



# Dublin, think energy

## Dublin, Ireland

### IN A NUTSHELL

*Think Energy encourages energy efficiency by working on two linked fronts: To provide information so people can make intelligent choices about energy use, and to change the culture around energy saving. This case study deals with a one-year campaign in Dublin's civic offices and a permanent measure of equipping public libraries with 'energy savings kits.'*

### The campaign

In Europe, buildings account for over 40% of the total energy consumed and user behaviour accounts for a significant proportion of this. While many people are aware of the importance of saving energy, sometimes there can be a lack of understanding of where significant changes can be made. Codema, an energy agency set up by Dublin in 1997 to help the city meet its energy performance targets, ran a year-long information campaign from June 2013 to June 2014 to reduce people's energy use in the Dublin civic offices.

To remain fresh and engaging year round, the campaign had seasonal material and activities. For Halloween, a series of posters spread messages about energy saving that played on the titles of popular horror films. For Christmas, the campaign became more family-focused, inviting employees children to participate in an energy saving themed colouring competition. Involving children captured the interest of parents.

The campaign also hosted regular lunchtime energy talks, using interesting presenters, including a local fireman who set up the world's first carbon-neutral fire station, and of course free coffee, as a lure.

There was also a large two-day energy event with interactive stands, such as an 'energy bike' that made electricity more tangible for staff by showing them how tough it is to generate a couple of kilowatts.

'Energy ambassadors' were key to the success of the campaign. One person from each department would act as an energy champion within their own office. This way, those who were really engaged in the subject could lead by example, displaying behaviours and advocating in a friendly way so that they spread to other staff. An energy ambassadors' support manual developed through the EU-funded BUILDSMART project was useful in preparing these advocates.

The campaign originally aimed at achieving a 5% reduction in energy use. While it is always hard to quantify behavioural change in terms of kilowatt hours saved, the monitoring done during the project found a 13% reduction in energy consumption in Civic Offices after one year; however, it is important to note that energy upgrades were also carried out during this period.



Increasing public energy awareness © Codema

## DUBLIN



**Population (2018):**

544,107

**Area**

115 km<sup>2</sup>

**Signatory to the Covenant of Mayors since:**

2009

**CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction target:**

40% by 2030

## Home energy saving kits

During the campaign, Codema also developed 'home energy savings kits' small boxes with a range of tools people could use to better understand and improve their home energy use.

Dublin City Council placed these kits in libraries across the city, where people are now able to check them out just as they would a library book. People bring the kits home and use the tools to get a sense of how much energy they are using every day, and what they can do to reduce this consumption. The scheme was so popular that it was quickly brought to every public library in Dublin, and has now been extended across other cities and regions in Ireland.

Throughout 2017-2018, Codema, the Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland (SEAI), M.CO and Dublin City Council's public libraries all worked together to gather and analyse feedback from the users of the Home Energy Saving Kit through surveys completed by users at their local library and online.

Throughout this period, 250 surveys in total were collected from users of the kit such as library patrons, local authority staff and those involved in SEAI's Sustainable Energy Communities programme.

These surveys revealed that the overwhelming majority of participants had a positive experience of the kits. 86% of survey respondents stated that the kits made them 'think about how [they] use energy in the home'.

Over half of participants reported intentions to act following their experience of borrowing the kit; 60% stated that it made them 'think about home upgrades' and 51% stated that it made them 'think about appliance upgrades. Interviews and focus groups showed anecdotal evidence of some people continuing their behaviour changes and investing in energy upgrades following their engagement with the kit.



**13%** reduction in energy consumption after one year

**67** libraries now stocking energy saving kits in Ireland

**86%** of survey respondents stated that using the Home Energy Saving Kit made them 'think about how [they] use energy in the home'



### FINANCING THE PROJECT

- + **Financing source(s):**  
Codema, SEAI library networks throughout Ireland
- + **Total amount:**  
€250 per Home Energy Savings Kit produced

### USEFUL LINKS

- ▶ <https://www.codema.ie/services/energy-awareness>
- ▶ <https://smartcities-infosystem.eu/content/scis-podcast-episode-3-behaviour-change>



### CONTACT

For more information on the project, please contact:  
Suzanne Fitzpatrick, Codema, communications manager  
[suzanne.fitzpatrick@codema.ie](mailto:suzanne.fitzpatrick@codema.ie)