

**Skate
Park**

**Dovey
Activity
Centre**

**Mountain
Bike Tracks**

**Owen
Glyndwr
Centre**

**Bro Ddyfi
Leisure
Centre**

**Centre for
Alternative
Technology**

Library

**Tele-
centre**

**Golf
Course**

**What's
here?**

**Bowling
Green**

Machinations

**Playgrounds
Machynlleth
Llanbrynmair**

**Grandma's
Garden**

**Y
Tabernacl
&
MOMA**

**Recreation
Fields**

**Machynlleth
Llanbrynmair
Glantwymyn**

**Madian
Quads**

3.4 Definition of childcare services for under 8's

Childcare settings may be registered or unregistered and cover a broad spectrum of provision for children under 8 years of age.

Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales

Any provider operating a childcare service for under 8's, for over 2 hours per day is required by law to register with the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales (CSIW). Groups registered with the CSIW must meet a set of minimum standards to establish a quality of care. These standards include the following requirements:

- Premises must be safe and suitable for purpose
- Staff must be appropriately trained / qualified
- Staff references must be checked, Health & CRB checks undertaken
- Appropriate equipment & resources are provided for the children
- Providers are subject to an annual CSIW inspection

Estyn

Estyn is an independent, National Assembly for Wales funded inspectorate. It inspects schools, colleges and training centres. Any pre-school setting providing part time education for 3 year olds is also inspected by Estyn. It is responsible for:

- Training and registering nursery education inspectors
- Ensuring the quality of inspections and reports
- Ensuring levels of good practice are adhered to in settings

Children's Information Service

There are 22 Children's Information Service Offices (CIS) in Wales providing information on childcare and children's services. Managed by the local authority, the Powys CIS is able to offer free, confidential and impartial information to parents looking for play and childcare provision for children and young people aged 0-14 years (up to 16 years for young people with additional needs). The CIS acts as a signposting service, giving contact information for a large number of organisations and agencies in Powys. The CIS can give information and advice on a range of childcare options:

- Childminders
- Day nurseries
- Playgroups / Cylchoedd Meithrin
- Parent and Toddler groups / Ti a Fi
- Out of school and holiday clubs / Playschemes

Integrated Children's Centre

It is one of the key aims of both the Welsh Assembly Government and the National Assembly to support and develop children and young people in Wales. To facilitate the objectives outlined in their strategic plans, it was intended to establish of at least one Integrated Children's Centre (ICC) in each of the 22 Local Authorities in Wales.

Powys is developing four ICCs in the following areas:

- Bro Ddyfi
- Welshpool
- Radnor
- Ystradgynlais

An ICC includes 4 main elements:

- Open Access Play
- Early Years Education
- Childcare
- Training and Community Development

(ICCs may have additional elements depending on the area in which they are located)

In Powys although there are 4 modestly-sized new buildings, the 4 ICCs are best described as 'virtual' centres consisting of a network of organisations, which work with children and families aged from birth up to 14 years (up to 16 years for young people with additional needs)

The networks in each of the 4 areas of Powys aim to:

- encourage organisations to work together and to increase their knowledge of each other's work
- share ideas and resources
- provide accurate up-to-date information on what services are available in an identified area
- avoid duplication and maximise opportunities
- research the needs of the area and bridge any gaps in service on offer to young children and young families as a whole

In Bro Ddyfi the Integrated Children's Centre building element – Ty Melfed, and the Co-ordination of Information service is managed by Machynlleth Community Children's Project Ltd.

The ICC does not itself, provide childcare, it supports the provision of childcare by the network of existing providers and seeks to develop new opportunities for the extension of play and childcare in Bro Ddyfi. It acts as a signposting service to families and professionals requiring information on activities and services for children and young people.

3.5 Registered Provision

Registered Childminders

Registered childminders are day care providers who provide childcare in their own homes. As they are usually locally based the children they care for are also able to attend other activities in the community such as Cylchoedd Meithrin and Ti a Fi etc. Some may only be available during school term time.

At present there are 5 registered childminders in Bro Ddyfi offering varying levels of service for children aged from birth up to 5 years.

Day Nurseries

Day nurseries provide full day care and early years education for babies and children from birth up to 4 or 5 years. They are often open throughout the year, Monday to Friday and have opening hours considerate to the needs of working parents.

Machynlleth Community Nursery operated by Machynlleth Community Children's Project is the only fully bilingual, registered day care setting in Powys. Up to 22 children per day may be cared for, from 6 months up to 4 years.

Playgroups / Cylchoedd Meithrin

Playgroups and their welsh medium counterparts Cylchoedd Meithrin cater for children aged between 2 to 5 years. The provision is usually sessional and mainly during term time only. Children are encouraged to play, learn and socialise.

There are 4 Cylchoedd Meithrin in Bro Ddyfi covering Machynlleth, Glantwymyn/Cadfarch and Llanbrynmair.

All children have the right to free, part-time (a minimum of 10 hours per week) early years education the term following their third birthday.

Youth Clubs

Clubs provided by the local authority do not require CSIW registration but do adhere to a Youth Work Code of Good Practice. Usually managed by a qualified Youth Worker, activities at these clubs are led by the young people aged 11-19 years who attend them. Often held during the evening, there may also be additional trips and outings during school holidays.

Youth Club activities in Bro Ddyfi are based exclusively in Machynlleth. A range of projects have been established addressing the needs of the young people attending and are delivered fully bilingually. A girl's project, babysitting course and general youth club are available. The Youth Worker also provides additional support to the young people at Ysgol Bro Ddyfi during Tuesday lunchtimes and offers sexual health advice on Wednesday mornings in the Youth Wing.

Open Access Play

Open access play settings may be permanent play projects such as adventure playgrounds, or short term play schemes for children and young people aged 8-16 years where they are free to come and go as they choose.

Open Access Play funding is available via the Integrated Children's Centre and during 2006 19 play projects were facilitated in Bro Ddyfi. Kidzone Club was established to run regular Saturday morning open access play activities for children.

Out of School Clubs (Holiday, Breakfast, & After School Clubs & 'Wrap Around' Care)

Out of school childcare clubs provide childcare provision outside of school hours, benefiting parents who work or attend training. They are usually open throughout the year and have opening hours considerate to the needs of parents.

Machynlleth Community Children's Project operates a CSIW registered, fully bilingual, After School Club and Holiday Play Club-which is also open on school INSET days catering for up to 32 children per day aged from 4 up to 12 years.

Local schools also operate term time, after school clubs throughout the year and may comprise: sports (Dragon Sports) homework clubs, Urdd, breakfast clubs, Pyramid, and craft clubs. These vary from school to school and some of the activities may run for a period of weeks rather than on a daily basis. They cannot be regarded as permanent solutions to out of school childcare provisions for working but can provide access to some quality short term play/care opportunities.

Primary schools in Bro Ddyfi provide a range of clubs for pupils 4-11 years. Ysgol Bro Ddyfi also operates a range of after school and lunch time clubs for pupils 11-18 years

Holiday Playschemes (not Holiday Clubs) are usually community led activities managed by voluntary committees and run by volunteers. If funding can be secured playschemes may be free of charge and often provide a welcome social gathering for children and parents alike during school holidays. A range of sport, craft and outdoor play activities are arranged, generally structuring programmes to cater for 2-8 and 8-16 years age groups.

Previously run by Play Montgomeryshire, Summer, rural play days were provided in Llanbrynmair, Glantwymyn and Machynlleth, however due to a lack of funding, this provision has now ceased. A voluntary committee in Glantwymyn has piloted a similar scheme with success and hopes to further develop the playscheme in 2007.

Community groups / Clubs

Varied in nature, providing social activities for children young people out of school hours often only during term time. A range of groups including Girl Guides, Scouts, Young Farmers, Military Cadets and St John's Ambulance cater for the 4 -19 years age range. Seldom registered with CSIW although staff/volunteers are CRB checked and may receive some specific training, many form part of national organisations.

