



## Werfenweng in Austria

Way to go - the village that chose sustainable transport and turned it into a tourist attraction

For over 20 years, the small village of Werfenweng in Austria has been growing its sustainable travel credentials and seeing a dramatic upturn in visitor numbers as a result. With multiple travel options, and a focus on both convenience and fun, the village has made a name for itself as a centre for green tourism.

Werfenweng is best known as a ski resort, located in the Austrian Alps, just under 30 miles from Salzburg. It's popular in summer too as a place to enjoy the beautiful alpine setting, with options for outdoor activities such as mountain biking, hiking and paragliding.

Today, visitors to the mountain venue can also enjoy getting around on e-bikes and electric scooters, by segway or even horse drawn

carriage ride. This whole smorgasbord of fun transport options is available through a carefully thought out sustainable transport programme designed to tempt tourists out of the family car and onto shared transport instead.

### A well-constructed plan

But it's not only about laying on some different modes of transport as sustainable tourist activities. The programme also incorporates a coordinated approach to practical transport options and a 24/7 mentality which recognises the real demands of real visitors.

Visitors really appreciate transport that's been designed with them in mind – as well as the positive impact on the environment.

An important link in the chain is the shuttle bus which runs between Werfenweng and the local railway station at Bischofshofen, supporting visitors who choose to leave their cars at home and arrive by public transport instead. An electric taxi is available for short local trips, including a free service for late night party-goers. There is even easy access to a fleet of Renault Twizy cars – ideal if exploring the mountains is on the agenda.

Between 1997 and 2017, the annual number of overnight stays at Werfenweng increased from 169,000 to 290,000

# Werfenweng Case Study

## The SAMO card- gentle mobility

The key to unlocking all Werfenweng's transport delights is known as the SAMO-Card. Once visitors have purchased a smart 'SAMO-Card' (they cost €10 each), access to all the shared transport options is free. SAMO stands for 'Sanfte Mobilität', or 'gentle mobility'. If visitors arrive by bus or rail, or exchange their car keys at the tourist information centre, they can receive the SAMO-Card. It's clear that they love it! The uptake on the card and the growth in visitor numbers both tell the story. The card can be used as the ticket to access to other visitor attractions too, including hiking tours, Nordic walking, ice skating, llama trekking and snowshoe tours.

More recently the SAMO-app has been added, making it easier to plan and book different transport options. Increasingly visitors choose to plan ahead online and the app provides the ideal way to do that.



Visitors to Werfenweng are getting to see the benefits of shared transport first hand



# Werfenweng Case Study

For a small resort, intent on growing its tourist trade, shared transport supports growth that is truly sustainable.

More recently the SAMO-app has been added, making it easier to plan and book different transport options. Increasingly visitors choose to plan ahead online and the app provides the ideal way to do that.

For a small resort, intent on growing its tourist trade, shared transport supports growth that is truly sustainable.

## Tourists embrace sustainable transport

The whole idea in Werfenweng is to create a place where visitors actively choose not to use the car. And there is plenty of evidence that the approach is working.

In the early 1990s the resort was seeing a serious decline in visitors. However, over the last 20 years the downward trend has been reversed. Led, by the mayor, the Werfenweng team has sought out funding and joined projects to develop the different transport options. They have also actively used

the initiative as a way of marketing the town.

## Reducing carbon emissions

From 1995 to 2013 non-car arrivals in Werfenweng increased from 6% to 25% - mostly due to the bus shuttle link to the train station. More guests arriving by train has led to a significant reduction in visitor-generated carbon emissions.

In addition, each of the electric vehicles in the Werfenweng fleet cover over 15,000 miles each year, producing no tailpipe emissions along the way.

By keeping the focus on sustainable transport over the last 20 years, the village of Werfenweng has benefited from a real boost to the local economy. The ever-expanding range of options and well coordinated booking facilities mean that visitors are actively enjoying more environmentally friendly transport.

## What next?

If you are interested in finding out how shared transport could work for visitors in your area then please get in contact with CoMoUK at [scotland@como.org.uk](mailto:scotland@como.org.uk).

