

PENARTH TOWN CENTRE TASK & FINISH GROUP OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT)



PENARTH TOWN CENTRE TASK & FINISH GROUP REPORT

**Final Report
November 2009**

Councillor M.R. Wilson
Chairman of the Penarth Town Centre
Task & Finish Group of the Scrutiny Committee
(Economy and Environment)
The Vale of Glamorgan Council
Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry CF63 4RU



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FOREWORD

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all involved in undertaking the review not only the Members of the Group but all the officers, stakeholders and residents who supported the Group with evidence and their advice. The review has proved valuable for myself and other Members of the Group in identifying at first hand the issues that affect the Penarth Town Centre and its outlying areas.

One of the aspects of the review that the Group had considered important at its first meeting was the need to gain an insight from users, service providers, retailers and the public to fully understand the issues they faced.

The Group have not only considered these aspects but we have increased our knowledge base and it has provided us with opportunities to not only consider the needs of local residents and stakeholders but to identify measures to enhance the popularity of Penarth and increased visitor attendance.

I would particularly like to thank Karen Bowen for all her efforts in bringing this report together.

Chairman of Penarth Town Centre Task and Finish Group
Cllr Mark Wilson

MEMBERSHIP OF TASK AND FINISH GROUP



Councillor M.R. Wilson (Chairman)



Councillor G. John (Vice-Chairman)



Councillors Mrs. M. Kelly Owen, Mrs. S.I. Sharpe and C.J. Williams.

MAP OF PENARTH



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) had expressed the view that having appointed the Barry Town Centre Task and Finish Group which had presented its findings to Cabinet in March 2008 that further work should be done in respect of one or other of the remaining town centres. To this end a Penarth Town Centre Task and Finish Group was established on 2nd July 2008 to undertake a review of the Town Centre.

The aims of the review were to promote and regenerate the Penarth Town Centre as defined as:

- To promote the Town centre as a distinctive and high quality place
- To improve the environment and to further encourage a shopper / visitor friendly town centre
- Create a welcome, safe, clean and sustainable town centre
- To raise awareness of issues affecting the Town and develop an action plan to deal with them.

Members considered that the challenge for Penarth is to confidently plan for the future to ensure an even more competitive town centre that builds upon success and attracts both local people and other visitors. Its future success will also be dependent upon the continued growth of independent retailers balanced with the need to enhance and promote the current attractions that are available in the area.

Key themes for success

As a result of undertaking the review Members identified the following themes as key outcomes to be addressed in promoting Penarth Town Centre for residents and visitors.

Marketing the Town Centre

Marketing the town centre can play a key role in overcoming negative images, improving perceptions and increasing awareness of the town. Marketing can ensure that quality material is produced for maximising the use of the website for events management and public relations. Strong events programmes need to be co-ordinated and defined as they should be a key component of a wider approach to regenerating Town Centres.

The Group considered it was important that the Town's main attractions should be reaffirmed by branding the Town, for example, highlighting its key features that is, its Victorian aspects which are excellent examples of the

architecture of the day with its public and commercial buildings and ornate houses. The Pier and the Esplanade are also linked by various parks and gardens with Penarth being acknowledged as the Garden by the Sea.

The Town is a Fairtrade town and it also has a considerable amount of café style facilities which could be further promoted by the use of branding the Town.

Parking and Accessibility

Due to the Town centre carrying a large volume of traffic which leads to traffic congestion Members consider that there is a need to ensure that the Town centre is pedestrian friendly and it should be addressed as a key aim of any regeneration strategy for the Town. The Group further advocates that strenuous efforts and more innovative ways should be encouraged in identifying further car parking facilities in and around the Town, cycling facilities and greater use of pedestrianisation.

Improving the Town Centre Environment

Pedestrian connections within the Town need to be reconsidered as they are of limited quality and visually unattractive as are the pavements with considerable maintenance issues which need to be addressed. The Town would also benefit from investment in quality design street furniture and lighting together with enhanced signage.

The key sustainable issues that form the Vale of Glamorgan's Local Development Plan details key issues for the Town centre economic development, which also include town centre retail analysis, commercial office space, car parking and pedestrian facilities, accessibility and public transport, hotels and conferencing and which have been highlighted by the Group.

