

VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

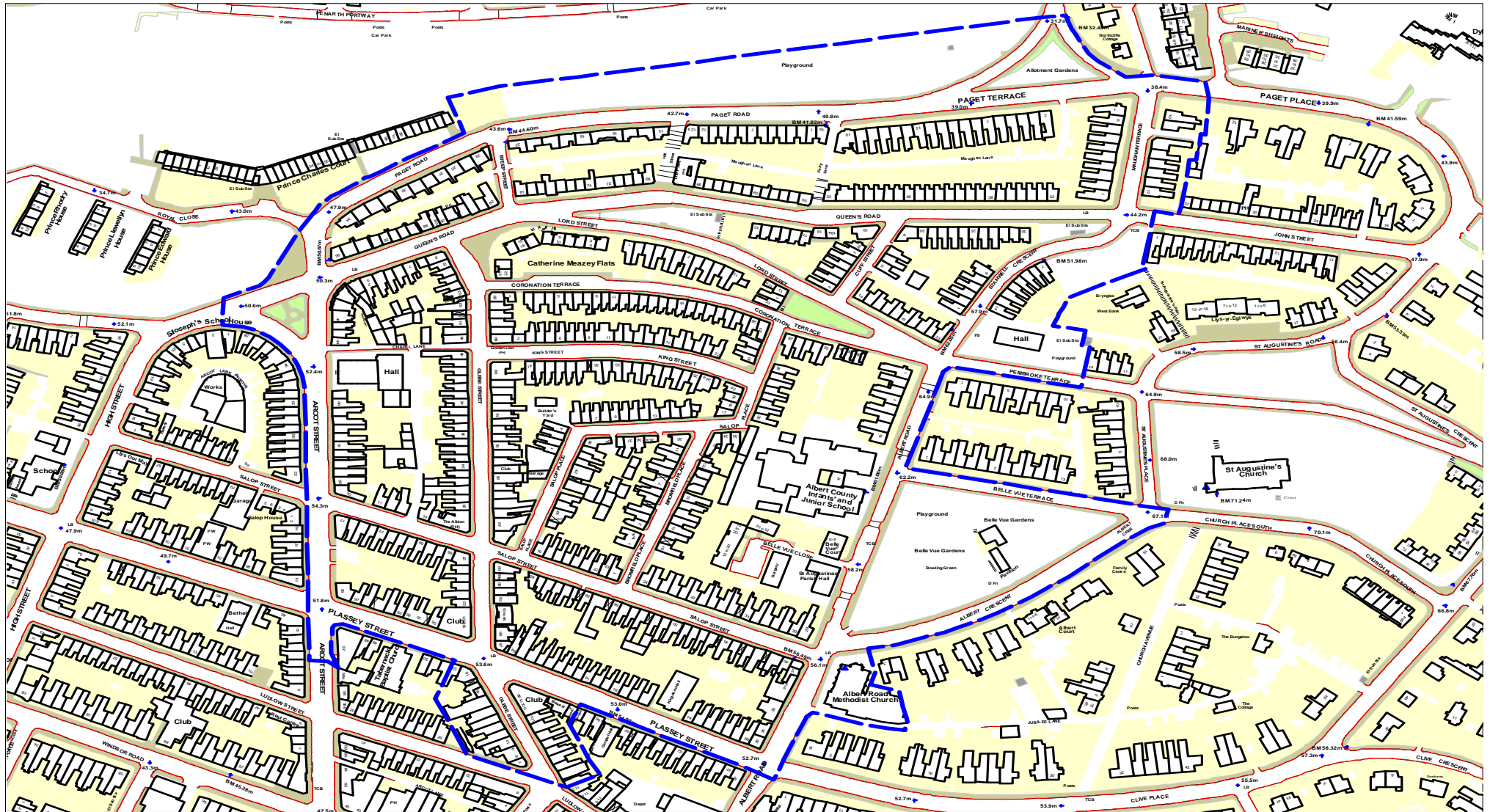


Penarth Central Renewal Area



2000 - 2010





Penarth Central Renewal Area

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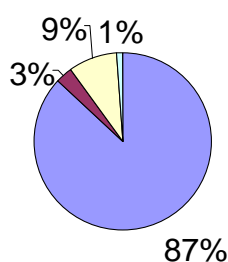
1. Penarth Central Renewal Area 2000 – 2010

