



Can we manage demand through behaviour change?

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The problem

- Demand on public services are rising
- Budgets are being squeezed
- Need to balance resources against demand
- Inevitable need to dampen demand?

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 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



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Park Life, Street Life:
Managing demand in the public realm

A photograph of a park with trees and a path. In the foreground, two yellow signs are placed on the grass. The sign on the left says 'KEEP OFF THE GRASS' with a red 'X' icon. The sign on the right says 'PLEASE KEEP TO THE PATH' with a red checkmark icon.

KEEP OFF THE GRASS ❌

PLEASE KEEP TO THE PATH ✅

The science bit



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

“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

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The Evidence: create moments



It helped me gain more experience and confidence..

Its more grown up...I will keep fit

I like travelling with my friends on the buses

I never thought he would be able to travel independentlyit will open up so many doors for him

As parents we were worried....but the travel team were professional and reassuring...when we saw him walking home on his first unaccompanied journey his face was beaming....we knew we had made the right decision





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?

What could we apply in building maintenance?



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

Positive enforcement

87% of Newtowns tenants keep to their appointment time

or

You must not miss your appointment time

Lambeth



Simplification and positive reinforcement



Key Information

- Pay your council tax now or your bill could go up by £127
- Make your first payment before 1st 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 of your trials so we can share best practice

Any Questions



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