

Active Travel Case Study

Project title: Mobilise!

Initiative: Gwellheans on Wheels

Target group: Recovering drug and alcohol users

Setting and area: Gwellheans substance misuse day centre, Redruth, West Cornwall

Case study date: October 2008 - December 2009



Project overview

Gwellheans on Wheels grew out of a request for the Mobilise! project to lead a cycle ride around a nearby country park for a number of Gwellheans clients. Mobilise! Project Leader Euan Mahy takes up the story:

“We normally take people on a set, five mile course, but it soon became apparent that Gwellheans wanted more. We threw away the rule book and tracked across country to the cliffs at West Cornwall’s Hells Mouth. It was stormy and a great place to watch the Atlantic breakers crashing against the north coast.

From here we used a new, incomplete trail, finishing with a climb through the beautiful Illogan woods, and a stop in the park’s cafe.”

As a result of the day, it was decided that Mobilise! would run regular rides for Gwellheans. Soon after Gwellheans’ Sports and Healthy Living Co-ordinator Shane Arthur decided to form Gwellheans Bike Club (GBC) in partnership with Mobilise! A feature and appeal on BBC Radio Cornwall led to bike donations, providing the club with its own fleet for members to use.

Aims

- To engage with a hard to reach group (recovering drug and alcohol users)
- To encourage outdoor physical activity as part of a holistic intervention programme
- To raise awareness of the natural environment and its accessibility
- To address sedentary lifestyles and related diseases including obesity, diabetes, coronary heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis, and mental health issues.

Contact us...

For further information, please contact Tracy Barter on: 01209 310062 or email: info@mobilise-cornwall.org.uk

Active Travel Case Study



How people have benefitted:

- Increased fitness
- Developing new skills
- Holistic approach to treatment
- Helping recovering drug and alcohol users to integrate back into society

Physical activity helps clients cope better with difficult or stressful situations; times when before they would turn to drugs or alcohol. It's also enabling some to develop new skills, as work is now underway to build a bike shed next to the centre. Mike, a client who has a degree in construction, is leading this project and is teaching others basic block laying techniques. Mike says:

"I have a very green ethos and so for me cycling is the obvious way to get around. I'm enjoying sharing my building skills with others and in turn look forward to learning how to take apart and rebuild bikes, something I have little knowledge of."

Gwellheans client Darren is now studying at a local college and finds the course stressful. He says:

"Shane encouraged me to go on a ride one Thursday afternoon and I enjoyed the opportunity to get away from a desk and do something physical. I'm working really hard at college at the moment and this has meant my fitness has lapsed. I'm determined to get back into shape, using cycling."

Activities

- Media appeal for 2nd hand bikes
- Construction of an on-site cycle storage/maintenance shed
- Regular led cycle rides

Once the bike shed has been constructed, it will be used for both storage and maintenance classes. Some of the women who attend the centre have also expressed an interest in joining the cycling club and will be attending separate, female only rides

Sustainability

It is now anticipated that the project will take a more formal shape, and the cycling will become a structured, 12-week programme where clients learn both off-road riding and bike maintenance skills.

Mobilise! and Gwellheans are also funding the purchase of six new mountain bikes from a local bike shop to enable a fully functioning fleet to be available early in the new year, whilst donated bikes undergo refurbishment.

Active Travel Case Study

Local partnerships and support

Mobilise! is delivered on a local level in partnership with Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust; Cornwall County Council; Penwith, Kerrier, Carrick, Restormel North Cornwall and Caradon District Councils, Natural England, Imerys and the Eden Project.

National partnerships and support

Mobilise! is working with Sustrans on Active Travel local projects as part of a Consortium of leading walking, cycling and health organisations being funded by the Big Lottery Fund's Well-being programme, which provides funding to support the development of healthier lifestyles and to improve well-being.

The Big Lottery Fund, the largest of the National Lottery good cause distributors, has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in June 2004.

What is Sustrans?

Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity.

Our vision is a world in which people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment. Every day we are working on practical, innovative ways of dealing with the transport challenges that affect us all.

www.sustrans.org.uk

www.sustransshop.co.uk

Information line: 0845 113 00 65

Supporters line: 0845 838 06 51

Head office: Sustrans, 2 Cathedral Square, Bristol BS1 5DD

Sustrans is a registered charity no. 326550 (England and Wales) SCO39263 (Scotland).

This project is funded and supported by the following organisations:

