

# **Social Practice Theory and Sustainable Mobility: An Analysis of English Local Transport Planning as a System of Provision**

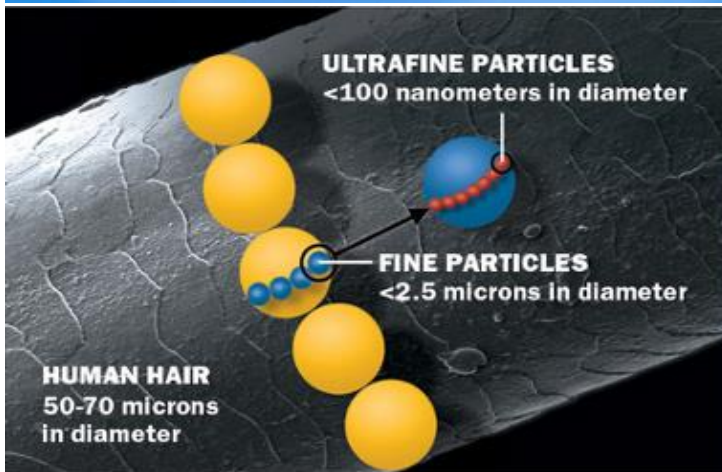
**David Williams (PhD Research Student)**  
**Air Quality Management Resource Centre**  
University of the West of England, Bristol

**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014**  
**CTS Winter Conference**  
**Room 1R26**

# Presentation

- Creating Change
- Local Sustainable Transport Fund
- Content Analysis
- Conceptual Model
- Interviews
- Conclusions and Recommendations
- Practical Application

# Why Create Change?



# Changing Behaviour

**NHS**  
National Institute for  
Health and Clinical Excellence

## Behaviour change

Issued: October 2007

NICE public health guidance 6

**CabinetOffice**

**INSTITUTE  
FOR  
GOVERNMENT**

## MINDSPACE

*Influencing behaviour through public policy*



## Behaviour Change and Energy Use

## GSR Behaviour Change Knowledge Review



Practical Guide: An overview of  
behaviour change models and their uses

**GSR**  
GOVERNMENT  
SERVICE REVIEW

[www.gsr.gov.uk](http://www.gsr.gov.uk)

**DEPARTMENT OF  
ENERGY  
& CLIMATE CHANGE**

## An introduction to Thinking about 'Energy Behaviour': a Multi Model Approach

### Chapter 2 Helping People Make Better Choices

#### The facts

- > 30% of people claim to care about companies' environmental and social record, but only 2% reflect this in their purchases\*
- > Whilst 90% of people know that drinks cans can be recycled, only 50% say they have actually ever done so†
- > "The Government leading by example will have a galvanizing effect for other sectors" (consultation response to "Taking it on", KPMG, 2004)
- > 60% of Britons think that global warming would be best tackled at a global level. Just under 1 in 10 people (9%) think it would be best tackled by individual households‡
- > Cycling in London has risen by 30% since the introduction of the congestion charge§

\* Co-op Bank, 2005

† Kant World Research for WWF, 2004

‡ BBC News, May 2004, put on climate change, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/3504000.stm>

§ www.dti.gov.uk



December 2011

ion  
on travel

# Psychology-Based Approaches

## Only YOU Can Prevent Global Warming

BY MARDY FONES |   NO COMMENT | | |

**Shut off a light, avert global warming—seem too simple? Yet Vanderbilt's Climate Change Research Network (CCRN) says revised individual behavior can do just that.**

The interdisciplinary network integrates faculty and student researchers in natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, engineering, and law and policy with the goal of uncovering a grass-roots solution to climate change.

Members are conducting theoretical and applied research on one of the most important and most widely overlooked sources of greenhouse gases: individual and household behavior.

The 20-plus member network includes, among others, **Brooke Ackerly**, associate professor, political science; **Florence N. Faucher-King**, associate professor, European studies and political science; **Ford Ebner**, professor, psychology; **Jonathan Gilligan**, senior lecturer, earth and environmental sciences, who also serves as CCRN associate director for research; and **Michael Vandenberg**, professor of law and CCRN director. These group members recently discussed climate change, the media, and the role individuals play in averting this crisis.

