Introducing ISM and Implications for Practice

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At Aberystwyth University

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What is Behaviour Change?

- **For policymakers:**

  An intervention to encourage individuals to change their behaviour in a way that will help Government achieve its policy goals...incorporating a better understanding of behaviour **(NAO 2011)**

- **For practitioners:**

  A way of working based on the understanding of behaviours and audiences which results in learning and change **(Darnton 2012)**

  …implying that:

  - Most effective interventions/policies/projects result in changes in behaviour – but that does not make them 'behaviour change' interventions

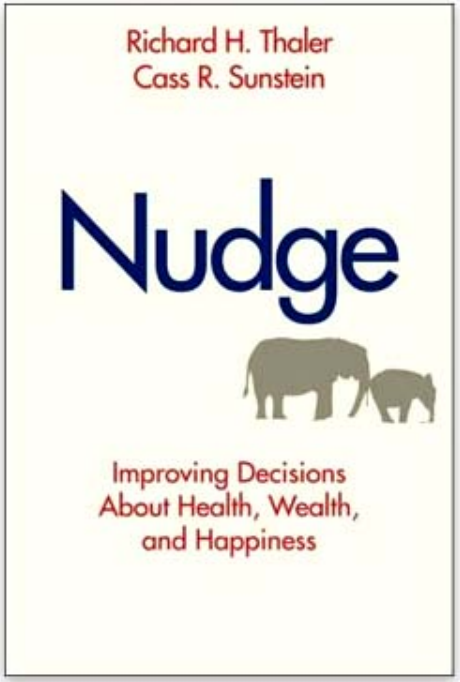
  - Interventions/projects which do not result in changed behaviours are not necessarily failures IF they result in learning

  - Behaviour change does not always mean targeting individuals

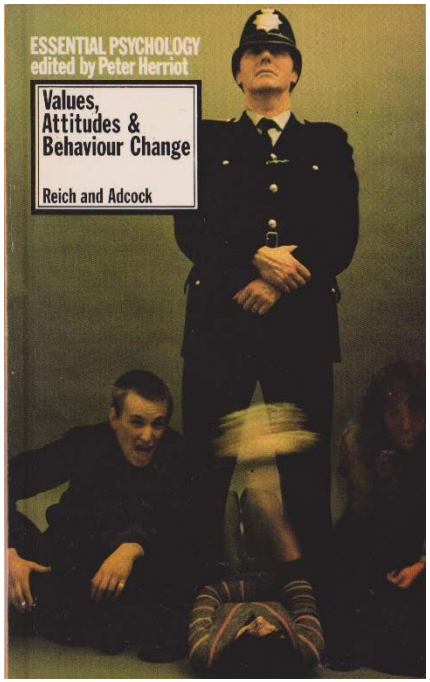
Research & Analysis

Spanning 3 Schools of Behavioural Theory…

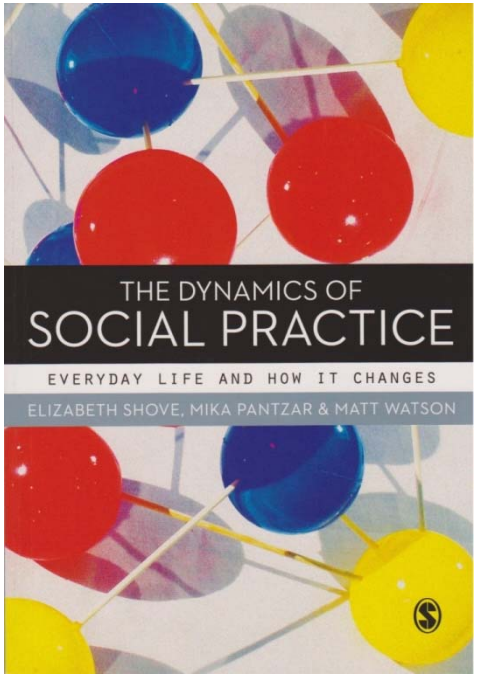
Behavioural Economics



Social Psychology



Sociology



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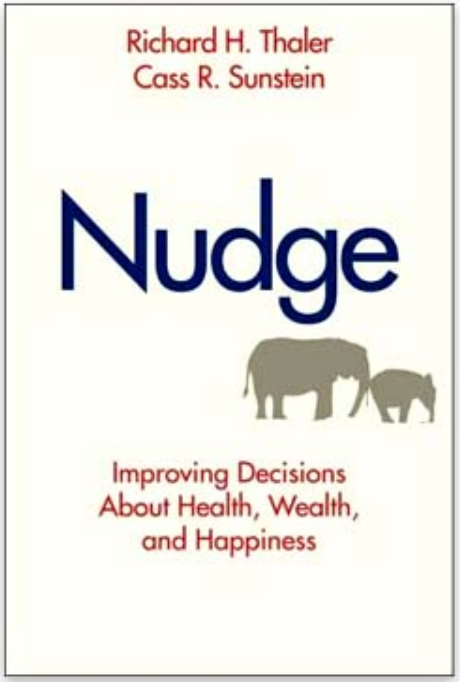
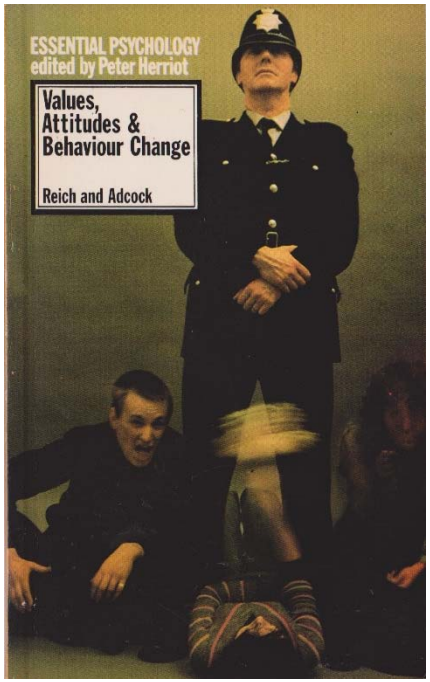
…with 3 different views of people

