

So-Mo

Case Studies 2023



Introduction

So-Mo influence choice and behaviour at scale.

Our team of behavioural scientists, data scientists, ethnographers and creatives bring unparalleled understanding of the science of decision-making, making us uniquely positioned to help you navigate the challenges of a complex and rapidly changing world.

We are particularly proud of our framework **THIS**, created to bridge the gap between the more 'academic' side of behavioural science and the need for real-world impact at pace.

If you are looking to influence choice and behaviour at scale, then So-Mo is the perfect partner.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several fluid, connected strokes.

Nicola Wass
CEO So-Mo

Behavioural Interventions

These examples have included trials to accurately measure efficacy.



Fasten Up Your FutureTM

Funded by Birmingham City Council, Transport for West Midlands and the Road Safety Trust

The challenge

East Birmingham was experiencing very high casualty figures. Birmingham City Council (BCC) thought that young men speeding in high performance cars, were the root cause.

Behavioural Analysis

When we interrogated collision data, alongside evidence from community interviews, we discovered that; whilst young men driving high performance cars were visible and annoying to residents, the actual number of casualties attributable to them was very small.

The real reason this area had higher deaths and injuries was explained by a very large number of passenger casualties. This suggested that passengers were not wearing seatbelts.

To test this, we observed seatbelt use at casualty hotspots. An observation of 507 vehicles uncovered a startling disparity.

Nationally, the rate of non seatbelt wearing is around 6% (all occupants DfT 2021).

In East Birmingham, the rate of non wearing rose to 38%, a staggering 6 times higher.

Our hypothesis was correct.

Sociodemographic analysis uncovered that most of these casualties were experienced by people of South Asian origin peaking at ages 16-24. BCC asked us to focus on this age group.

We undertook a review of prior national campaigns to try to understand reasons for the disparity in wearing rate. This revealed two things, first, every prior campaign had used 'emotion' as the primary device or 'lever' to promote seatbelt wearing. Second, the campaign actors were overwhelmingly white.



Birmingham
City Council

Transport for
West Midlands



Fasten Up Your FutureTM

Funded by Birmingham City Council, Transport for West Midlands and the Road Safety Trust

Behavioural Analysis (continued)

Heightened emotion aids engagement, memorability and recall of message - but only when the viewer is able to identify with the person in the campaign. Had a failure to reflect the lives and aspirations of South Asian people inadvertently resulted in 'message-not-received'?

“People are more likely to empathise and feel an emotional response when they identify with the campaign ‘actor’ and its content” (Noar et al., 2007)

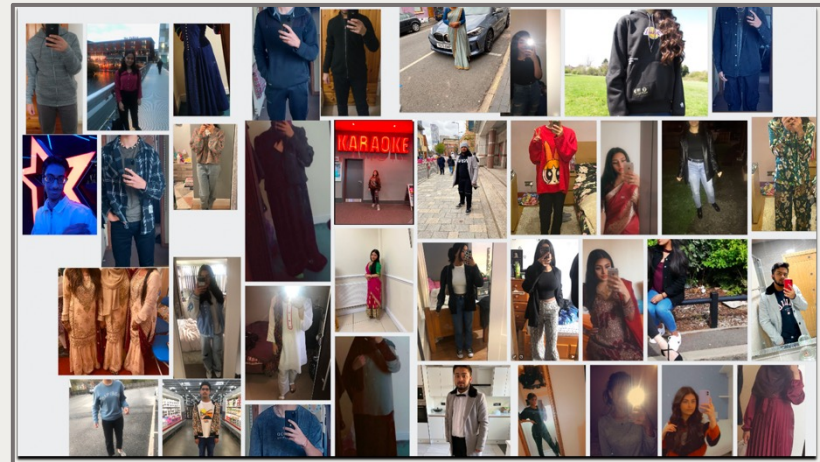
Behavioural Opportunity

If we could increase use of seatbelts, we would see a reduction in passenger casualties. Any intervention to increase seatbelt use would need to be targeted and tailored to a South Asian population.

Behavioural Deep Dive

We engaged 20 young people of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage in an online, ethnographic community, where we were able to conduct a Behavioural Deep Dive.

Alongside information needed for tailoring, we uncovered a powerful behavioural lever 'anticipated regret'. The young people we tested this on showed high susceptibility.



Over several weeks, 20 young people shared their lives, hopes, observations and experiences with us.



Birmingham City Council

Transport for West Midlands



Codesign with South Asian Teenagers

From explorative prototyping to testable assets

Anticipated regret is the feeling experienced right now, of the regret we would feel in the future, about decisions we are currently considering making.



Fasten Up Your FutureTM

Funded by Birmingham City Council, Transport for West Midlands and the Road Safety Trust

We developed two, behaviourally optimised, tailored campaign assets. These were tested using a **randomised survey**, completed by **400** Birmingham residents aged 16-22.

We split respondents into those who identified as **South Asian (185)** and those from **other ethnic groups (215)**. Each respondent was shown only 1 of 5 possible campaign assets:

- A tailored, behaviourally optimised campaign (1 of 2)
- A recent national seatbelt campaign aimed at young people
- The most recent regional campaign
- A So-Mo created decoy- information only campaign.

A regression analysis revealed that the **codesigned campaigns outperformed national, regional and decoy comparators on every behavioural metric**. This told us that the insights we'd uncovered were relevant to the experience of being young more generally.

However, there was one significant difference. Those who identified as South-Asian showed a 35% increase in levels of emotion, when viewing a behaviourally optimised, tailored campaign. This supports the proposition that people are more likely to empathise and feel an emotional response when they identify with the campaign actor and its context. This was an important finding.

Those who identified as South-Asian showed a 35% increase in levels of emotion, when viewing a behaviourally optimised, tailored campaign.

This demonstrates that the insights we uncovered, and the psychological mechanisms embedded in campaign, were highly effective.

Fasten up your FutureTM

Funded by Birmingham City Council, Transport for West Midlands and the Road Safety Trust

Despite impressive test results we knew that achieving engagement with a road safety message on social platforms was going to be a challenge.

Competition for attention on social media is tougher than ever. We not only needed to capture attention and engagement, in a context of 'infinite scrolling', we needed create campaign messages that were understood and memorable.

Short-form, behaviourally optimised videos that explored anticipated regret across themes such as 'life goals', boxing, car culture and family were codesigned and then shared on Instagram, TikTok, YouTube over a period of 6 weeks.