There are over 21 community groups and clubs in Bro Ddyfi and are operational in Llanbrynmair, Glantwymyn/Cadfarch and Machynlleth. Urdd Sant Ioan (St John's Ambulance) based in Glantwymyn is the only welsh medium unit in Powys.

3.6 Unregistered Provision

Some childcare providers may not be registered with CSIW :

- Parent & Toddler Groups
- Au Pairs
- Babysitters
- Creches
- Friends / Family
- Nannies

Parent & Toddler / Ti a Fi Groups

These groups provide a social meeting opportunity for parents with children under 2 years. Parents must stay with their children and therefore the group is not required to register with CSIW. Children are able to interact with their peers and enjoy a range of play activities.

There are currently 5 Ti a Fi in Bro Ddyfi based in Machynlleth, Glantwymyn and Llanbrynmair. NCH Sure Start operates a weekly (term time) Ti a Fi session at Ty Melfed in Machynlleth and provides parenting support, information and advice. All Ti a Fi sessions in Bro Ddyfi are held bilingually according to the needs of the parents and children attending.

Au Pairs

Usually foreign students wishing to learn English, aged between 17-25 years. Au pairs are regarded as members of the family and are contracted on a 'live in' basis. They may work for up to 5 hours per day and usually receive living costs and accommodation rather than an actual wage.

No statistics are currently available for the number of au pairs working in Bro Ddyfi.

Babysitters

Babysitters-often young girls looking to earn some extra pocket money, look after children when their parents need time to go out usually during the evening. Care takes place in the child's own home. NSPCC guidelines state that babysitters must be at least 16 years of age.

No statistics are currently available for the number of babysitters working in Bro Ddyfi, although the PCC Youth Service arranges accredited babysitting courses in Machynlleth.

Nannies

Nannies also look after children in the family home, they are unregistered and unregulated.

No statistics are currently available for the number of nannies working in Bro Ddyfi.

Creches

Creches provide occasional care for young children while their parents attend training, sports activities or social events. Parents must remain 'on site' in case of emergencies although not specifically in the same room. A crèche must be registered if it provides care for children under 8 years of age, runs for more than 2 hours per day and more than 6 days a year if it is held in the same premises.

NCH Sure Start operates crèche services in Machynlleth enabling parents to attend training programmes such as Cymraeg i Rieni, LAP/NAP, Play & Learn/Baban Cymru. MCCP Ltd provides crèche facilities as required for community activities and training programmes such as the Ysgol Cedewain Parenting Outreach Project at Ty Melfed and Genesis Wales Powys events.

Friends & Family

Parents may depend on friends and family members to mind their children for short periods of time. This is often a flexible and informal arrangement often relying on an 'in kind' return of favour. Care may be irregular and is taken up as required.



3.7 Education & Training

There are 3 primary schools in Bro Ddyfi providing education for pupils aged 4-11 years :

Machynlleth Community Primary School (Bilingual)

Headteacher: Mr Dilwyn Jones

Number of pupils: 260

Machynlleth C. P. School is organised in accordance with Powys Local Authority policy in two linguistic streams. Pupils may be taught in a Welsh Medium stream where pupils are taught mostly through the Medium of Welsh or in the English Medium stream where pupils are taught through the medium of English and Welsh is taught as a second language. In accordance with the Local Authority's Admission Policy pupils may be admitted at the beginning of term following their fourth birthday. The school does not admit pupils on a part time basis.

Ysgol Glantwymyn Community Primary (Welsh medium)

Headteacher: Mrs Rhiannon Causer

Number of pupils: 89

Ysgol Glantwymyn C.P. is a welsh medium school and serves the village of Glantwymyn and other surrounding rural villages. Currently there are 89 pupils between 4 and 11 years of age on the school register and they are admitted to full-time education during the half term, or at the beginning of the term, following their fourth birthday. Forty per cent of pupils come from homes where Welsh is the main spoken language, a drop from the 60% recorded at the Estyn inspection of 1996. However, 95% come to be able to speak Welsh fluently during their time at the school.

Ysgol Llanbrynmair (Welsh medium)

Headteacher: Mrs Bethan Bleddyn

Number of pupils: 42

Ysgol Llanbrynmair accepts pupils in accordance with the policy of Powys Education Authority in the village of Llanbrynmair and surrounding area. Children may be admitted to the school on a full time basis at the beginning of the term after their fourth birthday. Ysgol Llanbrynmair is a Welsh School and with the exception of English medium lessons, the pupils are expected to communicate through the medium of Welsh. On the past few years a number of non-Welsh speaking families have moved in to live in the area and as a result the majority of the pupils now come from non-Welsh speaking homes.

There is 1 Secondary school in Bro Ddyfi providing education for pupils aged 11-16 (18) years:

Ysgol Bro Ddyfi (Bilingual)

Headteacher: Mrs Lis Puw

Number of pupils: 276.

Ysgol Bro Ddyfi is a traditional bilingual comprehensive school controlled by Powys Unitary Authority (UA). The majority of pupils come from Machynlleth itself via Machynlleth C P School and the remainder from the 2 other main feeder schools in Glantwymyn and Llanbrynmair. The school also accepts pupils from the neighbouring counties of Gwynedd and Ceredigion. A significant percentage (circa 18%) of Year 6 pupils from the main feeder schools choose to transfer to other secondary schools rather than Ysgol Bro Ddyfi.

Ysgol Bro Ddyfi has the smallest Sixth Form in England and Wales with only 31 pupils. Only 35% of 16 year olds returned to Year 12 with 70% continuing to Year 13.

According to the schools' Estyn Inspection Report in 2003, around 50% of pupils come from areas which are neither prosperous nor economically underprivileged, whilst the remainder come from economically underprivileged areas. The average ability levels of pupils starting in Year 7 had, for a number of years, been lower than the percentages for Wales as a whole. More recent tests however had shown that Year 7 ability levels were similar to the Welsh average.

63% of pupils come from homes where English is the main language and 37% from homes where Welsh is the main language. 61% of pupils speak Welsh to first language standard and are taught subjects through the medium of Welsh. The school provides courses in both Welsh and English with some classes taught bilingually. In Years 7 to 9, one stream receives approximately 80% of the curriculum in Welsh and the remainder in English. The second stream receives approximately 50% of the curriculum in Welsh and the remainder in English while the third receives approximately 80% of the curriculum in English and the remainder in Welsh. In Years 10 and 11, pupils are able to take all their subjects in either Welsh or English, mostly in bilingual classes. In Years 12 to 13, a choice of courses is available in both Welsh and English.

The main providers of post 16 learning in the area are:

- Coleg Powys
- Coleg Meirion Dwyfor
- Coleg Ceredigion
- Powys Training (work based learning)
- Cambrian Training (work based learning)
- Other smaller training providers

According to the Dyfi Valley Pathfinder project further education students travel an average of 38 miles to study, with the average for Wales at 28%. With the implementation of this plan combined with the possibility of a 'Community Campus' there are likely to be a series of radical changes to the way further education and community based learning is delivered in Bro Ddyfi.

Pupils in the Bro Ddyfi area who have specific learning requirements generally attend Ysgol Cedewain Special Needs School in Newtown.

Ysgol Cedwain

Headteacher: Mr Peter Tudor

Number of pupils: 66

Over the past 5 years pupil numbers at Ysgol Cedewain have doubled and it has become a more inclusive school for children with a very wide range of abilities and learning difficulties. Ysgol Cedewain also operates an outreach service supporting pupils with special need in mainstream schools. A new 'Parenting Outreach Project supporting parents of children with additional needs was established recently with a series of weekly support and information workshops based at Ty Melfed in Machynlleth. A successful launch day was held in January 2007 with representatives from many community groups and Headteachers from primary schools in Machynlleth and Glantwymyn in attendance.

The school also has a new multi-sensory room and a dedicated class concentrating on a multi-sensory curriculum. Many pupils enjoy links with local primary and secondary schools and all pupils follow the national curriculum at the appropriate key stage. The general classes consist of up to ten pupils with teachers supported by two qualified learning support assistants.

