



*Working together
for cleaner,
greener places*

University Challenge

Prepared by Keep Britain Tidy's
Research Team

February 2012



#researchkbt

Studentification

'Studentification conceptualises the processes by which existing private rented or 'single-family' owner-occupied housing is recommodified by property owners, investors and developers to provide student accommodation within Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)'

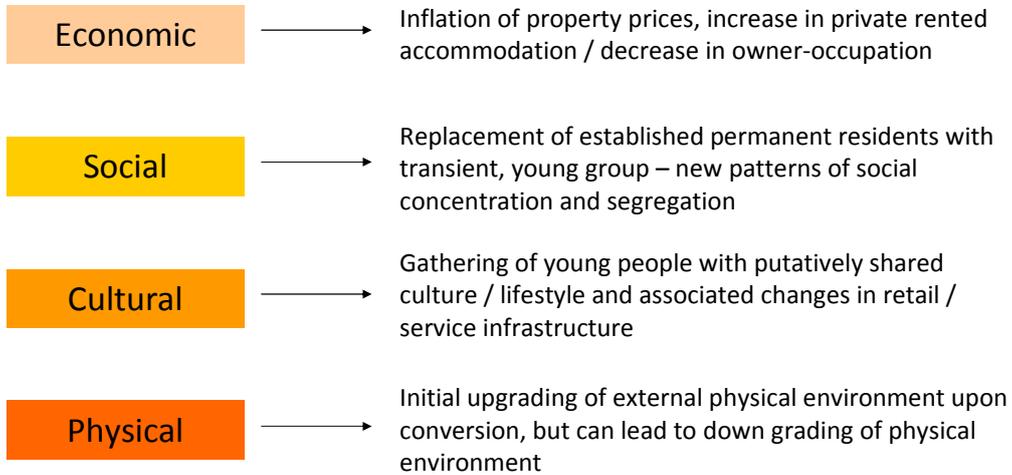


'Geographies of studentification and 'apprentice' gentrifiers?' Smith D, 2004

Studentification is an increasingly common phenomenon in the university towns and cities of the UK. The 10 years between 1999 and 2009 saw a 44% increase in students accepted to university, taking the number of students from 334,594 in 1999 to 481,854 in 2009 (UCAS website, January 2012).

Although recent changes to the Higher Education fees structure in England may have an impact on student numbers, the student market remains big business.

Impact of studentification



The process of studentification has four particular areas of impact on a neighbourhood or local area; economic, social, cultural and physical.

Economic

Increase in property prices is linked to the conversion of what was traditionally single-family housing to supply Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) for the Higher Education student market. These changes affect the housing tenure profile of an area and are characterised by an increase in private rented accommodation and a decrease in owner-occupation.

Social

Established permanent residents move on to be replaced by the young and transient student population. This affects the social make up of an area and can lead to segregation.

Cultural

Increasing groups of young people with a putatively shared culture and lifestyle are associated with an increase in certain types of retail and service provision to cater for the group's 'needs'.

Physical

An initial upgrading of the physical environment can be seen as properties are converted for multiple occupation, but can then lead to a downgrading of the physical environment following neglect by landlords and transient residents.

Impact on community and LEQ

'Transient occupation engenders a lack of community integration and cohesion and less commitment to maintain the quality of the local environment.'

(Smith 2006)

'...these [student] areas are also subject to many disputes and conflicts, both informally in terms of street crime and neighbourhood disruption, but also formally in terms of regulating litter, noise, and planning applications'

(Chatterton 2010)



"Studentification": a guide to opportunities, challenges and practice', Universities UK, Smith D, 2006

'The student city: an ongoing story of neoliberalism, gentrification, and commodification', Environment and Planning A 2010, vol 42, Chatterton P

More specifically, increasing populations of students have an impact on local communities, and their local environmental quality (LEQ).

Research has demonstrated that students and local residents perceive students to form a separate 'community within a community', with local residents identifying students as being unwilling to engage in 'neighbouring' activities (Kenyon 1997). This can result in segregation within the community, leading to a lack of understanding and tolerance between groups.

A lack of commitment to maintain local environmental quality in such areas is another impact, which can in turn contribute to some of these areas falling further out of favour with those looking for family properties (Smith 2006), perpetuating the issues.

Two sides of the story...

Students make an 'Impact' in Manchester



MANCHESTER
1824
The University of Manchester

Leeds students in 700 tonnes of waste shame



'Leeds students in 700 tonnes of waste shame', Yorkshire Evening Post, 1st December 2011

'Students make an 'Impact' in Manchester', The University of Manchester, 4th November 2011



It is important to remember that students do make a positive impact on their local area. University websites feature a variety of good news stories giving examples of the positive impact students have made to their local area, such as this example from the University of Manchester. However, anecdotally it would seem that it is the bad news stories and negative perceptions which remain with local residents.

So... what did we want to find out?





Research objectives

Explore how the student population **impacts** on local environmental quality (LEQ)

Establish how students can be encouraged to **engage** more positively with the LEQ agenda in their area

Identify how they can be encouraged to **demonstrate** pro-environmental behaviours

Establish how to **communicate** effectively and efficiently with the transient student population

Explore how students' sense of **responsibility** for and ownership of their local area differ between their home town and their university town



What we did...

Partnerships with 4 local authorities and 4 universities

Focus groups with students

Interviews with council representatives

Interviews with university representatives

Bath & North East
Somerset Council



Keep Britain Tidy would like
to thank all our research
partners for their help in
producing this research

