

Bridgend Local Development Plan

2006-2021



**Background Paper 1:
The National, Regional & Local Context**
Revised May 2012

Bridgend Local Development Plan 2006 – 2021

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**Revised
May 2012**

**Development Planning
Regeneration and Development
Communities Directorate
Bridgend County Borough Council
Angel Street, Bridgend
CF31 4WB**

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1. Introduction

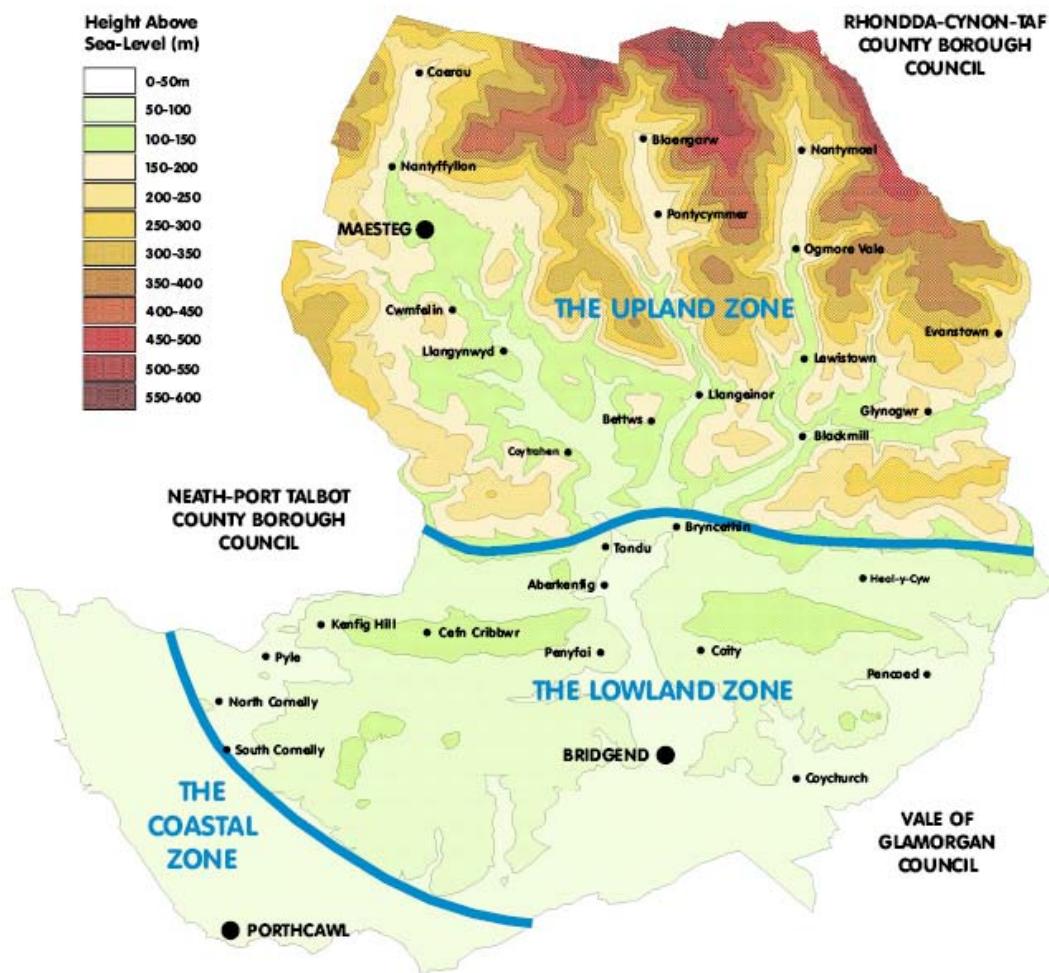
- 1.1 This Background Paper is the first in a series of documents which has been prepared by Bridgend County Borough Council to provide information and justification to the contents of the deposit Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP).
- 1.2 The Pre-Draft Proposals document, issued for public consultation between February and March 2009 contained information on the national, regional and local context with a review of the existing situation, policies and practice from various public and private organisations which have an impact or implication for the strategic land-use planning system. This review then continued by highlighting the national, regional and local issues which had been identified in that review which would need to be addressed or acknowledged in the deposit LDP.
- 1.3 This document represents an updated version of chapters 3-5 of the Pre Deposit Proposals. Updates to the document have occurred for the following reasons:
 - Factual updates resulting from changes to policies since the publication of the Pre Deposit Proposals
 - Changes which were recommended or suggested as a result of representations received during the public consultation on the Pre Deposit Proposals
 - As a result of the above, new or revised issues may have arisen which will be required to be addressed
- 1.4 The Background Paper does not attempt to précis every piece of national, regional and local policy, relevant to Bridgend County Borough. Where appropriate, this will be included in the individual chapters of the deposit LDP without repeating national policy:
 - Section 2 is based on data obtained during the preparation of the LDP to date, including the Sustainability Appraisal & Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report, a general review of up to date and relevant baseline environmental, social, and economic information, and an assessment of detailed local needs and issues which have emerged through a sub-area analysis of the County Borough.
 - Section 3 sets out the key elements of the national, regional and local policy framework that have helped inform the deposit Plan.

2. The Spatial Context

2.1 The Character of the County Borough

- 2.1.1 The County Borough is a Unitary Authority and lies at the geographical heart of South Wales. It is bordered by Neath Port Talbot County Borough to the west and north, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough to the north and north east, and by the Vale of Glamorgan Council to the east. It has an area of about 25,500ha, and had a Census population of 128,645 in 2001. The latest Registrar General's Mid -Year Estimate shows that this had risen to 134,800 people in 2008.
- 2.1.2 The largest settlement and administrative centre of the County Borough is the town of Bridgend. The two other largest towns are Maesteg, and Porthcawl.
- 2.1.3 Bridgend owes its origin to its strategic location at the lowest bridging point on the River Ogmore, where east to west, and north to south, traditional trade routes met. It was originally a small market town serving the western agricultural community of the Vale of Glamorgan which grew when the coal mining industry flourished to the north. The local road and railway network was developed to provide access to communities from the rest of South East Wales, taking advantage of Bridgend's strategic location. With further planned post-War urban growth based on local manufacturing, it became the administrative centre for the area. From the late 1970s to date, it has grown once more in response to commuter housing pressures generated from its proximity to Cardiff, and general economic growth westwards along the M4 Motorway corridor.
- 2.1.4 The wider settlement structure of the County Borough still reflects its agricultural and industrial heritage. The coal mining industry fostered the growth of Maesteg in the upper Llynfi Valley, and many smaller towns and villages, such as Blaengarw, Pontcymmer, Nantymoel, Ogmore Vale and Evanstown in the Garw and Ogmore Valleys, and Pyle, Kenfig Hill, Cefn Cribwr, Tondu, Aberkenfig, Ynysawdre, Sarn, Bryncethin, Brynmelyn, Heol-y-Cyw and Pencoed, in the more southerly coalfield fringe.
- 2.1.5 Porthcawl grew initially as a small port with rail links to the valleys and the coal mining industry. Later, in the inter-War period, it prospered as a popular coastal tourist resort. During the post-World War II period, it expanded significantly, along with the village of North Cornelly and the town of Pyle, to provide housing for workers in the growing iron and steel industry in nearby Port Talbot.
- 2.1.6 The County Borough extends from the Afon Cynffig in the west to the Afon Ewenni Fach in the east, taking in the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmore valleys from their sources in the north to the Bristol Channel in the south. From north to south, the area can be broken down into three geographical and zones which reflect the area's physical character, i.e. its upland, lowland, and coastal zones. The extents of these zones are shown on **Map 1**.

MAP 1 PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH



The Upland Zone

- 2.1.7 This zone is characteristic of the wider South Wales Coalfield which is dominated by the pennant sandstone plateau, its moor land and hill pastures. It is cut through by a number of rivers running generally south or south westwards to form a series of deep valleys. The ridges between these valleys rise steeply to heights exceeding 550m in the northern part of the County Borough.

The Lowland Zone

- 2.1.8 This zone is characterised by a series of east-west ridges generally not exceeding about 130m in height south of the Coalfield Plateau. Its undulating terrain, of generally higher quality agricultural land, forms a swath through the central and south eastern parts of the County Borough.

The Coastal Zone

2.1.9 This zone constitutes a generally flat plain which extends from 3.0 to 1.5 km inland from the Bristol Channel where it meets the higher lowland zone. It includes the sand dune systems of Kenfig Burrows in the west and Merthyr Mawr Warren in the south, and terminates in the south east at the River Ogmore estuary, which is the County Borough boundary.

2.2 Environmental Assets

2.2.1 Previous landscape assessments carried out for the adopted Bridgend Unitary Development Plan (UDP), and earlier development plans, identified **nationally and regionally important landscapes** in the County Borough. These include the western part of the nationally important **Glamorgan Heritage Coast**, one of the most scenically beautiful stretches of undeveloped coast in England and Wales. Also, **Merthyr Mawr, Kenfig and Margam Burrows**, and **Margam Mountain**, which are recognised by Cadw/CCW/ICOMOS as being of 'Outstanding' and 'Special Historic Interest' in their Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales.

2.2.2 The 'Strategic Coalfield Plateau and its Associated Valley Sides' is designated in the UDP as a sub-regionally important **Special Landscape Area**. Several 'Landscape Conservation Areas' are also designated in the UDP as being of local significance. The South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG), through joint LPA collaboration and common purpose, is seeking to identify afresh 'special landscape areas' of regional importance for input into their LDPs. A common method of assessment based on LANDMAP, is being used, as advised by CCW and in national guidance.

2.2.3 **Agricultural land** makes an important contribution to the County Borough's landscape, even though only 46% of the area (11,707 ha) (excluding Common Land) was in agricultural production in 2007. Some 84% (over 9,800 ha) is grassland, mainly used for sheep farming, whereas about 4% (483 ha) is used for arable crops, mainly barley.

2.2.4 There are 3,033 ha of registered **common land** in the County Borough which represents 12% of its area.

2.2.5 The County Borough has a wide range of **biodiversity and nature conservation** interests which include:

- Three sites of International/European nature conservation importance, at Kenfig Burrows and Merthyr Mawr Warren coastal dune systems, Cefn Cribwr grasslands, and Blackmill woodlands, each of which is a designated 'Special Area of Conservation' (SAC);
- Fourteen nationally designated 'Sites of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSIs), which includes Kenfig SSSI and Merthyr Mawr SSSI that form the Kenfig SAC, and which are also 'National Nature Reserves' (NNRs);

- Five Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), and one Regionally Important Geological or Geomorphological Site (RIGS);
 - Over 170 non-statutory ‘Sites of Nature Conservation Importance’ (SINCs); and
 - A wide range of species due to the area’s geographical variation, and a considerable range of habitats. Especially its internationally important sand dune systems, which include European and UK protected and rare flora and fauna.
- 2.2.6 The statutory sites cover 1,215 ha, or 4.8% of the area, 974 ha of which comprises the Kenfig SAC.
- 2.2.7 The County Borough also has a rich **Built Heritage and Historic Environment**, which includes:
- 62 Scheduled Ancient Monuments of national importance, and a considerable and varied archaeological resource including known archaeological monuments which are not currently scheduled but which are, nonetheless, included in the Historic Environment Record maintained by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust;
 - 361 Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest;
 - 15 designated Conservation Areas; and
 - 6 Historic Parks and Gardens, in addition to those Historic Landscapes noted under paragraph 2.2.1 above, which are also included in the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales prepared by Cadw/CCW/ICOMOS.
- 2.2.8 Also, there is a range of **informal recreational opportunities** in the County Borough where the public can enjoy its varied natural environment. These opportunities are readily accessible through an extensive network of public rights of way, including 497 km of public footpaths, 81 km of public bridleways, and 7 km of Byways Open to All Traffic. In addition, there are 50 km of community routes/cycle tracks in the area, with links to the Ogwr Ridgeway Walk and Coed Morgannwg Way long distance footpaths, and which incorporate a part of the National Cycle Network in Wales.
- 2.2.9 The Council operates and contracts a range of **indoor sport and recreation facilities** including 5 swimming pools, 4 sports centres and 21 community centres which offer more formal facilities (and a wide range of school recreational activities).
- 2.2.10 According to the Welsh Assembly Government’s Development Advice Maps (DAM) along with supporting evidence from a Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment, human health and property in the southern parts of Bridgend town, the Ewenny valley upstream to Pencoed, and the valley towns of Maesteg and Ogmore Vale are at ‘significant risk’ of **Flooding**. Parts of Porthcawl and the coast are also at risk from tidal inundation and storm surges.
- 2.2.11 EAW considers that the water quality of several rivers in the area may fail the objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), especially where river courses have been artificially changed in towns and villages, and

where they are polluted from agricultural and industrial discharges. Several stretches and water bodies which are already failing include the Llynfi, Ogmore, Blackmill, Kenfig and Kenfig Pool. Similarly, the Ogmore River Estuary is ‘probably at risk’ of failing the WFD. The Ogmore and Llynfi rivers are at risk from ‘point source pollution’, but improvements in waste water treatment and the construction of Combined Sewerage Overflows have improved this position.

- 2.2.12 The ‘natural lake’ of Kenfig Pool is currently failing the objectives of the WFD due to nutrient pollution. However, the coastal water quality at Rest Bay and Trecco Bay, Porthcawl have achieved Blue Flag status under the Bathing Water Directive.
- 2.2.13 EAW also identifies three **ground water** locations in the County Borough, only one of which is cited as being ‘at risk’ and another ‘probably at risk’ of failing the WFD. **Water resources** to the County Borough are abundant, but should be kept under review over the next 25 years, in order to respond to climate change, and to meet changing needs and issues of availability.
- 2.2.14 The County Borough has relatively good **air quality**, and does not have any ‘Air Quality Management Areas’. This position needs to be maintained, and projections up to 2010 show that air quality will improve based on predicted improvements in cleaner technology, particularly cars. The area remains at risk of poor air quality, however, as the M4 crosses it from east to west. Neighbouring Neath Port Talbot CB, and Swansea CC further west, both have Air Quality Management Areas in place. In addition, there appears to be an increasing trend in NO₂ concentrations at several locations in the County Borough which are being monitored.
- 2.2.15 The Regional Transport Plan (RTP) for South East Wales, which has been adopted by South East Wales Transport Alliance (Sewta) and approved by the Welsh Assembly Government , shows that **car ownership** in the County Borough closely mirrors that for Wales. 2004 data suggests only 25.6% of households do not have access to a car, whereas the all Wales figure was 26%. The car also dominated the 2004 modal split for **journey to work**: 75.4% of the area’s residents travelled to work by car, 10.3% walked to work, and only 5.4% used the train or caught a bus for their journey.
- 2.2.16 **Commuting** to, and (to a lesser extent) from Cardiff, dominates the journey to work patterns in South East Wales. However, there are also substantial commuter flows from Rhondda Cynon Taf to Bridgend, and between Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot CB. Car use for all purposes across Wales now accounts for at least half of all journeys, and **road traffic** has increased by 33% over the period 1989/91 to 2003/04. The biggest percentage increase has been in car use for education journeys (including ‘the school run’). All of the above factors have led to increased levels of traffic flows and congestion within the County Borough, and increases in **greenhouse gas emissions**, which are identified as a contributive factor to the causes of **climate change**. Energy use in buildings in the area is similarly identified as contributing to local greenhouse gas emissions.

