

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR

WALES

ANNUAL REPORT

ON

SOCIAL INCLUSION

IN

WALES

Foreword

Too many Welsh communities have experienced social and economic decline over many years. They have been the victims of economic circumstances beyond their control. We want to change that. The National Assembly has begun the process of empowering the people of Wales. Now, the Assembly, in turn, is empowering communities within Wales.

Tackling social disadvantage is one of three major themes which this National Assembly for Wales has adopted in its strategic plan, 'Better Wales'. Poverty is not inevitable. We can break the cycle of deprivation if we have the will and the means to do it. Better Wales showed that we had the will to do something about it. Initiatives such as Communities First shows that we are putting in place the means to achieve our aims.

Before the setting up of the National Assembly this approach would have been impractical if not impossible. Having an Assembly has meant that we can draw together all those agencies which affect people's lives. Education, Social Services, health and housing are all inter-linked. But it is only with the coming of the National Assembly that on a Wales-wide level we have been able to bring related problems together and look for comprehensive solutions. Our consultation processes have meant that we have reliable data specific to Wales. That is invaluable. When we say that we want Welsh solutions to Welsh problems it is essential that we have reliable information to work on. Having a Welsh Assembly now gives us the means to do exactly that.

The recent Welsh Affairs Committee report on Social Exclusion in Wales recognised that certain areas of Wales suffer disproportionately from social exclusion when compared with other areas of the United Kingdom. Wales has a higher rate of children living in poverty, lower levels of educational achievement, poorer quality housing, lower rates of pay, a higher rate of working age households with nobody in employment, a higher proportion of people on income replacement benefits, a lower life expectancy and higher mortality rates.

Nothing on that list is inevitable. There is not a single item there that cannot be tackled and improved. To tackle these problems we need to co-ordinate the efforts of health,

education, social services, the private and the voluntary sectors. People do not deserve to be poor. Communities who are the victims of history do not deserve to be deprived of a future. These things are not inevitable. We can do something about it. We need to give confidence and self-esteem back to people who have felt themselves to be alienated from the democratic process.

When devolution came to Wales we had the institution uniquely able to perform that task of co-ordination. I am proud that the National Assembly for Wales has made tackling poverty and deprivation a priority. We cannot right all the wrongs of history. But we can improve the present and the future of people blighted by the inheritance of the past.

Edwina Hart
Minister for Finance, Local
Government and Communities

PART 1 - OVERVIEW

Introduction

- 1.1 The National Assembly for Wales is addressing the issues of poverty and social disadvantage on a wide range of fronts. This first Annual Report on Social Inclusion outlines the policies and programmes being implemented aimed at tackling social disadvantage in Wales.
- 1.2 Following the National Assembly's endorsement of the outline Social Inclusion Plan in January 2000 a systematic and strategic approach has been taken to community regeneration and social inclusion. The Action Plan recognised the importance of strengthening networks both within and outside the Assembly to ensure that policy is developed in a cross cutting way, engaging everyone possible in spreading the message.
- 1.3 As a first stage, the National Assembly set up a Social Inclusion Network to bring together representatives from all relevant, major areas of activity. This Network began the complex task of unifying policy and of developing an approach to social inclusion which spans economic development, housing, education, health, social services, sustainable development and the European Structural Fund programmes, including Objective 1. The proposed Communities First programme has been developed from this network and been subject to extensive consultation with the public sector, voluntary agencies and communities. This programme, which is to be launched later this year, is a long term strategy for improving the living conditions and prospects for children and people of all ages living in the most deprived communities in Wales. It builds on the experience of the *People in Communities* programme which was the first approach adopted by the National Assembly to identifying and targeting deprived communities for specific and focused support. *Communities First* will establish community centred regeneration programmes throughout Wales, bringing together multi-agency partnerships to work with

community themselves to develop renewal strategies for each identified, deprived community area.

- 1.4 The central theme of the Assembly's approach to community regeneration is partnership, both internally across policy divisions and externally with a full range of organisations, communities and individuals. Additionally, partnerships with the UK government are important in ensuring that national programmes such as *New Deal* are having a major impact on poverty and social disadvantage in Wales. This report summarises the progress to date and outlines future developments that will collectively begin the reversal of the decline of many communities in Wales and work towards prosperity for all.

The Size of the Problem

- 1.5 Understanding the nature and pattern of poverty and social disadvantage is essential in order to begin developing the solutions to eradicate it. In March 2000 the National Assembly published "*Mapping Social Exclusion in Wales*". The document provided an accurate statistical picture of poverty and social disadvantage in Wales. The study leading to the publication drew together information from a wide range of sources in order to identify the pattern of disadvantage in economic activity, health, education, housing, child and family issues and in financial areas such as savings and social security. The report was an important milestone in understanding poverty in Wales and provides a clear picture of the location of the poorest communities in Wales.
- 1.6 Because of the difficulties in compiling accurate statistics, especially at the local level, the National Assembly commissioned Oxford University to develop a new Index of Multiple Deprivation to replace the old Welsh Office Index of Deprivation. The new index has compiled data in the six domains of income, employment, health, education, housing and geographical characteristics to arrive at a clear ranking of 865 Electoral Divisions in Wales. The new Index is more sensitive to rural issues and allows more frequent updating because it is less dependent on Census derived information. This

Index will become an important tool for determining policy and targeting resources at those areas most in need.

4.1 Both indexes sources have shown that there is poverty and social disadvantage throughout Wales: in the urban communities of our cities, the terraced streets of our Valleys towns and the more isolated rural communities. Predictably, there is a concentration of poverty in the industrial areas of Wales reflecting the loss of traditional industries and its economic effects. The Valleys of South Wales feature large in the list of the 100 most deprived areas of Wales. However, the new index also identifies rural poverty more clearly than in the past and supports growing concern about poverty in rural communities, especially in terms of rural isolation and poor access to services. This distribution is presented in Fig 1 which is at Annex A.

4.1 In many communities the current level of unemployment remains relatively high, despite improvements at a national level. Individual incapacity is also high adding to the poor rates of economic activity and low GDP. The quality of housing in these areas is often poor and educational attainment is low with fewer pupils returning to education after age 16. The following illustrates these issues:

- i. In August 2000, 6.4% of the working age population of Great Britain was claiming Incapacity Benefit compared to around 11% in Wales.
- ii. Using data from the IMD, the National Assembly's Statistical Directorate have calculated rates at Electoral Division level and have listed below the first 10 Electoral Divisions (Fig 2). Please note that these are not strictly rates of the working age population but based on those aged under 60 in receipt of Incapacity Benefit in 1998 and NHSAR population counts. However, they are the best estimates currently available:

Fig 2

EDIV	EDIV Name	Local Authority	Rank	Benefit Rate ¹
PFNA	Maerdy	Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	1	22.7
NZNA	Gwynfi	Neath Port Talbot	2	22.3
PKMA	Aberbargoed	Caerphilly	3	21.1
NZMW	Glyncorwg	Neath Port Talbot	4	21.1
PFMZ	Llwyn-y-pia	Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	5	20.9
NZMT	Cymmer	Neath Port Talbot	6	20.5
PKNK	Tir-Phil	Caerphilly	7	20.5
PHMD	Gurnos	Merthyr Tydfil	8	20.3
PKMM	Darran Valley	Caerphilly	9	19.6
NZNP	Sandfields West	Neath Port Talbot	10	19.6

Source: Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2000

1. No. in receipt of Incapacity Benefit in 1998 aged 16-59 as a percentage of all people aged 16-59.

Note that the population figures used are NHSAR population counts for 1998.

