

**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH:
A SMART FUTURE**

**SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC
REGENERATION STRATEGY AND
ACTION PLAN FOR BRIDGEND
COUNTY BOROUGH
2005/06-2007/08**

**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH ECONOMIC
PARTNERSHIP**

APRIL 2005

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SECTION 1: STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS - INTRODUCTION

This strategy and action plan is supported by the Bridgend County Borough Economic Partnership, including representatives from the public, private/social partners, and voluntary sectors. The Economic Partnership is already well on its way towards the vision, delivering tangible results across Bridgend county borough.

As part of the Community strategy process, the Economic Partnership is now working as one of a “family” of partnerships to promote and implement progressive economic, social and environmental change in Bridgend county borough. The ultimate goal is to develop a coherent set of plans, which together address the key strategic issues affecting the area.

The Bridgend County Borough Economic Partnership is responsible for championing the sustainable economic and physical regeneration of the county borough. The following pages summarises its strategy, highlighting what it is seeking to achieve, how it will be done, and who will do it.

The Partnership’s strategy is described in terms of the following structure:

- the **Vision and Strategic Objectives** for the economic transformation of the county borough.
- the **Key Measures of Success** which need to change significantly and progressively to show that the Vision is being achieved in the required timescale.
- the **Critical Initiatives** which need to be put in place to transform the context and culture in which practical projects are developed and delivered.
- the **Action Programmes** which incorporate the specific projects which will bring about change on the ground.

Bridgend County Borough Economic Partnership

FURTHER INFORMATION: This document draws heavily on work carried out by economic consultants on behalf of the Economic Partnership. For further information, interested parties should refer to:

1. “Bridgend County Borough: A Smart Future – Sustainable Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan”, Volumes 1-3, Shared Intelligence, June 2003.
2. “Sustainable Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan for Bridgend County Borough: A First Year Review,” Newidiem, August 2004.

Copies of the above documents can be obtained from the Economic Regeneration Resources Unit, Bridgend County Borough Council, Tel: 01656 672921.

SECTION 2: ECONOMIC REGENERATION STRATEGY FOR BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH - OVERVIEW

VISION 2004-2016	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTION PROGRAMMES
<p>Bridgend County Borough will develop competitive advantages, for itself and its people, communities businesses and other enterprises, based on becoming a 'smart' community, well maintained, well connected, well informed and innovative, playing a significantly enhanced role in the economy of South Wales by developing its locational and human resource advantages.</p> <p>Its mixed economy will provide a wide range of job opportunities in successful and growing companies in both manufacturing and services that operate across the South Wales economy and further afield.</p> <p>Its communities will be prosperous enough to have become vibrant and pleasant places to live, work and relax. Its poorer people will be catching up and have opportunities for further improvement. Above all, its people will have the income and the opportunities to enjoy the fruits of their labours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SO1: to increase the contribution of Bridgend County Borough to the wider South Wales economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP1: Strategic Positioning And Marketing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SO2: to foster the modernisation of the economy of the County Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP2: Modernising The Economy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SO3: to encourage positive attitudes to acquiring knowledge and skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP3: Fostering Lifelong Learning And Skills Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SO4: to strengthen the economies of the poorer communities within the County Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP4: Strengthening Communities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SO5: increase penetration, take up and effective use of new information technologies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP5: Promoting Take Up of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)

KEY MEASURES OF SUCCESS	BASELINE	TARGET
Gross Value Added Per Head	£11,637 (2001)	Exceed all-Wales growth by 1% per year
Gross weekly pay - Resident	£422 (2003)	Exceed all-Wales growth by 1% per year
Economic activity rate	73.7% (4 th quarter 2004)	Increase to 78% by 2010
Economic activity rate - women	67.2% (4 th quarter 2004)	Increase to 73% by 2010
Employment – Proportion of people in work	70.1% (4 th quarter 2004)	Increase to 75% by 2010
Unemployment (Claimant Count)	2.2% (April 2004)	Reduce to 1% below all-Wales average
Recycling rate – Municipal Waste	10.8% (2001/02)	Increase recycling rate to 32% by 2010