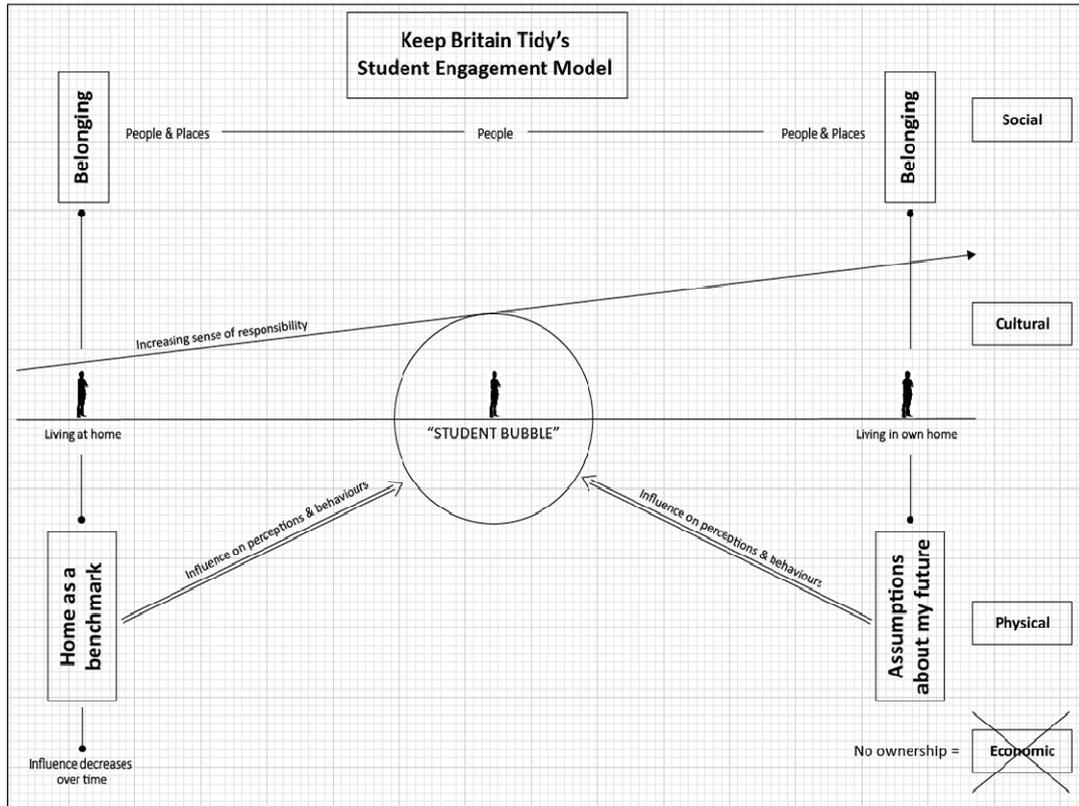


Keep Britain Tidy's research team worked in partnership with four local authorities and four universities to deliver this piece of work. The same approach was applied in each area, and included depth interviews with a representative from the council with an overview of streetscene and neighbourhood issues in the area, and a person with a similar overview of issues for the university. In addition, two focus groups were conducted with students of the university; one with first year students living on campus, and the other with 2nd, 3rd and 4th year undergraduate students living in rented accommodation off campus.

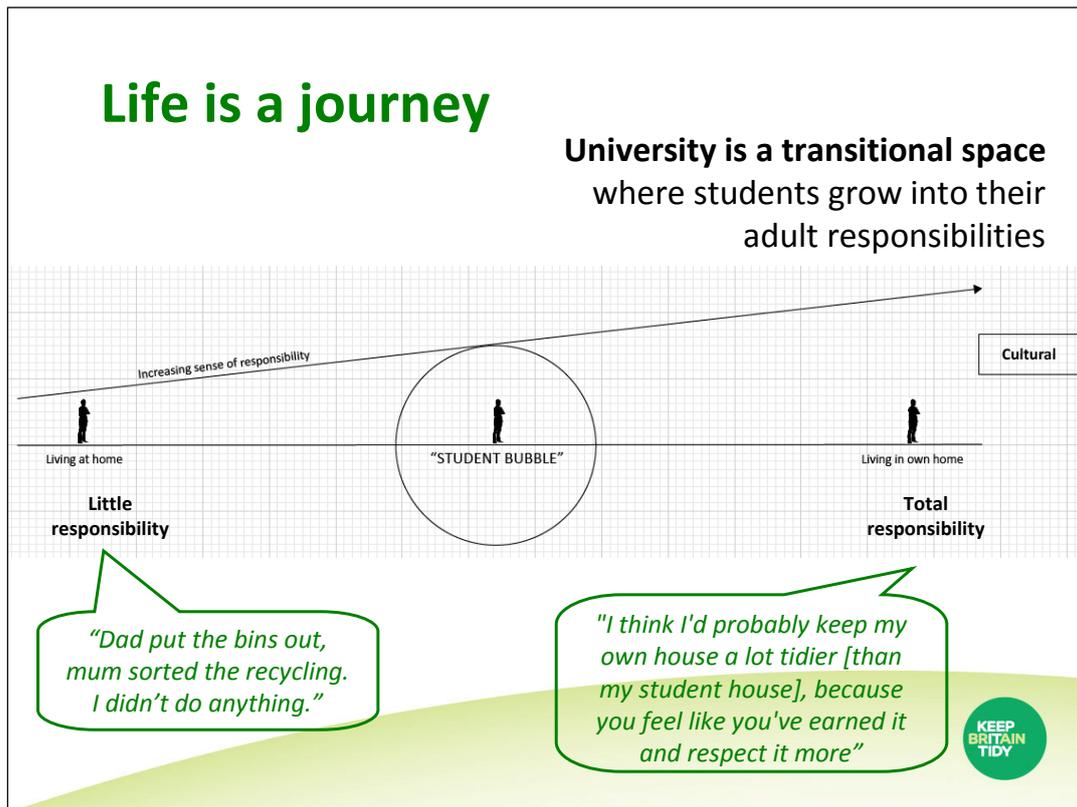
The fieldwork was carried out between 13th October and 12th December.

**And what do we know about
students?**





Through this research Keep Britain Tidy has gained a wealth of knowledge about students and how they relate to their local area when at university. In the coming slides, this report will explore all the different elements of the Student Engagement Model, and how they affect students' attitudes towards their local environment and their subsequent behaviours.



One key idea with which to understand student behaviour is that between leaving their family home and settling in their own home as an independent adult, their sphere of responsibility gradually increases. When living with their families, the vast majority of students agreed that much of the responsibility falls to their parents. Parents will delegate elements of this responsibility to their children in the form of household chores, but the responsibility ultimately lies with the parents and the children are ultimately answerable to their parents.

“Dad put the bins out, mum sorted the recycling. I didn’t do anything.”

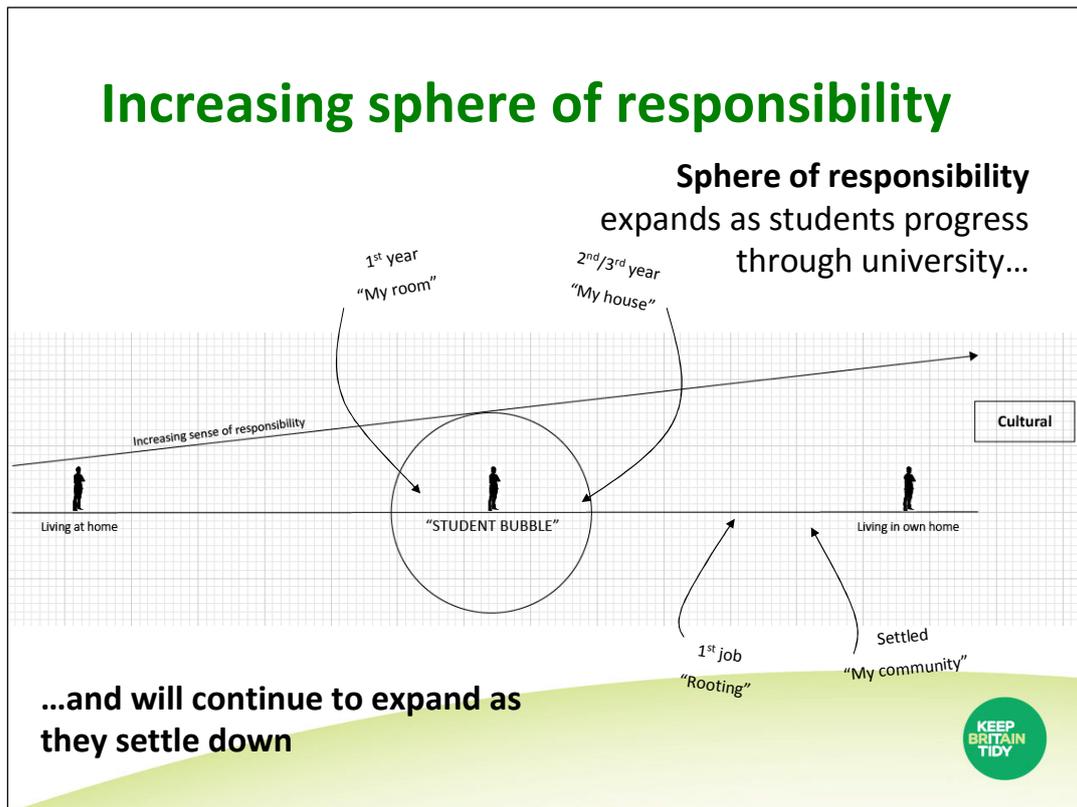
“Before uni [I had] a lot of reliance on my parents, and life seemed more simple then, because you only had to worry about the academic side and social life really.”

