

Our Future's People

Introduction

Our Future's People is a sustainable energy project for secondary schools. It brings together two of our most successful projects; 'Young Energy People' and 'Your Green Future' both of which have won prestigious awards for their contribution to sustainability education.

The programme aims to reduce school's energy use and improve the sustainability of their operations whilst providing students with a valuable educational opportunity. Through the programme they will develop a range of transferrable skills, increase their self-confidence and develop an awareness of environmental issues and the wide range of employment opportunities available within the ever expanding 'green economy'.

Challenge

In addition to delivering the needs and requirements reflected in the LEADER themes and principles OFP is based on programmes with a proven track record in delivering on the requirements of current political agendas in Wales and helps support the following:

- Create Enjoyment in Learning
- Encourage active citizenship
- Develop a highly skilled workforce
- Enhance and Increase learning opportunities in STEM
- Enrich the STEM curriculum
- Align Careers and STEM activity with advice on training and study options and also with employer needs.
- Retain local skills by showcasing local opportunity to young people
- Build resilience to poverty
- Inform and encourage investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy
- Increase activity to educate about energy issues and realise savings

Solution

The project was delivered within each school as follows:



School Recruitment

- Recruit x5 schools to take part in the project

Project Preparation

- Production of school energy diary
- Energy efficiency and renewable energy feasibility study
- Pre-project behaviour surveys

Recruitment of School Energy Management Team

- 10 -20 pupils recruited through:
 - Recruitment assemblies
 - Interviews
- Allocation of job roles
- SEMT students complete pre-project survey

Your Green Future

- An interactive event (open to all secondary schools in Powys but including schools signed up to OFP) which engages school students with a low carbon economy, and their potential role in creating this through their career choices.
- Students attend a series of interactive workshops looking at various sustainability issues as well as interacting with a range of businesses and education providers in our exhibition hall.

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Student Training

- 3 x 1 hour training sessions:
 - i) Energy and the environment
 - ii) Energy efficiency and renewable energy
 - iii) Energy use in schools

Global



Local

School energy survey

- Investigating:
 - Heating
 - Insulation
 - Lighting
 - Electrical appliances

Dissemination of findings

- School energy report
- Presentation to governors and senior management

School energy campaign

- Students plan and run an energy awareness campaign to promote positive behaviour change in the school.
- This could tie into national and international events such as Earth Hour and students may decide to raise money for Solar Aid or raise money to implement energy efficiency measures in their school.
- The campaign may include an information evening to spread the message to parents and the wider community.

Workplace survey

- Students carry out work-based survey and report back to host organisation.

Evaluation

- Post-project surveys carried out and feedback from schools recorded and evaluated.

Benefit

The project offers the following benefits to participating schools:

- **Curriculum enhancement**
Our Future's People links with the Welsh curriculum particularly programmes of study for science, geography, PSE, IT, English and mathematics.
- **Promoting enjoyment of learning**
Students can see the direct benefits of their work on the project and they have a chance to apply curriculum knowledge and skills to a real-world context.
- **Empowering pupils: Direct involvement in school decision-making**
Through the project, students become directly involved in decision-making processes within their schools. They present an action plan for improving the sustainability of the school's energy use and it is hoped that some of their recommendations will be implemented.
- **Improved student self-confidence**
Students increase their self-confidence as a result of working on a project with clear positive outcomes and through having their voices heard. They see that they really do have the power to make a difference both to their school and the wider world.



