Rhythms & patterns of daily life 1950-2000: The changing qualities of energy demand

Nicola Spurling, n.spurling@lancaster.ac.uk
DEMAND Centre, Lancaster University.

Project team: Anna Carlsson-Hyslop, Lenneke Kuijer, Elizabeth Shove, Frank Trentmann, Matt Watson

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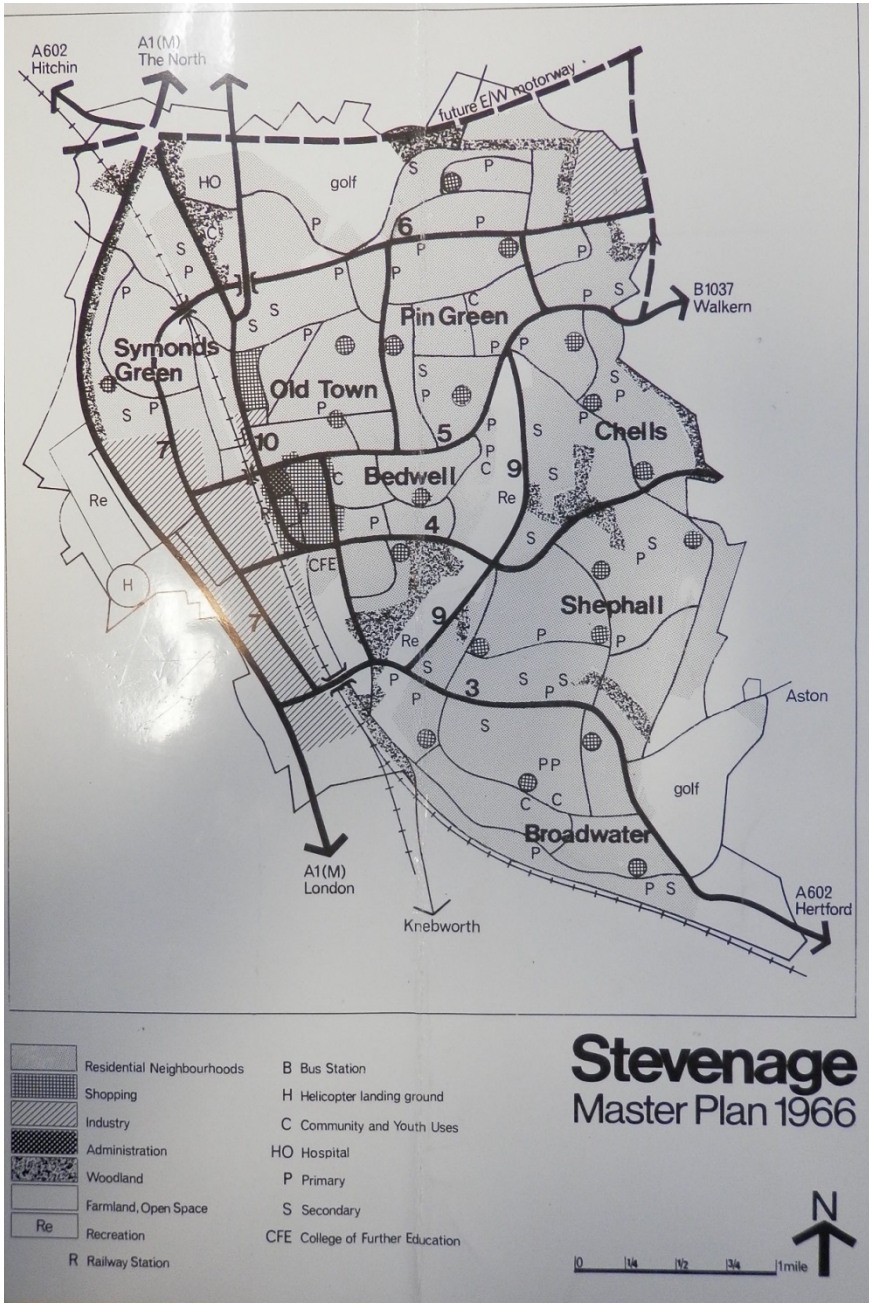
Outline

