

WEST WREXHAM URBAN 2 COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

DRAFT Programme Document

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1: DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT SITUATION

- .1 Wrexham County Borough Council and the Welsh Development Agency (with support from DTZ Piedad Consulting) is preparing a strategy for the economic restructuring of the County Borough's Urban Villages, which it intends to develop and implement over the next five years. The strategy also provides the context for the West Wrexham URBAN Initiative Programme. This programme offers an opportunity to access funding to address some of the social, economic and environmental regeneration issues affecting the West Wrexham area.
- .2 The Urban Villages comprise 17 wards which, generally, share a legacy of industrial decline associated with the disappearance of steel-making and mineral extraction from the County Borough's economy. A number of these communities, in West Wrexham in particular, now suffer from economic, social, and physical problems which have arisen out of the decline of the traditional industrial base. The URBAN strategy addresses community needs as well as the economic development and physical regeneration of these communities.
- .3 The West Wrexham Area focuses on 9 of the 17 Urban Village Wards which exhibit economic, social and physical problems which meet the criteria for the URBAN initiative. The baseline aims to evaluate the characteristics of the West Wrexham area in terms of the URBAN criteria. This Chapter provides information under the following major topic headings:
 - the key findings of the report as a whole
 - the population structure of the West Wrexham area, focusing in particular on issues such as depopulation and ageing population
 - the economic characteristics of the West Wrexham area with an emphasis on economic activity rates
 - the nature of the unemployment problem, in particular examining issues such as youth and long-term unemployment
 - deprivation indicators for the West Wrexham area to assess levels of poverty and exclusion
 - criminality and delinquency
 - education and skill levels of residents
 - environment, transport and services infrastructure

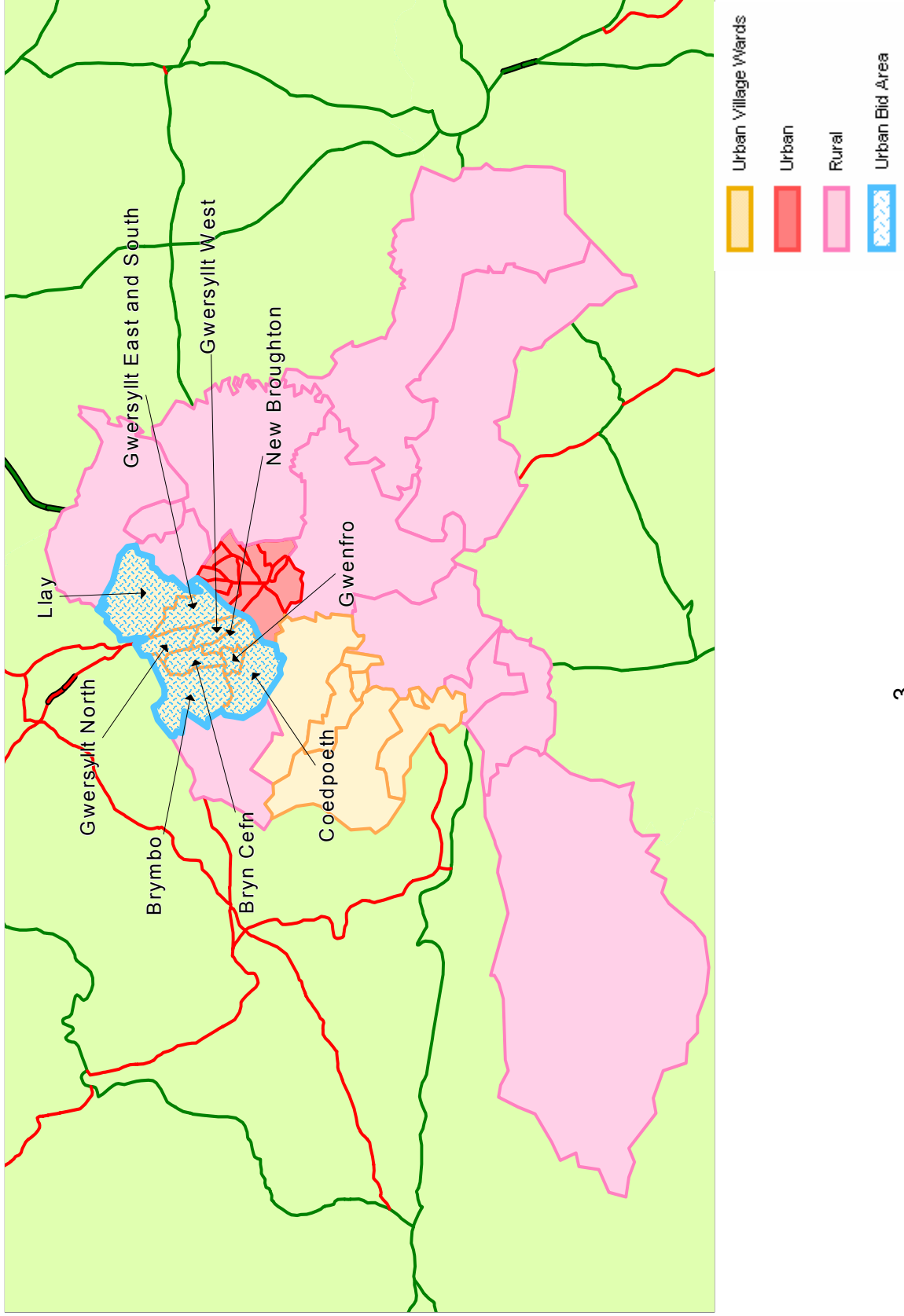
AREA DEFINITIONS

- .4 There are 9 wards in the West Wrexham area which can be described by five broad community groupings. These are, as follows:

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
Bryn Cefn Gwenfro New Broughton	Brymbo	Coedpoeth	Gwersyllt East and South Gwersyllt North Gwersyllt West	Llay

- .5 Map 1.1 illustrates the geography of the West Wrexham area in relation to Wrexham as a whole.

MAP 1.1
GEOGRAPHY OF WREXHAM AND THE "URBAN" BID AREA



KEY FINDINGS

		Para- graph Ref:
West Wrexham has a high proportion of working age population	The West Wrexham study area has a slightly higher young dependent population but a lower elderly dependent population than the Wrexham average.	1.9
Employment in the West Wrexham area is very male oriented	Since 1991, male employment has increased strongly in West Wrexham (by 24%), whilst female employment has been almost static. Male employment in West Wrexham in 1998 accounted for 61% of all employment in Wrexham.	1.32
Narrow economic base	AES data (1998) illustrates that 49% of employment in West Wrexham is in manufacturing, with about 20% of all employment in one branch plant factory (Sharp Electronics). The Wrexham economy as a whole is over-dependent on manufacturing, and econometric forecasts indicate that around 1,500 jobs will be lost to the local manufacturing base by 2005.	1.37
There are a limited number of key sectors in the West Wrexham area	The manufacturing sector is a very important employer particularly in Llay. However, this dependency is problematic as the sector continues to be hard-hit by competition and technological change. Other key sectors include construction and service sectors such as distribution, hotels and restaurants, and public administration, education and health.	1.37
Economic activity rates are below the Wrexham average in the majority of wards	Evidence from the 1991 census suggest that the economic activity rate in West Wrexham is comparable to the GB average. However, LAD-level data for Wrexham indicates that economic activity rates are declining for the Borough, at the same time as employment has been growing strongly. The economic activity for Wrexham declined from 75% in 1991 to 70.5% in 1998. The economically active population in the West Wrexham area is significantly below the Wrexham average in certain wards, particularly Brymbo and Gwenfro and all below the GB average.	1.51
There is a significant difference in the unemployment rates of individual wards	Wards such as Gwenfro have consistently had a relatively high unemployment rate throughout the 1990s. Long term unemployment in West Wrexham accounts for 17% of all unemployment, a higher figure than for Wrexham as a whole, but less than for Wales. Long term unemployment in West Wrexham is particularly acute among older females.	1.66
Weak entrepreneurial culture	Business start-up and self-employment data are often used as indicators of economic competitiveness. Business start-up data for West Wrexham is not available, but at the level of County Borough data suggests a weak entrepreneurial culture (new VAT-registrations are at % of the GB average). West Wrexham has a significantly lower proportion of the self-employed, with 8.7% of the workforce self-employed compared to 13% for Wales and 11.5% for GB.	1.76

		Para- graph Ref:
Low pay and debt problems are a characteristic of the West Wrexham area	Part-time work in the West Wrexham area is an important aspect of the economy. This is traditionally characterised by low pay and few benefits. Rising consumer and housing debt is also a cause for concern in the area.	1.80
Communities suffer from problems of isolation	A significant proportion of households in some wards do not have a car. This, combined with unsatisfactory public transport provision can contribute to feelings of isolation and restrict employment opportunities.	1.107
Crimes is significant in the area	Crimes per head in the West Wrexham area between 1997-1998 were high compared to Wrexham. 16.4% of all crimes in Wrexham were compiled in West Wrexham during this period.	1.124
Low Skills Culture	<i>Future Skills Wales</i> research indicates that only 15% of Wrexham's workforce are qualified to NVQ level 4 or higher, compared to 20% for Wales. At the same time, 15% of employers report significant gaps in the types of skills employees currently possess and those skills required to meet business objectives. Skills gaps are highlighted in clerical, secretarial and skilled trade occupations. <i>Future Skills Wales</i> research indicates that 56% of Wrexham employers identify a significant gap between the skills local school and college leavers possess and those than the employer requires.	1.146
Educational attainment is low in some communities	Schools such as Ysgol Bryn Alyn have a low educational attainment. The wards which serve this school score highly on deprivation indicators.	1.140
The study area has a high degree of physical dilapidation in certain areas	The decline of the traditional industrial base in the study area has led to a number of derelict, vacant or physically neglected sites and premises. This, combined with low incomes and high unemployment, has also seen a deterioration in the housing stock and community centres.	1.173
A high profile of Local Authority owned housing is characteristic in the area	For example, Gwenfro has 61% of its housing stock owned by the Council. Many of the pre-war and early post-war dwellings are now in need of investment to upgrade the properties.	1.176

POPULATION STRUCTURE

- .6 In this sub-section we detail the population structure of each ward and that of the West Wrexham area as a whole.
- .7 Using 1998 estimates, there are, in total, 28,770 residents in the West Wrexham area, representing 23.0% of the Borough's population. Table 1.1 illustrates the resident population in each ward of West Wrexham and examines the gender distribution by ward in comparison to the Wrexham, Wales and Great Britain averages.

Table 1.1 Resident Population by Gender 1998			
	Resident Population	% Male	% Female
Brymbo	2,635	48.7	51.3
Bryn Cefn	1,928	48.3	51.7
Coedpoeth	5,063	49.7	50.3
Gwenfro	1,716	50.3	49.7
Gwersyllt East and South	4,477	47.6	52.4
Gwersyllt North	2,562	50.6	49.4
Gwersyllt West	2,670	48.4	51.6
Llay	4,788	49.4	50.6
New Broughton	2,931	47.8	52.2
West Wrexham area	28,770	49.0	51.0
Wrexham	125,200	50.0	50.0
Wales*	2,933.300	49.0	51.0
United Kingdom*	59,236.500	49.2	50.8

Source: Wrexham County Borough Council/ * = Key Population and Vital Statistics©ONS, 1998

- .8 Wrexham, as a whole, has an even gender distribution. However, there is a slightly larger proportion of females in West Wrexham, with 51% of the total residents. This gender distribution is the same as the Wales average.
- .9 Table 1.2 illustrates the age profile of West Wrexham, benchmarked against Wrexham, Wales and Great Britain averages.

Table 1.2 Populations of the wards in West Wrexham 1998							
	Resident Population	Aged under 16	% Aged under 16	Adults of working age	% of adults of work- ing age	Retired population	% of retired pop- ulation
Brymbo	2635	538	20.4	1635	62.0	462	17.5
Bryn Cefn	1928	396	20.5	1244	64.5	288	14.9
Coedpoeth	5063	1092	21.6	3206	63.3	765	15.1
Gwenfro	1716	383	22.3	1053	61.4	280	16.3
Gwersyllt East and South	4477	1000	22.3	2866	64.0	611	13.6
Gwersyllt North	2562	558	21.8	1718	67.1	286	11.2
Gwersyllt West	2670	595	22.3	1670	62.5	405	15.2
Llay	4788	946	19.8	3061	63.9	781	16.3
New Broughton	2931	562	19.2	1841	62.8	528	18.0
West Wrexham area	28,770	6,070	21.1	18,294	63.6	4,406	15.3
Wrexham*	125,200	25,300	20.2	76,100	60.8	23,700	18.9
Wales*	2,933.300	599.200	20.4	1,749,000	59.6	585.400	20.0
United Kingdom*	59,236.500	12,109.900	20.4	36,396.600	61.4	10,729.800	18.1

Source: Wrexham County Borough Council/ * = Key Population and Vital Statistics©ONS, 1998

- .10 The West Wrexham area has a distinctly higher young dependant population than the Wrexham, Wales or United Kingdom benchmarks, but a smaller elderly dependant population. The resident population aged under 16 years of age forms 21.1% of the total population in the West Wrexham area, whereas Wales as a whole only has 20.4% of its total population in this age group. In contrast, the area has only 15.3% of its population classed as retired, compared to 20% for Wales as a whole.
- .11 The proportion of young dependant residents in the West Wrexham area is particularly high in the wards of Gwenfro, Gwersyllt East and South, and Gwersyllt West. All of these communities have 22.3% of their resident population in the young (0-16 years) age group.
- .12 Overall, however, it can be seen that the West Wrexham area has an above-average proportion of its population in working age cohorts. For example, it has 63.6% of its population classed as being of working age, in comparison to the average of 59.6% in Wales as a whole.
- .13 Table 1.3 outlines the changes in population structure since 1991.

Table 1.3 Population structure in the West Wrexham Wards 1991 and 1998				
Ward	1991 population	1998 Estimate of population	Change	% Change
Gwenfro	1812	1713	-99	-5.5
New Broughton	2868	2931	+63	+2.2
Gwersyllt West	2971	2671	-300	-10.1
Gwersyllt North	2571	2562	-9	-0.4
Gwersyllt East And South	3871	4479	+608	+15.7
Coedpoeth	4876	5063	+187	+3.8
Bryn Cefn	1805	1928	+123	+6.8
Llay	4889	4788	-101	-3.1
Brymbo	2706	2633	-73	-2.7
West Wrexham area	28,369	28,768	+399	+1.4
Wrexham	123,224	127,404	+4180	+3.4
Source: Wrexham County Borough Council				

- .14 From Table 1.2 it can be seen that five wards within West Wrexham have lost population in the 1991 – 1998 period. These are: Gwenfro (-5.5%); Gwersyllt West (-10.1%); Gwersyllt North (-0.4%); Llay (-3.1%); and Brymbo (-2.7%). This depopulation could be attributed to a number of factors, including the national trend of declining birth rates¹, and loss of employment in these areas over the 1991 – 1998 period, e.g. Gwenfro (see Figure 1.1). In particular, the concentration of population decline in the wards clustering around the Brymbo steelworks site indicate out-migration based on declining economic opportunity and/or environmental deterioration.
- .15 However, four wards have experienced growth, concentrated in particular in Gwersyllt East and South (+15.7%) and Bryn Cefn (+6.8%). The West Wrexham area as a whole has experienced population growth (+1.4%) but this is notably lower than the growth Wrexham has experienced over the same period (3.4%).

¹ Regional Trends, 1995, reported that the birth rate in Wales was 12.9 per 1000 population in 1992, this had dropped to 12.0 in 1996 according to Regional Trends, 1999. A similar trend has occurred in the UK which had a birth rate of 13.5 in 1992 compared with a rate of 12.9 in 1996.

POPULATION DENSITY

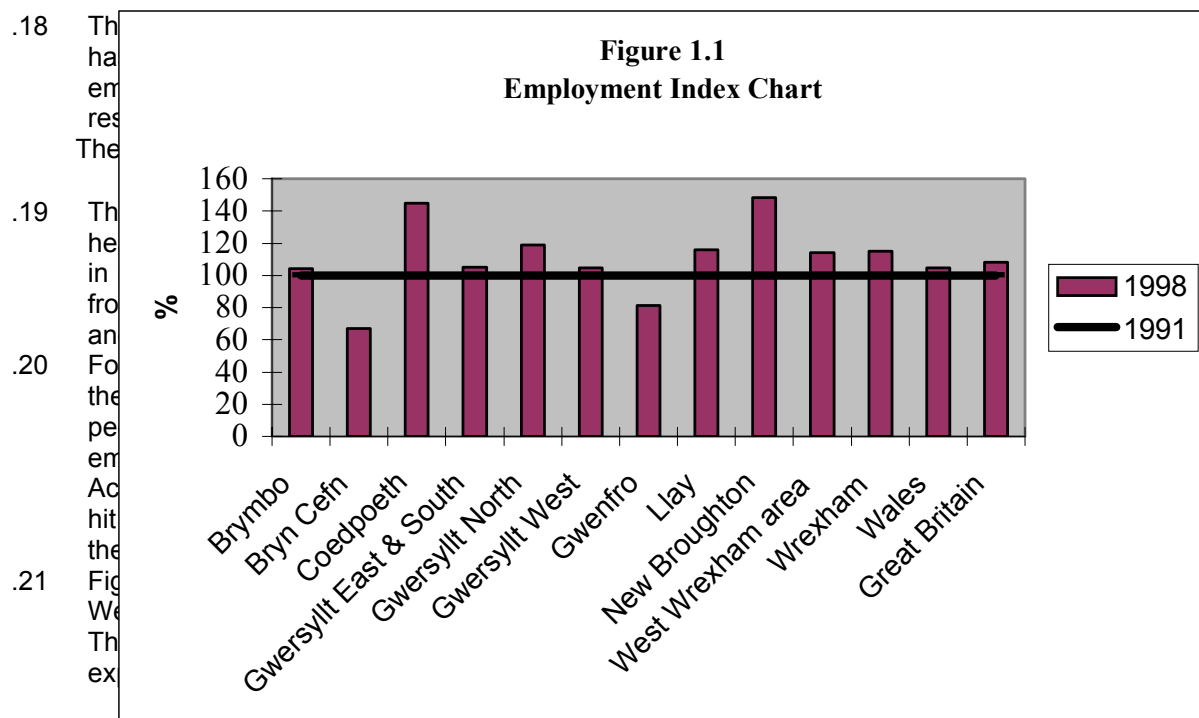
.16 Table 1.3 outlines the population density in the study area.

Table 1.3 Population density in the West Wrexham Wards 1991 and 1998				
Ward	1991 population	1991 density per ha	1998 estimate of population	1998 estimate of density per ha
Gwenfro	1812	20.27	1713	19.16
New Broughton	2868	16.68	2931	17.05
Gwersyllt West	2971	18.01	2671	16.19
Gwersyllt North	2571	11.54	2562	11.49
Gwersyllt East And South	3871	9.69	4479	11.21
Coedpoeth	4876	9.09	5063	9.44
Bryn Cefn	1805	8.66	1928	9.25
Llay	4889	5.39	4788	5.28
Brymbo	2706	3.86	2633	3.76
Wrexham	122,900	2.47	125,068	2.51

Source: Wrexham County Borough Council

.17 Population density is higher in all of the West Wrexham wards than for Wrexham as a whole. Population density is particularly high in Gwenfro (19.16), New Broughton (17.05) and Gwersyllt West (16.19). Overall, population density has increased over the 1991-1998 period in Wrexham as a whole. Population density in West Wrexham has increased in some wards, namely New Broughton, Gwersyllt East and South, Coedpoeth and Bryn Cefn. However, other wards have experienced a decline in population density.

ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS



.22 From Figure 1.1 it can be seen that employment in west wrexham as a whole has grown (by 14%) over the 1991 – 1998 period. Wrexham as a whole, Wales and Great Britain have all experienced a similar trend. It can be seen, in particular, that growth

- has been concentrated in wards such as Coedpoeth, Gwersyllt North, and New Broughton, and especially Llay.
- .23 Indeed, 60% of population growth in West Wrexham since 1998 has been concentrated in Llay ward, clearly associated with the expansion of the industrial estate. There is anecdotal evidence the majority of these opportunities have been captured by in-commuters to Wrexham.
- .24 However, employment decline has been experienced in Bryn Cefn (-32.8%) and Gwenfro (-18.5%). Other wards such as Brymbo and Gwersyllt West have experienced slight growth, but at a rate which is distinctly below the Wrexham and Great Britain averages.
- .25 Table 1.4 outlines the number of employees in employment in each of the West Wrexham wards.

Table 1.4 Employees in Employment Change over time: 1991 – 1998				
Ward	1991	1998	Change	% Change
Brymbo	217	226	+9	+4.1
Bryn Cefn	186	125	-61	-32.8
Coedpoeth	293	424	+131	+44.7
Gwenfro	27	22	-5	-18.6
Gwersyllt East and South	1,137	1,193	+56	+4.9
Gwersyllt North	328	390	+62	+18.9
Gwersyllt West	254	266	+12	+4.7
Llay	3,138	3,636	+498	+15.9
New Broughton	237	352	+115	+48.5
West Wrexham area	5,817	6,634	+817	+14.0
Wrexham	43,100	49,507	+6,407	+14.9
Wales	963,854	1,006,964	+43,110	+4.5
Great Britain	21,575,939	23,351,197	+1,775,258	+8.2

Source: AES©Crown Copyright

- .26 Wards such as Llay, Gwersyllt East and South, and Coedpoeth are key employment areas, not only within the area but for Wrexham as a whole. Llay has the advantage of having a major industrial estate, and as such is a focus of industrial employment within Wrexham and North East Wales.

SOURCES OF EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

- .27 Employment grew strongly in Wrexham County Borough between 1991 and 1998 (the latest available data). Altogether, gross employment increased by 8,290 jobs, and net employment increased by 5,870 jobs. This represented a net increase of 13.6% over the 1991 employment base. Recent evidence, however, suggests that jobs are currently being lost at an accelerating rate in West Wrexham, and in particular on the Llay industrial estate.
- .28 However, the sources of employment growth are quite narrow in Wrexham. Of the net increase of 5,170 jobs, 82% are concentrated in just 10 sub-sectors, as follows:
- Health services - 1,370 jobs
 - Business Services - 1,330 jobs
 - Food Manufacture - 980 jobs
 - Motor Vehicle Parts - 840 jobs
 - Utilities - 610 jobs
 - Medical Equipment - 440 jobs
 - Land Transport - 430 jobs
 - Leather Products - 300 jobs
 - Public Administration - 300 jobs
 - Furniture Manufacture - 200 jobs.

- .29 On this other hand, five sub-sectors lost significant number of jobs over the 1991-1999 period. These included:
- Hotels & Restaurants - loss of 470 jobs
 - Financial Services - loss of 330 jobs
 - Rubber Products - loss of 330 jobs
 - Electric Motors - loss of 220 jobs
 - Retailing - loss of 200 jobs
- .30 Table 1.5 outlines the gender differences in employment in the West Wrexham wards in comparison to Wrexham, Wales and Great Britain Benchmarks.

Table 1.5 Gender differences in employment 1991 – 1998				
Ward	Male 1991	Male 1998	Female 1991	Female 1998
Brymbo	34.6	43.4	65.4	56.2
Bryn Cefn	28.5	47.2	71.5	52.8
Coedpoeth	18.8	49.5	80.2	50.0
Gwenfro	22.2	47.8	77.8	52.3
Gwersyllt East and South	59.7	67.4	40.3	32.5
Gwersyllt North	66.5	50.0	33.5	49.7
Gwersyllt West	27.9	29.7	72.1	69.9
Llay	64.9	66.9	35.1	33.1
New Broughton	26.6	45.7	73.4	54.3
West Wrexham	55.9	61.1	44.1	38.9
Wrexham	52.3	53.0	47.7	46.9
Wales	49.9	51.4	50.1	48.5
Great Britain	50.6	51.3	49.4	48.6

Source: AES©Crown Copyright

- .31 From Table 1.5 it can be seen that male employment was appreciably lower in some communities in 1991. For example, in Coedpoeth only 18.8% of employees were male in 1991. This low rate of male employment in West Wrexham could be attributed to a number of reasons, including the impact of the decline of the industrial base (such as steel-making) on male-dominated occupations. However, in 1998 for 7 out of 9 wards male employment is still a lower proportion than is the case nationally.

Table 1.6 Full-time/Part-time employment 1991 – 1998										
Ward	Total no. of employees	1991				1998				
		Male Ft 1991	Male Pt 1991	Female Ft 1991	Female Pt 1991	Total no. of employees	Male Ft 1998	Male Pt 1998	Female Ft 1998	Female Pt 1998
Brymbo	217	32.4	2.3	23.1	42.6	226	31.0	12.4	30.5	25.7
Bryn Cefn	186	28.0	0.5	5.1	65.6	125	40.8	6.4	27.2	25.6
Coedpoeth	293	17.4	1.4	19.1	62.1	424	42.5	7.1	28.5	21.5
Gwenfro	27	22.2	0.0	48.1	29.6	22	45.5	4.5	31.8	22.7
Gwersyllt East and South	1,137	56.2	3.5	26.9	13.4	1,193	63.1	4.3	19.4	13.2
Gwersyllt North	328	62.5	4.0	13.1	20.4	390	43.6	6.4	28.5	21.3
Gwersyllt West	254	23.6	4.3	26.4	45.7	266	25.6	4.1	33.5	36.5
Llay	3,138	62.0	2.8	24.1	11.1	3,636	63.8	3.1	24.7	8.4
New Broughton	237	25.0	1.3	19.5	54.2	352	43.2	2.6	25.9	28.4
West Wrexham	5,817	53.1	2.8	23.2	20.9	6,631	56.9	4.2	24.9	14.0
Wrexham	43,100	49.6	3.9	25.7	20.9	49,507	48.3	4.7	28.2	18.7
Wales	963,854	46.7	4.5	26.0	22.8	1,006,964	45.9	5.5	26.7	21.8

Great Britain	21,575,939	47.2	4.5	26.7	21.5	23,351,197	45.4	5.9	27.4	21.2
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Source: AES©Crown Copyright

- .32 The proportion of male employment has increased substantially from 1991 to 1998, and in contrast, female employment has decreased. This appears to be in line with national trends. The only exception in West Wrexham has been Gwersyllt North, which has experienced a loss of male employment and a subsequent increase in female employment. This can have implications for income levels in the area as female employment in these communities is typically low-paid and part-time.
- .33 Table 1.6 outlines the importance of full-time and part-time work. It can be seen that the male part-time employment rate in Brymbo (12.4%) is more than double both the Wrexham (4.7%) and national averages (5.9%).
- .34 There has been a substantial shift in full-time and part-time work between 1991 and 1998 in the West Wrexham area. In particular, it can be seen that a large number of the wards in West Wrexham were heavily focused on female part-time work, e.g. Bryn Cefn had 65.6% of employees which were female and worked part-time. This can either be attributed to the decline of male and full-time employment in an area (and therefore a subsequent increase in the proportion of females and part-time workers) or due to an over-reliance on sectors which recruit female, flexible, low-paid workers (e.g. service sectors).
- .35 However, since 1991 full-time employment (both male and female) has predominated. This suggests that new employment opportunities are emerging. However, full-time work is still significantly below the Wrexham, Wales and Great Britain averages in some areas, e.g. Gwersyllt West and Brymbo. Therefore, part-time work still forms an important element of West Wrexham's economy which, subsequently, inhibits wealth creation and prevents the development of a *virtuous circle* in the area. This theory suggests that more permanent, well-paid, full-time employment results in greater expenditure in the local economy which subsequently creates more jobs and therefore further spend in the economy.
- Significant Employment Sectors in West Wrexham.
- .36 Table 1.7 illustrates the importance of particular industrial sectors in actual employment terms in West Wrexham.

Table 1.7 Important Sectors in the West Wrexham Area % of employees in employment in each ward 1998									
Ward	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Brymbo	0	0	2.2	4.0	12.8	26.5	6.2	31.4	16.8
Bryn Cefn	0	0	0	7.6	33.3	3.0	13.6	40.9	1.5
Coedpoeth	0	0	1.9	19.3	21.7	2.4	12.5	38.2	4.0
Gwenfro	0	0	0	22.7	31.8	9.1	0	36.4	0
Gwersyllt East and South	0	0	23.3	9.8	32.4	11.7	3.9	7.3	11.7
Gwersyllt North	0	9	16.4	9.0	15.6	3.8	1.0	29.0	16.2
Gwersyllt West	0	0	1.9	4.1	7.5	0.8	5.6	68.4	11.3
Llay	0	0.1	79.2	1.1	4.8	2.1	4.3	5.6	2.8
New Broughton	0	0	5.1	4.0	16.5	33.5	1.7	36.6	2.3
Wrexham	1.4	2.1	34.3	4.5	17.0	3.3	9.1	24.5	3.9
Wales	1.9	0.8	21.8	5.1	21.5	4.1	11.5	28.7	4.7
Great Britain	1.3	0.9	17.5	4.6	22.8	5.8	18.6	23.9	4.5

Source: AES©Crown Copyright, 1998

KEY:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Agriculture and fishing | 6. Transport and communications |
| 2. Energy and water | 7. Banking, finance, and insurance |
| 3. Manufacturing | 8. Public administration, education and health |
| 4. Construction | 9. Other services ² |
| 5. Distribution, hotels, and restaurants | |

- .37 It can be seen that, as a whole, the manufacturing sector is an important employer in the area. Llay is a particularly strong example: 79.2% of employees in the ward work in the manufacturing sector³. This figure is significantly above the Wrexham average of 34.3%, the Wales average of 21.8% and the national average of 17.5%. However, this raises a number of concerns as the manufacturing economy in Wrexham is predominantly branch-plant and as such is increasingly vulnerable to competition and external decisions taken outside the region.
- .38 Other key sectors include construction (with large clusters in Coedpoeth and Gwenfro), and distribution, hotels and restaurants (with clusters in Bryn Cefn, Coedpoeth, Gwenfro, and Gwersyllt East and South). Public administration, education and health is a significant employer in the area. With the exception of Gwersyllt East and South and Llay, the wards have a disproportionately high percentage of employees in this sector in comparison to Wrexham, Wales and Great Britain averages. This can be attributed to the relative insignificance of some of the other sectors, therefore making the employees in employment in sectors such as Public administration, education and health disproportionately high.
- .39 Table 1.8 illustrates the relative importance of key sectors (using a 2-digit SIC definition) in West Wrexham using location quotients⁴, using Wrexham and Wales as comparisons. The quotient is benchmarked against Great Britain.

Sector	West Wrexham		Wrexham	Wales
	Persons	Quotient	Quotient	Quotient
Manuf radio, tv/communications equipment	1,281	35.88	5.59	3.34
Manuf motor vehicles, trailers, etc	426	6.55	2.45	1.38
Sewage/refuse disposal, sanitation, etc	122	5.36	1.14	1.4
Manuf rubber and plastic goods	329	4.87	2.57	1.33
Other mining and quarrying	38	4.57	1.9	2.05
Manuf fabricated metal products, etc	389	3.32	1.64	1.18
Manuf wood/products/cork, etc	75	3.18	4.87	1.34
Manuf machinery and equipment nec	286	2.54	0.72	0.87
Manuf other transport equipment	107	2.24	0.92	1.07
Land transport; transport via pipelines	236	1.76	0.87	0.94
Manuf other non-metallic products	69	1.73	2.81	1.02
Activities membership organisations nec	86	1.57	0.92	1.25
Manuf food products and beverages	172	1.33	3.3	1.02
Post and telecommunications	151	1.18	0.54	0.77
Construction	337	1.11	0.98	1.11
Sale, maintenance/repair motor vehicles	158	1.03	0.78	0.96

² Other services include: **90.0:** Sewage and refuse disposal, sanitation and similar activities, **91.0:** Activities of membership organisations not elsewhere classified, **92.0:** Recreation, cultural and sporting activities, **93.0:** Other Service Activities e.g. hairdressing, dry-cleaning, funeral services.

³ Note: this statistic is workplace rather than residence based.

⁴ . In order to gauge the relative employment importance of specific sub-sectors, it is necessary to use location quotients. A location quotient is a numerical index which describes the importance of a specific sector in West Wrexham relative to Great Britain. The location quotient compares the proportion of employees in West Wrexham to a certain industry sector with the proportion of employees in Great Britain working in the same industry sector. A figure of more than one means that the sector is over-represented, in relative terms, in West Wrexham than in Great Britain. A figure equal to one means that the sector in West Wrexham is equal to the Great Britain average. A figure below one means that the sector is under-represented in West Wrexham compared to Great Britain.

Source: AES©Crown Copyright

- .40 A number of manufacturing sectors are 'over-represented' in West Wrexham in comparison to GB. The manufacture of radio, television and communications equipment is important in both actual (employing 1,300 people) and relative terms (with a Location Quotient of 35.88). This can probably be attributed to the presence of Sharp Electronics on the Llay industrial estate.
West Wrexham's Business Base

Table 1.9 outlines the size of firms (in terms of number of employees) in West Wrexham in 1998 and the change over time (1991 to 1998). Table 1.9 Size of Firms and Change over Time: 1991 – 1998 West Wrexham

	0 – 10 employees		11 – 49 employees		50 –199 employees		200 – 499 employees		500+ employees		Total Firms in sector
	Number	Change 1991- 98	Number	Change 1991- 98	Number	Change 1991- 98	Number	Change 1991 -98	Number	Change 1991 -98	
Agriculture & Fishing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Energy and Water	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Manufacturing	67	+4	19	+4	9	+4	2	0	1	0	98
Construction	93	+4	4	+1	1	+1	0	0	0	0	98
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	178	-9	19	-1	1	-1	0	0	0	0	198
Transport & communications	49	-5	4	+2	3	+2	0	0	0	0	56
Banking, finance, & insurance	76	+5	9	-1	0	-1	0	0	0	0	85
Public administration, education & health	45	-9	20	+3	6	+3	0	0	0	0	71
Other services	45	+6	8	+1	1	+1	0	0	0	0	54
Total	554	-4	84	+9	21	+9	2	0	1	0	662

Source: AES@Crown Copyright
* % change 1991 – 1998 for firms with less than 10 employees haven't been examined due to the fact that AES data did not take account of firms employing less than 10 people in 1991 to the same extent as in 1998, which questions the validity of the data.

- .41 Table 1.9 shows the actual number of establishment in West Wrexham according to size. It is clear that the majority of firms (83.7% of total firms) employ less than 10 people. The number of firms employing between 11 and 49 employees has declined by 4%. This may be interpreted as an indicator of low levels of enterprise among the Wrexham working age population, as well as poor levels of business survival.
- .42 However, firms employing between 50 to 199 employees have experienced a growth of 9 new establishments in this sizeband, an increase of 75% over the 1991 level. The total establishment change over time cannot be examined due to significant disparities in the 1991 small firms (employing less than 10 people) and the 1998 figure. However, taking firms above 11 employees it is clear that a slight growth has occurred with 5 new firms established.
- .43 Table 1.10 shows the proportion of firms by size in West Wrexham in comparison to Wrexham, Wales and Great Britain.

Table 1.10 Proportion of Firms by size 1998

	% of Total firms in area			
	West Wrexham	Wrexham	Wales	Great Britain
Less than 10 employees	83.7	82.0	84.5	84.7
11 – 49 employees	12.7	13.9	12.3	12.0
50 – 199 employees	3.2	3.1	2.6	2.7
200 – 499 employees	0.3	0.9	0.5	0.5
500+ employees	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AES@Crown Copyright

- .44 It can be seen that West Wrexham has an above average of firms employing less than 10 people in comparison to Wrexham as a whole. However, it is below the average of Wales (by 0.8 percentage points) and the national average (by 1 percentage point). Moreover, West Wrexham has an above average proportion of larger SME's. For example, 3.2% of its business base is concentrated in firms employing between 50 – 199 employees in comparison to an average in Wales of 2.6% and a national average of 2.7%. This suggests that West Wrexham has a higher dependency on larger employers.
- .45 Table 1.11 shows the change experienced in the business base over the 1991 – 1998 period. However, due to changes in the way small firms (0 – 10 employees) are recorded it is not possible to examine change in this sizeband or, therefore total change, because of the lack of reliability in the data.

Table 1.11 % Change in Business Base 1991 - 1998								
Sizeband	% Change 1991 - 98							
	West Wrexham		Wrexham		Wales		Great Britain	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 10 employees								
11 – 49 employees	-4	-4.6	-33	-5.6	-1190	-9.2	+652	+0.2
50 – 199 employees	+9	+75.0	+4	+3.3	+113	+4.7	+3561	+6.3
200 – 499 employees	0	0.0	+6	+19.4	+23	+5.3	+812	+8.4
500+ employees	0	0.0	+3	+150.0	-17	-10.5	-62	-1.7
Total Change *	+5	+4.9	-20	-2.7	-1071	-6.7	+4963	+1.4

Source: AES©Crown Copyright
* Total excludes firms with less than 10 employees

- .46 Overall, growth has been experienced in the business base in West Wrexham with 5 new establishments registered between 1991 and 1998, indicating a 4.9% growth in the business base. However, decline in the smaller firms employing between 11 and 49 employees has been experienced, with the loss of 4 firms representing a decrease of 4.6%. This is in line with trends occurring in Wrexham as a whole and Wales.
- .47 Table 1.12 shows the proportion of employees per area by size of firm.