Fig 3 gives the unemployment rates by travel to work areas in Wales for October 2000 (also Wales and UK unemployment rates):

Fig 3

1998 TTWA's in order of unemployment rate- October 2000

<u>Claimants</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>ttwa98</u>
1478	7.8	Merthyr
618	7.6	Holyhead
1024	7.2	Pembroke and Tenby
887	7.0	Llangefni and Amlwch
429	6.6	Portmadoc and Ffestiniog
1366	6.2	Haverfordwest
3997	6.2	Rhymney and Abergavenny
281	5.7	Dolgellau and Barmouth
1640	5.7	Llanelli

230	5.7	Machynlleth
2038	5.4	Bangor and Caernarfon
163	5.4	Betws-y-Coed
219	5.4	Fishguard and St David's
6001	5.3	Swansea
2335	5.1	Neath and Port Talbot
163	5.0	Llandeilo
4136	4.7	Pontypridd and Aberdare
387	4.6	Lampeter
53978	4.3	Total
379	4.2	Llandrindod Wells
1590	4.2	Rhyl and Denbigh
1317	4.1	Colwyn and Conwy
259	4.0	Pwllheli
9175	3.9	Cardiff
2287	3.8	Bridgend
375	3.8	Cardigan
859	3.8	Carmarthen
3473	3.6	Newport
1535	3.3	Cwmbran and Monmouth
242	3.2	Ruthin and Bala
1858	3.1	Wrexham
1907	2.9	Flint
521	2.7	Aberystwyth
88	2.4	Knighton and Radnor
268	2.3	Welshpool
266	2.2	Brecon
187	1.2	Newtown
53,978	4.3	Wales
1,009,232	3.5	United Kingdom

Source : Benefits agency administrative system

- (iii) Income in Households Below Average Income (HBAI) refers to disposable income, that is income after the deduction of income tax, National Insurance contributions, local government taxes and certain other deductions. Income levels are equivalised to reflect the relative needs of households of varying size and composition.

HBAI presents income analyses on two bases: Before Housing Cost (BHC) and After Housing Cost (AHC). Each measure has imperfections as a guide to

differences in, and changes in, living standards, but the two are complementary. Incomes from the self-employed have been excluded, as there is evidence to suggest they have been collected inadequately over previous years.

For ease of clarity, only After Housing Cost data have been presented here. (Fig 4) For Before Housing Cost data, refer to the full publication which can be found at <http://www.dss.gov.uk/publications/dss/2000/hbai/index.htm>.

Fig 4

Residents

- Wales had 25% of residents in households with incomes below half of average income, compared with 24% in Great Britain as a whole.

Children

- 35 per cent of children in Wales lived in households with incomes below half the mean income compared with 34% for Great Britain.

Adults of working age

- 22 per cent of adults of working age in Wales lived in households with incomes below half the mean income compared with 19% for Great Britain.

Pensioners

- In Wales, pensioners had the lowest proportion (23%) of having below half of average income, compared to 27% for Great Britain.

Overall

- While Wales appears to compare reasonably favourably with Great Britain when considering percentages in households below half average income this hides considerable variation between regions.

All data have been taken from the National Statistics publication, Households Below Average Income 1994/5 - 1998/9, published by the Department for Social Security.

Fig 5 below shows the percentage of residents living in households with below 50% average income, by region

Fig 5

Region	Children	Working age adults	Pensioners Percentage	Total residents Millions
North East	41	24	30	2.7
North West / Mersey	39	22	27	6.5
Yorkshire and Humber	36	23	31	4.3
East Midlands	31	18	29	3.6
West Midlands	31	18	27	4.6
Eastern	28	15	30	4.4
London	43	22	29	6.4
South East	23	14	25	6.7

South West	31	19	24	4.3
Wales	35	22	23	2.8
Scotland	30	19	27	4.2
Great Britain	34	19	27	50.5

Source : FRS 1998/9

Tackling the Problems of Social Disadvantage

1.9 Social disadvantage is a wide scale and complex problem which cannot be resolved quickly or in isolation. The National Assembly has recognised that a long term partnership approach is essential and that as a starting point it is necessary to have a vision for Wales. The Assembly's strategic plan **Better Wales.com** does this by identifying a vision that focuses on key values which the National Assembly wants to achieve for Wales. It wants Wales to be:

- United, confident and creative;
- Committed to fostering its unique and diverse identity, and the benefits of bilingualism, while looking confidently outwards and welcoming new cultural influences;
- Prosperous, well educated, skilled, healthy, environmentally and culturally rich.
- Served by modern, effective, efficient and accessible public services.
- Active in its local communities, where the voice of local people is heard.
- Fairer – a place where everyone is valued and given opportunity to play a full part.
- A place which values its children and where young people want to live, work and enjoy a high quality of life.

- Safe – where people can enjoy freedom from crime and from fear of crime.

1.10 In pursuit of that vision the National Assembly is tackling poverty and social disadvantage as one of its three major themes in **Better Wales.com**. This central concern is reflected in the benchmarks that will be used to judge the achievement of the vision in 2010 and the 100 objectives the National Assembly has set itself for the first term of office.

1.11 Examples of objectives include:

- Enabling more people with young families to work
- Giving children from disadvantaged backgrounds a better start to life through a Family Literacy and Numeracy Programme
- Supporting schools which serve deprived communities
- Using the £25million of the Children and Youth Partnership fund to support local initiatives for young people
- Increase opportunities for all by encouraging lifelong and flexible ways of learning

These and other actions detailed in **Better Wales.com** underpin the commitment of the National Assembly to tackling social disadvantage. They provide the strategic framework which will inform the design and delivery of policies and programmes to address the problems at a local level.

Designing and Delivering the Policies and Programmes

1.12 As stated in the Welsh Affairs Committee report on Social Exclusion in Wales, responsibility for tackling social exclusion crosses the devolution divide. The National Assembly for Wales has responsibility for the delivery

of policies and programmes in areas such as health, education, housing, transport, education and training, but it does not have responsibility for a wide range of other subjects which are linked to social disadvantage. Examples include social security benefits, crime reduction, taxation, the Employment Services, management of the Post Office and regulation of financial services and utility companies. However, the National Assembly and the constituencies it serves are uniquely based to formulate their own responses to poverty and deprivation based on the experience and pattern of poverty and social disadvantage in the many different communities of Wales. Strengthening links with other UK government departments to ensure policies are designed in a way which meets the needs of the most deprived communities in Wales is also a major task for the National Assembly.

1.13 A broad range of the National Assembly's policies and programmes impact on levels of social disadvantage in Wales. It has been estimated that nearly sixty Assembly programmes and initiatives target action at a community level. The National Assembly is working towards the rationalisation of these programmes and effective co-ordination of policies. The barriers to this process will be overcome to deliver, as far as is practicable, policies and programmes which tackle these serious concerns about poverty and social disadvantage in a co-ordinated and meaningful way.