Behavioural Economics



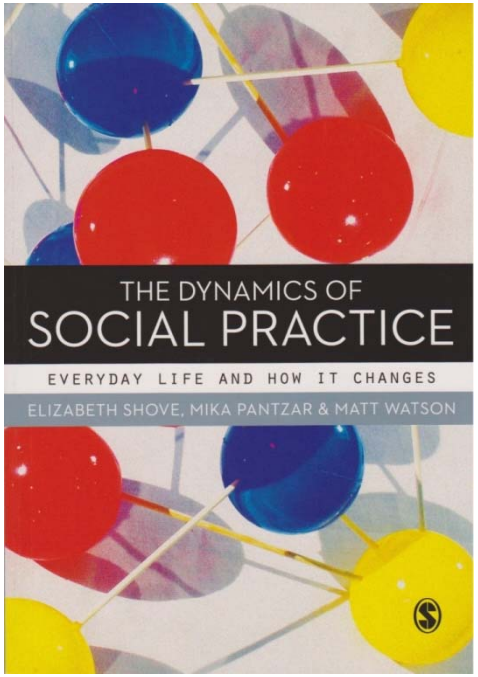
Individual as Rational Man

Social Psychology



Individual as Social Animal

Sociology



Individual as Actor

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Introducing ISM

- **AD's GSR Review 2008:**

"There is no one winning model"

- **BUT, faced with myriad models, practitioners ask 'Which one should I use?'**
- **ISM devised to bridge this divide: one single multi-disciplinary model**
- **Originated in Manchester SCI Review of International Behaviour Change Interventions (Southerton et al 2011)**
- **Designed as a practical tool: shortcuts theory (also, theoretical objections)**

For substantive and lasting change:

i) Work in multiple contexts

ii) Draw on multiple disciplines

iii) Involve multiple stakeholders

- **ISM as a Tool can be used throughout the policy / change process**
- **Especially suited to stubborn problems, systemic solutions**

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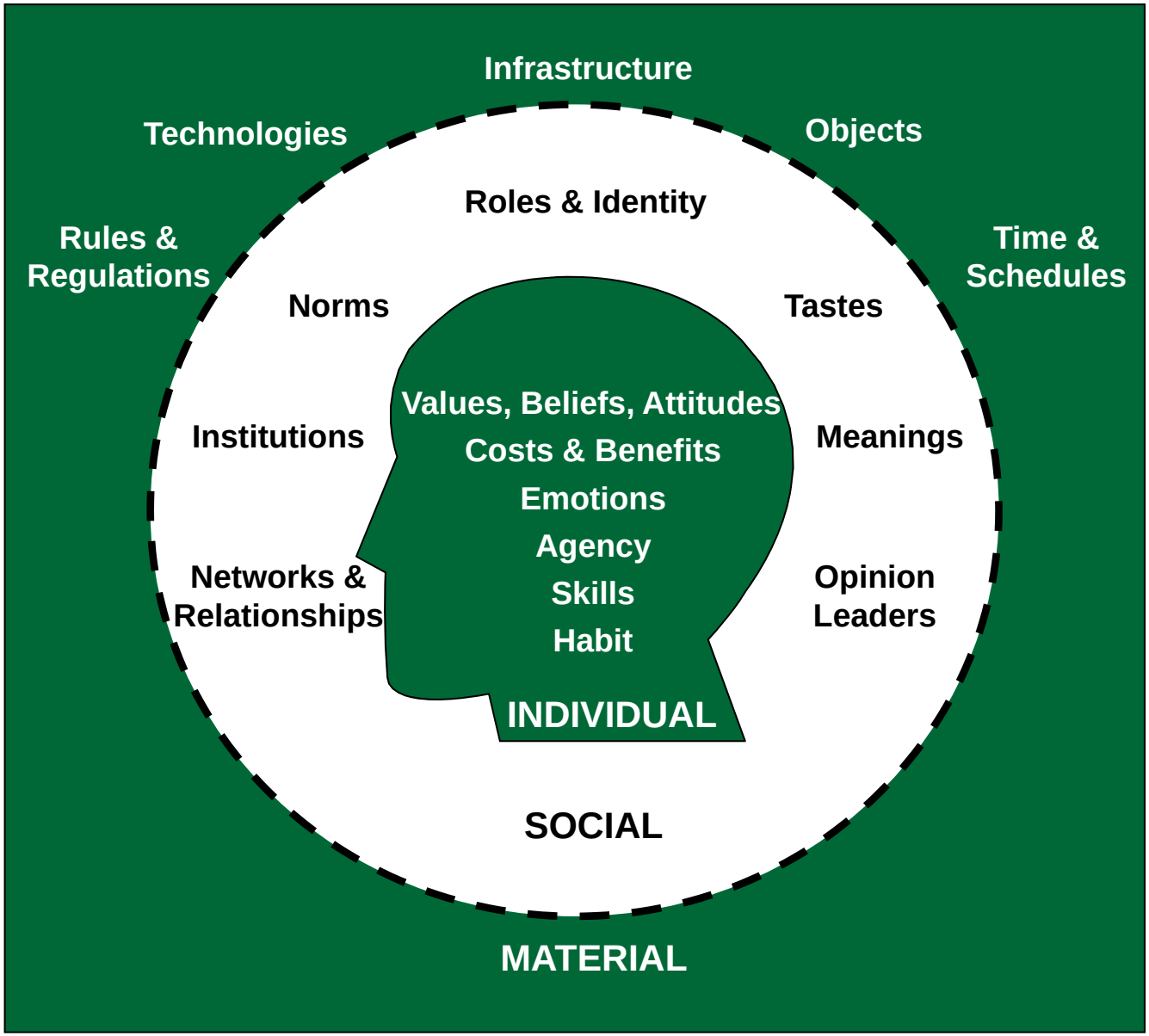
The ISM Model (Darnton & Evans for TSG 2013)