Improving the Town Centre for Visitors

The visitor attractions (for example the Esplanade) including the development of linkages with Cardiff and the wider Vale should be further promoted to enhance Penarth as a convenient base for visiting other areas. Members considered partnership working by the development of a Penarth Forum an important way forward and should be encouraged by the Council.



2. RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of meetings with the Task and Finish Group, stakeholders and the public, a number of recommendations have been made by the Group to try to make improvements for the regeneration of the Town and to provide the Cabinet with an insight into the needs of the community that have been identified as a result of the review. These are made in order to promote the Town and to encourage a better environment for residents and visitors alike.

In undertaking the review and in the development of the recommendations that have arisen, the Council's commitment has been demonstrated to continue to identify ways to improve town regeneration in the Vale despite the issues facing the Council in the current economic climate.

Members considered that in view of the current financial situation within the Council and the Country they have taken a pragmatic approach to the review and have made a series of recommendations on this basis which they feel are achievable at this current time.

The recommendations for Cabinet's consideration are detailed below:-

1. That a vision be agreed for Penarth centering around the following themes:

Community – to ensure that Penarth is a place which meets the needs of local people and provides a safe and welcoming environment.

Sustainability – that a sustainable approach is promoted in terms of retail, transport, development, fairtrade and community activities by working in partnership with others.

Quality – that the environment infrastructure and amenities are of a high quality for all.

2. That a Maintenance Action Plan for Penarth be developed in order to address the issues identified by the Group, samples of which are at **Appendix 1** to this report.
3. That a Signage Strategy be developed for pedestrians and motor users in Penarth and an audit action plan be included.
4. That the Vale Council considers adopting a similar approach to signage throughout all town centres in the Vale.
5. That OneVale be further utilised to pursue service / maintenance requests for Penarth with regular reporting on outcomes being referred to Members on a quarterly basis and that this be extended to all town centres in the Vale.
6. That regular monitoring takes place to ensure that all promotional literature is widely available and advertised for the public.
7. That Penarth Town Council be encouraged to liaise on a regular basis with the Tourism office and the web editor in the Vale to maximise the potential to promote the Town.
8. That further exploration be undertaken to relocate the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) in Penarth to West House and that the feasibility of relocating the TIC to West House be fully explored.
9. That in addition to their ongoing reporting Penarth Members be encouraged to undertake at least one walkabout annual appraisal of their areas within the Vale and report back to the relevant officers / departments in order to encourage a proactive maintenance reporting mechanism.
10. That all Local Members, Town and Community Councils and the public continue to be advised to refer all maintenance matters to the Contact Centre to ensure effective monitoring, information gathering and completion of work can be recorded.
11. That chevron parking be established throughout the Town where the wider roads appear in and around the centre.
12. That consideration is given to the development of a strategy for the provision of cycling facilities in Penarth.
13. That options be developed for the creation of further links between the Esplanade and the Town Centre to improve traffic flows through the Town.

14. That a Town Centre Strategy be developed by the Vale Council taking into account the local management objectives for town centre management and with overall responsibility and championing being endorsed by the relevant Cabinet Member portfolio holder.
15. That the principles outlined in this review be carried forward for all town centre strategies within the Vale.
16. That the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) reviews the actions outlined in the report on an annual basis.
17. That an action plan be developed with Penarth Town Council to identify and prioritise marketing options for the Town Centre.
18. That a similar exercise be undertaken throughout other towns in the Vale to further enhance Members' awareness and for a consistent approach to be undertaken throughout the Vale.
19. That a Forum be established comprising key stakeholders including Vale Council Members, Penarth Town Council, Penarth Society, Fairtrade Forum, Greener Penarth etc. to consider Town Centre issues.

3. BACKGROUND

The coastal town of Penarth is the second largest town in the Vale of Glamorgan, after Barry, with a population in excess of 23,000 people (Census 2001) and an important seaside resort with a distinctive Victorian character.

