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Welsh Assembly Government Wales Spatial Plan

An Investment Review Briefing Note

Arts Council of Wales | March 2010



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru
Arts Council of Wales

Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
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1. Introduction

This paper forms part of the background briefing material to the Arts Council of Wales's Investment Review. Although focused largely on our revenue funded organisations (RFOs), the Investment Review provides an opportunity to look at broader policy and funding issues. This paper considers some of the relevant issues from the Wales Spatial Plan.

The Wales Spatial Plan, its reach and its delivery is having an increasing impact on the allocation of public funding across sectors across Wales. Welsh Assembly Government Ministers are integral to the design and implementation of the Plan, and the groups of people involved in its planning and delivery are increasingly being consulted on wider Government policy. The Arts Council is working to ensure that its own strategies are consistent with the Wales Spatial Plan, its future delivery and its spend.

This paper briefly outlines the status and purpose, reach and delivery, themes and priorities of the Plan. It also contains information on area groups; the national vision and inter-relationships of regions, primary settlements, hubs and clusters; the vision statements and priorities recently issued by each area group.

2. The Wales Spatial Plan: People, Places, Futures

Background

The Wales Spatial Plan was adopted by the National Assembly for Wales in 2004. The plan was updated in 2008, in line with the *One Wales* document, (the joint agreement for fair government of Wales published by the Labour party and Plaid Cymru in June 2007).

The Plan spans a broad agenda over twenty years. Its driving force is one of sustainable development for Wales, across social, economic and environmental contexts. The purpose of the Plan is to ensure that what is done in the public, private and third sectors in Wales is integrated and sustainable, and that actions in different parts of Wales support each other and jointly progress towards a shared vision for Wales.

The overarching principles of the Plan are:

- to make sure that decisions are taken with regard to their impact beyond the immediate sectoral or administrative boundaries, and that the core values of sustainable development govern everything we do
- to set the context for local and community planning
- to influence where money is spent by the Welsh Assembly Government through an understanding of the roles of and interactions between places
- to provide a clear evidence base for the public, private and third sectors to develop policy and action.

Reach and delivery

The process through which the Spatial Plan is intended to function is that it:

- **produces evidence** - using a broad range of evidence to understand the different needs of different people and places
- **shapes policy** - ensuring government policies are sensitive to place and responsive to the needs of people, communities and businesses in different parts of Wales
- **ensures better engagement and governance** - providing a framework within which public, private and third sector service providers can work together to prioritise actions and design solutions
- **informs plans** - ensuring that the plans through which solutions are delivered have regard to regional and national spatial priorities
- **aligns investment** - ensuring public investment is made in the places and services where it is most needed.

The Plan is being delivered through six Area Strategies, strategies which also take into account the Assembly's statutory Sustainable Development Scheme.

Each Area Strategy is developed by cross-cutting Spatial Plan Area Groups which meet quarterly and which represent health, education, equality, business, voluntary, housing and environment sectors. Informing these strategies are also local development plans, community strategies and the

work of Local Service Boards (the purpose of Local Services Boards is to deliver benefits for local people through strengthening joint working across all public services).

The six Areas

The six Areas are intentionally loosely delineated in order to encourage cross-area discussion and partnerships. They are:

- North East Wales – Border and Coast
- North West Wales – Eryri a Môn
- Central Wales
- Pembrokeshire – The Haven
- Swansea Bay – Waterfront and Western Valleys
- South East Wales – Capital Region

Area strategies are being devised to look outwards, to other areas and beyond Wales.

The lead Minister for the Wales Spatial Plan is the Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery. Each Area Group is also led by an Assembly Minister. The lead Ministers are encouraging the Area Groups to provide joint responses to consultations on Welsh Assembly Government policies, and for policy officials to engage actively with the Groups. For example, the Groups have agreed spatial inputs to European Structural Funds.

Themes and priorities

In July 2008, each of the six Area Groups published a vision statement and related priorities. A statistical profile of each of the Areas has also now been researched and was published in November 2008.

The profiles map statistics relating to environmental, geographical, heritage, population, age, health, Welsh language, employment, and education aspects of each Area. The Area Groups have identified the centres likely to form the focus for each region's future development.

From 2009 there is scheduled to be a Spatial Plan Annual Report, this will indicate progress and give an update on the priorities of each Area. Each Area is currently working up a delivery framework for realising the Area visions and priorities.

