

7. Communications and Campaigns

Highlights

- Day to day communications activity to support the different business areas of the Authority, including for resident-facing operational activities and the North London Heat and Power Project.
- Behaviour change communications campaigns to encourage residents to reduce the amount of waste they produce, including food waste, textiles and furniture, and to recycle better by not contaminating mixed dry recyclables with used nappies.
- The first of a three year motivational communications campaign to encourage residents aged 18 to 34 to recycle more, delivered in conjunction with the seven constituent boroughs.

Overview of communications work

7.1 As outlined above, providing general communications support for the Authority's key activities formed a significant part of overall communications activity during 2016/17. Further details are provided in the relevant sections of this report. However, this work broadly involved using key communications channels, such as local and trade media, digital media (social media and the Authority's three websites), digital, print and outdoor advertising, and direct mail to:

- provide updates and information about the Authority's application for a Development Consent Order for a new waste facility at the Edmonton EcoPark (North London Heat and Power Project);
- promote the Authority's resident-facing operational activities (including reuse and recycling centres and the Authority's reuse shop 'Second Time Around');
- ensure information about services managed by the Authority (either directly or via contractors) is up to date and accurate;
- provide and promote printed and digital materials containing practical tips and service information to encourage residents to reduce their waste and recycle more;
- promote events and activities for residents (and industry professionals), including Give and Take days, Swish and Style events, the Pumpkin Rescue festival, New Leaf cookery and composting classes, Waste Less, Lunch Free events and the Upcycling Show;
- protect the Authority's reputation and raise its profile (both within the waste industry and to residents), including by managing the Authority's brand; and
- manage internal communications channels (including staff newsletters and all staff briefing events) to ensure that staff are well informed and up to date.

7.2 The majority of the Authority's communications activity is delivered through specific behaviour change campaigns, which are designed to encourage north London residents to prevent waste and recycle more. These campaigns, with the exception of the household recycling communications campaign, are delivered using the Authority's 'Wise Up To Waste' brand. The Authority's corporate brand is used for all communications relating to governance matters and corporate functions.

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Wise Up To Waste campaigns – waste prevention

7.3 In addition to day to day support for the Waste Prevention team's outreach and engagement activity, the Communications team also delivered a series of waste prevention behaviour change campaigns.

Real nappies

7.4 A campaign was delivered in April 2016 to encourage north London parents to take up the subsidy of £54.15 offered by the Authority for buying and trying real/reusable nappies. The campaign was delivered to coincide with Real Nappies for London's 'Real Nappies Week'.

7.5 The campaign targeted new parents/parents-to-be as well as grandparents and other close relatives, and aimed to promote the financial and environmental benefits of using real nappies, as well as the advantages of the real nappies themselves. The subsidy is offered as an incentive to encourage uptake of real nappies, and to help parents avoid the upfront costs associated with buying real nappies.

7.6 The campaign used a series of targeted online advertisements, mobile phone 'app' advertising, online borough newspaper advertisements, advertising on the 'Net Mums' website and Facebook and Twitter advertising to engage with the target audience and encourage them to visit the Authority's website and request the subsidy. The campaign also used press activity, featuring a 'real nappies mother and baby' case study, to promote the scheme.

7.7 As a result of the communications campaign there were more than 5,700 'click-throughs' to the information on the Authority's website (real nappies webpage) during 'Real Nappies Week', an increase of 1,253%. A total of 847 subsidy requests were made during 2016/17, compared to 860 for 2015/16. Further research will be undertaken in 2017/18 to assess why uptake of the vouchers is not higher given the level of interest generated by the communications campaign.

Food waste

7.8 Over the past few years food waste communications campaigns have focused on the message that wasting less food can save residents money. In 2016/17 a campaign was developed, which continued to promote the financial benefits of wasting less food, and also promoted practical tips on reducing food waste, to adult budget holders across north London. The target audience was specifically one-person households (those working during the day and shopping on the way home from work), who have historically been a hard to reach group in terms of tackling this waste stream.

