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SWYDDFA **ARCHWILIO** CYMRU

# Regeneration in Wales since the 1950's: Timeline and Synopsis. A Report by CAG Consultants for the Audit Commission in Wales

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The views expressed, however, and any errors made, are entirely our own and do not reflect the views of the ACiW.

## Executive Summary

This report by CAG Consultants has been commissioned by the ACiW. We were asked to develop a synopsis on regeneration policies and initiatives in Wales since the 1950s which should take into account those that relate to the public, private and voluntary/community sectors and which originate from Europe, Central and Local Government. We have been commissioned to produce a synopsis - a 'summary or outline' - rather than a critical review. The emphasis is therefore on providing information about the range of relevant initiatives over time rather than an in-depth analysis of any particular programme.

In defining regeneration we have followed the ACiW' terminology for the purposes of its Improvement Study: the upgrading of an area, taking a balanced approach to improving the well-being of communities through social, physical and economic improvements.

Wales has suffered from problems of deprivation throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It is important to acknowledge the history of entrenched and profound deprivation to understand both the need for, and the difficulties inherent in, finding integrated regeneration solutions to social exclusion in Wales from the 1950s to the present day. The following review paints a broad brush picture of that regeneration activity and attempts to situate it within the main themes of Welsh life including economic decline and transformation, employment, education, housing, health, Welsh language and politics, rural change, environment, infrastructure, spatial planning, and devolution and governance.

The review findings will feed into the ACiW's baseline assessment of regeneration activity across Wales and inform a National Report into the regeneration process in Wales being produced by ACiW. It is the companion document to a review of notable practice of 'holistic' regeneration also commissioned by the ACiW from CAG.

This review of regeneration in Wales provides three elements towards an understanding of the Welsh picture:

- a *timeline* of key economic, social, environmental and political activities, events and initiatives with a bearing on regeneration activities;
- a brief *review* of the economic, social and environmental conditions within which regeneration has taken place; and
- a broad brush rather than an in-depth *synopsis* of regeneration activities stemming from global, European, UK, Wales wide, regional, local and area based initiatives and programmes.

## List of Abbreviations

ACIW	Audit Commission in Wales
ASPBs	Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies
CADW	Historic Monuments in Wales
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CEW	Community Enterprise Wales
CHAs	Community Housing Agreements
CIAs	Commercial Improvement Areas
CtCs	Communities that Care
CTSs	Community Transport Schemes
DBRW	Development Board for Rural Wales
EAGGF	European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund
ELWa	Education and Learning Wales
ERAP	Economic Research and Advisory Panel
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FIFG	Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance
FDI	Foreign direct investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IIA	Industrial improvement area
INTERREG	Integrated Urban Planning and Management
JRF	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
LARS	Local Authority Rural Scheme
LAW	Land Authority for Wales
LEAD	Local Enterprise and Development Programme
LEADER	Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy
LFAs	Less Favoured Areas
LRF	Local Regeneration Funding
NAW	National Assembly for Wales
NDfC	New Deal for Communities
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NHS	National Health Service
NR	Neighbourhood Renewal
Obj 1	Objective One
PRF	Physical Regeneration Fund (Sponsored by the Welsh Assembly)
RSLs	Registered Social Landlords

RRU	Rural Regeneration Unit
SDC	Special Development Corporation (used in Cardiff)
SLAs	Service level agreements
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
UDC	Urban Development Corporation
UDP	Unitary Development Plan
UP	Urban Programme
WA	Welsh Assembly
WCC	Welsh Capital Challenge
WEFO	Welsh European Funding Office
WEPB	Welsh Economic Planning Board
WLGA	Welsh Local Government Association
WTB	Wales Tourist Board
WDA	Welsh Development Agency
WO	Welsh Office

# Introduction

- 1 Wales has suffered from problems of deprivation throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. As Jeremy Black notes in relation to the depression years, “decline in particular industries such as coal mining affected much of the Welsh economy, while unemployment and poverty sapped much of the population, leading to malnutrition and poor housing. Much of the population lacked adequate food, clothes, housing and sanitation, and they were frequently cold and wet. Public health was badly hit and tuberculosis became a serious problem. About 430,000 Welsh emigrated between 1921 and 1939...Many Welsh communities, such as Merthyr had a net loss of population leading to a sense of disruption, dislocation and bitterness both for those who left and those who stayed behind”. Black suggests that these hardships helped to cement the identity of Wales that persisted in the post-war decades of economic growth (Black, 2000, 203).
- 2 It is important to acknowledge this history of entrenched and profound deprivation to understand both the need for, and the difficulties inherent in, finding integrated regeneration solutions to social exclusion in Wales from the 1950s to the present day. The following review paints a broad brush picture of that regeneration activity and attempts to situate it within the main themes of Welsh life including economic decline and transformation, employment, housing, health, Welsh language and politics, the environment, and urban and rural life.

## Purpose of the Work

- 3 This report by CAG Consultants has been commissioned by the Audit Commission in Wales (ACiW). We were asked to develop a synopsis on regeneration policies and initiatives in Wales since the 1950s which should take into account those that relate to the public, private and voluntary/community sectors and which originate from Europe, Central and Local Government. We have been commissioned to produce a synopsis, which is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as a ‘summary or outline’ rather than a critical review. The emphasis is therefore on providing information about the range of relevant initiatives over time rather than an in-depth analysis of any particular programme.
- 4 The review findings will feed into the ACiW’s baseline assessment of regeneration activity across Wales. The ACiW has particularly focused on the role that Local Government plays in regenerating their communities and is one of seven Improvement Studies in Wales being undertaken by ACiW. The review informs a National Report into the regeneration process in Wales being produced by ACiW. It is the companion document to a review of notable practice of ‘holistic’ regeneration also commissioned by the ACiW from CAG.

## The Structure of this Synopsis

- 5 This review of regeneration in Wales provides three elements towards an understanding of the Welsh picture:
  - a *timeline* of key economic, social, environmental and political activities, events and initiatives with a bearing on regeneration;
  - a brief *review* of the economic, social and environmental conditions within which regeneration has taken place; and
  - a broad brush rather than in-depth *synopsis* of regeneration activities stemming from global, European, UK, national, regional, local and area based initiatives and programmes.

## Defining Regeneration

- 6 In defining regeneration we have followed the ACiW terminology for the purposes of its Improvement Study: The upgrading of an area, taking a balanced approach to improving the well-being of communities through social, physical and economic improvements.

## A regeneration timeline

- 7 The following timeline covers some key events, activities and initiatives in Wales with a bearing on regeneration activity in Wales primarily from the 1950s to the present day.

### 1920s-1940s

- 8 Although the timeline focuses on post Second World War regeneration, various trends and initiatives in the pre-war period had an important bearing on the post-war period. Already in the 1920s and 1930s the coal industry, traditionally central to Welsh economic and cultural life, was collapsing. The area was marked by high levels of malnutrition and poor housing. Broadly speaking, Wales was more deprived than any other part of Britain. By the 1930s deprivation in the south Wales Valleys was particularly acute, exacerbated by the effects of the Depression and leading to high levels of out migration to other parts of the UK and beyond. Around 430,000 Welsh emigrated, mostly to the south-east and the Midlands.
- 9 Wales suffered significantly in the Second World War both in terms of lives lost and damage to cities and industrial areas. World War II also had a transforming effect on Welsh agriculture. Mechanisation led to depopulation, mirroring the effects of pre-war migration on the industrial south. Early post-war Wales, like other parts of the UK, saw early attempts at 'slum' clearance and new town development which began to reshape the spatial, economic and social life of urban areas.

- 1925 Plaid Cymru formed.
- 1934 South Wales Special Areas established in recognition of dire level of deprivation.
- 1939-1945 Second World War - large numbers of Welsh troops killed or injured, Welsh cities bombed.
- 1945 Labour election victory.  
South Wales designated a Development Area, reflecting continued economic decline and deprivation.  
Work begins on Cwmbrân New Town.
- 1946 Wrexham area designated a Development Area.
- 1947 Coal industry nationalised.
- 1948 Council for Wales and Monmouthshire as a political entity created but no independent statutory powers.  
NHS established, in part modelled on arrangements in New Tredegar: Aneurin Bevan and James Griffith play a key role.  
Railways nationalised.
- 1949 Cwmbrân designated a New Town.

## 1950s

- 10** The trends that had begun to reshape Wales in the 1940s accelerated in the 1950s in both urban and rural areas. Rural transformation was accelerated by wartime changes to agriculture. Farms were amalgamated, employment in agriculture declined, and empty houses began to be bought up by incomers. While rural transformation through mechanisation and farm amalgamation continued apace, 'socialising' actions such as nationalisation of the rail and steel industries were undertaken by central government. By the late 1950s, the economy began to deteriorate, unemployment rose and there continued to be substantial outflow of population from the Valleys. National government's social policies and increased resources in health and housing sought to ameliorate Wales's severe levels of deprivation. A substantial public housing programme led to a very high level of the population, around 25%, residing in this tenure, some housed in estates located on valley tops.

**11** The beginnings of an environmental movement saw the creation of national parks. Despite environmentalist opposition major infrastructure such as power stations, motorways and bridges - envisaged as better connecting Wales to the national economy - began to be planned and built. Politically there was significant growth in interest in the possibility of more local control over Welsh policy.

- 1950s Three national parks designated.
- 1951 Rail and steel nationalised.  
Ministry for Welsh Affairs created.
- 1956 All rationing ends.
- 1957 Welsh Council suggests Secretary of State for Wales post be created.
- 1958 Tryweryn Dam controversy underlines Welsh sense of political powerlessness.
- 1958-1964 Vigorous wave of intervention in Welsh economy, annual investment rises to £260 million.
- 1958 Decision to build Trawsfynydd nuclear power station.

## **1960's**

**12** The 1960s saw mixed fortunes for Wales. On the one hand unemployment remained low and stable for part of the decade and new economic development created jobs in the oil, steel and service industries. Unemployment was kept to 3-4% until the mid 1960s. By the close of the decade, however, economic restructuring and the decline of traditional industries was strongly evident. Full-time male jobs declined while female employment increased - but much was low paid. Welsh language speaking declined, but there was an upsurge of interest in Welsh language and culture, and continued interest in devolution. Central government responded by giving Wales more direct influence - but not control - over policies for its economic, social and political future. Labour Governments actively promoted policies of regional development for Wales. Cardiff became the capital and the centre of an economic and housing 'conurbation' around the M4. At the same time depopulation trends in rural Wales and the Valleys continued as more farms became mechanised. With a rapid decline in the need for agricultural labour, depopulation continued and more 'incomers' began to move into 'leftover' rural housing, often transforming the nature of local communities. Growing prosperity allowed car transport to continue its ascendancy and was supported by new motorway and bridge projects, while railways declined and line closures occurred.

- 1960           Esso builds oil refinery near Milford Haven.
- 1962           Llanwern steel mill opens.  
                   Welsh Language Society founded.  
                   Introduction of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).
- 1963           Beeching Report recommendations lead to closure of number rural railway lines.
- 1964           Welsh Office (WO) and Secretary of State for Wales created. James Griffiths appointed.  
                   Welsh Economic Planning Board (WEPB) created.  
                   Advisory Economic Council for Wales commences.  
                   Yr Wylfa nuclear power station built.  
                   Civic Trust for Wales founded.
- 1966           Most of Wales becomes Economic Development Area (except for Monmouthshire and parts of Clwyd).  
                   Plaid Cymru wins its first parliamentary seat.  
                   Opening of Severn Bridge and extension of M4 motorway opens up markets.
- 1966-1968     Upsurge in support for Plaid Cymru.
- 1967           Plans for linear new town to stretch from Llanidloes to Newtown scrapped.  
                   Special Development Areas designated in Gwynedd and south Wales coalfield.  
                   Welsh Arts Council established.  
                   Newtown designated as a new town to try to encourage economic activity in mid Wales.  
                   Welsh Language Act gives Welsh language equal status.
- 1969           Development Areas become Intermediate Areas.

## 1970s

- 13** The 1970s continued many of the trends in economic and social life that had marked the 1960s. By 1970 large areas of the Welsh countryside had been transformed by tourism development. The decade saw the completion of a range of major infrastructure projects such as the M4 to Cardiff and the decision to proceed with others such as the A55 despite environmental protests. A new industrial belt developed in the south-east, stretching from Newport to Llanelli, much of which was based on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). The benefit to the regional economy of such investment was hotly debated. Structural change away from traditional industry - especially the sharp decline of the coal industry - was put into ever starker relief. Many men who lost their coal mining jobs never worked again, while service-based, manufacturing, chemical and light industries increasingly employed their wives and daughters. Britain's entry into the Common Market broadly benefited Welsh farmers but reinforced the trends in rural depopulation and 'industrialised' agriculture already well entrenched in rural Wales. In deprived areas of Wales the advent of European Commission (EC) Funds such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) began to provide funds for much needed activity to combat the effects of deprivation.

