

Swyddfa Cyllid Ewropeaidd Cymru
Welsh European Funding Office

Valleys Regional Park



Environment for Growth
Phase 1

Business Plan

Version 6
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1. **Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Valleys Regional Park (VRP) Environment for Growth Phase One Convergence Funding bid presents an opportunity to secure funding to support the regeneration of the VRP area through the delivery of a significant element of the VRP Action Plan. The programme has been designed to deliver the first of a two stage delivery plan that can be evaluated before a second bid is submitted. The latter is a collaborative action plan that will facilitate delivery of a range of European, Government and local strategies, and one which has been agreed by, and incorporates projects from the wide VRP Partnership organisations. The three year project will be hosted and lead by Welsh Assembly Government, and form an integral part of the wider branding concept for the Valleys that has yet to be developed by Welsh Assembly Government and Visit Wales. The Project aims to raise the profile of the area as a visitor destination, and a prime location to live and work because of it's quality environment and opportunities for outdoor recreation, heritage and environmental interpretation. It will achieve this through:
- Prioritised investments into existing visitor centres including country parks, nature reserves and heritage facilities to create a more enhanced and consistent offer.
 - The development of 5 landscape scale visitor destination initiatives.
 - A loops and links project that will invest in existing and create new walking cycling and horse riding links between the visitor destination facilities.
 - The establishment of visitor guides to support and guide visitors with a community tourism element to build confidence and create local tourism ambassadors.
 - A coordinated events programme.
 - A targeted campaign to prevent and remove the blight that detracts visitors from returning.
- 1.2 A collaborative delivery model has been devised that provides an innovative framework for delivery and ensures a way of working that will take the partners well beyond the project period, so ensuring the long term sustainability of the project. It is the VRP Partners acting as joint project sponsors who will deliver projects within the programme in accordance with established project management procedures. The project will be complementary to a range of other Convergence projects being taken forward by various organisations and consortia. There is a good working relationship with the leads of these projects.
- 1.3 The £21.75 million collaborative project will deliver seven initiatives to manage the natural and historic environment resulting in 80 kilometres of managed access to the countryside that will attract a minimum of 100,000 visitors and create 200 jobs. One of the seven initiatives is a community tourism training programme that will result in training for 200 people, with an anticipated 150 people gaining qualifications that will give them the potential to start their own business or get employment. Business engagement will be an integral part of the programme, so that the project acts as a catalyst generating private sector interest and the establishment of new SME's, which will generate revenue

income for long term management after the European funding has ended. In these respects, the long term sustainability of the facilities and activities can be secured.

2. Project Description

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 As part of the wider regeneration process, the Project aims to raise the profile of the area as a visitor destination, and a prime location to live and work because of its quality environment and opportunities for outdoor recreation, heritage and environmental interpretation.

2.2 Activities

2.2.1 The Valleys have traditionally been undervalued in terms of their natural beauty, cultural heritage and potential to attract visitors. They have the potential to offer far greater opportunities for outdoor recreation, heritage based and activity tourism than has yet been realised, and this can be supported by a welcoming population. There are a wide range of existing assets and facilities which have yet to reach their full potential as regards visitor numbers, but the consistency of standards is extremely varied across the region. This project aims to bring about a more consistent approach across the region, and make the visitor facilities an integral part of a package of interrelated recreational opportunities where the centres act as hubs for activities that are promoted throughout the Valleys Regional Park Convergence area.

2.2.2 The Project will raise the quality of countryside and heritage assets, and promote them as tourism and recreational facilities for our local people and visitors. Integral with this will be improving access infrastructure and visitor facilities whilst actively promoting activity based tourism in the natural environment through events and community based initiatives centred on countryside/wildlife and heritage centres, community based tourism initiatives and events.

2.2.3 Greater activity in and understanding of our unique environment and the history that has shaped our landscape and people will be encouraged through outdoor activities.

2.2.4 As examples, the project will:

- Develop programmes to encourage access and use of our facilities and green space in the local population.
- Enhance existing countryside and tourism facilities to provide an improved and more consistent visitor experience across the area.
- Provide visitor support and guidance through the employment of visitor guides and the engagement of community tourism ambassadors in respect of guided walks/events and physical activity programmes.

- Improve, further develop and promote a network of walking and cycling routes for recreation. Implement and promote heritage facilities trails and community based tourism related to heritage.
- Improve opportunities and facilities to encourage more visitors to wildlife sites across the region.
- Implement 5 strategic landscape scale visitor destination projects on a sub-regional scale that will raise the profile of the area and provide opportunities to attract visitors.
- Develop a range of projects which improve activity tourism opportunities through environmental actions, thereby encouraging healthier lifestyles through recreation (walking, cycling, horse riding, water and extreme sports).
- General marketing and promotion of opportunities for visitors to access sites, visitor centres and recreational facilities.

2.2.5 The project will achieve this through the following programmes of work:

➤ **Enhancing our Visitor Centres (Country Parks, Nature Reserves & Heritage Facilities)**

Improving visitor centres through infrastructure improvements, signage, interpretation, activities and promotion. Where there are capital build elements, detailed information will be submitted to WEFO for assessment prior to issuing any authorisation to proceed.

➤ **Transformational Landscapes for Visitors**

Creating a minimum of 5 strategic landscape scale initiatives, that can be promoted as visitor destinations, which are not necessarily focussed on any particular visitor centre, but will include a range of opportunities to attract people eg walking trails linked to heritage features and sites of wildlife interest.

➤ **The Loops and Links**

The improvement of existing and creation of new walking, cycling and horse riding routes to provide a sustainable network of trails that encourage visitors to explore the countryside and access the country parks, nature reserves and heritage facilities. They will provide physical largely off road connections between the visitor centres to encourage access into the wider countryside

➤ **Community Tourism Initiative**

This part of the project will maximise the opportunities to attract visitors from within and outside the area by the appointment of Community Tourism Development Officers with responsibility for developing community based tourism opportunities. There will be high profile marketing of regional and local events that encourage participation in these activities. The development officers will work with communities to encourage

community individuals to become ambassadors who through appropriate training, will become visitor guides, eventually providing them with the opportunity to set up in business undertaking this activity. This part of the programme includes Groundwork's Visit Network Project, church tourism and the HERIAN initiative, where community groups and individuals are encouraged to develop their own heritage interpretation programmes for visitors, supported by the Community Tourism Development Officers. The training element will be funded via the cross flexibility facility within the programme (see below).

➤ **Training the Ambassadors**

The Community Tourism Initiative above is designed to encourage volunteers to act as ambassadors for the area promoting local sites, facilities and events to visitors. Through the ESF Cross Fund Flexibility element of the project, they will be offered support and training to fulfil this role with the prospect of them gaining qualifications in the following areas that can lead to employment opportunities, self employment, or the establishment of small community enterprises.

- Level 3 accreditation with the Institute of Tourist Guiding (ITG).
- 'Welcome to Our Heritage' (WtOH), a derivative of the long established 'Welcome Host' community customer care programme operated by the UK and other European Tourist Boards eg Channel Islands. Discussion are ongoing with ITG regarding WtOH becoming an ITG Level 1 accreditation. A number of schools in north Wales are utilising WtOH as part of the Welsh Bacallaureate.
- 'This is Our Heritage' is a mentoring advisory support programme that attempts to ensure sustainable and viable local heritage interpretive projects are developed by community groups.

➤ **Events Programme**

The development of a coordinated events programme across the Valleys developing existing major events and establishing at least six new events which attract visitors from outside the region. There will also be coordinated programmes of smaller events such as localised cycling and themed activity events with participation from a range of organisations. Existing events will not be supported. The programme will also include the proposed HERIAN events including Chartism (People and Protest) and Interpretation Through Performance. There is a problem identifying match funding for the HERIAN element, hence the intention to target TMF. An application will be submitted for consideration at the March 2009 meeting of the TMF assessment panel.

➤ **Community Pride Total Focus Area Campaign: Presenting a Clean and Pleasant Environment for Visitors**

During the extensive stakeholder consultations undertaken as part of the development of the VRP concept, the major issue of concern to the partner organisations, particularly the local authorities, was the environmental blight (litter, fly tipping, burnt out cars, and illegal off road motorcycling). Based on past experience, the partners have made it quite clear that any attempts to attract more visitors to many of the priority sites within the VRP, would have limited success unless these issues are dealt with. A modest sum has been included within the project to support the Environment Agency Wales to coordinate a “Community Pride Total Focus Area Campaign” within the VRP area. The approach is based on the successful BREW Project in England, which focussed on specific towns and cities eg Bristol and Chester, and devoted manpower and resources to tackling fly tipping. Within the VRP, the focus will be at a local authority level. The project will focus on businesses and householders in problem areas where there is the greatest potential for increased visitor numbers through the other parts of the programme. The emphasis will be on Enforcement, Engagement and Education, specifically in relation to the objectives of the wider project ie to attract increased visitor numbers. The Tourist Guides and Community Ambassadors described above will have a major role to play in delivering the community aspect of this.

2.2.6 All the activities will incorporate an element of marketing and promotion. This will be done within the context of an agreed brand for the Valleys which Welsh Assembly Government and Visit Wales are jointly developing. The project will not support any feasibility studies. Nor will it fund marketing and promotion of activities that fall outside this project.

2.3 Links with the Strategic Framework and Priority Targets in the Operational Programme

2.3.1 The project is supported by European Convergence Sustainable Regeneration Strategic Framework.

2.3.2 The Strategic Frameworks for the South East and Swansea Bay Spatial Plan areas recognise the role that environment plays in the quality of life that will attract and retain talent, and sustain jobs in tourism and leisure. Indeed Priority 4 Theme 3 aims to:

- promote the enhancement and protection of the natural, built and heritage environment.
- increase the economic potential of the environment.

2.3.3 The Sustainable Regeneration Framework for South East Wales specifically mentions the development of the Valleys Regional Park to attract people to live and work within the area.

2.4 SMART Objectives

2.4.1 During the three year period of the project, the following key Environment for Growth Operational Framework outputs and results will be delivered:

- 7 strategic initiatives that develop the natural and historic environment
 - 8 Kilometres of managed access to the countryside
 - Creation of 200 jobs
 - 100,000 additional tourism visits
- 200 individuals receiving training with 150 of those gaining recognised qualifications.

2.5 Contribution to Welsh Assembly Government Policies

2.5.1 **One Wales: A Progressive Agenda for the People of Wales** identifies the opportunities to promote tourism “drawing on our unique assets in culture, history and the environment”. There is also a commitment to enhance and link up cycle routes on an all -Wales basis, and to create more fun and healthier opportunities for mass participation in walking, cycling and running events.

2.5.2 **The Wales Spatial Plan** makes reference to the role of a Valleys Regional Park in developing a distinctive and positive image for the Valleys based on the access and wildlife opportunities within the environment. Specific references are made to:

- enhancing the natural and built environment, which is an economic asset, both as a source of direct activity in tourism and leisure and as part of a wider quality of life.
- the quality of the environment is a fundamental asset for its intrinsic value, for our economy and quality of life. By safeguarding and enhancing both the natural and built environment we will attract people to, and retain them in, our communities and preserve the foundations for the future.
- increasing access to the countryside will form a new basis for local people and visitors to enjoy this asset whilst, at the same time, deliver national strategies for walking, cycling and other community and outdoor activities thereby reducing health irregularities across the Valleys.
- developing sustainable transport initiatives to link communities with countryside sites and, thereby, reducing the reliance on cars.
- working with the voluntary sector to develop countryside skills in local people and stimulate volunteering.

- ensure the presentation and promotion of Wales' rich historic environment which can make a wider contribution to economic and social regeneration and sustainability.

2.5.3 **The Heads of the Valleys Strategy** sits firmly within the Wales Spatial Plan and sets out the vision for the regeneration of the Heads of the Valleys which aims to improve the quality of life, retain and attract residents and increase the prosperity of the whole area. Within the strategy, the quality of the environment is seen as a key element in the whole process of regeneration. Protecting and enhancing the countryside is not just important for its own sake but it contributes to the quality of life, health and well being of residents which is a key factor in its attractiveness to skilled workers. It also provides a stunning context to attract visitors to use and enjoy the environment. A collaborative approach to developing the Valleys Regional Park will play a key role in this process. Specifically the Heads of the Valleys Strategic Programme seeks to:

- * stimulate the development of an attractive and well used natural, historic and built environment by supporting Valleys Regional Park as a key project.
- * stimulate opportunities for enterprise, entrepreneurial activity, business and tourism throughout the Valleys.
- * encourage and facilitate wider access and use of the countryside 'on the doorstep.'
- * use the park as a high quality environmental backcloth to stimulate business relocation and job creation.

2.5.4 **The South East Wales Development Strategy** in its section on 'A place to live, a place to visit' makes reference to 'the importance of raising all aspects of the living and tourism offers that the Valleys make. The strategy highlights the need to build a culture of entrepreneurship by encouraging new people into the area who tend, by nature, to be more risk taking and therefore more prepared to start new businesses than host populations. On that basis the need to make South East Wales an attractive place in which to live is fundamental, if top rate academics are to be encouraged to the region; if firms in high growth sectors such as business and creative services are to be attracted; if the region's brightest young people are to be persuaded to stay rather than migrate away; and if high wealth individuals are to make South East Wales the base for their affluent life styles. The quality of the landscape and seascape and the urban environments are important in this regard and the Valleys provide a unique and inherently attractive offer. The Valleys Regional Park approach should gradually help to achieve a transformation in the way people perceive South East Wales. It will bring together the notion that the Valleys themselves are a huge resource for residents and visitors alike offering opportunities for healthy outdoor activities close to existing local communities and within easy public and private transport access to larger

urban areas. The Valleys need to become iconic in a positive way – the backdrop to the excitement of Cardiff Bay and the gateways to the Welsh Mountains’.

2.5.5 These messages are also constantly reinforced in the **Walking and Cycling Strategy for Wales** and **Climbing Higher: Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity**. The promotion of increased walking, cycling, sport and physical activity are seen as key components in improving the health of the nation as a whole. They highlight that people living in deprived communities are less likely to be active and more likely to suffer ill health and disability. The strategies emphasise the importance of the natural environment as a setting for sport and physical activity. Together sport and physical activity, including walking and cycling, have the potential to contribute to the national agendas for health, economy, culture, society and the environment.

2.5.6 **Wales Environment Strategy sets out** the following objectives:

- * enhance the quality and usability of countryside recreation facilities across the Valleys.
- * improve the coordination of countryside and recreational facilities and amenities.
- * design all built and natural facilities to be as sustainable as possible.
- * improve access to, and use of, the greenspace network.
- * reduce the impact on greenhouse emissions by reducing reliance on the car to travel to, and around, countryside sites.
- * working with Herian to improve and enhance the historic and cultural environment of the Valleys.

2.5.7 **Making the Connections: Delivering Beyond Boundaries.** The Valleys Regional Park project will be delivered through a collaborative model designed to integrate the working arrangements of over 30 organisations through a single action plan. This particular project will be delivered using expertise from all the partners including the local authorities, local health boards, community safety partnerships, community and voluntary organisations, and statutory sector bodies. Additionally we will:

- * use Local Service Boards as an essential component for the communication and delivery mechanism for the project.
- * considering the needs of, and involving, citizens and park users in all aspects of design, delivery and management of the Valleys.

- * generate new economic opportunities in skills development, education and existing and new businesses in countryside recreation.
- * developing the management and delivery of Valleys Regional Park as an example of excellence building on organisational strengths, working cross sector and cross boundary to deliver better coordinated countryside recreation services
- * developing a structure that can adapt and change to ensure it is fit for purpose and the most appropriate delivery model for the Valleys.

