



Celebrating new ideas

2009 New Zealand Post Group
Local Government Excellence Awards

Project Submission Template

JOINED UP LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Name of Project

Stratford TET Home Safety Project

Name of entering council/s

Stratford District Council



1. Brief Description of the Project

In essence the objectives of the Stratford TET Home Safety Project were:

1. To promote home safety awareness by providing appropriate information and education on home safety.
2. To provide and install to NZ Fire Service standards, FREE smoke alarms in homes throughout the central Taranaki area.

The Stratford TET Home Safety Project Group was formed in June/July 2007 and is a collective of community and government organisations who have formed a partnership, documented in a Memorandum of Understanding, to deliver a home safety initiative to the residents of central Taranaki.

2. Organisations Involved

The partners are: the Stratford District Council, Central Taranaki Victim Support Group (lead agency), New Zealand Fire Service, Taranaki Electricity Trust (primary funder), Work and Income, ACC, Peak Health Taranaki, Stratford Police, Housing NZ and the Stratford Fire Brigade.

3. Rationale for the Project and Expected Benefits - 10 points

Rationale

Central Taranaki Victim Support Group has for years provided smoke alarms to the Stratford Fire Brigade to install in homes after a fire call out. Victim Support considered that the negative and damaging affects on peoples lives and homes following a (largely preventable) fire in the home needed to be addressed, and concluded that a concentrated and preventative action was desirable in and for the local community.

The Community Services Manager at the Stratford District Council went about establishing a Community Partner Group (and Memorandum of Understanding) to address the issue.

Expected Benefits

The benefits of the Project were to be both obvious and subtle:

- More homes to have operating smoke alarms
- Fire safety information to be delivered to central Taranaki homes
- Neighbourhood support information to be delivered to central Taranaki homes
- ACC falls prevention information to be delivered to central Taranaki homes
- Wallet sized card with emergency medical and helpful phone numbers to be delivered
- Victim Support information to be delivered to central Taranaki homes
- "It's Not OK" information delivered to central Taranaki homes
- Community members in need identified and referred on to social and health agencies
- Home Safety Ambassadors (via Work and Income) move in to full time sustainable employment

The Project commenced on Monday 14 January 2008, and was managed in three stages.

Stage 1: Stratford Township

A total of 2166 homes with a population of 5340 people. Target 85%

Stage 2: Midhirst/Toko Townships

A total of 120 homes with a population of 288 people. Target 85%

Stage 2A: Kaponga/Eltham Townships

A total of 939 homes with a population of 2253 people. Target 85%

Stage 3: Central Taranaki Rural

To complete the Project, residents in the rural areas were also offered the opportunity to receive this free community service.

A follow up survey was conducted in April / June 2009 to measure the perceived benefits of the Project.

4. Linkage to Council's Strategic Direction - 5 points

In 2003, the four local / regional authorities in Taranaki undertook a joint project to identify the community outcomes for the entire Taranaki region. The project began with suggestions from public meetings, hui and stakeholder meetings, which were then collated and followed up with a telephone survey and a questionnaire.

The final analysis revealed 38 key statements that were considered to apply equally to each district and the region. These statements were repeatedly put forward in different words, by different groups and individuals. The statements were grouped under seven themes which became Taranaki's Community Outcomes.

As part of this process, the Stratford District Council worked together with the Stratford community to identify priorities for the District.

1. *A district with a clear identity where people experience a sense of belonging and pride.*
2. *The leading rural trading centre attractive to residents, business and visitors alike.*
3. High quality health and education facilities and services accessible to all.
4. Affordable high quality core services and facilities.
5. *Local jobs and training for local people.*
6. Sustainable development.
7. Comprehensive social, recreational and cultural facilities accessible to all.
8. Clean air, water and land.
9. *A built environment that is attractive, safe and healthy.*
10. A diverse natural environment that is accessible to all.

The Stratford TET Home Safety Project worked towards priorities 1, 2, 5 and 9.

The Home Safety Project Ambassadors delivered safety information to 2,607 homes, including information on Neighbourhood Support, which has led to an increasing number of residents

establishing neighbourhood support groups. This is reflective of a district where people experience as sense of pride (**priority 1**).