As one might expect, once settled in their own home after graduation, students anticipate taking on all the responsibility which previously fell to their parents.

“I think I’d probably keep my own house a lot tidier, because you feel like you’ve earned it and respect it more.”

“I think you’d be a lot more financially responsible [after graduation], because before you’re still sort of living off loans and money that people are giving to you and after uni you’ll have to work for your money.”

In effect time at university acts as a transition between these two extremes, providing a safe and sheltered environment for students to grow into their adult responsibilities.



This growth in responsibility can be witnessed even within their time at university. In first year many students live in halls of residence or flats with cleaners who take care of communal areas and remove waste and recycling. In some instances students live in catered properties so also have their meals provided for them. The students' responsibility extends to their own room, and in this sense bears more resemblance to living in the family home than living independently.

"You're still in the bubble, the university bubble; the safety of your parents is still there. You've still got student loans. It's not like living in a house by yourself, you're still living half at home."

"I think it's about pride. Here, it's not our space really, it's someone else's we're just paying for it. Our rooms will be pretty tidy, but in the kitchen you don't really give one."

The sphere of responsibility increases as students move into privately rented accommodation, extending to include their house as well as their room. The students also begin to establish responsibility for shared tasks within the house.

"I just agreed at the beginning of the year with [my housemates] that it would be easier if one of us [took responsibility for contacting the landlord], well I took it on because I also took on the bills so it just seemed logical that I took everything on."

However, this responsibility is still unlikely to extend to the exterior of the property.

"Maybe if you were going to have a barbeque you might do it (tidy the garden), but that's about it."

It is interesting to note that parents still hold a strong influence over students' behaviour.

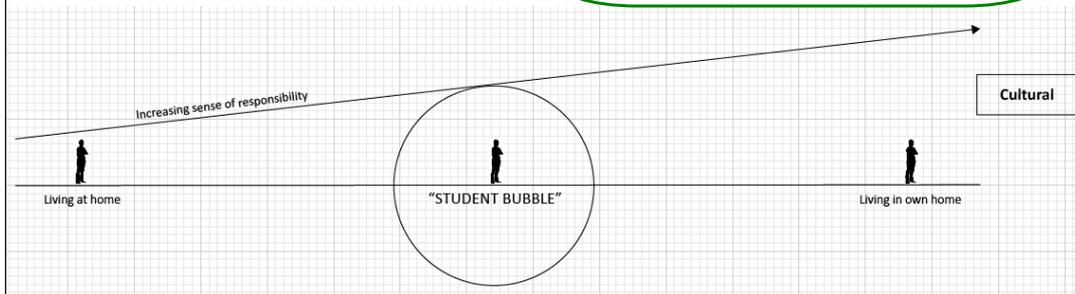
"Obviously your parents are going to come and visit and you don't want them to see your kitchen in an utter state, so it's a mad frantic panic the night before."

Life is a journey – in Bath

- Parents were providers
- Life was simpler
- Balance between freedom and responsibility

"Before uni [I had] a lot of reliance on parents, and life seemed more simple then, because you only had to worry about the academic side and social life really."

"We want to be in charge of our own lives, but at the same time you don't want the responsibility that comes with it."



Looking in more detail at how this applied in Bath, students had a strong sense of what their parents had done for them when they were at home. There was a greater appreciation of the efforts they had gone to, now that the students needed to be more self-reliant.

"I would say that now I've gone to uni when I go back I'm a lot more helpful in the house. You realise the importance of it."

The students were relishing the freedom that came with their university lives, but also voiced their reluctance to shoulder the associated responsibilities.

To demonstrate how this affects behaviours we will explore a working example – What's on their radar?

What's on their radar?



Social

Making friends, meeting new friends, nights out, getting involved with clubs / societies



Environmental

Sorting the recycling, putting bins out on the right day



"Sensible, adult, responsible"

Budgeting, reporting problems to the local council, cleaning the house, ensuring you get a good deal on utility bills



University assignments

Completing university assignments

Financial

Shopping, getting a part time job



Maintaining immediate property

Maintaining the garden / yard



Staying informed

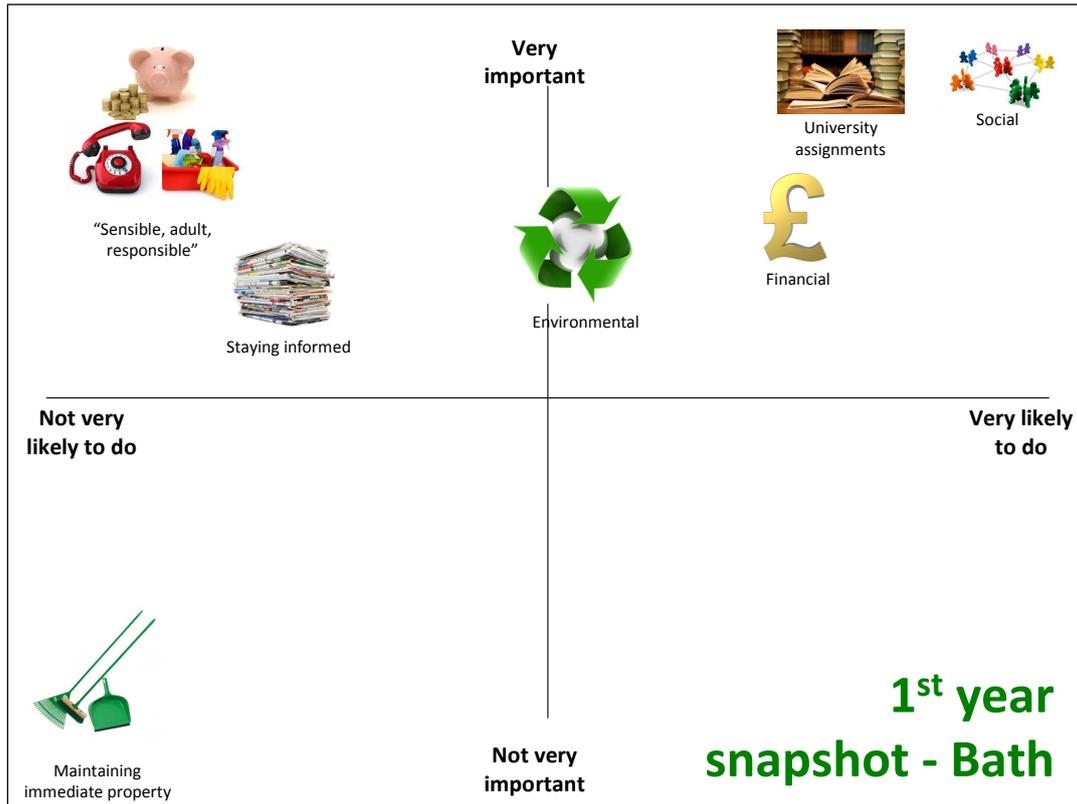
Keeping up to date with local news / issues, keeping up to date with current affairs



To help us get a better understanding of student behaviours and motivations we gave each of the groups a prioritisation exercise to complete. They were presented with a range of activities that students might do whilst at university and asked to consider how important they were and also how likely they were to do them.

