

# Enterprise and Business Committee

## Inquiry into Town Centre Regeneration

### Evidence from British Waterways



**British  
Waterways  
Dyfrffyrdd  
Prydain**

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### Evidence from British Waterways September 2011

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. British Waterways is a not-for-profit public corporation which cares for the network of canals, rivers, docks and reservoirs across Britain. It owns and manages 2,615 km of navigable inland waterways in the UK of which 75% are canals. It is currently accountable to the Department of the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs in England and Wales and to the Scottish Government (Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change) in Scotland.
- 1.2. British Waterways in Wales has a Wales Advisory Group, chaired by its Wales Board Member and Vice Chair John Bridgeman CBE TD, to assist it in responding to the needs and priorities of Wales. British Waterways also sponsors the Assembly Government All Party Waterways Group, which Nick Ramsay AM chairs, and contributes to the National Access Forum for Wales, the Heritage Environment Group and the Access to Inland Waters Round Table among other groups.
- 1.3. Subject to the passage of the Public Bodies Bill, the canals and rivers in the care of British Waterways in England and Wales will transfer to a new waterways charity in 2012. The grant currently received from Defra will then become a contract with the new waterways charity. Canals in Scotland were devolved to the Scottish Government in 1999 and will remain in the public sector.

- 1.4. The charity's all Wales body, similar to the National Trust's national committee, will take the place of the BW Wales Advisory Group. Positions within that body are expected to be advertised shortly. Entrusting the waterways of Wales into the new waterways charity offers the opportunity for a new and even stronger relationship with the Welsh Government.
- 1.5. The new charity will continue to work with a broad range of public, private and voluntary sector partners, as British Waterways does at present, to protect and find new uses for this nation's historic waterways.
- 1.6. The last decade has seen a widely acknowledged waterway 'renaissance' with canals being reinvented as agents of rural, town and inner city regeneration whilst offering some of the greenest and most accessible recreational and tourism facilities available in the U.K.
- 1.7. In Wales the canals comprise all of one and part of a second World Heritage Site. There are 219 listed structures in our ownership in Wales. That industrial heritage also means they are well represented in areas of deprivation.

## **2. British Waterways' experience**

- 2.1. In 1989 British Waterways was given the powers to develop our property dowry, trade it and reinvest the receipts back into the waterways of the UK. Our dowry comprises:
  - Legacy brownfield land inherited at the time of nationalisation;
  - Legacy land in use for freight and other waterway purposes at the time of nationalisation but since taken out of such use; and
  - Land transferred as dowry assets in connection with the transfer to BW of responsibility for waterway or dock infrastructure by other public bodies.
- 2.2. That property dowry now provides income that makes a significant contribution to the continued maintenance of the waterways. It will also now provide an endowment fund for the new waterways charity.
- 2.3. British Waterways is non-profit distributing and all the income we earn is reinvested into the waterways. Prior to the recession BW had outperformed the IPD index over 5 consecutive years despite the make-up of its portfolio differing significantly both in sector weighting and individual assets. It has also outperformed the IPD Regeneration Index over period.

2.4. Where regeneration or renewal is taking place our influence ranges from:

- BW itself delivering;
- Delivery through our partnerships and joint ventures;
- Working with third parties seeking a mutually beneficial investment in our property, for example as public realm, including works in kind and volunteering;
- Influencing masterplans and/or planning briefs;
- Influencing policy at a national, regional or local level and using our abilities as a neighbour and/or consultee;
- Providing a resource upon or through which others deliver regeneration, particularly social regeneration.

2.5. Our commercial activities often enable us to act as a bridge between the public and private sectors. Prior to the recession we calculated that our property based activities generated £50m in public benefits per annum of which £15m were additional to those that would have been delivered by the private sector (based on providing public access to the waterside, taking full advantage of the uplift in values enjoyed by waterside properties, quality of life outcomes and that 20% of the schemes we are active in would not otherwise have happened; a point accepted by the Treasury during their Operational Efficiency Review in 2009).

