

The Smart Alternative

Caerphilly County Borough's ten year Regeneration Programme



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Introduction

Caerphilly County Borough has an increasingly strategic location between Wales' dynamic capital and the Heads of the Valleys area. This puts it in the front line of Wales' efforts to switch from an economy driven by heavy engineering and low technology manufacturing to high value added manufacturing and services, from local markets to a global economy, from attracting inward manufacturing investment to being able to generate local businesses and be attractive to all types of investors.

This report is a summary of the Regeneration Programme for Caerphilly County Borough over the next ten years. Whilst its formulation is partly a response to the recent closures of Corus plants in South East Wales, there is no doubt that the trends described above - of which Corus was a symptom - make its preparation timely.

The proposals contained in this Programme are predicated on six regeneration principles specially developed to respond to the County Borough's needs - and these vary as it contains many different communities - and to capitalise on the many opportunities open to it. The main report contains a detailed explanation of the principles, and the challenges and opportunities facing the County Borough.

The regeneration principles are:

- Capitalise on proximity to Cardiff and Newport
- Strengthening the economy of the Mid Valleys Corridor
- Build a lifelong learning culture
- Diversify and strengthen the economy
- Re-establish town centres as foci of economic activity
- Community led regeneration throughout the County Borough

The Regeneration Strategy

The proposals in the Caerphilly County Borough Regeneration Programme build on the work undertaken in the Five Counties Regeneration Framework. Whilst the proposals are presented under the six regeneration principles they are cross-referenced in the Action Plan and Funding Report¹ to the Welsh Assembly Government's National Economic Development Strategy - 'A Winning Wales'. This demonstrates how proposals being implemented within the County Borough contribute to achieving national objectives and allow proposals to be related to available funding streams more easily.

The Regeneration Strategy is underpinned by the Council's sustainable development policy which aims to:

- Conserve resources
- Safeguard, enhance and reinstate the diversity of the local environment
- Encourage the local accessibility of services
- Ensure the well being of the community
- Raise awareness of sustainability issues

¹The Action Plan and Funding Report is separately available on request.

Capitalise



1: Capitalise on the proximity to
Cardiff and Newport

Principle 1:

Capitalise on proximity to Cardiff and Newport

The capital and Wales' newest city are both growing and continue to have ambitious growth-led strategies. This will produce spin-out opportunities for Caerphilly County Borough - the smart alternative - with its competitive operating costs for industry, lower house prices and potential for tourism and leisure. Carefully capitalising on these and raising the quality of the County Borough's offer in a range of key areas can bring prosperity to the south of the County Borough that can gradually spread further north.

The relationship with Cardiff especially, but also with Newport and other parts of SE Wales, will become increasingly important as Cardiff and the region becomes more successful and faces the pressures associated with this success. As this happens, Caerphilly County Borough may benefit increasingly from the results. However it needs to be ready to do so, and seeing Cardiff and Newport as an opportunity rather than a threat is fundamental to this.

In practical terms the County Borough will need to ensure that it has transport infrastructure to allow access to jobs, both locally and regionally. It will also need to ensure that its business environment is supportive and that it can provide for the needs of modern businesses which may want to move to the County Borough. It will need to capitalise further on its relationship with Cardiff in tourism, business, and by providing quality, affordable housing.





Improving transport

The County Borough's regeneration will depend heavily on the ability of its - and surrounding - transport infrastructure to underpin its economic and social needs. In order that the relationship with Cardiff and Newport can be maximised, and to improve the County Borough's access for tourists and businesses, developing transport links will be essential. Improvements to public transport to connect people to local jobs and to jobs in Cardiff and Newport will be a key ingredient to regeneration, as will the ability to move goods in and out of the County Borough.

Transforming the tourism and leisure offer

Local people and companies need to be outward looking and able to take advantage of the opportunities that come their way. This does not mean being dependent on Cardiff and Newport, but it does mean making sure that the County Borough makes the most of having these two cities so close. This especially applies with respect to tourism and leisure, where the County Borough may be able to capitalise on being so close to Cardiff both by providing a niche offer for the capital's population and by ensuring that tourists who visit Cardiff might also visit Caerphilly County Borough. Transforming the leisure and tourism offer in three particular areas of the County Borough- Caerphilly Town, Llancaiach Fawr and Cwmcarn - will be essential to achieve this.