A paid advertising strategy targeted 16-24 age group living in the West Midlands. We targeted according to interest as well as age and locality.



Social media campaign. Stills from Boxing video placed on the feeds of our target audience.



Birmingham City Council

Transport for West Midlands



Fasten Up Your FutureTM

Funded by Birmingham City Council, Transport for West Midlands and the Road Safety Trust

Our goal was to release a real-life Social Media campaign and determine whether **Social Media channels can be used to effectively convey a public health message to young people.**

The campaign was evaluated in two ways. We utilised social media analytics to assess the campaign's reach and content performance. To learn more about the campaign's memorability and emotional impact, we undertook an online survey with a smaller sample of 218 of young people. Survey respondents were aged between 16 and 24 and a resident of the West Midlands.

Social Media Analytics

We measured a range of metrics, key standouts include:

- **470,697** young people (72.5% of available population) reached (these are people who would have had the campaign displayed on one or more of their SM feeds).
- **Short form videos** (less than 30 seconds) performed overall **better** than long form videos (1 minute) in terms of **retaining viewers' attention until the end.** This underscores the importance of customising video length to align with platform-specific requirements, typically ranging from 10 to 15 seconds.



Social media campaign. Stills from Life Goals video placed on the feeds of our target audience.



Birmingham City Council

Transport for West Midlands



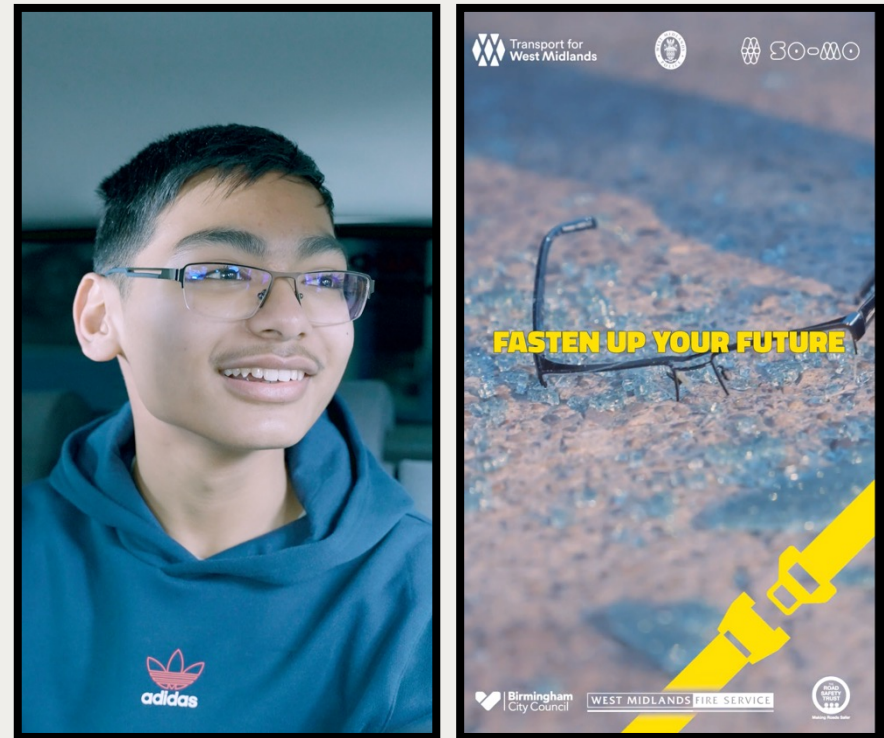
Fasten Up Your Future™

Funded by Birmingham City Council, Transport for West Midlands and the Road Safety Trust

Survey (218 individuals)

Our key insights were:

- Only **47.3%** (62) reported that they always wear their seatbelt and **51%** (65) might not be wearing their seatbelts regularly or at all. This shows that our targeting strategy was correct as we were reaching the right people.
- **82%** (53) of the people who might not be wearing their seatbelt regularly or at all, reported wearing their seatbelt more after viewing the campaign implying behavioural change had occurred.
- **73%** (96) of people who had seen the campaign were able to accurately recall the story and the key message “wear your seatbelt” four to eight weeks after viewing the campaign. This highlights the campaign's emotional resonance and its potential to leave a lasting impact. Recall is an important predictor of sustained behavioural change.
- Extrapolating these numbers to the YP population who saw the campaign on Instagram. Potentially, the campaign message to was remembered by 343,608 people and up to 190,632 changed their behaviour after viewing the campaign.



Social media campaign. Stills from Car video placed on the feeds of our target audience.

Fasten Up Your FutureTM

Funded by Birmingham City Council, Transport for West Midlands and the Road Safety Trust

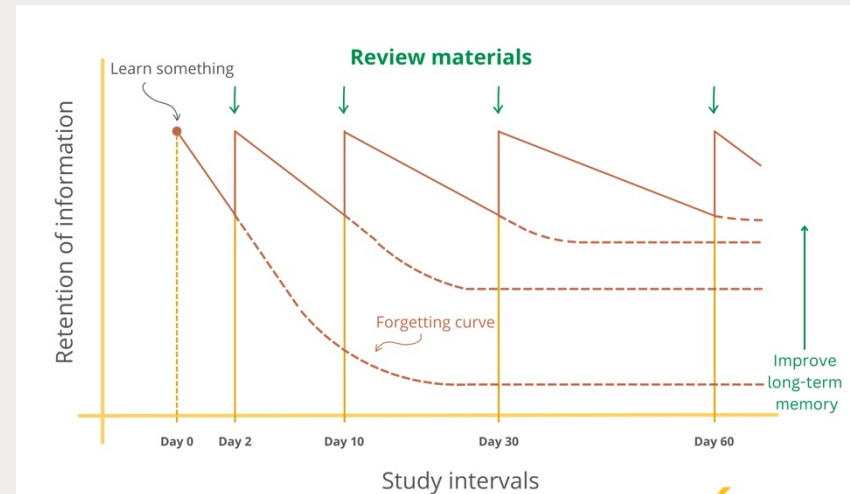
Why the recall statistic is so important.

This campaign completely defied what we would expect to see in terms of recall.

German Psychologist Hermann Ebbinghaus, a researcher from the 1880s, still influences how we understand memory today. His idea is that we forget a lot of new information quickly, especially within one day. In 2015, researchers confirmed his findings, showing his methods remain valid today.

So, when we look at the Fasten up your Future campaign, it's impressive that most young people can remember the message and story 4 to 8 weeks later.

