

GLOUCESTER DIAL-A-RIDE

MARKETING REVIEW –

**IMPROVING SERVICE
PROMOTION 2004/05**

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DATE: MAY 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 'Improve Service Promotion' campaign in 2004/05 has sought to ensure that the Gloucester Dial-a-Ride (GDAR) service is promoted to a wider audience, particularly people from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and younger people.

This is just one part of GDAR's strategy for engaging with a wider community in Gloucester. The need to do this can be demonstrated by a couple of examples –

- In 2002/03 GDAR provided transport for less than 14% of Gloucester residents claiming Disability Living Allowance (3710).
- In the 2001 Best Value review by Gloucestershire County Council, it was noted that in Gloucestershire 73% of Dial-a-Ride and 70% of Voluntary Car Scheme passengers were aged over 75.
- A MORI survey in 2001 'Attitudes of Disabled People to Community Transport' highlighted that 54% know of Dial-a-Ride but 20% have never heard of it, with awareness being particularly low amongst wheelchair users.

To address this lack of awareness and understanding GDAR has undertaken a broad and intensive communication campaign in the last 12 months.

The campaign has already had a positive impact when reviewing a number of the anticipated outcomes –

OUTCOME	MEASURE
Increasing membership	223 new registrations since June 2004 151 new users since June 2004
Changing demographics	Significant increase in the number of younger users and those from BME communities
Increase in enquiries and usage	278 enquiry forms issued since June 2004 Number of passenger trips up by 15% Increased interest from many community groups in Gloucester
Increasing and improving media coverage	Local newspaper, newsletter and radio articles

The communication campaign to date is only the beginning of the overall, longer term strategy of the organisation. One of the keys for GDAR is to ensure that there is sufficient planning and resource to maintain the momentum.

The following report looks in detail at what has taken place.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the campaign has combined a number of different aspects as follows –

Input from Gloucester Dial-a-Ride management committee, staff and volunteers	Meetings and questionnaires used to understand how organisation felt awareness could be improved
Review of relevant marketing guidance	Review of marketing methods in general, those applied in private, public and voluntary sectors and specifically those related to Community Transport
Input from Gloucester Dial-a-Ride passengers and potential passengers on how to improve awareness	<p>Questionnaires issued to active passengers; previously active passengers and groups supporting people with disabilities</p> <p>Meetings, seminars, presentations and discussion groups set up with individuals, disability groups, neighbourhood projects and partnerships, health officials, community organisations, relevant local government departments</p> <p>General service feedback by phone, letter, email and newsletters</p>
Input from other Dial-a-Rides, Community Transport Gloucestershire, Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee and Community Transport Association	Meetings, discussions and information on marketing issues.

Following this consultative approach a publicity campaign was undertaken, primarily from April 2004 but earlier activity had taken place. The distribution methods employed to create awareness were as follows –

- Posters, flyers and leaflets
- Displays
- Presentations and talks
- Meetings and networking
- Website
- Radio advertising and interviews
- Regional newspapers
- Community newsletters
- Directory and screen advertising

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

In order to create a communication strategy that would improve the service awareness amongst a wider community, it was important to initially understand the current situation. The consultation undertaken as the basis of formulating a marketing / communication strategy therefore produced the following indicators -

Gloucester Dial-a-Ride organisation (including current passengers) - the general view is that many people already know about us and do benefit from the service. However, there may be others who either do not know who we are for and/or what we really do.

Potential passengers – unaware of different aspects of the service, eg people have seen the buses but do not know who it is for; who is eligible; when it operates; what parts of Gloucester it covers; whether travel outside Gloucester is possible; do not know that a companion can also travel; unaware that concessionary travel tickets are accepted; unaware of the range of activities it can be used for and perception that it is only for the elderly.

Gloucestershire Community Transport (operators; forums and County Council) – marketing to create sufficient awareness is an issue for all. A separate countywide marketing initiative is running parallel to this plan.

Gloucester City Council – suggested different approaches to reaching target audience, eg staff to drive for other organisations; advertise for staff / volunteers and trustees in other ways and review short journey costs.

National groups (operators and support and advice organisations) – it is clear that there is no ‘quick fix’ or one way of achieving greater awareness. Primary issue is identifying people who need the service but do not know it exists.

All this local and national feedback clearly demonstrated that communication work needed to be done. Perception can often become reality and this is a negative when it is the wrong perception.