The Home Safety Project delivered home safety information. A safer community is a more attractive community in which to live (**priority 2**).

Twelve Work and Income clients were employed as Project Ambassadors. Seven have since moved into permanent work. (**Priority 5.**)

With home safety information delivered to over 2,607 homes in the course of this project, and with over 11,000 smoke alarms installed, Stratford is a much safer place. This addresses **priority 9**.

5. Project Planning - 5 points

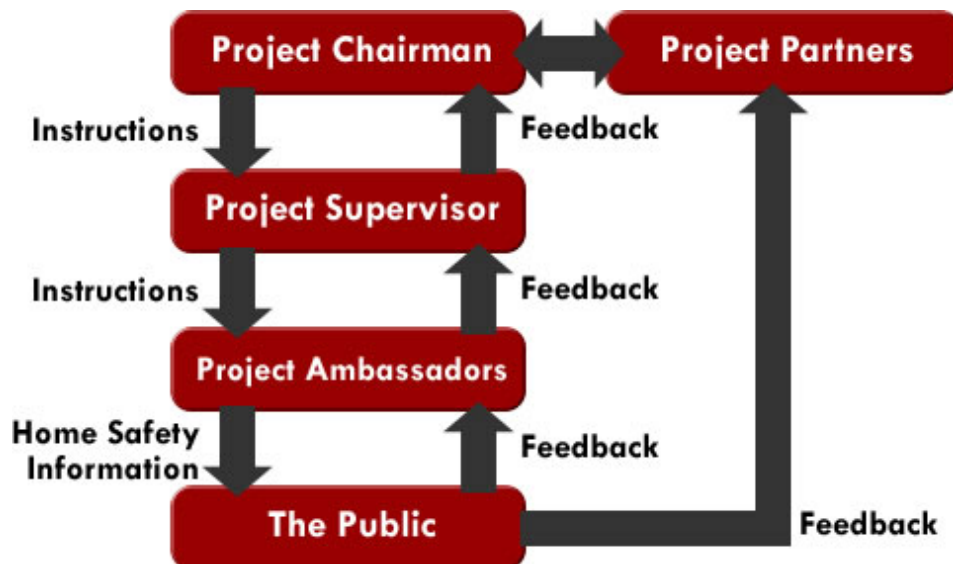
The Stratford TET Home Safety Project has been extremely well documented. From its concept planning, through to implementation, good and thorough recording has been undertaken and maintained. Each Partner Group requested specific requirements in terms of collection of data and these needs have been met.

The Ambassadors completed a statistical sheet for every home visited, and these have been uplifted and recorded in spreadsheet format by the Project Supervisor, providing up to date statistical data as the project progresses.

6. Project Management - 5 points

The Project commenced on 14 January and closed on Friday 1 August 2008.

It followed this structure:



The Project utilised traditional project planning techniques, namely:

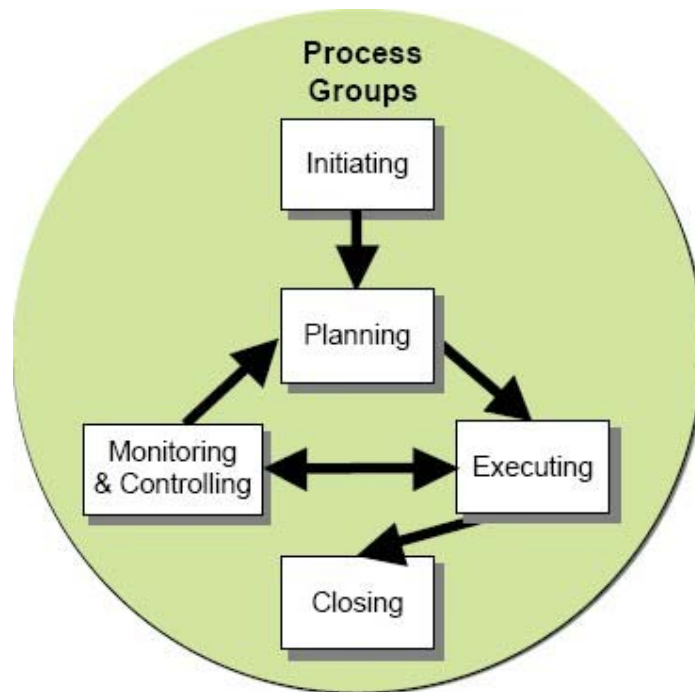
Initiation: the Project was initiated by Stratford District Council’s Community Services Manager.

