

DP4T 147-03

### **Successful Structural Funds Projects**

**Alun Cairns:** Will the First Secretary give examples of successful structural funds projects? (WAQ4811)

**The First Secretary:** On 10 March, the Welsh European Programme Executive Ltd launched a collection of project profiles, which shows how structural funds benefited Wales under the programmes that ended in December 1999. The featured projects give a flavour of how the structural funds can be used to enhance the economic development of Wales.

I have arranged for a copy of the project profiles documentation to be placed in the Assembly Library.

### **Operating Aids (Objective 1)**

**Alun Cairns:** What are the latest developments in the First Secretary's negotiation with the rest of the Objective 1 areas in the UK in relation to operating aids? (WAQ4812)

**The First Secretary:** A paper on proposals for operating aids will be laid before the Economic Development Committee on 12 April. This will cover negotiations with other Objective 1 regions.

### **Questions to the Secretary for Health and Social Services**

#### **Number of MRI Scanners**

**Alun Cairns:** How many MRI scanners are in use in the national health service in Wales and in which hospitals? (WAQ4306)

#### **Throughput of MRI Scanners**

**Alun Cairns:** What is the throughput of each MRI scanner per hospital? (WAQ4308)





Welsh European Programme Executive  
LIMITED

# Project Profiles



EUROPEAN COMMUNITY  
Structural Funds



# FOREWORD

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The importance of European Structural Funding to Wales is now fully recognised across the country in all sectors of industry and by the general public.

I welcome the initiative taken by the Welsh European Programme Executive Limited to put together this exciting and comprehensive collection of Project Profiles which shows how European Funds benefited Wales under the Programmes which ended in 1999.

The featured projects give a flavour of how European funding can be used to enhance the economic development of Wales by providing job opportunities, supporting innovation, enabling access to employment and training for all, improving and protecting the environment, and regenerating communities.

Almost all projects in the 1994-1999 Programmes demonstrated the importance of partnerships working together and it will be important to build on these for the success of the new Programmes which start in 2000.

I hope you find these Project Profiles both interesting and informative.



Rhodri Morgan AM MP  
First Secretary





# PROJECT PROFILES

## SPONSOR LOCATION MAP



The map references reflect the location of sponsors rather than projects (which may be region-wide or pan-Wales).

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Production Team would like to thank their colleagues in the Welsh European Programme Executive Limited and in all the Sponsor organisations who have helped to provide the information featured in this publication.

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Tredegar Business Park Phase 1	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Support in the Workplace	Torfaen County Borough Council

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**EUROPEAN COMMUNITY**  
Structural Funds



**European Structural Funds 1994 – 1999**

# **PROJECT PROFILES**

**Welsh European Programme Executive Limited**

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# INTRODUCTION

The Welsh European Programme Executive Limited has administered European Structural Funds in Wales since July 1997.

In the last three years, the Company has been responsible for the following programmes:

OBJECTIVE	PROGRAMME	FUND
OBJECTIVE 2	Industrial South Wales SPD 1997 – 1999	ERDF, ESF
OBJECTIVE 3	Great Britain SPD 1997 – 1999	ESF
OBJECTIVE 4	Great Britain SPD 1998 – 1999	ESF
OBJECTIVE 5b	Rural Wales SPD 1994 – 1999	ERDF, ESF, EAGGF
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES	RECHAR II 1994 – 1999	ERDF, ESF
	RESIDER II 1994 – 1999	ERDF, ESF
	RETEX II 1994 – 1999	ERDF, ESF
	KONVER II 1994 – 1999	ERDF, ESF
	SMES 1994 – 1999	ERDF, ESF
	PESCA 1994 – 1999	ERDF, ESF, FIFG
	LEADER II 1994 – 1999	ERDF, ESF, EAGGF

These Programmes have now come to an end, and the work of the Company is being transferred to a new Executive Agency of the National Assembly for Wales from 1 April 2000.

The new Executive Agency will be responsible for the administration of all new Structural Fund Programmes from 2000 to 2006.

*Project Profiles* is a unique initiative designed to demonstrate the benefits of the European Structural Funds through 96 projects representing every Priority and every Measure of the 1994 – 1999 Programmes listed above.

The *Project Profiles* are just a small sample of the 2920 projects approved during the Welsh European Programme Executive Limited's administration.

Since 1997, the Welsh European Programme Executive Limited has received and processed 4557 applications of which 64% have been approved with a total value of £280 million.

The following chart shows the applications received and approved for each Programme and Fund from 1997 – 1999:

Programme	Fund	Applications received 1997 – 99	Applications approved 1997 – 99	% applications approved
OBJECTIVE 2	ERDF	830	463	56%
	ESF	1178	724	61%
OBJECTIVE 3	ESF	863	663	77%
OBJECTIVE 4	ESF	351	258	73%
OBJECTIVE 5B	ERDF	363	152	42%
	ESF	345	287	83%
	EAGGF	128	72	56%
KONVER	ERDF	39	27	69%
	ESF	5	1	20%
RETEX	ERDF	31	14	45%
	ESF	13	9	69%
PESCA	ERDF	13	8	61%
	FIFG	10	5	50%
	ESF	9	9	100%
RESIDER	ERDF	91	60	66%
	ESF	57	36	63%
RECHAR	ERDF	133	87	65%
	ESF	71	37	52%
SMEs	ERDF	24	8	3%
	ESF	3	0	0%
TOTALS	ERDF	1524	819	54%
	ESF	2895	2024	70%
	EAGGF	128	72	56%
	FIFG	10	5	50%
GRAND TOTALS		4557	2920	64%



The total value of all the Programmes administered by the Welsh European Programme Executive Limited is £395 million of which £377 million has been committed to projects in the six years 1994 – 1999, leaving a balance of only £18 million or 4.6%. All Programmes are valued in ECU. The figures are a snapshot in Sterling at 31 December 1999, and may vary subsequently with any fluctuation in the value of the Pound.

The total value of grants approved for all Programmes by Fund is as follows (all figures are in £million):

FUND	TOTAL IN SPDS £	TOTAL COMMITTED £	BALANCE £
ERDF	248.25m	232.87m	15.38m
ESF	117.17m	115.34m	1.83m
EAGGF	29.15m	28.27m	0.88m
FIFG	0.14m	0.10m	0.04m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>394.71m</b>	<b>376.58m</b>	<b>18.13m</b>

The total value of grants approved for all Funds by Programme is as follows:

Programme	Total in SPDS	Total committed	Balance
<b>OBJECTIVE 2</b>	£172.46m	£161.76m	£10.70m
<b>OBJECTIVE 3</b>	£ 37.24m	£ 36.58m	£ 0.66m
<b>OBJECTIVE 4</b>	£ 12.05m	£ 11.91m	£ 0.14m
<b>OBJECTIVE 5B</b>	£129.92m	£ 125.99m	£ 3.93m
<b>COMMUNITY INITIATIVES</b>	£ 43.04m	£ 40.34m	£ 2.70m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£394.71m</b>	<b>£376.58m</b>	<b>£18.13m</b>

An individual breakdown of the grants approved under each Fund for each Programme is shown in the main text.

The *Project Profiles* are presented in Programme order. Each section begins with an overall introduction to the Programme, followed by a summary of the strategic aims of each Priority and Measure, and the profile of a representative project, giving the project title, sponsor, amount of grant, and a brief description.

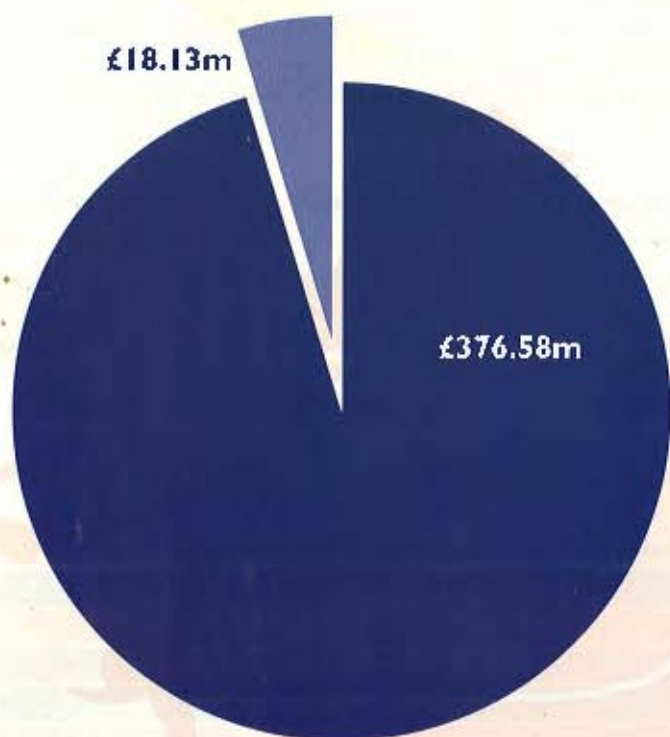
We hope that all those involved in European Structural Funds, whether administrators, applicants, or beneficiaries, and all those who are interested in the way the Funds have been used to increase and improve jobs, skills, employment opportunities and the quality of life in Wales, will find this portfolio of *Project Profiles* both helpful and informative.

Christopher Ward  
Chief Executive  
Welsh European Programme Executive Limited

March 2000

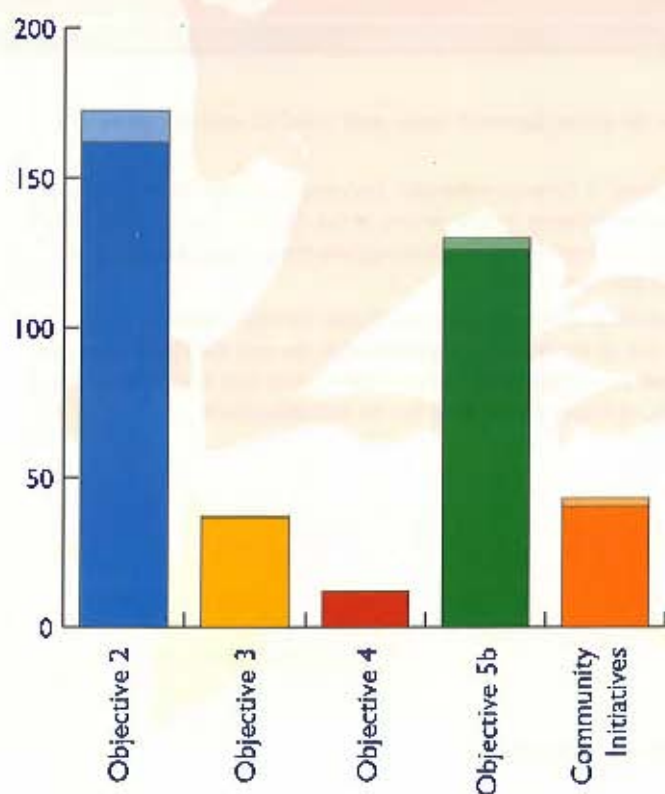


# GRANT STATISTICS



**Total grants approved for all Programmes and Funds**

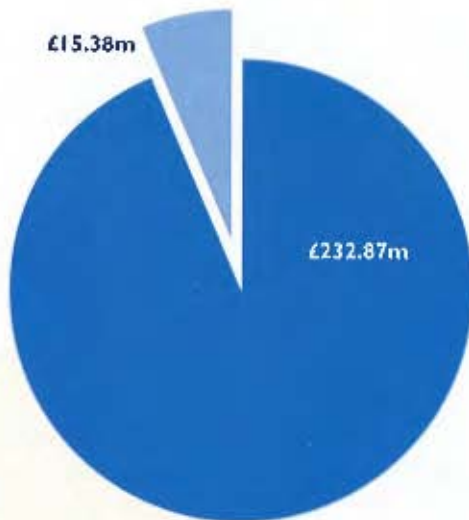
Grants approved	Balance
£376.58m	£18.13m



**Total grants approved for each Programme**

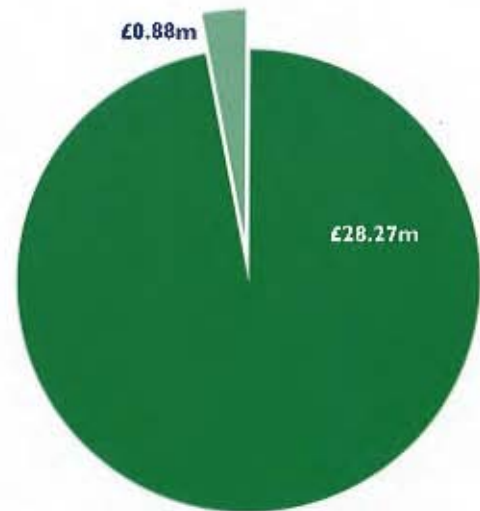
Programme	Grant approved	Balance
Objective 2	£161.76m	£10.70m
Objective 3	£36.58m	£0.66m
Objective 4	£11.91m	£0.14m
Objective 5b	£125.99m	£3.93m
Community Initiatives	£40.34m	£2.70m





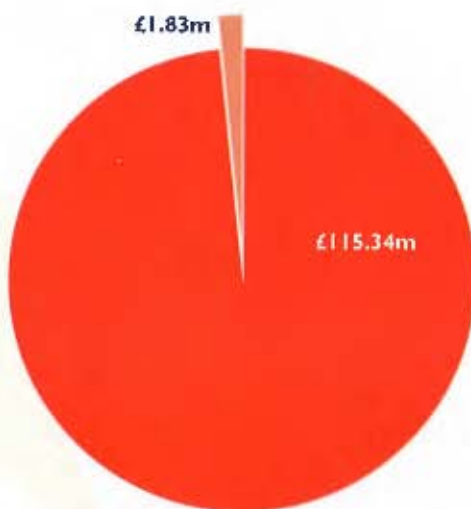
**Total ERDF grants approved for all Programmes**

Grants approved	Balance
£232.87m	£15.38m



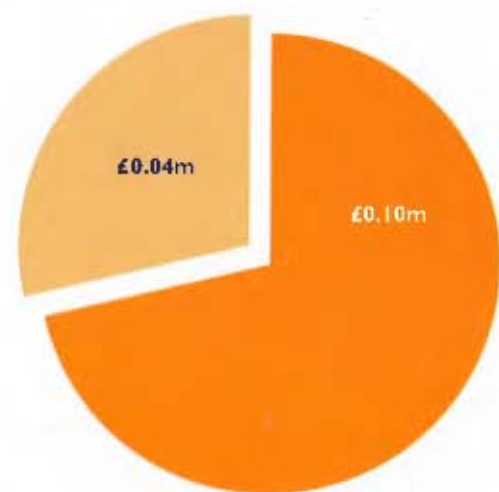
**Total EAGGF grants approved for all Programmes**

Grants approved	Balance
£28.27m	£0.88m



**Total ESF grants approved for all Programmes**

Grants approved	Balance
£115.34m	£1.83m



**Total FIGG grants approved for all Programmes**

Grants approved	Balance
£0.10m	£0.04m

# OBJECTIVE 2

Industrial South Wales SPD 1997 – 1999

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OBJECTIVE 2



# OBJECTIVE 2

## Industrial South Wales SPD 1997 – 1999

The Programme provided funding through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Structural Fund (ESF). It aimed to build on the experiences of the partnership in using Structural Funds during the 1994 -1996 ISW Objective 2 Programme.

### Global Objective

To maximise balanced and suitable economic growth and job creation which increases equality of opportunity, through the creation of a diversified industrial base and the successful exploitation of innovation, taking full account of environmental considerations.

### Strategic Objectives

- To raise the level of sustainable employment by improving economic competitiveness and diversification
- To reduce regional, social and economic disparities
- To improve the region's economic competitiveness to respond to major investment
- To remove the structural barriers to economic growth
- To support the growth of SMEs by adapting and exploiting new technologies
- To raise the quality of the natural and built environment
- To raise the skills of women and men to compete for new jobs and keep pace with new technologies.

### Horizontal Themes

The Programme had three horizontal themes running throughout it – equal opportunities, environment and innovation.

#### Equal Opportunities

- To secure equal access for men and women to what, for them, would be non-traditional sectors of employment and reconciling the demands of economic life with those of family life
- To enhance economic opportunities for the socially excluded and ethnic minorities

#### Environment

- To improve the environment in areas where this has a direct link to new job creation enhancing the future competitive advantage of the regions through the development of eco-products, environmental services, energy saving measures and clean production technologies
- To promote environmental training and awareness as a factor for economic advantage

#### Innovation

- To encourage the application of new technologies linked to employment growth, particularly where Wales Regional Technology Plan priorities (innovative culture; networking and supply chains; high quality business and innovation support; education and training; access to global technology and innovation; appropriate finance for innovation) are implemented

### Geographical Boundaries

The Local Authorities (LAs) covered by the Industrial South Wales Objective 2 Programme area were:

- The whole of Newport, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea
- Monmouthshire – those parts of the County lying within the Travel To Work Areas (TTWAs) of Blaenau Gwent and Abergavenny, Newport, Pontypool and Cwmbran
- Powys – those parts of the County lying within the TTWAs of Aberdare and Swansea
- Carmarthenshire – those parts of the County lying within the TTWAs of Llanelli and Swansea
- The Vale of Glamorgan – part of the Cardiff and Bridgend TTWAs
- Parts of the Cardiff LA

### Priorities

The Programme was split into six main Priorities:

- Priority 1: Community Economic Regeneration
- Priority 2: Investment in the Valleys
- Priority 3: Developing indigenous SME Potential
- Priority 4: Increasing Innovative Capacity in SMEs
- Priority 5: Action for Tourism
- Priority 6: Specific Carried Forward Action



# Priority 1

## Community Economic Regeneration

In highly disadvantaged areas a Community Economic Development (CED) approach is required for effective regeneration. This approach focuses on:

- the creation of public/community/voluntary/private (PCVP) partnerships
- the establishment of community capacity building programmes
- the creation of community owned income generating assets, and
- the design and implementation of sustainable long term strategies and actions for regeneration thus laying the basis for maximising balanced and sustainable economic growth in such communities

The main objective assisted under this Priority was the development of strategic action plans. Two of the main mechanisms for delivering this objective were partnerships and capacity building actions.

100 of the most disadvantaged wards of ISW, representing 28% of the population, were targeted for support under this Priority.

### Measure 1 – Community Economic Regeneration (ERDF)

#### Objectives

- To create sustainable Public/Community/Voluntary/Private ('PCVP') partnerships for Community Economic Development (CED)
- To build and sustain greater community capacity
- To develop and implement sustainable strategies for CED

In order to facilitate Community Economic Development (CED), action must be targeted at building the strengths of local communities, assisting them to develop grass roots initiatives that improve the quality of life for local people. Under this Measure locally based initiatives were supported that aimed to improve the

capacity of local people to provide services and goods that directly contributed to the economic, social, cultural and environmental regeneration of their communities.

The Upper Rhymney Valley Regeneration Strategy aims to arrest and reverse the spiral of decline in the Upper Rhymney Valley.

The core partners of the Task Force created to take it forward are Caerphilly County Borough Council, Groundwork Caerphilly, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations, and local communities. The following 4 project profiles clearly demonstrate the benefits of this Measure in terms of 'bottom-up' community led initiatives and the 'PCVP' partnership approach.

