

A woman in blue scrubs is holding a large, light blue cloth that covers the front of a white car. She is standing in front of a modern building with large windows. The scene is outdoors, and the ground appears to be wet.

**Making great  
strides to turn NHS  
Scotland's grounds  
into healthier,  
smoke-free places**

**3.1 Advertising**

### **In Summary:**

It's beyond question that the social norms around smoking in Scotland have improved in the last decade. But it's significant that this change has been driven by legislation.

We had to persuade people who already saw themselves as 'responsible smokers' to go even further and stop smoking on ALL NHS grounds. But without any legislation to help enforce this change.

Our green curtain campaign not only generated awareness but, after one burst, encouraged a third of smokers to change their behaviours.

A woman in blue scrubs is holding a large, light blue sheet that covers the front of a white car. She is standing in front of a modern building with large glass windows. The scene is outdoors, and the ground appears to be wet.

**Ambition  
and clarity  
of objectives**

Remember the days when people used to smoke in pubs and restaurants? It's amazing how quickly 2006's smoking ban created a new social norm – smokers accepted pretty much without question the instruction to smoke outside public buildings – that's 'just what you do nowadays'.

What's more, many smokers felt that they had gone above and beyond the letter of the law. Greater understanding of the dangers of second hand smoke, particularly to children, and their greater sensitivity to smoking's diminishing social acceptability, saw them smoking away from non-smokers in public places.

But this social norm lay at the heart of our challenge. Our task was to communicate all NHS grounds would be smoke-free from 1 April 2015. But...

- Smokers see it as their 'right' to smoke – as long as they're outside, why shouldn't they? They're not harming anyone (other than themselves, but they enjoy smoking that much, they'll take their chances).
- They don't see NHS grounds – clearly, health-promoting environments – as places where smoking shouldn't happen. They think that as long as they're an 'acceptable' distance away from the building, and mindful of the vulnerable, they're fine to smoke.
- Their visits to health centres and hospitals can be stressful – exactly the times when they need to reach for a cigarette. Why should they be discriminated against?
- If health professionals are smoking outside in NHS grounds then surely that makes it okay?

What they don't realise is the risk to patients and visitors – it's not just second-hand smoke that affects others; other smokers, including patients, are more inclined to smoke if they see others light up. And that can lead to complications and delayed recovery.

**We faced an added challenge. Many recent behaviour changes had been imposed through legislation, including 2006's ban. But this move to smoke-free NHS grounds would not be legislative. Indeed, limited resources and understandable wariness of confrontation between staff and visitors, meant it was unlikely to be enforced.**





Existing, local campaigns tended to focus on entrances and proximity to NHS buildings, which could reinforce existing behaviours:



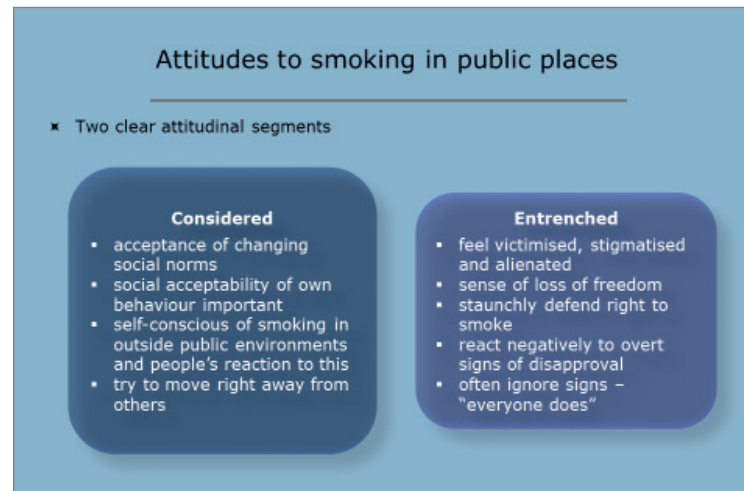
So we needed to create an extension to the current, sometimes uneasy, social norm primarily through a new national marketing campaign in the run up to April 1st.

There was no room for ambiguity with this campaign: everyone had to understand that smoking anywhere on NHS property was no longer acceptable. Firstly we needed to identify the most compelling reasons to persuade smokers to comply.

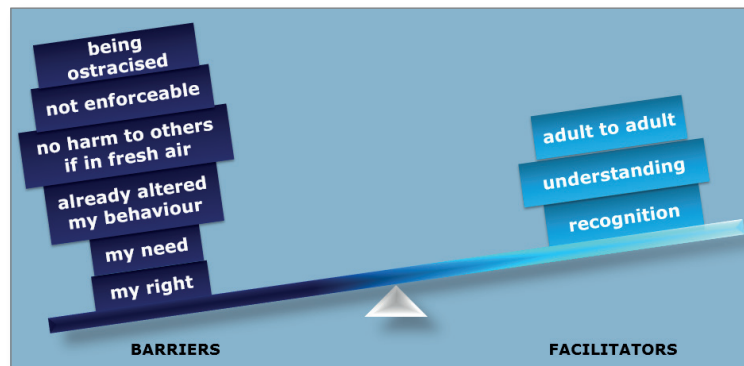
A woman in blue scrubs is pulling a large, light blue sheet over a white car in a parking lot. The sheet is being pulled from the front of the car towards the back, partially obscuring it. The background shows a modern building with large windows and a wet pavement.

