

LLANDRINDOD WELLS



Llandrindod Wellness

Pilot Study - Business Take up of *Llandrindod Wellness* Branding

1 Background

In a preceding Llandrindod Wells economic regeneration project (Llandrindod Wells Town Champion Project), we recognised that the town had a description but no recognised identity. This led us to commission Heavenly to undertake robust public consultation resulting in the creation of a place brand for the town which paid homage to the town's Victorian roots in health and wellbeing and reflected the town's current identity.

Our place brand is *Llandrindod Wellness*.

In creating the brand we also recognised that it would be possible to extend the Wellness concept to other nearby 'Wells' towns – Builth, Llanwrtyd and Llangammarch - by creating a destination called the *Wellness Heart of Wales*.

2 Purpose of the pilot

- To 'roll out' the brand to businesses and organisations in Llandrindod Wells and the Wellness Heart of Wales area.
- To learn from business engagement with and take up of *Llandrindod Wellness*.

3 Overview of the aims of the pilot

We planned to introduce the brand via two separate, but connected pieces of work:

A In year one we would concentrate on Llandrindod Wells, bringing people together to discover the benefits of the brand to the town and its businesses.

B In year two we would extend this work to the other Wells towns forming a group to drive forward the creation of a tourism destination.

4 What we actually did.

As soon as the project commenced we decided to swap years one and two for three reasons:

- 1) To liaise with the other towns would require a longer lead in period given that we were working through Town and Community Councils. If we achieved 'buy in' from the Town Council we would then work together to contact businesses in that town and 'sell' the idea to them in year two.
- 2) If we achieved positive reactions from the Wellness Heart of Wales towns, it would make it much easier to get businesses involved as they would be able to see the greater value for the wider area.
- 3) We wanted to maximise access to continuation funding to support a Wellness Heart of Wales group by applying in year one for Tourism Product Innovation Funds (TPIF) from Visit Wales.



Our revised work plan:

Year one Establish Wellness Heart of Wales working group

Year two Establish Llandrindod Wellness working group.

5 Year one June 2017 - May 2018. Wellness Heart of Wales

We defined the Wellness Heart of Wales as including Llandrindod, Builth, Llanwrtyd and Llangamarch Werlls plus Rhayader.

At the end of July 2017 we contacted those Town and Community Council's and significant businesses in the area like The Royal Welsh Show Ground, inviting them to a meeting in September 2017 to examine the benefits of working together in a tourism hub. We made a clear connection with the recently announced Wales Way as an opportunity for us and stated our aims as:

short term goal is to test the desire to create a Wellness Hub across Llandrindod, Rhayader, Llanwrtyd, Llangamarch and Builth as a tool for marketing existing tourism products and our **long term goal** is to strengthen and grow the Wellness brand in Llandrindod Wells - we're aiming to become the Wellness Capital of Britain - with our place based marketing hanging from that status. In time we hope the brand will extend across the region, so that it leads to the development of further products, turns some attractions with brand fit into destinations (eg the Llandrindod Wells Lake Park) and complements government led initiatives like the 'Years of' and the Wales Way Project.

The meeting was attended by representatives from all the Town and Community Council's invited along with local tourism businesses like World Alternative games. The outcome of the meeting was the formation of the Wellness Heart of Wales network group.

Our second meeting took place in November where support for the formation of a tourism group to promote the Wellness Heart of Wales was ratified.

Minutes extract: all present were in favour of working together to promote the area as the Wellness Heart of Wales. Some concerns were raised about the level of involvement, time and money required. This will become an outcome of the TPIF EOI.

The group agreed a set of goals, principles and values as follows:

The group agreed that we should:

- Work together, in partnership; councils + businesses
- Form a steering group for our work, NOT be a Tourism Association
- NOT be bogged down in bureaucracy
- Be bespoke to the Wells towns area incl Rhayader and the Elan Valley
- Be enjoyable + productive to be part of
- Do one thing well / not spread ourselves too thinly

The purpose of the group was agreed as:

- Creating a recognisable identity for this area
- Influencing with Visit Wales



- Increasing profitability for our businesses

The group agreed our values will be:

Authenticity	Real people; friendly and welcoming.
Sustainability	Based on what we have already, not new things created for a campaign.
Prosperity	Our activity should result in more visitors, for longer, spending more

5.1 Getting the towns on board

To get towns on board we planned to ask the Town and Community Council representatives to:

- Ask their Councils to take part in the Wellness Heart of Wales and
- Relay information to local business and tourism networks about the opportunities the Wellness Heart of Wales tourism destination represented.