- Starting points – key ideas
- Method
- Findings
- Reflections

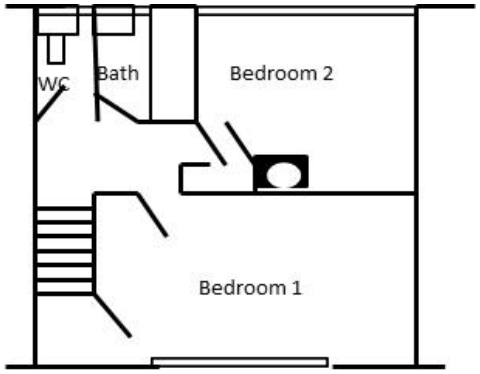
Starting points – key ideas

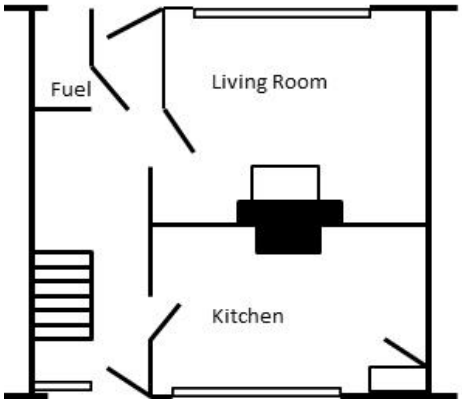
- Energy not used for its own sake but to accomplish social practices at home, at work and in moving around
- Understanding patterns of energy demand (in the home) requires an understanding of when and where social practices are performed
- And how these performances relate to patterns of infrastructure-in-use


Inverness
Aberdeen
SCOTLAND
Dundee
Edinburgh
Glasgow
United Kingdom
NORTHERN IRELAND
Isle of Man
York
Manchester
Dublin
Liverpool
ENGLAND
WALES
Oxford
London
Bristol
Cardiff
Bath
Plymouth
English Channel
Google


A602 Hitchin
A1(M) The North
future E/W motorway
HO
golf
B1037 Walkern
Pin Green
Symonds Green
Old Town
Chells
Bedwell
Shephall
Aston
golf
Broadwater
A1(M) London
Knebworth
A602 Hertford
Residential Neighbourhoods
Shopping
Industry
Administration
Woodland
Farmland, Open Space
Re Recreation
R Railway Station
B Bus Station
H Helicopter landing ground
C Community and Youth Uses
HO Hospital
P Primary
S Secondary
CFE College of Further Education
Stevenage
Master Plan 1966
N
0 1/4 1/2 3/4 1mile