There are five overlapping themes that shape the priorities and delivery frameworks for each Area, these are:

- **Building sustainable communities** - aims to reduce inequalities between communities; to retain distinctiveness; to increase housing, essential services and job opportunities
- **Promoting a sustainable economy** - aims for an all Wales approach to economic development; to build an innovative economy that utilises and develops peoples' existing skills and that adds to the standard of living and working environment; to invest in new employment sites; to facilitate cross-provision of skills by partners, particularly in ICT
- **Valuing our environment** - aims to preserve and enhance natural and historic assets; to address the consequences of climate change; to plan for a low carbon future
- **Achieving sustainable accessibility** - aims to facilitate the engagement of public service providers with transport planners; to reduce the need to travel through the co-location of amenities
- **Respecting distinctiveness** - aims to build and advocate a cohesive and distinctive identity that is outward-looking; to induce a sense of place; to promote innovative leadership

Placing the arts within this policy context

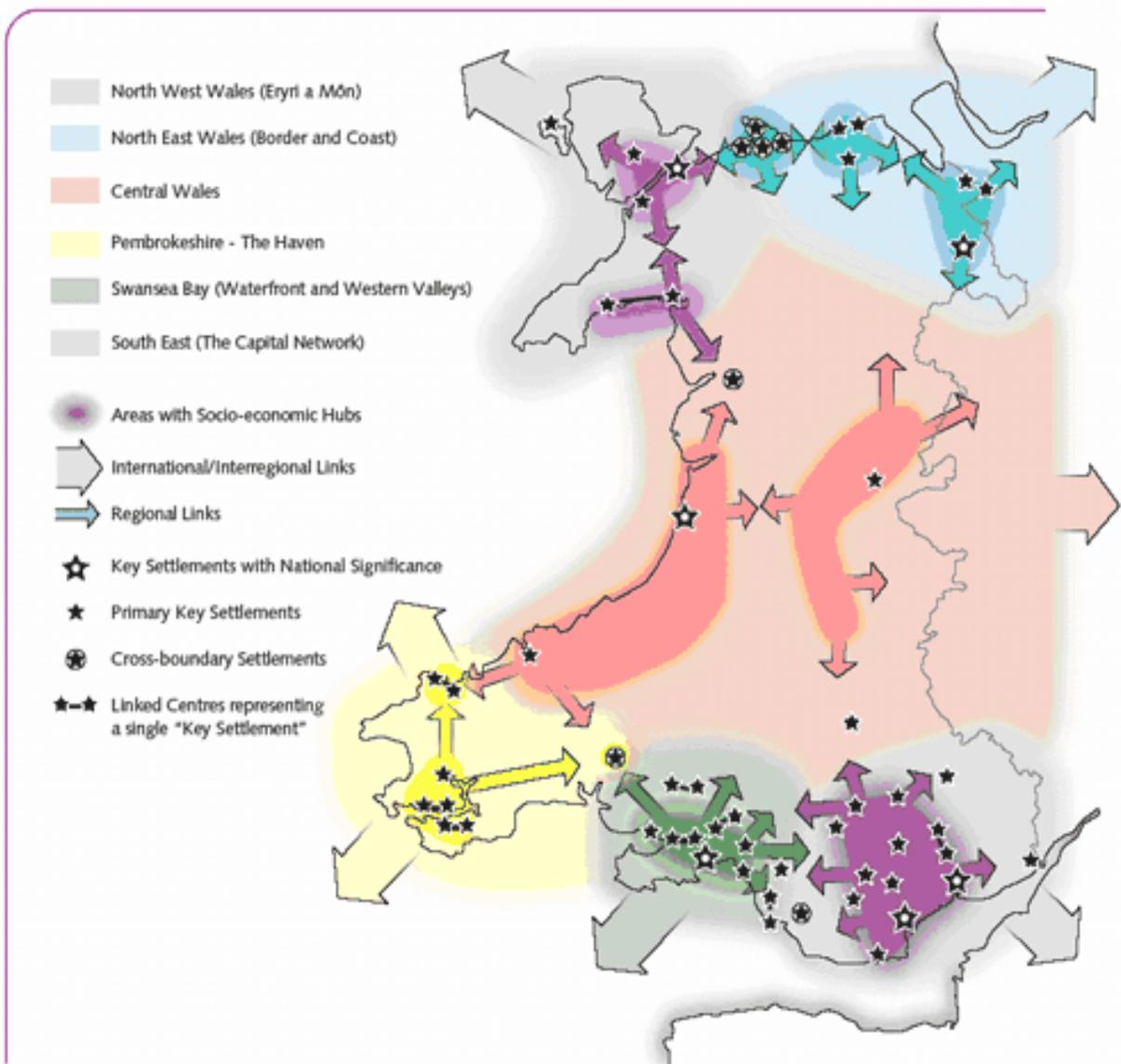
The theme **Respecting Distinctiveness** is the one in the Plan that specifically identifies the arts as playing a vital role in the social and economic life of Wales. There is recognition through this theme that the arts can contribute to creating both a sense of identity and a sense of community, and that festivals and special events have the potential to stimulate tourism and niche markets and thus become economic drivers.

