

# The Plan

One of the first things that became apparent from the consultation meetings was the marked differences between our communities. If problems are to be dealt with as local people would like, they cannot all be lumped together and dealt with across the County in one way from centralised offices. This therefore requires new mechanisms to be put into place (i) to listen and (ii) to deliver on a more locally sensitive system. The Agenda 21 Plan will be integrated into the Community Strategy for Neath Port Talbot. Guidance on the preparation and implementation of this new statutory duty will be issued by the National Assembly for Wales during the Spring of 2001. The Authority will seek ways of addressing community involvement and integrating this into the working of the Council, in order that it and its partners may be more aware of and responsive to local community aspirations and issues.

**(i) One possibility could be the creation of Community Area Fora based upon area groupings.** Local People identify with those areas with which they are familiar and although politically there is a strong will to pull the people of Neath Port Talbot together, the majority of people naturally have their strongest allegiance to the village or estate in

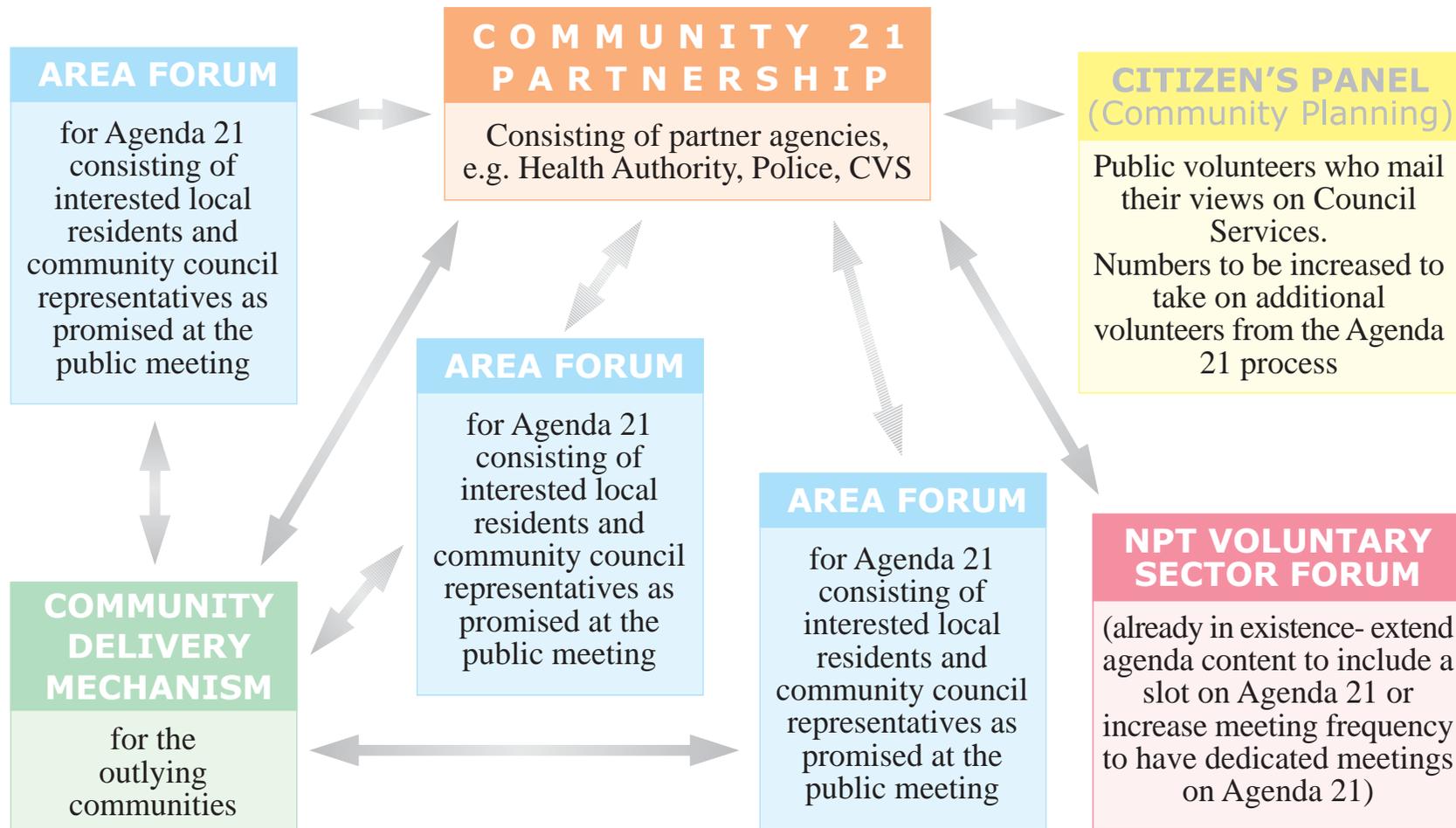
which they live, not any sort of wider administrative area.