SUMMARY ACTION PROGRAMMES 2005/06-2007/08

Programme	Projected Expenditure			Notes
	2005/06 £000	2006/07 £000	2007/08 £000	
1.1 Town Centre Renewal Programmes	3,675	3,933	6,173	Bridgend & Maesteg town centre programmes well underway. Porthcawl programme under development.
1.2 Strategic Infrastructure & Transport	2,073	4,270	9,500	Linked to Local Transport Plan.
1.3 Replenishing the Shopping, Tourism & Leisure Offer	511	690	570	Linked to priorities in Tourism Strategy.
2. Modernising the Economy	6,604	2,942	1,345	Business support programmes.
3. Lifelong Learning & Skills Development	435	179	119	Linked to activities of Bridgend Community Consortium for Education & Training (CCET).
4. Strengthening Communities	1,938	1,960	1,720	Target areas: Garw valley, Caerau, Blackmill & Cornelly(part) wards. Linked to Communities First programmes.
5. Promoting Take-up of ICT	240	215	215	Linked to economic strands of Bridgend Information Society Plan.
TOTALS	15,476	14,189	19,642	

SECTION 3: STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, CRITICAL INITIATIVES AND ACTION PROGRAMMES 2005/06-2007/08

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1	CRITICAL INITIATIVES	
SO1: TO INCREASE THE CONTRIBUTION OF BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH TO THE WIDER SOUTH WALES ECONOMY.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing the County Borough's key town centres – Bridgend, Maesteg, Porthcawl - as excellent locations for business and attractive places for business services, shopping and leisure facilities. • creating and managing a high-quality public realm • improving accessibility to the key town centres • improving key transport connections • improving the County Borough's tourism offer to stay competitive in traditional markets and to develop new ones, especially in industrial heritage, activity holidays and short breaks. • creating the image of a desirable and investor-friendly county borough 	
KEY MEASURES OF SUCCESS	BASELINE DATA	TARGETS
Public perceptions of key town centres – Bridgend, Maesteg, Porthcawl	To be determined for key criteria by data from annual health checks	Increase public satisfaction levels across key criteria for each town centre.
Town centre accessibility	To be determined for key criteria by data from annual health checks	Increase public satisfaction levels across key criteria for each town centre.
Tourism expenditure:	£200.2 million (2003)	Increase by 6.0% per year

