

CASE STUDY

***The importance of professionally produced
Impact Surveys in presenting a persuasive case
for continued funding in the voluntary sector***

Introduction

An increasingly important part of the work handled by Homer Creative involves the preparation of Impact Surveys for a range of organisations in the voluntary and education sectors.

Not only are the surveys invaluable to the organisations themselves. They also provide Homer Creative with useful qualitative information and a more rounded perspective of a client's activities when it comes to working on other projects such as websites and marketing collateral.

In the autumn of 2010, Homer Creative were asked to handle two Impact Surveys by the Westfield Community Centre and Next Generation (Youth Centre?). Both of these voluntary organisations had been funded previously by Leicestershire County Council.

Why Impact Surveys were needed

In common with other Councils throughout the UK, Leicestershire had fallen victim to central government economic policy which required substantial spending cuts across the board as part of a drive to reduce the national fiscal deficit.

As a result, the County Council asked both Westfield and Next Generation to present reports that would look at the impact of reduced or withdrawn funding on the centres themselves, their various user groups and the wider communities of Hinckley and Bosworth.

Both organisations felt that an independent Impact Survey would carry more weight and present a more persuasive case to the Council. Knowing that Homer Creative had prepared similar reports for other organisations, they were appointed to handle the two projects.

Producing the Impact Surveys

The time pressures on all concerned were considerable. Homer Creative had to complete both reports with deadlines of one month and six weeks respectively, with both projects running almost concurrently.

The methodology included interviewing key stakeholders and user groups in person, either by phone or using feedback questionnaires. In the case of Westfield Community Centre, this included groups

such as [‘mothers and toddlers’ and lunch clubs], whilst the work with Next Generation involved [talking to charity workers and others in the community who work with disadvantaged youths].

Using this detailed and personalised approach enabled the Homer Creative team to contact a hard-to-reach constituency as well as generating both qualitative and, some, quantitative feedback.

In a number of ways, this tailored approach to the challenges faced by each organisation typifies the way Homer Creative work. For both clients, financial considerations were also an important part of the reports, with one having robust finance and planning in place and the other needing detailed financial analysis which Homer Creative provided.

A Positive End Result

Each Impact Survey was designed and presented in a professional format. Equally important, each report contained separate, key recommendations for both the County Council and the client organisation itself so value was added in two distinctive ways.

Brian Homer – Managing Director of Homer Creative – led on both surveys, with substantial support from the company’s Valerie Jenner and two senior associates, Dr Jan Walmsley and Fred Brookes.

According to Brian Homer:

“We have had very favourable responses from our clients who have found the Impact Surveys to be highly effective in presenting their work in a clear and professional way which funders can easily evaluate and appreciate.”

Westfield Community Centre
(Address & contact details)

Next Generation
(Address & contact details)