### What is the biggest obstacle to stopping global warming?

**VANDEMBERGH:** Two things. First is the belief that there is



Vanderbilt University (2008)

# Social Practice Theory



**Practices....cannot be conceived as a set of individual actions, but....are essentially modes of social relations, of mutual action.**

**(Taylor 1971 from Shove *et al.* 2012)**

**“The individual is no longer the unit of enquiry”**



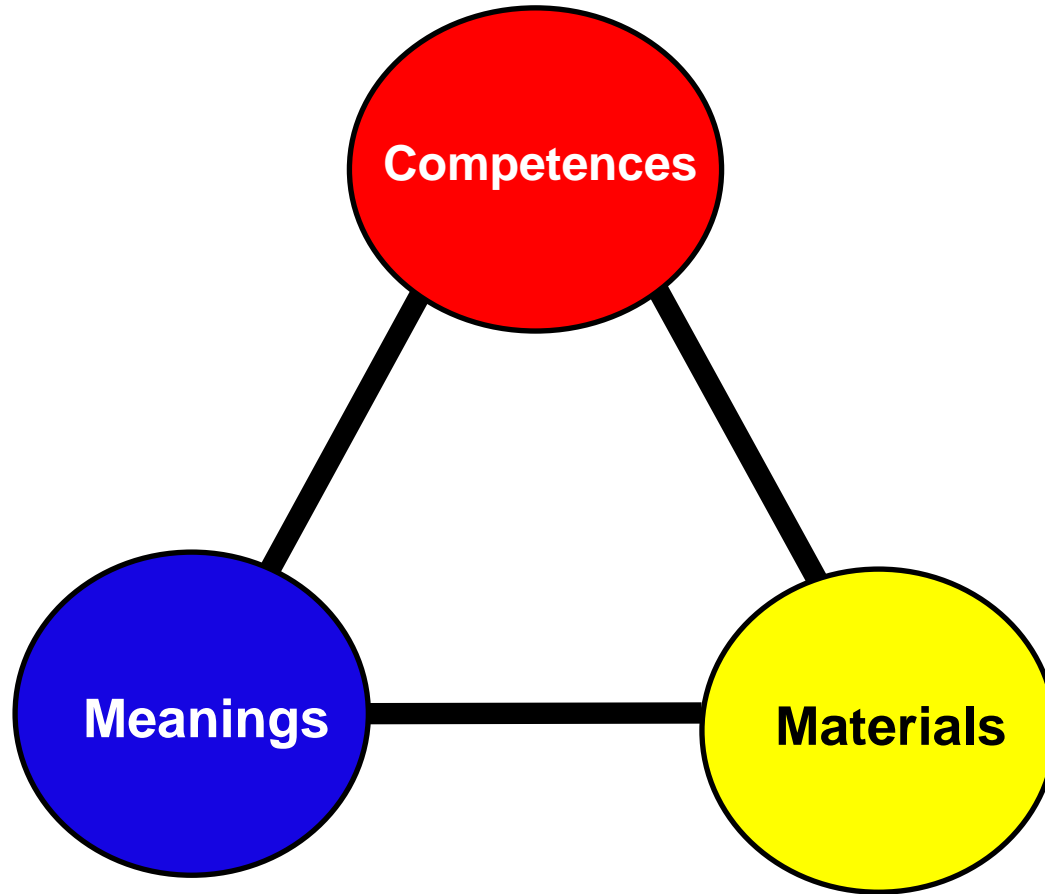
# Social Practice - Elements

**Materials:** Things, technologies, tangible physical entities, 'building' materials

**Competences:** Skill, know-how and technique

**Meanings:** Symbolic meanings, ideas and aspirations

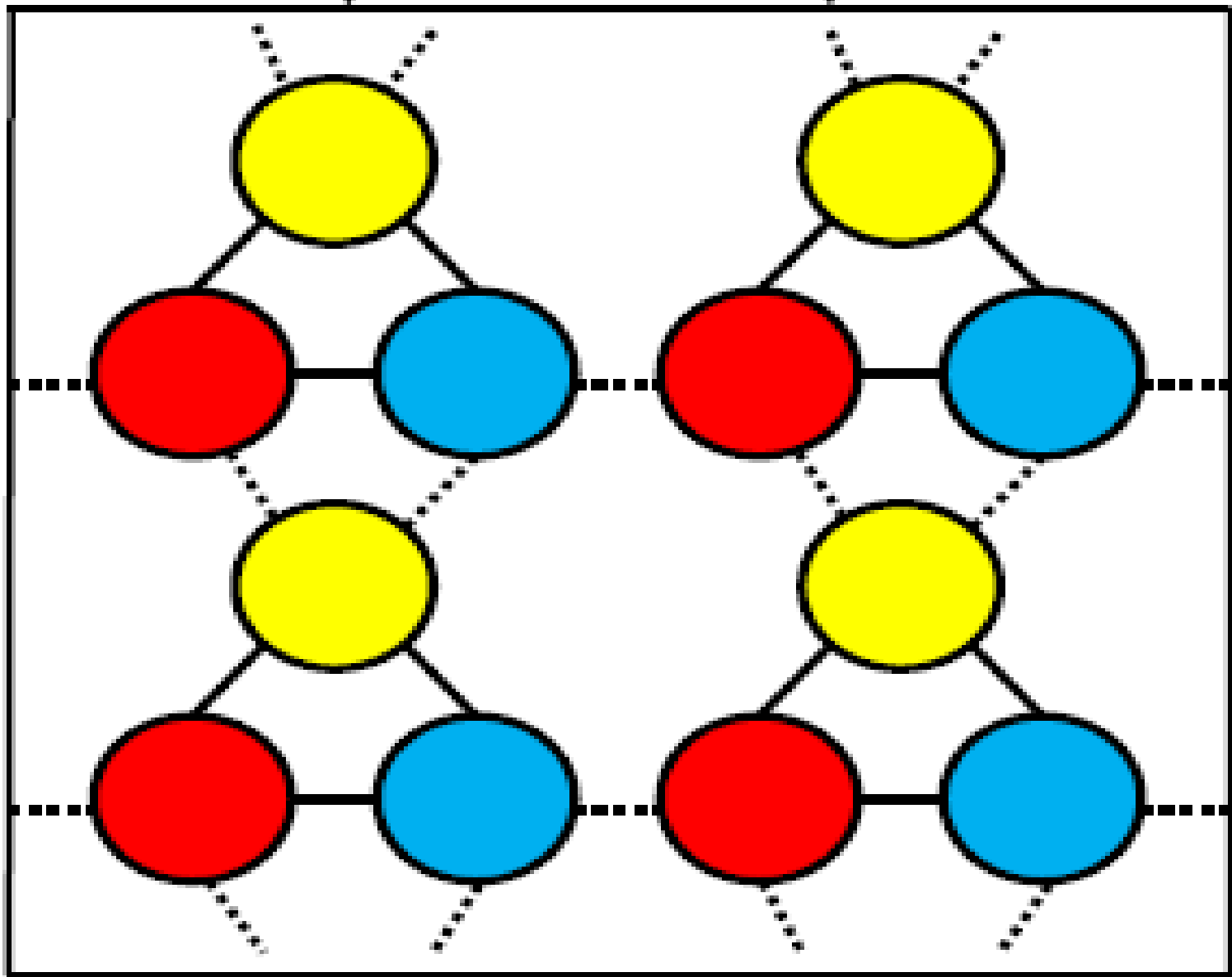
# 3-Elements Model



(Shove *et al.* 2012)



