

CASTELL ALUN SCHOOL
OUR IMPACT
OUR LEGACY



PROJECT OVERVIEW

KEY FACTS

Project Value	£7.6m
Customer	Flintshire County Council
Procurement	Scape Major Works
Dates	October 2020 - October 2022



Creating a new and inspiring learning space for students and teachers, in addition to employment and learning opportunities for the local Flintshire community, a new, three-storey art and design technology block has been built at Castell Alun High School.



Featuring specialist classrooms alongside general teaching spaces, offices and toilets, the new facility also has additional parking areas (enabled by the demolition of the technology block), and a welcomed replacement of the roof over the existing music department.

HOW SOCIAL VALUE IS MEASURED

Willmott Dixon uses the National TOMs (Themes Outcomes and Measures), externally-verified proxy values, which help us calculate the social return on investment of our community activities.

The proxies are set by an external independent expert organisation (Social Value Portal) which looks through trusted and verifiable publicly available source of data to find the most suitable proxy values. These are monitored regularly to ensure they are current and valid. To ensure the integrity of the values used, Willmott Dixon companies only use data validated by The Social Value Portal.

PROJECT COMMITMENTS

Our aim is to always deliver high-impact social value and support the local economy through encouraging local spend and providing local labour opportunities.

Working collaboratively with Flintshire Council, Castell Alun High School and at all times considering the seven wellbeing goals that underpin the 'Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015', we put together a plan to support the students and staff of the existing high school, as well the wider community of Mold and Flintshire.

The plan outlined specific targets across employment, education and community, with particular focus placed on the following key areas throughout delivery:

- Local spend
- Local employment to reach those furthest from the job market
- School engagement
- Supporting third sector



£1.05m
SROI

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS



14.2%
Overall SROI



**31 apprentice
weeks delivered**

Local spend



30.1% within 10 miles
35.98% within 20 miles
57.56% within 40 miles



**6 weeks work
experience**

Local labour



22.69% within 10 miles
43.30% within 20 miles
77.78% within 40 miles



**104 volunteering
hours completed**



**44 Considerate
Constructors
score**



**31 workshops
delivered**

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

SIMON HEMMINGWAY

Simon, 44 years old from Ellesmere Port, joined the Willmott Dixon team on the Castell Alun project after being made unemployed as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. We interviewed Simon to find out more about his new opportunity with Willmott Dixon:



Q WHAT WAS YOUR SITUATION BEFORE STARTING AT WILLMOTT DIXON?

A I'd been working in and out of jobs through agencies for quite a while and was laid off again from my last employer before getting this job here with Willmott Dixon. Going right back I actually qualified as Business Administrator but quickly learned that working in an office wasn't for me. I much prefer to be outdoors.

Q WHAT SKILLS HAVE YOU LEARNED WHILST WORKING WITH WILLMOTT DIXON?

A I've gone through Banksman training and that's been really important on this site given we are working with a school and there are kids so close to the works being carried out. I've not worked on a school project before and that's been challenging working hard to keep the pupils safe and managing the school drop off and pick up times. I've also undertaken face fit training and how to manage Covid 19 with visitors and operatives coming to site.

Q WHAT'S IT LIKE TO WORK FOR WILLMOTT DIXON?

A I've really enjoyed myself on this project. The way we work as a team is great; I always feel that I bring value to the team and that's because the managers here have come up through the trades themselves, so they understand what it's like to work on the ground. They also come across very calm and collected even when things become a little pressured or urgent.

Q WHAT DOES THIS NEW OPPORTUNITY MEAN TO YOU?

A It's been great so far. There is a good group of people on here that work as a team but the most important thing is that I have more security with this being a long term job.

Q WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS?

A Gaining more experience on different types of building projects and more certificates. My next step would be to do a First Aid course as I think this is helpful on any site.



"Since joining Willmott Dixon in September, Simon has very quickly become an integral part of the site team at Castell Alun. Simon's willingness to understand a new project has been excellent and has handled the challenge of both vehicle and pedestrian traffic management in and around site brilliantly. Already it is apparent he has the right qualities and skills for our site requirements."

