

Active travel in the workplace

Case studies



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This document provides case studies taken from workplaces across Wales. A growing number of employers are investing in active travel initiatives and experiencing the benefits of a healthier and happier workforce. The examples here are intended to provide ideas and to help you benefit from existing experience. Contact details are given, so that you can contact projects directly to find out more.



“I think the fact that I am not a regular cyclist myself has probably been a benefit in setting up the scheme, as it has helped me understand how to market the pool bikes to people like myself who haven’t cycled in years.”

Alwena Beach, Occupational Health Nurse and Physical Activity Coordinator, Denbighshire County Council

Denbighshire County Council: how folding bikes were the way forward

Location

Head Office: Ruthin, Denbighshire. A county with dispersed population centres, encompassing rural and coastal areas.

Number of employees

5,000 in total (2,000 fulltime) at ten locations across Denbighshire.

Action taken

Eighteen folding Dahon Vitesse bikes were purchased and located at various council offices, at a ratio of one bike per 280 staff members. The scheme was developed by occupational health officers, with input from several other departments including leisure services and transport. A part-time Active Workplace Coordinator will oversee the project as part of their work.

Benefits

The use of folding bikes has been ideal for Denbighshire, where many of the council offices are some distance apart, and the bikes can be used in combination with public transport. They can also be easily picked up by council vehicles to transfer from one location to another. The scheme is encouraging more people to be physically active,

building on other work such as lunchtime keep fit sessions.

Organisational barriers overcome

Setting up a booking system for the bikes took some time, but ownership of this process has now been taken on by the leisure services department.

Funding

£13,461 funding from the Sports Council for Wales.

Future plans

Purchase of additional bikes including hybrid bikes for use at lunchtimes for staff at the Rhyl office (located on the seafront). A permanent member of staff with long-term responsibility for the bikes.

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Singleton Hospital: a success story for active travel

“Investing money on walking and cycling infrastructure and staff facilities at Singleton has increased the number of people actively commuting to work. We consider this investment excellent value for money and are keen to make similar improvements at our other sites.”

Joanna Davies, Deputy Director of Planning, ABMU NHS Trust West



Location

Swansea

Number of employees

3,000 staff are employed at Singleton Hospital.

Action taken

- Travel Plan Coordinator employed, partly as a result of severe parking congestion at the hospital
- Travel behaviour survey undertaken: 106 key staff identified as living within 2 miles, working office hours and travelling by car. Home postcodes used to identify alternative routes available to commuters, by public transport or the accessibility of the National Cycle Network
- Staff locker room refurbished, with drying rooms and new lockers
- Cycle storage with CCTV
- 5 pool bikes and accessories purchased
- Local route signage
- Targeted information campaign to encourage staff to try out walking and cycling.

Benefits

Since implementation of these improvements the number of staff at Singleton Hospital who cycle to work has increased from 2 to 40. The number of people regularly walking to work and taking part in lunchtime activities such as jogging has also increased. This contributes to the Trust's targets on increasing physical activity amongst its staff, and has helped with the implementation of their new travel plan.

Organisational barriers overcome

Many of the staff at Singleton work shifts, so the scheme was initially targeted at those working office hours. Many people were not aware of local walking and cycling routes, so the scheme included raising awareness of routes and journey times on foot and by bike.

Funding

£28,000 funding from the Sports Council for Wales, plus staff time.

Future Plans

There are plans to roll out similar schemes across the Trust, including at Morriston hospital.

Contact Details

Rhodri Davies, Joint Services Planner
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“I use the pool bikes to go into town shopping at lunchtime, there’s not really time to get there and back otherwise, but on a bike it only takes ten minutes. I don’t bother to get changed or anything, it’s fine even in a skirt and boots. I’ve also started using one for some of my site visits and have even cycled home a few times, which is something I probably wouldn’t have done if it weren’t for the pool bikes”.

Rebecca Robertson, Neighbourhood Planning Team Leader, Cardiff Council

Cardiff Council: providing practical solutions for active travel in the city

Location

County Hall, Cardiff Bay

Number of employees

4,000

Action taken

- Upgrading of existing showering and changing facilities
- Installation of a drying room
- Purchase of 5 new pool bikes to add to existing fleet.

Benefits

Since the implementation of the scheme there has been a rise in the number of women using the facilities due to the increased size of the changing rooms and temporary lockers.

Take up of cycling has risen and the implementation of a pool bike scheme has increased the number of employees requesting cycle training. Additional pool bike schemes have been rolled out at other council sites.

Organisational barriers overcome

The funding has necessitated the development of a robust process for operation of the pool bike scheme at County Hall and other council sites. This work has involved cross departmental cooperation and there is now an efficient and proactive ongoing working group with input from a number of different specialist areas in the council.

Funding

£24,711 from the Sports Council for Wales (plus 40% match funding from Cardiff Council, bringing the total cost of the scheme to £37,291).

Future plans

Installation of showering and changing facilities and purchase of pool bikes at City Hall, the council’s other main site. Plans to roll out similar schemes to other council offices.