The school catchment area is one of the biggest in Britain and all pupils travel to school on a daily basis. Pupil ages range from 2.5 years up to 19 years.

All teaching at Ysgol Cedewain is through the medium of English. Welsh, as a second language, is taught as a national curriculum subject by specialist Welsh speaking teachers.

Ysgol Cedewain pupils are provided with free home/school transport. A minibus service is operational across Bro Ddyfi with a number of local children collected 'en-route'



3.8 Professional responses to current provision in Bro Ddyfi

A range of individual views were sought on the current level of provision for children and young people in Bro Ddyfi:

'It is important to identify and encourage/support more local organisations to take advantage of Open Access play funding. There are at present groups like Brownies, Guides, Celf o Gwmpas, Youth Service and of course Machynlleth Community Children's Project. However there are other organisations like Cylch Meithrin etc which are not able to access this funding due to the target ages of their groups participants. I wonder if it's possible to develop the capacity for them to widen their remit to enable them to develop more varied and locally accessible play opportunities.

There is obviously a need to develop more opportunities for play which is accessible to ALL children and so more inclusive/ bilingual play sessions should be developed where possible. Play, being a useful tool towards reducing impact of negative stereo typing can design sessions/ projects based on cultural diversity/ language/ disability etc to help true integration and empowerment of the individuals.

Families need to play together as we know and sometimes it's difficult for them to find appropriate venues/opportunities. I'm thinking of parents that have separated and are visiting their children in the area. Time is precious to them and a project which supports separated family members to play could be a useful way of helping on many levels as well as signposting to other services and info. Sure Start could be a possible partner?

Parents very often don't know 'how to play' with their children and a project that links parenting skills/ play/nutrition/ exercise etc would tick so many boxes.

The outdoor environment is a very underused resource and projects are needed that can encourage children to 'have fun outside' whilst learning a healthy respect for their surroundings, whether it's the street or a playground or a field, a beach or a wood. Maybe linking with Mentro Allan to share resources and aims etc.

Toy library service needs to be developed—Funding needed for a project / worker, new toys, may be linked with a mobile craft supply service, training etc. Useful to make local links, info, signposting etc.

Ongoing and locally delivered flexible and appropriate Playwork Training or course is the vital need for all this to happen. Playwork training is available and needs help to trickle down to those working with children. Maybe Communities First could be the local agent/ contact providing venue, identifying group/ their needs, encouraging engagement and liaising with Play Development Workers.

Its important too that Communities First is able to link in with the Play Development Worker to help to distribute info to groups and parents on local play / training opportunities- maybe as part of newsletter perhaps.'

Mel Chandler – Play Development Worker (Montgomeryshire)

Powys Children & Families Forum

'There are currently extremely limited opportunities for children and young people with additional needs in this area (Bro Ddyfi) Since the closure of the Play Montgomeryshire Inclusive Youth Club in Machynlleth several years ago, there are no specific inclusive social activities for children and young people to meet and have fun outside of school hours. There are a number of children living in this area who attend Ysgol Cedewain (Special Needs School) in Newtown and have to travel a long way to access fully inclusive play provision-usually via the education system. What we need is to secure funding to establish a youth club for 8 -19 year olds employing specialist support staff, with appropriate resources available in a fully accessible venue. Siblings / peers of children with additional needs would be welcome to come along but the emphasis would be on providing a range of social opportunities for these under-represented youngsters.'

Owen Bean - Support Assistant

Ysgol Cedewain Newtown

Formerly Youth Inclusion Co-ordinator for Play Montgomeryshire

Extract taken from County Times & Express (March 16th 2007 edition)

'Playscheme axed as funding crisis bites'

'A special needs school's summer holiday playgroup (playscheme) has been cancelled due to a crisis in funding'. The five week long inclusive holiday playscheme run by Play Montgomeryshire at Ysgol Cedewain has failed to secure this year and has been axed. Peter Tudor, Ysgol Cedewain's Headteacher said he was 'extremely disappointed' by the closure and called it a 'great loss'.

Although the playscheme was based in Newtown, children and staff from Llanidloes and other areas have become dependant on the service for the past seven years and are faced with no alternative'.

Ysgol Cedewain in Newtown provides special needs education for children aged 4-18 years with additional and complex needs. Machynlleth, Glantwymyn/Cadfarch and Llanbrynmair fall within its catchment area. A number of children living in this area currently attend the school and have regularly enjoyed the activities provided by the Summer playscheme in the past.

*'The four year **Mentro Allan (Bro Ddyfi) Venture Out** programme would be keen to work with an outreach play worker and can commit some staff time and a small amount of revenue costs for activity provision to providing active outdoor recreation activities in the area particularly for families / young parents with young children and 11-18 year olds. Outdoor play is a vital element of exercise and development for children and young people.*

Research from the Sports Council for Wales shows that while adults in Powys are much more likely to participate in outdoor activities than adults in Wales as a whole, young people are less likely than the all Wales average. Young people are much less likely to be active than adults and the lowest figures in Powys were for young females (only 8% of young females in the Powys sample were active in the outdoors compared to the all Wales young females average of 16.7)'

See SCW data below:-

Participation in outdoor physical activity by adults and young people:

Powys and all Wales

			Powys Percentage	All Wales Percentage
Adults	All activities	All people	58	48.8
		Male	60	52.6
		Female	56	45.3
	Outdoor activities	All people	48	36.6
		Male	50	38.5
		Female	47	34.8
Young people (under 18)	Outdoor activities	All people	12	16.5
		Male	15	16.2
		Female	8	16.7

Forty nine percent of all adults participate in sport or outdoor activities. This compares with 25 percent of adults who undertook moderate exercise and 37 percent who took vigorous exercise in the Wales Health Survey 1998. The Wales Health Survey 2005 asked whether adults met the guideline of five 30min sessions of physical activity per week. Only 29 percent did so, indicating that this is similar to the vigorous exercise of the 1998 survey.

These figures indicate that the numbers of people who take no or light exercise shown above underestimate the total number who would not meet the current guideline.

Fewer young people engage in outdoor activities than adults. This indicates that the projects working with young people will have a greater proportion of the population as a target.

Teresa Walters – Co-ordinator

**Mentro Allan – Venture Out (Bro Ddyfi)
ecodyfi**

*The outdoor play spaces in this area are not very exciting. **Forest School** sessions delivered in Llanbrynmair and Glantwymyn are generally sited in a flat field – therefore some form of landscaping would be great. I saw some very interesting ideas from Germany and at a recent conference on play spaces. These are spaces which have a lot of 'edge' to them - robust, etc. I know there are quite a number of 11+ year olds in the Llanbrynmair and Glantwymyn area who enjoy Forest School activities and go to 'ecoclub' during lunchtimes at Ysgol Bro Ddyfi but don't attend activities put on for them in that area I feel that perhaps the landscape there doesn't 'hold ' them.*

Public transport is also diabolical for teenagers in this area. It is difficult to co-ordinate bus times with activities and young people invariably find themselves 'hanging about' in all weather, waiting for the bus. This means that a lot of young people dislike using public transport and rely on their parents to transport them to their social activities.

Ruth Brocklehurst – Forest School Leader

Dyfi Forest Education Initiative

'There are significant challenges to be faced in creating play opportunities, particularly open access opportunities in rural areas. By their nature, open access play opportunities rely on children being able to come and go as they please. However, in areas of low population density, children and young people either have to travel to get to play provision, in which case they are no longer able to come and go at will, or play provisions need to operate on a very local level with very small numbers of children, which is not cost effective.

There are significant benefits to children and young people being able to use play provision on an open access basis if this can be facilitated. In some of the more rural areas where it is not easy to get together with friends outside school, access to any group play facility can be a vital opportunity to socialise and develop independence skills.

Louise Bell - Senior Childcare Development Officer

**Children, Families & Lifelong Learning Directorate
Powys County Council**

‘Machynlleth Community Children’s Project Ltd was established to meet the needs of local families, beginning with the creation of the Community Nursery followed some years later by the After School Club, Holiday Play Club, Cylch Meithrin Y Plas and most recently Kidzone, a free, open access play club.

