

Gwell Cysylltiadau Busnes Organig



Better Organic Business Links

Using behaviour change and values to promote organic food *A report for Better Organic Business Links (BOBL)*



Rachel Lilley

May 2015



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu
Gwledig; Ewrop yn Buddsoddi
mewn Ardaloedd Gwledig
The European Agricultural Fund for
Rural Development: Europe Investing in
Rural Areas



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Better Organic Business Links – Gwell Cysylltiadau Busnes Organig

Organic Centre Wales secured £2 million for The Better Organic Business Links (BOBL) project, to deliver sustainable growth to the Welsh organic sector over six years: 2009-2015.

Opportunity to promote sustainability

The BOBL project gives the organic sector in Wales a unique opportunity to:

- Develop new, emerging and existing markets for organic produce.
- Innovate in farming, processing and product development.
- Promote sustainable practices on farms, in abattoirs, in cutting rooms and kitchens and along the food chain.
- Raise market awareness among producers and increase sales across the range of outlets.

Tackling all parts of the supply chain

The BOBL project is working in partnership with a range of specialist providers to deliver these opportunities by focusing on:

1. Driving innovation through trials and research.
2. Supporting market development opportunities such as agri-tourism and supply chain efficiency programmes.
3. Disseminating up to date market intelligence, by commissioning detailed, focused consumer attitude surveys.
4. Addressing key structural problems within the sector, such as imbalances in organic horticulture supply and demand, and the availability of organic pullets.
5. Cross cutting issues: Sustainable Food Communities and Secure Alternative Markets.
6. Running an integrated communications campaign to help the sector deliver clear messages about the benefits of organic food and farming.

By strengthening the sector at all points along the supply chain, the project aims to leave a legacy of a more robust, responsive and sustainable organic industry in Wales.

The project is funded under the Rural Development Plan for Wales 2007-2014, which in turn is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

For further information on the project please see:

<http://www.organiccentrewales.org.uk/business-bobl.php?menuopt=4.2>

Or contact The BOBL Project, c/o Organic Centre Wales. Phone 01970 622248

Contents

- 1. Executive Summary**
- 2. Definition - what is behaviour change?**
- 3. Behaviour change models to support practitioners**
- 4. The process of a behaviour change project**
- 5. Progressive Behaviour Change**
- 6. Behaviour change and Bobl**
- 7. What might a Bobl behavioural insights approach look like?**
- 8. Considering a values approach and behaviour change**
- 9. Summary and conclusions**



1 Executive Summary

This report looks at the rising interest in and use of behavioural insights to tackle some of our more complex and difficult issues. It defines what it is, how it is being used in policy and civic society and how it might support future work in promoting and supporting the organic food sector in Wales. It also analyses some of the relevant work completed by the BOBL project, and how this could be developed and taken forward using a behaviour change approach.

2 Definition - what is behaviour change?

*“Behaviour change means developing a deep understanding of people and their current lives to design interventions that make it as easy as possible for them to choose different, more positive, behaviours”.*¹

*“It encompasses the understanding of both cognitive and unconscious triggers, the psychology of choice and action (and inaction), and using this knowledge to encourage sustainable behavioural changes”.*²

*“An evidence based process that uses psychology, behavioural science, and audience insight to develop strategies that change the way people act”.*³

In recent years pro environmental and sustainability policies and interventions in civil society have been informed by the insights of the behavioural sciences (and in particular behavioural psychology and behavioural economics).

These behavioural sciences suggest that while interventions have traditionally focused on the rational dimensions of human decision-making, which are triggered by the provision of information, regulation, or financial incentives, a significant portion of human behaviour is actually shaped by unconscious, seemingly irrational, prompts. These prompts include our emotional aversion to loss, our tendency to prioritise short-term gain over long-term needs, humans’ propensity to “blend-in” with what others are doing, and our collective preference for supporting the status quo over change. Prompts and triggers also include the contexts we live and work in, our social and physical environments.

These behavioural tendencies not only result in people making habitual decisions that are not in their own long-term interests, but, perhaps more worryingly, they are behavioural triggers of which we are often unaware. Indeed some cognitive scientists suggest that some 98% of our decisions are subconscious.

Emerging behaviour change policies and interventions have utilized the insights of the behavioural sciences in order to develop more emotionally literate forms of public policy and project design. They use insights into the human aspects of decision-making in order to make it easier for people make decisions that are in their own and society’s long-term interests. A recent study showed that

¹ http://www.how-on-earth.co.uk/files/Motivating_Millions.pdf Motivating the Millions Corporate Culture, 2013, pg 7

² Ibid

³ Ibid

evidence of these forms of behaviour changing interventions can be seen in 136 states throughout the world, with 51 governments developing centrally orchestrated policy programmes that strategically integrate the insights of the behavioural sciences into policy development areas (Whitehead et al 2014)⁴.