Table 1.12 % of total employees by firm size				
Size of firm	% of total employees			
	West Wrexham	Wrexham	Wales	Great Britain
Less than 10 employees	20.0	16.9	19.9	19.5
11 – 49 employees	28.1	24.8	25.6	25.9
50 – 199 employees	24.2	23.4	22.7	23.9
200 – 499 employees	9.0	24.5	14.1	13.7
500+ employees	18.7	10.4	17.7	17.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AES©Crown Copyright

- .48 Table 1.12 shows that employees in West Wrexham are more likely to work in firms employing over 500 employees. There may be a link between this structure and historic low rates of entrepreneurship in West Wrexham. Altogether, these firms account for 18.7% of total employment in the area. In comparison, Wrexham only has 10.4% of employees working in companies of this size. It is also interesting that West Wrexham is under-represented in medium sized firms with between 200 and 500 employees.
- .49 A significant number of West Wrexham's employees work in companies which employ below 199 employees. In each size-band it can be seen that West Wrexham has an above average proportion of employees in comparison to the Wrexham, Wales and Great Britain averages. These high proportions relative to other benchmarks can be attributed to the lack of employees working in firms with 200 – 499 employees.

Economic Activity Rates

- .50 The table below illustrates the economically active population as a proportion of total population aged 16+:

Ward	Rate		
	Total	Male	Female
Brymbo	54.4	67.2	43.0
Bryn Cefn	61.4	71.1	51.8
Coedpoeth	61.5	73.8	49.7
Gwenfro	55.7	70.0	43.0
Gwersyllt East and South	66.2	77.5	55.6
Gwersyllt North	65.0	77.8	51.7
Gwersyllt West	64.0	76.5	52.1
Llay	62.6	74.5	51.4
New Broughton	60.5	72.0	50.4
West Wrexham	61.7	73.8	50.3
Wrexham	58.4	70.9	47.0
Wales	55.4	67.5	44.5
Great Britain	61.0	73.3	49.9

Source: Wrexham County Borough Council, 1991 Census

- .51 It can be seen that in 1991 West Wrexham has a high economic activity rate above Wrexham, Wales and Great Britain averages. However at a Borough level economic activity rates have declined appreciably in Wrexham, from around 75% to just over 70%.
- .52 Two caveats are required in interpreting this data. First, it is old data based on Census 1991, when the macro-economic and local economic conditions in West Wrexham were both considerably less favourable than has been the case for most of the 1990s. Second, economic activity rates for the Wrexham County Borough Council area have declined markedly since 1994, falling from 75% to just over 70%, in the opposite direction to national trends.
- .53 Another point is that for three wards – Brymbo, Gwenfro and New Broughton – economic activity rates were in 1991 significantly below national averages.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- .54 Another measure of competitiveness of an economy's labour force is 'entrepreneurship'; the propensity to start a business. The prevalence of self-employment can be used as a way of measuring entrepreneurship.

	Total self-employed aged 16+	Total economically active	Ratio
Brymbo	122	1,174	10.4
Bryn Cefn	98	886	11.1
Coedpoeth	251	2,284	10.9
Gwenfro	45	762	5.9
Gwersyllt East and South	150	1,958	7.7
Gwersyllt North	108	1,236	8.7
Gwersyllt West	85	1,428	5.9
Llay	193	2,367	8.2
New Broughton	123	1,372	8.9
West Wrexham	1,175	13,467	8.7
Wrexham UA	6,158	56,992	10.8
Wales	163,635	1,255,772	13.0
Great Britain	3,078,436	26,776,802	11.5

Source: Nomis/AES©Crown Copyright

- .55 It can be seen that the West Wrexham area has a significantly lower ratio of self-employed persons than the Wales or Great Britain average, with a ratio of 8.7 in comparison to 13.0 in Wales, and 11.5 in Great Britain. This low rate is particularly noticeable in certain wards of West Wrexham, including Gwersyllt West (5.9) and Gwenfro (5.9). All wards in the area are significantly below the Great Britain average.
- .56 At a Borough-level data is available on business start-up rates, using VAT registration data. Wrexham generates 25.2 new VAT registrations per 10,000 resident adults (the accepted indicator), compared to 20.4 for Wales and 31.7 for GB.

KEY MESSAGES FROM THE RESIDENTS SURVEY

- .57 As part of the research, a household survey covering 158 households in the West Wrexham area was conducted. Key messages from this survey are set-out at appropriate points in this baseline document.
- .58 Of the residents surveyed in the study area, 49.4% felt that their progression in work was restricted. The factors cited as inhibiting progress were as follows:

Reason	% of total restricted
The type of jobs available locally	19.2%
The general lack of jobs available locally	17.9%
The nature of the work done	16.7%
The size of the firm worked for	15.4%
Their skills	8.9%

KEY MESSAGES ARISING FROM COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP

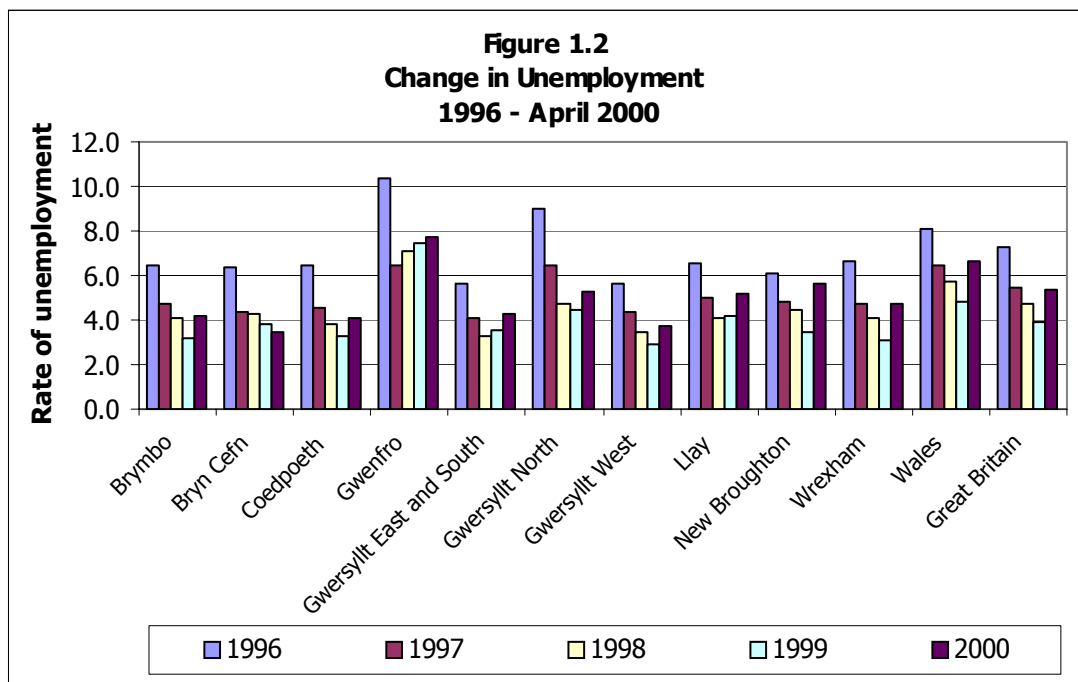
- .59 The research for the Urban Villages Strategy included a series of community focus groups held throughout the strategy area. One of these focus groups was held in the West Wrexham area. Representatives of interested parties, such as residents associations, community groups and organisations, health, education and youth workers and so on, were invited to attend these sessions. The aim of the focus groups was to identify the key issues affecting local communities on a day to day basis. Discussions covered matters such as housing, employment, environment, crime, youth issues, the needs of the elderly, transport, health, community facilities and education and training opportunities. The key issues drawn out of the West Wrexham focus group are outlined in the paragraphs which follow and in later sections as appropriate.
- .60 The closure of Brymbo steelworks led to major job losses in the local area. Many of these jobs have not been replaced through inward investment or indigenous firm growth.
- .61 Local people feel that there are limited employment opportunities inside the local area. They feel it is important to try and develop small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in the local area and move away from the dependence on large employers. They also recognise that the encouragement of business start-ups is crucial to developing sustainable employment opportunities in the area, and feel that a culture of entrepreneurship needs to be nurtured and developed.
- .62 Residents who don't own private cars are restricted in the employment opportunities they can access. Problems of access were a key issue raised at the focus group. Public transport provision *between* communities in the West Wrexham area is poor and is often perceived as expensive to many residents. Shift workers also find services inadequate at off peak times.

UNEMPLOYMENT ISSUES

- .63 This sub-section focuses on the unemployment issues apparent in the West Wrexham area. However, unemployment figures are notoriously difficult to interpret and rarely reflect the true position of labour market inefficiency. This chapter outlines the “official” claimant count unemployment rates.

The “Official” Unemployment Trend

- .64 Between 1996 and 1999 unemployment rates dropped in all wards in West Wrexham. This follows the trend of unemployment decline in Wrexham as a whole, Wales and Great Britain. Figure 1.2 illustrates the change in more detail in a year by year account and it can be seen that unemployment has risen in a number of the wards since 1999.



Source: NOMIS©Crown Copyright

- .65 The unemployment rate in a number of wards are above the Great Britain average, including Llay, Gwenfro, Coedpoeth, and Bryn Cefn. All wards (with the exception of Bryn Cefn) in the West Wrexham area have experienced a rise in the unemployment rate since 1999. This is in line with trends occurring in Wrexham and Wales.
- .66 Destinations of Unemployed Persons Leaving the Register
- .67 The Employment Service provided us with data on the destinations of unemployed persons in West Wrexham leaving the register. The key messages from the data were:
- The majority of people leaving the register do so because they have found work. However, whereas 78% of persons who are unemployed 3 months or less do so because they have found work, for persons unemployed longer than 6 months the proportion is around 58%.
 - For persons unemployed longer than 12 months who are leaving the register 15% do so because they have started to claim incapacity benefit.
 - 12% of the long term unemployed leave the register due to their participation on a Government training scheme.

.68 The data is summarised below.

Table 1.14 Reasons for Leaving the Unemployment Register: West Wrexham							
Deprivation of Unemployment	Found Work %	Increased Hours %	Gone Abroad %	Income Support %	Incapacity Benefit %	Training Scheme %	Other %
< 1 month	77.8	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.1	5.3	4.2
1-3 months	78.1	1.0	5.5	3.2	5.2	4.5	2.2
3-6 months	68.7	1.0	6.7	3.6	8.2	7.7	3.5
6-12 months	58.6	3.1	3.6	1.8	9.0	15.3	8.1
> 12 months	56.7	0	4.5	7.5	14.9	11.9	4.5

Source: Employment Service

The Gender Aspect of Unemployment

.69 Male unemployment is typically higher than female unemployment in Great Britain. This is also the case in all of the wards in the West Wrexham area. Figure 1.3 illustrates this in more detail.

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.70 The average male unemployment rate in Wales in April 2000 was 4.7% in comparison to a female rate of 1.7%. Gwenfro has the highest rate of male unemployment rate at 7.7%, which is 3.0 percentage points above the average for Wales.

.71 Female unemployment in West Wrexham is typically below the Wales average of 2.4%. The most significant area of female unemployment is in Bryn Cefn with a rate of 2.7%. However, these female rates are often misleading. Females may have less incentive to register as unemployed, particularly if their spouse is in well-paid employment. Females are also likely to withdraw from the labour market as a result of the "discouragement" effect: the perception that no suitable jobs are available (older males and some young people can also experience this phenomenon). Female underemployment is also frequently characterised by high levels of part-time work, often characterised by low pay.

Wards with high female part-time employment 1998

New Broughton	52.4%
Gwersyllt West	52.6%
Gresford East & West	48.0%
Bryn Cefn	48.5%
Wales	45.0%
GB	43.6%

The Age Profile of Unemployment

.72 Table 1.15 illustrates the age and gender profile of unemployment in April 2000.

Table 1.15 Unemployment by Age and Gender April 2000			
	Aged Under 25 years	25 – 39 years	40 – 59 years

West Wrexham			
Male Number:	89	165	111
Male % of total unemployed:	24.4	45.2	30.4
Female Number:	26	25	44
Female % of total unemployed:	27.4	26.3	46.3
Total Number:	115	190	155
Total % of unemployed:	25.0	41.3	33.7
Wrexham			
Male % of total unemployed	27.7	42.3	29.3
Female % of total unemployed	34.2	28.4	37.4
Total % of total unemployed	29.1	39.2	31.1
Wales			
Male % of total unemployed	25.3	41.1	32.8
Female % of total unemployed	34.5	28.3	37.1
Total % of total unemployed	27.4	38.3	33.7
Great Britain			
Male % of total unemployed	22.3	42.7	33.8
Female % of total unemployed	31.6	31.1	37.3
Total % of total unemployed	24.5	39.9	34.6
Source: Nomis©Crown Copyright			

- .73 On the whole, unemployed persons cluster in the 25 to 39 age group in West Wrexham, with 41.3% of the unemployed in this age group. This proportion is higher than the Wrexham (39.2%), Wales (38.3%) and Great Britain (39.9%) averages. However, when this figure is looked at by gender a different picture emerges.
- .74 In particular it can be seen that it is mainly unemployed males (45.2% of unemployed males) who fall into this age group in West Wrexham. In contrast Females only have 26.3% of their unemployed in this age group. Unemployed females tend to either be older: with 46.3% of the unemployed falling into the 40 to 59 years category, or younger: with the remaining 27.4% aged between 16 and 24.
- .75 Female unemployment which is in the 40 to 59 year age group is a particular problem in West Wrexham with an average far higher than Wrexham (37.4%), Wales (37.1%) or Great Britain (37.3%).
- .76 In contrast male unemployment in the 25 to 39 year age group in West Wrexham (45.2%) is above the Wrexham (42.3%). Wales (41.1%) and Great Britain (42.7%) averages. It is this age group in particular that are more likely to search further afield for employment as they have the experience to offer, and this raises the concern of depopulation.

The Duration of Unemployment

- .77 Table 1.16 below illustrates how long people have been unemployed in West Wrexham. This will help provide an insight into the health of the economy.

Table 1.16 Duration of Unemployment April 2000										
	Less than 4 weeks		4 – 13 weeks		14 – 26 weeks		26 – 52 weeks		52 weeks +	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Brymbo	10	26.3	13	34.2	3	7.9	8	21.1	4	10.5
Bryn Cefn	3	11.1	9	33.3	7	25.9	2	7.4	6	22.2
Coedpoeth	23	35.4	16	24.6	10	15.4	9	13.8	7	10.8
Gwenfro	8	20.0	13	32.5	7	17.5	7	17.5	5	12.5
Gwersyllt East and South	14	20.9	15	22.4	18	26.9	9	13.4	11	16.4
Gwersyllt North	9	20.0	12	26.7	7	15.6	4	8.9	13	28.9
Gwersyllt West	12	34.3	13	37.1	5	14.3	2	5.7	3	8.6
Llay	21	22.8	22	23.9	20	21.7	8	8.7	21	22.8
New Broughton	14	27.5	15	29.4	11	21.6	3	5.9	8	15.7
West Wrexham	114	24.8	128	27.8	88	19.1	52	11.3	78	17.0
Wrexham	467	23.9	569	29.1	357	18.3	267	13.7	296	15.1
Wales	10,640	18.1	13,938	23.7	12,133	20.6	10,224	17.4	11,867	20.2
Great Britain	179,387	16.4	257,388	23.6	218,131	20	195,637	17.9	242,125	22.2

Source: Nomis©Crown Copyright

- .78 Long-term (over 52 weeks) unemployment (LTU) in the West Wrexham area, accounting for 17% of total unemployment, is above the Wrexham proportion of 15.1%. Three West Wrexham wards have long term unemployment rates in excess of the national average. These are Bryn Cefn (22.2%), Gwersyllt North (28.9%) and Llay (22.8%). However, LTU for the the area as a whole is below the Wales (20.2%) and Great Britain (22.2%) rate.
- .79 Most of West Wrexham's unemployed are only unemployed in the short-term. The majority (27.8%) are unemployed for between 4 and 13 weeks. However, a higher proportion of the unemployed in West Wrexham are only unemployed for less than 4 weeks than the Wrexham, Wales and Great Britain average.

The Prevalence of Part-time employment

- .80 As discussed earlier, part-time employment is important in West Wrexham. Table 1.17 outlines this in more detail. It can be seen that the importance of part-time employment has dropped dramatically since 1991. However, it is clear from the 1998 data that these communities still have a significant proportion of their workforce employed on a part-time basis. For many wards, 1998 figures remain significantly above averages for Wrexham, Wales and Great Britain.

Table 1.17 Part-time employment 1991 – 1998		
Ward	% of overall employment	
	1991	1998
Bryn Cefn	66.1	32.0
Coedpoeth	63.5	28.5
New Broughton	55.5	31.0
Gwersyllt West	50.0	40.6
Brymbo	44.9	38.1
Gwenfro	29.6	27.3
Gweryllt North	24.4	27.7
Gwersyllt East and South	17.0	17.4
Llay	13.9	11.5
Wrexham	24.8	23.4
Wales	27.3	27.3
Great Britain	26.0	27.1

Source: AES©Crown Copyright

Debt Problems

- .81 The Citizens Advice Bureau offer financial advice to individuals suffering from debt problems. In total, for Wrexham as a whole, the sum of debt equalled £1.69 million in the financial year 1999/2000. The majority of these debts are consumer debts (71% of all debts) and housing debts (25%).
- .82 The data is not broken down to ward level. However, it is possible to ascertain from which wards within West Wrexham the Citizens Advice Bureau receive most debt advice enquiries. Table 1.18 illustrates this.

Table 1.18 Enquiries in the West Wrexham area 1999/2000				
	New enquiries		Repeat enquiries	
	Number enquiries	of % of total enquiries	Number enquiries	of % of total enquiries
Broughton	11	20.3	28	11.0
Brymbo	7	13.5	47	18.5
Coedpoeth	5	9.6	29	11.4
Gwersyllt	19	36.5	73	28.7
Llay	10	19.2	77	30.3
Total number of enquiries in the West Wrexham area	52	100.0	254	100

Source: Citizens Advice Bureau, 2000

- .83 From Table 1.18 it can be seen that the majority of new enquiries are emerging from Gwersyllt (36.5% of all new enquiries in the area). However, Llay has the highest proportion of repeat enquiries (30.3% of total repeat enquiries in the area) followed closely by Gwersyllt (28.7%). The Citizen’s Advice Bureau has witnessed an increase in debt in Wrexham in the last 10 years, the number of new and repeat enquiries in West Wrexham reinforces this statement.

KEY MESSAGES EMERGING FROM THE RESIDENTS SURVEY

- .84 Of residents surveyed in West Wrexham, 5.7% were in receipt of unemployment benefit. Of those who are unemployed the majority (40%) are “quite hopeful” of securing paid work in the next three months, although 20% are “not very hopeful”. In particular, 70% of the unemployed residents surveyed feel there are generally few jobs available, and 80% agree that there are generally few jobs available in their specific field.
- .85 Of the surveyed unemployed, there was agreement with the following statements:

Support for local people looking for work....	% of residents agreeing
Is generally available in the local area	55%
Is suitable to resident’s needs or situation	35%
Is of a high quality	30%
Helps people get into work	35%
Gives people the work skills they need	45%
Gives people the work experience they need	45%

- .86 When asked what type of assistance the unemployed would like to see available to help them back into work, the majority (25%) would like more training, and more jobs made available locally (20%).
- .87 Of residents surveyed in the area, 34.2% were unemployed but *not* looking for work. Of these, 42.6% of looked after the family home. When this group was asked whether there were any barriers preventing them from combining work and domestic responsibilities 52.2% replied in the affirmative. The reasons given for this were mainly: no time available because of looking after children (26.1%), caring for ill spouse (13%), childcare too expensive (4.3%), disabled dependent (4.3%) and earnings would deduct from benefits (4.3%).
- .88 These residents highlighted a number of actions which would help them access local job opportunities. Of those looking after the family 8.7% said that childcare in school holidays, less expensive childcare (8.7%), and improvements to general childcare facilities (8.7%) would assist them back into the job market.
- .89 When asked whether there were sufficient childcare facilities available locally for working parents:
- 30.4% feel there is a sufficient range
 - 30.4% feel there is sufficient quality
 - Only 17.4% feel it is affordable

KEY MESSAGES ARISING FROM THE COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP

- .90 Representatives at the focus group considered that the extent of the unemployment problems in the area over recent decades has led to lethargy and a loss of hope. These feelings of hopelessness are strengthened by problems of second and third generation unemployment. Motivating the community, combined with the creation of new employment opportunities will go a long way towards breaking this trend. There are also concerns that young people are leaving these communities due, at least in part, to the lack of job opportunities. This, to date, has not been reflected in the figures showing the proportion of working age people in the area (which is still above average).
- .91 The high level of unemployment over the 1990s combined with a lack of investment in the area has created an atmosphere of resentment in the local community. Local people perceive a lack of concern and interest at the local authority level. The residents recognise that the Council’s actions and achievements are influenced by

available funding. However, they consider the lack of funding channelled towards West Wrexham has encouraged community apathy and a loss of pride in their community.

- .92 A further barrier to overcoming the unemployment problems in the area is low incomes. This prevents people from accessing jobs because they cannot afford transport or access re-training opportunities in new skills.

DEPRIVATION INDICATORS

- .93 Wrexham contains four of the five most economically deprived wards in North East Wales (source: WCBC, 1997, Poverty Profile). One of these – Gwenfro – is in West Wrexham. Indeed, Gwenfro is the 81st most deprived ward in Wales, and the 11th most deprived ward in Wales outside the Objective 1 area.

- .94 West Wrexham as a whole has a number of common problems, characterised by symptoms of urban and social deprivation which has stemmed from the decline of the traditional industrial base. In a number of the wards there are signs of physical dilapidation with deteriorating housing stock and poor general environmental quality as a result of a lack of investment and low income levels. There are a number of ways of calculating deprivation using a variety of methods; these are considered below.

Claimants of Benefits

- .95 Analysis of housing benefit and income support data is one way to measure deprivation. The data is collected as a proportion of households on the electoral register and then sub-divided into the type of recipients who claim the benefit. Table 1.19 outlines the data for 1998.

Ward	1997 Electoral register	All claimants	% of HH	Pensioners	Lone Parents	Unemployed	Disabled & other
Brymbo	1,088	338	31.1	188	91	9	78
Bryn Cefn	743	179	24.1	116	70	2	30
Coedpoeth	1,885	521	27.6	281	141	5	112
Gwenfro	692	265	38.3	128	78	3	65
Gwersyllt East and South	1,194	359	30.1	187	98	6	93
Gwersyllt North	1,564	278	17.8	176	101	7	44
Gwersyllt West	944	307	32.5	185	96	5	52
Llay	1,816	496	27.3	244	137	20	136
New Broughton	1,304	373	28.6	207	90	7	85
West Wrexham area	11,230	3,116	27.7	1,712	902	64	695
Wrexham	51,219	13,543	26.4	7,397	3,608	239	2,842

Source: Wrexham County Borough Council

- .96 West Wrexham has a higher proportion of households claiming Housing Benefit and in receipt of Income Support than the Wrexham average. In total, 27.7% of Households in the area claim this benefit in comparison to 26.4% in Wrexham as a whole.

- .97 The wards with the highest proportion of households claiming Housing Benefit and in receipt of Income Support include Gwersyllt North (37.6%), Gwenfro (36.1%) and Brymbo (28.91%). These percentages illustrate the extent of benefit dependency in these communities in comparison to the Wrexham average. Pensioner and Lone Parent households form the majority of households which claim the benefit.

- .98 All wards in West Wrexham have a high proportion of Pensioners claiming the benefit, although this is particularly high in Bryn Cefn, Gwersyllt North and Gwersyllt West. Table 1.20 illustrates this below.

Ward	% of Pensioners as a proportion of all claimant households
Brymbo	55.6

Bryn Cefn	64.8
Coedpoeth	53.9
Gwenfro	48.3
Gwersyllt East and South	52.1
Gwersyllt North	63.3
Gwersyllt West	60.3
Llay	49.2
New Broughton	55.5
West Wrexham area	54.9
Wrexham	54.6
Source: Wrexham County Borough Council	

- .99 Lone Parents also form a significant proportion of claimants in the study area. This is illustrated below in Table 1.21.

Table 1.21 The Proportion of Lone Parents claiming Housing Benefit and in Receipt of Income Support 1998	
Ward	% of Lone Parents as a proportion of all claimant households
Brymbo	26.9
Bryn Cefn	39.1
Coedpoeth	27.1
Gwenfro	29.4
Gwersyllt East and South	27.3
Gwersyllt North	36.3
Gwersyllt West	31.3
Llay	27.6
New Broughton	24.1
West Wrexham area	28.9
Wrexham	26.6
Source: Wrexham County Borough Council	

- .100 It can be seen from Table 1.14 that the proportion of Lone Parents claiming the benefit is particularly high in West Wrexham, with 28.9% of all claimant households claiming as Lone Parents, in comparison to 26.6% in the County Borough as a whole. This high take-up of benefit is significant, in particular, in Bryn Cefn, Gwersyllt North, and Gwersyllt West.

Measures of Deprivation

- .101 The most up-to-date and available deprivation data is the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. The Index Team at Oxford University have recently produced this for the National Assembly for Wales. The index has been constructed using indicators of: income; employment; health deprivation; education/skills/training; housing; and geographical access to services.
- .102 The index is devised using a ranking system, therefore, of the 865 wards in Wales rank number 1 is the ward which is the most deprived in Wales on that particular indicator, e.g. income. Similarly the 865th ward is the least deprived. Table 1.22 illustrates the West Wrexham's wards ranked position on indicators such as income, employment, health, education, housing, access and child poverty.

Table 1.22 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation Rankings for West Wrexham Wards								
Ward	WIMD Ranking (all Wales)	Income	Employment	Health	Education	Housing	Access	Child Poverty
Brymbo	180	183	304	222	122	160	376	225
Bryn Cefn	418	373	499	412	182	324	520	379
Coedpoeth	521	375	572	444	347	272	671	436
Gwenfro	81	44	215	211	62	122	666	51
Gwersyllt E & S	671	523	668	514	319	717	669	569
Gwersyllt North	243	221	468	338	40	309	637	169
Gwersyllt West	457	236	476	314	457	542	727	228
Llay	423	309	606	510	127	439	509	314
New Broughton	403	295	535	418	189	257	704	385
Source: Index Team, Oxford University								

- .103 The ranking of all indicators shows that the most deprived wards in West Wrexham include Gwenfro (81 on the ranking system) and Brymbo (180 on the rank).
- .104 Gwenfro, it can be seen, is particularly deprived in terms of income (rank 44), education (rank 62), and child poverty (rank 51).
- .105 Key indicators of concern in the area include income, where Gwenfro scores very poorly (44th in Wales), and education where Gwenfro (62nd) and Gwersyllt North (40th) score rather poorly.
- .106 The design of indicators such as access and housing are arguably more weighted towards measuring deprivation in a rural context, and are less relevant to West Wrexham.

Other Indicators of Deprivation

- .107 There are a number of other ways that deprivation can be measured. However, all of these measures relate to the 1991 census and as such their current relevance validity must be in some doubt. One such measure is the “*Townsend Index*”. This measures indicators such as the number of households with no car, the type of home ownership, and overcrowding. Table 1.23 outlines these indicator values for West Wrexham. Unfortunately, benchmarks for the data at a Wales level are not available.

Ward	Total Households 1991	% of Households with no car	% of HH with >1 person per room	% of HH with non owned homes
Brymbo	1,041	37.6	1.4	49.0
Bryn Cefn	666	24.3	1.2	24.9
Coedpoeth	1,828	31.5	2.1	36.4
Gwenfro	673	45.8	3.4	65.4
Gwersyllt East/South	1,441	25.7	0.6	30.4
Gwersyllt North	890	31.6	2.9	41.2
Gwersyllt West	1,124	30.7	1.6	39.5
Llay	1,790	28.4	1.4	46.1
New Broughton	1,182	33.6	1.0	41.9
West Wrexham	10,635	31.4	1.6	40.9
Wrexham	47,213	31.9	1.5	39.8

Source: Wrexham County Borough Council

- .108 As we have stated, this information is derived from the 1991 Census Data. Although the proportion of households with no car in the study area is slightly below the Wrexham average (by 0.5 percentage points), there are certain areas which have a high proportion of households with no car. For example, Gwenfro has 45.8% of households which do not own a car. Having no car can contribute to economic and social problems in a community. In particular it intensifies the perception of being isolated from other communities. With the decline of traditional industries in West Wrexham it has become increasingly necessary to access employment opportunities outside West Wrexham. It is also difficult for residents in West Wrexham to access employment opportunities within the area, such as on Llay Industrial Estate. Lack of transport, therefore, can impact on an individual’s ability to access these employment opportunities, and, in turn, impact on the income generating potential of an area.
- .109 Overcrowding (with more than one person per room) is another indicator of deprivation. A high proportion of households with more than one person per room is not only indicative of social issues but also has environmental implications. Overall, the proportion of households with overcrowding in West Wrexham is slightly higher than the Wrexham average by 0.1 percentage point. However, particular wards do suffer from higher than average overcrowding problems, including:

- Gwenfro ⇒ 3.4% of all households
- Gwersyllt North ⇒ 2.9% of all households
- Coedpoeth ⇒ 2.1% of all households

- .110 The presence of Local Authority owned housing is high in the County Borough and this is exemplified through the high percentage of households who do not own their home. The West Wrexham area has 40.9% of households which fall into this category, which is slightly above the Wrexham average of 39.8%. However, this figure is far higher in certain wards in the West Wrexham area. For example, in Gwenfro 65.4% of households do not own their home. Similarly in Brymbo the figure is 49% and in Llay 46.1%.
- .111 The high percentage of non-home owners can also impact on the state of the environment. Because tenants do not have a stake in the rented property they are unlikely to put considerable sums of money into the upkeep of that property and thus are less likely to maintain it to the same extent as a home owner.

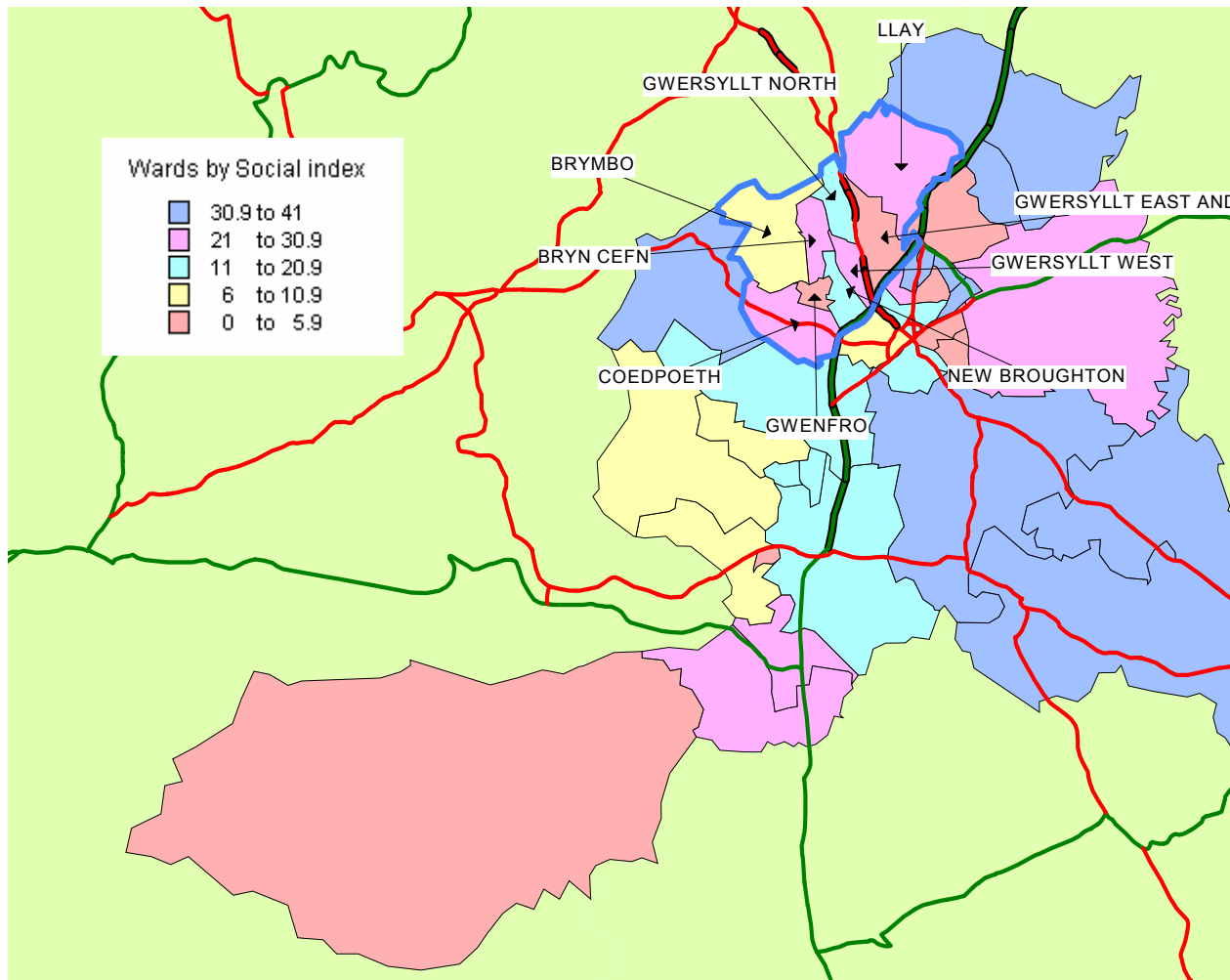
Social and Material deprivation

- .112 Assessing material deprivation through indicators such as unemployment, no car, public rented housing, overcrowding, lack of amenities and low Socio Economic Group (SEG), can be used to form an *Index of Material Deprivation*. This ranks the wards, with the *most* deprived ward equal to the figure one, and the *least* deprived ward equal to the figure forty-one (there being 41 wards in Wrexham). Similarly, an *Index of Social deprivation* can be created through indicators such as long-term illness, 16/17 year olds not in full-time education, pensioner households with no central heating, single parent families, and no earners. Finally a *Composite Index* can be created from the two indexes of material and social deprivation. Table 1.24 outlines this in more detail.

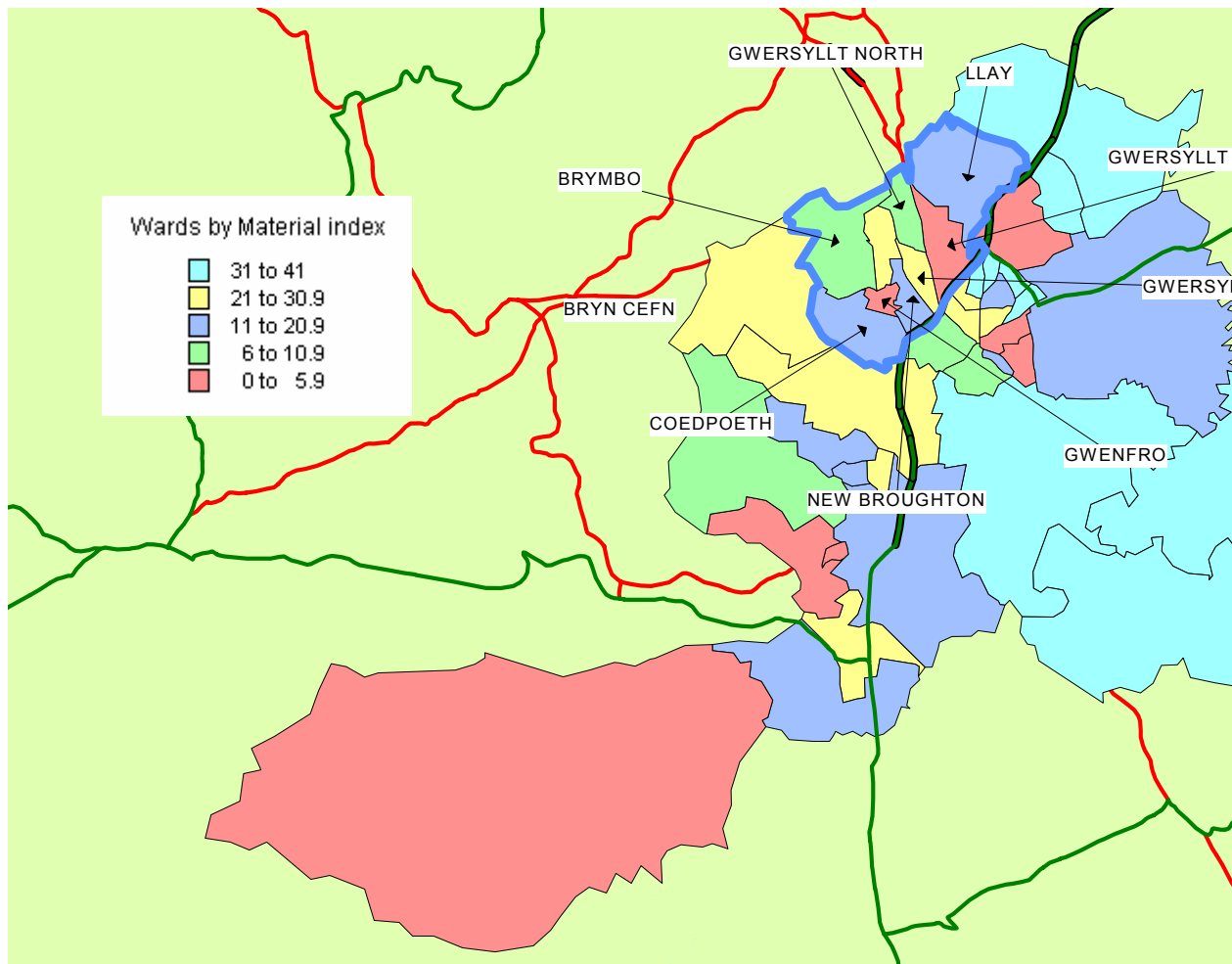
Table 1.24 Ranking of Material and Social Deprivation 1998			
Ward	Material Deprivation	Social Deprivation	Composite Deprivation
Brymbo	8	6	7
Bryn Cefn	27	30	27
Coedpoeth	11	25	18
Gwenfro	4	4	4
Gwersyllt East & South	28	39	31
Gwersyllt North	6	13	9
Gwersyllt West	22	26	25
Llay	18	23	21
New Broughton	16	13	14
Source: Wrexham County Borough Council			

- .113 On the whole, most of the wards score poorly on all indices. Taking account of both Social and Material Deprivation (using the Composite Index) it can be seen that Gwenfro is the most deprived ward in the area, with a rank of 4 (illustrating it is the fourth most deprived ward in Wrexham). Similarly Brymbo scores poorly with a rank of 7, and Gwersyllt North with a rank of 9.
- .114 Material deprivation is high in West Wrexham. The most affected wards include Gwenfro (rank 4), Gwersyllt North (rank 6) and Brymbo (rank 8). These wards also suffer from high levels of Social deprivation: Gwenfro (rank 4), Brymbo (rank 6) and Gwersyllt North and New Broughton at rank 13.
- .115 Maps 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 illustrates the pattern of social, material and composite deprivation throughout Wrexham and West Wrexham.

