

South Essex Active Travel – Targeted Travel Engagement

Summary

@liMSEAT provide Personalised Travel Plans to prospective @AmazonUK employees to empower them to walk and cycle to work

Outline of the project

South Essex Active Travel (SEAT) is an innovative project between Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, Essex County Council and Thurrock Council. The three councils have come together to better connect local jobseekers, young people and newly recruited employees with job, education and training opportunities available in south Essex and boost walking and cycling. The three-year project was launched in April 2017 and is funded by the Department for Transport's Access Fund.

The SEAT team has worked jointly with public, private and voluntary organisations to make a real difference to the people who live in south Essex. Thousands of people have been provided with travel advice and active travel incentives to connect them with jobs, education and training opportunities.

One of the organisations we have worked with is Amazon. In Spring 2017, Amazon opened a new fulfilment centre in Tilbury employing 1,500 people. The centre has limited car parking spaces for employees. A recommendation of Thurrock Council's travel plan was for Amazon to engage with SEAT to encourage more employees to walk and cycle to work. The SEAT team seized this opportunity. According to behaviour change theory a new job is a key moment of change when habits can be broken. SEAT worked with Amazon's HR department and the recruitment agency Adecco during the recruitment stage. The team were given space at Amazon's recruitment events.



10 trained travel advisors from Southend Borough Council and Thurrock Council attended 13 all-day recruitment events between May and August 2017. They provided advice to empower individuals to travel differently. People were offered Personalised Travel Plans. These plans provided tailored information about the length

and duration of their journey to the centre and the alternative transport options available to them.

In total, the team delivered 721 Personalised Travel Plans. Lots of people's journeys could be made by walking, cycling, taking the bus or a train instead of using a car. The team let people know where they could hire a bike, buy an affordable recycled bike or get information about train and bus times. Individuals were also offered free cycle training to boost their confidence on a bike.

Interventions with employees who lived less than 2 miles from the centre were very successful. Their initial response when asked about how they planned to travel to the centre was to drive. The Personalised Travel Plan helped them to think about walking or cycling as a viable alternative. A number of people went on to receive bespoke cycle training through SEAT.

The outcome of our engagement with Amazon was reduced demand for car parking spaces and improved employee health and wellbeing. It also cut road congestion and improved local air quality.

The benefits were recognised by Amazon. Robert Stobinski, General Manager, Amazon Tilbury, said: *“We have worked closely with South Essex Active Travel to help individuals joining the new Amazon team at Tilbury to receive tailored transportation information before they join us to ensure they can find the best way for them to travel to work.”*