Ebbinghaus was also able to demonstrate a number of determinants that increased memory, one of which was 'meaning'. Heightened emotion has also been linked to the act of remembering.



Ebbinghaus's forgetting curve illustrates how information is rapidly forgotten over time if it's not actively reviewed or reinforced. The curve is steepest right after learning something new and then gradually levels off. Repeated opportunities to learn levels the curve further.



Birmingham
City Council

Transport for
West Midlands



Fasten Up Your FutureTM

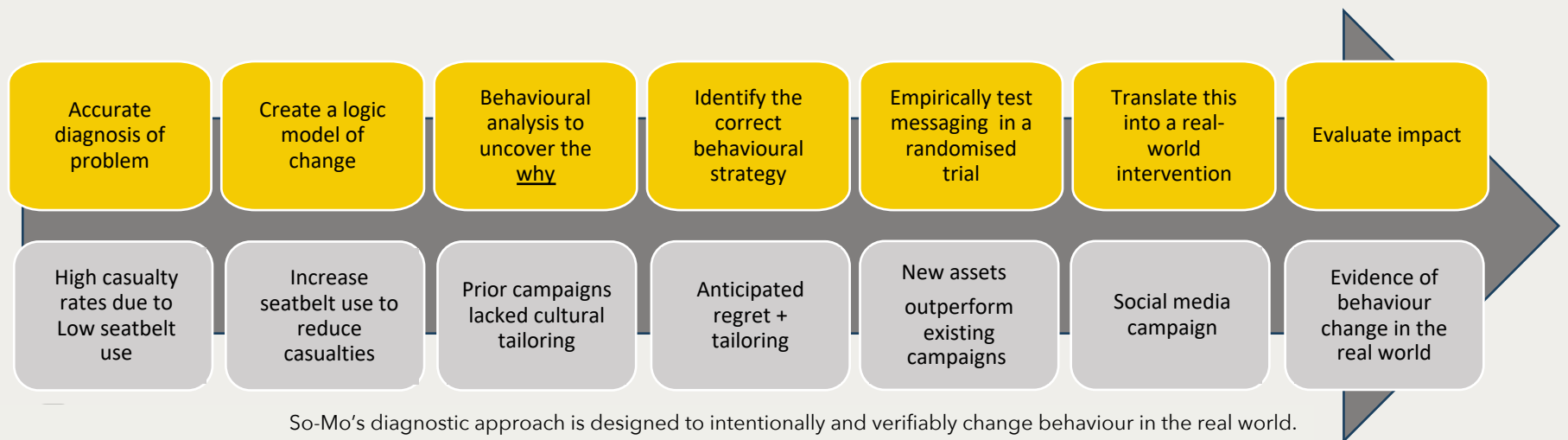
Funded by Birmingham City Council, Transport for West Midlands and the Road Safety Trust

Why the recall statistic is so important.

By tailoring these campaigns to create empathy we ensured content was meaningful. By heightening levels of emotion linked to feelings of regret, we not only achieved behavioural change in the real-world but had created a campaign with lasting effect. This improvement was achieved by maintaining a commitment to user research and codesign at every stage of the journey.

Crucially, these results validated our approach and provided Birmingham City Council & Transport for West Midlands with the foundations on which to build. For a shift in norms to be achieved, it will be necessary to periodically repeat the campaign or a modified version of it. This repetition is essential for sustainable change.

Below is an overview of the stages used, these are transferrable across a wide range of behavioural change opportunities.



Nudge Crossings

Liverpool City Council. The Road Safety Trust

The Challenge

Liverpool City Council had the second highest pedestrian casualty rate in the UK.

This is a systemic and complex challenge and so our initial focus was to uncover multiple opportunities for change and then rank these for ease of shift and scale of change possible.

Analysis of casualty data, police fatalities reports, and social demographic data, combined with observational studies and subject matter interviews uncovered a number of promising behavioural opportunities.

This example focuses on one of these.

Behavioural Analysis

Arterial routes, were significantly overrepresented in pedestrian casualty data. Sites that were home to high pedestrian casualties had several things in common:

- High streets - intersected by 4 lanes of fast- moving traffic
- Underused pedestrian crossing located near high-risk collision sites
- Crossing appeared to be on or very close to pedestrian desire line.
- Area of high deprivation
- People being hit were local to the area

Behavioural opportunity

If we increase the number of pedestrians who used available crossing in areas of high risk, we should see a reduction in adult pedestrian casualties.



22% of adult pedestrian casualties in Liverpool occur within 50 meters of a pedestrian crossing.



Nudge Crossings

Liverpool City Council. The Road Safety Trust

Behavioural Deep Dive

The crossing wait time was often shorter than attempts to cross independently. We concluded that there was no significant disincentivisation to using the crossing. Capability and opportunity criteria were all met.

In-context interviews revealed that pedestrians at these locations could not recall the crossing when asked to recount the last few steps of their journey. They were not 'attending' to (noticing) the crossing in their midst.

Cognitive bias's & other factors impacting on risk perception and behaviour.

- 'Path well travelled bias' the human bias to incorrectly judge environments that are familiar to be 'low risk'.
- 'Goal oriented behaviour' Goal oriented behaviour often results in inattentive blindness 'looking but not seeing'. In this case, people were not registering the crossing as it did not align with goal attainment and the area was considered low risk.
- Limited cognitive bandwidth due to circumstance. These were areas of high deprivation. Pedestrians were likely to have higher cognitive load and limited bandwidth, making them more vulnerable to errors of judgement.

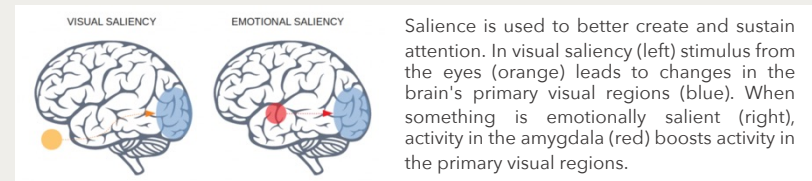
Intervention

Choice architecture refers to the way in which choices are organised, framed, and presented.

Just as an architect designs a building to influence the way people use and move within it, we design decision-making contexts to influence people's choices and behaviours.

We wanted to change the choice architecture to

- Align the crossing to the pedestrian's intrinsic goal - namely to get to where they are going as quickly and directly as possible; increasing likelihood that crossings become more salient to them.
- Make the crossings visually salient by using colours that were bright, directive and authoritative. Bold shapes and pattern finding nudged behaviour on a nonconscious level.
- Design to encourage repeat rather than one off behaviours. Wait times were marginally reduced to 'reward and reinforce' safe crossings and build habit formation.