Background

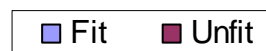
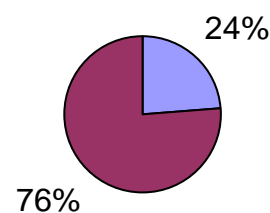
Renewal Areas form an integral part of the Council's Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy and enable the Local Authority to focus action on particular communities' needs with Area Based Action. Renewal Areas have high housing, social and environmental need, which makes them a priority and enables sustainable action to be targeted at them.

The Penarth Central Renewal Area was the second of the Vale of Glamorgan's Renewal Areas and was declared in November 2000. This was in line with the recommendations of the Penarth Central Neighbourhood Renewal Area Assessment Study undertaken in the summer of 2000. The area has 544 dwellings, 87% of which are in owner occupation. 38% of the residents are dependant on one or more means tested benefits with 76% of the properties rated in an unfit condition.

Mode of occupation



Housing Unfitness



Over the years, there had been substantial grant supported repairs in Central Penarth with many of the "improved" properties still well below the 30 years standard that is the expected criteria of such work. Much of the work had been driven by the need for structural repairs to front walls which has led to many elevations being rebuilt thus breaking down any cohesiveness or quality of street scene that would have been a feature of the area. This erosion of quality was a major factor in the removal of conservation area status which was originally given to the area in 1971, citing "weak frontages" and an erosion of quality as a factor in this. (*Penarth Central Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment Study, September 2000*)

The aims of the Renewal Area were to

- Improve Housing
- Improve general amenities & the local environment
- Develop partnerships
- Increase community and market confidence
- Maximise external investment into the area
- Reverse the decline of the area

Declaration of the Penarth Central Renewal Area signalled the recognition of the local community's problems and the Council's commitment to a long-term programme of sustainable activity. In April 2001, a Health and Well Being Survey was completed on individuals living in the renewal area to provide benchmark information on the health impact of the Renewal Area Initiatives.

Alignment with National and Local Strategies

The Renewal Area strategy was aligned with a number of National and Local strategies including:

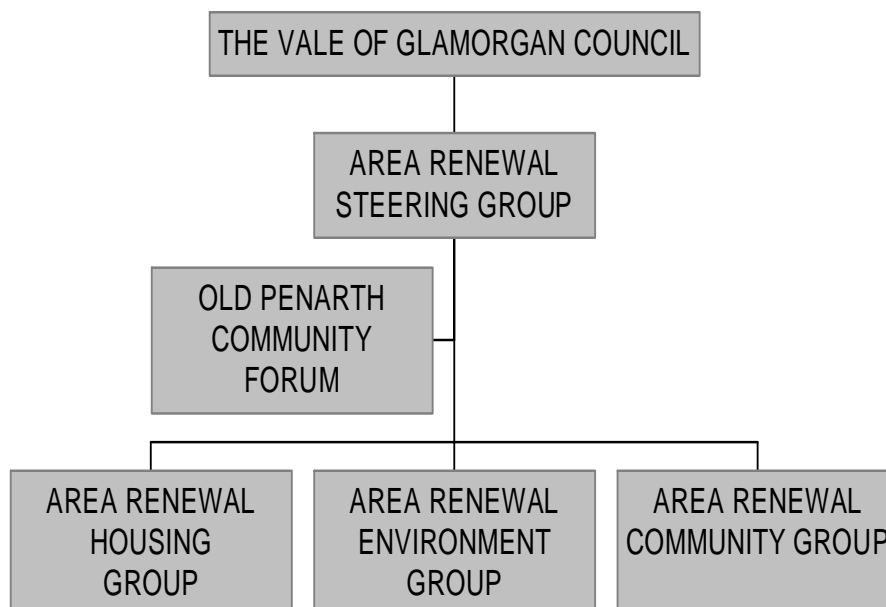
- The Vale of Glamorgan Community Strategy 2003-2013
- The Corporate Plan
- Better Homes for People in Wales
- UK Fuel Poverty Strategy
- Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy 2003-2004
- Local Housing Strategy

Implementation

Renewal Area Structure

In recognition of the wider regeneration issues, a new management structure was established to facilitate corporate leadership of the initiatives with the aim of 'joined up' working by the Council and its many partners.