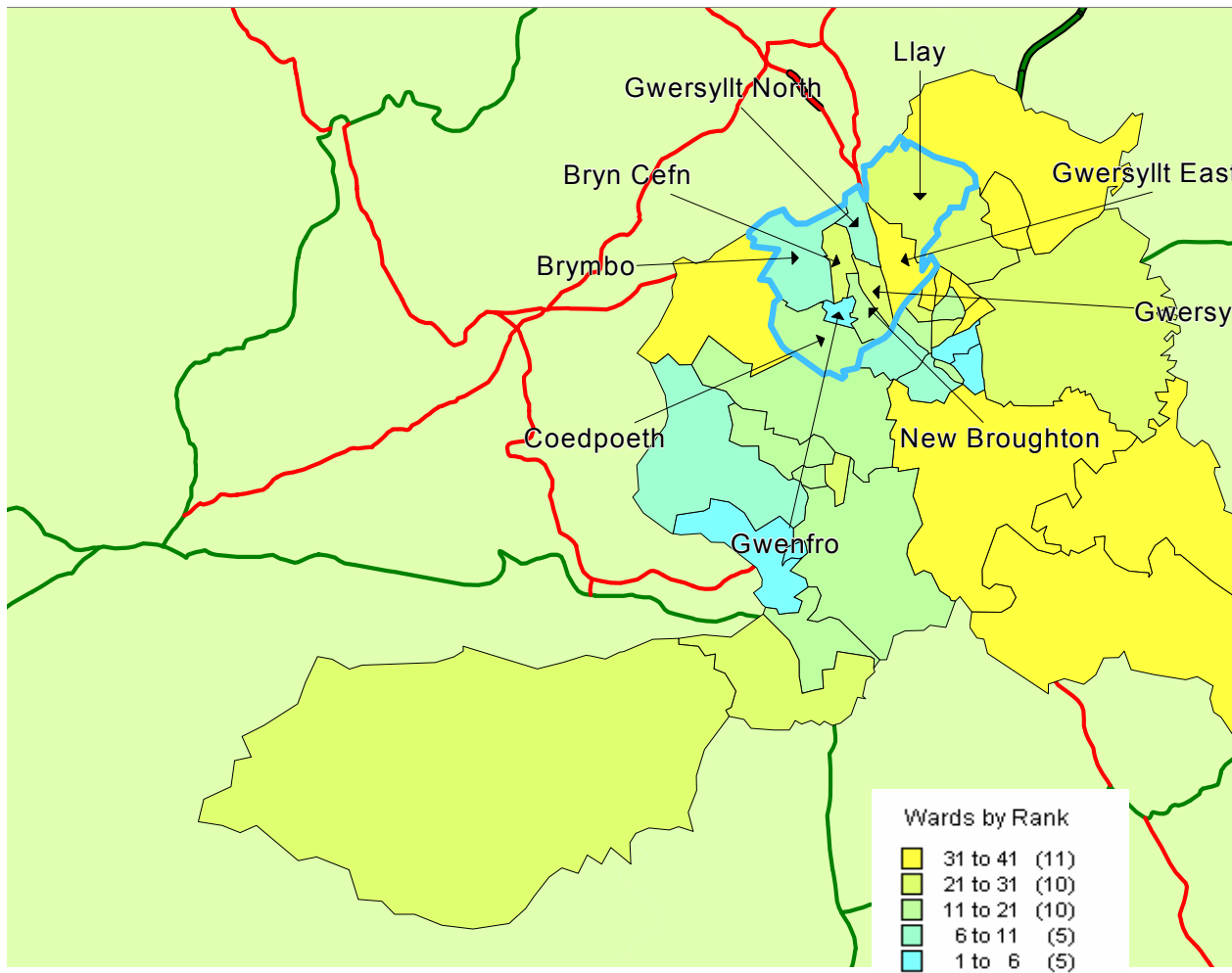
MAP 1.2
GEOGRAPHY OF SOCIAL DEPRIVATION IN WREXHAM AND THE "URBAN" BID AREA



MAP 1.3
GEOGRAPHY OF MATERIAL DEPRIVATION IN WREXHAM AND THE "URBAN" BID AREA



MAP 1.4
GEOGRAPHY OF COMPOSITE DEPRIVATION IN WREXHAM AND THE "URBAN" BID
AREA



The Jarman Index

- .116 The Jarman underprivileged area (UPA) score is a further measure of deprivation based on the following indicators taken from the 1991 Census: elderly living alone, children under 5 years, unskilled, unemployed, over-crowded households, highly mobile population, and ethnic minorities. According to the Jarman definition a higher score indicates increasing deprivation. Wrexham CBC have produced Jarman index data for their wards, but unfortunately Wales benchmarks are not available.
- .117 In West Wrexham, six of the nine wards have a Jarman score above zero, indicating a higher level of deprivation.

Table 1.25 Jarman Index 1991	
Ward	Score
Gwenfro	21.15
New Broughton	13.03
Gwersyllt West	10.07
Brymbo	8.18
Gwersyllt North	3.38
Coedpoeth	2.77
Llay	-1.74
Gwersyllt East and South	-8.03
Bryn Cefn	-11.02
Source: Wrexham County Borough Council	

- .118 According to this definition Gwenfro is the most deprived ward in West Wrexham with a score of 21.15, and the second most deprived ward in Wrexham as a whole (Plas Madoc is the most deprived with a score of 43.08). Other highly deprived wards include New Broughton, Gwersyllt West, Brymbo, Gwersyllt North and Coedpoeth.

KEY MESSAGES ARISING FROM THE COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP

- .119 Local people feel that the sense of community in the study area has been lost through the decline of the traditional industrial base combined with poor community facility provision in certain wards. In particular there is perceived to be a lack of activities for young people and in some cases the elderly. The elderly feel particularly isolated, due to the lack of activities in their own communities combined with poor transport provision limiting access to activities elsewhere.
- .120 The focus group raised concerns that barriers such as low income and poor childcare provision in West Wrexham prevent people from accessing new employment opportunities or re-training in new skills.
- .121 The focus group was keen to see the re-establishment of the heart of their community. The loss of the steelworks and the decline of other traditional industries has led to feelings of resentment, boredom, a loss of community pride and the breakdown of community networks. Local people feel that the provision of better community facilities and opportunities to network would go some way to restoring the community heart.
- .122 Local people feel that community involvement must be central to the regeneration of their areas. Such involvement would provide greater opportunities to create beneficial linkages between the communities of West Wrexham.

CRIMINALITY AND DELINQUENCY

- .123 High rates of criminal activity can have a number of implications for the community. The physical impacts from crimes such as vandalism can have a debilitating effect on the environment and perceptions of an area. This can result in loss of pride and lack of investment in the environment. Similarly, the social consequences of crimes such as theft, drug and substance abuse, combined with concerns of inadequate police presence, can generate a fear of crime in the community. This particularly affects the elderly. There can also be a knock-on effect on the economy of an area, for example if an area is seen as having a concentration of criminal activity then inward investors will be discouraged.
- .124 Table 1.26 illustrates the number of crimes in the wards and the number of crimes per head.

Table 1.26 Crimes recorded: 1 st April 1997 – 30 th June 1998		
Wards	No. of crimes	No. of crimes per head
Gwersyllt E & S	298	15.0
New Broughton	271	10.8
Coedpoeth	246	20.6
Llay	236	20.3
Gwersyllt West	215	12.4
Brymbo	189	13.9
Gwersyllt North	181	14.2
Gwenfro	150	11.4
Bryn Cefn	142	13.6
West Wrexham area	1,928	14.9
Wrexham	11,777	10.8
Source: Wrexham County Borough Council		

- .125 It can be seen from Table 1.18 that the number of crimes per head is significantly higher in West Wrexham, with 14.9 crimes per head in comparison to 10.8 in Wrexham as a whole. There are clusters of high crime per head, notably Coedpoeth with 20.6, and Llay, with 20.3 crimes per head.

.126 Table 1.27 outlines the types of crime that are recorded in these areas.

Table 1.27 Type of Crime recorded in the West Wrexham area 1 st April 1997 – 30 th June 1998								
Ward	Total Crime %	% of which...						
		Violent	Burglary	Theft	Vehicle	Damage	Drugs	Miscellaneous
Gwersyllt E & S	100.0	5.7	25.5	23.5	23.5	20.5	1.0	0.3
New Broughton	100.0	5.5	39.5	10.0	20.3	24.0	0.7	0.0
Coedpoeth	100.0	8.9	20.3	17.5	23.6	29.7	0.0	0.0
Llay	100.0	8.5	14.8	22.0	26.7	25.4	2.1	0.4
Gwersyllt West	100.0	9.3	22.8	14.0	25.1	28.4	0.5	0.0
Brymbo	100.0	3.2	36.0	6.9	25.4	28.0	0	0.5
Gwersyllt North	100.0	4.4	32.0	15.5	24.9	23.2	0.0	0.0
Gwenfro	100.0	9.3	32.0	16.7	22.0	20.0	0.0	0.0
Bryn Cefn	100.0	7.0	36.6	16.2	16.9	22.5	0.7	0.0
West Wrexham area	100.0	6.8	28.2	16.1	23.3	24.7	0.6	0.2
Wrexham	100.0	8.0	21.2	23.7	24.5	21.6	0.9	0.2

Source: Wrexham County Borough Council

.127 There are particular crimes which have high recorded rates in West Wrexham. For example, burglaries account for 28.2% of all crime recorded in the West Wrexham area in comparison to 21.2% in Wrexham as a whole. Similarly damage is high, accounting for 24.7% of all crimes in comparison to 21.6% in Wrexham as a whole. In contrast, violent crime, theft, vehicle and drug crimes are slightly below the Wrexham averages.

.128 However, it is possible to analyse the results at a ward level and identify clusters of types of crime. Therefore, above Wrexham average concentrations can be seen in:

Violent Crime

- ⇒ Gwersyllt West
- ⇒ Gwenfro
- ⇒ Coedpoeth
- ⇒ Llay

Vehicle

- ⇒ Llay
- ⇒ Brymbo
- ⇒ Gwersyllt North
- ⇒ Gwersyllt West

Drugs

- ⇒ Llay
- ⇒ Gwersyllt East and South

Burglary

- ⇒ New Broughton
- ⇒ Brymbo
- ⇒ Gwersyllt North
- ⇒ Gwenfro
- ⇒ Bryn Cefn

Damage

- ⇒ Coedpoeth
- ⇒ New Broughton
- ⇒ Llay
- ⇒ Gwersyllt West
- ⇒ Brymbo
- ⇒ Gwersyllt North
- ⇒ Bryn Cefn

Miscellaneous

- ⇒ Gwersyllt East and South
- ⇒ Llay
- ⇒ Brymbo

- .129 Table 1.28 outlines the number of disorder incidents⁵ recorded between the 1st of April 1997 and the 30th June 1998.

Table 1.28 Number of disorder incidents 1 st April 1997 – 30 th June 1998		
Ward	Number of incidents	Incidents per head
Coedpoeth	538	9.4
Gwersyllt West	437	6.1
New Broughton	416	7.0
Llay	379	12.6
Gwersyllt East and South	322	13.9
Gwersyllt North	310	8.3
Brymbo	286	9.2
Bryn Cefn	234	8.2
Gwenfro	181	9.5
West Wrexham area	3103	9.3
Wrexham	16383	7.8
Source: Wrexham County Borough Council		

- .130 The number of disorder incidents is high in West Wrexham. In particular, disorder incidents per head equal 9.3 in the West Wrexham area in comparison to 7.8 in Wrexham as a whole.
- .131 Gwersyllt West and New Broughton are the only wards in the area which are below the Wrexham average in terms of number of disorder incidents per head. The wards in the area which have a particularly high number of incidents per head include Gwersyllt East and South (13.9), Llay (12.6) and Gwenfro (9.5).

KEY MESSAGES EMERGING FROM THE RESIDENTS SURVEY

- .132 In general, the majority of residents surveyed (77.8%) feel that their area is safe to live in. However, 22.1% feel it is unsafe and live in fear of crime.

KEY MESSAGES EMERGING FROM THE COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP

- .133 Crime emerged as a key issue in the focus group. It was identified as a problem in all communities, with particular concerns expressed about vandalism and substance misuse. It was also widely believed that recorded crime did not reflect the true picture. People did not report crime, either due to fear of intimidation or lack of faith in the police's ability/willingness to respond. There was a strong feeling that policing in the area needed greater resourcing. This could be supported by other measures including awareness raising and education, together with programmes of diversionary activity.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

- .134 The skill levels of the workforce in an area can impact considerably on the success of the economy. For example a potential inward investor will consider the skill levels of the workforce before making an investment decision.
- .135 Post sixteen education and training in West Wrexham is predominantly provided by Yale College of Wrexham, a further education college and sixth form facility and the North East Wales Institute which is also an Associate College of the University of Bangor offering higher education courses. There is also a training provision from Wrexham County Borough's training centre, Wrexham ITEC. All of these facilities are located approximately four to six miles from the communities in question.

⁵ Disorder includes: abandoned 999 calls, anti-social behaviour, domestic disputes, racial, nuisance phone calls, mental, litter, landlord/tenancy disputes, industrial disputes, hoax telephone calls, and firearm offences

- .136 The vast majority of course are only available onsite and requires the community to travel the training provider. Some low-level courses are provided through the Community Tutor based in Gwersyllt. Yale has also provided IT courses over the past three years in the communities of Brynteg (3), Gwersyllt, Coedpoeth and Llay. Since September 2000 enrolments have totalled 80+ clients. It is intended to continue to run these courses, and others, in the urban catchment areas.
- .137 Wrexham TEC has also linked into the community through government training programmes such as Modern Apprenticeships, National Traineeships, Work Based Learning for Adults and other New Deal programmes. In the past year over one hundred clients from these communities have enrolled in various courses, the majority of which ending up in employment. It is intended that these course will continue whilst government funding is available.
- .138 In the longer term a partnership of providers is now being established through the shadow Wrexham Community Consortium for Education and Training. It is intended that the partnership can bring a more integrated and strategic approach to the education and training provision in these areas of special need. It is hoped to develop an Information Communication Technology network linking the partners and the community. This will ensure that no one is disenfranchised from the education and training opportunities available in this area.

GCSE Performance

- .139 It is difficult to ascertain the catchment areas for each school in Wrexham using purely ward based geographies. Therefore it is difficult to conclude which wards have a low educational attainment based on schools performance. However, it is possible to draw some inferences from the results and geographically link particular wards to schools.
- .140 Low educational attainment is a concern in certain communities. Table 1.29 illustrates GCSE performance in 1999 by secondary school.

Table 1.29 GCSE Performance in Secondary Schools in Wrexham, 1999			
Secondary School	Number of 15 year olds	% achieving A* - C grades	% achieving A* - G grades
Darland High School	133	60	95
St. David's High School	207	52	71
St. Joseph's R. C High School	82	56	95
The Groves High School	148	40	69
The Maelor School	103	59	98
Ysgol Bryn Alyn	120	37	83
Ysgol Bryn Offa	191	43	86
Ysgol Morgan Llwyd	103	52	90
Ysgol Rhiwabon	84	39	81
Ysgol-Y-Grango	128	44	84
Source: Department of Education, Wrexham County Borough Council			

- .141 Bryn Alyn High School and Bryn Offa High School are the main secondary schools serving West Wrexham. However, pupils from Llay often travel to Darland High School, and pupils from New Broughton, Gwenfro, and Bryn Cefn often travel to the Groves High School.
- .142 The attainment levels in Bryn Alyn, The Groves High School and Bryn Offa are amongst the lowest in the County Borough, with low proportions of pupils achieving A*-C grades. For example, only 37% of pupils from Bryn Alyn achieved A*-C grades. This finding reinforces the possible connection between educational attainment and deprivation as the wards which serve the school also score highly on deprivation indicators.
- .143 However, this connection is by no means clear-cut. For example, a number of pupils from West Wrexham may also attend Darland High School which has the highest educational achievement in Wrexham, with 60% of its pupils achieving A*-C grades in GCSEs.

School Leaver Destinations

- .144 The majority of school leavers from the schools serving West Wrexham continue into further education. However, in comparison to the proportion of school leavers from other schools in Wrexham, the number of pupils continuing is below average. This is particularly the case with the Groves School and for male pupils leaving Bryn Alyn. However, pupils from Bryn Offa are likely to progress further with their education. This is particularly the case for females, where, in 1999, 81.5% of pupils continued into Further Education.
- .145 Employment as a school leaver destination is also important in West Wrexham. In particular, 20% of males from Bryn Alyn leave into employment, this is a proportion far higher than the other schools in Wrexham. This could be attributed to the proximity of manufacturing employment in most of the areas and therefore the potential for school-leavers to partake in a modern apprenticeship.

Future Skills Wales

- .146 Below, we present some key findings from the *Future Skills Wales* surveys. These surveys – examining residents and employers separately – have addressed a number of issues. Unfortunately the results were only analysed at the County Borough level, and there is no analysis at a ward-based level which means they cannot be examined in the context of West Wrexham. However, a number of the issues will be of direct relevance to the West Wrexham area.

Wrexham Employers

Recruitment difficulties...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Wrexham employers have experienced recruitment difficulties across a range of occupational groups, however, these appear to be more pronounced in unskilled occupations and associate professional occupations. This situation reflects the importance of Manufacturing to the Wrexham economy, where these particular occupations are important. Recruitment difficulties in these occupations are comparatively greater in Wrexham than across North Wales as a whole. ➤ For Wrexham employers, the main reasons why some jobs are difficult to fill include lack of enough suitably skilled people in the area (although this is less of a problem in North Wales as a whole), lack of applicants interested in the work and unattractiveness of remuneration.
School and college leavers...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 56% of Wrexham employers say that there is a significant gap between the skills school and college leavers possess and those which the employer requires (compared to 52% of employers across North Wales as a whole). ➤ In terms of the particular skills that school/college leavers are felt to lack, the following are listed by Wrexham employers: practical experience, communication skills, numeracy, literacy and showing initiative.
Graduates...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 26% of Wrexham employers recruit graduates – the same proportion as North Wales as a whole. 36% of Wrexham employers feel there is a gap between the skills graduates possess and those required by the employer (compared to 32% of North Wales's employers). ➤ Wrexham employers feel that the following skills are particularly lacking amongst graduates: practical experience, communication skills and showing initiative.
Occupational skills gaps...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A lower proportion of Wrexham employers (15%), say that there is a significant gap between the types of skills employees currently possess and those required to meet business objectives, than is the case for all employers in North Wales (19%). ➤ For Wrexham employers, skills gaps are particularly noticeable in unskilled occupations, clerical and secretarial jobs and skilled trades.
Training...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A considerably higher proportion of Wrexham employers (66%) have funded or arranged off the job training for employees than employers across North Wales as a whole (58%). ➤ 36% of Wrexham employers state that they do not face barriers to training (compared to 37% of employers in North Wales). For those who do face barriers, the key ones are: the cost of staff time (the most important barrier) and the cost of actual training provision.

Wrexham Residents

Participation in training and learning...	➤	48% of Wrexham residents have been involved in training of some kind over the last twelve months, a slightly lower proportion than the 50% involved in training across North Wales. However, 75% of Wrexham residents have stated that they face barriers of some kind in pursuing wider learning or studying (this is lower than North Wales as a whole).
Familiarity with IT....	➤	61% of Wrexham residents state that they do not use a computer (with or without CD-ROM) at least once a week (the same proportion as North Wales).
	➤	Only 4% of Wrexham residents would describe themselves as advanced users of IT (compared to 6% in North Wales). A much lower proportion of Wrexham residents (22%) say that they never use a computer, compared to North Wales as a whole (33%).

KEY MESSAGES ARISING FROM THE RESIDENTS SURVEY

- .147 The residents survey asked a number of questions about education and training. Of the residents surveyed only 63.6% had any qualifications from school or college. However, 41.1% had received qualifications through work-related studies (e.g. Youth Training).
- .148 Of the valid percentage of residents surveyed and with qualifications (i.e. not including missing statistics) the highest proportions of qualifications were in:

Qualification	%
GCSE Grades A-C	42.4
GCE O Levels	33.7
Other qualifications (e.g. RSA)	23.9
CSE's other than Grade 1	16.3
NVQ/SVQ	15.2
GCSE Grades D-G	13.0
GCE A Level	12.0
Clerical Qualification	8.6

- .149 In the last 12 months, only 26.4% of residents surveyed had taken part in any education or training connected to their job, and only 20% were considering following an education or training course in the near future.
- .150 Of those who have undertaken training courses in the last 12 months the majority (67.6%) have only undertaken one course. The remainder have partaken in:

Number of courses:	% who have studied:
1	67.6
2	17.6
3	8.8
4	2.9
5	2.9
Total	100.0

- .151 The main motivation for undertaking a training course was, primarily, "To get a job" (17.5%), as a "Requirement of the job" (25%) and because "it interests me" (12.5%).
- .152 The surveyed residents mainly undertook their training on premises belonging to their employer (58.8%). Other places included:

Place where course was undertaken	% who undertook their course in this location
Premises belonging to employer	58.8
Premises belonging to another company	5.9
Private training centre	5.9
Adult education centre	2.9
Further or tertiary education establishment	20.6
Other educational institution	2.9
At home (open learning)	2.9
Total	100.0

.153 The surveyed residents largely had to travel a considerable distance to access their training:

Distance	% who travelled
1- 3 miles	30.8
4 – 6 miles	15.4
7 – 10 miles	15.4
11 – 15 miles	23.1
16 – 50 miles	7.7
Over 51 miles	7.7
Total	100.0

.154 On the whole the residents were largely *very satisfied* with their learning or training with 70% stating their satisfaction. Only 2.5% described their training as *neither satisfying or unsatisfying*. The remainder (27.5%) described their course as *satisfactory*.

.155 The reasons behind the residents wanting to pursue further education in the near future is mainly to get a job (52.6%), to change the type of work they do (15.7%) or to gain a Of those who had not taken part in education or training recently, the main reasons behind this were:

Reason	%
Having to look after children/other dependants	23.3%
Family circumstances making it difficult	12.6%
Couldn't get the time off work	11.6%
Don't need qualifications in the job	8.4%

KEY MESSAGES ARISING FROM COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP

- .156 Adult education provision was a key issue raised by local people. Barriers to achieving a reasonable level of adult education provision include the lack of a critical population mass to sustain adult education provision and the high cost involved. Whilst residents are aware of opportunities in Wrexham town centre, they are often unable to take these up due to lack of transport, cost of transport and/or family commitments. If lifelong learning in these communities is not addressed, then West Wrexham will struggle to regenerate itself, both physically and economically, as residents are prevented from gaining new skills and accessing new jobs.
- .157 The focus group felt the solution to this problem would be to have an education centre to serve the entire area, therefore gaining the critical mass to sustain provision. A centre such as this could be multi-functional, providing youth facilities, education and training, jobs for local people, and a community centre.
- .158 One threat which the focus group identified was the fear that a “brain-drain” of West Wrexham is occurring, whereby the higher educated move away in order to access more higher paid and higher skilled jobs.
- .159 However, local people did identify that the presence of a Higher Education institution (NEWI) in the County Borough was a key strength in the economy and one which could be built on in order to encourage movement of employees into higher skilled and higher paid employment.

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

- .160 This sub-section examines some of the environmental issues in the study area.

CROSS CUTTING THEMES

- .161 As well as the ‘vertical’ issues – set out above – that are crucial to West Wrexham, there are a number of horizontal or cross-cutting issues that must be addressed by the West Wrexham Strategy. These issues are:
 - Equal opportunities;
 - The labour market; and
 - The environment.
- .162 Below, we set out, in-turn, the relevant baseline information and other messages that are relevant to each of the three cross-cutting issues.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- .163 The West Wrexham strategy must recognise that individuals have an equal right to be considered as participants in all parts of the economy – as employers and self-employed business operators as well as employees in the labour market – as well as society as a whole. The Strategy should promote equal access to education, training and employment for all. Where necessary, specific activities will be supported in West Wrexham to tackle barriers to employment (including self-employment), learning or training, based on gender, disability, ethnicity, language or culture, disadvantage and social exclusion, through positive action projects.

- .164 An important cross cutting issue is to tackle social exclusion through a combination of targeted activities across the full range of supported activities. This means reducing the numbers and proportions of people at a disadvantage in the labour market, including those who may feel excluded from mainstream support.

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- .165 A particular issue for West Wrexham is the concept of promoting 'pathways to sustainable employment'. This approach recognises that for many individuals experiencing exclusion from employment and training opportunities, a graduated, step-by-step approach to re-inclusion will be required. It may require providing pathways to employment for a wide range of excluded groups but will have a particular focus on: disabled people; older people; returners to the labour market (including lone parents and those with caring responsibilities); ethnic minorities; and people with basic skill needs.
- .166 Other local priorities will include action to strengthen the capacity of local community based organisations and groups to deal with disadvantaged clients and support for the development of the social economy. This will help enable people to participate fully in economic life, and provide support for those experiencing particular disadvantage and address barriers to their participation in economic and community life.
- .167 Statistical evidence on equal opportunities issues in West Wrexham is somewhat patchy, and is better for gender-based opportunities issues than for non-gender issues. However, the following are some of the key messages.
- Females are enjoying fewer of the new employment opportunities in West Wrexham. Between 1991 and 1998, female employment in West Wrexham grew by only 0.7%, compared to 24.5% for males.
 - In 1998, only 39% of all employment in West Wrexham was female, compared to 44% in 1991. The comparable figure for Wrexham as a whole is 47%, and for Wales and GB 48.5%.
 - On the other hand, there has been strong growth in female full time employment over this period. In 1998, 64% of female employment was full-time, compared to 53% in 1991.
 - Economic activity rate data for West Wrexham dates from the 1991 Census and is obsolete. However, even this data indicates that there are significant pockets of particularly low female economic activity in West Wrexham, especially in Brymbo and Gwenfro.
 - In terms of unemployment, although the average female unemployment rates in West Wrexham is below the Welsh benchmark, pockets of higher unemployment exist, such as Bryn Cefn.
 - Furthermore, female unemployment rates in West Wrexham are higher among older (40-59) age cohorts than is the case for Wales and GB. That is, older females in West Wrexham appear to face two sets of barriers to active labour market participation.

LABOUR MARKET ISSUES

- .168 Clearly, much of the information discussed in this baseline is directly or indirectly related to 'labour market issues'. Some of the key messages from this research are summarised below.

West Wrexham has a high proportion of working age population

The West Wrexham study area has a slightly higher young dependent population but a lower elderly dependent population than the Wrexham average.

Employment in the study area is gradually increasing

After being hard-hit by the decline of traditional industries and subsequent unemployment the West Wrexham area is experiencing employment growth. However, this trend has been concentrated in the manufacturing sector, and the medium term forecast is for these industries to undergo rationalisation and restructuring.

Employment in the West Wrexham area is very male oriented

Over-time the proportion of male employment has increased, whilst, correspondingly, female employment has decreased.

Full time employment opportunities have increased	In line with the national economy, since 1991 the proportion of individuals in employment who are employed full time has increased significantly, both for males and females.
There are a limited number of key sectors in the West Wrexham area	The manufacturing sector is a very important employer particularly in Llay. However, this dependency is problematic as the sector continues to be hard-hit by competition and technological change. Other key sectors include construction and service sectors such as distribution, hotels and restaurants, and public administration, education and health.
The business structure in West Wrexham is skewed towards both larger and smaller employers	Compared to national benchmarks, employment in West Wrexham is concentrated in a greater proportion of micro-businesses (<10 employees) and larger businesses (>500 employees).
Rates of self-employment are low	Rates of self-employment (8.7%) in West Wrexham are significantly lower than national benchmarks (11.5%), suggesting a less entrepreneurial population.
There is a significant difference in the unemployment rates of individual wards	Although overall unemployment rates are average, wards such as Gwenfro have maintained a relatively high unemployment rate throughout the 1990s.
Low pay and debt problems are a characteristic of the West Wrexham area	Part-time work in the West Wrexham area is an important aspect of the economy. This is traditionally characterised by low pay and few benefits. Rising consumer and housing debt is also a cause for concern in the area.
GCSE attainment is low in some communities	Schools such as Ysgol Bryn Alyn have a low educational attainment. The wards which serve this school score highly on deprivation indicators.

THE ENVIRONMENT

- .169 Clearly, the Strategy's objectives must be pursued in ways that make them mutually compatible for current and future generations. Meeting these conditions will require a focus on models where economic growth is coupled with social development and reducing demands on the environment. The West Wrexham Strategy must assess all potential projects in terms of both direct and indirect impacts, and will seek to raise awareness of environmental issues across a range of mainstream activities.
- .170 There are a number of factors that have contributed to a poor environment in West Wrexham. The decline of the industrial base has contributed to the high proportion of derelict land in the area. In particular loss of employment has resulted in less disposable income to be spent on property improvements. There are a number of derelict sites in the area, including the former Brymbo Steelworks site which has been prioritised for housing/employment/or amenity in the Unitary Development Plan.
- .171 In a number of the wards, environmental problems have been heightened through the loss of traditional industries. For example, in Brymbo environmental problems have been heightened by the loss of the steelworks combined with a lack of development, contributing to a general malaise in the area. The external condition of a number of buildings is poor and the perimeter embankment to the former steelwork site forms a major detractor to the landscape quality of the area and deters investors.
- Environmental Audit
- .172 An environmental audit was undertaken by DTZ Piedad Consulting during July 2000, considering the general streetscape, retail vacancies, community facilities and building conditions. Also, the general environmental quality was assessed in the ward, looking at general appearance, community facilities and public open space. Finally the industrial areas were considered, looking at general appearance, building condition, and vacant and derelict sites.

.173 Key messages emerging from the audit and relating to West Wrexham are outlined below.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Brymbo</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Poor general streetscape: roads in poor condition, lighting inadequate, building conditions deteriorating, basic community facilities. ➤ Housing areas have a neglected feel. Public open space is minimal with no landscaping. ➤ Industrial areas very poor – all neglected/closed, signs of deterioration. ➤ Good sports and leisure facilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Brynteg</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ General streetscape: poor roads, lighting too wide apart, no green space visible. Retail vacancies (30%), poor building condition, shopping cover adequate. ➤ Housing mixed: council and private. Some well-kept, others boarded up. No community facilities seen. Good public open space with playing fields, cricket green and sports centre.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Coedpoeth</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Generally attractive streetscape. Some littering, graffiti. Roads in poor condition. Building condition reasonable, frontages kept clean and tidy. Good range of shops and services. ➤ Average general environmental quality. Housing in reasonable condition. Community feel to area. No facilities seen, but public open space good – tidy and attractive.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Gwersyllt</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ District Centre: very poor – district centre unattractive, no landscaping, poor pedestrian provision, reasonable lighting. Building condition dated, poorly maintained. Vacant site available. Good shopping offer – 13 retail units in total. ➤ Average general appearance. Road embankment and railway bridge and eyesore. Average public open space – extensive playing fields. Associated buildings in poor condition. Out-dated play equipment. ➤ Graham Packaging and Pine Furniture on A541 – very overgrown, poor signage.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Llay</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Average. Generally attractive. Road paving littered and slightly pot-holed. Reasonable building condition. Park well-kept and attractive. Reasonable shopping offer. ➤ Significant amount of council housing but in reasonable condition. Gardens a bit neglected. Good range of community facilities. Attractive central open space: well-kept. ➤ Industrial estate – average signage. Reasonable condition, but branding poor.

Housing Needs

- .174 According to the “Modelling Housing Needs in Wrexham” survey conducted in 1999 there were 51,852 dwellings on the Council’s valuation list in April 1997. The 1991 Census showed that 61% of households were homeowners, 32% rented from the Council, 5% rented privately, and 2% rented from a housing association.
- .175 One common housing theme which runs through the West Wrexham area is the importance of council housing in these communities. For example, Gwenfro has 61% of local authority housing, Gwersyllt North has 35% as has Gwersyllt West, and New Broughton has 31%. These were built at various times throughout the 1900s. However, many built in the pre-war and early post-war periods are now in need of investment to improve the dwellings. The decline of the traditional employment base has contributed to a high degree of physical dilapidation around these estates. Various crime problems, particularly vandalism, have also contributed to the deterioration of the environment.
- .176 Overall, it is estimated that the funds needed to improve all council stock to the desired standard is approximately £65 million in Wrexham as a whole. There is also a need for programmes of landscaping, fencing, footpath refurbishment, and off-street parking provision. These schemes so far have proved successful. A further problem, however, is that 460 council dwellings were vacant in 1998. This can attract crime and vandalism as well as being an eyesore.

KEY MESSAGES EMERGING FROM THE RESIDENTS SURVEY

- .177 In total nearly 50% of the surveyed residents in West Wrexham would like to see better services, leisure or community facilities available locally. There were a range of ideas suggested, but the most popular include: more general sports and leisure facilities, facilities for teenagers and young people, children’s play areas, and swimming facilities.
- .178 Overall, 88.6% of the residents surveyed feel it is a desirable place to live, although the majority of this figure (59.5%) would describe it as “Fairly desirable”. In total, however, 21.5% would like to move to another area.

KEY MESSAGES ARISING FROM COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP

- .179 Generally, focus group attendees perceived their environment as poor. This view is strengthened by the proximity of derelict land to their villages, e.g. Brymbo steelworks, derelict buildings, and poor housing stock in certain areas, e.g. Brynteg. The residents feel that derelict land such as the Brymbo Steelworks site is an eyesore and contributes to the lack of community pride. Residents would like to see it developed to provide jobs for local people through reclaiming these sites and making premises and workspace available.
- .180 The residents identified the poor condition of the roads within West Wrexham as a further detriment to their environment. This also provides a deterrent to potential inward investors. However, another concern regarding the main transport links is road safety. In particular, residents feel that traffic calming measures are needed in some of the more built up areas, (e.g. on the Pentre Broughton road).
- .181 Leisure facilities and play areas are unevenly spread in the area. The residents highlighted the importance of having more and improved facilities to promote a sense of community and provide children and young people with activities.

2: SWOT

The key messages in terms of the West Wrexham economy, and the area's physical and social environment, that has emerged from our analysis is summarised in the SWOT analysis presented in this section. The SWOT analysis performs two principal functions in the evolution of the West Wrexham URBAN II bid:

- It provides a logical connection between our analysis of the bid area's problems and constraints on the one hand, and the Commission's objectives and priorities in terms of URBAN II; and
- It informs the allocation of programme resources between candidate Priorities.

The SWOT analysis is presented below. In the context of URBAN:

- **Strengths** are assets or factors that may provide leverage in making progress towards greater competitiveness, employment, economic prosperity and social cohesion.
- **Weaknesses** are deficits or negative factors that represent a tangible obstacle to progress towards greater competitiveness, employment, economic prosperity and social cohesion.
- **Opportunities** are external factors that represent possibilities for progress.
- **Threats** are external factors that represent actual or potential constraints on progress.

Strengths

Strategic Issue	Underpinning Evidence	Strategic Implications
Employment Growth	AES 1991-98 shows that employment grew by 14% in the bid area, compared to 4.5% for Wales. However, most of the growth was in 'old economy' sectors such as food, motor vehicle parts, transport, health services and other manufacturing.	Whilst it will be important to build on existing strengths, it will also be important to address sectors with particular strong growth prospects in the wider sub-region. These will include: electronic components; communications equipment; specialist materials; advanced engineering; new media; tourism; and health care. If the potential of these economic sectors is to be maximised for the benefit of local residents, then skills development programmes relevant to the needs of these industries need to be developed and targeted at the existing workforce and potential new entrants.
Commitment of employers to training of workers	Encouragingly, Future Skills Wales research indicates that a considerably higher proportion of Wrexham employers (66%) have funded or arranged off-the-job training for employees than have their peer companies across North Wales as a whole (58%).	It will be important for the strategy to build on this emerging 'culture of training'. However, employers still report barriers to employee training, including the cost of staff time and the cost of training provision. It will be necessary for the strategy to facilitate greater penetration of a training culture among the local business base.
Increasing interest of residents in training	Household survey data indicates that around half of residents have been involved in some form of training activity over the past 12 months.	It will be important for the strategy to build on this emerging 'culture of training'. However, residents report barriers to accessing training, including public transport access and childcare provision.
Development land at Brymbo	This 70 ha site is the largest brownfield site in North Wales. The site benefits from planning permission for mixed-use development (housing and employment) and is in the ownership of Brymbo Developments Ltd. Land reclamation costs are in the region of £10-12m and funding routes are currently being investigated.	Re-development of Brymbo Steelworks site is a major strategic opportunity for North Wales. On the other hand, the community currently endures derelict buildings, such as the Legion Building, alongside the major eyesore of the main site. The lack of progress on this latter site over the past 10 years has resulted in resentment and disappointment among local people, and contributes substantially to negative perceptions of the area.