1.14 Full and participative consultation on policy proposals is a major feature of the work of the Assembly. The consultation process on Communities First has followed these principles. Numerous positive and constructive comments and suggestions have been received and are under consideration prior to the launch of the Communities First programme in the summer. The first stage of this process solicited over 160 written responses in addition to high attendance at events at national, local authority and community levels. The second stage is now coming to a close and the level of interest and enthusiasm has remained high. Policy development in this way should ensure that the Communities First programme meets the needs of the most disadvantaged communities in Wales in a way in which the communities themselves desire. This inclusive

government approach adopted by the National Assembly is addressing the exclusion of citizens from the political and policy process within Wales.

Partnership Approaches to Social Disadvantage

1.15 Partnerships with local government, the business community and the voluntary sector are central to the Assembly's agenda across the full range of its activities. The National Assembly's approach to combating social disadvantage has a major emphasis on partnerships.

1.16 Central to the policies for social inclusion is the involvement of communities themselves in the identification of and delivery of solutions to the problems faced. Partnerships within disadvantaged communities feature significantly in the National Assembly's approach for tackling poverty and social disadvantage. Community participation underpins the *Communities First* strategy and will involve the creation of local area partnerships; the setting of visions; and the raising of aspirations. These will provide significant opportunities for community members to become involved in the drawing up and implementation of the strategy at local level via local action plans.

**PART 2 – THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY’S SOCIAL INCLUSION
POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES**

2.1 This part of the annual report sets out some of the specific policies and strategies followed by the National Assembly in pursuit of its commitment to eradicate poverty and social disadvantage in Wales.

People in Communities

2.2 The *People in Communities* (PiC) programme was the first approach adopted by the National Assembly to targeting highly deprived communities for specific and focused support. It is an innovative response to tackling social exclusion in deprived communities in Wales. The programme is an area based programme of intensive community development which seeks to address multiple deprivation through a high degree of community involvement and effective, co-operative working by a wide range of agencies. The overall aim of PiC is to improve the quality of life and economic prosperity of people living in the chosen localities by testing out new and creative ways of tackling social disadvantage.

2.3 The programme’s objectives are :

- that all people in the community should have access either to work, to training or education or to another meaningful activity, such as community or voluntary work;
- that everyone should have somewhere decent and safe to live;
- that everyone should be able to lead healthy lives and to have access to appropriate health care;

- that all children in the community should feel safe and be provided with appropriate education and opportunities for play; and
- that people should be empowered to voice and contribute to decisions made about their community, so that there is collective ownership and capacity building.

2.4 PiC was launched in June 1998. Around £2.5 million has been allocated to the programme over the period 1998-2000. As a result of invitations to bid, sixteen deprived communities across Wales have been selected to take part in the Programme. These areas are:

Rhymney, Caerphilly
 Peulwys Estate, Conwy
 Deiniolen, Dinorwig & Clwt y Bont, Gwynedd
 Gurnos and Galon Uchaf, Merthyr Tydfil
 Duffryn, Newport
 Rhiwgarn, Trebanog, Rhondda Cynon Taff
 Blaenymaes and Portmead, Swansea
 Southsea and Brynteg, Wrexham
 West Central Rhyl, Denbighshire
 Butetown & Grangetown, Cardiff
 Mount Libanus Estate, Rhondda Cynon Taff
 Bush & Park Estate, Pembrokeshire
 Giants Grave, Briton Ferry, Neath-Port Talbot
 Nantyglo, Blaenau Gwent
 Caerau, Bridgend
 Abersychan, Torfaen

2.5 Work is now progressing in all sixteen communities. It is intended that lessons learnt and the valuable insights from the experience of these projects will be used to further develop and refine the *Communities First* programme and other area regeneration strategies. There is already some useful information

flowing from these projects and significant interest in their achievements to date. Some examples of the work being undertaken in the communities from which critical lessons can be learnt for the more effective, long term delivery of *Communities First* are:

Peulwys Estate, Conwy

Peulwys Estate, Conwy is located on high ground and open to extremes of weather coming off the Irish sea. It has rows of identically painted terraced houses which were constructed in 1972-73. There are 264 properties, only a small number of which are owner occupied. The estate is isolated from shops, most services and access to employment is difficult. There is a high proportion of children, young people and lone parents living in the properties. A high proportion of the residents are unemployed.

People in Communities (PIC) grant aid has funded a Development Co-ordinator for the community, enabled the employment of an estate caretaker, and provided resources for the conversion of one of the houses to a Community House/Resource Centre, an Out of School Club and a Toddler's Play area. Under a second phase of funding, the Peulwys Estate was awarded additional resources for an extension to the Community Room at Tan y Marian School and the development of an Arts and Drama Group.

[Photo]

The Community House is a well used resource offering 25 training and educational courses for residents. It is also a venue for the local community to meet in to find out what is happening on the estate. The facility encourages dialogue amongst and participation by individual community members in the development of their estate. Similarly, the toddlers play area, which is situated at the rear of the Community House, is proving to be popular and working well. Its location gives residents peace of mind about their children's safety and security.

Gurnos & Galon Uchaf. Merthyr Tydfil

Gurnos and Galon Uchaf community comprises two large local authority housing estates on the northern outskirts of Merthyr Tydfil with a population of 7,875 and 2,037 households. Prior to award of funding under People in Communities, the community had become isolated and insular with little vision beyond the boundaries of the estate. Unemployment and benefit dependency had become the norm, with education and training being viewed as pointless. There were few community facilities or services available.

[Photo]

Immediate needs identified which were supported under the PiC programme were appointment of a Development Co-ordinator; purchase of packages to train community representatives to sit on a Partnership Board and evaluation panels; and employment of education development worker. An additional application for an education enhancement strategy at the Estate was also approved at a later stage.

This Strategy has been prepared and covers adult education/parenting skills courses, which have proved popular. The Strategy has other elements which include playgroup facilities for toddlers and young children to encourage mothers to interact with each other and their children, whilst receiving support and general parenting guidance from health visitors.]

[Photo]

Duffryn Estate, Newport

Situated in the Tredegar Park Ward on the outskirts of Newport, this Council housing estate was built in 1978 and expanded in 1993 by Chartered Housing Association. It is built around a large wooded area which became an attraction for anti-social behaviour.

The estate has a high percentage of lone parents and unemployment together with low income levels and low levels of car ownership. With absence of nearby shops and recreational facilities this has all contributed to socially disadvantaged families suffering from apathy and low self-esteem.

People in Communities grant aid has funded a Development Co-ordinator; a Community School Initiative providing education and sports facilities and provided for a Community Grants Budget which was allocated the local community to manage their own small pot of funds thereby building their confidence.

The Duffryn Estate has since been awarded additional resources for the continuation of the Community School Initiative.

Southsea and Brynteg, Wrexham

The villages of Southsea and Brynteg were developed in the 18th and 19th centuries in response to steel and mining industries. The closure of the Brymbo Steelworks in 1990 devastated the local area. The direct and indirect effects of job losses are still felt. The two villages have a population of 3,500 and a shared identity as a single community. There has been a failure by service providers to recognise the area as one community. A limited number of community facilities exist in Brynteg with a small number of voluntary groups being active, although usually in isolation of one another.