Challenges:

- Continuity issues - elected member representatives on the WHW group changing
- Some members found it difficult to accurately convey the ideas to their Town and Community Councils
- There weren't active business networks nor tourism forums to talk to.

Achievements:

- By meeting with some of the Councils individually we increased interest in the project (the Project Officer addressed Rhayader and Llandrindod Town Councils and Llanwrtyd Wells Tourism Group).
- Llanwrtyd Community Council used this initiative as a catalyst to call tourism businesses together to form a tourism group.
- We built on individual's passion for place to create buy into the WHW.
- Our timing was excellent given the recent launch of the Wales Way and the desire to populate a map of 'Igarn Ogarn' opportunities around the A470.

5.2 A shared vision for a Wellness Heart of Wales – TPIF bid

The entire group was in agreement that a bid for Tourism Product Innovation Funds (TPIF) from Visit Wales would be a good starting point to pull together the individual towns in the area.

Please see summary of the TPIF Expression of Interest (EOI) in appendix 1.

Our partnership with Powys County Council allowed us to submit the EOI for TPIF with them as the lead. The bid asked for funds to employ an officer to continue the work of unifying the towns by using the Wellness branding alongside a marketing consultant to help each town to adapt the brand to their place and build assets that businesses could use around that.

The bid would increase people's skills in blogging and vlogging and in the networks to release that content to further promote the towns and the WHW area. Finally, there was a strong technological element to build on and extend the experience and



knowledge in Llandrindod of using town WiFi to collect visitor number data and the use of i-beacons to promote the town's offer.

We were pleased that the EOI was successful.

Challenges:

Sadly, our full application was not successful. In May 2018 Visit Wales told us that the primary reason they did not allocate funds was that they felt our product was not sufficiently developed yet to allocate funds to marketing it.

Whilst the group remained as an on-line forum, it did not meet again and in retrospect we feel the project lost momentum at this point. We definitely suffered from over reliance on the bid; so much had been invested in it that its failure was a huge blow.

Achievements:

Having taken on board the comments around the TPIF bid about developing product we later consulted with Arwain and it was agreed that we could divert funds to a drone photography project to promote the WHW towns both individually and as a group. This has proved a great way to spread the unifying branding across the area in a very visual way.

Llandrindod Wellness 'We live well' <https://youtu.be/1SPie6BfNcE>

Llandrindod Wellness 'Life, work, balanced' <https://youtu.be/LOKh0WJLLM0>

Llangammarch Wellness 'Well and truly relaxing' https://youtu.be/X-_ZsqcrlSs

5.3 Outcomes from year one - Wellness Heart of Wales

- Formation of the Wellness Heart of Wales tourism working group.
- Starting the Wellness Heart of Wales film project.
- Starting a conversation about how we can work together for the good of the area.

6 Year two – Llandrindod Wellness

6.1 Getting businesses on board – awareness raising

As with the WHW we started with an awareness event in November 2018. Invitations were sent to as wide a group of businesses as possible, so it was no surprise that the attendance was equally varied with delegates from voluntary sector, hospitality, tourism, child care, retail and services sectors.

The event explained the advantages and opportunities that the brand brought to the town and its businesses. The Wellness concept is flexible enough to apply to businesses from a family run haulage business to a wellbeing practitioner. The event also explored the advantages of being close to the Wales Way A470 and how Llandrindod Wellness could encourage people to leave the A470 and explore this town and area.