Each of these Fora would meet quarterly in their “patch” facilitated by officers from the Local Authority and the Council for Voluntary Service. The forum would consist of residents who had attended the public consultation meetings, members of the local Community Councils, school representatives, local Councillors, members of local voluntary organisations indeed any local person who wishes to actively improve their community. Any existing fora or similar community groupings already meeting, would not be competed with but hopefully be involved and enhanced.

The remit of the forum would be to consider the Agenda of issues that have been collected for their particular “patch” and by prioritising the issues, receive presentations and hold discussions with any relevant organisations or officers about 1 particular subject at a time. The idea being to get service deliverers and support organisations to thrash out local problems face to face with the community, looking for positive ways forward, not looking back to past mistakes.

**Figure 15**  
**Community Planning/Agenda 21 - a possible way forward**

- Meet quarterly Serviced by Community Planning Officers
- Serviced by Community Planning Officers
- Could be 3, 5, 14, 29 fora - not yet decided! Initial core to be made of attendees at the public meetings. Serviced by Agenda 21 officer and CVS Development Officer. Meet quarterly within their area
- e.g. One Stop Shop, Community Steward or Caretaker Plus
- Serviced by CVS



For example, one meeting could be dedicated solely to the flytipping problem for the an area Forum and hence they would invite the Environment Agency, Litter Wardens, Keep Wales Tidy Officers and the Clean Rivers Project Officer all to one evening meeting for open discussion on how to create a new initiative to deal with the problem. The local people should be involved as much as possible in the **solutions**, with support from the agencies.

Different solutions may be agreed independently by the various Fora to a similar problem, but that is not a difficulty as long as each can be delivered.

As the Fora over the months, work through their priorities, new issues will emerge but also minor issues would niggle as not large enough to warrant the whole groups time and these could become divisive over time. It is these smaller day to day or very localised problems which have historically posed problems for service deliverers and residents alike.

(ii) **It is therefore proposed that a Community Delivery Mechanism be put in place** in each community to work alongside the Community Police Officer, the local Councillor and the Community Councils. This deployment will be phased, starting with the most distant communities from central services. This

Community initiative could work as a very simple version of the One Stop Shop, it could be a community steward, it could be caretaker plus

The new mechanism should be seen as the contact on the ground for all organisations and it is therefore essential that the officers selected are experienced and understand the working of various bodies from the Council for Voluntary Service through to the Environment Agency. Indeed funding for such an initiative could be provided in a shared way.

The mechanism could be responsible for monitoring the level of service response their residents get and thus feed through to the Best Value system. It must not subsume the role of the local Councillor who is irreplaceable as the voice of the people but may assist the Councillor with administrative support for local community issues.

(iii) **It is proposed that these Community Delivery Mechanisms feed directly to the Neath Port Talbot Community 21 Partnership** who are also responsible for the delivery of the Community Plan. They should also be expected to feed the Area Community Fora meetings. (See Fig 15)

This improved community involvement and tackling of issues locally will help reduce unnecessary journeys and the feelings of

alienation, in return for empowerment and increased community satisfaction. However, this will not achieve sustainable communities alone. A massive awareness raising/education campaign is needed to help people to make the right choices when it comes to looking after our local and global environment. Even television commentators get confused whether they are talking about ozone depletion or global warming and so it is not surprising that a topic that sits largely outside the National Curriculum, yet affects all of us daily, is not widely understood.