The areas visited by the Group were:-

(a) **Lower Town Centre**

- Station Approach including the Paget Rooms
- Stanwell Road including Hickman Road area
- Upper Cornerswell Road

(b) Windsor Road, Windsor Terrace, Glebe Street and Windsor Arcade

(c) The Esplanade and the Pier.

The above were visited as Members considered they are parts of the Town that need to be linked to encourage visitors and residents to Penarth.

Penarth is considered to be a town centre with an image of niche and boutique shops, café culture and civic pride. It is an affluent area but with areas of deprivation. History has also shaped the town with the impact of the docks - Penarth owes its development to the expansion of the coal industry in the 19th century. Its proximity to Cardiff and the waterfront meant it was ideally suited to meet the world demand for Welsh coal through the construction of the docks. The Official Penarth Town Guide 2008 advises that “many of the town’s features owe their origin to the landowners of the time and the results of their vision can be seen in the many fine buildings and parks within Penarth today”. Penarth also earned the reputation as the “Garden by the Sea” because of its splendid parks and open spaces that link the sea front and the town centre. Since 2006 Penarth has also become a Fair trade Town with the establishment of a Fair trade forum and Fair trade directory. Greener Penarth is also promoting a plastic bag free town and working towards becoming a transition town, which means aiming to become carbon neutral.



However, since the early 1990s the vitality, attractiveness and viability of the Penarth District Shopping Centre have been under threat from a number of factors:-

1. Out of town developments – potential loss of trade with the expansion of Cardiff Retail Park, Culverhouse Cross, Penarth Haven and new developments within Cardiff City and its surrounding locality e.g. Leckwith and the new Stadium.

2. Traffic Management – there have been a number of concerns that the Penarth area / shopping centre suffers from traffic congestion and inadequate parking facilities.
3. Street scene – the appearance of the street scene has been weakened by the paving and street furniture falling into disrepair. There is a perceived lack of attractions to visit and inadequate signage makes it difficult to access parking areas.
4. The loss of residents from Harbour View / Royal Close estate has also added to the reduced spending power in the area and its dilapidated state has reduced the aesthetic appearance of the site.

4. INTRODUCTION

- 4.1 The importance of Town regeneration is recognised on a national level. National guidance, including TAN4, recognises and promotes that effective management and promotion of town centres can help enhance their viability and vitality.

The Welsh Assembly Government's objectives for town centres and retailing are:-

- To promote established town, district, local and village centres as the most appropriate locations for retailing, leisure and for other functions complimentary to it
- To enhance the vitality, attractiveness and viability of town, district, local and village centres
- To promote access to the centres through the use of public transport and cycling and
- To secure accessible, efficient, competitive and innovative retail provision for all the communities of Wales in both urban and rural areas.

- 4.2 The development of any town centre strategy should be an important step in developing a wide holistic approach to town centre management. There also needs to be a commitment from the very top of an organisation and that revitalising local centres is seen as a priority for the Council. Any strategy would also need ownership from the Council together with an Action Plan and commitment to ensure that the objectives are delivered. To this end the Task and Finish Group recommended that a Forum designed to provide a cohesive overarching role can play an essential role in developing strategic partnerships between local businesses and other stakeholders in order to tackle issues within the town centre.

Other guidance also encourages partnership working with both the public and private sectors, relevant groups together with working with the Town Council, a pooling of resources and ideas in order that matters of mutual concern can be addressed.

It is widely recognised that town centres have an important part to play for visitors and residents and that facilities need to be attractive. As such it is imperative that basic issues such as car parks, visitor information, signage, public toilets, street cleansing and keeping towns litter free are seen and acknowledged as important elements to showcase the available attractions that the town can be a more sustainable place to live.

Marketing and publicity are also essential elements that should be developed in order to encourage interest, together with information on any events taking place that can be promoted to raise the town's profile and build on good relations.

5. CURRENT POSITION

In 2005 and 2006 the Council commissioned a number of studies, which considered traffic management, public realm and quality building improvements to regenerate the core shopping area in Penarth Town Centre. The report findings were subsequently put before the public at a 3 day exhibition in Glebe Street and generally favourable responses were received. This work was part funded by a Development Funding Grant from the Welsh Assembly Government Physical Regeneration Fund.