2.6. All of our existing property assets will be vested in the new waterways charity for the benefit of our two nations.

### **3. What approaches have been followed to successfully deliver and finance the regeneration of town centres in Wales?**

3.1. British Waterway's land holdings in Wales are limited. However The Townscape Heritage Initiative, delivered by the Heritage Lottery Fund in conjunction with Local Authorities, has been seen to make an impact on the quality of premises and facilities in town centres. An example is Cefn Mawr within the buffer zone of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site. The benefits have not just been physical as the programme has also developed heritage skills and an awareness of and pride in the cultural origins of the town within the local community.

3.2. In parallel Cadw has been undertaking a Characterisation Study to describe and explain the historic character of the town to give a focus to local distinctiveness and to serve as a tool for the sustainable management of the historic environment. This work will be used to inform and shape the conservation and regeneration of Cefn Mawr

and the wider area. By recognizing that the character is fundamental to local distinctiveness and pride of place it will help to improve the quality of planning advice and masterplans.

- 3.3. Physical improvements can only ever be part of the solution.  
Development of community capacity and aspiration has to go hand in hand with those improvements as does promotion to bring the changes to the attention of a wider audience.
- 3.4. In Cefn Mawr the community's wish is to see their town's proximity to the tourism magnet of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct exploited as the catalyst for inward investment and jobs. Development of the adjacent and now closed chemical works, which also housed the Plas Kynaston foundry that created the aqueduct, presents the opportunity to extend the canal from Trevor to within a few minutes of the High Street. The canal would create both a physical and perceptual (and intellectual) link with the World Heritage Site bringing passing trade from visitors and a new market for the existing pubs, shops and accommodation providers. The waterfront would also drive higher values allowing more carefully considered design to exploit the views presented by the water.
- 3.5. The potential of Cefn Mawr and the World Heritage Site are of more than local significance as they have the potential to act as a gateway to North Wales and to build on complementary initiatives in North Shropshire linking the destinations of Llanymynech, the historic canal yard at Ellesmere, and Chirk within the World Heritage Site itself.
- 3.6. IWAC, in its report "*Planning a future for the inland waterways – a good practice guide*"(2001) quoted the example of the Milton Keynes Canal Basins and Pennyland where English Partnerships aimed to stimulate developer interest using the value added by a waterside location and/or basin to attract housing developers. The benefits of both schemes were felt immediately with properties selling at 20 – 35% premium. Lessons included the appreciation of the development potential and environmental benefits to be gained from waterside regeneration, use of a design competition to enthuse the private sector and to elicit attractive proposals, and the ability of well-considered development to realise considerable value whilst achieving a high quality design approach to the public realm and providing resources for associated infrastructure works. Other examples are in section 4 below.
- 3.7. A more local example of public domain being used to revitalise a declining town is Chepstow. In Chepstow public domain improvements were used to increase dwell times and reverse a rise in

vacancy rates in the town's premises. The "*Chepstow High Street Regeneration Impact Assessment – Measuring Success*" (Monmouthshire County Council Autumn 2006) [http://admin.localgov.co.uk/his\\_localgov/view/images/uploaded/Image/05PED1.pdf](http://admin.localgov.co.uk/his_localgov/view/images/uploaded/Image/05PED1.pdf) noted that prior to the improvements to the public domain vacancy rates in the town were as high as 14% in 2001. By June 2006, just over a year after the works had been completed, the rate had dropped to 5.7%. Within the 50 businesses surveyed there was a net gain of 77 jobs.

- 3.8. Investment in the quality of public domain also sent out the message that the town was worth investing in. Of those 50 businesses just over half had invested in their business with just over half of those investing in improving their premises. That then further contributed to the presentation of the town.
- 3.9. Visitors saw the town had more to offer than "just the castle." 86% of visitors were highly satisfied with the way the town looked and 88% would recommend the town to friends and family.
- 3.10. The impact of the vibrancy of the local economy on local pride and well-being should not be underestimated. Boarded up shops and a run-down feel quickly lead to a downward spiral, whilst freshly painted houses and busy shops lead to the opposite.
- 3.11. Further waterfront potential exists in Swansea (linking the Neath and Tennant Canals to SA1), Clydach, Neath, Newport, Cwmbran and Cefn Mawr following the example of Brecon where new basins were created as part of the development that created the theatre in the 90s.