Implementation Structure



It was recognised that a vital ingredient to help ensure the success of the Penarth Central Renewal Area Initiative, was local ownership of the scheme and in July 2002 a public meeting was held with the aim of setting up a Neighbourhood Forum. The meeting was extremely well attended resulting in the “**Old Penarth Community Forum**” being established.

Three Renewal Area Groups (Housing, Environmental, and Community) were also established having responsibility for identifying the needs of the local community and to develop and implement projects to meet them.

Renewal Area Process

To ensure the best selection of projects a list of Strategic, Housing and Community Operational Objectives were developed and agreed by the Renewal Area Groups. This was developed from the preferred options in the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment Study.

The Renewal Area Groups produced a “project sheet” for each project which included: - information about each project, identified partners, funding sources and estimated costs.

The projects developed by the Renewal Area Groups were presented to the Old Penarth Community Forum for comments and prioritisation and to the Steering Group for any further prioritisation and implementation by the Renewal Area Groups. All projects had to meet at least one of the Strategic objectives

Strategic objectives

“The Strategic Objectives had to be attained through social, economic and environmental sustainability.” (*Penarth Central Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment Study, September 2000*)

- S01 To improve the physical fabric of the housing stock
- S02 To encourage and sustain private sector investment
- S03 To ensure a high quality residential environment
- S04 To capitalise on the strong sense of community which exists in the neighbourhood, harnessing a sense of civic pride and gaining the support of local people for the Renewal Area initiative
- S05 To improve the physical environment and economic performance of the shops in Glebe Street
- S06 To provide support for economic development within the neighbourhood.
- S07 To ensure that an appropriate mix of community facilities is available
- S08 To actively involve and encourage the local community in coming forward with ideas for community-based initiatives aimed at improving central Penarth’s appearance, community resources and addressing key issues which local residents have highlighted.
- S09 To take account of all available funding sources and target staff and financial resources to achieve the greatest impact

2. Improvements to the housing stock

Housing Issues

A pre assessment study carried out between December 1998 and January 1999, which looked at the potential for new renewal areas in four sites in the Vale of Glamorgan, concluded that central Penarth with its sloping site and the size of some of the properties would appear to be more expensive to repair. This when weighed against socio-economic factors, pointed towards the central Penarth area having sufficient levels of disadvantage to make property repair a real burden on a substantial number of households. (*Potential for New Renewal Areas in the Vale of Glamorgan, Killick, Mcadam, Urquhart, January 1999*)

A comprehensive house condition survey of 100% external and 10% randomly selected internal inspections assessed some **76% of the households to be in an unfit condition**. Issues highlighted from the survey were:

- Significant evidence of structural problems in the area where high levels of external wall rebuilding had already been carried out. There was some concern that cosmetic re-rendering had covered many more structural defects, evidence for which was found during internal inspections and resident interviews.
- Evidence of rot to replacement external joinery
- Unsatisfactory and poor quality replacement roof coverings
- Poor quality chimney stacks and flashings
- Deflection in roof structures
- Poorly maintained rainwater goods

Housing objectives

In recognition of the above issues, the following objectives were targeted:

- To bring down the level of unsatisfactory and unfit properties by the conclusion of the Renewal Area
- To give every property a minimum thirty year life
- To demonstrate forward looking, energy conscious design standards
- To ensure that all work was carried out to the same high quality and in such a way as to complement its neighbouring properties
- To sustain and encourage private sector investment
- To develop a high quality residential environment

Housing programme

Group Repair Schemes were the main tool of the Renewal Area and involved the complete renovation of the external envelope of a group of houses and flats in one project. Group Repair works included not only the replacement of roof coverings, re-render of walls, renewal of doors and windows, rebuilding of chimneys, but also included things like boundary walls and fences.