ACTION PROGRAMME 1.1: TOWN CENTRE RENEWAL 2005/06-2007/08

Programme	Current 2004/05 £000	Projected Expenditure			Funding Sources 2005/06-2007/08	Lead
		2005/06 £000	2006/07 £000	2007/08 £000		
Bridgend Town Centre Renewal						J.Duddridge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 4: - Area 2 War Memorial - Area 3 Queen Street - Area 1 Market Street - Area 5 Court Road - Area 6 Nolton/Brackla St. • Town Centre Gateways • River Ogwr Walkway • Randall Memorial • Old Bridge Restoration • Building Improvements • Marketing & Communications • Town Centre Business Dev. • Feasibility - Development Sites • Community Safety • Events & Festivals 	<p>22 60 103 57 - 20 - 62 75 30 10 - 10 90</p>	<p>- 450 350 - 130 125 150 70 30 455 35 25 50 35 90</p>	<p>- 450 350 600 - 125 160 - - 530 25 25 50 35 90</p>	<p>- - - 400 500 100 1,790 - - 530 30 30 25 - 35 90</p>	<p>WAG(PRF): 600, BCBC: 300 <i>WDA/WAG(PRF): 600, BCBC: 100</i> <i>WDA/WAG(PRF): 800, BCBC: 200</i> <i>WDA/WAG(PRF): 500, BCBC: 130</i> <i>WDA: 225, BCBC: 75, Town Council: 20, Private: 30</i> <i>WAG(PRF): 1,700, BCBC: 150, Eag: 250</i> Town Council: 35, BCBC: 35 Cadw: 30, BCBC: 62 WAG(PRF): 200, HLF: 910, BCBC: 105, WDA: 300 BCBC: 135 <i>BCBC: 40, WDA: 35</i> <i>BCBC: 50, WDA: 50</i> CSP: 10, BCBC: 15, CSP: 40, WAG:50 Festivals Committee: 180, BCBC: 10, Voluntary: 80</p>	BCBC
TOTALS	539	1,995	2,440	3,500	Note: Confirmed funding in bold	
Maesteg Town Centre Renewal						L.Fradd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Hall Improvements • Public Realm Works – Phase 1 • Pocket Park • Public Realm Works – Phase 2 • Riverside Enhancement • Building Improvements • Llynfi Community/Cultural Complex • Town Centre Gateways • Feasibility Works 	<p>316 885 - - - 446 - - 69</p>	<p>- 489 77 723 - 206 - 100 25</p>	<p>- - - 921 30 175 242 100 25</p>	<p>- - - 723 - - 1,875 50 25</p>	<p>WDA:140, WAG(LRF): 249, BCBC(SRF): 100 WDA:61, WAG(LRF): 16 – within Phase 1 allocation WAG(PRF):1442,BCBC:455,HLF:110,Cadw:60, WDA:800 WDA:24. BCBC: 6 HLF:c/f, WAG: 166(LRF),175 (PRF) ,BCBC:20,Cadw: 20 BCBC: 242, BCBC:1,000, WAG(PRF):275, Lottery:500, <i>WDA: 100</i> <i>WDA: 200, BCBC: 75, Town Council/Private: 25</i> <i>WDA: 55, BCBC: 20</i></p>	BCBC
TOTALS	1,716	1,620	1,493	2,673	Note: Confirmed funding in bold	
Porthcawl Town Centre Renewal & Tourism Development						RG Jones BCBC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility/Investigation Works 	40	60	-	-	BCBC:60 <i>Ongoing programme to be confirmed</i>	
TOTALS	40	60	0	0		

ACTION PROGRAMME 1.2: STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORT 2005/06-2007/08

Programme	Current 2004/05 £000	Projected Expenditure			Funding Sources 2005/06-2007/08	Lead
		2005/06 £000	2006/07 £000	2007/08 £000		
• Improvements to Junction 36 of M4 Motorway	1,150	480	25	-	Objective 1/LRF: 505	J.Duddridge BCBC
• Brackla Railway Station	-	150	0	300	WAG (Transport Grant): 450, + £3m in 2008/09	J.Duddridge
• Maesteg Rail Enhancement	16	180	2,420	9,000	WAG (Transport Grant): 11,600, + £5m in 2008/09	J.Duddridge
• Bus Station Extension	2,700	200	-	-	WAG (Transport Grant): 200	J.Duddridge
• Bridgend Transport Interchange	6	365	1,375	100	WAG(Transport Grant): 1,840	J.Duddridge
• Bridgend Town Centre – Access (Cycling & Walking)	390	598	350	-	WAG (Transport Grant): 948	J.Duddridge
• Transport Corridor Environmental Improvements	82	100	100	100	BCBC(SRF): 100, BCBC(SRF): 50, WDA:150	L.Fradd BCBC
TOTALS	4,344	2,073	4,270	9,500	Note: Confirmed funding in bold .	

AP1.3: REPLENISHING THE SHOPPING, TOURISM & LEISURE OFFER 2005/06-2007/08

Programme	Current 2004/05 £000	Projected Expenditure			Funding Sources 2005/06-2007/08	Lead
		2005/06 £000	2006/07 £000	2007/08 £000		
• Develop and Market Stronger Events Programme	-	40	60	80	Capital Region Tourism: 30, BCBC: 150 (Revenue)	D.Fletcher BCBC
• Tourism Signage - Upgrading	25	45	45	25	WTB: 20, BCBC(SRF): 75, Private: 20	D.Fletcher BCBC
• Cycle Routes – Celtic Trail, Porthcawl, Llynfi Valley, Pencoed	80	390	560	450	WAG(Transport Grant): 1,400	A.Green BCBC
• Development & Feasibility	40	36	-	-	ACW: 22.8, WAG(PRF): 53.2	J. Griffiths BCBC
- The Bridge Arts & Performance Centre	-	-	10	-	BCBC: 10 (Revenue)	D.Fletcher BCBC
- Marketing for 3-4 Star Hotel with Conference Facilities	-	-	15	15	BCBC: 10, WTB: 10, Private: 10	D.Fletcher BCBC
- Watersports/Outdoor Activity Development	-	-	15	15		
TOTALS	145	511	690	570	Note: Confirmed funding in bold	