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- 7.9** In order to achieve sustainable behaviour change amongst the target audience the campaign focused on the idea that one small change makes a big difference. Social media advertising was used to share food waste reduction tips and as the basis for a competition to encourage people to share the tips themselves in order to qualify for a prize draw for one of two prizes of £100 of supermarket vouchers. Other digital advertising drove people to Twitter, to encourage them to follow the Authority's Twitter feed and to take part in the competition. Outdoor digital advertising was also used to share tips and encourage people to take part in the competition, as well as to raise the profile of the campaign.
- 7.10** As a result of the campaign the Authority increased its Twitter followers by almost 6% and there were at least 20,000 'engagements' with the campaign – meaning that people either clicked through to, liked, replied or shared the tips from the Twitter competition via social media. This figure excludes any engagement with the outdoor advertising for this campaign, which cannot be directly measured.

Textiles

- 7.11** Textiles waste is a priority waste stream for the Authority. To help residents reduce the amount of textiles (clothing) waste they generate, a communications campaign to promote textile reuse, repair and 'upcycling' was developed and delivered in March 2017. Textile repair and reuse can be a complex message so a digital campaign was developed to enable information and tips to be shared with residents in a manageable way to encourage them to take the tips on board and to make a first step towards longer term behaviour change.
- 7.12** The campaign focused on an online and mobile quiz on the Wise Up To Waste website, which consisted of a series of questions about textile reuse and repair, and which gave participants the opportunity to win one of seven sewing machines. The free prize draw was promoted via digital and traditional media, social media and digital advertising, and via borough channels.
- 7.13** During the campaign there were 6,776 visits to the textiles webpage on the WUTW website. 82.12% of visitors to this page were first time visitors to the WUTW website. There were also 728 visits to the textiles quiz page itself.

Wise Up To Waste campaigns – contamination

- 7.14** Contamination of mixed dry recyclables collected at the kerbside has been increasingly problematic for the Authority. In order to start to tackle this problem from a communications and behaviour change perspective, a campaign was developed in November 2016 to raise awareness of the issue by focusing on a single contaminant in the recycling stream – nappy and continence product waste. The objectives of the campaign were focused on raising awareness of the issue of contamination and on levels of engagement with the campaign.

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- 7.15** A wide ranging campaign was developed explaining how to dispose of used nappies and the consequences of incorrect disposal, including social media advertising to drive traffic to information on the WUTW website, a targeted HTML email to new and expectant mothers across north London, media activity, posters in baby clinics, letters to health visitor and district nurses teams to raise their awareness of the problem and letters to producers of nappies and incontinence products.
- 7.16** The digital channels selected and the level of media interest meant that the campaign had good exposure with the target audience. The target audience also demonstrated a positive level of engagement with the campaign. Targets for media coverage and for visits to the web page (from social media and other channels) were exceeded. There was also a positive reception and level of engagement from nappy and continence product producers and local health visitor and district nurse teams across the seven boroughs. Authority officers are now looking at plans for a larger scale communications campaign to help reduce contamination in 2017/18.

Household recycling communications campaign

- 7.17** Following an OJEU competitive procurement process a creative agency was appointed in July 2016 to deliver a three year household recycling communications campaign. In 2016/17 the Authority started its three year campaign, targeting those aged 18 to 34, through high-level, non-instructional advertising. The campaign aims to raise awareness of recycling and increase motivation to recycle by taking a humorous approach to demonstrating the consequences of not recycling.
- 7.18** The campaign was delivered through an 'in the home' strategy, including a 30 second advert delivered via targeted media (including Sky AdSmart television advertising, video on demand (VOD) and display advertising, YouTube advertising and social media advertising) and social media activity.
- 7.19** The advert directed traffic to a new website, saveourstuff.co.uk, where visitors can find more information about the campaign as well as local recycling information.
- 7.20** Overall the campaign performed well in terms of delivering the advert to the target audience. Given that the target audience had not previously seen the campaign, and the campaign is deliberately unbranded to increase its appeal, a good proportion of the target audience was able to recall seeing the advert. This was assessed through research conducted by Nielsen and by using Survey Monkey. Initial figures also suggest that the advert and the social media activity appealed to the target audience, and that the target audience were more motivated to recycle having seen the advert.
- 7.21** The second year of the campaign (2017/18) will continue to target those aged 18 to 34 via the 'Save Our Stuff' creative concept, aiming to further drive campaign engagement and further increase engagement, awareness and motivation to recycle.