- **Development of transferable skills**
Students develop a wide range of transferrable skills including teamwork, numeracy, literacy and IT skills. They also develop increased confidence in presenting in front of an audience and key public speaking skills. They are then able to utilise these skills to improve their curriculum work.
- **Cohesion: Bringing together the whole school community**
The project brings together the whole-school community in working towards a common cause. Students also interact with support staff such as members of the school's site and finance teams in a way that they may not have done before.
- **Citizenship – Local and global**
Our Future's People helps students to develop as responsible citizens at both a local and global level.
- **Careers-related learning**
Students apply for a position on a School Energy Management Team, helping them to develop key job application and interview skills. They apply the knowledge and skills they have developed to a work context and the Your Green Future events help them to develop an awareness of the growing employment opportunities available within the 'green economy' and related occupations.
- **STEM –related learning**
Both the in-school work and the Your Green Future events have a heavy focus on the development of STEM knowledge and skills and how these can be applied in order to improve the sustainability of school and business operations. Students also develop a greater awareness of STEM-related career and training opportunities.
- **Developing links with local employers and the wider community**
We will support schools in developing links with local employers both through arranging the work placements for students and through the Your Green Future events. Links with the local community will be strengthened through the information evenings, helping schools to strengthen their role as key community hubs.
- **Supporting work towards eco-schools**
Project activities link well with the eco-schools award scheme and can provide valuable evidence of student sustainability-related activity.
- **Reduced energy use and costs**
Schools benefit from reduced costs as a result of reducing their energy consumption. They also improve the sustainability of their operations, acting as positive role-models for their students and local communities.

Result

The project met its aims and provided the following benefits:

- **Raised enthusiasm and active engagement**
 - The project was in contact with 4554 students across 10 Powys High Schools, 2 Special Schools and 1 Primary School spread evenly across Powys.
 - 2718 students actively participated in project activities.
 - 156 students were part of SEMTs. This aspect in particular was a very enriching experience for the students involved. SEMTs worked



well, especially after a refocus and reduction in team numbers in Phase 2.

- 605 students attended YGF events.
- **Increased young people's understanding of a low carbon future**
 - SEMTs demonstrated between a 25% and 40% increase of knowledge across aspects of a low-carbon future.
 - There was a 39% increase in Phase 1 in the number of students who could say that they knew what a low-carbon, sustainable future means.
 - 87% of students in Phase 1 and 86% in Phase 2 thought that attendance at the YGF events increased their knowledge about what choices lead to a more sustainable life.
 - Over 96% of students had not heard of the UN Sustainability Goals. This question was only asked in Phase 1
- **Increased skills**
 - 100% SEMT members reported an increase in teamwork skills with literacy skills and job application skills also scoring highly.
 - Presentations to Governors and Senior Leadership Teams was an important element for students as it made them feel they had a voice.
 - 90% of students in Phase 1 and 87% students in Phase 2 felt they had learnt new things from the YGF events. This included speaking/listening, teamwork, decision making and problem solving.
 - An increase in self-confidence was a strong theme throughout SEMT comments.
- **Supported teaching and learning experience**
 - 48% of students in Phase 1 and 57% in Phase 2 felt that YGF events helped them to know more about engineering.
 - Teachers felt that YGF events focussed on aspects relevant to the curriculum.
 - Teachers felt that YGF events gave them ideas for cross-curricular work, extended tasks and future interaction with business.
- **Supported reductions of energy use in participating schools**
 - Participating High Schools reduced energy bills by on average £4,036 in PHASE 1 and £4,412 in PHASE 2 per annum immediately following the project. How much of this reduction can be attributed to the project is unclear.
- **Reduced Carbon Emissions**
 - Schools reduced a total of 79.91 tCO₂ in Phase 1 schools and 71.75 tCO₂ in Phase 2.

Project Contact Details

For more information please contact Owen Callender on owenc@severnwye.org.uk or visit the website <http://www.ourfuturespeople.org.uk/>

Partners/Match Funders Logos



Project Details

Key data	Project Specifics
Delivered By	Severn Wye Energy Agency Ltd.
Start Date	January 2017
End Date	September 2019
Leader	Theme 4: Renewable Energy at Community Level

Financial Details

Description	Amount
Total Expenditure	£201,790.61
RDP Funding	£160,642.56
Match Funding	£41,148.05