Promoting the County Borough's business offer

Comprehensive proposals to strengthen and diversify the economy are set out under principle 4. However there are some specific areas on which a particular focus will be required, in order to make best use of the proximity to Cardiff and Newport.

Careful attention needs to be paid to the opportunities which Cardiff, and to a lesser extent Newport, present in business terms. The real benefits of Cardiff will only be gained if the offer to businesses complements rather than tries to compete with Cardiff's.

As Cardiff becomes increasingly successful as a business location, this will generate two particular problems which the south of the County Borough - initially - might capitalise on in the medium and longer terms. These relate to overheating and to the emergence of new and unexpected opportunities. If the business offer is appropriate it could increasingly offer a realistic - and smarter - alternative to Cardiff as a business location.

If the relationship with Cardiff is genuinely going to benefit the County Borough, then there must be adequate ICT infrastructure. This needs to be complemented by strong ICT support through the business support infrastructure and through general training efforts.

Not least, Cardiff and Newport should be viewed as a market for the products and services offered by local companies, perhaps in new areas such as those associated with an Eco-Park development. This means raising the profile of the County Borough throughout the sub-region.

Proposals for developing quality, affordable housing are set out under principle 5, 'Re-establish town centres as foci of economic activity'. However increased housing choice at affordable levels is a requirement throughout the County Borough, not just in the town centres.



Strengthening



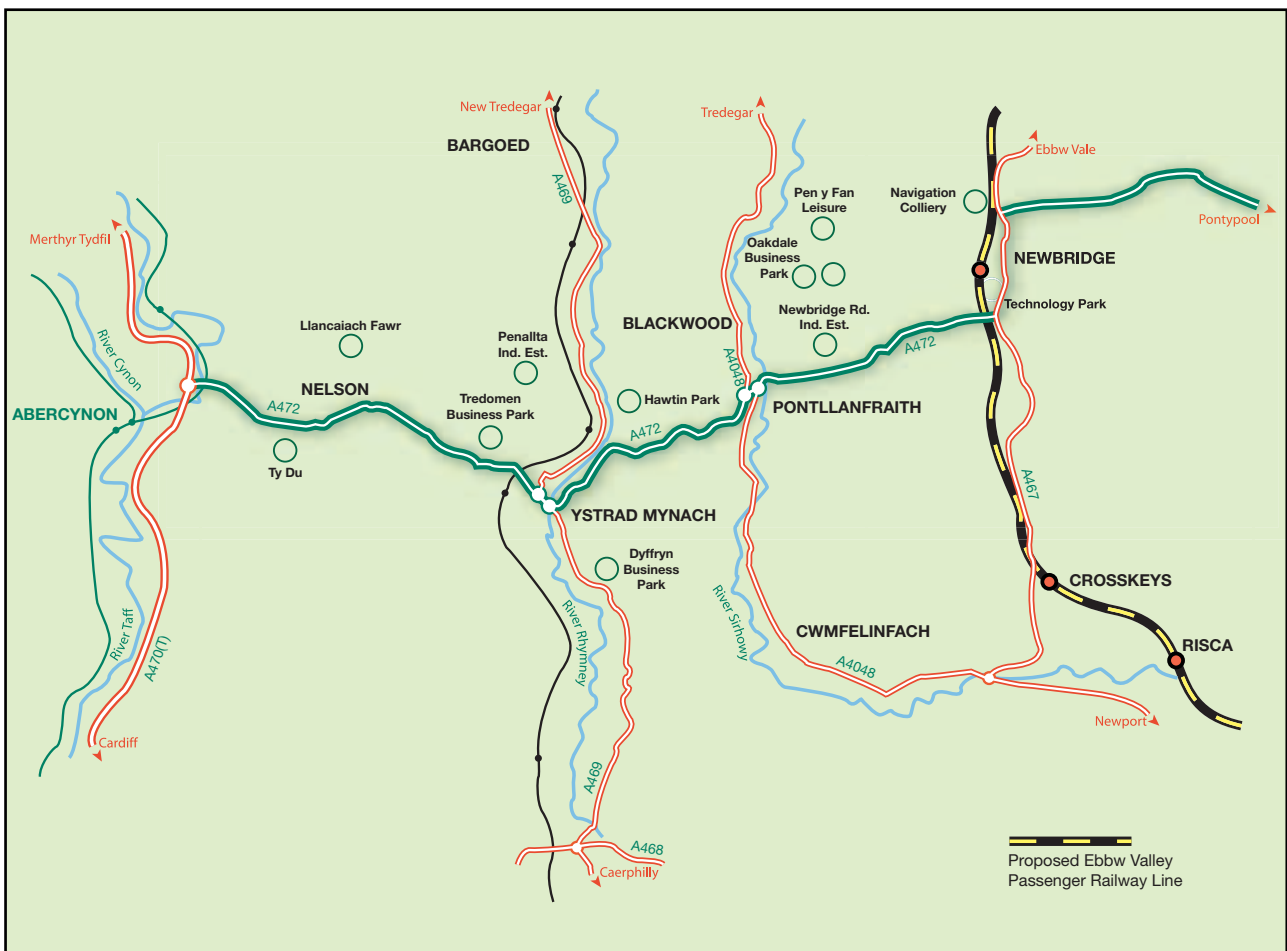
2: Strengthening the economy of the Mid Valleys Corridor