Brian Hanlon, Construction Manager at Willmott Dixon Construction

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

STEFAN CRIPPS

32 year old Stefan came to the Castell Alun project through the help of Inside Connections. Stefan gives an insightful view of how he turned and continues to turn his life around after years of living homeless and suffering from poor mental health:



Q WHAT WAS YOUR SITUATION BEFORE STARTING AT WILLMOTT DIXON?

A I'd been working with a UPVC spraying company in Preston for a few months but became unemployed when Covid 19 hit. I actually grew up as a bricklayer with my Grandad but things at home became really difficult and I ended up couch surfing before becoming totally homeless and living on the streets for about 4 or 5 years in Liverpool.

I suffered (and still do) from mental health and at 28 years of age I ended up inside. I had to do 2 ½ years of a five year sentence. I'm not proud of what happened but I appreciate everything jail gave me otherwise I could have been dead. I became Christian while I was in there and took courses in mental health management which has changed my life for good.

Q WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT THIS NEW OPPORTUNITY?

A This is a long term contract that gives me purpose and security. I can plan ahead for myself and my family. While I was unemployed I couldn't go to the gym because of the costs but now I can which again is so important for my mental health. I feel like this job is the good foundations to grow on. Life is back to good again.

Q WHAT HAS IT BEEN LIKE TO WORK WITH WILLMOTT DIXON?

A I want to strive and have a voice in my work. With Willmott Dixon you can suggest things and they listen to and acknowledge what you say. That's a big thing as you feel worthwhile. They have also really supported me with my mental health by allowing me to be honest about it and talk about it whenever I need to. Dave (Build Manager) often asks me if I'm ok twice, which is a great thing to do with people who have mental health issues as you naturally say "yeah I'm fine" the first time.

Q WHAT WILL YOUR NEXT STEPS BE?

A I'm looking forward to doing my dumper training but what I'd really like to do is help others in Construction. Not to tell them what to do, but just tell my story; so they know they are not alone if they suffer from mental health issues and there are ways of managing it. I've already been on TV to tell people they can change their life. If I can, anyone can.

"Stefan is a really positive character who is always looking forward and has a positive impact on all those around him. He is solution focused and although a new team member is not afraid to make suggestions for the better. He has obviously been through a lot previous to being here and its great that he can be so honest about this and allow us to help him if its needed. This openness is essential today with mental health such an important issue in construction and everyday society."



Dave Roberts, Build Manager at Willmott Dixon Construction

SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

Prior to the construction of Castell Alun, Social Value Manager, Beth Modder, and Construction Manager, Brian Hanlon, sat with the Senior Leaders of the High School to develop a robust, exciting and ambitious school/employer engagement plan. The aim was to develop a plan that would align to - and take full advantage of - the construction works taking place right on their own grounds, as well as the wider range of staff skills and resource available throughout the Willmott Dixon business and the many supply chain partners also contributing to the new school.



Staff and students of Castell Alun High School at the monumental steel beam signing ceremony.

Working collaboratively throughout a series of meetings, we identified the school's key priorities and focus areas as:

- Construction and Engineering students
- Diversity in Construction
- Disengaged boys at risk of becoming NEET
- Aligning the curriculum to careers across subjects.

After fine tuning the initial programme, Beth and the Willmott Dixon team engaged continually with the school to ensure we remained abreast of the events calendar, any new priorities, students identified as requiring support and the impact the pandemic was having on student life.

"WD also inspired the next generation of potential construction workers and engineers, providing workshops over several months with various student groups. These included a female engineering group, our construction students having first-hand experience of a large site and WD even organised work experience, with some of our more vulnerable students. For these students, such an experience proved invaluable. It gave them a real understanding of the skills and knowledge required to work in this industry and will prepare them for later life."

Colin Ellis, Headteacher at Castell Alun School

CUSTOMER RESEARCH SESSIONS

"A key part of understanding the market is to understand what your competitors offer. It is no use focussing solely on what potential customers might want or need if a competitor is already offering it."

We used this thought-provoking statement to set the scene for a research project tasked to a group of thirty key stage 4 business study students at Castell Alun.

When covid restrictions were still in place on visits to school, our Customer Knowledge Team designed and led a virtual project based on winning an exciting contract that a number of contractors were bidding for.