Recognising the importance of information sharing and signposting to network members and families alike, MCCP Ltd was keen to support the work of the Bro Ddyfi Integrated Children’s Centre and subsequently applied to take on the management of the building element Ty Melfed and the ‘Co-ordination of Information’ role disseminating information to allied agencies and organisations. We recognise that we play an important role in the local delivery of bilingual, children’s play and childcare provision, continually striving to improve our range of services to meet local demand. We are restricted in delivering provision to our maximum potential by a number of factors:

- **Larger premises** – outgrown current Nursery building often running at full capacity with a waiting list in operation. Few, affordable options to expand. Larger building=more childcare places available.
- **Sustainability** - Fees set affordable, considerate of local economy-impact on sustainability as core running costs are high – little financial support available for ongoing revenue costs. Minimum wage implications for employers.
- **Transport** – no public transport system to bring in children from outlying villages after school. Parents have to pay for private taxi’s or make informal arrangements, restricting ‘wrap around care’ provision.
- **Lack of information reaching parents** – more advertising needed for After School and Holiday Play Club to ensure parents are aware of provision. Direct work with the wider community is needed. Limited capacity due to funded hours.
- **Expense of Workshops** – Holiday Play Club costs high – rely on external funding as the costs of the workshops rarely cover the income from fees. Frequency of high quality, stimulating workshops/trips etc is dependant on level of funding secured-insufficient local authority backing.
- **Staff/Training costs** – we provide a number of training placements for NVQ students via Powys Training. Although the cost of their training is funded, in order to undertake a level 3 NVQ, students must be employed for a minimum of 16 hours per week in a suitable placement. Without exceeding our budgeted ratio of qualified:unqualified staff, we are restricted by the number of trainees we employ due to the employment costs involved to us for which we receive no financial support. We now have to restrict the number of placements we are able to offer local students because of this. Often at the end of their training placement we are unable to offer them permanent employment with this as it is financially beneficial to us to employ another trainee at a lower rate of pay.
- **12 years+** - at present we provide out of school provision for up to 11years, we feel however that there is a need for some form of provision for 12 years+ to avoid them returning to an empty house if both parents are at work.

We need to have continued local authority support to implement the aims of the numerous strategies set out by the Welsh Assembly Government. We are in an ideal position to deliver the key objectives on behalf of the local authority, but need financial assistance to do so-we rely heavily on grant funding for specific development projects.

**Diane Jones – MCCP Ltd Chief Executive
& Integrated Children’s Centre Manager (Bro Ddyfi)**

'Thank you for this opportunity to put some ideas forward'.

'Now with the public's heightened awareness of Climate Change issues and the general move towards reducing our collective carbon footprint, the role of the toy library should be more actual than ever. Renting toys causes far less emissions than buying them!'

I would like to see workshops for kids, all sorts. I think the Open Access Play sessions have shown us that there is an appetite for that sort of thing, but with it happening just once a month it will not create enough momentum for it to truly take off to meet its full potential. Lots of other children's activities are happening on Saturday mornings, e.g. football, ballet, to name but a few and it is unlikely that children and parents are going to drop a weekly activity for something that will just happen once a month.

Craft workshops would be successful- the workshops that the craft shop in Machynlleth runs are always oversubscribed.

I think it would be a good idea to link up with the "Mentro Allan" project that Ecodyfi is running, regarding outdoor play. We could come in with parachute games and traditional playground games (Marbles, skipping ropes etc). This could be a good one to get the parents involved too. Sometimes I think parents need to be shown how to play with their children and we could maybe do activities/workshops with that idea in mind. They could cover a number of topics, e.g. how to start doing crafts with their child, what games to play outside(in the park/on the beach/in the woods), and even provide play opportunities for kids and parents on a regular basis, a bit like a club. In my opinion I think it would be best to try as much as we can to join existing groups and work together.

Ann Lamot- Toy Librarian

**Machynlleth Toy Library
Play Montgomeryshire**

Needs Analysis

4.1 Community Consultation

Community consultation was conducted by several means:

- Face to face discussion
- Written/emailed responses
- Telephone conversations
- Evaluation reports
- Formal feedback from service users
- Questionnaires

Although 3 consultation events in each of the electoral wards had been factored into this project, when planning the actual events, initial community reaction to such an exercise was that *'it had all been done before'* with *'little real progress made on the identified needs of the community'* and *'completely pointless, as nothing ever comes of it afterwards'*. With this in mind, it appeared more practical to effectively utilise the existing feedback and limit the amount of direct consultation to areas where insufficient information existed. Specific areas and groups within the community were less willing to participate in further consultations and yet it was here that more work was needed to determine the actual views of the children and young people.

Press releases in the Cambrian News, Shropshire Star and County Times detailing this project and inviting local organisations to contribute to the audit and needs analysis did not provoke any groups to make contact and provide information on their services.

Speaking directly to the children and young people in informal situations proved to be most beneficial, and although the aims of the project were explained to them, they generally felt able to convey their views and opinions in a light-hearted, conversational manner without feeling that they were merely 'part of a consultation process'. Working with the PCC Youth Worker during a Tuesday lunchtime, students from across the area attending Ysgol Bro Ddyfi were asked for their personal perspectives on existing services and ideas for improvement to the range of activities available. Children and young people attending open access play projects in Llanbrynmair, Glantwymyn and Machynlleth also provided feedback for the analysis. Local children attending Machynlleth Community Children's Project services also provided key information. Wherever it was appropriate to do so, groups of youths on the streets were asked for their views although many were unwilling to participate in the activity at all citing that it was *'a waste of time'*. In total over 130 children and young people contributed directly to the needs analysis with a further 271 represented by parents completing questionnaires. (Slight risk of un-measurable duplication with parents providing information in questionnaires on children who had already been included in direct consultation figures.

Contacts with local community groups proved useful when seeking feedback from service users. Group leaders were willing to co-ordinate the distribution of questionnaires and were willing in the main, for direct consultation to be undertaken with members.

Post project evaluation reports containing comments and feedback from children and young people were considered during this process providing an interesting appraisal of interests, hobbies and activities enjoyed by the 4-19 years age group.

4.2 Questionnaires

Written questionnaires were produced bilingually, and circulated to a cross section of families across Bro Ddyfi. They were distributed at various community groups, play days and social gatherings, to parents with children aged from birth up to 19 years.

In total, 160 questionnaires were handed to local parents to complete and return during the sessions-with some parents seeking the opinion of their accompanying children. Of those, 148 were returned with a response provided for the majority of the questions asked.

Information was sought on a range of issues including:

- Area location of family home
- Age / gender of child/ren
- Services currently used
- Preventing factors i.e. cost, transport, information etc
- Interest in locally based training courses with childcare provision
- Interest in weekend childcare provision
- Interest in more youth based provision (After school / holidays)
- Importance of welsh medium / bilingual childcare, play and social activities
- Interest in community 'outreach' play projects
- Interest in using a transport system from outlying villages
- Services for children/young people with additional needs
- Ideas / suggestions for improvements to existing services
- Any other comments

Opportunity was given to complete personal details if further information was required although the majority of questionnaires were returned anonymously.

Of the 148 returned questionnaires, 8 were returned illegible – due to children drawing / scribbling on them or were largely incomplete, and a further 18 were completed by parents who although frequently access services in the area, did not live in the electoral wards of Machynlleth, Glantwymyn/Cadfarch and Llanbrynmair and therefore have not been included in this audit.

A total of 122 eligible questionnaires were used to represent parents' perspective and form part of the local needs analysis.

Questionnaire results:

Of the 122 parents who provided information the following results were formulated:

- i) 57% of parents recorded 'Machynlleth' as the area of their family home
 28% of parents recorded 'Glantwymyn/Cadfarch' as their family home
 15% of parents recorded 'Llanbrynmair' as their family home

- ii) In total parents represented 271 children /young people aged 0 -19 years

Number of questionnaires returned recording the number/s of children in each family:

1 child	2 children	3 children	4 children	5 children
10	82	25	3	2

Of these 271 children /young people, ages were indicated as:

Birth – 2 years	2 - 4 years	4 – 8 years	8 -12 years	12 – 19 years
11	29	87	83	61

Although gender specification was required on the questionnaires this information was inconsistently given, varying from ticks to numbers or simply left blank. Therefore this information cannot be accurately recorded.