(iv) **It is therefore proposed that a major awareness raising campaign be launched** containing the following as a minimum:

- That INSET training be arranged for staff of every primary and secondary school over the next 5 years on the full range of environmental issues affecting us locally.
- That every school works towards achieving the ECO Schools awards in the next 5 years.
- That staff of the remaining local authority departments are trained on the environmental impacts of their sphere of work - 30 staff per month.
- That officers from the waste, energy, wildlife, transport and air pollution units are made available to carry out at least 1 evening talk each, every month to a local voluntary organisation until all requests have been satisfied. There are dozens of WIs, Rotary Clubs, Round Tables, Towns Womens Guilds, Soroptomists and Probus Clubs who are constantly looking for evening speakers. The message of all talks should be “what can individuals do to understand and help protect the environment”. It would be extremely helpful if the Environment Agency and Health Authority could make similar commitments to water pollution and healthy lifestyles.
- That all of the Council’s environmental units listed above be given sufficient funds to produce a leaflet for every household on what individuals can do to help the environment e.g. on energy saving. The mailing out of these should be phased and co-ordinated.
- That the Eco Information points at each of the libraries be used by all departments to get sustainability messages over to the public.
- That an Eco Centre be opened in an accessible venue for people to have all of the environmental queries dealt with.
- A Supporting Awareness Raising Strategy for wildlife is available in the Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Finally, we need to achieve confirmation that all of our efforts

towards working and living more sustainably are a reality in terms of action not a delusion. This is best achieved by external checking.

(v) **It is therefore recommended that the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council commits to achieve Eco Management and Audit Scheme accreditation by 2006.** The current commitment is for 2007, but strengthening this commitment would harmonise with the 5 year Agenda 21 review period and also the Community Plan targets for 2006.

The Eco Management and Audit Scheme is an environmental quality standard used across the UK to show

by means of external validation that a company is striving to continually reduce its impacts on the Environment. A similar standard ISO 14001 has already been achieved by the local Transport, Highway and Engineering Department and it is felt the other departments should show a similar level of commitment.

**To acknowledge and reward projects of a sustainable nature** which originate from the community and voluntary organisations, subject to appropriate funds being available a grant fund will be made available annually of some £5,000 giving **grants up to £1,000** to help get new sustainable initiatives going.

## How does the Agenda 21 Strategy fit with other plans

As has already been explained the Agenda 21 Strategy is about how things should be done in the 21st Century to redress the imbalances which have been the hallmark of previous centuries – social inequalities, exploitation of peoples, resources and the environment. It lays down mechanisms to help people achieve their ambitions, but does not dictate what these ambitions should be as long as they are in harmony.

The Community Plan (2000-2006) has considerable overlap with the Agenda 21 strategy, both striving for healthy vibrant communities achieved through sustainable means. The difference is that the Community Plan lays down firm targets of what the community and partners would like to see happen on firm timescales over the next 5 years. Basically we find ourselves with a Community Plan saying “What” and an Agenda 21 Strategy explaining “How”.

**The County Borough Council has decided that the Community Plan and Agenda 21 Strategy be bound together and integrated as one document as “Community 21”.**

It is the intention to review the Agenda 21 Strategy every 5 years, consulting the community reviewing the indicators, suggesting mechanisms which can fine tune our aims to be more equitable and sustainable. We should have no illusions that we will achieve total sustainability within our life times, if ever, hence we must aim for continuous improvements.

The Green Transport Plan for example is a mechanism to reduce the Local Authority’s travel impacts on the local environment. There is a duty placed on any employer in an area with over 500 employees to produce such a plan, as the Ford plant as Jersey Marine has already done. These plans greatly help the Agenda 21 aims but more SMEs should be encouraged to do the same.

The Neath Port Talbot Biodiversity Action Plan (2001-2006), a BAP as it is fondly known, is a targeted plan to help the conservation of local wildlife and habitats in the area. This is a legally required plan which also fulfils the Agenda 21 aims.

The Unitary Development Plan (2001-2014) through the local planning system strives to control the loss of greenfield sites and natural habitats to development where appropriate brownfield sites are available. This will be closely linked with the Biodiversity Action Plan and again support the Agenda 21 Strategy. Unfortunately Local Unitary Development Plans have certain prerequisites nationally dictated such as the number of housing sites it has to set aside, this in turn means more sites have to be identified than perhaps would locally be liked.