However, the arts barely feature in either the vision statements or the priorities that have been published for each of the six Areas. This argues for a concerted drive on the part of the Arts Council to become more integrated into the process.

3. The national vision of the Wales Spatial Plan

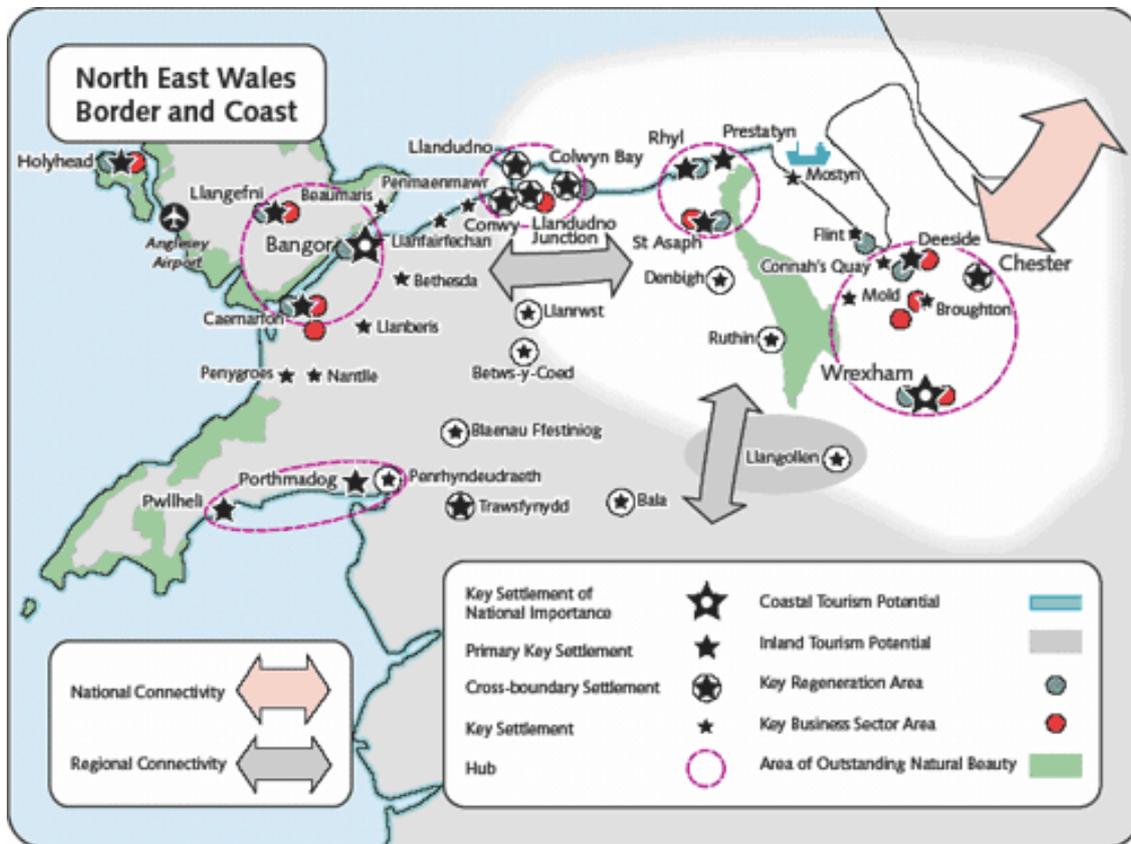
It is noted that the six Areas cross and dissect the twenty-two Local Authorities. This is felt to be advantageous however, particularly in terms of encouraging collaborative research and planning.