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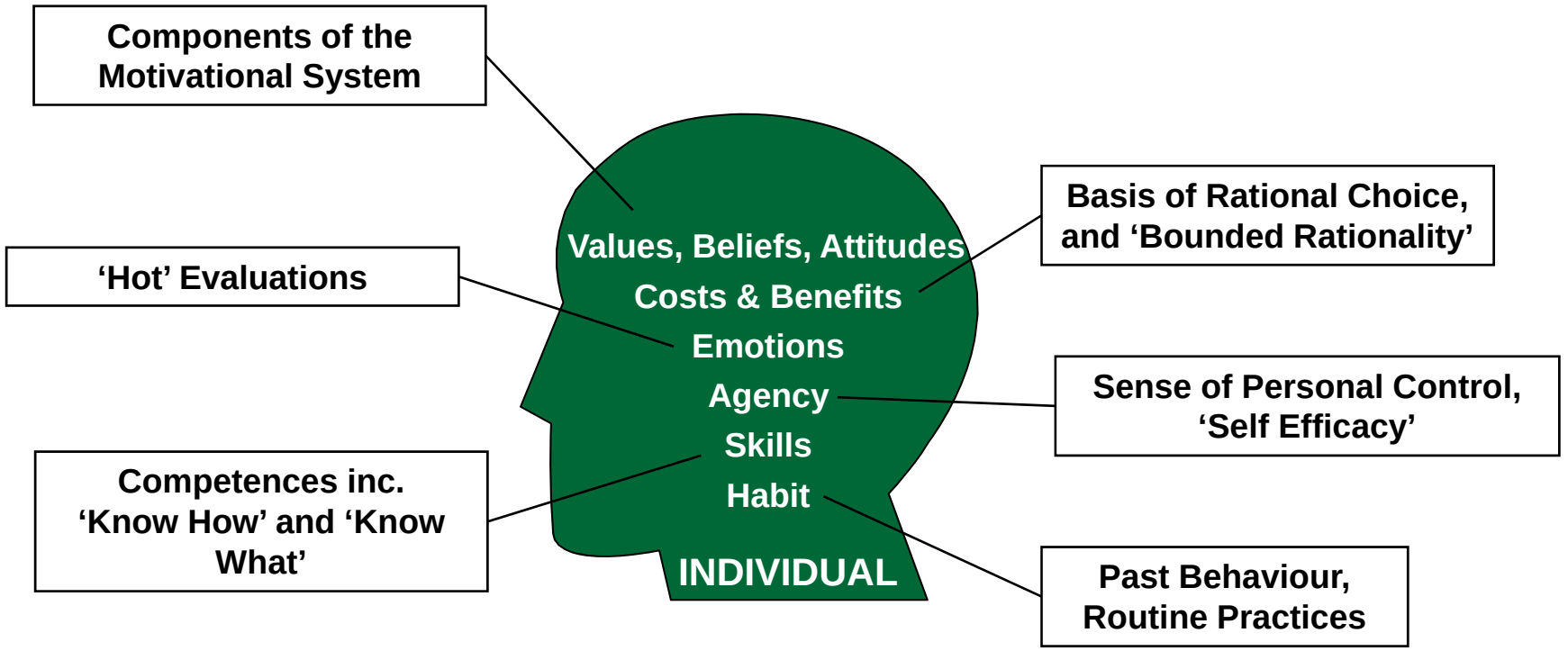
Introducing ISM: Individual Factors