The area has been given additional resources for a Child Safety Scheme (stair gates); clerical support for the Co-ordinator; provision for community training; ICT advice and training; the production of a community newsletter; a small grants scheme; resurfacing of tennis courts, continuation of the youth worker and the revenue costs of the CCTV implementation scheme.

Grant aid from People in Communities has funded a Development Co-ordinator. It has also supported a community led "Assessment of Needs, Skills and Priorities". Following this study a Partnership Board was established to draw together and implement an action plan. Additionally this grant provided for a detached youth worker, a welfare rights and money advice officer and a GP recommended programme of physical exercise.

Sustainable Communities

- 2.6 The Sustainable Communities programme is targeted at areas where investment is being made in the housing stock. It was launched in 1999 and to date £1.25 million has been allocated to the programme to complement major housing investment and help sustain communities. A broad range of projects have been supported such as childcare facilities, mother and toddler groups, and a healthy living centre. Some examples are:

Information Technology Training – Caerau, Cardiff

Residents of the local community are being encouraged actively to participate in a learning activity with the use of new information and communication technology in order to secure employment

*Gurnos Community Ceramics Project,
Merthyr Tydfil*

The medium of art is used to build local people's confidence and self esteem. Residents of the estate are encouraged to build on their personal skills by participating in art classes.

Community Regeneration – Bettws, Bridgend

Funding has enabled residents of this community to build their confidence and develop skills for future employment. Some have already secured jobs whilst others are enrolled on advanced information technology courses.

Peulwys Sport Wall, Conwy

The funding complements the support that is available under *People in Communities* for regeneration of the Peulwys Estate. It has provided a sports wall for children and youths in an area where there are no facilities for young people.

Communities First

2.7 Building on the experience of *People in Communities*, *Communities First* will provide targeted support to the most deprived communities in Wales. The proposal was first announced on 31st March 2000 with the publication of an initial consultation paper outlining a vision for regeneration of the most disadvantaged communities in Wales. Key features of the announcement were:

- The adoption of a community centred approach.
- A non-prescriptive approach which would leave detailed implementation to local area partnerships

- Long-term funding commitment
- The creation of partnerships between the National Assembly, local authorities, a wide range of public and voluntary sector agencies and most importantly the community itself.

2.8 This first consultation paper attracted over 160 written submissions as well as input at two national seminars, 22 local authority area meetings and national and community focus groups. This body of opinion was analysed and themed to guide the second consultation phase setting out firmer proposals for the programme. The main points were:

- Support for the 100 most deprived communities.
- Option for identification of localised disadvantage disguised by more affluent neighbourhoods.
- Confirmation of a long term commitment to funding.
- A commitment to community and agency capacity building to develop the innovative ways of working required by such an approach.
- A central role for community partnerships which will produce a vision of what the community wants to achieve and a local delivery plan to achieve it.
- A benchmarking system which will monitor progress in an accessible and transparent way.

2.9 Mrs Edwina Hart, Minister for Finance, Local Government and Communities launched the second, and final consultation stage on 6 December, 2000 with the publication of “Regenerating Our Most Disadvantaged Communities: *Communities First*”. This document invited responses to a specific range of questions on issues

raised during the first consultation exercise and outlined the main characteristics of the approach which are that *Communities First* will:

- Capitalise on existing good practice and extend this, wherever appropriate.
- Involve the community in securing tangible improvements, and in developing and implementing local delivery plans.
- Include everyone (of all age groups) within the community in the process.
- Deliver outcomes which lead to sustainability.
- Strengthen partnerships that are working towards the development of healthier communities.
- Secure a pleasant and healthy environment for people to live in.
- Create sustainable and lasting solutions, with multi-agency commitment to the implementation programme.
- Represent a long-term commitment to providing resources.

4.1 Funding for the first three years of operation has been announced with the following commitment:

2001-2	2002-3	2003-4
£20.054	£28.854 million	£33.854 million

2.11 Apart from direct funding, the Communities First programme will have strong links across all of the Assembly's functions with the aim of channelling resources from other main stream funding programmes to the most deprived areas of Wales. This ensures that the Assembly's available funds for issues related to poverty and social disadvantage are targeted at areas of greatest need. The programme will also provide

a model of effective multi-agency working to serve locally determined needs. This should benefit all communities in Wales in due course.

Community Strategies

- 2.12 The Local Government Act 2000 has placed a duty on principal local authorities in England and Wales to prepare a 'community strategy' for promoting the economic, environmental and social well-being of their areas and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK.
- 2.13 Community strategies are intended to bring together all those who can contribute to the future of the local authority area to agree on the key priorities for the area and pursue them in partnership. As such, the preparation and implementation of community strategies will involve and affect not only local communities and the groups that represent them but also a wide range of organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors, with local authorities playing a key facilitating role. The National Assembly is consulting on draft guidance which will address the issues of poverty and social disadvantage.

Social Inclusion Action Plan

- 2.14 In order to have the greatest impact on poverty and social disadvantage in Wales, it is essential to have a co-ordinated, unified and strategic approach to the problems within the deprived communities. In an attempt achieve this, in February 2000 the National Assembly drew up a Social Inclusion Outline *Action Plan* setting out a series of clear objectives with expected delivery dates. Progress is detailed below:

Activity	Result
Mapping exercise to establish a baseline of Assembly policies which impact on social inclusion	Database of Assembly programmes was established.

Compilation of comprehensive directory of community development initiatives	A Web based Directory of Community Development Initiatives has been established at www.glam.ac.uk/regeneration
Set/ Develop targets and milestones for social inclusion objectives	Ongoing
Compilation of initiatives impacting on health	Directory completed and published Spring 2000. It is available on the Health Promotion in Wales web site@http://www.wales.gov.uk/directory/community/search.asp
Development of detailed monitoring and evaluation strategy for People in Communities Programme	Completed. Evaluation currently ongoing to be finalised in April 2001.
Geographical focus for Tackling poverty and Social disadvantage targeting the greatest areas of deprivation first or a more general approach acknowledging wider definitions of community	Now enacted in the Communities First Programme which selectively targets the most deprived communities. Second stage of consultation for implementation in 2001 is underway.
Rationalisation of Programmes	The recommendations of the report "Simplifying Grant Schemes which Address Social Disadvantage" are being implemented.
Indices of Deprivation to measure exclusion	The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation was published in August 2000. It is available on the Assembly's web site.
Development of Networks	Ongoing – Champions have been identified under

and Social Inclusion Champions	PIC and are to be nominated for <i>Communities First</i> areas.
Identify existing fora/alliances involved in promoting social inclusion	Ongoing element of <i>Communities First</i> consultation exercise. Consideration is being given to further development of networks.
Host informal seminar of key players in the field of social inclusion.	Two national seminars and 22 local authority area meetings have been held in relation to the <i>Communities First</i> consultation process. Furthermore, community and national focus discussion groups have been held throughout Wales.
Wales wide conference on social inclusion to launch annual report Production of Annual report which will inform progress across all of the Assembly's areas of activity and monitor progress	The conference has been deferred to take forward the <i>Communities First</i> consultation process on which a major conference was held on 31 January. Report prepared.
Dissemination of guidance and best practice in tackling social exclusion in Wales.	Communities Regeneration: A Review of Best Practice has been published and is to be widely disseminated.