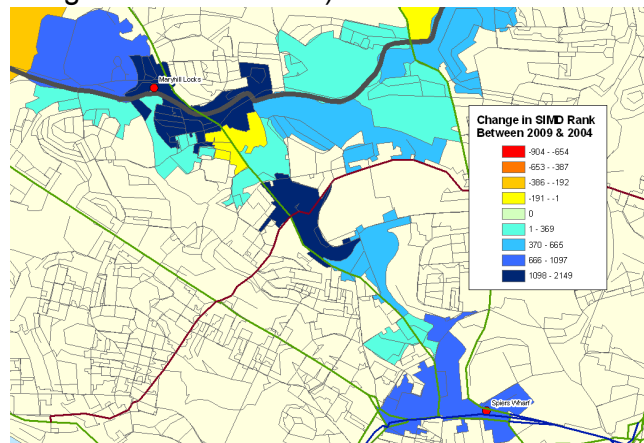
#### 4. Are there lessons to be learned from elsewhere?

- 4.1. Water is part of the public domain but it is distinctive and sets a town apart. Few towns have access to water and even fewer water that can be animated to become a focus for public access and mixed uses.

Canals have the advantage of stable water levels, unlike rivers, which can be incorporated into year round use. The economic impact of good public domain – wet or dry - is well researched, not just in terms of values but also dwell times in towns. However it is important that land and water uses are considered together so that they complement each other. Water should not be considered as an edge, barrier or backdrop but as part of the public domain.

4.2. Towns and cities across the UK, indeed across the World, have used water as their unique selling point; the wow factor. Its use has changed perceptions leading to significant inward investment. Birmingham's renaissance over the last 20 years, the resurgence of Cardiff Bay and the private sector investment that followed the completion of the Millennium Link in Scotland are all examples of the way that water (canals and waterfront) has succeeded in bringing in investment, building community confidence and developing tourism.

4.3. Figures from the Millennium Link in Scotland are particularly impressive (*Roger Tym & Partners Report (2008)*) with the target of £100M investment and 3,420 jobs being comfortably exceeded by the actual delivery of £342M private sector investment and 5,183 jobs. *MVA Consultancy (2010)* mapped a parallel improvement in Scottish IMD scores in those areas where canal investment had taken place (North Glasgow is shown below).



4.4. Case studies for these and other schemes are available from British Waterways. Scotland has probably been the most assiduous in evaluating the outcomes of waterway investment in respect to the Scottish Government's objectives ranging from economic outputs to health outcomes.

4.5. Birmingham City was probably the first British City to recognise the importance of its waterways. Faced with a decline in manufacturing, it sought a new economy derived from leisure and tourism and recognised that canals were its unique selling point. They are now the

“face” of Birmingham exploited as a backdrop to visits by Presidents and showbiz celebrities alike.



- 4.6. Water is now being exploited by cities as diverse as Falkirk and Salford, Cardiff and Swansea in their regeneration proposals. In England, Daventry and Swindon are seeking to introduce water where they currently have none through canal extensions or arms. Droitwich has just restored its canals and the project and Wychavon DC were recently visited by the WLGA to learn from their experience. Stroud in the South West is also in the process of restoring its canals to help lift the town to the level that would be expected given its transport links, landscape, architecture and location within the Cotswolds. Currently it suffers local and relative deprivation in its valleys arising from a decline in manufacturing.
- 4.7. Towns in rural areas can also enjoy the benefits of water. The recently published “*Montgomery Canal Economic Development Study by Resources for Change (2011)*” talked about maximising the value of local assets in a locally appropriate and sustainable way to support a more resilient economy with appropriate scale and “fit” to the rural area. Rural economies typically deal with smaller amounts of money; more dispersed labour; limited focus on single aspects of the economy and a strong relationship with the urban populations they serve. Many people have two jobs; economies are not about big units generating employment, but about building resilience into integrated systems. Resilience is often then the focus rather than growth.
- 4.8. That report also identified the difficulty in second guessing the private sector’s response to market opportunities. During the writing of the report a private sector investor came forward with a proposal for a local food hall, holiday chalets, marina, etc. which significantly increased the uplift in the number of jobs predicted through interviews with existing businesses in the area.
- 4.9. Waterfront also adds value to homes. *Garrod and Willis (1993)* and more recently (but unpublished) work carried out by *Lambert Smith Hampton (2003)* showed an average uplift in residential values of

18%. The latter study compared the offer prices for a small sample and range of residential properties both with and without proximity to water. Increased values can make the difference between a regeneration scheme being viable or not or it can contribute to the infrastructure.