2.5.8 **Lisbon Agenda:** The Valleys Regional Park will establish opportunities to up skill the local population in the maintenance and enhancement of this regional asset as part of the wider economic regeneration of the Valleys. We will provide a variety of opportunities at different levels for local people to become involved, get training and secure jobs in the development and management of the Valleys Regional Park in the long term.

2.5.9 **Gothenburg Agenda:** The Valleys Regional Park has incorporated sustainability principles into its development from the start. We have undertaken regular sustainability assessments of its programmes using the Welsh Assembly Government Sustainability Integration toolkit. We have sought to make each project within its delivery plan ensure an element of self-sufficiency or income generation to enable long-term maintenance and improvement longer than the funding programme. We have also developed the project to enhance the relationship between the planning of the environment, economic development and the development of our communities.

2.6 Stakeholder Consultation

2.6.1 The idea of using the environment to raise the profile of the Valleys and a catalyst for regeneration was originally developed by the Greening the Valleys Partnership which was formed in 1996. The VRP concept was borne out of this partnership, and has involved more than 2 years research and collaborative development and planning with over 30 partner organisations and a wider stakeholder group of 550 people. The background and evidence of need for the project was established by the Valleys Regional Park working document published in July 2007. As part of this stakeholder workshops, sub group/ focus group workshops and 1:1 development meetings were held with all partners. Approval in principle has been received from all Local Authorities, government organisations and voluntary sector organisations to progress the VRP further. The project is one of six national Environment for Growth projects being proposed, and there has been collaboration between these to ensure clarity of roles and boundaries of work. The projects that form part of this bid have been proposed by the partnership organisations, many of which are joint project sponsors within this bid.

2.7 An Innovative Approach

2.7.1 Previous studies have demonstrated that the environment provides opportunities for economic regeneration. However despite the quality of the landscape with it's associated cultural heritage, opportunities for outdoor recreation and a large population, the area has yet to realise its potential to attract visitors. The Valleys Regional Park approach provides an innovative collaborative model for achieving this through an integrated action plan that has been developed collectively by all the partners involved. The partnership which includes public, statutory and third sector organisations, has a vision to change the perceptions of the area by using the environment and heritage as a catalyst for tourism.

2.8 Target Beneficiaries

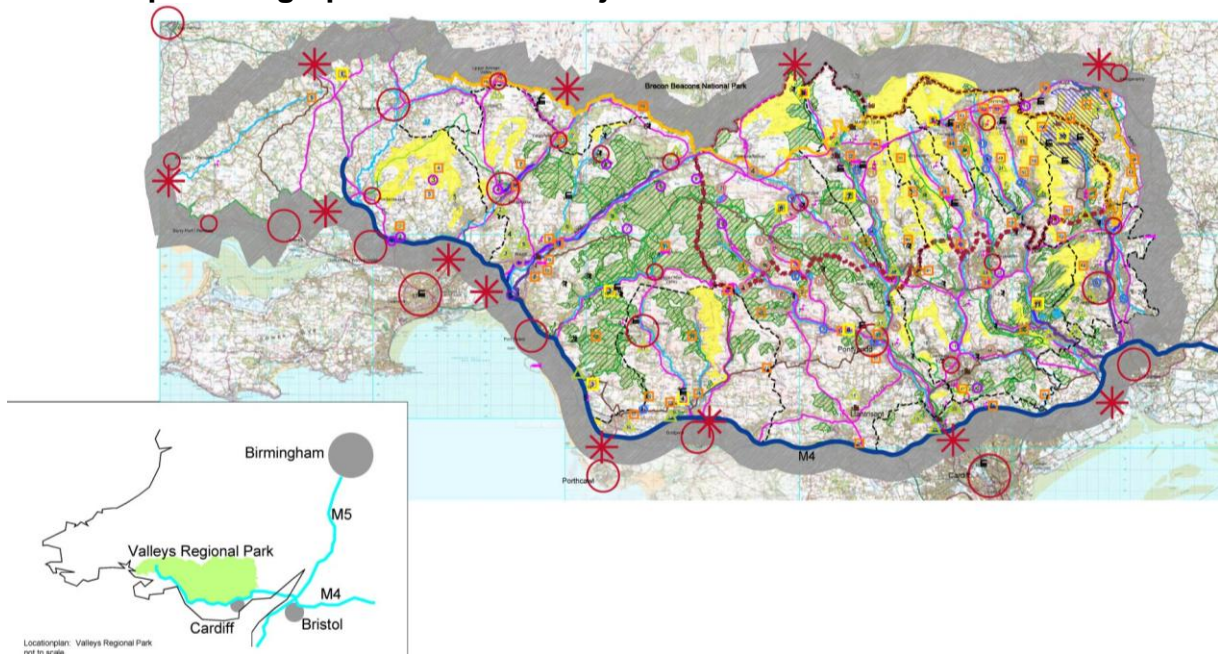
2.8.1 The following will benefit from the project:

- Local visitors to sites.
- Tourists from outside the area.
- Local businesses who will benefit from visitor spend.
- Local entrepreneurs who will be provided with opportunities to establish SME's as a result of the visitors who will be looking to undertake activities.
- The local population who will gain confidence as a result of living in an area that is seen in a more positive light, and one that they can be proud of. Such people are also likely to benefit from the increased employment prospects resulting from the private sector investment that is likely to be generated from the project. All projects within the programme will be required to demonstrate that they will act as a catalyst for private sector entrepreneurship, thereby creating jobs for local people. There will be a drive to market these opportunities to potential entrepreneurs. Examples of the likely private sector opportunities could include cycle hire, tour guides, bed and breakfast accommodation, small food outlets/tea coffee facilities

2.9 Project Coverage and Base

2.9.1 The project will be hosted by the Welsh Assembly Government's Department for the Economy and Transport, at the offices at QED Centre in Treforest, Pontypridd. Delivery will be at strategic sites and along connecting areas and routes between these sites as identified in the Valleys Regional Park Action Plan within the Valleys Regional Park boundary shown on the map below.

Map 1: Geographical Area of Project



3. Project Management and Delivery

3.1 Organisational Ability to Deliver

3.1.1 Officers from the Department for the Economy and Transport (who were formerly part of the Welsh Development Agency) have managed an environment programme with a broad range of delivery partners for the last 20 years. The programme invested £6 million per annum into physical environmental projects during the 1990's, but more recently it has been around £2 million per annum. The proven procurement methodology for this programme can easily be adapted to suit the convergence project.

3.1.2 The Valleys Regional Park Development Manager has 20 years experience of countryside management as part of wider regeneration programmes within local authorities. He also has experience of developing and managing a range of projects varying in value from £10,000 to £1 million, including a number of ERDF, Objective One and Interreg projects. In terms of procurement, he has experience in tendering for contract work, and managing contract implementation.

3.2 Organisational Structure

3.2.1 The Valleys Regional Park is developing an innovative management structure based on collaboration between more than 30 organisations, involving themed cross boundary project groups that will oversee all the activities delivered through the Valleys Regional Park, including the projects within this funding programme. The model is being developed with support from the Welsh Assembly Government's Making the Connections Team, with an associated

ESF bid under Priority 4 Theme 1, and will ensure that the projects delivered with ERDF support, will complement a whole range of other initiatives and ensure integration with the other VRP partners delivering a wider regeneration agenda involving the urban/town centres, health, education, community development, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and business development. Furthermore, in working strategically across a wide area, individual projects will collectively be seen as part of the Wales Spatial Plan approach to the regeneration of Wales, ie the whole will be greater than the sum of its parts and the approach will encompass all aspects of sustainable development. The Valleys Regional Park organisational structure is attached as Appendix 1. It is envisaged that the VRP collaborative management structure will be wholly funded through the ESF programme with match funding provided from the Making the Connections Improvement Fund and from the VRP partner organisations. This will maximise the available ERDF grant for project implementation through the joint project sponsors, although it is likely that a finance and technical support officer will still need to be funded from the ERDF element. However, the success of the ESF bid cannot be guaranteed. It is important therefore that we identify some funding for programme management staff to be employed by the lead sponsor (Welsh Assembly Government), to manage this programme. The project will also provide funding to recruit and employ four new project delivery managers based in key local authorities that do not currently have sufficient capacity to deliver the projects within this programme. At this stage therefore the project will include employment of the following staff:

Staff Employed by the lead Sponsor:

Programme Manager
Partnership Coordinator
Finance Officer
Technical Support x2

Staff Employed by Other Project Sponsors

Project Managers
Community Tourism Development Officers

Job descriptions for the above staff are attached as Appendix 2.

If the ESF bid is successful, the project manager and partnership coordinator will be funded from that project, and the associated funds re-allocated to projects on the ground within this ERDF bid.

3.3 Procurement Arrangements

- 3.3.1 The procurement procedure that will apply to this project is attached as Appendix 4. Delivery and reporting to of the outputs to Welsh Assembly Government (DE&T) will be undertaken by the joint project sponsors (listed in

Appendix 5), overseen by the Valleys Regional Park Implementation Group, with direction, technical guidance and an overview of collaboration being provided by the relevant project sub group. The approach is considered the most appropriate for this project, given that the VRP partners are best placed to develop projects on land within their ownership, they are known to have the expertise and procedures to deliver them, and are contributing match funding for the projects within their area. The very nature of the Valleys Regional Park is that there is a partnership culture, and agreement between each of the partners in terms of which organisations are best placed to deliver the individual projects. The Individual projects within the programme will be assessed according to specific criteria taking account of a range of factors including:

- Fit with the Strategic Framework
- Value for money set against the outputs
- Deliverability
- Sustainability as assessed through the Welsh Assembly Governments Creating Sustainable Places Guidance

3.3.2 The procurement procedure is based on the joint project sponsors inviting competitive tenders for any services or work. In circumstances where the joint project sponsors are able to deliver projects using their in house staff, then they would have to make a case justifying an exemption from the procurement procedure. Similarly if the works are of such a specialist nature that only one supplier can provide them, then procurement via a single tender would need to be justified by the joint project sponsor as a special case.

3.3.3 Joint project sponsors will enter into a contractual agreement with the Welsh Assembly Government to deliver the projects. A copy of the individual contracts for each project will be submitted to WEFO at appropriate times during the project delivery period. Each joint project sponsor will part fund the programme, and this funding will be an integral part of the overall match funding for the E4G project. The lead sponsor will be the Welsh Assembly Government that will report directly to WEFO.

4. Need and Demand for the Project

4.1 The Valleys Regional Park has undertaken more than 2 years research and collaborative development and planning with over 30 partner organisations and a wider stakeholder group of 550 people. The background and evidence of need for the project was established by the Valleys Regional Park working document published in July 2007. As part of this the partnership undertook stakeholder workshops, sub group/ focus group workshops and 1:1 development meetings with all partners. Approval in principle has been secured from all Local Authorities, government organisations and voluntary sector organisations to establish the Valleys Regional Park, and seek Convergence Funding to assist in delivering it's objectives. The Action Plan that has resulted from this work has been used to develop a prioritised list of projects that are eligible for Convergence Funding, and can deliver targets

within the ERDF Strategic Programme. Complementary projects that are not eligible for Convergence Funding will be delivered through other funding programmes, thereby enabling the full integrated Action Plan to be realised over a 5-10 year timescale.

- 4.2 The projects that we intend to deliver through this programme are based on need identified by the individual partner organisations. Indeed the actual project ideas have been submitted by the partners. As the VRP area is wider than the Convergence area, this bid is restricted to the following local authority boundaries:

Carmarthenshire, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen.

- 4.3 Within these areas, the project will help to bring benefits to 70 designated Communities First areas, and the key Wales Spatial Plan settlements of Carmarthen, Cross Hands, Ammanford, Pontardawe, Neath, Maesteg, Llantrisant, Pontypridd, Merthyr Tydfil, Bargoed, Blackwood, Caerphilly, Cwmbran and Pontypool. It is anticipated that benefits will also be brought to a number of key settlements outside the VRP area, namely Swansea, Bridgend, Burry Port, Gorseinon, Penllergaer, Swansea, Port Talbot, Porthcawl, and to Newport and Cardiff outside Convergence Funding area.

- 4.4 The unique feature of the Valleys is that there are over 1 Million residents who are within relatively easy reach of some kind of natural environment. Additionally, because the communities are so close to the “attractions” visitors coming from within and outside the region can be encouraged to use facilities and spend cash within the deprived areas, thereby enhancing their regeneration potential. Studies have recognised that the “wildlife economy” can function as a mechanism to realise other public sector objectives such as economic regeneration and the development of tourism activities (Mabis 2007). Tourism including day visits are worth over £1bn in value added to Wales annually (Visit Wales 2005), and the last available nationwide survey of day visitors showed that approximately 20% of the leisure visits in Wales were to the countryside. Research undertaken on behalf of Sustrans determined that there are over 1.5million user trips per annum on the Celtic and Taff Trails, creating an economic impact of £75million per year in the local economies of South Wales, and the creation or safeguarding of 1,400 jobs (University of Central Lancaster 2008).

- 4.5 The development of this project has taken place in close collaboration with other E4G project leads through an E4G Project Coordinating Group, to avoid any duplication, and maximise the opportunities for benefit in the region. There is also an E4G Project Sub Group where each of the project leads meets to share best practice in the following areas, to ensure that there is consistency across the programme.

- Format of a Memorandum of Agreement for Joint Project Sponsors
- Job descriptions for Project Staff
- Procurement

- Scoring Criteria for project selection and prioritisation
- Interpretation of sites and facilities
- Methodology for data collection to report outputs
- Clarification in terms of separation between the projects
- Monitoring and Consistency

4.6 Relationship with Other Environment for Growth Projects

- 4.6.1 In terms of the specific E4G projects, the following clarifies their relationship with the VRP bid:

Heads of the Valleys Tourism Project: Whilst delivering some elements of the VRP Action Plan, there has been mutual agreement with the Heads of the Valleys Team that the specific projects being taken forward in the HOV bid do not form part of the VRP bid, albeit that both bids complement each other.

Communities and Nature Project: This project will not fund anything within the VRP area.

Coastal Access Project: This falls outside the VRP area.

Sustainable Tourism Project: Work is ongoing with Visit Wales to maximise the tourism opportunities for the Valleys by incorporating complementary projects within both bids. For example, Visit Wales is looking to fund a number of "Centres of Excellence". The VRP Partnership is keen to see the Valleys promoted as a Centre of Excellence for Cycling and Walking. The VRP E4G project will deliver cycling infrastructure (connecting routes on the ground) that would provide an opportunity to develop and promote the area as a destination for family cycling holidays as part of a wider cycling and walking centre of excellence idea, but could equally stand alone if the latter does not proceed. There will be clear separation between the projects in terms of the funding arrangements.

Coastal Tourism: This falls outside the VRP area.

Heritage Tourism: With the exception of the Blaenavon Ironworks Project (which is owned by CADW), this project will not fund any work within the VRP area.

- 4.7 As described in paragraph 3.2.1, an ESF bid is being developed to fund the collaborative management of the VRP. If this bid is successful, there will be clear separation in terms of funding between the two bids, although they will clearly complement each other.

5. Options for Project Delivery

- 5.1 The essence of Valleys Regional Park is the collaborative approach to delivering an action plan that has been developed through a partnership of stakeholders. The stakeholders are the delivery organisations that have

worked in association with the Welsh Assembly Government and formerly the Welsh Development Agency for more than 20 years, and therefore have a track record of successful project delivery. The only option for delivering this project in accordance with the Assembly Governments Making the Connections Programme, and indeed the way in which the VRP has been set up, is to do it through its constituent partners. As all the partners will contribute some of their own funds to the projects, they will in effect be joint project sponsors. This option will also ensure that each of the partners has ownership of it's projects, and will make every effort to sustain it and it's associated visitor and job outputs for the long term. It will also maximise the opportunities for a more collaborative approach between the partners in terms of promoting and managing the countryside and heritage assets in the future.