- 1970            Conservatives return to power.
- 1973            Entry into Common Market benefits Wales.  
Kilbrandon report recommends devolution - a Welsh Assembly with executive powers.
- 1974            Labour returns to power - supports idea of an elected Welsh Assembly.
- 1975            ERDF commences.
- 1976            Welsh Development Agency (WDA) founded  
Intercity 125 train link between Paddington and south Wales introduced.  
DBRW established.
- 1977            Decision to proceed with A55 development.
- 1979            Referendum on Welsh devolution - majority vote against devolution.  
Thatcher government elected.

## 1980s

- 14** By the 1980s the economic base of Welsh industry had been almost completely restructured away from traditional industries, and government support was transformed along 'market economy' lines. A new geography of wealth and poverty emerged. High technology activity and multinational firms located in Wales. Issues of embeddedness and 'branch office syndrome' emerged. Investment did not lead to a congruent increase in Welsh prosperity. Much of Wales remained relatively poor compared with the rest of the UK but policy was now focused on individual effort to improve personal circumstances and structural aspects were ignored or discounted. By 1983 the south Wales coalfields were not profitable and the failed miner's strike of 1984-1985 was followed by accelerated pit closures and decline in related industries and services such as ports. Cardiff and Swansea ports both declined. Unemployment and disability rates continued to rise in the context of industrial decline and transformation, with fewer male full-time jobs, and an increase in female part-time jobs. A series of regeneration efforts funded by European - and some national programmes - were initiated around economic development themes. There was some focus on the physical regeneration of coalfield valleys and their associated housing areas.

1981	Enterprise zone designated in Lower Swansea Valley.
1982	Welsh language TV channel begins broadcasting.
1984	Development or Intermediate Area designation for much of south Wales.
1984-1985	Miners strike fails.
1987	Cardiff Bay Development Corporation established to regenerate 2,700 acres of the dockland area, approximately 10% of Cardiff.
1988	Welsh Language Board established.
1989	Wales Tourist Board LEAD programme (local enterprise and development initiative) commences for 5 years.  Valleys Initiative regeneration programme commences.

## 1990s

- 15** The 1990s saw the continuation of some trends from earlier decades but also some significant new developments. Trends included the continued long decline of the coal industry. For example, by 1992 fewer than 1,000 miners remained in Mid Glamorgan. Also by the early 1990s less than 18% of Welsh people spoke Welsh. Income levels in much of Wales remained below European Economic Community (EEC) norms. At the same time, there was also a renewed focus by national government on regeneration and the advent of devolution, with the establishment of the Welsh Assembly and the Welsh Assembly Government in 1999.

**16** Over the decade, Wales continued to display higher than national rates of deprivation - now re-conceptualised and broadened out as 'social exclusion' - and to benefit from European and central government regeneration funds in both rural and urban areas of deprivation. The reshaping of European Structural Funds towards more sustainable and spatially conscious policy and programmes began to have effects in its delivery in Wales. A wide range of regeneration initiatives was launched but despite these many of the problems of social exclusion persisted in places including the Valleys where social housing estates were particularly marginalised. Rural poverty also increased despite assistance through European funding programmes. High levels of long-term unemployment and disability were still evident as were lower than national average skills and qualifications rates among the workforce. A continued focus on economic development was delivered through the WO and the WDA, with various retail, industrial and business parks created along the M4. However, many of the skills needed did not match those of unemployed people. New economic developments were not necessarily located close to the most deprived areas.

- 1991 First LEADER Programme commences.
- 1992 Garden Festival of Wales held at Ebbw Vale.  
WDA Urban Development Wales Programme.  
Town centre regeneration strategies including Pontardawe, Pontarddulais and Ystalyfera - jointly commissioned by West Glamorgan County Council and the WDA.  
Wales first Urban Village based on part of former Ebbw Vale steelworks.
- 1994 European Union Urban Programme (EU UP) launched.  
National Lotteries Charities Board (Community Fund) set up.  
EU LEADER II commences.  
Welsh language Board becomes statutory body.
- 1995 National Lottery funding commences.  
Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO)211.
- 1996 Local Government reorganisation goes through.  
Second Severn Road Bridge crossing opens.
- 1997 WO agrees grant package of over £87m for major factory planned by LG Electronics on 100 hectare site in Newport.  
Yes for Wales campaign launched.  
Government White Paper, A Voice for Wales, published.

- Referendum narrowly supports creation of Welsh Assembly.
- 1998 Government of Wales Act passed.  
 Future Skills Wales report released.  
 People in Communities Programme launched in June.  
 Development Board for Rural Wales (DBRW) merges with WDA.  
 WO launches Pathways to Prosperity.  
 EU announces proposals for widespread reform of EU structural funds.  
 Better Health, Better Wales Strategic Framework.
- 1999 ESF Objectives 1-3 refocused.  
 Redevelopment of Cardiff Bay Millennium Stadium opens.  
 Wind-up of Welsh Capital Challenge (WCC) and Local Authority Rural Scheme (LARS) grants.  
 National Assembly for Wales (NAW) established.

## 2000s

**17** The first years of the new century have been a time of both declining activity in manufacturing and growth in service industries. Wales has experienced skills shortages in areas including the building industry and identified the need to develop a new skills set. Meanwhile there has been accelerating activity in regeneration in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government is reviewing and revising the existing approach to regeneration, producing a range of new strategies and programmes covering a variety of regeneration themes, and reorganising the delivery of regeneration through changes to governance arrangements. The Communities First programme has emerged as the first long-term funding approach to regeneration and the Spatial Plan as the first regional rather than local approach to spatial issues. Wales has continued to benefit - as it did in the 1990s - from significant European Funds. Up until 2006 the EU Structural Funds - with three renewed objectives - are set to continue, with up to £1.3 billion EU funds available if this is match funded. The current programme of European Structural Fund Objective 1 ends in 2005 and this will have profound implications for west Wales and the Valleys. The advent of EU enlargement means that the medium-term prognosis is for a decline in funds for regeneration and this is causing anxiety about meeting regeneration funding needs in the medium to longer term future.

- 2000 Better Wales Strategic Plan launched by Assembly.  
 Sustainable Development Scheme, Welsh Assembly Government to be guided by sustainability principles.

Local Government Act empowers authorities to promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area.

Communities First programme set up.

Welsh Housing Quality Standard adopted.

The Capital Region, economic strategy for south-east Wales released.

Betterwales.com released - strategic plan for Wales.

2001

Improving Health in Wales Plan and Strategic Framework released by Welsh Assembly Government.

Llanwern (Corus) Steelworks part closure with 1,300 job losses and a further 2,000 at risk.

Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) formed, incorporating four regionally based Welsh Training and Enterprise Councils

Transport Framework for Wales published.

Better Homes for People in Wales sets out role of housing in regenerating communities.

Farming for the Future Strategy launched by Welsh Assembly Government.

Inequalities in Health Fund set up.

Housing Renewal Areas established.

2002

WDA Agri-Food Strategy adopted.

WDA e-Communities programme launched to narrow 'digital divide' in poorest communities.

Well-being in Wales programme launched.

Broadband Wales Scheme launched to increase access to broadband.

A Winning Wales launched.

European Research and Advisory Panel (ERAP) established.

Skills and Employment Action Plan published.

Entrepreneurship Action Plan launched.

Assembly's Community Regeneration report released.

Assembly's Rural Development Plan 2002-2006.

Rural Community Action programme launched, nine rural. regeneration partnerships approved.

- 2003            Draft e-Learning Strategy consultation.  
                   Better Wales revision of strategic plan for Wales launched.  
                   Welsh Assembly Government Social Enterprise Action Plan.  
                   National Housing Strategy for Wales published.  
                   Urban village created at Llandarcy, south Wales.
- 2004            Welsh Assembly Social Justice Plan published.  
                   Wales Spatial Plan launched, and revised in December 2004.  
                   WDA e-Communities project scrapped due to lack of match funding.  
                   Wales Millennium Centre opens at Cardiff Bay.  
                   Regeneration Partnership for Heads of Valleys launched.  
                   WDA, WTB, ELWa brought under direct control of Welsh government.  
                   NAW three-year spending plan includes funds for Communities First and coastal area regeneration.  
                   Regeneration not Stagnation: A Manifesto for Rural Wales. launched by Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).  
                   Llanwern (Corus) steelworks redevelopment plan announced with Newport City Council and Newport Regeneration Company as partners.

## Review of Welsh Conditions

### Introducing the synopsis

- 18** This synopsis starts with a ‘broad brush’ background review of the relevant social, economic and environmental conditions within which regeneration activity has been undertaken in Wales. This includes some consideration of economic decline and restructuring, employment and skills, health, housing, the Welsh language, spatial development, rural issues, governance, sustainability and planning policy. These key themes are situated as far as possible within a chronological approach to the subject matter.

### Regeneration in Wales – the 1950’s to 1980’s

#### Deprivation and regeneration

- 19** Wales has, since the 1950s, suffered from entrenched, and in places apparently intractable, problems of deprivation, poverty and social exclusion. Its problems of social exclusion have been reflected in high levels of unemployment, very high levels of economic inactivity and high levels of long-term disability. While there have been

well studied locations for these problems such as the former coalfields, parts of cities and some rural areas this should not detract attention from the complex geography of exclusion that exists in Wales.

- 20** Wales has been dependent on external funding for regeneration efforts over much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Historians of Wales (Black, 2000; Davies; 1994) point to the special and assisted area status awarded parts of Wales from as far back as the 1930s. Already the serious levels of deprivation in the coalfields and elsewhere were recognised as creating severe social issues that required special financial measures. Despite continued efforts in economic development and regeneration in the post-war period, long-term deprivation issues remained a concern.
- 21** Funding channelled into Wales by national governments from the 1950s to 1980s attempted to create the economic conditions for prosperity by underwriting inward investment, funding large scale public housing and new town development and providing major infrastructure such as road and rail bridges. Black (2000) has documented how national services like the NHS did have the effect of ameliorating the appalling health effects of poverty in the Valleys and elsewhere. Regeneration programmes meanwhile tended to follow local authority boundaries, or were based on groupings of local authority areas, even though these have not clearly reflected the geography of exclusion.

### **Economic decline and restructuring**

- 22** The ongoing need for regeneration reflected an economy marked by long-term structural weaknesses. As Rees and Stroud (2004) note, the root causes and cumulative impact of job losses from coal and other staple industries go back to the 1930s. Equally there has been “a very long history of state strategies aimed at modernising the economy of south Wales by promoting inward investment and fostering the growth of indigenous enterprise” (2004, p3).
- 23** Post-war Wales saw massive economic decline and restructuring. Broadly the economic base changed from mining and steel to manufacturing, while male full-time employment declined sharply and female part-time, low-wage employment rose steeply. Problems with the economy and ongoing poverty and deprivation can be demonstrated with reference to the earnings picture. Cameron et al (2002) presented five main findings on earnings in Wales from the post-war period to today:
- earnings declined relative to those in Great Britain;
  - there was a shift away from full-time male earnings which was an important factor in the fall in earnings;
  - there was a decline in relative earnings of men working full-time that was partly explained by falling relative earnings in construction, distribution and transport as well as the failure of workers in banking and financial services in Wales to keep up with their counterparts in Great Britain;
  - there was a shift in full-time employment towards health, education and other services that tended to support lower relative earnings; and finally
  - there was a decline in full-time male earnings relative to Great Britain as a whole caused by long run factors unlikely to naturally reverse themselves.

## **Housing development**

- 24** Housing development was central to regeneration efforts in post-war Wales. Davies (1994) notes that issues of poor housing quality (with their links to squalid social conditions) exercised post-war Labour and Conservative governments and led to high levels of public housing construction.
- 25** Turning to some of the specific regeneration interventions undertaken since the 1950s, between 1951 and 1964, 63% of the houses built in Wales were public housing, partly because private house builders were reluctant to invest in areas like the Valleys. By the end of the 1960s over a quarter of Welsh people lived on housing estates. There were also substantial efforts to improve existing dwellings in both rural and urban areas. Davies (1994) reports that while these improvements got rid of substandard buildings, they often swept away swathes of historic areas such as half of Cardiff's Butetown and Merthyr's China.
- 26** Large scale 'mono-functional' housing developments in New Towns from the 1940s, Cwmbrân in the south and Newtown in mid Wales, were intended to assist in regeneration efforts by locating people close to industries or in the latter case stimulating industrial investment and thus providing employment.

## **Health issues**

- 27** Health inequalities have long been recognised as a key aspect of deprivation and social exclusion and thus a focus for regeneration in post-war Wales. For example, it has been argued that the Medical Aid Society's arrangements in the deprived community of New Tredegar in the 1920s were instrumental in Aneurin Bevan's thinking in setting up the National Health Service (NHS) (Davies, 1994).
- 28** The advent of the NHS was a boon to many of the most seriously deprived in Wales. "There was huge demand for false teeth and spectacles particularly among Welsh working-class women; for them, with their long-term deprivation, the service was truly revolutionary" (Davies, 1994: 621). Wales, with hospitals based in old workhouses and in a dire condition in 1948, saw heavy expenditure on hospital building. Given the scale of need the budget for NHS services in Wales in the early post-war period soon proved quite inadequate.