#### Project Profile 1

**Project:** Community Routeway from Parc Cwm Darran to Fochriw  
**Sponsor:** Caerphilly County Borough Council  
**Grant:** £41,626

#### ROUTEWAY FROM ISOLATION

Caerphilly County Borough Council has created both a 1km flat, off-road route between the community of Fochriw, situated in the north of the Rhymney Valley, and Parc Cwm Darran Country Park, near Deri. It also completes both a circular walk around the Park's lake and a 5km route between Fochriw, Deri and Bargoed.

Jan Bennett, Caerphilly County Borough Council's Community Regeneration Officer says, "Before the routeway, the residents of Fochriw without access to cars were fairly isolated. The only way for pedestrians to reach the Park was by walking on the road itself – which was clearly both difficult and dangerous. Now, everyone from parents with young children to the elderly can easily and safely reach the Park or walk further into Deri or even Bargoed using the routeway."

In addition to improved access, the routeway also improves the local environment through the integration of a disused railway into the landscape. An area of 0.3 hectares along the former railway line has been planted with trees, a new wooden bridge replaces the former railway bridge and information panels explain the significance and history of the railway to the local community. Further benefits resulting from the environmental improvements will be the reduction of trespass and damage caused by motorbikes.



The Community Routeway provides a vital link to the amenities of Fochriw



From left: John Mole, Parc Cwm Darran Manager; Jan Bennett, CCBC Community Regeneration Officer; Clive Roberts, Darran Valley Community Council; Bryn Richards, WEPE Ltd; Phil Griffiths, CCBC; Mrs Cooper, Darran Valley Community Council; Diana Wilson and Karen Thompson, WEPE Ltd.





## Project Profile 2

**Project:** Upper Rhymney Valley:  
**Task Force and Small Grants for Community Regeneration**  
**Sponsor:** Caerphilly County Borough Council  
**Grant:** £315,133



### PARTNERSHIP IS KEY TO SUCCESS...

The project involves the formation of a multi-disciplinary Task Force within the Council to help the development of a 'PCVP' partnership in 7 severely disadvantaged wards in the Upper Rhymney Valley. The Task Force works with partners on a rolling programme basis to draw up local action plans as part of a comprehensive, sustainable action plan for the area. The project also looks at new ways of increasing local input into Council decision making processes.

The formation of the Task Force and the resulting long-term commitment from the PCVP partnership has been the key to the success of the Upper Rhymney Valley Strategy according to Tim Peppin, Policy and Research Manager at Caerphilly County Borough Council. "The European funding was the catalyst which enabled us to put workers on the ground who could then work with the other organisations in the partnership. The Council's Community Regeneration Officer works closely with the Development Officers based in the Upper Rhymney Valley and with the Council's Corporate Management Team."

The Council operates a small grants scheme to help local groups become actively involved in regeneration. Grants of up to £1000 were offered within the Programme period to new and existing voluntary organisations and charities working in the Upper Rhymney Valley area.

## Project Profile 3

**Project:** Upper Rhymney Valley Community Environmental Regeneration  
**Sponsor:** Groundwork Caerphilly  
**Grant:** £521,840



### COMMUNITY REGENERATION AND RECYCLING

The aim of Groundwork's project is to undertake a programme of community led environmental strategies and to implement community environmental improvements and recycling initiatives with the aim of building community capacity and confidence.

The Community Furniture Enterprise is a recycling project based in Rhymney co-ordinated by Groundwork, in partnership with Caerphilly County Borough and GAVO, which is attempting to relieve the effects of poverty and social deprivation in the area by collecting, refurbishing and redistributing unwanted furniture and domestic appliances to people on low incomes. Groundwork Caerphilly Executive Director Peter Williams says, "The Community Furniture Enterprise provides jobs and volunteering opportunities. It also extends the useful life of furniture and household items, which reduces the amount of waste material going to landfill, in line with the Council's Waste Strategy."

Ael-y-Bryn Community Centre in Rhymney has played a key role in the community led environmental strategy/improvement element of the project. The local community has worked closely with Groundwork in the planning, prioritisation and implementation stages of a strategy to unify the community centre with the local community. The project group specifically involves people who are disadvantaged or traditionally excluded from involvement in projects of this kind (women, people with disabilities, the elderly and a youth group). The project has been selected as one of eight pilot areas for the People In Communities Social Exclusion Programme for Wales.

A similar strategic approach is being undertaken in a further six communities in the area including Pandyctyn and in Phillipstown, where residents' groups have designed, planted and are managing new community gardens created from previously derelict sites.

Members of the local community helped to identify priorities for environmental improvements at Ael-y-Bryn Community Centre and also helped to carry out the improvement strategy.  
Photo © Jenny Barnes

## Project Profile 4

**Project:** Community Economic Development in the Upper Rhymney Valley  
**Sponsor:** Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO)  
**Grant:** £123,704



### EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES AT GRASS ROOTS LEVEL

The project helps the communities of the Upper Rhymney Valley to capitalise on the opportunities for involvement and leadership being developed in parallel by the GAVO's partners in the Upper Rhymney Valley – Caerphilly CBC, Groundwork Caerphilly and others.

Mike Bridgeman, GAVO's Senior Development Officer says, "We have 3 Community Development Officers working from the Rhymney Day Centre, situated in the heart of the community. The centre is a focal point for us and our partners. The Development Officers work closely with members of the community to identify their needs and to help empower them to address those needs."

This project is a core element in the partnership approach to community led regeneration in the Upper Rhymney Valley. It provides the necessary support at a 'grass roots' level for local people to take full advantage of employment and training opportunities in the area.

The Development Officers with the Rhymney Community Development Co-ordinator (2nd from right), from left John Davies, Bernie McEwen, Stephen Nash, Alison Prowle



## Measure 2 – Community Economic Regeneration (ESF)

### Objective

To increase the sustainable and transferable skills of local people to engage in actions to help themselves individually and collectively, which will result in local economic benefit.

ESF was used for community led activities to build the capacity and confidence of local people, voluntary and community groups and potential partnership members directly to contribute to the economic development of their communities.

Both Training and Non Training Human Resource Development (HRD) activities were supported under this measure. The Community Music Wales project is training based, whilst the Artscare Wales project is non-training.

### Project Profile 5

**Project Title:** Cardiff and Valleys Youth Music Projects  
**Sponsor:** Community Music Wales  
**Grant:** £15,460

#### PERFORMANCE AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS

The Cardiff and Valleys Youth Music Project is an innovative training initiative for disadvantaged young people.

The project included an initial period of research, development networking and outreach work supported by taster sessions to recruit its target group. The resulting Open College Network (OCN) accredited courses comprised weekly 2 hour workshops over 15 weeks, an intensive week where participants organised and gave a live performance, and at least 12 hours of work placements or visits with individuals or organisations in music, leisure or related industries.

The courses enabled participants to gain OCN Level 1, Level 2 and even Level 3 in some cases. Participants were also given tutorial support to simulate progression into other training, further education or employment.

Eileen Smith, Community Music Wales' Admin Co-ordinator, says, "ESF support enabled us to undertake the outreach and networking activity required to reach the target groups in the selected areas. The tutorial support, work placements and performance were vital to the success of the project in terms of employment opportunities and the development of entrepreneurial and organisational skills."



Participants learning performance skills

### Project Profile 6

**Project:** Artscare Community Training Animator  
**Sponsor:** Artscare  
**Grant:** £12,082

#### AN ARTS APPROACH TO TACKLE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

This project was a 'twin' application in both Objectives 2 & 5b. Within ISW, the project was a cross-priority application under Priorities 1 & 2. (NB: Priority 1 targeted the 100 most disadvantaged wards & Priority 2 targeted the Valleys).

The aim of the project is to establish a Community Training Animator to work between the Artscare organisation and the bodies who refer people to Artscare. The Animator's role is to improve the organisation of Artscare's training in the area.

Those referred are at most risk of social and economic exclusion and undergo closely monitored programmes of specialist arts based programmes of confidence building. Referral bodies include social services and community departments of local authorities in the area and organisations such as Mencap, Carmarthen Association of Voluntary Organisations (CAVO), Lynx workshops, Llanelli and Carmarthen Drugs Team.

The approach to combating the needs of people at the margins of society adopted by Artscare has been acknowledged across the UK as being ground breaking and a source of best practice. Anne-Marie Rogan, Artscare's European Officer, explains, "Our approach offers organisations dealing with marginalised people a way of operating training and confidence building which does not, in the first instance, subject those with little or no confidence for mainstream training to the rigours associated with it. In short, it uses an arts approach to tackle social and economic issues."

The Arts Council of Wales has identified the project as highly innovative and an exemplar for other organisations across the UK. The project has direct synergy with West Wales Mobile Community Arts Training, its twin project funded by the Objective 5b Rural Wales Programme, which has also been a success.



A participant training in Llanelli





# Priority 2

## Investment in the Valleys

Problems experienced throughout ISW from the decline of traditional industries and subsequent job losses have been particularly serious in the Valleys. In particular, the area has suffered from high levels of unemployment, a lack of investment especially from the private sector, a lack of large sites and premises immediately available, inadequacies in the public transport system which prevent access to job opportunities, and a lack of an entrepreneurial culture. The Valleys have especially suffered from

the resulting problems associated with social exclusion such as deprivation and demotivation.

This Priority aimed to provide additional resources for the Valleys, to those available in other Priorities in the Programme, to produce added value by linking infrastructure developments with business support and human resource development.

### Measure 1 – Spatially Strategic Sites, Premises and Training (ERDF)

#### Objective

To develop the Valleys economy

This Measure supported a mixture of investments in the Valleys. However, as the western Valleys, part of the central Valleys and part of the eastern Valley are especially effected by physical constraints preventing development. A limited number of locations adjoining the Valley areas were also funded.

The sites supported had to directly benefit and serve the needs of

Valleys communities, be public/private sector partnerships and preferably be brownfield sites.

In order to remove barriers to female participation in the workforce, actions had to be gender sensitive and support was available for the provision of childcare facilities associated with sites, premises and training facilities.

#### Project Profile 7

**Project:** Construction of Two-Storey Training Centre at Village Farm Estate  
**Sponsor:** ACOM Business Services Ltd  
**Grant:** £56,325 Phase I; £15,838 Phase II

#### SME TRAINING CENTRE FOR SMEs

The ISW Labour Market Survey concluded that training facilities supported 'under this Measure should be either 'generic' multi-skilling facilities or 'sectoral' training facilities in growth sectors of the economy. ACOM'S project is a 'sectoral' training facility and was the first private sector approval in the 97-99 Programme.

ACOM is a private company, set up in the late 1980s, working in partnership with Mid Glamorgan TEC/TEC South East Wales, Bridgend College and Bridgend County Borough Council.

The Training Centre, built on land designated for industrial/commercial development, is ideally placed to meet local strategic objectives for Information Communication Technology (ICT) provision for Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs). Phase I accommodated twelve Information Technology (IT) Modern Apprentices and was designed with the potential to further extend the training area, if required. Phase II responded to increased demand, accommodating a further 18 networked computer workstations which will enable the delivery of a broad spectrum of courses.

Roy Bowen, Director, says, "At least two thirds of our clients now come from SMEs. I think that as we are an SME ourselves, we are better placed to understand SME needs."

In addition to the IT apprenticeships other courses are offered on a flexible basis at weekends and in the evenings attracting local residents, particularly young mothers and returners to the work place.



The ACOM Training Centre and training area





## Project Profile 8

**Project:** Baglan Energy Park Phases I & II Port Talbot – Infrastructure Works  
**Sponsor:** Welsh Development Agency  
**Grant:** Phase I £829,167; Phase II £3,000,000

### BOOSTING THE VALLEYS' ECONOMY WITH ENERGY

This project was supported as a 'spatially strategic site' that serves the Valleys area. It is a public/private partnership with BP Chemicals, the traditional main employer of the area.

The Energy Park lies on a brownfield site – partly former steelworks, partly redundant operational land – adjacent to the M4, north of Port Talbot. The Park aims to provide a vital economic boost for the area through the provision of a variety of plots suitable for investors from a wide range of sectors (including automotive, metal industries and building materials manufacturers) to locate to, providing employment opportunities for 6000 people. Investors will benefit from a newly constructed gas-fired power station on an adjacent site providing a discounted energy supply.

The scheme is based on the phased reclamation and development of 300 hectares of land, of which Phase I totals 42 hectares and Phase II 80 hectares. Phase I was based on a programme of landscaping to significantly improve the local environment and new roads. Phase II, due to be completed by Summer 2001, comprises actions to remedy contamination, reclamation, the provision of infrastructure including roads and footways, and landscaping.

WDA Chairman David Rowe-Beddoe describes the Park as a unique product in South West Wales, "Baglan Bay Energy Park is set to become one of the most exciting and significant economic development projects in the UK," he says.



Plan of Baglan Bay Energy Park

## Measure 2 – Support for Valleys' SMEs (ERDF)

### Objective

To generate jobs in Valleys' SMEs by:

- Establishing new SMEs
- Expanding existing SMEs
- Developing supplier chains & strategic clusters.

The regeneration of the Valleys' economy requires a diverse range of thriving, innovative SMEs in order to create jobs. This Measure

provided the business support needed to encourage SME formation, to assist existing SMEs to thrive and grow and to enhance and extend the ability of Valleys' SMEs to participate in ISW's strategic clusters and supply chain. The Measure aimed to enable companies to mutually benefit from their activities, products, services and inter-trading.

## Project Profile 9

**Project:** The Call Centre - An Enhancement of the Services Provided by the Mid Glamorgan Business Connect Consortium  
**Sponsor:** Mid Glamorgan TEC now part of TEC South East Wales (SEWTEC)  
**Grant:** £89,747

### CALLING ALL SMEs...

Mid Glamorgan Business Connect Consortium set up the Call Centre as a Business Connect Centre to improve the support services it provided to SMEs in terms of additional IT and human resources.

The Call Centre houses an information library and three enquiry handlers/information officers, two of whom are supported by this ERDF project. The staff provide a filtering service for enquiries, which can be transferred using state of the art telephone equipment to the appropriate consortium partner. The information and link service is free to employers.

The service is a 'first stop shop' for SMEs to gain access to a range of specialist advice and guidance on a range of subjects including business start up, business expansion, IT, training and management skills, finance, grants and loans, recruitment, research and development, European matters, tax, VAT, and insurance. The Call Centre also provides access to seminars, business counselling and other business support services. For start up and SME companies with growth potential, there is an opportunity to work with business advisors who can offer a customised support service.

Suzanne Stephens, European Support Manager says, "This project encourages networking and co-operation in the area helps new and growing Valleys SMEs to develop a competitive situation in the world market."



Call Centre Staff filter enquiries on behalf of Consortium Partners





## Measure 3 – Targeted Human Resource Development for Valleys (ESF)

### Objective

To attract investment into the area and to embed the benefits of recent investment by encouraging human resource development, including customised training employment schemes.

ESF was used to build the confidence and skills of Valleys' residents, to enable them to take advantage of new employment opportunities. Activities under this Measure were aimed at contributing to the well being of local economies by improving conditions for local enterprise and strengthening links with growth sectors. Preference was given to projects which addressed skills priorities

identified in the ISW Labour Market Strategy and local labour market needs.

Both Training and Non Training Human Resource Development activities were supported under this Measure, including vocational guidance, counselling, work placements and wage subsidies. Gorseinon College's project is training, whilst the University of Glamorgan project is non-training.

### Project Profile 10

**Project:** Basic Vocational Skills for Residents of Valleys' Communities  
**Sponsor:** Gorseinon College  
**Grant:** £45,095

#### BASIC SKILLS ARE FIRST STEP TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT

The project is a customised training scheme for Valleys' residents which is delivered on an outreach basis to help boost the confidence levels of its students.

Modules taught include literacy and numeracy, IT skills, computer aided graphics, an introduction to European countries and languages, counselling and vocational 'tasters'. The ESF funding supports tutorial groups, transport, access to computer resources and a computer resource co-ordinator, a nursery, and an interview skills module. Students can achieve the City and Guilds 3793 and 3794 qualifications in Wordpower and Numberpower.

"The project aims to provide its students with basic skills and to raise their confidence levels in order for them to take advantage of emerging employment opportunities," says Caroline Henderson, External Funding Manager. "In addition, the project aims to reduce regional, social and economic disparities by offering basic skills as a first step towards creating an entrepreneurial culture and entry into employment for residents of the Valleys."



Valley' residents receiving basic skills training

### Project Profile 11

**Project:** Multimedia Training Materials for the Community University  
**Sponsor:** University of Glamorgan  
**Grant:** £192,451

#### PACKAGES OF EMPLOYABILITY

This is a non-training project which aims to produce curriculum training packages in Multimedia, Electronic Publishing and for the Euro Computer Driving License (ECDL) at NVQ Level 2. The ECDL is a pan European Publishing Scheme for certifying computing skills to industry standards and is supported by the British Computer Society.

The project has worked with educational and training professionals, a multimedia SME and community partners to create open learning packages aimed at building confidence and providing skills for employment. The packages include the use of presentation software, word processing, file management, spreadsheets & databases, information networks, in addition to IT concepts.

Mike Watkins, Project Manager says, "The project contributes directly to community regeneration by raising educational and vocational standards by offering fully accredited packages. Possessing appropriate certificates enhances the employability of Valleys' residents."



Process description screen used in the training course



## Measure 4 – Improved Public Transport Access to Employment (ERDF)

### Objective

**To remove barriers to travel for jobs and training for Valleys' residents.**

There has been a history of major travel-to-work patterns between the Valleys and the main employment areas in Newport, Cardiff, Bridgend, Swansea and Llanelli. This Measure aimed at improving opportunities for Valleys' residents to compete for jobs in these areas.

Activities were focused on new or improved, sustainable public transport links in the Valleys and between the Valleys and the coastal plain.

### Project Profile 12

<b>Project:</b>	<b>South Wales Integrated Fast Transit (SWIFT)</b>
<b>Sponsor:</b>	<b>Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (on behalf of SWIFT)</b>
<b>Grant:</b>	<b>Phase I £2,192,000; Phase II £1,817,000</b>

### ROUTE TO EMPLOYMENT

SWIFT is a group of private and public partners comprising Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Vale of Glamorgan Councils working with Railtrack, Valley Lines, The Confederation of Passenger Transport, Cardiff Bay Development Corporation and the National Assembly for Wales. Its principal aim is to develop the most effective way of providing efficient, convenient, affordable and environmentally beneficial public transport within the Valleys, and between the Valleys and the coastal plain that enhances job opportunities.

The project is an ongoing programme based on direct improvements to rail and bus infrastructure, improving accessibility to public transport corridors and other general improvements. The project has established park and ride schemes, enhanced bus corridors and undertaken station enhancements including providing better access for people who use wheelchairs. Passenger information has also been improved.

'Increasing the frequency and speed of bus and rail travel enables Valleys residents to better access job opportunities not just within the Valleys, but in Cardiff and Bridgend,' says Peter Mortimer, Head of Policy Research and European Affairs at Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council. 'The impact of the project on the transportation infrastructure has also made the area more attractive for business investment.'



Caerphilly Bus & Rail Interchange, opened in Spring 1999.





