

## How infrastructures make demand

**DEMAND research shows that infrastructures such as electricity grids and broadband networks are involved in making and shaping, and not just meeting, current and future patterns of energy demand.**

In the book 'Infrastructures in Practice', edited by Elizabeth Shove and Frank Trentmann (2019), DEMAND researchers show that infrastructures and social practices co-evolve and are deeply connected. For example, having a daily shower or communicating with friends and family depends on water mains, power grids, and broadband services that support the reproduction of these practices and the energy they call for. At the same time, the design of infrastructures, how they are operated and maintained relates to the ways in which they are used. For example, Janine Morley shows how the uptake of smart devices for entertainment or making phone calls has shaped the development of Wi-Fi networks.

### Shaping interpretations of 'normal' practices

DEMAND research shows that many organisations are involved in making infrastructures and therefore in shaping what becomes seen as 'normal' practice. These include standard making bodies, planners and city councils. For example, Noel Cass et al. show how standards of modern office building design reproduce and transform expectations of working practices. Nicola Spurling shows how town planners in Stevenage facilitated driving by making space for parking the car at home. In combination, this research shows that what is seen as 'normal' shifts as infrastructures are modified and extended and as notions of 'need' co-evolve.

### Shaping the future of demand

Infrastructures help keep certain practices in place and make some futures more likely than others. This suggests that there is scope for producing infrastructures that support ways of living that are much more less resource intensive than those of today.

*'Infrastructures in Practice: The Dynamics of Demand in Networked Societies', edited by Elizabeth Shove and Frank Trentmann (2019). Oxon: Routledge*

*Shove, E., Watson, M. and Spurling, N. (2015), 'Conceptualising Connections: Energy Demand, Infrastructures and Social Practices' in European Journal of Social Theory, vol. 18 (3): 274-287*

*Cass, N., Schwanen, T. and Shove, E. (2018), 'Infrastructures, Intersections and Societal Transformations' in Technological Forecasting and Social Change, vol. 137: 160-176*

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