Strategy

Initially this feedback developed a plan of action (“Improve Service Promotion – Action Plan 2004/05”) that had 3 themes -

1. Publicity campaign
2. Partnership working
3. Development proposals

The **Publicity campaign** and **Partnership working** themes are the aspects that will be reviewed in this report. A number of the **Development proposals** have been actioned but these will form part of the ‘Improving accessibility’ plan and review proposed for 2005/06.

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Strategy (continued)

Overall aim	Specific aims	Objectives
To improve awareness of Gloucester Dial-a-Ride, particularly to younger people and BME communities	To increase the number and diversity of its active membership	To provide information about the Gloucester Dial-a-Ride service
	To improve the transport options for all those unable to use public transport	To develop partnerships and networks with younger people and BME communities
	To reduce social isolation of those unable to use public transport	To run an advertising campaign that is both targeted and varied
		To provide information in different formats
		To develop relationships with the local media

To underpin the aims and objectives the following outcomes and outputs were anticipated and planned –

Outcomes		Outputs
Increase in enquiries		Displays, local media coverage, leaflets and talks
Increased membership		Meetings and consultation with education providers, sports and leisure organisations, community groups and BME community groups
Image of Gloucester Dial-a-Ride alters		Publicity provided to specific age groups, Gloucester communities and districts Publicity through different methods, eg Internet; Radio; Newspapers and flyers
Member profiling changes		Flyers in different languages; Talking Newspaper articles; Radio interviews; Website and plasma screen advert
Increased feedback		Contacts made with and coverage obtained from Gloucester Citizen; Gloucestershire Independent; Severn Sound; Radio Gloucestershire and GFM
Service provision develops		

This report will now consider the activities and impact of the Publicity and Partnership themes.

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Publicity campaign activities

METHOD	TARGET AUDIENCE			
	MAIN	BME	YOUNGER	ALL
Presentations and talks	YES	YES	YES	
Networking and meetings	YES	YES	YES	YES
Displays	YES	YES	YES	YES
Newspapers				YES
Newsletters	YES	YES	YES	YES
Radio	YES	YES	YES	YES
Flyers, posters and leaflets	YES	YES	YES	YES
Website				YES
Directory and screen advertising			YES	YES

Note – MAIN means white europeans, aged over 65.

METHOD	TARGET AREA	
	GLOUCESTER WARDS	GLOUCESTER
Presentations and talks	Barton & Tredworth Quedgeley Westgate	YES
Networking and meetings	ALL	YES
Displays	ALL	YES
Newspapers		YES
Newsletters	Barton & Tredworth Coney Hill Matson Quedgeley White City	YES
Radio		YES
Flyers, posters and leaflets	Abbey Hardwicke Longlevens Saintbridge Quedgeley	YES
Website		YES
Directory and screen advertising		YES

Note - To support access for people whose first language is not English, interpreters have assisted at presentations and talks as appropriate and flyers, leaflets and posters have been produced and distributed in a number of community languages.

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Partnership working activities

To help sustain and develop the awareness and understanding of the service across a wide population of Gloucester the communication strategy also sought to develop greater work with partners. This has been done in a variety of ways –

PARTNER	ACTION	EXAMPLES
Shops	Posters about Gloucester Dial-a-Ride advertised in local stores.	Woolworths Co-op
	Coffee mornings and late night shopping trips to supermarkets	ASDA Sainsbury
Social clubs	Activities of these clubs promoted on the Dial-a-Ride buses, in our newsletter and on the website	Raven Tavern Chequers Bridge Gloucester library clubs
	Passengers taken to these clubs on their or club's request	As above
Sports and leisure centres	Activities of these promoted as above	GL1 Oxstalls Tennis Centre
Voluntary and community groups	Activities of these promoted as above	Living Independently in Gloucestershire
	Work with them to see if Gloucester Dial-a-Ride can support their members' transport needs	Asian Elders Hindu Welfare Group Hop, Skip & Jump Phoenix Club
Health organisations	Activities of these promoted as above	Freeability Bangladeshi Health Day
	Work with them to see if Gloucester Dial-a-Ride can support their members' transport needs	West Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Impact of the campaign