Principle 2:

Strengthening the economy of the Mid Valleys Corridor

A major policy of the County Borough Council Unitary Development Plan is that developmental pressures should be constrained in the south of the County Borough to protect the environment of the Caerphilly Basin and normally diverted northwards to support and promote regeneration of the Mid and Northern Valleys areas. The corridor along the A472, which has been the subject of on-going improvements for over a decade, is the heart of the delivery of this approach, and specific proposals are made in the Caerphilly County Borough Regeneration Programme to support it. Many are local variants of County Borough-wide policies prioritising the opportunities in the Mid Valleys area.

There is active discussion about a new hospital in the County Borough and a location in the Mid Valleys corridor should be considered as a top priority.



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The Mid Valleys Corridor (A472).

Improving transport in The Corridor

Continuing to improve access and transport within and into the corridor is essential. In particular, priority should be given to the completion of the Mid Valleys Cross Valley's route (A472) and the Sirhowy Enterprise Way. There is also a case for generally improving local access to public transport options and supporting additional bus services between Nelson and Caerphilly and key employment areas. The proposed Transport Corridor Economic Improvement and Barrier Removal Studies should prioritise the Mid Valleys Corridor.



Transforming The Corridor's tourism and leisure offer

The tourism and leisure offer of the Corridor can also be improved, firstly by implementing current plans for expansion/improvement of facilities at Llancaiach Fawr and promoting the Manor through Herian, the new heritage tourism initiative, and secondly by consciously seeking to strengthen commercial leisure facility provision in Blackwood.



Promoting The Corridor's business offer

This could best be achieved by ensuring that there is adequate ICT infrastructure, complemented by strong ICT support through the business support infrastructure, in the Mid Valleys areas. In particular, a feasibility study should be undertaken into the possibility of establishing specialist tele-working centres in the Mid Valleys area and the proposed specialist study to assess the opportunities for an Eco-Park in the County Borough should concentrate on it being established in the Mid Valleys Corridor.





Extending the general take-up of ICT in The Corridor

Increasing ICT access to SMEs located in the Corridor will be essential. The Council should therefore continue to promote the use of broadband by businesses. Consideration should be given to duplicating the IT Cafe Bargoed, designed to help to engage young people in IT usage, in other parts of the Corridor.

Provision of quality sites and premises in The Corridor

Advance interest in the second phase of the Tredomen Business Park demonstrates significant demand and progress should be made with a third phase. Similar office accommodation should be developed elsewhere in the Corridor and consideration should be given to introducing this type of development at Oakdale Business Park, and Ty Du.



Build



3: Build a lifelong learning culture

Principle 3:

Building a lifelong learning culture

The County Borough's below average educational attainment rates, which are related to high levels of poverty and social deprivation, will need to be raised significantly if the regeneration efforts are to succeed. There are encouraging signs as improvements in GCSE and A Level pass rate are improving at a faster rate than the national average. Efforts need to be directed at general education and learning provision - including all levels of formal education plus basic skills - and in ICT skills.