Network of voluntary sector organisations serving the area	Wrexham has a strong umbrella network of at least 85 voluntary sector organisations active in West Wrexham.	It will be important for the strategy to harness the expertise and energy that sits within the voluntary sector in Wrexham. However, the ability of the sector to contribute to the strategy is constrained by inadequate financial resources.
The emerging West Wrexham Partnership	The emerging West Wrexham Partnership is an important resource in identifying solutions and implementing the West Wrexham strategy.	The capacity of the Partnership must be developed further, particularly among social partners, the private sector and community representatives.

Weaknesses

Strategic Issue	Underpinning Evidence	Strategic Implications
5.1 Narrow economic base	AES data (1998) illustrates that 49% of employment in West Wrexham is in manufacturing, with about 20% of all employment in one branch plant factory (Sharp Electronics). The Wrexham economy as a whole is over-dependent on manufacturing, and econometric forecasts indicate that around 1,500 jobs will be lost to the local manufacturing base by 2005.	Diversification of the Wrexham economy is a priority for the local authority. It will be particularly important to encourage enterprise and new investment in sectors that are growing in the national and Wales context. These include hospitality; business and financial services; professional services and cultural/creative industries, including new media. One implication for West Wrexham will be the need to focus efforts on training the existing and potential workforce to be flexible and responsive to new opportunities.
Unemployment levels	Unemployment rates in a number of West Wrexham wards are above GB averages. Long term unemployment in West Wrexham accounts for 17% of all unemployment, a higher figure than for Wrexham as a whole, but less than for Wales.	Unemployment levels in West Wrexham are not greatly in excess of national benchmarks. Given the vulnerability of the area to the secular decline in manufacturing employment, however, there is a particular need to increase the flexibility and adaptability of the existing workforce and new entrants to ensure that unemployment levels do not rise further.
5.1 Economic activity rates	Evidence from the 1991 census suggest that the economic activity rate in West Wrexham is comparable to the GB average. However, LAD-level data for Wrexham indicates that economic activity rates are declining for the Borough, at the same time as employment has been growing strongly. The economic activity for Wrexham declined from 75% in 1991 to 70.5% in 1998.	This suggests strongly that local residents have failed to capture the benefits of employment growth, at the same time as local employers report recruitment difficulties, skills shortages and skills gaps. The implication is a need for additional investment in workforce training, but especially the need to address skills deficiencies among the economically inactive in West Wrexham.
Weak entrepreneurial culture	Business start-up and self-employment data are often used as indicators of economic competitiveness. Business start-up data for West Wrexham is not available, but at the level of County Borough data suggests a weak entrepreneurial culture (new VAT-registrations are at % of the GB average). West Wrexham has a significantly lower proportion of the self-employed, with 8.7% of the workforce self-employed compared to 13% for Wales and 11.5% for GB.	The barriers to developing a stronger entrepreneurial culture include cultural attitudes, poorly developed business support infrastructures (advice and financial support), a shortage of new-start premises, and poor education-industry links.

Lack of premises for new start-up businesses	Occupancy levels in Wrexham's stock of industrial sites and premises is in excess of 97%. However, low rental levels discourage additional provision by the private sector. Wrexham's Business Development team report high levels of frustrated demand for workshops and other start-up premises in the West Wrexham area.	Encouraging the provision of managed workspace, business incubation premises and more standard types of business accommodation in West Wrexham, especially types that are suited to high growth, high value industrial and service sectors is a priority for West Wrexham. It will be important to build on partnerships with the WDA, and develop new partnerships with the private sector if latent and frustrated demand is to met.
Under-skilled workforce	Future Skills Wales research indicates that only 15% of Wrexham's workforce are qualified to NVQ level 4 or higher, compared to 20% for Wales. At the same time, 15% of employers report significant gaps in the types of skills employees currently possess and those skills required to meet business objectives. Skills gaps are highlighted in clerical, secretarial and skilled trade occupations.	There is a need for significant action to increase local employer's demand for skilled people, to increase skills investment and to enhance the development capacity of the local workforce, if West Wrexham is to move towards a more productive and higher value economy.
Low educational attainment	Future Skills Wales research indicates that 56% of Wrexham employers identify a significant gap between the skills local school and college leavers possess and those than the employer requires.	In tandem with the need to develop greater recognition among companies of the link between workforce investment and business performance, there is also a need to instil within individuals the connection between learning and continuous improvement, and personal economic and social fulfilment. Careers education and guidance will be an important dimension for adults, as well as young people.
Barriers to training and work opportunities	Evidence from the household survey – corroborated by the Wrexham Childcare Partnership – suggests that childcare provision in the Wrexham area is not yet adequate enough to meet overall demand. In addition, provision tends to be concentrated in the urban core of the County Borough and is therefore inaccessible to many who reside in West Wrexham. Lower rates of female participation in the Wrexham labour force can be attributed in part to inadequate childcare arrangements.	Provision of childcare facilities is a key contributor to local labour market flexibility. Inadequate provision and lack of access to adequate, high quality and full time care can have a detrimental effect of the flexibility if the female labour market.
Generally fragmented community structures	Messages from the West Wrexham focus groups included the perception that existing community mechanisms and structures are under-developed. Generally, more investment is needed in community capacity building and self-help.	All stakeholders in West Wrexham, and most importantly the communities themselves, must be involved and must work together to achieve needed improvements. Key to the success of this approach will be the development of partnerships based on mutual understanding and respect and which are tailored to the needs and aspirations of individual communities.
Environment	West Wrexham displays considerable visual evidence of a poor environmental legacy from previously unsustainable industrial development. Consultations with local residents demonstrated a general lack of satisfaction with their immediate environment. These perceptions contribute to apathy, resentment and a further decline in community pride.	Poor environments lead to poor image and reduce business and investor confidence in an area, so compounding the problems caused by the loss of traditional industries.

Opportunities		
Strategic Issue	Underpinning Evidence	Strategic Implications
Job opportunities elsewhere in Wrexham and the wider sub-regional economy	AES data (1991-1998) shows that in the wider sub-region and labour market (Chester, Flintshire and Wrexham), employment is continuing to grow strongly.	Sectors with outstanding growth prospects include aerospace (linked to the BAe 3XX project); financial services; business and professional services; computer software and services; residential and health care; and leisure/recreation. If West Wrexham residents are to participate fully in these opportunities, adequate training must be delivered and other barriers to employment (transport, childcare) addressed.
Develop the Social Economy	Opportunities are available to West Wrexham in terms of providing local solutions to gaps in important services, such as local retailing; childcare; care for the elderly; recruitment and training projects; environmental enhancements; etc.	Developing community enterprise will enable local people to develop a greater culture of entrepreneurship and self-help, and will also provide a means of enhancing the skills and capacity of local residents, at the same time as addressing gaps in service provision.
Exploit ICTs to deliver training and jobs to West Wrexham	<p>Familiarity with basic IT is increasingly becoming a necessary skill in the workplace, irrespective of sector or occupation. However, the Future Skills Wales research shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ 61% of Wrexham residents do not use either a computer (with or without CD ROM) or the Internet at least once a week; and ⇒ 43% of Wrexham residents never use a computer. <p>Moreover, household survey evidence suggests Wrexham's urban villages face particular problems in accessing IT related training and developing related skills.</p>	<p>Lack of IT knowledge will have a detrimental effect both on accessing employment for those who are unemployed and in upgrading opportunities for those in employment.</p> <p>It will be important, however, to build on existing provision, such as: the Wrexham ITeC; the Southsea/Brynteg IT project; and outreach projects delivered by Yale College and NEWI.</p>
Harness the HE/FE institutions in Wrexham town centre	Links between Wrexham's research, education and training sector and West Wrexham's business base need to be developed further if opportunities for innovation, adaptability and enterprise are to be realised in full. A coherent approach is needed to enhancing lines of communication between research and education institutions and industry.	If Wrexham is to respond effectively to the challenge of the modern economy further investment is needed to develop the capability and accessibility of the knowledge base in Wrexham, particularly in the education and research sectors. It is also essential to improve the rate and quality of technology transfer between the research and teaching base, industry and workforce of Wrexham.
Threats		
Strategic Issue	Underpinning Evidence	Strategic Implications
Vulnerable to external decision making	Wrexham has been enormously successful in attracting inward investment, but in many ways it has become a branch plant economy vulnerable to external decision making. In West Wrexham, 20% of total employment is in one branch factory – the Sharp Electronics plant at Llay.	It is important that existing manufacturers in Wrexham be provided with a business environment that encourages retention and further investment.
Increasing employer demands for higher level skills	Future Skills Wales research indicates that employers in Wrexham and North Wales are frustrated by the difficulties they face in meeting both skills gaps and skills shortages.	To meet the challenges of the modern, competitive economy, it will be necessary for employers and employees to embrace a commitment to training and development linked to business needs and higher productivity.

3: Evaluation of Past Programmes

3.1 Structural Fund Programmes in Wrexham

In the past Wrexham has been eligible for funding under a number of European Programmes including Resider, Retex, Adapt/Employment and Objectives 3 and 4. Parts of Wrexham were also eligible under the Clwyd Operational Programme, the SME Programme, Objective 5b and Leader.

A good example of the kind of project that West Wrexham has received European funding for is the WDA's land reclamation of the former Brymbo Steelworks which received ERDF totalling £467,500 in 1998 under the RESIDER Programme. The project's aim is to redevelop the site, principally for employment generating uses. Project works include the reclamation of the site by demolition, extensive earthworks, containment of contaminants and mineral extraction, to create industrial development land, housing land, heritage country park and amenity/recreation space. The project also aims to undertake extensive landscaping to what was the single largest area of dereliction in Wrexham.

3.2 The Swansea URBAN I Programme

Although this section refers to the Swansea programme in the past tense it should be remembered that individual projects have to the end of 2001 to complete. Developments will continue, probably through a Community Development Trust or similar arrangement, with access to Objective 1 funding to support the continuing regeneration of the area.

The Townhill & Mayhill URBAN Community Initiative was approved by the European Commission in November 1996. It was part of a UK wide programme intended to help find solutions to the problems of lack of opportunity, low incomes and poor quality of life in urban areas by supporting projects aimed at economic and social revitalisation. The Swansea programme operated in the Townhill and Mayhill area and focused on creating a community led regeneration process incorporating the four key measures of community revitalisation, economic development, the environment and training. The programme was worth over £4 million in ERDF and ESF grant. The primary source of match funding was the City and County of Swansea, the accountable body for the programme, who invested some £2.2 million.

The individual projects were incorporated into Action Plans and the first of these was approved in April 1997 but there were early difficulties and progress was extremely slow. Four area committees were initially set up with elected chairs speaking for residents on the Initiative's Management Committee and its subgroups. However, the area committee structure became divisive and was not doing its job of representing local opinion. Consequently, the estate's committees were discontinued in March 1998 (with the agreement of the former Welsh Office) and independent consultants were appointed to consult widely with local residents and assess over 200 new project ideas. Their findings fed directly into the drafting of the second action plan, which was approved by the European Commission in March 1999.

Following the break up of the area committees the programme operated through the independently chaired Urban Partnership Group (UPG) members of which were drawn from a wide spectrum. The UPG reported to the Urban Management Committee who was responsible for monitoring the programme operation. A dedicated project team located in the area undertook day to day operations.

Considerable effort was made by the residents, project team, local authority and the committees to get the programme back on track. By the closing date for project approvals of the 31st of December 1999 over £3.7 million in ERDF and ESF grant had been committed to projects aimed at the regeneration of the area.

Some examples of the kind of projects approved and what they achieved in terms of targets are:

Community Revitalisation - projects included the Community Advice Project which advised 1449 people, the Hill Credit Union which recruited 63 new members and 6 new volunteers, the regular distribution of community newsletters, Detached Youth Workers from which over 120 young people were contacted and Townhill Older Peoples project from which over 300 older people were contacted.

Vocational Education and Training - projects included Key Skills for Employment which trained 1169 people, Intermediate Labour Market which created 59 training places for unemployed people and Step Up The Hill from which over 150 people were involved in dance training sessions.

Economic Development Projects - projects included an Employment Resource Centre that created 1491 new job opportunities, the Community Recycling Workshop saw the opening of a show house and created a number of training places and the Phoenix Centre which saw the development of a community enterprise centre including a creche, training facilities and business workshops.

Environmental Projects - projects included Townhill Environmental Improvements which saw 0.9 hectares of new landscaping, 18 hectares of new/improved open space, 0.9 hectares of knotweed treated and 28 community landscape projects. In addition the Traffic Management Scheme is ongoing following a survey carried out in partnership with the community.

Towards the end of 1999 the European Commission carried out an audit on a number of URBAN programmes which included the Townhill & Mayhill programme. The final agreed outcome of that audit will be taken into consideration when implementing the Wrexham programme.

3.3 Lessons learnt from previous urban regeneration programmes

This section refers to the potential lessons to be learnt from the Swansea and other URBAN programmes along with other community development initiatives.

The regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods requires a main focus on “developing people”. In order to achieve this outreach work must be undertaken to contact people on their own terms to discover what they want and promote horizontal participation e.g. the participation in youth groups, sports and social clubs, hobby groups, residents’ associations, senior citizen groups, arts groups etc.. This community development work is needed early on to mobilise the population, build confidence and establish trusting relationships between local people and major service providers.

Local community representatives should be drawn from existing local structures and organisations, and not selected by means of local elections. It is important not to overlook or alienate small groups who should be involved from the start. To aid this it is necessary to consult widely and develop easily understandable literature to promote the programme. It is crucial that the community is both informed and organised and there is a clear understanding of what can and cannot be done, both in terms of eligibility and the funds available. It should also be borne in mind that the degrees of commitment from the community will range from enthusiastic to non existent.

At the same time work will need to be done to encourage some community members to become involved in vertical participation. This means their direct involvement in designing, implementing and managing projects. This enhances local ownership of the programme and the empowerment process central to urban regeneration.

To develop a sense of community involvement and optimism it is important to start with clearly visible and relatively quickly implemented projects. This will also allow time for those involved to develop the necessary skills to design and implement the longer term and sometimes more problematic projects needed to tackle the regeneration issues of the area.

Local Government will need to be a key player in the development and implementation of the programme because of its access to long term resources and its overall responsibility for community benefit. They will need to take a strategic approach within their overall area to each of their deprived neighbourhoods, but it must be remembered that responsibility for funding will not lie just with the local authority. A multi-disciplinary team will need to be in place to drive the programme forward consisting of a programme co-ordinator with community development skills, community development staff, and good administrative support. The team may also have working alongside it specialists in economic development, child care, disability advice, healthy living etc. They should be based within the community and staffed by local people wherever possible. Appointments should be made for the duration of the programme rather than yearly contracts.

The Urban Partnership Group (UPG) should have as a minimum representation from the community; the churches; the police; social groups; economic development bodies; the health and education sector; local councillors; and the voluntary sector. To avoid tensions between the UPG and the accountable body a strong Chair must be selected. The UPG should have a clear framework and terms of reference which are made available throughout the community. Members should have full and clear job descriptions with dedication being a key word when selecting them.

A fact or guide sheet should accompany an application form which sets out the minimum requirements for submitting a bid under URBAN II. A good monitoring and evaluation system needs to be built in from the beginning of the programme. A "Forward Strategy" will need to be developed early in the programme to ensure developments are sustainable.

4: Policy Context

4. Overview

The URBAN II programme concerns the economic and social regeneration of cities and of urban neighbourhoods in crisis with a view to promoting a sustainable urban development. This initiative must offer distinct added value and be complementary to mainstream programmes.

To gain maximum impact from the Structural Funds it is essential that the URBAN Programme is closely linked to the principle regional and local policies designed to strengthen economic and social regeneration. To engender a “joined up” approach to policy making, new synergies between European regional programmes and domestic urban policies will be sought wherever possible. This Chapter outlines the key policies relevant to this programme and shows how European, UK, Welsh and local policies fit together. The approach taken will reflect the requirements of the CIP as set out in the OJ on the 19th of May as well as European policies and guidelines.

Sustainable development must be a key principle within the programme, and there must be clear links to the European Commission’s “Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: A Framework for Action” and “The Structural Funds and Their Co-ordination with the Cohesion Fund: Guidance for Programmes in the Period 2000-06”; “Better Wales”; the Urban Regeneration White Paper; the Objective 3 programme; and Wrexham’s Urban Villages Strategy. The Objective 2 and Transitional programme is not applicable to the Wrexham West URBAN II programme.

4.1 Devolution

On 1st July 1999 The National Assembly for Wales took over most of the powers, rights and duties of the Secretary of State for Wales. The Assembly provides an elected tier of government for Wales and its establishment is part of the Government’s programme of constitutional reform. The National Assembly for Wales was set up following a referendum in September 1997 and the Government of Wales Act of 1998. The Assembly is responsible for policies in Wales that cover a wide range of subject areas including agriculture, industry, employment, training, education, arts, recreation, transport, housing, health and the environment.

Devolution will enable the Assembly to raise the profile of Wales in Europe and to play a part in the future development of Europe working within the policy framework set by the UK Government. The Assembly itself is able to contribute to the development of UK policy and Assembly representatives will, as members of the UK’s negotiating team, be able to play an active part in the regular programme of discussions with our European partners. The Assembly has also developed relationships with other regional governments, some of which were already established by the Welsh Office and to create more direct links with European institutions, by way of an increased representative presence in Brussels. The Assembly structure will enhance and develop links with Europe. One of the Standing Committees has responsibility for European Affairs and each of the other Standing Committees have been charged with ensuring that their particular activities take full account of the European dimension.

One of the functions of the Assembly is to influence directly and indirectly legislation coming out of the European Community to ensure that the needs and priorities of Wales are fully taken into account. An important early task for the Assembly has been to present proposals to take up the increased level of Structural Funds support which Wales will receive in the programming period between the year 2000 and 2006.

4.2 Better Wales

On 24 January 2000 the National Assembly for Wales launched its draft strategic plan - Better Wales.

The plan, built around the three key themes of equal opportunities; social inclusion and sustainable development, offers a vision for the future of Wales that will transform the economy, create a fairer society where everyone has the chance to fulfil their potential and protect and renew the environment for future generations. It is based on a "Team Wales" approach and covers the Assembly's partners in local government, the voluntary, community and business sectors and a wide range of sponsored bodies.

4.3 Urban social and economic regeneration

The experience gained from the first URBAN programme and the Urban Pilot Projects has fed into the general discussion on urban policy. The outcome was that in 1997 the Commission adopted the Communication "Towards an Urban Agenda in the European Union". The Commission indicated its intention to examine EU policies from the point of view of their urban impact and to improve policy integration at urban level.

In October 1998 the Commission produced the communication "Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: A Framework for Action" which sets out the way forward and is directly relevant to the URBAN II programme. Many EU policies have, de facto, an important urban relevance that cannot be ignored. The Community has a responsibility to ensure that its policies become more effective by better taking into account the potential of urban areas and the challenges facing them. In this Framework for Action the Commission is taking a step towards increasing the effectiveness of EU policies provided for by the Treaty by making them more 'urban sensitive' and ensuring that they facilitate integrated urban development. There is no attempt to attain new responsibilities for urban matters or to design specific urban definitions or solutions on the European level. These must of necessity arise out of local situations and within the institutional context of each Member State. This is where the framework of this CIP comes into play in terms of guiding the development and implementation of the programme.

The EU Framework for action for sustainable urban development aims at better co-ordinated and targeted community action for urban problems and is organised under four interdependent policy aims, all of which are cornerstones of the URBAN II programme.

(i) Strengthening economic prosperity and employment in urban areas

The Commission stresses the importance of improving the effectiveness of Structural Fund support by providing for an explicit urban dimension in regional programming. It also envisages that the Structural Funds will promote co-operation between urban areas in different Member States with a view to enhancing joint development opportunities.

Emphasis is placed on developing a stronger urban dimension in employment policies, through strengthened local involvement and support to local employment and development initiatives. In Wrexham emphasis is being placed on increasing the participation in local labour markets.

The Commission will also promote transport strategies that reduce traffic congestion and will examine ways to improve the regulatory framework for domestic public transport. The latter again relates to the Wrexham aim of ensuring excluded persons have affordable access to basic services.

(ii) Promoting equality, social inclusion and regeneration in urban areas

Future co-operation against discrimination and exclusion based on the new Amsterdam Treaty should recognise their particular concentration in urban areas.

The Commission advocates an area-based approach to the regeneration of deprived urban areas under the Structural Funds, integrating economic, social, cultural, environmental, transport and security aspects. Linkages between urban areas in difficulty and the wider social and economic strategies in order to avoid urban segregation are equally important.

The Commission envisages continued support for "second chance education and training". The provision of education and training facilities for the local community is an important element of the Wrexham initiative.

(iii) Protecting and improving the urban environment: towards local and global sustainability

The Framework for Action highlights those environmental actions most likely to lead to demonstrable improvements on the ground in urban areas, and draws together a wide range of Community initiatives that affect the quality of the urban environment, including urban energy management, transport, waste, air quality, water, noise and contaminated land.

Emphasis is placed on integrated environmental management approaches and on how the Structural Funds can contribute to a more sustainable urban environment. Brownfield redevelopment and the improvement of the physical environment in West Wrexham are part on the overall strategy.

(iv) Contributing to good urban governance and local empowerment

There is a call for stronger policy integration between various levels of government and policy sectors and for citizen empowerment and involvement. Partnerships in this programme must be wide and effective and comprised of economic and social partners, NGOs and residents' groupings including those active in the field of the environment and other appropriate bodies.

The Commission foresees awareness-raising and capacity-building measures and support for innovative urban development strategies aimed at promoting good urban governance, empowerment and urban security. It proposes action to improve comparative information on urban conditions and offers to support the "Urban Exchange Initiative" launched by the Member States.

Community empowerment and the development of strong and inclusive communities are key elements of Wrexham's economic and social regeneration strategy.

For each of these four aims the Commission proposes to improve know-how and encourage exchange of experience between all the actors involved. The 5th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (RTD) will make an essential contribution in this regard.

(v) Urban White Paper

The UK Urban White paper is currently being drafted and the NafW response will be taken into account as the programme is developed.

(vi) National Assembly approach

The Assembly is currently developing its own policy on sustainable development. It has a legislative duty under section 121 of the Government of Wales Act 1998, to state how it intends to promote sustainable development in all its work. The duty requires the Assembly to make a Scheme setting out how it intends to pursue its obligation, to consult before making it, keep the Scheme under review and publish an annual report on progress. We believe the duty to be unique in Europe. The Scheme will not bind other organisations in Wales (except to the extent that they are subject to direction by the Assembly) but will make it clear what the Assembly intends to do.

A draft Scheme has been prepared with the help of key sectors in Wales. The Scheme takes as its starting point, the Brundtland definition of sustainable development - "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"

This definition reflects the need to encompass the three elements of sustainable development – social progress, environmental protection and economic advance. This is translated into a proposed vision for a sustainable Wales:

- United, confident, outward looking and creative
- Prosperous, well-educated, skilled, healthy and environmentally rich
- Served by modern, efficient and accessible public services
- Active in its local communities, where the voice of local people is heard
- Fairer - a place where everyone is valued and encouraged to play a full part

The vision also permeates the Assembly's draft three-year Strategic Plan. The draft Scheme and the Plan are being developed together. The Scheme when approved will give a framework for the development of policies and actions across the Assembly, look at their connections, set out what the Assembly intends to do, by when and how progress will be measured.

(vii) Area based regeneration

The National Assembly is committed to the development of vibrant and self-sustaining communities throughout the whole of Wales, with increased access to economic opportunities for all irrespective of location. The problems associated with, for example, high unemployment rates and low GDP levels are common to both urban and rural communities and the Assembly's aim for a better, stronger economy applies equally to the two areas. However, the underlying economic structure, social and cultural way of life in rural Wales is different from urban areas and the Assembly recognises that its policies and programmes must reflect differing local needs and priorities, as well as ensuring that help is also targeted at deprived communities that exist in areas generally regarded as prosperous.

The Assembly currently supports a range of area based schemes to promote sustainable regeneration and development throughout Wales. The approach to targeting resources on deprived communities is being developed further. The Assembly is discussing plans with its partners for a new initiative aimed at addressing the needs of Wales' most disadvantaged areas.

The Assembly supports 24 area-based renewal schemes where, in addition to improvements in the houses themselves, there are also related social, economic and environment improvements. Urban regeneration grants have been made available to local authorities through the competitive Capital Challenge. This is to be replaced by a £36m Local Regeneration Fund which will move away from a challenge culture by providing local authorities with resources to bring forward regeneration projects and programmes that meet the needs of local communities. The People in Communities initiative is aimed at both regenerating the most deprived communities and combating social exclusion therein.

Planning Policy contributes to sustainable development in promoting a planning system which seeks to reconcile the needs of development and conservation and secure economy, efficiency and amenity in the use of land. Development of land in urban areas, whether it be for housing or other types of development should be considered before greenfield sites are developed. It takes account of Government policy on transport and retail issues by emphasising encouragement for the location of new development where it is accessible to public transport routes and setting tests for out of town retail and leisure proposals.

(viii) Wrexham CBC's approach

Wrexham County Borough Council's Vision, Strategy and Corporate Policies set out the long term view of the future of Wrexham over the next five to ten years; how it intends to achieve the vision and the policy priorities which cut across all services – including Economic Development.

Indeed, the Economic Development Strategy for the County Borough recognises that the economic well-being of Wrexham is often perceived on a countywide basis but that it is possible to sub-divide the County Borough into three broad areas – Wrexham Town Centre, the rural hinterland and the 'Urban Villages'. There is considerable overlap and inter-change in terms of needs, issues and opportunities between the three sub-divisions but equally they also have a number of unique characteristics which demand slightly different approaches to economic, social and environmental regeneration in order to capitalise on the benefits for the economic well-being of the county as a whole. The broad spatial sub-divisions are each covered by separate strategies for development and regeneration – 'The Wrexham Urban Partnership Strategy 2000-2006', focusing principally on the Town Centre, a 'Rural Development Strategy', setting out a framework for the identification of problems, opportunities, objectives and targets for 'Rural Wrexham' and an 'Urban Villages Strategy for West Wrexham', covering settlements to the west of Wrexham known as the 'Urban Villages'.

The latter strategy is an integrated strategy for the whole of the 'urban villages' area, and covers the subjects of 'sustainable employment', 'community' and 'environment' It therefore provides a context in which due consideration can be given to possible funding opportunities within emerging European, national, regional and local funding initiatives, such as URBAN II and the National Assembly's Local Regeneration Fund.

Other policy statements of particular relevance to the Wrexham West URBAN programme area include a 'Wrexham County Borough Council Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Action Plan 1999-2000' and a 'Social Inclusion Strategic Action Plan for Southsea and Brynteg' as part of the 'People in Communities' programme to tackle social exclusion in Wales.

4.4 Business Support

The EU policy framework for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) is primarily concerned with the promotion of the Single Market and enhancing SME competitiveness via a variety of relevant measures. Commission guidance states that the creation or expansion of competitive enterprises is the pre-condition for creating sustainable jobs and thus regional economic development. However, the need to avoid distortion in competition and compliance with State Aid regulations is also recognised. Priority areas are business support services, targeting areas with particular potential, and support for enterprises, in particular SMEs.

The UK Government's overall policy approach on SMEs aims to foster a successful enterprise culture - by encouraging innovation, providing a supportive environment and removing barriers to growth and the provision of high quality business support.

The National Assembly sets the strategic framework for economic development in Wales and within that the main policy objectives in support of the SME sector. As well as directly managing a number of key all Wales business services (for example Regional Selective Assistance), the Assembly also provides the bulk of the funding to the main business support agencies which assist in implementing, on the ground, its policy objectives through relevant programme and initiatives. As well as the Assembly itself, the main business support agencies in Wales are as follows :

Welsh Development Agency (WDA) - responsible for a range of mainly all Wales programmes designed to help SMEs develop and grow successfully.

A National Council for Education and Training in Wales (CETW) will become operational from April 2001 and will assume strategic planning and funding responsibilities. It will also have responsibility for post 16 education in schools and community based learning.

Local Enterprise Agencies - specialise in the provision of services to new and small businesses in some parts of East Wales.

Local authorities - as part of their local economic development role they provide a range of services to small firms, including grants/loans. They work closely with local enterprise agencies, or directly deliver business support services.

SMEs are critical to the success of the Welsh Economy. In line with the draft National Economic Development Strategy and the National Assembly's recently published Strategic Plan for Wales, the overall aim is to improve the growth and competitiveness of the vitally important small firms sector in Wales.

To this end a range of policies and programmes are being pursued, the key ones being:-

- The stronger promotion of entrepreneurship across society in Wales through the development and implementation of a new Entrepreneurship Action Plan. A key part of this is to help encourage many more new businesses to start up and to survive and grow, including those within the social economy.
- To encourage more knowledge-based companies to locate in Wales and to help existing businesses to exploit ICT and other new technology more effectively. A key target here is for 50% of Welsh SMEs to be using e-commerce by 2003.
- To promote innovation and technology transfer through innovation centres and closer links between colleges and business.
- To help encourage more firms to export successfully.
- To improve the flow of finance to SMEs via the establishment of a new Development Bank or Fund.
- To upgrade the skills and knowledge base within Welsh SMEs via a stronger co-ordinated approach to management development and the reskilling/upskilling of the workforce.
- Embedding inward investors in the local economy through action on supply chains and other collaborative measures.
- A stronger focus on maximising the potential of the tourism, arts and cultural sectors in Wales.

4.5 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

In respect of ICT the Commission has driven forward a common policy aimed at removing the barriers to pan European telecommunication operations, service provision and equipment supply, whilst striking a balance between liberalisation and harmonisation of markets, competition and public services. In December 1999, the European Commission launched an initiative known as "Europe - An Information Society for All" whose key objectives are concerned with bringing every citizen, home, institution and company on line and into the digital age; creating a digitally literate Europe with an entrepreneurial culture; and ensuring social inclusivity and cohesion. Ten priority action areas have been set out for achievement of the overall objectives and these relate to various sectors such as business, health, transport and education.

The UK's policy in the Knowledge Economy and the Information Society is broadly in line with that of the European Commission. The policy is aimed at the UK leading in the digital economy and being the best in the world for electronic trading. This is to be done by developing a market framework to encourage competition and innovation; an innovative, dynamic and growing supply sector; and demand for digital products and services. Targets have been set in relation to small and medium businesses wired up to the digital market place; trading on-line; and performing to international best standards.

Within the general UK policy framework, the National Assembly for Wales is committed to an Information and Communication Technologies policy aimed at widespread adoption of the technologies in order to create a knowledge driven society; improve business competitiveness; create high value jobs; upgrade the education and training of existing and future work forces; deliver better public services; and advance social conditions for all citizens.

The BetterWales.com priority of building a competitive and more diverse economy, with a dynamic SME sector sets a target of increasing the number of companies in Wales with internet access, with web sites and with Electronic Data Interchange to at least 50% by March 2003. BetterWales.com also requires the Assembly to publish an Information Age Strategy this year.

The Commission guidance for URBAN II highlights as a priority the exploitation of information technologies to improve public services for small enterprises and citizens. This will be reflected in Wrexham's aim to develop an entrepreneurial culture through training and support in the field of ICT.

4.6 Employment and Human Resource Development

Employment strategy in Wales is based on three inter-linked objectives: increasing the supply of good quality jobs; improving the skills of the workforce; and helping into work those currently inactive in the labour market.

This section focuses on the development of human resources. Although this programme is funded solely through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Objective 3 money, through the European Social Fund (ESF), can also be accessed in support of activities undertaken in the URBAN area. In addition the ERDF can finance the measures eligible under the ESF required to implement the URBAN II Initiative. However, in Wrexham the focus will be on supporting human resource development by co-ordinating schemes between URBAN and Objective 3. In this manner, for example, ERDF can be used to provide the training facilities and ESF to subsequently support the actual training. However, the fact that Objective 3 resources will be covering the whole of East Wales means certain activities may have to be supported using the ERDF.

The European Employment Strategy (EES), enshrined in the Amsterdam Treaty, the UK Employment Action Plan, and the UK Policy Frame of Reference provide the overarching

policy context for the use of Structural Funds to support human resource development and to promote employment and social cohesion.

The UK Employment Action Plan provides the national response to the EES guidelines and is prepared by the UK Government in consultation with the National Assembly for Wales and the other devolved administrations. The draft National Economic Development Strategy for Wales and related policies inform the development of priorities for the use of Structural Funds within this overall context. The Assembly recently received the approved guidelines for the 2000 National Employment Action Plan, and is currently involved in the consultation process with organisations in Wales.

Action has been taken and is ongoing to ensure that European employment guidelines and policies for human resource development are incorporated within the Assembly's major policy initiatives, and outlined in documents such as Pathway to Prosperity; the draft National Economic Development Strategy; and European Structural Fund Programme Documents.

4.7 Active Labour Market Policies

The UK Government and Assembly policies promote employment opportunities for all and focus on the need for a skilled, trained and adaptable labour force, and a flexible labour market, underpinned by basic minimum standards of fairness and decency e.g. through policies such as the National Minimum Wage and the Working Families' Tax Credit. Other tax and benefits reforms have also been introduced to make it easier for people to move from benefits into work.

The UK wide network of Employment Service (ES) Job Centres provides individualised help for all job-seekers e.g. Job-seeker's Allowance, Restart interviews, Jobclubs, Jobplan Workshops, Jobfinder's Grant etc.

In addition the UK Government has introduced a wide range of employment and training programmes targeted on the long-term unemployed and other economically inactive client groups under the New Deal, the New Deal for 18-24 year olds, New Deal for 25 Plus, New Deal 50 Plus, New Deal for Partners, New Deal for Lone Parents, and New Deal for Disabled People.

In addition to these UK wide policies and programmes, the Assembly has direct responsibility for a range of policies and programmes which help to integrate young people into the labour market and to help people not currently active in the labour market to acquire the skills and motivation needed to obtain employment and progress in their careers.

Measures to help the economically inactive include training provision for unemployed adults; careers guidance for adults; financial support for those who need it to access further education; and help with childcare.

All of these UK policies are applicable in Wales.

4.8 Equal Opportunities For All and Promoting Social Inclusion

These are two of the three major themes which the Assembly has identified as priorities for action.

The principle aims are to develop an inclusive society where everyone has the chance to fulfil their potential and the promotion of a culture in which diversity is valued and equality of opportunity is a reality.

The Assembly will invest £48 million over the next three years from its Social Inclusion Fund to tackle some of the most deprived communities across Wales Initially this has been targeted at the People in Communities programme which aims to add value to other actions the Assembly is taking forward to tackle social exclusion, and the Children and Youth Partnership Fund which has been established to promote local initiatives.

People in Communities is particularly relevant to URBAN II and is an innovative response to tackling social exclusion in deprived communities in Wales. It recognises the need to promote community participation in policies to regenerate deprived areas. The policy aims of the programme are:

- that all people in the community should have access either to work, to training or education or to another meaningful activity (such as community or voluntary work)
- that everyone should have somewhere decent and safe to live
- that everyone should be able to lead healthy lives and to have access to appropriate health care
- that all children in the community should feel safe and be provided with appropriate education and opportunities for play
- that people should be empowered to voice and contribute to decisions made about their community, so that there is collective ownership and capacity building

The Assembly is also currently developing a more integrated approach to support for young people aged 11-25 with the objective of promoting sustained and effective participation in education and training as well as health, well being and citizenship (through the Learning and Skills Bill).

The Youth Access Initiative supports projects that help disengaged 14-17 year-olds, and those at risk of disengagement to enter employment, education or training. The Millennium Volunteers initiative reflects the Assembly's concern to promote a better society through combating social exclusion and encouraging active citizenship, starting with young people.

The principles of equal opportunity for all its citizens and ensuring that no groups are excluded from society are central to UK Government and Assembly policy, not least in relation to the labour market. In line with the equality principles enshrined in the Amsterdam Treaty, 'The Government of Wales Act' commits the Assembly to ensuring that the principle of equality of opportunity for all people is taken into consideration both in the exercise of its business and in carrying out its functions. As part of discharging its responsibility for equality of opportunity the Assembly is seeking to mainstream equality across the board through the development of sound systems and structures with particular regard to policy formulation, policy development and service delivery. An action plan is in place to take this forward which will ensure that mainstreaming is supported by specific actions such as the development of data baselines, the provision of equal opportunities awareness training across all aspects of the Assembly's work and importantly working in close partnership with the equality agencies in Wales from both the statutory and voluntary sector, establishing effective communication and consultation mechanisms.

There have been a number of UK legislative changes in employment laws to improve the rights of workers, especially women, and the Assembly is working in partnership to take forward equal opportunities in employment in other ways. It supports Chwarae Teg ("Fair Play") which is a voluntary partnership body whose aim is to improve the position of women and girls in the labour market. It does this in a number of ways including: advice and guidance to women entrepreneurs and managers; research and promotion activities; advising SMEs about gender policies; developing childcare and carer support measures. The Assembly is also a partner with the UK Government in a new campaign to encourage employers to introduce employment policies which help their workforce to better balance their work and home responsibilities. The Assembly is also developing a strategy for the support of carers, the majority of whom are women.

The draft strategic plan for the National Assembly for Wales has identified both new and improved services in connection with the national childcare strategy "to provide sustainable, affordable quality childcare" as being one of its priority areas for action between now and the summer of 2001.

4.9 Lifelong Learning

The National Assembly's stated policy is to establish Wales as a learning country, one which is renowned world-wide for its high standards of education and training.

