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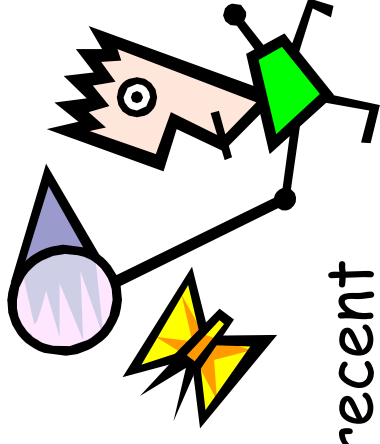


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“Working with different types of evidence”



Traditional approaches to taking tough decisions ...



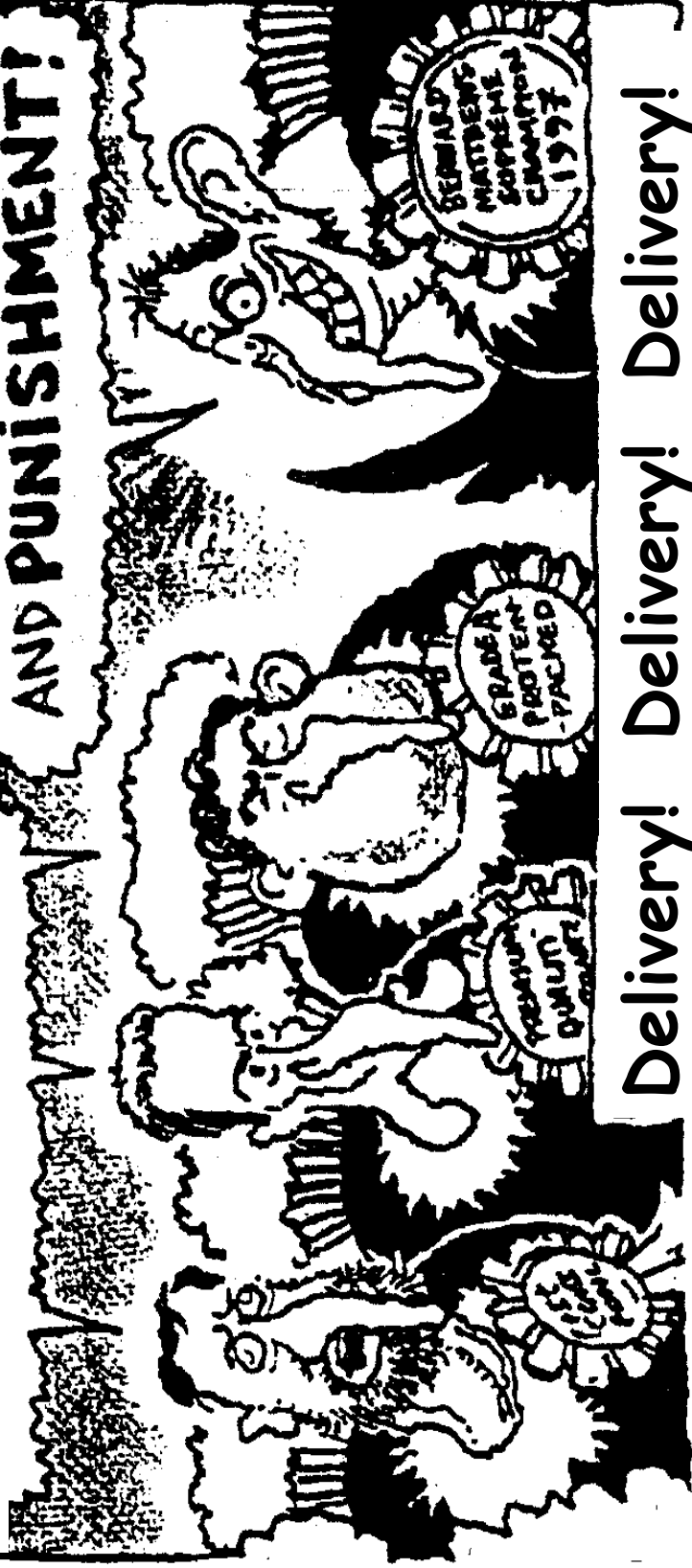
1. *Do nothing*
2. Use leadership intuition and experience
3. Copy what others have done
4. Consult internally in search for consensus
5. Seek external advice (usually at high cost)
6. Examine recent relevant cases
7. Model and forecast likely scenarios
8. Conduct local study to assess alternatives
9. *Reassess if decision needs taking at all*
10. *(Get someone else to review some relevant research...*

What role here for evidence from research...?