Planning and Design: the Project was planned and designed by Central Taranaki Victim Support, which took the form of a Memorandum of Understanding with other Project partners.

Executing: the execution of the Project was undertaken by a Project Supervisor, with the Project Ambassadors being the public faces of the Project.

Monitoring and Controlling: monitoring was conducted through instant feedback (ie client comments), telephone conversations, and follow up surveys.

Closing: the Project closed 1 August 2008 before the final follow up survey in April - June 2009. The Project partners undertook at that stage to continue their meetings under the heading Central Taranaki Safe Community Trust.



7. Relationship / Stakeholder Management - 10 points

The groups involved with the Project were those identified as the key safety stakeholders in the communities involved. All Partners committed to the Project as shown in the Memorandum of Understanding which was duly signed and acted upon by all throughout the Project. Other community organisations (ie. local fire brigades in smaller communities) have been consulted as the Project has progressed and their resources and advice encouraged and appreciated.

Monthly meetings were held, project progress monitored, and issues arising from day to day operations were dealt with by the Project Supervisor.

The interaction between community volunteer organisations and government agencies was strengthened through the Project, and clearly identified a need to work collaboratively on other community safety projects.

Each Project partner had their own set of information requirements, which was collated by the Project Supervisor and distributed as necessary.

Early on it was realised that communication with the various partners of the Project would be essential to ensuring their continued support. It was also realised that advertising the Project would be essential so that members of the public were not surprised by a knock on the door, but were in fact expecting it. These two goals were addressed through developing and utilising a wide range of tools and techniques including:

- regular team meetings and briefings
- strong communication with the Project partners
- regular committee reports
- a dedicated local telephone number
- advertising in the local community newspaper
- articles written in Taranaki newspapers
- targeted radio advertising,
- regular e-mail updates to key stakeholders

8. Innovation and Originality - 20 points

Projects similar to the Stratford TET Home Safety Project have been run before (in other places) as NZ Fire Service initiatives.

The Stratford TET Home Safety Project was unique in that it was led by a voluntary community organisation (Victim Support), who brought together the project partners (including the Stratford District Council) through a Memorandum of Understanding. The Project partners ensured buy in from funders, raised the required funding, provided chairmanship, administration, and project management.

Stratford District Council was a huge supporter in helping Central Taranaki Victim Support facilitate this. Council provided the base network, administration, community knowledge and buy-in to get the Project off the ground, as well as identifying the Project partners.

The Stratford TET Home Safety Project was also innovative in the range of home safety information that was delivered. The home safety information ranged from neighbourhood support information, to a Peak Health services card, to falls prevention information for over 65s.

To staff the Project, the appointment of a full time Project Supervisor was undertaken by the Project Chairman and two representatives of the NZ Fire Service. A Project Supervisor was appointed to the position in December 2007.

Following this, a number of Work and Income clients were referred for interview by the Project Chairman, a NZ Fire Service rep, and the Project Supervisor with twelve being selected to commence full time work on the Project. Work and Income subsidised the wages for the duration of the Project. The Ambassadors were all local people from a wide range of backgrounds, were receiving an assortment of benefits; are both male and female; aged between 19 and 62 years and of differing ethnic groups.

Ambassadors undertook an initial two week NZ Fire Service focused training programme at the local Fire Station. The training covered a lot of Fire Safety issues both informational and practical

sessions, along with presentations from each Partner Group. Personal presentation, communication skills, role plays, working with people in the community and team work were emphasised during the training phase.

The Project operated from a “shop” located on the main street of Stratford. The Ambassadors were led by the Project Supervisor and were employed for 40 hours per week, generally between 8.00 am and 5.00 pm daily. In addition, alternative hours are sometimes arranged to suit prearranged client appointments.

The Ambassadors were all supplied and outfitted with identifiable uniforms. The polo shirts were sign written and a formal ID badge was worn. Navy blue NZFS pants were provided along with safety shoes and socks. A sleeveless vest and warm jackets were also provided to each Ambassador as the cooler months arrived.