- 5.2 The project will therefore act as a framework that identifies a range of eligible activities together with an agreed set of outcomes and results focussed on specific areas that have already been identified. The joint project sponsors will make applications to the lead project organisation (Welsh Assembly Government) as part of a procurement process that ensures fit with a range of criteria. The criteria will require partners to make environmental sustainability and equal opportunities integral to the design and implementation of the projects. The procurement procedure is set out in Appendix 4. This tried and tested procurement model is thought to be the most efficient and cost effective method to achieve project delivery and ensure outcomes are met. Indeed, many of the joint project sponsors are used to this system of working as part of previous funding programmes managed by the Welsh Assembly Government.
- 5.3 In the event of no Convergence Funding being allocated, the partners will deliver some elements of the programme, but it will be on a much reduced scale, will lack the cohesion required to give the greatest impact, and will not result in the step change required in terms of changing the perception of the area through increased visitor numbers.

6. Outputs and Results

- 6.1 The project has been designed to contribute to delivery of the VRP vision:

The Valleys Regional Park will be a high quality, sustainable network of green space. It will offer outstanding recreational opportunities which will change the image and perception of the Valleys for ever. It will improve the quality of life and health for local people and generate pride in their area. It will create an environment that becomes an attractive destination for visitors and stimulates inward investment.

- 6.2 The primary outputs and results identified for the project that will contribute to achieving the VRP vision are set out in the table overleaf. The overall programme target indicators are also shown.

Primary Outputs Indicator	Programme Target	VRP Output
Initiatives Developing the Natural &/or Historic Environment	21	6
Managed Access to the Countryside	15km	80km**
Primary Results Indicator		
Visits	196,000	100,000
Jobs Created	5,000	200

Cross Fund Flexibility Outputs	VRP Output
Participants	200
Results Achieved	
Participants gaining qualifications	150

* The Expression of Interest identifies 8 initiatives developing the natural &/or historic environment. However consideration has subsequently been given to joining some of these up to produce a more coherent project. The six initiatives include:

➤ **Enhancing our Visitor Centres (Country Parks, Nature Reserves & Heritage Facilities)**

Local Nature Reserves for people and wildlife will now be included within this project, whereas it was formerly identified as a separate initiative.

➤ **Transformational Landscapes for Visitors**

These are landscape scale projects which are not necessarily based on a particular centre, but will encourage visitors to explore a wide area that takes in a range of features.

➤ **The Loops and Links**

Loops and Links part of the programme now includes long distance walking routes, local walking routes and horse riding routes, rather than them being identified separately.

➤ **Community Tourism Initiative**

This programme will fund the employment of staff to encourage visitors into the landscape and its inherent attractions, and to the heritage features so that they get the most out of their visit and are encouraged to return. They will also work with and inspire community individuals to become local ambassadors undertaking tours initially as volunteers, but with the prospect of them setting up their own small tour guide businesses. Funding for training the community ambassadors has been included within this element of the project.

➤ **Events Programme**

The Valleys offer the potential to establish some major outdoor activity events that will help raise the profile of the area for outdoor pursuits and general outdoor recreation

➤ **Community Pride Total Focus Area Campaign: Presenting a Clean and Pleasant Environment for Visitors**

This part of the project will focus on those businesses and communities that through litter, fly-tipping, create an unpleasant environment. Areas which have the greatest potential to increase visitor numbers will be prioritised. The VRP Partnership feels that unless these fundamental problems are resolved, the aims of the project will not be fully realised.

** The target figure within the Expression of Interest identifies 8 kilometres of managed access to the countryside. During the identification and development of projects with partners, it is evident that this figure is far too low. The target has therefore been revised and set at 80km based on the actual programmed projects.

6.3 The number of visits and jobs identified as results, are based on estimates provided by the project partners who are able to anticipate the increased visitor numbers based on their past experience of managing visitor facilities, access routes, ambassadors schemes and events programmes. An estimated 80 new jobs will be created directly as a result of a combination of the visitor centres, transformational landscapes, ambassadors and events projects.

6.4 As regards the access element, the research that the University of Lancaster undertook for Sustrans in 2008, referred to in paragraph 4.4, found that the Celtic and Taff Trails create an economic impact of £75million per year in the local economies of South Wales which can be translated into the creation or safeguarding of 1,400 jobs as a direct result of the trails. Based on the total combined length of the two trails, this equates to 3FTE jobs created or safeguarded and £170,000 worth of economic impact per annum per km length. This provides us with an annual economic impact of 13.6 million and 240 jobs. Bearing in mind that jobs safeguarded are not counted as results within the Convergence Programme, and that not all of the access routes

created will have the same level of use as the Celtic and Taff Trails, these figures have been reduced by 50% which is consistent with the approach taken by the Heads of the Valleys E4G Project. This provides an economic impact of 6.8 million and 120 jobs for the Loops and Links element of the programme.

6.5 Impacts/Opportunities of the Project on the Cross Cutting Theme of Equality

6.5.1 The project will comply with and promote the Welsh Assembly Government's Equal Opportunities Policy.

6.5.2 The collaboration that is fundamental to this project will further raise the profile of equal opportunities and ensure a common cross sector and cross boundary approach to it in the following areas:

- Project development and implementation will involve all sectors of the community regardless of age, sex, race, ability etc. Particular effort will be placed on encouraging men women, ethnic minorities, disabled and disadvantaged members of the community to get involved.
- Joint project sponsors will be required to collect equal opportunities data using the monitoring form (Appendix 7).
- There will be initiatives to build community confidence which has been identified as a barrier to the economic regeneration of the Valleys. Particular emphasis will be placed on reaching those furthest from the market.
- The improvement of existing and creation of new recreational facilities and other infrastructure will provide an opportunity to demonstrate best practice in terms of incorporating DDA compliance at the design stage of project development. There will be specific initiatives that provide opportunities for the disabled to access the facilities based on examples of best practice that the partners have used previously. Information relating to access to facilities and activities will include accessibility information for people with physical disabilities. This will cover gradient and surface information for access routes, facilities and provisions and public transport links. Clear and specific information will be provided on activities that are available to people with disabilities.
- Through community based activities, projects will encourage community cohesion and discourage any form of segregation, by working with community organisations such as the Communities First Support Network, Groundwork and the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers. The Ambassador Programme will help to tackle social exclusion through environmental and heritage initiatives that increase visitor numbers.

- The projects will encourage local people to make more use of their natural environment as a recreational resource, and to champion it, thereby turning negative perceptions into positive opportunities that encourage more visits. Through this there will be opportunities to break down social barriers and encourage greater community cohesion.
- Training opportunities will be targeted at all sectors, focussing on areas where there are skills shortages. Particular emphasis will be placed on reaching those furthest from the market.
- Marketing, promotional and training materials will be made available bilingually and in accessible formats, with easy to read font, large print, audio etc.
- Signage at visitor centres, facilities and activity areas will be provided bilingually, in large print, appropriate font style with good use of colour, text and background.
- All recruitment and job opportunities will be made available to all regardless of age, gender, race religion or belief, sexual orientation or disability.
- Training and events venues will be physically accessible and within convenient proximity to public transport routes.

6.6 Impacts/Opportunities of the Project on the Cross Cutting Theme of Environmental Sustainability

6.6.1 The VRP Action Plan has been developed with sustainability being a fundamental theme throughout. Indeed the to facilitate a structured approach, the themed cross boundary projects section of the Action Plan is set out in three sections covering economic, social and environmental initiatives, albeit that all three sections are interrelated. In terms of this particular bid:

- All projects within the VRP Programme of activities will be assessed against the Welsh Assembly Government's Creating Sustainable Places Sustainability Integration Toolkit (Appendix 9), which will be one of the essential eligibility criteria for inclusion.
- Any new build, refurbishments or extensions will be required to demonstrate how they will meet BREEAM "excellent" (or equivalent) as a minimum standard, before authorisation to proceed will be granted within the procurement procedures. A certificate will be issued to WEFO to confirm that this has been achieved following the post-construction review stage.
- Construction projects will be required to have a site waste management plan, including pollution prevention controls. Such conditions will be an

essential component of any tender documentation. The procurement procedure will ensure that no projects can proceed to implementation stage until such conditions have been satisfied.

- Projects will maximise the available opportunities to promote the use of recycled materials and energy conservation systems in any construction, as a demonstration of best practice. At least 10% of the value of the materials used should be from recycled and re-used sources. This will be written into all contracts and the contractor will be required to provide evidence that this has been achieved. Where re-used or recycled materials cannot be sourced, the materials will be sourced from as local and sustainable sources as possible. Information on this will be a requirement of any contracts.
- Should any projects require an Environmental Impact Assessment under current legislation, the details of such assessments and a report will be provided to WEFO.
- Within the procurement procedures, no authorisation to proceed will be issued until the joint project sponsor has accepted and agreed in writing to comply with all environmental legislation.
- As the VRP partnership includes experts on environmental management, the project is not expected to fund any environmental management training.
- Projects will be required to support and incorporate renewable energy sourcing facilities. The VRP has organisations on its partnership that can assist with this. The requirement will be part of the procurement process, and condition of any authorisation to proceed.
- There will be no inappropriate development in protected areas eg Natura 2000 sites. Notwithstanding this in other non designated areas projects will be required to take account of local ecological issues assessed through reference to CCW'S Phase 1 Habitat Survey and further site based ecological surveys.
- Integral to the whole concept will be the development of new and the enhancement and promotion of existing cycle way and walking routes, as an alternative transport mechanism within Local and Regional Transport Plans. Communities will be encouraged to access the countryside on their doorstep in preference to travelling by car to sites further afield, and opportunities to use public transport will be promoted. In terms of individual project funded from the programme, a commitment to prepare a travel plan will be required at the procurement stage, and authorisation to proceed will be conditional on this. The travel plan will set out proposals to minimise car use and reduce CO2 emissions.

- The project will develop an environmental policy to help achieve the objectives detailed above. This will be done through the creation of documentation for the joint project sponsors based on the Eco Code guidance issued by WEFO.
- Any training provided to staff and volunteers will include environmental sustainability awareness raising, and promotion of the project's environmental policies.
- The visitor centre improvements proposed together with the transformation of landscapes for visitors will provide an opportunity to enhance biodiversity and develop more sustainable land management techniques. As a by product of the activities, the Tourist Guides will have an educational role in informing visitors about more sustainable lifestyles.
- A network of green spaces that encourages visitors to exercise in the outdoors, will also serve to encourage people to use their environment as part of maintaining their health and well-being.
- All projects within the programme will be developed with in close consultation with a business advisor funded through the ESF project referred to in paragraph 3.2.1. This will maximise the potential for the projects to act as a catalyst for small business start up which is the key to the long term and financial sustainability of the projects.

7. Financial Profile

- 7.1 The expenditure forecast has been developed over the last six months in association with a wider Valleys Regional Park Action Plan (Appendix 6). The latter is an integrated document which draws together the environment, tourism and heritage aspirations of more than 30 partner organisations who have signed up to the VRP vision, and committed to cross sector and cross boundary. The partner organisations who are joint project sponsors in this bid, have provided the estimated costs based on many years experience of developing and managing similar projects. The table below has been prepared using the detailed project cost estimates provided by the joint project sponsors, with the programming being done in accordance with the timescales for recruiting staff and preparing works contracts. Clearly to deliver all the eligible elements of the action plan would cost more than could possibly be funded within a single bid, but the projects have been prioritised according to fit with the programme targets incorporating those projects that have match funding and will deliver the greatest outputs. A phase 2 project may be necessary, to deliver the outstanding eligible elements of the action plan, subject to the availability of further funding.
- 7.2 Table One below provides details of how the funding has been allocated to each programme. The apportionment is based on the relative priorities identified by the Partner organisations/joint project sponsors. The projects have been separated into environmental and non environmental initiatives as

defined by Regulation 1080/2006. Article 4, (4). This is to make clear that the environmental elements fall within the €25 Million threshold for environmental projects.

Table 1: Project Programme

	MANAGEMENT	ACTIVITY	GROSS COST(£)
	Programme Management	Office and IT costs, administration/technical support, financial and project monitoring and evaluation, and audit costs	0.9M
	Project Management (Project Delivery)	Project Management in individual local authorities to ensure capacity to deliver the programme	0.6M
	MANAGEMENT TOTAL		1.5M
	ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME	ACTIVITY	GROSS COST(£)
1	Transformational Landscapes for Visitors	Creating a minimum of 5 strategic landscape scale initiatives, that can be promoted as visitor destinations, which are not necessarily focussed on any particular visitor centre.	2.5M
2	The Loops and Links	The improvement of existing and creation of new walking, cycling and horse riding routes to provide a sustainable network of trails that encourage visitors to explore the countryside and access the country parks, nature reserves and heritage facilities. They will provide largely off road physical connections between the visitor centres to encourage access into the wider countryside.	5.0M
3	Community Tourism Initiative	This part of the project will maximise the opportunities to attract visitors from within and outside the area by using Community Tourism Development Guides that take tourists out into the local countryside, or to key heritage facilities. There will be high profile marketing of regional and local events that encourage participation in these activities. The officers will work with communities to encourage community individuals to become ambassadors who through appropriate training, could themselves become tourist guides, eventually providing them with the opportunity to set up in business undertaking this activity. The funding will cover the cost of employing the development officers. Includes £250,000 for the HERIAN Programme.	1.0M
4	Training the Ambassadors (ESF)	The Community Ambassadors will receive support and training from this programme so that they themselves can conduct tours. Includes 250,000 for HERIAN Training.	0.7M
5	Community Pride Total Focus Area Campaign: Presenting a Clean and Pleasant Environment for	A "Community Pride Total Focus Area Campaign" within the VRP area. The project will focus on businesses and householders in problem areas where there is the greatest potential for increased visitor numbers through the other parts of the programme. The emphasis will be on Enforcement,	0.75M

	Visitors	Engagement and Education, specifically in relation to the objectives of the wider project ie to attract increased visitor numbers.	
	ENVIRONMENT TOTAL		9.95M
	NON ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME	ACTIVITY	GROSS COST(£)
6	Enhancing our Visitor Centres (Country Parks, Nature Reserves & Heritage Facilities)	Improving visitor centres through infrastructure improvements, signage, interpretation, activities and promotion.	9.0M
7	Events Programme	The development of a coordinated events programme across the Valleys developing existing major events and establishing at least six new events which attract visitors from outside the region. There will also be coordinated programmes of smaller events such as localised cycling and themed activity events with participation from a range of organisations. Includes 1M for the HERIAN Events Programme.	1.3M
	NON ENVIRONMENT TOTAL		10.3M
	TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	Total sum of Management, Environment, and Non Environment Programmes.	21.75M

7.3 During the preparation of this business plan, considerable attention has been paid to identifying all possible sources of funding for the projects within the programme. A significant proportion has been identified within the existing partner organisations, and the Welsh Assembly Government, but there is currently a shortfall in funding of £9.6 million which is sought from the ERDF Programme. The project delivery profile sets out the expenditure over the three year period, and identifies the sources of funding that make up the total project cost.

8. Added Value

8.1 The VRP project will bring about a new approach to the development and management of a whole range of countryside and heritage facilities across a wide area, thereby creating a far more cohesive tourism offer that is currently the case. It will encourage an integrated cross sector and cross boundary approach to the way in which the partner organisations work together to collectively achieve economic regeneration based on a wide range of sites, facilities, connecting routes and outdoor spaces, which currently operate to varying degrees independently of each other.