The Airwise Strategy which monitors the Air quality of the area is another important element of Agenda 21. Similarly the Health Improvement Plan (HIP), the Crime and Disorder Strategy, Economic Development Strategy, Development of Life Long Learning and Skills Training and the Youth Justice Plan are all intended to be delivered through the Agenda 21 mechanisms of consultation and local involvement, minimising pressure on the environment.

# Summary of the Tawe Afan Nedd Agenda 21 Strategy - Commencing 2001

## 1. Inform

by publishing the Sustainability Indicators in the Authority's Annual Report, to every household, thus enabling local people to base their understandings on up-to-date information rather than perceptions.

## 2. Involve

by creating area based Community Fora, consisting of local residents, organisations and representatives. To meet quarterly to progress initiatives in a sustainable manner on their local Agenda with the relevant partner agencies.

## 3. Listen

by bringing together the agencies and service providers including the Police, The Voluntary Sector and the Health Authority to form the Community 21 Partnership. To listen to the Area Fora issues and help in their delivery in a "joined up" manner. To receive reports from the Communities. This Community 21 Partnership is a cornerstone of the Community Plan and will integrate the Agenda 21 and Community Plan together.

## 4. Respond

to community needs on the ground by phasing in a community delivery mechanism, such as a One Stop Shop, a Community Steward or Caretaker Plus in the villages to complement the role of local Councillors and Community Councils. Dealing with each of the agencies, not simply the Local Authority, and perhaps monitoring the response for Best Value. The role could be linked closely to that of the Community Police officer.

## 5. Change

peoples understanding and habits by a major awareness raising drive-training teachers and staff, challenging schools, talking to voluntary groups and comprehensive leaflet distributions.

## 6. Achieve

Eco Management and Audit Scheme accreditation for the Local Authority by the end of 2006. Also to achieve practical sustainable community led projects on the ground with the aid of Agenda 21 starter grants provided by the local Authority.

## **Appendix I**

### **Programme of Public Consultation Meetings**

Coedffranc community held on 5th May 1998, in the Memorial Hall, Skewen Park chaired by Mr. Emyr Gough. Attendance: 53

Dyffryn Clydach community held on 19th May 1998, in the Memorial Hall, Dyffryn Clydach chaired by Mr. D. Harry. Attendance: 39

Cilybebyll community held on 9th June 1998, in Rhos Primary School, Rhos, chaired by Mr. S. Hastings. Attendance: 34

Pontardawe community held on 23rd June 1998, in Pontardawe Arts Centre, Pontardawe, chaired by Reverend Richard Jones. Attendance: 61

Gwaun Cae Gurwen community held on 15th September 1998, in Gwaun Cae Gurwen Community Hall, chaired by Reverend Richard Jones. Attendance: 27

Cwmllynfell community held on 29th September 1998, in Cwmllynfell Primary School, chaired by Mr. E. Richards. Attendance: 17

Ystalyfera community held on 20th October 1998, in St. David's Hall, Ystalyfera, chaired by Reverend Anthony Turner. Attendance: 25

Glyncorrwg community held on 3rd November 1998, in Glyncorrwg Community Centre, chaired by Hazel Ackery. Attendance: 20

Gwynfi community held on 18th November 1998, in Blaengwynfi Social Welfare Centre, chaired by Mr. M. Christopher. Attendance: 18

Cymmer community held on 1st December 1998, in Croeserw Community Centre, chaired by Mr. Ieuan Davies. Attendance: 24

Bryn and Cwmavon community held on 20th January 1999, in Cwmafan Community Centre, chaired by Mr. R. Hart. Attendance: 46

Margam community held on 3rd February 1999, in Margam Community Centre, chaired by Mr. Don Thomas. Attendance: 28

Sandfields and Aberavon community held on 24th February 1999, in Dalton Road Community Centre, chaired by Dr. Joan Richards. Attendance: 23

Baglan community held on 17th March 1999, in Baglan Community Centre, chaired by Mr. J. Hussel. Attendance: 33.