- 4.10. Evidence relating to commercial property is more limited. *Wood and Handley (1999)* investigated the impact of waterfront development in the Mersey Basin and found that while there was a positive impact on property values the uplift was again highest for residential property. In terms of rental rates, the uplift was found to be 0 to 15 per cent for office accommodation, 0 to 25 per cent for leisure developments and 10 to 40 per cent for residential property.
- 4.11. Evidence from case studies completed by Ecotec for British Waterways suggests that waterside commercial property can generate a rental premium and be let more quickly than accommodation in non-waterside locations but the main driver by far is its overall location in the town/city, rather than anything to do with water proximity.
- 4.12. Active waterfronts with mixed use on land and activity on water create the greatest benefits. People can live, work and relax in the same space which creates activity at all times of the day. It also allows people to interact, building community cohesion particularly if space is left for events and other activities and the waterspace is animated. Cardiff Bay's waterfront is a good example.
- 4.13. Consideration of the way the land and the water will work together is important to ensure they are compatible, for example ensuring that there is sufficient privacy for residents, that there is operational or maintenance access to the water, etc. Guidance, particularly where heritage is key, is offered in a joint British Waterways/English Heritage <http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/HistWat.pdf>. Guidance specific to Wales is being put together currently by British Waterways and Cadw working with CREW.
- 4.14. Canals and other waterfronts often provide a tangible link with the past – the historic buildings and furniture; the patina arising from past uses and the stories which create a “local sense of belonging”. *DCLG's 2009 Guidance on Building a Local Sense of Belonging (P16 on)* recognises that the use of historic assets can be a means of creating a connection with a place and between adjacent communities creating a common thread or understanding.
- 4.15. While the environmental benefits of waterways are self-evident, they can add much more, for example they can be used use for sustainable



transport – walking and cycling – renewable energy for example as a heat sink or source of hydro power; or as habitats either in their own right or remnant habitats. Their social value, accrued by encouraging healthy exercise or quality of life benefits, is equally significant.

Diagrams in the TCPA planning note on waterways show the range of contributions that waterways can make:

<http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/inland-waterways.html>

4.16. The re-use of old buildings not only adds character but also takes advantage of their entrained energy which would be wasted if they are demolished and then replaced by more steel and concrete..

4.17. Heritage or waterway led regeneration can appear expensive unless these broader non-market benefits are included in their appraisal.

**5. How does the Welsh Government use the levers at its disposal to assist in the regeneration of town centres in Wales?**

5.1. In Wales there are unprecedented opportunities to capitalise on the increasing profile of waterways, the iconic structures exemplified by the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and our magnificent seascape and landscape. Within the next 12 months Wales' navigable waterways will pass to a new waterways charity and new waterfront design guidance will be developed by British Waterways and Cadw working with the Centre for Regeneration Excellence Wales.

5.2. Distinctiveness sets one town apart from another and improves its competitive advantage. That distinctiveness isn't just provided by listed structures and protected landscapes but by the rich patina and grain developed over hundreds of years of development. Recognition and protection of that pattern in a town helps the landscape make sense (feel right) to a visitor or resident. Where a town has developed around natural entry points, entry from elsewhere can jar.

5.3. Maintaining that heritage is difficult. Restoring and finding a new use for a historic building, while it may attract higher end values, will require more thought than new build, and is likely to cost more. For example specialist skills and materials will be required, design will be bespoke, VAT is attracted by repairs but not new build, rates are payable on empty buildings while new uses are found, etc. Developers seeking a rapid turnaround are also likely to be less interested in long term returns and the overall sustainability of conserving the entrained energy in an old building and the risks involved in innovative or contentious proposals.