Strategic  
thinking:  
taking the  
first steps

Undertaking primary research amongst smokers who frequented NHS properties revealed an interesting dichotomy – two clear attitudinal segments amongst smokers. The first – we called them the considered – were more self-conscious. The latter – the entrenched – regularly felt victimised for their habit and prepared to defend their rights!



Whilst the entrenched were in the minority, they were a vocal one. We identified a number of barriers and facilitators:



The bottom line was that it was going to be very difficult to win this debate with an emotive tug on the smokers' heartstrings.

For example, amongst potential territories that we tested, was the emotive: "To protect the health of patients, visitors and staff, we're proud to be totally smoke-free"

We hoped this tapped into the goodwill towards the NHS. But we found the opposite in research. There was little emotional buy-in, or sense of shared pride in 'our NHS' from smokers. It was seen as finger pointing – "your pride, our shame" – and demonstrating no understanding for the smokers' needs. Indeed, the question of smokers' rights became a recurring and sensitive topic of conversation.

It became clear we had a minefield to tread.

However, we found traction in a more direct, no nonsense territory to which even the more entrenched responded more favourably:

**There's NO place for smoking on NHS grounds.**

Its direct and factual approach made no attempt to play on the emotions. But this was applauded in the research as being both inclusive and more palatable.

Further unpacking of the territory demonstrated it had credibility:

Stimulus:	Respondents' Reactions:
The NHS exists to protect everyone's health.	A recognised responsibility No grounds for debate
So we need to ensure that our grounds are the healthiest environments that they can possibly be.	A rationale that links to the responsibility Understandable and credible Seems fair
That means that we can't allow smoking anywhere, on any grounds.	A valid conclusion Seeking buy-in, rather than demanding adherence



“It’s looking for buy-in. It’s looking for you to be part of it, rather than telling you... ‘you will not!’”

**(Male, C2D, 25-44)**

“They’re trying to protect everybody’s health. So that means they can’t allow smokers to smoke anywhere on their grounds. They’re not saying ‘you won’t!’... We all think it’s crap, but aye fair enough.”

**(Female, DE, 55-64)**

Executing this territory could meet our objectives by:

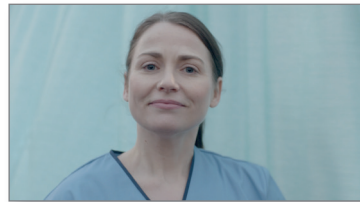
- Raising awareness that smoking is no longer permitted on NHS grounds.
- Ensuring people understood their need to smoke couldn’t take priority over the need to look after other people’s health.
- Communicating clearly people cannot smoke ANYWHERE on NHS grounds.

A woman in blue scrubs is holding a large, light blue sheet that covers the front of a white car. She is standing in front of a modern building with large windows. The scene is outdoors, and the ground appears to be wet.

# Developing the campaign: Putting our best foot forward

The research had validated our hypothesis. Smokers saw NHS property just like other public spaces – smoking outside was fine. In fact, they were smoking ‘responsibly’. To reflect the favoured territory, our execution had to take people back to basics and remind them of the purpose of the NHS – to protect everyone’s health. As such, it just wasn’t on to smoke in a health-promoting environment. And we had to make it clear that we meant anywhere on NHS grounds – from the front door to the car park boundary.

In TV we used a familiar hospital fixture – the green curtain surrounding patients’ beds – as a powerful visual metaphor. In our 30” TV/VOD ad, a nurse drew the curtain around a patient’s bed, carried on through the ward, out the entrance and around the car park. The idea cleverly symbolised the protective role of the NHS but also clearly demarcated the area our smoke-free zone applied to.



**MVO:** The days of smoking outside hospitals and health centres have drawn to a close. So when you come to an NHS building, on no grounds can you smoke.

**MVO:** Thank you for respecting the health of others.

[vimeo.com/156707012](https://vimeo.com/156707012)



‘story’  
the best selling agency

By wrapping the green curtain around the whole hospital, we successfully communicated that, in order to respect and protect the health of others, there's NO place for smoking ANYWHERE on NHS grounds. The deliberate inclusion of a 'Thank you for respecting the health of others' sign-off showed that we understood smokers had already made efforts to smoke responsibly.

On radio, we took a very direct approach, highlighting all NHS grounds were now smoke-free to protect everyone's health.