Archive Work





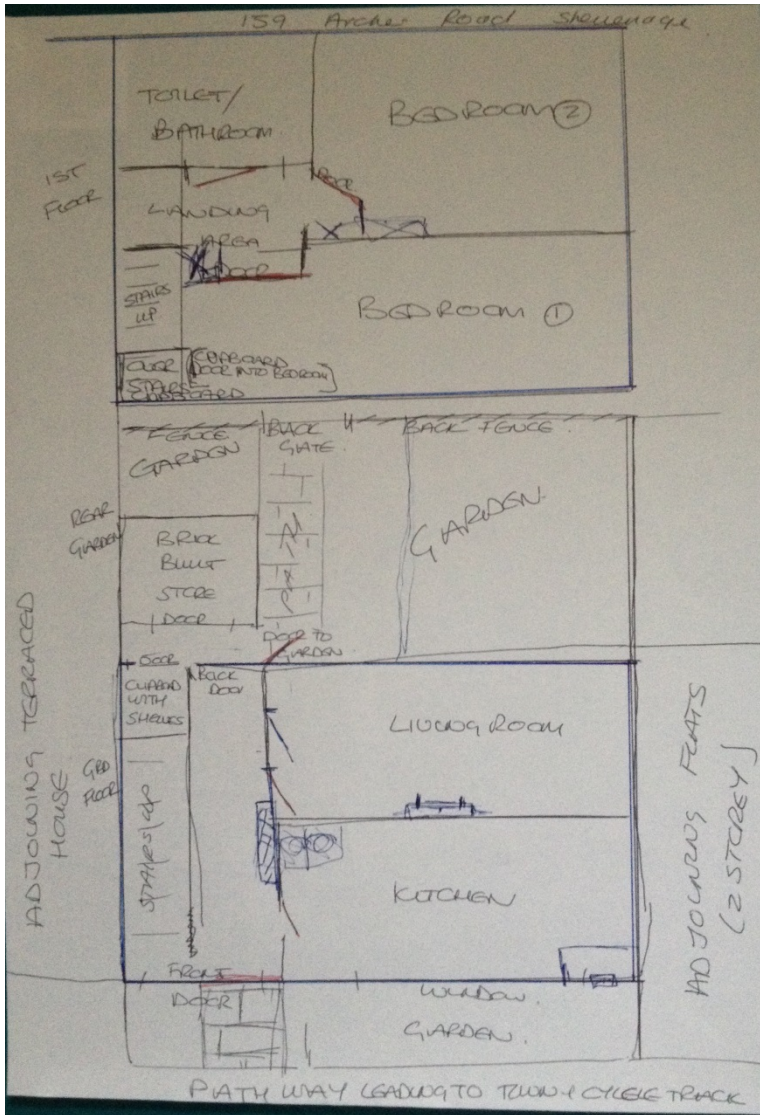
Plans: neighbourhoods & house types

Rent books: details about connections to gas and/or electric, how homes were heated, what fuel type for cooking, what was in the bathroom

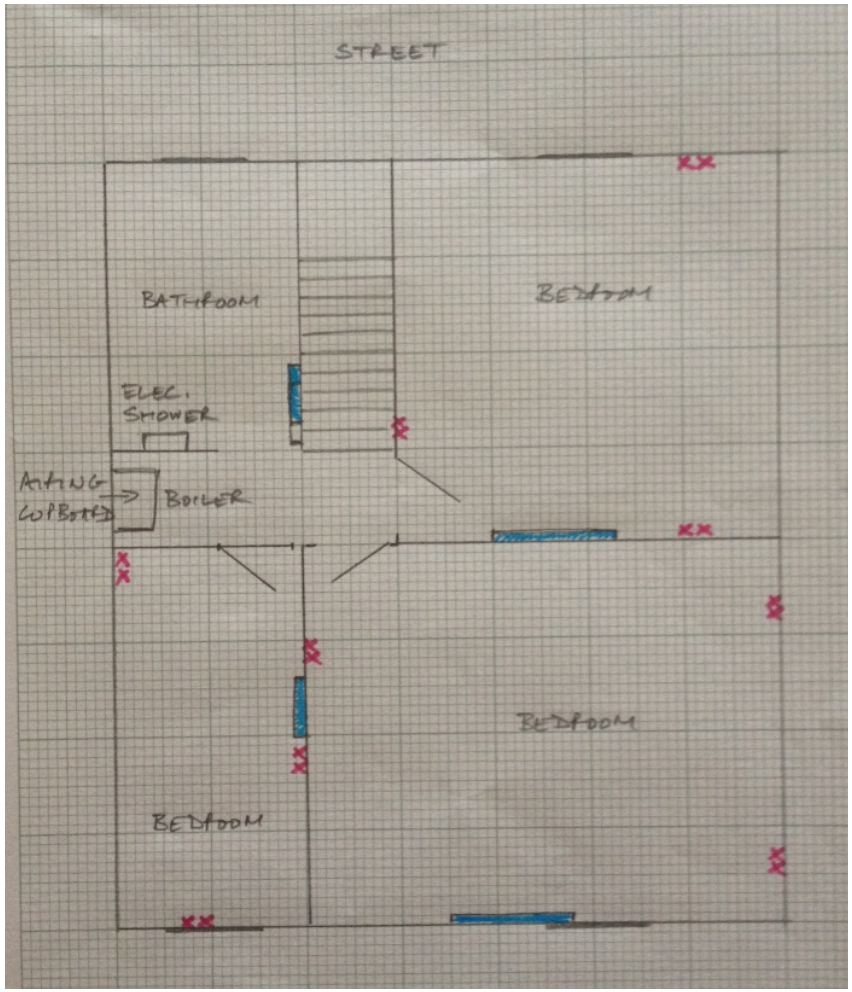
Years discussed in detail	Age of interviewee
1950s	Now aged 72
1960s	Now aged 80, 76, 75, 72, 66
1970s	Now aged 76, 72, 66, 62, 57
1980s	Now aged 62, 62, 60, 60, 57
1990s	Now aged 60, 44, 39
2000s	Now aged 51, 38, 38

15 in total. Some interviewees spoke about more than one decade.