- 5.4. The Welsh Government needs to provide both carrots and sticks to encourage sustainable development and the retention of the character of our towns and cities. Sticks through planning policies that encourage an understanding of the character and distinctiveness of towns prior to their development – developers need to be fully aware of the obligations placed upon them before they develop their business plans – and carrots through mechanisms that recognise the higher costs of reusing old buildings and allow those costs to be spread or deferred through, say, Tax Increment Financing, Community Shares or guidance towards other innovative funding mechanisms (section 11).
- 5.5. Public support will often still be needed to put in place the catalysts for inward investment (including canals) where the returns are long term or, in the first instance, largely non-market. That support should also recognise the long timescales required to build local capacity so that new employment opportunities can be fulfilled by the local population as they arise. The aim should be to develop factory owners not factory workers and to link people, place and their prospects.
- 5.6. Public procurement policies too should recognise the benefits of, where practicable, employing local people and firms during the implementation phase to ensure the optimum recycling and retention of the investment.
- 6. How are the interests and activities of communities, businesses, local authorities and Welsh Ministers identified and coordinated when developing and implementing town centre regeneration projects?**
- 6.1. The projects we have been involved in have all been partnership projects driven by a Board comprising the key stakeholders. Community involvement and engagement has been a major part of the process and often a requirement of the funders.
- 6.2. In the case of waterway reinstatement the neglect that is being undone is often as a result of the canal ceasing to be relevant to the local community and being seen as a hazard rather than a resource.
- 6.3. There has been a need to re-engage people's interest through participation in interpretation and educational activity, volunteering and the provision of a constant flow of information. A similar process is underway working with Aqueducts in the Pontcysylltye Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site. The community itself is developing an understanding and therefore pride in the rich and deep history of their area, including the now defunct chemical works. The works has been a part of the community's life for nearly 200 years and they wish to

see that recognised positively in the legacy left by its redevelopment.

- 6.4. The opportunity has also been taken to use the major projects as a means of developing new skills including addressing the dearth of sustainable building skills and stimulate an interest in STEM subjects among young people.



## 7. The roles the Welsh Government and local authorities play in the regeneration of town centres.

- 7.1. Regeneration is the process of enabling outcomes for people in existing places through a process of renewal and transformation. For the process to work the transformation has to be both physical and perceptual; changing the way people think about a place or react to a place; their emotional response.
- 7.2. In the current economic climate arguments for place over development are going to be much harder to win.
- 7.3. Regeneration takes time, normally 20 or 30 years, and it is essential that there is a clear and compelling vision which will transcend short term challenges. These challenges will undoubtedly include how to argue for and maintain quality standards in an economic downturn to maintain the long term vision of the place.
- 7.4. British Waterways has used Ecotec to examine its canal regeneration schemes from 1996 onwards. They found that a number of common themes emerged from those that were successful:
  - 7.4.1. There was a willingness of the public sector agencies to take a broad and imaginative approach, to invest to quicken the process, to stimulate private sector interest and to use grant aid to help set the “vision.”

- 7.4.2. The local authority had a strong motivating role, it used planning powers to realize the developments and it invested in transport infrastructure. (IWAC (*Planning a future for the inland waterways – a good practice guide 2001*) also found that a well-intentioned but passive partnership was not a good recipe for success (5.4.page 38) and that Local authorities are crucial where co-ordination and partnership are needed to achieve results (5.13 page 40). As Local authorities have the planning powers it is their support which is critical.)
- 7.4.3. Good design played a role in converting old buildings to add value, using the canal to act as an “integrating factor”, using environmental improvements to act as a catalyst and opening up the waterway to act as a transport (walking and cycling) and leisure corridor.
- 7.4.4. These design actions created “uplift” in the areas concerned and drew parts of the overall schemes together.
- 7.5. All of the canal based regeneration schemes included in this paper were delivered by partnerships which included the local authorities as key or sometimes lead partners. Inevitably there will be challenges within the project and the leadership and determination from the top of the authority (members and officers) gives their staff the message that it was a case of how the problem was to be solved and not whether it could be solved.
- 7.6. The Welsh Government sponsored North Wales Cultural Action Plan has enabled the feasibility of extending the Plas Kynaston Canal to be examined. Visit Wales, Cadw, British Waterways and Wrexham County Borough Council have worked in partnership with Arup as consultants. However delivery of the canal is likely to require further public support.
- 8. The extent to which businesses and communities are engaged with the public sector led town centre regeneration projects or initiatives, and vice versa.**
- 8.1. Communities can benefit hugely from canal led regeneration. In Maryhill near Glasgow on the Millennium Link results from towpath and household surveys (*mva consulting (2010)*) found that canal users agreed or strongly agreed that the canal enhances the local physical/built environment (89%) and households thought the presence of the canal made their neighbourhood a more attractive place to live (78%). 81% of the users also said the canal encouraged them to take more exercise. Across Scotland’s central belt that alone

was worth £6.4 million per annum in health savings.

