

3 September 2009

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Peterborough City Council:

"Going Green": The Climate Change Game

Summary of policy/project

Peterborough City Council along with Hampton College has created a game to test citizens' knowledge on surrounding environmental issues allowing the Council to interact with all types of residents.

Description

The Climate Change game has been created in partnership with the Green Team from Hampton College. They worked with the team, setting them the challenge of creating a game to test peoples knowledge surrounding environmental issues in a fun and interactive way, ensuring the participants learn valuable environmental lessons.

The game development was much more successful than we originally envisaged. The games that were entered in to the competition were of high quality and they therefore sought internal funding from their communications department to produce the game professionally. The designers of the winning game were invited to meet their team of in house designers who worked with the children to bring the game to life.

The pupils identified a pot of funding from the Peterborough Youth Bank from which they successfully obtained sufficient funding to produce a copy of the game for every school in the city - 76 schools. This success has led to them investing in a 2 x 2.7m version of the game which has been used at our "Your Footprint Counts" promotional events throughout the city and borrowed by schools to use. They now have a game designed by young people to proactively engage people in environmental issues, whilst this version is specific to Peterborough the game can be easily tailored to suit different areas of the country.

What problems does the policy/project solve?

The game was designed specifically to engage people into a topic that they may otherwise find difficult to relate to. In Peterborough their work very much focuses upon bringing climate change down to a local level, empowering individuals with the knowledge they need to adopt behavioural change. This game allows them to engage with people they wouldn't normally. For example when they take the large version of the game out to festivals across the city, children are very keen to get involved and play a game that looks like fun - not because it happens to be educating them. Whilst the children are playing the game the parents become actively involved and more often than not learn a few key messages themselves.

What were the difficulties of implementation?

Initially obtaining funding was a huge challenge, even though the funds required were relatively small. As soon as people could see how useful the game could be funds soon followed.

Has the idea worked elsewhere?

Hampton College is partnered with a school in Spain. They took the game along on a visit earlier this year, the children really enjoyed the game and felt the key messages were also relevant to their lifestyles. The game itself is unique to Peterborough. We have been approached by other local authorities who are keen to adapt the game for their locality and we are working with them to achieve this.

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What is the cost of implementation?

It was free to run the competition at the schools, apart from a £20 prize. The design and print costs came to approximately £2000.

What is the evidence of success?

Every school in the city has received a copy of the game and we have received some great feedback. The large version has been loaned out to schools and this is really gaining momentum now with schools signing up to borrow the game in September. We can also see how effective the game is when out at festivals because adults respond really positively, becoming competitive and keen to answer questions correctly - even when they don't know the answer.

Would this work in other Councils?

There is no reason why not.

What advice would you give any Councils wishing to adopt this idea?

We have found engaging local schools has been really useful. Young people come up with some fantastic ideas and to work with them to bring this to life has proved extremely successful.

For more information

For more information please contact Charlotte Palmer, the Climate Change Team Manager, Peterborough City Council. Email: charlotte.palmer@peterborough.gov.uk or phone 01733 453538.

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