## **Educational changes**

- 29** Davies (1994) notes that education in Wales was central to aspirations for a richer and more civilized society from the 19th century onwards and was important in the immediate post-war period. Davies argues that changes to national (UK) education policy in the mid to late 1940s did not take into account the distinctive features of Welsh secondary education.
- 30** Wales had a long history of underachievement and under provision in education and training. Its economic dependence on major industries and relatively rural character was a factor in this poor education situation but left it relatively unprepared in terms of skills and training for industrial decline and post-war change. To a considerable extent areas with the worst educational performance were also those suffering from other aspects of social exclusion.

- 31** Many Welsh people up until the 1960s left school very early. School buildings were improved in the 1960s and the school leaving age was raised to 16 in 1969. Improvements also occurred in tertiary education in the period from 1951 to 1971 and while no new institutions of higher education were created, the University of Wales grew out of the College of Advanced Education in Cardiff.

### **Welsh language decline**

- 32** The ongoing decline in the number of Welsh speakers was a dramatic feature of post-war Wales and became a particularly acute concern in the wake of the rural depopulation noted below as there had traditionally been more Welsh speakers in the north and west and in rural Wales. The arrival of incomers saw previously Welsh speaking areas apparently lose their 'Welshness' as the proportion of Welsh speakers declined.
- 33** As well as its role in supporting regeneration, education was seen as a key weapon by Welsh language proponents in the post-war period. Despite a range of initiatives (see timeline), until the advent of Welsh-medium schools there were fears that the Welsh language would die out.
- 34** Issues around the official recognition of Welsh as a key aspect of national identity have been a long-term concern for Wales. By 1983 the Welsh Language Act gave equivalent status to Welsh. As understanding of its cultural importance grew, increasingly it became a factor that needed to be taken into account in pursuing rural (in particular) regeneration initiatives.

### **The environment**

- 35** Welsh post-war history also demonstrated there was strong concern for the environment, and environmentalism as a movement gathered force in the late 1950s and especially the 1960s and 1970s. This was reflected in the movement to support the designation of Wales's national parks (and perhaps more perversely expressed) in the late 1950s by activists opposed to the building of the Tryweryn Dam.

### **Rural transformation**

- 36** As noted in the timeline, Wales's rural areas experienced a series of transformations in the post-war period. The requirements of the war for increased productivity caused changes in production methods that became the basis for the post-war approach to agriculture: increasingly large scale and intensive. In the 1950s, though, agriculture was still employing significantly higher numbers of people than in other parts of Britain.
- 37** The advent of widespread mechanisation reinforced the trend towards farm amalgamations and free-holding as well as the decline of rural employment. While there were 33,385 farm labourers in Wales in 1951 there were only 11,275 in 1971. Unchecked free-holding, which the proposed Rural Development Board of the mid 1960s was unable to stem, in fact led to what has been described as the rise of a class of 'kulaks' who unbalanced the homogeneity that had once characterised rural Wales (Davies, 1994).

- 38 Rural depopulation had profound cultural effects as the section above on Welsh language testifies. As rural Wales was depopulated in the post-war period by indigenous inhabitants, in some parts of Wales the 'ethnic mix' was transformed to the point where incomers outnumbered local populations; in a few places there were no original inhabitants left. This situation fuelled resentment that was expressed in both protests and 'direct action' such as arson attacks against holiday homes during the 1970s and 1980s.

### **The Common Market**

- 39 European funding to support the economy and regeneration has been important since Britain joined the Common Market in the 1960s. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) had significant - and sometimes perverse - effects on the structure of the rural economy and rural regeneration. The population of those directly involved in agriculture declined but some farmers with larger holdings benefited greatly from CAP subsidies. The CAP may have in fact exacerbated social exclusion in rural Wales.

### **Infrastructure development**

- 40 Since the 1950s the development of major energy, road and rail infrastructure has had obvious effects on the shape of the regional economy. The development of nuclear power stations, the M4 (planning started in the 1950s) to the south and the A55 in the north of the country led to substantial development in their wake. The Beeching report inspired the rail closures of the early 1960s, reinforced the inaccessibility of parts of rural Wales, and increased their car dependence.
- 41 The Severn road and rail bridges completed by the mid 1960s opened up new markets and connections between south-east Wales and cities such as Bristol but this did little to assist the Valleys' regeneration. It is widely thought that the M4 motorway has spawned the car dependent business parks of the south-east Wales conurbation, drawing still further economic development possibilities from the Valleys to the north. The 'Heads of the Valleys' strategy seems to assume this style of development will continue into the future.

### **Devolution**

- 42 Support (and opposition) to devolution had a long history prior to the advent of the Welsh Assembly, with important influences up until the 1980s including the home rule movement, the dominance of the Labour Party, and stretching further back, the liberal Cymru Fydd movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The notion of Wales as a cohesive region is easier to hold together when viewed from outside than when considering the experience of post-war Wales from within, where the picture becomes more complex. Both within the regeneration literature and in histories of Wales, there is a strong sense of local identification with place, so that people from the north-west may see themselves as having relatively little in common with those from the south-east. This regionalism within Wales fed into the anti-devolution stance of a significant part of the political class and the wider community in post-war Wales. Swansea residents, for example, could not see why they should be 'ruled from Cardiff'.

- 43 A referendum for devolution was lost in 1979 and fed into the perception of a 'democratic deficit' in Wales. This in turn connected to perceptions of an 'imperious' WO, over centralisation of power in Whitehall, the emasculation of local authorities through local government reforms, and the proliferation of unelected quangos (Morgan, 2003).

## Conditions since the 1980s

### Economic development and the prosperity gap

- 44 Although the 1980s saw significant amounts of inward investment in manufacturing, Wales without doubt continued to suffer from a 'prosperity gap' which it was not able to overcome. Parts of the country continue to suffer from extremely high levels of deprivation as the Welsh Index of Deprivation demonstrates. From the experience of the 1980s, there arose long-term debates about the efficacy of an economic strategy based on reliance on FDI, the problem of 'branch office syndrome' and the failure to 'embed' multinational enterprises (Phelps et al, 2003).
- 45 A perceived over focus on inward investment was felt to underplay the potential role of social enterprise. A recent report in New Start (19 November, 2004) suggested issues of simply raising awareness of social enterprise (let alone building its capacity) mean the sector is less developed than in England. Community Enterprise Wales (CEW) argues that there is a lack of leadership and co-ordination from government. At the same time the social enterprise sector has been quick to point out that the traditional inward investment strategy fails to reach entrenched pockets of deprivation. It argues that community economic enterprise used to be constrained by a narrowly defined model of community-owned and not for profit economic activity. Now a wider definition is necessary and the community enterprise process should be used as a counterbalance to the mainstream inward investment model. For social enterprise, the Social Enterprise Action Plan launched in 2003 was a long overdue step forward.

### From deprivation to social exclusion

- 46 By the 1990s the whole notion of deprivation in Wales and elsewhere was being challenged as too narrow in scope. Theorists including Michael Parkinson (1998) noted that social exclusion was not just about poverty but "emphasises the ways people are locked out of the social, economic and political mainstream". Wales has experienced all of the facets of exclusion that Parkinson (1998:1) defines:
- "Social exclusion has many faces and takes many forms. They include: unemployment and insecure employment, homelessness, inadequate housing and high levels of debt and arrears, low educational attainment, lack of mobility, limited access to essential services, poor health, and lack of citizenship rights. Exclusion has many secondary symptoms, such as social fragmentation, civil disorder, a growth in racial tension, youth alienation, crime and policing problems, drug abuse and mental health problems."

- 47 Equally, the economic factors that Parkinson (ibid) notes as causes of social exclusion are all present in Wales:
- "Rapid changes in the economic environment caused by internationalisation and industrial and corporate restructuring have transformed the character of local economies. They have brought a more fragmented labour market, a decline in manufacturing and a rise in the service sector, high levels of structural unemployment, an increase in part-time, insecure and low paid employment, a shift in the balance of male and female employment and a growing gap between the highest and lowest household incomes."
- 48 Wales has demonstrated that this can happen during boom times as well as in times of decline. "Growth does not guarantee an increase in the number of jobs. Instead, capital-intensive production methods reduce them, and many potential workers in the most successful cities lack the skills needed in modern industries" (Parkinson, 1998: 1).

### **Development and Sustainability**

- 49 The concept of 'sustainability' as we now understand it, had not been fully conceptualised until the 1980s and thus did not until that time begin to be reflected in aspects of public policy with a bearing on regeneration in Wales. Since the 1980s, rural and urban sustainability (broadly defined to encompass social, economic and environmental aspects) has moved centre stage in Wales in policy and programme terms.
- 50 Within the area of regeneration, and economic focused regeneration in particular, there appeared in the mid to late 1990s to still be an ongoing, long-term tension between proponents of economic development and sustainability, especially as perceived by those charged with the economic revitalisation of Wales in the WO and WDA.
- 51 Although this is now shifting under devolved government there still appears to be a 'rearguard action' from economic regeneration specialists that sustainability requirements are likely to get in the way of achieving jobs. The perception is that there are limited opportunities to use SD to create a competitive edge for Wales. Success is still judged by reference to narrow Gross Domestic Product (GDP) based measures of economic regeneration.
- 52 As CAG's previous work for the WDA on Sustainable Regeneration Working Differently showed, regeneration initiatives need to take account of sustainability in a number of settings including strategies, development sites, master planning exercises and in relation to sustainable design and construction.
- 53 In the broader public policy domain, a lot had changed in relation to sustainability by the mid to late 1990s by which time it became a mainstream policy preoccupation at EU, UK, Wales-wide, regional and local level and its links to regeneration were being made in explicit ways. In the early 2000s, the Welsh Assembly Government uniquely has a legislative duty under the Government of Wales Act 1998 to state how it will promote sustainable development which is thought to be the only such legislative basis in Europe. (CAG has previously assessed the effectiveness with which the Assembly is fulfilling its statutory duty.)

## **European funding and social exclusion**

- 54** Since the 1980s, in both urban and rural areas of Wales, European Structural Funds were (and still remain) absolutely central to efforts to tackle deprivation and exclusion through a range of programmes and initiatives described below. Despite a plethora of funding initiatives from Europe and central government, areas of Wales continue to be over represented on the Index of Deprivation. At the same time, analysts argue the situation would have been even worse without the Structural Funds monies.
- 55** Since devolution the Welsh Assembly Government has focused a great deal of policy and funding attention on social exclusion issues and has acknowledged the critical part European funding plays in its regeneration efforts. This has occurred within a changing European funding picture. Since the mid 1990s EU funding has become more sensitive to the urban dimensions of regeneration and to sustainability issues, promoting area based, integrated approaches to regeneration. Today, the future of the Structural Funds within Wales is causing considerable consternation. The Welsh Assembly Government has been making strenuous efforts to find ways to deal with the inevitable decline of structural funds after 2006 when various poorer countries join the EU.
- 56** A Winning Wales - The National Economic Development Strategy of the Welsh Assembly Government that was launched in January 2002 acknowledges the backdrop of economic difficulty and proposes a range of measures and initiatives to regenerate the Welsh economy and build on its strengths. A notable feature is a shift away from the previous reliance on FDI towards a more balanced, holistic view of the economy. A Winning Wales sees a greater role for indigenous economic growth where both urban and rurally based small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and social enterprises play more of a part and the approach is underpinned by sustainable development principles.

## **Regeneration through education, training and enterprise**

- 57** By the early 1990s, Central Government action on learning and skills was developed through four Welsh based Training and Enterprise Councils which were then subsumed into ELWa. ELWa was responsible for policy in learning and employment related regeneration prior to its recent re-incorporation in to the Welsh Assembly Government this year.
- 58** Wales has some serious issues around learning and skills that impact adversely on employment. As the Skills and Employment Action Plan 2003 notes, “Low employment rates, which are in Wales primarily caused by low rates of economic activity rather than unemployment, are associated with relatively low GDP per head, concentrations of households where nobody works, and poverty. Raising activity rates is therefore central to poverty reduction and social inclusion, as well as to the economic development targets in ‘A Winning Wales’. The evidence suggests that getting a job is the best way out of poverty for individuals and their families. There is also substantial evidence that getting a job improves people’s mental and physical health”.

- 59 The Skills and Employment Action Plan 2003 showed that the lack of appropriate skills was preventing Welsh people from taking up employment opportunities. As the Action Plan notes, Wales has a higher proportion of adults of working age without qualifications compared with England and Scotland. Twenty eight per cent (19,200) of the unemployed in Wales have no qualifications, compared to the UK average of 21%. One in four people of working age is economically inactive and 148,500 (34%) of the inactive in Wales have no qualifications. The Basic Skills Agency Baseline Survey of 2002 showed that one in four Welsh adults has poor literacy or numeracy skills (often both), and that 50% of these people are in work.
- 60 The Welsh Assembly Government and its predecessors developed a range of strategies including for Basic Skills, for Future Skills, e-Learning Strategy, and Lifelong Learning. The Welsh Assembly Government recently (2004) evaluated its National Basic Skills Strategy for Wales. Its e-Learning Strategy meanwhile looks to ways to improve teaching and learning using the new technologies now available. After consultation in 2004, the Skills and Employment Action Plan proposes to take forward the skills and employment agenda in Wales under four main strands:
- improving the mechanisms of workforce development;
  - supplying new entrants to the labour market with the skills needed for employment;
  - working with employers and employees to improve skills; and
  - helping more people into sustainable employment.
- 61 Welsh language policy relates closely to education, political identity and economic development. The Welsh Language Board which is accountable to the Assembly has the task of promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh and the Assembly itself holds its proceedings bilingually. Welsh is now seen as a factor in showing commitment to local communities and in the branding and image making of companies and thus a tool in economic development, tourism and regeneration.