Patterns emerged in the data, particularly the common positioning of activities which were deemed similar in some way. During the analysis process, Keep Britain Tidy's researchers have grouped commonly placed, similar activities together to aid understanding. For example all social activities were consistently positioned together, and were regarded as being of similar importance and likelihood. Financial activities which had an immediate impact on their circumstances, such as shopping and getting a part time job, were grouped together. Interestingly though, more strategic financial activities such as budgeting and obtaining a good deal on utility bills fell into the group termed "Sensible, adult, responsible". These are activities which students associated heavily with adulthood, tasks which they might expect their parents to do.

The following slides will explore how students prioritised these activities.



First year students prioritised social activities above all others, being both very important and very likely to happen. Making friends and socialising was regarded as a significant part of coming to university, and one that would enhance the rest of their university experience. Indeed, social activities were considered to be of similar priority level as university assignments.

First years also prioritised financial activities such as shopping and getting a part time job as these were regarded as essential. Environmental activities (recycling and putting the bins out) were regarded as being very important, although they were less likely to be done. This demonstrates a significant level of awareness of the "correct" behaviours, albeit not translating into consistent action at this stage. However, the majority of first year students living in halls of residence reported that their waste and recycling was removed from their properties by cleaners, so they were only required to take minimal responsibility for these tasks.

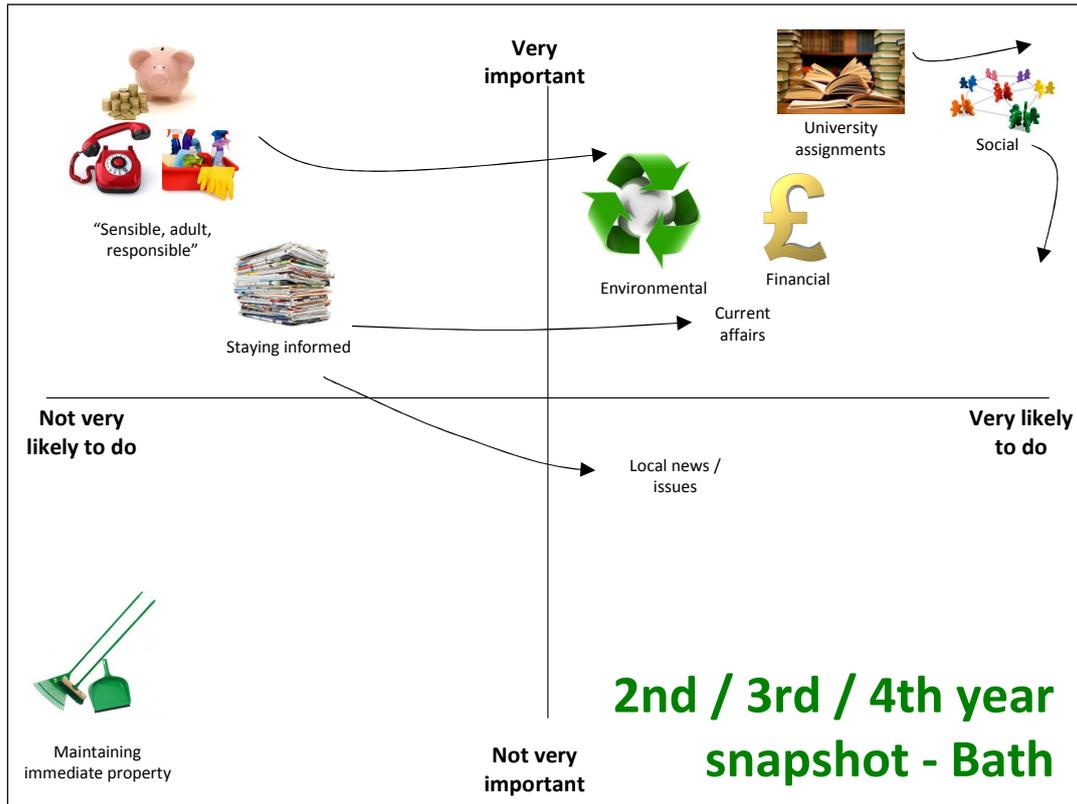
"A guy comes into our kitchen and empties our bin and recycling boxes for us."

In terms of staying informed responses were more mixed. In general staying up to date with current affairs was regarded as more important for those who were required to keep abreast of current affairs as part of their course.

The activities labelled "sensible, adult, responsible" were acknowledged to be important by the students, but were currently not a priority for them. These were the tasks which students associated with adulthood, the sort of things their parents would take responsibility for, but not something they were ready to take on yet.

"I think other people around you are more likely to have more time to report problems to the council, so the likelihood of you doing it is probably less."

In contrast maintaining the immediate property was not regarded as important by the first year students. They rarely used the yards / gardens attached to their properties; consequently it did not occur to them that they might want to or be responsible for maintaining these areas.



As students progress through university their sphere of responsibility increases, and their priorities shift, which has a significant impact on their likelihood to take responsibility for certain activities.

The first change observed was that social activities begin to be less of priority, and university assignments take precedence. Although social activities are still highly likely to happen, they are regarded as less important as students begin to focus on their university work, which now contributes to their final grades.

"The more work you do the less inclined you are to go out and get hammered."

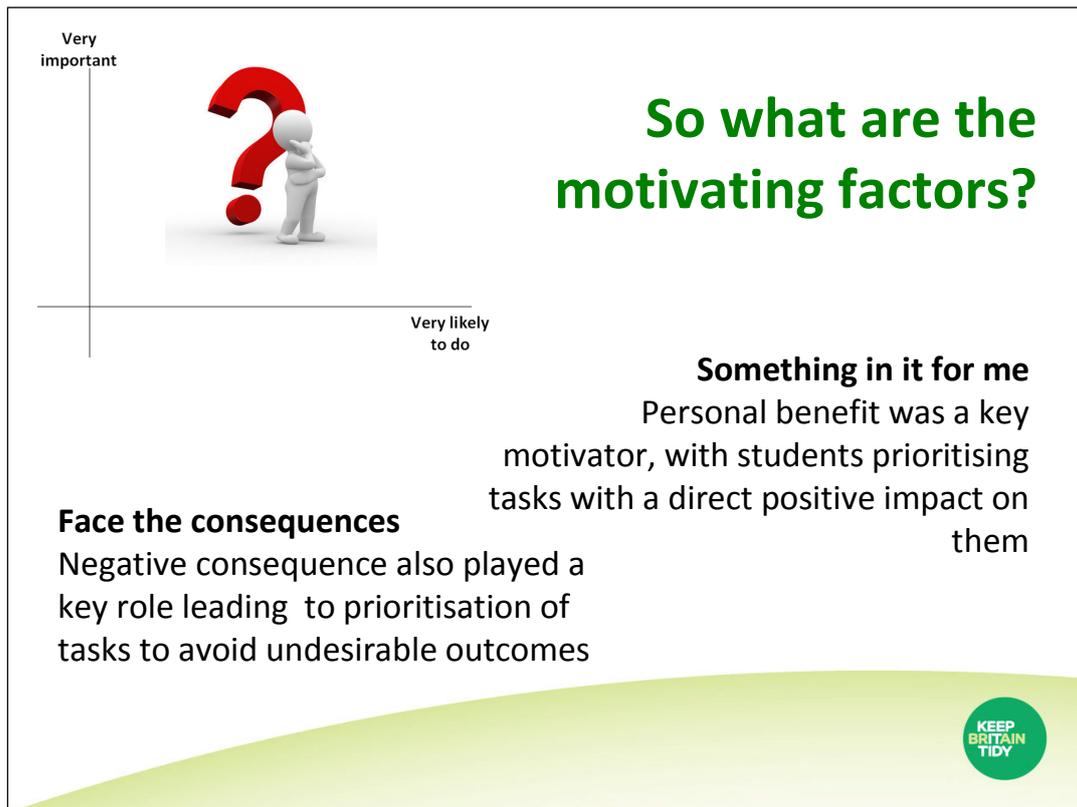
There is also an increase in likelihood to take responsibility for environmental and "sensible, adult, responsible" activities, suggesting that the sphere of responsibility has increased sufficiently to begin to cover these tasks. Although they are not always done consistently.