The Assembly has also agreed a wide range of National Targets for Education and Training in Wales and also has endorsed the proposals for the establishment from April 2001 of an all-age guidance service - Careers Wales. Operating under a common brand, Careers Wales will draw together the Careers Service and the adult guidance networks. This will be a key development. For the first time there will be one access point across Wales for anyone seeking advice and support in managing their learning and career development.

The National Assembly, as part of the lifelong learning agenda, is supporting and funding key initiatives and policies which aim to turn round Wales' poor basic skills record. This is happening in partnership with the further education sector, the Basic Skills Agency and the local authorities.

In addition to discrete provision, Further Education (FE) institutions also deliver basic skills support to students on mainstream FE programmes. All institutions are being encouraged by the FEFCW to achieve the revised Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, with its focus on strategic effectiveness. The Council is currently considering how its funding may be more effectively deployed to underpin this approach.

The National Assembly has increased the amount of Access Funds available to Welsh HE and FE colleges so they can provide selective help at their discretion to further and higher education students who experience serious financial difficulties whilst studying, or to those who might not otherwise have been able to afford to take up a place because of financial reasons. This has led to the development of a number of policies and programmes aimed at widening participation in HE and FE.

4.10 Business Development

To increase the levels of skills development that are required if the objectives of this programme are to be met, the approach taken in Wales has been to take the necessary actions as a partnership between the social partners, central and local government and training and education providers.

Existing Assembly policies and programmes to improve skill levels in Wales include research and information provision to enable all partners to take the necessary actions; access to advice and guidance; a range of work-based training programmes for young people and adults; training initiatives specifically targeted at the small-firms sector; support for employers to collaborate on skills and training issues and support for the Investors in People programme. The Assembly also supports programmes which encourage entrepreneurship and the development of management skills in SMEs

The main responsibility for developing the skills of employees rests with employers, and the Assembly and other partners can provide support and one of the ways that this is being done is to establish closer links with the network of UK wide National Training Organisations (NTOs). These links have been strengthened by the establishment of a separate NTO Council for Wales. The Assembly is also encouraging employers in Wales to come together to set up Skills Sector Groups. Business Connect provides a one-stop information and guidance service for SMEs in Wales. Key priorities include promoting better awareness among the business community of the services available from Business Connect partners and improving take-up.

It is a strategic aim for the HE and FE sectors to contribute to the development of a skilled and well qualified workforce and the capacity for supporting the creation of wealth. With the WDA the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales has established a joint initiative to support institutions' development of placement and other career-related programmes designed to improve graduate employability. From 2000/01 the Knowledge Exploitation Fund (£14 million) over two years will be introduced which will enable the HE and FE sectors to accelerate the exploitation of research and development, other knowledge and expertise within institutions, to contribute to wealth and job creation and economic development in Wales.

Management Development is a key strand of workforce development. Better managers ensure improved performance for their organisations, enable others in the workforce to develop their own skills and are able better to plan and develop their own future. As recommended by the Wales Education and Training Advisory Group the industry-led Wales Management Council has been asked to tackle these issues. The TECs are one of the major providers of management development support to firms in Wales. They offer companies a range of assistance, often linked to the Investors in People programme and the Small Firms Training Initiative so a proper framework for the activity is provided.

4.11 The Welsh Language

Public policy in Wales is firmly behind the maintenance and promotion of Welsh and of its use in all areas of life. The 1993 Welsh Language Act enshrined the principle that Welsh and English 'should be treated on a basis of equality' in public business and in the administration of justice. The 1998 Government of Wales Act placed a similar requirement on the new National Assembly and the Assembly has held its proceedings bilingually since its inception.

The Welsh Language Board (a public body accountable to the National Assembly) is charged with promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh. The Board pursues a wide range of initiatives. The Board has statutory powers to require public bodies to implement language schemes covering their use of Welsh. Over 100 schemes have been approved by the Board to date, and practical bilingualism is becoming a norm throughout the public services in Wales.

There are no legal requirements on the private sector to use Welsh, but increasing numbers of companies are choosing to do so. Welsh is a distinctive component of the image and branding of Wales and of Wales's tourism product. The tourism industry already capitalises on the language and the culture most closely associated with it as a distinctive selling-point for Wales. Welsh also represents a potential marketing tool for businesses wishing to target markets in Wales, draw attention to a product being from Wales, or demonstrate commitment to local communities. Awards for the use of Welsh in business are made annually at the National Eisteddfod.

4.12 Reduction in consumption of hydrocarbon energies

The European Union has proposed a framework for energy policy based on the four key elements of integration of the market; managing external dependency; sustainable development; and energy research and technology. Energy policy within the UK is on a national basis and its thrust is to ensure secure, diverse and sustainable supplies of energy at competitive prices.

Energy policy is not devolved to the National Assembly, but the Institution has a keen interest in the subject because energy is an essential component of economic and social development. Furthermore, the Assembly carries responsibility for functions closely linked to energy policy, such as planning and environmental matters. The development of a strategic framework for energy is important for developing energy industries which contribute to the Assembly's sustainable development objectives. In respect of energy supply and usage, policies and programmes encourage the efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy technologies.

This programme will target promoting energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, a reduction in consumption, and training in environmental management and protection.

4.13 Waste

The National Assembly is committed to an integrated approach to waste management, aimed at more effective protection of human health and the environment, while also reducing the demand on natural resources. In line with the requirements of the Framework Directive on Waste (75/442/EEC), this will require a reduction in waste arisings, increased re-use, higher levels of recovery, and the development of new and sustainable technologies.

In June 1999, the UK government published "**A way with waste** - A draft waste strategy for England and Wales". Following the promulgation of this plan, the Assembly will develop a more detailed sustainable waste implementation strategy for Wales, which will include specific proposals for achieving the targets in Directive 1999/31/EC. A scoping study is already in hand and is due to report in June 2000. This is a key step in identifying the infrastructure which will be required to develop more sustainable waste management options throughout Wales. In the medium term, local authorities will need to adopt new techniques for disposal, enabling them to move away from their current dependence on landfill. There is a need to review land use planning guidance for waste for Wales to reflect the contents of "**A way with waste**", and guide the preparation of policies in the Unitary Development Plans.

4.14 Transport

Priority EU areas include Efficiency (including the modernisation and upgrading of transport infrastructure); Modal balance (with a reduced emphasis on roads); Accessibility and Sustainability (reducing the environmental impact of transport and encouraging a shift to the use of more sustainable forms of transport).

The aim of the Assembly's transport policy is to deliver a transport system that is safe, efficient, clean and fair. It should deliver integration between different types of transport, be integrated with the environment and land use planning policies and is focused to support the policy aims of education, health and wealth creation. As such it underpins efforts to combat social exclusion and promote sustainable development.

Key policy objectives relating to this programme are:

- To improve access for people and business through provision of an efficient and comprehensive transport system
- To maximise the benefits of the existing transport infrastructure and thereby improve competitiveness
- To support sustainable economic development, through specific local schemes

5: Programme Strategy

5.1 Overview and Explanation

The Wrexham West area lies to the west of the town of Wrexham. It is a homogenous area consisting of a number of communities that have suffered from industrial decline and related deprivation and isolation problems. In this respect the SWOT analysis (see Chapter 4) highlights the common strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats pertinent to the area.

The strategy is generic to the needs of the whole area, and also specific, where appropriate, to the needs of particular geographical communities. This is because local divergences at the level of each particular community exist in a number of instances. These will be addressed through different projects within the broad Priorities addressing the particular needs of the area that are set out in Chapter 6.

Such an approach allows a programme of action to be developed over the next six years and beyond that will foster the creation of a cohesive entrepreneurial and participating community. To achieve this aim, strong links will also be made with the Objective 3 Operational Programme for East Wales and Wrexham's Objective 3 Local Action Plan, and other local strategies focused on regenerating Wrexham County Borough. These include the Wrexham Economic Development Strategy, the Wrexham Urban Partnership Strategy, the Wrexham Rural Development Strategy, the Wrexham Urban Villages Strategy and the Strategic Action Plan that has been produced for Southsea / Brynteg as part of the National Assembly's 'People in Communities' programme (see Chapter 3 for further details). The linkages will allow a focus on the relationship between West Wrexham and other centres of employment, leisure and retail, such as Wrexham Town Centre and the Wrexham Industrial Estate. Both of these provide employment opportunities for individuals residing within West Wrexham but the nature of the work available, accessibility to such work and the skills required vary significantly. Hence all of these factors need to be addressed through the URBAN II programme to ensure the development of a participating and entrepreneurial community.

5.2 Developing the Strategy – Drivers for change and guiding principles

Drivers for change

Over the lifetime of the URBAN II programme, a series of economic, social, technological, environmental and policy drivers (and their interaction) are likely to exert a strong influence over the prosperity of the area's economy. Such drivers will include:

ECONOMIC GLOBALISATION WILL ACT AS A DRIVER FOR CHANGE

Continuing trends towards globalisation will stimulate yet further the flows of capital, labour, goods and services across the world.

IMPLICATIONS FOR WREXHAM WEST

Businesses must become more export orientated, knowledge intensive and productive to succeed. They must also invest in service quality. The availability of URBAN II funding must assist in developing Wrexham West as a high-skill investment destination and ensure it is competitive through becoming more knowledge-intensive and productive.

MAJOR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGES WEST

Key trends will include an ageing population, early retirement, higher divorce rates and increasing numbers of lone parents, financial exclusion, growing concerns about the environment and sustainable development.

POTENTIAL EMPLOYMENT LOSSES FROM OVER-CAPACITY AND RESTRUCTURING

As a relatively flexible labour market economy, the UK has succeeded in attracting a disproportionate share of foreign direct investment. A potential downside is the relative ease with which UK based operations can be scaled-down or dispensed with altogether compared to rival locations elsewhere.

THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES WILL BE MAJOR DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

ICT usage will create new types of business opportunity, stimulating the creation of new firms and new jobs. Existing businesses will deploy ICT to help penetrate new markets, and increase the efficiency with which existing functions are performed. New skills will be needed, and businesses and individuals who display flexibility and adaptability will tend to succeed over their competitors. ICT also provides opportunities for more flexible patterns of work and can reduce the need to travel to work for business

IMPLICATIONS FOR WREXHAM

The workforce will have to be flexible and fully able to participate in the workplace.

As West Wrexham has a distinctly higher young dependant and working age population than the rest of Wrexham, Wales and the UK., there is greater earning potential than elsewhere. Thus mobilising local people by encouraging and enabling them to participate so that they realise their potential is a key issue that the URBAN II initiative must address. Nevertheless, this may be problematic as issues emblematic of social exclusion are evident within the area: for example, Wrexham West has a higher than average proportion of benefit claimants, particularly in respect of lone parents.

IMPLICATIONS FOR WREXHAM WEST

In the short to medium term, possibilities of plant closures will increase. Indeed, the recent announcement of redundancies by exogenous and indigenous firms in or in close proximity to West Wrexham (particularly in electronic equipment and processed goods) means that the workforce must have the opportunity to learn new skills and to be adaptable in order to meet the needs of both new and existing employers.

IMPLICATIONS FOR WREXHAM WEST

Existing businesses in the area must grasp the opportunities provided by the use of ICT. New business formation will also be heavily influenced by the use and affordability of ICT. The existing workforce must also be trained in ICT usage. In this respect, businesses in the area must become nationally competitive in the use and application of ICT's. The increasing use of ICT's could also help to overcome problems of peripherality and isolation being experienced by some individuals.

AN INCREASING DANGER OF SOCIAL ISOLATION BECOMING FIRMLY EMBEDDED WITHIN DEPRIVED NEIGHBOURHOODS

The problem of social exclusion and poverty has been identified as being increasingly concentrated within neighbourhoods.

IMPLICATIONS FOR WREXHAM WEST

Learning, skill development, employment, a reduction of crime, better health and the building of self-esteem will all be important in tackling isolation within West Wrexham indeed, indices of deprivation for the area highlight the need for such measures particularly in Gwenfro, Gwersyllt North and Brymbo. West Wrexham continues to suffer a number of common problems stemming from the decline of its traditional industrial base and an increasing dependence on manufacturing sectors forecast to decline over the next five years.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION WILL BECOME EVER MORE CENTRAL TO THE PROSPECTS FOR LOCAL ECONOMIES

Entrepreneurship and innovation are central to the creative process in the modern economy and to promoting growth, increasing productivity and creating jobs.

IMPLICATIONS FOR WREXHAM WEST

New business formation in high skill / technology areas, along with a more skilled, adaptive and creative workforce must be supported to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation. Particular growth sectors of importance to the area will include corporate hospitality, business services and high technology manufacturing. Indeed, in terms of the latter, sub-sectors worthy of consideration include I.T. multimedia applications, health care and sports science.

To summarise, the communities of West Wrexham must seek to embrace the opportunities that these drivers provide and address the challenges that they face head on.

5.3 Problems and issues: West Wrexham's local neighbourhoods

Although a range of common issues and problems can be identified across the West Wrexham area, the Strategy also recognises the distinctiveness of local neighbourhoods within the area. Indeed, the Strategy recognises the different interactions between macro-level drivers and local circumstances, leading to a requirement for geographically focused action that addresses specific issues within particular neighbourhoods in addition to the primary actions targeting the area as a whole.

Hence below the headline indicators of problems and opportunities (as described in the SWOT – Chapter 4), the distribution, pattern, level of severity and relative importance of economic, social and environmental issues varies between the neighbourhoods or groups of neighbourhoods within the West Wrexham area.

In a number of communities experiencing severe forms of *economic* isolation, action will be tailored towards addressing the quality and diversity of new and existing employment opportunities and addressing particular barriers to participation such as skills, training and education deficiencies, childcare availability and transport provision to places of employment. In other communities, *social* problems in the form of benefit dependency, consumer and housing debt, perceived and actual levels of crime, poor health and a general lack of facilities will be key issues to be tackled. A poor *environment* in terms of a high degree of physical dilapidation (brought about by the decline of key traditional industry) has resulted in derelict, vacant or physically neglected sites and premises in a number of communities and such problems must also be addressed.

In many instances, however, there is much overlap between the economic, social and environmental domains of deprivation being experienced within the communities of West Wrexham and hence efforts to develop solutions embracing all of these issues will be prioritised.

5.4 Horizontal and vertical participation

5.4.1 Horizontal participation

Horizontal participation refers to the inclusion of the West Wrexham community in both formal (for example resident's groups, youth groups, arts groups) and informal activities in order to meet their aspirations. Indeed, specific actions focused on capturing community interest, involvement and development of local strategies to address the improvement of the local environment and community facilities are integral to the programme as they assist in engendering community responsibility, ownership and the promotion of sustainability.

5.4.2 Vertical participation

Vertical participation refers to both the direct and indirect involvement of the neighbourhoods of West Wrexham in the actual designing, implementing and managing of the URBAN II Programme in conjunction with organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Critical to this process are the five Community Committees and the overarching West Wrexham Community Partnership (see later sections and Annex X) that have been set up to enable both individuals and groups from local communities to play a pivotal role in the regeneration of their community.

5.4.3 Vision

The interaction of both exogenous and indigenous drivers for change with local circumstances assists in highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the area and possible future opportunities and threats. In turn, this gives rise to an overall vision for the area and is stated as follows:

Vision:

The creation of a strong, participating, entrepreneurial community where people work together to create desirable places to live, and where residents are empowered to participate in the local economy and everyday life.

The URBAN II Initiative in West Wrexham will enable significant progress to be made towards achieving the vision, and it will also make a real difference in the quality of life of local people.

5.5 Cross Cutting issues – Horizontal themes

As well as the 'vertical' strategic themes (detailed below) that assist in achieving the vision set out for West Wrexham, three cross-cutting horizontal themes are embedded within the CIP:

Horizontal Themes for the West Wrexham URBAN II Initiative

- 1. Equal Opportunities**
- 2. Sustainable Development / Environmental Sustainability**
- 3. ICT / the Information Society**

5.5.1 Theme 1: Equal Opportunities

The Programme recognises that people have an equal right to be considered as participants in all parts of the economy – as employers and self-employed business operators as well as employees in the labour market. The programme will promote equal access to education, training and employment for all (but particularly older men and the youth of the area). It will also promote equal access to support to help individuals achieve these goals. Where necessary, specific measures will be taken to tackle barriers to employment (including self-employment), learning or training, based on gender, disability, ethnicity, language or culture, disadvantage and social exclusion, through positive action projects.

5.5.2 Theme 2: Sustainable Development / Environmental Sustainability

The Programme's objectives must be pursued in ways that make them mutually compatible for current and future generations. Meeting these conditions will require a focus on models where economic growth is coupled with social development and reducing demands on the environment. Due to the decline of the traditional industries that historically characterised the West Wrexham area, many neighbourhoods have suffered from severe environmental degradation. This has led to a high proportion of derelict land, a poor image and reduced investment, especially by the private sector.

Indeed, an environmental profile of the area identifies the general poor appearance of the streetscape within the neighbourhoods of West Wrexham, the high numbers of retail vacancies and derelict industrial sites, the lack of community facilities and a deterioration in building conditions. A qualitative assessment of environmental quality is included too, and this details the lack of neighbourhood facilities and public open space.

To summarise, the programme will need to assess all projects in terms of both direct and indirect impacts and will mainstream the raising of environmental awareness.

5.5.3 Theme 3: ICT / Information Society

The new Information Age must be embraced wholeheartedly if Wrexham West is to compete in the rapidly changing European economy of the new century. These technologies are a crucial tool for businesses in all sectors to increase productivity, marketing and sales potential and access to information. Information technology skills will become as fundamental as basic literacy and numeracy in the search for employment. Those with advanced IT skills will be in a strong position to secure well paid employment. IT facilities will also help communities to get access to vital information and to develop partnerships and skills that were previously unavailable.

It is recognised that the effective use and application of Information and Communications Technologies is critical for the achievement of sustainable economic development within the more deprived and isolated neighbourhoods of West Wrexham. Local development of ICT is expected to concentrate on the promotion of existing facilities and benefits to micro-businesses and SME's as well as the provision of facilities where there is a clear need.

5.6 Strategic Themes

To move towards achieving the vision, four strategic themes can be identified for West Wrexham that meet the general principles and priorities for action specified in the URBAN II guidance (OJ reference para.9). They also relate very closely to the strategic implications detailed within the SWOT analysis for West Wrexham (see Chapter 4) and therefore such linkages are made within each strategic theme. Also incorporated within the strategic themes are three guiding principles - social inclusion, capacity building and sustainability:

5.7 Strategic Themes for West Wrexham URBAN II Initiative

- **Theme 1: The development of stronger and more inclusive communities**
- **Theme 2: Business and Enterprise development**
- **Theme 3: Education, Skills and Training**
- **Theme 4: The development of an attractive, functional, accessible and productive environment**

The Strategy itself is flexible in that it places particular weight on the need to invest in the capacity of the West Wrexham communities to implement local solutions to local problems and opportunities. This is in part because of the need to ensure accountability, but also because of the need to ensure the durability of solutions and positive outcomes.

5.7.1 Theme 1: The development of Stronger and More Inclusive Communities

(i) Linkage to SWOT

Strategic issue identified in SWOT

Strengths -	Network of voluntary sector organisations serving the area – harness their expertise and energy The emerging West Wrexham Partnership – developing the capacity of the Partnership
Weaknesses	Unemployment levels – secular decline in manufacturing means need to increase flexibility and adaptability of workforce Barriers to training and work opportunities – need provision of quality, affordable childcare Generally fragmented community structures – communities must work together to achieve improvements
Opportunities	Job opportunities elsewhere in Wrexham and the wider sub-regional economy – barriers to employment (such as transport and childcare) need addressing

Threats As detailed in weaknesses

This theme is focused on building stronger and more inclusive communities through engaging with the local population, stimulating interest, action and responsibility in all aspects of economic, social and environmental life, providing education, training and up-skilling as part of this process, and to sustain involvement in community activities. Indeed, the benefits arising from the Programme must be accessible to all residents and improve the quality of life for everyone, but particularly those currently excluded from participating in the local economy and everyday life.

The URBAN II Initiative in West Wrexham will focus on addressing neighbourhood decay (due to the closure of traditional industries in the area, such as mining and steel-making) and in developing new employment opportunities in high-skill, high-wage sectors, rather than in low-paid manual sectors that have contributed to a fall in unemployment in the last decade. The Initiative will also address long-term and youth unemployment (particularly of males), as these features have contributed significantly to the apathy and disaffection locally due to a lack of variety in the employment opportunities available. Debt and benefit dependency are also significant issues contributing to a lack of participation in community and economic life and the Initiative will develop measures to reduce debt and a reliance on benefits.

Activities funded by URBAN II will also focus on addressing poor health, the breakdown of families and other social networks and crime. These issues are causally linked to poverty and exclusion and re-inforce feelings of community decline and physical and social isolation, both perceived and real. Networking between communities to overcome local parochialism will also be promoted in order to develop more inclusive and participating communities through the sharing of information, resources and expertise.

In addition, the URBAN II programme in West Wrexham will dovetail with other new national policy initiatives in Wales, such as '*Communities First*'. Therefore priorities, measures and projects funded by URBAN II will foster 'bottom-up' approaches to utilise local resources and to improve the ability of local people to articulate their concerns and to participate effectively in local labour markets and in other aspects of the local economy and society.

(ii) Theme 2 Business and Enterprise development

Linkage to SWOT

Strategic issue identified in SWOT

Strengths Employment growth – development of growth sectors

Weaknesses Narrow economic base – diversification a priority (encouragement and investment in growth sectors)
Weak entrepreneurial culture – need to address barriers such as business support and Education-Business Links (EBL's)
Lack of premises for new start-up businesses – work in partnership to provide workspace and incubation premises

Opportunities Job opportunities elsewhere in Wrexham and the wider sub-regional economy – provide access to sectors with outstanding growth prospects

Develop the Social Economy – develop community enterprise to enable local people to develop culture of entrepreneurship
Exploit ICTs to deliver training and jobs to West Wrexham – develop ICT knowledge to increase employment / quality of employment opportunities
Harness the HE / FE institutions in Wrexham Town Centre – improve rate of technology between research and teaching base and industry and workforce

Threats

Vulnerable to external decision making – existing manufacturers need an environment that encourages retention and further investment

Increasing employer demands for higher level skills – employers and employees need to embrace a commitment to training and development

There is little point in improving participation or involvement in the labour market unless we create new job opportunities and ensure local people can access them. Unfortunately, West Wrexham due to its historical dependence upon traditional industries and a small number of key employers, has significantly below average rates of self employment and entrepreneurship (as does the rest of the County Borough and much of Wales) compared to the U.K. Hence the URBAN II Initiative will encourage self-employment and entrepreneurship in order to create a more flexible and adaptive business environment and workforce.

In the West Wrexham area there are a very limited number of key sectors for employment, with the manufacturing (including electronic equipment, processed goods, metal fabrications and chemicals - all of which are expected to decline in the medium-term), construction and distribution, hotels and restaurants sectors being particularly important. Indeed, in Llay, 79.2 per cent of employees in the ward work in manufacturing whilst in Bryn Cefn just over a third of employees in the ward work in distribution, hotels and restaurants. Furthermore, over two-thirds of employees in the Gwersyllt West ward work in public administration, education and health.

Where these firms are located in the SME sector (up to 20 employees), the URBAN II Initiative in West Wrexham will offer support in order for them to adapt new technologies (particularly through ICT usage) and new ways of working and to become more competitive and innovative (both in *product* and *process* terms) in an ever-increasing competitive economy (also see '*Drivers for Change*' detailed earlier). Support through measures funded by the URBAN II will also be given to create new business start-ups in high-value, high growth sectors, such as corporate hospitality, business services and high technology manufacturing. This will be a crucial focus of the programme in West Wrexham area given the current under-representation in these sectors. Thus an emphasis will be placed upon diversifying the local economy to a very significant extent, and to markedly expand the SME base given the extremely low level of start-ups for the area (also see SWOT in Chapter 4).

To encourage this expansion, URBAN II will allow financial support to be made available to encourage business start-ups, expansion and growth. It will also make provisions for accessing ICT, improving business networks and for the sharing of information, advice and expertise. This work will be undertaken within the existing Business Connect framework and the soon-to-be launched National Council for Education and Training in Wales. Furthermore, the programme will promote efforts to secure both inward and indigenous investment on redeveloped sites and premises that were previously derelict, vacant or physically neglected. Such investment will make available appropriate and affordable premises (including managed workspace or incubation units) to allow small firms to establish and expand and will be of benefit to communities suffering from particularly high rates of economic inactivity and unemployment. In this way the Initiative will integrate 'bottom-up' community initiatives with 'top-down' efforts to stimulate economic development activities in the area.

Indeed, support for Community Enterprise will be a key feature of activities funded under the programme. In particular, the creation of a Community Enterprise Centre and satellite 'drop-in' units, managed by a project management team, will be pivotal in fostering intermediate (3rd sector) labour market approaches. These support the growth of revenue-generating community owned assets which enable residents to support the regeneration of their communities whilst improving their long-term economic, social and environmental sustainability.

(iii) Theme 3: Education, Skills and Training

Linkage to SWOT

Strategic issue identified in SWOT

Strengths	Commitment of employers to training of workers – penetration of training culture through business base Increasing interest of residents in training – addressing barriers – e.g childcare
Weaknesses	Narrow economic base – need training of workforce in order for them to be flexible and responsive Economic activity rates – declined whilst employment has grown so need to address skill deficiencies in economically inactive Under-skilled workforce – need to increase skills investment and local employer's demand for skilled people Low educational attainment – need to instil connection between learning and personal economic / social fulfilment
Opportunities	Job opportunities elsewhere in Wrexham and the wider sub-regional economy – adequate training required to participate in growth sectors Develop the Social Economy – will provide a means of enhancing the skills and capacity of local residents Exploit ICTs to deliver training and jobs to West Wrexham – develop ICT knowledge to increase employment / quality of employment opportunities Harness the HE / FE institutions in Wrexham Town Centre – need to develop capability and accessibility of knowledge base of education and research sectors
Threats	Increasing employer demands for higher level skills – employers and employees need to embrace a commitment to training and development

This theme is concerned with utilising the URBAN II programme to enable local people to help themselves in order to access existing and emerging employment, training and other service opportunities. The thrust of the work funded by the Initiative will therefore revolve around providing better access to information, education, skills development, learning and training opportunities, especially through the use of ICT's. The creation and resourcing of an Enterprise Centre and drop-in satellite units based within the local neighbourhoods of West Wrexham will be an integral feature of this work. Such centres will also cross-cut other strategic themes by ensuring that redundant buildings are productively used, by providing incubator space for local businesses, by encouraging the development of commercial and community enterprises (for example, childcare provision and a community café) and by assisting with efforts to create a more flexible and productive workforce.

The URBAN II programme in West Wrexham will therefore concentrate on raising aspirations and achievements in all aspects of learning and skills development in order to enhance the adaptability and productivity of workers and managers. Recent studies undertaken as part of the Future Skills Wales analyses indicate that only 4 per cent of Wrexham residents would describe themselves as advanced users of I.T., whilst 56 per cent of Wrexham employers identify a significant gap between the skills school and college leavers possess and those which the employer require – these include practical experience, communication skills, numeracy, literacy and showing initiative. Hence the URBAN II Initiative will focus strongly on addressing all of these deficiencies.

Although employment has increased within West Wrexham since 1991, participation rates have not grown as strongly and pockets of high unemployment remain. As a result it can be argued that residents have failed to take full advantage of the strong growth in job opportunities provided and this is a key priority that is being focused upon by the URBAN II West Wrexham programme: increasing participation to ensure local residents are able to access new or existing employment opportunities locally or within the rest of the County Borough or sub-region.

Notwithstanding a number of job losses announced recently, the trend towards a decline in unemployment has meant that local businesses have experienced increasing difficulties in recruiting qualified workers and hence workforce competitiveness is now a primary factor behind business location, expansion and profitability. This is a point that has been re-inforced in the *'Future Skills Wales'* Report (1999/2000) for North Wales focused on the needs of North Wales businesses. As a result, the URBAN II Initiative will concentrate on developing a well-qualified workforce that is more able to secure high value added jobs (attractive to inward and indigenous business) and which contributes positively to the performance of the local economy.

Objective 3 – linkages with the West Wrexham URBAN II Programme

A series of complimentary initiatives funded under other programmes, such as the Objective 3 Programme will additionally assist in equipping individuals and groups in West Wrexham with the skills (particularly ICT) they require to overcome barriers to participation and to access employment locally and beyond. In particular, four priorities within Wrexham's *Objective 3 Action Plan* are of much relevance to the URBAN II Programme – *'Developing active labour market policies to prevent and combat long-term unemployment'*, *'Actions to promote equal opportunities for all'*, *'Facilitating lifelong learning'* and *'Enhancing and promoting business confidence'*.

However, it is likely that the training and skill requirements of individuals will differ quite markedly in a number of instances and hence the project team appointed through URBAN II funding will tailor programmes accordingly, but which also meets the requirements of potential and actual employers.

(iv) **Theme 4: The development of an attractive, functional, accessible and productive environment**

Linkage to SWOT

Strategic issue identified in SWOT

Strengths	Development land at Brymbo – re-development required
Weaknesses	Environment – address the poor environment caused by decline of traditional industry to increase business and investor confidence
Opportunities	As detailed in strengths
Threats	As detailed in weaknesses

This theme aims to create places in which people want to live through improvements to the physical environment. Improvements that are proposed through the use of URBAN II monies, in conjunction with other funding programmes, will not stand alone in enhancing quality of life but they will be an important element in engendering community pride and will help motivate people to become involved in other community activities.

Small-scale improvements to the physical environment will be focused upon at the outset of the URBAN II programme, as they can be achieved in a relatively short space of time and at a relatively low cost. They are therefore a vital tool in terms of motivating people and sustaining their involvement and interest whilst more complex, time-consuming and less tangible projects are developed that will ultimately be crucial to the overall success of the Initiative. Examples of such activities include 'softer' individual and institutional support structures, as well as 'harder' developments such as the construction of the Community Enterprise Centre and associated 'drop in' satellite units.

Improving the image and environment of the West Wrexham area is also essential to the development of business confidence and offering an attractive environment to new investors from within and outside the area. The improvement of derelict land through the Initiative will help to combat perceptions of exclusion and abandonment and creates sites attractive to private sector investors. In West Wrexham three key sites for improvement can be identified – the former Brymbo Steelworks site, the former Plas Power Colliery site in Brynteg and the Tanyfron Tip site.

Linkage of principles and priorities of URBAN II to strategic objectives

The overall criteria to be complied with in relation to the URBAN II programme encompass the strategic objectives set out above in various ways:

URBAN II criteria	Strategic Objective
A high level of long-term unemployment	Obj.1 – The development of stronger and more inclusive communities Obj.2 – Business and Enterprise Development Obj.3 – Education, Skills and Training Obj.4 – The development of an attractive, functional, accessible and productive environment
A low level of economic activity	Obj.1 – The development of stronger and more inclusive communities Obj.2 – Business and Enterprise Development Obj.3 – Education, Skills and Training
A high level of poverty and exclusion	Obj.1 – The development of stronger and more inclusive communities Obj.3 – Education, Skills and Training
A specific need for conversion, due to local and social difficulties	Obj.2 – Business and economic Enterprise Development Obj.3 – Education, Skills and Training
A low level of education, significant skills deficiencies and high drop-out rates from school	Obj.1 – The development of stronger and more inclusive communities Obj.3 – Education, skills and training

A high level of criminality and delinquency

Obj.1 – The development of stronger and more inclusive communities

Obj.3 – Education, Skills and Training

Obj.4 – The development of an attractive, functional, accessible and productive environment

A particularly rundown environment

Obj.1 – The development of stronger and more inclusive communities

Obj.4 – The development of an attractive, functional, accessible and productive environment

Management arrangements

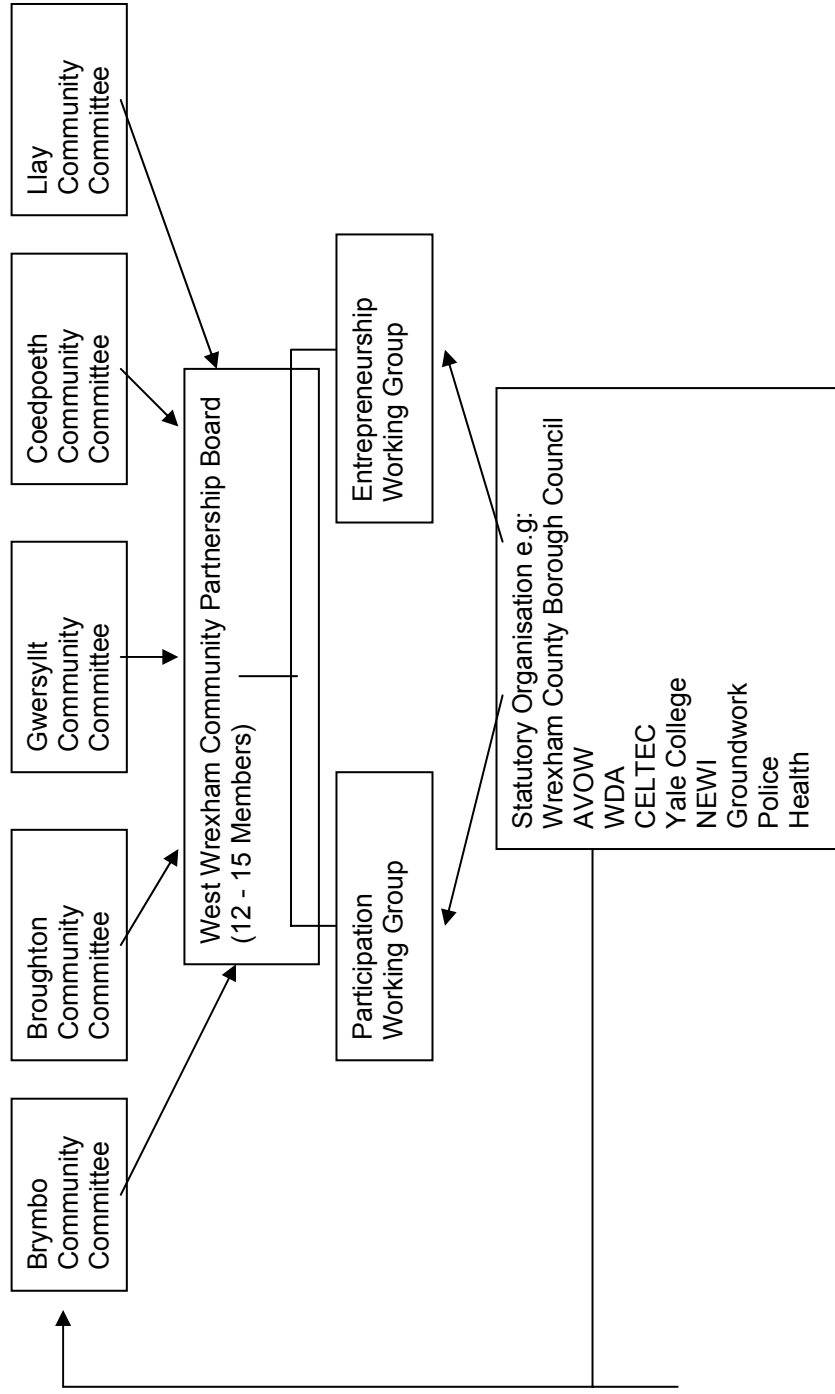
The management arrangements for the West Wrexham URBAN II programme are discussed in more detail in the Implementation Chapter and Annex X. However, to summarise briefly, the West Wrexham area exhibits many uniform characteristics contributing to its overall economic, social and environmental position. However, within the area there are five distinctive neighbourhoods or sub-communities that make it possible to adopt global actions to meet specific deficiencies or opportunities of these five sub-groupings. The management structure is shown in Figure 1 and comprises:

(i) Five community committees based on the broad geographical groupings of communities (Coedpoeth, Brymbo, Broughton, Gwersyllt and Llay) that exist have been set up. Existing local partnership structures have been used (where relevant) and strengthened / expanded to assist this process. These committees are representative of the needs of their community.

(ii) A West Wrexham Community Partnership Board has subsequently emerged which draws its membership from these individual community committees. The Partnership has overall responsibility for the strategic direction of the Wrexham West URBAN II programme, including the 'approval' of projects prior to them being submitted to the Wales European Funding Office (WEFO) for the formal approval and allocation of appropriate resources.

(iii) Two sub groups have been set up to deal with the two programme priorities of Participation and Entrepreneurship. An Officer working group from the Council, as well as individuals from other public (for example, the WDA) private, voluntary and community sector support agencies have a direct input into these sub-groups in order to support, develop and implement project idea. In this way, linkages can be made and duplication avoided before any recommendations are forwarded to the Wrexham West Partnership Board.

Figure 1: URBAN II - West Wrexham Partnership Structure



Targets

To achieve the vision and the strategic themes identified therein, a number of headline targets can also be identified:

1. To increase the number of local employees in employment and reduce long-term unemployment
2. To increase business formation rates
3. To increase the number of adults with NVQ Level 3 qualifications
4. To reduce the proportion of households in receipt of benefits and subsequently increase the number of people in the decision-making of projects

5.8 Development of the Programme

It is envisaged that projects that emanate from, and are of benefit to, those residing in West Wrexham will be of varying magnitude, varying duration and varying degrees of complexity in terms of their implementation. To encourage community involvement a number of projects (both large and small scale) will hopefully be implemented in the infancy of the programme. Such projects will include physical infrastructure works that are clearly visible, as well as the appointment of a management team to take the whole process forward efficiently and effectively. In the medium to longer term, projects that require more detailed inception and implementation work will subsequently be developed.

