

**Project code:** 8376

**Project name:** London Borough of Hounslow Communications Team: 'Step Up For Hounslow!'

**Contact:** Amy Burns, Hounslow Council

**Category:** Campaign of the Year

**Category type:** LGC Awards Categories

**Project title:** London Borough of Hounslow Communications Team: 'Step Up For Hounslow!'

- These awards primarily cover achievement and performance in the calendar year 2020 and the first two months of 2021, and entries should have a particular focus on that period. However, judges will take into account work that began before that period, as well as achievement and performance since that period.
- The awards will reflect the fact that Covid-19 and the response to it have posed an unprecedented challenge to local government. Judges' decisions should reflect attributes such as performance, resilience, compassion and adaptability in the face of the pandemic alongside achievement, innovation and vision. However, entries which are primarily not about the council's pandemic response should be treated equally to those that are.
- You only have to submit a single statement explaining why you should win (up to 1,000 words).
- Please also provide a 100-word summary of your entry. Please use this as an opportunity to make a pitch to our judges about what makes your work innovative and bold.
- Please use the questions in the bullet points below as a guide and break up your submission accordingly. Some may be more applicable than others for your entry.
- Please specify which private sector partners do you work with (if any).
- While you have the option of providing supporting material, we urge you to do this sparingly, and only if you feel further evidence is required to back-up your entry. The critical information should however be included in the main part of your entry.

If you require any help with your entries contact: **Rafael Younes** on **020 3953 2115**, email [Rafael.Younes@emap.com](mailto:Rafael.Younes@emap.com) or **Jae Taylor** on **020 3953 2117**, email [Jae.Taylor@emap.com](mailto:Jae.Taylor@emap.com)

**Supporting material:**

[step\\_up\\_for\\_hounslow\\_supporting\\_evidence\\_.pptx](#)

Please use the questions in the bullet points below as a guide and break up your submission accordingly. Some may be more applicable than others for your entry.

**Total word count: 1,000**

**• Submissions should focus on:**

- The objectives the campaign was intended to achieve;
- A summary of the campaign strategy, including target audiences, media, image, timing and budget etc;
- The extent to which the campaign achieved the objectives including, for example securing behavioural changes;
- The evidence base used to inform the need for and contents of the campaign and measure its impact;
- The extent to which partner organisations were involved in the campaign

**• Award entries will be judged on:**

- The quality of the campaign, including design, format, delivery and evaluation;
- The impact of the campaign and the extent to which it achieved the council's objectives;
- How the campaign contributed to the council's wider objectives and strategy.

**Your answer here:**

When Matt Hancock announced on 19th May that a programme of surge testing and increased vaccinations would be taking place in Hounslow, we had already vaccinated some 130,000 eligible residents, around 48% of our total population.

The announcement, which came without advance notice, was publicly described by Hounslow Council Leader Steve Curran as an example of Government not working in partnership with local authorities. It was followed by further confusion when changes were made to travel guidance, also without warning.

Despite the surprise at finding Hounslow participating in 'surge', it was recognised that additional resources would enable us to prevent further infection rate rises and reduce the risk of hospital admissions. But we knew too that we would need all our residents to become part of the solution and get vaccinated. It required that Hounslow move quickly to operationalise its detailed final surge plans and meant a new communications campaign was needed.

Objectives: Previous research in the borough had shown that some key drivers of reluctance existed, especially ease and accessibility of access to testing and vaccination, and the availability of trusted, clear information.

That required work in four key areas, to ensure:

Target audiences were encouraged to become part of the solution ('step up'), aware of testing and vaccination, and – critically - how and where to access them (in appropriate, local settings).

Residents understood why testing and vaccination is required and saw the surge operation as effective in both its operational and communications response.

The Council was viewed as a credible and trusted source of information by all target audiences.

Maximisation of the opportunity to demonstrate 'One Hounslow' unity with Council, partners and communities coming together.

### Campaign strategy

The objectives required a multi-channel, behaviour-driven, multi-lingual campaign strategy. The new communications campaign, based around the unifying call to action, 'Step Up For Hounslow!', was live across the borough just two days after the announcement.

The operational plan mobilised pop-up vaccination clinics and Mobile Testing Units across the borough. Making sure those were visible to residents was critical to delivery, as was ensuring residents were driven to 'step up', motivated to play their part and clear in terms of the information about the vaccine, and trusting in the operation.

The strategy incorporated:

Broadcast

Engagement

Partnership and advocacy

Celebration

**Broadcast:** daily bulletins and social media promotion to communicate the operational offer were introduced alongside maintenance of on-going general COVID-19 communications. The use of the call to action and the language 'step up' was seeded across a wide range of spokespeople interviews or publications, with the Director of Public Health and Leader featuring the call to action in over 100 media enquiries handled (resulting in coverage on BBC, ITV, Guardian, The Times, Mail and the Metro) and fifty-one local and national media interviews including BBC, Sky, ITV, Radio Jackie, Hounslow Herald. We also used posters, banners and JC Decaux signs.