By having the works undertaken to a block of houses at one time as part of one scheme and by one building contractor it enabled a more co-ordinated and better overall look and street scene to be developed. Group Repair Schemes worked their way around the area over the ten-year life

of the Renewal Area. Therefore not only the street but the whole local community was improved by the long-term investment.

The maximum contribution by Group Repair participants was 20% of the cost of the works. Grant conditions were five years for owner occupiers and ten years for landlords.

Other Housing Grants

Other housing grants were available to safeguard `vulnerable people` and to complement the work of the group repair programme:

Renovation Grants were available on completion of Group Repair works, and were used to bring the inside of unfit properties up to a reasonable standard.

Regeneration Grants were available where a housing need had been identified and involved the conversion of non-residential buildings into dwellings. The grant could also include the complete demolition and rebuilding of buildings where considered appropriate e.g. where a building was an eyesore, had been a public nuisance, was structurally unsuitable for conversion, was no longer required as a commercial undertaking or was of no public benefit.

Emergency Repair Grants were available for small emergency repairs that needed attention e.g. a leaking roof, defective hot water system.

Home Repair Assistance Grants were available where an owner was waiting to have Group Repair work undertaken and urgent works were required e.g. dangerous electrical wiring, roof repairs, boiler replacement.

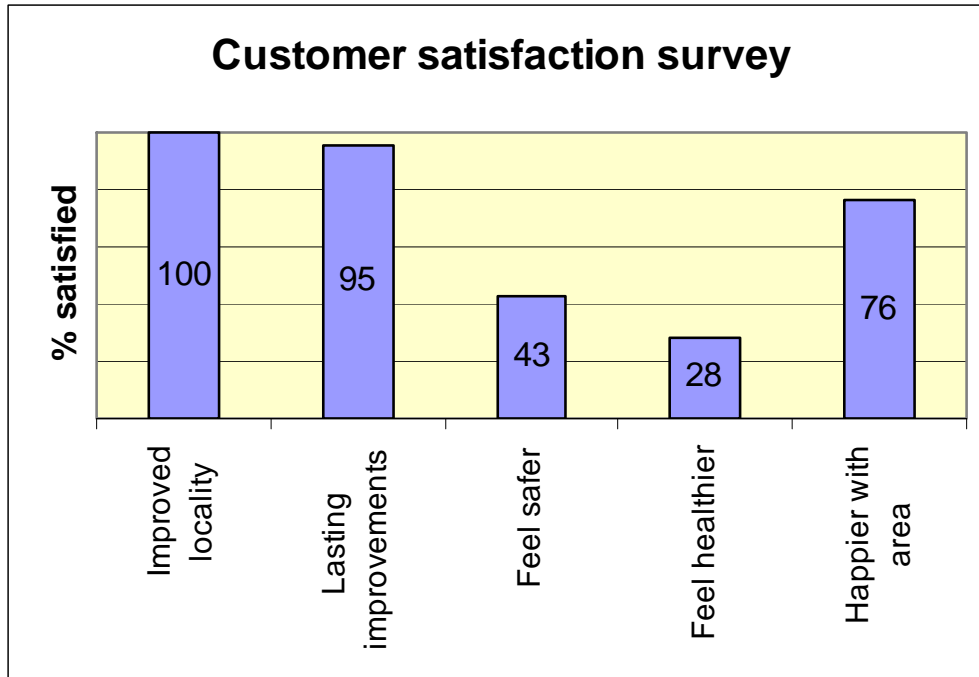
Home Safety Grants were available to provide assistance for measures to improve safety in the home. Measures may include handrails, prevention of falls measures, thermostatic mixer valves on hot water taps etc.

Conversion Grants were available for the conversion of existing accommodation into additional units or the conversion of non-residential units into residential accommodation e.g. "Homes over the Shops". The size of the units to be provided was in line with identified need.