- 2.2.17 The County Borough contains significant quantities of high quality **Mineral Resources**. There are two active limestone quarries named Cornelly and Gaens, near South Cornelly, which produce about 0.75 m tonnes/year of aggregates and high quality limestone sinter for steel manufacture. There is also a small sandstone quarry at Cefn Cribwr which operates intermittently; an inactive limestone quarry at Grove, South Cornelly; and a dormant limestone quarry at Stormy Down. Coal was extracted at Parc Slip/Margam by opencast operations, but all of the small mines in the area have now ceased working. There are also a number of land-based sand and gravel resource areas which have been safeguarded to avoid future sterilisation. The County Borough's landbank of consented reserves currently make a significant contribution to the regional supply and market for aggregates (approximately 40 million tonnes).
- 2.2.18 The Regional Waste Plan (RWP) for South West Wales states that the total principal **waste** stream arising in the County Borough in 2000-01 was 435,225 tonnes. Most of this waste (51.5%) arose from construction and demolition activities, a large amount arose from the commercial and industrial sectors (33.2%), whereas only 15.2% arose from the municipal waste stream. Latest estimates indicate that by 2005/06 total waste arising in the County Borough have risen to about 462,300 tonnes. Latest data also shows that 35.8% of municipal waste was recycled or composted in the area in 2005-06, which is much higher than the 25.9% figure achieved across Wales. The RWP forecasts that the sub-regional pro-rata allocations of total waste arising in the County Borough should fall by 2.6% from 2001 to 2013.
- 2.2.19 The identified regional strategy for waste management is to bring about a reduction in land filling and an increase in composting and materials recovery, thereby achieving an increase in recycling and composting across the region from 8% in 2001 to 52% in 2013. The County Borough's performance up to 2005-06 shows that it is moving well towards this objective by utilising the joint venture materials recovery and energy centre (MREC) at Crymlyn Burrows in neighbouring Neath Port Talbot CBC, and by establishing new Civic Amenity (CA) sites at Maesteg, Ogmore Vale and Brynmenyn. A new municipal waste transfer station has been completed at Tondu, and is now operational.
- 2.2.20 The Council's Municipal Waste Management Strategy similarly sets out long-term aims and objectives for managing the waste that is produced in the County Borough. The current strategy, which is being revised, reflects a wide balance of opinion, and also sets a number of targets for waste management. This includes reducing household waste arising from 1.15 tonnes per household in the area in 2004/05 to 1.10 tonnes per household by 2009/10, and raising the amount of municipal waste that is recycled from 22.5% in 2004/05 to 32.4% by 2009/10. However, this target had already been achieved and exceeded by 2005/06.
- 2.2.21 The Council produced a **Contaminated Land** Inspection Strategy in 2002. This Strategy is in the process of being comprehensively reviewed, and for the first time the number and extent of sites in the County Borough with potentially contaminated land will be assessed. Potential contamination can

arise historically from a number of past activities including various industrial processes, mining, quarrying, harbour/dockside activities, and through former waste disposal.

- 2.2.22 A more detailed breakdown of the character and environment of the County Borough can be found in Section 3.2 of the Sustainability Appraisal – Scoping Report for the LDP (December 2006). The Scoping Report can be viewed on the Council's website at:

<http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/Web1/groups/public/documents/services/015235.hcsp#TopOfPage>

2.3 Key Social Trends

- 2.3.1 At 255sq. km Bridgend County Borough is one of the smaller Unitary Authorities in Wales; however it is the 10th largest in terms of its total **population**, with 134,800 people estimated to be living in the area in 2008. Its population density in 2008 averaged 528 people per square kilometre, compared with an average of 143 for Wales, reflecting its relatively urban nature.
- 2.3.2 The population of the County Borough has, in general, grown continuously over the past 40 years, although it has not been uniform, as the level of growth recorded in the 1960s exceeded any subsequent growth rates. Overall, the population has grown approximately 22% between 1961 and 2008, from 108,950 to 134,800 respectively.
- 2.3.3 In the 2001 census, non-white ethnic minorities comprise 1.4% of the County Borough's population compared to 2.1% for Wales. Nearly 85% of its residents were born in Wales, compared to around 75% nationally.
- 2.3.4 In mid 2008, the age profile of the population of the County Borough was very similar to the Wales average; 81,500 persons were of working age (60.5%), 27,900 were of retirement age (20.7%) and 25,500 were aged under 16 (18.9%). The population profile of the County Borough is expected to show a significant increase in those of retirement age in the LDP Plan period.
- 2.3.5 In-migration has had a significant influence. Major infrastructure improvements in the 1970s and 1980s, especially the construction of the M4, major inward investment, and proximity to Cardiff boosted the attraction of the southern part of the County Borough to in-migrants.
- 2.3.6 Many people commute further to work than the Wales average. Statistics on commuting patterns show that in 2008: 17,200 people commute out of the County Borough for their main job, and 14,200 commute in – a net outflow in the working population of 3%.
- 2.3.7 The trend in 'components of population change' since 1991 shows that natural change in population has remained fairly constant, with births and deaths balancing each other out. Migration levels since 1991 have fluctuated considerably, with an overall net in-migration trend between

1991 and 2006 of 140 persons per annum. More recently however, since 2001, net in-migration has averaged 740 persons per annum.

- 2.3.8 The Welsh Assembly Government estimates that there were 57,472 **residential properties** within Bridgend County Borough in 2007.
- 2.3.9 Between 1991 and 2006, 8105 new **dwellings** were completed in the County Borough, at an average rate of 540 dwellings per annum.
- 2.3.10 The UDP identifies a dwelling requirement of 7957 new dwellings between 2000 and 2016. At June 2006, 3233 of these dwellings had been built representing more than 40% of the overall requirement.
- 2.3.11 The Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) monitors the supply and availability of **housing land**, in order to ensure a minimum 5 year supply. Judged against the requirement of the UDP, and using the residual method, at 1st April 2009 Bridgend had a supply of 6.6 years, substantially above the minimum requirement.
- 2.3.12 The 2001 census reported that there were 53,342 householders in Bridgend County Borough with an **average household size** of 2.38 persons. This is predicted to fall in line with national trends.
- 2.3.13 Over 77% of **households** in Bridgend are owner-occupied which is higher than in Wales as a whole.
- 2.3.14 In 2009 - 2010 Bridgend had the fifth highest rate in Wales of population accepted as statutory **homeless**.
- 2.3.15 According to information from the Land Registry the average house price for the County Borough in December 2010 was £125,985. The 2010 average household income was £25,433 per annum, which means there is an overall **house price to income ratio** of 4.9. This compares to the Welsh Assembly Government's definition of affordability which uses a multiple of 2.9 for dual earners and 3.5 for single earners.
- 2.3.16 The 2008 median annual salary for a full-time worker living in the County Borough (as sourced from the ONS annual survey of hours and earnings) is £22,924. On this basis, the house price to income ratio is 5.7 (for a single-earner).
- 2.3.17 The 2009 Local Housing Market Assessment concluded that there is an overall annual requirement for **affordable housing** of 1,514. This compares to the 7 year trend in provision between 2000 and 2007 of 70 affordable houses per annum, and a projected UDP build-rate of both market and affordable housing of 498 dwellings per annum.
- 2.3.18 Part of the 2009 assessment suggested In terms of the size of affordable housing required, a split of 40% smaller (one and two bedroom) dwellings and 60% larger (three and four bedroom) properties could be pursued by the Council.

- 2.3.19 Statistics from the overall **Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2008** (WIMD)²³ show that of the 85 Lower Super Output Areas within the County Borough, 5% are within the most deprived 10% in Wales, and 56% are more deprived than the Wales average. The most deprived areas are within its Valley Settlements especially Caerau and Bettws, but also in North Cornelly. Other areas of deprivation exist within Sarn, Blackmill, Maesteg and Nantymoel and parts of Bridgend at Brackla and Wildmill. The least deprived areas are generally south of the M4.
- 2.3.20 The most deprived areas have significantly lower levels of car ownership, which can be a potential barrier to economic participation and the wider use of social, leisure and community facilities.
- 2.3.21 According to the 2008 ONS annual population survey the County Borough has a higher percentage of **working age people** with no qualifications, 15.4% compared to 14.1% for Wales. Only 25.3% of the working age population has qualifications NVQ4 and above, compared with 26.5% for Wales, and 29% for Great Britain.
- 2.3.22 In 2009/2010, 60% of pupils in their final year of compulsory education achieved five or more GCSEs at Grade C or above, or equivalent qualifications. This figure has risen for the eighth year running. However, the figure for the County Borough has been consistently a little lower than that for Wales over the same period.
- 2.3.23 The Council is undertaking a phased school modernisation programme, with respect to its current stock of 66 schools across the County Borough. The modernisation programme is considered and prioritised on issues and opportunities presented by: an analysis of existing and future demand for school places; analysis of catchment areas; new curriculum requirements; building condition maintenance costs, suitability and site opportunities; sustainable building design; and the opportunity for co-location with other social and community services
- 2.3.24 According to the 2001 census, a quarter of people in Bridgend County Borough had a limiting long-term illness, compared to 23.3% for Wales. The 2004/2005 Welsh Health Survey reported that **health-related lifestyles** of adults is fairly similar to that of adults in Wales, but slightly higher in terms of binge-drinking and overweight or obesity.
- 2.3.25 The former Bridgend Local Health Board outlined its strategic proposals for the redevelopment and modernisation of its current estate in its 'Integrated Healthcare Strategy for Primary Care Premises'. GPs currently operate out of 24 separate and varied premises. In addition, the former NHS Trust also provides 11 community clinics across the County Borough. The Strategy aims to ensure that the estate can meet the needs of its service in terms of size, functionality and quality, by providing 'one stop' local access to general health and social care facilities, as well as providing 4 new specialised integrated health, community, and social service centres across the County Borough. With the creation of the new, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board, this situation is now under review.

- 2.3.26 The rate of **recorded crime** in the County Borough is similar to that for Wales across all of the individual crime types. These include violence against the person, burglary, vehicle and other theft and criminal damage.
- 2.3.27 Accessibility to formal and informal **open space** is an important factor in improving the health and well-being of residents of the County Borough, while such areas enhance the environment and quality of life of the area.
- 2.3.28 A recent (2010) Audit showed that 221.67 ha of land is available for **outdoor sporting activities** in the County Borough, which represents an overall surplus of 6.95 ha based on the relevant FIT standard of 1.6 ha per 1000 population. In this respect, the only sub areas which showed a deficiency in provision were the larger urban centres of Bridgend and Porthcawl, and settlement based deficiencies in Caerau/Nantyffyllon, Blaengarw and Kenfig Hill/Cefn Cribwr. All of the remaining settlements are well provided for.
- 2.3.29 A similar Audit (2010) showed that about 70 ha of land is available for **children's playing space**, which represents an overall deficiency across the County Borough of about 38 ha based on the minimum FIT standard of 0.8 ha per 1000 population. The sub-areas which showed the greatest deficiencies in provision were the large urban centres of Bridgend, Maesteg, Porthcawl and Pencoed, and only the Pyle Kenfig & Cornelly Sub-Area showing a surplus in provision. In neither area, however, is there a particular excess of provision.
- 2.3.30 An allotment audit carried out in 2010 suggests that by a sub area analysis there is an overall surplus of 1.288 hectares throughout the County Borough with only Bridgend, the Valleys Gateway and the Garw Valley showing a deficit in provision. Notwithstanding this however, the Audit also identified abandoned allotments and land which could potentially be (re-)used as allotment gardens. The total potential land available for (re-)use as allotments was approximately 7 hectares which exceeds the recommended standards set by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners.
- 2.3.31 Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 20 support the Welsh Government's commitment to sustaining the **Welsh language** through the planning system. In this respect, where appropriate LPA's are required to provide a policy framework which will support these objectives in their Local Development Plan.
- 2.3.32 The 2001 census shows that 20.8% of the population of Wales speak Welsh. The figure for Bridgend however was approximately 10.8% with the highest concentration in the Pontycymmer area with a Welsh speaking population of 13.6%. The latest figures produced by Stats Wales indicate that in 2010 the Welsh speaking population of the County Borough was 15.5% which is one of the lowest Welsh speaking population in Wales.
- 2.3.33 Given the relatively low levels of welsh language use across the County Borough, it is not considered that major development proposals will materially affect the linguistic balance of the area, to the detriment of welsh language use. It is therefore considered that this issue will not be

addressed by specific policies in the LDP. However, under the provisions of TAN20, the Welsh language will remain a material consideration in the development management decision making process.

2.4 Key Economic Trends

- 2.4.1 Bridgend County Borough is at the heart of the South Wales economy. It has been undergoing a major restructuring in recent years with losses of jobs in manufacturing being offset by growth in the office market and service sectors.
- 2.4.2 In 2008, the County Borough had an **economic activity** rate of 73.2%, this means that 63,800 people are either working or unemployed but available for work. This is higher than the economic activity rate for Wales as a whole, which stood at 72.8%.
- 2.4.3 At 2008, there were 53,300 employees within the County Borough, this compares to 61.4% in Wales and 64.5% in the UK. 16.9% of which were employed within the **manufacturing** sector; this compares to 13.4% and 10.9% for Wales and Great Britain respectively. In 2007, 17.1% of which were employed within the manufacturing sector; this compares to 13.6% and 10.6% for Wales and Great Britain respectively.
- 2.4.4 The County Borough is therefore disproportionately reliant upon the manufacturing sector, although this has substantially declined in recent years. In 1995 manufacturing employment stood at 29.7% of total employees. There has therefore been a reduction of 12.8% in 13 years. There has been a corresponding increase in jobs within the **service sector**, rising from 65% in 1995 to 82.9% in 2006.
- 2.4.5 In terms of **entrepreneurship**, the rate of new VAT registered businesses as a proportion of business stock in 2007 was 9.1% for Bridgend County Borough, substantially higher than the rate for Wales at 7.8%, but lower than the rate for Great Britain at 10.4%. The rate of **deregistration** in 2007 was 7.4%, higher than the Welsh rate and that for Great Britain.
- 2.4.6 In 2008, the County Borough also had a higher rate of **unemployment** than Wales, 6.7% compared to 6.3%. At December 2008, Bridgend had a claimant count unemployment rate (a narrower measure) of 4.9%, this compares to 4.4% for Wales, and 4.2% for Great Britain. Furthermore, there are also pockets of significantly higher unemployment, especially youth unemployment within the County Borough in Caerau, Bettws, Blackmill, Sarn, North Cornelly, and parts of Bridgend.
- 2.4.7 In terms of **commuting** patterns, the 2004 Annual Population Survey indicates that 71% of County Borough's residents work in the area, which is the same as the Welsh average. 17,300 people commute out of the Authority to work and 14,200 commute in. There is therefore a net outflow of 3000. The most dominant areas for out-commuting are Cardiff at 4000, Rhondda Cynon Taf at 3000, and Neath Port Talbot at 3000. In terms of the origin of those working in the Authority, there is significant in-

commuting from Rhondda Cynon Taf at 4000, and Neath Port Talbot at 3000.