Healthy Communities

2.15 There are strong links between the pattern of deprivation and the pattern of ill health and disease. Health inequalities are linked to social inequalities and social exclusion. Empowering people and community groups to take action to address their specific needs is a core strand of the community health development approach as highlighted in "*Promoting Health and Well Being*". There are a number of programmes and

initiatives available to help address health inequalities at a community level. These are:

- *The Health Promotion Voluntary Grant Scheme* offers grants to voluntary organisations which complement the work of statutory health organisations. Priority is given to projects which support approaches to health which address inequalities, deprived communities, hard to reach groups and rural and urban deprivation. These include projects working with young homeless people; ethnic groups; support for people with learning difficulties and their families and youth outreach support.
- *Local Health Alliances* are currently being developed in each local authority area to bring together multi-sector agencies to protect and improve health. All 22 local authorities now have an alliance in place in their area.
- *The Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes* looks at ways in which schools can contribute to the health of pupils, teachers and the wider community through the development of a health promoting school environment. Some local schemes are specifically targeting those schools in the most disadvantaged communities.
- *The Sustainable Health Action Research Programme (SHARP)* is an initiative which identifies effective practice in tackling poor health specifically researching the links between poor living conditions and poor health. Current projects include an investigation into the impact of participation in adult learning on the health and well being of socially excluded women in a peripheral housing estate and access to services for girls and young women.
- *The Health Impact Assessment* tool has been developed to help define the likely effect of policies on the health of the population. Health impact assessment is being developed as a means of ensuring health is taken into account during the development of policies, plans and programmes. The Assembly has made a commitment to its use and is encouraging organisations in all sectors to do the same. It will help to identify the likely effects of policies on people's health and

new opportunities to improve health as an integrated part of wider social and economic development. A health impact assessment of the Objective 1 Programme has been undertaken and the report highlights the Programme's relevance to improving health. Using the Programme's priorities as a framework, the report identifies the potential impact of the programme's component parts on people's health and thus the opportunities that exist to develop this further by way of an integrated approach to health, social inclusion and local community and economic development. A guidance document has been produced as a result of the assessment and this will help organisations and groups in all sectors to consider how action to improve people's health can be developed as part of projects put forward for support.

- Addressing the clear inequalities in health that exist between communities across Wales is central to the Assembly's national health promotion strategy *Promoting Health and Well Being* and to *Improving Health in Wales: A Plan for the NHS with its Partners*.
- A new *Inequalities in Health Fund* has been established to support new action to address inequalities in health and the factors that cause it, including inequities in access to health care services. The Fund will focus on coronary heart disease as its first year priority.
- A tool is being developed to help plan healthier communities. It aims to provide a simple planning tool through which a range of local activities can be planned, implemented monitored and evaluated in a more systematic and joined up way. This will contribute to *Community Planning* and *Communities First* and will help link up initiatives such as *Healthy Living Centres* and *Sure Start*.
- The Assembly's *Corporate Standard for Health at Work in Wales* and the UK initiatives *Revitalising Health and Safety* and *Securing Health Together* set out to raise standards and to improve health at work.

- *Healthy Living Centres* funded by the New Opportunities Fund specifically address improving health amongst the most disadvantaged communities, using new approaches to engaging local communities in partnership with other key agencies.

Primary Health Care Services

2.16 Continual efforts are being made to improve access to primary health care services. The National Assembly's *Dental Initiative* provides very real incentives for dentists to locate in areas of high need. Furthermore, an *Eyecare Initiative* is soon to be introduced. This will improve standards throughout Wales and address the particular and urgent needs of certain ethnic minority groups. To ameliorate the hardship and disincentive of charges, Wales will freeze prescription charges and provide free prescriptions and dental checks for those under 25.

Young People in Wales

4.1 The impact of social disadvantage on young people is acute and can trigger a lifetime of disengagement and exclusion from society. Almost all communities in Wales report problems experienced by young people and many communities see young people as a threat. The National Assembly has recognised the centrality of young people's issues and has therefore initiated a far-reaching review of provision for young people in Wales. An independent Advisory Group established in January 2000 reported to the National Assembly in October with the publication of its report Extending Entitlement: Supporting Young People in Wales. The National Assembly has endorsed the report's conclusions and has established a new Youth Policy Team to take the report forward in order to secure comprehensive support services for young people in Wales.

Sure Start

2.18 The Sure Start Programme in Wales was announced on 8 April 1999 and shares a common set of aims and principles with Sure Start across the UK. Sure Start helps children aged 0-3 to achieve a "flying start" to life and tackles directly social

exclusion during the earliest ages. It also links to a wider social inclusion agenda, by providing support to parents and encouraging capacity building in the most disadvantaged communities.

2.19 The programme is aimed at improving health, the ability learn, and social development of these very young children in the most deprived areas. It also links the wider social inclusion agenda, by providing support for parents and encouraging capacity building in the more disadvantaged communities.

2.20 Sure Start is a locally-based programme operating across Wales. Projects are being delivered by local partnerships, consisting of Health Authorities, Local Authorities and the Voluntary Sector who have submitted 3 year plans to the Assembly. Funding of £3 million was available in 1999-2000. A further £11 million was made available in 2000-2001, and a further of £11 million in 2001-2002.

'Arfon yr Arth', Gwynedd

This creche/nursery offers free childcare places for vulnerable families. The steering group Grwp Cymuned Caernarfon originally ran the nursery from a leisure centre in Caernarfon. Priority treatment was given to children who need more stimulation than they receive at home; children with speech/hearing problems; and children from disadvantaged backgrounds where the family has no external support. With the arrival of Sure Start funding, the group was able to negotiate the use of a house to provide a centre which opened in July 2000, the second year of the *Sure Start* programme. The new centre contains rooms for a range of age groups and caters for a breastfeeding group, parenting courses, a twins group. It also provides a base for an outreach worker and for the Special Needs Advisory Project.

The Gwersyllt Sure Start projects, Wrexham

In Wrexham a former health clinic in Gwersyllt has been developed into a Sure Start centre, offering a range of support to children and families

Parent and toddler groups run through the medium of English and Welsh

A toy library where parents can borrow good quality toys for their children

A family learning project which help parents in helping their children to learn and to move themselves into new learning opportunities

A breastfeeding project to encourage and support mothers to breastfeed their babies

The Stay Safe child safety project which provides home safety equipment for families who cannot afford it.

The Children and Youth Partnership Fund

2.21 The fund was launched on 8 April 1999 and is part of the elements of the Social Inclusion Fund. One of its primary objectives is to complement and fill in the gaps in mainstream education, leisure, health and social services. The Fund supports projects designed to promote local initiatives to lift youngsters' educational achievement and encourage them away from crime, drugs, vandalism and truancy. It is specifically aimed at encouraging children and young people to strive for independence and to develop a sense of community and personal achievement. The local schemes are being delivered partnerships, consisting of Health Authorities, Local Authorities and Voluntary Organisations who have submitted 3 year plans to the Assembly. Funding

of £3.5 million was available in 1999-2000. A further £10 million was made available in 2000-2001 and again in 2001-02.

2.22 In 2000-2001 the Fund also included £1 million for a new Play grant scheme. The Play Grant scheme aims to improve play facilities in deprived communities in Wales. The scheme was so successful that it will not be continued and a further £1m has been allocated for 2001-02.

