

"Warm and comfortable living"

EnergieBureau Amersfoort, The Netherlands

Summary

"Warm and comfortable living" is a campaign taking place in selected districts of the city of Amersfoort. The campaign is targeted at owner-occupants of houses built before 1985, the year in which they started to pay attention to insulation and energy-saving technology. The Amersfoort municipality, EnergieBureau Amersfoort, the energy supplier to the province REMU and Planbuilding are working closely together. The aim is to encourage as many owner-occupants as possible to request an EnergyPerformanceAssessment (EPA), and then to ensure that the recommended energy-saving measures are actually implemented. In the process the end-user is alerted to the availability of attractive subsidies (REP). The campaign was entirely financed by Amersfoort municipality. Intensive communication with the target group was one of the most important success factors of the campaign. The campaign's success can be put down to this intensive approach.

End-user area	Target Audience	Technical
<input type="checkbox"/> New buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> Citizens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy efficiency
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refurbishment of buildings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Households	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heating
<input type="checkbox"/> Transport and mobility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Property owners	<input type="checkbox"/> Cooling
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial instruments	<input type="checkbox"/> Schools and universities	<input type="checkbox"/> Appliances
<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Decision makers	<input type="checkbox"/> Lighting
<input type="checkbox"/> Legal initiatives (municipal regulations, directives, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Local and regional authorities	<input type="checkbox"/> CHP
<input type="checkbox"/> Planning issues	<input type="checkbox"/> Transport companies	<input type="checkbox"/> District Heating
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable communities	<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Solar energy
<input type="checkbox"/> User behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/> ESCOs	<input type="checkbox"/> Biomass
<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Architects and engineers	<input type="checkbox"/> Wind
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial institutions	<input type="checkbox"/> Geothermal
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Hydro power
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Context

The Amersfoort municipality has many houses, which were built before 1985. Before this date little or no attention was given to the possibility of insulation and/or energy saving measures in building new houses. For one thing because energy saving was not yet a 'hot item' and for another because the costs of insulation and energy-saving measures were still too expensive. At that time the price of a house became unacceptably high if measures were to be taken.

In the development of the campaign and in determining the target group the following criteria were taken into account:

1. Houses lying within the borders of the city;
2. Only houses lived in by in owner/occupants;
3. Houses built before 1985.

Objectives

1. The aim of the campaign was to motivate owner occupants of houses within the Amersfoort municipality built before 1985 to have an Energy Performance Assessment carried out.
2. After that the aim was to encourage the owner-occupier involved to request a quotation from Planbuilding on the basis of the Energy Performance Assessment for the performance of all or some of the proposed energy saving measures.
3. On the basis of a clear quotation to encourage the owner/occupiers to actually place an order to carry out/ have the proposed energy-saving measures carried out.
4. In the absence of a response to one of the above steps owner-occupiers were contacted by telephone to encourage those involved to take action.

Process

The campaign was organised on a district basis (around 2,500 houses) and was realised with the support of an intensive communications approach. The available media gave plenty of attention to the campaign. The media used were:

1. The cable TV information service for the Amersfoort municipality;
2. Local radio and TV broadcasters;
3. Freesheets published within the Amersfoort municipality;
4. An information stand in the Amersfoort city hall/community centres and other public spaces;
5. Direct mail with a registration card and EPA-brochure to owner-occupants in pre-selected districts of the Amersfoort municipality. The response could lead to:
 - A direct request to perform an EPA;
 - Or a request for an information pack;
 - Or a registration for an information meeting in the district.
6. If no response is received, the owner-occupier involved was sent a reminder. If there was no response to this mailing then the owner-occupier involved was not approached again.

During an information evening held in the district, in close cooperation with the district manager, information was given on:

1. The aim of the project;
2. The project's approach;
3. Explanation of the EnergyPerformanceAssessment (EPA);
4. The costs of the measures to be taken to save energy;
5. The schedule for the performance of the work
6. The availability of subsidies to promote energy-saving measures;
7. The coordination of the campaign;
8. The specially developed information pack.

The aim of the information evening was to encourage the owner-occupants present to request an EPA. If an order to carry out an EPA was not given, telephone contact was made with the person involved to find out whether they might be interested in the campaign.

Financial resources and partners

The campaign cost a total of 50,583 euros. REMU implemented the technical aspects of the campaign at the cost of the Amersfoort municipality.

A number of parties were involved in the campaign.

1. Amersfoort municipality, the formal client for the campaign, also the champion for owner-occupants resident in the existent housing;

2. EnergieBureau Amersfoort, coordinating role between the Amersfoort municipality and other parties;
3. REMU NV, technical implementation of EnergyPerformanceAssessment;
4. Planbuilding, operational party and coordinating role in the contacts with market parties such as: fitters and insulation companies.

Results

Results of the communications drive

Activity	Number
Number of responses via cards, re-mailing and e-mail	735
Number of responses via e-mail	1

Visitors at 1 st open evening	47
Visitors at 2 nd open evening	52

Information packs requested via card	308
Information packs requested via re-mailing	147

EPAs given via card	136
EPAs given via re-mailing	96

No interest via card	26
No interest via re-mailing	4

Requests for new Central Heating quotation	64
Requests for insulation quotation	105

EPAs carried out	210
EPAs not carried out (client cancelled)	69

Overview of orders and m² covered in Amersfoort

Place of residence	Requests		Orders	
	Number	m ²	Number	m ²
Amersfoort	146	4398	34	1246
Construction related measures	1	0	0	
Roof insulation (sloping roof or loft)	13	848	2	103
HR++ glass	53	592	22	239
Not filled in	22		0	
Cavity wall insulation	25	2415	9	870
Concrete floor insulation	1	35	0	
Floor insulation underneath floor	8	475	1	34
Gable plating	1	33	0	

Lessons learned and repeatability

The following can be said to be positive elements of the campaign:

- The good mutual cooperation;
- Partly organising the campaign under the flag of the Amersfoort municipality contributed to the reliability of communication and information.

- ❑ The availability of subsidy money to have an Energy Performance Assessment carried out. If the suggested measures are carried out the EPA costs nothing. (Free).
- ❑ The availability of subsidies, RegularEnergyPremium (REP) to take energy-saving measures and for white goods make a campaign more attractive to end-users.

The main problem encountered is related to the planning of the measures to be implemented. Comparable campaigns were organised in other municipalities in addition to the Amersfoort municipality. REMU was also involved here as the provincial energy supplier. Because of an abundance of interest from end-users in the various campaigns in the Utrecht province, REMU encountered problems with capacity. Good consultation helped to resolve this.

Success factors that contribute to the success of the campaign that can help the replication elsewhere in Europe are:

- ❑ Campaign was adapted to the local circumstances;
- ❑ Expert parties supported each other in the organisation and implementation of a campaign;
- ❑ The availability of subsidy incentives which make participation in the campaign more attractive for the end-user;
- ❑ A reliable communicator. An organisation with prestige, for example the municipal government;
- ❑ Making use of existing media;
- ❑ The scale of a campaign must not be too ambitious. This is the only way for the organiser to retain an overview;
- ❑ District-oriented thinking and working.

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