- 2.4.8 Analysis by Cambridge Econometrics indicates that **overall employment** in the County Borough is projected to decrease by 600 between 2006 and 2021. The main loss of employment is predicted to be in the manufacturing sector (-1,600) although the overall loss is offset by growth in the financial and business service sector.
- 2.4.9 As a discrete part of the service sector, **tourism** is of growing local importance. The tourism industry in Bridgend is currently worth £246 million to the local economy, attracting over 3.5 million visitors per annum and generating 4,238 jobs (Source: STEAM 2009) This is, however, substantially below the all Wales rate of 8.4% of total employees working in tourism-related activities.
- 2.4.10 85% visits to the County Borough were from day visitors only. Only 4.3% of visitors stay in serviced accommodation.
- 2.4.11 In 2006, 217 hectares of **employment land** was identified for Class B1, B2 and B8 Uses within the County Borough. Recent trends between 2001 and 2009 indicate that the take-up rate of industrial land is approximately 6.33 hectares per annum. This is therefore more than sufficient land in overall terms for the LDP period up to 2021.
- 2.4.12 In spatial terms, however, the existing employment base is concentrated in the south-east of the County Borough. Furthermore, 64% of the available employment land is located within Bridgend. Only 17% is located within the valleys, a substantial part of which, e.g. at Coegnant, Maesteg, is very constrained.
- 2.4.13 There is a mismatch between the geographical location of employment land within the County Borough and the areas of deprivation, which are predominantly in the north. This has significant potential implications for levels of congestion, journey times and the promotion of sustainable integrated transport and levels of accessibility.
- 2.4.14 An employment report was jointly commissioned by the Council and WAG in 2006 with a remit to: identify the availability of sites and premises; consider the quality and age of current stock; review sectors; assess likely demand and changes in the market place and identify what level of provision should be made up to 2021.
- 2.4.15 In terms of **availability of premises**, the report identified that at the time of the study demand was exceeding supply for both office and industrial premises which has led to significant speculative development in the office sector. However, this situation has changed in the light of the current economic downturn.
- 2.4.16 60% of immediately available employment land is in public ownership, 92% in the short-term and 70% in the medium term. This highlights the key role

of the public sector in bringing forward difficult parcels of land and removing obstacles to growth.

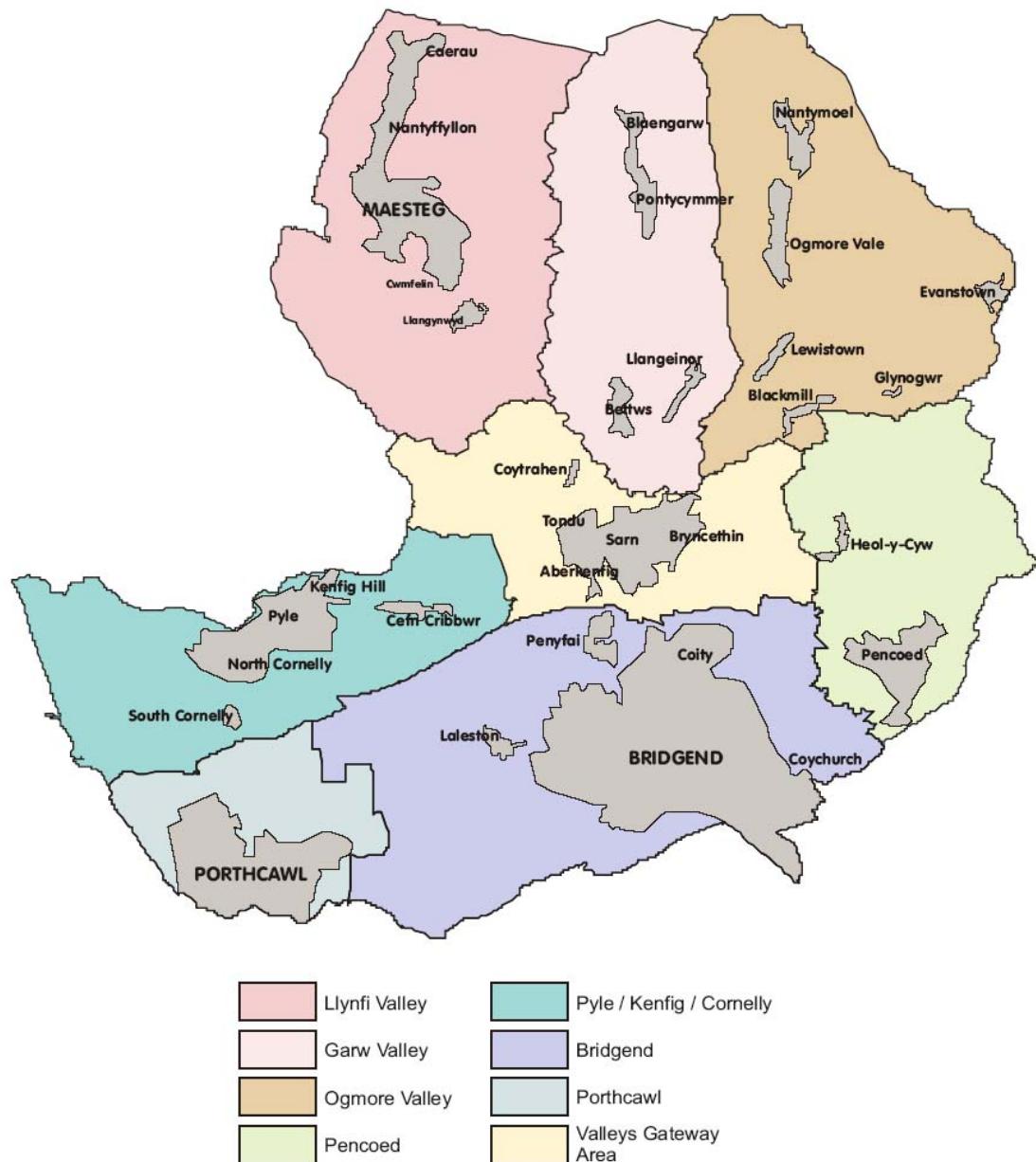
- 2.4.17 In terms of **age and quality of stock** a large part of the existing manufacturing building port folio was built by the former WDA, however with the exception of Raven's Court in Bridgend Town Centre the private sector has been responsible for all new office development. Good design is seen as essential to a good working environment as well as being important in terms of image and a sense of place.
- 2.4.18 The sustainability agenda is influencing design, especially with respect to where WAG has an interest (e.g. ownership or joint venture etc).
- 2.4.19 In terms of a **review of sectors** the report identifies Bridgend's current strength as being in construction and related industries; pharmaceuticals; plastics; automotive; software and IT call centres. However this differs from the key sectors mentioned in 'Wales: A Vibrant Economy', namely: high technology, automation, aerospace, agri-food; tourism; financial services and creative industries. In light of this, the report recommends the Council reflects on these sectors and addresses possible training gaps if they are to aspire to better quality higher value-added jobs in the future. The Report recognises that a large number of factors can influence **demand**. It recommends a core objective of the Council must be to create the conditions, environment and ethos that signifies that it is there to do business and drive forward policy initiatives, if it is to remain competitive.
- 2.4.20 The report also recognises that current **land availability** is more than adequate for the LDP Plan Period up to 2021 and beyond.
- 2.4.21 In 2008, the County Borough had over 2.3 million sq ft of retail and **commercial floorspace** within its town and district centres and retail parks.
- 2.4.22 Bridgend is the main focus of retailing activity acting as a sub-regional commercial centre, with a total of 0.75 million sq. ft of floorspace. Out-of-centre retail parks including the Bridgend Designer Outlet Village cater for a further 0.5 million sq. ft. There are also smaller town centres in Porthcawl and Maesteg which make a significant contribution to local retail provision. These are supplemented by a network of district centres across the County Borough which act primarily as top-up shopping and service destinations.
- 2.4.23 Information from annual surveys indicates that, whilst the existing District Centres within the south of the County Borough are accessible and viable, those in the valley areas are in decline with significant pressure to change existing commercial buildings to residential uses. This has brought several of these areas to the verge of their very viability. Conversely, there are smaller, more successful retail and commercial areas, some of which are highlighted in the Sub Area Spatial Assessment (below), which have no status or recognition at present which, along with other social facilities act as focus for community activity.

- 2.4.24 Bridgend Town Centre, the main general retailing area of the County Borough, is currently underperforming as it is failing to meet the needs of its catchment in terms of retail provision. The current pattern of retail development and occupation points to a cycle of depletion which is likely to continue until the town is left with a severely weakened retail offer. However, according to the Bridgend Retail Needs and Town Centre Vision studies undertaken by CACI, it has the potential for undergoing a step-change in its retail provision, to move away from being a ‘Value Regional Town’ to an ‘Average Regional Town’ as defined in CACI’s Retail Footprint Classification. This would entail the development of significant retail floorspace, on sites already identified in the UDP, which the catchment area could support in expenditure terms. In overall terms Bridgend Town Centre is considered to be a viable proposition to increase its market share and release its untapped potential.
- 2.4.25 The County Borough is well served (approximately 47,000 sq m) in terms of convenience retailing in both in and out-of-centre locations. No further large-scale convenience retailing developments (over and above that committed) are required to meet the needs of the County Borough during the Plan period. Bulky comparison goods sales are concentrated in the Bridgend and Waterton Retail Parks totalling approximately 24,000 sq m. A qualitative need for approximately further additional floorspace in the south of the County Borough has been identified for this purpose during the Plan period.

2.5 Sub Area Spatial Assessment

- 2.5.1 In order to more fully understand the issues that affect the County Borough and to fully inform a spatial strategy, it is important to understand the current role and function of settlements.
- 2.5.2 This will draw out those issues that are of particular importance to a local area and the opportunities that exist in spatial planning terms to address them.
- 2.5.3 For this purpose the County Borough is sub-divided into eight sub-areas which reflect the existing local Policy Forum areas of the County Borough which are also defined by the geography of the area, the transport network, existing settlements and the linkages between them. The sub-areas are shown on **Map2**. The identified Sub-Areas are:-
- Bridgend
 - The Llynfi Valley
 - Porthcawl
 - The Garw Valley
 - The Ogmore Valley
 - The Valley’s Gateway
 - Pyle/Kenfig/Cornelly Area
 - Pencoed

MAP 2 SUB-AREA DIVISION OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH



(A) Bridgend Sub-Area

- 2.5.4 The sub-area of Bridgend is located in the southern part of the County Borough. At the heart is the town of Bridgend, which is the County Borough's principal settlement. Bridgend is made up of a number of large but distinctive residential neighbourhoods, which are served by small local centres. Within the sub-area and close to the town are the satellite villages of Laleston, Penyfaid, Coity, Coyauchur and Merthyr Mawr.
- 2.5.5 Much of the sub-area has good accessibility, with road access served by junction 36 of the M4 to the north and the A48/A473 corridor to the south although there are some issues with peak-period congestion. Bridgend is also served by an inter-city high speed rail service from London (Paddington) to Swansea as part of the national rail network. The road

infrastructure, in particular, has been and continues to be a primary reason for inward investment projects, its attractiveness as a preferred location for the major volume house builders and the focus of out-of-town retailing. However, access by car into Bridgend Town Centre from these main routes can experience localised congestion, especially during peak periods. There has been significant recent investment in dedicated residential access routes to the town centre for walkers and cyclists.

- 2.5.6 The sub-area has a population of approximately 42,000 people, which represents a third of the County Borough's total population. Bridgend has been a major focus for new housing development in recent years and will continue to be so during the lifetime of the LDP in the light of more than 2500 market and affordable dwellings that already have planning permission. This includes a major north-eastern expansion of Bridgend at Parc Derwen which comprises 1500 new dwellings, commercial centre, primary school and associated recreation facilities. In addition other large-scale on-going commitments exist at Broadlands and Brackla south of Coychurch Road.
- 2.5.7 Bridgend is a major employment centre serving the whole of the County Borough and the wider sub-region, largely because of its strategic location immediately south of the M4. There are a number of well established large-scale industrial estates at Bridgend, Waterton and Brackla. Although substantially developed, these estates offer significant scope for infill development and redevelopment opportunities. In terms of the development of further additional employment sites 3 priority projects for funding under the Convergence Programme have been identified at Brocastle, Island Farm and Waterton. There are other sites where there is an opportunity to reassess their employment roles and whether there may be opportunities for alternative land uses.
- 2.5.8 Bridgend acts as a sub-regional hub for retailing, representing the most significant retail centre between Swansea and Cardiff. The town is undergoing substantial physical regeneration with improvements to the public realm and to the fabric of the buildings, through various regeneration initiatives. However, the Town Centre is underperforming with respect to its catchment area profile. To this end, major schemes for additional retail floorspace, leisure developments and environmental enhancements are planned to achieve its full potential and reduce the high level of retail expenditure leakage, especially to Cardiff and the Bridgend Designer Outlet Centre, also located within the sub-area off junction 35 of the M4. In terms of bulky goods retailing, there appears to be a shortfall in provision.
- 2.5.9 The day-to-day needs of the local communities that make up the wider urban area of Bridgend and its satellite villages are served by local shops and neighbourhood commercial centres. The LDP needs to define the role and function of these local centres with a view to rationalising, protecting where necessary, developing and directing future investment within such 'community' hubs.
- 2.5.10 The Bridgend Sub-Area falls within the more affluent 'southern' part of the County Borough. However, there are pockets of deprivation at Wildmill and

Brackla and the LDP needs to support regeneration initiatives where there are land-use implications.

- 2.5.11 The Bridgend sub-area is the home of the Princess of Wales Hospital, a district general hospital within the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg NHS Trust. The hospital serves the whole of the local population of the County Borough and beyond, and is currently embarking on a Capital Development Programme.
- 2.5.12 The Bridgend Sub-area is served by 23 schools, which includes 2 secondary schools. The proposed School Modernisation Programme, as well as necessitating amalgamations and redevelopments of existing schools may require new schools to be developed on alternative sites. The LDP will need to provide the means by which relevant recreation, healthcare and educational strategies are spatially integrated to deliver more 'Community Focused' schools. This may result in opportunities for windfall development of redundant sites and premises for a variety of uses.
- 2.5.13 The 2010 Audits of Outdoor Sport and Children's Playing Space record a significant quantitative shortfall in open space within the Bridgend Sub Area, which will only be exacerbated by future growth in population. However, in terms of the WAG's Climbing Higher Agenda, there are no significant shortfalls in facilities within 6 minutes walk (300m) of residential neighbourhoods.
- 2.5.14 Outside of the urban areas the surrounding countryside offers considerable scope for informal recreational activity, tourism opportunities and farm diversification. Collaborative working with the Vale of Glamorgan should ensure the synergy between these areas in landscape terms. The high quality environmental assets include landscapes of national importance, part of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast and special areas of conservation. Tourism and recreational opportunities need to preserve these assets.