Glynneath community held on 31st March 1999, in Glynneath Town Hall, chaired by Reverend Robin Angel. Attendance: 37

Blaengwrach community held on 21st April 1999, in Cwmgwrach Welfare Hall, chaired by Mr. Gerald Harris. Attendance: 40

Resolven and Clyne community held on 11th May 1999, in Resolven Rugby Club, chaired by Reverend Norman Hadfield. Attendance: 46

Pelenna community held on 19th May 1999, in Ponthydyfen Community Centre, chaired by Reverend Denys Brace. Attendance: 24

Onllwyn community held on 17th June 1999, in Onllwyn Welfare Hall, chaired by Mr. A. Thomas. Attendance 38

Seven Sisters community held on 7th July 1999, in Canolfan, chaired by Mr. Emyr Lewis. Attendance: 17

Crynant community held on 14th July 1999, in Crynant Community Centre, chaired by Mr. Barry Michael. Attendance: 75

Blaenhonndan community held on 15th September 1999, in Catwg Primary School, chaired by Mrs. Margaret Thorn. Attendance: 54

Tonna community held on 30th September 1999, in Tonnau Primary School Community Hall, chaired by Mr. Iorwerth Thomas. Attendance: 24

Briton Ferry community held on 13th October 1999, in Briton Ferry Pensioners Hall, chaired by Mr. Huw James. Attendance 52

Taibach Community held on 10th November 1999, in Taibach Community Centre, chaired by Carole Wellington Attendance 20

Cimla community held on 24th November 1999, in Crynallt Junior School, chaired by Reverend Cliff Thomas. Attendance: 29

Melincryddan community held on 19th January 2000, in Melin Junior School, chaired by Mr. Ron Gallender. Attendance: 34

Port Talbot community held on 3rd February 2000, in Port Talbot Arts Centre, chaired by Father Steven Kirk. Attendance: 26

Neath community held on 17th February 2000, in St. David's Church Hall, chaired by Mr. George Griffiths. Attendance: 32



## Appendix II

### Agenda 21 School Comments

Coedffranc school comments from Coedffranc Junior School.

Dyffryn Clydach school comments from Neath Abbey Infants School and Melynychlog Nedd Juniors.

Cilybebyll school comments from Rhos Primary School and Alltwen Primary.

Pontardawe school comments from Rhydyfro Primary School, Llangiwg Primary School, and YGG Pontardawe.

Cwmllynfell school comments from Cwmllynfell Primary School and Rhiwfawr Primary School.

Ystalyfera school comments from Y Wern Primary School.

Gwynfi school comments from Abergwyhfi Junior School.

Cymmer school comments from Croeserw Primary School, Cymer Afan Primary School, and Cymer Afan Comprehensive School.

Bryn and Cwmavon school comments from Cwmavon Junior School, Cwmavon Infants School, and Bryn Primary School.

Margam school comments from Groes Primary School.

Sandfields and Aberavon school comments from Glanymor Primary School, St. Therese's Primary, Sandfields Primary, St. Joseph's Junior School and Sandfields Comprehensive School.

Baglan school comments from Blaenbaglan Primary School and Baglan Primary School.

Glynneath school comments from Cwmnedd Primary School and YGG Cwmnedd.

Blaengwrach school comments from Blaengwrach Primary School.

Resolven and Clyne school comments from Clun Primary School and Ynysfach Primary School.

Pelenna school comments from Tonmawr Primary School and Pontrhydyfen Primary School.

Onllwyn school comments from Maesmarchog Primary School,

Seven Sisters school comments from  
Blaendulais Primary School,  
Ysgol Gymraeg Blaendulais,

Crynant school comments from  
Creunant Primary School.

Blaenhonddan school comments from  
Catwg Primary School,  
Cilffrew Primary School and  
Blaenhonddan Primary School.

Tonna school comments from  
Tonnau Primary School.

Briton Ferry school comments from  
Brynhyfred Primary School,  
Llansawel Primary School,  
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tyle'r Ynn  
and Ynysmaerdy Primary School.

Taibach school comments from  
Eastern Primary School.

Cimla school comments from  
Crynallt Infant and  
Crynallt Junior Schools.