The UK government's Behavioural Insights Team provides the most discussed, and arguably the most developed, example of the application of the behavioural sciences into public policy-making. They are applying the insights of the behavioural sciences to policy areas as diverse as charitable giving, energy conservation, taxation, and healthy living.⁵

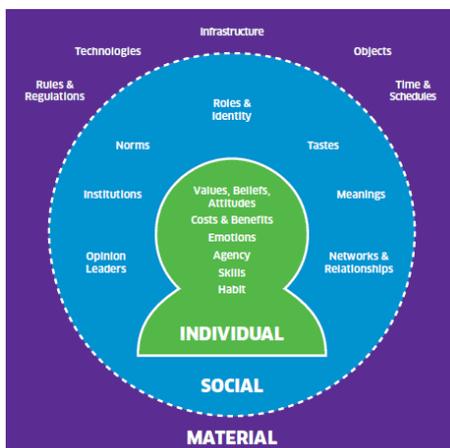
3 Behaviour change models to support practitioners

A recent report by Whitehead, Jones, Howell, Lilley and Pykett (2014)⁶ found that behaviour change interventions draw from a wide range of academic disciplines including:

Behavioural Economics, Behavioural Psychology, Cognitive Design, Engineering Psychology, Ethology, Intuitive Judgment Theory, Material Psychology, Neuroeconomics, Neuropsychology Preference Theory, Psychographics, Social Cognitive Theory, Social Influence Theory, Social Marketing, Theories of Affect, Time Preference Theories, User Centred Design, Visual Perception Theory.

However, most commonly, insights are drawn from behavioural economics, behavioural and cognitive psychology, sociology, social marketing and neuroscience. Even with this narrowing down of theoretical sources, the knowledge base is wide and varied. In an attempt to make it easier for practitioners to work with these insights there have been a number of attempts to create behaviour change models which synthesise and summarise the different theoretical aspects.

One such attempt is the ISM model, developed by Darnton and Evans (2013).⁷ It has been used widely by the Scottish Government, specifically in the context of behaviour change and sustainability. The ISM model utilises theory from sociology, behavioural economics and psychology. It considers the three elements of the individual, the social and the material context.



The individual context

Includes the factors held by the individual that affect the choices and the behaviours he or she undertakes. These include an individual's values, attitudes and skills, as well as the calculations he/she makes before acting, includes personal evaluations of costs and benefits.

The social context

Includes the factors that exist beyond the individual in the social realm, yet shape his or her behaviours. These influences include understandings that are shared amongst groups, such as social norms and the meanings attached to

⁴ <https://changingbehaviours.wordpress.com/2014/09/05/nudging-all-over-the-world-the-final-report/>

⁵ <http://www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/>

⁶ <https://changingbehaviours.wordpress.com/2014/09/05/nudging-all-over-the-world-the-final-report/>

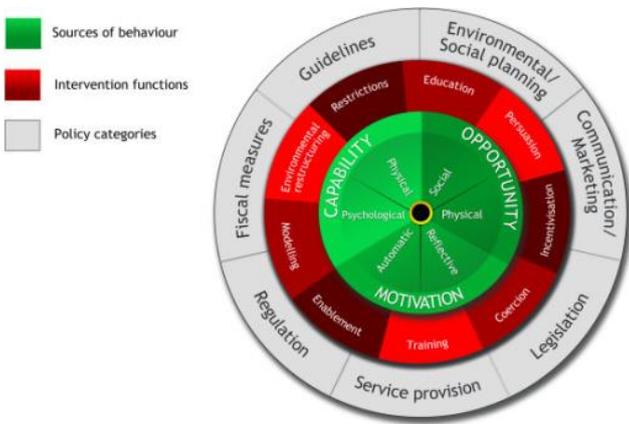
⁷ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2013/06/8606/1>

particular activities, as well as people’s networks and relationships, and the institutions that influence how groups of individuals behave.