(B) The Llynfi Valley Sub-Area

- 2.5.15 In geographical terms the Llynfi valley Sub-Area is located in the north-western part of the County Borough and comprises the town of Maesteg with the settlements of Caerau and Nantyffyllon to the north with Cwmfelin and the villages of Llangynwyd and Pontrhydydycyff to the south. It shares its northern and western boundary with the administrative area of Neath Port Talbot.
- 2.5.16 In terms of accessibility the sub-area is served along its entire length by the A4063, which links the area to Bridgend to the south, and eastwards via the Sarn Link to Junction 36 of the M4, which is approximately 8 miles from Maesteg Town Centre. There are some issues with peak-period congestion along this route, particularly at the A4063/A4065 junction. To the north the A4063 links Caerau and Nantyffyllon to Croeserw and Cymmer, a significant settlement in Neath Port Talbot, located less than half a mile from Caerau. The B4282 links Maesteg with the Afan Valley in Neath Port Talbot via the A4107; linking to the M4, Port Talbot and Swansea to the West.

- 2.5.17 The sub-area is also served by the Maesteg to Bridgend Railway line, which terminates at Maesteg Town Centre with halts at Ewenny Road and Garth to the south. There are currently hourly services to Cardiff, and beyond to Newport and Cheltenham, but there are proposals to increase service frequencies to half hourly.
- 2.5.18 The sub-area has a population of 20,700 which represents approximately 16% of the County Borough's population. Maesteg is the 2nd largest town in the County Borough. This position in the County Borough's hierarchy of population centres has not however been reflected in the level of growth, especially in new housing in recent years. Indeed, the sub-area has only provided approximately 6% of new housing between 2000 and 2007, and no new affordable housing. Thirteen units of social housing however were completed in April 2008. With the exception of sites at the former Llynfi Hospital and at Heol Tywith, Nantyffyllon there are no recently approved large housing sites of more than 10 units with planning permission.
- 2.5.19 A major reclamation and regeneration project at the former Maesteg Washery immediately to the east of Maesteg town centre has provided a new comprehensive school with associated playing fields serving the Llynfi Valley sub-area. The new school opened in 2008, and its opening has released the former 'Upper' School at Llangynwyd as a new Welsh Medium Comprehensive, serving the whole of the County Borough.
- 2.5.20 The Maesteg Washery site is also currently proposed as a mixed use scheme. In this respect in addition to the provision of a new school and playing fields the area is also currently earmarked for 250 new dwellings and B1 employment. The residential and employment aspects of this wider mixed use scheme do not yet have the benefit of planning permission.
- 2.5.21 The Llynfi Valley Sub-Area has a number of established employment and manufacturing centres and industrial estates. Two undeveloped employment sites exist at Coegnant Colliery in Caerau and the Maesteg Washery. The former Llynfi Power Station is located just outside the southern extremity of the sub-area in a rural location unrelated to any existing settlement. There are opportunities to reassess some of these employment allocations, given the fact they have remained allocated but undeveloped for more than 20 years, with little or no 'developer' interest and significant infrastructure cost constraints rendering them unviable.
- 2.5.22 Maesteg Town Centre is the main commercial and shopping centre for the Llynfi Valley Sub-Area. In recent years the retail offer has been broadened with the opening of the Wilkinson Store in Llynfi Road and a new Tesco Store on the edge of the centre. In physical terms this former Edwardian Industrial Town has also seen a recent transformation through the many regeneration initiatives that have and still are being actively pursued by the Council.
- 2.5.23 Other local shopping centres are specifically defined as 'commercial areas' at Caerau and Nantyffyllon. These areas have however seen significant decline in recent years and large parts of them are now dominated by

residential areas and many shops are vacant and semi derelict. On the other hand other neighbourhoods and communities within Maesteg and its environs, Cwmfelin and Pontrhydycyff / Llangynwyd have shops and other facilities that are not specifically formalised or defined, but nevertheless provide vitally important local services.

- 2.5.24 The northern part of the sub-area, comprises the settlements of Caerau and Nantyffyllon. Part of the Caerau Ward is the most deprived area of the County Borough, and ranked 13th most deprived in Wales in terms of the 2008 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. Caerau is included within the Welsh Assembly Government's Communities First Programme. The area is also subject to a number of regeneration initiatives including the recent designation of the County Borough's First Housing Renewal Area.
- 2.5.25 Key to the regeneration process is the programmed opening of a new primary school in Caerau, due for completion in 2009 as well as improvements to recreation facilities and increased access to the countryside. The opening of the new primary school will release 3 existing school sites for alternative development opportunities. There is also the recognition of substantial brownfield sites within the settlement boundary, which could also contribute to the revitalisation of the area and be developed for alternative purposes including community enterprises.
- 2.5.26 The southern part of the sub-area offers significant scope for countryside tourism opportunities. The quality of landscape is high and characterised by wooded valleys, attractive swathes of countryside and historic landscapes. Indeed an area west of Llangynwyd Village forms part of Margam Mountain, a landscape of Special Historic Interest, which transcends the boundary of Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot. The Llynfi Valley also offers an 18 hole golf course in an elevated mountain top location west of Maesteg Town and abutting the boundary of Neath Port Talbot. These upland areas have come under increasing pressure from proposed windfarm developments.
- 2.5.27 In terms of Social and Community facilities the Llynfi Valley sub-area is served by 12 schools, one of which is a secondary school. In terms of the School Modernisation Programme, this is already impacting on local provision with the opening of the replacement Maesteg Comprehensive at the Washery Site and the proposed new primary school at Caerau. It is envisaged that both schools will be community focussed schools that will provide a variety of social, recreational as well as educational services to the wider community.
- 2.5.28 In terms of further education Maesteg has an outreach campus of Bridgend College, which provides courses for local residents.
- 2.5.29 With specific reference to recreation provision, the 2010 Outdoor Sport Audit, relating to the provision of playing fields, records a deficiency in Caerau and Nantyffyllon, but a surplus in the rest of the sub-area. In terms of Children's Playing space, the 2010 Audit identifies a substantial deficit in quantitative terms throughout the whole of the Llynfi Valley Sub-Area. With respect to the Welsh Assembly Government's Climbing Higher Agenda, the

analysis of facilities within 6 minutes walk (300m) shows a significant gap in provision in Nantyffyllon.

(C) Porthcawl Sub-Area

- 2.5.30 The Sub-Area of Porthcawl is located in the south-westerly part of the County Borough and comprises the seaside town of Porthcawl and its environs. It is situated between the sub area of Bridgend to the east and the Pyle, Kenfig and Cornelly sub area to the north west. In accessibility terms, it is located within 1 mile of junction 37 on the M4 and is connected to it by the A4229. There are no rail links to Porthcawl.
- 2.5.31 The sub-area has a population of 15,800 which represents approximately 12% of the County Borough's population. Porthcawl is the 3rd largest settlement in the County Borough after Bridgend and Maesteg and comprises a number of distinct neighbourhoods focusing on the town centre, Newton, Nottage and Rest Bay. The seaside resort lies approximately midway between Cardiff and Swansea and, as well as being a popular tourist destination, it has become a primary location for retirement and this is reflected in its population profile.
- 2.5.32 The main drivers for economic growth are Porthcawl's environmental assets – areas of high scenic beauty and biodiversity coupled with the coastal location offering accessible, sandy beaches and excellent waves for active pursuits. In addition to serving as a key attractor in terms of immigration, these assets are the main drivers for the local tourist economy, placing Porthcawl as the top visitor destination within the County Borough. The attraction of its outstanding sandy beaches has led to the development of one of Wales's largest caravan sites at Trecco Bay – which has approximately 1900 static caravan pitches. The sub-area also has a number of other touring caravan and camping sites, including Wig Fach's Happy Valley to the east of Porthcawl.
- 2.5.33 In respect of retailing and commercial uses, the main shopping destination in the sub-area is Porthcawl Town Centre. The retail area is concentrated along John Street where the main retailers, major high street banks and building societies are represented; however, the town lacks a major retailer limiting its capability to attract shoppers from other areas such as Bridgend town centre and McArthur Glen Outlet Centre.
- 2.5.34 Outside of the settlement of Porthcawl, the countryside is highly sensitive, with significant areas protected for their landscape quality. The Glamorgan Heritage Coast lies to the east of the sub-area stretching from Newton Point to Breaksea Point in the Vale of Glamorgan and is important within the national context. The SAC and SSSI designations of Merthyr Mawr and Kenfig Burrows are also an integral part of the historic landscape of the area.
- 2.5.35 The countryside as well as the beaches therefore offers considerable scope for informal recreational activity and further tourism opportunities, however, these should preserve the high quality environmental assets and natural beauty of the area.

- 2.5.36 In respect of future development, a major regeneration project focusing on Porthcawl's Waterfront is proposed, stretching from Cosy Corner and the harbour in the south west of the town, to Trecco Bay in the east. The Porthcawl Waterfront regeneration project is seen as an opportunity to bring forward appropriate development on a mainly derelict area of land comprising over 100 acres on the coastline of South Wales. The main objective of the regeneration project is to create a vibrant new focus that will bring social, economic and environmental benefits for the town itself and the wider area. Bringing this area forward for comprehensive and high quality development will be critical in ensuring the future status of Porthcawl as a premier seaside resort and in this regard its regeneration is currently being progressed by means of an adopted SPG and the submission of an outline planning application.
- 2.5.37 The proposal is for a mixed use development, incorporating the design of essential flood defences that will enable the development of the site to take place and protect more than 400 existing homes from flood risk. The proposals includes 1350 new dwellings, enhanced retail provision including a new food store adjacent to the town centre, together with new tourism and leisure related developments that will enhance the vibrancy and attractiveness of Porthcawl as a seaside destination.
- 2.5.38 It is anticipated that the Porthcawl Regeneration Area will be the prime focus of future residential development in the sub area. The local housing market has been buoyant in recent years with a large number of 'windfall' developments coming forward on brownfield sites, as well as the build out of the majority of the UDP housing allocations, mostly for apartments or flats of 1 or 2 bedrooms or warden controlled retirement apartments; wherever possible taking advantage of sea views. In this regard there is considerable redevelopment pressure for alternative residential development of existing hotels in prime locations within Porthcawl.
- 2.5.39 Despite Porthcawl being one of the areas in the County Borough with the highest house prices, there has been very little affordable housing provision other than developer monetary contributions via S.106 agreements in recent years.
- 2.5.40 There is no vacant employment land to directly serve the Porthcawl sub-area other than at Pwll-Y-Waun, which is allocated in the UDP for small scale mixed B1 employment, residential and open space purposes.
- 2.5.41 There are 5 Council run schools in the sub-area, one of which is a secondary school. There are also 2 private schools, St. Clare's and St John's, which are situated in Newton. In respect of Further Education, Bridgend College has an outreach campus at Porthcawl, providing day and evening courses for local residents.
- 2.5.42 In terms of recreation provision, the 2010 audits of Outdoor Sport and Children's Playing Space record a quantitative shortfall within the Porthcawl Sub-Area. Locks Lane Playing fields are however being

extended and new changing facilities being developed, which will go some way to redress this deficiency.

- 2.5.43 The Local Health Board is actively pursuing an alternative site for a new integrated health care facility to replace the current health centre.

(D) Garw Valley Sub-Area

- 2.5.44 The Garw Valley Sub-Area is located in the north of the County Borough between the Ogmore and Llynfi Valleys. The northern part of the sub-area comprises the village settlements of Blaengarw, Pontycymmer, Pantygog, Pontyrhyl and Lluest. At the southern end of the valley are the villages of Betws, and Llangeinor. The settlement of Betws is geographically divorced from the main valley settlements, being located in an elevated position on the valley side.
- 2.5.45 The sub-area has a population of 7,570 which represents approximately 6% of the County Borough's population.
- 2.5.46 In terms of accessibility the sub-area is served by a principal route the A4064, which links Blaengarw in the north with Brynmenyn in the south in the Valleys Gateway. The A4064 terminates at Blaengarw and as such the sub-area is not physically linked in strategic transportation terms to other parts of the County Borough nor to any settlement in Neath Port Talbot, which abuts the northern boundary. The village of Bettws is linked to Llangeinor by means of a minor road, which continues south-wards to Brynmenyn in the Valleys Gateway. Llangeinor is however linked to Pantyrawel in the Ogmore Valley sub-area by the A4093.
- 2.5.47 The sub-area does not have a passenger rail service; however, the existing valley railway line is maintained and has potential for tourism purposes.
- 2.5.48 The area has a strong association with coal mining. However, following the Second World War local industry and coal mining began to decline, with the eventual closure of most large sources of local employment. The development of industrial estates in Brynmenyn and Bridgend has provided the mainstay of employment since the last pit closed in 1985. There are 2 existing employment sites allocated at Ffaldau and Llangeinor within the sub-area, both of which are fully occupied.
- 2.5.49 The Garw Valley suffers from a range of economic, environmental and social problems specifically low incomes, high unemployment, poor educational attainment and poor health. According to the 2008 WIMD the Bettws Ward is amongst the most disadvantaged in the County Borough and is within the top 10% most deprived in Wales. The wards of Bettws and Llangeinor are designated as Communities First areas.
- 2.5.50 The Garw Valley is the subject of a formal and active Regeneration Strategy which has largely been focused on 'green' tourism, with links to Blaengarw Country Park, which is located in the south of the area. A significant programme of land reclamation and landscaping has been implemented throughout the Upper Garw Valley, which has transformed

the area and addressed the environmental dereliction caused by the loss of the mining industry.

- 2.5.51 The Garw Valley has 10 allocated sites for residential development in the existing Development Plan. Up to 2007 4 of the sites have not yet started with the remaining sites either mid-way through development or nearing completion. In addition, there have been a number of residential ‘windfall’ and ‘small’ sites coming forward in the past three years indicating that the local housing market is relatively buoyant. The sub-area has not benefited from any recent additional affordable housing provision; however, the settlements of Bettws and Llangeinor have a large element of social housing which has undergone renewal and improvement. Much of the housing stock in the Upper Valley Settlements consists of traditional mining terraces, some of which have fallen into disrepair.
- 2.5.52 There has been a notable decline in the retailing and commercial centres, and their associated physical environment. In the designated retail centres of Blaengarw and Pontcymmer, although vacancy rates are low, over 45% of properties in the centres are in residential use. This is due to the fact that many former retailing premises have been converted to residential use after prolonged periods of marketing have failed to find a commercial occupier.
- 2.5.53 The majority of the countryside outside the settlements in the sub-area is given over to high healthland, forestry and sheep farming and currently designated as a Special Landscape Area, either as part of the Strategic Coalfield Plateau and Associated Valley Sides or as a local Landscape Conservation Area. Much of the landscape is dominated by dramatic steep-sided uplands. These upland areas have come under increasing pressure from proposed wind farm developments.
- 2.5.54 There are 5 primary schools, one of which is Welsh Medium, and one nursery school located in the sub-area but no secondary school. Secondary school pupils’ travel to Ynysawdre within the Valleys Gateway Sub-Area. The Schools Modernisation Programme will include a review of secondary education provision with the Gateway to the Valleys Sub-Area within its second phase.
- 2.5.55 In terms of recreation provision, the 2010 Outdoor Sport Audit, relating to the provision of playing fields, indicates that there is an overall surplus in the southern part of the sub-area and a deficit in the north. In terms of Children’s Play Space, the 2010 Audit identifies a deficit in provision.