- iii) 97% of children / young people were recorded as regularly* engaged with some form of organised social activity. Activities included:

- Community Nursery / Cylch Meithrin y Plas
- After School Club
- Holiday Play Club
- Youth Club
- Cylch Meithrin
- Ti a Fi
- Brownies / Guides / Rainbows
- Cadets
- Gwerin y Coed
- Young Farmers Club
- School Clubs; Urdd, Sports
- Swimming Lessons
- Sports Clubs

2% of children were recorded as not engaged with any form of organised social activity

1% of parents recorded regular trips to the Library with their child as an organised social activity

* *regularly, was defined as more than once a week*

- iv) Factors preventing access to play / childcare / social activities were given as:

- Cost
- Lack of up to date information
- Transport
- Working around children so childcare not required
- Waiting list for places

v) A resounding 80% of questionnaires returned expressed interest in undertaking locally delivered training courses with childcare provision. No specific courses were stated. During the day was the favoured time of study. A further 15 % said that 'maybe' they would be interested, with a final 5% indicating that they would not be interested in this type of provision.

vi) 56% would like to see childcare services provided at the weekend enabling parents to go shopping etc without their children. This service was particularly required around the Christmas period. 28% stated that 'maybe' this would be of interest to them while 16% would not use such a service.

vii) 77% of parents with children in the 8-12 and 12-19 age groups indicated that they would like to see more youth based provision after school and during the school holidays. 3% would not be interested in using these services and 20% said that 'maybe' they would. Interestingly, 10% of parents with children in the younger age groups also expressed an interest in more youth provision.

viii) Although 66% recorded their households as either bilingual or fluent welsh, only 39% felt that it was important that their child had access to bilingual / welsh medium childcare, play or social activities. 34% indicated that no welsh was spoken in the household.

ix) 32% of parents returning questionnaires felt that more outreach 'community play activities' were required. Consideration however, should be given to the predominance of responses received from the Machynlleth area where access to activities is less restricted than in the outlying villages.

x) 25% of parents expressed an interest in using a transport service which collected children / young people from the outlying areas, bringing them to centrally organised play, childcare and social activities and would be generally willing to contribute to the associated costs.

xi) Of those who provided information on this, services were considered 'adequate' for children / young people with additional needs. However, parents recording that their child did have additional needs felt that more provision was required locally, avoiding lengthy journeys to access specialist provision. Lack of information on such services was also highlighted as a concern by 2 parents.

xii) Comments, ideas and suggestions for improvements to existing services:



4.3 Needs of children and young people

In total comments and views were provided by over 130 children and young people resident in Bro Ddyfi (Machynlleth, Glantwymyn/Cadfarth & Llanbrynmair)

Age appropriate consultation activities were carried out with the mixed gender 4 -19 years age group in a variety of ways including face to face contact involving directed questions, written evaluations by children / young people from previous play projects, general discussions with children and working closely with local children's service providers from pre-school to youth work.

Of the groups I spoke to most were involved in some form of out of school provision. They highlighted a number of factors which prevented them from participating in more social activities and provided views on what they felt was lacking in the area for children and young people. Suggestions were diverse and imaginative across the age ranges.

None of the 130, 4 – 19 year olds consulted felt that there was sufficient provision for children and young people in Bro Ddyfi, with a significant number of the upper age group giving one or more suggestions for improvement. Opinions expressed by an individual within a group were frequently seconded by others, perhaps either showing support for the suggestion or haste to provide an answer and return to their activity. This was particularly true of the boys, girls generally offered more suggestions but then interestingly also provided reasons why their suggestions would not be feasible in this area.

The suggestions highlighted in this analysis are representative of the views of the children and young people consulted in this process although do not form a complete list of individual suggestions.

It was not possible to determine a wide scale view of young people within the 16-19 years age group, not attending school or organised social activity. Representatives of this age group were particularly concerned that their views had been expressed in the past and yet no attempts had been made to address their needs. Fuller consultation work with this group would be more appropriately conducted as part of a larger scale research project undertaken by a community youth project worker. The limited research information with this target group has however been included and further reference is made to previous consultation work undertaken as part of the Communities First Participatory Appraisal.

Suggestions for improvements included:

- Improved playground facilities: swings, slides, seesaws / repaired equipment
- Increased free/subsidised, structured play opportunities: play days / play schemes
- Better transport service to 'wrap around' existing play / social activities
- Large, outdoor, open access play facilities: adventure playgrounds, BMX tracks
- Leisure Facilities: Cinema, ice rink, theme park, bowling alley, paint ball
- Local 'drop in' meeting places for young people: Internet café, youth clubs
- Financial support / advice for low income families to help with play/childcare costs
- Improvements to community safety enabling more outdoor play / walking home etc
- More 'green spaces': playing fields, accessible woodlands
- More play / social activities delivered 'locally'-especially in the outlying villages
- Regular, organised trips away from the area with/without parents.

There's nothing much to do, Youth Club is fine if you live in Mach, but we don't.

We want more play days like we used to have

You go to other places and see great stuff like adventure playgrounds, parks and just places for kids to go. I'd like an ice rink, bowling alley, arcade, paint ball and a cinema. Then I'd be happy!

I wish we had an internet café or something

I love Holiday Play Club but Mum says she can't afford it all through the Summer

Mum won't let me come to Youth Club because the bus does n't come at the right time to bring me home again. She worries about me! I'm 15 though!

We want more trips, camping, theme parks, cool places....

We just feel let down all the time. No-one ever does anything.

We need a Manager for the junior football team.

I like doing crafts and being with my mates. I like coming to Kidzone.

We want more mountain biking trips for free.

I want to move away from this dump, I want to live in a big city where there are shops and places to go with my mates

We wish Llanbrynmair had a decent footy pitch. We could help teach the young kids

Stuff starts, but then stops just when you start getting into it

I hate going home to an empty house after school. My Mum & Dad both work 'til 6.

Forest School is great, I love getting dirty & Mum does n't mind! More sessions please.

Motorsports & go-karts for kids would be fun

A decent skatepark again .

We need more choice

I wish we had an 'Alton Towers' here in Mach!

It's all just talk anyway, nothing ever gets done about what we want

Too many 'welshies' go to it

Not much to do here

I want nice swings & slides in the park

I'd like to come to After School Club more often. It's fun!

A Cinema would be good

4.4 Communities First Ideas Book & Action Plan

The Communities First ideas book invited suggestions from local people on ways to improve life in Bro Ddyfi. From these ideas an action plan was developed as a working document to support community regeneration. To gather views for the Participatory Appraisal, consultation took place with over 250 adults and around 100 children throughout the Bro Ddyfi area with a particular emphasis on the communities of Bryn y Gog and Llanbrynmair.

The form of this consultation included personal interviews, postal surveys, community visioning exercises and focus groups. The work was undertaken between late 2003 and mid 2004.

