Key Information

- Pay your council tax now or your bill could go up by £127
- Make your first payment before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014
- Tell us now if we have any of your details wrong
- Over 95% of Lambeth Residents pay their council tax



# Outcomes

- Simplification significantly increased the proportion of people paying their Council Tax compared with the control group by 4 percentage points
- The effect was consistent across ward, deprivation and council tax band
- Social Norm did not affect payment levels although there was variation among different Council Tax bands



# Trials



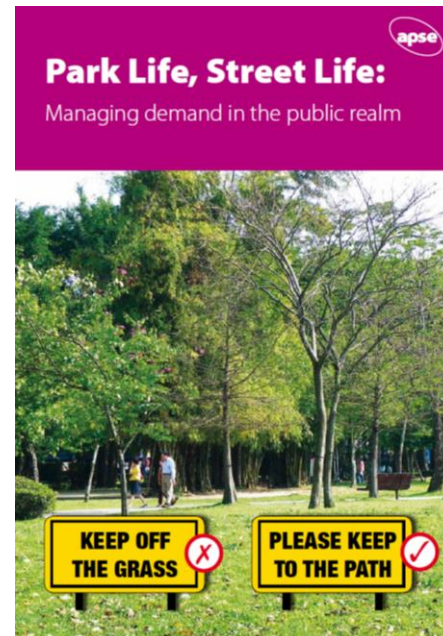
- Important to trial what works
- Using randomised control testing of pilots
- Don't be afraid of failure!
- Collaborate and share resources
- First steps often cheap and simple – simplify information, use positive reinforcement
- Text messaging – works best in short bursts
- Enforcement is an option!

# More information?



*‘Park Life, Street Life:  
Managing Demand  
in Public Realm’*

*Keep APSE informed about  
your trials so we can share  
best practice*





## Contact details

**Mo Baines, Head of Communication and Coordination**

**Email: [mbaines@apse.org.uk](mailto:mbaines@apse.org.uk)**



**Association for Public Service Excellence**  
2nd floor Washbrook House, Lancastrian Office Centre, Talbot Road,  
Old Trafford, Manchester M32 0FP.  
**telephone:** 0161 772 1810  
**fax:** 0161 772 1811  
**web:** [www.apse.org.uk](http://www.apse.org.uk)