# Priority 3

## Developing Indigenous SME Potential

Priority 3 was seen by the authors of the ISW Programme as being central to the Programme. It was anticipated that activities within this Priority would contribute to achieving all of the seven strategic objectives of the Programme.

- Support for new start-ups
- Establishment of supply chains
- Provision of direct investment for SMEs & workspace with support services
- Business support measures, increased direct investments in SMEs
- Targeted Human Resource Development

This aim of this Priority was the establishment and growth of SMEs, enabling them to become more competitive. The Priority combined a range of business support activities with access to finance. This has been cited by SMEs as one of the major barriers to innovative development activities. Activities also included the provision of workspace and support services for SMEs and HRD activities to enable SMEs to take advantage of new procedures, techniques and skills.

### Measure 1 – Support for Establishing SMEs and to Grow SMEs (ERDF)

#### Objective

##### To Generate jobs by:

- Establishing new SMEs
- Expanding existing SMEs

This Measure sought to encourage the establishment and development of SMEs by providing advice and assistance aimed at achieving competitive advantage. The Measure concentrated on supporting SMEs with the greatest potential for job creation and regeneration. Quality branding was an important factor within this Measure.

As the Business Connect Consortia is the body normally responsible for ensuring the application of quality standards within Wales, direct support from the Consortia was an important aspect of project selection.

### Project Profile 13

**Project:** Cardiff & Vale Business Birth Rate Initiative  
**Sponsor:** Cardiff and Vale Enterprise (CAVE)  
**Grant:** £257,300

#### INITIATIVE HELPS NEW BUSINESSES TO BE 'BORN'

The Business Birth Rate Initiative aimed to provide an integrated programme of advice, mentoring and information designed to increase the numbers of new business starts. Businesses with growth potential were targeted to ensure a higher survival rate. The project builds on the Business Venture Programme run by CAVE with ERDF support in the previous ISW Objective 2 Programme.

A wide range of support activities were made available to participants at times convenient to them and their business needs. Activities included seminars, networking and mentoring with successful entrepreneurs to assist with meetings, business plans and accounting systems. "The support provided by the project has been instrumental in starting more than 50 businesses, creating at least 200 jobs," says Hywel Davies, Business Adviser with CAVE.

Signal Radios was a new business that has benefited from this project which was started from home in December 1997 comprising an owner/manager plus one engineer. Administrative issues were dealt with by a volunteer in the evenings. Just over two years later the company is based in a suite in the Cardiff International Arena and has 7 engineers and 2 full time administrative staff. A further increase to 15 engineers by July 2000 is anticipated.

Martin Williams, the owner manager, says "Initial help was vital – it helped me to focus on the essential issues. I received expert help concerning the viability of the idea, recruitment, preparation of cash-flow analysis etc. The use of the CAVE logo was really influential in dealings with banks – it gave credibility which I'm sure helped me to secure funding. I also had excellent advice about advertising and promotional issues."



Hywel Davies (centre) and Gordon Moss (right) of CAVE visit John Mudd at the Real Crisp Company – another Business Birth Rate Initiative success – in Cwmffinech.



## Measure 2 – Strategic Clusters and Supply Chains (ERDF)

### Objective

#### To equip indigenous companies to derive benefit from inward investment

Industrial South Wales has been successful in attracting investment and it was important to ensure that the benefits were both spread throughout the area and were sustainable. This Measure focused on assisting medium-sized growth SMEs in forming supply chains and

services to larger companies located in the ISW area. The Measure also supported the extension and enhancement of supply chains to spread the benefits geographically, as studies show that firms prefer their suppliers to be located within a 10 mile radius.

### Project Profile 14

**Project:** Quality Environmental Management for SME's  
**Sponsor:** Arena Network  
**Grant:** £108,016

#### IMPROVING COMPETITIVENESS BY ADDRESSING QUALITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Arena Network Wales Environment Centre and the Wales Quality Centre are two key organisations that provide focussed support to businesses in Wales to improve competitiveness and examine opportunities for saving costs. Arena Network Wales Environment Centre particularly raises awareness of business environmental issues. This project addresses the gap where SMEs recognise the value of both quality and environmental certification to remain competitive and improve profitability, but view the task as too onerous. The project is delivered with support from some of Arena Network Wales Environment Centre and Wales Quality Centre's larger business members. Companies like Sony, Hyder, Trico and BP Chemicals provide mentoring support to SMEs in the manufacturing and service sectors. By working in groups, SMEs are given the opportunity to both achieve quality and environmental certification, and to benchmark their quality and environmental performance with others. In addition to other key business issues.

A CD ROM is being produced to publicise and promote the successes using a series of case studies and best practice demonstrations for SMEs to see how similar businesses address environmental and quality issues for advantage.

Dr Martin Turner, Projects Manager, says, "Quality and environmental issues are key business performance measures which customers are using more and more to assess suppliers. This ERDF funded project has provided the opportunity for SMEs to address these issues and improve their competitiveness, thus protecting or even generating jobs."



The Project Team





## Measure 3 – Increasing Direct investment in SMEs (ERDF)

### Objective

#### To increase direct investment in SMEs

In order to succeed, SMEs need access to capital. Many companies have reported difficulties in getting risk capital to finance innovative changes. They need help in applying for and obtaining private sector finance and other grant aid. Assistance needs to be complemented by diagnostic counselling, advice and information infrastructures.

This Measure was subject to the recommendations of a 'mapping study' which was commissioned by the Welsh Office and accepted by the ISW Monitoring Committee & the European Commission in early 1998.

The Measure had two parts - provision of risk capital for SMEs and business advice and consultancy services to support SMEs seeking risk capital. The Commission was looking for one 'umbrella' project to cover all applications for the risk capital element and a small number of supporting projects.

The following profiles are the projects that jointly formed the 'umbrella' bid, alongside three support bids.

### Project Profile 15

**Project:** Wales Technology Venture Fund now known as The Wales Innovation Fund Ltd  
**Sponsor:** Welsh Development Agency (WDA)  
**Grant:** £1,500,000

#### UK 1ST FOR NEW VENTURE CAPITAL FUND

This project involved the establishment of a £5 million venture capital fund aimed primarily at technology based SMEs. The fund offers investments of between £150,000 and £500,000 to Welsh based businesses showing a capacity for rapid and profitable growth. The fund is a joint venture between the WDA and NatWest Bank.

Venture capital provides long-term, committed share capital. This type of investment has been shown to contribute significantly to companies' growth, enabling them to achieve their full potential and make a major contribution to the economic development of the community in which they operate.

WDA Chairman David Rowe-Beddoe says, "The Wales Innovation Fund is an essential component of the strategy to boost the growth of indigenous business. It is also the key to the development of the entrepreneurial, knowledge-based society which can deliver the economic growth we all want to see in Wales and a tangible demonstration of the effectiveness of partnership between public and private sectors."

Malcolm Cameron, of NatWest Corporate Banking Services says "We're delighted to be an investor in the Wales Innovation Fund - which will be the first joint bank, Regional Development Agency and European-backed fund of its type in the UK investing in early stage companies."



(from right): WDA Chairman David Rowe-Beddoe with Wales Innovation Fund Chairman William Legge-Bourke and Fund Manager Peter Shortt.

### Project Profile 16

**Project:** South Wales Small Loan Fund now known as Wales Small Loan Fund  
**Sponsor:** Welsh Development Agency (WDA)  
**Grant:** £643,000

#### SME ENTREPRENEURS HELPED BY SMALL AMOUNTS OF RISK CAPITAL

The objective of this project is the establishment of a £2.1 million Small Loan Fund aimed at improving economic and entrepreneurial activity, by providing small amounts of risk capital at a fixed interest rate. Loans of between £5,000 and £50,000 are available to profit and non-profit making SMEs to support projects which otherwise would not proceed. Mike Davies, Fund Manager, says, "The Fund will promote access to capital for specific business groups such as ethnic minority, women entrepreneurs and viable community businesses."

During the Programme period, the fund will advance more than 100 loans to 100 businesses. The establishment of the fund required ERDF support, however, the structure is such that it can continue on an 'evergreen' basis, without the requirement of further European Funding.



Mike Davies, Fund Manager, visiting G-Plas, one of the businesses assisted by the Fund.



## Project Profile 17

**Project:** British Steel (Industry) Limited – South Wales Technology Enterprise Fund  
**Sponsor:** Welsh Development Agency (WDA)  
**Grant:** £600,000

### FUND HELPS TECHNOLOGICAL SMES OVERCOME NOTORIOUS RISKS

The Technology and Enterprise Fund is a £2 million project aimed at providing development capital for new and existing SMEs. Risk capital of between £25,000 and £150,000 is offered at competitive interest rates to enable these businesses to achieve sustainable growth and generate quality employment.

All types of business are considered for the Fund, but the emphasis of investment is on those demonstrating technological prowess. Successful applicants will be commercially viable businesses with genuine growth potential. A business can be in either the manufacturing or service sectors, but not retailing.

David Hughes, Wales Regional Manager, British Steel (Industry) said "The Welsh Development Agency has identified technology as a growth area, but the risks of the sector are notoriously difficult to assess by the investment industry. This new fund is excellent news for technology based companies in Wales."

## Project Profile 18

**Project:** Technology Enterprise Fund: Mentoring Scheme  
**Sponsor:** British Steel (Industry) Limited  
**Grant:** £60,606

### MENTORING SMEs FOR GROWTH

The aim of this project is to establish a mentoring scheme in support of SMEs who are in receipt of investment from the Technology Enterprise Fund, one of the three projects making up the 'umbrella' bid previously outlined. The mentoring service will provide SMEs with valuable business expertise and experience, thus enabling the SME to grow. It is anticipated that over 30 SMEs will receive mentoring.



Pedogy Runs OK – Dr Clive Keed (centre) with Jonathan Fogg of British Steel (Industry) (left) and Richard Harbottle, Fund Manager.

## Project Profile 19

**Project:** Access to Capital Initiative  
**Sponsor:** Welsh Development Agency (WDA)  
**Grant:** £128,362

### HELP WITH CAPITAL VENTURE FOR SMEs

The initiative supports sound business propositions to obtain access to equity capital. Users of the initiative will be referred by venture capitalists who will need to prove that they are unable to progress the application without support. Assistance will be provided principally by the commissioning of external consultants.

The initiative aims to assist 30 SMEs in ISVV and raise £3 million equity capital. In addition to targeted assistance, there will be a programme of general education to raise the awareness of the benefit of equity capital.



## Project Profile 20

**Project:** Xenos – Business Angel Network Phase II  
**Sponsor:** Welsh Development Agency (WDA)  
**Grant:** £197,257

### GUARDIAN ANGELS

Xenos is the brand name of the Business Angel network in Wales. Xenos aims to identify successful, wealthy business people – the angels – who are willing to invest some of their money in interesting new ventures in anticipation of a good return. The scheme provides support for the bringing together of angels with prospective investee businesses.

Phase I established the network including a database of registered angels and businesses.

Phase II aims to take advantage of the Phase I achievements and build on the high level of publicity and promotional work already undertaken. The objective was to generate maximum deal flow and already ISVV business angel investment has been achieved a level comparable to the rest of the UK.



Bio Discovery – Dr Coir. Lucey (left) and Dr Robert Wallin





## Measure 4 – Workspace and Support Services for SMEs (ERDF)

### Objective

#### To encourage the development and growth of SMEs

The aim of this Measure was to provide new and emerging local SMEs with new or refurbished business premises and on-site support structures. The high occupancy levels in small unit developments was evidence of the demand being stimulated by complementary measures to encourage local enterprise.

The demand for the development of sites for new small companies has been evolving over the last decade. It was essential to meet these increasing demands to ensure the optimum conditions for SMEs to develop.

### Project Profile 21

<b>Project:</b>	<b>Refurbishment and Environmental Improvements to Business Sites</b>
<b>Sponsor:</b>	<b>Torfaen County Borough Council</b>
<b>Grant:</b>	<b>£99,960</b>

#### IMPROVING INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPES TO ENCOURAGE SMEs GROWTH

The project aimed to improve the quality of seven run down Industrial sites in the Borough of Torfaen in order to re-establish their marketability to SMEs.

The sites had below average occupancy levels of 60%, with several long term vacant units, compared to 85% occupancy at newer sites. Many of the sites dated from the 1960s and as they had aged they had increasingly failed to meet the current needs of companies. By improving the sites' visual appearance and quality of environment, Torfaen County Borough Council aimed to make them more attractive to investors.

"Whilst the needs of start ups were catered for in the Borough there was evidence that, because of their run down nature, some estates could not attract new investors and there was a real danger that companies wishing to expand would relocate outside the area, even outside Wales," says David Ludlow, Head of Economic Development. "Providing business premises suitable to the needs of SMEs encourages their development, growth and competitiveness, thus ultimately stimulating increased economic activity in the area."

The refurbishment of the workspace included re-roofing and re-cladding the existing buildings, which not only improved the quality of the environment, but also provided benefits in terms of energy conservation. Through the programme of refurbishment and landscaping of the surrounding area, the semi-derelict land was returned to an attractive industrial landscape.



One of the industrial estates in Torfaen



## Measure 5 – Human Resource Development for SMEs (ESF)

### Objective

**To assist the creation, expansion and survival of SMEs by supporting training and employment schemes which are developed in a targeted response to the skills needs of the area.**

In order to flourish, industries and businesses within Industrial South Wales require a highly skilled and adaptable workforce, ready to face the challenges of a dynamic economy. A strong emphasis on training and retraining is essential.

Support through this Measure was targeted to raise skill levels in the areas in demand from inward investors, both by helping inward investors train quickly and effectively in addition to supporting training among firms already established in the ISW area.

Support was also provided for projects which concentrated exclusively on improving the ability of training organisations to deliver appropriate training to SMEs.

Both Training and Non-Training Human Resource Development activities were supported under this Measure. The University of Wales Institute Cardiff project is a training based project and the South East Wales Training and Enterprise Council project is non-training.

### Project Profile 22

**Project:** Ethnic Business Excellence  
**Sponsor:** University of Wales Institute Cardiff (UWIC)  
**Grant:** £151,676

#### ASSISTING ETHNIC ENTREPRENEURS TO GENERATE PROGRAMMES OF ACTION

The overall aim of this project is to generate programmes of action to assist ethnic entrepreneurs in interpreting anticipated changes in the small business environment and to respond to them in a timely efficient manner.

The project delivers generic transferable skills, as recommended in the 'Future Skills Wales' study, in a number of ethnic dialogues and languages. Modules taught include communication skills, understanding customer needs, ability to learn, team working, showing initiative, basic management skills (e.g. business planning, financial planning, book-keeping), organising self learning and basic IT skills. It targets employees of SMEs, individuals wishing to enter employment, employees of ethnic businesses and people in minority groups.

"There are no quick fixes in business so our aim is to help participants formulate their own vision. We deliver the course in a variety of innovative formats such as weekend interactive seminars and workshops," says P K Verma, Assistant Course Director. "The last Census revealed a very high unemployment rate amongst the ethnic minorities in parts of ISW and a subsidiary aim of the project is the production of reliable data on ethnic minority people and their role in the labour market."



Weekend workshops enable flexible training for SME employees

### Project Profile 23

**Project:** Medium Term Strategy to Meet the Skills Shortages within the SME Engineering Sector in Mid Glamorgan 'The Apprentice Plus Programme'  
**Sponsor:** Mid Glamorgan TEC now part of TEC South East Wales (SEWTEC)  
**Grant:** £229,540

#### PROGRAMME PROVIDES POOL OF SKILLS FOR SMEs

The Apprentice Plus Programme offers a tailored package to overcome the barriers to training and recruiting faced by SMEs in the manufacturing engineering sector and has received ESF support over a three year period. The programme has been developed to boost the numbers of young people opting for careers in engineering and manufacturing. Apprentices work towards an NVQ Level 3, combining college-based and on the job training.

"Since the project's launch in 1997, 77 young people have benefited from training," says Suzanne Stephens, European Support Officer. "In 1999 the 65 young people taking part in the scheme achieved their NVQ Level 2 and are working towards the next level in 2000."

During the first year of the scheme, a number of trainees were based full time at the Waterton Technology Centre in Bridgend before moving into engineering companies during the second year and placements with SMEs for the third. Other trainees were hosted by Hoover for two years, with off the job training at local colleges, and the third year with small local engineering companies. A separate group of trainees were based at SMEs for the full duration of the project. The wage costs of the trainees have been met through a combination of ESF funding, TEC funding and contributions from the private sector.

**TEC**  
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# Priority 4

## Increasing Innovative Capacity of SMEs

**Innovation involves the successful transfer and utilisation of new techniques, processes, information and communication systems.** It also involves the management and organisation of production, business methods and training. SMEs need to be at the leading edge of technology to benefit from best practice from other local, national and international competitors. Effective management of new technology needs a strategic approach to innovation. This would enable SMEs to integrate their own

resources and expertise with those of government agencies, higher and further education and business support organisations.

Wales has benefited from the production of a **Regional Technology Plan (RTP)**. This developed a consensus on the key innovation issues, identified priorities and established an implementation programme. Projects supported under this measure needed to demonstrate that activities were 'consistent' with the RTP recommendations.

### Measure 1 – Transfer and Utilisation of Technology (ERDF)

#### Objective

**To enable SMEs to acquire and utilise new technologies**

This Measure focused on the transfer and utilisation of technologies to and between SMEs. It was seen as essential to develop practical links for technology transfer between HE and FE Institutions and the

business sector. Innovation facilities closely linked to a university or college with closely managed facilities and providing support to suit the needs of SMEs is required for sustainable growth.

#### Project Profile 24

**Project:** Industrial Drives Centre for ISW Manufacturing  
**Sponsor:** University of Wales, College Newport  
**Grant:** £31,137

#### DRIVE FOR INNOVATION

In a European survey undertaken by the University College, industrial drives training was identified as the most important training required by SMEs and larger firms in manufacturing. The project aims to develop links between SMEs and the University College to enhance innovation in the field of intelligent control for motors through the establishment of a centre for customised training.

Customised intermediate short courses in industrial drives (e.g. AC servo inverters, servo drives, DC drives, Steppermotors) have been developed for manufacturing companies following the installation of industrial standard hardware and software.

"Previously, there was no customised drive training for SMEs," explains Robert Easthope, Training Officer. "Training was available on borrowed machines within big companies on machines designed to meet the needs of the big employer. The Centre allows trainers to customise courses to meet individual SME needs and allows the SME to become self-sufficient through learning problem solving. Intelligent drives are increasingly important in manufacturing, e.g. companies like Pirelli Cables use AC servo drives to wrap things like speaker cables and DC drives are used on cranes for speed control."

The Drives Centre enables SMEs in the manufacturing industry to remain competitive in the global market by increasing the use of integrated, automated production processes. By adopting the resulting new clean energy efficient technologies, the use of natural resources can be reduced, thus improving the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of the production process.



An AC Drive System.



## Measure 2 – Cleaner Ways of Working (ERDF)

### Objective

- To ensure that SMEs adopt and use environmentally friendly techniques and processes including energy conservation and efficiency
- To maximise good environmental practice as a business opportunity

This Measure aimed to encourage the development and increased use of environmentally acceptable alternative sources including renewable energy. The Measure fostered the development of clean techniques, innovative methods of waste recycling and disposal, and alternative energy sources. Additionally, encouragement was given to

mutually beneficial developments in which waste products or surplus energy of one unit, factory or business were utilised by adjacent factories, businesses and communities, thus increasing the efficiency of resource use and minimising environmental impacts.