(E) Ogmore Valley Sub-Area

- 2.5.56 The Ogmore Valley Sub-Area is located in the north east of the County Borough and encompasses the Ogwr Fawr and Ogwr Fach Valleys. The most northerly settlement of Nantymoel is situated some 9 miles north of Bridgend and rests at the foot of Bwlch – Y – Clawdd which is the highest point in the County Borough.

- 2.5.57 The A4061 links the County Borough with Rhondda Cynon Taf to the north and runs south through the valley settlements and former mining communities of Nantymoel, Pricetown, Wyndham, Ogmore Vale, Lewistown, Pantyrawel and Blackmill and onward to the M4 and Bridgend. The A4093 runs through the eastern part of the Sub-Area connecting Blackmill with Rhondda Cynon Taf via the village of Glynogwr. The peripheral settlement of Evanstown also lies within the Sub-Area and is accessed via the A4093 and B4564 via Gilfach Goch (which is in Rhondda Cynon Taf). The Ogmore Valley Sub-Area is not served by rail.
- 2.5.58 The sub-area has a population of 7,800 which represents approximately 6% of the County Borough's population. The Ogmore Valley has the lowest population density of the County Borough.
- 2.5.59 The Ogmore Valley has 6 allocated sites for residential development in the existing Development Plan. To date, two of the sites have been fully developed with another two nearing completion. In addition, there has been a significant number of residential 'windfall' sites coming forward in the past three years indicating that the local housing market is relatively buoyant. However, the Sub-Area has not benefited from any recent additional affordable housing provision. Much of the housing stock in the Upper Valley Settlements consists of traditional mining terraces, some of which have fallen into disrepair. Housing choice is therefore a significant issue for this sub-area.
- 2.5.60 Unemployment in the Sub-Area remains above the County Borough and Wales average and the economic inactivity rate is particularly high. According to the 2008 WIMD the Wards of Nantymoel and Blackmill are among the most disadvantaged in the County Borough. Indeed the ward of Blackmill (which also includes Evanstown) is within the top 20% most deprived in Wales, and is currently designated as a Communities First area. Despite this the Ogmore Valley is not currently the subject of a formal and active Regeneration Strategy. In terms of employment land, lack of demand has meant that the take-up of the limited existing employment allocations in the Valley has remained low.
- 2.5.61 The poor economic fortunes of this once thriving mining community over the last 30 – 40 years are reflected in the decline of the retailing and commercial centres, and their associated physical environment. In the designated retail centres of Nantymoel and Ogmore Vale, although vacancy rates are at a respectable 9.7%, over 70% of properties in those centres are in residential use. This is due to the fact that many former retailing premises have been converted to residential use after prolonged periods of marketing have failed to find a commercial occupier.
- 2.5.62 There are 3 primary schools in the sub-area but no secondary schools. Secondary school pupils travel to Bryncethin within the Valleys Gateway Sub-Area. The Schools Modernisation Programme will include a review of secondary education provision within this Sub-Area in its second phase which will have a direct impact on the Ogmore Valley. In terms of Primary school provision Ogmore Vale benefits from a recently opened new primary

school which replaced four former schools, which have since been developed for residential purposes.

- 2.5.63 The Local Health Board is looking at the potential of providing a new integrated Health Centre facility to serve the Ogmore Valley.
- 2.5.64 The majority of the countryside outside the settlements in the sub-area is upland given over to high heathland, large tracts of forestry plantation and sheep farming. This expansive landscape is currently designated as a Special Landscape Area, either as part of the Strategic Coalfield Plateau and Associated Valley Sides or as a local Landscape Conservation Area. Much of the landscape is dominated by dramatic steep-sided mountains, which offers spectacular views and considerable scope for informal hill walking and more extreme outdoor pursuits such as paragliding and hang-gliding. These upland areas have come under increasing pressure from proposed windfarm developments.
- 2.5.65 In terms of more formal recreation provision, the 2010 Outdoor Sport Audit, relating to the provision of playing fields, indicates that there is an overall surplus in the Sub-Area. In terms of Children's Play Space, the 2010 Audit identifies a deficit.

(F) Valley's Gateway Sub-Area

- 2.5.66 The Valley's Gateway sub-area occupies a central location within the County Borough.
- 2.5.67 It comprises the settlements of Sarn, Bryncethin, Brynmenyn, Ynysawdre, Abergarw, Aberkenfig and Tondu which forms an almost continuous urban area north of the M4 at the mouth of the Ogmore, Garw and Llynfi Valleys. The smaller village of Coytrahen is also located within the sub-area, immediately north of Tondu.
- 2.5.68 In accessibility terms the sub-area is served by two railway stations and park and ride facilities at Sarn and Tondu, from which regular train services operate between Maesteg and Bridgend, with connections to Cardiff, Swansea and beyond.
- 2.5.69 In terms of highway access, the sub-area is very well served by the local and strategic highway network. The western part of the sub-area is connected to the Llynfi Valley to the north and Bridgend to the south by the A4063, part of which directly links by means of a dual-carriageway to junction 36 of the M4. The A4065 traverses the northern edge of the sub-area, and provides a westerly by-pass to Bryncethin and access to the sub-areas' main industrial estates and the Garw Valley to the north. The eastern part of the area is served by the A4061, which runs in a north-south direction from the Ogmore Valley via Bryncethin, and directly onto junction 36 of the M4. The line of the M4 approximately defines the sub-area's southern boundary, the exception is the Mac'Arthur Glen Shopping Outlet, which for the purposes of analysis is more appropriately considered in terms of its regional retail function within the Bridgend sub-area.

- 2.5.70 The sub-area has a population of 10,600, which represents approximately 8% of the County Borough's population.
- 2.5.71 Part of Sarn has recently been designated as a Communities First area. This status means that the area will be eligible to attract additional funding from the Welsh Assembly Government to support community regeneration schemes in order to improve the socio-economic fabric of the area.
- 2.5.72 The sub-area has been a major focus in recent years for new residential development by national and local house-builders. In this respect all of the 7 UDP housing allocations within the sub-area have either been built-out or development has commenced, including 2 large schemes at Bryncethin and Tondu.
- 2.5.73 The scheme at Tondu is part of a mixed-use development which is also delivering an extension to the existing commercial centre of Aberkenfig, which is the main shopping area serving the sub-area. Aberkenfig is a thriving commercial centre, although it is dominated by the A3 service uses comprising restaurants, cafes, takeaways, pubs and clubs, which account for more than 25% of the commercial premises. Aberkenfig itself is particularly constrained by the flood plain of the River Ogmore.
- 2.5.74 There are other local centres of commercial and community facilities which serve the wider urban area to the east of Aberkenfig, however, these are not currently specifically defined in land-use terms and therefore not protected.
- 2.5.75 In employment terms the sub-area is served by 3 existing industrial estates at Tondu, Brynmenyn and Abergarw, which have reasonable access to the M4 and the valley communities to the north. All of these sites are almost developed to capacity, and land-use options could usefully be explored to bring forward additional floor-space within this sub-area to provide local job opportunities as well as serving the nearby disadvantaged, but highly constrained valley communities.
- 2.5.76 Because of the sub-area's central and accessible location within the County Borough, it has become the preferred and most sustainable location for a number of facilities that serve a much wider catchment. In this respect part of the mixed scheme at Tondu has been developed as the County Borough's new Waste Transfer Station. Similarly, the Local Health Board as part of its strategy has also expressed a desire to locate new health facilities within the Valley's Gateway that will serve both the local and wider Valley's Catchment areas.
- 2.5.77 There are 4 primary schools in the sub-area, 1 of which is a Roman Catholic school. There is an infant and nursery school at Sarn and Aberkenfig. The sub-area also has 3 secondary schools; Ogmore Comprehensive at Bryncethin, and two at Ynysawdre, one of which is Archbishop McGrath, a Roman Catholic secondary school serving the whole of the County Borough. Phase 2 of the School's Modernisation Programme identifies the need to resolve the educational needs of secondary provision in this area which also serves the Ogmore and Garw

Valleys. In this respect it is likely that Archbishop McGrath will relocate to a site at Brackla, Bridgend whilst Ogmore and Ynysawdre Comprehensive may combine, overcoming the issue of a substantial number of surplus places. The land-use consequences of such an amalgamation may release a substantial brownfield site for future alternative development.

- 2.5.78 Outside of the urban areas the north and east of the sub-area is framed by a backdrop of woodland, which includes Parc Slip Local Nature Reserve, Derllwyn Road Conservation Area and Tondu Ironworks Heritage Site. To the south and east of Sarn and Bryncethin the countryside comprises substantial areas of common land. Bryngarw Country Park lies immediately to the north of Brynmenyn.
- 2.5.79 With specific reference to more formal recreation provision, the 2010 Audit of Outdoor Sport, which includes playing fields, indicates a surplus within the sub-area but a marginal deficit of Children's Playing Space provision.

(G) Pyle/Kenfig Hill/Cornelly Sub-Area

- 2.5.80 The Sub-Area of Pyle/Kenfig Hill/Cornelly is located in the west of the County Borough and comprises the settlements of Pyle, Kenfig Hill, North Cornelly, South Cornelly, Cefn Cribwr, Mawdlam and Kenfig. It shares its western boundary with the administrative area of Neath Port Talbot.
- 2.5.81 In accessibility terms, the sub-area includes Junction 37 on the M4 motorway which links it directly to Swansea, Cardiff and London. The A48 dissects the sub area and links it with Bridgend and Margam. Cefn Cribwr is accessed via the B4281 which additionally provides access to the Valley's Gateway sub-area. There is a railway station at Pyle with services on the Swansea to Cardiff line.
- 2.5.82 The sub-area has a population of 14,750 which represents approximately 11% of the County Borough's population.
- 2.5.83 Part of the Marlas Estate in North Cornelly is designated as a Communities First area. This status means that the area will attract additional funding from the Welsh Assembly Government to support community development schemes in order to improve the socio-economic fabric of the area.
- 2.5.84 Major new housing development in recent years has centred on the Marlas Farm site in North Cornelly which has further undeveloped capacity. Other significant housing sites include the 'Bryndu Central' housing site off Station Road in Kenfig Hill. This is a 100% affordable housing site which, when complete, will provide over 110 units.
- 2.5.85 In employment terms, the Pyle/Kenfig Hill/Cornelly sub-area contains four significant employment sites. Village Farm Industrial Estate is a large, well established Industrial Estate primarily occupied by locally-based firms. The estate has relatively little vacant land remaining for development. The Ty Draw Farm special employment site is located on the north western quadrant of junction 37 on the M4. It is currently unoccupied but its excellent location alongside the strategic highway network makes it ideal

for inward investment opportunities as well as a variety of high-quality employment uses. South Cornelly Industrial Estate and land at Heol Y Splott lie on adjacent sites south of South Cornelly. The former is an established Industrial Estate without any remaining vacant areas of land whilst the latter remains undeveloped.

- 2.5.86 Just outside the County Borough boundary, but immediately adjacent to the sub-area is the Kenfig Industrial Estate. Whilst this estate provides significant employment opportunities for the residents of the sub-area, access to it has caused a significant local issue in recent years. Heavy goods vehicles accessing the estate exit the M4 via junction 37 and travel through North Cornelly. An alternative route which doesn't pass through residential areas is available via M4 junction 38. However, due to height restrictions on a railway bridge which passes over this road only limited numbers of industrial vehicles can use this route.
- 2.5.87 In terms of retailing and commercial uses the main shopping destination is Pyle Cross which is home to a 50,000 sq ft Co-operative Store, which is surrounded by a small group of commercial premises. The western edge of Village Farm Industrial Estate to the south of this store has also become a quasi-retail area in recent years and contains (amongst others) a garden centre and bakers. A district centre is also designated in Kenfig Hill which consists of an elongated commercial area along Pisgah Street. The commercial uses are very dispersed amongst significant numbers of residential homes in this area to such an extent that its identity as a distinct shopping destination could be called into question. Conversely existing commercial centres elsewhere within the sub-area at North Cornelly are not currently officially recognised in land-use planning terms.
- 2.5.88 There are 8 schools in the sub-area, one of which is a secondary school. Within the Schools Modernisation Programme a feasibility study is currently being carried out into the provision of 3 -18 education in the sub-area and is due to report by March 2009. This process may involve amalgamations and/or redevelopments of existing school sites.
- 2.5.89 The provision of health services within the sub-area is also subject of a review, and options are currently being explored for a new Health Centre to serve the area.
- 2.5.90 Most of the County Borough's actively quarried mineral reserves are also located within the Pyle – Kenfig Hill sub area. Cornelly, Grove and Gaens Quarries produce about 1.75 million tonnes per year of aggregates and high quality limestone and sandstone is intermittently quarried at Cefn Cribbwyr. Whilst recognising the important role in providing current and future aggregates supply these quarries make, future development needs to be controlled in order that impact on residential amenity is minimised but also that new development will not seek to curtail the quarry uses themselves. In addition, coal is extracted at Parc Slip/Margam, north of Kenfig Hill and Cefn Cribbwyr by extensive opencast operations which extend into the adjacent Neath Port Talbot County Borough.

- 2.5.91 The sub-area contains the Kenfig National Nature Reserve which is also a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Local Nature Reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest. It also forms part of a designated outstanding Historic Landscape. Future development in the immediate vicinity of this area will need to be very tightly controlled to avoid inappropriate encroachment and a fine balance achieved, because of this area's attraction as a leisure and tourist destination in its own right.
- 2.5.92 In terms of recreation provision, the 2010 Outdoor Sport Audit, relating to the provision of playing fields, indicates that there is a slight deficit in Kenfig Hill / Cefn Cribwr, but a surplus in North Cornelly/Pyle. In terms of Children's Play Space, the 2010 Audit identifies a surplus throughout the sub-area.