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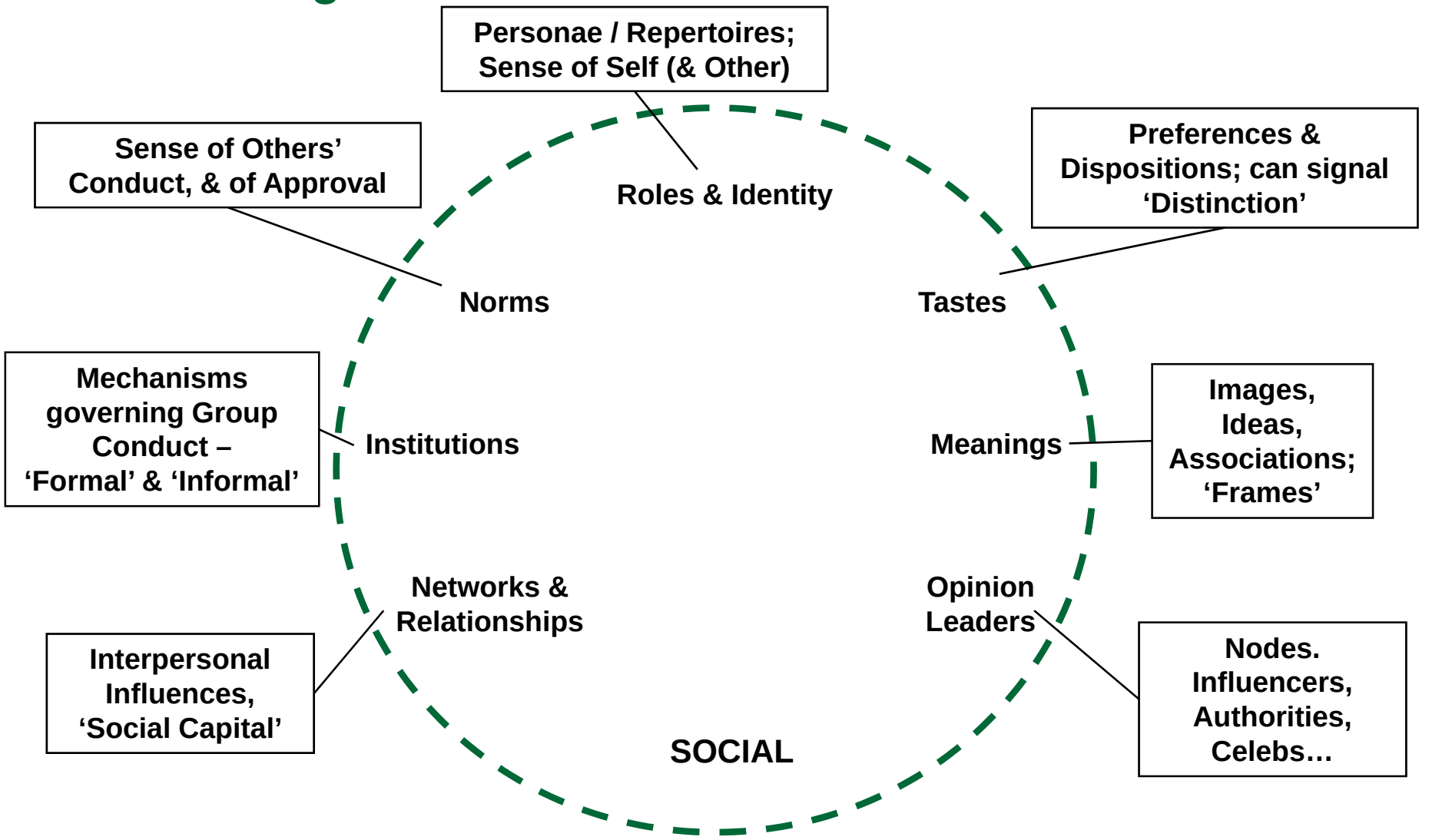
Introducing ISM: Social Factors



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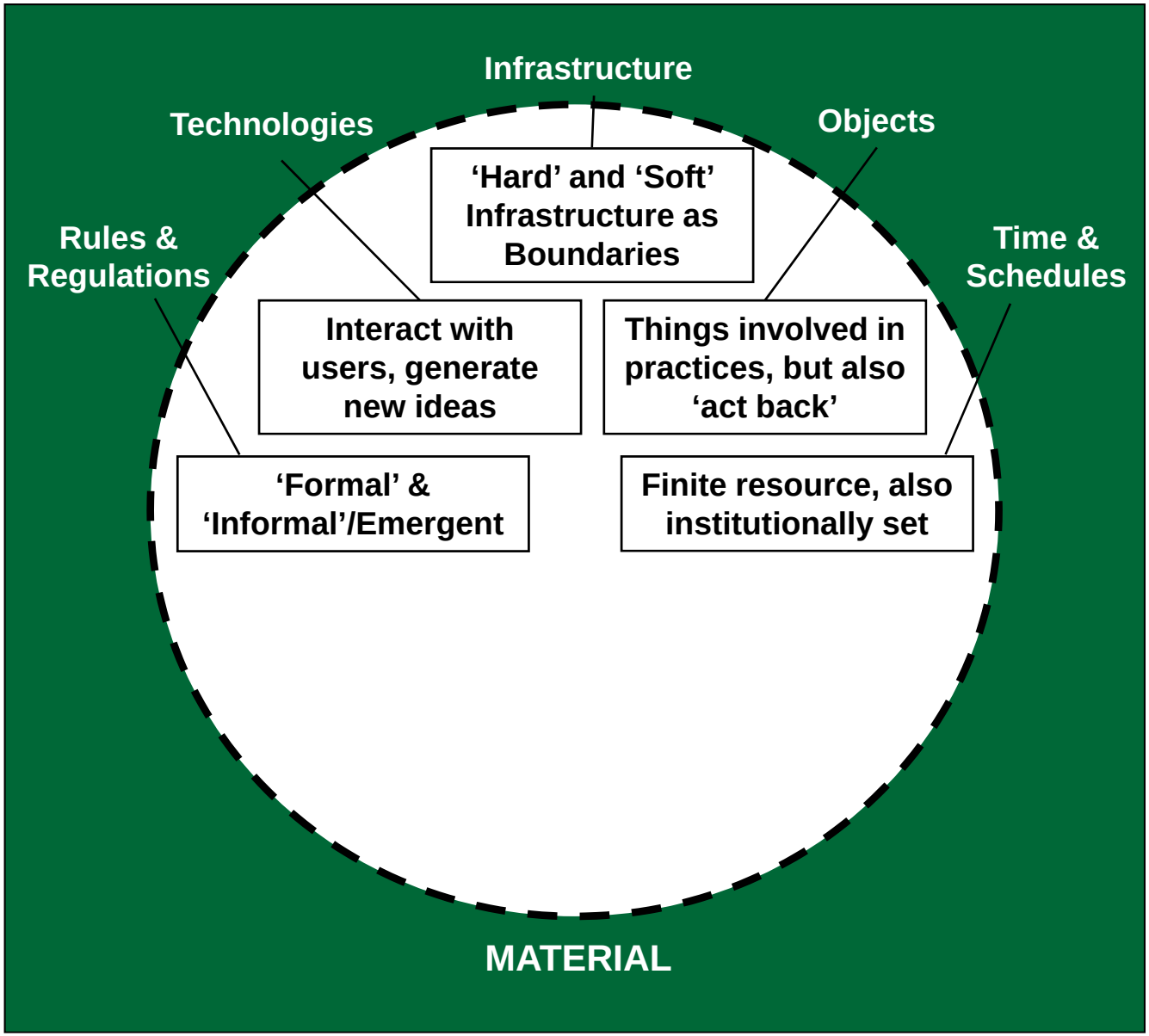
Introducing ISM: Material Factors