### **Regeneration and housing**

- 62 Given that around 25% of all housing in Wales is social housing, since the beginning of the 1990s a substantial amount of regeneration funding has been used to regenerate and renew public housing estates. In the private sector the Welsh Consumer Council (November 2004) has reported on a lack of affordable housing in Wales for house buyers, especially first time buyers. Wales also has areas of high and low demand housing. The Consumer Council (2004) noted that the house price boom in some areas has placed extra pressure on social housing as more people look to local authorities and housing associations to help them find decent, affordable places to live. Additionally, Wales has the oldest housing stock of any Western European nation, much of which is in a poor condition, and current rates of house building are so low that there are 4% fewer new homes being built each year than are needed to match the projected growth in the number of households.

- 63 In July 2001 the National Assembly approved the National Housing Strategy for Wales 'Better Homes for People in Wales'. Better Homes for People in Wales sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's long-term vision for housing in Wales. Central to that vision is the expectation that all households in Wales shall have the opportunity to live in good quality homes. To achieve this, the physical standard and condition of existing housing must be maintained and improved to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (the Standard).
- 64 The Welsh Assembly Government has taken the view that "local authorities are best placed to identify local housing need" and has given them the leading role in determining priorities for Social Housing Grant investment through Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). "We will continue to support local authorities in undertaking needs surveys and producing Local Housing Strategies so that investment decisions will be increasingly evidence-based and strategic". The Assembly Government argues that its National Housing Strategy provides a framework for the development of local housing strategies "that contribute to the delivery of the Welsh Assembly Government's vision for housing in Wales. This will require evidence-based strategies that are developed through effective partnerships between all relevant local housing organisations".
- 65 Some of these initiatives are included in the synopsis below.

### **Regeneration and health**

- 66 Long-term illness leading to economic inactivity was noted above as a feature of the Welsh economy where receipt of disability benefit is far above the national average. There are areas where the health situation of residents is most severe including the Valleys and on housing estates across Wales generally. In 2001 the Welsh Assembly Government launched its Improving Health in Wales Plan for the NHS and its partners with the objective of setting the direction for health over the next 10 years. Health issues are also noted in mainstream regeneration programmes such as Communities First (detailed in the synopsis) and touched on in the economic and spatial strategies.

### **Rural issues**

- 67 As in other regions of the UK, in Wales since the 1980s the CAP has "promoted farm-scale enlargement, production expansion and a continual price-squeeze for small Welsh farms" (Bristow, in Bryan and Jones, 2000: 72). By 1996 there were 13% fewer agricultural holdings than in 1977 owing to the effect of the CAP's policies.
- 68 Rural poverty continues to be a significant issue. For example, farm incomes declined dramatically following the BSE crisis of 1996. In 1998/1999 average hill farm incomes in Wales were £4,700. Many farmers are dependent on external subsidies and the potential withdrawal of these is an issue for the future. Rural poverty today also has other facets. The economy is over dependent on a small number of large employers and there is heavy reliance on low-paid seasonal and part-time employment in service industries. There is limited capacity to support new businesses and small, dispersed populations are poorly served in terms of key services and transport and access to urban areas. The young and the high-skilled tend to leave.

- 69 Just as urban Wales has been dependent on European funding for regeneration efforts, European Structural Funds have been used since the early 1990s. Rural Wales has been in receipt of a range of European funds including the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) and LEADER. There has also been activity around the reformulation of the CAP.
- 70 Since devolution the Welsh Assembly Government's Rural Strategy has been developed through Farming for the Future and the Rural Development Plan while particular programmes support a range of farming and rural regeneration and sustainability initiatives, some dealing with issues such as foot and mouth, others with needs for rurally based affordable housing and jobs.
- 71 Wales is well ahead of other parts of the UK in developing strategy around 'value added' organic produce. Initiatives in 'agri-food' through the Agri-Food Partnership help Wales to place itself strategically to grow markets. Regeneration in the countryside is also supported through the Rural Community Action Programme. As well as concern at Assembly level, the peak body representing local government has released a relevant strategy. The Welsh Local Government Association has this year launched a manifesto for the regeneration of rural Wales which broadly suggests building on sustainable agriculture models, so it is broadly in line with Welsh Assembly Government thinking.
- 72 Further information: <http://www.wlga.gov.uk/publications/2004/regen-stag.pdf>

### **Spatial issues and area based approaches**

- 73 Parkinson (1998) refers to the strong spatial element in social exclusion and this is a feature of the Welsh experience of this phenomenon. Uneven spatial impacts of social and economic change in Wales since the 1980s have impacted adversely on peripheral housing estates and larger regions left behind by economic change. This includes brownfield sites of former industrial areas and low demand housing on deprived housing estates.
- 74 A growth in the concentration of poverty has also been noted in Wales, indicated by factors including access to the labour market, access to the housing market and benefit dependence. Specific problems of isolated housing estates in the Valleys and elsewhere, declining market and coastal towns, and declining rural communities all contribute to the exclusion picture. By the 1990s substantial economic activity was located around the M4 and A55 corridors and depended on car access so that poor transport links reinforced social exclusion. The move to area based initiatives in the use of the Structural Funds, from around the mid 1990s, appears to have improved the spatial targeting of regeneration programmes as well as increasing the integration across regeneration themes. With Communities First, the Welsh Assembly Government has used the top 100 wards on the Index of Deprivation to define where it spends this programme's regeneration money, although this too has its critics as it leaves out other places that are also significantly deprived.
- 75 The spatial issues in regeneration are reflected in People, Places, Futures - The Wales Spatial Plan 2004 which sets out 'a direction of travel' for Wales for the next 20 years. It describes "what is required to put Wales firmly on the path towards sustainable spatial development". The Spatial Plan is intended as a blueprint for creating sustainable communities and has been revised following a major consultation process.

## **ICT and the 'digital divide'**

- 76** Since the mid 1990s, as ICT has become central to economic development and regeneration, it has been recognised in the regeneration literature that Wales has suffered from increasing problems because of a lack of appropriate ICT infrastructure and access. For example, less than the national average of SMEs are using email and broadband. In socially excluded communities in Wales access to ICT is particularly low. This is part of the so-called digital divide.
- 77** The recognition of the existence of a 'digital divide', especially within poor communities, led to advent of the Objective 1 funded e-Communities Programme that was launched by the WDA in 2002. However the programme was scrapped this year at the end of its development phase. The Welsh Assembly said this was due to concerns about its effectiveness and it would be replaced by a targeted system in which individual local ICT providers would be supported to bid for structural funds. (Reported in New Start, 4 June 2004.)
- 78** Some European funded programmes have focused on ICT issues since the 1990s as have programmes delivered through the WO, the WDA and ELWa. A number of Welsh Assembly Government initiatives and policies have been developed to increase understanding of ICT and the use of services such as broadband to support economic development and regeneration.
- 79** The approach to ICT is documented in A Winning Wales. Individual projects also reflect this ICT-related regeneration theme. For example, in 2002 Penrhyndeudraeth became the UK's first 'networked' village and this project is included in our synopsis below.

## **Devolved government**

- 80** Interest in and support for devolution grew from the 1980s, fed by the realisation that national boundaries would mean less and less in a European context, while cities and regions would increasingly be understood as the motors of economic growth and political leadership.
- 81** After a long period of political activity, in 1999 the elected National Assembly for Wales took over most of the powers of the Secretary of State for Wales. This completed the changes heralded by the referendum in 1997 and given statutory force by the Government of Wales Act in 1998. The 1998 Government of Wales Act specified that political leadership should be provided by a first secretary who chairs a cabinet style executive committee. Various subject committees cover policy fields. Regional committees were intended by the Act to have an advisory role based on regional areas and consultative machinery was planned to deal with local government, business and the voluntary sector. Its constitution requires the Assembly to deal with sustainable development (the first time such a requirement has been constitutionally based). The relationship with Whitehall was at first through a series of concordats.

- 82** In terms of its governance role, the Welsh Assembly Government is now responsible for many areas of public policy and controls substantial budgets. Morgan (2003) has identified three main challenges for the Assembly in future: as a new mode of governance; to undertake economic renewal - especially in west Wales and the Valleys, and to build civic capacity. As well as the many regeneration initiatives it has developed in the early 2000s, the Welsh Assembly Government has recently announced its intention to bring the quangos, the WDA, ELWa and WTB back within mainstream government.
- 83** A key role is the relationship with Europe which is complex but likely to dominate given the need to keep Objective 1 status as far as possible past 2006.
- 84** The next section of this report is a detailed synopsis of regeneration activities in Wales.

## Synopsis of Regeneration Interventions in Wales since the 1950's

### Introduction

- 85** The following synopsis covers a wide range of activities in regeneration in Wales since the 1950s. It does not claim to be entirely comprehensive but attempts to cover the key regeneration themes in a broad brush way and show which have been the most important. Thus it provides examples of different kinds of intervention rather than every intervention of that type. It tries to give a sense of the range of activity that has been undertaken, the various trajectories of regeneration over time and how these do (or do not) link together. It covers both urban and rural regeneration. The initiatives are as far as possible presented in time order for each category. However, in a number of cases the policies and programmes were contemporaneous or overlapping. This can make it difficult to understand what initiative led on to what other programme or initiative and why. The synopsis lists when programmes/initiatives started and can be used as a cross-referencing tool.
- 86** The policies, programmes, strategies, action plans and other initiatives are summarised in the following order:
- Global - stemming from agencies or organisations with worldwide coverage;
  - European - deriving from European organisations, chiefly the EU Structural Funds;
  - United Kingdom - mostly from central government but also covering some charitable and NGO based initiatives;
  - Wales - from Wales-wide sources including the Welsh Assembly Government and its predecessors;
  - Regional - initiatives from groupings at a sub-Wales level - mostly local government led; and
  - Local Authority and other local initiatives - mostly undertaken by local authorities in partnership with other stakeholders but including some NGO run, charitable and other initiatives. Includes area based strategies and initiatives at neighbourhood or ward level.

## Overview

- 87** Wales has received funding for regeneration activity from the United Kingdom Government over the entire period studied, and more recently from the European Union (Objectives within ESF and ERDF Structural Funds being the best known sources) through Programmes including LEADER, URBAN, INTERREG and EQUAL). European Union policy frameworks on, for example, SMEs and on sustainable development have also been influential in Welsh regeneration efforts.
- 88** Since their inception (see timeline for key dates), some national (UK) funds have been channelled through government offices and quangos such as the WO, the WDA and the Welsh Rural Development Board and included Capital Challenge and its replacement the refocused Local Regeneration Fund.
- 89** Following devolution and the advent of the Welsh Assembly, a significant proportion of national (UK) funds for regeneration have been dispersed through Welsh Assembly Government budgets and have appeared in programmes such as Communities First into which earlier regeneration schemes including People in Communities and the Sustainable Communities Programme were subsumed.
- 90** Major funding programmes which formed the backbone of regeneration funding in England, such the various rounds of the Single Regeneration Budget, have not been present in Wales. Research for this report suggests that while other key programmes such as the New Deal and NR have been present they have not been central to Welsh regeneration efforts. Sources of funding including the National Lottery and the Millennium Commission have had a more important if narrowly focused impact by providing funds for major buildings such as the Millennium Stadium and Millennium Arts Centre.
- 91** A number of areas of funding which might not be directly classed as ‘regeneration’ have had substantial regeneration effects - both good and bad. These national projects include funds for transport and other major infrastructure (such as the M4 and the A55 road and Severn Bridge links that reinforced conurbation development), for housing (reflected in the building of a large number of now problematic public housing estates in the Valleys and elsewhere), health services (the NHS has been critical to efforts to ameliorate deprivation) and education and training (through funding to schools and universities) among others.
- 92** It should be noted that it has proved something of a detective effort to piece together the complex picture of the regeneration scene in Wales, and information on older programmes (pre 1980s especially) has been significantly harder to obtain. It also may well have something to do with changing notions of what constitutes ‘renewal’ and what might make it happen. For example, a considerable part of ‘renewal’ spending in Wales from the 1950s to 1970s was to create housing estates that are now considered by many to be the source of problems needing present day regeneration efforts to mend. Likewise, in the 1980s substantial public funding was provided to support inward investment and was expected to lead to the regeneration of declining economies in the Valleys and elsewhere. However, this mainstream economic development approach seems to have proved unable to bridge Wales’ well known prosperity gap and is now being rethought along more integrated, sustainability driven lines.