Melincryddan school comments from  
Melin Junior School and  
Melin Infants School.

Port Talbot School comments from  
Central Infants and Juniors.

Neath School comments from  
Gnoll Primary School,  
St. Josephs Roman Catholic Primary  
School,  
Alderman Davies Primary School and  
Ysgol Gymraeg Castell Nedd.



## Appendix III Welsh Headline Indicators

### Proposed Welsh Indicator

- Total output of the economy (GDP and GDP per head) █
- Percentage of UK business research and development expenditure which occurs in Wales █
- Proportion of people of working age who are in work █
- To be determined in the context of the Social Inclusion Action Plan and Annual Report, and the development of the 'Communities First' policy █
- Qualifications at age 19 █
- Standardised mortality rate per 100,000 population █
- Houses judged unfit to live in █
- Level of crime █
- Emissions of greenhouse gases █
- Days when air pollution is moderate or high █
- Road traffic █
- Rivers of good or fair quality █
- Populations of wild birds █
- Use of previously developed land, and pressures on undeveloped land █
- Waste arising and management █
- Satisfaction with quality of life (to be developed) █
- GDP per head and household disposable income per head in the Valleys and the west of Wales, relative to the Welsh average █
- Welsh domiciled students leaving higher education after qualifying and going into employment in the UK who go into employment outside Wales █
- Proportion of people who can speak Welsh █
- Electricity produced in Wales generated from renewable resources. █



## Appendix IV Useful Contacts

Throughout the document there have been references made to local projects. If you would like to know more, here are the main contacts: (all numbers are 01639 unless otherwise stated)

Agenda 21	Suzanne Waldron	764277
Neath Port Talbot Clean River Project	Mr Mike James	764370
Four Valleys Furniture Initiative	Mr Simon Williams	01792 321341
Energy Efficiency Unit	Mr Peter Morgan	01792 512610
Awel Aman Tawe Community Wind Project	Mr Dan McCallum	01269 822954
Clean Up After your Dogs Campaign	Mr Chris Willans	764266
Community/School Litter Picker	Mr Alan Shields	01792 512581
Airwise Strategy	Mr Peter Hollingsworth	897548
Neath Port Talbot Biodiversity Forum	Isabel Macho	764273
Unitary Development Plan	Mr Owain Lewis	764287
Forest Enterprise Red Squirrel Project	Mr Chris Tucker	701880
Dulais Valley Job Search	Brian Ahearne	701880
National Trust Aberdulais Falls	Mr Vic James	636674
Business Connect	Mr Greg Kaminars	01792 817575
Community Development Trusts	Mr Adrian Howells	764371
Crime Prevention Unit	Mrs Jane Griffiths	764428



## Appendix V Bibliography

A Sustainable Wales  
Measuring the Difference  
(Consultation Indicators)  
2000 National Assembly for Wales

Sustainable Communities in Wales  
for the 21st Century  
(why and how to prepare a local  
agenda 21 strategy)  
1998 Welsh Local Government  
Association

Draft Neath Port Talbot Community  
Plan (Achieving Better Communities)  
2000 NPTCBC

Airwise – Local Air Quality Strategy  
for Neath Port Talbot  
1999 NPTCBC

Quality of Life Counts  
(Indicators for a strategy for  
sustainable development for the UK)  
1999 DETR

Neath Port Talbot Crime and Disorder  
Strategy  
1999 South Wales Police

Predeposit Consultative Draft of the  
Neath Port Talbot Unitary  
Development Plan  
2000 NPTCBC

Preparing Community Strategies  
(Draft Guidance to Local Authorities)  
2000 DETR

A Healthier Future for Neath Port  
Talbot (Ensuring that the contribution  
of the Voluntary Sector makes a real  
difference)  
2000 Neath Port Talbot Council for  
Voluntary Services

Neath Port Talbot Local Transport  
Plan  
2000 NPTCBC

Neath Port Talbot Tourism Strategy  
2000 NPTCBC

Local Environment Agency Plan  
Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend Area  
2000 Environment Agency Wales

Local Environment Agency Plan  
Swansea and Llanelli Area  
2000 Environment Agency Wales