



New Forest National Park

Protecting together, shaping tomorrow



The challenge to influence behaviour in National Parks, Jim Mitchell

Presentation to SLU, Sweden January 2021

Introduction

12 slides

Who am I?

Show you some of the approaches
taken to influence behaviour

Jim Mitchell

Interpretation and Outreach Manager,
New Forest National Park

Chair, Association for Heritage
Interpretation

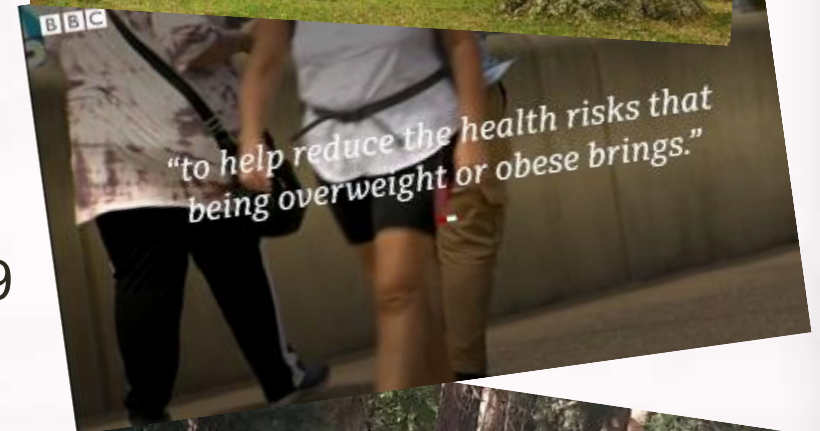
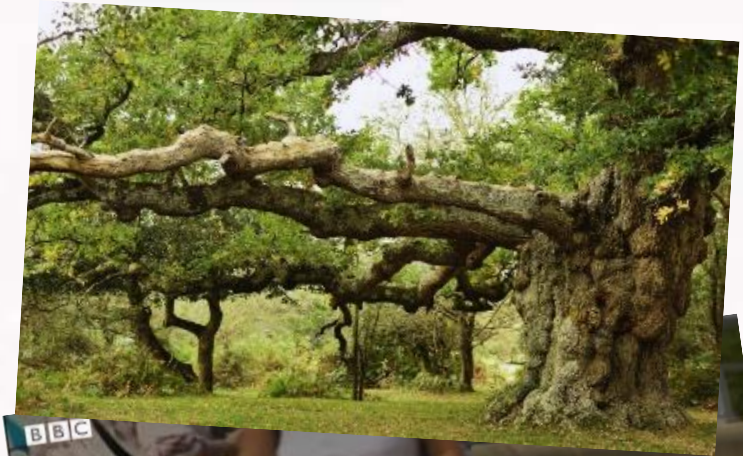
*Interpretation – ‘planned engagement
with people in their leisure time’*

‘Walk in the visitor shoes’



Covid-19, lockdown, health and the climate and nature emergency

- The New Forest is a very special highly protected landscape
 - Open access to woods and heaths
 - [Source- NFNPA](#)
- Health inequalities increased by Covid19
 - [Sources PHE / LGA \(2020\)](#)
- Behaviour changes from Covid-19
 - Increased demand for outdoor space
 - Attitudes to private cars / public transport
 - [Source- MENE](#)
- Climate and nature emergency
 - The bigger picture



What sort of behaviour?

- Feeding of semi-wild animals (grazing ponies)
- Wild camping
- Litter
- Fires and BBQs
- Verge parking
- Disturbance of wildlife
- Levels of behaviour

