



Green Gown
Awards 2016



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Finalist's case study

Swansea University Facilities and Services The Incredible Journey



About the project

Summary

Our brand new Bay Campus, a £450 million development on the eastern approach to the city, together with the transformation of our existing Singleton Park Campus means that we are now, for the first time in history, a dual beachfront campus University. The need to really promote and encourage students and staff to get out of their cars and instead choose active and sustainable travel choices has been the driving force behind 'The Incredible Journey'. Forward planning, considered infrastructure, building strong partnerships (both internal and external), and dynamic and tailored communication have resulted in positive behavior change and national recognition for sustainable travel best practice.

Initiatives which have been highlighted as best practice (Gold level Welsh Government Sustainable Travel Plan Award) include: the increase seen in active travel, increased public transport use, change in HR policy to not pay greyfleet mileage for campus to campus journeys, whilst paying 20p a mile for cycling; and free travel on the campus to campus bus service.

Project partners

Swansea University (across several departments), Swansea Students Union, First Cymru, GWT, Traveline Cymru, Welsh Government, Local Businesses, Police Liaison Team, City and County of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Wheelwrights Cycle Charity/Sustrans, Safer Swansea Partnership

The results

The problem

The Incredible Journey is a best practice example showing that a new University development can also be an example for promoting Sustainable Transport. The Bay Campus was very much seen as 'out of town', and with a 6 mile journey between Singleton and Bay Campus, cheap reliable and tailored bus services would be needed to link the two. As the site is also outside the City and County of Swansea Local Authority, and just within the boundary of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council many saw this as a barrier to providing enhanced cycle links as well as tailored public transport. With only 600 parking spaces including staff, visitors and blue badge, and with only 914 students at the time of opening residing on the campus, there was a need to plan well and work very closely with partners to deliver a tailored and sustainable travel network. On top of this we wanted effective and efficient sustainable transport links to healthcare, as well as support our local communities, by running all new services on a commercial basis so that the public could benefit from them.

The approach

The Incredible Journey started with the employment of a dedicated Sustainable Travel Officer, who would act as one point of contact within the University to lead on the travel plan. Setting up the Bay Campus Travel Plan



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Working Group established a collaborative approach with extraordinary commitment and support of all the partners. The challenges of dual campus working for the first time, across two separate local authorities, alongside the implementation of a Sustainable Travel Plan has met with several challenges. The Bay Campus Travel Plan Working Group identified the challenges and working in partnership set out the priorities.

- Engagement with staff and students
- Engagement with the local community
- Internal and external partnership working
- Putting in place the best possible tailored travel plan measures
- Making Sustainable transport more cost effective than single occupancy car travel
- Communication, Communication, Communication every step of the way
- Raising awareness, being honest and open and selling the environmental, and cost benefits of travelling by sustainable transport to both staff and students.

Our goals

- Reduce the need for staff and students to travel by car
- To provide a tailored network of integrated transport solutions to benefit everyone including those with disabilities
- To effectively sell the benefits of sustainable travel so that more students, staff and the community choose this as their number one choice
- To set up long lasting, close partnerships with transport providers, cycle organisations and others
- The delivery of 'The Incredible Journey' in line with University values would show that we, 'work together, we are professional, and we care.'
- Encourage major regeneration impact to Swansea Bay and Wales
- Develop an environment to foster health and wellbeing

Obstacles and solutions

<p>Bay Campus seen as out of town and that a car would be needed to make the journey.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailored bus network using postcode data • Engagement with staff and students every step of the way • Surveys of staff and students • Selling the environmental and cost benefits • Bus trips to the Bay arranged • Bus bays closer to buildings than car parks
<p>Better active travel facilities and routes between Singleton and Bay as well as support for cyclists and walkers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of a link to the NCN Route 4 Cycle and walk network • Upgrades completed on the whole NCN route 4 between Singleton and Bay funded by University • In excess of 500 new cycle stands provided for cyclists at the Bay • Showers and cycle storage facilities mapped • Regular cycle events throughout the year with Bike Dr, discounted bike purchase for all students, bike marking and giveaways i.e. lights, locks hi vis, and access to bike pump/puncture repair kits.