# 3-Elements Model



# Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)

- £560m Fund Matched by Local Authorities (£538m awarded)
- Deliver between 2011-2015
- Support the local economy;
- Reduce of carbon emissions;
- Delivery of wider social benefits;
- Improve safety;
- Improve air quality; and
- Promote physical activity.



Department for  
**Transport**

 **isruption**  
unlocking low carbon travel

# Content Analysis

# Materials

## Competences

Meanings

# Content Analysis

## Government Policy



## Funding

*Department for*  
**Transport**



 **isruption**  
unlocking low carbon travel

# System of Provision

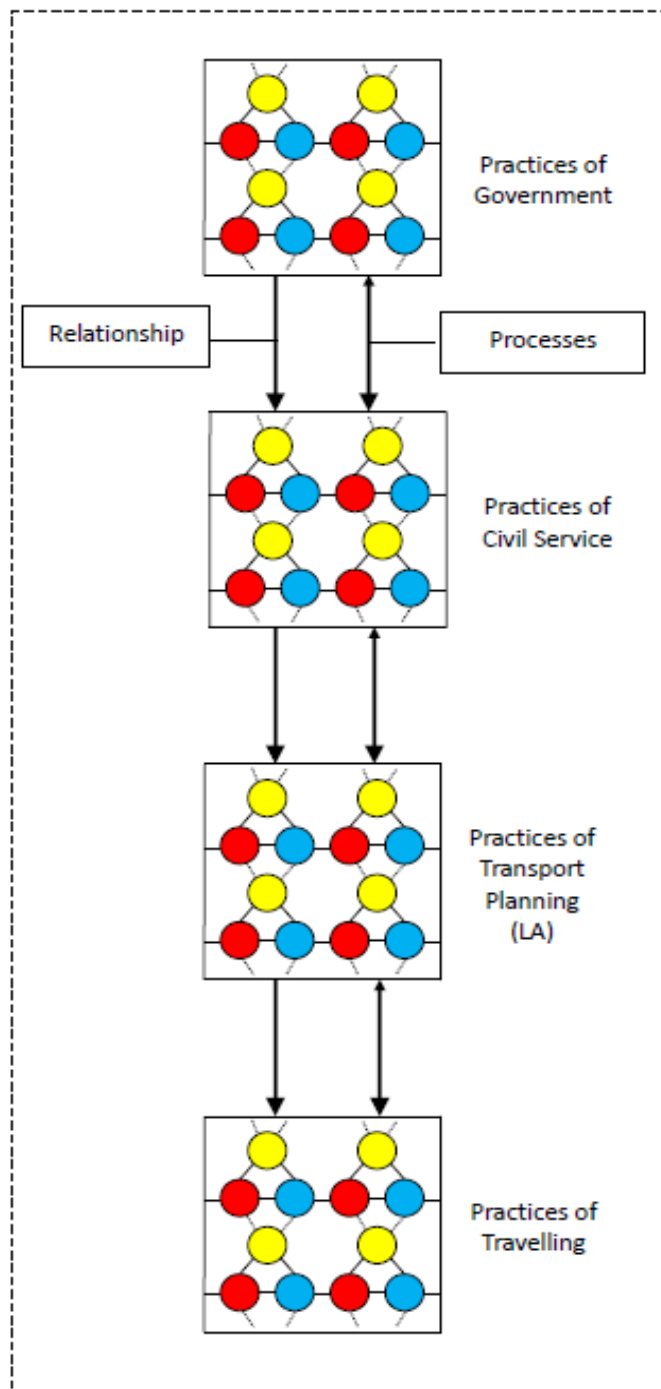
**Fine (2002: 79) defines a SOP as: “*an inclusive chain of activity that attaches consumption to the production that makes it possible*”.**