### Project Profile 25

**Project:** Sully Aluminium Recycling Project  
**Sponsor:** Scope (Cwmipas Cymru)  
**Grant:** Phase I £54,463; Phase II £66,904

### MANAGED BY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

This aluminium recycling project is run and managed by people with disabilities for people with disabilities. It creates training and employment opportunities, is environmentally friendly and also raises the awareness of recycling in the community.

The project is responsible for aluminium can and foil recycling for the Vale of Glamorgan, Swansea, Bridgend, Pontypridd, Cardiff and Cynon Valley areas. Phase I set out to service fifty companies in ISW, a target that it surpassed. The majority of companies the project now services are SMEs such as Crystal Cleaning, Stradform Construction, Nacion Spice Centre, Alignrite and Ogmere Centre Trust. The ERDF funding is used for costs of staff, machinery, transport, premises and administration, and in Phase II for the expansion of the working area.

Louis Fodor, Service Manager for Scope says, "We exist to enable men, women and children with cerebral palsy to claim their rights. This scheme provides jobs for 25 people with a disability, with the aim of teaching at least 10 of them how to set up and run a small business and eventually to hopefully set up a small co-operative."

The scheme provides members of Scope with a variety of activities depending upon their capabilities. There is a rota system for the more mobile members to work with volunteers/staff travelling to the various collection points. Within the centre, there are a number of activities involving varying degrees of dexterity – such as using wall mounted can-crushers, large can separators and crushers, and finally ballers.



Unit Manager, Louis Fodor and trustee John Grigg show local dignitaries the project





## Measure 3 – Human Resource Development for Innovation (ESF)

### Objective

**To ensure that SME managers and their workforce have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to exploit new technologies**

A better educated, better trained and better informed workforce is needed to strengthen the innovation process. This Measure helped to fund and promote updating and upskilling programmes for employees and management, including financial incentives for SMEs to undertake training programmes in innovation.

Both Training and Non Training Human Resource Development activities were supported under this Measure. Bridgend College's project is training based and the Fforwm project is non-training.

### Project Profile 26

**Project:** Engineering Innovation for SMEs  
**Sponsor:** Bridgend College  
**Grant:** £124,916

#### HELPING SMEs TO ADAPT TO NEW TECHNOLOGIES

'Engineering Innovation for SMEs' aimed to provide employees with higher and specialist skills in Engineering and Technology to SMEs in Industrial South Wales in response to identified skills shortages.

The activities of the project included Mechatronics, Mechanical and Manufacture, Electrical and Electronic Engineering. These disciplines included training in robotics, programmable logic controllers, digital electronics, microprocessor practice. Qualifications achieved by trainees were up to NVQ Level 4 (HNC/HND) in Engineering.

John Jenkins, Dean of Faculty said, "The objectives of this project were to help SMEs adapt to new technologies, particularly in the area of production techniques and product development. Without this element of long term training, wider recruitment initiatives could fail to realise their potential."

'Engineering Innovation for SMEs' embraced the principles of the Regional Technology Plan and recognised the need to promote the growth of knowledge-based industries. It also aimed to raise skills in technology and new techniques and processes, and to introduce trainees to practices and techniques in leading-edge manufacturing businesses.



### Project Profile 27

**Project:** Fforwm Environmental Project (Greening Our Colleges)  
**Sponsor:** Fforwm  
**Grant:** £113,912

#### LEARNING HOW TO BE 'GREEN'

'Greening Our Colleges' sought to identify, assess and develop environmental sustainability and support fourteen colleges within the ISW region to prepare and enhance their environmental policies. The project provided support to Further Education (FE) Colleges to engender a culture of greater respect, awareness and appreciation of the environment. It further aimed to encourage young people and SMEs within ISW to view environmental improvement as an economic opportunity.

Fforwm developed a partnership with the Environment Agency, the Environmental Education Council Wales and the Groundwork Trust to develop curriculum workbooks offering support on how to improve the environmental awareness content of the FE curriculum. Fforwm engaged Penarth Management Services as the consultant for the project.

Ieuan Price, the Project Facilitator, says, "Outcomes of the project will have a major influence on the colleges 'going green' and on the inclusion of environmental issues in curriculum design, vocational training and college operations. It draws attention to the moral principle of sustainability and to the importance of environmental management in the sector and to those it serves and provides for, including SMEs."

This innovative project takes forward and builds on the recommendations of the 1993 Toyn report on environmental responsibility and addresses the needs outlined in the ISW Labour Market Assessment.



Subject oriented Environmental workbooks were produced by Penarth Management Services as a project outcome for colleges use.



# Priority 5

## Action for Tourism

The tourism sector accounts for around 7% of employees within the ISW area and has been one of the few growth areas of the last decade. The attractive and varied countryside and landscape of ISW, combined with the attraction of the region's heritage and the potential for growth in business and cultural tourism combined to make it a sector with the potential to drive the regeneration of the ISW economy.

However, the industry is fragmented comprising a large number of very small businesses with limited resources and skills. This affects the ability of this sector to capitalise on the potential for growth. The aim of this Priority was to address the need to spread the benefits of growth in the tourism industry throughout ISW and embed the benefits.

### Measure 1 – Strategic Tourism Development (ERDF)

#### Objective

##### To increase the economic benefits of tourism to the region

Strategic development of the tourism product within ISW will bring additional tourists and expenditure to the region. This would help create new jobs and will increase the economic diversity of the area. Being a dynamic industry, the tourism sector requires significant reinvestment to meet changing customer tastes and to increase the number of visitors and visitor spend within ISW.

To maximise value for money and to ensure the most appropriate tourism strategy for ISW, a scoping study was commissioned. Invitations for Structural Fund support were invited against the agreed recommendations of the scoping study.

#### Project Profile 28

**Project:** Millennium Coastal Park  
**Sponsor:** Carmarthenshire County Council  
**Grant:** £1,500,000

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PARK RISES FROM ASHES OF INDUSTRIAL DERELICTION

The Millennium Coastal Park provides an all-weather, all-year tourism opportunity for both domestic and overseas visitors and features a string of attractions linked by a continuous traffic free cycleway/footpath. The environmental park has been reclaimed from a 22km stretch of coastline previously in industrial dereliction – from Loughor Bridge in the east to Pembrok Country Park in the west. The £1.5m funding supported visitor and interpretation centres, the development of a wetland habitat and the creation of lakes.

Carmarthenshire County Council has formed a close partnership with the Millennium Commission, the Welsh Development Agency, the Wales Tourist Board, Hyder, Countryside Council for Wales and the Forestry Commission to ensure the success of the project. The Park is unique in Wales and its marketing and publicity will promote it as an attraction of international status.

Gerry Phillips, Project Director says, "The Millennium Coastal Park will bring together the very best approaches to bio-diversity, sustainability, wildlife protection and habitat conservation. It aims to be a coastal resource of national and international importance, attracting a minimum of 1.2 million visits."



Gateway hide at Millennium Coastal Park wetlands

#### Project Profile 29

**Project:** Celtic Trail – The Newport to Kidwelly Cycle Route  
**Sponsor:** Neath County Borough Council  
**Grant:** £1,500,000

#### SAFE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND ROUTE FOR TOURISTS

The Celtic Trail/Lôn Geltaidd project will provide 276km of mostly off-road safe cycleway for tourists, suitable for novice and experienced cyclists, walkers and people with disabilities. The Trail will be enhanced with artworks based on local themes in addition to the usual waymarkers along the route. Route maps and interpretation panels en-route will indicate local tourist attractions and accommodation.

The Trail is being developed by the South Wales Cycleway Consortium which comprises Bridgend, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Councils, the City and County of Swansea, Groundwork Cymru Wales, Forest Enterprise and in partnership with Sustrans. The project is also supported by Environment Wales, the Millennium Commission, WDA, Wales Tourist Board, Welsh Office/National Assembly for Wales, Countryside Council for Wales, private sector landfill operators, community groups and cycling organisations.

Brian Biscoe of the South Wales Cycleway Consortium says, "The Celtic Trail will be a major tourist attraction in its own right, as well as being a link to many other tourist attractions such as the National Botanic Gardens, Rhondda Heritage Park and the Millennium Coastal Park – which was also awarded £1.5m ERDF funding. The Trail forms part of the Trans European Cycle Network from mainland Europe to Southern Ireland."



Cyclists and Rollerbladers enjoy the Celtic Trail in Swansea





## Project Profile 30

**Project:** Cardiff International Sports Village – The Snowdome  
**Sponsor:** Cardiff County Council  
**Grant:** £2,100,000

### SKI-ING AND TOBOGGANING ... IN THE CAPITAL CITY?

The Snowdome will offer world-class indoor facilities for winter sports such as snow boarding, ski-ing and tobogganing and is planned to open in Autumn 2001 as part of the proposed £250m Sports Village in Cardiff.

A partnership involving Cardiff County Council, Philips Electronics and other private sector developers is developing the project, which aims to attract 450,000 new visitors to the area.

Cllr Marion Drake, Deputy Mayor (Regeneration) of Cardiff County Council, comments, "The scheme will create 60 new jobs and numerous training opportunities over two years. We are delighted that it has been recognised as an innovative and beneficial project to the area and awarded this significant European grant."

The facility will include 3 indoor ski slopes with an Olympic snow-making system, ski lifts, viewing areas, equipment hire and repair workshops. The Snowdome will also include an ice climbing wall and a family visitor attraction featuring a mountain environment interpretation centre.



Artist's Impressions of the Snowdome

## Project Profile 31

**Project:** The National Botanic Garden of Wales  
**Sponsor:** The National Botanic Garden of Wales – Stage 2  
**Grant:** £1,800,000

### LARGEST GLASS HOUSE IN THE WORLD GERMINATES TOURISM BOOST

The £44m Botanic Garden is a major Millennium Commission scheme, which has attracted match funding from the National Lottery. It aims to encompass and promote the UK environmental strategy, sustainable development, plant genetics and the management of environmental resources. The scheme will include landscapes from various continents, the largest single-span glass house in the world and is set to become a world-class centre of scientific excellence.

The ERDF funding has supported the second stage of the scheme through the development of additional facilities including a visitor interpretation centre, the refurbishment of buildings and site landscaping. The Garden of Wales is working in partnership with a wide range of organisations such as the Wales Tourist Board, Cadw, The National Trust and Carmarthenshire County Council.

"The grant will add significantly to the visitor experience and heighten the attraction and appeal of the site for tourists," says the Garden's Finance Director Brian Bassett. "It will also support 59 additional jobs."

The National Botanic Garden of Wales is seen as a major tourist attraction that will appeal to visitors from Wales, the UK and beyond. Planned to open in late May 2004, it is expected to attract around 250,000 visitors a year by 2004. By the end of 1999, 35,000 visitors had already toured the site to view developmental, construction and planting work.



The Glass House of the National Botanic Garden of Wales

## Project Profile 32

**Project:** Wales Millennium Centre  
**Sponsor:** Wales Millennium Centre  
**Grant:** £4,380,000

### ARTS AND CULTURAL CENTRE MARKS NEW MILLENNIUM FOR WALES

The Wales Millennium Centre will house an international arts and cultural complex and is due to open in Autumn 2002.

The project is a joint venture with the Welsh National Opera and Urdd Gobaith Cymru and is supported by the Welsh Development Agency, Cardiff Bay Development Corporation, Wales Tourist Board, Cardiff County Council, and the private sector.

The £70.2m project, situated in Cardiff Bay – part of Butetown, ranked one of the most deprived wards in Britain – is likely to attract over 1.5m visitors each year and create up to 1,500 direct and linked jobs.

Kathryn McDowall, Chief Executive of the Wales Millennium Centre, says, "The Centre will be an exciting new home to a wide range of organisations whose events will attract visitors from Wales, the UK and beyond. There will also be a 1,900 seater auditorium capable of hosting major musicals, ballet, dance and opera which are currently lost to Wales due to a lack of suitable venues."



Artist's Impression of the Wales Millennium Centre



## Measure 2 – Marketing Industrial South Wales (ERDF)

### Objective

#### To secure growth in the overall tourism market for ISW

Industrial South Wales has not traditionally been a tourist destination. However, there is considerable potential for attracting additional visitors through increased marketing activity both within the UK and overseas. This Measure supported actions to spread the benefit of tourism throughout the region, through local information provision and improved packaging of key attractions and services.

To maximise full potential it was necessary to harness private sector funding and support through developing appropriate partnerships and funding mechanisms.

### Project Profile 33

<b>Project:</b>	<b>Valleys of South Wales Marketing Campaign</b>
<b>Sponsor:</b>	<b>Tourism South &amp; West Wales</b>
<b>Grant:</b>	<b>£203,900</b>

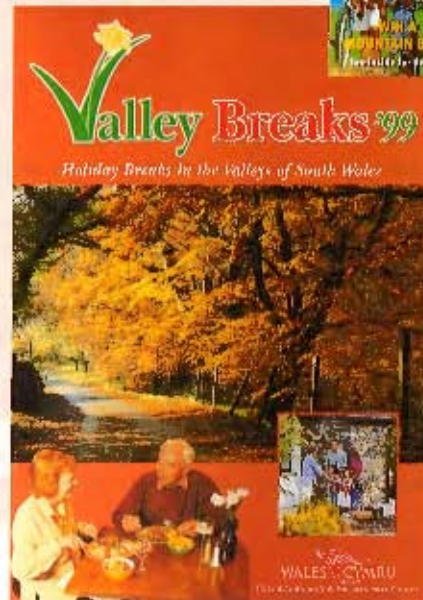
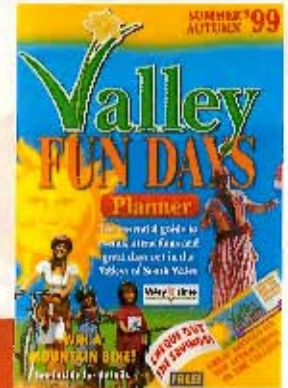
#### VALLEYS REVISITED

This marketing campaign aims to actively develop and promote the tourism potential of the South Wales Valleys. The campaign is the result of a strategic alliance between the local authorities of the region, Tourism South and West Wales, and the Wales Tourist Board.

The campaign seeks to develop the tourism potential of the region as one of the twelve areas in the overall destination UK marketing strategy for Wales. The Valleys campaign has been a forerunner in the development of innovative direct marketing initiatives and this project seeks to develop these further. Market research commissioned by the consortium identified two broad markets for the Valleys, namely Short Break Visitors and Day Visitors.

John Harrison, Marketing Team Leader, says, "The consortium's key priorities for the project are to enhance the image of the Valleys, to create targeted product offers for visitors and to deliver those offers in the most cost-effective ways, to build customer loyalty, and develop segmented databases to monitor the results."

The project is based on a number of promotions to reach its target markets including campaigns to convert casual/non-regular customers into regular/loyal visitors, to create new customers and to take advantage of the opportunities offered by Rugby World Cup 1999.







## Measure 3 – Human Resource Development for the Tourism Sector (ESF)

### Objective

#### To develop a high quality tourism product by upgrading skills in tourism

Tourism is an increasingly important sector of the economy of ISW. Further development depends upon raising the quality of service by improving the skills and qualifications of the workforce. The aim of this Measure was to support training designed to meet the needs of local providers and demonstrate flexibility of delivery.

The Measure also supported activities which integrated training audits and plans with overall business development and capital investment. Actions which supported network tourism and co-operative approaches were also encouraged.

### Project Profile 34

**Project:** Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management for Local Growth Sectors now known as 'Hospitality Management'  
**Sponsor:** University of Wales Institute Cardiff  
**Grant:** £164,236

#### SIMULATED ENVIRONMENTS GIVE TRAINEES OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN WORK EXPERIENCE

This project delivers high level hotel, catering and institutional management skills to assist in the continued development of the local and regional tourism industry.

"The project is based on both theoretical and practical work and trainees achieve the Higher National Diploma in Hospitality Management," explains Mike Flynn, Course Director. "The training ensures that potential employees acquire the understanding and professional knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to develop a high quality tourism product."

Simulated environments at the college such as fully-equipped modern kitchens, a restaurant, coffee shop, accommodation operations, and other practical areas gives trainees the opportunity to experience realistic working situations and gain valuable practical experience under real business pressures. A key element of the course is an extensive work placement either within local companies/SMEs or within another Member State to allow trainees to develop their practical expertise and skills.



UWIC School of Hospitality, Tourism & Leisure students have the opportunity to train alongside a number of visiting professionals. Pictured: US Chef Karl Guggenmos, Johnson & Wales University, South Carolina.

### Project Profile 35

**Project:** Tourism Training Forum Action Plan  
**Sponsor:** Wales Tourist Board (WTB)  
**Grant:** £42,987

#### FORUM FOR ACTION

*This project had a twin application in Objective 5b.*

The Tourism Training Forum for Wales was convened in 1998 and comprises senior representatives of a range of organisations including the Welsh Training and Enterprise Councils, WTB, Regional Tourism Companies, Hospitality Training Foundation, Welsh Colleges of Further and Higher Education, the National Trust and employers.

"By bringing together a partnership of interested parties to develop an action plan and strategy to address the identified needs of the tourism industry in ISW, we can develop an integrated, co-ordinated approach to tourism training for ISW," explains Diana James, WTB's Training Liaison Manager.

The project aims to develop a range of training programmes including high level, longer duration part-time courses, use of new technologies, tailored/customised management courses, in-house courses for staff in the accommodation, catering, activities and attractions, generic skills for new staff and seasonal workers, and tourism guide training. It also aims to establish and maintain a network of training providers for the tourism industry. Once the training events have been identified by the action plan a marketing strategy will be formulated to promote them to the tourism industry.



Economic Development Secretary Rhodri Morgan AM and WTB Chief Executive Jonathan Jones with members of the Tourism Training Forum for Wales at the South Wales launch of the strategy in Cardiff Bay November 1999 (from left) David Botterill of UWIC, Peter Cole of Tourism South and West Wales, Jonathan Jones, Rhodri Morgan AM and Gareth Edwards of Springboard.



# Priority 6

## Specific Carried Forward Actions

SMEs require modern rail freight facilities to enable them to increase their export capacity by taking advantage of the rapidly increasing European rail freight services. South Wales was one of the few UK regions without a modern facility and it was recognised that the provision of a rail freight terminal would greatly support SME development. Additionally, an increase in the level of goods carried by rail rather than road would provide significant environmental benefits.

Provision for a terminal was originally included in the previous Programme. However, whilst two applications were considered, there were technical difficulties which prevented either from reaching approval.