5.9 Priorities, Operational Measures and Projects

As noted, URBAN II can help us move towards our vision for West Wrexham by addressing the four strategic objectives set out above. These objectives can be aggregated to form two **Priorities for Action** that will be achieved through the delivery of a series of **Operational Measures**.

To meet the needs of the communities in the area, many of the measures that are listed in the following chapter are 'umbrella' in nature in that they address the two priorities of Participation and Entrepreneurship identified as being crucial to the economic and social well-being of all the communities in West Wrexham that the programme is focusing upon. However, the specifics of action will be taken through project development and implementation by the stakeholders (individuals / groups / communities) themselves.

5.10 The development of a sustainable strategy for Wrexham West

The success of the Programme in West Wrexham will depend to a significant degree on the community committees and the Community Partnership Board being as inclusive as possible.

As the programme develops, it is envisaged that a Development Trust will evolve from the Community Partnership Board and will be set up to oversee the sustenance of the Strategy. The Trust is likely to be managed by a combination of local groups and individuals from the area, supported in the early stages by officers from the Council and other organisations as appropriate.

The eventual creation of a Development Trust will allow a greater diversity of funding avenues to be explored in addition to those available from 'traditional' sources, including the National Assembly for Wales (for example, the new Local Regeneration Fund), the National Lottery Charities Board funds, domestic economic development funds from the WDA and the Council.

The Enterprise Centre and drop-in centres will act as foci for the provision of information, advice, mentoring, skills development (entrepreneurship), awareness raising, job searches, childcare provision and workspace provision to both local individuals, local community groups, local entrepreneurs and local businesses. In support of these activities, various financial packages including a Community Resource Fund and Business Support grants will also be managed from the Centre. 'Best Practice' will also be shared with other designated community strategy areas within the County Borough and beyond and links will be made with the University for Industry Project based at Chirk library, the Innovation Centre based at the North East Wales Institute of Higher Education (NEWI), the Wrexham Training and Enterprise Centre (ITEC) and future Lifelong Learning projects being proposed. Statutory approaches to local regeneration initiatives will additionally be influenced.

A further stimuli to the sustainability of URBAN II-related activities will be the development of Intermediate Labour Market (ILM's) focused on environmental improvements, entrepreneurship and social facility provision. Hence the management team at the Enterprise Centre will encourage local individuals to start their own businesses in relation to the opportunities in growth sectors that have been recognised, and to use the knowledge, experience and expertise they gain to assist other individuals and groups in identifying and meeting their own needs.

The requirement to work in partnership will also help to develop synergies between organisations, groups and individuals from the public, private and voluntary sectors that would otherwise be absent. Such working will also allow the blending and sharing of resources to take place, fostering a greater 'capacity to act'.

6: PRIORITIES

In implementing the Strategy three Priorities are identified. Each of these Priorities will contribute directly to the Strategy:

Priority 1: Entrepreneurship and Business Development

This priority will be focused upon encouraging enterprise and self-employment in West Wrexham and improving the competitiveness and efficiency of both new and existing businesses through advice, information and financial support, the development and sustenance of the local workforce, the provision of workspace and site reclamation.

Priority 2: Participation

This priority is primarily focused on ensuring that local people can access the jobs created in West Wrexham or elsewhere within the sub-regional economy. In particular it will attempt to maximise the potential of local people by improving their skills, training and education, raising the aspirations and achievements of local people, and overcoming barriers to accessing employment opportunities.

Priority 3: Technical Assistance

The Technical Assistance provided will help to meet the costs of management and project delivery support in order to ensure that the two priorities of Entrepreneurship and Participation are efficiently and effectively addressed.

Priority 1: Entrepreneurship and Business Development

Rationale

Creating an entrepreneurial culture and developing and sustaining a competitive business environment will be crucial to the regeneration of the West Wrexham area. The historical legacy of a dependency on a narrow industrial base focused on a small number of key employers – particularly steel and mineral extraction – has led to a weak entrepreneurial culture and a low number of new business start-ups, contributing to a dependence on lower value added activities, reducing innovation and job opportunities locally.

The aim of this Priority, as highlighted in the SWOT and Strategy chapters, is to **encourage an entrepreneurial culture and increase business start-ups and competitiveness, particularly in high-value growth sectors in order to widen the economic base.** Additionally, the development of a flexible, adaptive and responsive workforce in West Wrexham will be addressed. This will help to ensure that the area is less vulnerable to shutdowns and branch closures caused through external shocks elsewhere, although this will remain a threat to many employers whilst they continue to produce lower value added products.

Addressing such issues is in line with the draft National Economic Development Strategy and the National Assembly's recently published Strategic Plan for Wales. Such work is also in line with other existing national and local strategies (see Policy Context chapter).

This Priority reflects the role that sustainable business development must have in creating jobs, enhancing competitiveness and generating more wealth within the neighbourhoods of West Wrexham. The activities created and funded under this Priority are intended to be robust in order to endure beyond the lifetime of the Structural Fund programme.

In Wales, the entrepreneurship culture has been traditionally weak and in West Wrexham the number of self-employed persons is well below the average for Wales or Great Britain (see Strategy Chapter). A key challenge of this Priority will be to create an entrepreneurial community where local people (but especially the young) recognise self-employment as a career option and have the necessary confidence, motivation, skills and support to turn their business ideas into actions. Measures within this Priority will contribute towards the creation of an entrepreneurial culture in the area by addressing issues relating to the provision of affordable, workspace / premises, the availability of grants, information, advice, and the provision of education and training packages.

Both new and existing businesses also require support tailored to their own needs to enhance and develop their competitiveness. As a result, the Priority will ensure that business support and mentoring, grant availability for premises, process and product innovation and networking support is available to encourage further growth. Significant investment in land reclamation for industrial growth and expansion is required too, as a result of the dereliction and waste arising from former steel works and mining activities. This presently acts as a deterrent to investment by indigenous and exogenous business investors.

Usage of ICT will be critical in marketing and promoting the area and its products locally, regionally, nationally and internationally and will be a further emphasis of this Priority. Inherent within the use of ICT marketing tools will be Local Purchasing and Supplier Networks, which will be vital to maximising benefits to the local economy.

Indeed, ICTs are one of the key generic technologies that will enhance the competitiveness of business. However, the take-up of new technologies remains low in West Wrexham and the Priority will focus on stimulating demand to help local businesses compete in the global market. In addition, the use of ICTs will encourage electronic trading and the break down of barriers to negate perceived and actual feelings of isolation by business leaders.

Support for the creation of new businesses and support for those already existing, as well as for those wishing to expand and diversify into high growth sectors in the short-medium term must also be accompanied by workforce development measures. In this respect strong links will be made with the EU's Objective 3 Programme to ensure the availability of an educated, appropriately skilled, flexible, adaptive and responsive workforce. This is a crucial issue given that the nature of employment in many companies in West Wrexham has not required either high level or advanced adaptable skills. This not only reduced the possibilities for major productivity increases and for product development and innovation, but increases employees' vulnerability to unemployment should they suffer redundancy. The development of transferable skills is vital to ensuring that both firms and employees are able to adapt to external shocks and improve productivity and profitability.

Priority 4 of the Objective 3 Programme is focused on 'Promoting Business Competitiveness' and this highlights that the skills and knowledge base of a workforce within a business will directly influence its competitiveness. Objective 3 will therefore be used to strengthen businesses by improving skills at all levels, ranging from basic skills to higher-level graduate skills.

The success of the measures relating to entrepreneurship and business creation, the development of a competitive and sustainable West Wrexham business environment, and the development and sustenance of the local workforce in employment will therefore depend on the area embracing the aim of the Objective 3 Programme in developing a strong training and education culture.

The Priority will also conform to equal opportunities requirements and provide appropriate support to groups such as youth, single parents and older males who are less likely to create and develop their own businesses, or who may be less well-placed to participate in workforce development measures. Appropriate consideration, at all stages, will also be given within the Priority to the sustainability of business practices and to the overall environmental improvement of the area.

Overall aim

To increase employment opportunities in West Wrexham through encouraging enterprise and self-employment and by promoting sustainable business growth.

Priority Objectives

- to embed a culture of innovation, R&D and technology transfer to enhance the competitive edge of firms and workforce through appropriate training / up-skilling;
- to promote a culture of entrepreneurship and higher level of entrepreneurial activity in West Wrexham; and
- to provide increased access to high quality workspace for business in the area through the improvement of derelict land and defunct industrial premises.

Links to other priorities

To achieve greater rates of entrepreneurship and to develop businesses in the West Wrexham area, there is a need to ensure that potential and actual employees participate fully within local labour markets in order to realise fully the benefits arising from the opportunities being made through URBAN II.

Priority 2

Participation links with this priority through the utilisation of the Enterprise Centre and 'drop-in' satellite units that will be created. These centres will provide information, advice, training, childcare and other support measures to address barriers to the development of an entrepreneurial culture and a competitive business environment.

Measure 1 will contribute directly to greater rates of entrepreneurship and more successful local businesses by providing a suitably educated and skilled workforce, particularly in the use of ICT infrastructure, that has the ability to both create and access employment opportunities. Measure 2 will focus on ensuring that local residents within West Wrexham can overcome any health, crime, transport, financial or childcare issues that prevent them from participating within the labour market. This Measure will also address environmental and community decay in order to support the inclusion and active involvement of all, and to support the ability of the West Wrexham community to be enterprising and to establish third sector businesses.

The Objective 3 Programme and Wrexham's Local Action Plan

The Objective 3 Programme is intended to support national efforts to improve employability and human resource development. In Wrexham, local partners have developed a Local Action Plan to deploy the resources available through the programme in a systematic and strategic manner. The development of such a Plan has also been undertaken to ensure greater complementarity with other strategies, such as the URBAN II Programme, and to target resources most appropriately towards those whom support is required to enhance employability, adaptability, enterprise and equal opportunities.

The Wrexham Action Plan concentrates its efforts on five Priorities: active labour market policies to prevent and combat long term unemployment; actions to promote social inclusion; facilitating lifelong learning; enhancing business competitiveness and promoting gender equality.

Of particular relevance to URBAN II are the first four priorities. The first concentrates on combating unemployment, disaffection and the integration of young people into the labour market, and complements various issues being addressed through Measure 1 of Priority 2 for the URBAN II programme in West Wrexham, focused on overcoming barriers to participation (see later). Indeed, linkage of employers, educational establishments and those currently excluded from participating in local labour markets by 'Job Bridge' activities / improving accessibility to employment opportunities is a key feature of URBAN II. Such work will complement Objective 3 measures focusing on the re-integration of the long-term unemployed and the transition of school leavers into employment.

The second priority provides pathways to employment for a wide range of excluded groups (especially older people and lone parents) through a graduated step-by-step approach which fits neatly with proposals to develop both the community and mainstream commercial business sectors (grants, workspace etc) through URBAN II funds (see Measure 1 Priority 1 and Measure 2 Priority 2).

The third Priority relates to the development of systems and structures to support and increase participation in lifelong learning. Such work dovetails with activities proposed under Measure 1 of Priority 2 of the West Wrexham Initiative centred on overcoming barriers to participation and the provision of education and training courses to develop a flexible, adaptive, suitably qualified workforce. Indeed, the capital expenditure incurred from developing and resourcing Lifelong Learning cCentres in West Wrexham could be met through URBAN II, whilst the provision of appropriate education and training could be met through Objective 3.

The fourth priority of the Objective 3 programme is centred on promoting business competitiveness and it is envisaged that tailored support (for management and workforce),

along with the introduction of new technology (ICTs) to assist the production and marketing operations of local companies will be provided through URBAN II. This will help to ensure that maximum impact is made in relation to activities to be funded through the Objective 3 programme concerned with entrepreneurship, innovation and skills and knowledge development.

Indicative Targets

Output targets:

Number of business start-ups assisted
Number of new and existing businesses receiving financial support
Number of businesses where management and workforce have received additional training, advice and assistance

Impact targets:

Investment in new and existing businesses
Net number of new businesses running after 18 months
Net additional jobs in commercial and community business sectors
Net additional safeguarded jobs

Resources

The resources allocated to this priority are:

ERDF
WDA
National Assembly
National Assembly
Groundwork Wrexham
Coalfields Regeneration Trust
Wrexham County Borough Council
Private Sector

The objectives and targets will be met through two measures:

- Encouraging Enterprise and Self-Employment
- **Development of competitive and sustainable businesses**

Measure 1: Encouraging Enterprise and Self-Employment

Description and rationale

This Measure will provide a range of pre-start and aftercare services for new SMEs in West Wrexham. This will include mentoring, business advice and finance and the provision of appropriate units for business. Prioritisation will be given to start-ups providing employment for local residents and will include additional support for community enterprises.

New SMEs are often the result of entrepreneurship, but the social status of the entrepreneur is still low within the area. As a result, many individuals are reluctant to embrace self-employment as a career alternative.

Nevertheless, new businesses are vital as a source of wealth, jobs innovation and productivity. Generally, a local economy that succeeds in creating more new businesses will also be more flexible and adaptive. Unfortunately, the West Wrexham area currently has low

rates of entrepreneurship and so it must enhance the entrepreneurial nature of its inhabitants if it is to improve its overall economic performance.

To help foster an entrepreneurial culture, an Enterprise Centre and associated satellite 'drop-in' centres across the West Wrexham will be developed. This will be of benefit to both priorities within the URBAN II Programme as the centres will be essential to encouraging participation within local labour markets. Indeed, the centres will offer information, advice and support to individuals / groups from the area on a range of wider issues, such as health and safety, and the availability and accessibility of education and training opportunities. A community-run creche facility, meeting rooms and training suite will also be available to encourage participation.

From an economic perspective, all of the centres will offer a comprehensive, co-ordinated and efficient information, advice, support and training service to new entrepreneurs and existing businesses, in both the commercial and community sectors. The development of positive attitudes to entrepreneurship and risk-taking, addressing the motivation and skills of would-be entrepreneurs and supporting entrepreneurship programmes in schools and colleges will be key target areas too. In addition, the main Enterprise Centre will provide incubation and managed workspace at affordable rates. The identification of other private sector property market investors and/or developers to bring forward, in partnership, appropriate quality industrial and light commercial workspace elsewhere within the area will also add to the workspace available to tenants on flexible terms.

The provision of appropriate financial packages for new start-ups is another key feature of this measure. Such grants would be focused upon individuals or partners wishing to start a small business employing up to 10 individuals and wishing to either purchase their own premises or to acquire freehold or very long leasehold interests on a property. Fitting-out costs could also be covered and this financial support would give small companies added credibility in their negotiations with banks, finance houses and landlords.

Further financial support will be allocated to support for technology based and innovative enterprises which may not become profitable in the period of which loan finance is normally available, as well as a limited amount of venture capital for high risk projects.

Whilst increasing the role of business start-ups is crucial to developing an entrepreneurial economy, it is also important that these businesses survive and prosper. Tailored support, access to support services, business networks (XENOS etc) and first rate mentors to enable them to realise their growth potential will be required in order to improve their efficiency and competitive advantage, and for them to become more important local employers. Hence efforts through this measure will seek to ensure that all new-start-ups with the ability to be successful have access to appropriate support and advice on ICT, funding, equal opportunities, quality procedures and environmental regulations management.

New businesses must be sustainable and where possible protect or enhance the natural environment and industrial heritage of the area thus incentives to promote environmental management will be built into assistance packages where appropriate.

Promoting entrepreneurship is a key policy objective of the Objective 3 programme. Its aim of raising the profile of entrepreneurship and embedding entrepreneurial behaviour within the education system and overcoming barriers to training will complement the activities of this measure.

Aims and Objectives

- to create an Enterprise Centre and 'drop-in' satellite units in order to provide incubation and managed workspace and other facilities;
- to provide financial assistance (capital and revenue funding) for establishing new ventures and developing existing businesses;
- to encourage an entrepreneurial culture, particularly in potential growth sectors (see Baseline and SWOT chapters); and
- to provide ongoing advice and support to sustain business start-ups.

Possible activities

Managed workspace and incubation space; refurbished workshop accommodation; training suites; resource centre; creche facility; community café; advice and support; provision of appropriate training; provision of Small Business Start-up Grants for installation of electricity, heating, lighting within premises, office furniture, equipment, plant and machinery; development of business networks and tailored support to new businesses over the first 36 months,

Final beneficiaries

Include new and existing local businesses, local residents, public agencies, local authorities and the voluntary sector.

Measure 2: Development of competitive and sustainable businesses

Description and rationale

In the modern economy, existing firms across all sectors must continually improve their products and services – and adopt more efficient business processes – if they are to achieve sustained growth and profitability. All businesses must strive for continual improvements in efficiency and productivity to secure a sustainable future.

This Measure is aimed at helping local businesses and employees adapt to the new challenges brought about by the globalisation of the world's economy. A central thrust involves activities to up-skill the local workforce and to support companies that wish to innovate and take advantage of the growing opportunities available through the use of ICTs. A further emphasis will be on the reclamation of land and the refurbishment of buildings for wider development and to open up wider opportunities for direct investment.

Both community and commercial business use of ICT in the West Wrexham area is low and hence one major thrust of activity will be to raise awareness and help businesses understand the opportunities (and threats) for information and communications technologies (ICTs). This will involve a process of providing support and advice and to undertake a process of dissemination and awareness raising to encourage more effective take-up of digital and communications technologies by local businesses.

Indeed, an innovation culture needs to be embedded into indigenous firms in the area so that they become better equipped to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the introduction of new technology. Therefore emphases will be placed on e-commerce and ensuring that companies are provided with access to the appropriate support, ICT infrastructure and market framework so that they can take advantage of electronic trading.

A key feature to achieving the aims and objectives will be to change the existing culture to one where businesses and individuals embrace the concept of continuous investment in skills and learning. As a result one area of work will target the improvement of business leadership and management skills among local businesses. Greater efforts are required from business and business support networks to enhance the capabilities, competence and responsiveness of local business managers. The sharing of best practice and the development of stronger local business networks will help this process.

Work will also be undertaken with local employers to develop job tenure schemes, workforce training, planing and implementation, work trails, work placement schemes and job rotation schemes to develop the local workforce.

An overarching issue that must also be addressed through this measure is to improve and simplify business support. This will be undertaken through more focused and easier-to-

access advice and expert assistance (possibly from ICT-based local points of access) and to develop a networking role for business support agencies.

With reference to specific advice on access to business finance and development capital, equipment grants for existing companies to enable them to become more sustainable in the longer term will be one mechanism used, in conjunction with other sources of state aid, to reward potential inward investors and growing local companies. Monies for the construction of premises by small, owner-managed based-businesses employing local people will be another way of encouraging sustainable business, whilst subsidised support for the lease of work premises will also be available through this measure.

The reclamation of derelict land and the refurbishment of key employment infrastructure to enable high growth sectors to flourish will contribute to overcoming an air of abandonment that many local people have felt since the closure of the Brymbo Steelworks in 1990. Existing run-down SME premises will be refurbished and accessibility enhanced, meeting the needs of businesses and thus improving the built environment and encouraging investment.

Of particular relevance to this measure is Priority 4 Measure 4 in the Objective 3 Programme which seeks to promote and enhance a culture of entrepreneurship by addressing the skills gap which exists in the ongoing development of business. The Programme additionally aims to improve the general management of small businesses, and as a result the ability of SMEs to attract finance.

'Skills and Knowledge development for the workforce' of the Objective 3 Programme (Priority 4 Measure 2) will further complement this measure through the improvement of workforce skills, ensuring that they have the skills and training required for future business development hence increasing competitiveness. This is vital to improving the competitiveness of firms in areas such as marketing through the use of e-commerce.

'Encouraging Innovation, R&D and the Information Society' within the Objective 3 Programme (Priority 4 Measure 3) will support skills and knowledge development at a higher level to achieve skill enhancement and boost the human resource potential in research science and technology. Firms through Objective 3 and URBAN II will exploit the benefits of innovation, create a culture that encourages and values innovation and places an emphasis on developing higher level skills.

Aims and Objectives

- changing attitudes and encouraging and supporting entrepreneurs in the formation of new ventures, in particular in growth sectors of the local economy;
- to support and encourage businesses to utilise and exploit the new trading revolution;
- embedding the innovation culture into businesses and all levels of the education system by raising awareness of the importance of innovation in enhancing competitiveness, employment and growth;
- creating more technology-based businesses and more highly paid, highly skilled, value added quality jobs;
- improving academic – industry links through improved technology transfer; and
- provide a wide range of high quality sites and premises to support the formation and development of local businesses, sectoral clustering and to attract new investment to the area.

Possible activities

Value-added business consultancy advice and expert assistance; advice on access to finance for growth and expansion; advice on human resource development, regulatory environment, export opportunities and developing R&D partnerships; advice on business use of ICTs; establishing and enhancing the role of business networks and encouraging business leadership and business management skills; development of a business intranet to develop and share information and e-commerce consultancy support fund.

Final beneficiaries

Include new and existing local businesses, local residents, public agencies, local authorities and the voluntary sector.

Priority 2: Participation

Rationale

The participation of the West Wrexham community in all spheres of economic, social and environmental life is vital to improving the quality of life for local people and creating communities where people want to reside and work.

The market changes within national and local economies have had a major impact on the lives of the people of West Wrexham (see Strategy Chapter). The decline in 'high status', relatively well-paid traditional steel-making and mineral extraction industries has resulted in the neighbourhoods of West Wrexham facing social isolation and demoralisation in recent years. These jobs, if at all, have been replaced by lower status, less secure employment which has failed to bring the previous level of prosperity.

The introduction of new technologies in the local and sub-regional economy has resulted in many 'traditional' skills required by those employable becoming redundant, whilst new skills are in greater demand. These new skills do not easily lend themselves to certain sectors of the population, such as older males, and many older men are classified as economically inactive as they have not been able to re-enter the labour market. In addition, youth unemployment rates are high and this has led to continuing low expectations of school-leavers.

The aim of this Priority is to overcome the barriers that prevent participation in the local labour market and accessing the job opportunities that are created in West Wrexham or elsewhere within the sub-regional economy. Indeed, as the SWOT and Strategy chapters have highlighted, there has been a growth in overall employment within the area during the last decade yet economic activity rates within many of the neighbourhoods of West Wrexham have actually fallen. This implies that local people have been unable to access the new job opportunities that have become available and so a range of measures are included in order to address this issue. As well as focusing on skill shortages, attitudinal deficiencies and physical barriers, many of these will include support for actions that help residents tackle for themselves some of the problems afflicting the area and raise their own levels of self confidence and levels of community action. This is particularly important in the context of West Wrexham where adjacent neighbourhoods have little history of co-operation and of seizing the benefits available from pooling resources.

Educational attainment in the area is low by Welsh norms and many people, both school leavers and older residents, lack skills needed for securing sustainable jobs. In this respect, high quality education, training and information and advice opportunities will be prioritised to meet the needs of both local residents and local and sub-regional employers, especially where formal recognised qualifications are a pre-requisite of accessing employment.

Additionally, strong links will be forged between the community, education and business sectors to relate the benefits of structured learning to actual employment opportunities.

Lifelong learning will also be taken forward through the development of accessible centres within the neighbourhoods of West Wrexham and local businesses. Such sites will help to forge a culture of lifelong learning and assist in removing barriers to education, training, skills development and continuation in employment. As part of this process, it is envisaged that the motivation, involvement and aspirations of local residents will be raised significantly.

The isolation and exclusion being experienced by many individuals within the neighbourhoods of West Wrexham has been exacerbated by poor accessibility to employment, leisure and recreation and other community facilities.. Indeed, the geographical position of the West Wrexham area, as dispersed neighbourhoods on the outer fringes of the main town of Wrexham, has led to low levels of service provision. Social problems are reflected in high crime rates and an increasingly run-down environment that acts as a physical and psychological barrier to local development.

As a result, the Priority identifies that the regeneration of such neighbourhoods will require the active involvement of all residents and the agents that serve them and the development of new applications and training for ICT to ensure a flexible, adaptive and competitive workforce can access local employment opportunities. Such work will strengthen social cohesion and develop neighbourhood networks, build the ability of individuals to be enterprising and assist the up-take of employment opportunities by those currently unemployed.

A range of other barriers such as poor childcare facilities and limited access to transport also reduce the work opportunities available to local residents. Hence activities focused on removing practical, physical and perceptual barriers to participation in the workforce, especially by men towards grasping the nature of new employment opportunities, are reflected strongly within this Priority. Indeed, approaches targeted on overcoming benefit dependency, fear of crime, poor health, poor transport to employment, retail, leisure and community facilities and a lack of affordable, accessible, quality childcare will be key areas of work.

Physical improvements to the local environment, industrial and retailing premises and community facilities will also help to encourage a positive perception of the West Wrexham area by local residents, local businesses and potential investors alike. This will involve the participation, where possible, of locals in re-development / regeneration schemes and foster a positive attitude towards achieving the necessary skills and training to create, participate and continue in employment.

All projects will identify how they address sustainability and equality of access and opportunity for all members of the West Wrexham community, and the Priority will be implemented in tandem with the *Objective 3 Action Plan* for Wrexham.

Overall aim

To ensure that residents of West Wrexham fully participate in their community and to access the jobs created in West Wrexham and elsewhere within the sub-regional economy.

Priority Objectives

- to raise the level of participation in new and existing employment opportunities, services and training opportunities (particularly by the use of ICT);
- to facilitate initiatives which foster inclusivity, self worth and strengthen the capacities of neighbourhoods to help themselves;
- to create safe, healthy and proactive communities; and
- to improve the image and environment of West Wrexham, raising the profile and physical attractiveness of neighbourhoods for residents and existing / potential employers.

Links to other priorities

Priority 1

The creation of an entrepreneurial culture and the development of new and existing businesses (and the workforce therein) links with this Priority through the utilisation of the Enterprise Centre that will be created. This will provide workspace provision and encourage business creation and the development of new employment opportunities in growth sectors in the West Wrexham area.

The measures included will complement efforts to increase participation through the provision of packages focused on assisting individuals interested in creating and developing their own businesses. They also offer further support by directing resources towards sustaining participation in employment by focusing on developing a competitive, successful business environment. In addition, actions are focused on the creation of a skilled, adaptive, flexible workforce that is both required and valued by local employers.

The Objective 3 Programme and Wrexham's Local Action Plan

See notes under Priority 1.

Indicative Targets

Output Targets:

Increase in number of new community facilities / improvements to existing community facilities.

Number of new training courses provided which are of direct benefit to URBAN II Programme.

Number of environmental schemes supported.

Impact Targets:

Net additional new business start-ups.

Net additional new jobs provided.

Resources

The resources allocated to this priority are:

ERDF

National Assembly of Wales

Groundwork Wrexham

Coalfields Regeneration Trust

Wrexham County Borough Council

Private Sector

The objectives and targets will be met through two measures:

- **Overcoming barriers to participation**
- **Developing Active Communities**

Measure 1: Overcoming barriers to participation

Description and rationale

This measure will focus on helping residents of West Wrexham access labour market opportunities in the local economy. It will focus on equipping young people with the skills and experiences required for work and provide targeted support for other groups - such as older males and single parents – who are facing specific barriers to labour market participation, such as affordable, quality childcare provision.

Intervention will occur from as early a stage as possible and the measure will contribute to growth and employment through actions to address gaps in basic or generic skills. Both formal and informal training courses, which lead to appropriate recognised qualifications and accreditation of skills, will also be provided through Education-Business Links (EBLs), as well as improving work record consistency, the provision of advice for the unemployed and long-term unemployed, the provision of counselling / mentoring / job search services and work trials.

Furthermore, recruitment services for employers, skill matching services, marketing and publicity and candidate pre-selection for interview will be undertaken. Pre-recruitment training services customised to meet employers needs and demographic and labour market

information to employers and investors will also be provided. All of these activities, where appropriate, will be developed through the provision and usage of ICT infrastructure (Public ICT Access Information Points).

Consultation with the West Wrexham community has identified the physical isolation, both real and perceived, of the area as a major issue. Car ownership in the area is low, particularly in the wards of Gwenfro (45.8 per cent do not have access to a car) and Brymbo (37.6 per cent do not have access to a car). Many people are therefore forced to rely on public transport but this is poor in relation to accessing employment opportunities on Wrexham Industrial Estate and also in relation to accessing evening training classes / leisure facilities in Wrexham Town Centre as well as inter-neighbourhood links across the West Wrexham area.

This relative lack of mobility impinges on residents' ability to access economic and social opportunities, but particularly the young and lone parent families. Hence another thrust of this measure focuses on introducing employment transport schemes to link the local population with employment opportunities on the Wrexham Industrial Estate, Wrexham Town Centre and on the Llay Industrial Estate. Subsidies for the provision of public transport in off-peak hours, the introduction of social car schemes led through the voluntary sector and affordable driving lessons for young people may also be other key areas of activity.

Aims and Objectives

- to strengthen the capacity of local groups and individuals to develop and manage their own work and to participate fully within the local economy and the neighbourhoods in which they reside;
- to provide training, support and advice to the unemployed in order for them to access local employment opportunities;
- to develop links between individuals, local businesses and education / training establishments to overcome barriers to participation in local labour markets; and
- to enhance transport provision between centres of population and local employment opportunities.

Possible activities

Individual personal development programmes; promotion of the awareness of the benefits of learning; incentives for employers to participate; basic skills programmes; a 'West Wrexham Job Team' to deliver skills and training and provision of a Job brokerage service; community transport schemes; subsidy of existing public transport; social 'taxis' where the neighbourhood provides a car and local volunteers act as drivers and affordable driving lessons for young people and extension of childcare provision in schools / provision of 'kiddie shuttles'.

Final beneficiaries

Local public / community / voluntary / private partnerships, local community groups, voluntary and charitable bodies, local authorities and other local agencies and business organisations.

Measure 2: Developing Active Communities

Description and rationale

The extent to which people can undertake local community regeneration activities is dependent, to a significant degree upon the organisational structures and skills inherent within the neighbourhoods of West Wrexham, and on the ability of locals to articulate their needs and priorities.

This measure focuses on developing such structures and skills, and also provides support for such activities where they contribute to increased community participation and morale, and the development of more accessible local services.

In order to be able to access employment, people need to recognise the ways in which the expertise and resources of external agencies can be harnessed to assist this process. Crucial to increasing participation will be the development of community leaders, who will require support and training. Their skills can then be passed on to others, building a positive cycle of involvement and confidence building, and a willingness to access employment opportunities for self improvement.

The availability of a Community Resource Fund will additionally support groups within West Wrexham to resource their basic needs and will assist the creation of new employment opportunities, particularly in the community business sector. Access to opportunities in existing commercial / community businesses would also be enhanced.

Community infrastructure within the West Wrexham area is weak and under-developed and has been exacerbated due to the perceived and real isolation of many of the neighbourhoods, and has particularly affected certain less mobile groups such as the young, lone parent families and the elderly.

In this respect, the measure also focuses on the physical provision and refurbishment of facilities and the local environment. Indeed, the physical environment is an aspect over which they can exert some direct control. A high quality environment engenders civic pride, projects a positive image to potential investors and is important in developing business confidence in the area and its inhabitants.

To enable the positive benefits of the URBAN II programme to be seen by local residents at an early stage, an emphasis will therefore be placed upon small-scale environmental improvements ('greenspace') and the provision of meeting places and education and training facilities. The latter will particularly focus on the youth of the area, whilst advice and information sessions will be aimed at both families and lone parents. Once again, an integral part of this process will be the development of linkages with local businesses in the commercial and community sector, as well as local people.

Furthermore, an active, participating West Wrexham community will be dependent to a significant extent on efforts to reduce debt and maximise income. The Baseline and SWOT chapters have identified that low incomes are prevalent throughout the area, excluding many people from accessing employment opportunities due to the costs involved. Low incomes additionally re-enforce individual's feelings of low self respect and apathy. The appointment of a series of outreach workers focused on Money Advice and Counselling, coupled with the promotion of a West Wrexham Credit Union and a Local Exchange Trading System would therefore be the types of activity that would possibly encourage greater participation.

Many individuals within the area also suffer from poor health. This can partly be attributable to the traditional 'dirty' manufacturing industries that once provided the main source of employment, and partly to the low levels of income which prevail today. Indeed, in the Gwenfro ward, over one-fifth of the population are affected by poor health. Therefore, better access to health facilities and services will be taken forward, along with other associated services targeted at the right groups at the right time and in the right ways. This will assist people's ability to participate in everyday life and in any employment opportunities that are available.

Burglary and criminal damage are prevalent within most neighbourhoods of West Wrexham too, and this has led to many people isolating themselves from both formal and informal economic, environmental and neighbourhood activities. In this respect the measure will prioritise the introduction of crime prevention measures (such as CCTV – this will also be of direct benefit to the security of premises of local businesses), as well as projects improving the relationship between young people and other groups residing in the area. The introduction of a number of Neighbourhood Wardens or Managers will also be investigated to ensure that people are fully able to participate in everyday life without fear of crime.

Aims and Objectives

- the development of Community Leaders;
- the provision of grant aid for local organisations;
- the improvement of community infrastructure and the local environment; and
- to reduce debt and maximise income.

Possible activities

Appointment of Community Development Officers; training courses in leadership skills; inter-community sessions to establish mutual goals; grants to organisations which are controlled by the community; improvement of play facilities in play areas; environmental landscaping; the establishment of community shops, community businesses and (re)-introduction of local markets; community cafes, lifelong learning centres and cyber cafes, provision of a young persons advice line, and detached youth workers.

A Money Advice and Debt Reduction Scheme could also be undertaken through extensive outreach work, as well as the creation of a West Wrexham Credit Union. Bids for Healthy Living Centres may also be developed along with the provision of basic lifeskills classes, the provision of health advice and services, the introduction of CCTV, advice and education about substance misuse and the introduction of Neighbourhood Wardens / Managers.

Final beneficiaries

Local public / community / voluntary / private partnerships, local community groups, voluntary and charitable bodies, local authorities and other local agencies and business organisations.

Priority 3: Technical Assistance

Rationale

Technical Assistance (TA) is an essential resource for effective delivery of the programme. Delivery of the programme will require robust administration systems. These arrangements are likely in some areas to feature arrangements for delegated delivery of certain aspects of the programme which will require adequate administration and support. In addition, information and guidance about the programme will be required to allow a wide range of potential project sponsors to come forward with proposals. There is also need for research money to be available to ensure proper evaluation of the programme and of particular aspects of it. TA will also be used to support initiatives to promote the Programme through accessible formats for disabled people and ethnic minority community languages.

Core activities

There are two principal activities that are proposed as part of a core TA programme. These are:

- **Programme Support and Development**
- **Publicity and Communication**

Programme Support and Development

One of the drawbacks identified by partners in current delivery mechanisms is the lack of a strategic approach. Arrangements need to be put in place which ensure a more coherent approach to local economic development utilising Structural Funds. Programme development and support of these activities will be resourced by both Technical Assistance and partnership resources to support this role in addition to those provided by the central secretariat, the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) whose role it would be to service the PMC.

Facilitators have not been widely used on Welsh programmes before (except Interreg) to help deliver Structural Funds programmes. However the requirements of the new programme will require a considerable facilitation role to be developed. The main role of facilitators will be to assist potential project applicants to develop ideas and empower local communities to take forward their proposals. This is particularly important to provide support for sectors which have been traditionally under-represented in the Programme such as voluntary groups and the private sector. These bodies will also require tailored support from WEFO when it comes to submitting applications to the Monitoring Committee. Facilitators will also need to support those partnerships running delegated appraisal processes which will ensure that all projects submitted are subject to a level of rigorous appraisal which meets the minimum requirements of the regulations and utilise the full range of available partnership expertise.

Publicity and Communication

The public consultation has already helped to generate interest in the Programme amongst the wider population. In order to ensure that as many people as possible are aware of the Programme there is a need for WEFO to promote it to new organisations and also to make the wider public aware of the benefits of the Programme. This activity will be in addition to the publicity carried out by individual project sponsors as part of their contractual obligation as grant recipients.

Workshops and seminars will also play an important role in publicising the programme and enhancing understanding of the new mechanisms for implementation. These events will satisfy a number of objectives:

- increasing expertise for organisations new to the Programme, and new members of staff in organisations with previous funding experience;
- providing guidance and support on aspects of the funding process such as selection criteria, and eligibility; and
- promote the aims and achievements of the Programme to a wide audience.

The Welsh European Programmes Executive produced a range of guidance material to assist applicants in the Objective 2 and 5b Programmes. A range of partner organisations have recommended the production of additional guidance materials, especially given consideration of the use of packages of projects to ensure strategic delivery of the programme.

This will involve both further research and the production of high quality support materials. This will include written guidance on all aspects of the programme, including the application and claims processes, as well as technical guidance on issues such as estimating economic effects of projects. Specialist guidance on issues such as eligibility will also be made available.

Priority Aim

To ensure efficient, transparent management of the programme.

Priority Objectives

- widen access to the use of Structural Funds to the maximum range of eligible partners;
- support strategically driven, well informed management of the funds; and
- support the development of appropriate levels of skills and expertise among those running the programmes at all levels.

Links to Other Priorities

Resources from this Priority will be available to support activities linked to any of the other priorities, across the entire eligible area.

Measure 1: Promoting Effective Programme Management

Description and Rationale

While overall programme management will be conducted by the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO), delegated management actions co-ordinated by partnerships convened either locally or around a theme, will require financial support. This will allow strategic decision making to take place at an appropriate level of expertise and promote more integrated project planning than has taken place previously. The processes involved will also facilitate the development of more substantial partnerships for both development of appropriate strategies and their delivery.

Such partnerships will require TA to ensure they are able to provide a sufficient facilitator and secretariat resource to serve the entire partnership. Without such a resource, delegated funds will not be open to the full range of eligible partners but could be limited to a small amount of well informed groups, normally in the public sector.