1979


159 Archer Road Stevenage
TOILET/ BATHROOM
BEDROOM (2)
1ST FLOOR
LANDING AREA
STAIRS UP
BEDROOM (1)
CLOSET STAIRS UNDERNEATH
(BOARD DOOR INTO BEDROOM)
FENCE
GARDEN
BACK GATE
BACK FENCE
REAR GARDEN
BRICK BUILT STORE
DOOR
GARDEN
DOOR TO GARDEN
DOOR
CUPBOARD WITH SHELVES
BACK DOOR
LIVING ROOM
GRD FLOOR
STAIRS UP
KITCHEN
FRONT DOOR
WINDOW
GARDEN
ADJOINING TERRACED HOUSE
ADJOINING FLATS (2 STOREY)
PATH WAY LEADING TO TOWN + CYCLE TRACK

2014


STREET
BATHROOM
BEDROOM
ELEC. SHOWER
AIRING CUPBOARD
BOILER
BEDROOM
BEDROOM

Methodology

Aspect of change	Method
Daily and weekly rhythms	Oral history interviews – daily/weekly patterns of life (of interviewee & household)
Infrastructure of homes	Archival work & oral history interviews: house plans and energy infrastructure, both when built and across the period
Infrastructure-in-use	Oral history interviews – prompting discussion of on/off time of appliances as part of daily rhythms & patterns

Findings:

1. Changing rhythms & patterns of social practices

2. Changing spatiality of practices

3. Changing relation of social practices and infrastructure-in-use

1. Rhythms and patterns of practices

introduction of new appliance or technology

change across the life course e.g. having children

place of the home in daily & weekly routines

New appliance/technology

Turning on the immersion heater
Wheeling out the twintub
Washing: filling with water –load 1, load 2 etc.
Emptying the water
Rinsing: filling with water – load 1, load 2 etc.
Emptying
Spin-drying: load 1, load 2 etc.
Hanging out to dry.

Many interviewees did the washing in one day.

"…you didn't just press a switch you had to bring it in from wherever it was stored, attach it to the tap, attach the overflow thing, and yeah so we did - more or less - have a set day for the washing…When we both worked, obviously it would be done in the weekends"

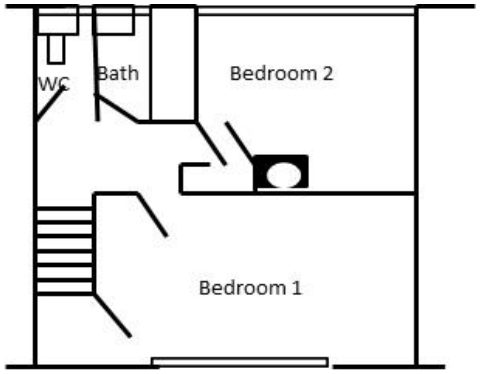
2. Spatiality of practices: interfaces and adaptation

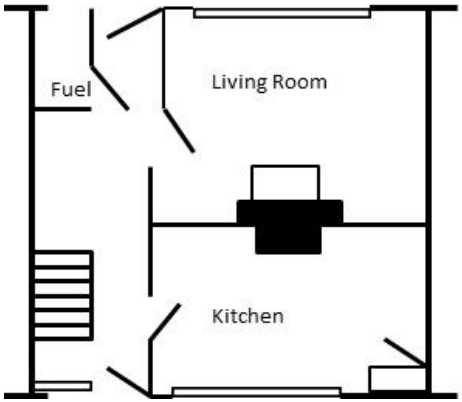
Number of interfaces in the home (and therefore the potential peak demand of any home) have increased

An increasing number of energy-consuming technologies become part of the infrastructure

Iterative process – the spread of interfaces- respatialization of practices- adaptation of homes etc.