6.2 A shared vision for our town – methods to spread the message

After the awareness event, we formed a Llandrindod Wellness working party. Membership is diverse which is helpful to ensure that whatever we are doing appeals to a wide range of businesses. Many businesses in Llandrindod are small and have little time to create content for websites and social media (if indeed they even have those things) so both the Project Officer and the Llandrindod Wellness working group have worked on ways to maximise brand exposure and minimise effort from businesses. Here are some examples:

- We created 'brand assets' which businesses could use or adapt. In its most simple form these were copyright free images of the town and its people and which businesses could use free of charge. The first tranche of these are available on the town website and the next batch will be housed on a separate photos store and linked to the town website.
- Through the year the Project Officer put the photos together with brand messages to encourage businesses to simply 'post and go'.
- We started a #Llandrindod Wellness campaign and created a Llandrindod Wellness Facebook page.
- We recruited a 'high profile' business (Tesco) to create and display a prominent banner at the store entrance.
- The group started a #Llandrindod Wellness window sticker scheme. The stickers are awarded by the working group to reward involvement in Llandrindod Wellness and will continue after the project has ended.
- Local papers carried an article about the aerial photography and film making to raise awareness of the project and brand.
- Posters in the town notice boards about Wellness events like the Llandrindod Wellness Day.



Challenges:

- Small businesses were interest rich but time poor which resulted in us failing to capitalise on some of the enthusiasm of those businesses.
- Often people's computer skills were minimal so putting a photo together with some brand font text was not something people could do easily so the Project Officer spend a lot of time supporting people to do this.
- It was difficult to convey that businesses were not being asked to stop using their own branding in favour of the town brand.
- Sometimes businesses found it hard to see the value in working on a town wide basis if their businesses wasn't tourism facing.

6.3 Turning a brand into a movement / relinquishing control

This was a watershed moment when the Project Officer knew that this project had been successful - the working group recently agreed that rather than referring to

Llandrindod Wellness as a brand, we would now refer to it as the Llandrindod Wellness Movement.

People can join a movement but don't know what to do with a brand. A movement = travel, moving forward whereas people tend to see a brand as a static thing like a logo. People can spread the word about a movement and take an active part in it and as a member, you will feel a sense of ownership.

6.4 Outcomes from year two – Llandrindod Wellness:

- The formation of a really active, proactive Llandrindod Wellness working group who continue to see the value of the brand as a unifying force for a small rural town.
- The level of adoption of the brand across the town given that we are just two years in - to have independent businesses starting to use the brand commercially on products is brilliant.
- Strategic buy in from the Town Council so combined with the working group that leaves us in a strong position for the future.
- A direction for the future, the Llandrindod Wellness Movement.

7 Conclusions - What did we learn?

- Embedding a place brand requires strategic buy in at an early stage so that 'brand messages' are strengthened early on.
- Choosing Town and Community Councils as the strategic lead comes with constraints of time and politics. Prominent businesses like the Metropole Hotel provide a different kind of leadership which is equally powerful.
- Nurturing early adopting businesses is essential. These become your brand ambassadors whom others will follow.
- Staff employed on a place brand project need to have great IT graphics skills plus a working knowledge of place branding and tourism. This project had the former but struggled with the latter.
- Making personal contact with individual businesses is time consuming and perhaps unsustainable in the long term but is essential in bedding in a concept and explaining it in the context of that business.
- Producing a bank of branded assets that people can use for free helps small businesses engage with the brand.
- Visual assets using local people and voices engage people far better than simply showing some nice scenery.
- Embedding place branding is a long process and should start with that place. Expanding to encompass the other towns within a two-year part-time project was perhaps reaching for the stars!
- Referring to a brand is not always helpful as businesses already have their own branding. Re-describing our activity as a Wellness Movement has helped people to engage.

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7 Public awareness of the brand.

At the end of the project we undertook a survey of the public on Llandrindod Wellness Day. The survey took place in the foyer of Tesco Stores where we showed the two Llandrindod Wellness films and asked members of the public to complete four questions to gain entry into a free prize draw. The results were as follows:

	70 responses in total	Yes responses	As % of total
1	Have you seen the hashtag #LlandrindodWellness?	47	67%
2	Have you seen the Llandrindod Wellness film?	37	53%
3	Have you seen this (town brand) logo being used?	39	56%
4	Did you know there are 400+ copyright free photos on the town website for anyone to use?	14	20%

It was gratifying to see a high level of awareness of the hashtag, films and logo but surprising that people were not aware that the photos were there to be used by everyone. We will not put in place work to correct that misconception.