Following the public exhibition, the Council applied to the Welsh Assembly Government for an Implementation Funding Grant to realise a £1.2m town centre public realm improvement scheme. However, the bid application failed, and thus the proposals had to be shelved until an alternative source of funding could be identified.

In light of the above the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) recommended that a Penarth Town Centre Task and Finish Group be established in order to consider ways to regenerate the Town and how improvements could be progressed.

Since the establishment of the Task and Finish Group (Nov 2008) in 2009/10 £245,000 was identified under the Penarth Housing Renewal Area and Visible Services Asset Renewal budgets and measures were put into place to resurrect the 2006 scheme, but with changes to the parking regime. Construction of this is scheduled to commence after the Christmas trading period in January 2010.

In 2008 a retail study of the Town and District shopping centres in the Vale (including Penarth Town Centre) was also commissioned by the Council. The Town and District Centres Retail Study examined the viability and vitality of the Vale's main retail centres in Barry, Cowbridge, Llantwit Major and Penarth and assessed how those centres performed against a set of national indicators of viability and vitality. That information provided baseline data to inform the retailing policy of the emerging Local Development Plan and provided useful information that would assist in progressing the Council's town centre action plans and town centre services.

The Town and District Centres Retail Study report has recently been reported to Cabinet (minute C532 refers, see [Appendix 2](#) and [Appendix 6](#)) and has highlighted some of the concerns raised by the Penarth Task and Finish Group Members and stakeholders in conducting this review.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Task and Finish Group of the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) was established as part of the Committee's Forward Work Programme in March 2008. In order to undertake the review it considered that various methodologies should be used in order to gather information for the review, these included:-

- Meetings with key stakeholders i.e. Local Town Council
- Meetings with local retailers and interested parties
- Site visits around the Town
- Site visit of the surrounding area
- Site visit to a town with similar facilities / issues as Penarth
- Meetings of the Group itself with officers of the Vale.

The first meeting of the Group took place on 23rd October 2008. At that meeting a Checklist for Scoping (see **Appendix 3** to this report) the Group considered that an important part of the review was to gain an insight from users, service providers, retailers and the public to fully understand the issues they faced.

The focus was to assist in the development of an holistic approach to the economy of Penarth Town Centre by examining:

- the identity of the area and how to brand it
- the area under consideration and its linkages
- its character
- its accessibility
- its health
- permeability and connectivity including traffic management, signage, car parking
- public realm facilities
- Community safety and sustainability including cycling facilities, dog walking aids.

The review was carried out in line with the Council's overview on Scrutiny methodology. Comprehensive guidance is provided with regard to the overview and scrutiny function in the Vale of Glamorgan within the Council's Constitution, its website and Scrutiny Handbook and also includes:

- identifying issues for Scrutiny review
- scoping the review
- collecting and collating evidence
- final report.

7. INVESTIGATIONS

Brief summaries of the investigations that were undertaken are outlined below.

In order to ascertain the issues for local residents, visitors and retailers etc., the Task and Finish Group also invited a number of key stakeholders and retailers to meetings in order to consider what they thought were the main areas of concern.

7.1 Meetings

At their first meeting, a list of priorities was identified by Members of the Group which were agreed should be addressed for the regeneration of the Town Centre.



- Traffic and transport
- Car parking
- Signage
- Antisocial behaviour issues i.e. noise and litter
- Attractions, appearance and community events
- To seek the views of the public, stakeholders and local Members in order to develop an holistic approach to the area.

In undertaking the review it was apparent that like many traditional town centres, Penarth had undergone many changes and faced challenges which had affected its performance. This had been generally brought about by changes in the retail industry by the growth of out of town shopping centres via convenience and choice. It could be considered that small centres have had to compete externally for trade against the growth and attraction of other centres plus the emergence of competition from shopping on-line.

The economic position and social condition of an area and the centre it serves significantly affects success. Anti-social behaviour, it can also be concluded, presents a major threat to the vitality of a town as it can create a negative and intimidating environment. This was evident to Members throughout their undertaking of the review. The ease with which shoppers can move around town centres is also a key factor in influencing their decision on the usage of the centre and, as such, traffic congestion and parking problems continue to be a challenge. The physical environment of a town centre and its image to shoppers and investors can also be seen as factors that make it attractive or not.