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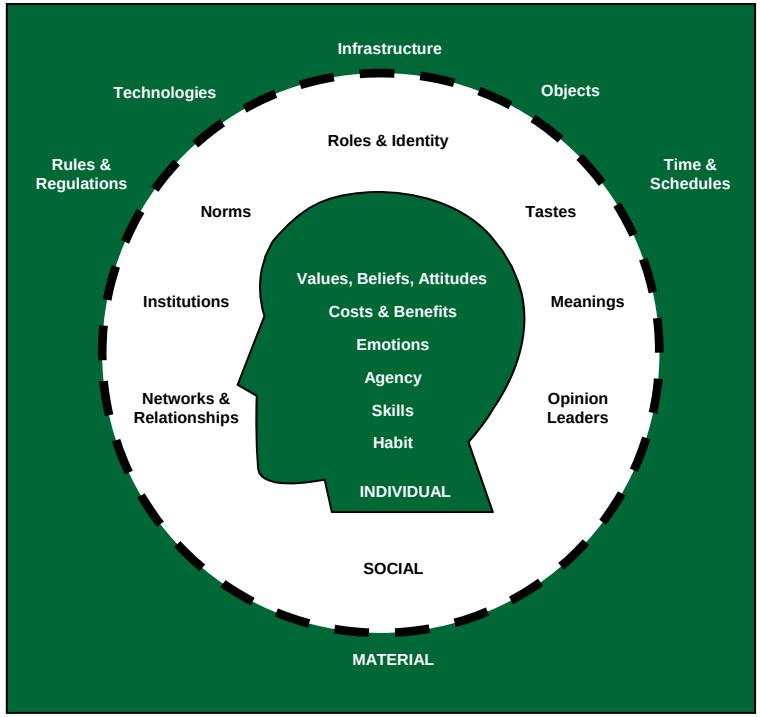
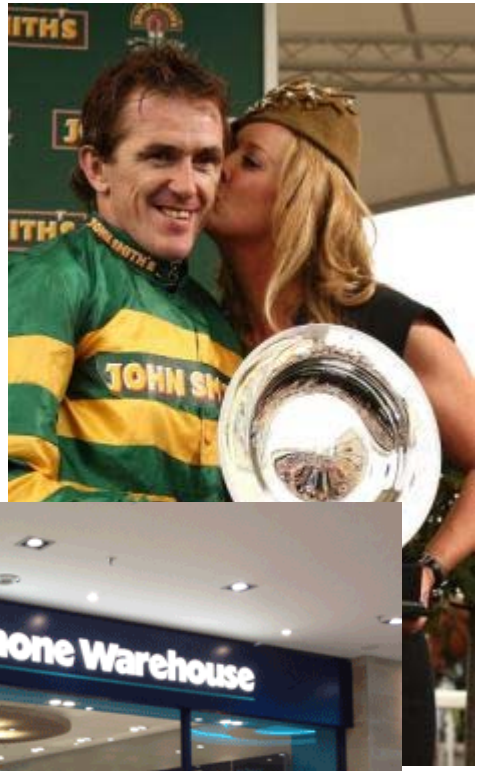
ISM applied to... mobile phone driving



- **INDIVIDUAL CONTEXT:**

COSTS & BENEFITS



- **SOCIAL CONTEXT:**

MEANINGS

- **MATERIAL CONTEXT:**

TIME & SCHEDULES

ISM applied to... eat less meat

- **S: Networks**
  Young people eat less meat

- **S: Tastes**
  Different meats/methods confer distinction

- **S: Meanings**
  'vegetarian', 'ethnic foods'

- **I: Habit**
  Familiarity Effect

- **I: Emotions**
  Filling and tasty

- **I: Costs & Benefits**
  Unhealthy/ processed foods deliver cheaper calories

- **M: Infrastructure**
  Convenience stores (mini-supermarkets)

- **M: Objects**
  Ready meals

- **M: Technologies**
  Microwaves

- (PS a disembodied/everyman model: no guts, no gender)

ISM as a conceptual framework (PHE PA/HE Review 2013)

	Physical Activity		Healthy Eating
MATERIAL	‘Car Culture’	**Consumer Culture**	‘Convenience Food Culture’
	Age / Gender / Ethnicity / (Dis)advantage	**Sociodemographics**	Age / Gender / Ethnicity / (Dis)advantage
	PA/Leisure / Travel Activity	**Family Activity**	Food Choice / Eating Patterns
	Parenting Styles; Support; Rules	**Parenting**	Parenting Styles; Rules
SOCIAL	Sector; Policies; Proximity	**School**	Sector; Policies; Environs
	Companionship; Norms	**Peers**	Attitudes; Norms
	TV Viewing; Screen Time	**Media Exposure**	TV Viewing; Eating Patterns
INDIVIDUAL	Sports; Journeys; Fitness	**Habits**	Tastes; Preferences

ISM enacts principles for lasting social change

- **Change is a process not an event**
- **Change requires action on multiple levels, across whole systems**
- **Change requires insights from multiple disciplines**
- **Change requires collaboration between multiple actors, including target audiences (co-production)**
- **Change is context specific (people, places, points in time)**
- **Change is the status quo (we modulate)**
- **Change is disruptive**
- **Change is iterative (a process that changes)**
- **Change and learning are intertwined (no learning, no change)**
- **Change is best explained through stories (narratives trump data)**