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2	CRITICAL INITIATIVES	
SO2: TO FOSTER THE MODERNISATION OF THE ECONOMY OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver integrated business support services • Support closer links between local companies and universities/Bridgend College • Maintain the aftercare service to external manufacturing investors • Develop networked centre of excellence in manufacturing training and support. • Create a programme of inward and outward trade missions • Develop local procurement and supplier chain initiatives to capture economic benefits of Council's housing stock transfer • Create a high-quality portfolio of commercial sites and premises 	
KEY MEASURES OF SUCCESS	BASELINE DATA	TARGETS
Business density: VAT registered businesses per 1,000 population	20.4 (2003)	Increase to 22.3% or total of 2,870 by 2010 (net increase of 35 businesses per year)
High-tech manufacturing employment (% of all employment)	12.9% (2002)	Maintain at 13% by 2010 (Under review)
Knowledge intensive services employment (% of all employment)	35.4% (2002)	Increase to 40% by 2010 (Under review)
Green Dragon companies per 10,000 population	2.56 (2004)	Increase to 10.4 by 2010 (or increase from 33 to 133 Green dragon companies)
Area of land prepared for immediate development (hectares)	82.3 (October 2004)	Increase by 60 hectares by March 2008.

ACTION PROGRAMME 2: MODERNISING THE ECONOMY 2005/06-2007/08

Programme	Current 2004/05 £000	Projected Expenditure			Funding Sources 2005/06-2007/08	Lead
		2005/06 £000	2006/07 £000	2007/08 £000		
Enterprise Development						
• Bridgend Business Support Framework – Phase 2	350	507	-	-	Objective 1: 115, BCBC: 115, Private: 277	R.Pearce BCBC
• Bridgend Business Support Framework – Extension of Scope	60	532	533	475	Objective 1: 260, WAG(LRF): 260, Private: 1020	R.Pearce BCBC
TOTALS	410	1039	533	475	Note: Confirmed funding in bold	
Strategic Sites						
• Waterton Technology Centre	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Development programme as centre of excellence for manufacturing	Phil Catherwood WDA
• Brocastle	1,400	1,099			Objective 1: 298, WDA: 801	Martin Hall WDA
• Pencoed Technology Park	960	500	750	500	<i>WDA: 1,750 + 4,750k in future years</i>	Martin Hall
• Waterton Park	-	80	500		<i>WDA: 580 (500k from 2006/07 onwards)</i>	Martin Hall
TOTALS	2,360	1,679	1,250	500		
Sites and Premises for SMEs						
• Bocam Park	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Major private sector investment with funding support from WDA.	Macob Projects Ltd.
• Site Green 3, Bridgend Industrial Estate	425	3,100	729	-	Objective 1: 1,574, Private: 2,680	Insight Investment
• Industrial Estate Improvement Programme						R.Pearce BCBC
- Section 15 Improvement Grants	261	220	220	220	<i>WDA: 396, Private: 264</i>	
- Litchard Industrial Estate – Road Adoption	6	535	-	-	WAG(PRF): 457, BCBC: 78	
- Forge Industrial Estate	15	31	60	-	BCBC(SRF): 28, WDA: 3, BCBC:60	
- General improvements	-	-	150	150	<i>WAG(PRF): 300</i>	
TOTALS	336	3,886	1,159	370	Note: Confirmed funding in bold	