Nudge Crossings

Liverpool City Council. The Road Safety Trust



"Faster Boarding" Liverpool Prescott Road



Nudge Crossings

Liverpool City Council. The Road Safety Trust

Trial & Impact

Impact was measured using a quasi-experimental study design, comparing crossing behaviours pre and post intervention.

Blinded analysis of over 4,000 crossings demonstrated a

14% increase in correct crossings during the intervention period

This was statistically significant, (meaning the increase could not have occurred by chance). This is a high percentage for a behavioural intervention.

Now proof of principle has been achieved, the local authority is looking to develop this novel intervention for use in similar locations.



Analysis used a Poisson Regression to measure effect. $X \sim \text{Po}(\lambda)$, $\lambda = Y \cdot \exp(\beta_0 + \beta_n \delta_n + \beta_w \delta_w + \beta_i \delta_i)$



Predictive Capabilities

Using Behavioural Insights to help systems function during COVID

2022



Behavioural Data Science

Cheshire East Integrated Care Board

The Challenge

New COVID variants & local outbreaks created high volatility, making it extremely difficult to predict surges in demand for beds. Risk of hospitals being overwhelmed was high.

Our client needed to manage levels of risk within local hospitals, stepping up wards and procuring additional capacity from private care providers in order to support flow and maintain patient safety.

Behavioural Analysis

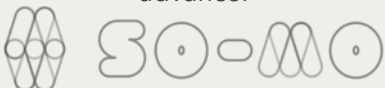
By linking multiple data sets we were able to profile the population according to test results. This revealed that the LFD (community testing) data was biased. The most affluent and educated were overrepresented in the data and the most deprived were underrepresented. This was due to behavioural differences in reporting.

Behavioural opportunity

1. Remove bias and shorten delays in reporting.
2. Create a dynamic, geo mapped 'early warning system' that would give CEC the ability to make strategic and operational decisions at pace.
3. Reliably 'predict' hospital bed occupancy ten days in advance.



Client's existing means of monitoring COVID infection in the local populations was generating an inaccurate picture.

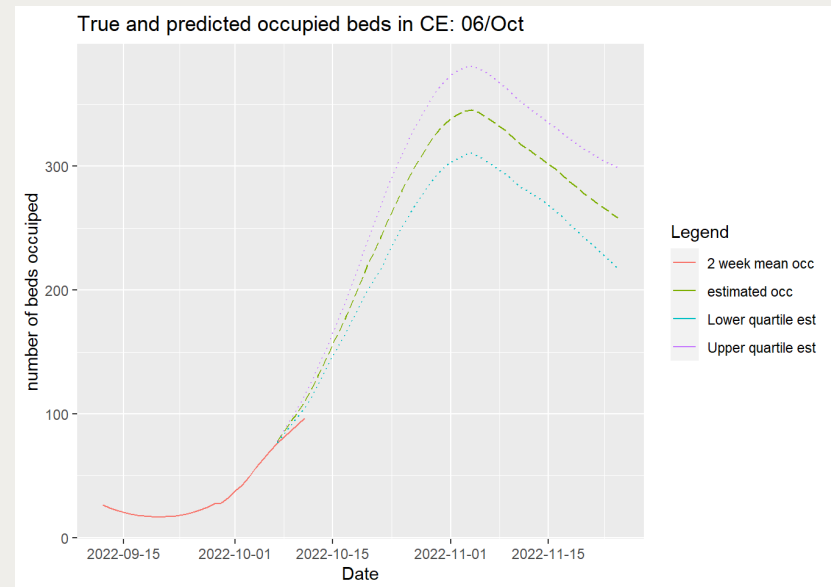


Behavioural Data Science

Cheshire East Integrated Care Board

Intervention

- 1. Remove bias and shorten delays in reporting.** We brokered a deal with the UK Health and Security Agency (UKHSA) to replace the biased test data with new data, taken from routine sampling of COVID viral load in wastewater. This was a far more accurate COVID diagnostic, allowing us to pinpoint viral load within small geographic areas.
- 2. Improve ability to make strategic and operational decisions at pace** We created an algorithm that combined COVID 'risk' (concentration of viral load) with population 'vulnerability' (current level of immunity and predicted behavioural response to evasive measures). The output was a digital, dynamic COVID dashboard which geo-mapped and ranked small geographic areas (Lower Super Output Areas) according to shifting patterns of need. Large businesses were also included as an output.
- 3. Predict hospital bed occupancy 10 days in advance** Behavioural Insights derived from a behavioural audit were used to create an algorithm capable of predicting hospital bed occupancy, from people presenting with COVID-19.



Sample output from predictive model



Behavioural Data Science

Cheshire East Integrated Care Board

Impact

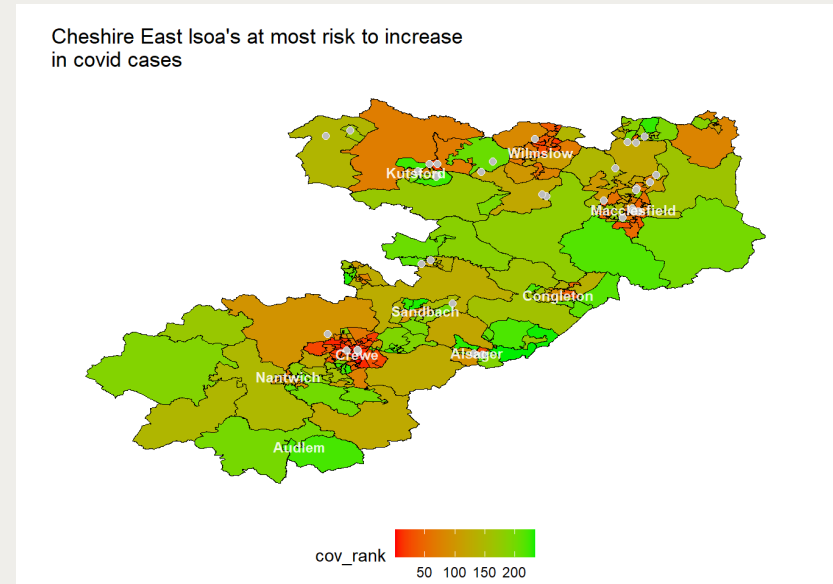
Predictive model

Predictions were not only highly accurate -they predicted surges in bed demand 10 days before they occurred.