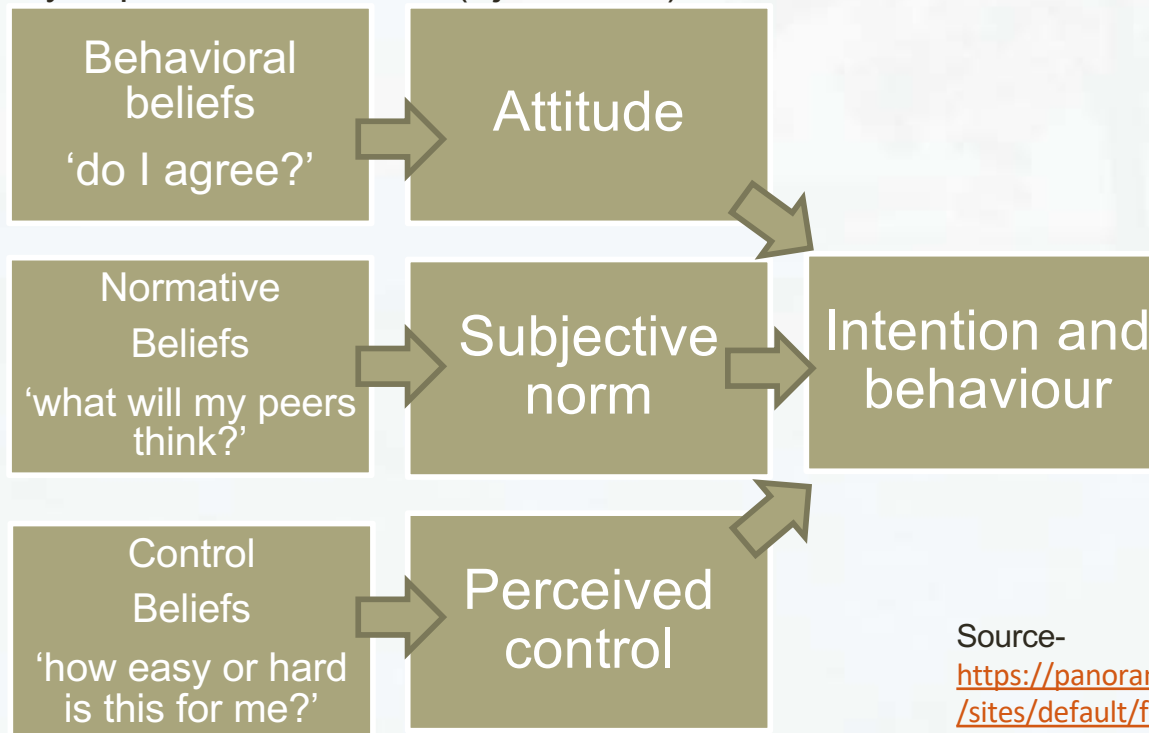


When you have the time...

The normal approach to influencing behaviour-

1. Analysing our own existing messages and behaviour
2. Researching visitor behaviour in specific locations and shaping a message
3. Building consensus around shared goals and messages

Theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 1991)



Source-

https://panorama.solutions/sites/default/files/Ham_Promoting_Persuasion_in_Protected_Areas-2009.pdf



Tools in the toolbox

When you are short on time!

Use as many tools as there are available
and refine-

Face to face tools

Digital and physical signage tools

Partnership tools

But you need to agree the message first...

Follow the New Forest code

The New Forest is a unique place with rare wildlife and free-roaming livestock. Thank you for helping us care for this special place by following the simple New Forest code.

Be Forest
Friendly!



Keep your distance
from the animals
– don't feed or
touch them



Keep dogs under
control. Don't let
dogs approach or
chase any animals



Stick to the
permitted
cycle tracks



Take home
litter and
dog waste



Park only
in car parks



Drive with
care – animals
on the road!