Education and Learning

The main challenges include: raising aspirations and attainment; providing relevant vocational training and post-16 education; ensuring that the CCET's role is pivotal and that it drives the agenda; continuing the emphasis on basic skills development, including information and communication technologies; ensuring that access is available to connected 'Learning Places' rather than just schools (for access by everyone rather than just children); promoting lifelong learning and skills for all ages and groups; providing the skills required for global business; and ensuring the provision of learning opportunities for disadvantaged groups.

In order to achieve the ambitious changes required in the educational performance, consideration will need to be given to how the maximum value is derived from the investments in education provision.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

A Winning Wales points out that, as a result of an increasingly integrated world economy, features such as good quality communication links and broadband infrastructure will be considered important by businesses seeking to make location decisions. Access to such infrastructure will also be crucial to the success of indigenous businesses. Efforts to improve the ICT infrastructure must therefore continue and be strengthened.



With the increasing importance of digital technology in the workplace, there is a need to improve the ICT skills of the workforce and of those who need such skills to enter the labour market. There are three complementary strands to promoting the use of ICT: extending the general take-up of ICT by residents throughout the County Borough, especially children (this is particularly important for education and training purposes); extending the take-up of ICT by companies; and promoting the availability of high capacity broadband services. The first of these strands is dealt with under principle 3, the other two under principle 4.

Diversify



4: Diversify and strengthen the economy

Principle 4:

Diversify and strengthen the economy

The Regeneration Programme envisages a shift to services and high value-added knowledge-based manufacturing. It does so by emphasising the need to provide a more sophisticated environment in which to do business. There are 6 key elements to achieving this: business support; provision of quality sites and premises; enabling innovation; promoting entrepreneurship; establishing Caerphilly County Borough in the World; and promoting improved use of ICT.

Business support

It is widely recognised that it will be home-grown small firms which will make the biggest contribution to regeneration. Recent changes to business support mean the WDA is now responsible for support for all firms - not just larger companies and inward investors. However, provision remains very fragmented, although this is less the case in Caerphilly County Borough than in most other counties. The new Business and Technology Centre at Tredomen is an exemplar project and provides the County Borough with an excellent advantage in its business support offer. This offer needs to be reinforced with a more strategic approach to clients and increased clarity and co-operation amongst partners.

In particular, the needs of manufacturers and service sectors of the economy need further consideration and support. The service sector will need, in the longer term, to become the mainstay of the local economy, and will require dedicated support. This will require the advanced use of up to date business intelligence and a re-examination of how current provision fits together.

There is already a strong platform on which to build in terms of supporting businesses, including the work of the Caerphilly Business Forum. With some more focused activities and more joint working, the business support system may be used more effectively to meet the needs and provide the supportive and responsive environment which modern businesses demand.





Provision of quality sites and premises

Quality business sites and premises are already being made available throughout the County Borough and there is not an overall shortage of site availability (although infrastructure issues limit the short-term availability of some sites). The Five Counties Framework provided detailed proposals for site development and the County Borough's own development plan is building on these, with advance planning and/or works being undertaken on a number of strategic sites, especially along the Mid Valleys growth corridor (Ty Du, Tredomen, and Oakdale) and in the south of the County Borough (Caerphilly Business Park).

Industrial and large scale sites need to be supplemented with other elements of provision including smaller workshop and office sites, especially in town centres, since this could provide a major regeneration boost.

Attention also needs to be paid to ensuring that all sites and premises meet the demands of modern occupiers and are well kept so as to provide a pleasant working environment and portray a positive image. Proposals are therefore made for improved estate management and some estate modernisation.

Enabling innovation

Encouraging innovation throughout the County Borough in both the private and public sectors will be a central element to future success in strengthening and diversifying the economy. A Winning Wales highlights the following priorities with regard to innovation: ensuring businesses innovate by developing new products, processes and management practice, maximising the use of ICT; enabling strong links between businesses and educational institutions; strengthening the technology base of educational institutions; enabling the successful commercial exploitation of new ideas; and testing advice and support services for their capacity to promote innovation.

Embedding these priorities in the regeneration efforts will not be easy, although a positive start has already been made. Two of the most important ways of embedding these priorities relate to institutional and company innovation.