- 8.2. On the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and canal World Heritage site the ten communities along the 11 miles have come together to form Aqueducks – the Friends of the World Heritage Site. They now have a role to play in helping to maintain and develop the site so that it delivers economic benefits to their area. They are fundraising, organizing events, learning new skills (environmental, heritage and green badge) and working with partners to improve the product.
- 8.3. The Plas Kynaston Canal Group, based in Cefn Mawr, has a narrower focus but has gained widespread support for their proposal to extend the canal from Trevor to bring the economic benefits enjoyed in Trevor, due to its proximity to the iconic aqueduct, into Cefn Mawr itself. The town centre is currently part way through a Townscape Heritage Initiative and the community believes that bringing the canal to their community will not only drive better quality design and distinctiveness in the adjacent development of the redundant chemical works but also create a physical and perceptual link between their town and the visitor focus; indeed between the location of the aqueduct and its birth place, the quarries and foundries of Cefn Mawr.
- 8.4. In Scotland through the strategic and inclusive regeneration and development of the canal corridors they have stimulated inward investment into local waterside communities through new commercial space and support for relocating and start-up businesses, created new jobs, driven the growth of national and regional tourism and delivered new homes. Businesses are now embracing that change.
- 8.5. To take just one example: in Kirkintilloch initial concerns about the reopening of the canal through the town and the disruption that would cause were transformed when traders saw the numbers attending the opening ceremony for the bridge in 2000 and then the canal in 2001.



- 8.6. As a consequence Kirkintilloch marketed itself as the Canal Capital of Scotland and began an annual canal festival. Various projects centred around the canal have since been completed including the

Southbank Centre shown below and on the link: <http://www.k-i.org.uk/projects/>



8.7. More recently the Droitwich Canals in the West Midlands reopened in July this year and already traders, having seen the uplift in trade on the opening weekend, are getting together to develop an annual event.

8.8. The first private investment is taking place with the construction of a new 238 berth marina which began within days of the opening: <http://www.droitwichspamarina.co.uk/> and will contribute to the forecast outputs below:

- £2.75m additional visitor spend
- 196 FTE jobs
- 322,000 additional visitor days plus
- 12,000 p.a. cycling visits
- 2,000 p.a. canoe visits
- 3,500 angling visits
- £3,088,800 uplift values for adj. houses
- £144,000 annual health benefits
- 20% boating increase on W&BC & River Severn
- 3,300 new boat movements
- 87 permanent moorings
- 24 ha of brownfield land regenerated

8.9. Similar results have been seen on the Rochdale and Huddersfield Narrow Canals where around 500 additional 500 jobs were created or supported in the first 8 years since they re-opened; not just in the larger towns such as Stalybridge, but also small towns like Slaithwaite where pavement dining has been introduced for the first time.

9. **The factors affecting the mix of residential, commercial and retail premises found in town centres - for example, the impact of business rates policy; footfall patterns and issues surrounding the night-time and daytime**

## **economies within town centres.**

9.1. No comment

## **10. The impact of out-of-town retail sites on nearby town centres.**

10.1. No comment

## **11. The use of funding sources and innovative financial solutions to contribute to town centre regeneration – including the Regeneration Investment Fund for Government, local authority and private sector investment.**

11.1. Innovative funding is going to be even more important as margins decline. At Broughton in South East England the community had aspirations to create a new canal as part of a greenfield development. British Waterways worked with Weatherells and Lambert Smith Hampton to show how the canal could be wholly funded through an increase in density in the blocks along the line of the canal and the uplift in residential values within those blocks.

11.2. LSH's work confirmed the average uplift of 18% but found a range of uplift values from 1.5% where a standard house happened to have a canal at the bottom of the garden to 35% where full advantage had been taken of the location. The build costs of the two extremes were similar. Local Authorities need to be aware of and take advantage of these possibilities.

