



Demonstration Project Case Study

Project title: Improving our facilities to boost active and sustainable travel

Description

As part of its commitment to reduce its carbon impact in order to tackle climate change, NRW encourages its staff to choose active and sustainable travel methods including cycling or walking for work-related journeys whenever it's a practical option. So, making it as easy as possible for employees to do so is of utmost importance.

One such approach we've taken towards encouraging active travel and to make this option more accessible to staff has been to upgrade the shower facilities at our Monmouth office, after a bid was put forward by the site's Facilities team.

Method

NRW's Carbon Positive project had a £10,000 budget for the purpose of supporting small-scale energy efficiency and active travel projects within the organisation, and this was promoted internally by targeting teams such as Facilities and inviting bids for funding from potential projects.

One of the responses received was from the Facilities team at the Monmouth office, who were keen to replace the existing shower unit they had onsite in order to encourage more staff to engage in active and sustainable travel. It would also benefit staff whose work involves them getting wet or dirty.



The existing shower was old, with the cubicle very small and mouldy, to the point that it was believed to be deterring people from walking or cycling to and from the office, as they didn't want to use it.

The team had already approached repairs and maintenance contractors for a quote to do the work, and when they were made aware of the Carbon Positive budget, they decided to apply for a portion of it to fund the project.

After emphasising the potential carbon benefits replacing the existing shower would bring, their bid was approved, and the shower was installed in March 2019 by contractors, with minimum disruption to staff.

**Total project cost:
£2,005 excl. VAT**

Established carbon saving opportunity

In 2017, calculating NRW's net carbon status revealed that around 8% of our emissions were attributed to business travel and fuel use in our vehicles (fleet).

Although it will be difficult to measure the emissions saved as a result of this project, it's clear that the more we do to minimise our use of diesel and petrol fuelled vehicles by opting for active and sustainable travel methods, the more we'll mitigate the impact we have on climate change.



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Wider benefits

The key Well-being Goals from the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the project has contributed towards are:

- A globally responsible Wales
- A healthier Wales

As well as helping to reduce our business travel-related emissions and our organisation's overall carbon footprint, engaging in active travel such as walking and cycling can dramatically improve fitness, as well as general health and wellbeing.

Staff involved

Facilities Team
(Monmouth)

Carbon Positive Team

Facilities Technical Team

Outcomes

While the old shower unit was a barrier for staff wanting to choose active travel methods, its new replacement makes it far easier for them to do so, which not only can reduce our emissions, but also improve fitness and wellbeing in general.

Barbara Morris, Facilities Operations Assistant at Monmouth, said: "It has made a big difference. Quite a few people now cycle to work and enjoy having a shower when they arrive."

Around 60 members of staff recently took part in the first Monmouth NRW triathlon, held in aid of the Ted Senior Foundation, which aims to tackle mental health issues in students and young people, and the Velindre cancer charity.



"We had a number of people training for the Triathlon that was held here recently and a lot of them are keeping up that training as they want to stay fit," added Barbara. "So it has been a really welcome addition to us in Monmouth and has played a big part in improving the overall fitness of the staff and helped reduce our carbon footprint."

Evidence and information

This project was carried out in the context that one of our environmental objectives for 2019/22 is to become a recognised Cycle Friendly Employer (CFE), an accreditation awarded by Cycling UK.

To achieve accreditation, we need to demonstrate that we meet a number of specific criteria across a range of categories, including Communications, Services and Facilities.

Further information about the accreditation is available on their website: www.cyclinguk.org/cyclefriendlyemployer



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Learning

The main challenge encountered was solely time pressures.

While the fund itself had to be spent by the end of the 2018/19 financial year, and all parties who had applied for a share of the funding had been asked to give assurance that all works would be completed and money spent by March 31st, when it came to delivery, this proved to be easier said than done.

By the end of the financial year, most of the parties involved were having to juggle various other equally tight deadlines, running the risk that the work would run over into the new financial year and that the Carbon Project would not be allowed to carry the money forward to fund the project at that time. We were also unaware that invoices sent from the contractor for different projects would be received grouped together, which delayed things slightly.

Although the work was able to be delivered successfully, in terms of learning, in future the Carbon Positive team may need to begin the process (such as promoting and inviting bids) sooner if possible, and to make sure we are completely aware of what to expect with invoicing or payment arrangements.