Within the youth action plan the following views pertaining to activities and services for children and young people were recorded as first priorities for consideration:

- 'Provide more work for young people to stay in the area'
- 'More affordable childcare especially in rural areas'
- 'Skills for young unemployed'
- 'Encourage business succession (young generation to take on family business)'
- 'Expand the Machynlleth Community Children's Project and support the involvement from parents and community'
- 'Enable people to get to events and out of area facilities'
- 'Continue and develop festivals'
- 'Facilitating a higher use of existing community facilities'
- 'Better building for Machynlleth Community Children's Project'
- 'Encourage a higher level of volunteering'
- 'Full time youth worker for Dyfi Valley'
- 'More welsh language activities for youth'
- 'Exploring the scope to open a Youth Club that responds to the needs and aspirations of young people'
- 'Somewhere for young people between 10-18 years to go in the evenings, especially in the Winter-then they would n't try to get into public houses'
- 'Developing and supporting childcare provisions, transport schemes and outreach services to ensure inclusion and accessibility to sports and leisure facilities (including the extension of opening hours at the Leisure Centre)'
- 'A full all weather sports pitch-possibly a joint project between Ysgol Bro Ddyfi, Machynlleth Rugby Club and Machynlleth Football Club. This would be for use by and benefit the whole community'

- ‘Childcare facilities for young parents wishing to access training’
- ‘Ysgol Bro Ddyfi to become more of a community resource’
- ‘Make use of former shop at Bryn y Gog for any of the following’: Youth drop in centre, training facility or crèche
- ‘Better access to IT facilities for those outside Machynlleth’
- ‘Informal training for vulnerable young people’
- ‘Raise awareness of the value of pre-school education’
- ‘Use the outdoors for informal play and education, including colleges offering environmental studies and fine art groups’
- ‘Development and encouragement of clubs, societies, playgroups etc that operate (or wish to operate along bilingual lines)’
- ‘Need for support for parents outside Machynlleth’

The full Communities First Participatory Appraisal (PA) is available for public viewing however points of note extracted from the consultation process detailed key issues regarding services for children and young people.

Several parents who took part in the PA stated that they felt that since having children it was not worthwhile looking for employment as childcare costs taken from net incomes from low paid jobs left them with little disposable income feeling that they were ‘better off’ living on welfare benefits. Economic deprivation was echoed by others throughout the process citing poorly paid jobs, few employment opportunities and high cost of living as key contributors to rural disadvantage.

Concerns were also expressed at the general lack of rural childcare but specifically the limited number of pre-school places at the Community Nursery which runs at full capacity with demand easily outstripping the number of places available. However with the lack of public buildings to relocate key childcare services in the area it was felt that the situation was unlikely to improve.

The proposed Integrated Children’s Centre offered hope to redress some of the issues identified above and was welcomed by the community in the main who embraced its arrival, some members of outlying villages however felt that it was simply an additional resource for Ysgol Gynradd Machynlleth and did not see the relevance of it to their own community.

Members of the Young Farmers Club who were consulted in this process were particularly concerned by increasing divisions within the community caused by the Welsh language in a number of areas from housing to local activities. A seeming reluctance by the increasing incoming English first language populous to engage in community activities was causing divisions notably in the outlying villages. It was apparent that young people attending this group enjoyed an active social life, had a wide circle of friends and participated fully in rural community life. Non-Welsh speakers however reported that although they would enjoy the benefits of such a group, they felt excluded because of their lack of knowledge of the Welsh language and therefore choosing not to attend at all.

Better use was needed of existing facilities and could potentially be utilised by groups seeking to extend their current provision or develop new services to regenerate specific areas of the community. i.e. IT courses, 'youth drop-in centre' crèche facilities etc

It was widely appreciated by members of the community that there were few opportunities for young people to access stimulating and interesting recreational activities therefore increasing the number of young people 'hanging about' on the streets after dark. The general consensus was that if young people in the area had something constructive to do with their time they would not descend into anti social behaviour. The view of the young people at this time was that they felt 'unheard' and that their needs were not considered.

Many young people were disillusioned by the lack of employment and educational opportunities in Bro Ddyfi and subsequently outwardly migrated to seek better prospects. This has resulted in a decrease in the younger local population with few skilled young people remaining in the area.

Outdoor recreational activities should be developed as the natural environment such as woods and fields etc were undervalued resources and would provide excellent play and learning opportunities for children and young people.



5 Key Findings

From the consultation work carried out to date by a number of agencies, a number of detailed reports have identified the needs of young people in Powys generally and in varying concentration - Bro Ddyfi. These include:

'County wide audit of services for children and young people' by Powys Children & Young Peoples Framework Partnership

'Transport for Young People' needs analysis by Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations

'Communities First Participatory Appraisal of Bro Ddyfi' & 'Youth Action Plan'

'Powys Community Strategy'

Bro Ddyfi Youth Consultation Weekend Evaluation facilitated by Powys County Council Youth Service & Save the Children, funded by Communities First Bro Ddyfi.

Bro Ddyfi Integrated Children's Centre - Open Access Play evaluation reports

And this locally conducted:

'Audit and needs analysis of activities and services for children and young people 0-19 years in Bro Ddyfi (Machynlleth, Glantwymyn / Cadfarch and Llanbryn-mair)' by Machynlleth Community Children's Project incorporating Bro Ddyfi Integrated Children's Centre and funded by Communities First Bro Ddyfi.

A concise list of preventing factors to active participation in the 0-19 years age group can be drawn up from the research and developed upon to engage and stimulate children and young people in Bro Ddyfi.

Most notable from the consultation work is the evident restrictions on access to services. Although initially there would appear to be a reasonable range of high quality play, care, recreational and social activities operational in the area, they are not fully supported by the 0 -19 years age group.

Many young people involved in the consultation were not aware of the Welsh Assembly 7 Core Aims for children and 10 Entitlements for young people. They felt that at local level although several efforts had been made to identify their needs, nothing had actually been done to meet these needs and a great sense of frustration was expressed.

The primary preventing factors appear to be:

- **Cost:** price prohibitive-childcare, social activities, travel expenses etc compounded by low net household income-low paid jobs, reliance on benefits.
- **Transport:** unreliable / uncoordinated transport network, rural isolation, expense
- **Community safety:** Children and young people not able to enjoy the freedom of outdoor play, fear for personal safety when walking home after Clubs etc
- **Choice:** Lack of options for social activities especially for 14-19 year olds
- **Availability:** Limited number of registered childcare places, area of delivery
- **Language:** Issues for both the English and Welsh speaking communities with discrimination felt on both sides.
- **Development:** Insufficient, locally based staff developing projects to meet identified needs. Lack of real progress with 'action plans' and 'consultations'-no real engagement with the children and young people past this point
- **Sustainability:** Projects started but not sustained, young people left disillusioned
- **Outward migration:** 16-19 year olds leaving the area to seek work/training



Cost



**Community
Safety**



Transport



Issues for
children,
young
people &
their
families
in Bro
Ddyfi



Choice



Development



Language



Sustainability



**Outward
Migration**

6 Recommendations for action

This local audit and needs analysis suggests that although there are a range of activities and services available for children and young people between birth and 19 years in Bro Ddyfi, more work is needed to capitalise on the existing provision. A number of factors have been repeatedly identified which are preventing the target age group and their families from effectively utilising the services available to them. In order to meet the identified needs of the community a series of measures need to be taken.

- **Young People's Community Outreach Worker**

The employment of such would ensure that the wider community is able to access and benefit from a range of play, social and childcare services. There currently appears to be gaps in play provision specifically for children aged from 4-11 years in the villages of Llanbrynmair and Glantwymyn during school holidays and to some extent after school. Although it would be difficult to ensure cost efficiency in developing new projects, due to the sparsity of population in this age group as well as transport issues, there is a need nonetheless to provide adequate opportunity to engage these young people with high quality, fully inclusive play and social experiences. For example, it would be more cost effective to establish a co-ordinated transport network to provide working families living in Llanbrynmair and Glantwymyn with 'wrap around childcare provision' by utilising existing after school services in Machynlleth. Locally delivered, holiday playschemes with a range of workshops involving indoor and outdoor play plus more after school play activities such as Forest School etc, would enable children to socialise with their peers and provide a safe meeting place to enjoy stimulating, physical activities encouraging them outdoors and away from PC and console games. This would reduce the levels of rural isolation experienced by this age group and may provide social benefits to parents if they could be encouraged to participate in the activities with their children.

Young people in the 12-19 years age range also experience difficulty accessing social activities in the most rural areas of Bro Ddyfi and considerable work is needed with this group to avoid disillusionment with the area and subsequent outward migration. More direct engagement work is needed in the villages to determine how best to meet their needs and how to overcome some of the barriers which have been identified in this needs analysis with regard to transport, housing, access to information and the language issues experienced by both the Welsh and English first language communities.