8.2 Not only will the project encourage a more coordinated approach, but it will raise the quality of existing facilities, and create physical connecting routes that are fundamental to the promotion of the area as a tourism destination. It will also create an environment that encourages entrepreneurship as a result of the new outdoor recreational opportunities that will be created, and the

collective positive marketing and promotion of these. It is this that will result in the creation of permanent new jobs and self employment.

- 8.3 Systems will be established to ensure that the positive outcomes of the project are measured. In association with this, visitor spend will be measured on an annual basis by “STEAM” which is an accepted model for measuring the economic benefits of tourism, and is currently used by most of the joint project sponsors.
- 8.4 It is unlikely that the project could be delivered without the support of European funding. The reality is that the project sponsors would probably continue to manage their sites and facilities independently without the benefit of the investment that will bring them up to the required standards, develop some consistency and create or upgrade the connecting access routes. The opportunity to collectively promote and market the area as a tourism destination based on these opportunities would also be lost. Having said this, there are a number of local small scale initiatives that demonstrate best practice in terms of attracting visitors and promoting private sector opportunities, but these are few and have lacked the required support to achieve their full potential. Additionally, in the absence of a cross sector, cross boundary collaborative approach, and a quality tourism infrastructure, these have not been able to expand and be replicated in other areas. The projects within this programme will support the expansion and replication of good practice in terms of destination improvement and management that will therefore act as a catalyst for private sector business development.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 9.1 The project will be developed and managed in accordance with the principles of Prince 2 project management procedures. An essential component will be adherence to a series of quality standards which includes sustainability, both in terms of the balance of economic, social and environmental considerations, and the long term financial sustainability of the projects. Joint project sponsors will also be required to plan their projects in consultation with other relevant VRP professionals to maximise the visitor, job and economic opportunities, as well as ensuring community support. Ultimately they will need to demonstrate that they are able to deliver their projects to time and as far as is reasonably possible, within budget.
- 9.2 The procurement procedure detailed in Appendix 4, has been prepared to ensure that the partners are clear about their obligations in relation to the above, and will commit them to provide detailed project progress updates, and reports on the achievement of their project targets.
- 9.3 The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (Appendix 8) provides more detail in terms of specific monitoring and evaluation that will be undertaken within the project in terms of measuring the outputs and results.

- 9.4 The Welsh Assembly Government has established procedures for dealing with project bids, monitoring expenditure and processing claims. The finance and technical support officers identified within the project will use the existing procedures to monitor project progress in terms expenditure and the achievement of outcomes in liaison with the joint project sponsors.
- 9.5 Monitoring reports will be submitted to WEFO at six monthly intervals, and there will be a mid term project review to assess progress and expenditure. The mid term review will also include evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the project in delivering it's targets.
- 9.6 There will be two reports prepared to disseminate information on the project activities and results; one will be prepared at the mid term review and the other following project completion. These reports will serve to:
- Provide the existing partners with a comprehensive update on their collective achievements.
 - Inform other organisations of the activities and achievements.
 - Inform the private sector of the opportunities for business start up.
 - Convey the good news to the media.
- 9.7 The project will be delivered in accordance with the equal opportunities monitoring objectives set out in paragraph 6.5, and the environmental sustainability objectives set out in paragraph 6.6.

10. Post Funding / Continuation Strategy

- 10.1 Ensuring the long term sustainability of projects within this programme is a key criteria that the joint project sponsors will commit to, to access funding through this programme. Projects will be assessed according to a range of criteria including the Welsh Assembly Government's Creating Sustainable Places. This will ensure that the long term sustainability of the projects is secure.
- 10.2 Much of what is proposed is designed to provide a catalyst for private sector engagement that will yield revenue support for the ongoing management of the visitor facilities. The project will also provide an opportunity to develop visitor payback schemes that contribute to the management of the facilities. Most of the facilities including the visitor centres and access routes fall within the ownership or responsibility of the local authorities, and there are revenue budgets in place to manage them following investment from the project. This finance will be supplemented by additional visitor spend as a result of the project. There is also an opportunity to make use of volunteer assistance to manage the facilities and routes. In terms of the events and tourist guide programmes, resources will be allocated to continue to deliver these. There is a good business case for local authorities allocating revenue to support this on the basis that the activities result in significant financial spend in the area as a

result of day visits and overnight stays. Additionally, many of the activities will be operated by individual entrepreneurs or SME's funded through revenue from visitors who will pay for organised activities that provided. Others will be run by volunteers. Through a combination of these, the joint project sponsors will be required to demonstrate that they have or can acquire the resources to manage the facilities and continue the activities after the European funding has ceased.

- 10.3 The Welsh Assembly Government in it's role as lead project sponsor will ensure that there are sufficient staff resources in place following the end of the project to compete all the necessary financial claims and reports relating to the project. There will be a planned project closure phase which will ensure that all the project targets have been completed in line with the agreed programme, and that the outputs and results have been collected and evidenced.
- 10.4 An external evaluation will be undertaken to evaluate the outputs and results of the project. This will be used to inform the further development and improvement of the programme of activities, events and promotion of the visitor centres and routes so we are able to build on the success of the project, and influence the phase two project that will be submitted to deliver parts of the VRP action plan that were beyond the scope of the current project.
- 10.5 All this information will be collated into a final project report and exhibition that will take the form of a video, PowerPoint presentation and displays on boards which give examples of the projects delivered and results and outputs. These will be available for all the joint project sponsors to use and display on their web sites.

11. Risks

- 11.1 Table 3 overleaf identifies the potential risks associated with this project together with the measures in place to minimise the risks.

Table 3: Risks

Category	Risk	Minimisation Method
Operational Risks	Changes in demand that may impact on successful project delivery	There has been extensive involvement with the joint project sponsors in the development of the VRP action plan, so there is sufficient clarity in terms of the projects included.
	Capacity issues within the organisations resulting in problems designing and managing the projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Funding has been included within the bid to secure some additional project managers to be hosted within those organisations which have capacity issues. ➤ The collaborative delivery model will encourage flexibility in terms of organisations being able to provide services for others.
	Ensuring consistency of approach to the monitoring of outcomes.	There is an Environment for Growth Project Sub Group where all the E4G project sponsors are working together to develop a consistent

		approach to data collection and monitoring.
	Joint project sponsors have difficulty meeting delivery targets.	There will be regular liaison with project leads to ensure they are progressing as planned. Any issues will therefore be picked up early and resolved.
Compliance with Legislation	Failure to comply with statutory legislation	The procurement procedure will ensure that the joint project sponsors comply with procurement regulations and demonstrate their compliance with statutory legislation.
Procurement Risks	Failure to secure suitable contractors	The joint project sponsors have a good track record of working with a range of suitable contractors that operate in the area.
Project Management Risks	Inability to lead, control and deliver the programme to agreed timescales and budgets	The project is lead by DE&T within the Strategic Regeneration area of the Welsh Assembly Government which has appropriate management procedures. An experienced project manager will be appointed to lead the programme, who will report to the VRP Executive Board. The Project Management Board role will be undertaken by the VRP Management Team.
	Lack of financial control	The project finance officer will be hosted within and work to the Assembly's financial management system.
Funding Risks	Loss of programmed match funding	Most of the match funding has already been identified. If any of the partner match funding changes, the project staff will work with other organisations to identify new match funding opportunities.
	Failure to secure TMF resulting in a risk to the HERIAN Ambassadors Programme	A robust TMF application will be submitted.
Organisational and Financial Risks	Cash flow problems whilst awaiting for claim payments	This is not a problem for Welsh Assembly Government. It could be an issue for third sector sponsors. In these circumstances a more frequent claims payment procedure could be adopted through WAG.
State Aid Risks	Linda Weaver agreed to complete	Linda Weaver agreed to complete

12. Publicity

- 12.1 The project will be publicly promoted as an integral part of an enhanced Valleys tourism brand that has yet to be agreed between Welsh Assembly Government and Visit Wales.
- 12.2 All projects, documentation, events and media promotions produced with funding from this programme will recognise the contribution of EU funding. Any launches, or press releases will be planned in liaison with WEFO's PR Manager. Contractual agreements with the joint project sponsors will include these requirements as conditions.

- 12.3 All projects, documentation, events and media promotions produced with funding from this programme will be bilingual, and prepared in suitable font and large print that is easy to read by all.
- 12.3 The mid term and final project reports will publicise the activities and success of the project within the wider context of the Convergence Funding Programme.
- 12.4 The Environment for Growth Project Sub Group will ensure consistency in the way that the individual projects are publicised.
- 12.5 The management structure for the Valleys Regional Park will ensure the pooling of expertise and resources through an Identity and Marketing sub group that will steer promotion and marketing across the whole VRP, ensuring consistency in terms of communication, PR and marketing effort.
- 12.6 A fundamental role of the Valleys Regional Park will be to exchange best practice for the benefit of the wider partnership. There will be project delivery sub groups that have an overview of activities across the VRP, and these will identify best practice that can be rolled out to other areas, thus creating a more consistent visitor experience.

APPENDIX 1

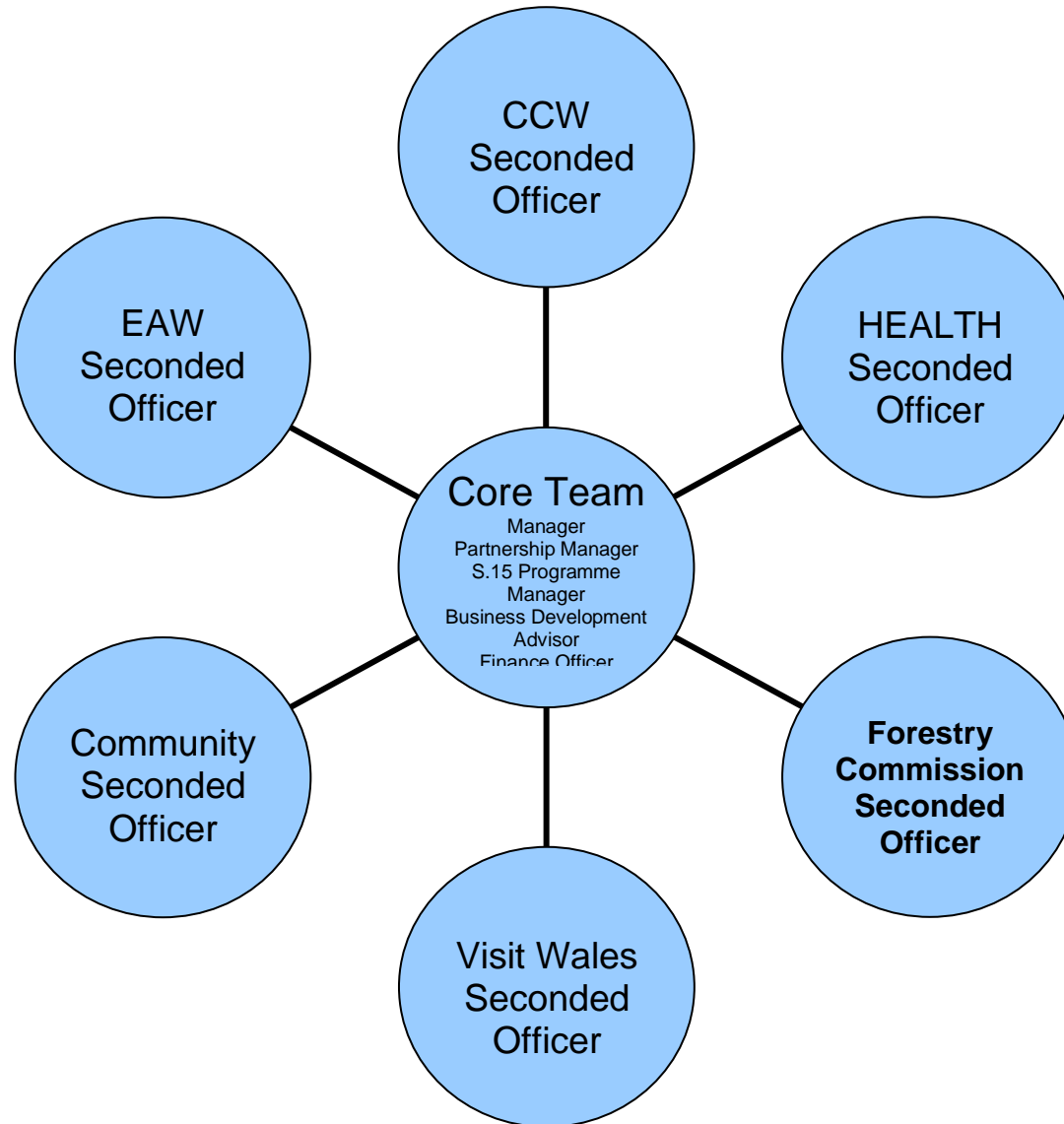
VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Valleys Regional Park
Executive Board

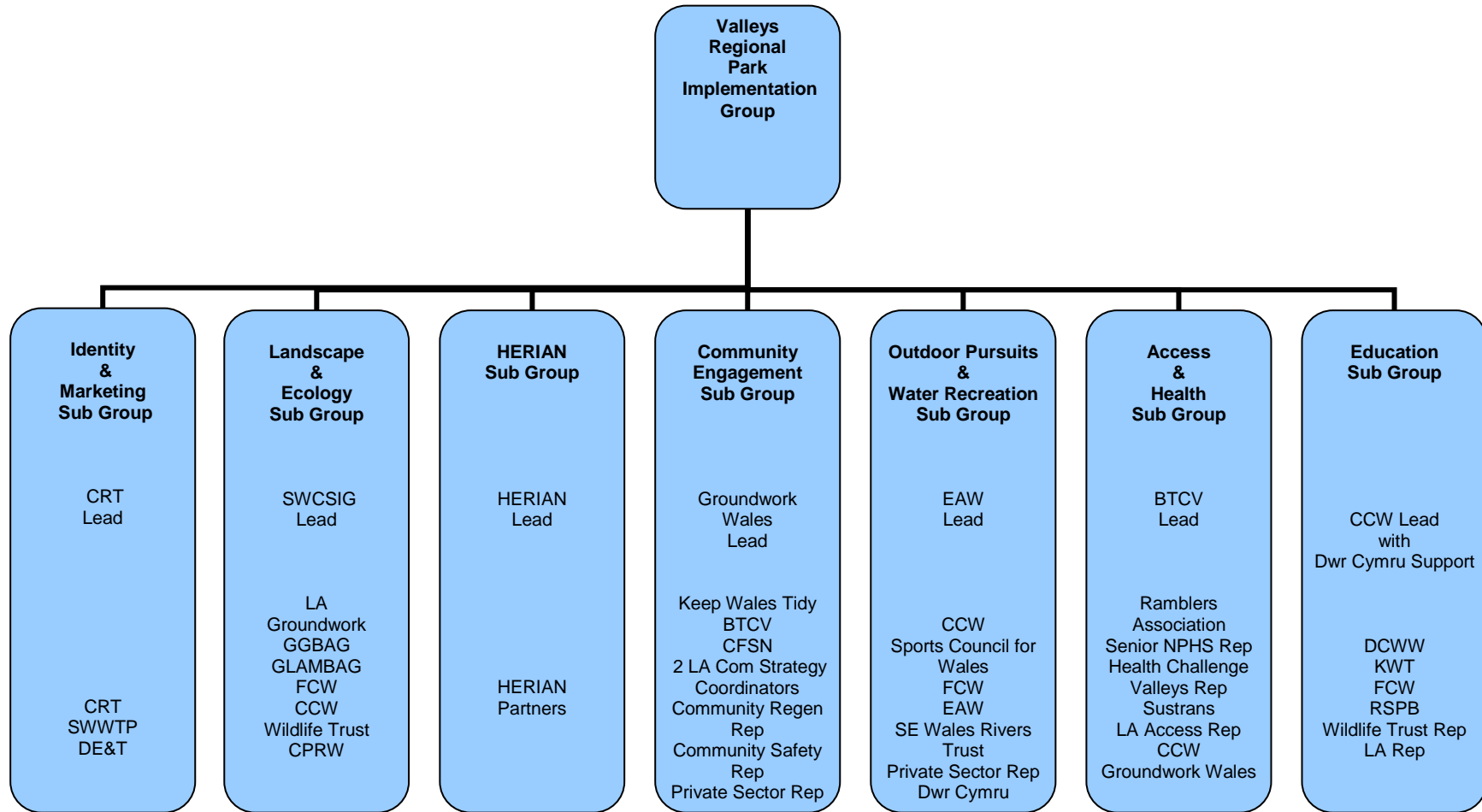
Valleys Regional Park Management Team

Valleys Regional Park Implementation Group

Valleys Regional Park Management Team



Sub Groups & Sub Group Membership



Skills will be a consideration within all the groups

APPENDIX 2

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK MANAGER

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST REF:

DEPARTMENT: The Economy & Transport

DIVISION: Regeneration

SALARY: 45-50k

RESPONSIBLE TO: Senior Environment Manager

CAR ALLOWANCE: Casual

NATURE OF THE POST:

Main Purpose of Post

1. To manage the Valleys Regional Park in terms of it's role as a collaborative management system for environment, heritage and tourism services within the context of Making the Connections and the Welsh Assembly Government's Strategic Regeneration Programme.
2. To manage delivery of the Environment for Growth Convergence Funding Programme for VRP, and coordinate the most effective use of other external and internal funding streams to maximise target outcomes and results.

