

Case Study: Bradley Tenants and Residents Association

Bradley Tenants and Residents Association use text messages to keep in touch with local people.

Mandy Boatswain-Tomkin, who set up the service, explains: "We send out news about everything from free home security advice to children's events. But if we waited to put that in a printed newsletter, lots of it would already be out of date, so local people would miss out."

One of the most useful features of texting is sending last minute reminders. "If there is something going on in the evening," Mandy says, "We can send out a quick text in the afternoon to remind people. We know the message will get through because people always check their texts. Nothing else works so well."

Sending out texts also increases visits to the TRA website. "Each text to Bradley people results in an immediate peak in visits to the local community blog. A recent text resulted in 104 visitor hits on the blog"

Mandeep Hothi of the Young Foundation has been studying the use of digital technology to help local communities across the country. "Bradley TRA have got it spot on." Mandeep says, "they are using simple technology that everyone understands to make sure local residents get useful information fast. This could work anywhere in the country."

The service also has the full support of local councillors. Cllr Ken Smith said "This service is a great example of our community coming up with good ideas and putting them into action. As ward councillors we've already used the service to make sure local people know how to get in touch with us."