

TOYOTA LEAN CLUSTERS PROGRAMME



Headlines

Cardiff & Vale UHB All Wales Medical Genomics Service (AWMGS) - 100% non-conformances eliminated

General Dynamics - 61% reduction in priority requests

Heidelberg Materials - £126,000 annual savings

Mrs Bucket - 14 mins saved per washroom

Tata Steel Building Systems UK - £26,000 annual saving from eliminating use of prime material

TATA Colors - Improved startup efficiency through clear checklists and standardised maintenance

Bike Park Wales - Productivity improved through workshop redesign

Amcor Flexibles - Internal waste reduced from 184kg to zero

Cardiff Canning - 61% faster changeovers / £80,000 annual saving

Procter Brothers - £62,000 annual saving.



These are just some of the outputs and achievements from Cohort 9 of the Lean Start programme. Ten companies identified issues and objectives in their workplace over the course of 8 days between October 2025-April 2026.

Lean Start is a practical programme available for Welsh companies where the main objective is developing people the Toyota Way while improving operational performance.

If you're a Wales based business and interested in learning more about the Toyota Lean Clusters Programme, visit our web page or contact the team at TLMP@gov.wales

Cohort 9:

Heidelberg Materials

COMPANY	OBJECTIVES	CHANGES	KEY RESULTS
In the UK, Heidelberg Materials employs over 4,000 people across 300 sites over three business lines - aggregates, asphalt and recycling, cement and concrete. 19 sites are in Wales. The company is leading the decarbonisation of the cement sector through carbon capture and storage and construction is underway to build the UK's first carbon capture facility at a cement works at its Padeswood site in North Wales.	Increase RAP usage in all mixes to ensure site target of 13% is achieved and annual losses are reduced. Gain a better understanding of Toyota problem-solving methods and apply them in our business. Better utilisation of TPS tools.	RAP now in covered storage at Machen. Agreed with quarry manager to relocate following a site visit. Recognition that RAP was being stored under a waterfall and is constantly wet. New SOP created to instruct all staff how to recycle RAP and maintain quality. Penderyn now only using 0/10mm grade in all mixes which has allowed for overall increase. Overall RAP % increase in total sales. Plan to review Elevator Buckets, Air Cannons & Chute Vibrators to prevent plant breakdown.	22% RAP usage achieved in week 10, the highest for 2 years but need to gain better stability. Agreed to use 0/10mm grade only and mix in with more products – similar to Whatley. Sold off the no longer required 10/20mm for a one-off £40,000. Reduced external fuel costs - £6,000 per annum. Greater binder savings using RAP across multiple products – Average £10,000 per month. Lower fuel consumption, shorter mixing times and improved morale across site. Annual savings - £126,000.

Cardiff & Vale UHB All Wales Medical Genomics Service (AWMGS)

COMPANY	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY RESULTS
The All Wales Medical Genomics Service (AWMGS) is an NHS specialist regional health service which helps and supports patients in Wales who have genetic conditions, who may be at risk of developing symptoms of a genetic condition or who are concerned about their family history.	Eliminate all non-conformances for urgent Quantitative Fluorescent Polymerase Chain Reaction (QFPCR) service at triage. Improve practical problem solving skills by applying them to the above problem. Better utilisation of Toyota Production System (TPS) tools – Standardised Work, Kaizen (staff suggestion system).	An Andon was introduced to enable Stop-Call-Wait. Andon calls were tracked and recorded to allow future problem-solving activities. Standard Operating Procedures created as part of countermeasure activity. Do not disturb standard introduced for Duty Scientist. Initial feedback was not so positive so trialled different examples until all staff agreed. Long term – Implemented electronic request system to eliminate human error. The current request forms are not fit for purpose as they allow information to be missed or are incorrectly completed.	All non-conformances for urgent QFPCR have been eliminated. Financial benefit of approximately £4,000 per year. Introduction of TPS tools to support process improvement and manage abnormality - Andon. Strengthened the existing staff suggestion system (kaizen). Created a Kaizen cycle for all staff to engage with and ensure implementation. Created a Lean sharepoint to enable learning to the wider workforce.