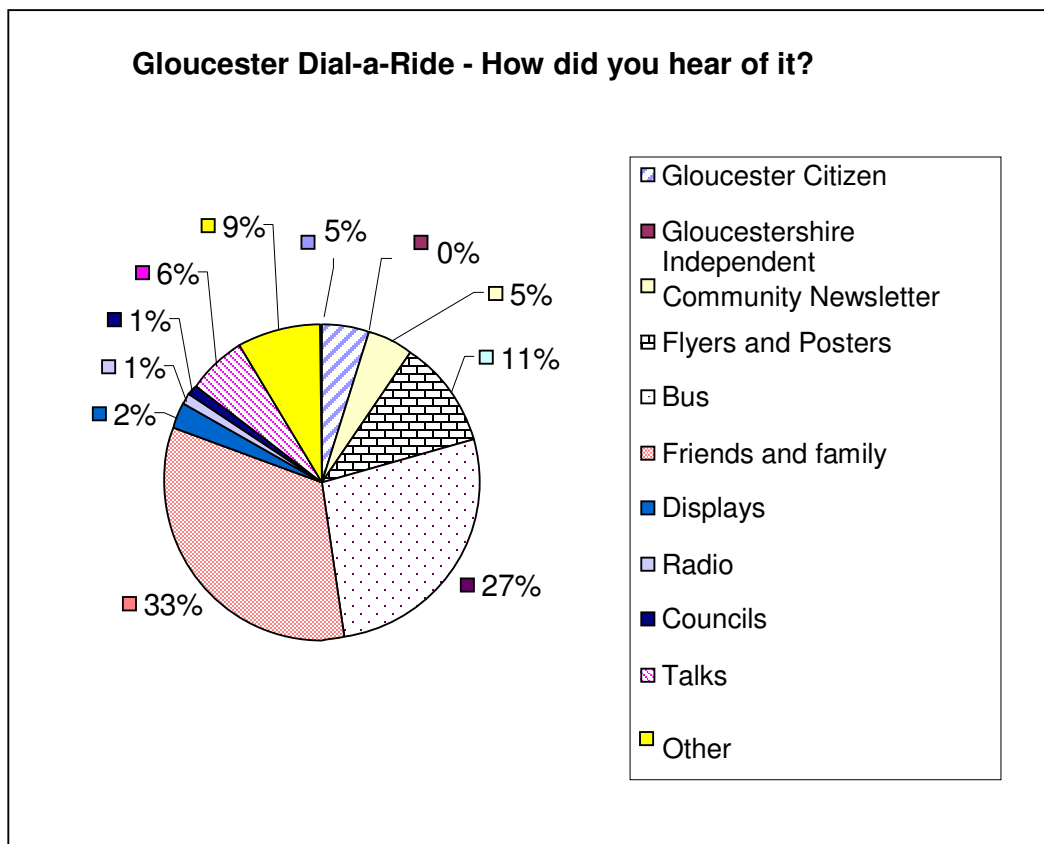
This communication strategy has certainly had an impact on the activity for Gloucester Dial-a-Ride and the headline aspects are –

- Increasing membership
- Changing demographics
- Increase in enquiries and usage
- Increasing and improving media coverage
- Improved understanding and awareness of the service
- Increased interest from health organisations, leisure providers and community groups
- Developing service provision

The appendices provide fuller details on the above.

Effective communication methods

The increased publicity certainly seems to have created change, however, what methods have really made the difference? To assess the value of this a short survey was issued to 110 new members in January 2005, who joined Gloucester Dial-a-Ride from 1 June 2004 onwards. 67 people replied, an excellent response rate of 61%, and the following chart summarises their answers.



REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Effective communication methods (continued)

It is interesting but not unexpected that 60% of respondents indicate they found out about Gloucester Dial-a-Ride from either seeing the buses or friends and family (ie 'word of mouth'). Successful businesses are often marketed by 'word of mouth' and this is therefore very encouraging for Gloucester Dial-a-Ride. It does not belittle the publicity activity because how did the people informing their friends find out about the organisation in the first place?

The key point to take is the need to create awareness in a number of ways. By doing this people will then begin to 'see or hear the service', ie 'Gloucester Dial-a-Ride' actually registers with them.

This must be true as the buses were operating around Gloucester before the communication strategy began but for many of the potential passengers they would have been 'invisible'. Unless you can connect an 'advert' with a service or product it does not actually register in your mind.