The need for reliable, accurate and speedy exchange of information in a common format will be essential for the effective implementation of the programme. Modern computer systems are able to transmit information electronically facilitating delegated management actions co-ordinated by partnerships convened either locally or around a theme. The installation, operation and interconnection of computerised systems will allow the management of both themed packages and action plans at a number of locations within the programme area whilst maintaining a flow of information to WEFO.

Aim

To support effective management of the programme.

Objectives

- to ensure proper resourcing of delegated management functions;
- to deliver efficient management information systems;
- to support the development of integrated “packages” of projects in a strategic manner; and
- to assist in the preparation of quality eligible bids, especially from those with limited track records in using the funds.

Possible activities

Funding for a local management team; support for preparation of project bids; scoping and feasibility studies; monitoring and evaluation of funded actions; development of applications and information systems; initiatives to increase access of social partners to the programme.

Final Beneficiaries

These may include local authorities, voluntary sector, social partners and national public sector bodies

Measure 2: Raising Awareness of the Programme

Description and Rationale

The success of the programme depends to a large degree on a wide understanding among the partnership of its contents, governing regulations, aims and objectives. Without this understanding implementation will be a slow and inefficient process. Actions must be taken to ensure that potential sponsors, administrators of the programme at all levels and inhabitants of the West Wrexham area are aware of how it works. It is also important that the benefits and achievements of the programme are widely publicised beyond the responsibility incumbent upon individual sponsors if its global impact is to be appreciated. The development of a communications strategy will be an early priority for the Programme Monitoring Committee.

Aim

To raise awareness about the workings of the programme across the West Wrexham area.

Objectives

- to provide information about the workings of the programme to the wider partnership; and
- to provide clear guidance and information about the workings of the programme to administrators.

Possible activities

Seminars and workshops, guidance and publicity materials and wider publicity materials; targeted initiatives to raise the profile of the programme among different elements of the partnership. These activities relate to those eligible under Rule 11.3 of the Commission Regulation relating to eligible expenditure on Technical Assistance.

Final Beneficiaries

These will include national public sector bodies, local authorities and the voluntary sector and social partners.

7: IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

General

In accordance with the requirements of Art. 19.3 (d) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 of 21 June 1999, this chapter sets out the implementation provisions for the **Wrexham URBAN II** Community Initiative Programme.

These have been developed taking into account the requirements of the Council Regulation referred to above and of those of the enabling Commission regulations on the euro, information and publicity, eligibility of expenditure and financial corrections, which are in the process of being formally adopted⁶.

These programmes will be subject to any regulations adopted under Article 53(2).

The Programme Complement

Within three months of the Commission decision approving this Community Initiative Programme, the UK government will send the programme complement to the Commission as a single document.

As defined in Art. 9(m), the programme complement is the document implementing the programme strategy and priorities and containing detailed elements at measure level. It is drawn up by the National Assembly for Wales (as defined in Section 2.2.) after the agreement of the Monitoring Committee (as defined in Section 3.2.) and contains the information requested by Art. 18.3. These are the following:

- Measures implementing the corresponding priorities;
- Ex-ante evaluation, in accordance with Art 41.3, of quantified measures where they lend themselves to quantification in order to demonstrate consistency with the aims of the corresponding priorities, quantifying their specific targets where the priorities lend themselves thereto and subsequently verifying the relevance of the selection criteria, which have to be approved within six months of the Commission's decision;
- Relevant monitoring indicators in accordance with Article 36.;
- Definition of the types of final beneficiary of measures;
- The financing plan at measure level. The financing plan will be accompanied by a description of the arrangements for providing the co-financing for measures taking account of the UK institutional, legal and financial systems;
- Measures intended to publicise the CIP and in particular the communication plan required by the enabling Commission Regulation on information and publicity;
- Description of arrangements agreed between the Commission and the UK for the computerised exchange, where possible, of the data required to fulfil the management, monitoring and evaluation requirements of the regulation.
- The programme complement is sent to the Commission for information.

⁶ All articles quoted in the text are those of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/99 of 21 June 1999, except where otherwise stated. In terms of legal basis, this text does not substitute the above regulation..

- The presentation to the Commission of the programme complement containing the required information is one of the conditions subject to which interim payments will be made by the Commission.

Management

General

This section deals with the arrangements for managing the CIP and details the role of the different institutional and financial partners of the National Assembly for Wales involved in the management and implementation of the CIP.

The Managing Authority

The Managing Authority in accordance with Article 34 is responsible for the efficiency and correctness of management and implementation.

The Managing Authority for the **Wrexham URBAN II** programme will be the National Assembly for Wales. The address is Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ. The National Assembly for Wales takes the general policy lead in the co-ordination of the Welsh Objective 1 and 2 Structural Fund programmes and, in particular, in European Regional Development Fund matters.

The National Assembly for Wales will delegate the day-to-day administration of the **Wrexham URBAN II** programme to the Welsh European Funding Office at Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ under Article 34.

Paying authority

According to Art. 9(o), the Paying Authority is responsible for drawing up and submitting certified payment applications and receiving payments from the Commission.

For the **Wrexham URBAN II** programme, the Paying Authority will be the National Assembly for Wales.

Delegation of powers

The Paying Authority for ERDF will delegate these functions to the Welsh European Funding Office.

Management of the programme

General

The involvement of the partnership in the definition of the programme will extend to programme implementation.

Secretariat

The National Assembly for Wales shall be assisted by a Secretariat. The Secretariat for the programme will be provided by Welsh European Funding Office and will be resourced by civil servants and may include secondees from the partnership. The Secretariat will be located in Colwyn Bay.

Tasks and responsibilities of the Secretariat

The detail of its tasks and responsibilities for the day to day administration of the programme will be agreed at the first programme Monitoring Committee meeting. However, key secretarial responsibilities will include:

- Assisting the National Assembly for Wales in ensuring the efficient and correct management and implementation of the programme;

- Drawing up a work programme to present to the first programme Monitoring Committee for consideration;
 - Advising on the regulations and on drawing up applications;
 - Drafting guidance on implementation;
 - Receiving applications, other than any which go through an Action plan approach;
 - Assessing applications, other than any which are the responsibility of an action plan partnership;
 - Contributing towards publicity material;
 - Drawing up framework and co-ordinating work on drafting annual reports;
 - Gathering financial and monitoring information.
- And in support of the Programme Monitoring Committee:-
- Preparing and circulating invitations, agendas and papers;
 - Drafting the minutes of meetings.

The use of technical Assistance for resourcing of the secretariat is described in the Technical Assistance measures.

Management Arrangements

General

The Welsh European Funding Office, on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales, seeks the advice of the Programme Monitoring Committee on what sort of management arrangements should be used to assist the National Assembly for Wales in managing and implementing the programme. The Welsh European Funding Office will also consult the Programme Monitoring Committee on changes to those arrangements which become necessary during the course of the programme.

It is the Welsh European Funding Office, on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales, which will agree the management arrangements for the programme taking into account the advice of the Programme Monitoring Committee. The Welsh European Funding Office will ensure that such arrangements are recorded. The Welsh European Funding Office (acting on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales), remains responsible at all times for the management of the programme.

In managing the programmes, the National Assembly for Wales, in consultation with the Programme Monitoring Committee, will seek inter alia to ensure the following, putting in place, monitoring, and adapting arrangements as necessary to achieve:

- The effective delivery of priorities and measures, and their outputs and targets
- Encouragement to and support for the development of projects, particularly amongst those who have little experience of obtaining assistance from the Structural Funds. Capacity building where necessary
- The effective implementation of cross-cutting themes
- Conversion of the strategic focus into good quality projects
- Effective, fair and timely appraisal of project proposals
- The effective dissemination of good practice.

Details of the management arrangements in place at any one time will be held by the programme secretariat and be available on request.

In respect of management arrangements, the Programme Monitoring Committee (whose composition and duties are detailed in section 3.2.1) also:

- advises the Welsh European Funding Office on whether any part of the programme should be delivered through Action Plans (see below);
- advises the Welsh European Funding Office on whether there is any need for any working groups (see below).

To encourage the full participation of partnerships in the decision making process for the programme, the National Assembly for Wales, in consultation with the Programme Monitoring Committee will set up project working groups to consider and appraise projects (except those falling within the delegation to Accountable Bodies). The approval of projects by the Welsh European Funding Office shall take full account of the recommendations of the working group./ Offer letters will be sent out by the Welsh European Funding Office on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales (with the exception of Actions Plans).

The National Assembly for Wales, in consultation with the Programme Monitoring Committee may decide to establish other working groups. The membership and remit of these groups will be proposed by the Programme Monitoring Committee. They report through the Programme Monitoring Committee to the Welsh European Funding Office. They may operate on a limited or long term basis.

Working groups may for example be set up on the basis of priority, measure, theme, geographical area, particular expertise or cross cutting issues (such as publicity or evaluation). The membership of the groups will depend on the remit of the working group. Working groups may also report to the Programme Monitoring Committee on matters such as best practice and progress. They may carry out other functions agreed by the Programme Monitoring Committee and by the Welsh European Funding Office

Two forms of delivery mechanisms are envisaged: 1) project selection organised through competitive bidding rounds and 2) Action Plans. If any further delivery mechanisms are considered necessary, the PMC will advise the Welsh European Funding Office, which on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales will take the decision.

Project selection

The programme will be implemented through the support of operations as defined in Art 9(m). Partners proposing to submit projects for appraisal will be encouraged, where appropriate, to group these as a coherent and integrated response to an identified need or opportunity as defined in the Community Initiative Programme.

Normally, individual applications for support from the programme, will be sent to the Secretariat in response to the publication of a call for applications on either a priority, thematic or rolling basis. Applicants submit their applications to the Welsh European Funding Office by the announced date, detailing the project proposed and it's contribution to the programme objectives.

The Secretariat on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales, appraises the application against project selection criteria agreed by the Programme Monitoring Committee. Those which meet an agreed standard, are then referred to a selection working group for qualitative analysis. Where any member of the group has an interest in the project being assessed, this must be declared and they will normally take no further part in the proceedings that relate to that project. If they do so, this fact should be recorded, along with the outcome of the decision reached on that project.

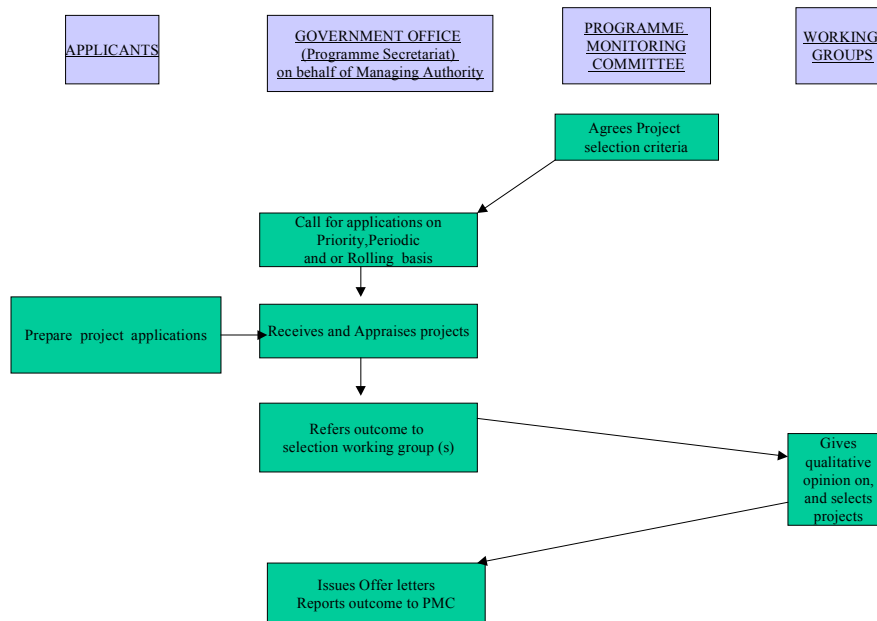
The Working Group then gives it's opinion on which of the projects presented to it should receive support.

The Welsh European Funding Office, on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales, issues grant offer letters accordingly. This should specify the outputs and financial performance expected of the project.

Project applicants must keep full records of their activities, expenditure and outputs in a form agreed with the Welsh European Funding Office, to provide the audit trails required under Regulation 2064/97. They must also report the progress of their projects when presenting grant claims to the Welsh European Funding Office.

The Welsh European Funding Office must monitor the progress of projects regularly and record on a computer system, financial and statistical information on the projects and carry out physical checks on project expenditure as well as on progress towards the achievement of targets as agreed in the offer letter.

The arrangements are illustrated in the following flow chart:



Action Plans

There is an option to implement the whole or part of the programme through 'Action Plans'. Action Plans are drawn up by partnerships who will be representative of all those with a key interest in the proposed activities to be carried out in the Action Plan. They will reflect the content of the Action Plan proposal and the characteristics of the area or socio-economic group at which it is aimed. The National Assembly for Wales will ensure that the partnerships are genuine, with the active involvement of the relevant players and interests for the duration of the Action Plan.

Action Plans will bring together a number of related projects so as to maximise co-ordination between structural funds and domestic regeneration and economic development. They may target small geographical areas to provide focussed support for areas in need or to cover larger geographical areas; or to target specific themes such as business support or tourism. They can combine both geographical and thematic objectives.

Responsibility for delivering an Action Plan will be delegated to an 'Accountable Body' nominated by the partnership and agreed by the National Assembly for Wales. The Accountable Body is responsible to the National Assembly for Wales for meeting all the obligations which arise from the conditions laid in the approval of the Action Plan. This is without prejudice to the final responsibility of the National Assembly for Wales. Where Action Plans are to be used to help deliver the programme the following minimum provisions will apply:

- In deciding whether priorities can be implemented in whole or in part through an Action Plan and in considering individual applications for Action Plans the National Assembly for Wales will take into account the nature of the priorities concerned. An Action Plan may contribute to the implementation of one or more priorities. The National Assembly for Wales will ensure that the Action Plans conform with the overall strategy, including the geographic and thematic targeting of the approved programme.

- The National Assembly for Wales will establish a financial limit (a maximum amount of structural funds grant applied for) above which it will have responsibility for project appraisal and approval. Responsibility for the appraisal and approval of projects below this 'delegation limit' will be delegated to the Action Plan Accountable Body.
- In approving the appointment of an Accountable Body the National Assembly for Wales must ensure that the Accountable Body is solvent and has proven competence and experience in administration and financial management and capacity to fulfil the tasks and in particular has effective systems of management in place to appraise and approve projects (below their agreed delegation limit) and to monitor their subsequent performance.
- The National Assembly for Wales will also ensure that the Accountable Body has sound financial systems in place which provide for the proper disbursement of structural funds and compliance with all relevant regulations and conditions. In particular it will be for the National Assembly for Wales to ensure the Accountable Body can maintain a sufficient audit trail in line with Annex I of Regulation 2064/97 and can provide for a proper separation of the functions of grant claims checking, authorisation and payment.
- Where the final beneficiary is also the Accountable Body under the action plan, there must be a functional separation between those responsible for the project implementation and those responsible for fulfilling the tasks and obligations delegated under the Action Plan.
- In approving an application for an Action Plan the National Assembly for Wales must set out clearly all the tasks and responsibilities of the Accountable Body and specify all the targets to be achieved by the Action Plan. The approval process must include a formal, legally binding declaration of acceptance of these terms by the Accountable Body.

To safeguard against conflicts of interest in handling project appraisal and approval the Accountable Body must show that it has formal written procedures for projects below the delegation limit which include the following:

- Project appraisal is carried out by a panel made up of representatives of the Action Plan partnership.
- As a general rule, members of the appraising panel must be independent of and have no interest in the project being appraised.
- Arrangements to ensure that those who develop a project or will be responsible for its implementation should not normally be involved in its appraisal.
- The approval of projects will be carried out by the appraisal panel using criteria determined by the PMC and a project appraisal checklist.
- Clear instructions that in the event members of the appraisal panel do find that they have an interest in a project that they declare that interest and normally take no further part in the proceedings that relate to that project. If they do, this fact should be recorded, along with the outcome of the decision reached on the project.

Three groups are responsible for monitoring the progress of Action Plans; project applicants; the Action Plan Accountable Body and the National Assembly for Wales. The following safeguards must be in place to ensure Action Plan monitoring is effective:

Project Applicants;

- Must keep full records of their activities, expenditure and outputs in a form agreed with the Action Plan Accountable Body;
- Must report the progress of their projects to the Accountable Body accurately and on time.

Action Plan Accountable Body;

- Must monitor the progress of projects regularly and report in accordance with the requirements of the National Assembly for Wales;
- Must maintain records of each project within the Action Plan to provide an audit trail to comply with regulation 2064/97 (Annex I).
- Must carry out physical checks on project expenditure.
National Assembly for Wales (Programme Secretariat)
- Specify the outputs and financial performance expected of the Action Plan in its letter of approval.
- Carry out the controls required in Regulation 2064/97 and include physical checks of a sample of Action Plan projects.
- Carry out checks on the implementation of the management and financial control systems (including the operation of the appraisal and approval mechanisms).
- Require Accountable Bodies to provide annual, externally audited statements of grant expenditure.

Management of the operations

General

This section deals with management at the level of the operation, defined in accordance with Art 9 (k) as any project or action carried out by the final beneficiaries of assistance.

Eligibility

In accordance with Art. 30, expenditure in respect of operations is eligible for a contribution from the Structural Funds only if these operations form part of the programme.

The starting date for the eligibility of expenditure for the **Wrexham URBAN II** Programme is (date passes EC's receiveability test). Expenditure may not be considered eligible for a contribution from the Funds if it has actually been paid by the beneficiary before this date.

The final date for the eligibility of expenditures relates to payments made by the final beneficiaries. For this programme, the final date for eligibility, as laid down in the decision is 31 December 2008. This date is extended to 30 April 2009 for expenditure incurred by bodies granting aid in the case of aid schemes. The final date for eligibility of expenditure may be extended by the Commission at the duly justified request of the United Kingdom. For transitional areas these dates will be one year earlier.

The relevant national rules shall apply to eligible expenditure except where, as necessary, the Commission lays down common rules on the eligibility of expenditure. Common rules of eligibility are contained in the Commission Regulation (EC) No 1685/2000, laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/99 as regards eligibility of expenditure of operations co-financed by the Structural Funds.

The United Kingdom will ensure that an operation retains the contribution from the Funds only if that operation does not, within five years of the date of the decision on the contribution of the Funds, undergo a substantial modification:

- a) affecting its nature or its implementation conditions or giving to a firm or a public body an undue advantage; and
- b) resulting either from a change in the nature of ownership in an item of infrastructure or a cessation or change of location in a productive activity.

The United Kingdom will inform the Commission of any such modification. Where such a modification occurs, provisions in terms of financial corrections, as defined in Section 7, will apply.

Eligibility criteria

Before operations can be considered for funding under the Programme they must:

- As a general rule, operations must be located in the programme eligible area. According to Rule 12 of the Commission regulation on the eligibility of expenditure, provided certain conditions are satisfied, the National Assembly for Wales may accept for co-financing operations located outside in those cases where the programme area will benefit wholly or partly from them.
- Contribute to one or more of the Programme objectives.
- Correspond to one or more of the activities defined in the programming complement.
- Quantify outputs and provide details of clear and attainable targets.
- Demonstrate an additional and sustainable benefit to the socio-economic development of the area.
- Be eligible for Structural Funds assistance.
- Have a sound funding package in place, identifying the recipient of the funds and the sources of match funding.
- Not duplicate existing activity.
- Not substitute for existing or planned expenditure.

Selection

Eligible operations will be processed, with a view to select those for which assistance will be granted.

Selection Criteria

The Monitoring Committee will consider and approve the criteria for selecting the operations financed under each measure within six months of approval of the CIP.. Priority considerations which will help to measure the desirability of the operation will include:

- Job creation, or attainment of other specified relevant outputs Value for money
- Leverage of extra investment, especially from the private sector
- The strategic nature of the scheme in its regional context
- Synergy with other schemes and measures, including linkage between different Structural Funds schemes
- Demonstration of a positive environmental impact where possible or minimisation of any negative impacts.

Compliance with Community policies

Introduction

According to Art. 12, operations financed by the Structural Funds must be in conformity with the provisions of the Treaty, with the instruments adopted under it and with Community policies and actions, including the rules on competition, on the award of public contracts, on environmental protection and improvements and on the elimination of inequalities and the promotion of equality between men and women.

This compliance is verified in the appraisal of the operations as well as during their implementation through monitoring..

Competition policy

General

If the Community is to part-finance State aid schemes, the Commission must approve such aid in accordance with Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty. Under Article 88 (3), Member States must notify the Commission of any measure granting, altering or extending State aids to firms.

Treatment of aid schemes in the CIP

In accordance with Articles 9(m), 18.2(b) and 19.3(b) the Community Initiative Programme Document contains a summary description of the measures planned to implement the priorities, including the information needed to check compliance with *state aid* pursuant to Article 87 of the Treaty.

In order to fulfil the requirements of the above regulation, the UK authorities have provided a list of *state aids* by measure, according to the format requested by the Commission. The list of state aids will be included in an annex to the final version of this programme.

As a general rule, the list referred to above covers all *state aids* already notified and approved by the Commission and which shall be co-financed by the various measures of the programmes.

Besides *state aid* already notified and approved, state aids or ad hoc aid granted under the measures will be either compatible with the de minimis rule or will be applied, when adopted, under an exemption regulation in accordance with Council Regulation No 994/98 of 07.05.1998 (O.J.E.C. L 142 of 14.05.1998).

As regards new aid schemes and new notifiable ad hoc grants not foreseen in the initial decision approving the CIP, the following provisions shall apply:

- The UK will notify to the Commission (DG Competition) for approval any new aid schemes and ad hoc grants;
- Once the new aid schemes or ad hoc grants have been approved, and following the approval by the Programme Monitoring Committee of the insertion of these additional approved aid schemes and ad hoc grants in the CIP, the UK will submit a revised list of state aid schemes and ad hoc grants to the Commission (DG Regional Policy);
- In accordance with Art 30 of the General Regulation, the starting date for eligibility of expenditure will be the date on which the UK submits to the Commission the request to modify the assistance by a formal Commission decision.

The above provisions deal with *state aids* co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

De minimis

Aid which complies with the conditions as defined in the Commission Communication 96/C68/06 on "de minimis" rules need not be notified and does not require prior approval. The ceiling for aid covered by the "de minimis" rule is €100,000 over a three-year period beginning when the first "de minimis" aid is granted. The method of calculating the cash grant equivalent of aid received in forms other than grant is explained in the letter sent to Member States on 23 March 1993 by the Commission. The ceiling applies to the total of all public assistance considered to be "de minimis" aid and will not affect the possibility of the recipient obtaining other aid under schemes approved by the Commission. This ceiling applies to all kinds, irrespective of the form it takes or the objective pursued, with the exception of export aid, which is excluded from the benefit of the "de minimis" rule. The public assistance which is allowed up to the €100,000 ceiling comprises all aid granted by the national, regional or local authorities, regardless whether the resources are provided from domestic sources or are part-financed by the European Union. The National Assembly for Wales must establish an adequate machinery to ensure that for the same recipient of aid under separate measures, all of which are covered by the "de minimis" rule, the total amount of aid does not exceed €100,000 over a period of three years. The de minimis rule does not apply to State aid relating to agricultural products listed in Annex I of the EC treaty.

Block exemptions

By Council Regulation No 994/98 of 7 May 1998, the Commission has been enabled for the first time to adopt regulations declaring certain categories of State Aid compatible with the common market and exempting them from the notification requirements laid down in Art. 88(3) of the EC Treaty. At the same time, this regulation has provided a legal basis for the "de minimis" rule.

Guidelines and frameworks from the Commission have during recent years governed the categories covered by the future block exemption regulations. These will be abolished once the block exemption regulations will have been adopted.

Three draft block exemptions are being prepared. These are the following:

"De minimis" (see point 2.6.2.3. above).

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, as defined in Section 2.6.5.

Training Aid.

Until block exemptions on SMEs and training aid are adopted, notification will be required.

Specific sectors

Specific obligations as regards notification apply to aid granted in certain industrial sectors:

Steel

Coal

Shipbuilding and repair

Motor vehicle industry

Transport

Agriculture

Fisheries and Aquaculture

Employment Aid

In the field of employment aids the guidelines on aid to employment 95/C 334/04 which specify the scope of Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty and clarify the concept of State aid to employment and the notification obligations are applicable.

Regional Aid

As regards maximum aid intensity ceilings, the total amount of public aid, independently of its origin in State resources (central, regional, local authorities) Community funding or combination of both, should not exceed the aid intensity ceiling determined by the map of assisted areas for the UK. Structural Fund support to aid schemes can be granted in those areas approved in the Assisted Areas Map for the UK (2000-2006).

Large Investment Projects

As regards large investment projects, pursuant to Article 88(3) of the EC Treaty, any proposal to award regional investment aid within the scope of an approved scheme or ad hoc aid where either of the following criteria are met has to be notified to the Commission:

- the total project cost is at least €50 million (15 million in the case of projects carried out in the textile and clothing sector), and the cumulative aid intensity expressed as a percentage of the eligible costs is at least 50% of the regional aid ceiling for large companies in the area concerned and aid per job created or safeguarded amounts to at least €40,000 (€30,000 in the case of projects carried out in the textile and clothing sector);
- the total aid is at least €50 million.

Award of contracts

Implementation of measures part-financed by the Structural Funds must comply with Community requirements as set out in as set out in the EC Treaty (Art. 12, 28, 43 and 49) and in the Public Procurement Directives (Directives 92/50 - services, 93/36 public supplies, 93/37 - public works as modified by Directive 97/52 implementing the WTO agreement on public procurement within EC law; Directive 93/38 - public procurement contracts in the telecommunications, water, energy and transport sector as modified by Directive 98/4, implementing the WTO public procurement agreement.

In accordance with Art. 34.1 (g), notices sent for publications in the Official Journal of the European Communities will specify those projects in respect of which a contribution from the Structural Funds has been applied for or granted.

Protection of the environment

In the interests of proper programming of structural spending and, at a later stage, proper implementation of programmes, Member States must have fulfilled their obligations under the Community policies and schemes for protecting and improving the environment, in particular the "2000" network.

Where this is not yet the case, the Commission considers that Member States should submit their lists of sites to be

protected under Natura 2000, together with the related scientific information, as soon as possible.

The programming documents for these countries (CSFs, CIPs and OPs) must contain clear and irrevocable

commitments to guarantee consistency of their programmes with the protection of sites as provided for under

Natura 2000.

An explicit part of such a commitment should be to send in proposed lists under the "Habitats" Directive (Article 4(1)) together with the related scientific information within a stipulated time, which should be as short as possible. This list will be formally presented to the Commission by January 2001. It should be noted that this commitment relates solely to presentation by the Member State of lists at the right geographical level.

In line with its commitments and pending presentation of its list, the United Kingdom gives a formal guarantee that it will not allow sites protected under Natura 2000 to deteriorate during operations part-financed by the Structural Funds. It also commits itself to providing the Commission, when presenting the programming complement for this

programme, with information about the steps they have taken to prevent the deterioration of sites protected under Natura 2000.

The Commission will be formally notifying Member States concerned when it is about to take immediate and

appropriate action in the event of irregularities concerning the conditions of implementation, in accordance with the

General Regulation on the Structural Funds (Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999) or the Regulation on the Cohesion Fund

(Regulation (EC) No 1164/94), i.e. in this case specifically a failure to comply with the commitment to present lists of

protected sites.

Such appropriate action will include recourse by the Commission to Article 39(2) of the General Regulation on the

Structural Funds or Article D.2 in Annex II to the Cohesion Fund Regulation (as amended by Regulation (EC)

No 1265/1999) regarding the suspension of payments, except where the individual circumstances warrant otherwise

and consistent with the principle of proportionality.

As regards actual operations, it is important to note that the Commission will apply Article 12 of the General Regulation

on the Structural Funds or Article 8(1) of the Cohesion Fund Regulation on the compatibility of operations with the

provisions of the EC Treaty and with Community schemes and the policies.

Infringements of Community legislation will be acted upon under Article 226 of the EC Treaty. The fact that a Member

State has committed itself to submitting a list within a stated deadline will have no effect on current infringement

proceedings.

Finally, the Commission may introduce individual monitoring of measures taken or envisaged by Member States which

are likely to affect sites protected under Natura 2000. The Commission may in particular, in co-operation with the

Member State concerned, have recourse to Article 38(2) of the General Regulation on the Structural Funds or

Article 12 of the Cohesion Fund Regulation (as amended by Regulation (EC) No 1264/1999) concerning controls on

the ground. At meetings of the Monitoring Committee responsible for an assistance package, the Commission

representative will pay close attention to any measure or project likely to affect sites protected under Natura 2000 and

will make any necessary recommendations to the management authority concerned. The Commission will also

consider carefully all complaints that may be notified to it.

Polluter Pays Principle

The application of the Polluter Pays Principle will have regard to the Commission Technical Paper 1 on the same subject. In relation to the disposal of waste, waste

charges will apply in accordance with the polluter pays principle as set out in Art. 15 of the Waste Framework Directive 75/442/EEC).

Environmental Impact Assessment

All projects enjoying co-financing from the Structural Funds will be in compliance with Directive 85/337/EEC as amended by 97/11/EEC. As a result of this consideration, it should either be stated that they do not have any significant, negative environmental impact, or a description of a possible, negative impact as well as of the mitigating measures should be presented.

In accordance with Art. 26, applications for assistance concerning major projects as defined in Section 2.8 must include information allowing an evaluation to be made of the environmental impact and the implementation of the precautionary principle and the principles that preventive action should be taken, that environmental damage should as a priority be rectified at source and that the polluter should pay and compliance with the Community rules on the environment).

Waste

In relation to waste project Community funding may be used to finance waste infrastructure which is in conformity with up-to-date waste plans prepared for the regions and local authorities concerned in accordance with the requirements of these directives.

Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive

In proposing Community funded interventions in urban wastewater treatment, project promoters should make provision for the probability that additional water bodies will be designated as sensitive areas under Article 5 and Annex IIA of Directive 91/271/EEC on Urban waste Water Treatment.

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

The provisions of Commission Recommendation of 3 April 1996 (OJ L 107 of 30.04.1996) concerning the definition of an SME shall apply to the SMEs which benefit from Structural Fund assistance under this programme, without affecting the continuation of aid schemes approved by the Commission before entry into force of this recommendation.

For the purpose of this programme, SMEs are defined as enterprises which:

- Have fewer than 250 employees,
- Have either an annual turnover not exceeding €40 Million, or an annual balance-sheet not exceeding €27 million,
- Conform to the criterion of independence (as defined in paragraph 3 of OJ L 107 of 30.04.1996, page 8). Independent enterprises are those, which are not owned as to 25% or more of the capital or the voting rights by one enterprise, or jointly by several enterprises, falling outside the definition of an SME or a small enterprise, whichever may apply. This threshold may be exceeded in the following two cases:
 - If the enterprise is held by public investment corporations, venture capital companies or institutional investors, provided no control is exercised either individually or jointly;
 - If the capital is spread in such a way that it is not possible to determine by whom it is held and if the enterprise declares that it can legitimately presume that it is not owned as to 25% or more by one enterprise, or jointly by several enterprises, falling outside the definition of an SME or a small enterprise, whichever may apply.

Where it is necessary to distinguish between small and medium-sized enterprises, the "small enterprise" is defined as an enterprise which:

- Has fewer than 50 employees,
- Has either an annual turnover not exceeding €7 million, or an annual balance-sheet not exceeding €5 million,
- Conform to the criterion of independence as defined above.

Equal opportunities for men and women

Operations part-financed by the Structural Funds must comply with, and where appropriate contribute to, Community policy and legislation on equal opportunities for men and women. In particular, consideration should be given to opportunities concerning investments and training which facilitate the return to the labour market of people with children.

The appraisal of operations seeking co-financing from Structural Funds and which are not specifically oriented towards the improvements of equal opportunities, should include an assessment as regards their impact of equal opportunities. This should be taken into account for the purposes of modulating the grant rate in accordance with Art.29.

The National Assembly for Wales will produce disaggregated statistics by gender on the basis of available data. It will also ensure that evaluations measure the extent to which the principle of promoting equal opportunities has been taken into account in the implementation of this programme, with particular regard to the involvement of women in general measures and to the implementation, the relevance and the outcome of such measures. It intends to develop, where appropriate, adequate evaluation procedures, tools and indicators to this end. Technical assistance will be made available to support the mainstreaming of equal opportunities between men and women.

The annual and final implementation reports referred to in Section 2.10.1 will contain a specific chapter describing the actions taken in the framework of the programme in order to ensure the implementation of equal opportunities objectives of the Programme, and to state to which extent the targets set out in the Programme have been met.

Information and publicity

Information and publicity measures to be carried out by the Member States concerning assistance from the Structural Funds shall conform to the provisions of Art. 46 and the enabling Commission Regulation No. 1159/2000 on information and publicity, which is in the process of being adopted.

The enabling Commission Regulation puts forward a common methodology and approach for persons responsible for carrying out information and publicity measures which takes account of the specific situation of each Member State. The National Assembly for Wales responsible for implementing the programme will be responsible for publicity on the spot. Publicity will be carried out in co-operation with the European Commission, which will be informed of measures taken for this purpose.

The information and publicity measures put in place will be presented in a structured form ("communication plan"), clearly setting out the aims and target groups, the content and strategy of the measures and an indicative budget. The communication plan will be set out in the programming complement in accordance with Art. 18.3(d).

The amounts set aside for information and publicity are specified in the Technical Assistance measure.

The Welsh European Funding Office will designate one or more persons to be responsible for information and publicity and will inform the Commission of those designated.

Major projects

As part of the programme, the Structural Funds may finance expenditure in respect of major projects, as defined in Article 25, i.e. those:

- which comprise an economically indivisible series of works fulfilling a precise technical function and which have clearly identified aims, and
- whose total cost taken into account in determining the contribution of the Funds exceeds €50 million.

Where the National Assembly for Wales envisages the Funds' contributing to a major project, it shall inform the Commission in advance and provide the information necessary for the Commission's appraisal of the project as set out in Art. 26. To this end a standard application form to assist the National Assembly for Wales in the submission of the necessary information for major projects has been prepared by the Commission.

The National Assembly for Wales will ensure that a cost-benefit analysis, referred to in Art. 26, will be drawn up by an organisation truly independent of the project applicant. The cost may be supported by technical assistance from the programme, with co-financing provided either by the National Assembly for Wales or the project applicant at the request of the National Assembly for Wales.

The Commission will appraise major projects, consulting the European Investment Bank where necessary, in the light of the following factors:

- the type of investment planned and, where applicable, the revenue expected;
- the results of the cost-benefit analysis;
- the results of the evaluation of the impact on the environment;
- consistency with the priorities of the programme;
- compliance with other community policies;
- the expected economic and social benefits particularly in terms of employment, having regard to the financial resources deployed;
- the co-ordination of the financial instruments and the combination of grants and loans;

Within two months of receipt of the information referred to above (or three months where consultation of the EIB proves necessary), the Commission shall decide to confirm or amend the level of Community assistance to the project. If it considers that the project appears not to justify either part or all of the contribution from the Structural Funds, it may decide to withhold part or all of that contribution, stating the reasons for so doing.

Separate notification pursuant to Art. 88 of the EC Treaty is required for large investment projects meeting the criteria of the multisectoral framework on regional aid for large investment projects as indicated in Section 2.6.2.7.

Implementation Reports

Annual report

In accordance with art. 37, the National Assembly for Wales submits to the Commission within six months of the end of each full calendar year of implementation an annual implementation report. The first report will be due by 30 June 2002.

The report must be examined and approved by the Monitoring Committee before it is sent to the Commission.

Once the Commission has received the report, it shall indicate within a period of two months if the report is considered unsatisfactory, giving its reasons; otherwise, the report shall be deemed to be accepted.

The annual report shall include the following information:

- Any change in general conditions which is of relevance to the implementation of the programme, in particular the main socio-economic trends, changes in national, regional or sectoral policies or in the frame of reference (i.e. the document which sets the context for assistance concerning employment and human resource development throughout the UK territory, and which identifies the relationship with the priorities set out in the National Action Plan for Employment), and, where applicable, their implications for the mutual consistency of assistance from the different Funds and consistency between Fund assistance and that from other financial instruments;
- The progress in implementation of priorities and measures for each of the Funds in relation to their specific targets, with a quantification, wherever and whenever they lend themselves to quantification, of the physical indicators and indicators of results and of impact referred to in Article 36 at the appropriate level (priority or measure);

- The financial implementation of the programme summarising for each measure the total expenditure actually paid out by the paying authority and a record of the total payments received from the Commission and quantifying the financial indicators referred to in Article 36.2.c.
- The steps taken by the National Assembly for Wales and the Monitoring Committee to ensure the quality and effectiveness of implementation, in particular:

Monitoring, financial control and evaluation measures, including data collection arrangements;

A summary of any significant problems encountered in managing the programme and any measures taken, including action on recommendations for adjustments made following the review between the Commission and the Member State or requests for corrective measures;

The use made of Technical Assistance;

The measures taken to ensure publicity for the programme.

The steps taken to ensure compatibility with Community policies and to ensure co-ordination of all the Community Structural Assistance, having regard to the frame of reference and rural development and fishery structures

A separate section, where appropriate, on the progress and financing of major projects.

Final report

A final report will be submitted to the Commission at the latest six months after the final date of eligibility of expenditure.

The same content and procedure (submission to the Commission by the National Assembly for Wales after examination and approval by the Monitoring Committee) for annual reports apply to the final report.

In the case of a final report, the Commission will indicate if the report is considered acceptable within a period of five months from receipt of the report.