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ISM implications for practice

- **Govt/lead organisation plays a convening role**
- **Build the community of practice first, then set goals**
- **‘The art of the possible’: stakeholders bought in first, then agree how to intervene (rather than develop intervention – eg. in the lab – then ‘sell’ it to delivery partners)**
- **Each label owner(s) pulls the levers they hold: change across the system will result (more like Transitions in Practice than Behaviour Change)**
- **Interventions will be multi-layered, even multi-stranded**
- **Calls for unorthodox evaluation: multi-method, mixed currencies (what is evidence?), controlled trials not possible at whole system level**
- **Remaining challenges inc. how to integrate findings; how to cost the interventions at the outset**

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ISM applied to... Zero Waste Presteigne

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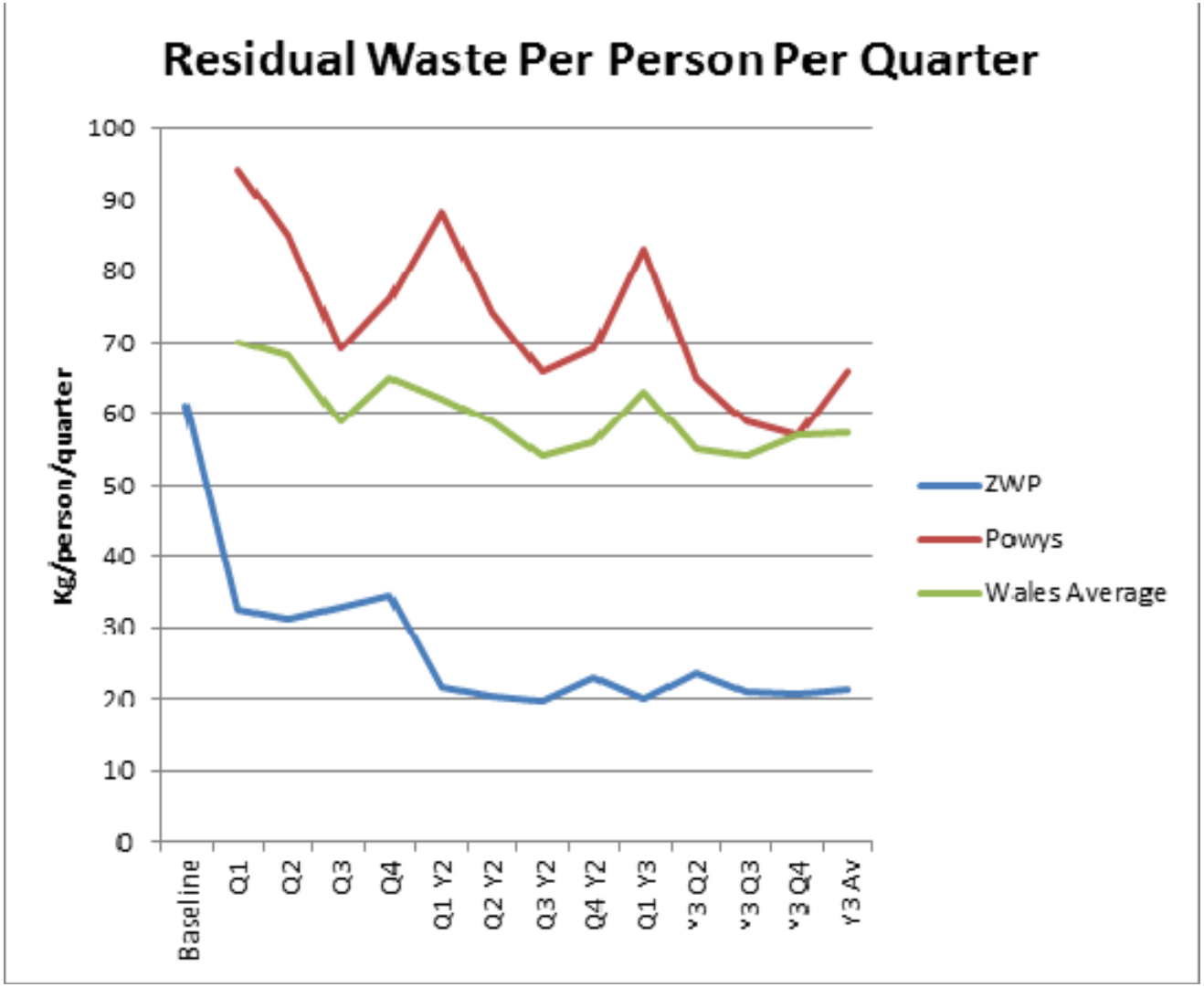
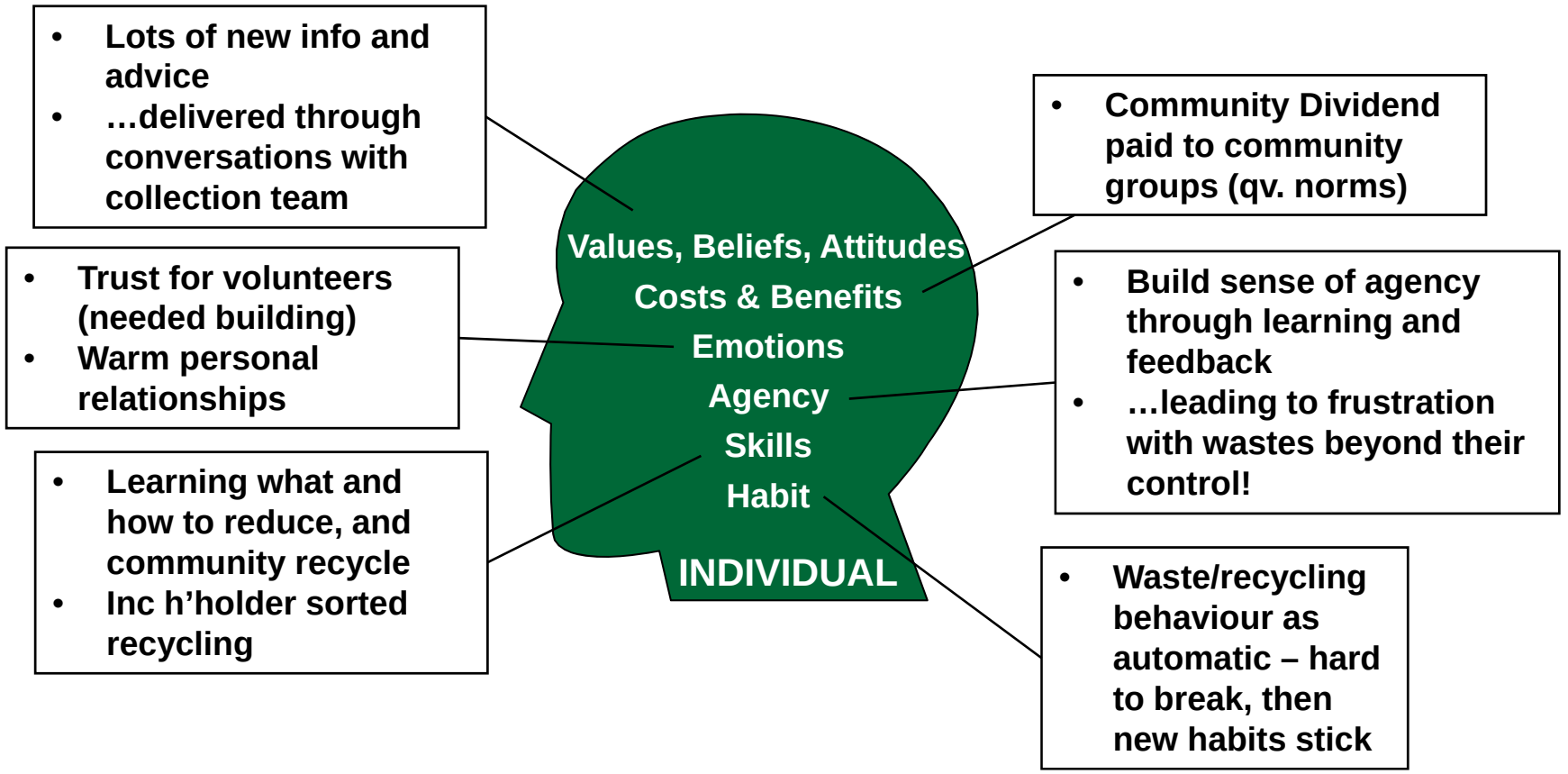


