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CampaignCreator: your “campaign in a box”

CampaignCreator is an all-in-one online tool that helps first time campaigners set up a successful campaign.

It’s been developed alongside this guide to encourage you to raise a local campaign and have your say on issues you care about. Wherever you see the CampaignCreator logo in the guide, it means that CampaignCreator can help with that part of campaigning.

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It helps you to do a lot of the things that will build public support, give you a professional image and give your campaign credibility.

Campaigners can use the tool to:

- create posters and leaflets
- send out email newsletters
- build a high quality campaign website
- manage a mailing list of supporters
- keep a campaign diary
- host polls and surveys.

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It’s easy to use and all members of the campaign team can have access.

Using the tool will keep your campaign focused, help you to build your profile and make time for you to do all the other things in your campaign plan.

Find out more at

www.campaigncreator.org

Case studies:

Bristol Birth Centre campaign

Jilly Rosser has co-run an inspiring campaign to get a birth centre opened

in Bristol. The group was concerned about the quality of care and the lack of options available to pregnant women in Bristol. The campaign has been very effective to date with the local health authority currently reviewing all maternity services in Bristol - all of the options being put forward to the Bristol Health Services Plan include birth centres

Jilly is quite confident about what it was that made their campaign so effective:

- **The right people** – The initial group was fortunate enough to assemble a good and dedicated team. The campaign was faltering initially but when Sue, a lawyer, came onboard the team was able to set more realistic targets and to engage decision makers at all levels. The campaign group was also inclusive including members of the public, mid wives, and GPs, which gave the group “a reasonable and moderate” image. Four MPs went out publicly in support of the campaign

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- **The right message** – The team did lots of research and was able to say how a birth centre would affect the targets the local health authority had to meet ie they managed to speak to the local health authority in their own language.
- **Persistence** – wrestling with the NHS was never an easy task and even though they were taking to them in their language change was slow to happen. Jilly’s advice?: “tell them 11 times, tell them 12 times, tell them a million times!”

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With Love from Bristol

“With Love from Bristol” was set up to do something locally in Bristol to support the survivors of the Boxing Day tsunami. The campaign encouraged people to use the resources of a specially designed website (www.lovefrombristol.org.uk) to organise their own fundraising, and to persuade businesses to donate or fundraise. Overall, the aim was to raise £50,000 between 10 January and 15 February. By 15 February a fantastic £33,500 was raised.

Trish, who started the campaign, went through her contacts and managed to set up a team that allocated tasks, eg calling schools and businesses etc and to build a website, which was up and running within a week.

Trish thinks that the key to success was:

- acting quickly and making the most of the climate – lots of people were keen to do their bit to help
- the people involved using their existing skills for the benefit of the campaign

- all members of the team used their networks “shamelessly” to get support
- getting the media involved at an early stage.

Friends of the Earth Oswestry

When Sainsbury’s moved into town, the local Friends of the Earth (FoE) group was concerned about the environmental impact. Specifically, they were concerned that an increasing number of people would start driving into the city centre rather than walking.

The team contacted Sainsbury’s who, keen to play a role in their new community, assembled a group to liaise with the FoE team.

It was important to get the facts right when meeting with the Sainsbury’s group. To prepare the FoE team undertook some essential research:

- They counted the number of people crossing the road to get to the supermarket to show Sainsbury’s that there was a clear cut case for a zebra crossing.

- They proved the poor state of the bridge and made a persuasive case that unless the bridge was refurbished, people would start to drive to the supermarket.

They further used this knowledge by contacting the local press with well-written press releases and pictures of the two sites. This put extra pressure on the supermarket to act.

Redland School Now!

Redland School Now! used modern technology to campaign successfully for a new school in their area.

The campaign quickly grew from a small core group of members to more than 500 people. To keep such a large group involved and up to date, www.redlandschoolnow.co.uk was set up. It covered the history of the campaign, the latest news and told people what they could do to support plans for the school. Supporters signed up to a mailing list and could also email the team with their questions and comments.

The group found that email and a

website can be extremely effective campaigning tools:

- When a traditional ‘paper’ petition was organised for presentation to the planners, the team collected 1800 signatures in just eight days.
- Prior to the Council meeting that finally approved planning permission for the school, emails were sent around encouraging people to write statements in support of the Redland campaign – 222 statements were received in favour of the new

Redland school, compared to only 27 against.

For those keen on following how the school is progressing, visit the new website set up by the LEA and the school’s temporary governing body (a group that includes a number of the original campaigners):

www.newnorthbristolschool.org

St George’s City Farm

The campaign to open St George’s City Farm was launched after it came to light that some local children

thought that eggs came from supermarkets and not chickens! The organisers thought that the unused “brownfield” land in the area could be converted into a city farm.

Despite receiving lots of support, the farm did not open in 2005 as originally hoped, primarily because of local opposition from private homeowners nearby.

But the campaign has decided to keep going. In November 2005 the campaign will become constitutionalised and the campaign to open the city farm will continue.

Fern, who set up the campaign, has some advice to would be campaigners:

- Be open minded and don't let your means limit your campaign. "Believe in yourself, go for it and you will be successful!"
- Accept that things often take a longer time than expected, and when things finally happen it is often suddenly and sporadically. "Be patient and be prepared for the long haul!"

- A good team is essential. People have to be co-operative and work together. A committee is essential to control and organise the members and harness local support.

The Recycling Consortium

The Recycling Consortium (TRC) is based in Bristol and promotes the Three R's: reduce, re-use, and recycle. A recent campaign to promote Mini-Recycling Centres (MRCs) for use by local residents that live in flats was launched in June 2004.

Martin, who runs the campaign, thinks the important things to think about are:

- **getting good advice** – communication channels, publicity, and funding sources are all important but it can be tricky to know how to use them. Community sector umbrella groups and the voluntary service council (VOSCUR in Bristol) are good sources of advice

- **the risks** – campaigners should also be aware of potential problems before the campaign is launched. In Martin's case the campaign did not think that there would be as many problems through working with local residents as there were
- when working in partnership with others set clear ground rules. Campaigns that involve partners need more organisation. It is important to make sure that all partners are on the same wavelength

by agreeing the “ground rules” at the start. You also need to be extra clear about your objectives, sure that your desired outcomes are realistic, and that your targets aren’t too high for you to recognise successes!

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Written by Andy Martin and Rikard Lindquist, RSe Consulting with Tom Kenward, Friends of the Earth

Project Team: Steven Hilton and Kevin O’Malley

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