"I have to say though as the years go by people tend to be better at the budgeting."

"We've forgotten [to put the bins out] quite a few times."

Interestingly, maintaining their immediate property is still regarded as neither important nor likely to happen, suggesting that the sphere of responsibility does not extend to the exterior of a property at this stage.

So what is it that motivates students to prioritise the tasks that they rate as very important and that they are very likely to do?



Two significant factors linked the issues which students rated very important and very likely to do. They either perceived a direct personal benefit for completing the tasks or they were aware of a negative consequence if the tasks went incomplete.

For example, social activities were not only regarded as integral to the university experience, they were perceived to significantly improve the quality of student life.

Equally, the students were aware that if they did not complete their university assignments they would not graduate; a prospect that none of them relished.

Interestingly, this also applied to the environmental tasks, with students placing greater emphasis on putting their bins out and sorting their recycling if they thought they would get fined for not doing it correctly.

"If you are going to get fined for not doing it then it's probably pretty important and you're probably likely to do it."



A minority of the students consulted believed there were financial consequences for failing to do their recycling or place their bins out correctly. This led the students to prioritise these issues, as indicated on the previous page.

A minority of Bath students believed that they were liable to be fined if they did not manage their waste and recycling correctly, leading them to prioritise these tasks. It is interesting to note that students in Bath stated that they were more likely to do these tasks than their counterparts at other universities, suggesting that their belief in the consequences for their actions had an impact on their behaviours.

So, how does this apply to local environmental quality?

How do students impact on LEQ?

Students are unlikely to do anything proactive to contribute positively to their area...

"I wouldn't do something really actively towards it, but I think if there were something I could fit into my daily life that would help the community then I would do it. But I wouldn't go out of my way to do it, just because I don't have the time."



Negative
impact

0

Positive
impact

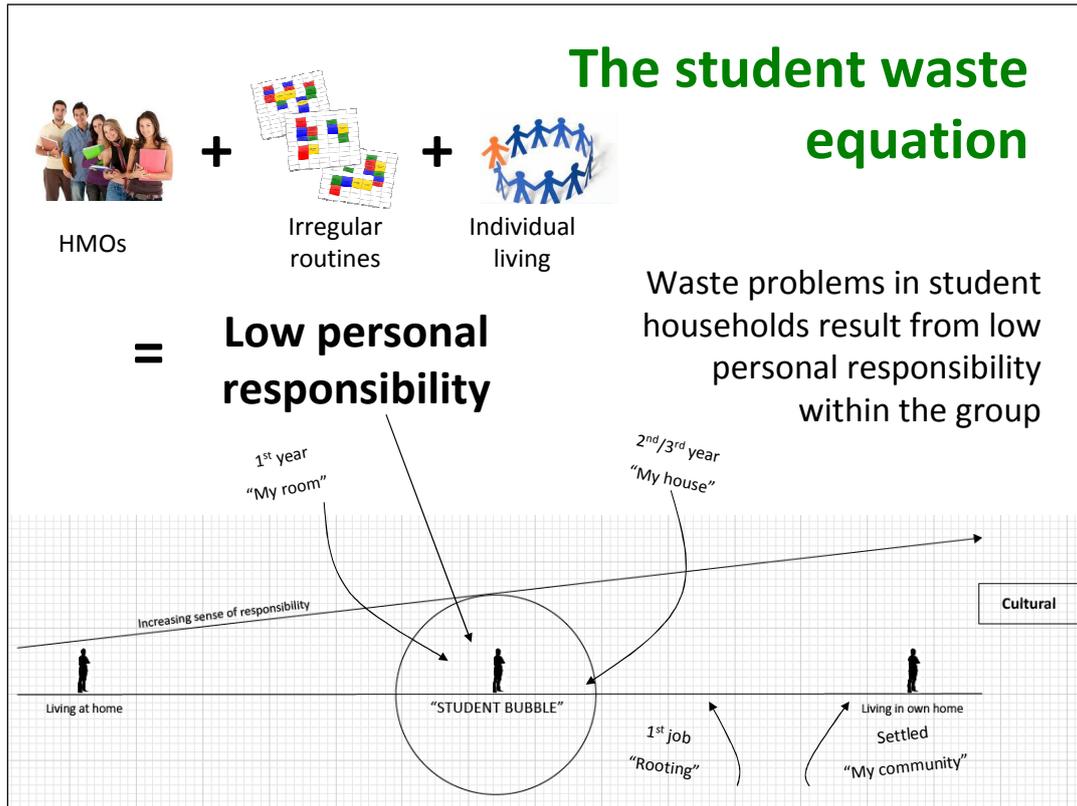
...but they don't feel like they engage with detrimental behaviours either



From the discussions with students it emerged that the vast majority of students were unlikely to do anything proactive to contribute positively to their area. This reflects what we have previously understood about students' sphere of responsibility not yet extending to include their local area. Consequently, the vast majority of students consulted would not take action to improve their area, whether something small scale such as reporting an issue to the council or larger scale such as getting involved in a tidy up. They perceived this responsibility to lie with other residents.

However, the majority of students did not believe they engaged in behaviours that had a negative impact on their area. They felt it was their responsibility to behave to an acceptable standard wherever they went.

Despite students' perceptions to the contrary, students are perceived to have a negative impact on waste issues. This will be explored further in the following slide.



The students consulted readily admitted that they could be forgetful when it came to ensuring that their domestic waste and recycling was managed correctly and put out at the right time. Several factors were identified which influenced this behaviour.

Firstly, student houses are commonly Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), often with more people in residence than they were originally intended to house. The sheer number of people living in each property can increase the amount of waste produced, in comparison to a family-occupied property.

"I live in a house of five people"

"I live with six others"

In a family occupied property, it might be expected that the homeowner or lead tenant would ensure that these tasks were completed, however in student properties the housemates are more equal, allowing for diffusion of responsibility. Consequently, there is often no one who takes on that role.

Secondly, students' routines are often quite irregular. Their lectures may not always begin at the same time each day, and their other commitments may differ from week to week. Consequently it can be a challenge for students to remember to put their waste out on the right day, or to sort their recycling correctly.

Finally, despite sharing a property many students live as individuals, not sharing meals or chores. This can result in higher levels of waste and a failure of anyone to take responsibility for domestic tasks.

"We had a Christmas dinner yesterday, but that was the first time everyone's eaten together."

In essence, students are not deliberately ignoring these tasks, neither are they trying to get away with poor behaviour, it is just that no one takes on the role of managing the waste. This can be contextualised by revisiting the sphere of responsibility, which demonstrates the limitations of a student's personal responsibility. In this instance, students need to be pushed into ensuring that they have a system in place for managing waste.

Lack of responsibility – in Bath

Individual behaviour was widely apparent

"With meals and stuff occasionally we'll cook something other people will eat, but on the whole we cook for ourselves."