Because the Integrated Care Board knew when and where a COVID peak was happening and its future impact on hospital beds, they had the time to stand up additional capacity in hospitals and care homes.

Dashboard Using the dynamic information from the COVID dashboard our client was able to select care homes in locations where risk of transmission was lower.

Community re-ablement teams were able to make informed decisions on which patients could be sent home first, due to their place of residence being in a lower risk area.



Sample output: Covid Dashboard



Behavioural Data Science

Cheshire East Integrated Care Board

The Dashboard and Bed Predictor cohesively, brought us together as a system.

We were able to work as partners at pace, look at resource and funding, but most importantly, to address the question, 'how do we keep that person safe, and where do we place those people and actually, where, across our system is risk emerging and what are we going to do about it'?

As a leader, the ability to say, 'I know this now! Let's plan for this now!' gives you the head space to understand what's coming and to act at pace, because a new COVID wave was on you before you knew it.

We knew what we were dealing with. We could see it. It was there. It was evidence-based, and we got that.

You take a lot of comfort from that. Comfort is probably the right word. You'd want this system all day everyday behind you, to be able to inform and articulate what is happening.

Daniel McCabe, Head of Urgent and Emergency Care - Integrated Care Board (ICB)



Behavioural Insights and Strategy

Sometimes clients just want a strategy containing actionable recommendations they can go on to deploy by themselves. Often we remain alongside them, providing guidance and support.



Behavioural Insights and Strategy

Cheshire East Council: Test Trace Contain Enable

The Challenge

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Local Authorities were responsible for community testing. By July 2021, community testing rates in Cheshire East had plateaued. Although national government continued to drive the broad agenda, it was becoming increasingly apparent that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, was failing to have the desired impact.

Behavioural Analysis

By linking multiple data sets we were able to profile the population according to test results.

We also interviewed people delivering Covid related services who'd had 'eyes on' observations of people interacting in the public realm, communities, schools and workplaces over the preceding months. A pandemic timeline was constructed to contextualise insights and observations in relation to the social, environmental and policy influences present at the time.



Behavioural Insights and Strategy

Cheshire East Council: Test Trace Contain Enable

Behavioural opportunity

1. Increase on-site testing rates LFT and PCR.
2. Increase LFT testing and reporting in areas of concern (high poverty, low compliance).
3. Increase testing in key settings.

Intervention

We were able to derive profound insight into the CE population and the factors influencing their behaviour.

Not only were we able to glean insight into specific segments of the population, we were also able to segment each group according to levels of resistance in relation to vaccination and other COVID behaviours. We hypothesis tested using data modelling.

Using this knowledge, we were able to identify the most effective levers of change.

Our Behavioural Insight report offered profound insight into the CE population and the factors influencing their behaviour. It included tailored advice on the most effective behavioural strategy for each segment and risk level. We also provided strategic guidance on how to apply behavioural insights to intervention design.

Impact

Acting on the insights So-Mo provided, CEC went on to achieve a significant uplift in testing across the county:

- Doubled the number of on-site LFT and PCR tests.
- In areas of concern (high poverty, low compliance), testing shifted from an average of 42 LFT tests p/w to 553 and 23 PCR tests p/w to 189.
- Schools' on-site testing increased from the 100s (May June) to the 1,000s (September, October).

The Behavioural Insight report we produced was shared with UK government who used it as a planning tool during the Omicron wave.

"I came to So-Mo with what I deemed to be an almost impossible task and they have helped our whole team, not only tangibly understand how to approach some of our challenges, but have also produced, what I would consider some of the best behavioural insights in the country. I would highly recommend So-Mo and hope to work with the team again in the future."

Lucie Robinson, TTCE Programme Manager



Insight only

Not all clients wish to commission empirical trials or evaluations.
These examples are included because the underpinning insight
work is of interest.



Averting a Winter Health Crisis

Cheshire East Council (CEC) 2022

The Challenge

In 2022, UK government announced the removal of remaining COVID restrictions and an end to free testing. This would see society opening up more quickly than many comparable countries.

Respiratory viruses that typically circulate every winter would return alongside the coronavirus. CEC's main concern was that two years of significantly reduced social contact would have weakened the immune systems of the local population, leaving the most vulnerable at greater risk of becoming seriously unwell.

Elevated levels of respiratory viruses combined with increased vulnerability threatened to tip an already strained health service into crisis.

By summer 2022, fears were confirmed when a worrying resurgence of respiratory infectious diseases was reported both locally and nationally.

CEC asked for our help to design a campaign intended to encourage widespread adoption of IPC behaviours needed to reduce rates of infection and transmission of disease.

Behavioural Analysis

Public health campaigns reach large numbers of people quickly, and in a cost-effective way. However, whole population, (generic) communication-based approaches are relatively 'light touch,' lacking the power to overcome significant structural or motivational barriers.

So-Mo had previously profiled the Cheshire East population, using linked datasets to segment, the population into 'clusters' with shared characteristics in relation to circumstance, lifestyle, attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs.

Some of these segments could be combined to form what we labelled the 'Movable Middle.' They were the people most likely to respond to a communications-based approach. They also formed the majority of Cheshire East's population.

A behavioural analysis identified a number of potential barriers that, left unchecked, would limit effectiveness of a campaign from a behavioural perspective.



Averting a Winter Health Crisis

Cheshire East Council 2022

Key risks:

- 1. Optimism bias / underestimation of risk.** In the absence of easily accessible information, people will rely on a common mental shortcut known as the 'availability heuristic.' This is where a person will judge the likelihood of an event or risk occurring, based on how easily an example, instance, or case comes to mind. In other words, 'If no one I know is ill, and I don't hear about others becoming ill, then the risk of me and mine becoming ill is low - a case of 'out of sight, out of mind.'
- 2. Attention deficit/not noticing.** Previous Covid campaigns and public health campaigns in general, look strikingly similar. If we launched an Autumn Winter Campaign that looked too similar to campaigns from earlier in the pandemic, there was a real risk that people would not notice them or choose to ignore them, assuming that the images and messaging displayed were old and therefore irrelevant.
- 3. Intention action gap -** This is where motivation to act is achieved but fails to convert to actual behavioural change.



Public Health Campaigns look strikingly similar.



Averting a Winter Health Crisis

Cheshire East Council 2022

Behavioural Opportunity - Majority Population (Movable Middle)

1. A small increase in Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) behaviours amongst a large group of people, will achieve an overall reduction in risk. This reduces risk amongst the whole population, in turn, lessening demand on health and care services.
2. To be effective, a campaign must be tailored to the 'Movable Middle' and overcome identified barriers to change.