Pragmatic & Modernised Services:

What matters is
WHAT WORKS!

**THE EXCELLENT SHALL
HAVE RESOURCES.
THE NON-EXCELLENT
SHALL HAVE
EXHORTATION
AND PUNISHMENT!**



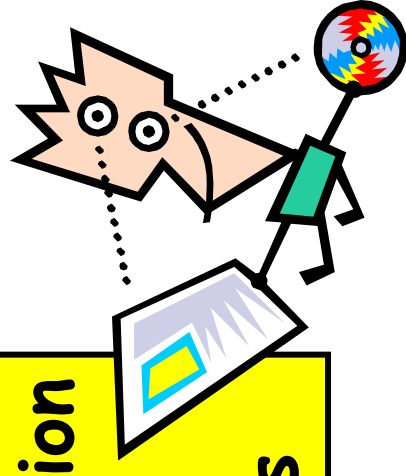
Delivery! Delivery! Delivery!

So, what IS Research EVIDENCE?

For some, research evidence = “what works”

i.e. Systematic reviews (and meta-analysis) of (preferably, double-blind, randomised control) evaluations -- or the next best thing that's available.

- ⇒ **Technical task of data integration**
- ⇒ **Hierarchies based on methodological considerations**



“What matters is What Works”

“Social science should be at the heart of policy making... we need social scientists to help determine what works and why, and what types of policy initiatives are likely to be most effective.”

David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education



But policy & evidence sometimes collide...

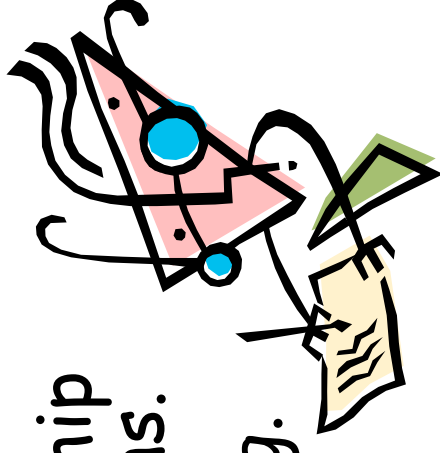
AND: “No one with the slightest common-sense could take seriously suggestions by University researchers that homework is bad for you.”

the very same, David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education

Knowledge requirements for effective social policy are *much broader* than “what works”

- *Know about problems*: e.g. the nature, formation, natural history and interrelations of social problems.
- *Know-why*: explaining the relationship between values and policy directions.
- *Know-how (to put into practice)*: e.g. pragmatic knowledge about programme implementation.
- *Know-who (to involve)*: e.g. building alliances

[Ekblom, 2002]



⇨ **Methodological pluralism, contentiousness & politics**

From instrumentality to “enlightenment uses”: promoting new ways of thinking...

*Service user
engagement...*

*Importance
of informal
carers...*

Decarceration policies...

*Patient
safety...*



*Enhancing
self-care...*

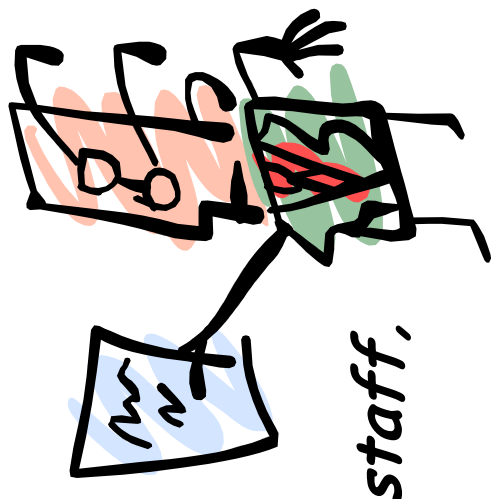
*The happiness
and well-being
agenda...*

*Harm reduction
in substance
misuse...*

⇨ Long-term, complex, uncertain – clearer in retrospect

What IS evidence: eclectic policy view...