# European Programmes

## Introduction

- 93** European funding has been absolutely central to regeneration efforts in Wales over the last 15 years. Earlier meanwhile, the CAP had important implications for rural regeneration through its influence on rural economic restructuring that were noted in the sections dealing with rural regeneration above.
- 94** Since the early 1990s, Wales has received a range of substantial European funding that has impacted on both urban and rural regeneration. These come in the form of the EU cohesion funds which are aimed at reducing disparities and improving the EU's economic, social and territorial cohesion. The programmes are financed principally by four structural funds:
- the ESF for social integration training and employment;
  - ERDF for infrastructure and small and medium-sized enterprises
  - the EAGGF for rural development and
  - the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) for modernisation of infrastructure in this sector.
- 95** Wales has received funds mainly under Objectives 1 to 3. In urban areas Objective 1 has been the most dominant and in rural areas of the country programmes including LEADER have been important. In 1998 reforms to the Structural Funds were proposed and led to adoption of reshaped Objectives for the period 2000-2006. The picture of European funding is complicated and the section below tries to tease out the main strands.

## Objectives 1 to 3

- 96** Parts of Wales have been eligible over time for European funds from Objectives 1 to 3 and for certain priorities within those Objectives. Complicating matters further, Objective 1 and other Objective funding has been delivered in Wales through a variety of programmes including LEADER and URBAN.
- 97** Objective 1 in Wales is the highest level of EU support available. It is used to promote the development and structural adjustment of regions where development is lagging behind. In the current round of Objective 1, two areas of Wales, west Wales and the Valleys are included within the Structural Fund areas. Objective 1 funds can cover up to 50% of the cost of any scheme with the rest requiring match funding.
- 98** Objective 2 in Wales provides the next highest level of funding and is aimed at supporting economic and social conversion of areas facing structural difficulties as are substantial parts of Wales. Areas can qualify for Objective 2 monies under four strands: industrial, rural, urban and fisheries.
- 99** Objective 3 in Wales is not territorial but thematic. It focuses on assistance to education, training and employment. It offers help to the long-term unemployed and those facing barriers to work. It excludes Objective 1 areas which already receive this kind of support.

- 100** Within the various Objectives there are further (numerous) priorities and measures relating to different aspects of regeneration. Various evaluations of the Objectives have pointed to problems in their implementation. A typical example is an Interim Evaluation of the ISW Objective 2 programme 1997-1999 which focused on a programme for economic growth and job creation in the area from Swansea to Monmouthshire. It found that progress against targets varied markedly, and programme complexity and spatial targeting proved problematic for the recipients (ECOTEC, 1999).

## **Leader I, Leader II and Leader+**

- 101** LEADER was the EU-funded programme to promote the development of rural areas. Its aim was to encourage and help “rural actors” to think about the longer-term potential of their area. It sought to encourage the implementation of integrated, high-quality, original strategies for sustainable development based upon innovative approaches towards rural development. In Wales the LEADER I programme covered the period 1991-1993, LEADER II covered 1994-1999, and the newest version of the programme, LEADER+, covers the period 2000-2006.
- 102** The guidelines emphasised that LEADER was “a laboratory which aims to encourage the emergence and testing of new approaches to integrated and sustainable development”. LEADER used funds from ERDF, EAGGF and ESF. The LEADER I programme was based on principles of implementation at local community level led by Local Action Groups (LAGs) who would define issues and develop business plans setting out objectives and programmes of action. LEADER was implemented by four LAGs established in Wales: the South Pembrokeshire Programme for Action for Rural Communities, Antur Teifi, Menter Powys and South Gwynedd. They formed part of a network of 217 European LEADER groups representing significant rural development initiatives.
- 103** A number of LEADER schemes were then developed in these rural areas: including Aberavon, Bala, Dinefwr, Llanberis, Milford Haven, Pentrefoelas, Pwllheli and Tywyn/Aberdovey that aimed to enhance the visitor experience and quality of life of local communities.
- 104** Further information: <http://www.wefo.wales.gov.uk/frameset.htm>
- 105** The aim of LEADER II established in 1994. The programme was committed to piloting “innovative sustainable and transferable local community integrated rural development programmes as models of excellence which are transferable within Wales, the UK and Europe”. Under LEADER II the number of action groups grew to eight for the period 1994-1999. LEADER II had five objectives to meet this aim and activities were defined under three measures:
- A - acquiring skills
  - B - rural innovation programme
  - C - transnational co-operation
- 106** LEADER II covered eight LAGs. Four of these were carried over from LEADER 1 and four new ones were established: Menter Preseli, Menter Môn, Antur Cwm Taf and Tywi, and Cadwyn.

- 107** LEADER+ began in 2000 and continues some themes from LEADER I and LEADER II. It is considered as a further phase in the programme's development. The programme's website says of LEADER+: it is one of four initiatives financed by EU structural funds and is designed to help rural actors consider the long-term potential of their local region. Encouraging the implementation of integrated, high-quality and original strategies for sustainable development, it has a strong focus on partnership and networks of exchange of experience. Leader+ continues its role as a laboratory which aims to encourage the emergence and testing of new approaches to integrated and sustainable development that will influence, complete and/or reinforce rural development policy in the Community.
- 108** Further information:  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/rur/leaderplus/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/rur/leaderplus/index_en.htm)
- 109** In Wales LEADER+ is funded solely through the EAGGF, and all rural areas are eligible to apply. Wales's financial allocation for 2000-2006 is 13.1% of the UK allocation. This provides Wales with a sum of €14.7637 million, or £9.2273 million (at an exchange rate of 0.625).

## **Urban and Urban II**

- 110** URBAN was launched in 1994 by the EU. URBAN was aimed at assisting severely deprived urban areas. Following a number of successful pilot projects, URBAN (1994-1999) was started in 118 European cities.
- 111** URBAN II is the successor to URBAN and is an EU initiative to promote the development of urban areas of the European Union over the period 2001-2006. It responds to the Commission's 1998 Framework for Action for Sustainable Urban Development which recognised the importance of the urban dimension in Community policies and highlights the possibilities offered by regional development programmes co-financed by the structural funds. The URBAN II Community Initiative provides scope for intervention under priority Objective programmes by supporting innovative strategies for sustainable economic and social regeneration in a limited number of urban areas. This includes some parts of Wales such as the Wrexham area. URBAN II's objectives are to:
- Promote the design and implementation of highly innovative strategies of economic and social regeneration in small and medium-sized towns and declining areas in major conurbations.
  - Reinforce and share knowledge and experience on regeneration and sustainable urban development in the European Union.
- 112** The programme shares a focus with other European programmes on targeting areas of severe deprivation, on the integration of social and economic inclusion and sustainable development through partnership working and on the sharing of best practice.

## **INTERREG (European Union Programme for Co-operation between Regions)**

- 113** Another European funding programme important to Welsh regeneration is INTERREG, the European Union Programme for Co-operation between Regions. INTERREG I ran from 1992 to 1995 and INTERREG II from 1995 to 2001. INTERREG 3a and 3b is the current programme. INTERREG IIIA Community Initiative Programme aims to stimulate interregional co-operation in the EU between 2000 and 2006. It is financed under the ERDF.
- 114** This new phase of the INTERREG initiative is designed to strengthen economic and social cohesion throughout the EU by “fostering the balanced development of the continent through cross-border, transnational and interregional co-operation. Special emphasis has been placed on integrating remote regions and those which share external borders with the candidate countries”.
- 115** INTERREG III is made up of three 3 strands and has a total budget of €4,875 billion:
- Strand A: Cross-border co-operation between adjacent regions aims to develop cross-border social and economic centres through common development strategies.
  - Strand B: Trans-national co-operation involving national, regional and local authorities aims to promote better integration within the Union through the formation of large groups of European regions.
  - Strand C: Interregional co-operation aims to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies and instruments through large-scale information exchange and sharing of experience (networks).

## **EQUAL**

- 116** EQUAL was launched in March 2001. It was a new ESF Community Initiative which covered the whole of Wales and aimed to promote new ways of combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities in relation to the labour market, through transnational co-operation. The Initiative had a particular (though not exclusive) focus on equality issues associated with gender, disability, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, age and sexual orientation. The initiative also supported the social and vocational integration of asylum seekers/refugees.
- 117** The basic working element of EQUAL is the Development Partnership (DP). A DP works within one thematic area and brings together interested parties with relevant experience. It involves key players such as the equality organisations, local authorities, social partners, the business sectors and other relevant public bodies (such as the then WDA or the new National Council for Education and Training). DPs can comprise project applicants, advisors and those representing excluded groups. The work of each DP will be based on a formal agreement and work programme. The guidance suggested that each Development Partnership would need to have at least one partner from another Member State. DPs could also co-operate with counterparts outside the EU, for example, in candidate countries under the Phare programme.

- 118** EQUAL is being taken forward in Britain by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) in the lead. The documentation guiding the programme has been developed by the DfEE, in consultation with the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Executive. It was agreed that Wales will have a separate Wales Implementation Plan, supported by a ring-fenced allocation of resources. At the start of the programme it was expected that Wales was likely to receive around £12.5 million for the period 2000–2006 and the overall value of the programme, including matched funding, was expected to be around £25 million.
- 119** Further information: <http://www.wefo.wales.gov.uk/newprogs/equal/equal-wip.htm>

## United Kingdom Wide Initiatives

### Introduction

- 120** As in relation to regeneration based on European Structural Funds, there has been a plethora of UK government sponsored programmes delivered in Wales through government offices and quangos including the WO, the WDA, WTB and ELWa. Since devolution many of these programmes have been dropped, subsumed or transformed and are now delivered through the Welsh Assembly Government. Another feature of UK-wide regeneration funds is that although a number of British programmes theoretically cover Wales, some appear to have been present in only skeletal or modified form. Wales, even prior to devolution, largely ‘did its own thing’ in regard to regeneration approaches.
- 121** It should be noted that information on some of the former programmes - now wound up or refocused - has been difficult to obtain. So, useful information on programmes like the Strategic Development Scheme, run in Wales up until at least 1998, and mentioned in passing in a range of recent documents, has proved elusive. In other cases, supposedly nationally rolled out programmes like NR have proved equally difficult to obtain details on. For instance, although the researchers were told that NR monies had been used within Wales for housing improvements in deprived areas, no text or web based record could be found of this having occurred.
- 122** In the same way as for the European programmes noted above, this section is a broad brush synopsis of national programmes over time.

### Capital Challenge

- 123** Capital Challenge was a UK-wide programme that was administered by the WO and then the Welsh Assembly Government. As it became a primarily Welsh Assembly Government led programme it is considered in the Wales section below.

## National Lottery

- 124** The National Lottery Act 1993 established five areas to benefit from the Lottery: Sport, the Arts, Heritage and Charities and projects to mark the year 2000 and the beginning of the third millennium. In addition, the National Lottery Act 1998 created a sixth good cause of health, education and the environment. There are five National Lottery Distributing Bodies covering Wales. Distributing Bodies responsible for awarding grants include Sport Wales and the Arts Council of Wales. National bodies which have awarded significant grants to Wales include the Millennium Commission and the Heritage Lottery Fund, both noted below.

## Millennium Fund

- 125** The Millennium Fund has been funded by the National Lottery and managed through the Millennium Commission. D the 1990s it has funded a range of projects in Wales including the National Botanic Garden of Wales, The Powys Alternative Technology Centre, the Millennium Coastal Park at Llanelli, Millennium Stadium Cardiff, Millennium Library Project, Millennium Arts Centre, part of the National Cycle Network and the Welsh Highland Railway.
- 126** Further Welsh projects which have been funded can be viewed at:  
<http://www.millennium.gov.uk/cgi-site/awards.cgi?action=detail&id=22&t=2>

## Heritage Lottery Fund

- 127** The Heritage Lottery Fund programme has funded a range of projects in Wales since the mid 1990s. The programme from 2002-2007 meanwhile focuses on heritage grants which are for organisations looking after or enhancing Wales's heritage (nature conservation, historic buildings, collections etc), grants to increase people's understanding of heritage, smaller projects for community based projects and a Townscape Heritage initiative for projects to regenerate the historic environment in towns and cities in Wales. This is being used to repair buildings of special architectural character and bring derelict and underused historic buildings back into practical use.

## Development Corporations - Cardiff Bay

- 128** The regeneration of Cardiff Bay was managed by the Cardiff Bay Development Corporation (CBDC). The Corporation was established by the Secretary of State for Wales in April 1987 under the Local Government and Planning Act 1980 to regenerate some 1,090 hectares of south Cardiff with the then population of 5,800.
- 129** The Corporation was the product of political consensus between a Conservative Government and Labour controlled local authorities. Its structure and organisation demonstrated partnership, evidenced by the nomination by the local authorities of leading locally elected Councillors to the Board of the Corporation (five of the 12 Board members were local councillors) and by the local authorities retaining their powers, most significantly their full range of planning powers. The Corporation reclaimed nine hectares of former refuse disposal tip at Ely Fields to create a multi-media business park.

- 130** The Corporation was responsible for managing the construction of the Wales Millennium Centre a 30,000m<sup>2</sup> arts and cultural centre housing a 2,000 seat theatre and a new Waterfront museum. The Corporation was wound up in 2000.