The students' task was to research Willmott Dixon's competitors in order to identify our strengths, as well as what competitors may offer that we don't. The students then had to present their findings back to the team with supported evidence and rationale.

"Willmott Dixon provided a video and challenge that was a real-world example of conducting research and market research ahead of a 'bid'. This was an interesting case study that was delivered to Key Stage 4 students. The students enjoyed the real-world nature of the work and produced interesting response."

Katy Jones, Acting Assistant Head at Castell Alun School

CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME

We designed a bespoke, 7 week construction programme for the school's year 10 engineering and construction students. Students experienced the journey of a typical school build through a multitude of sessions and activities undertaken both on and off site.

Willmott Dixon staff members from across a diverse range of roles delivered theoretical and practical learning, whilst sharing their own personal career journey and words of advice and guidance. Providing the students with an in-depth insight into the breadth of careers available to them in construction and the different routes of getting there.

The students participated in a variety of technical tasks such as programming works (role of a programmer), calculating quantities of materials required from drawings (the role of a quantity surveyor), carrying out H&S inspections (role of a H&S Manager) and creating Matterport films (role of a BIM Manager) and then also experienced hands on trade activities such as brickwork.



"I would like to thank you for arranging the sessions for our college group. They have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the staff at Willmott Dixon, as well as taking part in sessions and experiencing the real time development of our new building.

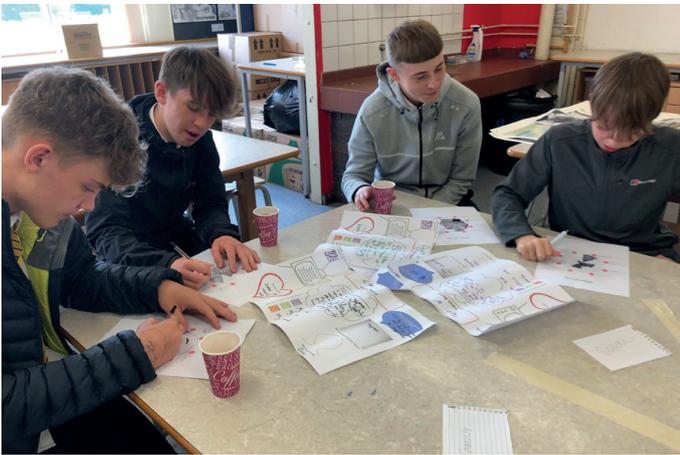
This has been a unique experience, which has given them the opportunity to participate in a 'live' project and learn new skills. The sessions have been delivered in a fun way, that were informative and interesting."

Diane Bates, Learning Coach Inclusion Coordinator at Castell Alun School

COACHING BOYS TO SUCCESS

Helping the school to support some of their male year 9 students who were identified as at risk of becoming NEET, our Social Value Manager Beth Modder ran a 'Coaching for Success' Programme over a six-week period.

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The programme started by exploring masculine stereotypes and beliefs that negatively impact the boys' emotions, behaviours at school, and life choices. We called this their 'Man Box'. By discussing stereotypical expectations such as being manly and strong, we were further able to explore the impact these beliefs could have.

Through discussion and activities set, the group talked openly about their own personal experiences and how certain stereotypes and beliefs had influenced some of their life choices. For example, they shared their thoughts on choosing school subjects such as drama, art and music, stating that these would naturally be avoided as they are considered subjects for girls.

The group also discussed how easy it was to get drawn into male anti-social behaviours such as drugs and gangs in their local area. We then considered what impact holding such beliefs long term could have on adult mental health and in workplaces such as construction.

To emphasize the risks, John Burton - a reformed ex offender from Inside Connections, was invited to talk to the students about his experiences. Growing up as a young lad in Liverpool, John delivered a talk on the consequences of living out such negative stereotypical behaviours, enabling the boys to understand the reality of wrong choices.

Following on from this, the students then went onto explore their future courageous goals including their careers and the key milestones of getting there, using interactive tools such as vision boards and the 'wheel of life'. In doing so, the group were able to reframe their original 'man box' and create new positive beliefs and next steps for their personal career journeys.

"The sessions were very well run and made the boys involved feel that it was a safe environment for them to discuss very sensitive issues.