8 Conclusions - What did we learn?

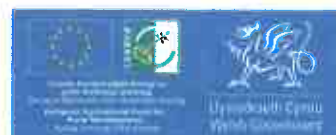
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APPENDIX 1

Summary of the Tourism Product Innovation Fund (TPIF) Expression of interest (EOI)

The EOI was submitted by PCC with Antru Teifi as a project partner (the company that employs Jude + will employ the project officer if we are successful) and this group as the project delivery partner. We have until **2nd March** to submit a **full application**.

PROJECT MILESTONES

	What we said we'd do in the EOI	Steps to achieve aim
	Appoint project member of staff	Create JD, advertise + appoint
MARKETING	Appoint marketing consultant	Create brief for marketing consultant (marketing strategy, leaflets, web development, translation, photography and social media) + appoint
		Create marketing strategy
	Develop a WHW printed leaflet	Agree content
	Develop seasonal marketing campaigns for the WHW	Agree content
	Promote hidden gems / year of discovery	Choose assets to promote
	Promote a series of epic view points	Choose which views to promote
	Promote all types of transport	Define (train, car, bike, walk etc)
	Design bi-lingual WHW branded road signage aligned with Wales Way.	Agree location and messages
		Seek permissions / install
	Create assets like photos, videos, banners, social media content	Define views, shots etc to be promoted
	Create social media channels for WHW	Agree what channels + create
		Agree guidance for posting / management
	Create website for WHW linked to existing towns + businesses	Create brief or web developer
		Link website to existing towns + businesses
SKILLS	Develop people skills in social media, blogging, vlogging, and data analysis.	Create guidance for content
		Advertise for volunteers
		Workshops / training
	Encourage collaboration between providers	Brand + marketing workshops for businesses
TECHNOLOGY		Use Wellness to rebrand our existing offer
	Develop a 'disposable app' for visitors and integrate with i-beacons	Commission Locly app developer
		Agree what the app will do / features
	Install i- beacons	Agree purchase with towns / businesses
		Agree location and messages + link to app
	Extend the Llandrindod Wells Wi-Fi system to WHW towns by placing one Wi-Fi box in each town to	Appoint Telemat to survey locations

	allow collection of visitor numbers, dwell time and movement within and through the area.	Identify hosts for boxes, agree installation
		Install equipment
	Develop ROI / success measures	Part of marketing brief

What do the i-beacons actually do?

In Llandrindod we're just about to launch a i-beacon trial to find out what sort of messages are successful in changing people's behaviour. Here's some examples of the messages we're using:



The messages use blue tooth to push a message to a mobile device over a short distance so will be received if the person walks past the i-beacon. The device needs an app to receive the messages. Messages should encourage action eg going into a shop or café or taking up an offer promoted through the message. Messages can also convey exclusivity as some promotions or information will only be available to people with the app. Messages can relate to things happening, promotions or offers outside of the range of the i-beacon or the Wi-Fi box.

The trial will give us valuable information about what messages worked and what didn't. We plan to use this information to inform the development of an app for the WHW area should the TPIF bid be successful.

What will the Wi-Fi boxes and associated soft ware do?

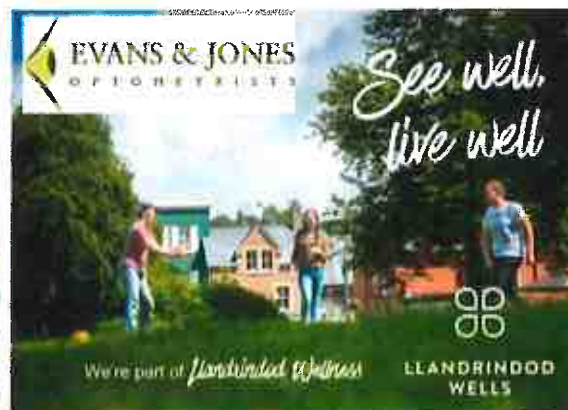
1. Provide free of charge access to Wi-Fi for the public in the town in the vicinity of the box. That means people won't be using their own data allowances.
2. Collect e mail addresses as people log onto the Wi-Fi and if people 'opt in' we can build a mailing list for future marketing.
3. Collect statistics about numbers of people in town, how frequently they return, how long they stay and where they move to. We will shortly be providing access to this information to Llandrindod Wells based businesses.