11.3. In this case the local authority was prepared to increase density in waterside blocks from 35 units per hectare (allowed in the local plan at that time) to up to 50 units per hectare given the open feel provided by the water. The canal created a new focus for the development with a small basin and mixed uses in the heart of a new village.

11.4. The canal towpath, while included as part of the canal construction cost would also be part of the walking and cycling network already included within the developer's costs. Savings would also be made by using the canal as the utility route (the benefit to the utility company is ease of access for installation and future maintenance). Neither of these benefits were included in the figures below.

11.5. An uplift in Gross Development Value of £100 million more than compensated for the £65m rise in development costs which included £11m for the canal and its bridges, 30% affordable housing and took account of the reduction in base value for properties in a denser development. The uplift in value could be attributed roughly 50/50 to the increase in density and the uplift in value. The increase in units on

this site also reduced pressure on green field sites elsewhere.

- 11.6. Anchor Mill in Scotland demonstrates another innovative approach where innovative collaboration with the Prince's Regeneration Trust saw the restoration of a Mill:  
[http://www.princeofwales.gov.uk/personalprofiles/theprinceofwales/casestudies/the\\_prince\\_s\\_regeneration\\_trust\\_prt\\_anchor\\_mill\\_paisley\\_566482972.html](http://www.princeofwales.gov.uk/personalprofiles/theprinceofwales/casestudies/the_prince_s_regeneration_trust_prt_anchor_mill_paisley_566482972.html)
- 11.7. Historic Scotland and Scottish Enterprise Renfrewshire provided vital grant funding of almost £1.5m: The Council ensured that a large part of the value generated from Morrison's retail development was made available and Morrison's substantial contribution was then amplified by the Trust to nearly £4m using Gift Aid.
- 11.8. For canals a further option is to consider Land Remediation Relief which could be claimed by a developer having an interest in a canal and then cleaning it out. Relief is given at the rate of 150% of the relevant expenditure, when it is recognised on the balance sheet of the company incurring the expenditure. The developer must not be the contaminator, nor be connected to the contaminator and any subsidy received by the developer in respect of the contamination will also affect the level of relief available.

## **12. The importance of sustainable and integrated transport in town centres – including traffic management, parking and access.**

- 12.1. No comment

## **13. The potential impact of marketing and image on the regeneration of town centres – such as tourism, signage, public art, street furniture, lighting and safety concerns.**

- 13.1. To quote the *Scottish Placemaking Case Study* for Irvine Bay it was the aspiration for distinctiveness that was the key aspect of the development and economic appraisal of the scheme, and it is distinctiveness that is expected to attract new people to come and live in Irvine.
- 13.2. Image and perception is particularly important in driving inward investment; whether by visiting tourists, longer dwell times by local visitors or by employers seeking locations where their employees will wish to live.
- 13.3. *“The Economic Case for the Visitor Economy”* published by Deloitte and Oxford Economics (June 2010) found that tourism played a large



role in local economies and indeed communities, enhancing the provision of facilities and amenities that are also extensively used by residents as well as visitors. As tourism also appears to be resilient in the current recession perhaps it is as a custodian of local facilities and amenities where its importance lies in this context.

- 13.4. Sustainable projects will be those that can articulate local identities, draw out hidden and curious participants, and link them to the cultural resources in town centres and other areas. Canals have a particular ability to do that and to change people's perceptions of an area.

**14. The extent to which town centre regeneration initiatives can seek to provide greater employment opportunities for local people.**

- 14.1. Provided consideration of local employment is considered well enough in advance to develop capacity where and when required, regeneration schemes should and could provide opportunities for local people and businesses. Local supply also ensures investment is recycled and retained in the target areas and builds local ownership of the resulting development.

**15. The Committee would also welcome any recommendations on what measures could be used to evaluate the success of initiatives undertaken to regenerate town centres.**

- 15.1. The evaluation should track those outcomes sought from the regeneration at the outset and the way these outcomes are anticipated to be manifested, bearing in mind that they may take many years to manifest themselves. Many of the improvements may well be local and not necessarily absolute. Measures ought to be tied into the Living Wales (eco systems) approach which theoretically should work in any context; however the current emphasis on the environment may not adequately reflect the social and economic outcomes and the redistributive effects of town centre regeneration.