The creation of outreach youth clubs in Llanbrynmair and Glantwymyn providing bilingual, and fully inclusive activities for young people regardless of language, ability or social background would be a way to engage with the young people and provide them with services delivered locally. Adequate information, advice and support would need to be provided perhaps with regular workshops or 'drop in' sessions from groups such as Careers Wales, MAYP, CAMAD and local colleges/training providers etc. The current youth provision in Machynlleth should be replicated in the villages but with regular community events bringing groups together for further social interaction e.g music gigs, sports events, trips etc.

A review of the local public transport network to co-ordinate with existing provision is required. Clearer timetables, better scheduling of services, and increased frequency would improve access to services.

- **Improved local facilities**

Although more difficult to achieve, this continues to be high on the 'wish list' of young people in Bro Ddyfi. Interest in large scale leisure facilities has been openly expressed by 8 -19 year olds as well as the wider community who would appear to welcome improved facilities for young people to 'keep them off the streets'. Some of the most popular suggestions were:

- Ice Rink
- Cinema
- Pin Bowling
- Games Arcade
- Theme Park
- Adventure Playground
- All weather sports pitch
- Internet Café
- Paint balling
- Go Karts
- Mountain Bike circuits / Dirt tracks
- More exciting 'green spaces'
- Better playground facilities

Although some of the suggestions may exist in one form or another in areas of Bro Ddyfi (Mountain Bike circuits, sports pitch, playground facilities) they are not easily accessible to all members of the community. An internet café would be an ideal social enterprise, and the improvements to 'green spaces' could be supported by local wood/land owners. As a 'half way' measure, Film Clubs/Nights could be introduced showing newly released DVD's with healthy snacks provided recreating the cinematic experience albeit showing films which have been out at the cinema for some time.

Theme parks and large leisure facilities generally remain to the community to be 'unreachable' and 'unrealistic'

Although the ideas outlined above may indeed be unlikely to materialise in Bro Ddyfi in the foreseeable future, young people should still be provided with opportunities to visit such facilities and part of a Young People's Community Outreach Worker's role could be to facilitate regular outings and trips for 8-19 years olds as part of a multi agency project involving local children's service providers. This would alleviate pressure from parents who feel that such outings can be cost prohibitive when entry and travel costs are accounted for, and are not easily arranged using public transport if access to a car is limited. Parents would be more willing to contribute towards a reduced group rate cost than find the total amount for an 'individual' trip.

'Open Access Play' guidelines could be reviewed to consider the inaccessibility of activities enjoyed by young people in this area and may be extended to accommodate organised trips to sites where open access play could be delivered: i.e A visit to the Venture Playground in Wrexham or more locally to mountain bike tracks or Forest School woods which necessitate transporting young people to the actual activity site.

- **Support for existing services in Bro Ddyfi**

A large number of existing play, leisure and social activity providers have been identified in this audit. A common problem however, compounds many of the projects which would have a lasting benefit to the young people- cost.

Many small voluntary sector groups are well placed to deliver some of the key objectives laid out in the strategies and action plans laid out by the Welsh Assembly Government, often, they do not however, receive the financial support required to facilitate the actual delivery. Premises; local, experienced, bilingual CRB checked staff; play equipment/resources; administration systems and community contacts are all available and yet are not maximised due to the funding restrictions experienced by the third sector.

Improved cross sector working needs to be fostered in order for voluntary sector organisations to assist with the delivery of locally based play/care provision. A co-ordinated approach must be taken to planning projects and partners should be consulted in the decision making process. More support, advice and encouragement should be offered to develop existing services.

Holiday playschemes, toy library services, and some youth based provision (e.g sexual health advisory services) receive substantial statutory funding in other areas of Wales. In Bro Ddyfi however, these activities are reduced due to a lack of adequate funding. More annual service level agreements are needed to avoid the lengthy funding application process and subsequent 'fingers crossed' approach taken when planning play projects. Projects supported in this way will then be able to offer affordable services - without the need to pass on costs on to parents, many of whom are already experiencing financial hardship.

Access to clear and concise benefits information is restricted and the advice given can be inconsistent. Parents need more support with basic skills and confidence building, to enable them to seek the advice they need. Working Families Tax Credits have proved beneficial to some whilst creating more problems than they solve for others.

- **Inclusion**

Improvements to provision for children and young people with additional needs should be considered to ensure that all forms of play, care and leisure activities are accessible to all. When considering the physical needs of young people, it is essential that specialist support staff should be provided when required to enable young person to gain maximum enjoyment and benefit from the activity. Service providers need to be made aware of their responsibility to provide inclusive play activities and regular internal/external inspections of settings need to examine their working practices.

In broader terms, the term 'inclusion' should encompass the integration of the Welsh and English languages/cultures as well as all others. Both languages are spoken in Bro Ddyfi making it a truly bilingual community and it is important to respect linguistic preferences whatever they may be. Bilingual staff and volunteers should be valued and developed. Bilingual school leavers should be encouraged to capitalise on their skills, staying in the area to take advantage of the lack of bilingual playwork/childcare staff and should be offered appropriate locally delivered training opportunities.

- **Community safety**

Hopefully with the recently increased number of community police officers in the area, more safety measures can be introduced to protect vulnerable members of the Bro Ddyfi community.

Parents should be supported to calculate risk when considering play activities. More awareness is needed to offer reassurance that unsupervised, outdoor play is beneficial to over 8's and that the risk of significant harm is limited.

Bullying needs to be addressed fully in schools, colleges and community groups with 'whistle blowing' policies as a requirement alongside child protection policies.

As suggested by an 18 year old male at Ysgol Bro Ddyfi during the consultation process:

'You give us a decent footy (football) pitch in Llanbrynmair and we'll look after the young kids, we'll teach them how to play properly'

This form of mentoring and peer support is to be encouraged and with the support of a Young People's Community Outreach Worker working alongside the youth service this message could be actively re-enforced in all areas.

Young people need to be stimulated and have access to appropriate youth based provision, without it they are likely to become bored and disengaged.

- **Choice**

Repeatedly, children and young people expressed their dissatisfaction at the options available locally to them to enjoy play, leisure and social activities. A wider choice of provision is required and delivered where it's needed. Hobbies of the 8-19 years age groups were listed and there was an encouraging level of participation in specific activities including:

- Playing football / rugby
- Playing netball
- Art & Crafts
- Swimming
- IT based activities
- Cycling
- Drama
- Music / Dance
- Console games

Young people commented however that their opportunities to take part in these hobbies and interests were limited and some requested more sessions providing the following additional activities:

- Cookery
- Forest School – den building
- Jewellery design
- Rafting/ Canoeing
- Horseriding
- Paintballing
- Archery
- DJ workshops
- Circus skills
- Mountain biking / BMX / Motocross / Cycle maintenance
- Socialising – meeting friends, chatting, 'hanging out'

Given the steady increase in childhood obesity figures, it is interesting to note then, that given the opportunity, many of the young people consulted in this process would participate in more physical activity.

Open access play sessions could in some way address this need, possibly working in conjunction with the Toy Library Service or Youth Service although a review of the guidelines for trips to delivery sites etc is suggested. With the creation of a Young People's Community Outreach Worker post, young people from across Bro Ddyfi could be included in the planning of such activities and would ensure that the delivery of workshops was inclusive of all areas.

There are no Scout, Beaver or Cub groups in the area following the recent emphasis on 'risk assessment'. Leaders felt that this was working against the ethos of their groups and that 'paperwork' was getting in the way of outdoor play, with the extra emphasis placed on measuring the risks involved, many potential 'new' Leaders are unwilling to take on the responsibility. More training/support should be accessible locally to potential leaders.