"The sessions did help them to see things from a different perspective and to help them to see what mattered in their lives. We have seen a marked difference in two of the boys who took part and they are now displaying more mature and positive behaviours as they have moved on to their GCSE years.

"Moving forward I think it would be really beneficial for our pastoral support person in school to liaise with Beth so that we can continue the good work that she has done with the group."

Katy Jones, Acting Assistant Head at Castell Alun School

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION

On the 25th May 2021, a group of Willmott Dixon female staff members from across different fields and roles came together to inspire and educate Castell Alun year 9 girls on the opportunities and careers available in construction.



Timing the event to align with the important stage of choosing subject options for the girl's final two years of school, this widened their views on the range of possibilities available within the construction industry, which proved particularly helpful for those looking to take business studies as an option.

Interaction and communication was key to the session and as part of a carousel activity, the girls were asked to meet each staff member and guess the women's roles after asking questions about their skills, strengths and previous qualifications. The girls were then asked to rate themselves against each role, thinking about their own skills, strengths, personality and subject preferences.



"Firstly, it was so wonderful to see so many female role models come into school to deliver the workshops. Our year 9 students were really excited to hear about all the various roles and also the backgrounds of the women and what led them to where they are now."

"Working within the construction industry was not something that most of them had considered at all. It helped them to see that they could have a career and progress within that sector."

"The structure of the event was well planned, and the students liked the way they were put into small groups as it felt like they were having more of a chat rather than it being a formal presentation. The event has inspired a few more girls to consider a job in the construction industry and to take on apprenticeships also."

Katy Jones, Acting Assistant Head at Castell Alun School

WORK EXPERIENCE

At the start of the Castell Alun project, we identified the value of providing local young people with real life work experience. Giving them a taste of a modern day construction site and highlighting the wide range of job roles required to successfully run an important local construction project like Castell Alun. During the lifetime of the build we invited a number of local students and community members who were looking for the next steps in their career to participate in work placements with our site team.

THEO'S STORY

Lacking in confidence and motivation, Theo was referred to Careers Wales at the start of Year 10 to help him focus on career ideas and his next steps after leaving Year 11. Theo attended school on a part-time timetable (mornings only), studying only Maths and English.

Theo was supported by a careers adviser through 1-1 and group sessions in school. He was unsure what he would like to do after leaving school but felt he would be better suited to a practical job. As a result, it was decided that he would benefit from attending some work experience to help him explore his ideas further.

During lockdown, Theo did not engage well digitally and rarely answered his phone. Web links from the Business Engagement Adviser were sent to help him explore his idea of working in the construction industry further. Together with a coaching session provided by our Social Value Manager, Beth Modder, Theo started to re-engage when he returned to school in October 2020 (now in Year 11) and discussions between Careers Wales and Willmott Dixon took place to arrange a work placement on our construction site at Theo's school.

Theo was finally able to start his work placement with Willmott Dixon at the start of May 2021. He attended on a weekly basis for half a day initially, but this was soon increased to a full day which was a big step for Theo. He intergrated well with the site team and took a keen interest in the work from the start. By shadowing different trades, this helped him to make decisions about potential routes he might like to consider within Construction.



Developing a really positive, trusting relationship with Theo, Willmott Dixon Build Manager, Dave Roberts, went above and beyond throughout the placement. Dave set Theo tasks to provide a good overall understanding of how different skills are used within construction, allowing him to get the most out of his time on placement.

By continually mentoring him, pushing him out of his comfort zone and challenging some of his limiting beliefs (such as college not being right for him), Dave was able to positively influence Theo whilst giving him some invaluable advice around the best ways into construction.

"It was clear to me that the team at Willmott Dixon invested a lot of time and energy into supporting Theo's needs whilst on placement. Theo was happy to continue his placement after he left school at the end of May even though he had officially left school. The placement really helped to focus Theo on his plans for the future as well as build his confidence. Theo went into this placement with no plans in place after Year 11 and he is now waiting to start a Construction Skills Traineeship with Coleg Cambria."

Kayleigh Brummell, Business Engagement Advisor at Careers Wales

"I am 100% convinced that if Theo hadn't done this work placement with Willmott Dixon, he wouldn't be getting ready to start college now. You have all been amazing, thank you so much for your help and support."