"It's different every week." [who puts the bins out]

Although there was some evidence of broader household responsibility

"I also took on the bills, so it just seemed logical that I took everything on." [contacting landlord]



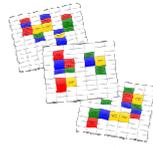
Individual behaviour was widely apparent in Bath. However there were instances of broader household responsibility. Interestingly these instances generally occurred in second, third or fourth year households, when the students' sphere of responsibility was beginning to extend to include their house. However, it did seem that there were individuals within the households who were taking personal responsibility for these tasks, rather than the entire household agreeing on responsibilities.

The student waste equation in Bath



HMOs

+



Irregular routines

+



Individual living

"The bin, when it gets full, whoever see it's full empties it."

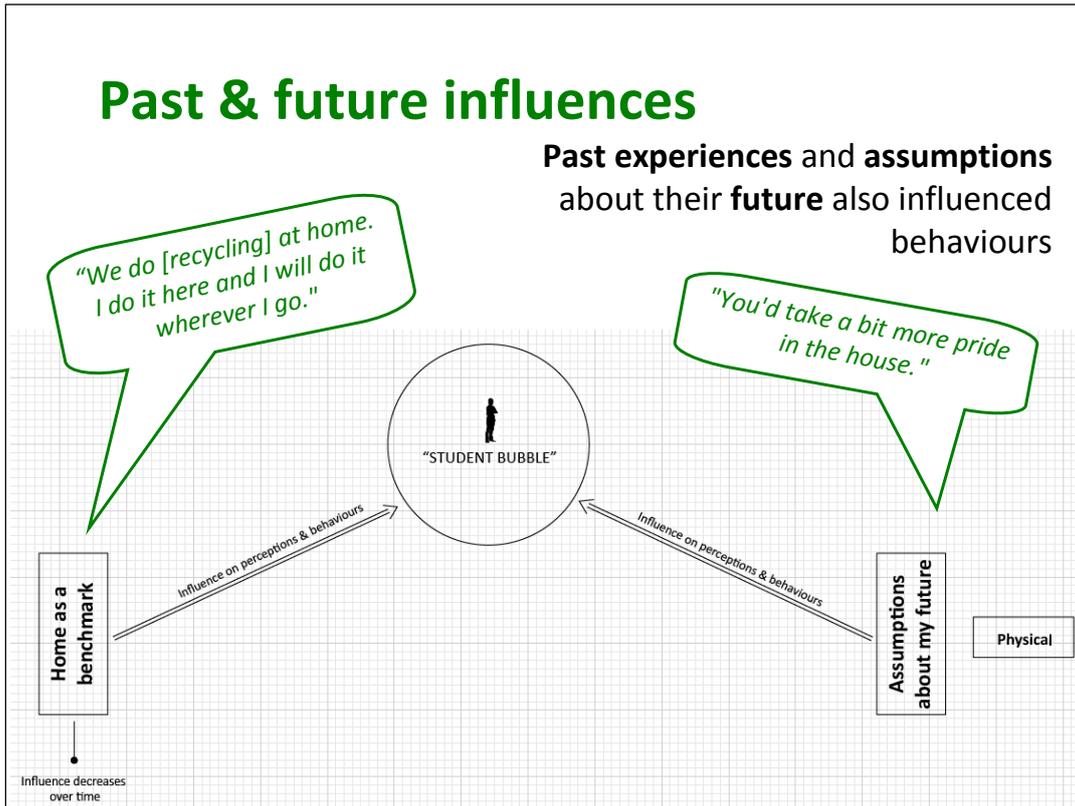
"Putting the bins out isn't a particularly glamorous job so you think ok I can leave it to someone else to do. So you just pass it onto the next person"

KEEP
BRITAIN
TIDY

Lack of personal responsibility also impacted on behaviours around waste and recycling, allowing these tasks to be overlooked or forgotten. By prioritising these tasks as important on the student radar, Bath's students have already acknowledged the importance of these tasks. This further highlights the need to push students into taking responsibility for these tasks.

Past & future influences

Past experiences and assumptions about their future also influenced behaviours

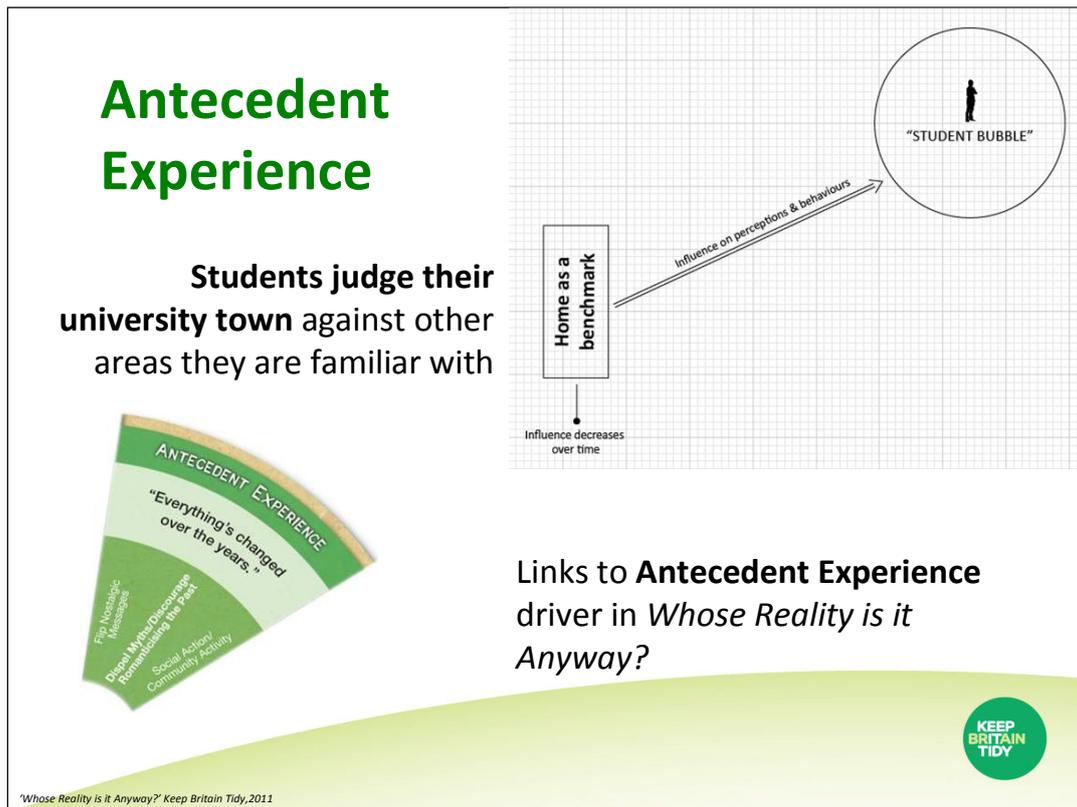


Influences from the past had a strong influence on student behaviours. For example students whose parents had placed a strong emphasis on recycling were more likely to prioritise this behaviour at university.

"We do [recycling] at home. I do it here and I will do it wherever I go."

Equally, assumptions about their future were used to frame, and to some extent justify, their current behaviour. Students commonly believed that their low prioritisation of "sensible, adult, responsible" type tasks, and others to do with the upkeep of their property, were explained by their lack of investment in the area. Once they were settled in an area and living in their own home, the students anticipated that their increased investment in the area would bring about an increase in more adult behaviours.

"You'd take a bit more pride in the house."



Further to the influences that the past has on behaviours, past experience also influences how students perceive their local area.

The Keep Britain Tidy *Whose Reality is it Anyway?* report highlights that Antecedent Experience influences residents' perceptions of their area: "Residents bring to any area memories of past neighbourhood experiences. These experiences are frequently romanticised or tempered with nostalgia for 'times gone by'."