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Public transport expensive and doesn't run late enough.
24 hour libraries but no late night service also students would feel cut off from societies, sports facilities at the Singleton Campus

- Early engagement with partners to support the delivery of tailored bus services.
- Engagement and communication every step of the way.
- Use it or lose it late night service until 3am delivered as part of the incredible journey package.

Performance and results

- The positive feedback from the local press on the new bus services
- The new number 8, 4 and 10 services provide more accessible, safe, and frequent bus services that have improved hospital services, connectivity to rail stations and the rest of the bus and rail network, which in turn has led to improved employment opportunities for those in the local area
- The increase in staff purchase of bus passes (100% increase)
- The increase in student purchase of annual bus passes both at the Travel Shop and via mTicket app. (5,500 passes sold compared to 3,900 in 2014)
- The take up of the late night 'Use it or lose it' service 2,500 student journeys a week and will continue 2016/17 with an increased frequency
- Take up of the staff bus ticket scheme for Campus to Campus journeys 2,230 in the first 6 months
- Cycle stats increase taken from the counter on NCN Route 4 cycle route between Singleton Park Campus and the Bay up from 100 a day to 650 journeys a day
- Smooth running of exam buses (100% positive feedback from students)
- Positive testimonials and support for the late night bus service received from Police, Local Night time Economy Partnership, Safer Swansea Partnership and of course Swansea Student Union
- Students expressing personal thanks for the 1st year at Bay Campus successful bus service provision
- University travel plan recognised as best practice and gained the Welsh Government Travel Plan Award at Gold Level
- Healthier, happier more sustainable and productive staff and students as demonstrated through University Achieving Bronze Corporate Health Standard Award (25th May 2016)
- Has led to a substantial increase in funding for sustainable travel going forward
- The University were invited to and now lead and chair the external Swansea Bay Sustainable Travel Planning Group sharing best practice across Bay area
- We are thrilled to have been notified (since entering for Green Gown Awards) that we are also finalists in the following:

Chartered Institute For Logistics and Transport Cymru (Wales): Categories

- Passenger Transport Initiatives (for our Uni bus service)
- Safety and Sustainability (for our successful and safe late night bus service)
- Partnership (for our successful delivery of sustainable travel as a whole)



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Chartered Institute For Logistics and Transport (UK): Categories

- Transport Policy and Planning (for our Travel Plan delivery)
- Transport Best Practice (for all of our sustainable transport successes)

The future

Lessons learned

- Partnerships are the key to success, without partnerships you will not achieve anything
- Make sustainable transport interesting, inclusive and imaginative
- Tailor to your end users requirements by regularly engaging and communicating
- Never forget accessibility, by being inclusive of all users you remove barriers
- Work with students and staff to spread the word to their peers
- Include transport in all your sustainability events e.g. we include in our new SWell (Sustainability and Wellbeing) programme. This highlights the environmental and health benefits of active travel
- Sustainable Travel Planning is a continuous programme of work never take your eye off the ball
- Our Incredible journey has not ended!

Sharing your project

'The Incredible Journey' has already been widely recognised by our staff and students as well as the press and local community as a success. The University have raised the profile and exposure for the need of sustainable and integrated transport in the Swansea Bay area, Wales, and the UK through various articles, case studies, presentations and award submissions. Locally we chair the Swansea Bay Sustainable Travel Planning Group providing support and help to members which includes the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's along with private and public sector organisations. Our dual campus experience is one that could be replicated elsewhere, not just across educational establishments but also for NHS sites and other large employers. The key to our success is good old fashioned transport modelling, partnership working, a number of communication methods, and listening to what students/staff really want.

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

"It says 'diolch yn fawr iawn' (thank you very much) to a University community that works to continually improve the positive environmental and social impacts of our institution. This award celebrates our hard work, and recognises Swansea University as a responsible member of our city and regional community."

Professor Richard B. Davies
Vice-Chancellor

Further information

For further information on this project contact Heidi Smith, Head of Sustainability and Staff Wellbeing, Swansea University

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