Intervention

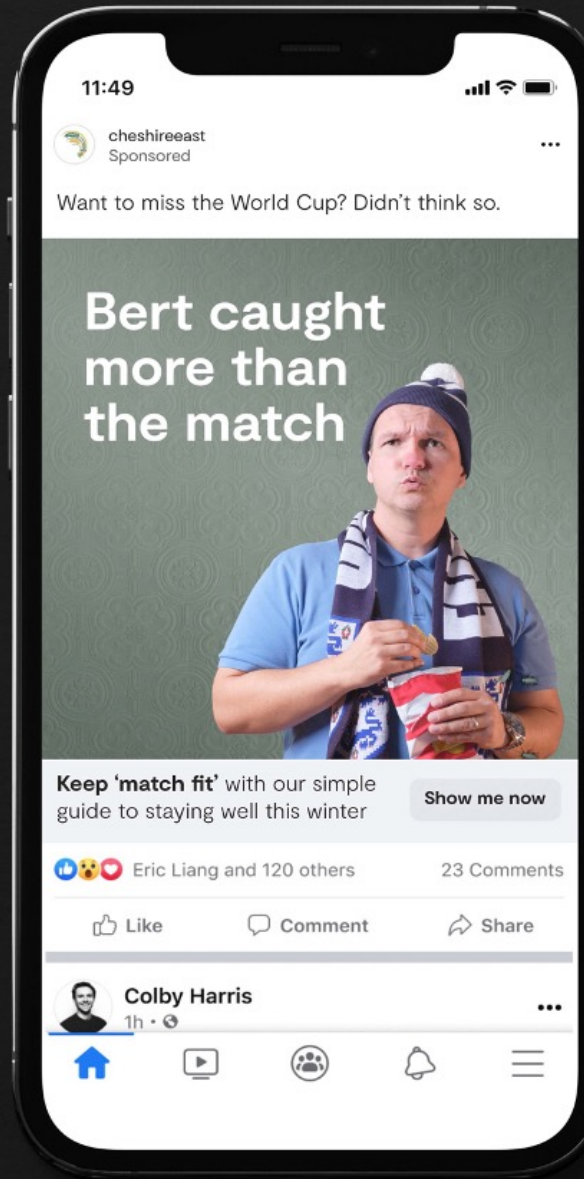
The campaign was founded on the following principles:

- 1. Ensure reach and visibility** Social channels were profiled to match the viewing habits, of the 'Movable Middle'. A 'paid' strategy ensured the digital campaign assets appeared in the feeds of target segments. Outdoor locations for billboard adverts etc were selected to align with what we knew about their lifestyle habits and daily commutes.
- 2. To ensure the campaign was attended to** we designed a campaign that was visually incongruent to 'typical' public

health campaigns - especially those prominent during earlier phases of the pandemic. This increased the likelihood that it would be noticed, and key messages attended to. Social assets had CGI 'bugs' that were animated to crawl & fly in order to elicit feelings of disgust needed to draw attention and compel viewers to regard featured IPC behaviours as a way to repel bugs and avert threat of illness.

- 3. To increase empathy and engagement,** The people and events featured reflected the lifestyles, habits attitudes, contexts and behaviours of the 'Movable Middle'. We also used emotion, as a lever, choosing humour over fear. User testing indicated that fear-based messages were likely to backfire or be ignored.
- 4. To reduce risk of the 'intention action gap'** We focused on IPC behaviours with strong evidence of efficacy but were also easy to perform and uncontroversial. Masks were rejected because of their politicisation and association with COVID (something people were keen to put behind them). Rhyming was used to aid recall. Recall is important when the desired behaviour occurs at a different time to when the campaign is viewed.





Digital assets were animated they showed flickering candles and moving CGI 'bugs'

Sue shared more than sherry trifle

One in three people don't use soap to wash their hands.

We're talking about you Sue! Washing with soap for 20 seconds keeps winter bugs at bay.



cheshireeast.gov.uk/winterbugs



Joe's got more than first date nerves

Airborne diseases can travel distances greater than 6 feet. Putting others at risk.*

Think before you go Joe! Keep your bugs to yourself.



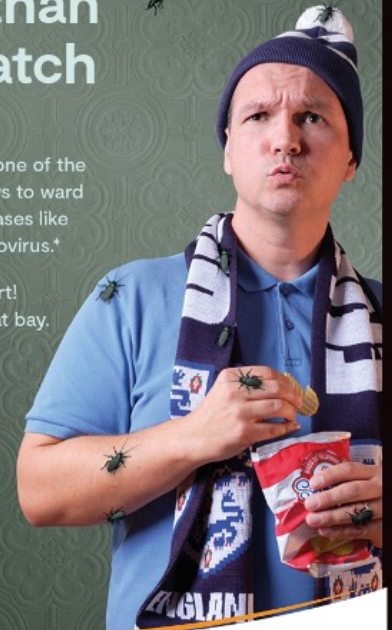
cheshireeast.gov.uk/winterbugs



Bert caught more than the match

Hand sanitising is one of the most effective ways to ward off infectious diseases like Covid, flu and Norovirus.*

Give it a squirt, Bert! Keep winter bugs at bay.



* Pringle et al. 2020

cheshireeast.gov.uk/winterbugs



Louise got more than she wished for



Having a party? Let fresh air in and keep your loved ones well.

Feel the breeze Louise! Keep winter bugs at bay.



Averting a Winter Health Crisis

Leveraging intrinsic motivations

A secondary insight was that people within the Movable Middle were motivated to protect family, neighbours & colleagues. We leveraged this insight via narratives that exploited intrinsic motivations around 'kin'.

Impact

Limited time and budget meant we were unable to 'lab test' psychological mechanisms prior to launch. However, guerrilla testing, gathering user feedback by taking design prototypes into the public domain and asking people for their thoughts. This provided high confidence that the campaign assets were understood and the messaging effective.

When live, CEC were delighted with the response from residents & neighbouring authorities who referred to the campaign as 'appropriate' 'effective' and 'innovative'.



Averting a Winter Health Crisis

Cheshire East Council 2022

Minority Population

To have focused solely on the 'Movable Middle' risk widening health inequalities.

To address this and operate on a principle of fairness, CEC concurrently delivered a targeted intervention, directed at communities presenting higher levels of risk and vulnerability.