Mrs Buckét

COMPANY	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY RESULTS
At Mrs Buckét, we deliver top-tier commercial cleaning services and facilities across Wales and the South West of England. As a multi-award-winning cleaning company, we take pride in offering professional, reliable, and sustainable cleaning solutions for both public and private sector organisations. With a focus on quality, innovation, and environmental responsibility, we create spaces that support your team's success and wellbeing.	Quality standardisation – use shared cleaning methods and expectations so every site delivers the same high standard. Optimise productivity – simplify workflows and remove unnecessary steps to improve efficiency without affecting quality. Train & Develop – Ensure everyone receives the same high-level training and that they understand best practice. Operational Efficiency - Improve task order and eliminate waste to consistently deliver better outcomes.	Generic standard operating procedure created to support the cleaning of all washrooms. The SOP includes a major step, a key point and a reason why. Visuals included in SOP so operatives can see what good looks like. QR codes introduced so operators can scan and access the SOP for the washroom. Relocation of the cleaning trolley to eliminate wasted movements, less steps and time saved. All cleaning operators trained to the new standard. Plan to yokoten the new style SOP to all areas.	Quality audit score returned to standard expectation of 95% - exceeded. Efficiency improvement to clean the washroom – 14 minute reduction in time to clean. Allows the company to issue accurate quotes when tendering contracts. Supports accreditations. £3.14 saving per washroom – Annual savings of £13,000.

General Dynamics

COMPANY	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY RESULTS
General Dynamics are one of the UK's largest defence companies and a lead supplier to the Ministry of Defence. Their assembly integration and testing facility is based in Merthyr Tydfil.	Reduce P3 requests from 233 to 116 (49.8%) a month over the duration of specific project, and encourage P2 requests. Hold meetings with the relevant people at the Gemba. Teach clients how to use the 8-step thinking to Practical Problem Solving. Improve turnaround time from parts delivery to fitting to the vehicle.	3 clients visited Deeside on 3 occasions to learn TPS & The Toyota Way principles. The plan was to reduce the P3 requests from 233 to 116 a month over the time of the project. General Dynamics never hold meetings at the Gemba with a relevant topic, nor do they include the relevant people. The topic is normally vague and no problem solving takes place. Problem solving is done with the supervisors and managers, but not the shop floor members. The parts runners were given the authority to interrogate the P3 requests and question whether it needed such a high priority. Standardise how the runners collect the data as each line was undertaking this differently. There were no instructions on what to do with a priority part if the VTC (supervisor) was not present. There was no designated area for parts to be dropped off and no system to prioritise.	Weekly average reduction of P3's by 61%. Reduced average P3 delivery time from 11 hours to 9 hours. Improved standardisation between requestors and part runners. Material build-up and clutter around the vehicles was reduced Total cost benefit including cost avoidance = £56,171.18

Tata Steel Building Systems UK

COMPANY	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY RESULTS
Tata Steel's Shotton Works in Deeside manufactures approximately 500,000 tonnes of metallic-coated and pre-finished steel each year for building envelope, domestic and consumer applications. Tata Steel at Shotton consists of two main businesses, Colors and Building Systems employing around 800 people. Building Systems, the lead construction business within Tata Steel UK, manufactures building products and systems, processing around 80,000km of material a year—enough to go around the world twice.	Improve Yield on Line 1 by reducing start up scrap. Reduce scrap by not using prime material for top and bottom protective sheets. Carry out a 5S activity on Line 1. (sort, set, shine, standardise and sustain).	There is a new entry table fitted to the line. A defined accepted start up scrap has been entered into. The OEE app and anything above this must be clearly defined as to the scrap reason. Management of Change 142 has been created to look at using Correx to protect the panels, removing steel protective sheets. Until this is finalised, non-prime material is to be used. All unwanted items have been removed. Broken items have been replaced. The floor has been painted and areas marked out. Tools have been put into trolleys for each team on a shift instead of hanging on shadow boards. Audits have been introduced.	Saving approximately £16,248 per year with a 3m reduction in set up scrap. Saving approximately £10 per set up, £26,000 per year by not using prime material for top and bottom sheets. There is an approximate average saving of £55 per month on replacing missing tools (£660pa).

Tata Colors

COMPANY	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY RESULTS
Tata Steel's Shotton Works in Deeside manufactures approximately 500,000 tonnes of metallic-coated and pre-finished steel each year for building envelope, domestic and consumer applications. Tata Steel at Shotton consists of two main businesses, Colors and Building Systems employing around 800 people. Colors process steel coils into galvanise and colour coated coils.	During downshifts or outage periods there is a delay in startup. Out of the 8 maintenance periods seen, 5 have had delays when starting back up. A3 Aim: Reduce the overruns after maintenance periods to 1 hour from a 5.5 average over the past 17 months.	Better visualisation of progress during maintenance periods via the use of Gantt Charts. Clearer expectations of jobs by improving job cards, isolation schedules and resource allocations. Improved development of isolation requirements [Creating supplementary boxes specific for tasks to allow for smoother permit allocation]. Checklists and documentation reviewed for startup requirements. Documents merged with skill allocation specific to work areas removing some of the burden on team leaders.	Improved efficiency on startup due to clearly defined checklists. Improved understanding of task progression during maintenance. Standardised approach to maintenance and outage periods.