Principal Accountabilities

1. To manage the Environment for Growth Convergence Funded Project.
2. Manage the project delivery team.
3. To maximise the use of other grant funding and domestic funds to enhance the programme .
4. To develop a culture of collaboration within each of the joint project sponsor

organisations, and between each of the VRP partner organisations.

5. Support the organisations in delivering the VRP action plan through the funded programme.
6. Champion the opportunities that the VRP can provide in terms of regeneration through environment and heritage based tourism as set out in the project.
7. Work with colleagues within the Welsh Assembly Government to deliver the VRP programme.
8. Use the Environment for Growth funded projects as a platform for the development of the region as a tourism destination.
9. To act as a champion for the Valleys and generally raise the profile of the area.
10. To prepare of a mid term project progress report, and a final end of project progress report.

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP COORDINATOR

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST REF:

DEPARTMENT: The Economy & Transport

DIVISION: Regeneration

SALARY: 30-35k

RESPONSIBLE TO: Valleys Regional Park Manager

CAR ALLOWANCE: Casual

NATURE OF THE POST: Fixed Term for 3 years (with possible continuation subject to available funding)

Main Purpose of Post

1. To coordinate the Valleys Regional Park (VRP) management meetings including the Executive Board, Management Team, Implementation Group and support the project sub groups, thereby ensuring effective communications in the delivery of the Convergence funding programme.
2. To communicate the VRP concept and delivery progress to stakeholders and other bodies.

Principal Accountabilities

1. To coordinate and provide a secretariat role for the VRP Executive Board, Management Team and Implementation Group.
2. To provide professional support to the Partnership in advocacy and communication.

3. Support the VRP Manager in the development of work programmes that deliver the VRP action plan.
4. Maintain effective liaison between the various VRP groups and partnerships.
5. To lead on relationship building with new partners and maintain good working relationships with existing partners.
6. To act as a champion for the Valleys and generally raise the profile of the area.
7. Lead external communication, advocacy and profile to key audiences within the Valleys and beyond.
8. Prepare a regular newsletter on VRP delivery progress.
9. Lead on the preparation of exhibition materials for the project including videos/DVD's and display boards.
10. Assist with the preparation of a mid term project progress report, and a final end of project progress report.

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK FINANCE OFFICER

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST REF:

DEPARTMENT: The Economy & Transport

DIVISION: Regeneration

SALARY: 25-30k

RESPONSIBLE TO: Head of Finance and Performance

CAR ALLOWANCE:

NATURE OF THE POST: Fixed Term for 3 years (with possible continuation subject to available funding)

Main Purpose of Post

- To provide financial support to deliver of the Valleys Regional Park (VRP) Convergence funded Project hosted by the Welsh Assembly Government.

Principal Accountabilities

- To provide support to the Valleys Regional Park Manager in relation to project finance management, having due regard to the Assembly's financial procedures and European project rules.
- To establish a system for managing the finance associated with the VRP Project including monitoring expenditure, and preparing regular monitoring reports.
- To attend meetings of the VRP Core Group to report of expenditure.
- To deal with individual claims for grant from the project partners.
- To prepare and submit financial claims to WEFO on a quarterly basis.

- To lead in the preparation of the mid term project review by preparing a comprehensive expenditure update and forecast for the remainder of the project period.
 - During the course of undertaking the day to day duties, the post holder will be expected to assist in promoting a positive image of the Valleys to all sectors of the community and organisations.
 - To have regard to the Assembly Government's responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc., Act 1974 and to comply with office standing instructions and the Health and Safety Policy.
9. To maintain confidentiality at all times.
 10. To carry out any tasks that may reasonably be required from time to time by the Line Manager.

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK TECHNICAL SUPPORT ASSISTANT

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST REF:

DEPARTMENT: The Economy & Transport

DIVISION: Regeneration

SALARY: 18–20k

RESPONSIBLE TO: Valleys Regional Park Manager

CAR ALLOWANCE: Casual

NATURE OF THE POST: Fixed Term for 3 years (with possible continuation subject to available funding)

Main Purpose of Post

1. To provide administration support to deliver of the Valleys Regional Park Convergence funded Project hosted by the Welsh Assembly Government.

Principal Accountabilities

1. To provide support to the Valleys Regional Park Manager in relation to project management, office management and administration, having due regard to the Assembly's agreed standard office procedures.
2. To distribute the mail.
3. To provide a service in relation to typing, filing, telephone answering and taking minutes when necessary for the project.
4. To arrange meetings and maintain the diary for the Valleys Regional Park Programme Manager, 3.and to take minutes of meetings as appropriate.

3. To work on your own initiative in responding to general enquiries, either written or on the telephone.
4. To deal courteously with enquiries from members of the public, and representatives from the partner organisations.
5. During the course of undertaking the day to day duties, the post holder will be expected to assist in promoting a positive image of the Valleys to all sectors of the community and organisations.
6. To have regard to the Assembly Government's responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc., Act 1974 and to comply with office standing instructions and the Health and Safety Policy.
7. To maintain confidentiality at all times.
8. To carry out any tasks that may reasonably be required from time to time by the Line Manager.

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK PROJECT MANAGER (INSERT SPECIFIC PROJECT)

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST REF:

DEPARTMENT: Insert host organisation details

DIVISION: Insert host organisation details

SALARY: 30-35K per annum

RESPONSIBLE TO: Insert host organisation details

CAR ALLOWANCE: Casual

NATURE OF THE POST: Fixed Term for 3 years (with possible continuation subject to available funding)

Main Purpose of Post

To manage and coordinate the delivery of a range of environment, tourism and heritage initiatives across **insert host organisation or area of coverage**, as part of a drive to develop and promote the Valleys as a visitor destination.

To ensure that there is a collaborative approach to managing the projects within the Valleys Regional Park (VRP) Environment for Growth Convergence Funding Project insofar as they relate to **insert host organisation**, and to ensure that the projects are developed and implemented within the context of a regional approach across the VRP in collaboration with the various themed cross boundary project groups.

Principal Accountabilities

1. To plan, prepare and oversee the implementation of a programme of environment and heritage projects and activities.

2. To bring appropriate teams of technical expertise together to manage an integrated programme of projects and activities, thereby ensuring a joined up approach to delivery.
3. To work with and support the work of other technical officers within the VRP partner organisations to implement the programme.
4. To adopt a partnership approach in all aspects of the work.
5. To collate information on outputs and results arising from the projects.
6. To be prepared to take a hands on approach in terms of the design and management of projects.
7. To monitor and report on visitor numbers and perceptions of the area, and generally act as champion for the Valleys
8. To contribute to the maintenance of a healthy, safe and effective working environment within the guidelines set down by (insert host organisation)

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST REF:

DEPARTMENT: Insert host organisation details

DIVISION: Insert host organisation details

SALARY: 20-25K per annum

RESPONSIBLE TO: Insert host organisation details

CAR ALLOWANCE: Casual

NATURE OF THE POST: Fixed Term for 3 years (with possible continuation subject to available funding)

Main Purpose of Post

To promote the Valleys as a visitor destination and develop and inspire community individuals and groups to act as ambassadors by undertaking duties relating to visitor/tourist management, stakeholder communication, and the monitoring and promotion of heritage and environment within the Valleys Regional Park (VRP), through the Environment for Growth Convergence Funding Project.

Principal Accountabilities

1. To plan, prepare and implement a programme of heritage and environmental events and activities involving community individuals and groups.
2. To prepare cost estimates and work schedules and to plan and deliver events programmes.
3. To assist in the delivery of heritage and environment community engagement, programmes as a way of promoting the area as a visitor destination. This will

include providing support and mentoring to community individuals undertaking their Green Badge Tour Guide Training to become community ambassadors.

4. To lead tours of landscapes and sites of heritage or environmental interest.
5. To work with and support the work of other technical officers within the VRP partner organisations to manage the network of access routes to encourage greater visitor numbers.
6. To adopt a partnership approach in all aspects of the work.
7. To organise, promote and lead programmes of walks, activities and events.
8. To organise training for community ambassadors.
9. To liaise with landowners, and officers from the VRP area.
10. To work with other organisations, landowners and the local police to assist in monitoring activities that discourage visits, including misuse of the countryside by antisocial behaviour, particularly in relation to off road motorcycling.
11. To monitor and report on visitor numbers and perceptions of the area, and generally act as champion for the Valleys
12. To investigate complaints received from members of the public and visitors, and liaise with others to resolve the cause of these.
13. To contribute to the maintenance of a healthy, safe and effective working environment within the guidelines set down by (insert host organisation)

APPENDIX 3

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK ENVIRONMENT FOR GROWTH PROJECT

SELECTION AND PRIORITISATION CRITERIA

Selection and Prioritisation Criteria

There are two stages to the selection and prioritisation of projects within this programme.

1. Business Planning Stage

1.1 Projects within this programme must contribute to the delivery of the strategic aims set out in the Valleys Regional Park Framework Working Draft, and be identified in the VRP Action Plan. This by definition, means that they must focus largely based on the natural/semi natural environment and or heritage (natural, industrial or cultural) and maximise the opportunities that lie therein to attract visitors.

1.2 Projects have therefore been selected from the VRP Action Plan based on the following criteria:

- Potential to attract additional visitors
- Number of Jobs likely to be created
- Number of participants (ESF element)
- Number of participants likely to achieve qualifications (ESF element)
- Area/Distance of Improved Access to the Countryside
- Potential for inclusion within the 6 cross sector, cross boundary collaborative initiatives across the Valleys. All the projects need to have a collaborative approach.
- Contribution to the overall VRP concept.

2. Project Procurement Stage

2.1 A more thorough selection process will take place at the procurement stage for individual projects. All the criteria in 1.2 will apply, but additionally projects will be assessed according to the following:

- Value for money as defined by the tender processes, and or forecast outputs.
- Availability of match funding from the joint project sponsor.
- Design quality factors.
- Equality assessment as detailed in paragraph 6.5 of the business plan
- Sustainability assessment including the environmental sustainability elements detailed in paragraph 6.6 and Appendix 9 of the business plan.
- Extent of community engagement and methodologies used.
- Potential to act as a catalyst for community enterprise or private sector business start up.
- Long term sustainability/continuity after the funding has ended.
- Detailed collaborative arrangements where joint project sponsors will need to demonstrate how they work with each other across the Valleys, particularly in relation to promotion and marketing.

APPENDIX 4

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE

Valleys Regional Park Project Procurement Procedure

1. EOI Approval
2. Business Planning: > Project ideas agreed & prioritised by VRP Project Management Groups
> Project delivery sponsors agreed for each project
3. WEFO E4G project approval
4. Application to DE&T for Approval in Principle (AIP): Project delivery sponsor submits to DE&T, an in principle application for funding to deliver agreed project, with details of costs, targets and how funding criteria will be met. This will include adherence to selection and prioritisation criteria as set out in Appendix 3.
5. DE&T AIP: DE&T grants approval in principle (AIP), allowing detailed procurement process to proceed.
6. DE&T Approval of Procurement Documents: Documents (contracts, drawings etc. incorporating specifications in compliance with SD guidelines) submitted to DE&T for approval of procurement procedure. If procuring through competitive tender, include proposed list of tenderers (who have to be registered on Buy 4 Wales website).
7. Invite & Receive Tenders: For procurement by competitive tender, project delivery sponsor invites, receives and evaluates tenders.
8. Report on Tenders: Project delivery sponsor sends report to DE&T, with request for detailed approval to be granted on the basis of the lowest, or otherwise most suitable tender. If projects are procured without tendering, a report is still required to justify that the procurement method provides value for money.
9. Detailed Approval: Full approval to proceed with works granted by DE&T.
10. Contract Period: Project delivery sponsor oversees contract and informs DE&T when works are complete, but not paid for in full (retentions held).
11. DE&T Inspection of Works: DE&T inspects work and agrees payment of any retention funds.
12. Grant Claim: Project delivery sponsor submits grant claim to DE&T.
13. Grant Payment & Draw Down from WEFO: DE&T pays agreed grant to project delivery sponsor if the project has been delivered according to the agreed specification. DE&T draws down grant from WEFO.

- Final Project Report: DE&T collates project output information, including photographic evidence from project delivery sponsors, prepares a detailed final project report, and submits to WEFO.

APPENDIX 5

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK JOINT PROJECT SPONSORS

Valleys Regional Park Environment for Growth Phase 1 Business Plan

List of Joint Project Sponsors

Lead Sponsor: Welsh Assembly Government

Joint Sponsor 1: Environment Agency Wales

Joint Sponsor 2: Capital Region Tourism

Joint Sponsor 3: Sustrans

Joint Sponsor 4: Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water

Joint Sponsor 5: Groundwork Wales

Joint Sponsor 6: Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Joint Sponsor 7: Bridgend County Borough Council

Joint Sponsor 8: Caerphilly County Borough Council

Joint Sponsor 9: Carmarthenshire County Council

Joint Sponsor 10: Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Joint Sponsor 11: Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Joint Sponsor 12: Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council

Joint Sponsor 13: City and County of Swansea

Joint Sponsor 14: Torfaen County Borough Council

Joint Sponsor 15: Dulais Valley Partnership

Joint Sponsor 16: Groundwork Caerphilly

Joint Sponsor 17: Groundwork Bridgend & Neath Port Talbot

Joint Sponsor 18: Groundwork Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taff

Joint Sponsor 19: National Museums and Galleries of Wales

Joint Sponsor 20: Forestry Commission Wales

APPENDIX 6

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK

ACTION PLAN

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK ACTION PLAN

2008-2013

SUMMARY (v13)

Introduction

This Action Plan has been developed by a partnership of over 40 stakeholder organisations from national and local government, community and the voluntary sector whose aims are to work together to achieve the shared Valleys Regional Park vision:

The Valleys Regional Park will be a high quality, sustainable network of green space. It will offer outstanding recreational opportunities which will change the image and perception of the Valleys for ever. It will improve the quality of life and health for local people and generate pride in their area. It will create an environment that becomes an attractive destination for visitors and stimulates inward investment.