- **…and these effects endure at one year follow-up**

Zero Waste Presteigne: Individual Factors



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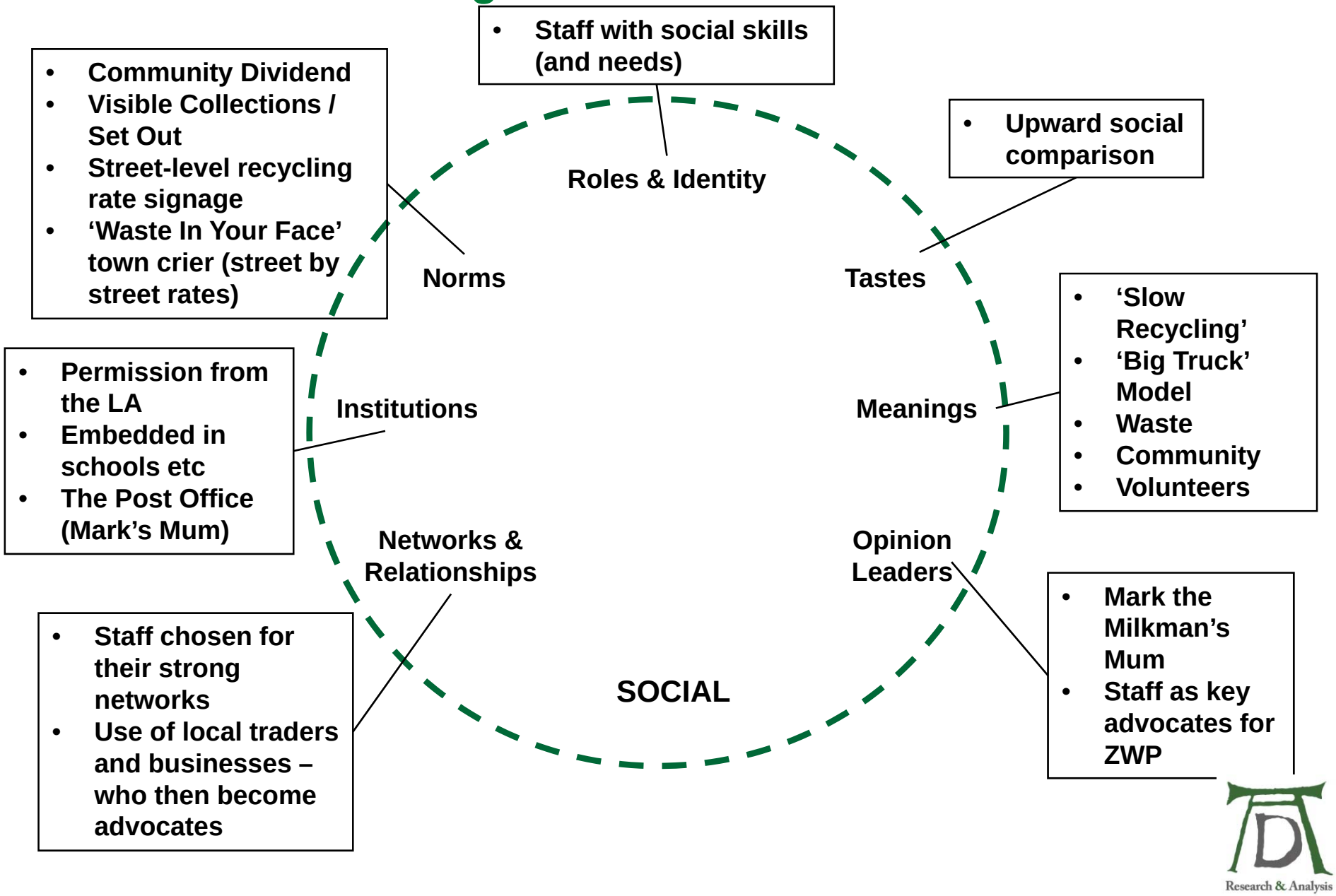
Zero Waste Presteigne: Social Factors