## **Regeneration Trusts**

- 131** Various Regeneration Trusts have been active in Wales. These include the Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT) launched in 1999. The CRT is an independent agency, committed to achieving social and economic regeneration in the former coalfield areas of Wales, England and Scotland. It has invested nearly £50 million in coalfield communities since its launch. It supported projects which resource and empower communities, encourage enterprise, promote lifelong learning, enhance environments, support employment and promote good practice in regeneration.
- 132** Further information: [http://www.coalfields-regen.org.uk/pages/projects\\_list.cfm](http://www.coalfields-regen.org.uk/pages/projects_list.cfm)

## **New Deal**

- 133** Since 1997 Wales has been in receipt of some New Deal funds targeted at long-term unemployed and economically inactive people. Wales is overrepresented nationally in both categories. New Deal employment and training programmes include New Deal for 18-24 year olds, New Deal for 25 plus, New Deal 50 plus, New Deal for partners for lone parents and for disabled people. Wales also benefits from mainstream UK services such as the Employment Service and Job Centres.

## **New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal**

- 134** Although Neighbourhood Renewal is apparently present in Wales it has been very difficult to find information about it.

## **Renovation Grants**

- 135** The Welsh Assembly Government notes in its Better Homes Strategy that over the past decade the UK government has provided around £2 billion of renovation grant and area renewal funding to improve private sector house conditions in Wales.

## **Sure Start**

- 136** Sure Start is a national (UK) initiative aimed at providing the best start for children under 4 years and their families. It is part of the Government's wider social agenda to tackle social exclusion and eradicate child poverty. It is targeted at areas of high need in terms of deprivation and disadvantage.
- 137** In Wales an example of how Sure Start has worked is provided by areas such as Conwy which matches these criteria. In Conwy, urban and rural communities have been identified as deprived in terms of their socio-economic status including housing status, employment rates, crime statistics, and numbers of lone parents. In relation to rural communities meanwhile, a specific issue is scarcity of service provision.

## Communities that Care

- 138** Not all the nationally based regeneration initiatives have come from central government. Among NGO and charity based efforts is the Communities that Care (CtC) programme from the charitable JRF. Developed in the USA the CtC programme was revised for implementation in the UK. CtC focuses on early intervention and prevention services for children and their families.
- 139** By 2001, six communities in south Wales including the eastside of Swansea (see below for details) were using the CtC process to create evidence based, community led plans which aim to reduce significantly the numbers of young people who get involved in Youth Crime, Drug Abuse, School Failure and School Age Pregnancy.
- 140** The programme argues that the process works best in a fairly large community with a population of over 10,000 people. It also works best when there is already a more conventional Community Development project in place which can address the more immediate problems. CtC seeks to prevent future problems by ensuring that young people grow up in an area with all the support they require to reach their full potential. Thus the action plans developed focus on supporting parents and schools. The experience so far shows that this way of working is particularly effective at creating partnerships between agencies and community residents.

## Market Towns Initiative and Action for Market Towns

- 141** The researchers were advised that the Market Towns Initiative was active in Wales. However, research to date appears to demonstrate this to be an England-wide policy and programme only, delivered through the Countryside Agency. We did find references within Welsh strategy and policy documents that suggest it has been influential in market town regeneration thinking in Wales. Wales has been active in the National Action for Market Towns programme dedicated to supporting and regenerating these towns throughout the UK.

## Wales Wide Initiatives

### Introduction and overview

- 142** It has been difficult to decide which programmes to place in the national (UK) section and which in the Wales section. The criteria we have used are based on where the programmes are particularly focused on Wales, or have special characteristics in the way they have been rolled out in Wales rather than including Wales as just one of the regions for delivery UK wide.
- 143** As noted above, a number of regeneration policies and initiatives were delivered within Wales prior to devolution, in part through designated of 'special area' and 'assisted area' status earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, later through the WO and the Secretary of State for Wales (established 1964), and, since their advent, various quangos such as the WDA, the WTB and the Welsh Rural Development Board.

- 144** Since devolution the timelines demonstrates that the Welsh Assembly Government has produced a torrent of strategies and initiatives either directly focused on regeneration or having significant effects on aspects of deprivation and social exclusion such as economic development, spatial planning, health and rural development. Key documents underpinning the Assembly's approach to regeneration were A Better Wales, the strategic plan for Wales, launched in 2000, and A Winning Wales, the economic development strategy in 2002.
- 145** Some of the following regeneration or regeneration related policies and programmes are funded by European Structural Funds but are noted here because they are delivered through the Welsh Assembly Government or its predecessors. The 2002 Assembly Review of community regeneration in Wales noted that there are now over 60 funding streams operated by the Welsh Assembly Government and a further number through ASPBs which have an impact at community level. There is also a range of 'community based' voluntary and community sector regeneration activities and interventions.
- 146** Given the extremely wide range of programmes and initiatives with a bearing on regeneration, this section attempts to be broad brush in line with the brief to cover the more important programmes and policies both before and after devolution, but is by no means comprehensive.

## **Capital Challenge**

- 147** Capital Challenge was the key approach used by the WO (and then the Welsh Assembly Government for a time) to provide competitive grants for area based regeneration to local authorities prior to the advent of the Local Regeneration Fund which replaced it in 2000.
- 148** A review of examples of Capital Challenge in its earlier WO/WDA days suggests that it was being used in a rather piecemeal fashion and not in a particularly sustainable way. There were concerns about the pre-Welsh Assembly Government stage of Capital Challenge over the failure to fund other kinds of more sustainable infrastructure with Capital Challenge funds. However, by 2000 the Welsh Assembly Government was supporting 24 area based regeneration schemes in both urban and rural areas which combined housing renewal with improvements in economic, environmental and social conditions.

## **Welsh Office Urban Programme**

- 149** The WO ran the UP which provided funds for town schemes, Commercial Improvement Areas (CIAs), and traffic calming among other area improvements. Organisations involved included Groundwork and the Civic Trust. We believe this was sometime in the late 1980s but have been able to find very little information about timing or programme content.

## Pathways to Prosperity

- 150** In July 1998 the Secretary of State published his new economic agenda Pathway to Prosperity which set out a programme of action to help transform the Welsh economy into a higher value-added, innovative regional economy, capable of delivering increased prosperity to people in all parts of Wales. A better range of good quality employment, lower rates of unemployment and under-activity coupled with higher incomes would result in healthier lifestyles. In turn, that would benefit the economy through lower rates of sickness absence and long-term illness.

## Wales: A Better Country

- 151** This was the document that in 2000 defined the Welsh Assembly Government's strategic agenda for Wales. It set out the vision for a sustainable future where action for social, economic and environmental improvement work together to create positive change. This would be achieved by promoting a diverse, competitive, high added-value economy, with high quality skills and education that minimised demands on the environment. The Welsh Assembly Government also committed itself to strengthening Wales's cultural identity and helping to create a bilingual country.
- 152** Further information: <http://www.wales.gov.uk/themesbettercountry/strategic-e.pdf>

## A Winning Wales

- 153** The Welsh Assembly Government launched its economic development strategy, A Winning Wales, in February 2002 (and 'refreshed' in 2004). A Winning Wales is described as a 10-year agenda for change that builds on A Better Wales. This is a key document for framing regeneration activity in Wales over the 2000s. The aspiration has strong regeneration implications: to raise Wales's living standard to match that of the UK as a whole with prosperity that is more evenly spread and sustainable. The strategy focuses on:
- increasing the knowledge, E&D and innovation capacity in all parts of the economy;
  - building on Wales's considerable strengths in manufacturing;
  - increasing the number of jobs in financial and business services;
  - helping more people into jobs to raise the level of economic activity; and
  - spreading prosperity across Wales using all the measures at its disposal including European Structural Funds.
- 154** Actions proposed for example to bring down economic inactivity rates, increase access to highly skilled jobs and support the social enterprise sector feed into other regeneration strategies. The strategy noted that implementation was the key and to this end would strengthen working across all the organisations and agencies which were stakeholders in the process. It also highlighted the strategy's commitment to sustainability and its intention to use tools like the ecological footprint to think about and measure economic performance in a more sustainable manner. The strategy set a number of economic development targets that would also positively impact on regeneration.

- 155** Further information:  
<http://www.wales.gov.uk/themesbudgetandstrategic/content/neds/winningwales-refresh-e.pdf>

## **WDA, WTB and TECS (later ELWa)**

- 156** The Welsh Development Agency (WDA) is a key actor in economic development. The Agency, from October 1998, acquired new powers to further the social as well as the economic development of Wales. From April 1999, the boundaries of Training and Education Councils (TECs) became coterminous with the WDA regions to ensure better co-ordination of economic and skills development services to maintain and safeguard employment levels. The Wales Tourist Board (WTB) is also expected to foster growth in the tourism sector. These agencies are charged with bringing new jobs to areas where economic activity levels need to improve, such as the south Wales valleys, south-west and north Wales.

## **WEFO**

- 157** The Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) is responsible for administering Structural Funds in Wales. Wales has been allocated a total of €2.233 billion (over £1.5 billion) by the European Union for the period 2000-2006. With match funding from a variety of public, private and voluntary sources the Structural Funds are worth €4.795 billion (over £3.2 billion) in Wales.
- 158** WEFO is responsible for encouraging new projects, appraising and making decisions on applications, paying grants and ensuring that proper procedures are in place by those organisations in receipt of funds. It is also responsible for publicising the effect of the funds in Wales. WEFO is part of the Welsh Assembly Government's Economic Development and Transport Department.
- 159** Further information: <http://www.wefo.wales.gov.uk/>

## **Regional Selective Assistance**

- 160** The Welsh Assembly Government provides Regional Selective Assistance (RSA) grants for investment projects that create or safeguard jobs in Assisted Areas. It is a discretionary grant and certain criteria, including demonstrating need for a grant, have to be satisfied.

## **Rural Regeneration Programmes**

- 161** As well as projects funded through EAGGF, and activity around the reformulation of the CAP (see European section), the Welsh Assembly Government now supports a range of farming and rural regeneration initiatives. Farming for the Future is a key strategic framework. Programmes like Farming Connect support farming families facing changing circumstances. The Welsh Agri-food Strategy focuses on regenerating farming through emphasising value-added produce which should help raise low farm incomes and allow rural diversification to strengthen the economic base. Organic Action Plans are being managed through the WDA within the Agri-Food partnership. There is also a Rural Development Plan for Wales that also responds to other non-farming rural issues.

- 162** The Welsh Assembly Government supports rural regeneration through its Rural Community Action Programme to help community capacity building, and this Programme has approved the first nine rural Community Regeneration Partnerships.
- 163** Further information: <http://www.walesontheweb.org/>

## **Rural Development Plan**

- 164** The Rural Development Plan (RDP) 2000-2006 is financed by Structural Funds, but managed by the Welsh Assembly Government, and delivered through a complex mix under Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 5. It is a mechanism for supporting sustainable development in rural Wales. It complements reforms in the agricultural sector by fostering an integrated approach to rural development and by recognising the wider contribution made by farming to rural communities.
- 165** The Plan is based on 10 possible measures, including agri-environment, support for Less Favoured Areas (LFAs), the wider adaptation and development of rural communities, and processing and marketing agricultural products.
- 166** A number of Welsh rural areas are suffering from problems including out migration especially of younger people, a decline in Welsh language speakers, low levels of attainment and skills and poor access to services. Economic issues include declining GDP, declining economic activity rates, high levels of social deprivation, over dependence on declining industries and relatively few dynamic, indigenous medium sized enterprises. The measures in the Plan thus have important regeneration implications through support for job generation and diversification to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of LFAs in Wales as well as supporting more sustainable rural development.
- 167** Further information: [http://www.wefo.wales.gov.uk/resource/ruraldevplan\\_e.pdf](http://www.wefo.wales.gov.uk/resource/ruraldevplan_e.pdf)

## **The Networked Village and the Digital Vale**

- 168** The Assembly has been responsible since the early 2000s for a number of strategies relating to increasing the understanding of, access to and uptake of ICT services in rural and remote communities as well as urban areas. Originally part of the Market Towns Initiative (supported by the WDA and noted in this section), Penrhyndeudraeth became the UK's first networked village. A Winning Wales notes that the village has developed itself into a high tech interactive community. A group of local partners led by a community group has based the networking project in the former local police station. The project houses a range of facilities including the latest computer and communications equipment aimed at supporting training for the village's existing ICT facilities and infrastructure.
- 169** The Digital Vale project was launched in 2003 to provide affordable broadband access to the internet via radio technology to households and businesses in Penrhyndeudraeth, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Maentwrog, Talsarnau, Harlech and Porthmadog.