The Ambassadors spent up to the first hour of each day preparing information packs, smoke alarms and their “kits” for the day. There were three sign written cars, each with four Ambassadors working in teams of two. Occasionally a team of three worked together. In general the Ambassadors door knocked in a pre determined area of the town on a street by street basis. A full and comprehensive advertising and promotional campaign was established and residents were been informed as to where the Project Ambassadors would be working next on a regular basis through the local papers. If residents were not home at the time they visited, Ambassadors left a “calling card” inviting them to phone in to arrange a suitable time to call back.

Appointments were encouraged as this assists good time management. A team of two Ambassadors would generally complete 5-6 homes per day.

The Project Supervisor maintained maps of the various communities covered by the Project ensuring that every home is visited. Ambassadors completed at least two sweeps of each community leaving a calling card where people were not at home.

The Project partners decided to undertake a survey in an attempt to measure the community well being as a result of the project and the results were overwhelming. From 655 responses:

- 433 rated the level of service as 9-10 (highest possible)
- 581 rated the projects value to the community at 9-10 (highest possible)

In essence, the communities of Stratford, Midhirst, Eltham, Toko, and Kaponga engaged with the Project partners and welcomed the combined initiative. A sense of well being was reflected back in the survey.

Please see the attached information summary for more about the survey results.

9. Evaluation Framework - 5 points

The Stratford TET Home Safety Project set out with specific goals: to provide smoke alarms and home safety information to as many homes as possible within central Taranaki.

A number of measurable targets were set, including:

- The target for Stratford township was 85% of homes.
- The target for Midhirst / Toko townships was 85%.

- The target for rural central Taranaki was 85%.

In addition, we measured progress on a weekly basis from information collated by the Project Supervisor.

It is important that the home safety information is not just delivered, but is heard and addressed by the public. Since the completion of Stage 3, the Project partners have reassembled to do a follow-up survey between April-June 2009. This involved 4 Home Safety Ambassadors visiting homes where fire safety information had been delivered, and smoke alarms had been installed, to complete a survey and check the status of the installed alarms.

The Project Ambassadors talked to 510 people in the survey. Asked to rank the Project from 1 to 10 (1 being the lowest, 10 the highest) in terms of how valuable the Project has been, the average score was 9.22.

62% of respondents felt they had improved their knowledge of home safety practices, and 71% had a fire escape plan.

Over 43% of respondents had used the health services contacts provided by the Project Ambassadors.

Please see the attached information summary for more about the survey results.

10. Outcomes for Council - 10 points

The Stratford District Council could not have succeeded in running this project on its own. The Project partners were essential in providing information, contacts, and operational expertise.

Each Project partner was initially selected for their knowledge, information and/or resources to help establish the Project and keep it operating in a sustainable way over the predetermined timeframe. The Project partners selected were:

Central Taranaki Victim Support Group:

- Chairmanship, Treasury and Secretarial
- Staff employment and management
- Community Media and Promotion
- Establishment of Project concept and budgets for funding applications
- Preparation of Partners MOU
- Management of Partnerships with partner groups including Funding agencies/applications
- Staff (Ambassador) training to assist people into full time sustainable careers
- Public/Community speaking engagements
- Information for Education Packs

New Zealand Fire Service:

- Technical advice
- Management Team representation
- Resources for establishment of project site
- Ambassador work kits
- Training of Ambassadors (staff) to NZFS standards

- Information for Education Packs
- On going technical advise and on job training
- Public/Community speaking engagements

Work and Income:

- Provision of local clients to staff the project
- Funding to subsidise wages
- Assistance with staff management and employment opportunities

Taranaki Electricity Trust:

- Provision of approximately 75% (\$296,000) of the total project cost estimated at\$409,000.
- Community Profile

ACC, Peak Health Taranaki, Stratford District Council, Housing NZ:

- All provided resources for information packs including Over 65+, Under 5+ campaigns, Neighbourhood Support Group; Medical & emergency Number Cards, etc.
- Shop resources and staff support

Also a local business In2Kitchens came on board with RadioWorks and provided a substantial radio promotion budget to assist with promotion.