**SFX:** Ambient noise hospital corridor.

**MVO:** The days of smoking outside hospitals and health centres have drawn to a close. Help us respect the health of others, and wait until you're away from NHS grounds before you smoke.

**Thank you.**

**Visit [smokefreegrounds.org](https://smokefreegrounds.org) for help and advice.**

Our green curtain was deliberately designed as a memorable campaign icon. This extended the campaign's presence from broadcast into significant presence in the NHS Boards' own communications:



MPU



POSTER



WEB BANNER

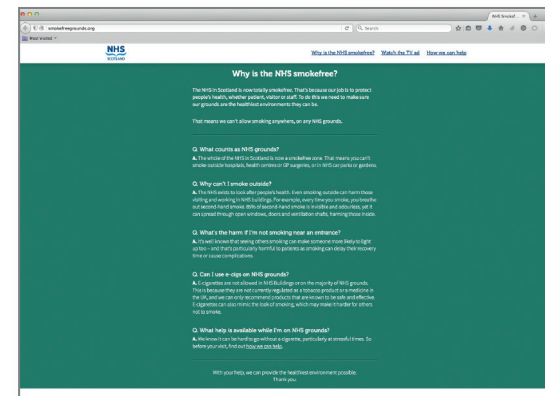
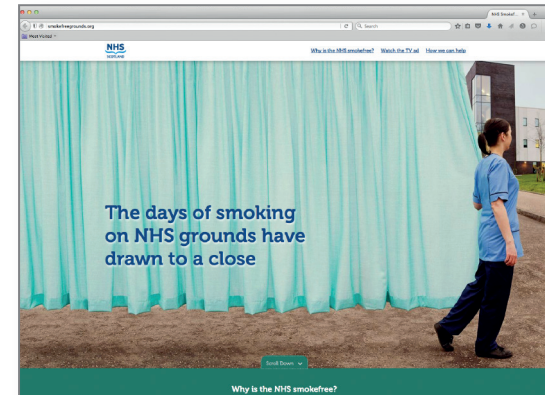


Our media strategy targeted smokers, skewed towards lower socio-economic groups who over-indexed for smoking and NHS visits.

The campaign broke in w/c 2 March to allow for a 4 week burst in the run up to 1 April:

Medium	Space	Info	2015			
			March			
			2	9	16	23
TV	30"20"	550 tvrs				
STV Player	30"	192,000 impressions				
Radio	30 second advert	Weekly OTH 4, upweight on Radio Border & Westsound				

The microsite – **smokefreegrounds.org** – took traffic to a dedicated microsite, where we unpacked the NHS smoke-free rationale as well as showcasing the campaign:





**Results:  
We made  
great strides**

Our creative thinking revolved around raising awareness of all NHS grounds becoming totally smoke-free and helping smokers understand why they should accept it – i.e. it's just not right to allow smoking in environments dedicated to protecting everyone's health.

But we delivered more than awareness - we changed smokers' behaviours. In the absence of legislation, and considering we're talking to entrenched smokers, that's a really impressive result after just one short campaign burst.

### Driving awareness

Our campaign certainly stood out:

- Spontaneous awareness was up from 11% pre to 49% post, driven by TV.
- Overall campaign recognition was at 71%.
- We recorded great campaign cut-through, with spontaneous campaign-related mentions rising from 37% pre to 72% post.
- A **major** increase in awareness of all NHS grounds being smoke-free – 55% pre v 82% post campaign.

But campaign awareness is just one measure of success. Did our creative thinking deliver against our strategic objectives?

## Increasing understanding of WHY NHS grounds need to be smoke-free

Independent evaluation by TNS amongst C2DE smokers showed a significant shift in attitude between campaign recognisers and non-recognisers:

- 78% of recognisers agreed people **shouldn't be allowed** to smoke anywhere on NHS grounds, versus 51% of non-recognisers.
- Campaign recognisers were significantly more likely to be aware of all NHS grounds being smoke-free than non-recognisers (93% v 55% non-recognisers).
- In line with campaign strategy, there was **far greater agreement** among campaign recognisers that making more places smoke-free helps improve the health of people in Scotland (78% v 61% non-recognisers).

## Making it clear there was NO place for smoking on NHS grounds

- 92% of respondents agreed our campaign made it clear you're no longer allowed to smoke ANYWHERE on NHS grounds – a resounding validation of the effectiveness of our creative approach.

### Making a real difference

Getting the message out there is one thing but what about action? Really encouragingly, 31% of recognisers took positive action:

- 27% stopped smoking/decided not to smoke on NHS grounds anymore.
- 4% even tried to quit smoking altogether.



# Campaign Partners:

Story – Strategy, Creative, Production

Carat – Media Planning and Buying

Scott Porter – Insight Gathering and Creative Testing

TNS BMRB – Campaign evaluation