## Better Health, Better Wales

- 170** The strategic framework Better Health, Better Wales was launched in 1998. It focuses on working across sectors to improve the determinants of poor health in deprived communities. For example Better Health, Better Wales places partnership working within and across sectors as a cornerstone of its approach to improving health, while providing the foundation for the Welsh Assembly Government's action to improve health and well-being.
- 171** Among the many themes it covers are Sustainable Communities, and the framework aimed at ensuring economic and social well-being which promotes health in all sectors of the community in all parts of Wales. It recognises a number of 'drivers for action'. It is noted in the framework that the economic health of Wales and the health of people living in Wales go hand in hand. The success of Wales's economic agenda (at that point represented in Pathways to Prosperity) would be assessed against a number of key tests.
- 172** Further information: [http://www.wales.nhs.uk/publications/stratframe98\\_e.pdf](http://www.wales.nhs.uk/publications/stratframe98_e.pdf)

## Other Wales-wide Health Initiatives

- 173** There have been a range of other health related initiatives with a bearing on regeneration in Wales. These are listed below.
- 174** A Strategic Framework by the WO (1998) developed the implementation of Local Health Alliances for every local authority area. The lead responsibility for the development of alliances was given to local authorities, emphasising the non medical nature of determinants of health and responses to them.
- 175** Further information:  
[http://www.google.co.uk/search?hl=en&q="strategic+framework"+health+wales&meta=cr=countryUK|countryGB](http://www.google.co.uk/search?hl=en&q=)
- 176** Taking the lead from the global agenda, Promoting Health and Well-being: Implementing the National Health Promotion Strategy (National Assembly for Wales, 2001) outlined the way NHS Wales could improve the health of the people of Wales through working across sectors.
- 177** Further information:  
[http://www.google.co.uk/search?hl=en&q="promoting+health+and+Well+being"+NH+S&meta=cr=countryUK|countryGB](http://www.google.co.uk/search?hl=en&q=)
- 178** This was followed by Improving Health in Wales - A Plan for the NHS with its Partners (National Assembly for Wales, 2001), mentioned in the timeline, which sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's 10-year plan for the renewal of the NHS in Wales and reinforces the need for the NHS, local government, the independent sector and communities to work together to improve health in Wales.
- 179** This strategy is built upon the work of the World Health Organisation in its document Health 21 which states that "the improvement of Health and well-being of people is the ultimate aim of social and economic development".
- 180** Further information:  
[http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/ccs\\_apps/eng/documents/documents/community\\_health/2.asp](http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/ccs_apps/eng/documents/documents/community_health/2.asp)

## Sustainable Development Scheme

- 181** As noted above, the National Assembly for Wales has a duty under section 121 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 to promote sustainable development in everything it does. The Act requires the Assembly to make a scheme setting out how it proposes to implement the duty, to consult before making it, keep it under review, publish an annual report on progress and evaluate its effectiveness every four years. It is primarily the responsibility of the Welsh Assembly Government to implement the Scheme and to draw up an Action Plan to say how it will do so.
- 182** The Scheme is the National Assembly's overarching strategic framework and sets out the vision of a sustainable future for all of Wales where action for social, economic and environmental improvement work together to create positive change. It therefore has important regeneration implications as it underpins area based strategies, programmes and funding regimes for deprived and socially excluded areas. The Scheme works in conjunction with other key documents of the Welsh Assembly Government to deliver change.
- 183** The Sustainable Development Action Plan identifies the major long-term strategic challenges for Wales in delivering that vision and, following consultation with stakeholders, identifies the key actions that need to be taken in the short, medium and longer term. Wales: A Better Country sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's political priorities against the vision of a sustainable Wales, for the next four years. The Wales Spatial Plan recognises that the vision will need to translate differently in different areas of Wales. The Plan provides both the opportunity for dialogue between the national and local levels about what is needed in those areas and the tool for delivering those agreed needs into action. All other strategies sit beneath this framework. Their role is to underpin the delivery of a sustainable Wales.
- 184** Further information:  
<http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessustainabledev/content/review/revised-scheme-e.htm>

## Local Regeneration Fund

- 185** In 1999, the Welsh Assembly Secretary for Economic Development set out new proposals for funding local regeneration strategies. The key principles are:
- wind-up of WCC and LARS grants;
  - establishment of a new Local Regeneration Fund (LRF), to which applications for support could be made from all parts of Wales, whether or not within the Objective 1 area;
  - the LRF to support local authority and voluntary/community sector regeneration activities;
  - close integration between LRF and European programmes, where applicable; and
  - retention of the successor arrangements agreed for the Strategic Development Scheme.

- 186** The purpose of the LRF is to support sustainable regeneration or development within the most deprived areas in Wales through projects sponsored by local authorities. It encourages projects which have an economic focus but reflect social and environmental needs in line with sustainability principles and have a long-term focus. LRF monies are made available as both match funding and direct grants depending on projects and are available for local authority led capital build projects and some revenue expenditure.
- 187** Local authorities in receipt of a number of different European funding programmes can access LRF. For example, local government areas that benefit from Objective 1, Objective 2 (transition or new), URBAN, and in some cases INTERREG 3A and 3B, can match fund project applications on an annual basis.
- 188** As part of the Assembly's duty in relation to sustainable development, local authorities bidding for LRF address sustainability issues including long-term revenue support after European and LRF grants have been exhausted. The guidance on LRF also makes a link to Communities First (see below) saying that "Community First Partnerships and local authorities will want to give careful consideration to how LRF match funds will be used to help achieve the programme's aims within the context of the application being made under the European Programme or Initiative".
- 189** Further information: <http://www.wefo.wales.gov.uk/matchfund/localregen/rgf-guidance.htm>

## **People in Communities**

- 190** This was a forerunner programme to Communities First (see later in this section). People in Communities was a programme which sought to tackle social disadvantage in some of Wales's most deprived communities by closely involving local people in deciding what needs to be done and how to do it, and by encouraging co-operative working by a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies.
- 191** Eight communities were involved in the first phase of the programme, which was launched in June 1998 (Round 1). In August 2000 these areas were awarded further funding to expand and develop their work. In June 2000 a further eight communities were chosen to participate in the scheme (Round 2).
- 192** Further information: [http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessocialdeprivation/content/picintro\\_e.htm](http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessocialdeprivation/content/picintro_e.htm)

## **Sustainable Communities Programme**

- 193** This was also a forerunner programme to Communities First (see below in this section). It was a grant aided scheme funding local projects to secure the long-term viability of deprived communities and begin the process of integrating funding towards cohesive packages to tackle and prevent social exclusion. Funding was made available in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001.
- 194** Further information: [http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessocialdeprivation/content/sustcoms\\_intro\\_e.htm](http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessocialdeprivation/content/sustcoms_intro_e.htm)

## Communities First

- 195** Commencing in 2000, Communities First is described as the Welsh Assembly Government's flagship programme for tackling poverty and social disadvantage. It is targeted at the 100 most deprived wards on the Welsh Index of Deprivation. It is a long-term strategy for improving the living conditions and prospects for people in the most disadvantaged communities in Wales. Communities First has subsumed two earlier programmes 'People In Communities' and 'The Sustainable Communities Programme' under the Community Purposes funding umbrella.
- 196** One of the main aims of the programme is to ensure that other public sector funding is targeted in an integrated way, at the most deprived areas. The programme is holistic in its approach. Its further aims are to build local confidence and self esteem and develop a 'can do' culture, encourage education and training, create job opportunities and incomes, improve housing and the surrounding environment, improve health and well-being, make communities safe and secure and drive forward change in the way public services are delivered.
- 197** The Welsh Assembly Government's Guidance to Local Authorities points out that Communities First differs from other funding programmes in that it is long-term, based on communities' own decisions about what is needed, aspires to increase local participation, brings together funding and support from a number of different sources, encourages creativity and imaginative approaches and involves an integrated approach to addressing poverty and factors that cause or contribute to it.
- 198** The guidance promotes the use of partnerships in which local authorities have an important leadership role in implementing Communities First. The Welsh Assembly Government meanwhile is responsible for developing Communities First at an all Wales level. "This includes setting the policy context in consultation with partners, providing resources, driving forward implementation, monitoring progress and evaluating the programme. The Welsh Assembly Government also monitors and supports Partnerships locally through regional teams located in Cardiff, Carmarthen and Caernarfon. Its Communities and Social Inclusion Unit provides advice to Communities First co-ordinators, develops community action plans, supports local authorities, assesses funding bids, monitors and evaluates progress and develops guidance. A Communities Freephone and help desk provide information and advice. A Communities First trust fund has been established to allow communities quick access to funding for community activities.
- 199** A recent review by a Welsh Assembly Committee suggested that capacity development in community organisations and individuals in deprived areas is a key need through Communities First. It argued that skills enhancement needs to occur through both formal and informal skills acquisition. It proposed improvements to the Communities First programme to increase its focus on training, learning and skills acquisition and accreditation. It also noted a shortage of qualified local staff and training needs in this area (NAW Local Government and Housing Committee Policy Review, March 2003).
- 200** Information about Local Authorities and Communities First partnerships and strategies can be found in the local government and local area initiatives section below.

- 201** Further information:  
[http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessocialdeprivation/content/comfirsthome\\_e.htm](http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessocialdeprivation/content/comfirsthome_e.htm)

## **Community Strategies**

- 202** The Welsh Assembly Government has provided guidance on how to prepare community strategies. These have an important regeneration focus on tackling issues of deprivation and social exclusion. For more on community strategies see the local government section below.
- 203** Further information:  
<http://www.wales.gov.uk/subilocalgov/content/guidance/communitystrat-e.pdf>

## **Wales Tourist Board LEAD Programme**

- 204** The WTB LEAD Programme (Local Enterprise and Development Initiative) operated on a selective basis for towns and communities in Wales with targeted funds of £8.7 million in financial assistance over a five-year period which began in April 1989. The primary aim of the programme, like other urban initiatives such as UDG/UIG was to act as catalyst in bringing the public/private sectors together to take forward tourism development in an integrated and co-ordinated way.
- 205** LEAD areas in Wales included seaside resorts such as Llangollen, Rhyl/Prestatyn and Tenby which received £1 million each, the historic towns of Chepstow, Conwy and Llandrindod Wells which received £1 million each, and a further £1.5 million divided between tourism action area programmes in Barry, the Rhymney Valley and Wrexham.

## **Housing Regeneration and Homelessness Programmes**

- 206** Since the late 1990s, there has been a raft of programmes for physical regeneration, housing quality and access to housing delivered through the Assembly. Some of these are noted below.
- 207** Social Housing Grant investment is provided by the Assembly through RSLs. The Assembly's Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Strategy meanwhile aims to help social landlords build on existing services for their clients, develop new initiatives and services where appropriate, and to ensure equality of opportunity and the empowerment of BME individuals and communities.
- 208** The Assembly's Better Homes Strategy notes that an estimated 220,000 households in Wales suffer from fuel poverty, are eligible for and would benefit from the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme. "This is not surprising given that 11% of homes in Wales lack central heating and, while most homes are insulated to some extent, significant numbers of homes lack adequate insulation. For example, almost a fifth of homes do not have loft insulation and almost a half of homes in Wales do not have draught stripping on doors and windows." The Assembly is committed to eradicating fuel poverty by 2010.
- 209** The Homelessness Commission was established to advise the Assembly on the implementation of its objectives to reduce homelessness. The Assembly says it will be guided by the recommendations of the Commission in setting future policy to address the problem of homelessness.

- 210** The Assembly is promoting better access to quality housing for people with learning disabilities and mental health problems, through its 'Supporting People' programme.

## **The Welsh Assembly Government's Inequalities in Health Fund**

- 211** The Inequalities in Health Fund was set up in 2001 by the Minister for Health and Social Services in order to stimulate and support local action to address inequalities in health and the factors that contribute to it, including inequities in access to health services.
- 212** Information about the Fund argues that it demonstrates the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to tackle inequalities in health that exist between some of our communities. The fund supports a total of 67 active projects. These cover a variety of activities that target coronary heart disease, with a budget of £5 million for 2003/2004. Partnership is a key element of the fund and the NHS, local government and the voluntary sector are working together for joint action to tackle inequalities in health.
- 213** In 2004 the Assembly announced a plan to set up at least 26 food co-operatives over the next two years, financed by the Inequalities in Health Fund. These will be run by volunteers and overseen by the Rural Regeneration Unit (RRU). They will be located in areas of deprivation and aim to increase the amount of fruit and vegetables in disadvantaged communities. Two Welsh pilot schemes in Barry and Rhyl have been set up and supported by the Welsh Assembly Government. The project is intended to connect farmers and communities and cut down on the distribution chain, allowing for lower prices while leading to a healthier diet for communities and viability for farmers.
- 214** Further information: <http://www.cmo.wales.gov.uk/content/work/inequalities-in-health-fund/all-projects-e.htm>

## **Community Regeneration Organisations and Programmes**

### **Introduction**

- 215** As well as initiatives delivered through the Assembly and its public sector predecessors, the voluntary and community sector, NGOs, and to a lesser extent, the business community, have had a long-term presence on the Welsh regeneration scene.
- 216** The examples below are all regeneration initiatives from community or business based organisations and have been chosen as a sample from a wider range of similar examples.