2.23 In 2001-02 an additional £3 million will be included in the Fund for the Youth Access Initiative which until 2001-02 was undertaken by the Training and Enterprise Councils. The Youth Access Initiative aims to help young people that are under school leaving who have dropped out of mainstream education, or are in danger of doing so, to be reintegrated or to progress to other forms of learning. It also aims to engage with young people above school leaving age, to age 17, who are not in learning or employment.

Literacy and learning skills in Caerphilly

One project within Caerphilly's Children and Youth Partnership targets those most at risk of disengagement with the education system and low academic achievement. Assistance is provided with literacy and learning skills, and alternatives offered to those for whom the classroom is a barrier to learning. Intervention programmes are individually tailored to the needs of the child and monitored by a named youth worker. Advice, counselling and mentoring and parent support is provided where appropriate.

Rhyl Adventure Playground Denbighshire

One project that the Children and Youth Partnership monies in Denbighshire have been used for is to extend the services offered by the Rhyl Adventure Playground to weekends. This facility employs 6 full time staff and draws children from all parts of Rhyl and surrounding district, but in particular from disadvantaged areas. Funding will also enable modifications to be made to the existing building to provide educational facilities and to support and expand sports coaching.

2.24 The National Childcare Strategy aims to benefit children and to support working parents by ensuring good quality, affordable childcare for children aged 0-14 in every community and to develop a strategy for Wales within a UK-wide framework of Government initiatives. The Strategy is being taken forward in each local authority area by Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships who are responsible for planning the development of childcare to meet the needs of their areas. £1.4 million will be made available to Partnerships in 2001-2002. In addition £14.3 million is available between 1999 and 2003 from the New Opportunities Fund for new out of school childcare in Wales.

Substance Misuse

2.25 Substance misuse does not occur in isolation. It is tied into the social context in which an individual lives. The misuse of substances can propel individuals into damaging situations including unhealthy lifestyles, marginality from education or the labour market, homelessness and involvement in crime. Action to tackle substance misuse, therefore, needs to assume a key role in wider policy agendas of social inclusion, economic development, public health and crime and disorder.

2.26 In line with the National Assembly's theme of partnership, in May 2000 the Assembly launched its new strategy "*Tackling Substance Misuse in Wales: A Partnership Approach*". This recognises that effective partnership working can have a far greater impact on the complex and multi-faceted problem of substance misuse than disparate and fragmented activities. The strategy aims are:

Children Young People and Adults –to help children, young people and adults resist substance misuse in order to achieve their full potential in society and to promote sensible drinking in the context of a healthy lifestyle.

Families and Communities – to protect communities and families from anti social and criminal behaviour and health risks related to

substance misuse.

Treatment – to enable people with substance misuse problems to overcome them and live healthy and fulfilling lives and in the case of offenders, crime free lives.

Availability – to stifle the availability of illegal drugs in our streets and inappropriate availability of other substances.

2.27 The National Assembly has made £1.5 million available annually for a *Drug and Alcohol Treatment Fund* to help ensure that effective and timely treatment and care for substance misusers is available, particularly to those in the vulnerable groups, such as young people. This Fund will nearly double by 2003.

Education

2.28 Low levels of educational attainment is, again, linked with poverty and social disadvantage. The National Assembly is pressing ahead with several initiatives in order to raise levels of educational attainment. The main ones are listed as follows:

Special Educational Needs Action Programme

2.29 The action programme was published in 1999 and set out key measures, including the preparation of a revised Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice in Wales. This will be reinforced with UK legislation which, if enacted, will, amongst other things, strengthen the rights of children with special educational needs and their parents; provide their parents with independent advice; and bring in arrangements which will make it easier for disabled school children to be educated in main stream schools.

Early Years

- 2.30 The National Assembly has ensured that every four year old child in Wales, is able to have at least a half time education place before the start of compulsory education, provided that it is wanted by their parents

School Disaffection

- 2.31 The National Assembly has made £9.86 million available in 2001-2 under the Grants for Education Support and Training programme specifically for tackling social disadvantage issues within schools. This will be used for school based action to address truancy and behaviour difficulties.

Student Hardship

- 2.32 The National Assembly is concerned about poverty and hardship that may be preventing students and others from pursuing further and higher education. An independent group has been set up to investigate the issue of student hardship and funding in Wales. It will be reporting on the options for tackling problems inherent in the current system of student maintenance and support, including those faced by mature students and those studying on a part-time basis. The investigation will also consider how to widen participation in higher and further education, in particular from under-represented groups. The report from the group is expected in May 2001. Meanwhile, funding has been made available to enable further and higher education institutions to target financial assistance at students who would otherwise be prevented from entering or remaining in higher or further education because of financial difficulties. The amounts available for 2001-2 is £11.525 million which is due to increase to £12.025 million in the following two years.

The Educational and Training Action Plan for Wales

- 2.33 *Education and Training Action Plan for Wales*” recognises that education and training are intimately and equally related to social inclusion. It recommends tackling social exclusion by helping demotivated young people, the unemployed and those in low skill, low wage jobs to improve their prospects through post-16 learning. The plan has been endorsed by the National Assembly. The new National Council for

Education and Training for Wales, which comes into operation on 1 April 2001, will be giving particular focus to implementing life long learning measures which will help tackle social exclusion.

Community Enterprise

- 2.34 Community enterprise and co-operatives have a key part to play in tackling social disadvantage in terms of contributing to economic growth in the more deprived communities. Community businesses empower individuals and communities to take control of their working lives as well as generating jobs and encouraging people to learn new skills.
- 2.35 Many community businesses and co-operatives, particularly in deprived areas, do not have capital to back them up and have difficulty in accessing mainstream sources of finance. The Assembly is seeking to address some of these difficulties through the *Community Loan Fund for Wales*, which is a partnership between Finance Wales and HSBC Wales, using ERDF resources. The fund is aimed at helping community regeneration by encouraging entrepreneur development and improving access to capital for community based businesses. It provides financial support through the provision of loan finance for voluntary and community organisations which have been unable to raise sufficient capital from traditional sources. The fund supports economically viable, not for profit organisation which will meet an identified community need. The National Assembly is also providing funding to *Community Enterprise Wales*. The organisation represents the interests of community business and encourage their development by fostering communication among individual enterprises and between businesses and support agencies.
- 2.36 Co-operatives will soon be able to access a special fund from *Finance Wales*. This helps ensure continuation of businesses when proprietors of small firms wish to retire but have no successor available to take on the business.

Credit Unions

2.37 The National Assembly is tackling financial exclusion through support for the promotion of the *Credit Union* movement in Wales. *Credit Unions* are financial co-operatives that offer quality and low cost financial services to their members. They can be particularly beneficial to those on low incomes or those who find themselves excluded from mainstream financial institutions. They also provide a focal point for a community by bringing people together to work alongside each other for their own benefit and the benefit of the community as a whole. At present, there are 47 credit unions in Wales with over 500 credit union volunteers serving a membership of 12,000. The Assembly has contributed £450,000 for 2000-2001; £400,000 for 2001-2002. Within the next three years, *Credit Union* membership is expected to treble; the number of volunteers to double from 500 to 1000; 1200 members will be trained; and support offered to 1800 people through financial exclusion projects.