Due to a lack of investment the appearance of the street scene and the architectural integrity has been weakened leading to a lack of coherence in the public realm.

Notwithstanding the above the growth of out of town development and along with the challenges, as detailed above, the Group considered it important that the town centres within the Vale are sustainable towns and that clear ways are identified for meeting a range of local needs, providing choice and safeguarding the provision of local services and facilities.

20th November 2008

The second meeting of the Group on 20th November 2008 focussed on traffic issues, signage and accessibility with various stakeholder representatives being again invited to attend. At the meeting suggestions for improvement were made as follows:-

- To find a balance between one and two hour parking restrictions within the Penarth Town Centre environs. The development of a strategy to support car parking within the Town Centre, its wider environs and also how this links with other developing tourism strategies should be established;
- It was generally acknowledged that signage within Penarth and the wider environs needed to be radically addressed to achieve a flow of pedestrians around the Town Centre, to the Esplanade and the Cardiff Barrage;
- There needs to be a “vision” strategy for marketing Penarth which should encompass publicity material on all modes of public transport etc;
- That some of the existing road infrastructure should be devoted to the introduction of a cycle way particularly with the impending introduction of a cycle way over the Pont y Werin Bridge;
- That, where appropriate, additional on-street car parking could be significantly increased by introducing chevron car parking on one way roads;
- Consideration of a circular bus scheme around the Town together with the pursuit of a shuttle bus in and around the town that links the Esplanade and the Town Centre and the Barrage.

11th February 2009

At the third meeting of the Group held on 11th February 2009 at the Paget Rooms, Penarth representatives from various organisations, schools, retailers, local societies, forums and residents’ associations were invited to offer their views / suggestions for the regeneration of the Town Centre and to consider what, in their view, was the top priority for the area.



Following discussions a number of issues were raised by those present as summarised below:-

- Glebe Street be made a one way system with the establishment of limited parking on both sides;
- The introduction of two hour parking bays be considered;
- End on parking be introduced as detailed in Option 5 of the previous scheme;
- Cycle parks and one way systems could be introduced with minimal cost;
- Limiting the use of UPVC on premises in a conservation area. Officers responded by stating that UPVC was recognised in conservation areas within context but there was a requirement on its nature etc.;
- Chevron parking be considered within the Town;
- Increased marketing for Penarth;
- Utilising the Pier as an attraction;
- Introduction of 20mph speed zones;
- A dedicated bus lane at the Barons Court roundabout;
- Lack of adequate pavements;
- Lack of street furniture;
- Lighting issues – e.g. four different types of lighting systems currently in operation, at Queens Road;
- Lack of signage. It was difficult to know where the Town and the beach were and as these were two of the best attractions at Penarth it was suggested that these be one of the first priorities to be addressed;
- Notice boards providing information for visitors and residents alike;
- Traffic management system to relieve congestion delays;
- Reduce the air pollution (and fuel wastage) from vehicle congestion;
- One way restrictions to have exemption for cyclists except where specific difficulties - Rectory Road and the Esplanade should both be two way for cyclists;
- Barons Court junction - the lanes up from the Windsor roundabout need clear markings for cyclists;
- Merrie Harrier junction - consideration for cyclists required, particularly to and from Andrew Road;
- Cycle route up Arcot Street via Paget Terrace to the Barrage - cycle signs required;

- Cycle way down the Old Railway to Lavernock Park has no clear entrance from Plymouth Road and / or Penarth Station, and has no signing till Birch Lane;
- Traffic lights at Cogan - would it be possible to put a dedicated lane in for Windsor Road residents;
- The plan for Penarth be resurrected;
- A walkway over the Cogan spur was essential, as would be a shuttle bus or a land train to link Penarth to Cardiff Bay and the surrounding locality;
- At Ludlow Lane it was suggested that the lanes be divided not with dotted lines but divided to ensure that more cars could park.