Through the implementation of this action plan covering a period of five years, we have a unique opportunity to develop an integrated and sustainable cross sector, cross boundary approach to managing our fantastic environmental and heritage assets, and to maximise the opportunities therein to stimulate economic prosperity through recreation and tourism. Community regeneration will feature prominently in the programme, as will tackling anti-social behaviour in rural and urban fringe areas, together with measures to improve and maintain the health and well-being of our population.

The action plan programme has been developed in such a way that it can be delivered through project management groups which have responsibility for delivering specific themes. The groups will be led by experts in the relevant field of work, and have representation from relevant delivery organisations from across the whole Valleys Regional Park.

Sustainable development will be an underlying theme throughout the programme, which is reflected in the structure of this document where project themes fall into economy, environment and people. A fourth section, Park Infrastructure encompasses all three. As the economic value in the heritage and environment of the Valleys is clearly not being exploited, all projects will seek opportunities to maximise visitor spend and create sustainable jobs for local people. In terms of quality standards, all projects will be delivered according to set criteria which will include developing quality visitor facilities.

Actions

Economy

Item	Project	Lead Body
1	Stimulating Economic Activity	
1.1	Stimulating and supporting enterprise by providing opportunities for tourism business development based on environmental and heritage activities with support from the WAG Single Investment Fund.	WAG (DE&T & Visit Wales) with CRT
1.2	Developing thematic business clusters	CRT
1.3	Private sector partnerships to identify the scope for ancillary tourism activity such as 1-1 interpretation guides, cycle hire, refreshment provision and accommodation. We will encourage quality design, sustainable environmental management and develop sponsorship opportunities.	VRP Core Team with Visit Wales
1.4	Assessing the economic impact of sites and facilities in VRP	WAG (DE&T)
1.5	Developing private sector involvement and sponsorship to improve and maintain the VRP assets and activities	VRP Core Team
2	Access for Sustainable Transport: Developing the Valleys Cycle Network	
2.1	Enhancing the strategic cycle network as part of a sustainable transport system including the Taff Trail, Celtic Trail, routes 46 and 47, and a range of additional strategic valley routes. Includes Interpretation.	Sustrans
2.2	Signage to facilities and business sites.	Sustrans
2.3	Developing integration between public transport and cycle way/walking routes.	SEWTA & SWWITCH
3	Access for Recreation: Loops & Links	
3.1	Mountain Bike Trails Feasibility Study To determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Enhancement opportunities at existing flagship sites ➤ Opportunities for additional sites/routes ➤ Transport to sites ➤ Site facilities & marketing ➤ Long term management 	Visit Wales
3.2	Walking Trails: Improving existing trails for walking based on the public rights of way network and permissive routes. Includes surfacing, access signage and promotion.	LA's with FCW & Groundwork
3.3	Local Cycling Trails: Improving existing local routes for cycle access where legally permitted. Includes surfacing, access signage and promotion.	LA's with Groundwork
3.4	Horse Riding Trails: Expanding and improving the bridleway network to provide greater opportunities for horse riding, including the provision of cross boundary routes. Includes access provision, signage, promotion, and in some cases enhancing user	LA's with Groundwork & BHS

	rights on existing public rights of way.	
Item	Project	Lead Body
4	VRP Gateway improvements	
4.1	Improvements to physical gateways into the Valleys Regional Park (Physical environmental improvements, improved facilities, signage and interpretation).	DE&T with LA's
5	Outdoor Pursuits Promotion	
5.1	Undertake Outdoor Pursuits feasibility supported the outcomes of the CRT marketing work.	CCW/SCW
5.2	Promote and establish projects	SCW/LA's
5.3	Community based Fishing Initiatives including improved infrastructure & facilities	Visit Wales/ EAW
6	Skills	
6.1	Undertake a skills audit to establish gaps (currently in progress)	WAG (DE&T)
6.2	Establish skills training programmes in tourism, heritage & countryside to meet the needs of SME's and related businesses	Lead to be Identified
6.3	Work with professional institutes, educational establishments and careers services to encourage individuals into careers in tourism, ecology and landscape, and provide support to students through work experience..	VRP Core Group with DE&T
7	Valleys Regional Park Communications (VRP Core Team)	
7.1	Prepare Communications Strategy (completed).	VRP Core Team with DE&T
8	Marketing	
8.1	Undertake a marketing audit, including identifying the potential to align existing marketing activities of partners.	CRT
8.2	Undertake destination and thematic marketing campaigns	CRT
8.3	VRP visitor information including interpretation & web based tourist information on landscape, geology, biodiversity and heritage.	CRT
9	Events Programme	
9.1	Develop a coordinated events programme across VRP	CRT & SWWTP

Environment

10	Landscape Action Plans	
10.1	Prepare landscape action plans for BGCBC, CCBC, MTCBC, RCTCBC, NPTCBC, SCC, & parts of Carmarthenshire CC, Cardiff CC and NCC. Will take account of LANDMAP, LBAPS, FCW Plans, and ROWIP's	DE&T with LA's
11	Historic Landscape Restoration	
11.1	Implement Historic Landscape Conservation Management Plans for Merthyr, Rhondda, Gelligaer & Clydach Gorge	LA's

Item	Project	Lead Body
11.2	The Sirhowy Valley Landscape Partnership Project aims to conserve the local heritage, connecting local people with the past and promoting economic growth and development. This will include developing programmes and activities to encourage community participation, access to information and education as well as improving the physical landscape.	BGCBC
11.3	The Blaenavon Forgotten Landscapes Project will work with local communities to help conserve and restore the built features that create the historic character of the landscape and natural landscape features around Blaenavon. Access into the wider landscape will be improved and high quality information on the area's important cultural heritage and wildlife made available to visitors.	TCBC
12	Ecological Connectivity & Common Land Management	
12.1	Undertake a study to identify ecological connectivity opportunities	CCW & GGBAG/ GLAMBAG
12.2	Project implementation (inc. Coalfields Rhos Pasture Project)	GGBAG/ GLAMBAG
12.3	Develop a coordinated approach to the management of common land in partnership with graziers across the VRP and implement pilot implementation projects.	CCBC
13	Nature Reserves for People & Wildlife	
13.1	Manage & promote a network of nature reserves as accessible green space.	GGBAG/ GLAMBAG
14	Valleys Forest	
14.1	Woodland Management: bringing all publicly owned woodlands into active management for ecology and recreation, including converting FCW woodlands into mixed species	FCW/Coed Cymru
14.2	Expanding the area of woodland for recreation, ecology production of biomass fuel and to help combat climate change	FCW/Coed Cymru
15	Valleys Waterways	
15.1	Improve and manage the river and canal corridors for wildlife and recreation.	EAW/BW
16	Pilot Project to tackle invasive species in HOV area (LA's)	
16.1	Implement a pilot programme of invasive plant treatment & subsequent evaluation in HOV area.	CCBC
17	Geological Heritage	
17.1	Assess the feasibility of and develop a business plan for a coordinated approach to the protection, promotion & interpretation of geological heritage.	BIGC

People

Item	Project	Lead Body
18	Health Opportunities in the Environment	
18.1	Maximise health gain across the HoV area through the coordination, development and expansion of the Health Challenge Valleys Network, focusing	HOV

	on improving physical, mental and social wellbeing through activities in the natural environment. Successful projects to be used as evidence base to roll out across the whole Valleys Regional Park area.	
18.2	Developing Green Gyms concept across South Wales.	BTCV
18.3	Implement findings of Greenspace Assessment in HOV area & undertake assessment in non HOV areas.	LA's
19	Environmental Education	
19.1	Prepare Environmental Education Strategy for VRP.	CCW
19.2	Eco Education: A programme of community based environmental education involving schools and adult groups linked to the school curriculum & national strategies.	CCW with support from DCWW to deliver
Item	Project	Lead Body
20	Community Engagement: To be an integral part of all projects, but the following are specific community based initiatives.	
20.1	VRP Rangers/Tourist Guides	LA's
20.2	Cleaner Greener Communities (includes Community Chest to support small scale community projects)	KWT
20.3	HERIAN Projects (HERIAN). Includes Valleys Built Heritage & a £3.3M community grant scheme.	HERIAN
20.4	Tackling Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Off Road Motorcycling ➤ General litter and fly tipping ➤ Arson/Forest/Heath/Grass Fires 	LA's
20.5	Community Ambassadors including HERIAN Green badge Guides, Visit network and Living Ambassadors	HERIAN/ Groundwork Wales / LA's
20.6	Sustainability & Support in Communities	Groundwork

Park Infrastructure

21	Country Parks/Visitor Centres & Historic Sites & Monuments	
21.1	Develop and implement a cross boundary approach to the improvement and management of a range of country park sites, visitor facilities and monuments across the VRP. To include improvements to visitor facilities, interpretation and routes. Projects will aim to develop a common, standard approach to management and visitor facilities, and promote themselves and other similar facilities across the VRP, as VRP hubs.	LA's
21.2	Promote and develop a range of sites that provide opportunities for outdoor recreation.	LA's
22	Landscape Scale Initiatives	
22.1	Develop a landscape scale approach to managing areas of interest and fund linked infrastructure works that contribute to the VRP vision.	LA's with CCW

Glossary of Acronyms

BGCBC	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
BIGC	British Institute for Geological Conservation
BTCV	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
BW	British Waterways
CCW	Countryside Council for Wales
CCBC	Caerphilly County Borough Council
CRT	Capital Region Tourism
DCWW	Dwr Cymru Welsh Water
DE&T	Department for the Economy and Transport (within the Welsh Assembly Government)
EAW	Environment Agency Wales
FCW	Forestry Commission Wales
GGBAG	Greater Gwent Biodiversity Action Group
GLAMBAG	Glamorgan Biodiversity Action Group
HERIAN	Heritage In Action
KWT	Keep Wales Tidy
LA's	Local Authorities
SEWTA	South East Wales Transport Alliance
SCW	Sports Council for Wales
LA's	Local Authority Group
SWWITCH	South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium
SWWTP	South West Wales Tourism Partnership
TCBC	Torfaen County Borough Council
VRP	Valleys Regional Park

APPENDIX 7

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK ENVIRONMENT FOR GROWTH PROJECT

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING FORM

Participant reference:..... (to be completed by project staff)

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

It is a requirement of the funding for this project that we collect data on those participating. The information collected is confidential and is used to inform the European Commission of whether projects are reaching all citizens in Wales irrespective of the barriers they face. The collection of these data will help to ensure that funds are targeted to where they are needed most. Please assist us in this process by completing the form in full. This information will not be used for any other purpose other than that stated and any equal opportunities information which is made public will be done in a way that ensures anonymity. The completion of the sections within this form is voluntary, but we would ask you to give as much information as possible to assist us.

Are you?

Female

Male

Do you have sole caring responsibility for a child/children

Welsh language ability

Understand Welsh

Speak Welsh

Read Welsh

Write Welsh

None of the above

Disability

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person because of the barriers which prevent you from participating fully in all areas of life? (These barriers can be because of the attitude of others, the physical environment or organisational barriers)

Yes No

Do you have a work limiting health condition?

(Any health condition which has an impact on you ability to work or remain in work)

Yes No

Which age group do you fit into?

11-14	15-24	25-54	55-64	65+
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ethnic origin

Ethnic origin questions are not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. They are about broad ethnic group's i.e. UK citizens may belong to any of the groups below. Please tick the category, which you feel describes your ethnic origin or use your own words if you would prefer to describe your ethnic origin in another way.

Black, Black British, Black English, Black Irish, Black Scottish, Black Welsh

- Caribbean
- African

Any other Black background, please specify.....

Asian, Asian British, Asian English, Asian Irish, Asian Scottish, Asian Welsh

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese

Any other Asian background, please specify

White

- British
- English
- Irish
- Scottish
- Welsh

Any other White background, please specify

Dual Heritage

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian

Any other dual heritage background, please specify.....

- Gypsy / Traveller / Romany**

If you would prefer to describe your ethnic origin in another way, please do so.

Are you a migrant worker?

- Yes** (from a European Union Country)
- Yes** (from a non-European Union Country)
- No**

Thank you for completing this form

APPENDIX 8

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK ENVIRONMENT FOR GROWTH PROJECT

MONITORING & EVALUATION PLAN

1. Objectives

- 1.1 There is a requirement that projects and sites supported by ERDF funding provide evidence that the resources have been used appropriately; that projected impacts have been achieved; and that fundamental 'good management' practices have been followed (for example with respect to the cross cutting themes of equal opportunities and environmental sustainability). The project will be able to measure a series of target indicators as set out in paragraph 6.2 of the business plan. However many of the important impacts of visitation will not occur 'onsite', but more widely throughout the regional economy as visitors spend money on accommodation and other services away from the destination in question; meanwhile, sites will have impacts off site through their purchases of goods and labour. This is where the real economic impact of the project will be realised.

2. A Collaborative Approach

- 2.1 Monitoring and evaluation of within this project will be undertaken in collaboration with the other 6 strategic Environment for Growth projects ensuring that the impacts are reported consistently and hence comparably across all supported projects. This consistent approach brings a variety of benefits at project, bid and E4G level:
- **Better Management Information** – As individual projects collect information on the nature and spending of their visitors, this will be combined with information from across E4G sites to improve understanding of economic value added and jobs supported, for sites, bids and E4G generally. This will provide sites with a sophisticated measure of their impact, and reveal valuable market segments and behaviours. Meanwhile E4G will make it a priority to disseminate information on best practice to projects.
 - **Consistency across E4G** – A common approach to evaluation means that the overall results of individual E4G bids can be reported consistently and without double counting within bids or between bids. Thus, WEFO and partners can have confidence that reported impacts are defensible and believable, potentially increasing the likelihood of favourable treatment in any future funding rounds.
 - **Understanding Environmental Impacts** – A key requirement of Environment for Growth is that negative environmental impacts are understood and managed, whilst positive impacts are maximised. The use of a bespoke tourism model which links economic behaviour to environmental outcomes will enable projects and bids to measure the carbon, waste and other environmental impacts associated with their visitors and make concrete, grounded steps to reduce these impacts. Meanwhile, the measurement of energy use by sites will enable the derivation of an overall 'carbon footprint', and point to what actions can minimise this footprint in the most resource effective ways.

3. Indicators

3.1

Primary Outputs Indicator	Programme Target	VRP Output
Initiatives Developing the Natural &/or Historic Environment	21	6
Managed Access to the Countryside	15km	80km**
Primary Results Indicator		
Visits	196,000	100,000
Jobs Created	5,000	200

Cross Fund Flexibility Outputs	VRP Output
Participants	200
Results Achieved	
Participants gaining qualifications	150

4. Forecasting

- 4.1 The projected outputs and results for the project period have been estimated on a quarterly basis based on information provided by the joint project sponsors, and are detailed in the project delivery profile which accompanies the business plan.

5. Monitoring System

- 5.1 Two key elements will be required, at minimum, for an estimate of the economic or environmental impact of visitation to a destination within this project. First, an estimate must be made of the volume of visitors to the site over a given period. Secondly, an estimate of the 'impact' per visitor will be arrived at. It is possible, and in some cases necessary, to assume that impact per visitor is comparable between similar sites or visitors within an area. For small or unmanned sites, undertaking visitor surveys in order to reveal visitor characteristics or behaviour is impractical. For example, for very small sites, the effort involved in interviewing a sufficient sample of visitors to provide statistically robust estimates of (say) expenditure would be wholly disproportionate to the usefulness of the data collected. Here, it is intended to measure visitor volumes through surveys and electronic counters at strategic points, and then to assume characteristics and behaviour are in line with those reported at other similar or proximate sites. This does, however, mean that at an absolute minimum site managers will estimate, with a reasonable degree of accuracy, the number of visitors to their destination.

