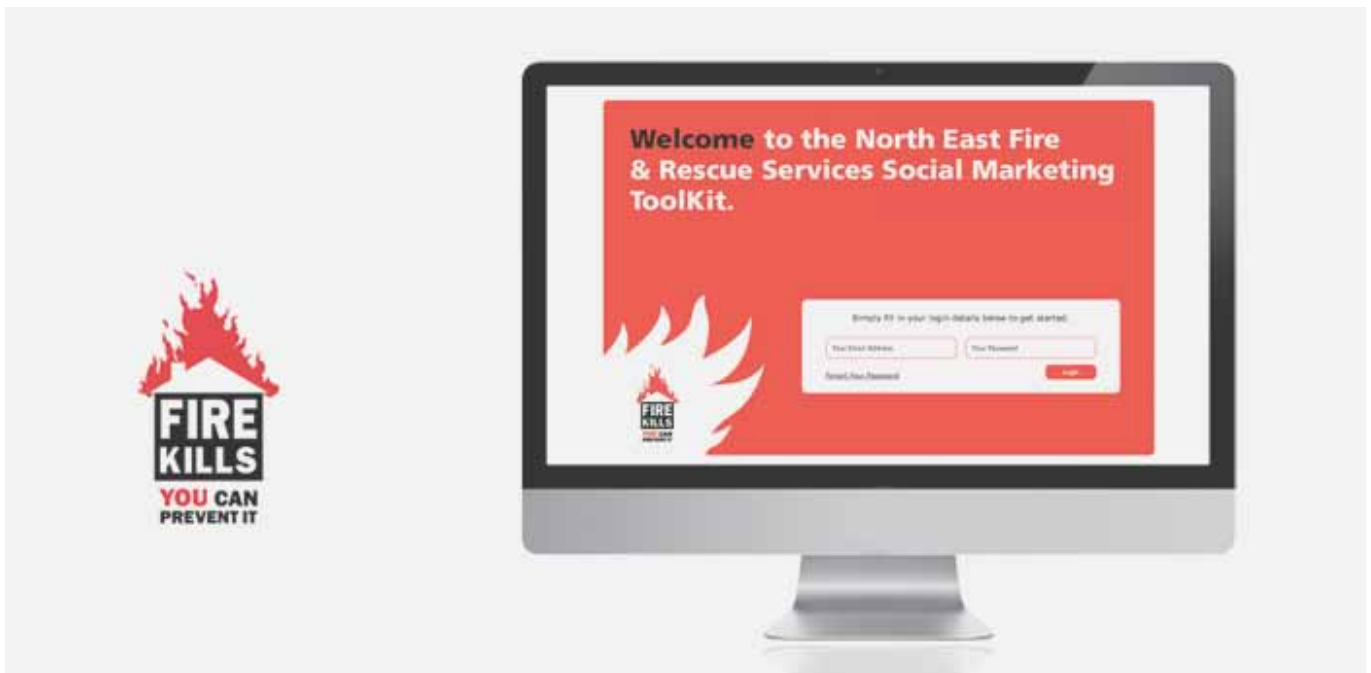


North East Fire and Rescue Services

Changing Behaviour: insight, imagination and technology blend to deliver an innovative approach to identifying and engaging those at risk from accidental dwelling fires.



The Brief

Despite ongoing investment in community focused marketing and engagement approaches, accidental dwelling fire deaths and associated injuries have increased across North East England in recent years.

All four regional Fire and Rescue Services in Cleveland, Durham and Darlington, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear and the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership wanted to use social marketing to reduce the risk to key target groups - including older people, those who smoke or who live alone - of being involved in a dwelling fire.



Our Social Marketing model combines tried and tested techniques with imagination and objectivity to develop solutions that deliver great outcomes and outstanding value for money.

The Approach

We partnered with specialist insight company *Explain*, who led focus groups and in-depth interviews, accompanied by a desk-based analysis of historical fire incident data, to understand how we could reduce the fire risk of individual target groups by addressing gaps in service provision and improving communication and engagement.

The research was instrumental in the development of a social marketing toolkit, designed to match the capacity of the Fire and Rescue Services to deliver a sustained programme of intervention.

The toolkit enables FRS personnel to conduct targeted home fire safety visits, followed up for 12 months to ensure advice and support provided is acted upon. It also includes a database of potential partner organisations that can be approached by FRSs to develop customer focused, multi-agency interventions.

Explain presented the proposed toolkit to representatives of target audience groups and Fire and Rescue Service stakeholders to gauge feedback. This demonstrated support for the overall approach and identified a list of suggestions for improvements, including simplification of communication and engagement approaches, that were then implemented.

The Results

The toolkit developed gives FRSs enhanced understanding of their target groups, including what support, approaches or interventions are most successful in making people think and encouraging behavioural change to reduce fire risk.

It is enabling FRSs across the region to deliver improved, target group specific fire safety advice to residents for a year after an initial home safety visit – a major operational change to the traditional one-off visit and one which FRSs believe will prove more effective.

FRS personnel now have a predictor tool that enables them to highlight the most vulnerable members of a community based on historical fire data and Experian Mosaic lifestyle information.

It is anticipated that the delivery of the toolkit's social marketing programme will affect behavioural change among target groups and reduce fire deaths and serious injuries, to the benefit of communities and the public purse.

The final report of the European Accidental, Natural and Social Fire Assessment and Management (ANSFR) project funded by the European Commission highlights social marketing as a key contributor to the management of accidental and social fire risk. This toolkit is identified in the report as an example of good practice. Further details can be found at www.fire-risk.eu.



The Client's View

“Following implementation the project should result in more efficient targeting of marketing and community engagement resources. Furthermore if the approach is successful in changing target group behaviour and reducing incidences of accidental dwelling fire deaths and associated injuries it will generate substantial efficiency savings across the public purse.”

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