The National Vision



The primary settlements, hubs and clusters as illustrated in the national Spatial Plan map are set out in the following pages.

5. North East Wales – Border and Coast

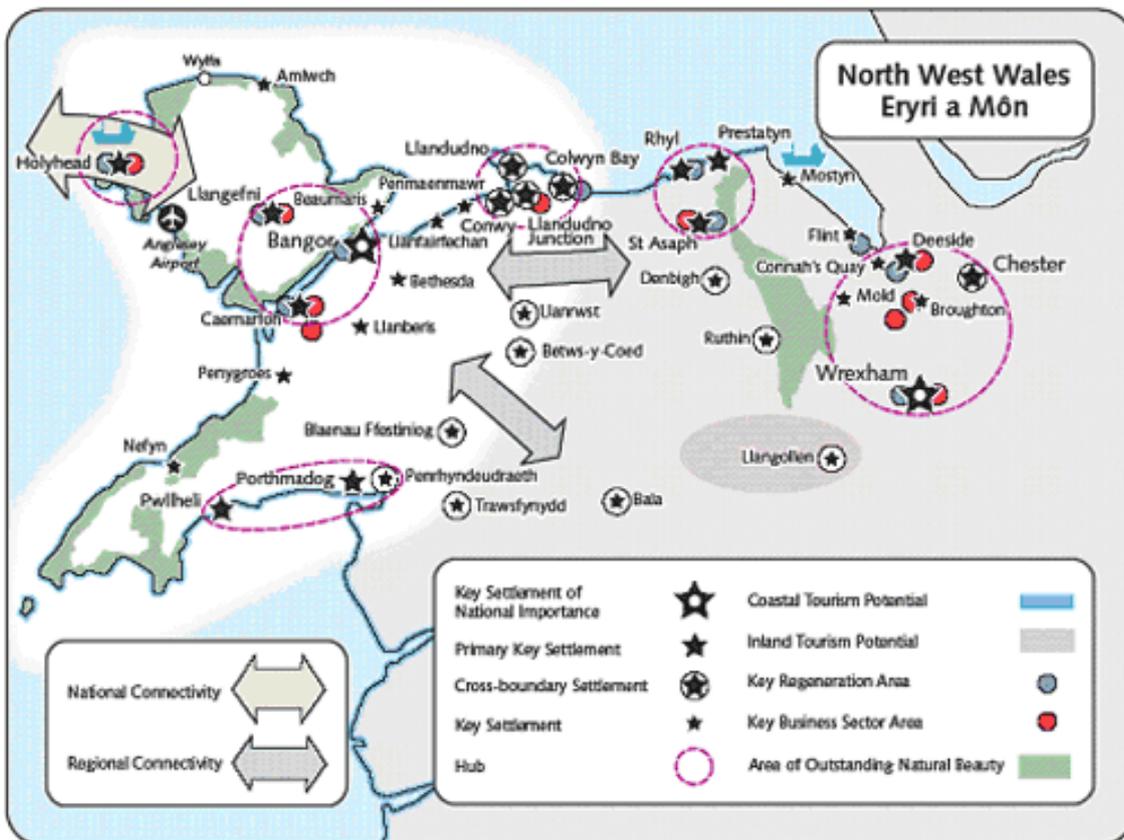


The future prosperity of the Area is closely linked with that of North West England, as such, the focus identified for new investment and development is the strategic hub of Wrexham-Deeside-Chester. There will also be a development focus on the strategic coastal hubs in which economic inactivity rates currently remain high.

Specific aims and priorities identified include:

- Housing
- Maintaining the competitiveness of the manufacturing sector
- Need to distinguish the different market roles of hubs, roles include the manufacturing, high level services, tourism and leisure, processing industries
- Improving professional and financial services, currently a structural weakness in the Area
- Improving the quality of tourism facilities and reducing seasonality
- Diversifying coastal and mountain economies and improving the leisure and tourism images for these areas
- Adapting to the impact of climate change, particularly the effect on and protection of buildings
- Improving the transport strategy with England and Ireland, on which the cross-border economy is reliant.