Input from a local school

Children from a local school had also advised of their suggestions as namely:-

- an indoor play centre;
- a milk bar;
- a collectable shop;
- an arts and crafts shop;
- a children's cinema;
- a home work facility premises;
- a joke shop.

On the conclusion of the meeting all present were asked to prioritise which in their opinion was the main issue for Penarth, and by a show of hands an overwhelming majority considered that the following were priorities

Priorities identified at the end of the meeting (11th February 2009)

- Traffic management issues were the highest priority, followed by
- conservation issues and car parking;
- to improve the range and quality of the retail offered in order to enhance the viability of the Town Centre;
- to promote the development of local shops and services where possible;
- to encourage a range of various retail outlets to improve the quality in order to improve the vitality of the Town;
- where possible, to encourage a link between the three arms within the Town i.e. the Town Centre itself, Cornerswell Road and the Esplanade. In order to do this it was seen as imperative that transport movement and accessibility were considered the key priorities in order to improve the pedestrian footfall and the linkages across the Town Centre;
- to liaise with the Penarth Town Council and to include them in the development of the strategy of the Town Centre in having regard to their local views;

- to examine the possibility of a partnership approach and to ensure that all views are portrayed in order to achieve an improvement in the vitality and viability of the Town Centre;
- Importance of marketing.



Members also considered that the adoption of the master plan for Penarth as a whole would assist in providing a vision and strategy for improving the Town Centre.

7.2 Site Visits

Members considered it an essential part to the review to conduct site visits of various areas and that environmental issues should be addressed as a matter of urgency in order to help to engender a sense of identity and local pride.

During the course of the review the Group:-

- Undertook three site visits in and around the Penarth area. Two of which were actual walkabouts of the area i.e. Cornerswell shopping area, Penarth Town Centre and the Pier and the Esplanade, the other being a tour of outlying areas i.e. Barons Court Roundabout, Merrier Harrier, Cosmeston and Penarth Marina in order to understand the issues for themselves;
- Undertook a visit to Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon on 23rd April 2009 which showed examples of town centre initiatives that were ongoing. The areas were similar to Penarth, with similar attractions and provided Members with an understanding of town centre management best practice that had been established.



Although they were well aware that particular funding in excess of £2 million had been received to undertake the regeneration required. Section 5 provides information on the site visit to Weston.

8. VISIT TO WESTON 23RD APRIL 2009

The Group considered it important to visit a town comparable to Penarth which had recently been involved in the regeneration process. To this end the visit to Weston and Clevedon were undertaken on 23rd April 2009 by Members of the Group. Weston-super-Mare offers a number of attractions and facilities used by both residents and visitors. It has a population in excess of 30,000. Officers from Weston had met with the Group and officers from the Vale to advise on the recent funding that had been given to the area and the issues that had been considered, for example signage, marketing, street furniture etc. A walkabout of the centre was undertaken and in particular Members



noted the signage that had been erected at numerous locations which identified areas of interest and linked the town throughout. Further examples of regeneration work that have been undertaken at Weston can be found at **Appendix 4** of this report. The pictures identify improvements that have been made with a consistent approach throughout the town. The town also developed a central piece of art that has been seen as a key focal point for the town and has certainly been a talking point for all.

To encourage and promote the area all Wards in the area had local profiles created which provided basic information on each of the Wards within the district.

Each Ward profile contained a map, key facts and statistics of crime, deprivation, education, employment, health, housing, population and transport for the particular area.

During the visit a number of issues were presented to the Group that had initially been considered by officers of Weston as listed:

- no one single point of contact for the community on environmental issues
- duplication of resources with officers from different teams walking the patch and viewing environmental issues
- potential for conflicting priorities and actions to occur on the ground
- the street scene environment not being considered from the “customer’s shoes”
- missed potential to work across issues and gain from shared experiences



- in a number of instances, failure to deliver on promises that had been given.