### Project Profile 36

**Project:** Cardiff Eurofreight Terminal  
**Sponsor:** Cardiff County Council  
**Grant:** £3,000,000

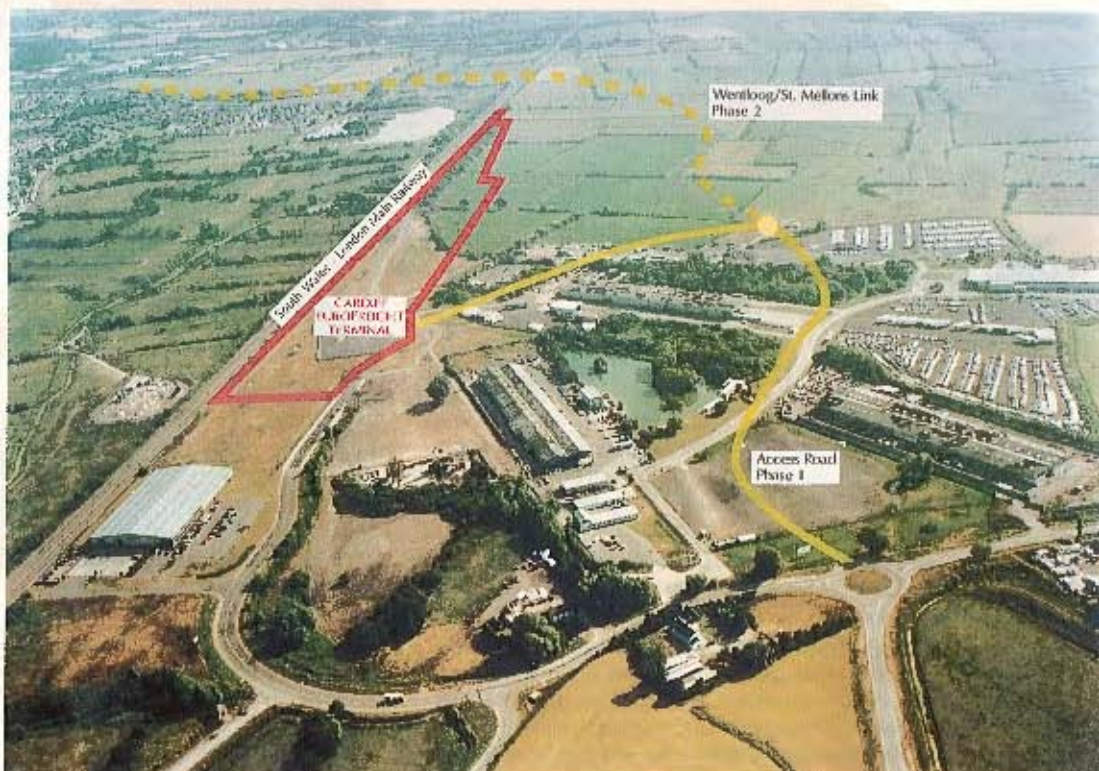
#### LINKING WALES WITH EUROPE BY RAIL

The Cardiff Railfreight Terminal aims to open the gateway to jobs, investment, economic growth and environmental benefits. A consortium of Cardiff County Council, Railtrack, Euroclad, Freightliner and the Welsh Development Agency formed a private/public partnership for this dynamic venture.

Cardiff Railfreight Terminal will be constructed on a twenty acre site adjacent to the Cardiff/London mainline at Wentloog in Cardiff. It will provide significant scope to cater for rail associated warehousing which is a feature of all modern facilities and will have the capacity for the full range of container, swap-body and other rail roads. The location gives immediate access to the region's principal rail line providing direct routes to other parts of Wales, especially the Valleys, to Ireland and to mainland Europe. Excellent road links to the M4 are also in place.

Nick Williams, Director of Euroclad, says, "I'm particularly keen that small Welsh firms will be able to move small amounts of freight by rail – there is a lot of potential there. By 2010, a huge amount of products will be going out of the UK into the rest of Europe."

The facility is designed to meet the growing demands of industry for the efficient movement of freight by rail within the UK and on mainline Europe, together with achieving major environmental gains by the transfer of significant levels of freight from road to rail. The aim is also to shift more products at more competitive prices that will in turn act as a magnet for further inward investors.

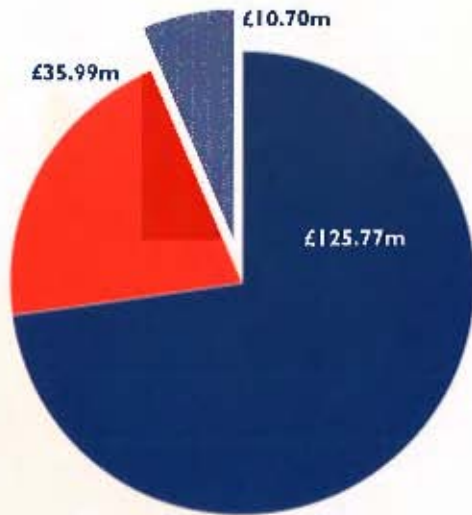


Aerial view of Cardiff Eurofreight Terminal Site



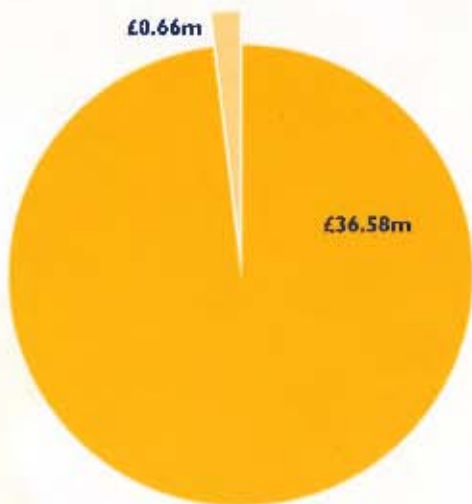


# GRANT STATISTICS



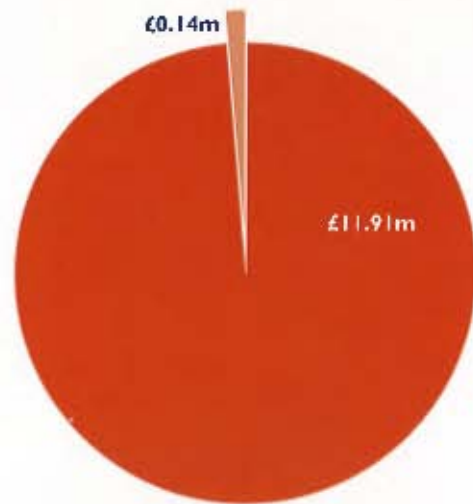
**Total grants approved  
by Fund for Objective 2**

Fund	Grant approved	Balance
ERDF	£125.77m	£10.70m
ESF	£35.99m	£0.00m



**Total grants approved  
for Objective 3**

Grants approved	Balance
£36.58m	£0.66m



**Total grants approved  
for Objective 4**

Grants approved	Balance
£11.91m	£0.14m

# OBJECTIVE 3

Welsh Development Plan 1997 – 1999

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OBJECTIVE 3





# OBJECTIVE 3

## Welsh Development Plan 1997 – 1999

The 1997 – 1999 Objective 3 Programme operated throughout the whole of Wales, drawing on money from the European Social Fund (ESF). The Programme intended to help people from across the broad 'unemployed' group, not just those claiming unemployment benefits, targeting some of the most excluded and disadvantaged groups. The Programme looked to break down the four main barriers to employment in Wales: education, economic, physical and cultural barriers, giving particular consideration to the level and type of skills and qualifications.

To maximise access to the employment market, emphasis was placed on the 'pathway' approach, which entailed combining different types of assistance to form a package of help, appropriate to the individual.

### Global Objective

To assist people without work to find jobs, by providing training, guidance and other assistance as appropriate to the individual, thereby contributing to the ongoing processes of raising the quality of life of the Welsh people, and of developing the Welsh economy.

### Target Groups

The Programme supported people from the broad 'unemployed' group, particularly the following disadvantaged sub groups (under Priorities 1 & 2):

- People with disabilities (including health or learning difficulties)
- Ethnic minorities (subject to provisions of the Race Relations Act 1976)
- People needing training in English or Welsh as a second or other language
- Homeless people
- People coming to the end of (or having completed) custodial sentences, periods of remand, or restrictive or supervision orders
- Single parents and those with other care responsibilities
- 'Returners' who have been out of the labour market for at least 2 years
- People living in rural areas
- People with literacy and numeracy problems
- People having recently lost their jobs in large-scale redundancies

### Priorities

The Programme was split into 4 main Priorities:

- Priority 1: Pathways to Employment
- Priority 2: Pathways to a Good Start In Working Life
- Priority 3: Pathways to Equal Opportunities between Men and Women
- Priority 4: Enhancing Capacity for Community Development

# Priority 1

## Pathways to Employment

**Priority 1 provided support for people aged 25 and over who had been out of work for 6 months or more. Priority was given to:**

- People with no up-to-date, relevant or vocational qualifications
- People who have not worked for at least 2 years
- People aged over 50

The aim was to facilitate the integration of unemployed people exposed to long-term unemployment by helping them to compete more effectively in the labour market to find and retain jobs.

This included helping them to make informed choices about their employment and training needs, raising their skill levels, motivation and confidence and enabling them to compete more effectively for employment and self-employment opportunities.

In addition, expenditure supported people aged 25 and over in disadvantaged sub-groups (who need not have been out of work for 6 months). Overall, preference was given to those actively seeking and available for work.

### Project Profile 37

**Project:** Vision 21 (Over 25s)  
**Sponsor:** Vision 21 (Formerly Gabalfa Community Workshop)  
**Grant:** £195,368

#### AWARD WINNING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Cardiff based Vision 21 provides training for people who have learning disabilities. The organisation has been running since 1987 and has been funded by the European Social Fund in 1998 and 1999 with an extension into June 2000. The Vision 21 Over 25s project utilises the funding to help its students who are aged 25 and over, and who have been unemployed for over 2 years, to find employment.

Students are offered a variety of training opportunities including horticulture, building work, catering, retailing, money management, IT and business training, industrial and commercial ceramics and batch production of saleable goods. The training is delivered in real work settings – including a café and kitchen, garden centre, wood workshop, pottery and a high street retail outlet. The project offers a range of employment opportunities including job tasters, work experience and supported employment. Such experiences increase confidence, build self-esteem in addition to raising skills levels to motivate students to work. Students have gone on to gain employment with companies such as Tesco, McDonalds and local Leisure Centres. Some students have also gained recognised accredited standards including NPTC, OCN and NVQ qualifications.

"Vision 21 has received a number of awards for its flexible and responsive projects including the 'Social Work Today' award for Care in the Community, and the 'Understanding Disability' award presented by parents and carers in the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff," says Barry Shiers, Fund-raising and Development Officer. "We have also been recognised as a centre of excellence and have been pleased to welcome high profile visitors including the Prime Minister Tony Blair and other MPs and MEPs on fact finding visits."



A trainee receiving training in Vision 21's wood workshop.





# Priority 2

## Pathways to a Good Start in Working Life

The aim of this Priority was to facilitate the integration of young people into working life by helping them to achieve their full potential and compete effectively in the labour market by providing support for young people aged 16 – 24 who were without work.

Priority was given to:

- School-leavers aged 18 and under, without a job and not in full-time education and seeking a training place
- Those with no work experience (excluding any undertaken whilst at school)
- Those with no up-to-date, relevant vocational qualifications
- Those without work for at least 1 year

### Objective

- To provide young people with the broad-base and specific skills which they need at the start of their working lives to get and keep jobs
- To raising general skill standards particularly on craft, technician and higher technician, managerial and professional levels
- To help young people to make informed choices about their employment and training needs
- To provide suitable training for young people with special training needs.

In addition, expenditure supported people aged 16 – 24 in disadvantaged sub-groups who were at risk of exclusion from the labour market. The aim was to facilitate their integration into working life and overcome the barriers they face.

### Project Profile 38

**Project:** Basic Computer Skills Training  
**Sponsor:** Coleg Glan Hafren  
**Grant:** £68,393

#### IT PROVIDES PATHWAY TO EMPLOYMENT

This initiative aimed to provide a pathway approach to integrating people with disabilities into the labour market. Beneficiaries of the project – funded by ESF in 1998 and 1999 – received pre-vocational training, to assist them in their integration into training and basic vocational training in IT to a level equivalent to NVQ Level 1.

"This project assists students to overcome negative perceptions of themselves and their potential achievements," explains European Officer Leanne Morgan. "Individual action plans are a key feature of the project and individual needs are assessed, negotiated and agreed with each student to determine their own training priorities. In this way, we can tailor the project to each student's needs."

All beneficiaries received IT support and core skills support, including literacy, numeracy, communication skills and presentation skills. Job search assistance, including career planning, personal effectiveness, applying for jobs, preparing for interviews, interview techniques, work/study skills have all been offered to students to help them access employment. Vocational guidance and counselling is an essential element of the project and has been delivered on a one-to-one basis, providing advice and information on local employment and training opportunities.

Work visits, work placements and work experience formed a major aspect of the project with each student undertaking a minimum of one day a week with employers, working alongside non-disabled employees, gaining first hand experience of a working environment and what employers look for in prospective employees.



Trainees developing IT skills.

# OBJECTIVE 4

SPD 1998 – 1999

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OBJECTIVE 4





# OBJECTIVE 4

## SPD 1998 – 1999

The 1998 – 1999 Objective 4 Programme covered the whole of Wales and aimed to support projects that helped to facilitate the adaptation of workers to industrial change using money from the European Social Fund (ESF).

### Global Objective

To support employees threatened with unemployment or affected by industrial change or changes in production systems it provided grant aid for organisations (not individuals) for training and related activities, enabling employees to take ownership of their own development to build their future skills.

### Strategic Objectives

- To anticipate the effects of industrial change in labour market trends and their implications for training needs
- To produce multi-skilled workers with transferable skills
- To enhance the development of new and improved approaches to training, networking and dissemination of good practice.

### Target Groups

- **Unskilled and semi-skilled manual workers**  
Many of these workers needed to make the transition to employment in the service sector, requiring improved basic literacy and numeracy, general communication skills and interpersonal/customer care skills. Semi-skilled production workers required better communication and interpersonal skills to work in flexible teams and to understand complex automated systems and diagnose basic problems.
- **Craft and skilled manual workers**  
Some of those workers needed to make the transition to services, some to upgrade their skills to deal with advanced technology with an emphasis on understanding complex systems.
- **Clerical and secretarial workers**  
Many of those workers needed to adapt to new IT systems, to gain a broader understanding of systems and to undertake a broader range of tasks, or to acquire higher skills to make the transition to junior manager/front line supervisor jobs.

Assistance was concentrated on those in small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) with less than 250 employees, particularly (though not exclusively) in the manufacturing and service sectors.

### Priorities

The Programme was split into 3 main Priorities:

- Priority 1: Planning for Change
- Priority 2: Tackling Change Through the Development of the Workforce
- Priority 3: Reinforcing Solutions to Change

# Priority 1

## Planning for Change

### Planning for Change

**Concentrating on small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), this Priority recognised the need for them to identify the impact of industrial change on their skill requirements.**

In addition, the effective dissemination of results to appropriate audiences was also seen as important in relation to one of the

core functions of the University for Industry. Emphasis was placed on explaining the extent to which the dissemination proved valuable in other Strands of Objective 4, and insistence upon the documentation of all future benefits.

### Strand 1 – Overall Anticipation of Changes in the Overall Labour Market at National, Regional and Local Level (ESF)

The rapid industrial and technological changes that face companies and their employees require both national, regional and local approaches to tackling skill gaps informing the design of training for those who need to adapt. Strand 1 provided additional funding for

projects that attempted to provide an insight into sectoral, regional and local trend skills. Research projects at all levels that attempted to involve firms in their research, and that provided clear and coherent dissemination and evaluation plans were supported.

### Project Profile ④

**Project:** Future Skills Wales Research  
**Sponsor:** Council of Welsh TECs (Training & Enterprise Councils)  
**Grant:** £99,000

#### LANDMARK STUDY OF WALES' SKILLS NEEDS

This project has links with several others under the Future Skills Wales umbrella. In 1999, 'Future Skills Wales 2000' received £28,000 under Priority 3, Measure 2 and 'Future Skills Wales Dissemination' received £65,000 also under Priority 3, Measure 2. In the previous year, 'All Wales Future Skills Wales Needs Assessment & Future Research' received approval for £108,492 within Priority 1, Measure 1 and 'All Wales Future Skills Needs Dissemination' received £36,400 under Priority 3, Measure 2.

The Future Skills needs study was of great significance to an analysis of the labour market in Wales and assisted in a co-ordinated pan Wales approach to identification of needs. This landmark study took place against a background of tremendous growth opportunity and it is arguably the most extensive analysis of jobs, skills and business prospects yet carried out in the British economic region.

The overriding aim of this project is the provision of a consistent economic focus for Wales that unifies the skills needs of employers with education and training provision and the employment aspirations of individuals. This focus is applicable in the four economic sub-regions and local authority areas.

"Future Skills Wales provides the motor for driving policies as well as the foundation for consistent decision making," explains Les Davies, Company Secretary. "The forecasting results of the study have influenced the Objective 4 Programme by setting strategic priorities to be addressed by the Monitoring Committee. Furthermore, Future Skills Wales Research has had a substantial input into the new post 2000 Structural Funds, in particular Objectives One and Three, through the formation of the Skills Taskforce for Wales which takes forward the research findings as a strategy for skills development."



Tom Middlehurst, Secretary for Post 16 Education (left) launching the Future Skills Wales Website with Chief Executive David Evans.





## Strand 2 – Company Level Skills Analysis (ESF)

Strand 2 provided funding for projects that aimed to help SMEs carry out skills analysis as an integral part of their business planning process, enabling employers to think strategically about future demands on their workforce and assess whether they were equipped to meet new challenges with their current skills profile.

Employees were encouraged to address their own learning needs and workers who were classed as priority groups under the SPD were targeted. Emphasis was placed on a partnership approach and also on active and appropriate dissemination of the research.

### Project Profile 42

**Project:** Engineering Training Needs  
**Sponsor:** Swansea College  
**Grant:** £31,030

#### ENGINEERING NEEDS ANALYSED

The aim of this project is to undertake training needs analyses with engineering and auto engineering SMEs, to identify current and future skills needs as a result of advances in new technologies. The twin purposes of the training needs analysis are to support SMEs in the development of training action plans, strategies for workforce development and lifelong learning, and to inform the development of the new Advanced Engineering and Auto Engineering Centre at the College.

The training needs analyses therefore has a mutually beneficial purpose for both the SMEs and the College. The highly experienced staff from both the Engineering Division and the Business College will provide advice, guidance and support, and assistance with developing customised training packages to Companies and in exchange the Companies, both large and small, will advise the College on their training needs and the facilities they require to acquire those needs, thus providing them with the unique opportunity to be directly involved in the development of the new multi-million pound Engineering and Auto Engineering facility.

"The project will undertake sectoral skills analyses with groups of SMEs and within SMEs and large company partnerships, develop lifelong learning strategies within companies, and develop company level action plans demonstrating how skills will be developed to meet future business objectives," explains Sen O'Neill, Assistant Principal. "It will also gather customer and client feedback on service delivery, which could inform the future skills requirements demanded of the market."



Analysing training needs in relation to new technology advances.

# **OBJECTIVE 5b**

Rural Wales SPD 1994 – 1999

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OBJECTIVE 5b





# OBJECTIVE 5b

## Rural Wales SPD 1994 – 1999

The Programme provided funding opportunities to strengthen the local and regional economy of Rural Wales through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF).

Objective 5b was the main European Structural Fund Programme operating in Rural Wales during the period 1994-1999 and built on the work of previous funding Programmes.