It may seem obvious to say that students compare their university town to their home town, but to take this a step further we can say that students use their home town as a yardstick against which to measure their university town.

"It's quite easy to get attached to Bath as a place. It's a small and really nice place, whereas where I'm from it's really big and much more industrial"

This also appears to influence behaviour. Students who felt that the general appearance of the area where they went to university was significantly better than the area where they had lived before were likely to improve their behaviours to meet the perceived standard of behaviour in their university town.

Antecedent experience in Bath



"I think it's always a comparison with where you're from."
2nd Year

"It's quite easy to get attached to Bath as a place. It's a small and really nice place, whereas where I'm from it's really big and much more industrial."
2nd year

"I find it enjoyable to do recycling at home because the system works so much better. You have different bags for different things, which means you can put it outside the house. It's much more convenient and more hygienic."
2nd Year



"Whose Reality is it Anyway?" Keep Britain Tidy, 2011

In Bath both first and second year students acknowledged the differences between Bath and the area where they had lived previously.

Bath was held in very positive regard by the students. It was perceived to be an attractive and safe city, which the students liked. This is also likely to be advantageous in encouraging correct behaviours from students, as they wished to maintain the positive appearance of the area.

A minority of the students commented that they preferred the recycling system implemented in their home town, to the one in place in Bath. Clearly not all local authority areas offer the same systems, but it is important to bear in mind that this can impact on a student's likelihood to use the system fully. Ensuring that the system and how to use it are communicated clearly to students will enable them to make the most of the services available.

It is also important to note the differing experiences of international students coming to Bath to study. As local authority services can differ across the UK, they differ even more widely from country to country. Consequently the impact of Antecedent Experience can be even greater. For example, a representative from the university quoted an example of international students from China who were recycling plastic carrier bags and film in their plastics recycling container, instead of the required plastic bottles and tubs, because that was how they understood the definition of plastics. Working closely with the university to identify these students and ensure that they understand how local services work and what is required from them can help to minimise the impact.

People & Places

Sense of belonging to past and future areas is driven by attachment to people and place



The majority of the students we spoke to felt a sense of belonging both at university and in their home town. However, the factors influencing their sense of belonging differed for the two locations.

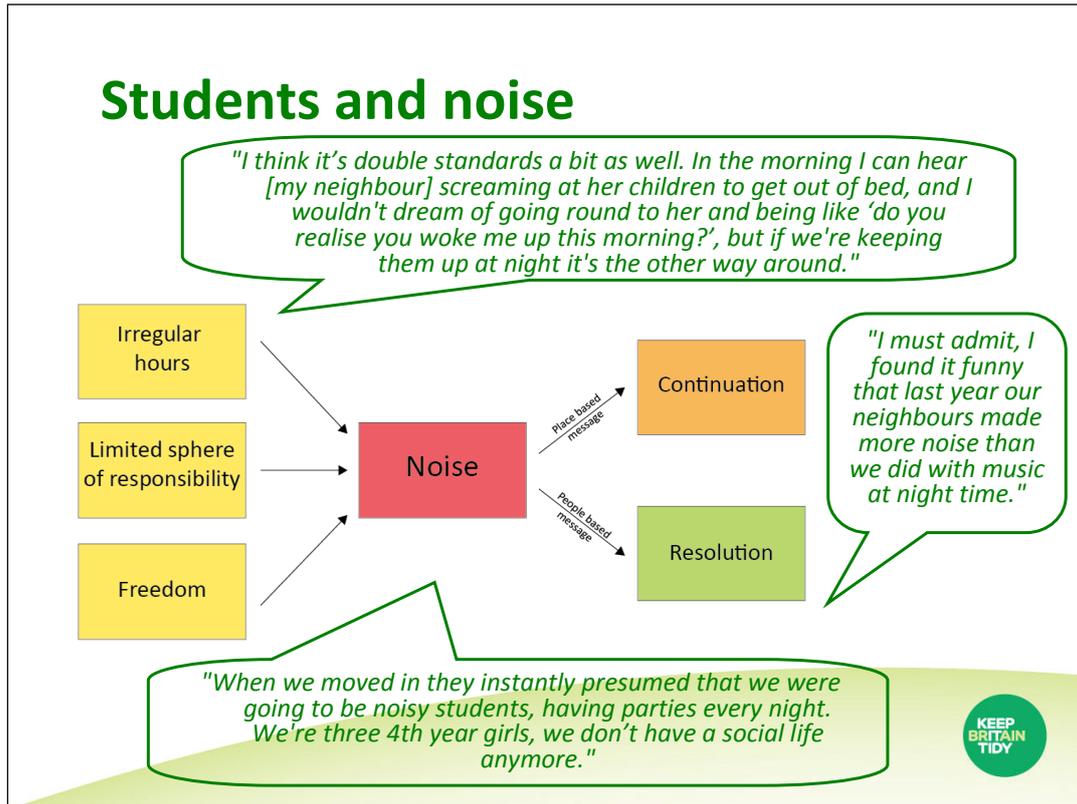
The students defined their sense of belonging in their home town in terms of familiarity with the area, the length of time they had lived there, and how engaged they felt with the area's history. In effect they had roots in the area and friends and family close by. Their sense of belonging was driven by the strength of relationships they had with people in the area, and attachment to the area itself.

"It's just like you've been there for so long you fit in and it's yours because you've become used to it."

In contrast their sense of belonging at university was almost solely driven by the strength of relationships with their fellow students.

"When you get your group of friends and you just settle into it. Things seem more easy and natural, and it's not hard to live here at all because you've got your close group of friends around you"

It is anticipated that once students graduate and settle in an area, their attachment to that area will grow and their sense of belonging will be driven by people and places once more. This makes the student bubble something of an anomaly. However, this is an important factor, as it also influences behaviours. This will be demonstrated on the next slide.



Some of the key things we have already learnt about students and their behaviour also apply to students as noise makers. Firstly, they keep irregular hours, which means their living patterns may be out of sync with their neighbours'. Consequently, students may be making noise at times which are unacceptable to their neighbours simply through their day to day lifestyles. Secondly, students' sphere of responsibility is limited to their house, suggesting that they are unlikely to consider the impact of their behaviour on their neighbours unless prompted to do so. Finally, university is regarded as a time of freedom, which enables students to engage in behaviours and accept standards which they may not at any other stage in of their life.

All of these factors come together to draw a picture of students as noise makers. As with waste and recycling issues discussed previously, student noise is often not malicious or deliberate, rather their sphere of responsibility has just not grown sufficiently to make them consider the volume of their everyday activities. Again, students are likely to require additional prompting to be consider their neighbours. As we learnt in the previous slide, students' sense of belonging to their university area is driven by people rather than place. In this instance is it likely that a place based message calling on students to make their area a quiet neighbourhood is unlikely to have a significant impact on behaviour. However, a people based message, calling on students and their neighbours to engage with one another could yield more positive results. Where students and their neighbours engaged positively, and behaved considerately to one another, relations were better and disagreements over noise were averted.