Interfaces

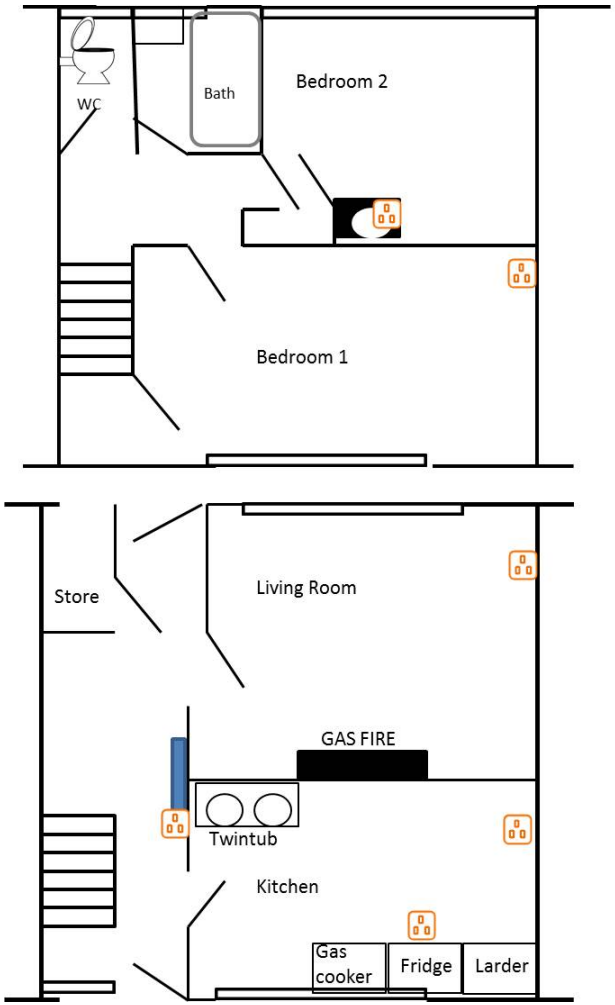




1960
B24: archive house plans/rent book

2 bed (4 person)
solid fuel fire in lounge
back boiler
radiator in kitchen
gas/electric cooker
larder cupboard (though small)
back door led to brick-built store
fuel store
upstairs: airing cupboard
small no. of electric sockets (unsure how many)
bathroom (no shower)
Windows single glazed

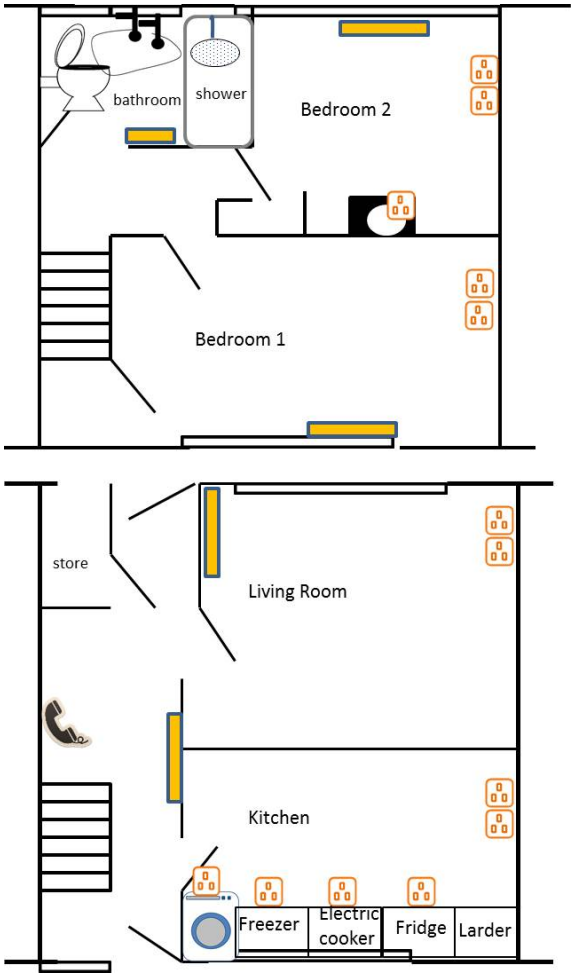
Interfaces



Mid-1970s
B24: interviewee

Removed radiator in kitchen
Gas fire in lounge
immersion heater
Storage heater in hall
larder cupboard & fridge
fuel store – change of use.
Electric socket in lounge and kitchen
Maybe one in each bedroom

Interfaces



1983
B24: interviewee

Radiators throughout (gas central heating) hot water (GCH)
Ample electric provision throughout
Double glazing
fridge, freezer, electric cooker,
automatic washing machine (plumbed in)

Bathroom (knocked into 1 room) with shower

3. Relation between social practices and infrastructure-in-use

To understand infrastructure-in-use requires us to think about how technologies, alongside humans, are implicated in the performance of practices.

Example: Bathing & keeping warm with a solid fuel fire and gas central heating.

Infrastructure-in-use

Living with a **solid fuel fire/ back boiler**

Bathing:

"I can remember the bathroom being absolutely freezing. You know that thing where you lift a damp flannel and it's solid. I can remember that"

Keeping warm:

"We didn't bother lighting the fire in the morning, I'd always light that when I got home…"

"The back room – you'd sort of keep the doors shut to avoid losing the heat – or to stop the cold spreading. Keeping in the heat you wanted"

Infrastructure-in-use

Living with **gas central heating**

Bathing:

“Mary will get up and go in to the bathroom. So she might be turning on the shower.”