Annual implementation review

In accordance with Art. 34.2, every year, when the annual implementation report is submitted, the Commission and the National Assembly for Wales shall review the main outcomes of the previous year, in accordance with the following arrangements agreed between the Commission and the UK within six months of the approval of the programme:

After this review, the Commission may make comments to the UK Government and the National Assembly for Wales. The UK shall inform the Commission of the action taken on these comments. Where in duly substantiated cases the Commission considers that the measures taken are inadequate, it may make recommendations to the UK Government and the National Assembly for Wales for adjustments aimed at improving the effectiveness of the monitoring or management arrangements for the programme, together with the reasons for any such recommendations. If it receives any such recommendations, the National Assembly for Wales shall subsequently demonstrate the steps taken to improve the monitoring or management arrangements or it shall explain why such steps have not been taken.

According to Art.32.3, one of the conditions, subject to which interim payments shall be made by the Commission, is acting upon the Commission recommendations within the specified time period (or the communication by the United Kingdom of the reasons why no measures have been taken). This applies where those recommendations are intended to

remedy serious shortcomings in the monitoring or management system, which undermine proper financial management of the programme.

Complementarity with other programmes supported by the EC

This text includes measures to be taken to avoid duplication or overlap between URBAN II and other programmes.

Objective 3

This CIP identifies priorities for support and explains the links between URBAN II, Objective 2 and Objective 3 ESF support.

The CIP seeks to ensure that URBAN II provides coherent and strategic support linked to the overall needs of the region,

avoiding overlap and duplication of funding with Objectives 2 and 3. The Managing Authorities for the Objective 2 and

Objective 3 programmes have an important role in ensuring this. The Programme Monitoring Committee and the regional

Objective 3 committees will agree the necessary mechanisms and links. There will be a series of measures to avoid overlap.

MONITORING

General

Monitoring will be carried out by the National Assembly for Wales assisted by the Programme Monitoring Committee. This monitoring will ensure the quality and effectiveness of implementation through assessment of progress towards achievement of the financial, physical and impact indicators defined in the CIP. It will involve the organisation and co-ordination of the data relating to the financial, physical and impact indicators and those concerning qualitative aspects of implementation.

The Programme Monitoring Committee

General provisions

In accordance with Art. 35, the programme will be supervised by a programme Monitoring Committee which will be set up no more than three months after the programme has been approved.

Composition

The membership of the Monitoring Committee will include the principal regional partners including the Government, the private sector, the voluntary sector, and economic and social partners, members of local authorities, and those representing the environment and equal opportunities, the latter particularly taking account of the need to promote equality between men and women.

A balanced participation of men and women will be a consideration in representation on this Committee.

The Commission and, where appropriate, the EIB shall participate in an advisory capacity.

The Monitoring Committee will be chaired by a representative of the National Assembly for Wales.

Duties of the Monitoring Committee

The Programme Monitoring Committee will be chaired by the Government Office Regional Director or his/her nominee. The Committee will draw up its own rules of procedure and agree them with the Welsh European Funding Office secretariat acting on behalf of the Management Authority. The Committees duties are defined in Article 35 and 36.

At its first meeting the Committee shall approve detailed provision for the proper and efficient discharge of the duties assigned to it, including, the frequency of its meetings. These provisions shall include particularly:

The procedures and arrangements for selecting individual projects and actions, including the selection methodology and the operational selection criteria:

The arrangements for informing it about the fate of individual projects submitted for Community assistance;

Arrangements to review progress towards achieving the specific objectives of the programme.

The Programme Monitoring Committee shall satisfy itself as to the effectiveness and the quality of the implementation of the CIP. To this end:

- It shall confirm or adjust the programme complement, including the physical and financial indicators to be used to monitor the assistance. Its approval must be obtained before any further adjustments are made and approved by the PMC;
- Within six months of approval of the CIP, it shall consider and approve the criteria for selecting the operations financed under each measure;
- It shall periodically review progress made towards achieving the specific objective of the programme;
- It shall examine the results of implementation, particularly the achievement of the targets set for the different measures and the mid-term evaluation referred to in section 4.2;
- It shall consider and approve the annual and final implementation reports before they are sent to the Commission;
- It shall consider and approve any proposals to amend the contents of the approved CIP;
- It may propose to the National Assembly for Wales any adjustments or review of the programme and programme complement in order to help attain the CIP objectives, or to improve the management of the programme, including financial management.

Computer systems will be set up to gather reliable financial and statistical information on implementation. They will keep records and provide common information for all projects.

Monitoring indicators

According to Art. 36, the National Assembly for Wales and the Monitoring Committee will carry out the monitoring by reference to the physical and financial indicators specified in the CIP and in the programme complement. These are developed taking into account the indicative methodology and the list of examples of indicators published by the Commission in its Working Paper 3 "Indicators for monitoring and evaluation: an indicative methodology" sent to the UK on 29 July 1999.

- The indicators relate to the specific character of the programme, its objectives and the socio-economic, structural and environmental situation of the UK and its regions as appropriate. These indicators include those used for allocating the performance reserve and referred to under Section 5.

- The indicators will show the specific targets, quantified where they lend themselves to quantification, for the measures and priorities and their mutual consistency
- The stage reached in the programme in terms of physical implementation, results and, as soon as practicable, its impact at the appropriate level (priority or measure)

The progress of the financing plan

Where the nature of the programme permits, the statistics will be broken down by sex and by the size of the recipient undertakings.

Categorisation of fields of intervention

In accordance with Art. 36, the Commission has drawn up a proposed list of categories of fields of intervention of the Structural Funds in order to assist with the tasks relating to the reporting on the activities of the Structural Funds.

The list will also facilitate follow-up and monitoring and provide solid foundations on which to base the evaluations. The programme complement will show the link between each measure in the programme and the corresponding category in the list. The annual implementation reports should also show the link.

Annual Monitoring Business Plan

As well as the review mechanism to be operated under Article 37, it is agreed that there will be supplementary arrangements made to enable the Programme Monitoring Committee to satisfy itself that projects are coming forward as quickly as anticipated; and if they are actually producing the projected outputs.

The supplementary review will therefore be based upon estimates of commitment and payment each year against each measure, and subsequent reporting of actual outturn in terms of commitments, payments and outputs against targets.

At its first meeting, the Programmes Monitoring Committee will receive a report from the secretariat which will set out their best estimate of anticipated operations for the calendar year 2001. The report will include a list of the expected and identified operations, where these are possible to be identified, and the expected outputs to be achieved by the end of the calendar year. This will be viewed as the first step toward attaining the goals set out in the programme document.

Within three months of the end of 2001, the Programme Monitoring Committee will receive and consider a report on actual progress during the first period of implementation. This will be accompanied by a list of the estimated operations/targets for the year 2002.

The process will be repeated at the end of each calendar year of the programme's implementation.

In this way, the programme partnership will be able to assess the extent to which operations coming forward to the programme as expected, and if they are on course to achieve the programme objectives.

Evaluation

General provisions

In order to gauge its effectiveness, Community Structural Assistance will be subject of an ex-ante, mid-term and ex-post evaluation.

Mid-term evaluation

In accordance with Article 42, the mid-term evaluation will be carried out under responsibility of the National Assembly for Wales in co-operation with the Commission and the UK government.

This mid-term evaluation will examine, in the light of the ex-ante evaluation, the initial results of the programme.

It will be carried out by an independent assessor, be submitted to the Programme Monitoring Committee and sent to the Commission no later than 31 December 2003, with a view to re-examining the programme and if necessary adapt it at the initiative of the UK or the Commission. The Commission will examine the relevance and quality of the evaluation on the basis of criteria established beforehand by the Commission and the UK in partnership, with a view to review the assistance and allocate the performance reserve.

Independent assessors will be required to observe confidentiality when dealing with the Monitoring Committee's data to which they have access.

Ex-post evaluation

In accordance with Art. 43, the ex-post evaluation will be the responsibility of the European Commission, in collaboration with the UK and the National Assembly for Wales. It will cover the utilisation of resources and the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme and its impact and it will draw conclusions regarding policy on economic and social cohesion. It will cover the factors contributing to the success or failure of implementation and the achievements and results, including their sustainability.

It will be carried out by independent assessors and be completed not later than three years after the end of the programming period.

Financial Implementation

Financial contributions by the Funds

In accordance with Article 28(1), any operation within the programme may benefit from a contribution from a single Structural Fund only. An operation may not be financed simultaneously by more than one programme (e.g. Objective 1, 2, 3) or Community Initiative. An operation financed by a Fund under Objective 1, 2, 3 or a Community initiative may not be simultaneously financed under the EAGGF Guarantee Section.

In accordance with Article 28(2), the contribution of the Funds must be consistent with the financial plan laid down in the decision approving the CIP.

In accordance with Article 28(2), the contribution of the Funds shall principally take the form of non-repayable direct assistance (hereafter referred to as 'direct assistance'), as well as other forms, such as repayable assistance, an interest-rate subsidy, a guarantee, an equity holding, a venture capital holding or another form of finance.

Assistance repaid to the National Assembly for Wales shall be reallocated to the same purpose.

Differentiation of rates of contribution

In accordance with Article 29, the contribution of the Funds shall be subject to the following ceilings:

- a maximum of 50% of the total eligible cost, and at least 25% of the eligible public expenditure
- in the case of investments in infrastructure generating substantial net revenue, 25% of the total eligible cost.
- in the case of investments in firms, 15% of the total eligible cost. This rate may be increased, in the case of investments in small and medium-sized undertakings for forms of finance other than direct assistance, provided that this increase does not exceed 10% of the total eligible cost.

In the case of investments in firms, the contribution of the Funds shall comply with the ceilings on the rate of aid and on combinations of aid set in the field of State aids.

Community budget commitments

General

In accordance with Article 31(1) and 31(2), Community budget commitments are made on the basis of the decision approving the CIP. The first commitment is made when the Commission adopts this decision and subsequent commitments will be effected as a general rule by 30 April each year.

Decommitments

In accordance with Article 31(3), the Commission will automatically decommit on a Fund basis any part of a commitment (other than any part which has been settled by the payment on account) for which it has not received an acceptable payment application by the end of the second year following the year of commitment. The contribution from that Fund will be reduced by that amount.

In other terms, at the end of 2002 the Commission will decommit (and automatically reduce on a Fund basis the amount of contribution of the Funds allocated to the programme) any part of the first commitment, less the 7% payment on account, for which an acceptable payment claim has not been received. Similarly, at the end of 2003, the Commission will decommit any part of the second year commitment, less any payment on account if this is split over two years, for which it has not received an acceptable payment application. For subsequent years there can be no payment on account, and therefore the Commission will decommit any part of a commitment which has not been the subject of an acceptable payment claim. Finally the Commission will decommit any part of the total commitment to the programme for which an acceptable payment application has not been received by the deadline for the transmission of the final report referred to in section 2.11.2 (end of June 2009).

The period for automatic decommitment shall cease to run for that part of the commitment corresponding to operations which, at the specified date of decommitment, are the subject of a judicial procedure, or an administrative appeal having suspensory effects, subject to the Commission receiving prior information giving reasons from the UK government and to information being issued by the Commission.

In any case, the Commission shall in good time inform the UK government and the paying authority whenever there is a risk of application of a automatic decommitment as referred to above.

Payments

a. Payments at Community level

Following provisions of Article 32, payments by the Commission of the contribution from the Funds shall be made, in accordance with the corresponding budget commitments, to the paying authority (defined in section 2.3.).

Payment may take the form of: payments on account; interim payments; payments of the final balance.

1. payments on account

In accordance with Article 32(2), the Commission will pay to the paying authority 7% of the total contribution from the Funds to the present programme. In principle, the payment on account may be subdivided over two budget years at most, depending on the availability of budget funds.

In accordance with Article 32(2), all or part of the payment on account depending on progress towards implementation of the programme will be repaid to the Commission if no payment application has been received within 18 months of the decision approving the CIP.

2. interim payments

In accordance with Article 32(2) and 32(3), the payments on account are used to pay end beneficiaries. The Commission will make further payments (interim payments) based on declarations of expenditure certified by the Paying Authority, to reimburse expenditure paid to end beneficiaries. These further payments, the content of which is set out at paragraph 6.5, are subject to the following conditions:

- programme complement, containing the information specified in section 1.2. , submitted on time to the Commission;
- latest annual implementation report, containing the information specified in section 2.11., forwarded to the Commission;
- mid-term evaluation of the programme, as referred to in section 4.2., when due, submitted to the Commission.

The Member State will, as far as possible, present applications for interim payments to the Commission in batches three times a year. The last application should be presented no later than 31 October.

As required by Article 32(7), the Member State shall send the Commission their updated forecasts of applications for payment for the current year and the forecast for the following year, by 30 April each year.

3. payments of the final balance

The final balance of the assistance will be paid if:

- within six months of the deadline laid down by the decision approving the CIP, the paying authority submits to the Commission a certified statement of expenditure actually paid out.
- the final report, containing the information specified in section 2.11.2., has been forwarded to and approved by the Commission.
- in accordance with Article 38(1)f, the Member State has presented to the Commission a declaration drawn up by an independent person or department, the content of which is specified in Regulation 2064/97.

As set out in Article 32(5), the final payment may no longer be corrected at the request of the Member State if the paying authority has not forwarded an application to the Commission within nine months from the date of transfer of the final balance.

b. Payments by the Member State

In accordance with Article 32(1), the paying authority shall ensure that final beneficiaries receive payment in full and as quickly as possible. No deduction, retention or further specific charge which would reduce these amounts shall be made.

a) payments on account

In accordance with Article 32(2), throughout the lifetime of assistance, the paying authority shall use the payment on account to pay the Community contribution to expenditure relating to the assistance. Any interest earned on the payment on account will be allocated by the paying authority to the CIP.

Declaration of expenditure

In accordance with Article 32(2 and 32(a)), interim payments and payment of the final balance must correspond to expenditure actually paid out as certified by the paying authority, which must correspond to payments effected by the final beneficiaries, supported by receipted invoices or accounting documents of equivalent probative value. This constitutes the declaration of expenditure.

Payments will be calculated at the level of measures contained in the financing plan of the programme complement. In order to demonstrate the link between the financing plan and expenditure actually paid out, the declaration of expenditure should present financial information in the following manner:

- i. broken down by year
- ii. broken down by priority and measure
- iii. distinguishing for each priority between expenditure made in areas receiving full and transitional support

Transparency of financial flows

In the UK, the treatment of Structural Funds expenditure is based on the principle that receipts from the Commission should be managed, disbursed and monitored in exactly the same way and using the same systems as the UK's own public expenditure. The basic principles of the UK Government Accounting apply to these receipts, the most important being:

- Parliamentary scrutiny and accountability;
- The identification of an Accounting Officer responsible for the funds under his or her control;
- A statutory basis for all expenditure, whether from National or EC source. Detailed provisions for handling transactions are contained in the Treasury's procedural guide "Government Accounting".

A feature of the UK public sector financial management and control is the obligatory requirement to submit all public expenditure operations to periodic audits. This covers both the financial systems in operation and an annual audit of specific payments made by the Member State. Financial control is further maintained through the separation of duties between those responsible for the certifying and authorising of payment claims, to safeguard against the possibility of personal involvement in a project, or of fraud.

Payments from the Commission in respect of operations part-financed by the Structural Funds will be received in a Treasury Account at the Bank of England, where they be converted into sterling.

For the ERDF, each sterling amount will then be transferred immediately to the Welsh European Funding Office. It will hold the amount in a specifically identified account. This is consistent with the standards of financial control applied to national expenditure.

In accordance with Article 32(1), the paying authority shall ensure that final beneficiaries receive payment in full and as quickly as possible. No deduction, retention or further specific charge which would reduce these amounts shall be made.

In order to facilitate the verification of expenditure by Community and National control authorities, the Member State will ensure that all bodies involved in the management and implementation of Structural Fund operations shall maintain either a separate accounting system or an adequate accounting codification capable of providing detailed and complete summaries of all transactions involving Community assistance.

Financial management and control arrangements for ERDF Funds

The Welsh European Funding Office is authorised by the National Assembly for Wales to undertake financial management and control arrangements for all Funds on behalf of the Member State. The Court of Auditors and the European Commission undertake audits on their own behalf. The Welsh European Funding Office also acts as the Paying Authority for the ERDF.

All monies from the European Union are treated in the same way as domestic funding for the purposes of financial management and control, as well as being subject to EU Regulations. It is subject to Treasury Handbook on Government Accounting and there is a Structural Funds Manual which sets out many aspects of UK Structural Funds administration so there is a consistency of treatment both within and between secretariats.

The Welsh European Funding Office receives and holds ERDF monies which have been sent from the Commission in the form of advances, and interim and final payments. They issue offers of ERDF grant, other than in the case of agreed Action Plans, where some offers may be made by the relevant Accountable Body. The Welsh European Funding Office, and if applicable the Accountable Body, receive payment claims from the final beneficiaries to which they have issued offers. All payment claims are backed up by invoices or other accounting documents.

The Welsh European Funding Office or Accountable Body checks the payment claims against the offer of grant and the project papers, and ensure consistency with the performance targets set and eligibility. If acceptable they authorise and pay out grants on the basis of eligible expenditure incurred. The functions of checking, authorisation and payments are separated within the Welsh European Funding Office or Accountable Body. The Welsh European Funding Office draw up and certify the payment applications for ERDF to the Commission based on the payment claims received from the final beneficiaries or Accountable Bodies. These payment applications will be in euro, the conversion from sterling being in accordance with the regulatory requirement

The Welsh European Funding Office is responsible for carrying out the majority of the 5% verification checks on total eligible expenditure across the programme. They are also responsible for working with HQ Departments to investigate and draw up reports on any alleged irregularities. These are then forwarded to the Department of Trade and Industry which submits the quarterly returns to the Commission together with details of follow-up actions. Where Action Plan arrangements operate the Welsh European Funding Office will, during the course of their 5% checks, pay particular attention to projects where the Accountable Body is also the end beneficiary.

Where Action Plan arrangements are in place the Welsh European Funding Office, acting on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales, will issue an approval letter to the partnership concerned, authorising the relevant body to issue offers of grant for activities under that Action Plan, within the agreed delegations. Each Accountable Body will have sound financial systems in place to ensure compliance with all relevant Regulations and conditions and, in particular, to provide audit trails in line with Annex 1 of Regulation 2064/97. To this end, they will maintain records to provide proper audit trails; carry out physical checks on project expenditure; and provide actual, externally audited, statements of grant expenditure to the Welsh European Funding Office.

The Internal Audit Unit of the National Assembly for Wales undertakes audits of the management and control systems implemented by WEFO and provides the declaration to accompany the final payment application. This declaration will relate to the extent to which WEFO has provided for and implemented the regulatory financial management and control requirements determined during the audit visits.

Use of Euro and conversion rates

In accordance with Article 33, all commitments and payments are made in euros. Statements of expenditure have also to be made in euros. Since the United Kingdom does not have the euro as its national currency, amounts of expenditure incurred in sterling will be converted into euros by applying the rate in force on the last but one working day at the Commission in the month preceding the month during which the expenditure was recorded in the accounts of the Paying Authority.

Control and Financial Corrections

General provisions

In accordance with Article 38(1), primary responsibility for the financial control of assistance lies with the UK.

In accordance with Article 38(2), officials of the Commission may carry out checks without prejudice to checks carried out by the UK, in accordance with national laws, regulations and administrative provisions.

In accordance with Article 38(3), the Commission and the UK shall on the basis of bilateral administrative arrangements co-operate to co-ordinate plans, methods and implementation checks so as to maximise the usefulness of those carried out. The UK and the Commission will immediately exchange the results of checks carried out.

In accordance with Article 38(3), at least once a year the Commission and the UK shall jointly examine and evaluate the results of checks carried out by the UK and the Commission, any comments made by other national or Community control bodies or institutions and the financial impact of irregularities noted (including steps taken or required to correct them and, where necessary, adjustments to the management and control systems). This evaluation should in any case take place before the annual implementation review detailed in paragraph 2.11.

In addition to the requirements made in the Council regulation 1260/1999, the arrangements for control and financial corrections shall comply with Commission regulation 2064/97, establishing detailed arrangements for financial control by the Member States of operations co-financed by the Structural Funds.

Financial control by the Member State

In accordance with Article 38(1a) and 38(1c), the UK will establish financial management and control arrangements in such a way as to ensure that Community funds are used efficiently and correctly and that assistance is managed in accordance with all the applicable Community rules and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management. The detailed requirements set out in Commission Regulation 2064/97 shall apply throughout.

In accordance with Article 38(1d) and Article 38(1f), and in the first instance, in accordance with Commission Regulation 2064/97, Article 4, the UK is responsible for certifying the accuracy of declarations of expenditure presented to the Commission, the specific procedures for which are detailed at paragraph 6.5.

In accordance with Article 38(1e), the UK is responsible in the first instance, for preventing, detecting and correcting irregularities and for notifying these to the Commission and keeping the Commission informed of the progress of administrative and legal proceedings. In accordance with Commission Regulation 2064/97, Article 5, the controls shall establish whether any problems encountered are of a systematic character. The arrangements for handling irregularities and financial corrections are given at paragraph 7.4.

In accordance with Article 38(6), the UK shall keep available for the Commission all supporting documents regarding expenditure and checks on the assistance for a period of three years following the payment by the Commission of the final balance. This period may be interrupted in the case of legal proceedings or at the duly motivated request of the Commission. The UK shall keep a clear audit trail in compliance with the definition set out in Commission Regulation 2064/97 and annex.

Financial control by the Commission

In accordance with Article 38(2), the Commission may carry out on the spot checks, including sample checks, on the operations financed by the Funds and on management control systems with a minimum of one day's notice; The Commission will give notice to the UK with a view to obtaining all the assistance necessary and UK officials may take part in such checks.

In accordance with Article 38(2), the Commission may require the UK to carry out an on the spot check to verify the correctness of one or more transactions and Commission officials may take part in such checks.

Also under Regulation 2064/97, there is an annual review of financial control arrangements at the level of the United Kingdom

Irregularities and financial corrections

a. Role of the Member State

In accordance with Article 39(1), the UK has in the first instance, responsibility for investigating irregularities, acting upon evidence of any major change affecting the nature or conditions for the implementation or supervision of assistance and for making the financial corrections required.

Financial corrections shall be made in connection with the individual or systematic irregularity and shall consist of the cancelling of all or part of the Community contribution. Community Funds released in this way may be re-used by the UK for the assistance concerned.

In accordance with article 39(4), any sum found to have been received unduly and to be recovered shall be repaid to the Commission together with the interest.

b. Role of the Commission

In accordance with Article 38(4), the Commission may make observations following examinations and evaluations, particularly regarding the financial impact of any irregularities detected. These observations shall be addressed to the UK and the National Assembly for Wales and shall be accompanied, where necessary, by requests for corrective measures to remedy the management shortcomings found and correct those irregularities which have not already been corrected. The UK shall have the opportunity to comment on these observations. Where the Commission adopts conclusions, the UK will take the necessary steps within the deadline set by the Commission and will inform the Commission of its actions.

In accordance with Article 38(5), the Commission may suspend all or part of an interim payment linked to a serious and uncorrected irregularity. The Commission shall inform the UK of the action taken and the reasons for it.

If, in accordance with Article 39(2), after completing the necessary verifications, the Commission finds that the UK has not complied with its obligations as agreed in paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2, or finds that all or part of the operation does not justify either part or whole of the contribution from the Funds, or finds that there are serious failings in the management or control systems which could lead to systematic irregularities, then again, the Commission may suspend the interim payment in question and, stating its reasons, request that the UK submit its comments and, where appropriate, carry out any corrections within a specified time period.

In accordance with Article 39(2), if the UK objects to the Commission's observations it shall be invited to a hearing by the Commission, in which both sides in co-operation based on the partnership make efforts to reach an agreement.

In accordance with Articles 38(5) and 39(3), if five months after the Commission requested corrective measures to remedy a financial irregularity the reasons for the suspension remain or the UK has not notified the Commission of the measures taken to correct the serious irregularity, or if at the end of the set period no agreement has been reached and the UK has not taken account of the comments made, the Commission may, within three months, decide to:

- i. reduce the payment on account referred to in paragraph 6.4(a)
- ii. make the financial corrections required by cancelling all or part of the contribution from the Funds to the assistance concerned.

Corrections of this type will have regard to proportionality, the type of irregularity or change and the extent of the financial implications.

In the absence of a decision to do either i or ii, the suspension of interim payments shall cease

PROCEDURES FOR THE AMENDMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

Amendments of the CIP

As a general rule, modifications of the CIP approved by the Monitoring Committee, have to be made following the procedures applied for its adoption. These include consultation of the Committees referred to in Articles 48, 49, 50 and 51.

However, any amendments to the decision approving the CIP, which does not alter the total Community contribution, can be approved by the Commission in agreement with the UK Government, if the modification of the total cost or Community financing to any priority is up to a maximum of 25% of the total Community Contribution to the CIP throughout the programme period or up to €60 million, whichever is the greater.

Any modification is subject to the availability of funds and must remain compatible with the Commission's budgetary rules. It may entail transfers of resources between the Community Structural Funds and a change in the rate of assistance.

Whenever the amounts of finance are altered, the notification shall be accompanied by the revised financing plan of the CIP.

The Monitoring Committee may in any event propose to the management authority any adjustment or review of the programme likely to make possible the attainment of the Objective set out in Art. 1, or to improve the management of programme, including financial management.

Any financial adjustment shall be accompanied by the revised financing plan.

Any amendment of the CIP shall be decided by the Commission, in agreement with the UK Government, within four months of delivery of the Monitoring Committee's approval.

Amendments of the programme complement

According to Article. 34.3, the management authority may, at the request of the Monitoring Committee or on its own initiative, adjust the programme complement, without changing the total amount of the contribution from the Funds granted to the **priority concerned nor its specific targets.**

After approval of this adjustment by the Monitoring Committee, the management authority shall inform the Commission of the adjustment within one month.

Technical Assistance

An enabling Commission regulation lays down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation 1260/1999 as regards eligibility of expenditure of operations co-financed by the Structural Funds.

According to Rule 11 on "Costs incurred in managing and implementing the Structural Funds", Technical Assistance can be used under point 2 of this Rule to co-finance expenditure incurred for management, implementation and control expenditure under certain conditions. The implementation of this point has to be agreed between the Commission and the Government and is laid down in the Chapter on Technical Assistance. For the purposes of monitoring, the costs made available under point 2 are the subject of a specific measure within Technical Assistance.

Technical Assistance can also be used to co-finance other actions under this programme, for example studies, seminars, information and evaluation.

8: FINANCIAL TABLES

The table below shows the allocation to the URBAN II Programme over the period 2000-2006.

The European Commission have yet to provide UK authorities with annual spending profiles to allow us to develop the necessary yearly tables; these tables will be produced as soon as the figures are made available.

	Total	ERDF	Public Sector Match	Private Sector Match
Priority 1 Entrepreneurship and Business development	12.284	6.142	5.528	0.614
M1 Encouraging enterprise and self-employment	6.142	3.071	3.071	
M2 Development of competitive and sustainable businesses	6.142	3.071	2.457	0.614
Priority 2 Encouraging Participation	7.216	3.608	3.608	
M1 Overcoming barriers to participation	2.886	1.443	1.443	
M2 Developing Active communities	4.33	2.165	2.165	
5.1 Priority 3 Technical Assistance	0.5	0.25	0.25	
Overall Totals	20	10	9.386	0.614

WREXHAM URBAN COMMUNITY INITIATIVE 2000-2006: SELECTION PROCESS AND PARTNERSHIP DETAILS

URBAN II bid assessment partnership

The European Task Force, established by the Secretary of State for Wales in 1998, set up a sub-committee specifically to consider the four Community Initiatives that will operate during the 2000 to 2006 period. The committee met for the first time in July 1999 and resolved to form four Consultative Groups to consider each of the Community Initiatives.

The urban group met five times between August 1999 and January 2000 and considered the draft guidelines along with a review of best practice. A number of conclusions and recommendations were made and as a result it was agreed that a partnership group would be formed to consider the application and selection process. The partnership was formed solely to perform this function and put forward a recommendation on the choice of area to the Finance Secretary. It was agreed that two meetings would take place. The first of these was held on the 12th of June at which the draft Welsh application form and guidelines were agreed. By the very nature of the programme these had to be largely based on the European Commission guidelines. All local authorities in Wales were invited to bid with a closing date of the 24th of July, and the applications received were distributed to all members of the partnership by the 26th. The assessment took place in the National Assembly on the 3rd of August.

The partnership, based on the "thirds" principle, comprised of representatives from organisations with expertise in urban regeneration as follows:

Wales Community Development Foundation; Wales Council for Voluntary Action; West Wales TEC; Community Enterprise Wales; Business Wales; Welsh Local Government Association; Business in the Community Wales; TUC Wales; Groundwork Wales.

Their findings were put forward to the Finance Secretary for a decision on behalf of the Cabinet. The announcement was made on the 25th of August that Wrexham West had been chosen for the URBAN II programme in Wales.

Wrexham Partnership

Key to the success of URBAN II will be the on-going development of an effective community partnership for West Wrexham (see Figure 1). It is envisaged that the first formal meeting of the Partnership will take place in December 2000 (also see below). This will develop the Programme Compliment Document and West Wrexham Local Action Plan, generating, discussing, evaluating and approving project ideas, seeking likely sources of matched funding and the overall management, and administration of the programme.

The Community Partnership will be supported by a dedicated project management team and two Working Groups consisting of local people and officers representing the statutory and voluntary sectors. The groups will be focused on the two priorities of *Entrepreneurship* and *Participation*, and will support the development and implementation of projects.

The Partnership Board will have overall responsibility for strategic direction and project development, and will approve projects prior to them being forwarded to the Wales European Funding Office (WEFO).

Nevertheless, although West Wrexham is a homogenous area that exhibits many common problems, it is actually comprised of a number of distinct neighbourhoods that have a history of strong community identity. This meant that forming a single community partnership representative of the whole area was impossible, in terms of such a body performing a 'strategic' role.

As a result, five Community / Neighbourhood committees based on the five broad communities of Coedpoeth, Brymbo, Broughton (including New Broughton, Gwenfro and Bryn Cefn), Gwersyllt (including Gwersyllt North, Gwersyllt West and Gwersyllt East and South) and Llay have been set up during the period September-November 2000, and all will have held at least one meeting by the end of November 2000 to discuss the Programme (for membership details, see Figure 2 below).

Indeed, in the case of Coedpoeth, Brymbo and Llay, the Community Councils have been extremely active in publicising and setting up initial meetings to discuss the possibilities offered by the URBAN II Programme, to draw in as many interested individuals, organisations and groups as possible (see below), and to discuss project ideas, matched funding sources and implementation partners.

In Gwersyllt, existing local partnership structures have been built upon so that the 'Gwersyllt Partnership', which pre-dates the URBAN II Programme and which has focused on the regeneration of Gwersyllt over the last five years, is playing a key role in developing local interest and stimulating project ideas.

In Broughton, the National Assembly's '*People in Communities*' Initiative has resulted in the formation of a Partnership Board representative of the local community. It is likely that in the near future the membership of this board, and its working groups, will be widened to incorporate additional members, as the geographical remit of the Initiative, and any successor (such as the National Assembly's '*Communities First*' Programme) is extended to cover the Broughton Community Council area. This will ensure that the structure developed will be suitably placed to service both the '*People in Communities*' Initiative and the URBAN II Programme, and maximise the funding opportunities available to develop projects focused on entrepreneurship and participation.

Hence these five neighbourhood / community committees are representative of the needs of their community within the context of the URBAN II Programme. During the next four to six weeks individuals from each of the Community Committees will be nominated to form the West Wrexham Community Partnership Board. This process will be supported by each of the committees holding further meetings to involve local people and it is envisaged that 'natural leaders', representative of their areas and fully supported by all those involved, will emerge. Further development of ideas and proposals will also occur over this period and these will be generated in the context of the identified overall strategy and priorities that have already been developed in partnership with others. Indeed, a number of meetings were held between July and September 2000 (see Figure 3) in the West Wrexham area to discuss and develop the URBAN II bid and through the completion of project proformas to assist the subsequent drafting of the Strategy, Priorities and Measures detailed in the CIP. A *Resident's Survey* conducted of over 150 households in the area has also helped to inform the development of the CIP, as well as contributing to the production of an overarching strategy for all of the 'urban villages' of Wrexham County Borough.

Members of each of the community committees have also met with individuals involved with the URBAN I Programme in Townhill / Mayhill in Swansea at the beginning of October 2000. This proved an extremely useful learning exercise in terms of how to manage community expectation of the URBAN II Programme, identifying the most appropriate mechanisms to involve local individuals in URBAN II-related activities and the importance of continued empowerment of the community beyond the lifetime of the Programme.

A representative of the UK URBAN Network was also present at the meeting in Swansea, and Technical Assistance will be sought by the Partnership and Management support team to develop links with other URBAN Community Initiatives, particularly those in close geographical proximity (for example, those in the North of England), as well as continuing links with the URBAN I Initiative in Swansea,

Figure 2: Individuals involved in the initial development of the Community Committees

.1.1 Coedpoeth Community Committee – to meet 15 November 2000

Iola Lloyd Jones, Coedpoeth Community Council
Gareth Wyn Griffiths, Wrexham County Borough councillor
Mark Davies, Wrexham County Borough councillor

.1.2 - all involved in the instigation of the meeting

.1.3 Brymbo Community Committee – to meet 28 and 30 November 2000

Alan Cardiff - Chair Brymbo Community Council
Sylvia Greenaway - Wrexham County Borough councillor
Denis Greenaway - Brymbo Community Council
Steve Tilston - Brymbo Community Council
John Parry - Brymbo Community Council
Tony Birch, Brymbo Community Council

- all heavily involved in publicising URBAN II Programme

.1.4 Broughton Community Committee

Ken Rowlands, Broughton Community Council
Shan Wilkinson, 'People in Communities' Board member and Wrexham County Borough councillor
Neil Rogers, 'People in Communities' Board member and Wrexham County Borough councillor
Sandra Williams, 'People in Communities' Board member and Broughton Community Association
Fred Derbyshire, 'People in Communities' Board member and Southsea Residents Association

.2 Gwyneth Lewis, 'People in Communities' Board member and Broughton/Brymbo Computer Club

Mr Clive Holmes - Broughton Villa Football Club
Eva Jones - 'People in Communities' Board member and Pentre Broughton Youth Club
Myra Russell - 'People in Communities' Board member and Pentre Broughton Youth Club

.2.1 Gwersyllt Community Committee

Ted George – Wrexham County Borough councillor
Sandy Mewies – Wrexham County Borough councillor
Keith Hett – Wrexham County Borough councillor
Anthony Hett – Gwersyllt Partnership
Barabara Roxburgh – Gwersyllt Partnership
Mike Williams – Gwersyllt Partnership
David Griffiths – Wrexham County Borough councillor
I. Pratt – Bradley Thursday Club
Bernie MacCann – Bradley Youth Club
Keith Bryan – Gwersyllt Community Council
C. William – Bradley Village Hall

Ron Pearson – Gwersyllt Sports Association
 Margaret Forbes - Gwersyllt Residents Environmental Action Team / Gwersyllt Youth Club
 Roger Davies – Headteacher, Bryn Alyn High School
 Gwyneth Jones – Summerhill Institute
 Steve Bould – Gwyn Evans Swimming Pool
 Brenda Trickett – Guides and Brownies
 Dorothy Jones – Cefn y Bedd Community Centre
 Thelma Griffiths – local resident
 Megan Davies – Gwersyllt W.I., Gwersyllt Community Centre

.2.2 Llay Community Committee

David Broderick – Llay Community Council and Wrexham County Borough councillor.
 Malcolm Williams – Wrexham County Borough councillor
 Rev Bellamy – Vicar of Llay and Chair of Parochial Church Council
 C. Higgins – Chair of Llay Community Centre
 Rev Chris Girvan – Church of the Nazarene
 G. Jones – Headteacher, Llay Junior School
 M. Lund, Llay Senior Citizens Committee
 H.B. Jones – Chair, Llay British Legion
 P. Forrester, Chair, Llay Wives Management Committee
 S.M. Apsley, Secretary, Llay Wives Management Committee
 Glenys Price – Women’s Institute, Llay

Figure 3: Attendance at meeting to discuss URBAN II Programme held on 11 July 2000 at Brymbo Sports and Social Club, Brymbo

Mrs Gwyneth Lewis	Broughton/Brymbo Computer Club
Christine Stace/Gaynor Roberts	Citizens Advice Bureau
Celia Hughes	Tenant Participation/Community Development Officer
Phillis Matthews/Colleague	Wrexham Childcare Partnership
Gwyneth Jones/Dylis Ellis	Brymbo Tenants & Residents Association
Alan Cardiff	Brymbo Community Council
Dennis Greenaway	“
Steve Tilston	“
John Parry/Tony Birch	“
Margaret Morris	Wrexham Childcare Partnership
Margaret Forbes	Gwersyllt Residents Environmental Action Team
Mrs J Robinson	St Mary’s Primary School, Brymbo
Mr Chris Barker	Headteacher, Ysgol Tanyfron
Mr Ted George	Gwersyllt Partnership
G W Jones	Gwersyllt Sports & W M Club
Peter Harrison	Manager CELTEC
Ingrid Emerson/Peter Bulmer	Groundwork, Wrexham
Mr Clive Holmes	Broughton Villa Football Club
Councillor Arnold Griffiths	Councillor for New Broughton
Celia Hughes	Wales & West
Janet Growcott	Local Police Coedpoeth
Yvonne Davies	Principal Policy Officer
Jerry O’Keeffe	Welfare Rights Officer
	Health Promotion Officer