



Swansea Bay Futures Activity Report for 2007/08

Launched in March 2006, Swansea Bay Futures has just completed its second year of operation. It has been another busy year during which we have changed our name to fully reflect the area we cover and undertaken a number of initiatives and developed platforms on which the company can continue to build.

The aim of this report is to provide a brief summary of the activity undertaken together with an outline of our plans for 2008/09.

If you have any questions or comments then please get in touch with me, Peter Jones or any other member of the Swansea Bay Futures Board.

So... what's the story so far...?

Partners & Associates

Linking and working jointly with other companies and organisations is the key to Swansea Bay Futures achieving its goal of raising the profile of Swansea Bay and improving perceptions... thereby having a positive impact on the local and regional economy. Our Partners and Associates play a vital role, not just in financially supporting the company, but also in working with us.

The following supported the work of Swansea Bay Futures during 2007/08

Premier Partners

- City & County of Swansea
- DVLA
- Cardiff International Airport
- Admiral
- Grŵp Gwalia
- IBM
- Land Securities Group
- The Wave & Swansea Sound
- Swansea University
- Morgan Cole
- Swansea Metropolitan University
- Technium
- Associated British Ports
- Fujitsu
- EDS
- South West Wales Publications

Partners

- First
- National Waterfront Museum
- Swansea College

Associates

- Trainer Group
- Gorseinon College
- Afon Tinplate
- A Space in the City
- iCreate
- Howard and Palmer
- Swansea Building Society
- Food Passion



The goals which we set ourselves for 2007/08 and the progress we made during the year are outlined below

1. Ensuring the company's operation becomes truly regional

- Following detailed discussions with Neath Port Talbot and Carmarthenshire Councils, both agreed to formally work with Swansea Bay Futures for the benefit of the region by entering into partnership with the company.
- Leading members from each authority will be joining the Board of the company, with senior officers acting as advisers to the Board

2. Developing existing partnership relationships to increase the reach and impact and securing new partners

- Much work has been done with Partners through the course of the year, with initiatives ranging from providing information and area tours for key visitors so that they take away a full picture of what the area has to offer and how it is changing and growing, to successfully selling Swansea Bay as a place to live when recruiting to senior positions in Partner companies

3. Increasing profile for the brand, its messages and the latest news on developments within the region.

- Examples include
 - Continued development of the website www.abayoflife.com
 - Developing and growing the 'Bay of Life Watch' newsletter, which is currently directly mailed to around 500 individuals and is posted on websites or circulated to all members of staff within a number of Partner organisations
 - Placing large scale images from Swansea Bay region in Liberty Stadium hospitality areas
 - Providing information for articles on Swansea Bay in Financial Times, estates Gazette and local media

4. Creating more bespoke opportunities to promote Swansea Bay – either independently or with partners and similar organisations

- Liaising with partners to produce a combined mailing list of potential developers and investors to the region. Undertaking some initial awareness raising about Swansea Bay
- Making connections with organisations outside of the region who can help us in our goals, such as Wales in London and Swansea in Llundain

5. Focusing on the opportunities offered by high profile events such as Earth from the Air, Swansea Bay Film Festival, etc.

- Swansea Bay Futures helped to ensure that both Earth from the Air and Swansea Bay Film Festival 2007 had a high profile and were used to best advantage to get across the wide ranging offer in Swansea Bay



- The company also worked with Dunvant Male Choir to promote the area through their concert performances outside of Wales

6. Producing generic promotional materials for use by partners on visits overseas or for international visitors coming to the city.

- Key resources developed during the year include
 - The 'Gift from the Swansea Bay region' for high profile visitors to the region
 - 2 Swansea Bay promotional DVDs – which can be viewed on the website as well as YouTube and Facebook.
 - Producing an A4 generic promotional brochure – Come to Swansea Bay Come to Life!

In addition to these key goals, there are a number of core activities which the company undertakes on an on-going basis.

Development of resources

In addition to the specifics mentioned, Swansea Bay Futures is continuing to develop its range of images and information to support activity by the company and its partners, and to be able to quickly and effectively respond to enquiries from media, developers and partners. This is a vital role for the company as often information and imagery are needed in short order if opportunities are to be grasped.

Co-ordinating activity and joint working

This is a key element of our work. The Marketing Forum brings together practical marketers from a wide range of organisations in order to share information and learning, to discuss how events and initiatives can be used to best advantage, providing opportunities for others to get involved.

Discussions also took place with Cardiff & Co, the new marketing company set up for Cardiff, about the potential for joint lobbying and promotional activity. This has not been actively pursued due to senior staff changes at Cardiff & Co.

Directing and Managing the company

The Board of Swansea Bay Futures changed very little during 2007/08, although there will be major changes taking place during the coming year, as additional members will be recruited to expand the breadth of the Board.

Board Members all donate their time to the company and have played an important role in increasing the reach and breadth of Swansea Bay Futures.

The core team of the company remains as 1 part time and 2 full time posts. Despite its small staff resource, the company is considered to have a wide reach through its partnership links, giving the opportunity to reach widely into the region.



Where are we headed in 2008/09?

The company has set out some specific actions around a number of key areas

1. Continuing to invest in and develop the resources we all need to promote the area. E.g.
 - website redevelopment, search engine optimisation and maximising site links
 - updating and developing promotional materials
 - making the right connections – individuals and organisations
2. Making sure the company has a higher profile and is working effectively within the region
3. Undertaking activity promoting Swansea Bay focused on a number of key audiences
 - Businesses, institutions and individuals that are considering relocating to the region
 - Those planning to come to the region for a specific activity or event
 - Inaugural Junior Rugby World Cup
 - Swansea Life Film Festival 2008
 - Dylan Thomas Prize 2008
 - Targeting certain sectors which are important to the region's development
4. Working with our Partners, and other key organisations, to try to ensure we maximise every opportunity available to us to promote the region and assist in converting interest into action e.g. overseas students accepting places to study in the region
5. Measuring perceptions and awareness of the Swansea Bay Region, in comparison to other parts of UK.

And finally...

On behalf of the Board I would like to thank all of our Partner and Associate organisations for their commitment and support. The more companies that work with Swansea Bay Futures, the greater our impact and chance of succeeding. Together we can achieve what we all want for Swansea Bay... a thriving modern city, at the heart of a successful, growing and developing region in which people want to live, work, study, invest and visit.

Fiona Rees
Executive Director
April 2008