No fires or
barbecues



No wild
camping



Help wildlife by
keeping to the
main tracks



Forestry England



NEW FOREST
COMMONERS



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL



Face to face tools

Rangers- Full time, seasonal and apprentice

Extra staff

Volunteers

Interviews

Mobile Units

Proper training-
in engagement and
interpretation



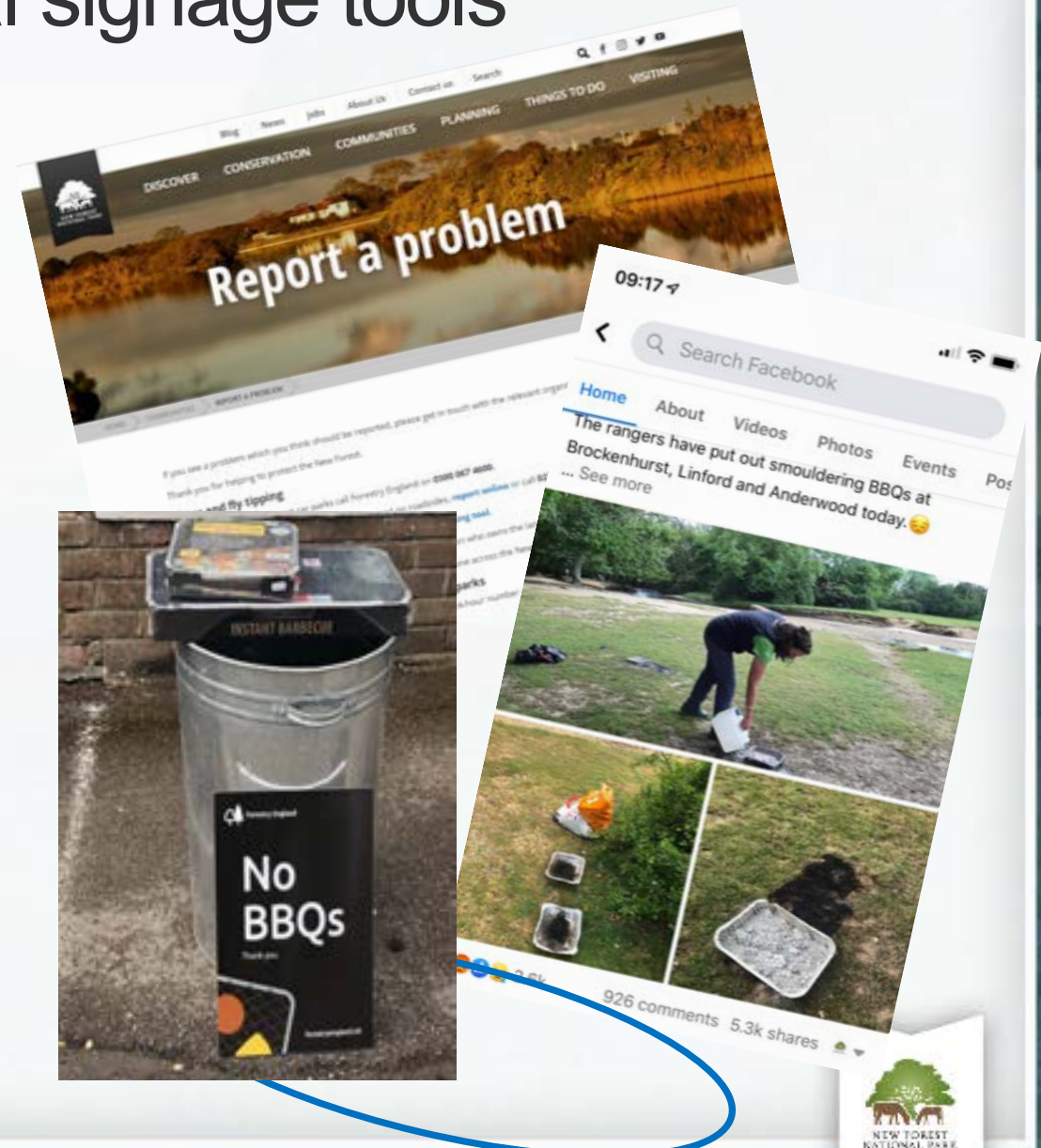
Digital and physical signage tools

Social media campaigns
BBQ ban
#add3minutes

Report a problem page

Time implications- needs
dedicated communications staff

Remember- only about 10% of
people read signs! But they are
important in the right place, and
especially if they convey timely
information



Partnership tools

Ambassadors- local people and businesses

Local information points

Local farmers – ‘commoners’ – co-creation of messages and programmes with the local community

Issue specific groups-

Dogs forum

Cycling working group

Animal accident reduction group

Feeding animals forum

Litter working group



Long term opportunities

Building new relationships with new audiences- 'Maintain the gain'

People who will protect and care for nature in the future

Increased appreciation of the value of nature and access to it



Summary

- There are no easy solutions, no magic wands
- But there are lots of different engagement tools that each work, in the right situation
- Using a variety of tools gives you experience of which work best in which situations
- Always work in partnership
- It is a good thing that lots of people want to visit nature- the alternative is worse!

Thank you for listening!

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