6. North West Wales – Eryri a Môn

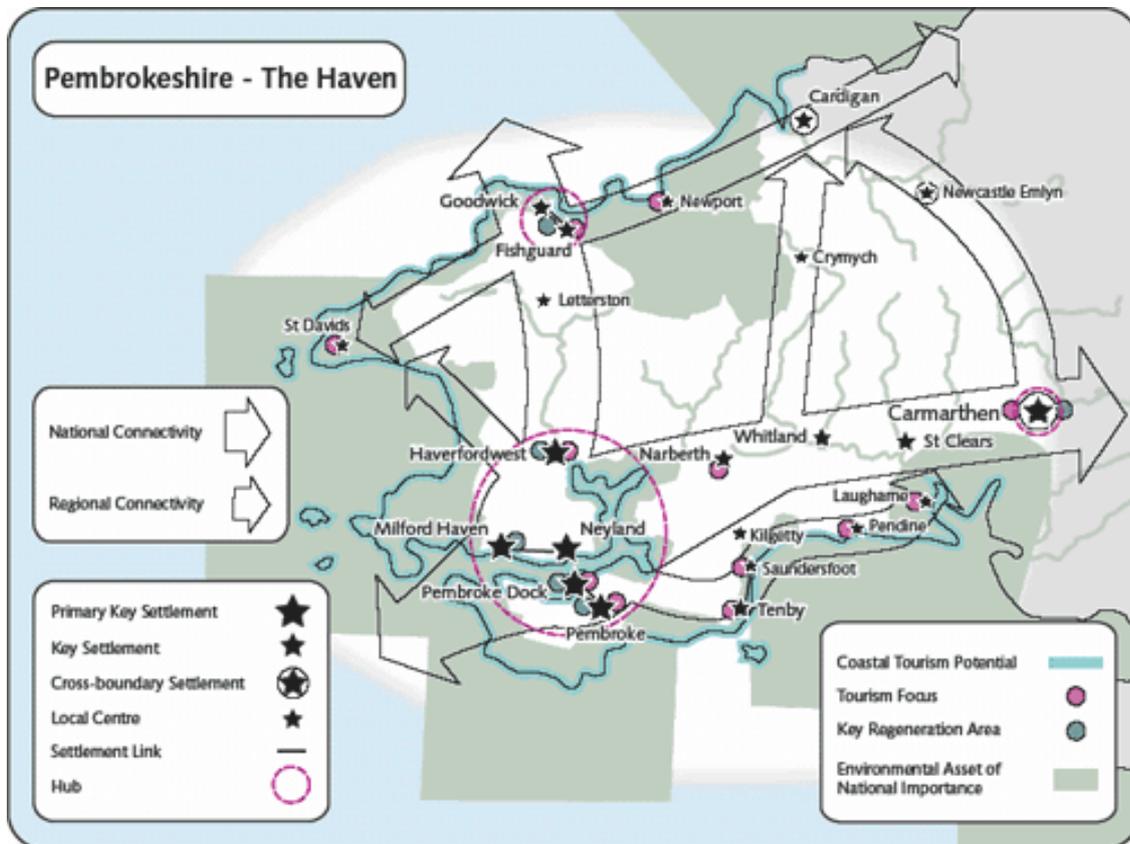


The Area is recognised as having a strong cultural identity, particularly as it is home to generations of Welsh speaking communities. The Area includes four of Wales' five world heritage sites and enjoys a vibrant social enterprise sector and good levels of educational attainment.

Specific aims and priorities identified include:

- Encouraging healthy inward migration
- Ensuring that Menai and Llandudno are functioning to the best of their potential (the recent enhancement of Venue Cymru is noted)
- Increasing vocational training and re-skilling
- Adequate and affordable housing
- Creating knowledge-based jobs, developing the creative industries, tourism sector, technology/geo-sciences, in order to improve low economic activity
- Enhancing the built environment, including tourism facilities
- Developing a coastal defence strategy
- Assisting agriculture, horticulture and forestry to adapt to a changing market
- Improving the free movement of goods, people and information through investment in key roadways and railways
- Developing air travel opportunities with links to elsewhere in the UK and beyond

7. Pembrokeshire – The Haven



The Area is particularly focused around its unique environment, maritime access and internationally important energy and tourism opportunities.'