Institutional innovation will be a requirement if the economy is to be diversified and strengthened. It is essentially concerned with ensuring the maximum effectiveness and use of public sector resources through promoting: joint development and project working - trying to ensure that existing structures continue to deliver new ideas which maximise value. The proposals are consistent with the Best Value agenda and the outcome of the recent peer review of the Council. Similarly, the virtual authority proposal (under principle 5 on town centres) is a mechanism for ensuring that more of the existing public sector spend is re-used by focusing its impact on town centres.

Company innovation covers: product and process innovation via E-enablement; targeted resources for manufacturers; and sites and premises to meet the needs of innovative businesses.

Promoting entrepreneurship

Encouraging entrepreneurship throughout the County Borough in both the private and public sectors will be required to provide the ongoing rejuvenation the economy needs to be successful. A Winning Wales highlights the following priorities with regard to entrepreneurship: improving the climate for enterprise; offering better support for new and growing businesses; and making the school and college education system more focused on teamwork, project work, creativity and business venturing.

This will need to be done by: implementing the National Entrepreneurship Action Plan through a Local Entrepreneurship Action Plan which details exactly how the national targets might be achieved; and extending the use of Community Enterprise activities.





Establishing Caerphilly County Borough in the World

Successful local economies have businesses which operate on the world stage. Many of the County Borough's inward investors, some of its indigenous manufacturing companies and a few of its service sector enterprises, do this, but not enough of them do. More local enterprises need to be assisted in embracing international business opportunities and in building stronger strategic alliances between the County Borough's economy and those elsewhere.

A number of areas will be important to the regeneration in terms of how the area engages with the rest of the world and how it is viewed externally. This is partly about encouraging an outward looking attitude in business, but also about strong and effective marketing of the excellent offer, as well as making sure the reality of the offer corresponds with the marketing.

The importance of a key theme in this area - tourism and leisure - has already been set out under principle 1. Two further aspects also need to

be promoted, namely: increased business dynamism through the establishment of international economic partnerships and increased recognition for the County Borough nationally and internationally; and inward investment marketing and strategic sites and the promotion as an area with the ambition and passion to meet modern business needs.

Promoting improved use of ICT

At present, business take-up of digital technology is low amongst SMEs throughout the County Borough but as a result of the Caerphilly Connected Partnership there are new opportunities to access high capacity broadband services and this is being encouraged by the introduction of a subsidy scheme for businesses.

The Welsh Assembly Government has provided a £2 million cash injection through the Corus Regeneration Fund to build upon the existing ICT support infrastructure in the Five Counties. The subsidy scheme is supported by this fund.

Re-establish



5: Re-establish town centres as foci of economic activity

Principle 5:

Re-establish town centres as foci of economic activity

The traditional role of town centres symbolised the strength of the whole town and provided a major economic motor within it. This has too often been undermined by new out-of-town developments. However it would be unrealistic to advocate turning back the clock on out of town development - there is an economic logic for this trend, but it creates new opportunities in its wake.

Instead, efforts do need to be made to find new ways in which spend can be generated in town centres both during the day and in the evenings. The County Borough is already at the forefront of such efforts in South Wales, and the Regeneration Programme is designed to support those efforts and build them into an ever more ambitious yet achievable improvement. It does this through proposals for a variety of inter-related measures designed to maximise public sector impact. These include: public realm improvements; improving retailing and the tourism and hospitality offer; widening the range of office activities; and increasing town centre living.

A more pro-active approach to town centres may be required, involving the use of CPO powers when necessary and therefore requiring greater partnership working with the WDA and the private sector. New and creative approaches will need to be utilised to fund these proposals.





Public realm improvements

The Five Counties Framework identified town centre renewal as an essential - and sustainable - element of the economic regeneration of the sub-region. Developing town centres has long been identified as one of the major drivers for regeneration. Detailed Town Centre Action Plans have been drawn up for the major towns, including Caerphilly, Ystrad Mynach, Newbridge, Risca, Blackwood and Bargoed. These Town Centre Action Plans will undoubtedly strengthen the potential of the towns to engender local community pride and to raise levels of economic activity across the whole of the County Borough, driving the regeneration process forward.

Improvements to the public realm are vital but not sufficient, with additional focus required on encouraging economic activity in the improved areas and on detailed efforts to raise the economic contribution of individual sites and buildings but, especially of course, those that are unused or under-used.