Housing achievements

- Housing unfitness reduced to 0%.
- 438 Properties improved through Group Repair (take up of 81%)
- £15.8 million invested in Group Repair schemes
- Over £600,000 invested in individual grant assistance
- 52 Home Safety Grants awarded at a cost of £54,000
- Energy efficiency initiative conducted on some 370 properties (68% of the total for the area) in partnership with British Gas. Every property was provided with a free, personalised, energy report which highlighted where improvements in energy efficiency could be made, installation of free electricity real time monitor and standby buster.
- Over £1.6 million collected in contributions from owners.
- Several new shops and businesses have opened up in the area including a new post office, florist, health and fitness centre etc.

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- A home maintenance brochure entitled “Home Health Check” developed and distributed to every property in the Renewal Area.
- A “Customer Satisfaction Survey” carried out showed that 100% of residents felt that the Renewal Area Housing Initiative was contributing to the improvement of their locality with 95% stating they thought the improvements made would be long lasting.





75 Plassey Street - Before



75 Plassey Street - After

EXAMPLES OF HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS



Plassey Street - Before



Plassey Street - After



Coronation Terrace– Before



Coronation Terrace – After

EXAMPLES OF HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS



Stanwell Crescent – Before



Stanwell Crescent – After

3. Environmental improvements

Environmental issues

Central Penarth is a dense residential environment with sub-standard open space provision when compared with other areas in Penarth. Many local people felt that the area looked tired and shabby and that this did not inspire confidence in the area.

The survey and consultation process carried out as part of the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment Study identified a number of environmental improvement schemes and related projects:

- Green space improvements at Queens Road, Lord Street and Stanwell Crescent to give some sense of purpose to the areas.
- Enhancement works to lanes – resurfacing works, improved lighting with refurbished cast iron standards, refurbishment works to railings, need to introduce planting and street furniture.
- Improvements to back lanes – the back lanes provide a network of well used pedestrian routes through the area adding to its permeability. In places they are unkempt and have become a repository for various types of dumped material.
- Street lighting – general improvements including the possible re-use of old existing cast iron standards in Ferry Lane and Hill Street to help create “old” areas.
- Road paving improvements – including the refurbishment of railings along Paget Road.
- The need for better street signs.
- Traffic calming on selected roads.

Environmental objectives

- To enhance and make sustainable improvements to the overall appearance of Penarth Central Renewal Area
- To identify environmental problems in partnership with the local community and address them accordingly.
- To identify and improve waste/derelict sites in partnership with the local community, maximising efficient and proper land use.
- To maximise and encourage the use of ‘Open’ and ‘Green’ spaces within the Renewal Area.
- To address the local environmental concerns identified as part of the Neighbourhood Renewal Process.
- To identify and maximise additional external funding opportunities in order to undertake environmental improvements.

Environmental programme / achievements

The following table lists the diverse range of environmental improvement schemes carried out over the lifetime of the Renewal Area. In total, some £464,000 was spent on these projects. All of the schemes were fully endorsed by the local residents association – “The Old Penarth Community Forum”.

Project Title	Description	Year
Lord Street Triangle Green Space	Refurbishment of open green space	2004
Belle Vue Park	Playground area refurbishment	2005
Queens Road Public Open Space	Landscaping works to derelict site including public seating area	2006
Environmental improvements to lanes, steps, lighting, etc	Redecoration of railings. Refurbishment of steps, walls and cobbled areas. Lighting upgrade	2007
Back lane improvements	Environmental Landscaping to Ferry Lane	2007
Stanwell Crescent Open Space	Landscaping works to overgrown site including viewing and seating area	2009
Town Centre Improvements	Implementation of new one-way, traffic management system and parking enhancement scheme.	2010
Paget Road railings	Re-alignment and redecoration of existing railings.	2011
Cycle route	Installation of new cycle route	2011



Queens Road – Before



Queens Road - After

EXAMPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS



Stanwell Crescent – Before



Stanwell Crescent - After

4. Community improvements

Community issues

“Central Penarth’s major asset is its local population and their commitment to their community. The support of the local population is imperative if the Renewal Area initiative is to be a success and it must be the intention from the outset to involve local people in the evolution of the Action Plan.”