Objective 1 – Better Business.Wales

2.38 The Better Business.Wales project is intended to stimulate economic growth across the whole of the Objective 1 area mainly through improving the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises. However, the project addresses community regeneration and social exclusion by raising prosperity, creating and safeguarding existing employment and raising economic activity to improve GDP across the region. The Objective 1 Single programming Document and its associated Programme Complement recognises the importance of helping those exposed to social exclusion and disadvantage to secure and retain employment. Support will be given to projects that help to promote social inclusion and assist the re integration of excluded groups into the labour market. Support will also assist the development of new and innovative ways of engaging young people suffering from or at risk of, disaffection with activities promoting good citizenship, learning and employability. The emphasis is on developing local responses to meet local needs. The project also has clear aims to promote sustainable rural development, particularly in the agriculture sector and supports attempts to diversity the rural economy through the use of ICT.

Homelessness

- 2.39 Poverty and social deprivation can lead to homelessness, so the National Assembly is committed to eliminating the need for anyone in Wales to sleep rough. All local authorities are being encouraged to produce strategies for tackling the causes of rough sleeping and homelessness and to find ways of supporting people so that they can sustain independent living. In April 2000, the National Assembly made £3.6 million available to authorities to enable the development of homelessness strategies and specific capital projects. Alongside this funding to voluntary organisations who provide support and services to socially disadvantaged people has increased significantly from £650K in 1998-9 to £2.85 million in 2001-2.
- 2.40 The newly established *Homelessness Commission* is advising the National Assembly on implementation of the recommendations of a research report on Rough Sleeping in Wales and those of the Housing Strategy Task Group set up to consider these issues. The Commission will be publishing the result of its work in Autumn 2001.

PART 3 – UK SOCIAL INCLUSION POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

Working with the UK Government

- 3.1 Tackling social disadvantage is also a central theme of the United Kingdom government, so as well as the above National Assembly driven strategies, a number of key UK policies are being delivered in Wales. The partnership between the national and regional governments ensures that social disadvantage is being tackled on all fronts and that regional inequalities are addressed.
- 3.2 One of the key areas of intervention has been to respond to the concerns over young people discussed above. Two particular UK programmes have had an important impact on youth services in Wales:

Youth Inclusion Programme

3.3 *The Youth Inclusion Programme* is a multiple intervention package for 40-50 of the most at risk 13-16 year olds in over 100 of the most deprived neighbourhoods in England and Wales. The aim of the programme is to ensure that the young people most at risk of becoming involved in crime are included in mainstream activities. Support is offered to help them overcome a variety of social problems, such as access to after school clubs, sports and the arts, as well as education and training, mentoring and addiction treatment. To date, three areas in Wales are benefiting from the programme. These are Llanrumney, Cardiff; Gurnos, Merthyr Tydfil and Caia Park, Wrexham. They will each receive around £150,000 over 2 years for activities to reduce arrests reported crime, levels of truancy and exclusion from school. The Programme is being managed and funded by the Youth Justice Board, with additional funding from the Crime Reduction Programme. During the summer further financial support was provided for 'Splash' activities aimed at keeping young people away from crime during the school holidays.

On Track

3.4 'On Track' forms part of the Crime Reduction Programme for England and Wales and is aimed at children aged 4-12 who are at risk of developing offending behaviour later in life because of social exclusion factors and poor parenting. It is based on a successful American model that advocates a multiple intervention approach. The scheme builds on and links with existing services and initiatives for children and families and calls for extensive inter-agency working. Projects will be evaluated in depth to draw out best practice examples on preventing delinquent behaviour. Two areas in Wales which experience high levels of deprivation –communities in Rhondda Cynon Taff and Bridgend - competed successfully for funding of £1 million each over the life of the project for implementation of agreed delivery plans.

Welfare to Work programmes

3.5 Central to ending social disadvantage is enabling the return to full time work of sections of the population which are unemployed, especially those who have been economically inactive for a long time. Many barriers exist to returning to work often,

related to decline in confidence, skills gaps and the financial barriers of a job start. Specific help has been made available to key groups through the *New Deal* programmes. These successful programmes have helped thousands of people in Wales return to permanent employment.

New Deal for Young People (18-24s) (up to end of November 2000)

- Nearly 35,500 young people in Wales have joined the *New Deal* since it was launched in the West Wales Pathfinder in January 1998 (6% of GB starts) and around 6,600 are still on the programme.
- Over 17,700 young people have secured jobs (7% of GB jobs), of which over 13,800 or 78%, have been sustained for 13 weeks or more. (7% of GB sustained jobs).
- At the latest count (end of November 2000) some 2,600 young people were undertaking education, training and work experience under *New Deal* options, over 2,700 were receiving guidance and support in the *New Deal Gateway* and over 1,180 were being provided with further job search help in the *New Deal* follow-through.
- 5,590 disabled people have joined the programme, of whom almost 1,600 have secured a sustained unsubsidised job and a further 520 are currently improving their employability in an option.
- Over 800 people from an ethnic minorities been included in the programme, of whom some 210 have secured a sustained, unsubsidised job and a further 60 are currently improving their employability.
- Since the *New Deal* was launched throughout Wales, there has been a 74% fall in the number of 18-24 year olds unemployed and claiming the Job Seeker's Allowance for 6 months or more (from 6,555 in April 1998 to 1,687 in November 2000).

- 6,312 employers in Wales have signed-up to support the *New Deal* up to the end of November 2000.

New Deal for 25 plus (Long Term Unemployed) (up to end of November 2000)

- 16,920 long-term unemployed people in Wales have joined the *New Deal* since it was launched throughout Wales in June 1998 and nearly 3,200 are still on the programme.
- Over 3,720 people have secured jobs (of which over 3,110 or 84%, have been sustained for 13 weeks or more).
- At the latest count (end of November 2000) nearly 440 people were undertaking education and training, over 2,570 were receiving guidance and support in the Advisory Interview Process and almost 200 were being provided with further job search help in the *New Deal* Follow-through.
- 4,230 disabled people have joined the programme, of whom nearly 440 have secured a sustained unsubsidised job.
- 350 people from an ethnic minority have joined the programme, of whom 40 have secured a sustained unsubsidised job.
- Since the *New Deal* was launched throughout Wales, there has been a 39% fall in the number of people aged 25 and over who have been unemployed and claiming the Job Seeker's Allowance for 2 years or more (from 8,401 in June 1998 to 5,156 in November 2000).

New Deal for Lone Parents (up to end of November 2000)

There are two data sources for the *New Deal for Lone Parents*:

1. Phases one and two: from the launch of the prototype *New Deal for Lone Parents* in Cardiff and the Vale (July 1997) to full implementation across Wales (October 1998):

- Over 2,300 lone parents were interviewed and nearly 2,200 agreed to participate on the programme (94% of interviewees).
- During this initial stage, over 780 lone parents entered jobs (36% of those agreeing to participate).