Ceri, Theo's Mum

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH TRAINING & EDUCATION PROVIDERS

WE MIND THE GAP

During the construction period, we were connected to We Mind The Gap, a local charity which runs a number of programmes for young people across North Wales. This includes the 12 month "We Grow" programme for young women in disadvantaged circumstances, providing work placements, life coaching, new skills and experiences.

It was immediately apparent that not only did the programme support Flintshire's focuses on areas such as wellbeing and employability, it was something that the Willmott Dixon team at Castell Alun could fully support. By offering both work placements and employability skills support, we were able to contribute to the young women's knowledge, providing them with insight into the construction industry (dispelling some common myths along the way!), and increasing their skillset and confidence throughout their time on the programme. Our Social Value Manager delivered a number of sessions including a STEM teamwork tetrahedron activity, CV writing, interview preparation and finally concluding with mock interviews.



"My favourite part was getting to see how a building site operates and seeing behind the scenes of it all which is something that not ordinarily I would have been able to see. The people were all really friendly and welcoming... lots of opportunities were given to me...I was asked my preference of which field I would like to go into so I could best find my interests. I went into the management field and the painting and decorating field. I was also given the opportunity to do some charity work in the community"

Georgia, Student at We Grow

COLEG CAMBRIA

With work placements on hold and students restricted to studying from home, the pandemic made it vital to explore alternative means of support. Working with Assistant Principal, Ian Hogg, we quickly learned that digital technology was an important subject for Colleg Cambria's Department of Engineering & Construction.

Given that the college was largely unused at the time, we asked our Building Information Modelling (BIM) Manager, Pam Tippett, if she could produce a Matterport video of the College's Construction & Engineering Department areas. This would be used as study material for the students and also as promotional material for their website and future open days - a unique way of attracting the next generation to the industry!

We also donated 8 packs of facing bricks to the college!



"Thanks ever so much for doing this for us, it will be really useful for promoting the Construction Centre to new students."

Ian Hogg, Assistant Principal at the Institute of Technology (Engineering and Construction)

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

RAINBOW BIZ

RainbowBiz CIC is a social enterprise based in Flintshire, North Wales, set up to promote equality and diversity. Through projects and social events, Rainbow Biz enables and empowers their volunteers to develop skills, celebrate people and engage with the local community; minimising the impact of isolation and promoting social inclusion in minority and marginalised groups.



RAINBOWBIZ
PROMOTING EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

We were connected to this social enterprise through Flintshire Council and took the opportunity to provide support to their their local hippy shop in Mold, which directly supports important community projects through the profits generated by the sale of fairtrade gifts and clothing. We carried out some well-needed building work inside and outside the shop, as a result greatly improving the shop function and maximising their overall efficiency.

 **52 HOURS STAFF TIME
SPENT, £1,320 WORTH
OF MATERIALS DONATED**

HWB CAERGWRLE TRUSTEES

Our team at Castell Alun were put in contact with a small group from Caergwrle in the process of forming a charitable incorporated organisation. Their objective was to purchase a closed church in the area and convert it into a wellbeing hub for the local community.

As the group were at the beginning of the journey, they required guidance on making the building more sustainable, as well as structural survey advice to maximise the outcome from bids to the Welsh Government and other funders.

Providing guidance and support, we visited the church with trustee members of the group to understand their intentions for the building conversion. Evidence of damp was found in the building and we discussed options for improving energy efficiency, i.e., a new heating system and solar hot water system.

Enabling the group to consider the options available to them in improving the facility, we appointed a structural engineer to conduct a survey of the existing condition of the building and the roof. This also supported the group in applying for the funding required to improve the facility for the local community.



"The Hwb Caergwrle Trustees are very appreciative of the support which Willmott Dixon has given to their project by way of a social value contribution. We are in process of making bids to Welsh Government and to other funders in order to secure the funding to purchase the closed Presbyterian Church and Schoolroom in Caergwrle so that they can become a village hub, wellbeing centre in the post pandemic period. It helps our case to be able to show that we have had a structural survey of the properties. Therefore we really welcome this support."

Dave Healey, Trustee at Hwb Caergwrle