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3	CRITICAL INITIATIVES	
SO3: TO ENCOURAGE POSITIVE ATTITUDES TO ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and extend the range of learning pathways available to all learners. • Raise participation levels in learning amongst the economically inactive. • Increase the quality and take-up of basic skills training. • Develop higher-level and management skills. • Secure adequate supply of skills to meet the needs of the construction industry and other recognised sectors experiencing skills shortages. 	
KEY MEASURES OF SUCCESS	BASELINE DATA	TARGETS
People of working age with high-level qualifications: % of NVQ4+ qualified	22.5% (2003/04)	To be confirmed
People of working age with no qualifications	20.4% (2003/04)	To be confirmed
16 year olds not in education, training or employment (%)	7.6% (2002/03)	Reduce to 5% by 2007/08
16 year olds leaving school without a recognised qualification	2% (2002/03)	Reduce to 1% by 2007/08
Participation in learning: adult education enrolments per 1,000 people	5.28 (2002/03)	To be confirmed
Work- based training: % receiving	11.7% (2002/03)	To be confirmed

ACTION PROGRAMME 3: LIFELONG LEARNING & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT 2005/06-2007/08

Programme	Current 2004/05 £000	Projected Expenditure			Funding Sources 2005/06-2007/08	Lead
		2005/06 £000	2006/07 £000	2007/08 £000		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish 14-19 Network and annual network development plan 	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	WAG Grant 2005/06	K. Durbin BCBC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand learning opportunities through Common Investment Fund 	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	ELWa Bridgend College: 156, BCBC: 120	K.Durbin BCBC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction Skills Training Unit, Caerau 	125	330	-	-	WAG: 125, Job Centre Plus: 125, Valleys to Coast: 80	L.Fradd BCBC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Learning Brokers 	-	105	179	119	Objective 1: 298, BCBC: 105	M. Shephard BCBC
TOTALS	175	435	179	119	Note: Confirmed funding in bold	

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4	CRITICAL INITIATIVES	
SO4: TO STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIES OF THE POORER COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE COUNTY BOROUGH.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support economic regeneration in designated target communities under the Communities First and Objective 1 programmes - Caerau, Blackmill, part of Cornelly, and all Garw Valley wards. • Increase capacity for participation and partnership working. • Provide grant funding support for community economic development activities. • Support the development of community enterprise. 	
KEY MEASURES OF SUCCESS	BASELINE DATA	TARGETS
Low Literacy rates in Communities First wards	36.8-41.5% (Bridgend CB: 28.6%)	Reduce variations in literacy rates
Low numeracy rates in Communities First wards	42.6-46.8% (Bridgend CB: 31.7%)	Reduce variations in numeracy rates
Gross weekly pay in Communities First wards (Residence-based)	£308 (2003) (Bridgend CB: £422)	Reduce variations in pay rates.
Long-term claimants rates in Communities First wards	15% (2004) (Wales: 14%)	Reduce to below all-Wales average by 2010.

ACTION PROGRAMME 4: STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES 2005/06-2007/08

Programme	Current 2004/05 £000	Projected Expenditure			Funding Sources 2005/06-2007/08	Lead
		2005/06 £000	2006/07 £000	2007/08 £000		
Capacity Building						
• Community Capacity Building – Blackmill	-	41	43	45	Objective 1: 90, Other: 39	T. de Kretser BAVO
• Community Capacity Building – Caerau	-	41	43	45	Objective 1: 90, Other: 39	T.de Kretser BAVO
• Caerau Regeneration Officer	-	46	48	49	<i>Objective 1: 101, WDA: 15, Communities First: 22, Voluntary (in kind): 5</i>	L.Fradd BCBC
Grants						
• Community Grants Scheme Phase 3	-	133	143	152	Objective 1: 300, BAVO: 128	T.deKretser BAVO
• Garw Valley Regeneration Fund	-	466	467	467	Objective 1: 978, WAG(LRF): 422	L.Fradd BCBC
• Rural Economy Action Programme Grants	-	747	729	465	Objective 1: 815, WAG(LRF): 1,126	R.Pearce BCBC
Community Enterprise						
• Local Economy Action Programme Phase 2	-	231	252	259	<i>Objective 1: 371, BCBC: 371</i>	R.Pearce BCBC
• Social Firms Development Fund	-	233	235	238	<i>Objective 1: 353, WAG(LRF): 353</i>	R.Pearce BCBC
TOTALS	-	1,938	1,960	1,720	Note: Confirmed funding in bold	