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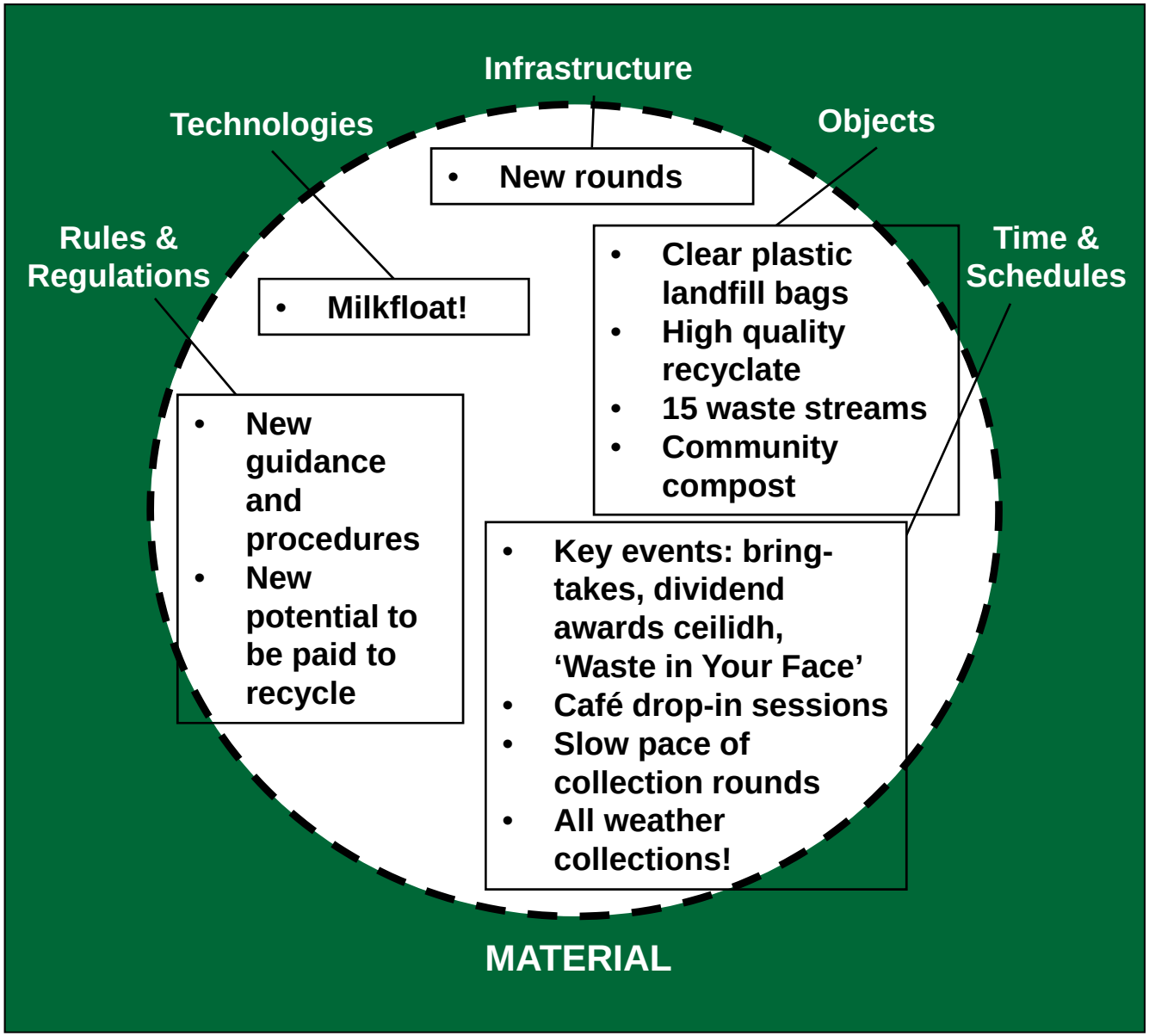
Zero Waste Presteigne: Material Factors



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Zero Waste Presteigne: ISM implications

- **ZWP validates ISM thinking: lasting change requires multi-layered interventions**
- **ISM validates ZWP: provides conceptual framework to articulate the programme and the evaluation findings**
- **A narrative still needed to integrate the results (plus £ saved to make business case)**
- **ZWP and ISM going 'beyond the individual': mapping whole system change**
- **Should aid translation and roll-out: but NB programme will be different everywhere (ZWA, ZWB, ZWC...)**
- **Opportunity to use ISM from the start, to build the stakeholder working group (CofP)**

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ISM User Guide
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/06/8511

ISM Technical Guide
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/06/8606