- 5.2 The project managers will take concrete steps to ensure that robust estimates of visitor volumes are collected. In most of these cases, these volume estimates will be combined with data from visitor surveys and E4G level modelling of indirect impacts to provide a gauge of sites' overall economic impact, both for WEFO monitoring purposes and to help site managers understand the nature of their product and market.
- 5.3 There are a number of options available to measure visitor volumes. These will vary in applicability between sites, depending on volumes of visitors, the physical character and facilities of the site in question and available personnel resources. The following tables outline the key options.

Cordon Pedestrian Count: Useful for sites where entry/exit is by one or more clearly defined routes that can be equated to a cordon through which visitors must walk. Can be done manually or by electronic counter.

'Hotspot' Pedestrian Count: Similar to the above but more applicable to sites which have diffuse and multiple entry or exit points, but where a central 'hotspot' can be identified that will likely attract all visitors to the site at some point during their visit. This, for example, be a visitor centre, or could apply to an unbounded historic monument site with a single information board or key viewing point.

Car Park Ticket Sales: For sites where visitors are required to pay to park.

Entry Ticket Sales: For sites where visitors are required to pay to enter, and where the site is congruent with the ticketed area.

Car Park Vehicle Count: Site Applicability For sites where the majority of visitors arrive in vehicles to a single car park/drop off point

- 5.4 In order to ensure a reasonably representative estimate of visitor numbers, visitor counts will be allocated and undertaken in a way which reflects likely changes in visitor numbers over the seasons. Specifically, estimates will be required on a quarter-by-quarter basis to fit with the collection of wider E4G and visitor/tourism data. Specifically, sites will be required to estimate numbers January-March; April-June; July-September and October-December. This does not, however mean that effort will be equally distributed, and counts will be specifically aimed at ensuring best coverage during the Summer months, during school holidays and on bank holiday weeks and weekends. Site managers will be provided with a extensive list of dates upon which they might count visitors – although every site will not be expected to count on every date provided. This will enable a consistent approach to be undertaken to the grossing up of individual days' volumes to an estimated annual average.
- 5.5 The monitoring of the cross fund flexibility outputs will simply be a matter of the joint project sponsors keeping a record of the number of participants involved with signed documentation to back this up. Copies of certificates for the qualifications gained as a result of the project will also be retained by the joint project sponsors, and provided to WEFO.

APPENDIX 9

VALLEYS REGIONAL PARK ENVIRONMENT FOR GROWTH PROJECT

DRAFT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INTEGRATION TOOL

DRAFT DATED 9 February 2009

Sustainable Development Integration Tool
for
Welsh Assembly Government
Department for the Economy and Transport

The purpose of this tool is to support the integration of SD into the earliest stages of decision making for DE&T Economic Development and Regeneration activities, and applies to the following levels:

- Business Plan or Programme development
- Area Regeneration Strategies, Area Plans and Frameworks
- Masterplans for Sites or Groups of Sites
- Development and Regeneration Projects

It provides the framework for the cross-functional teamwork that is critical to achieving sustainable outcomes.

This is a draft version for testing, and views are invited on any changes needed

Sustainable Development Integration and Appraisal Tool

1. Background

Sustainable Development is a Statutory Duty on the Welsh Assembly Government, and the new Sustainable Development Scheme, “One Wales – One Planet”, (currently out to consultation will) places SD as the “Central Organising Principle” for the Assembly Government and the wider public sector in Wales.

The Welsh Assembly Government is also committed to challenging targets to reduce carbon emissions and for the diversion of waste from landfill, and has set environmental performance and resource efficiency standards for new buildings that receive funding from, or are built on land sold for development by, the Assembly Government.

These will have a substantial impact on the way we support business growth and regenerate communities, requiring substantial changes to the way we work.

This tool is intended to mirror the Policy Gateway Tool, apply the principles to the specific operational needs of DE&T.

2. Purpose of this Tool

In preparing this tool, we have reviewed earlier approaches used by DE&T.

This Tool is designed to be used by DE&T at the earliest stages of decision making. Our aim is integrate, or “Front Load”, SD into our thinking at all levels of business planning, strategy, programme development and project delivery.

This is particularly relevant to our regeneration activity, where our experience has demonstrated the importance of integrating SD principles and objectives into the earliest stages of strategy, masterplan preparation, and development projects.

The Tool has taken the core concepts around SD and converted them into a form tailored to meet the specific needs of DE&T. It will also provide a framework for reporting on actions taken and expected outcomes.

3. SD Integration – Objectives, Principles and Priorities

Note: The following section provides the background to the theory of SD principles and Objectives. It is included at this stage to explain the approach to SD Objectives that has been adopted, and may be omitted from the final version, unless it is thought that this explanation helps to convey a greater understanding of SD.

The strategic framework for SD at the UK level is in “One Future – Different Paths” (Defra 2005). This reviewed the core objectives in the 1999 UK SD strategy:

- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- effective protection of the environment;

- prudent use of natural resources; and
- maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

And concluded that *“although that strategy stressed that these objectives had to be pursued at the same time, in practice different agencies focussed on those one or two most relevant to them”*.

“One Future – Different Paths” sets a new “purpose” for SD in the UK to show how Government will integrate these aims, to develop the earlier strategy, not depart from it. It states that the goal of SD:

will be pursued in an integrated way through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment, and a just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal well-being. This will be done in ways that protect and enhance the physical and natural environment, and use resources and energy as efficiently as possible.

It also redefined the guiding principles for SD as follows:

- Living within environmental limits
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- Achieving a sustainable economy
- Promoting good governance
- Using sound science responsibly

and stated:

These principles will form a basis for sustainable development policy in the UK. For a policy to be sustainable, it must respect all five principles. We want to achieve our goals of living within environmental limits and a just society, and we will do it by means of sustainable economy, good governance, and sound science.

The Priorities for action agreed at a UK level are:

- Sustainable Consumption and Production
- Climate Change and Energy
- Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Enhancement
- Sustainable Communities

The new SD scheme for the Assembly Government “One Wales: One Planet” the consultation on a new sustainable development scheme for Wales (November 2008) has two core principles:

- Involvement
- Integration

And it establishes a new set of priorities for Wales based around the “One Wales” commitments:

- A Healthy Future;
- A Prosperous Society;
- Living Communities;
- Learning for Life;
- A Fair and Just Society;
- A Sustainable Environment and
- A Rich and Diverse Culture.

(DN – the above justification can be omitted from the final version of the tool when we have gained acceptance of this approach. The aim is to prove that the 4 objectives we use are still valid under UK policy, and reflect current SD policy at a UK and WAG level),

Suggested final text for this section:

The founding concept of sustainable development is about meeting social, economic environmental and resource use objectives **simultaneously**. This tool is organised around these core objectives. These core objectives are then subdivided into sub-objectives that expand the meaning of the core objective in the context of DE&T activities. This is a relatively well understood and used approach, which emphasises creating ‘win-win’ solutions.

The successful integration of SD at any level depends on meeting the four core objectives of SD at the same time, and without pursuing any one or two at the expense of the others. We have reviewed and updated our previous approach to SD appraisal, and now propose the following 4 objectives:

- A Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone.
- B A sustainable economy and prosperous society.
- C Prudent use of natural resources – reducing our ecological footprint.
- D A sustainable natural environment.

For each objective, a number of sub-objectives are proposed that illustrate how the objective may apply to DE&T work.

4. When to Use the Tool

For most effective integration, the tool should be used at the outset of the process. However, it can also be used to appraise a plan, strategy or project already designed, but it has to be accepted that at this stage successful integration is very difficult.

The flow chart below shows how the SD Integration tool is used at the inception stage when evidence and information is being collected. It will help to inform the data collection process, ensuring that equal weight is given to social, economic, resource use and environmental considerations.

Any conflicts between objectives can be identified, and solutions and SD objectives and actions built into the design and development stages.

5. How to use the Tool

The Tool is in two parts

- A proforma for the review of key issues and evidence, and the identification of solutions.
- A menu of possible SD responses/solutions/actions that can be selected from as relevant.

It can be used in two ways, to integrate SD at the inception stage, or to appraise plans or projects that have already been prepared and designed.

- 5.1 The **“Integration Approach”** will identify synergies and conflicts at the outset, and lead to positive outcomes. Sustainable integration means finding ways of pursuing each of the 4 core objectives, and related sub-objectives, simultaneously without undermining others and where choices between objectives are inevitable, to be explicit and democratic about the choices. This process can also be defined as “Conflict Minimisation” – finding solutions which reduce (but not necessarily fully overcome) conflicts between different objectives. Any conflicts between objectives will be treated as a ‘crunch issue’, and ways of reducing or resolving them will be sought. Sustainable Integration goes beyond conventional appraisal techniques, and will enable us to identify and confront the big crunch issues. This in turn will enable us to search for innovative alternative options to overcome those issues and identify ways to adapt options or identify limitations. It might be necessary to undertake the process 2 or 3 times until all issues have been adequately addressed.

5.2 The “**Appraisal Approach**” is similar to the above, but reviews a plan/strategy/masterplan/project already prepared. It is more difficult in this case to retrofit sustainability solutions the need for which may be identified. It’s necessary to have the full set of baseline technical information relating to all 4 objectives as for the Integration Approach, and it is essential to accept the need to retrofit sustainability solutions in order to remedy any crunch issues that are identified. This approach should diminish over time as more and more projects have SD integrated from the outset.

6. The Process

The process is as follows:-

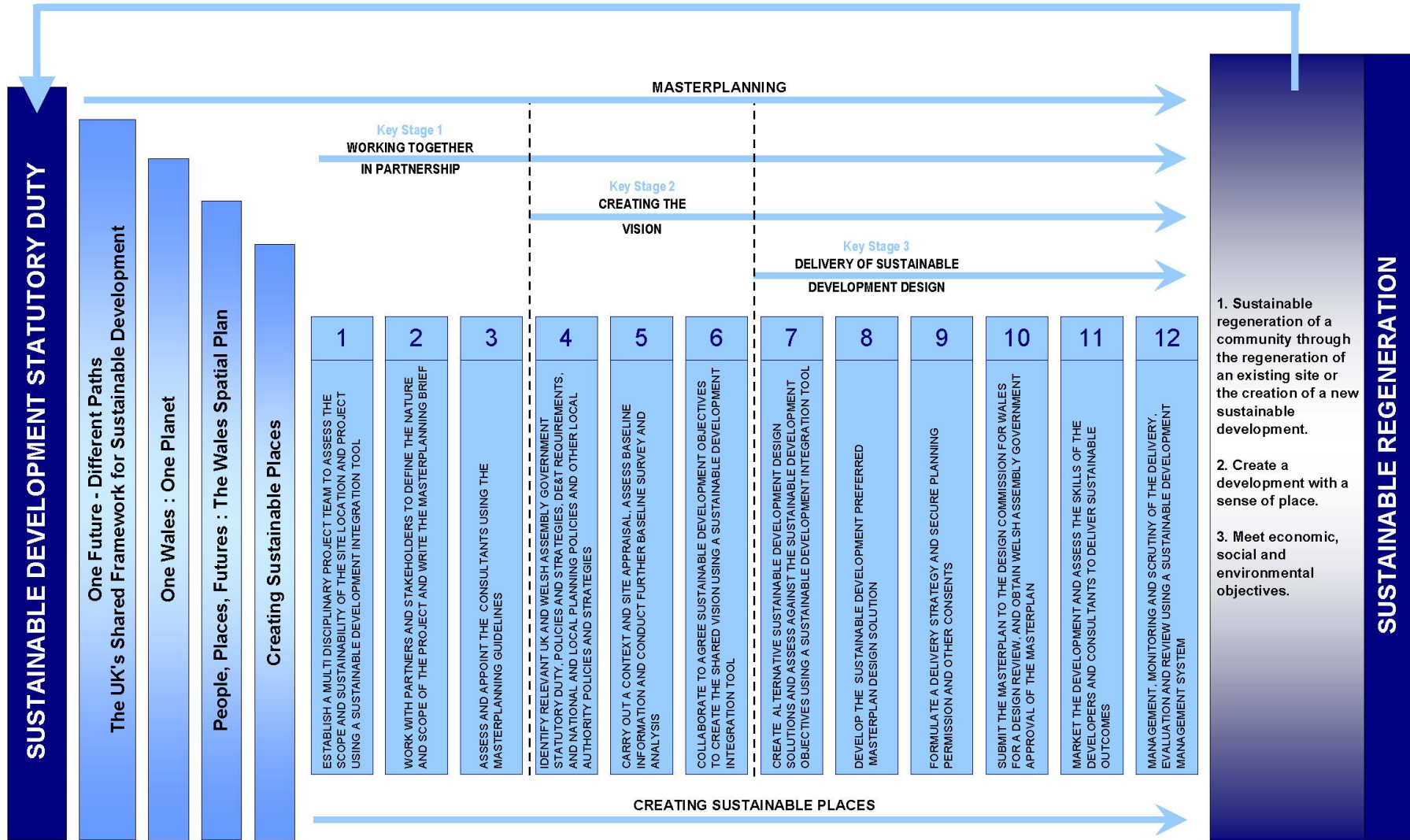
1. Use the SD Objectives as a guide to compile and summarise all relevant background data and information for the context of the plan, strategy, masterplan or site. Click here for data sources for carrying out a baseline sustainability assessment [[hyperlink data sources to be added](#)].
2. Bring together the baseline information and a project team with relevant expertise

3. Convene an appraisal group with a mix of expertise and interest, including all partners and stakeholders, and local community relevant to the plan area or site. This should include the Welsh Assembly Government team and relevant partners. (Hyperlink to the masterplanning guidance, gives further guidance on this aspect.)
4. The team should consider and review the context and baseline information for the project against the SD objectives listed.
5. Identify any potential conflicts between objectives, or “crunch issues” and suggest solutions. Examples of possible solutions are provided. These should not be followed slavishly, but are provided as examples relevant to the different scenarios, and other solutions may be proposed by the team.
6. Develop solutions which will be refined into bespoke site/area objectives, and which will form the starting point for the development of the plan, strategy, masterplan etc.
7. The tool should not be filled in prior to the appraisal meeting, but should reflect consensus reached at the meeting.
8. The process can vary in length from 1 or 2 hours to a whole day, depending on the nature and complexity of the project. For complex projects, several workshops could be held with different groups of interested partners and stakeholders, before the results and outcomes can be synthesised into a coherent whole.
9. Highlight gaps in knowledge on any aspect and agree how to acquire any necessary information in order to complete the assessment

10. Achieve consensus in the group, and complete the report making recommendations
11. The strategy/plan/masterplan/project can now be developed using the refined objectives developed through this process.
12. During the development of the strategy/plan/masterplan/project a number of alternative approaches or iterations can be developed and tested against the objectives set by the team.