APPENDIX 2 Business use of the Llandrindod Wellness brand.

The Metropole Hotel using the Wellness brand to promote its customer service



Two business displaying Wellness themed large posters in their windows



Merchandise: Wellness themed mugs on sale and in Arvon Ales plus postcards on sale.



Key Martin shared a post to the group **Llandrindod Solutions**
18 April
Thank's Jude Beufie for all your help. You've been a great asset to this town and always go above and beyond to help local businesses 🙏
It's stuffed with this new range of postcards featuring local people, places and the Wellness branding's.



Websites starting to use the brand...

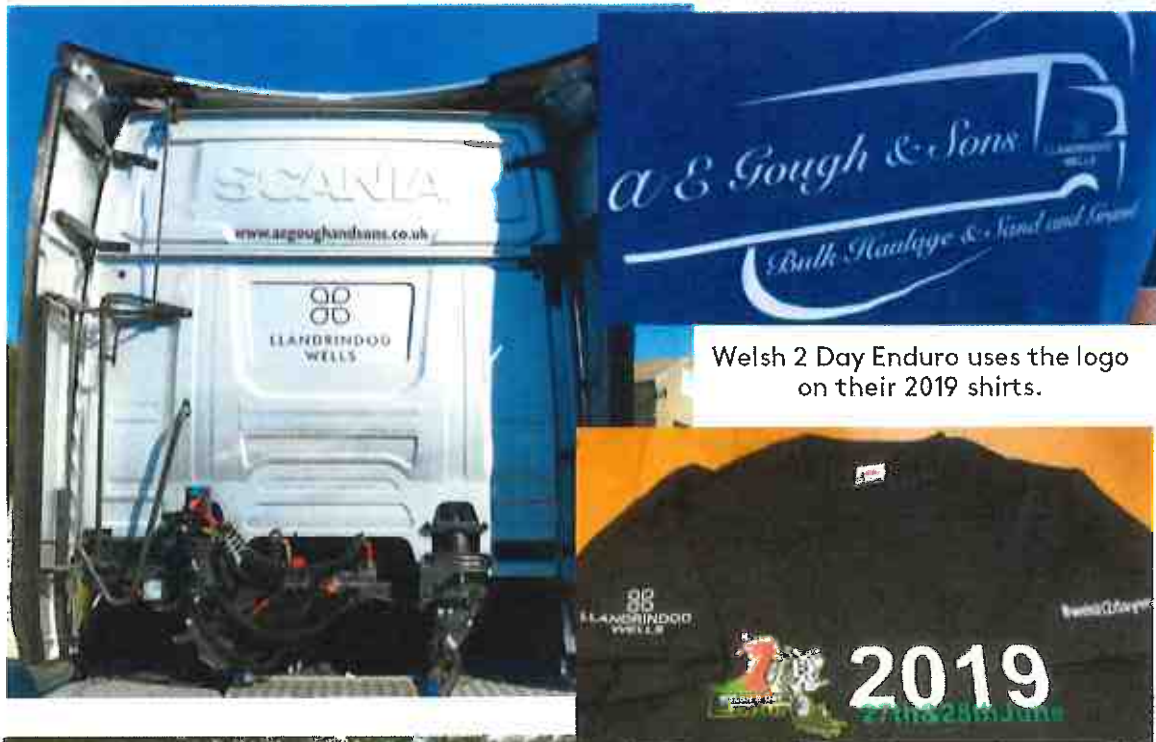


Town Council adopts the brand for the new look town leaflet.

Hunts Coaches use the brand alongside the copyright free photography to advertise a tour



Local haulage company uses the town logo on their new lorries and on the town football team shirts which they sponsor.



Tesco banner at entrance
to store

