

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: Outstanding In-House Public Relations Team

Company: Wheatley Group

Number of staff employed - including executive / support staff - and annual public relations budget:

Wheatley's Communications and Marketing Team is made up of:

- Four Communications Officers and a Digital Communications Officer
- An Events Officer
- A Marketing Officer and a Marketing Assistant, reporting to our Marketing Manager
- Two Designers
- Admin Assistant.

The team reports to the Director of Marketing and Communications.

Business objectives and analysis of team performance against budget over the past three years:

Wheatley is Scotland's leading housing, care and property-management group. Our Group subsidiaries are united by a joint mission: 'Making Homes and Lives Better'.

Wheatley aims to:

- Support customers and communities by tackling poverty and disadvantage
- Build more homes
- Regenerate our neighbourhoods
- Improve the safety and security of people in our communities.

What sets our team apart? We use our skills and professionalism to deliver real change in the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged people and create positive outcomes. We don't just tell Wheatley's success story: we play a key role delivering it.

With 250,000 customers aged from 17 to late 90s, our communications have to be wide and varied to reach people online and offline.

Our team has embraced technology, learned new skills while still embracing traditional communication channels to reach all of our customers.

In 2017, we launched 10 new websites, allowing us to reach new audiences and support the business's aim to help more people get online. Our websites and social media presence continues to grow, with 96,500 monthly visitors to our websites, 28,100 people following our social media channels and 29,000 people registered for our online services.

At the end of March 2018 our intranet, our staff intranet – W.E. Connect – was upgraded and re-launched with feedback from staff shaping its new format. We carried out an organisation-wide survey asking staff what they wanted to see and what they needed to do their job. The results are spectacular. We have 89% of our staff engaged with the intranet and looking at our content. This is a key tool in empowering our staff, helping them collaborate and giving them the tools and knowledge they need to make a difference on the front line.

A brief overview of business / team strategy:

Our aim as a team is to change lives for the better and our strategy is:

- Communicating and engaging effectively with our customers, building strong relationships with them and helping them take up the opportunities to improve their lives
- Communicating effectively with our staff – giving them the tools they need to make a difference every day, and helping staff share their ideas and knowledge and collaborate better across the business
- Holding events and engaging with stakeholders so we are supported in our mission by key policymakers and partners
- Using a mixture of paid for, owned and shared content to reach different audiences and deliver our messages in a way which works best.

A summary of commitment to CPD and professionalism:

Six members of the team are CIPR members. We are all committed to improving our skills and knowledge in order to do more to reach our customers, taking part in face-to-face training courses and online seminars. One recent success has been a mobile video course run by the CIPR. We now shoot and edit video quickly in-house.

Our Learning and Growth Lead's vlog on his Learning at Work trip to our environmental teams garnered 17.3k views.

This epitomises the way our skillset has grown over the past three years. Growing our skills means we are able to keep pace with the way that people want to be communicated with.

A summary of recent outstanding achievements:

We measure our successes in terms of the impact our engagement has for the lives of our customers and how our content and channels drive change.

- In 2018, we launched new hyper-local Community News pages on our social landlord websites. The work allows customers to see the difference we make in their own neighbourhood rather than across a full city. Staff told us this has contributed significantly to boosting customer satisfaction levels in their area
- We secured coverage in key local publications for the Modern Apprentice campaign, reached in excess of 188,000 people on social media and featuring the story in our suite of newsletters. 77 out of the 85 Modern Apprentices recruited came from homes in our communities
- Our 'Gaun Yersel' men's health campaign has so far seen 231 men have health MOTs to spot early signs of diabetes and heart problems. A message from our team to attend a stop smoking workshop on the intranet resulted in five people signing up within 20 minutes
- Our Communications and Marketing Team devised the 'MySavings' online discount marketing campaign and rolled it out successfully across all of our channels, helping more than 400 customers in the first week alone save money on their shopping bills.

A summary of a campaign you are particularly proud of, including details of the brief, objectives, strategy, tactics, outputs, outcomes and budget:

In summer 2017, Wheatley launched the Stay Safe campaign to:

- Make sure people had correct, clear advice on all aspects of home safety, particularly fire safety
- Encourage everyone to have a home fire safety visit
- Ensure everyone has a working smoke alarm in their home
- Change people's behaviours around the most common causes of accidents – for example, extinguishing cigarettes and cooking safely.

We created new content sections on our websites, broken down into individual rooms.

This allowed us to highlight the dangers in each room: chip pan fires in kitchens, smoking in bed and candles in bathrooms. We also developed targeted content for frontline staff – using our intranet – to identify fire risks and where to signpost customers for support.

The campaign was a phenomenal success. Stay Safe reached customers of all ages, across multiple channels:

- 19 articles in our six tenant newsletters, published quarterly/bi-monthly, with a circulation of 50,000+

- 122 pieces of content across Twitter
- 170 pieces of content across Facebook
- Facebook reach of 53,288
- 3,256 page views to our Stay Safe website pages.

Our internal police and fire officers praised the impact the communications had on the success of Stay Safe in 2018:

- A 94% point increase in the number of home fire safety visits (from 1114 in 2017 to 2158 in 2018)
- A 14% point decrease in the number of fires
- A 6% point decrease in the number of cooking fires.