

Hearts and Minds: Driving political campaigns through Ambassadors

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Together we will beat cancer

A word from our Ambassadors

'Becoming an Ambassador for Cancer Research UK not only gives me a voice that can be heard by the media but it allows me to give something back and to hopefully help other cancer patients whilst doing so.'

Laura Ashurst, breast cancer survivor and mum of three



'I got involved in the Ambassador programme... because my mother died of colorectal cancer and my father came close to dying of that disease as well... I came away with a different perspective on how policy is determined in Wales.'

Duncan Baird, CR-UK funded researcher, Cardiff



'While an MP may be committed to beat cancer, many other interests lobby them and we cannot assume support for every aspect of our campaigns. Ambassadors are a vital resource in the battle to provide fact based evidence to MPs. I am immensely proud to be part of that process.'

David Collins, retired police constable and campaigner



When I found out I was in full remission following a fourteen month battle with Hodgkin's Lymphoma I vowed to do everything I could in the fight against cancer.

21 September 2012 **Sarah Gurney, 23, keen Race for Life supporter**



Who are our advocates?



How do we organise this?



21 September 2012

Communications plans and peer-to-peer support



Penny-Sophia

Thanks for all your replies, you all made me feel a lot better! I'm very glad David set this group up, I really don't feel so alone now I'm getting to know my fellow ambassadors, it's nice to be able to share ideas and support with you all! xx

17 October at 15:44 · Like · 1

Training, and looking to the future

Ambassador Case Study: David Collins



Last year when we were running the Out of Sight, Out of Mind campaign action to save the tobacco control laws we had fought hard for, David had contacted his MP David Nuttall. Knowing that his MP was not so warm to tobacco control legislation, David set about establishing himself as an authoritative voice for our campaign, and kept a good eye on what issues were of interest to his MP, by monitoring his MP's blog.

When his MP put a post on his blog about having met David at the 2010 lobby day, the conversation started out with David positioning himself in his official role as a Cancer Campaigns Ambassador. Social media moves so quickly and one comment can make a conversation thread go off on a tangent. So unexpectedly, David found himself in the middle of a fiery battle between pro-tobacco people and Smokefree supporters debating the pros and cons of the 2007 Smokefree legislation.

This is where David really shone, as he stepped back, took stock of the situation, sought advice from the Cancer Campaigns team first, and then went back with reasoned calm arguments and pointers to the evidence base behind what he was saying. David didn't get flustered and was careful to separate what evidence and points he had sought from us, with those he was putting forward in a personal capacity.

Go to <http://bit.ly/DCollins> to see David in action!!

David's words of wisdom:

Get involved, but stay vigilant...

As more and more politicians are using social networking sites to communicate with voters, you may want to post onto their site, blog or twitter account as part of a campaign task. In general, you should have no problems. You will find that by far and away the majority of Internet users are reasonable, genuine people. However, you need to be vigilant so there are a few trouble-makers out there who aren't so friendly, particularly if you mention 'cancer', or 'tobacco control'.

If you meet a trouble-maker, define them first:

An online trouble-maker is someone who searches out opportunities to post inflammatory, dubious or outrageous messages in an online community, forum, chat room, blog etc. They do so with the primary intent of provoking people into a response, or rubbing opinions and beliefs that are different to theirs. They come in many forms, but in my experience the two types of trouble-maker you are most likely to come across while campaigning are as follows:

Trouble-makers

These are people with a strategy and agenda. These can travel as a gang, acting together in order to cause disruption and doubt. Have a quick look at the comments on my previous MP's blog and ask yourself why would people who have no connection with the constituency, be bothering to read a back-bench MP's blog...?

Define

'Trolls'

Trolls are the most distressing type of opposition and it can be a bit of a shock when you first meet one. They get their kicks by posting offensive comments to upset people and provoke a reaction. It's the modern version of 'knock a door run'. They can, and have, caused offence on tribute sites.



CANCER RESEARCH UK



‘Our evidence shows that plain packaging will give millions of children one less reason to start smoking. Sign our petition.’

Cancer Research UK

‘I’m a stage three lung cancer survivor. I was hooked on cigars because of the glamorous ads and packs they came with. I want to make it easier for my Grandson not to start smoking – help me get to 10,000 signatures.’

Jim, Ambassador and cancer survivor



‘Hiya – As you know we lost my lovely Mum this year to cancer. This petition from Cancer Research UK means so much to me, so please could you sign up when you get a moment? Thanks.’

Sally, your best friend



Media

26 NEWS

Cigarette packaging row drags in Cameron

The Prime Minister's choice of an adviser with links to the tobacco industry has raised eyebrows. By **Steve Connor**

The introduction of a government of health and safety advisers to David Cameron has been called into question by details of the appointment of a senior adviser with links to the tobacco industry.

Baroness Williams, the director of the Institute of Environmental Affairs (IEA), has been appointed as an "adviser" to the Prime Minister's "Team Challenge", which they believe might offer him a "reflective" and "critical" perspective on the government's policies on tobacco.

Baroness Williams is well known for her work on the environment and has been a vocal supporter of the tobacco industry. She has been appointed as an "adviser" to the Prime Minister's "Team Challenge", which they believe might offer him a "reflective" and "critical" perspective on the government's policies on tobacco.

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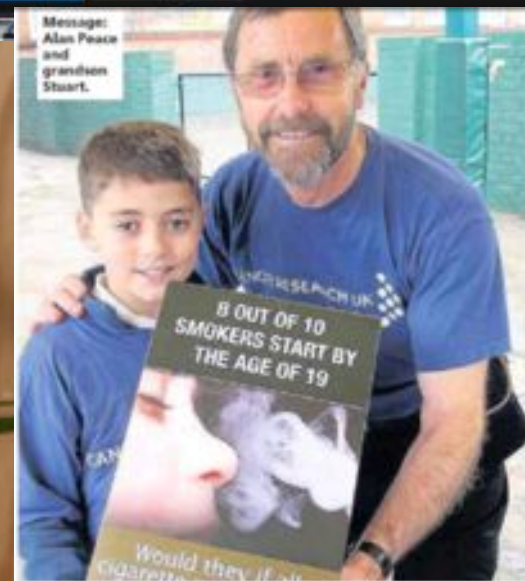
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United to tackle smoking

TWO generations of the same Midland family have backed a national campaign to strip cigarette packets of their branding.

Award-winning fundraiser Alan Peace, 66, has been touring the Midlands to drum up signatures in support of Cancer Research UK's '8 Out of 10' campaign.

And Dudley-based Alan roped in his ten-year-old granddaughter Jorja to promote his message.

Alan said: "I do not want my grandchildren subjected to the cynical, obscene marketing ploys the tobacco industry uses."

More information

Westminster lobby



Making it work



21 September 2012