Specific aims and priorities identified include:

- Maximising the maritime assets and proximity to Ireland
- Developing a year-round tourism sector, including cultural links with Ireland
- Developing the three strategic hubs – Haverfordwest, Milford Haven and Neyland, Pembroke and Pembroke Dock
- Regenerating many of the coastal town centres
- Designing and planning health and social care services more effectively
- Improving business performance and profitability in order to attract investment in niche sectors
- Establishing the Area as an internationally recognised centre for renewable and low-carbon energy sources by developing an energy strategy
- Further developing vocational options in education
- Responding positively to the demand for language skills arising from increased in-migration
- Increasing outdoor activities and active participation of communities
- Improving transport options
- Improving the take-up of ICT by businesses

8. South East Wales – Capital Region



The coastal zone of the Area is recognised as being the main economic driver and its competitiveness needs to be sustained in order to raise the full economic potential of the Area.

Specific aims and priorities identified include:

- Linking all Areas to Cardiff or Newport by a suitable, high-capacity transport system; transport links to SW England also need to be improved
- Developing the concept of the Valleys Regional Park in order to increase tourism and community values
- Acknowledging Cardiff's role as the key international and economic driver
- Securing further affordable housing development
- Developing higher value services and building the capacity to seize investment opportunities
- Supporting education/improving capacity for modern apprenticeship schemes
- Improving investment in the most deprived localities and progressing the international business park initiative
- Improving access to sustainable energy sources
- Developing culturally sensitive support for professional development
- Developing wildlife areas, public rights of way and cycle paths
- Considering road charging in order to reduce congestion
- Embracing the presence and contribution of minority ethnic communities

10. Alignment with Arts Council Plans and Strategies

Our Corporate Plan talks about the Arts Council's relationship with the Welsh Assembly Government. It draws an explicit link between the Wales Spatial Plan and the Arts Council's Lottery Capital strategy. However, it also acknowledges the importance of delivery across the wider range of Welsh Assembly Government priorities.

We recently commissioned an external review of the impact of our Lottery Capital programme from consultancy, Arts Service. (The report will be published on the Arts Council's web site in May 2010.) Our current Lottery capital programme continues until 2011/2012. The Arts Service report will therefore inform Council's preparation of a new Lottery Capital strategy.

The report notes the close correlation between the development areas identified in the Spatial Plan, and the investment of Lottery Capital (see Appendix 2). The report also makes the connection with the Arts Council's decision to target Arts Outside Cardiff funds on a carefully designated network of strategic centres.

Overall, the report observes:

"There is general consensus that investment has been well-targeted and that it has addressed strategic priorities well, both in terms of geography and artform needs... Where new buildings have been created (for example, Riverfront, Wales Millennium Centre, Theatr Brycheiniog, Galeri) there is a strong consensus that they have made an invaluable contribution to the existing infrastructure and addressed gaps in provision...

...the investment has provided a network of venues and galleries better able to present a variety of work of high quality and to present work to a higher technical standard."

The preparation of a new Lottery Capital strategy, alongside the timetable for the Investment Review, gives Council an ideal opportunity to ensure that grant-in-aid and Lottery funding offer a 'joined up' approach to the delivery of longer-term strategic priorities. It will also be important for the Arts Council's activities to be more explicitly integrated into the work programmes of the Area groups who are progressing the Wales Spatial Plan.

Appendix 1

Organisations currently involved in the Spatial Plan Area Groups

Central Wales

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
Carmarthenshire County Council
Central Wales Economic Forum
Ceredigion County Council
Coleg Meirion Dwyfor
Conwy County Borough Council
Countryside Council for Wales
Denbighshire County Council
Environment Agency
Equality and Human Rights Coalition
Gwynedd Council
Jobcentre Plus
Powys County Council
Rural Housing Authorities Network
Snowdonia National Park Authority
South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium
Taith
Tourism Partnership Mid Wales
Trades Union Congress
Trafnidiaeth Canolbarth Cymru - The Mid Wales Transport Consortium
University of Wales, Aberystwyth
Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Wales Environment Link
Wales Social Partners Unit
Welsh Assembly Government
Welsh Language Board

North East Wales - Border and Coast

Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust
Conwy County Borough Council
Countryside Council for Wales
Denbighshire County Council
Environment Agency
Equality and Human Rights Coalition
Flintshire County Council
Flintshire Local Health Board
Jobcentre Plus
Llandrillo College
North East Wales Institute of Higher Education
North Wales Economic Forum
North West England Regional Assembly