"...expert knowledge; published research; existing statistics; stakeholder consultations; previous policy evaluations; the Internet; outcomes from consultations; costings of policy options; output from economic and statistical modelling..."



"There is also a great deal of critical evidence held in the minds of front-line staff, and those to whom policy is directed."

Who can assemble and integrate?

- Research & evaluation reports
- Client & user experience data
- Audit & inspection findings/data
- Expert views & insider knowledge
- Routine monitoring data/KPIs
- Opinion polls & stakeholder consults
- Local & international exemplars
- System capacity & implementation issues
- Costings data
- Models & forecasts

⇒ Who has – Purview? Skills? Tools? Authority?
Appropriate standpoint? Neutrality? Etc. etc...

Integrating evidence...

Research ⇨ Evidence  Knowledge

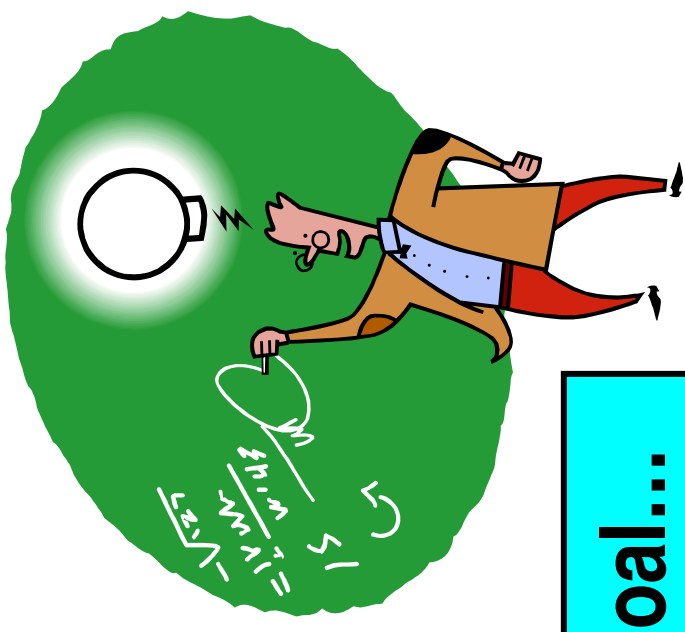
- very uncertain processes; engage with values, existing (tacit) knowledge and experience...
- socially and contextually *situated*...
- may create conflicting knowledge and/or knowledge in incommensurate domains.

And, not just *what* knowledge/evidence,
but crucially, *who's* knowledge/evidence?

- knowledge/power intimately co-constructed

Academics complicate matters further...

- *The consensual approach - working with the grain of current policy/practice.*
- *The critical and contentious approach - "keeping the system honest".*
- *Paradigm challenging - subverting current thinking and perhaps proposing new principles for action.*



⇒ **Convergence not always the goal...**

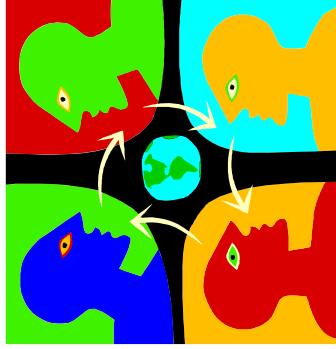
Key message: *interactive, social and interpretive models of research use*



Moving away from ideas of 'packaging' knowledge and doing 'knowledge transfer'.

Recognising instead:

- The importance of *context*;
- *Interaction* with other types of knowledge (tacit; experiential);
- Multi-voiced *iterative dialogue*;
- 'Use' as a *process* not an event.



⇨ Significant limits to control of knowledge integration ⇨ plurality

Improving research use: addressing supply, demand, and that in between

Improving stocks or reservoirs of research knowledge

Knowledge Brokerage

Models: stock broking: marriage guidance?

What happens to knowledge in brokerage?

How should brokerage be arranged, organised?

Single or multiple sites of action?

Increasing demand in political and professional worlds, and wider society



Yes, it's quite a noise - but are we having any impact?



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