We trained their team in use of behavioural strategies designed to optimise their approach.

The team's reach into communities was phenomenal, most notably achieving access to communities that the local authority had previously struggled to engage such as those vulnerable to misinformation, the traveler community, a large community of economic migrants whose behaviour was demonstrated, using data modelling, to be more closely aligned to the norms and beliefs of their country of origin.



Cheshire East Council transformed their testing team into a 'Stay Well Squad'. We trained them in human centered approaches .and principles of behaviour change.



Getting buy in for a new Health and Care Centre

Wirral Community Health Care NHS Trust (WCHCT) 2021

Not all clients have the time or inclination to undertake empirical testing of interventions. In such cases we try to test as we go, in order to offer the best strategies and recommendations.

In this example we undertook a rapid behavioural audit before delivering a campaign intended to influence behaviour in the short term. We designed it in a way that would uncover further insights the Trust could use to influence choice and behaviour over the next 18 months whilst the project was moving through different stages of development.

The Challenge

Wirral Community Health Care NHS Trust (WCHCT) were about to submit planning for a state-of-the-art health and wellbeing centre. The development had experienced a seven-year delay and as a result, confidence in the Trust was low. Further delays arising from to public objection to the removal of a mature tree, a Stopping Up Order that removed a public right of way, and the required closure of an existing medical centre would jeopardise the project's viability.

Our primary objective was to create messaging and imagery that could increase trust and overcome resistance to the issues described.



Artist's impression of the new Marine Lake Health and Wellbeing Centre in West Kirby



Getting buy in for a Health and Care Centre

Wirral Community Health Care NHS Trust (WCHC) 2021

Behavioural Analysis

Key risks:

- **Low trust** Concerns about the amount of 'time-taken' presented the biggest obstacle to trust and confidence.
- **Loss aversion** to closure of an existing medical centre, loss of green space, trees and right of way.
- **Different audiences**, with different needs and expectations - if we appealed to only one segment, we risked losing vital support from other segments.

Intervention

We created a campaign strategy that applied the following behavioural levers.

1. **Anchor the public to positive emotions associated with the NHS' role during COVID.** Intentional use of a colour pallet that referenced the NHS rainbow was used to tap into powerful positive emotions held by the public in 2020. We also created a strapline that positioned the Trust as a caring, committed and capable.
We are here. We are committed. We are WCHC.

1. **Use of 'gain framing'** to divert attention from perceived losses and focus attention on the many benefits the centre would bring, with particular focus on environmental and social benefits.
2. **Visualisation:** Creation of a 'walk through' social video that would provide a more tangible representation of the many benefits of the new centre.
3. **Tailoring** Images of people representative of the local demographic was used to increase empathy, engagement and ownership.



In 2020 the NHS rainbow was associated with feelings of Trust and confidence.



Getting buy in for a new Health and Care Centre

Wirral Community Health Care NHS Trust (WCHCT) 2021



Local clinicians and residents were featured to engender a positive response in the viewer and reduce risk of public objection.

Getting buy in for a new Health and Care Centre

Wirral Community Health Care NHS Trust (WCHCT) 2021

Impact

The campaign achieved all objectives set out by the Trust. Analysis of public response to the campaign was used to test existing insights and levers whilst uncovering new insights that would underpin a future communication strategy.

The campaign generated a huge amount of support for the project. WCHCT use the insights we derived in their ongoing work.

Facts and Figures

- **19,000** reached (89% of the local population)
- **8,490** local-residents visited WCHCT landing page.
- **ZERO** objections to the Stopping Up Order
- Plans were submitted with zero objections
- Community mobilisation to protect mature tree was averted
- Expected vandalism to hoardings did not manifest.
- 100% positive media coverage.



EARLY WORK

2012 -2014



The Anfield Project

Liverpool 2012-2015

The Challenge

In 2012, Liverpool City Council (LCC), Liverpool Football Club (LFC,) and a large social housing company; Your Housing, announced ambitious plans to expand Anfield football stadium and to transform and regenerate neighbouring housing, streets, and public spaces. The scheme was at the time equated to £280 million investment.

Instead of being a cause for celebration, partners faced an intractable standoff from the community, local businesses and organisations. This presented a serious threat to their ability to secure planning permission and retain access to funding. Out of options they came to So-Mo for help.

Our brief was to break the impasse and find a way for partners and communities to engage in constructive dialogue; ensuring government funding was retained and planning applications were supported by evidence of widespread and in-depth consultation.

Behavioural Analysis

A behavioural audit and behavioural deep dive uncovered important drivers and determinants of behaviour.



Illustration of the new LFC stadium at Anfield



The Anfield Project

Liverpool 2012-2015

Low trust and confidence A historic policy of buying up houses around the stadium and leaving them empty, fuelled a belief that LFC, (with the Council being complicit), were buying up houses by stealth, and then deliberately leaving them derelict in an attempt to accelerate the area's decline and keep house prices low. Unsurprisingly this had generated a widely held belief that the partners and their collaborators were not to be trusted and did not have the community's best interests at heart.

Hierarchy of need and available bandwidth. People in this area were experiencing high levels of deprivation, poor living conditions and stress linked to; increases in antisocial behaviour, and uncertainty of future. Until these were removed, the situation would remain unchanged. People had no available bandwidth to consider things which felt uncertain and far away such as; a reimagined high street, a new hotel or pony trekking in the park.

Social Norm The prevailing norm was to not engage with partners and their representatives

Behavioural Opportunity

If we could remove identified points of friction, we would increase engagement in the consultation process.



'AREA'S DERELICTION HAS WORKED FOR LFC, NOT THE COMMUNITY'



SUPPORT: Patrick Duggan

PATRICK Duggan bought Epstein's guest house in Anfield Road specifically because of the regeneration he perceived would result from the football club.

But as little progress appeared to be made, he began to put up banners outside the guest house, expressing his anger at what the club he supports passionately was doing – or not doing.

He explained his banners were intended to make the point he felt the name of Anfield was being traded upon across

the globe to bring cash into the club, when businesses who made Anfield what it was were struggling to survive.

"The dereliction of the area seems to have worked in favour of the club, but not the community. Where houses were, there are chip wagons. Maybe it was strategic everything outside the ground should be devalued.

"Much of the business it does seems to be with firms outside of the area, but local businesses should be prospering too."

He said were he to meet with the new owners, he would "like to make sure they recognise our right to exist, to live here and make a living here in Anfield, because the last pair [Tom Hicks and George Gillett] got away with it too long.