Taith
Tourism Partnership North Wales
Trades Union Congress
Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Wales Environment Link
Wales Social Partners Unit
Welsh Assembly Government
Wrexham County Borough Council

North West Wales - Eryri a Môn

Anglesey County Council
Coleg Menai
Conwy County Borough Council
Countryside Council for Wales
Environment Agency
Equality and Human Rights Coalition
Gwynedd Council
Jobcentre Plus
Magnar North
Mantell Gwynedd
Menter Mon (Social Enterprise representative)
National Public Health Service – North West Wales
North Wales Economic Forum
North West Wales NHS Trust
Snowdonia National Park Authority
Snowdonia Society
Tourism Partnership North Wales
Trades Union Congress
Taith
University of Wales, Bangor
Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Wales Environment Link
Wales Social Partners Unit
Welsh Assembly Government
Welsh Local Government Association

Pembrokeshire - The Haven

Carmarthenshire College
Carmarthenshire County Council
Countryside Council for Wales
Environment Agency
Equality and Human Rights Coalition
Jobcentre Plus
Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion Local Health Board
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
Pembrokeshire College
Pembrokeshire County Council

Pembrokeshire County Voluntary Council
South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium
Trades Union Congress
Wales Environment Link
Wales Social Partners Unit
Welsh Assembly Government

South East Wales - The Capital Network

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
Bridgend County Borough Council
Caerphilly County Borough Council
Cardiff County Council
Countryside Council for Wales
Environment Agency
Equality and Human Rights Coalition
Jobcentre Plus
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Monmouthshire County Council
Newport City Council
Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council
South East Wales Regional Housing Forum
South East Wales Strategic Planning Group
South East Wales Transport Alliance
Torfaen County Borough Council
Trades Union Congress
Vale of Glamorgan County Council
Valleys Regional Park Partnership
Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Wales Environment Link
Wales Social Partners Unit
Welsh Assembly Government departments
Welsh Language Board
Welsh Local Government Association

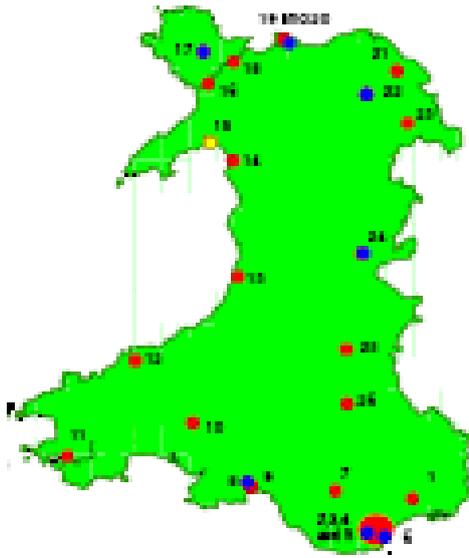
Swansea Bay - Waterfront & Western Valleys

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot Local Health Boards
Bridgend County Borough Council
Carmarthenshire County Council
City and County of Swansea
Countryside Council for Wales
Environment Agency
Equality and Human Rights Coalition
Jobcentre Plus
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Powys County Council

South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium
Swansea University
Trades Union Congress
Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Wales Environment Link
Wales Social Partners Unit
Welsh Assembly Government

Appendix 2

National Infrastructure of Key Venues and Galleries that have received Major Capital Funding in Wales



Key:

● Venues

● Galleries/Craft Centres

● Other

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. The Riverfront | 2. Chapter | 3. Bay Art |
| 4. Sherman Cymru | 5. WMC | 6. Craft in the Bay |
| 7. Valleys Kids | 8. Glynn Vivian Gallery | 9. Grand Theatre Swansea |
| 10. The Lyric Theatre | 11. Torch Theatre | 12. Theatr Mwldan |
| 13. Aberystwyth AC | 14. Theatr Ardudwy | 15. Ty Newydd |
| 16. Galeri Caernarfon | 17. Kyffin Williams Gallery | 18. Theatr Gwynedd |
| 19. Oriel Mostyn | 20. Venue Cymru | 21. Theatr Clwyd |
| 22. Ruthin Craft Centre | 23. Stwit Arts Centre | 24. Oriel Davies Gallery |
| 25. Wyeside Arts Centre | 26. Theatr Brycheiniog | |



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Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Cynllun Gofodol Cymru
Nodyn Briffio Adolygiad Buddsoddi
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