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5	CRITICAL INITIATIVES	
SO5: TO INCREASE THE PENETRATION, TAKE-UP AND EFFECTIVE USE OF NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES IN THE COUNTY BOROUGH.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement the economic strands of the Bridgend Information Society Plan. • Secure improvements in broadband infrastructure for local businesses (making use of public sector dedicated networks where possible). • Support the development of a strong knowledge and innovation economy in Bridgend county borough. • Audit ICT infrastructure and ICT usage among businesses and households. • Support innovative use of ICT to promote economic and social well-being. • Support ICT training initiatives. • Support the establishment of public and private sector e-procurement capabilities. 	
KEY MEASURES OF SUCCESS	BASELINE DATA	TARGETS
ICT Access and Use by Residents	To be determined for key criteria through survey work	Increase ICT access and use by local residents
ICT in the Workplace	To be determined for key criteria through survey work	Increase ICT access and use by local businesses and their employees

ACTION PROGRAMME 5: PROMOTING THE TAKE-UP OF ICT 2005/06-2007/08

Programme	Current 2004/05 £000	Projected Expenditure			Funding Sources 2005/06-2007/08	Lead
		2005/06 £000	2006/07 £000	2007/08 £000		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business ICT Audit and e-Procurement Development Programme – BISP Better, Stronger Economy Project 	-	140	140	140	<i>Objective 1: 210, Other: 210</i>	C.Howell BCBC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT Household Usage Survey 	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	BCBC(within existing provision)	C.Howell
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Computer Initiatives – Scheme for Local Businesses 	-	10	5	5	<i>Private: 20 (with project support from BCBC).</i>	C.Howell
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village Farm Industrial Estate Wireless Security Network – Pilot Project 	-	70	70	70	<i>Private(Business Improvement District scheme): 210</i>	C.Howell
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial Estate Networks – Development programme 	-	-	-	-	<i>Development programme to be confirmed following evaluation of Village Farm pilot.</i>	C.Howell
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Content Business Incubator - Feasibility 	-	20	-	-	<i>WAG(PRF): 10, BCBC: 10</i>	C.Howell
TOTALS	-	240	215	215		

SECTION 4: CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

4.1 As well as its direct economic objectives and targets, the Sustainable Economic Regeneration Strategy for Bridgend County Borough is striving to address the following four cross-cutting themes:

- (i) **sustainable development:** the Bridgend County Borough Economic Partnership fully endorses the Welsh Assembly Government's requirement that whilst businesses must be encouraged to become more competitive, they and their local communities must ensure that future development is sustainable: its proposals must not compromise the future of the county borough and its environment.
- (ii) **equal opportunities:** the Bridgend County Borough Economic Partnership will strive to ensure equal access to education, training and employment opportunities for all members of Bridgend county borough's population, irrespective of gender, disability, ethnic background or age.
- (iii) **social inclusion:** Bridgend county borough can only be successful if everyone has the opportunity and choice to benefit from and contribute to the area's growth and restructuring. In particular, the Bridgend County Borough Economic Partnership will develop initiatives to connect the most disadvantaged communities with new opportunities for employment and skills development.
- (iv) **promoting take up of ICT:** the information society is one of the prime drivers of economic and social change. The increased access to and use of ICT by businesses, individuals, and communities is considered to be such an important objective in its own right that it is also a main Action Programme (AP5) with specific projects designed to help deliver it.

4.2 Progress towards achieving all of them could be achieved through the following mechanisms:

- assistance and well designed guidance to ensure the integration of the cross-cutting themes into all projects.
- their integration into the selection criteria for local projects.
- a requirement in project development that indicators and targets for the cross-cutting themes be specified in their projected outputs.