### Global Objective

To achieve growth in employment incomes through an economic development strategy focussing on the development of the SME sector that promotes business efficiency and productivity, taking into account the environmental quality of the programme area.

### Strategic Objectives

- To assist the creation of a self-sustaining market economy by supporting the provision of business and agricultural infrastructures and support services and the development of the human resources of the area
- To develop and improve high quality tourism products, services and marketing so as to produce the maximum possible positive economic and social impact whilst safeguarding the quality of the natural and built environment
- To support, encourage and empower communities to retain and develop community services and infrastructures, and to enhance their rural environment

### Themes

The Programme had 7 common themes running throughout the whole of the Programme:

- **Responding to structural changes in the agricultural industry and social changes in the agricultural community** via: targeted business advice and training for farmers; encouraging diversification (particularly into tourism activities) encouraging environmental enhancement on farms; developing forestry as an important element of the economy
- **Stimulating new and existing economic activity in Rural Wales to reduce the area's dependence on agriculture** via: new businesses and support for SMEs; encouraging the development of employers' and employee skills; providing suitable premises for business; actions to ensure economic activity is compatible with the environment
- **Improving access to markets and employment/training** via: actions to improve business access to sources and markets; developing infrastructure to encourage inward investment; providing tourists with access to attractions and tourist areas; encouraging public transport schemes; creating a telematics infrastructure, and developing related IT skills

- **Developing tourism as an important sector in the economy of Rural Wales** via: promoting all year round tourism; developing new attractions and improving access to facilities; providing information and marketing for tourism facilities; training for tourism activities; promoting farm tourism
- **Developing the Rural Wales economy in a manner which is compatible with the needs of rural communities** via: actions to maintain and develop the quality of the agricultural environment; encouraging rural communities to take responsibility for their own development; provision of training to improve the skills of rural communities; improving access to training for those living in remote areas
- **The need for the indigenous population of Rural Wales to acquire and develop skills** via: providing appropriate training opportunities for the agricultural community to use in both on and off farm equipment; providing support for upgrading the skills of managers and workers; provision of training for the tourism industry; providing training and access to training for remote rural communities
- **Improving the quality of the environment and ensuring that economic development is compatible with environmental considerations** via: encouraging farming to adapt and diversify; encouraging effective use of derelict land; waste management and pollution avoidance schemes, and energy conservation; supporting use of telematics; ensuring tourism that is compatible with the environment; improving the quality of land owned by farmers

### Geographical Boundaries

The eligible areas described in the Programme document included:

- The whole of the former county of Gwynedd (now Gwynedd, Anglesey and most of Conwy)
- The former county of Dyfed, excluding the Llanelli and Swansea travel to work areas (now Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and most of Carmarthenshire)
- The county of Powys excluding very small parts of Southern Powys
- Parts of the former county of Clwyd (now parts of Denbighshire and Wrexham)

### Priorities

The Programme was divided into 3 main Priorities:

- Priority 1: Business Development
- Priority 2: Development of Tourism
- Priority 3: Countryside Management and Community Development



# Priority 1

## Business Development

The challenges of adjustment in agriculture and the SME sector formed the basis of the Business Development Priority. Its strategy was to address the identified weaknesses and threats facing the SME and agricultural sectors whilst building on recognised strengths and developing identified opportunities for development.

The strategy focused on resourcing actions that had the greatest potential to achieve value for money and overall impact. To maximise value for money, Structural Funds support was targeted on actions that generated additional business activity. Priority 1 contained actions that were designed to improve the effects of any negative environmental impacts on the Rural Wales environment.

### Measure 1 – Development of Agriculture and Forestry Fund (EACGF)

This Measure focussed on developing the full potential of the agricultural resource as a means of creating alternative income opportunities and achieving improvements to the economic position of farming communities.

Measure 1 had two objectives:

- To assist with the development of agriculture and forestry businesses by providing business support including the provision of advice, capital grants and training
- To assist with the diversification of agriculture and forestry by developing alternative sources of income

### Project Profile 47

**Project:** Whole Farm Review and Development Scheme  
**Sponsor:** South Pembrokeshire Partnership for Action with Rural Communities Ltd (SPARC)  
**Grant:** £231,597

#### POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE WHOLE FARM BUSINESS

The aim of the Whole Farm Review and Development Scheme is to assist farmers to improve the economic and environmental sustainability of their holdings. The scheme builds on the success of the previous Farm Support Scheme, which now involves 50 farmers, but greater emphasis has been placed on networking and co-operation between farmers. Particular help is given to farmers to source off-farm income, add value to products and diversify into alternative enterprises.

There are three parts to the scheme: audit, implementation planning, and grants. Farmers benefit from professional audits of their business needs, resources and opportunities, and can then sign up for seminars and advice from consultants to develop implementation plans for their holdings. Grants are available to assist farmers implement aspects of their plans, such as hedge trimming, new gutturing and roofing, timber gates and stiles, computer software and hardware, footpaths and pond restoration, bore holes and timber processing equipment, quality assurance schemes, experimental crops, eyesore clearance and amenity provision. Of these, grants for computer software and hardware have proved the most popular.

Steven Bradley, SPARC's Agricultural Officer, says "We have built up a pro-active network between ourselves, the South Pembrokeshire farming community, and training and advice providers. The Scheme encourages farmers to adopt a holistic approach that covers every aspect of farming, including conservation, and is helping to change farming from a way of life into a successful business. We are delighted that the scheme is being so widely recommended by word of mouth within all sectors of the community."



Giffels Farm used a £2000 grant from SPARC to diversify into a new enterprise producing, packaging and delivering meat packs.



This farmer received grant to purchase poly-tunnels to extend the strawberry season, adding value to his produce.





## Measure 2 – Development of Industrial Sites and Premises (ERDF)

This Measure focussed on reducing the substantial gap between market conditions in Rural Wales and the normal investment standards of the industrial property sector. It supported the return of contaminated or derelict land to public use to provide development opportunities as well as enhancing the environment. A number of other environmental improvements were also identified for support, including the control of industrial pollution and waste, the conservation of energy, and the exploitation of opportunities for the development of renewable energy.

The Measure had two objectives:

- To establish industrial sites, premises and other economic infrastructures that would assist the development of businesses, especially manufacturing
- Environmental improvements, including the reclamation of contaminated land, the control of pollution, and the exploitation of renewable energy

### Project Profile 48

**Project:** Denbigh Business and Enterprise Centre (Phase III)  
**Sponsor:** Denbighshire County Council  
**Grant:** £261,200

#### BROWNFIELD SITE IS A CATALYST FOR IT INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

This is the third phase of an innovative project to bring 900 sq m of previously derelict land on the Colomendy Industrial Estate, Denbigh into productive economic use with a strong emphasis on the development of new technology initiatives that will be a catalyst for further economic development in the area.

In the first two phases training and management support units were constructed, plus six 30 sq m, four 75 sq m nursery units, and a 100 sq m stand-alone unit to provide accommodation for new technology enterprises.

The third phase will include the construction of a further three 30 sq m, two 40 sq m, two 80 sq m, and one 130 sq m units.

Kevin Edwards, European Officer with Denbighshire County Council, says "Our discussions with Denbigh Technical and Vocational Centre and the Rural Denbighshire Cyber Skills Workshop have shown a clear need for the development of new accommodation with the aim of attracting IT and technology related businesses. In addition to the eight starter units in Phase III we will provide a business support and training facility. This is another exciting development of a former brownfield site that will serve as a catalyst for further economic development in the area."



One of the units at the Denbigh Business and Enterprise Centre.



## Measure 3 – Business Support Infrastructure (ERDF)

Measure 3 supported significant investments aimed at reducing the adverse effects of peripherality, and the perceptions of peripherality in the eyes of potential inward investors. These investments were specifically targeted at improving direct access to business development sites, realising the potential created by telematics and tackling areas at severe economic disadvantage.

### Project Profile 49

**Project:** Llwybr.Pathway II  
**Sponsor:** Powys County Council  
**Grant:** £631,000

#### FURTHER ALONG THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS PATHWAY

Llwybr.Pathway is a unique partnership initiative which has encouraged a comprehensive approach to regional information and communications technology (ICT) development in rural Wales. It has brought together the combined expertise of local Authorities, the University of Wales Aberystwyth, the WDA and over 270 partner organisations.

The Project initially successfully implemented six major areas of work, namely:

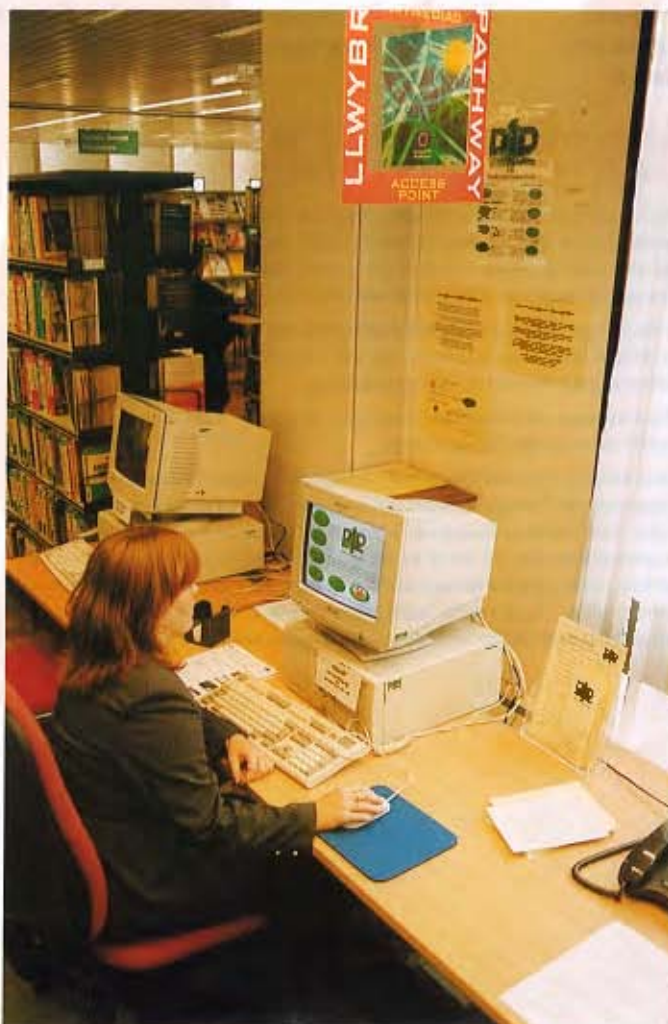
- widespread establishment of public access points throughout the region, delivering information services for individuals and businesses
- building a regional network to ensure access to high quality and cost effective communications, with connection to the Internet and other key national and international networks
- development of a comprehensive range of electronic information systems and services, accessible via the Internet and access points
- promotion and support activities to encourage the rapid take-up of ICT throughout the region
- continued development of ICT expertise through pilot and research actions
- development of broadband communications capabilities to take advantage of the next generation of services to the region

The second phase of the project, Llwybr.Pathway II expands the existing work areas (above), and introduces a new work area – to deploy new collaborative working technology to support remote service provision, video telephony, electronic form filing etc.

Jon Simonds, Head of European Unit at Powys County Council, says "We are building on the initial success of the Llwybr.Pathway project by providing 50 new public access points and a further 10 regional information services. The new work area will enhance services at 50 access points across the region, to enable individuals and businesses to access to the interactive services also being developed under this work area."

The Measure had three objectives:

- To enhance the economic infrastructure of Rural Wales in order to promote business development through tackling the problems of peripherality
- To provide and improve access to and within Rural Wales in order to encourage productive investment
- To create opportunities for SMEs to fully realise the potential offered by information technology and telematics



Public access point providing local people and businesses with access to on-line services.





## Measure 4 – Business Support Services (ERDF)

Measure 4 aimed to overcome/redress the disadvantages experienced by the very small enterprises that dominate the economy of Rural Wales. The rurality of the region compounds problems experienced by these enterprises in obtaining market, technical and legislative information and guidance.

The Measure had four objectives:

- To facilitate access to business and enterprise support services
- To encourage management expertise and innovation
- To stimulate the number, survival rate, and growth of businesses
- To maximise the potential for competitiveness of businesses in Rural Wales

### Project Profile 50

**Project:** Business Connect Information Support Programme  
**Sponsor:** Welsh Development Agency  
**Grant:** £102,774

#### BUSINESS FIRST, TECHNOLOGY SECOND

Gary Straw, Enterprise Executive, Aberystwyth, explains the overall aim of the project "We need to use the Business Connect network to help small and medium-sized enterprises access existing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) support. To do this we will deploy a project team of three, with experience and expertise in ITC and who understand that the overriding need for SME support is to think about the needs of each business first, and then how technology can help them."

There are four discrete but interrelated activities supported by this project:

- Raising the awareness of clients and staff of Business Connect to applications of ICT within business
- Establishing services and skills across the region within acceptable travelling distances for SMEs
- Ensuring that relevant services are available for SMEs
- Increasing the competence of staff within Business Connect to signpost, inform, analyse problems and provide solutions.

Gary Straw says "To underpin the awareness raising role, the project team will be expected to develop comprehensive information and new relationships to support the referral process within Business Connect."

"This project will ensure the adoption of business focused ICT resources through the co-ordinated activities of the Mid Wales Business Connect Consortium, and achieve close synergy with other ERDF funded projects, such as the Llŷder Pathway I and II project."



One of the IT facilitators (Victoria Galt)

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

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Technical Assistance was available within the Objectives 2, 3 and 5b Programmes to assist with efficient management and administration and the overall achievement of the Programmes' objectives. In addition to supporting the costs of the Programme secretariat (i.e. the Welsh European Programme Executive Limited), Technical Assistance was accessed by external providers to help improve the efficiency of the Programmes and their implementation.

The Executive was responsible for key activities, such as assisting sponsors with the preparation of project applications, promotion and proactive development of the Programmes and promoting integration between the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF).

The aim of the Executive was to draw upon the diverse skills present in the Regional Partnerships. There was provision for the Partnerships to acquire the services of external experts where appropriate. This would help to ensure independent appraisal of individual projects, independent evaluation of the impacts of the Programmes, research into performance indicators, publicity and promotion of the Single Programming Documents and any other work deemed necessary to inform and support the execution of the Programmes.

## Objectives

- Efficient and accountable management of the Programme
- Maximise quality of Programme implementation and its impact
- Ensure improved monitoring and evaluation of the Programme
- Ensure improved information about and publicity for the Programme





# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

## Project Profile 60

**Project:** Integrating Equal Opportunities into the Structural Funds:  
A Partnership  
**Sponsor:** Chwarae Teg: Fair Play (Workforce) Ltd  
**Grant:** Phase I £9,350, Phase II £6,480

### PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN STRUCTURAL FUNDS

Phase I was funded by Objectives 2 & 5b (ERDF), and from Objective 3 (ESF).

Phase II was funded by Objectives 2 & 5b (ERDF).

#### Phase I

A strategic network of partners in the public, voluntary and private sectors in ISW approved a proposal to offer guidance, support and training on the integration of equal opportunities into structural fund approvals, monitoring and implementation.

"The annual conference of Chwarae Teg provided a launch pad for the project providing endorsements from existing partners and recruiting further partners to the network," says Iwan Swain, Project Executive South West Wales. "The project received Ministerial recognition and support from TECs, Welsh Local Government Association, National Assembly for Wales, Trade Unions and private sector employers."

Training and guidance was developed in partnership with the Equal Opportunities Commission, and the Commission for Racial Equality and Disability Wales. It highlighted all aspects of equal opportunities in relation to economic development and the appropriate use of the structural funds. Training and guidance information was cascaded via partners to project promoters in all sectors.

A series of pilot awareness sessions were offered to WPEPE Ltd staff and to all members of the assessment process – Project Assessment Groups, Core/Technical Groups and Monitoring Committees.

#### Phase II

Phase II was based on the evaluation of the first phase, in order to demonstrate positive outcomes, tools and success criteria in integrating equal opportunities in the structural funds.

The project built on Phase I experiences to promote the mainstreaming of equal opportunities in local and regional economic development through the Structural Funds and the new Welsh Economic Agenda. It developed a good practice model for the European Commission evaluation of the critical indicators for success to be transferred into the new Programmes. It also advised on monitoring and evaluation.

## Project Profile 61

**Project:** Industrial South Wales Labour Market Assessment Update  
**Sponsor:** Mid Glamorgan TEC now part of TEC South East Wales  
**Grant:** £3,150

### UPDATING THE 1996 LABOUR MARKET STUDY

This project was funded by Objective 2 (ESF).

An Industrial South Wales Labour Market Assessment was carried out in 1996. The ISW SPD 1997–1999 made a commitment that this would be updated.

Consultants were appointed to update the original report. The project was submitted by Mid Glam TEC with support from the West Wales, South Glamorgan and Gwent TECs.

The main report focused on three key elements of labour demand, labour supply and meeting future labour demand.

The study considered the social economic and labour market changes that had taken place since the 1996 edition. The aim of the study was to use the revised information to help determine how best to use this Programme and assist in shaping future Priorities and Measures by taking account of changes in the ISW economy.

# RECHAR II

## Programme for Wales Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

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The Programme provided funding through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). It aimed to build on the experiences drawn from the RECHAR I Programme. The Programme complements the strategies in the Single Programming Documents for the Wales Objective 2 and 5(b) areas by focusing resources on the special needs of the RECHAR areas.

The economic history of the RECHAR area has been dominated by a dependence on the coal industry. This has produced an unusual pattern of settlement for an industrial area that is concentrated into a large number of small towns and villages. The purpose of the RECHAR initiative was to accelerate the economic conversion of coal mining areas concentrating on those most seriously affected.

### Global Objective

To encourage the regeneration of the South Wales coalfield by creating and preserving employment opportunities and enhancing the quality of life in the area.

### Strategic Objectives

- To create jobs in mining communities
- To improve the quality of life for those who live in mining communities
- To strengthen the communities.

### Strategic Approach

Research has outlined how the decline of the coal industry had weakened the local economies of mining villages, damaged the immediate environment and affected community life. It has also showed that mining communities have not fully benefited from mainstream economic growth, for example because of difficulties attracting inward investment and the physical and socio-economic isolation of many mining communities. The RECHAR II strategy recognised that mining communities faced barriers to participation in externally generated growth and aimed to tackle these barriers by encouraging development within mining communities and integrating mining villages into the wider economy.

The strategy therefore aimed to develop the indigenous potential of former mining communities. It looked to the intrinsic qualities of the existing economies, population and environment as the main sources of regeneration, rather than bringing in solutions from outside. The strategy influenced the types of project supported, which were:

- Initiatives which were locally based and focused
- Initiatives which were developed and implemented by or with the local community
- Initiatives which addressed the specific needs of coalfield communities
- Initiatives which were new and innovative
- Initiatives which were located in the most seriously affected areas within the RECHAR area
- Initiatives which were sustainable.





# RECHAR II

## Programme for Wales Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

This strategy aimed to target resources on those localities in the RECHAR area which had been most affected by coal mining and its subsequent contraction. These were classified into two types:

- Areas that had been damaged by coal mining activity itself, such as its extraction, processing and tipping of waste.
- Settlements which developed specifically to serve nearby collieries.