7. **The Flow Chart** – see next page

MASTERPLANNING FOR REGENERATION



5.0 Sustainability Appraisal and Integration

SD Appraisal and Integration Sheet

SD Objectives	Evidence from appraisal. Conflicts to be resolved, “Crunch” or Secondary Issues	SD Solutions (see menu sheets) SD Objectives to Take Forward to summary (page 23)
A <u>Social Progress which recognises the needs of everyone</u>		
A1 <u>Living communities</u> Promote strong communities and social cohesion.		
A2 <u>A Healthy Future</u> Provide safe and healthy environments and promote healthy lifestyles.		
A3 <u>A Rich and Diverse Culture</u>		

Celebrate and enhance our unique culture.		
A4 <u>Learning for Life</u> Promotion of high quality learning for life and engagement with sustainable development.		
A5 <u>A Fair and just Society</u> Promote active citizenship and ensure equality for all.		
A6 <u>Housing</u> Enable access to good quality, safe and affordable housing for all.		

SD Appraisal and Integration Sheet

Objective	Evidence from appraisal. Conflicts to be resolved, “Crunch” or Secondary Issues	SD Solutions (see menu sheets) SD Objectives to Take Forward to summary (page 23)
B <u>A Sustainable Economy and Prosperous Society</u>		
B1 <u>Employment</u> Provision of a wide range of employment opportunities and training and the development of greener jobs		
B2 <u>Investment</u> Encourage research and development to promote new economic activities, and create an attractive business environment to support investment and confidence		
B3 <u>Local Economy</u> Strengthen the local economy by stimulating local or community enterprise, and		

<p>capturing the benefits of inward investment.</p>		
<p>B4 <u>Resource Efficiency</u> Promote measures to decouple resource use and greenhouse gas emissions from economic activity.</p>		
<p>B5 <u>A Confident and Successful Region</u> Create a Region with a clear and well-articulated vision, communication links and collaborative systems for delivery.</p>		

SD Appraisal and Integration Sheet

Objective	Evidence from appraisal. Conflicts to be resolved, “Crunch” or Secondary Issues	SD Solutions (see menu sheets) SD Objectives to Take Forward to summary (page 23)
C <u>Prudent Use of Natural Resources – Reducing our Ecological Footprint</u>		
C1 <u>Climate Change and Energy</u> Promote energy efficiency to achieve 60% reduction of CO ² emissions by 2050.		
C2 <u>Land</u> Promote appropriate and efficient use and re-use of land and soil resources.		
C3 <u>Flood and Water Management</u> Protect our freshwater and marine environment –reduce water pollution and the risk of flooding.		

Encourage the efficient use of water.		
C4 <u>Air and Atmosphere</u> Reduce all forms of air pollution.		
C5 <u>Waste</u> Facilities and targets to avoid; minimise; re-use or recycle waste		
C6 <u>Renewable Resources</u> Promote resource efficiency and the sustainable use and management of natural resources.		

SD Appraisal and Integration Sheet

Objective	Evidence from appraisal. Conflicts to be resolved, “Crunch” or Secondary Issues	SD Solutions (see menu sheets) SD Objectives to Take Forward to summary (page 23)
D <u>A Sustainable Environment</u>		
D1 <u>Biodiversity</u> Protect and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems		
D2 <u>Landscape</u> Protect and enhance the quality of the landscape.		
D3 <u>Climate change adaptation</u> Ensure economic, social and environmental infrastructure is secure or can adapt to climate change consequences.		

<p>D4 <u>Built Environment</u> Develop and protect the quality of the local built environment.</p>		
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SD Integration Solutions

Objective	Menu of Possible SD Responses/ Actions			
	Business Plan – Programme Development	Area Strategies/ Plans/Frameworks	Site Masterplans	Projects
A <u>Social Progress which recognises the needs of everyone</u>				
A1 <u>Living communities</u> Promote strong communities and social cohesion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and respond to community context • Address needs of local areas (rural proofing?) • Enable communities to influence decisions that affect their neighbourhood and quality of life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise community engagement particularly with marginalised or hard to reach groups • Understand needs of the local communities • Support local community and voluntary action • Leadership and commitment • Encourage a balance of land uses for jobs, housing, and social, cultural and amenity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site layouts which promote social cohesion • Places, not just housing estates • New developments connect to existing communities • Streets and squares designed as social places, e.g. village greens, home zones • Use Manual for Streets • Inclusion of disadvantaged and minority groups • Design out crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve local people in decision making – community participation • Ensure community engagement and local ownership • Accessibility to all social groups
A2 <u>A Healthy Future</u> Provide safe and healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and address the factors contributing to physical and mental 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate health facilities within or close to key settlements, easily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure provision of open space, pedestrian and cycle links • Opportunities for growing local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An opportunity for healthy lifestyles promotion • Plant fruit trees in amenity

environments and promote healthy lifestyles.	<p>health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote active life styles • Strengthen primary and community-based health services • Promote access to healthy, fresh, locally sourced food 	<p>accessible to public transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote outreach services for isolated areas • Promote healthy and active life styles, such as walking and cycling • Opportunities for growing local food • Promote “Transition Town” status 	<p>food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness Trails • Countryside loops and links • Provide access to recreational space, leisure and cultural activities 	<p>areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities for walking and cycling • Amenity areas focus on providing social and recreational areas for the community
<p>A3 <u>A Rich and Diverse Culture</u> Celebrate and enhance our unique culture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to creating a modern bilingual society • Promote cultural arts or sporting activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote safe open clean spaces for leisure • Encourage opportunities to participate in cultural sport and recreational activities • Promote language development and impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and respond to local cultural context • Instil a sense of pride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to ‘sense of place’ and local design styles • Use of bilingual signage • Bilingual communication and promote the use of Welsh
<p>A4 <u>Learning for Life</u> Promotion of high quality learning for life and engagement with sustainable development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access to information and services including improved electronic communications • Improve learner outcomes effectiveness and efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide learning services in or close to key settlements and public transport routes • Support local communities to develop learning and skills for sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate learning opportunities or ‘hubs’ into new developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green travel plans for schools and other learning establishments
<p>A5 <u>A Fair and just Society</u> Promote active citizenship and ensure equality for all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute towards the eradication of child poverty by 2020 • Address barriers to accessing information services or jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cater for the needs of all social groups • Understand and respond to equality and diversity context • Maximise the role of social enterprise by providing support to the voluntary/community sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include needs of disadvantaged and minority groups • Ensure safe and easy access for all to essential goods and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDA compliance • Ensure an equitable approach to equality and diversity • Facilities accessible to all social groups

<p>A6 <u>Housing</u> Enable access to good quality, safe and affordable housing for all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing needs are understood and responded to where relevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of housing sites strongly linked to public transport walking and cycling networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a mix of tenure and size - including affordable homes to ensure balanced sustainable communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing designed to a high quality to maximise occupant comfort and energy efficiency • Highest possible standards for Building for Life, Secured by Design and Inclusive Design
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SD Integration Solutions

Objective	Menu of Possible SD Responses/ Actions			
	Business Plan – Programme Development	Area Strategies Plans/Frameworks	Sites Masterplans	Projects
B <u>A Sustainable Economy and Prosperous Society</u>				
B1 <u>Employment</u> Provision of a wide range of employment opportunities and training and the development of greener jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle concentration of poverty and economic inactivity • Increase entrepreneurship and business diversity • Target new growth sectors for R&D and Business Support • Encourage a culture of enterprise and innovation for a low carbon, low waste economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure educational and training provision matches geographical and sectoral needs and addresses skills deficits affecting employability • Ensure that new economic opportunities are carefully matched to local workforce needs and potential • Encourage flexible employment opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide sites with well thought out mixed uses – suitable for local economic context • Consider how the local labour market can benefit from regeneration activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise local procurement opportunities • Develop local supply chains • Enable local SMEs to compete fairly for construction and supply
B2 <u>Investment</u> Encourage research and development to promote new economic activities, and create an attractive business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise economic activity and/or income levels • Contribute towards the development of a knowledge based economy • Support innovation for a low carbon, low waste economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality environmental and social infrastructure needed to attract and retain investment. • Foster community pride and confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide quality sites to attract / retain quality investment and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve 'best value' for project investment • Ensure value of investment is maintained by appropriate aftercare and management arrangements

environment to support investment and confidence				
B3 <u>Local Economy</u> Strengthen the local economy by stimulating local or community enterprise, and capturing the benefits of inward investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve local business diversity and help for small businesses • Support for local businesses sustainably utilising natural resources – food/ timber / wildlife / water etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and respond to local business context • Opportunities for value – adding and marketing of local natural resources • Ensure new development does not undermine the viability of town centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites and premises suitable for new business start ups and local business needs • Think of parks and green spaces as economic landscapes • Green spaces for food production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social clauses in contracts and procurement to promote local sourcing, employment and training
B4 <u>Resource Efficiency</u> Promote measures to decouple resource use and greenhouse gas emissions from economic activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure full life cycle impacts of products and activities are understood • Promotion of environmental management and sector level support for Businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure locational needs of renewable energy supply and management, waste management, recycling etc are given priority in area plans or strategies • Focus new development on areas well serviced by physical infrastructure, particularly reducing the need to travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate renewable energy and waste management infrastructure into site masterplans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BREEAM Excellent • Code for Sustainable Homes level 3–4 • Promote high standards of resource efficiency in businesses • Promote high standards of sustainable resource efficient design, construction and maintenance of buildings
B5 <u>A Confident and Successful Region</u> Create a Region with a clear and well-articulated vision, communication links and collaborative systems for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage innovative leadership and partnership working • Encourage engagement or collaboration within and between the public, private and third sectors • Development of integrated policy and service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop compelling SD Vision for the area based on social evidence and environmental opportunities • Develop appropriate stakeholder and cross discipline working groups • Encourage our business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop compelling site vision and SD objectives • Seek Design Commission for Wales Guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek Design Commission for Wales Guidance and Approval • Develop Sustainable Development Management System (SDMS) for site

delivery.

- provision
- Enhance awareness of WSP and develop its evidence base
 - Aim to stabilise then reduce Wales's ecological footprint

and regeneration partners to integrate sustainability principles, learning skills and practices into their activities

SD Integration Solutions

Objective	Menu of Possible SD Responses/ Actions			
	Business Plan – Programme Development	Area Strategies Plans/Frameworks	Site Masterplans	Projects
C <u>Prudent Use of Natural Resources – Reducing our Ecological Footprint</u>				
C1 <u>Climate Change and Energy</u> Promote action to achieve WAG targets for the reduction of carbon emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a low carbon approach that minimises or eliminates carbon emissions • Promote sustainable travel patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure locational requirements of renewable energy infrastructure is accounted for • consider location of new development in a way which reduces the need to travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ‘Integrate’ renewable energy and waste management infrastructure into site masterplans – all masterplan sites to have an energy strategy – Develop site level green travel plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low embedded energy systems • Develop green travel plan where appropriate • Meet WAG aspiration for building standards and zero carbon from new building from 2011
C2 <u>Land</u> Promote appropriate and efficient use and re-use of land and soil resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid usage of soils with high carbon content (e.g. peat) • Manage soils to promote carbon capture and avoid losses of soil with high carbon content • Ensure infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve quality and sustainability of connections within and between key settlements and their hinterlands • Bring previously developed land into beneficial use • Protect valuable mineral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Avoid imports / exports of material to and from site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacture soils / growing media from green waste and local materials

	<p>provision addresses regional need and integrates with existing provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote technology for remediation of contaminated land 	resources		
<p>C3 <u>Flood and Water Management</u> Protect our freshwater and marine environment –reduce water pollution and the risk of flooding. Encourage the efficient use of water.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid damage to sensitive coastal and freshwater environments Maintain the integrity of flood plains Encourage new technology for the efficient use of water resources, and treatment of waste water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and respond to water quality and flood issues Development aligned with sustainable use of water resources Drainage basin level response to flood alleviation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design drainage system to protect against ground water and future water pollution Use permeable hard surfacing wherever possible Consider the use of SUDS wherever possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider SUDS and rainwater harvesting Use Green Roofs wherever possible (One Wales Commitment “Action on Eco Roofs”))
<p>C4 <u>Air and Atmosphere</u> Reduce all forms of air pollution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure cleaner technologies for power generation Promote sustainable travel patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to improve air quality taking into account Air Quality Management Areas Encourage safe routes to schools to minimise car travel for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure development does not exacerbate existing Air Quality problems Develop site level green travel policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop green travel plans where appropriate
<p>C5 <u>Waste</u> Avoid; minimise; re-use or recycle waste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage strategies and technology for the management and reuse of waste, to minimise waste going ton landfill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of waste facilities to have regard for proximity principle Ensure locational requirement of waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop site waste management plan Allow for waste recycling infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design in waste management / recycling opportunities for the occupiers Minimum 10% of total value of materials used should derive

		facilities are catered for		from recycled and re-used content
C6 <u>Renewable Resources</u> Promote resource efficiency and the sustainable use and management of natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect most versatile agricultural land and forest resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop opportunities for sustainable resource management value adding and marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop site sustainable procurement strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use sustainably sourced materials • Use or recycled aggregates • Use the BRE Guide to Specification

SD Integration Solutions

Objective	Menu of Possible SD Responses/ Actions			
	Business Plan – Programme Development	Area Strategies Plans/Frameworks	Sites Masterplans	Projects
D <u>A Sustainable Environment</u>				
D1 <u>Biodiversity</u> Protect and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote opportunities for biodiversity gain across all programmes and actions Promote eco-connectivity and landscape scale approach to biodiversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and respond positively to ecological context Seek to maximise permeability of the landscape e.g. for biodiversity Avoid development on sensitive sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid negative impacts on BAP habitats and species Measures to aid movement of biodiversity through or around the site Include existing or new areas of biodiversity value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape proposals to include relevant local nature species and habitats Green roofs Opportunities for bats in structures Wetlands Construction impacts are managed to minimise disturbance to wildlife
D2 <u>Landscape</u> Protect and enhance the quality of the landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address degraded landscapes Protect and enhance valuable landscapes Promote the benefits of landscape quality on health and wellbeing Integrate green infrastructure into planning and design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban green space are linked to open countryside Ensure renewable energy installation take account of landscape character and visual assessment Parks and green spaces integrated, not just an add-on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform site development with appropriate landscape and visual appraisal Use CCW Natural Greenspace toolkit Minimise loss of tranquillity including levels of light pollution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development respects the heritage and distinct identity of area Carefully integrate renewable generating installations using Cadw guidance where relevant
D3 <u>Climate change</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address climate change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop ecological 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Layout site and uses to respond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design responds to anticipated

<u>adaptation</u>	consequences for land use, water resource biodiversity or wildlife	networks to promote the adoption of biodiversity to climate change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure new development is not located where it will be vulnerable to known or anticipated climate change impacts 	to known or anticipated climate change impacts	climate change impacts
D4 Built Environment Develop and protect the quality of the local built environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address poor quality urban environments • Protect and enhance our best urban environments • Promote the benefits of local environmental quality on health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take into account Cadw's guidance on Traffic management in historic areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carefully integrate new sites into existing urban environments using CABE/DCfW guidance and DE&T "Creating Sustainable Places" Masterplan Guidance • Follow established "Place making" principles of urban design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development respects the heritage and distinct identity of area • Carefully integrate renewable generation equipment using Cadw guidance where relevant

3. Is a more detailed feasibility study needed?

4. List the key issues to be taken forward to the development of the area strategy/framework/masterplan/project

5. Summarise the sustainability objectives that should be set for the Plan/Strategy/Site/Project – How can they contribute to the four objectives of Sustainable Development?

1. Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
2. A sustainable economy and prosperous society

3. Prudent use of natural resources - reducing our ecological footprint
4. A sustainable natural environment

Appraisal form completed by _____

Date _____

Appraisal Group

	Name	Expertise (See Page 7)
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Checked by _____

Date _____

Approved by _____

Date