(H) Pencoed Sub-Area

- 2.5.93 The Sub-Area of Pencoed is located in the east of the County Borough and includes the settlement of Pencoed and the village of Heol-y-Cyw. It shares its eastern boundary with the administrative area of Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 2.5.94 In accessibility terms, the sub-area includes Junction 35 of the M4 motorway which links Pencoed directly to Swansea, Cardiff and London. The A473 by-passes Pencoed to access the M4, and links Bridgend with Pontypridd. Heol-y-Cyw is accessed from the A473 by the B4280 which runs through the village, connecting it with Bryncethin to the west. Pencoed is served by a railway station on the main South Wales Railway Line with services to Bridgend and Maesteg, westwards and eastwards to Cardiff, Newport and Cheltenham. The level crossing is, however, a significant constraint.
- 2.5.95 The sub-area has a population of 9,400 which represents approximately 7% of the County Borough's population.
- 2.5.96 Major new housing development in recent years has centred on the 'Triangle' site, south east of Junction 35 on the M4 and the site south of Hendre Road, Pencoed which has further undeveloped capacity, neither of these sites have delivered affordable housing. The Council is currently operating a moratorium on any new development west of the level crossing.
- 2.5.97 The Pencoed sub-area contains three of the County Borough's five existing 'Special' employment areas which are of a high quality and reserved for high technology business and manufacturing, research and development and related offices. Most significant of all is Pencoed Technology Park. The site comprises of 38Ha of development land, 5Ha of which lies within Bridgend. This site has been identified regionally as being suitable to attract European Convergence funding for future developments.
- 2.5.98 In terms of retailing and commercial uses the main shopping destination in the sub-area is Pencoed District Centre. The centre has a relatively low vacancy rate but a higher than average provision of service businesses. The centre is designated as a Commercial Improvement Area. Interest for

new-built development in this area has been limited to a handful of sites, this includes the former Bayswater Tubes site, outside but immediately adjacent to the District Centre where a number of different proposals, including residential and retail are being considered.

- 2.5.99 A site has been identified for a new Medical Centre close to the District Centre in Pencoed which will replace an existing doctor's surgery currently operating out of temporary accommodation.
- 2.5.100 There are 5 schools in the sub-area, one of which is a secondary school. Within the Schools Modernisation Programme Pencoed Infants and Pencoed Juniors have amalgamated as of September 2008. Work is due to commence on a feasibility study for a replacement school on the existing site.
- 2.5.101 In terms of Further Education, Pencoed College offers a range of land based sport and recreation courses. A substantial area of land to the south of the college has been identified as a potential source of sand and gravel. This area has in recent years been the venue for the National Eisteddfod of Wales, and is currently the home of one of the County Borough's major tourist events i.e. the annual Bridgend Show.
- 2.5.102 Outside of the settlements, the countryside in the sub-area is highly sensitive, with significant areas protected for either their landscape quality and biodiversity interest or by the fact that it is common land. These interests overlap in many cases and they represent significant constraints for future development. Coincidentally an environmentally sensitive area north of Pencoed also has significant coal reserves. Much of the south and eastern areas of Pencoed lie within the flood plain, therefore it will be difficult to justify new highly vulnerable development, such as residential development, in these areas.
- 2.5.103 In terms of recreation provision, the 2010 Outdoor Sport Audit, relating to the provision of playing fields, indicates that there is a surplus in Pencoed and Heol-y-Cyw. In terms of Children's Play Space, the 2010 Audit identifies a deficiency of up to 5 Ha of provision.

3. The National, Regional and Local Policy Context

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The Local Development Plan is one of a range of national, regional and local plans, strategies and policy statements that provide the framework for planning in Bridgend County Borough.
- 3.1.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council to prepare an LDP and, in so doing, to have regard to national policy, including the **Wales Spatial Plan**²⁹, and its own **Community Strategy**³⁰. The LDP Regulations prescribe that LDPs must have regard to the Waste Strategy for Wales and Regional Waste Plans, Local Transport Plans and Local Housing Strategies. The LTP will be replaced in 2009 by the statutorily required Regional Transport Plan produced by Sewta, the South East Wales Transport Alliance, a consortium of 10 local authorities in south east Wales. The LDP must have regard to this policy framework to pass the tests of soundness.

3.2 The National Policy Context

(a) National Policy Framework

- 3.2.1 The Welsh Assembly Government's national land use policies are set out in **Planning Policy Wales**³¹ and **Minerals Planning Policy Wales**³². These are supplemented by Technical Advice Notes, Circulars and Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statements.
- 3.2.2 The procedures for LDP preparation are set out in **The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005**. These Regulations prescribe that LDPs must also have regard to various national, regional, and other policy documents (Regulation 13 refers) to which the Environment Strategy for Wales (WAG 2006)³³ should now be added.
- 3.2.3 Finally, Section 4 of the LDP Sustainability Appraisal – Scoping Report – December 2006 sets out how International, UK Government, and WAG policies and strategies will inform the Sustainability Appraisal of the LDP.

(b) People, Places, Futures: The Wales Spatial Plan

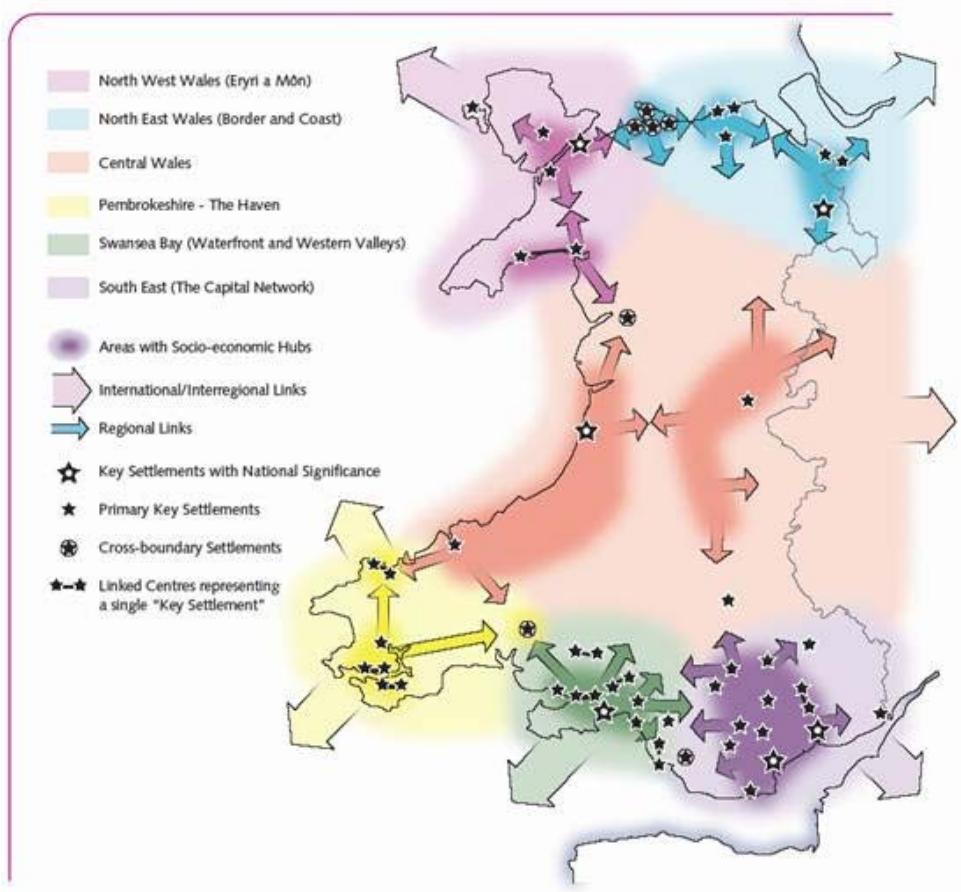
- 3.2.4 The Wales Spatial Plan (WSP) is a key part of the implementation of the Assembly's strategic agenda set out in Wales A Better Country. It provides a strategic framework to guide future development and policy interventions across Wales, beyond the scope of formal land use planning control.
- 3.2.5 The WSP “integrates the spatial aspects of national strategies, including social inclusion and economic development, health, transport and environment policy, and thus translates into practice the National Assembly's sustainable development duty”.
- 3.2.6 Key to this is the prominence of one issue in recent years: **Climate Change**. The WSP recognises that Wales needs to drastically reduce its

contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, as well as adapt to the impacts of climate change which are inevitable. The Welsh Assembly Government has a target of reducing green house gas emissions by 3% per year by 2011. The implementation of sustainable LDP Strategies will play an important role in this respect.

- 3.2.7 The WSP recognises that 'each area of Wales will need its own distinctive response to delivering the national vision'. Accordingly, the Plan looks at the specific needs of six spatial or regional areas within Wales, and identifies key centres and international and intra-regional linkages. The County Borough sits mainly within the '**South East – The Capital Network Area of Wales**' However, western parts of the County Borough, including the settlements of **Maesteg** and **Porthcawl/Pyle**, are also included within the '**Swansea Bay – Waterfront and Western Valleys Area**'. (see **Map 3**).

MAP 3 WALES SPATIAL PLAN – THE NATIONAL VISION

The National Vision



- 3.2.8 The Vision for the '**South East – The Capital Network Area of Wales**' in the WSP is:

An innovative skilled area offering a high quality of life – international yet distinctively Welsh. It will compete internationally by increasing its global visibility through stronger links between the Valleys and the

coast and with the UK and Europe, helping to spread prosperity within the area and benefiting other parts of Wales.

- 3.2.9 South East Wales is recognised as Wales' most populated area but characterised by major economic and social disparities. Its coastal zone is its main economic driver, and the competitiveness of the region needs to be 'sustained to help raise the economic potential of Wales. The heavy commuting flows between the Valleys and the coast mean that the area functions as an interdependent but unplanned urban network. This gives rise to pressure on transport infrastructure'. As a 'key centre' in the region **Bridgend** is seen as having a close functional relationship with Cardiff and other neighbouring towns.
- 3.2.10 The Vision for the '**Swansea Bay – Waterfront and Western Valleys Spatial Plan Area**' is:
- A network of interdependent settlements with Swansea as its heart which pull together effectively as a city-region with a modern competitive knowledge-based economy designed to deliver a high quality of life, a sustainable environment, a vibrant waterfront and excellent national and international connections.***
- 3.2.11 The Swansea Bay Spatial Plan Area includes significant population centres, including Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot. The region has experienced a slight increase in population since 2000 due to in-migration. For the region to succeed as a whole, the WSP considers that the critical factor "will be to develop a strong network of urban centreswhich spread prosperity to surrounding smaller settlements. As a city-region Swansea must flourish at its heart but the city cannot do this without the region fully functioning". The aim of the WSP is address the priority areas for development and bring the region towards a sustainable and successful city-region by the second quarter of this Century.
- 3.2.12 **The Area Framework for South East Wales – The Capital Network**, divides the region into three distinctive 'spatial subsets' or sub-regions, all of which traverse Bridgend County Borough (see **Map 4**):
- 3.2.13 The northern parts of the County Borough fall within the **Heads of the Valleys Plus** zone, an area comprising the upper valleys, including Maesteg, that is characterised by small to medium sized towns and villages. These areas face some of the greatest economic and social change challenges created by recent economic restructuring.
- 3.2.14 The central part of the County Borough falls within the **Connections corridor** zone, an area comprising the mid valleys, the M4 motorway and lowland countryside which is increasingly under pressure for economic and housing development spilling out of main settlements. Whilst still facing challenges with areas of deprivation, improvements in this zone highlight its crucial role as being a part of 'the connecting strip' between growth areas and major deprivation in the Heads of the Valleys.

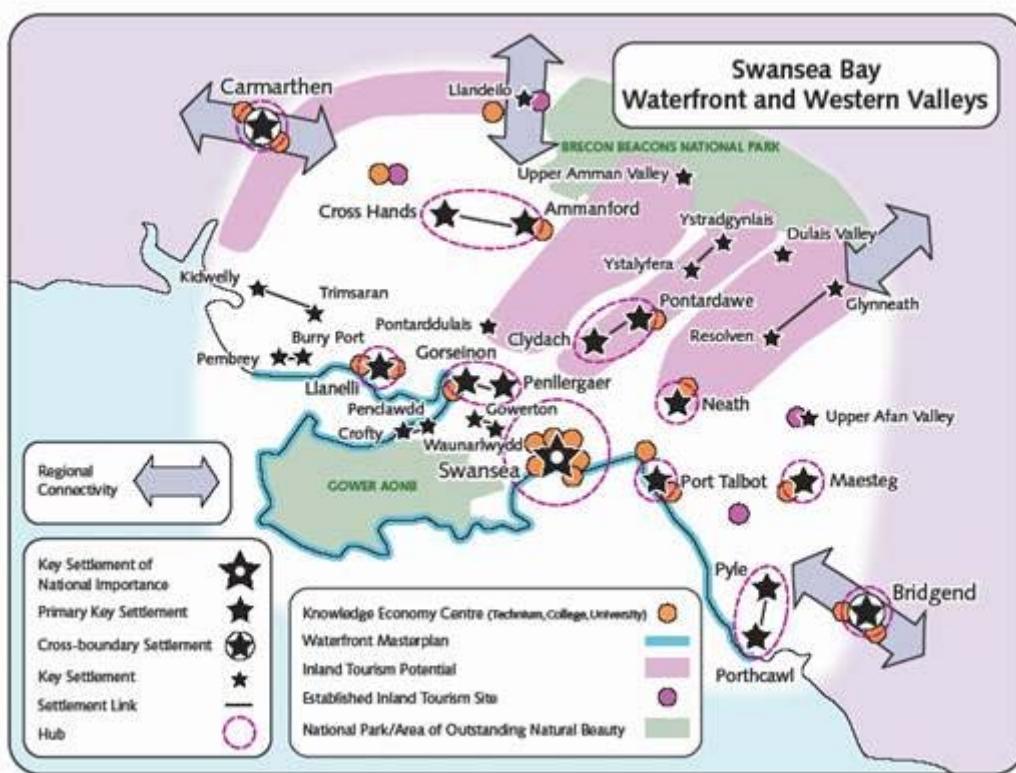
- 3.2.15 The southern part of the County Borough, including Bridgend and Porthcawl, falls within the **City Coast** zone. In general terms, the zone is seen as having 'high quality employment sites, particularly where they represent locational or large site opportunities for inward investment, which should be reserved for uses which maximise strategic economic benefits. Within this zone, Bridgend is the closest of the coastal towns and cities to the former mining communities to the north, and employment growth here, combined with good public transport links to those settlements, can be seen to have particular benefits.
- 3.2.16 The Area Framework envisages that at the heart of the vision for the region there will be a network of strong, sustainable communities spreading prosperity from Cardiff and Newport to the valleys across the region.
- 3.2.17 A priority in the Heads of the Valleys Plus and Connections Corridor is to continue to develop a greater mix and balance of housing linked to public transport nodes. However, in the coastal zone:
- "the pressure to build more houses should not be allowed to destroy the landscape, environment or community strength of this area. While there may continue to be substantial growth of housing in the Coastal Zone, this should not be on the scale to undermine the health of housing markets in the Heads of the Valleys and Connections Corridor".*
- 3.2.18 14 **hub settlements** (see **Map 4**) including Bridgend have been identified as being crucial to the overall success of the city region.