Amcor Flexibles

COMPANY	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY RESULTS
As a global leader in packaging solutions for consumer and healthcare products, our industry-leading innovation capabilities, global scale and technical expertise help our customers grow and meet the needs of millions of consumers every day.	Reduce customer complaints for Weak Seals on product produced on machine ES11 (End Sealer Machine). Change overs for size and calibration on Extrusion machine S12 exceeding Target - Reduce the change over times from 80 minutes (average) to the Target of 60 mins.	Reduce internal scrap and waste (customer returned product) by 50%. Understanding of internal waste led to better control methods. TPM on machine improved. Clearer expectations of jobs by improving SOP's, and resource allocation. Review of small bolt removal safety completed and improved handling procedure introduced. Tooling replacement for missing Lift Hooks.	Improved efficiency on machine due to introduction of TPM. To date no customer complaints for Weak Seals. Waste reduction of internal product failures reduced from 184kg to zero, saving on average £7,500 per annum. Improved efficiency on change overs due to clearly defined checklists. Improved understanding of task progression during change overs. New target changeover time as improvements regularly below original target. 17.8% improvement to date.

BikePark Wales

COMPANY	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY RESULTS
A home for mountain bikers from novice to professional, BikePark Wales has the UK's greatest and most diverse selection of all-weather mountain bike trails. With a vehicular uplift service to transport you to the top of the trails, bike and equipment hire, coaching, guiding and a lovely on-site café, BikePark Wales has everything you need for an incredible day on the mountain.	Identify inefficiencies in the hire department. Collect data to grasp the current situation. Use 8 step process to find the true root cause and countermeasure it. Hold meetings with the members on the shop floor and not just the management team. Increase the time the mechanics spend on their workstations.	All 3 candidates visited Deeside on 3 occasions to learn TPS and Toyota Way thinking. Used simple tools and methods to show the flow of the mechanics in the workshop. Used facts and data to understand the current situation, and not opinion which would be the normal route eg only one customer asked for free bike battery charge versus up to 16 on an equivalent day. Identified issues and carried out the actions step by step to understand the impact. Bike Park Wales usually work in a siloed environment but increased inter-department collaboration.	Created space in the main reception area. Process is flowing much better preventing back up of customers during the busiest periods. Mechanics spend most of their day in the workshop now. Productivity has naturally improved by the reduced distance required to travel when dealing with regular enquiry vs charging request. Morale has improved in all departments. Undertaking money saving calculations after collating further data.

Cardiff Canning

COMPANY	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY RESULTS
Founded in 2019, Cardiff Canning has grown into one of the UK's leading independent drinks manufacturing facilities, supporting customers across the UK and internationally. As an independent business, Cardiff Canning combine professional manufacturing capability with a practical, hands-on approach that puts quality, communication and customer relationships first.	Production losses were running at 28.43% . This was above target and needed reducing to support customers. Reduce downtime to improve plant capacity.	Focus on prioritised problem which was planned stops resulting in lost production due to liquid changeover. Twelve potential causes investigated. Seven direct causes identified. Seven actions completed including standardisation of new processes. Focus on standards, training and teamwork.	Liquid changeover reduced from 23 minutes to under 9 minutes. Success of standard proven by 9 weeks of better than target results. £80K annual saving realised. Strong foundations created for future growth.

Procter Brothers

COMPANY	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY RESULTS
Established in 1740 by William Varley, the Procter company of today has unrivalled expertise in Machinery Guarding, Fencing and Concrete Products. The Procter business of today operates three separate divisions: Procter Machine Guarding, Procter Contracts, and Procter Fencing Supplies. Within Procter Contracts, Procter Brothers has the operating brands of Fencing Systems, Automatic Gates and Street Furniture, and within Procter Supplies, the company has Fencing & Concrete Products, plus Gates - Railings - Metalwork. By drawing on the combined capabilities of the separate divisions and their operating brands, Procter Brothers are able to provide a comprehensive offer to their customers.	Efficiency was low because work was taking much longer than planned. Before the project it was running at over 200 additional hours of work per month. This was impacting profitability. Reduce gap between plan and actual.	Used facts and data to discover the main losses were in fabrication and within this area material shortages were the most significant concern. This became the activity focus. Set a challenging target to increase efficiency by 3%. Five direct causes identified. Worked with both external parties and internally to address issues. New stores procedures were setup with standardised work, and training was provided. Shift handover established to eliminate problems arising from missing information	Three weeks with zero shortages since implementation of countermeasures. £62K annual saving realised. Group have already identified the next issue to focus on.