"We've got quite a good relationship with our neighbours. If we're doing anything that's going to be loud, like if we're having a pre-drinks little party round ours we'll just knock on their door and say look it might be a bit loud tonight and they're fine about it"

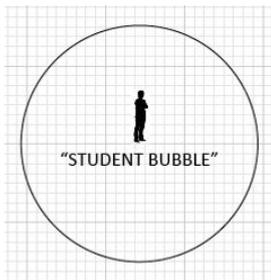
Ownership

Students view their time at university as temporary at this stage their sense of ownership and investment is limited

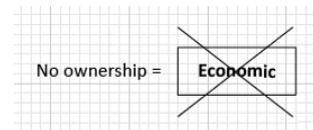
Student life is unique

Epitomised by sense of freedom and limited responsibility

Standards and behaviours are acceptable which aren't acceptable at any other time



= **Transient** =



All of the insights about students already explored in this report demonstrate the factors influencing students and their behaviour in the area where they go to university. The final factor at play is ownership of the area. During their time at university students are very much aware that they are transient residents in the area. Whilst they may form strong friendships with their housemates and other students, and report a feeling of belonging in the area, they still think of university as time out from real life – the ‘university bubble’. This is further compounded by their lack of financial investment in the area.

Awareness of their transient relationship with the area then serves to limit the degree to which students feel ownership of their area. Consequently students experience very little engagement with or interest in the long term future of their university town, as they see their own future as being elsewhere, or believe they will begin to engage once they have left university and have a greater investment in the area.

The lack of ownership experienced whilst at university, along with the limited sphere of responsibility experienced by students, also enables them to engage in behaviours and accept standards which they may not at any other stage of their life. Whether that be how they choose to decorate their room or the standard of cleanliness in their house. Were these behaviours to be transferred back to their parents’ house, they would not be tolerated.

Equally, they would not continue these behaviours once they had settled down, as they were only considered acceptable within the realm of student living.

“You’d take a bit more pride in the house.”

Engagement with LEQ

Limited proactive engagement with LEQ

- Sphere of responsibility does not yet extend to local area
- Lack of ownership of area



Some involvement with general volunteering

- Personal interest and career advancement are triggers



None of the students consulted for this research had undertaken any form of proactive engagement with their local environment during their time at university. When it was discussed they showed little or no interest in doing so. Time was cited as the most significant barrier to engagement, however as a student's sphere of responsibility does not extend to their local area it is unlikely that they would engage, even if time wasn't a factor.

"I wouldn't do something really actively towards it, but I think if there were something I could fit into my daily life that would help the community then I would do it. But I wouldn't go out of my way to do it, just because I don't have the time."

The majority were aware of opportunities to volunteer through their university or students union, and a minority knew of environmental opportunities (not necessarily local environmental quality related) offered through this source. However, only a very small minority of the students had taken advantage of any of these opportunities, none of which related to LEQ. In these instances the triggers were a personal interest in the type of work, supporting their course or increasing employability.

As mentioned above, students do not have a strong sense of ownership for their area, neither does their sphere of responsibility extend to include their local area at this stage. Both these factors indicate that students are unlikely to engage in activities to improve the local environment, unless it is a matter of personal interest, or of personal benefit. Therefore resources would be better directed to prompting students to engage with 'essential activities' e.g. managing their waste correctly.

How does this apply affect communications?



Students are a notoriously difficult group to communicate with. As a transient population with different drivers to the rest of the population, a targeted approach is needed. This research has highlighted several different points which will be of use when considering this approach.

Communicating with students

This is what they told us...

Timing

Use of media

Initiative

Sender

There are several different points during the academic year when students may need to make use of particular local authority services. For example at the start of the new academic year, when they may need to dispose of packaging from newly purchased items, or the end of the year when they are disposing of unwanted items before leaving university. Equally, students moving into their new property at the start of an academic year will need to know about waste and recycling collections. Targeting appropriate communications to known student properties / areas in time for these events will help to ensure students have the information they need to act responsibly.

The students consulted were frequent users of social media. However they were also quite critical in their assessment of how organisations used it. Social media could be a good way to communicate with students, but it must be done well for them to engage with it.

"I don't think [social media is] tapped into properly in all honesty. People have a social media site, but they don't know how to use it"

Students describe themselves as time poor, and are unlikely to take time to seek out the information about services in their area and how they work. Communication methods which rely on the resident going out of their way to access them, such as websites, are unlikely to be effective with this audience.

Email was the most popular form of communication with students, however it is also very easy to delete. Who sends an email is important in determining whether students will read it. 93% of students would open and read an email from their university, 92% from their tutor, 82% from their landlord, but only 61% from their local authority. This indicates that students are most likely to listen to those with some power or influence over them. Local authorities should consider working with universities and landlords to reinforce communications.

Communicating with students

This is what they told us...	We already know...	Recommendations...
Timing	People not places	...tailor comms schedule to academic year
Use of media	Living as individuals	...use social media BUT do it well
Initiative	Motivators	...avoid comms requiring students use initiative
Sender	Try something new	...comms via uni or landlord ...avoid place based messages
		...avoid household comms ...provide rewards or consequences ... best form of comms is email BUT easy to delete ...consider face to face / peer to peer

Students engage with people rather than places when at university. Avoid place based messages, and try communications focussing on people instead.

Despite sharing houses, students often live as individuals within their homes. Instead of communicating with households, try to target communications to individuals where possible.

Students are motivated by personal benefit and negative consequences. Where appropriate, consider using these to engage students in desirable behaviours.

Different partners in this research project have reported particular success using different methods of communication to engage students. One partner found face to face communication worked particularly well when dealing with student households managing their waste incorrectly.

"They tend to be really helpful and not the stereotypical students that everybody seems to think they are. That's my personal experience of it. So they do react well to face to face on site, either knocking on the door or meeting them in the street"

Another partner advocates peer to peer communication, suggesting it is more effective in encouraging behaviour change.

"Student led communications are particularly appealing to students. If its me giving them information that's not as interesting as if a group of students are giving them the same information in a more creative way then I could have thought of."

Communications in Bath



Influences

"...because it's good to know the people who are going to help you out."

1st year on tutors

"There are notice boards in the kitchen which are usually about all the important stuff."

1st year on processes

"At uni the landlord usually leaves a letter with all the information, and their phone number."

2nd year on landlords

Methods

"We get communal post and sometimes things don't get received or they get sent through to the wrong flat, so email is the best for me."

2nd year



In Bath, students were aware of various sources of information, useful for their time at university. Firstly, tutors were highlighted as an important source of information and assistance, particularly for first year students. First years also knew that important information could usually be found on the notice boards in the kitchen. Second years and above considered their landlords as information providers, giving information about the house, processes and services.

The importance of individual communication was also highlighted, as students did find that shared information did not always reach the correct people.

How can we use this information?



Conclusions & recommendations

Key priorities for students are:

- Socialising
- Finances (or lack of)
- Things that must be done
 - » *Link communications / engagement activities to their priorities*
 - » *Give a consequence for not performing tasks*
- Feelings of ownership and responsibility to place increase through time at university as sphere of responsibility expands
 - » *Encourage responsibility for buildings, exteriors, neighbourhoods through rewards and consequences*
 - » *Highlight consequences of not performing tasks*



Conclusions & recommendations

Despite living in shared accommodations, students live as individuals, not households:

- Diffusion of responsibility means household tasks can be easily overlooked
 - » *Encourage systems / processes (e.g. cleaning rota)*
 - » *Where possible communicate with individuals not households – engage with landlords / university to do this*

Behaviours are strongly influenced by past experience:

- Students do not all have a common benchmark
 - » *Provide clear guidelines on services and responsibilities*
 - » *Set new points of reference e.g. Bath is the safest city in the south west*



Conclusions & recommendations

Stronger attachment to people than place at university:

- Students are unlikely to engage in positive LEQ related activity
 - » *Engage students through people and existing groups / networks*
 - » *Focus messages on preventing negative impact on environment*





Look out for us on Twitter!
#researchkbt

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