### Geographical Boundaries

The coalfield part of Industrial South Wales comprises:

- the districts of Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen
- the Travel-to-Work (TTWAs) areas of:
  - Aberdare, Pontypridd and Rhondda, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney, Llanelli, Neath and Port Talbot
  - the parts of the Bridgend TTWA and Cardiff TTWA in the former County of Mid Glamorgan

- the part of Newport TTWA in the former Islwyn Borough
- the Swansea TTWA except Swansea district.

The RECHAR area was further divided into priority and non priority areas, based on their vicinity to mines closed from 1990 onwards.

### Measures

The Programme was split into seven Measures:

- Measure 1: Economic Infrastructure in Mining Villages
- Measure 2: Alternative Economic Activities
- Measure 3: Local Tourism Initiatives
- Measure 4: Vocational Training and Employment Measures
- Measure 5: Remedying Damage Caused by Coal Mining
- Measure 6: Community Potential
- Measure 7: Community Infrastructure

## Measure 1 – Economic Infrastructure in Mining Villages (ERDF)

### Objectives

- To create sufficient quantity and choice of accommodation for SMEs in mining villages having regard to the specific local need and demands and the benefits of complementing other initiatives
- To ensure sufficient quantity and choice in supply of land for business use
- To remove physical infrastructure constraints, for example on the development of sites for industry

The main aim of this Measure was to assist the provision of economic infrastructure necessary to support new economic activity in areas seriously damaged by coal mining. Because of the former dominance of coal mining employment, mining communities

normally lacked premises suitable for alternative economic activities. In some instances, former colliery buildings may have been suitable for conversion to new economic activities. Where such buildings had already been cleared or were unsuitable for conversion, new factories and workshops needed to be constructed. Where business premises (of all kinds) and their surroundings had sometimes been damaged by coal mining activity, minor improvements would help them to be more attractive. New economic activities in areas seriously damaged by coal mining, for example on former colliery sites or reclaimed land, may not be accessible by road and so the construction or improvement of roads leading directly to them were required.

### Project Profile 62

**Project:** Tredegar Business Park – Phase I  
**Sponsor:** Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council  
**Grant:** £907,100

### QUALITY INDUSTRIAL/OFFICE UNITS WILL CREATE NEW HI-TECH JOBS

Independent property market research highlighted the shortage of larger industrial units in this area and recommended the early development of this site.

The Tredegar Business Park Phase I represented the first phase of the development of this site, following reclamation. The aim of the project was to provide the premises previously lacking for economic activities, as the existing coal industry buildings on the site were unsuitable for new economic activities. The project involved the construction of two high quality, industrial/office units. The intended occupants of the units are businesses in the hi-tech sector and they will contain a high office content.

"The quality of these buildings is unusual for Blaenau Gwent. They will help create much needed jobs and encourage a sector that is under represented in the RECHAR area," said Gerard McHugh, Policy and Projects Manager with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

The project has also provided a spine road to provide access to the units in addition to landscaping and fencing of this new business park.



One of the new quality, energy efficient buildings at Tredegar Business Park – Phase I.

# RESIDER II

Programme for Wales Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

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RESIDER II





# RESIDER II

## Programme for Wales Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

The Programme provided funding through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) to assist the economic and social conversion of steel areas. It aimed to build on the experiences gained from the RESIDER I Programme. The Programme in Wales complements the strategies set out in the Single Programming Documents for the Wales Objective 2 and 5(b) areas by focusing resources on the special needs of the RESIDER II areas. The Programme proposed a feasible targeted strategy designed to meet these needs and to realise tangible benefits for the area.

### Global Objective

To accelerate the economic conversion of the three eligible areas in Wales affected by the re-structuring of the steel industry, by creating and preserving employment opportunities and enhancing the quality of life in those areas.

### Strategic Objectives

- To create employment opportunities
- To improve employment prospects
- To improve the quality of life

### Strategic Approach

The Programme sought to stimulate job creation in the RESIDER area by focusing on stimulating the creation and growth of small firms. It also recognised the need for the work force of the area to have the necessary skills to enable this to take place. It focused on the improvement of the environment, infrastructure and social fabric of steel areas. The strategic approach was:

- Specific geographic areas
- Local community participation
- Innovation and piloting of projects
- Network/exchange experience with other RESIDER areas
- Impact and value for available funds
- Complementing and building on other EU funded activities
- Targeting specific groups
- Links with local strategies for community regeneration.

This strategy aimed to target resources on two areas:

- Environmental conversion and reclamation infrastructure activity concentrated in the vicinity of steel activity in the Travel-To-Work Areas (TTWAs)
- People-orientated activities centred around and within local communities in the eligible areas.

### Geographical Boundaries

The three steel areas included in the RESIDER Initiative are parts of South West, South East Wales and North East Wales comprising:

- South East Wales – Travel-To-Work Areas (TTWAs) of Blaenau Gwent, Abergavenny, Pontypridd and Cwmbran, Newport and Cardiff Objective 2
- South West Wales – TTWAs of Neath and Port Talbot, Swansea and Llanelli
- North East Wales – TTWAs of Wrexham and Shotton, Flint and Rhyl

### Measures

The Programme was split into four Measures:

- Measure 1: Remedying damage to environment due to steel production
- Measure 2: Improving social and economic infrastructure for communities in steel activities
- Measure 3: Alternative economic activities
- Measure 4: Vocational Training and Employment Support

# SMEs

## Programme for Wales Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

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**The Programme provided funding through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). It aimed to stimulate SMEs to adapt to the Single Market and to ensure they became internationally competitive. The Initiative aimed to improve SME effectiveness throughout the European Union.**

The Programme area covered two distinct Objective areas: Rural Wales Objective 5b and Industrial South Wales Objective 2. The distribution of the population in Rural Wales has been affected by surplus agricultural labour moving from rural areas to centres of industry both in Wales and beyond. Slate quarrying and other mining areas of Rural Wales have suffered decline due to industrial disinvestment and dislocation. In the Industrial South, jobs were lost through the run down of the mining and steel industries and the resultant diversification and restructuring of these and other sectoral industries.

### Global Objective

To enable small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to enhance their abilities to adapt to the Single Market and to facilitate the strengthening of their competitiveness through appropriate support for developing their micro operating environment.

### Strategic Objectives

- To support SME activities in eligible areas through access to information and advice in areas of technological innovation, quality, management and organisation, and use of modern communication and information systems
- To promote inter-SME co-operation and networks to encourage transfer and sharing of knowledge and responsiveness to market forces linking rural and industrial areas within Wales
- To boost SME innovation by enhancing their access to information on Research and Development activities, best practice and market opportunities
- To facilitate SME access to new markets, capital funding and credit
- To strengthen skills within SMEs related to the actions contained within the Programme particularly management skills in line with the Management Charter Initiative and links to Investors in People.

### Strategic Approach

The Programme aimed to ensure that the final beneficiaries were SMEs at their local level of activity. The Measures were targeted at encouraging 'bottom up' development through support for the establishment of SME business co-operatives and networking together with the cross fertilisation of experiences between SMEs within the Programme area. The added value for this Initiative was the potential for inter-regional scope for advancement for SMEs by learning from their industrial or rural counterparts and for the mix between new and mature SMEs.





# SMEs

## Programme for Wales Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

### Geographical Boundaries

The Objective 2 and 5b areas of Wales were eligible for participation in this Programme. Areas outside the Objective boundaries were eligible for participation in networking activities, but were not eligible to receive an allocation under the Programme.

### Measures

The Programme was split into five Measures:

- Measure 1: Support for Productive Investment\*
- Measure 2: Support for Co-operative Networks and Business Clubs
- Measure 3: Co-operation in RTD and Technology Transfer and Innovation
- Measure 4: Access to Funds
- Measure 5: Training for Programme Actions\*

\*NB No projects were approved during the Programme period under Measure 1 (ERDF) or under Measure 5 (ESF).

## Measure 2 – Support for Co-operative Networks and Business Clubs (ERDF)

### Objectives

- To improve the efficiency and problem solving capacity of SMEs through the establishment of co-operative and collaborative regional, inter-regional and transnational networks which will facilitate the exchange of information and experiences.
- To improve the competitiveness of Welsh SMEs through the development of trade links and partners.

Research had identified that the forming of business clubs and co-operation networks could be very beneficial. These included pooling resources in marketing, exports, research and product development, sharing risks and expanding contacts and market information. Not only were linkages between small enterprises important but

also between medium-sized and larger SMEs (up to 500 employees). The learning and pooling process was essential to ensure SMEs were aware of the external environment and market forces in which they operated.

SMEs need to forge links across Europe in order to compete in the Single Market. Transnational association and co-operation, in particular, can help overcome some of the barriers to exploiting Single Market and global trade opportunities. They can overcome difficulties and reduce the costs involved in obtaining local market and regulatory information, and in identifying suitable local dealers and partners.

### Project Profile 73

**Project:** South West Wales Inter-Trading Network  
**Sponsor:** West Wales Chamber of Commerce  
**Grant:** £39,080

### POOLING AND EXCHANGING INFORMATION TO BOOST SME TRADE

SMEs are aware of the need to be trading with Europe. However, the majority are inhibited by the lack of skills in investigating European and International markets. Traditionally, take up of government programmes for SMEs has been low. The South West Wales Inter-Trading Network sought to offer pro-active support for SMEs in their growth, competitiveness and exploitation of new markets.

"There is clear evidence from our own membership that whilst strategic programmes are excellent in themselves, small businesses are unaware of their existence, suspicious of the bureaucracy or intimidated by their inaccessibility," says Hilary Davies, Chief Executive, West Wales Chamber of Commerce. "The process of pooling and exchanging of information will result in problem solving leading to access to government programmes, particularly new ones."

The project aimed to develop local networks based on a series of workshops, inter-trading events and best-practice visits. The results of these events were disseminated regionally, inter-regionally and transnationally through the Chambers of Commerce networks. The programme sought to create linkages between SMEs for inter-trading and internal trade.



Members of the South West Wales Inter-Trading Network attend an exhibition organised as part of Swansea Bay Industry Week

# PESCA II

## Programme for Wales Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

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**This Community Initiative was specifically designed for regions affected by the decline in the fishing industry. Its purpose was to provide EC funding to assist in the restructuring of the fishing industry and to encourage diversification of economic activities in areas heavily dependent upon fishing. The Programme drew money from three European Structural Funds:**

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- European Social Fund (ESF)
- Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG)

### Global Objective

To enable the fisheries sector in the U.K. to successfully tackle necessary structural adjustments, to help it cope with social and economic consequences and to contribute to the diversification of the areas concerned by developing job-creating activities.

### Strategic Objectives

- To retain, and where possible create, employment in fishing dependent areas for the benefit of the local economy
- To enable the fisheries sector in Wales to meet the challenges affecting the rationalisation, restructuring and diversification of the industry, and its attendant social and economic impact on fishing dependant areas

### Eligible Areas

Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) of:

- Haverfordwest
- South Pembrokeshire
- Holyhead
- Pwllheli

In addition, the Wards of:

- Fishguard, Goodwick, Sceddau, Aberystwyth North, South East and West, Borth, Faenor, Ceulanamaensmawr, Llanbadarn Fawr, Llanfarian, Tirmynach, Aberdovey, Porthmadog West / East, Gest, Criccieth, Tremadog, Capelulo, Conwy, North Gower, Llwynhendy, Elli, Tyfsha, Hengoed, Burry Port, Bynea, Glanymor

### Measures

The Programme was split into three Measures:

- Measure 1: Diversification and Infrastructure
- Measure 2: Human Resource Development
- Measure 3: Fisheries Sector Projects





# PESCA II

## Programme for Wales Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

### Measure 1 – Diversification and Infrastructure (ERDF)

The Measure aimed to encourage innovation and enhance diversification of the local communities, develop new and existing SMEs and create new employment opportunities.

It focused on:

- The promotion of alternative economic activities for businesses, particularly SMEs, by establishing or expanding business support services

- Feasibility studies and assistance in the creation and activities of economic conversion bodies and regional development teams
- Renovating and modernising the physical, social and economic infrastructure as part of regional economic regeneration strategies
- Assisting with the promotion of tourism
- Financial engineering and facilitating access to finance

### Project Profile 76

**Project:** Fishing Development Officer  
**Sponsor:** Pembrokeshire County Council  
**Grant:** £34,726

#### HELP FOR PEMBROKESHIRE'S FISHING INDUSTRY

This 3 year project has established the post of Fishing Development Officer within the Economic Development Division of Pembrokeshire County Council. The officer works to develop possibilities for diversifying the Pembrokeshire fishing industry, advises the Council's business development officers on issues relating to the fishing sector, and progresses initiatives with the aim of improving some of the problems faced by fishing and fishing related SMEs in the area. He is also expected to assist in developing strategies to help those leaving the industry, as a result of re-structuring, to find alternative employment.

"The post involves close liaison with key organisations in the fishing sector, including the Pembrokeshire Business Initiative (PBI) and the SPARC and Menter Preseli LEADER II groups," explains David Gardener, Fishing Development Officer. "The project also has close links with several other developments in the Pembrokeshire fishing industry such as the fishing training centre at Milford Haven and the study into the potential for development at Saundersfoot harbour."

The principal area of responsibility is the provision of specialist business development support for the Pembrokeshire fishing industry. In addition, the identification of potential areas of business growth and support requirements, including funding, training, transportation and marketing. Along with facilitating networking between the private sector and business support organisations, identifying opportunities to develop local fishing products and raising awareness within the retail sector of local fishing produce.



Two fishermen at sea – sending down a grab to sample oars in the seabed

# KONVER II

Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

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**This Community Initiative was specifically designed to accelerate the diversification of economic activity in areas heavily dependent on the defence sector or military bases by creating complementary economic activities.**

The Programme aimed to address the diverse effects of the decline in the defence sector with measures to diversify the economic base and address the problems caused by defence dependent job losses, building on the achievements of the earlier KONVER I Programme.

KONVER II drew monies from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). ERDF projects had to be within the defined eligible geographical areas, although ESF projects could be carried outside these boundaries if they proved to be of direct and demonstrable benefit to the people living or working in the KONVER areas.

## Global Objective

To respond to the effect of decline in the defence industry by the promotion of alternative sources of employment through SME development, technology transfer where appropriate, and tourism measures.

## Strategic Objectives

- To help the diversification of the local economy through the development of local SMEs
- To help businesses diversify their activities and reduce their dependence on the defence industry through the promotion of technology transfer and co-operation between SMEs and other key organisations
- To attract and promote new business activity through the conversion of military/defence industry sites to other uses
- To develop the tourism potential of the local area to increase visitor spend in the local economy, through sustainable tourism initiatives
- To ensure those directly affected by the decline of the defence sector are able to access opportunities for employment in the local economy through the provision of training and employment support.

## Eligible Areas

All of the old county boundaries of Gwent and Pembrokeshire.

## Measures

The Programme was split into 5 Measures:

- Measure 1: Developing Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs)
- Measure 2: Promotion of Innovation, Know-how and Technology Transfer
- Measure 3: Rehabilitation of Military and Defence Sites and Environmental Improvements
- Measure 4: Promotion of Tourism
- Measure 5: Training and Retraining

KONVER II





# KONVER II

## Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

### Measure 1 – Developing Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs)(ERDF)

Measure 1 funded the development of SMEs through support and advisory services in a variety of management areas. They included: quality control, computer aided manufacture and planning, provision of finance, marketing, new methods of

business organisation, diversification issues, innovative production methods, telecommunications, internal audits, support for research and innovation, design development, feasibility studies and conversion strategies.

#### Project Profile

**Project:** Monmouthshire Food Initiative Project Officer  
**Sponsor:** Monmouthshire County Council  
**Grant:** £30,000

#### FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

Monmouthshire is a predominantly rural county with a significant agricultural sector facing major challenges. This, together with recent closures and reductions in the defence industry, has led to the need for diversification within the local economy. This project seeks to assist this process by developing existing small businesses in the food sector and adding value to their produce.

The scheme involves the appointment of a Food Initiative Project Officer who is working to an Advisory group made up of food and farming industry representatives. The initiative focuses particularly on diversification for farmers and growers into added value opportunities. Farmers markets have been set up in three locations; Food Fest @ Abergavenny provides selling opportunities and promotes Monmouthshire as a place where good food is produced; a leaflet has been produced for consumers detailing 80 producers, stalls, markets, farm shops and shops where locally grown food can be bought; conversion to organic production has been encouraged as a potential diversification; and problems with local meat cutting facilities are being addressed. Individual producers are supported through business advice, information on training courses and sources of advice on food production, and help with access to funding.

"Encouraging local employment will keep communities together and replace jobs lost by recent closures and reductions in the defence industry," says Rick Longford, Head of Economic Development, Monmouthshire County Council. "By bringing producers together, the input and effectiveness of the whole food industry in Monmouthshire will be maximised."



Stall at the Food Fest @ Abergavenny

# RETEX II

Programme for Wales Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

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RETEX II





# RETEX II

## Programme for Wales Community Initiative SPD 1994 – 1999

The focus of the RETEX Community Initiative was to assist with the economic diversification of the areas concerned, with a view to making them less dependent on the textiles and clothing industry and easing the adjustment of commercially viable businesses in all industries.

RETEX II built on the achievements of the earlier RETEX I Programme to ensure continued activity was delivered to bring about the diversification of economic activity. The Programme provided funding through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF).

### Global Objective

To accelerate the diversification of economic activities in those regions heavily dependent on the textiles and clothing sector so as to render them less dependent on this sector and to encourage the adjustment of commercially viable businesses in all sectors of industrial activity.

### Strategic Objectives

- To support the diversification of SMEs
- To strengthen existing SMEs
- To improve the vocational skills of employees in SMEs in textile dependent areas.

### Strategic Approach

RETEX action was region specific as opposed to sector specific and was therefore open to companies in all sectors. Eligible areas are those identified as being highly dependent on the textile and clothing industry.

This strategy complemented Priorities and actions set out in the Industrial South Wales and Rural Wales Single Programming Documents.

### Measures

The RETEX II Community Initiative was split into 4 Measures:

- Measure 1: Improvement of Business Know How
- Measure 2: Formation of Groups and Networks (Scotland & Wales only)
- Measure 3: Technical Facilitation Units for SMEs
- Measure 4: Development of Human Resources

### Eligible Areas

- Objective 2 – Travel to Work Areas:  
Blaenau Gwent & Abergavenny, Swansea, Aberdare, Bridgend, Cardiff, Llanelli, Merthyr & Rhymney, Neath & Port Talbot, Pontypool & Cwmbran, Pontypridd & Rhondda
- Objective 5b – Travel to Work Areas:  
Holyhead, Bangor & Caernarfon, Porthmadog & Ffestiniog, Dolgellau & Barmouth, Machynlleth, Welshpool, Newtown, Llandrindod Wells, Brecon, Aberystwyth, Lampeter & Aberaeron, Cardigan, Fishguard, Haverfordwest, South Pembrokeshire
- Non-Objective Area – Travel to Work Areas:  
Wrexham, Shotton, Flint & Rhyl

## Measure 1 – Improvement of Business Know How (ERDF)

Textile areas are typified by a narrow economic base, traditionally dependent on one or two major industries. SME sectors in textile areas include a large number of smaller manufacturers, dependent on the declining major industries. This Measure specifically targeted these micro-businesses which quite often have low level market awareness, poor awareness of quality and performance issues and limited awareness of modern management techniques. To compete in new markets, these SMEs need to overcome the problems of lack of resources and expertise in identifying and introducing new techniques

and the cost of collecting and analysing business information, which are often seen as prohibitive and a deterrent to change.

