



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig:
Ewrop yn Buddsoddi mewn Ardaloedd Gwledig
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Caswell Bay, Gower - Changing Places Facility



What were the projects aims?

Swansea Council secured support from Welsh Government's TAIS to make Caswell Bay a truly accessible destination for visitors with severe disabilities.

Research shows that an estimated 250,000 disabled visitors are severely restricted in their choices of destinations and activities across the UK. This project had the potential to change the lives of thousands of visitors with severe disabilities and their carers, attract many more to the Swansea Bay area and improve Gower's reputation as an accessible destination.

The aims were to install brand new, high-quality modular Changing Places facilities in the Caswell Bay car park and to invest in specialist beach equipment to allow severely

disabled visitors to access and enjoy the water. A storage unit was also purchased to store the new equipment safely.

The Changing Places facilities consist of a self-contained unit, complete with hoist, shower and changing bed and it is the first Changing Places facility on Gower, enabling thousands of people with severe disabilities to enjoy the beach and waters at Caswell Bay, one of Gower's most popular Blue Flag beaches.

The two Mobi-Chairs are designed to go on the beach as well as in the water. These are available free of charge and must be pre-booked with Swansea Council.

The official launch in September 2019 was attended by Dafydd Elis-Thomas MS, Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism as well as members of the press

and featured on the ITV news.

How were these aims achieved?

The key to the project's success was close partnership working with Visit Wales, other Council Departments (Corporate Property / Building Services, Planning, Car Parks, Cleansing, etc.), delivery partners (iHUS) and end users (Surfability, disability groups, etc.).

Who was involved?

Swansea Council led on delivery in partnership with iHUS Projects Ltd, one of the UK's leading Disabled Adaptations Specialists. We also worked in closely with the relevant ward members, Surfability UK, Bramwood Accessible Holiday Home and local disability groups.

Surfability UK are the only

adaptive surf school in the UK and provide a unique experience for people with severe disabilities or learning difficulties. They have been featured on BBC Children in Need and founder Ben Clifford received the Pride of Britain Community Partner Award in 2019. Bramwood Accessible Holiday Home is the only fully accessible holiday home on Gower and can be fully booked up to a year in advance.

The project was fully supported by Swansea Council's corporate priorities, Beaches Management Plan (BMP) and Destination Management Plan (DMP) 2017-2020.

It received overwhelming support from local disability groups, Surfability UK, Keep Wales Tidy, RNLI and local businesses from inception right through to delivery.

How was the project funded?

Total project costs: £85K
TAIS: £68K
Council match funding: £17K

Where did you go for help and advice?

The initial project idea emerged from discussions with end users, when it became evident that a Changing Places facility on Gower could make a huge difference to thousands of disabled visitors and attract a new audience to the area.

Once we had established the

evidence of need, we sought advice from the Visit Wales funding team and various Council's Department to ensure our project was achievable within the budget and timeframe.

iHUS was extremely helpful in delivering a solution to suit our requirements at Caswell Bay and solving minor issues with the delivery of the modular unit. Further help and advice were available from colleagues in the Council's Building Services throughout the delivery of the project.

What has been the greatest achievement so far?

The greatest achievement without a doubt is the difference this project has made to thousands of residents and visitors with severe disabilities, who are now able to access and enjoy the waters at Caswell Bay and have a dignified experience when changing and washing in a facility which is fit for purpose and meets their complex needs and requirements.

And the biggest challenge?

The complexity of delivering a capital project in one of the most popular areas of our destination at a time of extreme financial pressure on Council services, whilst satisfying the needs of the many parties involved in the delivery process.

Being the first Changing Places installed on Gower, this project

attracted a great deal of attention from residents, visitors and the press – raising expectations and adding pressure for a successful delivery.

Any tips for those setting up a similar project?

Extensive consultation and close working partnership with all parties involved, including end users, were critical to the successful delivery of this project.

What's next for your project?

Based on the success of this project and pending future funding, there are early discussions for an additional Changing Places facility at another key location on Gower.