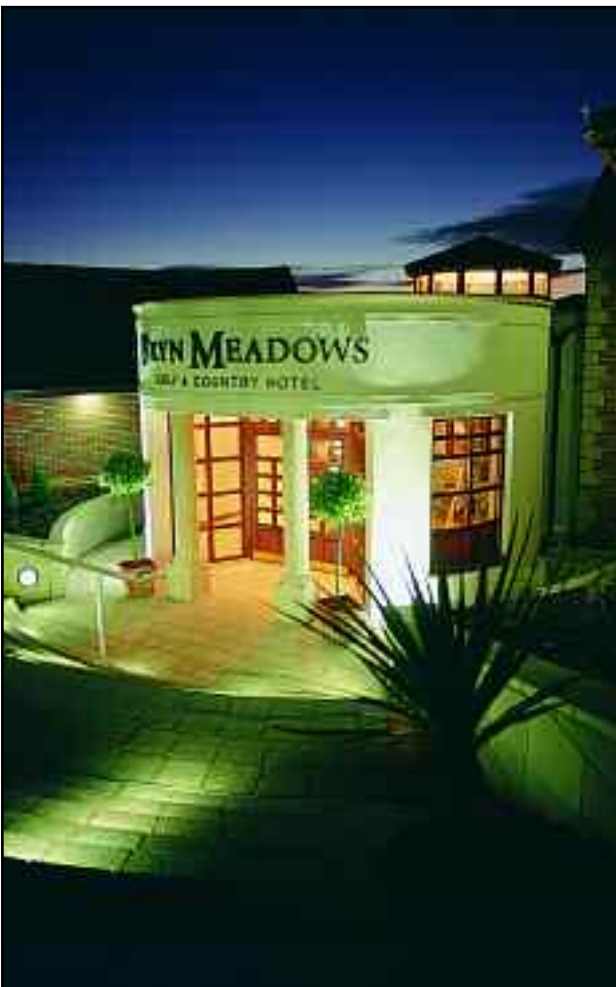
The Council and the WDA are identifying specific opportunities in town centres. Systematic buildings surveys are needed in each of the town centres to identify buildings and plots where use can be intensified (empty chapels, Miner's Institutes, police station and courts, etc.) and to identify appropriate potential uses that can be introduced. The use of CPO powers is likely to be necessary for this to be a successful policy.

The value of street painting schemes to show local people that improvement is possible and that the public sector can deliver results is often undervalued. Many of the town centres would benefit from having a Town Centre Development Manager.

Improving retailing and the tourism and hospitality offer

The County Borough has weak and inadequate retail provision that results in people travelling considerable distances to shop for everyday items. The two main centres, Caerphilly and Blackwood, do not rank highly compared to other centres in Wales, although improvements are evident in Caerphilly and Blackwood.

The towns also suffer from a real lack of leisure and evening facilities such as quality restaurants. Yet the County Borough is well placed to capture economic spillover from Cardiff. Specific proposals are made with regard to this in Caerphilly - where the opportunities are strongest - under principle 1. However, they exist in many other town centres, albeit on a smaller scale.



Widening the range of office activities

There is a need to diversify into increased service sector jobs within the town centres, and to reduce the dependence on manufacturing. Cost pressures on Cardiff - as set out in principle 1 - can allow the County Borough to offer a lower cost alternative for Cardiff based companies. However, there is a need to compete on quality as well as price.

Finding ways to achieve the improvements required in town centres will not be easy, and careful consideration needs to be made of the role that the public sector might play.

The Council could make a contribution to the regeneration by establishing itself as a 'virtual' authority, with a range of office-based work relocated to the town centres. This scheme, which could see the Council as a 'model' authority, would be consistent with the ambitions of the current Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Statement, and could have a very positive impact on the image of the County Borough.

Increasing town centre living

New homes in town centres can address a number of problems: shortage of homes, adding residents' expenditure into local retailing, adding life to the town centres in the evenings/weekends and putting buildings to use when they might otherwise stay derelict or generate little income for the owners. This starts from the view that town centres should be utilised much more to drive the regeneration. Also, that much greater consideration should be given to individual sites in town centres that are appropriate for modernisation, refurbishment, or redevelopment to provide office accommodation and 'town centre living'.

Community



6: Community led regeneration
throughout the County Borough

Principle 6:

Community led regeneration throughout the County Borough A Winning Wales acknowledges the role community regeneration has to play in economic regeneration. The roll out of the Communities First programme attempts to focus resources on the most disadvantaged communities. It is a long-term programme, which will run for a minimum of ten years, which aspires to increase the level of participation of local people.