(Penarth Central Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment Study, September 2000)

An interview based survey was undertaken during the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment, of all business and community services to ascertain public confidence in the area, their views about the area, its future, strengths and weaknesses. Interviews were also carried out with key stakeholders within the community, including the local primary school headmistress, church ministers and managers of local centres. The results of the survey revealed a pattern of concern on the following topics:

- There is a shortage of community space for community activities in this area of Penarth with most centres operating to full capacity all the time.
- There is a lack of adequate facilities particularly for the 11-14 year old age group.
- Lack of support for elderly residents.
- Lack of parking for shoppers, tourists and visitors to the town

Community objectives

- To gain and retain the commitment of local people throughout all stages of the programme - set up mechanisms through which local people can contribute to the initiation, development and implementation of local projects.
- To provide an information focus for the neighbourhood and Renewal Area Initiatives - an area renewal office is required to provide a focus for information and residents’ questions.
- To ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are represented in the emerging projects, the formation of residents’ group is seen as a key component in this role.
- To undertake a study of the demand for alternative recreational activities, especially those which cater for youth.
- To undertake feasibility studies on extending the use of existing buildings, sites and activities in the area to establish the nature of accommodation and the current level of use.
- To enhance the provision of community facilities and encourage the development of community-led projects and programmes.
- To build upon the strong sense of community and belonging which exists in central Penarth.
- To target support to vulnerable groups (e.g. by introducing a Care and Repair surgery into the RA advice centre to help elderly and disabled groups)

Community programme and achievements

In order to ensure suitable involvement of the local residents and create a sense of local engagement for the Renewal Area action, a Community Forum was created as part of the implementation structure. The Old Penarth Community Forum, who became a constituted Residents Association, was developed from a public meeting held in the summer of 2002. The Forum has subsequently been actively involved in the decision making process for all Renewal Area projects.



The Old Penarth Community Forum commissioned a local artist to design a mosaic which would act as a centrepiece to the landscaped site on Queens Road. The mosaic depicts various aspects of life in Penarth.

Over the lifetime of the Renewal Area, £146,000 of funding was allocated to the following projects:

Project Title	Description	Year
Penarth Youth Project	Refurbishment of existing premises to provide additional space for provision of local youth facilities within the community	2005
St. Augustines Parish Hall Community Centre	Internal alteration and improvements to provide additional space for community activities	2008
Albert Road Methodist Church Community Centre	Refurbishment of existing basement to provide large, multi-use area especially for young peoples activities	2008
Penarth Sea Cadets Hall	Refurbishment and landscaping works, including provision of disabled access, to enable existing hall to be used as community facility	2009



Refurbishment and Landscaping works to Penarth Sea Cadet Hall



Refurbishment of basement to provide large, multi-use area especially for young peoples activities

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS



Provision of youth facilities at Penarth Youth Project



Alterations and improvements to extend community facilities at St. Augustines Parish Hall

5. Looking forward

There is no doubt that the Penarth Central Renewal Area project has been successful in reversing the decline of the area, providing opportunity for residents in the future. Looking back on the original objectives shows how far the Renewal Area has come in the past ten years and underlines the effectiveness of renewal areas in fuelling change. It is imperative therefore that the loss of renewal area status does not contribute toward the area being forgotten about as the local authority pushes ahead with its new renewal area in Barry.

With the area due to lose its “Renewal Area” status in March 2011, a number of key tasks will need to be undertaken to protect the investment made in the area and to promote and implement sustainability :-

- Distribution of a final edition of the Penarth Central Renewal Area newsletter highlighting the closing date for the Renewal Area Office at 88 Glebe Street, together with contact details for all future enquiries.
- Undertake a second “Health Impact Survey.” The results from the survey will be compared against the original undertaken in 2001 in order to assess the health benefits gained from the housing improvements.
- Promotion of “Neighbourhood Watch”
- Continue to provide advice and support to the “Old Penarth Community Forum”
- Distribute Health & Safety files to participants in the final phases of Group Repair
- Resolution of all outstanding disputes / complaints as far as possible within 12 months of loss of renewal area status.
- Maintenance of open spaces and highways by the relevant council departments