Many individuals and groups that have been communicated with over the last 6-12 months have said exactly this. A common response in a follow up meeting is 'I see those blue Gloucester Dial-a-Ride buses everywhere now.....'.

The service provided has not changed. What has is the awareness of what the organisation is about and who it is for.

Conclusion

This work has developed individual and group transport support while at the same time it has interested these and other organisations in wanting to find out more. Groups are now inviting GDAR to do presentations about its activities.

It is very much a two way process and to help foster sustainable partnerships GDAR will be completing a project in 2005/06, kindly supported by Gloucester City Council.

As stated earlier the work to date is very much the beginning. The appendices that follow summarise the outputs and outcomes to date.

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- Appendix 1 – Activity analysis
- Appendix 2 - New registrations
- Appendix 3 - Demographic comparisons
- Appendix 4 - Ward comparison
- Appendix 5 - Passenger trips
- Appendix 6 - Publicity campaign calendar

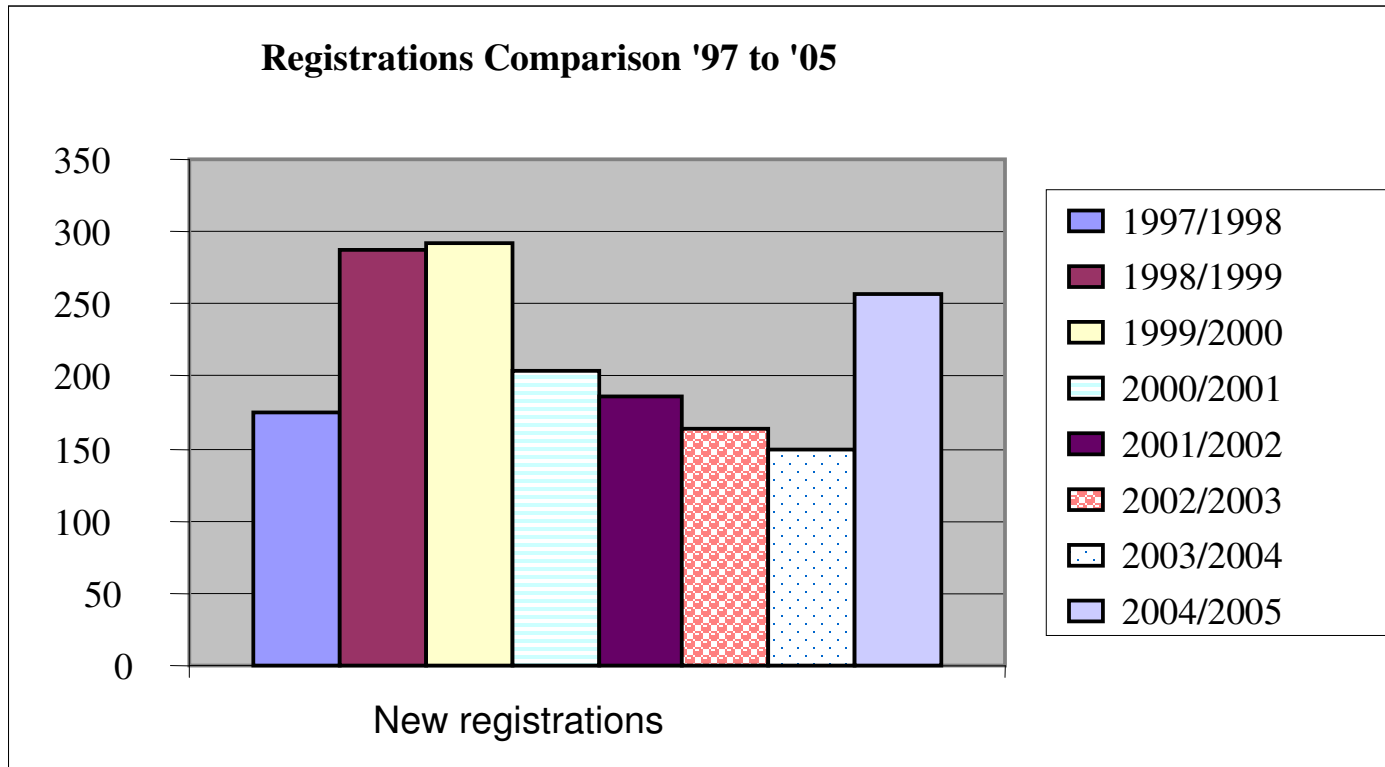
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Appendix 1 – Activity Analysis