The Communities First initiatives are rapidly evolving and the activities are addressing some of the major obstacles to regeneration: poor frameworks for social support; poor health; low levels of economic activity; high levels of disability; poverty; and outdated infrastructure. Whilst the approach being developed seems capable of delivering many of the desired results there is also a need to put more emphasis on proposals that create economic activity - especially jobs - and employment training opportunities.



Raising self-belief and direct action in the deprived (Communities First) areas

Regeneration requires investment, which only proceeds if there is a belief that there will be a future return. This applies just as much to individuals investing in their skills as to companies investing in production equipment, labour skills or brand development. Giving confidence to communities to help solve their own problems and showing how the public sector can contribute is essential. Therefore, general support for the principles behind the Communities First programme along with giving that programme a much enhanced economic development and community enterprise element is another strategic thrust of the overall Regeneration Programme.

Carefully targeted public sector investment can also make a major contribution to regeneration throughout the County Borough. One such major investment, which has been the subject of ongoing discussions between the new Local Health Board and the Council, concerns a possible new or upgraded hospital and health care provision for the area.

Given demographic changes and the proposed increases in UK spending on health over the period of the Regeneration Programme, some of the options under consideration could have major regeneration implications for the County Borough - they could lead to new well paid direct jobs as well as a significant number of indirect jobs.

Widening housing choice

Wales's capital and its newest city are adjacent to the County Borough. They are pursuing ambitious growth programmes and have been experiencing fairly rapid house price increases. Housing in the County Borough is relatively cheap but is also likely to prove a good investment as the coastal belt's success ripples northwards.

Poor housing and a limited choice of homes - particularly in the northern parts of the County Borough - directly affect quality of life and health. But they also have many undesirable side effects, including forcing local people forging careers to leave to find better homes, thus depriving communities of role models and potentially active residents. More significantly, expansion of the housing stock and improvements to existing property also provide both business (start up and expansion) and employment opportunities. Therefore widening the housing choice north of the Mid Valleys area and in town centres should make a significant contribution to delivering the objectives of the Regeneration Programme.

Supporting rural communities

However there are many areas (including some rural ones), which fall outside the remit of Communities First. It is vital that such areas are not forgotten in any efforts to encourage regeneration in the County Borough. Community partnerships are, therefore, being developed in all parts of the County Borough as part of the community planning process.

With regard to rural communities, the Rural Objective 1 Strategy explores the opportunities for using the potential of rural areas as part of the regeneration process. This should be viewed as a complementary document informing the detailed development of the Action Plan.

Priorities and implementation



Priorities and implementation

The successful regeneration of Caerphilly County Borough will depend on the abilities of those involved, primarily the Council, but also other public agencies (WDA, ELWa, WTB etc) to mobilise the market to help drive such regeneration. Regeneration will only occur if private investors (e.g. employers, retailers, property developers) believe that the communities in the County Borough will be prosperous.

Setting out the key priorities

The six Regeneration Principles around which the Regeneration Programme is based are complementary - that is they support and reinforce each other. The six principles may be categorised into 'guiding' and 'fundamental' principles. Guiding principles should inform the activities pursued under the fundamental principles.

The categorisation of the principles is set out in the schedule 'Categorisation of Regeneration Principles' below. Their priority within the Caerphilly County Borough Regeneration Programme is based on the consultations carried out.

Categorisation of Regeneration Principles			
No.	Principle	Category	Priority
1	Capitalise on the County Borough's proximity to Cardiff and Newport	Guiding	2
2	Strengthen the economy of the Mid Valleys Corridor	Guiding	2
3	Build a lifelong learning culture, which provides alternative and accessible 'pathways to learning'	Fundamental	1
4	Strengthen and diversify the economy, especially into services and high value-added knowledge-based manufacturing, by providing a more sophisticated environment in which to do business.	Fundamental	1
5	Re-establish town centres as foci of economic activity.	Guiding	2
6	Promote Community led regeneration throughout the County Borough	Guiding	2

The first principle - 'Capitalise on the County Borough's proximity to Cardiff and Newport' - may be regarded as a guiding principle in trying to ensure that what is offered complements what is being offered elsewhere rather than duplicating this offer. It should be used to inform activity in the implementation of the other principles.

