

**Abstract: Policy and Politics conference, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

**Governing behaviour and the re-scientisation of decision-making.**

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Libertarian or 'soft' paternalism has emerged as an important style of government in the UK and in other liberal democracies. Aspiring to increase freedom of choice whilst at the same time improving welfare, it signifies a shift in the rationales and mechanisms of governing everyday conduct across a range of public policy spheres, including – but not limited to – health, personal finance and the environment. Central to the justification of libertarian paternalist modes of governing are new insights from behavioural economics, psychology, neurosciences, neuroeconomics, and (in the field of 'pro-environmental behaviour') research from the discipline of geography. These insights pertaining to the systematic mistakes, 'predictable irrationality' (Ariely, 2008), emotional determinants (Le Doux, 1994; Damasio, 1996) and instinctive bodily aspects (Gladwell, 2006) of human action are integral to developing the policies and programmes of behavioural and cultural change which characterise contemporary practice within public service reform in the UK (e.g. Cabinet Office 2004; 2008). Drawing on documentary analysis, in-depth interviews with policy strategists and case study research, this paper considers how decision-making is conceptualised by protagonists of libertarian paternalism, the mechanisms used within libertarian paternalist initiatives to shape the time-spaces in which we make decisions, and the political implications of a post-enlightenment culture of governing in which the sciences of decision-making are king.