

The logo for the CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019 Gold Winner. It features the text 'CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019' in white on a black background, followed by 'GOLD WINNER' in large, multi-colored letters (pink, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple).

Category: Best Use of Content

Company: Home Group

Entry title: Gateshead Innovation Village

Brief and objectives:

Gateshead Innovation Village (GIV) is an exciting live research project by Home Group, looking at new ways to solve the housing crisis.

The village of 41 homes for affordable rent is testing modern methods of construction and smart and energy efficient technologies all on one site.

We aim to inspire change in the UK housing industry, by discovering how we can create quality homes, more quickly and efficiently through engaging industry professionals and members of the public with the project.

The idea, research and planning:

Research showed people did not understand what modular housing was and for the project to be a success, we set the following objectives:

- Challenge the perception of modular homes
- Position Home Group as partners of choice, innovative and industry leading, experts in the field, trustworthy and human, customer-focused and an organisation that cares about communities.

From this, we developed a strong content approach based on three principles:

1. Setting the scene: taking stock of the housing crisis and challenging perceptions of modular housing
2. Finding the solution: we need to do things differently but what is the best way forward?
3. The impact: what have we learnt and what do our customers have to say about the project?

Strategy, tactics, creativity and innovation:

As a team, we have an established content strategy ensuring we are always creating content of value and distributed via a variety of paid, earned, shared and owned channels.

With our own in-house design team, we designed a GIV brand identity adhering to the Home Group brand, including our colour palette, font, illustration and icon styles, photography and tone of voice. This was done to ensure all GIV content is easily identifiable, and remains distinctive.

Delivery:

- Perceptions research

Our YouGov research revealed a number of misconceptions around modular homes, and we shared these figures regularly on social, along with positive facts on modern methods of construction, to challenge this. This was supplemented by an article and quiz in our customer magazine to almost 51,000 customers across the UK in autumn 2018 demonstrating the realities of constructing and living in modular homes. We re-ran the research in spring 2019 to measure any changes.

- Hoardings

The site has a prime location opposite Gateshead Stadium. We wanted to maximise this through the site dressing; we took a storytelling approach, allowing each hoarding panel to work either in isolation or to be followed along the adjacent footpath to tell the story of the Home Group brand, the journey of the village and how to get involved. This included incorporating viewing panels to let the wider community see into the site as it progressed.

- GEON

The Great Exhibition of the North was a great opportunity for us to promote the project locally. We sponsored a gallery at the Great North Museum, exhibiting a site model and iPad with an augmented reality (AR) app. Content that appeared on the AR app, as well as on our website and social platforms, highlighted our affinity with the Great Exhibition's origins, as well as demonstrating the pioneering spirit of the project.

- Metro advertising

With the momentum created over summer 2018, we also invested in a metro advertising campaign in the Gateshead area – tag lines like 'Innovation is just a metro stop away' showed how easily accessible the homes were by public transport and encouraged customers to express an interest in living there.

- Video and photography

Video and photography have been crucial pillars of our content and we've filmed regular updates on the site, including members of Home Group's development team as well as partner organisations. As well as longer videos, we've produced shorter, subtitled edits specifically for social and created aerial update videos showcasing our drone footage, as well as regular still imagery updates.

- Articles

Throughout the projects we've secured both local and national media coverage through a targeted and tailored approach, including articles published in national and trade titles as well as engagement with broadcast media locally.

- Conference

As the construction element of GIV drew to a close, there was a unique opportunity to celebrate and discuss the project with industry professionals before the homes on site became occupied. As a result, we created our Innovation in housing conference with influential speakers from the sector and a unique opportunity to explore the site.

Measurement and evaluation:

The campaign set out with clear objectives to demonstrate success:

1. Secure media coverage –coverage in at least 4 trade and 2 national titles, print and broadcast coverage regionally across at least 5 titles
2. Garner community/industry support – 80% positive sentiment on social media related content
3. Generate positive introductions with prospective partners –attendance by key partners at events, online engagement and opportunities generated for us to share our learnings
4. Generate interest from potential tenants (including the right mix for research purposes) –100% capacity applications.

Our success is demonstrated by:

1. 25 unique pieces of content, over 100 pieces of coverage across targeted tier one digital, print and broadcast platforms
2. 0% negative sentiment associated with our #Gatesheadinnovationvillage hashtag, top performing LinkedIn video update with 2.9k impressions, 64 likes, 44 link clicks, best performing tweet with 80k reach, 5.2k impressions, 8 RTs, 24 likes and 20 clicks
3. Attendance at the conference saw just under 50% of external delegates attending from our targeted invite list, senior managers within Home Group have spoken at 5 external conferences and events about GIV
4. 455 people applied to live in the 41 homes on site, demonstrating capacity levels just over 11 times the planned target, with 50% of applicants having heard about the project from either passing the site and viewing the hoardings (20%) or seeing the Metro advertising (30%).

We were also pleased to see the impact our high quality content has had on sentiment at a regional level; while the perceptions research we reran with YouGov in May 2019 demonstrated minimal change in overall likelihood to live in a modular house at a national

level, the regional impact was significant. In answer to the question 'How likely, if at all, would you be to choose to live in a modular house?' positive responses (very likely or fairly likely) in the North East more than doubled from 2018's responses.

Budget and campaign impact:

Agreed/Spent:

- Design £1,800.00/£0.00
- Film £21,000.00/£5,000.00
- Collateral £2,000.00/£0.00
- Media £1,000.00/£1,600.00
- Photography £4,000.00/£5,000.00
- Time lapse £11,500.00/£9,600.00
- Sponsorship £29,760.00/£24,000.00
- Digital £47,410.00/£46,200.00
- Outdoor ads £7,800.00/£4,906.00
- Site branding £14,600.00/£21,535.00
- Events branding £6,200.00/£0.00
- Total £147,070.00/£117,841.00

Delivery of the campaign was 20% under budget.