MAP 4 WALES SPATIAL PLAN – SOUTH EAST WALES AREA DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



- 3.2.19 As a key hub settlement, **Bridgend** is also recognised as a cross boundary settlement with links to the Swansea Bay area (see below). In the South East Wales Area Development Framework used to formulate the updated Spatial Plan it is described as an important manufacturing and service town, which has a range of leisure and retail attractions that draw from a large catchment:
- "The town should be aiming to perform a far greater sub-regional role, with diversification of employment a key issue, and future reinforcement of the Town Centre. Bridgend also has an important role as a major district service centre for the deprived former mining communities to the north. The transport links between Bridgend and its valley satellite settlements are therefore an important consideration. Bridgend can be viewed as a hinge point, connecting all three sub-regions, with an important role to play in each".*
- 3.2.20 The Area Development Framework envisages that a wider range of services should be delivered locally in Bridgend to reduce the overall need to travel. Bridgend's opportunities and constraints are seen as being similar, if on a smaller scale, to those of the cities of Cardiff and Newport. It has economic growth potential, particularly in the town centre, which needs to be tempered by the need to avoid traffic overload.
- 3.2.21 The Spatial Plan update states that the success of hub settlements should improve life in smaller rural and valleys communities, with good access to services being a key determinant of quality of life: "*The focus for these places will be to create affordable and attractive places to live with a choice of transport to and from jobs and services*". In Bridgend, such a zone of influence would certainly encompass the whole of the County Borough, including Porthcawl/Pyle, Maesteg, and its valley communities. This could quite reasonably extend towards Cowbridge, Llantrisant and Barry to the east, taking into its compass two of the '**Strategic Opportunity Areas**' identified by the Wales Spatial Plan update, and could also extend as far as Port Talbot in the west.
- 3.2.22 The vision for the **Swansea Bay – Waterfront & Western Valleys Area Framework** recognises the importance of Swansea to the development of that area as a whole. However, the potential of the region will only be achieved if the city and its surrounding settlements develop together in a complementary way. The area's coastline is recognised as a key asset in creating a thriving retail, leisure and business environment. A Waterfront Masterplan has been developed to bring together existing proposals and identify new opportunities that cover development based on land and water to create a vibrant waterfront.
- 3.2.23 **Maesteg and Porthcawl / Pyle** are identified as 'hub settlements.' in addition to Bridgend which is designated as a cross-border settlement. The area, including its 'hub settlements' are shown on **Map 5**.

MAP 5 WALES SPATIAL PLAN – SWANSEA BAY WATERFRONT AND WESTERN VALLEYS AREA DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



- 3.2.24 In terms of their development, the hub settlements have a similar role to their counterparts in South East Wales. Their success will benefit the surrounding smaller settlements, rural and valley communities by offering increased access to employment and amenities whilst stimulating employment, housing and retail development.
- 3.2.25 The Wales Spatial Plan Update states that housing will be a major influence on the development pattern of the area:
- “The emphasis will be on the hubs, while also seeking to revitalise and sustain smaller centres and valley communities. The aim will be to create sustainable places through the co-location of housing, jobs, facilities / infrastructure and leisure...Housing should be attractive, affordable and sustainable”.*
- 3.2.26 Within the regional area work, **Maesteg** is identified as having opportunities for improvements to existing industrial estates and for further employment uses on brownfield land. The town centre is still a priority for townscape improvements to further enhance both the historic quality of the buildings and the investment potential for mixed use development. Further investigation into regional projects and initiatives that would assist in the development of green tourism in the valley is also recognised as a vital opportunity
- 3.2.27 The **Porthcawl/Pyle** area, provides a strong link between the Swansea Bay & Western Valleys and South East Wales Spatial Plan Areas. It is

recognised that a number of key regeneration activities are being taken forward to consolidate the Porthcawl and its hinterland as a hub of visitor accommodation and facilities. An overarching regeneration strategy for the area will be implemented over the next ten years within the context of the area Waterfront Masterplan (see above), a key component of which will be the regeneration of 120 acres of prime waterfront land. Junction 37 of the M4 has a strategically located site at Ty Draw Farm with potential for new development whilst there are also opportunities to improve the existing industrial estate at Village Farm, Pyle.

(c) Wales Environment Strategy

3.2.28 The Welsh Assembly Government's Environmental Strategy (2005) updated by a revised Action Plan 2008-2011 outlines a comprehensive strategy for the protection of the environment, achieved through other plans and strategies. This is currently under review with the preparation of a revised strategy underway. However, the LDP will be expected to comply with the strategy as it attempts to protect and conserve Wales' unique habitats and landscapes and considering climate change. The Action Plan contains a number of 'outcomes' for the environment in Wales, most relevant to the LDP are:

- 3. Environment considerations are integrated into all policies programmes and service delivery and that high quality and consistent environmental evidence is available to inform the decision making process.
- 7. Wales' greenhouse gas emissions are minimised, consistent with Wales contributing fully to meeting UK-wide targets and in line with more specific Wales targets.
- 8. Wales has improved resilience to the impacts of climate change.
- 11. Appropriate waste management facilities are in place to minimise the amount of waste going to landfill.
- 13. Water resources are managed sustainably meeting the needs of society without causing damage to the environment.
- 16. Soil is managed to safeguard its ability to support plants and animals, store carbon and provide important ecosystem services.
- 17. The extraction of minerals and aggregates minimises the impact on the environment and local communities.
- 20. The wider environment is more favourable to biodiversity through appropriate management, reduced habitat fragmentation and increased extent and interconnectivity of habitats.
- 23. The quality and diversity of the natural and historic character of our landscape and seascapes is maintained and enhanced.
- 24. The built environment is high quality and vibrant, reflecting local distinctiveness and supporting strong communities, which are actively engaged in the management of their local environment.
- 25. New buildings in Wales meet high environmental quality standards and the environmental quality standards of existing building stock is improving.
- 26. The historic building stock and character is maintained to a high standard
- 27. There is easy, equitable access to ample high quality green space.

- 28. Environmental nuisances such as...noise pollution and light pollution are minimised.
- 30. The number of people choosing to walk or cycle as a means of transport is increasing.
- 31. Appropriate measures are in place to manage the risk of flooding from rivers and the sea and help adapt to climate change impacts.
- 33. A reduction in air pollution leads to increased life expectancy and ecological protection.
- 34. The extent of contaminated land is better understood and actions are being taken to remediate contaminated land for beneficial use where appropriate.
- 35. The quality of our groundwater, rivers, lakes and coastal waters is maintained and enhanced.

3.3 The Regional Policy Context including Collaborative Working

(a) *Housing Apportionment*

- 3.3.1 In June 2006, the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) published *Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement (MIPPS) 01/2006: Housing*³⁴, which stated that within each region local planning authorities should work together collaboratively, and with appropriate stakeholders to apportion to each authority the Welsh Assembly Government household projections, or agree their own regional policy-based projections and that the Wales Spatial Plan should be used as the basis for the exercise.
- 3.3.2 This apportionment work has been progressed by the South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG). Initial housing assessments, based on existing UDP and LDP work was undertaken by all the local authorities, and was used as the basis for further discussions and consultation within SEWSPG.
- 3.3.3 SEWSPG has subsequently produced the '**South East Wales Housing Apportionment Memorandum of Understanding**'³⁵. The Memorandum is based on the Welsh Assembly Government's household projections to 2021, and confirms agreement to their apportionment to each local authority within the South East Wales Grouping. The figures should not be viewed as a target however, but rather as a working hypothesis to provide a regional housing context for the preparation of individual Local Development Plans.
- 3.3.4 As a result of this process, Bridgend has been apportioned 500 dwellings per annum from 2006 to 2021, which equates to a requirement of 7500 dwellings over the LDP period. However, the housing apportionment figures may change as the LDPs in South East Wales progress. Therefore, the regional apportionment figures will be monitored by SEWSPG, and significant variations will be considered by the Group.

(b) *Transportation Planning*

3.3.5 The County Borough lies within the area covered by the South East Wales Transport Alliance (Sewta). However, it is also a neighbouring authority to the area covered by the South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWITCH). The Regional Transport Consortia have been established in Wales following the additional powers conferred on the Welsh Assembly Government under the Transport Wales Act 2006 and the Railways Act 2005. The Transport Wales Act requires WAG to produce a Wales Transport Strategy, and gives it powers to promote regional transport planning and take direct control of local and regional rail services in Wales. By working collaboratively with local authorities and other partners, each of these regional groupings has the remit to prepare a statutory Regional Transport Plan (RTP). The aim of the RTP is to improve regional transport in south east Wales and help deliver the social, economic and environmental objectives of the Wales Spatial Plan and the Wales Transport Strategy. Both Sewta³⁶ and SWITCH³⁷ published their Outline RTPs for consultation purposes, in January 2007, and consulted on draft full Plans in October 2008. The final plans were published in 2010.

3.3.6 Essentially, each RTP seeks to provide opportunities which will:

- Improve access between key settlements and sites and improve transport and access beyond their regions, ensuring that communities have access to a good range of employment opportunities
- Improve access to services and facilities, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling
- facilitate economic development, and promote land use developments which are supported by sustainable transport measures
- to achieve modal shift and promote the greater use of more sustainable and healthier modes of transport, including public transport, walking and cycling,
- protect the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts and reduce the impact of transport system on the local streetscene and the natural, built and historic environment
- Reduce the number and severity of road traffic casualties
- Improve interchange within and between modes of transport
- Reduce traffic growth and congestion and make better use of the existing road system
- Regenerate town centres, brown-field sites and local communities through appropriate transport provision

3.3.7 These aims are complementary with the aims and objectives of the Welsh Assembly Government's emerging Wales Transport Strategy, which was published in 2008 and the vision and priorities of the Wales Spatial Plan. The aim is for RTPs to be developed in parallel with the relevant 'priority actions' for their respective WSP regions.

(c) Renewable Energy

3.3.8 A consortium of South Wales Authorities including Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea, and Carmarthenshire Councils has undertaken work on future wind farm development in the sub-region. In response to changes in Renewable Energy Policy in Wales as advocated in TAN 8: Planning for Renewable Energy (WAG July 2005)³⁸, the consortium commissioned consultants to provide recommendations on the proposed refinement of the boundaries of Strategic Search Areas E and F in the TAN.

(d) Special Landscape Area Designation

3.3.9 SEWSPG has collaborated with CCW on the formulation of common criteria for the designation of 'Special Landscape Areas' in LDPs within this region. This work has been carried forward to designate SLAs in the Bridgend LDP.

(e) Economic Development

3.3.10 The South East Wales Economic Forum (SEWEF) is the primary vehicle for collaboration on economic development issues across south east Wales. It brings together central and local government, the private sector, higher education and trade unions. In 2005 a strategy document was prepared, "Enter the Dragon Economy" which has recently (2010) been reviewed. Following this the feasibility of a number of projects is being investigated.

3.3.11 One of the remits of SEWEF is to monitor the supply of, and demand for, employment land and to assess this in terms of the adequacy for business needs with the aim of encouraging actions to achieve the right balance. Therefore, the LDP should seek to support and advance this regional aim of ensuring an adequate supply of suitable employment premises and land when considering strategic options for growth, and in its selected preferred strategy, aims and objectives, and policies.

(f) Tourism

3.3.12 The strategic importance of tourism and the tourist industry to the economy in both South East and South West Wales is also recognised through collaborative working. The County Borough has a crucial role to play in the strategic planning of both regions, and strategic planning for tourism at a local level has therefore become increasingly important. The Tourism Strategy 2011 – 2016, also highlights the importance of tourism to the County Borough of Bridgend and identifies 3 Strategic Objectives:

- Raise the profile & Awareness,
- Investing in product development and quality,
- More effective organisation and delivery

These three objectives all carry equal weight and relate to the county as a whole. Please refer to Tourism Strategy 2011-2016 for further information regarding the Strategy and the key objectives.

- 3.3.13 The Council Borough lies within the remit of 'Capital Region Tourism', which has already produced a Regional Tourism Strategy for South East Wales. The Strategy identifies the key market propositions for the region as being: Business Tourism, City Breaks, Countryside and Scenery, Easy (highly accessible) Activities, Browsing (Towns and Villages, retail and food), Culture and Heritage. The County Borough, especially the strategically important tourist resort of Porthcawl, has a crucial role to play in these key areas, and the policies to be generated in the LDP should reflect this.
- 3.3.14 The County Borough also has a strategically important role in supporting the aims of the South West Wales Tourism Partnership (SWWTP). SWWTP's Regional Tourism Strategy 'Open All Year' has a similar vision to that for SE Wales, but its main strategic approach focuses on generating business outside the main summer season, improving the quality of the visitor experience, developing and sustaining the infrastructure, environment and cultural resources and to improve tourism business practice . The policies to be generated in the LDP should also therefore seek to support the strategic approach that is being pursued in that Strategy.

(g) Waste Planning

- 3.3.15 The County Borough lies within the remit of the South West Wales Regional Waste Planning Forum, however, it also has observer status on its South East Wales counterpart. Working in collaboration with seven other authorities, the South West Forum has already produced a **Regional Waste Plan** (November 2003)⁴², which is subject to annual monitoring. The Regional Waste Plan has been reviewed, the First Review was published in August 2008⁴³. This work will have an important input in formulating waste planning policies in the LDP. Work has also proceeded on Mapping Areas of Search for Sub-Regional Waste Sites in South West Wales, the outcome which should also strategically inform waste policies in the LDP.
- 3.3.16 Several industrial estates approved for B1, B2 and B8 uses have been identified as being acceptable in principle to accommodate new waste processing facilities. In respect of landfill, collaborative working with adjacent authorities will be carried out to achieve perceived additional capacity for landfill as set out in the Regional Waste Plan.

(h) Minerals Planning

- 3.3.17 The County Borough lies within the remit of the South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party (SWRAWP), whose activities extend to a substantial area of Mid-Wales. SWRAWP carries out an annual monitoring survey and produces an annual report to inform and advise both UK Government and the Welsh Assembly Government on the regional supply of, and demand for onshore primary and secondary aggregates. SWRAWP has issued the final Regional Technical Statement for Aggregates⁴⁴, which seeks to provide sufficient aggregates to underpin the economy but from the most sustainable sources, including greater use of construction /demolition waste and secondary aggregates (i.e. slag/pulverised fuel ash).

3.3.18 This Statement will inform the Mineral Planning Authorities as to how much aggregate provision will be required in their LDPs and will be reviewed every 5 years. In Bridgend, the amount of consented reserves is sufficient to satisfy both local and regional needs for the next 15 years. Hence no new allocations are anticipated. It is proposed, however, that there will be safeguarding of areas of high purity limestone around Cornelly Quarry and high PSV sandstone in the north of the County Borough.

3.3.19 Further collaborative working in the area of minerals planning (with the involvement of SEWSPG) is also proceeding with respect to the future safeguarding of onshore coal reserves, in accordance with emerging WAG technical guidance for minerals planning.

(i) Other Collaborative Work

3.3.20 This work has involved close cooperation on national, regional and local strategies and plans which fall within the remit of many other bodies. For example, (Water Framework Directive) **River Basin Planning** and **Catchment Flood Management Plans** with EAW, **Countryside Access Planning** with CCW, and other aspects of planning for **Integrated Coastal Zone Management (including Shoreline Management Planning)** and **Marine Planning** with WAG and other Government Departments and regional consortia.

3.3.21 In summary, the Council's involvement in collaborative working at a regional and national level, with a view to co-ordination of emerging planning strategies and policies which are relevant to LDP preparation, has been, and continues to be considerable.