The material context

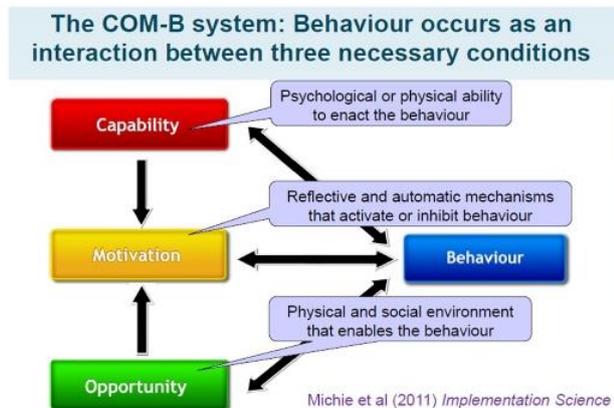
Includes the factors that are ‘out there’ in the environment and wider world, which both constrain and shape behaviour. These influences include existing ‘hard’ infrastructures, technologies and regulations, as well as other ‘softer’ influences such as time and the schedules ⁸

The *Behaviour Change Wheel* is another model, created by Psychologists at University College London. *Marketing for Change*⁹ (see link below for a useful blog entitled ‘behaviour change for beginners’) promote the model as a useful tool.



At the hub of the wheel is the Com-b model which considers how capability, opportunity and motivations contribute to behaviours:

The COM-B Model



Both the ISM and the behaviour change wheel place the individual firmly in a social and physical context which either allows or inhibits particular behaviours. Thus the individual’s ability to make choices is limited by their context as well as by the psychological elements which guide their choices within systems (i.e. knowledge, experience, beliefs and habits).

4 The process of a behaviour change project

The models offer a framework to help think through the relevance and application of theory. Behaviour change generic process that mostly defines behaviour change projects.

⁸ Ibid

⁹ <http://www.marketingforchange.com.au/behaviour-change-tips-for-beginners/>



- 1. Defining the behaviour** - or 'set of behaviours' which is being targeted. In the context of this project the behaviour may be to increase the sales of a particular organic product such as milk/carrots/vegetables. There have been a number of projects that have attempted to increase sales of fruit and vegetables generally such as the x project which attempted to increase sales in supermarkets. The more specific the behaviour the easier it will be to tackle. Eg: getting people to buy more organic vegetables generally will be less helpful than getting people to buy more organic carrots from supermarkets. Getting people to eat more organic food will be less helpful than getting people to eat more organic food in restaurants in local authority buildings.
- 2. Considering who the audience is** - Who is performing the behaviour? What do they need to do? When and where will they do it and with whom they will be?
- 3. Identifying the current barriers to the behaviour** - What needs to change in order for the behaviour to take place? Relevant changes may apply to the individual (their understandings, capabilities, motivations), the social context (it must be socially acceptable, a norm within a relevant peer group) and the material context (it must be possible/there must be the opportunity to do it). Classically many 'behaviour change' projects do not consider in detail the behaviour they are attempting to shift or the existing barriers to the enactment of that behaviour.
- 4. Collecting data and creating an evidence base** - is essential in behaviour change interventions. Information re the behaviour, the audience, the audience's current relationship to the behaviour and the social and physical context enables an understanding to emerge in which behaviours are happening.
- 5. Designing and prototyping** – an intervention, based on the evidence is the next stage. This allows for testing and modifying.

4.1 Example

In a project designed to improve hand hygiene in nurses, the behaviour and the audience were clearly identified. It was discovered that elements were in place related to infrastructure (the gel was available) and that the nurses had the psychological and physical capability (the nurses believed in it and knew how to do it). However the social element was not covered - nurses did not see senior health professionals cleaning their hands and therefore the social norming element was not addressed. They also noted that the action had not become a habit and that therefore work needed to happen to support habit formation. Previously attempts to change the behaviour might have been through an awareness/information campaign. However it was found that the main element which needed to be addressed was the social norming via key members of staff which would help support habit formation.

5 Progressive Behaviour Change?

Aberystwyth University Human Geography department has, led by Professor Mark Whitehead, a research interest in how behaviour change theories can be applied ethically and effectively and how they can be evaluated. Most recent work has been through an ESRC funded initiative, reports and information outputs from this work can be found on the website <https://changingbehaviours.wordpress.com/>. The research has included scoping behaviour change work globally, mostly in governance and the wider civic and public society. It has also developed and run training interventions which have attempted to teach behaviour change theory to public and NGO staff in a way that builds their own psychological capacity and an appreciation of the effects of their individual 'irrationality'. The course utilises mindfulness and behaviour change

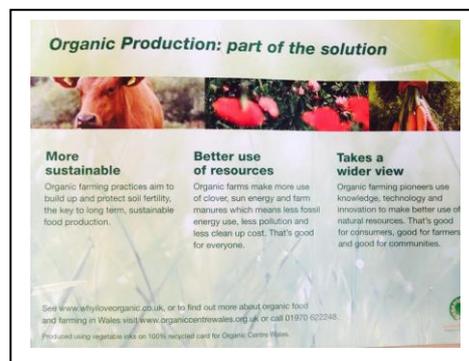


theory (particularly considering cognitive biases and habit formation). It has been run over five times in its current form and both the qualitative and quantitative evaluation are promising. Indications are that behaviour change understood in this way encourages a ‘bottom up’ empowering approach to designing and delivering behaviour change. This work is innovative and there is much interest from others, including the Mindful Initiative <http://www.themindfulnessinitiative.org.uk/> which runs the All Party Group on Mindfulness, as well as behaviour change practitioners.