Measure 1 aimed to strengthen and increase the SME base in the eligible area and to reinforce their business potential by increasing their adaptability to new markets and conditions. Funding supported specialist advice to eligible SMEs where it was not already available in both manufacturing and management best practice and marketing.

### Project Profile 85

**Project:** Best Practice in SME Management  
**Sponsor:** Pembrokeshire Business Initiative (PBI)  
**Grant:** £161,801

#### INTRODUCING BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

This project is aiming to introduce best management practice into SMEs in Pembrokeshire by providing holistic support services with integrated specialist consultancies. The starting point for this service is business diagnostics, identifying where and if, in-depth and hands on support is appropriate, leading to identification and applications for financial support. Businessess will then be guided through the route of strategic development, including benchmarking, with consultants tapping into the existing Welsh Development Agency, and West Wales Training and Enterprise Council supported initiatives.

Complimentary and supporting services are utilised to provide a fully encompassing service. IT support, electronic trading, marketing, human resource development and sector specific specialisms are all available through PBI/Business Connect. The service is aiming to increase companies' working capital through the implementation of best practice across the business disciplines, working with the owner-managers to develop their skills and lead to more effective and adaptable management.

Mr Richard Packman, PBI's Managing Director says "By the end of 2001, we anticipate that the project will have assisted 210 SMEs and attracted approx. £2 million of private sector investment. The provision of such structured support is vital in updating and developing business techniques, leading to increased business viability and vitality."

The project compliments a previous PBI Business Development Services project approved under the Objective 5b Programme as well as Pembrokeshire County Council's Objective 5b project – Pembrokeshire Business Development Grant Scheme. It also compliments a successfully funded project from the previous KONVER Programme – Developing Marketing Expertise In Pembrokeshire SMEs.



One of the 12 Pembrokeshire-made revolutionary seats used by television cameramen in action in Cardiff's Millennium Stadium





## Measure 2 – Formation of Groups and Networks (ERDF)

**The growth and competitiveness of SMEs is highly dependent on the availability of the right information about markets, technologies, manufacturing and management best practice.** Obtaining such information can be both difficult and expensive for small companies operating on an individual basis. Significant competitive benefits can be gained from co-operation between groups of SMEs.

The Measure's aim was to improve the competitive position of SMEs by encouraging them to work together, particularly where this leads to the generation of clusters of competitive advantage. Particular support was available for co-operative marketing and design, and technology transfer initiatives.

### Project Profile 86

**Project:** Independent Production Business Development Network  
**Sponsor:** Teledwyr Annibynnol Cymru (TAC)  
**Grant:** £115,065

#### INDEPENDENT TV AND FILM PRODUCTION COMPANIES GET ON THE NETWORK

The project encourages companies to adopt a more innovative approach and to assist the diversification of the local economy by making the media sector, in particular, aware of the positive aspects of change. The main beneficiaries are the SMEs in the independent film and television production sector, including the 100 existing member companies of TAC.

A Business Development and Research Officer plays a key role in the project, developing a collaborative approach so that companies are able to exploit their competitive advantage. The Officer co-ordinates business development, intelligence gathering and marketing activity. The network approach is complimented by the uses of an industry intranet developed in partnership with the University of Wales, Bangor.

"The project supports, at a local and individual company level, more strategic programmes being delivered by the statutory economic development agencies, particularly Source Wales, the Gwynedd Multimedia Development Programme and Wales Information Society under the auspices of the WDA," explains Dafydd Hughes, Chief Executive. Particular attention is paid to improving the sourcing of opportunities and access to new markets through the development of an intelligence and information service and the promotion of best practice."

The project compliments such programmes as the Wales Regional Technology Plan and the Wales Information Society Initiative. TAC also formed a partnership with the WDA for the ERDF funded Gwynedd Multimedia Development Programme project.



TAC co-hosted an exploratory visit from representatives of Merseyside's independent production sector with Barcud-Darwys, the local television facilities company

## Measure 3 – Technical Facilitation Units for SMEs (ERDF)

The main aim of Measure 3 was to help improve the technical capacity of SMEs and enable them to maintain or improve their competitiveness. This was addressed by funding the establishment of technical units or centres providing services to groups of companies. These centres, established either for specific

sectors or on a multi-sectoral basis aimed to improve information flows and provide technical support to companies seeking to invest in new technology for production e.g. Computer Aided Manufacturing equipment, Computer Aided Design and other businesses processes.

### Project Profile 87

**Project:** Establishment of a Workshop for Timber Product Development and Training  
**Sponsor:** Coed Cymru  
**Grant:** £59,080

#### SEEING THE WOOD FOR THE TREES

Coed Cymru is an all Wales Initiative to promote the management of broadleaf woodlands and the use of locally grown hardwood timber in Wales. It tackles issues such as the integration of forestry, farming and wood use, and understanding the social, commercial and importance of woodlands in Wales. Identified as a key player in the promotion of innovation for hardwood using SMEs in Wales, this Coed Cymru project is the first of its kind to undertake such a major research and development study with the intention of building a co-ordinated network of timber production and use.

The project aims to equip and staff a wood working workshop at Coed Cymru's headquarters at Tregynon, near Newtown. It will be used to develop new design ideas in timber products which will utilise small dimension Welsh timber using low tech processing appropriate to SMEs in the hardwood sector. The trainees including design/furniture making students will help develop designs and learn techniques, make prototypes used for marketing purposes and to stimulate interest from SME manufacturers in the use of locally produced Welsh wood.

"By expanding local business activity using locally derived timber from sustainably managed woods, we are also promoting sustainable economic development," explains Andy Stewart, Coed Cymru's Timber Marketing Officer. "This independently funded workshop will be able to carry out design prototyping, as well as provide a training and information centre for the process of using local hardwood timber, passing on new technology skills developed to local SMEs."

The project greatly accelerates the diversification of economic activities in the locality by developing the use of currently under-utilised, locally sourced timber, benefiting the owners of the timber (farmers), harvesters and millers.



Welsh angle furniture developed at Coed Cymru's workshop





## Measure 4 – Development of Human Resources (ESF)

The main aim of Measure 4 was to increase and maintain the existing skills base of the areas concerned, and to improve the employment prospects of the local workforce. It provided funds for customised training packages and programmes which enabled textile companies to diversify and become more competitive whilst also supporting SME formation and development.

Vocational training to address skill shortages and help protect the jobs of employees faced with redundancy was also catered for; along with the provision of guidance and counselling for unemployed textile workers. General employment support measures and management training were also eligible for support.

### Project Profile 88

**Project:** Computer Integrated Manufacturing  
**Sponsor:** Carmarthenshire College  
**Grant:** £20,506

#### INTEGRATING MANUFACTURING PROCESSES USING COMPUTERS

This project provides innovative training at NVQ level 4/5 equivalent in Computer Integrated Manufacturing (CIM) to 30 trainees in local RETEX areas.

The main aim of the project is to develop a programme of innovative training modules to support local SMEs in the introduction of Computer Integrated Manufacturing Processes. Using the resources of the Design and Manufacturing Network, it delivers modular training in CIM to employees of the local manufacturing industry and evaluates the effectiveness of the training in terms of feedback from the employers Involved Network.

"The skills areas and modules delivered include design for manufacture and assembly, manufacturing, modelling, and finite element analysis," explains Pat Jones, European Development Officer for Carmarthenshire College. "These modules are being delivered in 30 hr blocks (1 week) with each trainee doing at least 5 modules, totalling 150 hours. This customised training package – involving aspects of both theory and practical computer based assignments related to company requirements – has made a significant difference to the competitiveness of local SMEs."

The project builds on the success of the development of an integrated engineering infrastructure, based on an advanced design and manufacturing centre located at Carmarthenshire College, as a result of the ERDF funded Design and Manufacturing Networking Support project, which was supported under Measure 3 of the RETEX Programme.



Trainees have used Computer Integrated Manufacturing skills to re-design the plastic RNLI collection box, producing a stainless steel camper-proof version

## Antur Cwm Taf and Tywi (ACTT)

ACTTs aim is to work with local people, communities and organisations to identify, develop and implement innovative strategies to enhance the economic, cultural, social and environmental well-being of the area.

ACTT is a company limited by guarantee with a geographic coverage comprising the rural area of Carmarthenshire (excluding Carmarthen town and that part of Carmarthenshire within the Antur Teifi area) covering 47 communities.

The group's strategic objectives are to:

- Provide local people with the information necessary for them to make informed decisions and to enable them to draw up plans for their future

- Develop strategies and methodologies which will enhance the economic social, cultural and environmental assets of the area
- Work with communities in achieving their ambitions and by so doing demonstrate the necessary steps and processes, thus giving them knowledge and confidence which will empower local people to continue the process for many years to come
- Work with local people to create sustainable improvements
- Liaise with partners to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the ACTT area and complement existing activity, not establish rival competitive actions

### Project Profile 89

<b>Project:</b>	<b>Land of History and Legend</b>
<b>Sponsor:</b>	<b>Antur Cwm Taf and Tywi (ACTT)</b>
<b>Grant:</b>	<b>£38,795 ERDF &amp; £21,222 ESF (1998 - 1999)</b>

### PROSIECT GARN PROJECT MAKES HISTORY

The Land of History and Legend project aims to make the heritage and culture of the ACTT area more accessible and attractive to tourists. By encouraging better distribution of tourists throughout the area, as well as appealing to new markets, it aimed to create opportunities for value added community benefits.

'Prosiect Garn' is just one example of many undertaken within the Land of History and Legend project. It is part of a strategy to develop, promote and protect the natural heritage of Llanfihangel Aberbychych for the enjoyment of local people and visitors to the area. In June 1999, a cairn was reconstructed from a 4000 year old bronze age summit burial chamber. The original cairn was not listed as a monument and could have been destroyed by quarrying.

The stones were retrieved from the threatened summit and moved to the project site, located on the line of 12<sup>th</sup> of linked rights of way joining two country parks in the Carmel National Nature Reserve. Using LEADER II money, ACTT funded basic engineering operations to prepare the site, build access walls and landscaping. A small parking facility with picnic tables and interpretation boards was also constructed.

Bethan Michael, ACTT's Administrative Officer says, "The Leader of Carmarthenshire County Council Meryl Gravell has already placed her 'Millennium Message' in the burial chamber. On 1st May 2000, Community Millennium Day, a large time capsule containing messages from ACTT as well as many and varied individuals will also be placed in the burial chamber and the chamber access sealed."



The reconstructed 4000 year old burial chamber, part of the Prosiect Garn project





## Antur Teifi

Antur Teifi is a local enterprise agency registered as a 'Society' under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act. It is a limited company with shareholders. The geographic coverage of the group is the whole of the county of Ceredigion and North Carmarthenshire (covering three TTWA's – Cardigan, Lampeter and Aberaeron), and Aberystwyth.

The strategic objectives of the Antur Teifi group are to:

- Develop, support and assist innovative approaches to rural development within the area in such a way as to enhance the economic, social and cultural opportunities for those that live within the locality
- Provide the necessary mechanisms, structure etc. to facilitate such innovation

- Monitor the effect of these activities on the economy and sociology of the area
- Develop and promote the image of the area outside of the region
- Promote the quality of the area produce and facilities
- Enhance the local economy through the stabilisation of existing employment and the creation of additional jobs and businesses
- Ensure the successful tapering of support for successful enterprises to enable the development of a self-generating permanent infrastructure
- Integrate the use of new technologies into the activities of businesses and the wider community; and to facilitate use through appreciation of the applications of new technologies by a wide section of the community.

### Project Profile 90

**Project:** Multifaceted Distance Learning  
**Sponsor:** Antur Teifi  
**Grant:** £73,388 ESF (1995, 1997 – 1999)

#### CROSS BORDER TRAINING

This project aimed to build upon the local experience of distance learning and develop a transnational programme in collaboration with European partners from Ireland. It focused on enhancing skills and providing new opportunities through the delivery of training in rural areas to a target group of 15 women, two thirds of which were unemployed. The project received ESF funding in 1995, 1997, 1998 and 1999.

As an experimental project, it looked to nurture added value from cross border activity. Through sharing experiences and learning materials on a transnational basis and developing skills with other European regions facing similar development issues, a suitable network capable of jointly developing distance learning materials was established.

Lynne Thomas, Director of Antur Teifi, says, "This pilot project allowed us to explore communities and learning opportunities outside the boundaries of rural Wales. We now have a wealth of knowledge and experience to build on our progress to date and plan to develop and establish further learning networks across other European LEADER II borders."



Radio played a major role in distance learning

## Menter Môn

Menter Môn is a company limited by guarantee, established as a Community Development Trust. The area covered by Menter Môn is the whole of Anglesey, with the exception of the urban district of Holyhead.

The main aim of the Menter Môn group is to harness the potential of geographic, thematic and sectoral communities in the pursuit of creativity, diversity and quality as mechanisms for the revitalisation of the rural economy, culture and quality of life.

Menter Môn's strategic objectives are set out under a series of sectoral headings:

- Tourism
- Food and Agriculture
- Environmental and Business Development.

### Project Profile 93

**Project:** Môn Mam Cymru Food Initiatives  
**Sponsor:** Menter Môn  
**Grant:** £27,500 EAGGF

#### CEGIN MÔN

This project has encouraged a number of food initiatives in Anglesey, providing support for developing new and local, innovative value added food products on the island, increased utilisation of the Môn Mam Cymru food brand and facilitation of joint ventures within the food industry in Ynys Môn (Anglesey).

Cegin Môn is one of many successful ventures supported by the Initiative. LEADER money was used to part-fund a commercial kitchen facility at Gaerwen, Ynys Môn. The production room is fitted out to meet local authority food standards and is equipped with a comprehensive range of equipment and selection of utensils, available for hire by the half day or by the day. Small, local food producers can now take advantage of a commercial kitchen as opposed to their own, at home, and develop their products more efficiently and conveniently making them more economically viable.

Gerallt Llywelyn Jones, Menter Môn Managing Director says, "Cegin Môn is intended as a stepping stone facility for new and established micro businesses to test the market for their products, with the aim of them moving into their own commercial premises once they have proved their market."

Môn Mam Cymru Food Initiatives also has close links to Mona Food Hall and the Farm Enterprise Grant, both LEADER supported projects in Anglesey.



Local Produce





## Menter Powys

Menter Powys is a partnership between public, private and voluntary sector organisations and operates as a department of Powys County Council.

Geographical coverage extends to the whole of the County of Powys, except the town of Ystradgynlais and surrounding parishes which are not covered by the Rural Wales Objective 5b Programme.

The overall aim of the Menter Powys group is to enable the regeneration of sustainable communities by the strengthening of economic, social and environmental resources and their use by local people in the rejuvenation of the rural economy.

Its strategic objectives are to:

- Diversify and restructure the rural economy through grass roots activity
- Promote the concept of self help with the community as a platform for enterprise
- Create a rural economy that works for the environment, not against it
- Develop the use of Information technology as an instrument to enhance business and community development
- Deliver community based regeneration strategies in partnership with other agencies

### Project Profile 94

**Project:** Village Regeneration  
**Sponsor:** Menter Powys  
**Grant:** £75,000 ERDF & EAGGF (1994 – 1999)

#### LLANBADARN FYNYDD ON-LINE (UK VILLAGE OF THE YEAR 1998 – 1999)

Over the past six years, the LEADER II Programme has funded the continued development of a multitude of activities and ventures in this small, rural hill farming Powys village. Starting with a village appraisal, the views of the local people on a wide range of issues relevant to the district of Llanbadarn Fynydd, Llanidloes and Llananno were drawn together. The appraisal highlighted the imminent closure of the old village shop, petrol station and post office unless there was a proven need and want for the services.

With the assistance of a Menter Powys Development Officer, based in a new office at the old shop, the villagers identified various needs within the community and together, they worked to support developments and raise phenomenal funds.

The 'Sweet Llion Lamb' marketing scheme is just one of many successful projects borne out of the regeneration of Llanbadarn Fynydd. Launched in June 1999, the promotion of local lamb from the Ithon Valley takes many forms, from being sold out of the local village shop, to telesales and e-commerce. Telesales training for local residents as well as part time work in taking orders has sustained small farms in the area and created new employment. Profit from the lamb marketing scheme is ploughed back into the community via the village shop and small producers. In addition to 'Sweet Llion Lamb' being advertised on [www.lambdirect.co.uk](http://www.lambdirect.co.uk), the site also has links to other village services including accommodation providers and local attractions.

Helen Minnie-Hughes, Manager of Menter Powys says, "This project is a fine example of a community taking control of its own destiny, building a sustainable future based on the recognition that environment, social and economic life are interdependent. With LEADER help, the villagers of Llanbadarn Fynydd have not only saved their community, they have secured a much improved and sustainable future."



The village shop, petrol station and post office, also home to 'Sweet Llion Lamb'.

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Swansea College	Retraining for the Military	84	89
Swansea Institute of Higher Education	Aerospace Skills Development	45	42
Teledwyr Annibynnol Cymru	Independent Production Business Development Network	86	93
Torfaen County Borough Council	Environmental Improvements Panteg Steelworks	69	72
Torfaen County Borough Council	Refurbishment and Environmental Improvements to Business Sites	21	19
Torfaen County Borough Council	Support in the Workplace	72	75
Tourism South & West Wales	Valleys of South Wales Marketing Campaign	33	26
Troedryhiw Boys and Girls Club	Troedryhiw Boys and Girls Club Community Welfare Club	68	69
University of Glamorgan	Multimedia Training Materials for the Community University	11	13
University of Wales College Newport	Industrial Drives Centre for ISW Manufacturing	24	21
University of Wales Institute Cardiff	Ethnic Business Excellence	22	20
University of Wales Institute Cardiff	Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management for Local Growth Sectors now known as 'Hospitality Management'	34	27
University of Wales, Lampeter	Performance Improvement in SMEs by Transfer Support	74	78
Vision 21	Vision 21 (over 25s)	37	32
Wales Millennium Centre	Wales Millennium Centre	32	25
Wales Tourist Board	Tourism Training Forum Action Plan	35	27
Wales Young Farmers Clubs	Rural Life Project – Phase II	57	56
Welsh Development Agency	Access to Capital Brokerage Scheme	75	79
Welsh Development Agency	Access to Capital Initiative	19	18
Welsh Development Agency	Baglan Energy Park Port Talbot – Infrastructure Works Phases I & II	8	12
Welsh Development Agency	British Steel (Industry) Limited - South Wales Technology Enterprise Fund	17	18
Welsh Development Agency	Business Connect Information Support Programme	50	49
Welsh Development Agency	South Wales Small Loan Fund now known as Wales Small Loan Fund	16	17
Welsh Development Agency	Wales Technology Venture Fund now known as The Wales Innovation Fund Ltd	15	17
Welsh Development Agency	Xenos – Business Angel Network Phase II	20	18
Welsh Sea Fish Industry Training Association	Diversification for Fishermen	77	82
West Wales Chamber of Commerce	South West Wales Inter-Trading Network	73	77