## Groundwork Wales

- 217** Groundwork has been active in Wales for over 12 years working on projects that integrate social, economic and environmental approaches to regeneration. There are four Trusts in Wales: Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taff, Bridgend, Caerphilly and Wrexham which together employ more than 100 staff and now have an overall turnover of around £9 million.
- 218** Further information: <http://www.groundworkwales.org.uk/>

## Business in the Community Cymru

- 219** Business in the Community Cymru (BITC Cymru) has been running in Wales for some 20 years. BITC Cymru works in partnership with over 300 companies to advance and support social and economic regeneration initiatives in disadvantaged communities throughout Wales. BITC Cymru has offices in Cardiff, Denbigh, Llandarcy and Tredegar.
- 220** A typical BITC Cymru project was to renovate and create an outdoor area in a local school which was an empty concrete area containing no grass or shrubs into a resource that could be used for environmental studies. Plans were drawn up in liaison with the school and the team raised the funds and collected the resources they would need to complete the task. The project involved more than 22 members of staff working over 10 hours at the school to repave a courtyard, prime brick walls, repaint railings, design and paint murals, assemble and treat benches.
- 221** Further information: [http://www.bitc.org.uk/regions/bitc\\_in\\_your\\_region/wales/programmes/prohelp/](http://www.bitc.org.uk/regions/bitc_in_your_region/wales/programmes/prohelp/)

## The Civic Trust for Wales

- 222** The Civic Trust for Wales was founded in 1964 as a charity and is a leading non-governmental organisation committed to the improvement of cities, towns and communities to benefit all. They undertake projects through community action, good design, respect for heritage, and sustainable development and regeneration.
- 223** Information about Welsh projects can be found at: <http://www.civictrustwales.org/>

## The Wales Council for Voluntary Action

- 224** The principal body for the voluntary sector in Wales, among other regeneration activities the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) administers the Communities First Trust Fund, the grant scheme funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and aimed at small community led organisations in Communities First areas in Wales. The fund is managed by the Communities First Support Network and administered on the Network's behalf by WCVA. The purpose of the scheme is to support any type of activity that involves local people, through small community organisations, that benefits their community.
- 225** Further information: [http://www.wcva.org.uk/content/about/index.cfm?display\\_sitedeptid=2](http://www.wcva.org.uk/content/about/index.cfm?display_sitedeptid=2)

## Community Development Foundation in Wales

- 226** The Community Development Foundation (CDF) has a long track record in Wales, starting with major community development projects in Newport and, during the 1980s, several large scale projects in north-east Wales. In 1989 CDF's Wales office was opened and several other projects initiated, in the south Wales valleys in particular. For the past 10 years CDF Wales has held an annual conference, often in conjunction with another organisation such as the WLGA, and has run a number of training courses. Conferences have covered such subjects as community enterprise, community economic development lessons from the USA, and the role of housing in community economic development. Training courses have covered community profiling, working with community groups, working in partnership, project planning, community development theory, and evaluation.
- 227** Further information: <http://www.walesontheweb.org/cayw/guides/en/56>

## Community Development Cymru

- 228** Community Development Cymru (CDC) is a member led independent organisation that aims to work across sectors to promote all aspects of community development in Wales. It aims to develop a common understanding of the values and practice principles of community development, to promote community development at all levels, throughout Wales, to strengthen support for community development workers and others engaged in community development, play an active role in the advancement of standards in community development practice and facilitate the development of a collective voice to communicate community development at all levels (including policy) for Wales.
- 229** Further information: <http://www.cdc.mid-wales.net/cymraeg/index.php>

## Scarman Trust

- 230** The Scarman Trust is a national charity active in Wales that is committed to helping people bring about change in their community and they fund and give practical assistance. In Wales the Scarman Trust's work began in Cardiff in 1999, with a Millennium Commission funded small grants scheme 'Can Do' which mirrored other Trust activities in other parts of the UK. These grants were awards for individuals who wanted to set up community projects that would benefit their own communities.
- 231** Since then many other individuals and small groups have approached the Trust for help and, although the Can Do scheme has long since ended, they have been able to help many of them access funds and resources and have provided support to develop new projects. The support work with projects and networking has helped a number of larger scale community ideas to develop and come to fruition. The Trust continues to work closely with individuals and small groups in developing their ideas and a number have evolved into much larger scale projects. In some the Trust takes a lead role in others a subsidiary helping role.
- 232** Further information: <http://www.thescarmantrust.org/wales/index.htm>

## Sefydliad

- 233** Sefydliad is an all Wales Community Foundation that supports a wide range of voluntary sector organisations and community groups concerned with improving quality of life for those experiencing disadvantage. Sefydliad's mission is to build a people's fund to make and manage grants to communities, hence championing community activity in Wales. Their vision is to be the leading organisation channelling sources of funding and support to people enabling them to enrich and sustain communities throughout Wales. Their values are for a society where everyone is included, where all have the best opportunities, and sustainability prevails. They support projects in the Valleys, towns and rural areas all over Wales.
- 234** Further information: <http://www.cfip.org.uk/>

## Building Social Enterprise

- 235** Social enterprises have also been present in regeneration in Wales for some years but have so far largely failed to make a substantial impact on mainstream economic revitalisation efforts. Commentators including CEW have argued that too little note has been taken of the capacity of social enterprise to provide a valuable regeneration tool in areas of deprivation and social exclusion. Apparently in response, the Welsh Assembly Government has acknowledged the need to support social enterprise in A Winning Wales through a range of areas including skills and learning, entrepreneurship and SME start ups. It points to the growth in credit unions, and community loan funds to start small businesses, with over £5.5 million of Objective 1 funds committed by 2002 to 28 projects supporting the creation and development of businesses in the social economy.
- 236** Some of the key organisations are noted below.

## Community Action Network

- 237** The Community Action Network (CAN) was founded in 1998 and is a learning and support network for social entrepreneurs and aims to strengthen communities and tackle deprivation in Wales. CAN encourages the use of the web and email based technology in the voluntary sector. CAN is one of eight Welsh organisations appointed by the Assembly to provide specialist services to over 130 Welsh communities in the Communities First programme. CAN has been an integral partner in the establishment of the Communities First Support Network (CFSN). Within CFSN, CAN's role is to provide web development services. CAN is a member of the Communities First Trust Fund Board – a two-year, £9 million fund focusing on providing small but significant grants to local groups, quickly.
- 238** Further information: <http://www.can-online.org.uk/regions/wales.asp>

## Community Enterprise Wales

- 239** Community Enterprise Wales (CEW) was set up nearly 10 years ago and is based in Merthyr Tydfil. It is a network for organisations and individuals who are committed to developing community enterprise in Wales. It contains grass roots groups planning to establish community businesses, and the bodies which support them and the movement in Wales.
- 240** Further information: <http://www.communityenterprisewales.com/>

## The Development Trust Association Wales

- 241** The Development Trust Association Wales (DTAW) is part of a network of community enterprise organisations in the UK and is based at Penarth. The Trust's aim is to assist in the creation of a sustainable development trust in every community in Wales that wants one. It now has 28 full member Trusts in Wales.
- 242** Further information: <http://www.dta.org.uk/>

# Regional Initiatives

## Introduction

- 243** A number of regional initiatives have been established but these have tended to be based around certain specific service requirements such as waste management, transport, and economic development rather than being more broadly strategic. Therefore 'stand alone' documents and processes in terms of regeneration have only been undertaken in two areas: the Five Counties and north Wales.

## Five Counties Regeneration Framework

- 244** The Five Counties Regeneration Framework was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government and developed by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Newport County Borough Council and Torfaen County Borough Council. The WDA and ELWa helped in the preparation. It was in part prompted by decline of steel manufacturing at Corus's Llanwern works and the closure of its site at Ebbw Vale, as well as other major reductions in manufacturing that brought structural change to the economy of the counties. The Regeneration Framework was based on substantial consultation and research involving key stakeholders from public, private and voluntary sectors.
- 245** The Framework defined key drivers of change in social, technological, economic, skills and environmental areas and developed a vision of a smart, successful and well connected region. It established four principles to guide this change: to create a sustainable, knowledge based economy, to establish an integrated and well connected sub-region, to build a lifelong learning culture and to re-establish towns as the centres of economic activity.

## **North Wales Development Strategy - A Winning North Wales**

- 246** This strategy has been driven by the North Wales Economic Forum (NWEF). The vision for north Wales is of a region where, people, business and a unique environment create conditions for success. The mission is “to transform the competitive position of north Wales to bring about sustainable prosperity and well-being for the region and its people”. The Strategy has five interlinking themes relating to business, enterprise and innovation, skills and learning, community cohesion, communication and infrastructure, and the north Wales ‘offer’.
- 247** The underlying principles of the strategy are: diversity and equality, sustainable development, partnership and leadership, and quality. The development of the new Strategy for North Wales suggests a revised structure for the Forum which would include the voluntary and community sectors at both strategic and working group level. The Strategy also proposes greater involvement of the Health Sector

## **Other Regional Strategies and Frameworks**

- 248** Meanwhile, South East Wales Economic Forum has developed a strategy that contributes to local regeneration, mixes commercial and public finance in creative ways, combines market opportunities with better access to services and challenges traditional sector boundaries. The Strategy acts as the context and catalyst for entrepreneurship with a wide range of players, to maximise the impact of regeneration activity.
- 249** In other sub-regions, the Mid Wales Partnership has commissioned an Action Plan for Rural Economic Regeneration, and a North Wales Economic Forum Framework is being prepared.

## **Local Authority and Other Initiatives**

### **Introduction**

- 250** Some of the initiatives noted below were funded by European Structural Funds but are placed here because they cover local authority areas or neighbourhoods and/or reflect local authority and local stakeholder partners’ leadership in the regeneration process described. Some are the result of community enterprise activity. In terms of timeframes for this activity, much seems to have been generated by the availability of European Funds, therefore they can be broadly defined as occurring since the early 1990s. They are ‘Wales wide’ in the sense that they can generally occur in any part of Wales except in the case of Communities First which is tied to the 100 most deprived wards. Again, the synopsis attempts to be broad brush but is not definitive.

## Community Strategies

- 251** As noted elsewhere in this report, the Local Government Act 2000 places a new duty on local authorities in Wales to prepare a “community strategy” to promote or improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This requires authorities to work in partnership with other local bodies and communities themselves, to put in place strategies for their areas which establish common priorities for action and determine the steps needed to address them.
- 252** The Welsh Assembly Government has prepared Guidance on Preparing Community Strategies. According to the guidance, Community Strategies are intended to bring together all those who can contribute to the future of communities within a local authority area, to agree on the key priorities for the area and pursue them in partnership. As such, the preparation and implementation of community strategies will involve the local authority and a wide range of organisations in the public, private, and voluntary and community sectors as well as local people. Although the Act requires local authorities to produce a community strategy, they are not the local authorities’ strategies, but shared documents. They should be prepared jointly by local authorities and their partners, including local communities.

## Community Strategy Partnerships

- 253** Community Strategy Partnerships (CSPs) have been triggered by the development of Community Strategies. They are being established across local authorities in Wales in the wake of the Local Government Act of 2000 which provided authorities with the power to promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of their areas. These, it says, should be seen as the overarching partnerships for each local authority and make clear links to Communities First Partnerships. They should also link to the Community Strategy and the Community Action Plan developed by the Communities First Partnership. It is suggested that in some areas authorities may wish to establish wider strategic partnerships, covering a number of Communities First areas as has occurred in the Five Counties Regeneration Framework.

## Communities First Partnerships

- 254** The Communities First Partnership (CFP) is the group of people who will take on the main responsibility for running the Communities First programme in their area. A Partnership needs to be made up of the following:
- one-third community members;
  - one-third statutory agencies, such as the Council, Health Authority and the Police;
  - one-third representatives from voluntary organisations and business; and
  - the number of community representatives must be at least equal to any other group.

- 255** All partners in a partnership are required to sign a Partnership Agreement confirming how they will work together to make the Communities First programme work. The partnership works as follows: a Communities First Partnership is formed representing different groups in the community. It then employs a Co-ordinator. The Partnership and Co-ordinator consult the community about all the issues, problems and opportunities in the area. They then develop a Community Action Plan of work to improve the community and the Plan is used to apply for funding and join up local services
- 256** Further information: <http://www.neath-porttalbot.gov.uk/communitiesfirst/>

## **Local Housing Strategies and Community Housing Agreements**

- 257** Given the dire situation of much public housing stock (quality and location issues) noted in the 'conditions' review above, and reflected in Wales wide initiatives, ways to improve the diversity, affordability and quality of local housing stock is an important aspect of regeneration. The Welsh Assembly Government supports local authorities in undertaking needs surveys and producing Local Housing Strategies (LHSs) so that investment decisions will be increasingly evidence based and strategic.
- 258** Community Housing Agreements (CHAs) have been mooted in Wales to improve the capacity of local government to harness the contribution that RSLs can make in meeting local housing need and demand. It is argued that CHAs can help ensure effective joint working between local authorities and their partner RSLs, at the strategic level in devising their local housing strategies and operational level in meeting housing provision. These agreements are already used in some areas, "providing an effective means of underpinning the strategic and operational relationship between local authorities and RSLs".

## **Local Authority Led Regeneration Studies, Plans, Frameworks and Strategies**

- 259** A number of local authorities in Wales have either separately or in partnership with local stakeholders produced regeneration plans, programmes and strategies, although there is no area based guidance that promotes a common structure for these initiatives. These have mainly been oriented around the funding that is available and reflect initiatives emerging from Wales and Europe. A selection of local government led or local government related initiatives is listed below.

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