MEMBERSHIP FORMS ISSUED 1/6/04 to 31/3/05	278		
NEW REGISTRATIONS 1/6/04 to 31/3/05	223		
NEW USERS 1/6/04 to 31/3/05	151		
	June-November 03	June-November 2004	% CHANGE
PASSENGER TRIPS	11621	13756	18.37%
PASSENGER CALL BOOKINGS (COMPLETED)	10900	12953	18.83%
HIGHEST DAILY CALLS (EXCLUDE REGULARS) - MONDAYS	1149	1421	23.67%
LOWEST DAILY CALLS (EXCLUDE REGULARS) - THURSDAYS	488	596	22.13%
REFUSALS (MEMBERS / STANDARD REQUEST)	281	431	53.38%
REFUSALS (NON MEMBERS / NON STANDARD REQUEST)	NOT RECORDED	98	N/A
CANCELLATIONS	2154	2660	23.49%
ANALYSIS OF REFUSALS (NON MEMBERS / NON STANDARD REQUEST)		OUT OF AREA DESTINATIONS	CHEL TENHAM DESTINATIONS
OUT OF AREA	43	CHELTENHAM	HOSPITAL
GROUP BOOKING	21	CHURCHDOWN	STAR CENTRE
SAME / NEXT DAY BOOKING	16	NEWENT	
NOT DETAILED	4	OVER	
ELIGIBILITY	3	STANDISH	
OUT OF NORMAL HOURS	3	STONEHOUSE	
SCHEDULE FULL	3	STROUD	
HOSPITAL DISCHARGE	2	COTSWOLD WATER PARK	
TIME NOT SUITABLE	2	STAUNTON	
RISK ASSESSMENT	1		

APPENDICES

Appendix 2 – New registrations



APPENDICES

Appendix 3 - Demographic comparison of Gloucester Dial-a-Ride members

	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	New Members
Age ranges				
< 18	None	1%	None	None
18-30	0%	0%	1%	4%
31-45	3%	3%	4%	8%
46-60	3%	5%	7%	9%
61-75	15%	16%	19%	32%
75+	78%	75%	69%	47%
Ethnic Origin				
ASIAN	1%	NONE	1%	2%
BLACK				
CARIBBEAN	3%	2%	2%	1%
CHINESE	4%	4%	3%	1%
WHITE				
EUROPEAN	89%	92%	92%	95%
OTHER	3%	2%	1%	0%
Gender				
Male	19%	17%	20%	31%
Female	81%	83%	80%	69%

**Note – Figures are distorted by non disclosure of data.
For example in 2004/05 non disclosure is as follows – Age 23%; Ethnic Origin 38% and Gender 2%**