“I alternate, so one day shower and the next day shave. Fortunately I don’t have to shave everyday so that’s what I do at that point, so I’ll be in the bathroom either using the shower or running hot water, and the boiler, we use a combination boiler so **we don’t have to worry about the water**.”

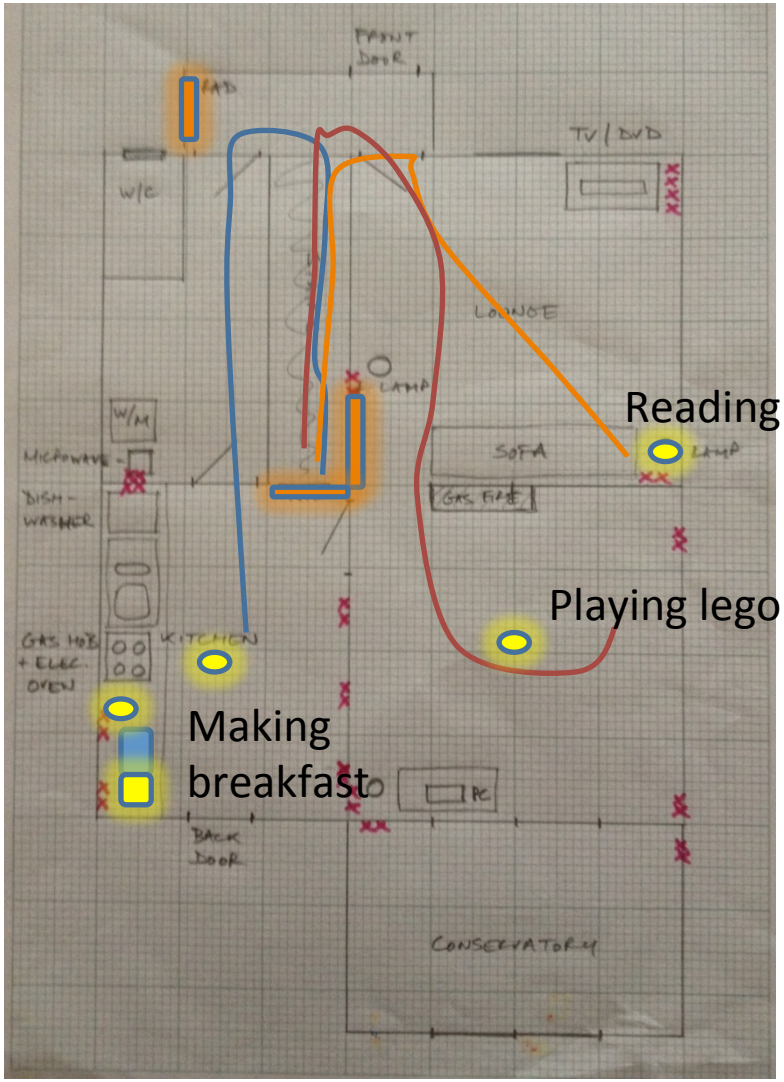
Keeping warm:

“...the heating is on a timer so the heating will have come on at a quarter to seven, the house will have been warming up”

645am


FRONT DOOR
PAD
TV / DVD
W/C
STAIRS
LOUNGE
LAMP
W/M
MICROWAVE
DISH-WASHER
SOFA
LAMP
GAS FIRE
GAS HOB + ELEC OVEN
KITCHEN
Baking bread
PC
BACK DOOR
CONSERVATORY

730am


FRONT DOOR
PAD
TV / DVD
W/C
LOUNGE
LAMP
W/M
MICROWAVE
DISH-WASHER
SOFA
LAMP
GAS FIRE
Reading
Playing lego
GAS HOB + ELEC OVEN
KITCHEN
Making breakfast
PC
BACK DOOR
CONSERVATORY

Types of change - Reflections

Changing rhythms and patterns of social practices
- Introduction of new appliances
- Change across the life-course
- Place of the home in daily and weekly routines

Changing spatiality of practices
- Increase and spread of interfaces in the home
- Appliances become part of infrastructure
- Iterative process – interfaces-practices-adaptation

Changing relation between social practices and infrastructure-in-use