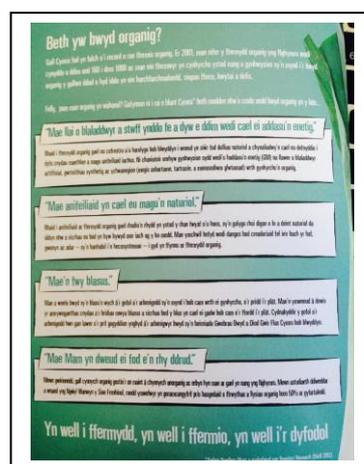
6 Behaviour change and Bobl

The Bobl project was tasked with: “Providing information on organic food and farming in Wales,” with the aim of “improving profitability, sustainability and community engagement.”

One key part of this was developing marketing materials and messaging which could be used by producers to promote their produce. Below are examples of how the messaging and marketing evolved over the project and a brief consideration of how this links to behavioural insights.



Initial leaflets were based on an ‘information deficit’ perspective. Such an approach positions the receiver of the message as a ‘rational’ actor who, once they have processed the relevant information, will make an informed decision which will be in their long term interests. In this example the hope would be that this decision would be that they would buy more organic food because of a refreshed understanding of the action being more sustainable, a better use of resources and helping to support our communities. Evidence suggests that an information deficit approach can be limited in its effect because people rarely base their decisions purely on information. Even if they agree with the statements, often behaviour has more to do with how a person feels about something, their existing habits or what they believe from previous experience. Many behaviours are simply based on convenience and comfort.



The second set of leaflets (above) follows on from extensive audience research to discover potential customer motivations for choosing and buying organic foods. These are, less pesticides (safer), animal welfare (kinder), taste (better experience) and price (cheaper than you would expect). This approach is much more targeted, based on an understanding of people's beliefs and current understandings (or misunderstandings). It considers people's current attitudes, beliefs and preferences and positions the messaging in relation to those elements. In relation to behaviour change and the ISM model it starts to address aspects which influence the individual context. However a behavioural approach would also want to consider how a person would get one of these leaflets/pick it up and read it in order for the information to have an effect. It also potentially doesn't address other barriers to such as social (is it a social norm?) or material (are organic produce accessible and affordable?).



The third leaflet combines the key messaging of wildlife, natural and local produce, safety and high quality with the use of a 'champion' messenger. Champions have been used more commonly in recent years as we have understood more about the important role of messengers. This is based on psychological theories of trust and who we are prepared to listen to. It was featured strongly in Cialdini's work; the six principles of influence (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Cialdini#6_key_principles_of_influence_by_Robert_Cialdini). Evidence suggests that we are more likely to listen to someone we like, or someone who we perceive as having authority or expertise. The champions in this leaflet represent both experts and 'people like us'. The leaflet considers theories of engagement which may be used in a behaviour change approach. However, as with previous examples, it relies on people accessing the leaflets, picking them up and reading them. The leaflet also includes a lot of information. Evidence suggests that messages need to be very simple. We are often put off reading something if it has too much information on it. The behavioural insights team produced a useful guide to behaviour change and messaging using the acronym EAST. They suggest that messages should be Easy, Attractice, Social and Timely. The leaflet might need further simplification and consideration be given to the most timely (relevant) moment when someone might receive it. To find out more about the EAST model and access the guidelines: <http://www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/publications/east-four-simple-ways-apply-behavioural-insights>



7 What might a Bobl behavioural insights project look like?

If Bobl were to utilise a behavioural insights approach that included, but extended more widely than just the messaging, they could do this by identifying, designing and testing an appropriate behavioural intervention.

As discussed previously, this would require defining specific behaviours, researching the causes of the behaviour, designing (or ideally co-designing) an intervention based on the research and testing it. For example:

7.1 Defining specific target behaviours

Behaviours which might be considered could include “increasing take up of school meals” or it could be related to “increasing purchases of organic fruit and vegetables at farmers/local produce markets”. The more specific the behaviour, the easier it is to work with.

7.2 Considering the target audience

If we follow on with the school meals example above this could be “children (and perhaps parents) in either primary or secondary schools.”