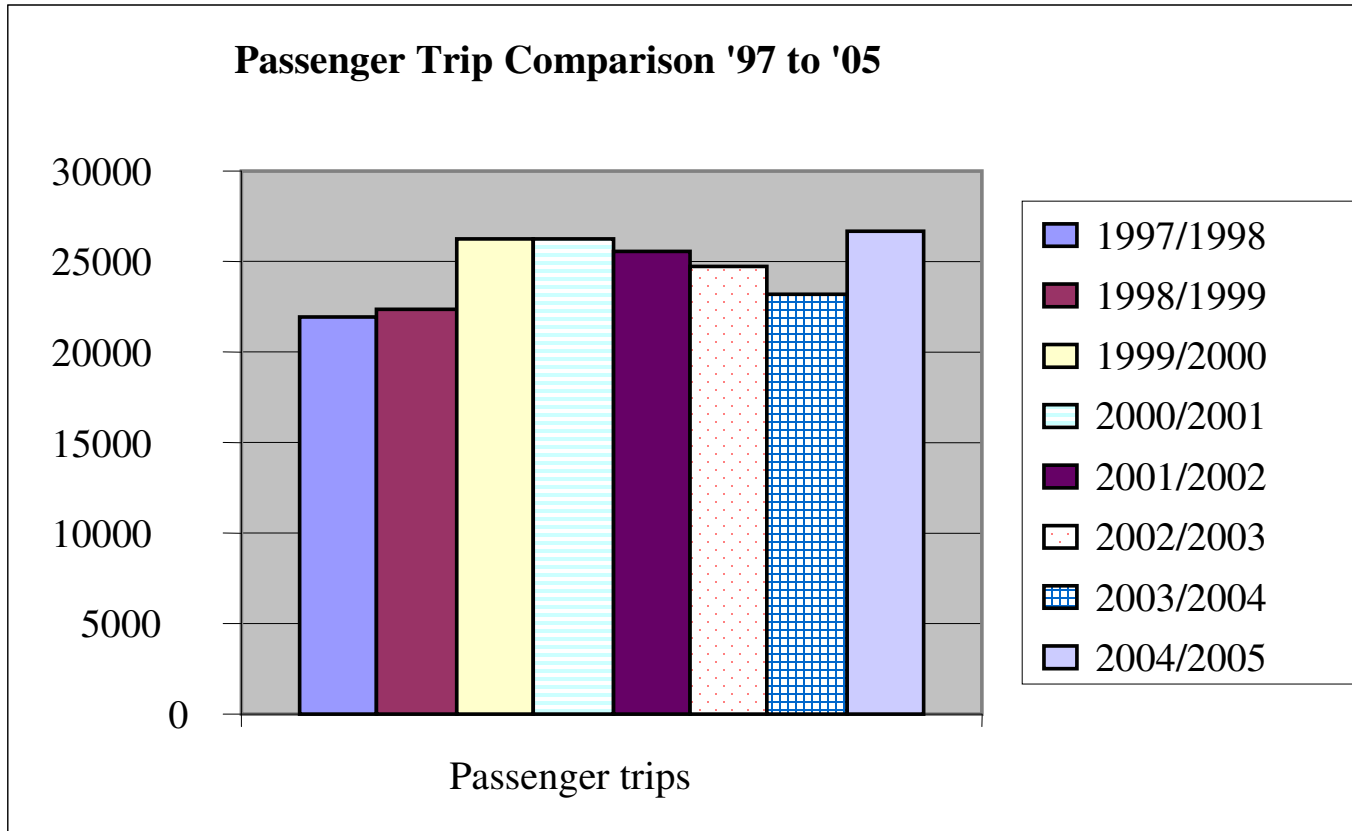
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Appendix 4 – Ward coverage by Gloucester Dial-a-Ride

Gloucester Wards	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	New Members
Abbey	8%	8%	7%	6%
Barnwood	9%	8%	8%	6%
Barton & Tredworth	8%	8%	9%	10%
Elmbridge	3%	6%	5%	1%
Grange	1%	4%	6%	8%
Hucclecote	10%	9%	8%	7%
Kingsholm & Wootton	9%	8%	8%	10%
Longlevens	8%	5%	4%	3%
Matson & Robinswood	11%	11%	12%	15%
Moreland	9%	6%	7%	5%
Podsmead	8%	7%	6%	5%
Quedgeley Fieldcourt	4%	3%	2%	2%
Quedgeley Severn Vale	2%	2%	3%	1%
Tuffley	8%	4%	7%	10%
Westgate	4%	3%	5%	8%
Not Gloucester	Not known	6%	4%	3%

APPENDICES

Appendix 5 – Passenger trips



APPENDICES

Appendix 6 – Publicity campaign calendar

When	What	Where	How	Target
Sep-03	Display - Freeability	Eastgate Centre	Staffed display	Young
	Gloucestershire Independent Newspaper	Gloucester	Door-to-door	All
	Newsletter - Gloucestershire Lifestyles	Gloucester	Door-to-door	Young
Oct-03	Display - Health event	Podsmead Neighbourhood Project	Staffed display	All
	Flyers	Gloucester	Community Groups	All
Nov-03	Newsletter - LIGS	Gloucester	Door-to-door	Young
Dec-03	Display - Bangladeshi Health day	Colwell Centre	Staffed display	BME
	Flyers	Gloucester	Community Groups	All
Jan-04				
Feb-04	Display - Concessionary Ticket collections	Hucclecote	Staffed display	Main
Mar-04	Display - Concessionary Ticket collections	Gloucester CVS	Staffed display	Main
Apr-04	Gloucester Citizen Newspaper	Gloucester	Resale	All
	Gloucestershire Independent Newspaper	Gloucester	Door-to-door	All
	Severn Sound - Classic Gold advert	Gloucestershire	Radio	Young
	Radio Gloucestershire	Gloucestershire	Radio	All
	Presentation - Black Elders	St Catherine Court	Talk	BME
	Display - Sainsbury	Gloucester	Staffed display	All
	Flyers	Gloucester	Community Groups	All
May-04	Severn Sound - Classic Gold advert	Gloucestershire	Radio	Young
	Presentation - Asian Elders	Great Western Court	Talk	BME
	Presentation - Age Concern	Gloucester	Talk	Main
	Presentation - Phoenix Club	Gloucester	Talk	Young
	Flyers - Gloucestershire Lifestyles	Gloucester	Door-to-door	Young