**Engagement:** the Communications team led an early decision, based in benchmarking with councils in the north-west, to drive the campaign most acutely through front-door connection directly with target audiences. We were clear about the need to reach Black and Minority Ethnic communities, with that priority heavily informing our decision-making. At street-level, our communications and engagement campaign saw recruitment of teams of volunteers, not only to deliver and collect PCR home-test kits, but specifically to include people who could explain and myth-bust in relevant community languages, armed with campaign branded leaflets.

**Partnership and advocacy:** working through a wide range of partners and stakeholders was an essential part of the strategy, ensuring internal/external stakeholders had key information and branded materials to promote and influence in their communities. A stakeholder email was delivered daily to MPs, elected members, partners, community groups, faith groups, and influencers. Progress and wins were also reflected to staff through internal communications updates.

**Celebrating:** used to socialise, reinforce and demonstrate what was happening, amplifying the community effort, publicising the wins to encourage others to 'step up' and embedding our 'One Hounslow' narrative for our internal/external transformation as a Council.

Our behaviour change work also informed the design concepts deployed, with a particular appeal to younger audiences rooted in lifestyle and aspiration messages. The campaign's branded creatives were designed to reflect Hounslow's diverse communities and to attract a younger audience, with the core 'call to action' of 'Step Up For Hounslow!' which was carried across all channels and materials.

Striking in design, the creatives were also flexible to accommodate different formats and messages about PCR testing and vaccinations.

All images signposted to the web page as a source of further information. Supporting messaging also included details of an email address and phone number to assist those without direct access to the internet.

Targeting of younger or BAME people through CAN was also important. BAME staff fronted some social media outputs with multi-lingual approaches were critical. In advance of the Twickenham one-day mass vaccination event, over 60,000 leaflets were delivered to target wards, translated into five key community languages. Advertising was placed on community radio stations. Three days of digital advertising through CAN reached 162,000 people, with 625,000 impressions. 11,000 people attended for vaccinations on the day. Advertising on community radio seems to have been effective with pop-up vaccination centres at faith centres accounting for up to 1200 vaccinations each day they were open. Faith leaders in these settings took responsibility and were active participants in the planning, coordination, delivery and hospitality for vaccination staff and residents who attended.

## Results and feedback

Over 53,000 residents 'stepped up' for Hounslow in just four weeks. Hounslow's ERA status, due

to last five weeks, ended a week earlier than originally planned because of the measurable success of the campaign.

#StepUpForHounslow trended nationally and activity on Twitter generated more than 1 million impressions:

Social media metrics continued to be strong throughout the campaign.

Facebook 52,461 reach, 7,055 engagements

Twitter 1,083,604 reach, 52,068 engagements

Instagram 23,899, 129 engagements

LinkedIn 2,830 impressions, 99 engagements

Total 1,162,794 reach/impressions / 59,351 engagements

Professor Kevin Fenton, London Regional Director for Public Health England, said: "The progress in Hounslow is very encouraging and a brilliant example of how effective we can be when we all pull together. We need to see that unity across London now, with as many people as possible coming forward for the vaccine over the coming weeks. More than 100,000 people have now been fully vaccinated in the borough.

Seema Malhotra MP told us, "This is great. Well done to all!" while Director of Communications, Local Government Association, David Holdstock, tweeted, "Lots of praise for @LBofHounslow and NHS partners for the mass vaccination day at Twickenham Stadium. Great work from our local government colleagues."

100 word summary\*

**100 word summary:**

Hounslow Council's Communications Team successfully galvanised borough residents into action at a critical stage of the COVID 19 pandemic, when cases of the Delta variant were rising.

Within 48 hours of an unexpected announcement in the House of Commons of 'Surge' PCR testing and increased vaccination in the borough, the Communications Team had created and deployed the eye-catching, multi-channel, communications and engagement campaign 'Step Up For Hounslow!'

The campaign had measurable impact; harnessing the Council's 'One Hounslow' values and achieving the core objectives. Around 53,000 vaccinations were given in four weeks and Government ended Surge status in Hounslow a week early.

**What private sector partners do you work with (if any):**

**\* If you are a private sector organisation Please provide contact details of the local authority that you are in partnership with. You will need to obtain prior consent from the local authority contact to pass on their details for GDPR compliance.**

**Local Authority Contact Name:** Amy Burns  
**Name of Local Authority:** Hounslow Council  
**Telephone Number:** 7,846,323,028  
**Email Address:** amy.burns@hounslow.gov.uk