2. Phase three : since full implementation in October 1998 (equating to the data published by DfEE in Statistical releases):

- 11,940 lone parents have attended an initial interview. Of these, over 10,990 (92%) have so far agreed to join the caseload to receive the support and guidance to help them into jobs.
- 4,610 lone parents have found employment (42% of those agreeing to participate), with the majority remaining on the *New Deal* to receive in-work support from their Personal Adviser.
- Almost 370 lone parents with a disability and 90 lone parents from an ethnic minority have agreed to participate in the *New Deal*.
- In total, from July 1997 to November 2000, nearly 5,400 lone parents have now secured jobs through the *New Deal*.

New Opportunities Fund

3.10 The New Opportunities Fund is a Lottery Distributor created to distribute grants to health, education and environment projects across the UK. By supporting sustainable projects the Fund aims to improve people's quality of life, address the needs of those most disadvantaged in society, encourage community participation and complement

relevant local and national strategies and programmes. The current initiatives launched in 1999 and 2000 include Healthy Living Centres, Out of School Hours Learning and Childcare, Community Access to Lifelong Learning and Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities.

3.11 Within Wales the Fund's staff work in partnership with the National Assembly and other organisations within the public, private and voluntary sectors to ensure that the its programmes are set firmly within the Welsh policy context.

3.12 To date, grants of over £8million have been allocated to projects in Wales.

St Mellons Healthy Living Centre

£1.3million was recently announced for the St Mellons Healthy Living Centre in Cardiff. The Centre aims to improve the health and well-being of local people through a coalition of community health activities and services working in partnership. The project plans to work with local residents to provide information and activities centred on issues of nutrition, the environment, play, youth work and community health development.

3.13 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is currently consulting on the Fund's next round of programmes. The National Assembly for Wales is in discussion with DCMS on the priorities for Wales. It is expected that the new programmes will be launched late in 2001.

Post Offices

3.14 It is generally accepted that post offices have an important role to play in tackling social exclusion. In recognition of this the Prime Minister asked the Performance and Innovation Unit at the Cabinet Office to produce a report on the future of the post office network. This was published in June 2000 and the UK Government accepted all 24 of its recommendations. It gave a commitment to work with the Post Office

and the devolved administrations to build a modernised network and to ensure that people in all parts of the country should continue to have access to Post Office Counter services and that post offices should continue to sustain communities which have access to few other shops.

3.15 Among the Report's recommendations was an undertaking to support the rural network. The UK Government has set aside £40 million to prevent avoidable closures of rural post offices. 'Putting Wales First: *A Partnership Agreement for the People of Wales* set out a commitment to take measures to protect post offices, shops and other businesses that supply vital services to rural communities.

3.16 A further commitment was to the establishment of a new company in partnership with High Street Banks to be called a Universal Bank. This will be jointly owned by the Post Office and the High Street banks and will provide banking services for people who do not have access to a bank account. These people are typically on low incomes; find banks intimidating; and are excluded from banking services because they lack appropriate proof of identity or do not have a good enough credit rating.

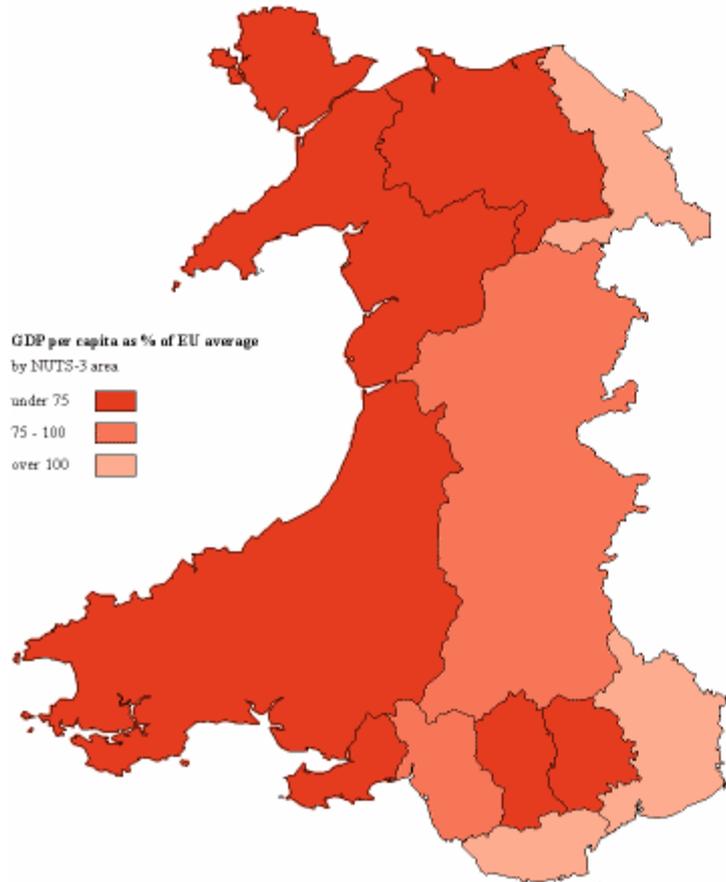
PART 4 – CONCLUSION

4.1 This first National Assembly Annual report on Social Exclusion in Wales illustrates the extent of poverty and social disadvantage within Welsh communities. It also demonstrates how the National Assembly is turning its commitment to tackle these problems into reality through focused actions. The aim is to eradicate poverty and social exclusion to achieve the vision of a Better Wales.

4.2 Expenditure on those programmes which contribute in some way to making deprived areas of Wales more prosperous has increased significantly since the advent of the National Assembly. There are plans to continue targeting the Assembly's resources at those areas most in need in an attempt to break the cycle of poverty and social deprivation.

4.3 The problems are complex and so are the solutions. However, the launch later this year of the Communities First programme with the identification of the areas to be included in its initial phase, will mark the start of a concentrated effort to tackle the wide ranging problems. This unique, long term, grass roots approach should, for the first time in Wales's history, directly address some of the social and economic factors which have bedevilled too many communities for too long. Apart from Communities First programme funding, Communities First areas will also benefit from European Regional Development Fund Objective 1 monies and resources from other National Assembly main stream programmes and those of other public agencies. This joined up and inclusive approach will have a major impact on raising the aspirations of those living in these communities and provide them with opportunities to improve their lives.

Fig 1 – Annex A



- over the three years 1994-96, per capita GDP in Wales was around four fifths of the average for the EU as a whole;
- in West Wales and the Valleys, GDP per head was under 75% of the EU average;
- GDP per head across the UK as a whole was 98% of the EU average.

GDP measures the income generated within an area rather than that accruing to residents. As an indicator of living standards, therefore, it has limitations as it takes no account of transfer payments, such as pensions, or people commuting out of their area of residence. An alternative measure is household disposable income which does take account of these factors so reducing variation between areas. The table below includes the latest available household disposable income data for the former counties. More recent figures will become available later in the year.

NUTS-3 area	GDP per capita as % of EU(15) average		Household disposable income per capita as % of UK average	
	1994-96		County	1995
Central Valleys	64		Mid Glamorgan	80
Isle of Anglesey	67		Gwent	90
Conwy and Denbighshire	68		Dyfed and Powys	92
South West Wales	69		West Glamorgan	92
Gwent Valleys	70		Clwyd	94
Gwynedd	74		Gwynedd	96
Swansea	74		South Glamorgan	101
Powys	76		Wales	91
Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot	84			
Monmouthshire and Newport	104			
Cardiff and The Vale of Glamorgan	105			
Flintshire and Wrexham	106			
Wales	82			