7.3 Gather data

Gathering data would include finding out what beliefs/understandings/misunderstandings are in relation to school meals and what barriers exist to prevent children choosing to get them. This might include the food itself, the systems involved, attitudes/beliefs/previous experiences, it would also include cost perceptions and value for money. Other areas worth looking at would be may be competing habits/triggers/environmental and social context and the current convenience of school meals. It would also include investigating whether or not there are any social/peer influences. In terms of the material the research could consider the Infrastructure which either supports the take up and interest in school meals – how the systems are set up and organised.

7.4 Reflecting on existing research and relevant theory

Once (and while) the data is collected, desk research would look at other relevant research work and projects that have been carried out in this area. Meanwhile related theories, relevant to the data that is being collected, may also be considered. For example, if interviews start to reveal certain biases in people’s perceptions – such as a bias towards associating school meals as poor quality then the behavioural economics theory of confirmation bias might be considered. This could influence the design of the intervention – for example how school meals are framed and promoted or the kinds of meals that are offered.

7.5 Designing and testing an (or a number of) intervention (s)

An intervention/behavioural experiment would then be designed based on the findings from all the work in 1-4. This may include re-designing the systems which young people use to access school meals (financial/serving), or elements related to either social elements (how school meals fit into children’s social/peer relations) or a campaign over a number of weeks with “theme” meals and tastings and scripted conversations to address beliefs

about quality and taste. This would very much depend on the data gathered – which can often challenge our pre-conceived ideas and assumptions.

During and following the testing phase, additional data can be collected, control trials set up and modifications trialled. This hones the intervention and is also useful as the next stage of scaling takes place.

8 Considering a values approach and behaviour change

BOBL has delivered a values based project looking at how values can be used to influence behaviours. It is therefore worth considering specifically how values would be integrated into a behaviour change project.

In recent years values based approaches to change have become more prevalent and popular. In a recent study of 253 U.S. residents, quoted in Psychology Today, Zenzi¹⁰ found that the more a purchase is an expression of the person's values, the more likely they are to: share information about the purchase, both online and via word-of-mouth; write an online review of the purchase; do a great deal of research before buying; involve others in the research process and *spend more money* on the purchase. Examples of values based marketing campaigns include recent work by Dove and Chipotle



Meanwhile work by Tom Crompton (WWF) and the Public Interest Research Company (PIRC) on values and frames entitled "Common Cause" (<http://valuesandframes.org/>) has considered the role of values in engaging and influencing behaviours in civic society. Their evidence suggests that a values approach can potentially positively engage people through relating to their core beliefs (as with the commercial campaigns above). But their work also indicates that if messages and processes purposely express *intrinsic* values (as opposed to *extrinsic* values), there will be a 'spill over' effect which will influence a person to do other, related pro-environmental and pro-social behaviours. Conversely, if messaging portrays *extrinsic* values (e.g.: saving money) then that can be counterproductive as it is likely to encourage other more extrinsic behaviours (such as spending more money), as the frame that has been triggered is a financial/extrinsic one, creating associations to other, similar behaviours.

¹⁰ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/cant-buy-happiness/201406/viral-values-how-do-personal-values-affect-behavior>



One ambitious attempt to frame a message intrinsically is 'For the Love of....', a campaign which attempts to promote positive action on climate change. It moves away from either information deficit or more fear or guilt based approaches and instead uses very intrinsic frames.

In relation to future projects which promote organic produce and include behaviour change insights, it will also be useful to consider what values are triggered in either the messages or scripts included in the intervention or the design of the project itself. This would be one element in the project which would potentially support engagement in new behaviours over the longer term – as well as influencing spill over into a wider set of related and positive behaviours.

9 Summary and conclusions

This report has defined behaviour change and considered it in relation to the work Bobl project. It follows on from a short workshop with Bobl staff delivered in May 2015.

It has considered the theoretical background of behavioural insights, how it is being applied and specific models which have been developed to support practitioners applying the theory. It has also looked at the process of behaviour change project design and application.

It has shown how, through its work on messaging and values, the Bobl project has worked on some aspects which could form part of a behaviour change intervention, specifically on audience segmentation and messaging. This could be built on in future work to help design and deliver a behavioural experiment which could further enhance its work.

During the workshop staff felt that future work might include looking at how engagement with the organic sector might be made more of a social norm.

In conclusion, this report would recommend that in the future a team (ideally including skills in social sciences such as behavioural economics, psychology, human geography, sociology etc.) could be brought together to research, design and test a specific behavioural intervention with a view to supporting the sector to continue to increase the core aim of improving profitability, sustainability and community engagement of and with organic produce.