"I would like to see them commit to monthly scheduled meetings with the residents and firms. "We should not be hearing things second hand or in the pages of the papers first. "We should be treated with respect and dignity."

Partners and communities were looking through different ends of the same telescope. Partners could not understand why communities wouldn't want to consider a bright ambitious future. Residents couldn't understand why partners were not dealing with the rats coming into their homes as a result of broken drains.



The Anfield Project

Liverpool 2012-2015

Behavioural Opportunity (cont)

Any intervention needed to:

- Demonstrate that the communities' immediate needs were being taken seriously and addressed.
- Increase opportunity and capability to engage.
- Challenge 'in group' 'out group' bias.
- Change the prevailing norm 'no one is engaging'

Intervention (what we did)

- 1. Hierarchy of need.** We advised partners that if they wanted to capture views on the big-ticket items they needed to deal first with the small things - the things were having a huge impact on people's lives. A door-to-door scheme was set up as a precursor to consultation. This captured resident and business issues and resolved these within a three-week window or provided a timed plan for response. This reduced cognitive load, freeing up ability to contemplate the future whilst building trust.
- 2. Use of visual salience** The key consultation hub was located on a small area of derelict land outside the stadium. We transformed this into an oasis of green, incongruous amongst a sea of brick and rubble. People saw this and were curious enough to come over. Seeing people from the

community engaging in a positive experience, encouraged others to do likewise.

- 3. Primacy effect & reciprocity** The aim was to make interactions warm and open, challenging any established stereotypes that could act as a barrier. Primacy effect was key, the first experience people encountered when they crossed the street was an offer, not an ask. Instead of asking 'can we consult you on plans for the area' we offered a cup of tea and a chat. Interactions focused on 'show us' allowing participants to set the agenda & explore ideas together, increasing a sense of investment and ownership.
- 4. Make it easy** We created multiple opportunities for people to engage in consultation; from door-to-door visits, to setting up hubs in places people frequented as part of their daily lives. Trusted people in these hubs were mobilised as signposters - leveraging the messenger effect. We also replaced a 200-page 'Vision Document' (written in consultant speak) with visualisations and interactive aids which made it easy for people to conceptualise what a new future might look like.
- 5. Norm Setting:** We created and shared multiple short form videos that showed people from the area engaging in consultation activity. When residents perceived that "everyone is doing it," they were more inclined to join in to fit in with the norm.

The Anfield Project

Liverpool 2012-2015



We removed a critical barrier to engagement by first addressing residents and businesses most pressing needs.



The hub was designed to be salient. Interaction design focused on removing barriers to trust and engagement.



The Anfield Project

Liverpool 2012-2015

Impact

A new vision for the area was created. This reflected the community's ideas and aspirations.

So-Mo was asked to continue to work alongside partners through subsequent phases of development and the Masterplan was submitted without objection.

The stadium build and wider regeneration scheme were completed on time and to budget.

The work So-Mo delivered in Anfield is held up as a benchmark of urban renewal.

“So-Mo exceeded our expectations and delivered a truly innovative approach that managed to break a deadlock of over twenty years in Anfield. The £280 million Anfield regeneration programme has been deemed an overwhelming success, transforming an area which had previously lacked hope, to become a neighbourhood looking to the future with aspiration”

Mark Kitts, Director of Regeneration Liverpool City Council

Anfield Project
somovideo - 1 / 8

- 1 RESIDENTS SAY YES TO THE £260m REGENERATION VISION... somovideo
- 2 The Anfield Project - Young people share their ideas for a... somovideo
- 3 The Anfield Project - Out on the trailer somovideo
- 4 The Anfield Project - Door Knocking somovideo
- 5 Garry Explains Anfield Regeneration somovideo
- 6 The Anfield Project -- Stanley Park somovideo
- 7 Anfield Spatial Regeneration Framework somovideo
- 8 Feedback from the consultation on the Spatial Regeneration... somovideo

Videos used to change the norm 'we don't engage'



The 20 Effect

Liverpool 2012-2014

The Challenge

Liverpool City Council, announced that 70% of roads were to be subject to 20mph limits. We were asked to achieve two things:

- Increase support for the new limits in advance of legal orders (TROs).
- Behavioural change in the form of speed reduction, post implementation of the scheme.

A prevailing concern was the fact that various UK schemes had experienced considerable resistance, resulting in high numbers of time-consuming objections to legal orders (TROs).

Post implementation, such schemes reported widespread failure to comply with the new limits.

In addition, 20 mph had become a political football in Liverpool and Merseyside Police were insistent that they did not have the resources to routinely police 20mph limits.



populations was generating an inaccurate picture.



The 20 Effect

Liverpool 2012-2014

Behavioural Analysis

- Clear opportunities to harness 'social proof'
- Fundamental attribution error. The dominant mindset was that 'others' were the problem (they are irresponsible drivers) whereas personal lapses were excused.
- 'Fairness principle' & the police. People dislike unequal payoffs. The public wanted to know that the police were prepared to do their part.
- Intrinsic motivations linked to tangible gains such as protecting children from harm.
- Importance of credible messengers and a distrust of authority. People in Liverpool did not like being 'told what to do'.

Intervention

We leveraged these insights in a community-driven campaign which took the story away from politicians and into the community. We codesigned behaviourally optimised activities with communities, businesses, hospitals, public figures and even the Royal Mail. These 'coproduced' stories carried a lot of appeal in national, and regional press.

We overcame police resistance by designing ways to involve Merseyside Police in a manner that made their presence appear

far greater than resource allowed, satisfying both police and communities.



The 20 Effect

Liverpool 2012-2014

Impact

Liverpool's 20mph scheme and accompanying behavioural intervention is considered to have been the most effective 20mph campaign delivered in the UK to date. Cited as an exemplar of best practice in government review of 20mph schemes, So-Mo went on to advise cities across the UK.

Anticipated

1.2mph average speed reduction

54 reduction in collisions p.a.

Thousands of legal objections to the TROs

The cost of the whole scheme is £1.52 million

Political football

Achieved

3.5mph average speed reduction

191 reduction in collisions p.a.

The lowest rate of objections to legal orders of ANY UK unitary authority

Return on investment £18.8M a 1,234% rate of return

Cross party support

The campaign achieved a huge amount of coverage - leveraging social proof in the absence of a set norm.



Codesigned stories generated £100,000s. worth of media coverage. The degree of mobilisation became so great that we were finding out about activity we had not initiated. The community took this issue to heart.