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Appendix 6 – Publicity campaign calendar (continued)

When	What	Where	How	Target
Jun-04	Flyers	Quedgeley, Hardwicke, Abbey	Door-to-door	All
	Gloucester Citizen Newspaper	Gloucester	Resale	All
	Gloucester Citizen Newspaper	Gloucester	Resale	All
	Gloucestershire Independent Newspaper	Gloucester	Door-to-door	All
	Newsletter - Partnership News	Gloucester Community Groups and Councillors	City Council	All
	Posters	Gloucester	Retail, GPs, Libraries, Community Groups	All
	Severn Sound - Classic Gold advert	Gloucestershire	Radio	Young
	Display - Carers Gloucestershire	Gloucester	Staffed display	Main
	Presentation - PHD Forum	Gloucester	Talk	Young
	Flyers - Shopmobility	Gloucester	Shopmobility	Main
Jul-04	Newsletter - Barton and Tredworth News	Barton and Tredworth	Door-to-door	BME
	Posters	Gloucester	Retail, GPs, Libraries, Councils, Homes	All
	Gloucester FM	Gloucester	Radio	BME
	Severn Sound - Classic Gold advert	Gloucestershire	Radio	Young
	Flyers - LIGS	Gloucester	Door-to-door	Young
Aug-04	Flyers	Longlevens, Abbey, Saintbridge	Door-to-door	All
	Posters	Gloucester	Retail, GPs, Libraries	All
	Newsletter - Coney Hill NP	Coney Hill	Door-to-door	All
	Presentation - Hindu Elders Group	Gloucester	Talk	BME
	Flyers - Muslim community	Gloucester	Door-to-door	BME
	Flyers - Art Shape	Gloucester	Door-to-door	Young
	Display - Neighbourhood Needs Conference	Gloucestershire	Staffed display	Main

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Appendix 6 – Publicity campaign calendar (continued)

When	What	Where	How	Target
Sep-04	Newsletter - Quedgeley News	Quedgeley	Door-to-door	All
	Gloucester Citizen Newspaper	Gloucester	Resale	All
	Display - Quedgely After Retirement	Quedgeley	Staffed display	Main
	Presentation - Asian Elders (Women)	Gloucester	Talk	BME
	Newsletter - Caring Matters	Gloucestershire	Door-to-door	Main
Oct-04	Newsletter - White City CP	White City	Door-to-door	All
	Gloucester Citizen Newspaper	Gloucester	Resale	All
	Display - Health event	Gloucestershire	Staffed display	Main
Nov-04	Flyers - Chinese Women's Guild	Gloucester	Door-to-door	BME
Dec-04	Plasma screen advertising	Gloucester	Advert	All
	Presentation - Star College	Gloucester	Talk	Young
	Display - Neighbourhood Partnership AGM	Kingsholm and Wootton	Staffed display	All
Jan-05	Newsletter - Matson NP	Matson	Door-to-door	All
	Flyers - Sheltered Housing	Gloucester	Door-to-door	Main
Feb-05	Thomson Local Directory Advert	Cheltenham and Gloucester	Door-to-door	All
	Display - Community Transport Conference	Gloucestershire	Staffed display	All
	Display - Concessionary Ticket collections	Gloucester	Staffed display	Main
Mar-05	Presentation - Castlemeads Court	Westgate	Talk	Main
	Presentation - Hop, Skip & Jump	Gloucester	Talk	Young
	Display - Education event	Gloucester	Staffed display	Young
	Display - Concessionary Ticket collections	Gloucester	Staffed display	Main
	Display - Health event	Gloucester	Staffed display	Main
Apr-05	Website	Internet	Internet	All