Contact details

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Wales Centre for Health: designing a pool bike scheme that works for your staff

Location

Cardiff

Number of employees

40 (32 of which are based at the main office on Cathedral Road).

Action taken

- 8 pool bikes plus accessories purchased
- Cycle parking installed
- Bike maintenance and introductory cycling sessions offered to staff

Benefits

- Staff who would never have thought about cycling have given it a go
- The time spent travelling to meetings has been reduced
- Staff have the opportunity to gain their 5x30 minutes of physical activity during the working day
- The 'personal use' bikes have created a sense of ownership of the scheme by encouraging staff to think about investing in their own bike.

Organisational barriers overcome

Some staff were nervous about cycling in traffic, so cycling coaching was offered in partnership with a local cycle shop. Staff were also keen to cycle to and from work as well as to meetings. To accommodate this, four of the bikes were designated as 'personal use' bikes, and offered on long term loan.

Funding

£5,000 from the Sports Council for Wales

Future plans

- Continuation of the scheme with the opportunity for new staff to receive cycle training.
- Agreement of an active travel policy.

Contact details

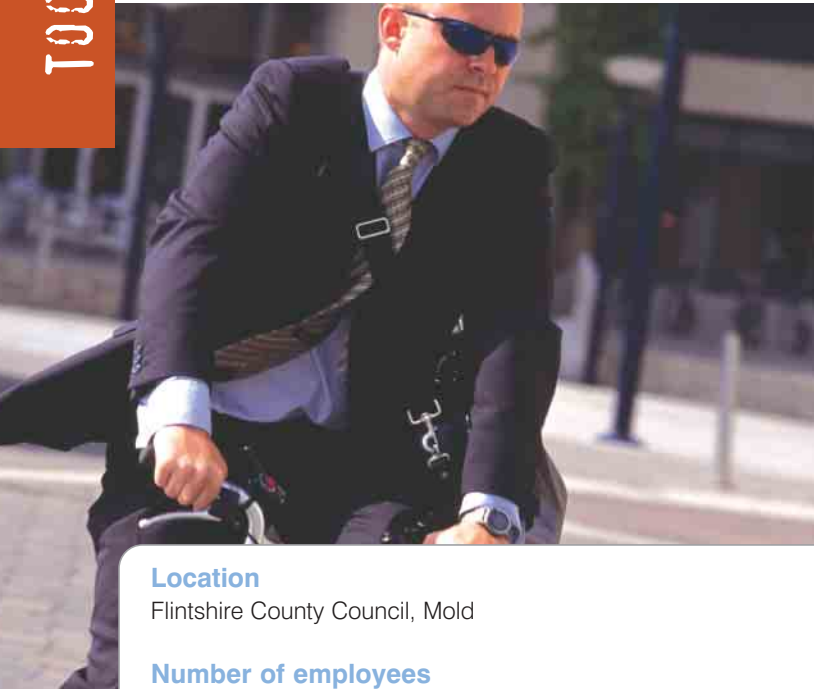
Anne-Marie Beresford-Webb,
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“I have been using one of the new bikes to cycle to work for the last two months, and have also used it a couple of times at the weekend to go cycling with my boyfriend. I don't cycle everyday, only in good weather, but have really been enjoying it. I don't have a car anyway, so for me using the bike is a healthier alternative to the bus, and usually just as quick. I would definitely recommend trying it to anyone who lives within a few miles of their office.”

Jo Menzies, Wales Centre for Health



Flintshire Council: getting staff back in the saddle



“I am currently using a bike to cycle to work once or twice a week. I feel much fitter and prefer it to the car if the weather is nice. Now I know I can manage to cycle to work I hope to take advantage of the cycle to work scheme when it starts later in the year.”

Location

Flintshire County Council, Mold

Number of employees

3,000

Action taken

24 hybrid bikes plus a storage container purchased

Benefits

The bikes are available to staff for travelling to and from work, to local meetings and for leisure purposes at lunchtimes, before and after work.

The scheme provides opportunities for staff to be more physically active, which benefits their physical and mental health.

In addition to providing an alternative mode of transport, the free access to a leisure activity has been a boost to staff morale.

Organisational barriers overcome

- Implementing a suitable booking system through staff intranet, and agreeing maintenance, security and daily management of bikes with caretaking staff

- Encouraging and supporting novice riders back into cycling through the provision of led rides by a qualified cycle leader
- Having bike scheme accepted within the culture
- Gaining support from Chief Executive and Corporate Health Standard.

Funding

£11,700 from the Sports Council for Wales.

Future plans

- To offer staff bike loans for up to one month. Linking with the 'Cycle to Work scheme' being launched in September 2008
- Weekly led ride programme
- Purchasing panniers to enable more people to use bikes for travelling to local meetings
- 4 week loan available to other local workplaces
- Hold bi annual bike maintenance days.

Contact details

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This guide is part of the active travel workplace toolkit. The toolkit and additional resources are available online at www.activetravelcymru.org.uk/toolkit

Active Travel Cymru works with policy-makers and practitioners to promote walking and cycling as health-enhancing physical activity.

Sustrans

Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity, working on practical projects so people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment.

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