The feedback from the community about the project was overwhelming.

The Project partners undertook a survey in an attempt to measure the community well being as a result of the project and the results were overwhelming. From 655 responses:

- 433 rated the level of service as 9-10 (highest possible)
- 581 rated the projects value to the community at 9-10 (highest possible)

11. Benefits to Other Parties - 10 points

The buy in from the Project partners is evidenced in the attached MoU.

Outside the main thrust of the Project - to have safer homes - the Project provided an invaluable source of information for each of the Project partners.

For example, ACC was provided with a breakdown of how many homes had residents over the age of 65, and how many of them had had falls in their homes.

The NZ Fire Service was provided with information about whether or not households had a fire escape plan, the number of (working) smoke alarms already present in homes, and information about sources of heating and cooking, which are major contributors to household fires.

Housing NZ was provided with information about the number of children and adults in each house, whether the house was rented or owned, and the ethnicity of the occupants.

The ongoing commitment from all parties can be seen in the establishment of the Central Taranaki Safe Community Trust. This trust was established on the conclusion of the TET Home Safety Project, where all parties recognised the value of meeting regularly and working together. The Project

highlighted the potential of such an arrangement. The Central Taranaki Safe Community Trust now meets monthly.



12. Results - 15 points

The Project was managed in three stages.

Stage 1: Stratford Township

A total of 2166 homes with a population of 5340 people. Target 85% Final: 84.58%

Stage 2: Midhirst/Toko Townships

A total of 120 homes with a population of 288 people. Target 85% Final: 83%

Stage 2A: Kaponga/Eltham Townships

A total of 939 homes with a population of 2253 people. Target 85% Final: 81.58%

Stage 3: Central Taranaki Rural

To complete the Project, residents in the rural areas were also offered the opportunity to receive this free community service. Slightly more than 250 rural homes were visited.

In total, 2,932 homes were visited, 11,960 smoke alarms were installed in 2,607 homes, and the Project Ambassadors spoke with 3,245 adults and 499 children about safety in their homes.

Since the completion of Stage 3, the Project partners have reassembled to do a follow-up survey between April-June 2009. This involved 4 Home Safety Ambassadors visiting homes where fire safety information had been delivered, and smoke alarms had been installed, to complete a survey and check the status of the installed alarms. A summary of the information from the survey is attached to this application.

The Ambassadors have, in their course of work, have come across members of the community who demonstrated a greater social need than what the focus of the Project is aimed at. These residents have been gently encouraged and assisted to seek help from social and health agencies as needed. There are a significant number of “good” stories that have come about simply by our Ambassadors visiting people in their homes for a “good” cause.

The community embraced the Project whole heartedly. Many good comments have been recorded and letters received in support of the initiative.

A significant positive outcome of the Project has been that seven of the initial twelve Project Ambassadors (formerly Work and Income clients) through training, encouragement and support

from the Project Management have left the Project and moved into full time sustainable employment.

Examples of this are:

- Jon – a young Filipino man – married with children; had some prior electrical experience. By gaining confidence in himself through the Project training and public relations aspect of the job Jon quickly secured an electrical apprenticeship in a local firm.
- Kevin – an older man who has been at home for 18 years raising his family – looking to return to work force with no recent training. Kevin has gained so much self confidence and self belief during the project and has secured a job in the oil industry. His second real job in 18 years!
- Mary – a young Mother of two children looking to return to work in a better and secure occupation. Mary is working in administration at an early childhood care facility and is enjoying the challenges.

As the Project entered its fifth month, Management decided to support the Ambassador staff further into securing future employment by providing a professional training day focusing on employment opportunities. The training was packed full of techniques and tips about how to go about securing a good job and how to sustain and build that employment into a worthwhile career. All Ambassadors completed the training and two have used those techniques to move into secure futures.

All Partners have indicated a desire to be able to refer the Project, as a package, to their counterparts in other regions around New Zealand.

13. Supporting Material

Please find attached:

A summary of the information from the follow-up survey.

A copy of the memorandum of understanding.

Contact/s for further information

Pauline James

Community Services Manager

06 765 6099

pjames@stratford.govt.nz