4.3 However, efforts at effective integration of cross-cutting themes, such as sustainable development, into the development and delivery of economic programmes and projects have met with limited success.

4.4 The Bridgend County Borough Economic Partnership will be looking to work with other local partnerships to develop a working mechanism to address the cross-cutting themes as integral elements to its strategy and action plan.

5. LINKAGES AND FUNDING

(i) The Role of Objective 1 Funding

- 5.1 Over the period 2000-2004, the EU Objective 1 programme has acted as a catalyst for partnership working, and has provided a focus for a real targeting of regeneration funds. Over the period 2005-2008, the Objective 1 programme will continue to be used to support the action programmes set out in the previous pages. Inevitably, as the availability of new funds diminishes, the Economic Partnership will be focusing on deriving maximum benefit from existing grant approvals rather than on developing new project applications.
- 5.2 In this context, the Economic Partnership will be looking to explore the full range of regeneration funding opportunities. The Sustainable Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan for Bridgend County Borough will therefore provide a clear framework for partnership working. Communities, agencies, companies and outside funding bodies will be coming together, for the first time in many cases, to bring about the delivery of key developments, co-operating in areas which have proved difficult in the past.
- 5.3 This will ensure that the environment of our towns and their development sites are upgraded, that economic activity increases, jobs are created, local people are equipped with the skills that businesses will require to become more competitive, expand their need for services and increase employment.

(ii) Links to wider strategies and initiatives

- 5.4 **National policies:** the range of programmes embraces WAG policies set out in "Better Wales"(2000), "A Plan for Wales"(2001), and "A Winning Wales"(2002). The programmes and projects also seek to be consistent with the Wales Spatial Plan(2004) and other WAG-endorsed programmes led by key national executive agencies: WDA, ELWa, WTB.
- 5.5 **Regional policies:** the two key regeneration strategies within the region are the South East Wales Economic Forum's draft 10-year Regional Framework (2004), and the West Wales and Valleys Objective 1 Single Programming Document. Both aim to stimulate regeneration and economic development within the wider south-east Wales region.
- 5.6 **Local policies:** the programmes and projects will make an important contribution to the achieving the objectives of Bridgend Local Strategic Partnership's Draft Community Strategy 2004-2016 (2004). They will also be consistent with the Local Agenda 21 strategy and local planning policies, as well as a wide range of other local strategies and plans.

6. MONITORING, REPORTING AND PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1 The role of the Bridgend Economic Partnership is to establish the vision and set the overall priorities. The Economic Partnership's Board will comprise equal representation from public, private/social partners, and voluntary sector representatives.
- 6.2 Delivery of action programmes will be managed by key partnership groups. They will track each planned action and ensure delivery, reporting regularly on progress. The Economic Partnership Board will be supported by the following key partnership groups:
- ~ Bridgend Town Centre Operational Group
 - ~ Maesteg Town Centre Operational Group
 - ~ Tourism Forum (Strategy Sub Group)
 - ~ Bridgend Business Support Account Managers Group
 - ~ Bridgend Community Consortium for Education & Training (CCET)
 - ~ Developing Communities Group
 - ~ Garw Valley Regeneration Partnership
 - ~ Bridgend Information Society Plan Partnership Group
- 6.3 The next steps for the Bridgend Economic Partnership is to:
- refine the strategy as it goes, taking account of changing circumstances, new ideas, threats and opportunities, re-aligning our plans in the light of these changes at least every six months.
 - plan a major review in three years' time.
 - make sure that residents and businesses are able to keep abreast of the strategy's progress by a variety of means, including the local media, the Council's publications, the internet, and the Partnership's own newsletter.
- 6.4 The partnership arrangements will be kept under constant review, adapting them if the need arises. The Economic Partnership is committed to increasing the participation of voluntary, community and business sector champions. It will also seek to forge stronger links with other key partnerships and to encourage joint working on key issues of common interest, particularly in the context of the evolving Community Strategy process.