**Structures**

**Processes**

**Agents/agencies**

**Relations**



# Interviews

## Structures

*“[The LSTF] came from the Lib Dems and it was an idea that we wanted to ensure that there was sufficient funding for sustainable transport projects in this parliament”, Norman Baker MP.*

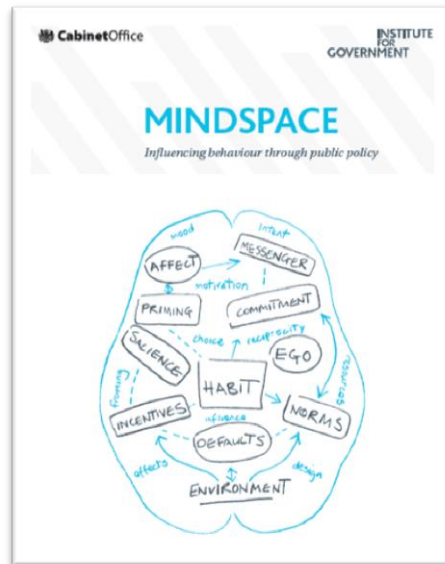
*“There's absolutely no appetite from the coalition for anything that appears to be in any way anti-car, as we heard from Philip Hammond [MP and former Secretary for State for Transport May 2010-Oct 2011] when he came in. But I don't think any of his successors, well we've only had two, have had any desire to visibly soften on his hard line”, Respondent DfT1.*



# Interviews

## Agents/Relations

*"It was driven really by Baker as a strong local transport minister in the few years he's been in government who kind of drove it through and made happen. So I wouldn't say that other officials were persuaded",  
Stephen Joseph CBT.*



# Interviews

## Processes – Funding

*“Funding allows you to do the sorts of the things we wanted to do set out in the Local Transport Plan” (Respondent UA5)*

*“Without knowing how much money we're going to get you can't plan what you are going to do”, Respondent CC3.*

*“Everything short term. It also means that local authority transport planners are spending a lot of time bidding for funding”, Respondent UA4.*

*“There is no guarantee that our bid will be successful. If this project dies after just three years and I'm sure that I'll be fielding loads of calls and emails from all the partners that we've worked with saying: ‘well why has this service stopped? It was so useful’”, Respondent UA7.*

# Conclusions

## *The 3-Elements model*

- Can be used to explain impact of new infrastructure
- Lacks the detail to explain how the processes and agents influence how people travel

## *Conceptual Model*

- Includes the benefits of the 3-Elements, but includes the influence of ministers, government policy and funding
- Demonstrates how power to influence travel is exerted

# Practical Application

## ***Exeter City Council – Low Emission Strategy***

<http://www.exeter.gov.uk/les>

- Multiple stakeholder approach
- Tackling problem of air quality
- Working with businesses, the community, county and district council
- Solutions not solely focusing on individual change

Quality, Innovation & Originality

# Thank you

David Williams, TTR [david.Williams@ttr-ltd.com](mailto:david.Williams@ttr-ltd.com)

*This studentship is part of the Disruption: the raw material for low carbon change project, funded under the RCUK Energy Programme, ESPRC Award No. EP/J00460X/1. ([www.disruptionproject.net](http://www.disruptionproject.net))*

Quality, Innovation & Originality