This is also the case for principles 2 and 5: "Strengthening the economy of the Mid Valleys Corridor (A472)" and "Re-establish town centres as foci of economic activity". They each suggest a spatial focus to regeneration efforts by ensuring that most activity is centred on a particular part of the County Borough and existing centres of population. Regeneration efforts should be clearly aimed at capitalising on the opportunities created by the better access resulting from the upgrading of the A472 as this can serve areas more remote from the M4 Corridor and on re-establishing town centres as these provide the most likely 'engine' for additional economic and social activity, including in the case of Caerphilly town increased spending from visitors to the County Borough.

Principle 6 - 'Promote Community led regeneration throughout the County Borough' is also a guiding principle, since it informs the methods by which regeneration may be delivered. It also encompasses proposals for smaller scale projects which may use a limited spend to generate a large impact in a small community.

The two fundamental principles - building a lifelong learning culture and strengthening and diversifying the economy - are envisaged as the

'twin pillars' of regeneration efforts. They will underpin the regeneration of the County Borough over the next 5-10 years and beyond. Failure to deliver significantly against the proposals set out in these two principles would be a major setback for the regeneration effort.

Fundamental to the successful realisation of this regeneration effort and the implementation of the Programme, is the clear articulation of priorities - clearly, not all actions can be undertaken simultaneously, and some actions will take longer to bear fruit than others.

The implementation of the Programme will depend upon key public sector contributions as follows:

Caerphilly County Borough Council

The County Borough Council will need to remain actively engaged in the Five Counties process, including its Regeneration Forum and three year rolling programme.

The Council will continue to play a primary role in regeneration and economic development. The Council already has a strong team of officers, who work with the communities to conceive, secure funding for, and manage a wide range of economic development and regeneration projects. This strong involvement of the officer teams needs to continue but their efforts need to be much more integrated and focused.

Consideration also needs to be given to issues of resourcing. A consequence of the proposals on tourism and leisure is that they will generate a need for enhancement of the Council's Tourism Development Team and budget. Given the

proposals set out in the Regeneration Programme, similar considerations may also apply in the area of Business Development, Community Regeneration, and for Town Centre Development Managers.

As the local planning authority, the Council undertakes the key decisions on all major land developments/property projects. In order to make this process more certain it is vital that a strong link is created between regeneration and work on community strategies and development plans.

This will ensure that regeneration benefits from wide support deriving from early involvement of the community, including business, and that decision making - and thus implementation - benefits from the strength of adopted development plan policy.

As the local education authority, with a strong commitment to promoting the lifelong learning principle, the Council will be responsible for key elements of the regeneration programme and will play a major role in the CCET.

A Strategic Regeneration Partnership has been created to bring all stakeholders together to agree a common agenda and priorities within the framework of the community strategy.

The Welsh Development Agency

The WDA will continue to play a primary role to directly build key projects, provide grant support for others and assist some land acquisition/disposals. In addition, the WDA will continue its role on inward investment promotion and after-care, support for indigenous businesses, and new start-ups via the Enterprise Agencies.

ELWa/The CCET

ELWa and the CCET will perform essential roles. With their responsibilities for post-16 education, work-based training, and lifelong learning, the effectiveness of their investments will be key to the economic future of the County Borough. ELWa South East Wales has prepared a Regional Statement of Needs and Priorities - this is providing the basis for detailed planning of post-16 provision with the CCET.

Wales Tourist Board and South East Wales Regional Tourism Partnership

Commitment from the Wales Tourist Board and Capital Region Tourism (CRT) will be vital. In light of the importance of tourism to the future of the local economy, CRT could become a significant supporting partner.

Project development, monitoring and evaluation

Project development, appraisal, implementation and monitoring needs to be undertaken for the proposed projects deriving from the Regeneration Programme. The importance of this process cannot be understated - it is not an optional 'add-on' but is fundamental to driving forward the overall regeneration of the County Borough.

Further information

THE FULL REPORT '**CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH REGENERATION PROGRAMME**'
AND ACCOMPANYING APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Action Plan and Funding Report.

APPENDIX 2: Caerphilly Today (Overview of the County Borough).

APPENDIX 3: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST TO:

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