

Excellence Awards - 2021 Entry
85 Tottenham Court Road
London. W1T 4TQ
020 7631 6900

Entry ID: 9612

Third Party Authorization

Are you entering on behalf of, or in association with, any third party?: No

Basic Information

Category: 12. Low Budget Campaign

Entry Information

Entrant company name: Dwr Cymru Welsh Water

Entry title:

Bringing Lisvane and Llanishen Reservoirs back to life

Entry

Brief, objectives and budget:

In 2016, Welsh Water acquired the Cadw listed Lisvane and Llanishen reservoirs, based in Cardiff and declared at the time it's goal to restore them to their former glory for customers to enjoy. The site would form part of the network of reservoirs and visitor attractions Welsh Water operates across Wales which form an integral part of the business. All sites are cared for by Welsh Water for customers to enjoy, spaces where we promote the benefits of wellbeing which come from being next to water – especially those located in an urban setting.

The reservoirs came with a turbulent history following a bitter battle by the local community to save them from plans for a housing development. This meant there was a lot of sensitivity locally around any future plans Welsh Water had for the site.

It is against this backdrop that we developed plans for water sports activities and a visitor centre at the site. The plans needed to balance the commercial needs of the business for the site against the local sensitivities around any form of development at the site.

The plans would be subject to planning approval from the local authority therefore a campaign was developed to garner positive support for the project during the planning process.

Campaign objectives:

- To engage with the local community and local stakeholders about the proposed plans and encourage them to engage in the pre-planning process

- To ensure two-way communication channels were easily accessible so that those engaging in the process could provide feedback and be assured their views were taken into account
- To secure more comments in favour of the proposal than against it as these would need to form part of the final application to the local authority.

The campaign budget was £14,000 which included virtual consultation room, film production, mailing, social content and time.

The idea, research and planning:

As a company owned on behalf of its customers, Welsh Water is committed to engaging with customers on projects. Using customer data, we were able to build up a profile of the customers in the area to understand the best means of engaging with them. We had already identified the key stakeholders as well as other interested parties who might have an interest in the project.

We also researched the Welsh Government's guidance on pre-application consultation to ensure best practice was followed to achieve meaningful and inclusive consultation. Our strategy therefore centred around a large PR launch for the project which would be followed up by a consultation period with a focus on encourage people to get involved in the consultation process.

Strategy, creativity and innovation:

Our original plans were devised pre Covid-19 and included hosting information events at different locations within the local community. Our plans however had to be quickly be revised with the onset of the pandemic as the consultation formed part of the critical path for the project and could not be delayed.

To overcome the challenge of holding face to face consultation events, we created a virtual consultation room for the community and stakeholders. The room was designed to replicate the inside of a community hall that had been set up for an exhibition and included everything from pull-ups to films and feedback forms. The virtual room was hosted on the Lisvane and Llanishen reservoirs webpage that had been created specifically for the project and all communications sign posted people to the virtual room. A Welsh version of the room was also created to ensure those wishing to communicate with us in Welsh about the project could do so.

Realising that customers often have further questions when they have read information at an exhibition, we offered virtual question and answers sessions with the project team. These were publicised in advanced and enabled members of the public to raise any further questions they might have had.

Delivery/implementation of tactics:

The delivery of the strategy included:

Virtual advance briefings with key stakeholders (MP, MS, Councillors) and also interested parties (Cardiff Council, Reservoir Action Group, Visit Wales) ahead of project's public announcement

PR to media announcing the plans, the consultation process and the virtual consultation room offering. PR was accompanied by an eye catching images of the visitor centre and fly-through film

Social media posts to launch project and during course of consultation period to encourage people to engage in decision making process

Virtual consultation rooms hosting the relevant information about the project and providing feedback mechanism

Virtual Q&A sessions with the project team for visitors to the virtual consultation room

Project newsletter delivered to around 8,000 customers living or working in areas surrounding reservoirs. Also, for those not able to access the virtual consultation room, newsletter contained feedback form and pre-paid envelop for people to return comments directly to us

Dedicated Lisvane and Llanishen reservoirs information webpage. Also included links to virtual consultation room, fly-through film, feedback forms and all the related planning application documents

Telephone information line for customers who wanted to communicate via this channel about the project

All communication and consultation items were provided in English and Welsh to ensure those that wanted to find out more about the project or provide feedback on it in Welsh could do so.

Measurement, evaluation and impact:

The success of the campaign can be seen through:

- Front page lead story in South Wales Echo. Story also ran in Western Mail and WalesOnline featuring fly-through film
- 3,900 unique visitors to the virtual consultation room – far exceeds any number that would visit a physical information event
- 2,000 unique feedback forms received – with 86% in favour of project
- Only 10 official objections submitted to the local authority about the plans

Social media:

- Facebook (2 posts) - 130 shares, 55 comments
- Twitter – (5 posts) - 146 retweets, 341 likes
- LinkedIn (3 posts) - 837 reactions, 43 comments
- Also stakeholder and interested parties endorsement on social media

The project was due to be considered by the local authority in March 2021 however this has been delayed until May therefore outcome of decision unknown at time of submission of award entry.

Supporting Information

Additional supporting information (images, artwork, clippings and other media):

Provided

Campaign image (if entering individual/team awards, upload headshot/team photo here):

Provided

Company logo:

Provided

Please write a 30 word entry summary in the third person:

After acquiring Lisvane and Llanishen Reservoirs, Welsh Water but had to tread carefully in winning the hearts and minds of the community for its future plans for the site.