3.4 Linkages with Adjoining Local Authority Areas

3.4.1.1 It is important to identify the impact and effect of adjoining local authority areas Development Plans on Bridgend County Borough. To this end, officers of the Council have been and will continue to be engaged with officers from the Vale of Glamorgan, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Neath Port Talbot Councils both directly through face-to-face meetings and the wider consultation processes. All of these Councils together with the Community Councils within those areas that border Bridgend County Borough are members of the LDP Key Stakeholder Forum and as part of that consultative forum have already contributed strategic input into LDP formulation. South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG) and Wales Spatial Plan regional meetings also give opportunities for sharing of ideas and opinions on relevant cross-border issues.

Vale of Glamorgan

3.4.2 The Vale of Glamorgan Council has an adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) in place and consulted on a LDP Draft Preferred Strategy in January / February 2008. A deposit plan is expected to be published for consultation in 2011.

- 3.4.3 The draft Preferred Strategy of the Vale of Glamorgan LDP seeks to direct development opportunities to Barry and the South East of the Vale (e.g., Penarth, Dinas Powys, Sully) with some growth in the more sustainable rural villages. It also recognised the regionally significant St. Athan Defence Training Academy development as an opportunity to focus development (although the UK Government has recently announced this scheme will not go ahead in the short to medium term), as well as the future expansion of Cardiff International Airport.
- 3.4.4 With such a Strategy it is clear that Bridgend town will remain the main retail, employment and service centre serving the western communities of the Vale of Glamorgan. The proposed St. Athan development will also have a significant impact on the sub-region in terms of transport movements, with Bridgend County Borough being the gateway to the development in terms of access from the west via the M4.

Rhondda Cynon Taf

- 3.4.5 Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) County Borough Council does not have an adopted Unitary Development Plan in force, but has a series of adopted Local Plans which give full coverage of that County Borough; however these plans all have an end date of 2006. The Council consulted on a draft Preferred Strategy in January / February 2007 and a deposit Plan in 2009. An examination was held in 2010 and the Plan is expected to be adopted in 2011.
- 3.4.6 The RCT LDP seeks to build sustainable communities in the northern part of the County Borough to halt depopulation and decline whilst in the south to cater for sustainable growth that benefits RCT as a whole.
- 3.4.7 In terms of proximity to Bridgend County Borough, Llanharan is identified in the Preferred Strategy as a Key Settlement / Growth Area and specifically, the former Llanilid OCC Site is identified as a Strategic Site. This site includes the Dragon Film Studios and business park together with residential development.
- 3.4.8 Key to the relationship between RCT and Bridgend County Borough is the Pencoed – Llanharan corridor which contains areas of major employment development, specifically at Pencoed Technology Park which straddles the boundary between the two County Borough's, which generates an associated commuting pattern. Pencoed provides vital social and community services for the residents of Llanharan area and the Llanilid site. Conversely, residents of Evanstown use facilities in RCT (particularly in Gilfach Goch / Tonyrefail) for the day-to-day service needs, notably for educational services.
- 3.4.9 A refined Strategic Search Area (SSA F) for large scale wind farm developments (as defined in Technical Advice Note 8) straddles the boundary between Bridgend and RCT County Boroughs near Pant Y Wal with the majority of the area lying within Bridgend. Recent planning applications have been determined by both Councils for wind farms in this area. The linkage between the two administrative areas on this issue will

be one of visual and environmental impact of any potential future wind farm developments on the surrounding landscape and nearby residential amenity.

Neath Port Talbot

- 3.4.10 The Neath Port Talbot (NPT) Unitary Development Plan was adopted in March 2008. A Delivery Agreement for an LDP was consulted upon in November 2007. The Preferred Strategy is due to be published in 2011.
- 3.4.11 The NPT UDP development strategy seeks to concentrate development in the Port Talbot – Neath urban area and, to a lesser extent, in Pontardawe.
- 3.4.12 For Bridgend County Borough this means that Maesteg will continue to be a major service centre serving the Upper Afan Valley particularly in terms of retailing and employment. Furthermore, there is also a key strategic linkage between the Afan Forest Park in Neath Port Talbot and the successful regeneration of Maesteg and the Upper Llynfi Valley, in terms of cycling and other tourism related projects.
- 3.4.13 Kenfig Industrial Estate has both a beneficial effect in terms of employment generation for residents of Bridgend County Borough but also a negative effect in terms of traffic generation through North Cornelly until such a time that access arrangements from the M4 can be enhanced.
- 3.4.14 As with RCT above, SSA F also straddles the Bridgend – Neath Port Talbot boundaries at Mynydd Margam and Afan Argoed. However, at these locations the majority of the areas lie within the Neath Port Talbot Area with very minor areas falling within Bridgend. The issues associated with these mirror those described in 3.4.9 above.

3.5 The Local Policy Context

Bright Future – A Community Strategy for Bridgend County 2009 – 2012

- 3.5.1 Bridgend County's new Community Strategy was published in 2009. The Bridgend Local Service Board (LSB) is co-ordinating strategic action across the County so that agencies work together to realise the vision for Bridgend:

A bright future that celebrates and builds on the successes of our past and present. Our:

***Strong Communities
Young Voices
Healthy Living
New Opportunities
Proud Past
Green Spaces***

- 3.5.2 Relevant commitments within the Community Strategy of particular relevance to include:

Strong Communities

- ◆ Ensure that things that matter to communities, such as reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, are included in the planning of services and the deployment of resources
- ◆ Set up dedicated teams to work closely with offenders who commit a large percentage of crime or anti-social behaviour to reduce their offending behaviour
- ◆ Communicate more on the safety of the county and the real successes to reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour
- ◆ Improve the way that health and social care services are provided so that older people have good health and independence for as long as possible but receive good quality treatment and support when they need it.
- ◆ Ensure that services are provided to older people based on their need, not their age.
- ◆ Support national initiatives that build community cohesion
- ◆ Build capacity in local groups to work on the sustainable development of their communities
- ◆ Develop the support and training available for local businesses, community and voluntary groups
- ◆ Support local voluntary and community groups to be better able to influence local and national policy and strategy

Young Voices

- ◆ Increase the range of learning opportunities for all children and young people, including those who find formal learning difficult
- ◆ Provide the guidance, help and support to enable children and young people to develop the skills they need, and the personal attributes to apply them, to make the best of their talents
- ◆ Provide more opportunities for children and young people to have their voices heard
- ◆ Recognise and celebrate more often the successful things that young people do
- ◆ Work together to support children and young people and their families, in their local communities

Healthy Living

- ◆ Providing opportunities for people to make healthier lifestyle choices
- ◆ Encouraging healthy lifestyles
- ◆ Looking at wider issues that affect people's health like where they live, how they get around and whether they can work, get training and enjoy social activities
- ◆ Helping employers to improve the health of their staff by promoting healthy lifestyles and making the workplace a safe and healthy place to be.
- ◆ Ensuring the NHS, the council and other services work together to meet people's treatment and care needs

New Opportunities

- ◆ Ensure that help is available for local people currently out of work so that they can get the right skills to be able to find work locally and that companies are confident that they can find local people with the skills they need.
- ◆ Provide a good range of adult and community learning opportunities for people to study things that are important to them and to employers

Proud Past

- ◆ Identify and preserve buildings of architectural or historic importance
- ◆ Improve our historic town centres and support the improvement of town centre buildings
- ◆ Use our heritage as a focus for development of tourism
- ◆ Implement the regeneration proposals for Porthcawl
- ◆ Develop and support training available for local businesses, community and voluntary groups

Green Spaces

- ◆ Provide more opportunities for local people to volunteer, learn skills and take part in community arts, coastline and countryside activities such as hedge laying, guided walks and dry stone walling.
- ◆ Train BCBC members, BCBC officers and volunteers about protected species.
- ◆ Support local communities to improve and enhance their open public spaces in town and villages and their green and recreational space.
- ◆ Develop local rural food economies with producers, shops, markets and distributors.
- ◆ Improve access to our green spaces by improving rights of way for all local people and encouraging walking and cycling.
- ◆ Ensure an attractive and clean environment by tackling local environmental quality issues, protecting the quality of the natural environment and contribute to tackling climate change
- ◆ Work towards a sustainable transport infrastructure which reduces the dependency on the car, recognises the benefits of public and community transport and encourage walking and cycling
- ◆ Create a rural business centre developing rural skills and encouraging social enterprises
- ◆ Develop local rural tourism facilities, improving skills, access and marketing

The Corporate Plan

- 3.5.3 The Council's Corporate Plan 2010 – 2013 sets out how the Authority will deliver services locally in partnership with others. The Council has resolved that the aims of the Community Strategy, as worded, would become its Corporate Objectives. This would make the issue of linking business plans to its aims and objectives a much simpler task, and have the added advantage of raising the profile of the Community Strategy to its intended status, that is, of being the overarching vision for the County Borough.

3.5.4 The aims, objectives, land use strategy, policies, and proposals of the LDP takes on board the corporate priorities of the Council, so that the overarching aims of the Community Strategy will find focused physical expression in terms of land use. However, it is likely that those priorities will need to change over the period of the LDP, not only in response to changing community aspirations, but to changing national policies. Therefore, the LDP will need to be sufficiently flexible to readily adapt to changes in overarching aims and objectives, and to remain responsive to emerging issues. Regular monitoring, review and updating of the LDP land use strategy, policies, and proposals will be essential, for the LDP to remain as up-to-date and relevant as possible, and therefore 'fit for purpose'.

Bridgend Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2001 – 2016

3.5.5 The Bridgend Unitary Development Plan (UDP), adopted in 2005, expresses the land-use strategy and planning policies for the County Borough up until 2016. The guiding principle of the UDP is:

"To improve the quality of life for the residents of Bridgend County Borough in ways which are compatible with the principles of sustainable development."

3.5.6 This is implemented by a preferred land use strategy of:

"Limited dispersal of new development in the main urban areas, wherever possible on redundant or under-utilised urban land and optimising the use of committed development sites."

Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategy 2008 – 2011

3.5.7 The main purpose of the Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategy is to achieve the shared goal of improving people's lives by improving their health, social care and well-being. The Vision for this Strategy is:

"The health and well-being of the people of the County Borough of Bridgend will be the best in Wales."

"Everyone has appropriate access to first class services delivered by organisations working together."

3.5.8 The Health & Well-Being Partnership is responsible for making sure this plan influences service development and delivery where specific problem areas have been identified in the health and well-being of the population.

The main areas to be prioritised for the three year strategy period are:

- Increasing life expectancy.
- Reducing levels of chronic disease, specifically heart disease, stroke, respiratory disease, diabetes and cancer.
- Improving mental health and emotional well-being.
- Reducing alcohol misuse.

- Improving lifestyle choices.

- 3.5.9 There are many other areas that will also be considered within the resources that are available within the county borough and in line with other plans such as the Single Plan for Children & Young People and the Local Development Plan like improving transport and increasing educational opportunities.
- 3.5.10 A draft Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategy has been published for consultation for the period 2011 – 2014.

Bridgend Children and Young Peoples Plan 2008 - 2011

- 3.5.11 Bridgend Children & Young People's Partnership want all our children and young people to:
- thrive and make the best of their talents;
 - live healthy and safe lives;
 - be confident and caring individuals throughout their lives;
 - know and receive their rights.
- 3.5.12 The plan sets out seven Core Aims:

"These are that all children and young people will be given every chance to:

- **have a flying start to life**
by which we mean be born healthy into a secure and supportive family
- **have access to appropriate educational opportunities**
by which we mean be able to fulfil their potential as learners
- **be healthy and free from exploitation**
by which we mean be healthy and secure individuals, free from exploitation by others
- **access play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities**
by which we mean be able to participate in activities regardless of their skills and abilities
- **be listened to and treated with respect**
by which we mean be able to have a say in all decisions which affect them and have an understanding of their rights and responsibilities
- **live in a safe home and community**
by which we mean be safe and emotionally well supported within their home and local community
- **not be disadvantaged by poverty**
by which we mean thrive and become confident and caring people regardless of their family's income."

- 3.5.13 A draft Children and Young People's Plan has been published for consultation for the period 2011 – 2014.

Fit for the Future: Bridgend County Borough's Regeneration Strategy 2008 – 2021

- 3.5.14 *Fit for the Future* defines regeneration as an over-arching activity delivering a balanced approach to revitalising the well-being of communities through social, physical, and economic improvements. The Strategy seeks to promote entrepreneurial and wealth-creating activities: it builds on and integrates economic development and tourism, urban and rural physical regeneration, and health.
- 3.5.15 The Strategy also integrates with key values embedded in the Community Strategy. Working alongside other major local strategies, *Fit for the Future* emphasises key actions to prepare for, take and maximise opportunities for local people and businesses, and to attract new investment into the Borough.
- 3.5.16 The vision contained in the strategy is:
- “By 2021, Bridgend County Borough will be recognised as a self-contained, productive sub-regional economy, with a skilled and utilised workforce, in a place where people and businesses want to be”*
- 3.5.17 The strategic framework contained within the strategy outlines 4 strategic aims:
- Enabling wealth and increasing enterprise
 - Building up skills levels and entrepreneurial attitudes in an active labour force
 - Making a great place to live, work, visit & play
 - Strengthening & renewing infrastructure
- 3.5.18 Beneath these four aims, several key actions have been identified. Relevant actions could be seen as follows:
- Deliver major housing refurbishment programmes and associated community regeneration opportunities
 - Continue investment in the natural environment and townscape heritage
 - Target 11-13 age group through convergence funding
 - Build on current work to create a 14-19 learning pathways pilot including stronger school/college partnerships
 - Continue strong existing programme of business support
 - Develop a focused programme to attract Single Investment Fund support
 - Supply Chain review, targeting SME and service opportunities to support
 - new skills strategy
 - Develop and support Focus Clusters of priority industries to raise quality and performance
 - Develop business through an Ideas Bank, linking local intellectual capital to enterprise development
 - Carry out a Productivity Review to understand and respond to the productivity gap

Other Plans and Strategies

- 3.5.19 In addition to the Community Strategy and the Corporate Improvement Plan there are several other Plans and Strategies which have a close relationship with, and whose topic areas are relevant to, the Local Development Plan. These are
- Bridgend Local Housing Strategy
 - Never too Old – Joint Strategy for Older People Living in Bridgend County Borough
 - Bridgend County Borough Tourism Strategy
 - Bridgend Community Safety Partnership Crime and Disorder Strategy
 - Bridgend Local Health Board Primary Care Estates Strategy 2004.
 - Local Biodiversity Action Plan
 - The Revised Countryside Strategy for Bridgend
 - Swansea Bay Shoreline Management Plan
 - Communities First Action Plans.
- 3.5.20 Many of these other plans and strategies, including the County Borough Tourism Strategy, Shoreline Management Plan etc., have already been, or soon will be, under review. Therefore, the relationship between them and the LDP must, by its very nature, be an iterative one. The close liaison already established between the Council and its partners through the Local Strategic Board and its constituent partnerships set up to compile and review the Community Strategy, and the involvement of LDP stakeholders in the plan process, will ensure that the other relevant strategies and policies regularly and properly inform LDP preparation.
- 3.5.21 The findings of these documents have informed the development of local needs and issues which the LDP seeks to address.