

Devising Strategies
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[Comment: My least favourite of the Introduction papers. This is the final part of a process which involved, the class coming up with their preferred futures, identifying three necessary outcomes for those futures, and plotting a timeline of events which must occur to make those outcomes happen. We then had to choose two of those events and detail them. This passed, but I think it's crap.]

Health chip trials, 2020

Such a radically new device will require extensive testing before being made available to the public through either the NHS or private healthcare. Government health bodies should be kept updated on progress of the testing so that they are ready to consider implementing changes as soon as is feasible.

Media attention is bound to be heavy, but care should be taken not to raise hopes and generate hype (or scare stories) before trials are complete. Assessment of progress should begin early in the process with continual iterative reporting. In reporting the results of the testing both the health benefits and cost benefits should be made clear, along with an ethical justification for continuing trials.

In order for this active implantable medical device to become available on the market it must be issued with a CE mark indicating it meets European standards. This is issued by the UK Competent Authority (ie, the Secretary of State for Health acting through the Medical Devices Agency) and the approval of the local Research Ethics Committee must first be found.

Putting pressure on government to control industrial waste, 2000

Pressure must be exerted on government to highlight the dangers of industrial waste. Using Stand.org.uk as a model, a large number of people could be mobilised with comparatively little effort. Each person taking part 'adopts' their local MP by registering at the website and inputting their postcode. When an event occurs about which MPs must be pressured, one person sends a letter outlining the complaint. Everyone else who has adopted that MP receives an email asking them to send a postcard to their MP supporting this letter. This method is much more effective than bombarding MPs with letter campaigns or petitions (which have a tendency to be ignored) and is liable to be more noticeable and respected. If, at some point in the future, MPs were to adopt email to a greater extent this process could be transferred to email making it easier for campaigners.

This process could be used to highlight events such as chemical spills, excessive waste output, etc. Given that many of these events are local in nature, the network should be extended to cover county and district councils, enabling a more focussed effort at generating discussion. The largest events should result in protest directed at national representatives, smaller events at local councils. Given the increasing powers of European government, there is scope for joining with campaigners in other countries and targetting Euro MPs.

Campaigns should also be directed at media organisations, encouraging them to think that this is a newsworthy topic which they should cover. Assisting them to package stories as human interest, rather than, say, industrial spillage could improve prominence. The ability for campaigning groups to create, edit and distribute their own coverage to the media (as the J18 organisers did) can only help achieve a high profile among the public.