Key Action Points:

- **Young People's Community Outreach Worker**

Apply for funding for post – partnership working with local agencies
Work with communities to re-engage young people with existing provision
Establish new provision to cover identified gaps i.e. Youth Club projects
Arrange trips/outing for local children, young people and their families
Facilitate advice workshops in local communities: careers, MAYP, CAMAD, training etc
Foster bilingualism at existing provision – ensure full inclusivity is offered
Provide more play/social provision for children and young people with additional needs
Work with ICC & local groups to promote services available locally
Develop outreach play provision – playschemes, open access play, play days etc

- **Improve & co-ordinate public transport network**

Lobby for changes in the timetabling schedules
Work with local groups during route/timing planning
Simplify timetables – clear, concise information
Improve access to information – distribute schedules via community groups / ICC
Access to a community minibus

- **Improve local facilities**

Internet café? Youth 'drop in'
Seek funding to develop outdoor play - playgrounds / Astroturf / 'green spaces'
Film Clubs specifically for young people
'Halfway House' – arrange trips to places where better facilities *are* available
The Plas? Community Centre? Community Campus? Pathfinder Project?

- **Inclusion**

More emphasis on equal opportunity (better Welsh & English integration)
Respect for language and culture – bilingual community
Support Ysgol Cedewain parenting outreach projects- promote fully
Develop more 'inclusive' play provision (Play Montgomeryshire)

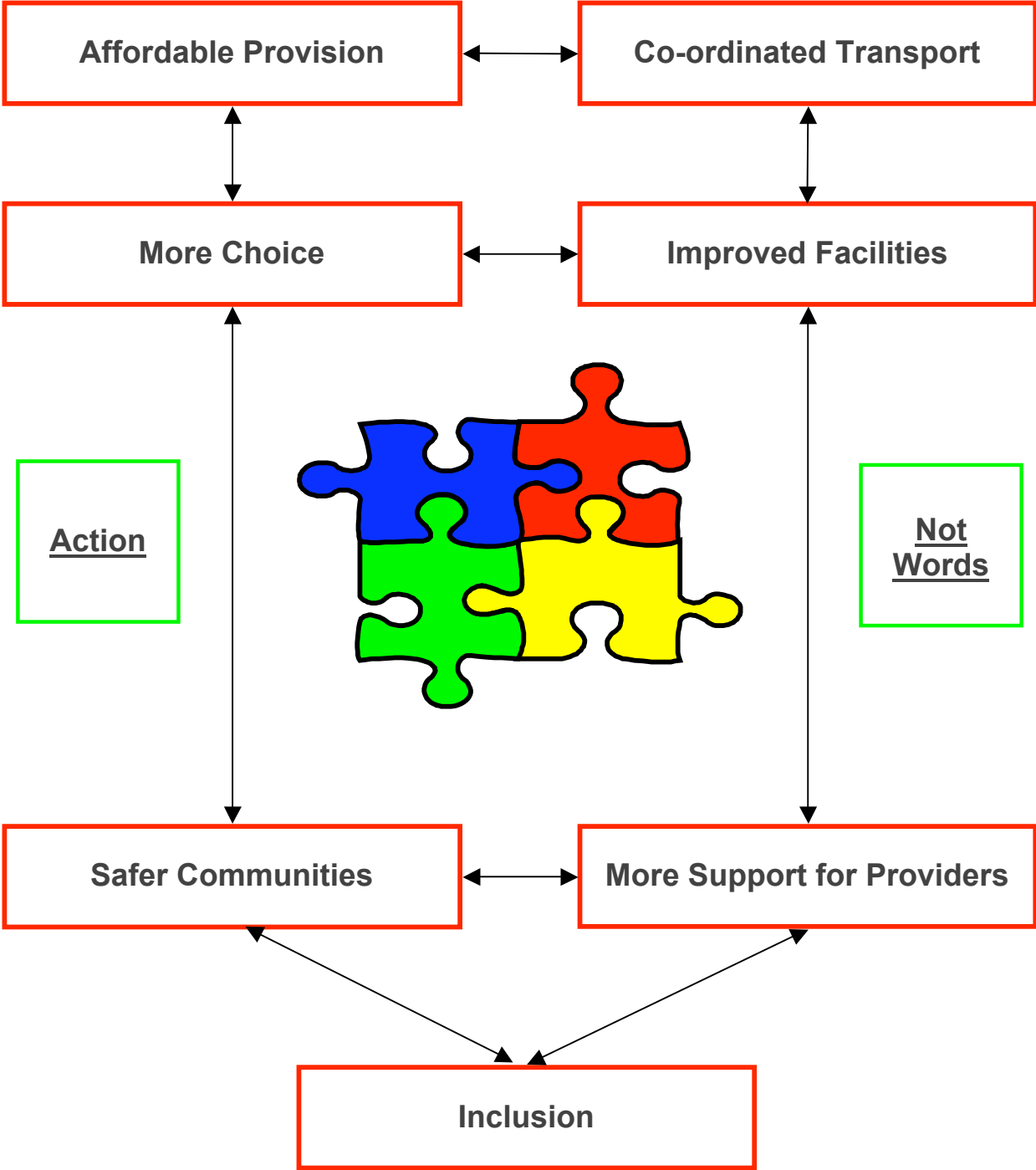
- **Community Safety**

Mentoring / peer support at settings, via schools, community groups (Outreach Worker)
Local police working *with* community groups – more visual presence needed
More social inclusion with young people-provide more direct engagement

- **Cost**

Lobby to ensure WAG and local authority work together when implementing strategies
(*Pens and purses working in partnership*) Voluntary sector can deliver but needs funding
More support for local providers needed to implement initiatives 'on the ground'
Financial support for providers reduces impact on local families-more accessible services
More clear information on benefits, support for low income families

**Improved Services
for
Children & Young People in Bro Ddyfi**



**Young People's Community
Outreach Worker**

7 Conclusion

It is evidently clear that the Welsh Assembly Government has a strong sense of commitment to the nurturing of children and young people in Wales. The ongoing implementation of initiatives to reduce child poverty, increase opportunities for play provision, support childcare initiatives, improve access to services and respect the youth perspective, all suggest positive moves towards a real understanding of the importance of play, leisure and social opportunities for children and young people from birth to 19 years in Wales. With the additional financial support now being provided by the Big Lottery Fund to develop and sustain quality childcare/play provision, and by working in partnership with the local authority to secure funding, service providers should be well placed to deliver the key objectives as set out in the PPIP and associated strategies at grass roots level.

It is important to remember however, that what is needed now is actual delivery. Whilst the value of consultation cannot be underestimated, it is vitally important that we listen to what we are being told and make 'in roads' to facilitating change for the children and young people in our communities. During this audit and needs analysis I repeatedly encountered apathy and a sense of 'what's the point, nothing ever gets done about it'. To minimise the apparent public perception of the Welsh Assembly Government, Local Authority, Communities First and such agencies as simply 'talking shops', direct action is now required to support the needs of the area. We need to build on the information we have available and ensure that we all adopt a fully cohesive and meaningful approach to community regeneration. A lot of the issues identified, were repeated in each area of consultation and have been documented previously and since in associated audits and appraisals suggesting the depth of feeling within Bro Ddyfi.

A great deal more direct community work is needed to ensure a widespread understanding of WAG initiatives and strategies. Worryingly, the majority of children and young people consulted were not aware of the 'Universal Entitlement'. A high percentage of parents included in this audit did not fully understand the role of Communities First or the concept of the Integrated Children's Centre network.

On a more positive note, a number of interesting developments appear to be under consideration for Bro Ddyfi which should in time, address some of the needs identified in this analysis. It is hoped that with the evidence gathered and formulated into concise action plans, supported by WAG legislation and given adequate funding to deliver, service providers should be given assistance to meet the needs of families, children and young people in the area. It is clear that the work needed now lies at the heart of the community with the children and young people the aims and objectives relate to. The passion and heartfelt dedication to their work demonstrated by voluntary sector groups combined with the ongoing strategic development work by the Powys Children & Young People's Framework Partnership and commitment by the Welsh Assembly Government, the future of play, care and social provision in Bro Ddyfi looks encouraging.

Diane Jones

**MCCP Ltd Chief Executive &
Integrated Children's Centre Manager (Bro Ddyfi)
20th March 2007**

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