In order to address the above shortfalls the Weston Council agreed the following area working initiatives:

- “aim to provide an efficient, effective and economic customer focused Street Scene Environment for all areas within the control of the Streets and Open Spaces Group on a geographical area basis”
- the team consists of 13 officers -
 - 3 Senior Area Officers directly responsible for a team of Area Officers within the agreed geographical area. In addition each Senior Area Officer has specialist technical expertise in one or more of the following disciplines:
 - ◆ Highway Maintenance works co-ordination
 - ◆ Waste Management
 - ◆ Grounds Maintenance
 - 9 Area Officers each with a geographical area of responsibility
 - 1 Area Officer / Assistant Town Centre Manager who is employed by Weston-super-Mare Town Centre Partnership Company.

As a result of implementing the above the following aims have now been achieved:-

- single point of contact for the community on environmental issues
- focusing on resources (reducing on gaps and overlaps)
- identification and resolution of local priorities and actions on the ground
- working across issues and gaining from shared experiences
- building knowledge and capacity to deliver
- setting realistic targets with the local community and critically delivering upon them
- creative stimulating work environment, moving staff from just monitoring and placing of works orders to identification, consultation, problem solving and resolution of issues
- Town Centre partnership.

It has also been agreed that the following should be addressed:

- new branding of Weston
- destination management
- developing a business brand for the district
- encourage retail in all areas and promote events.

Members' views

The visit to Weston-super-Mare highlighted for Members of the Task and Finish Group the way in which a realignment of staffing to provide a consistent and valuable approach to addressing issues affecting the town was working and the area working initiatives identified to trace the maintenance issues in and around the town.

Evidence from visiting Weston proved the iconic visitor attraction on page 18 commonly referred to as the "Parsnip" has had a tremendous affect on the attraction of the town centre. It is also an information centre and provides toilet facilities and it provides a focal point for discussion by visitors and residents alike. Should funding be available such an attraction was considered good for the town.

In light of the above the Group recommends:

Recommendation 1

That a vision be agreed for Penarth around the following themes :

Community – to ensure that Penarth is a safe place which meets the needs of local people and is a welcoming environment to visitors.

Sustainability – that a sustainable approach is promoted in terms of retail, transport, development, fairtrade and community activities by working in partnership with others. That Penarth moves to become a transition town and becomes carbon neutral.

Quality – which the environment infrastructure and amenities are of a high quality for all.

9. IDENTIFIED THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE REVIEW

As a result of undertaking a walkabout of all the Penarth areas i.e. Town Centre, the Esplanade, the Marina and the periphery, a number of issues were identified. These can be categorised in the following areas: maintenance issues, signage, marketing and life quality.

9.1 Maintenance Issues

It is acknowledged that a clean and attractive environment is essential to attract people to town centres. During their walkabout / site visits in and around Penarth the Group identified over 50 items of concern, examples of which are contained in the report below and at **Appendix 1** to this document:-

General Maintenance issues

Throughout the visits and discussions that took place Members identified a considerable number of maintenance issues that needed to be addressed and appropriate mechanisms for reporting, recording and feeding back of all issues to be established.

Pavements

The pictures below identify problem areas in Penarth which require remedial work. They also show at first hand how the pavements are affected by trees and the way in which the kerbs and pavements are not working together.



Example of good work: This example can be found at the Barons Court roundabout which received funding via monies applied for by Cardiff Council for the Barons Court roundabout development which links Penarth to Cardiff and Cardiff Bay.



Graffiti

Graffiti is an issue throughout the Vale. The pictures below highlight some areas in Penarth that identify problem graffiti areas which do not provide a nice environment to live in or encourage visitors to the area.



The Scrutiny Committee Economy and Environment have also requested a Graffiti removal demonstration in September 2009 to consider ways of addressing the increasing issue in Penarth and around the Vale of Glamorgan.

Vandalism

Again vandalism like graffiti can deter visitors to an area and significant clean up campaigns would provide a cleaner environment for all.





In considering the maintenance issues positive steps would be to recommend that a proactive maintenance programme be established with particular focus on high need areas, high risk areas, footfall and access to retail areas. The OneVale Contact Centre should be well placed to assist in this process with regular information on referrals, costs, work completed etc. being readily available for Members and officers as a management information tool.

The OneVale Contact Centre would be the mechanism with which the referrals and management information database can be maintained.

Members were aware that the OneVale was soon to focus on those areas but suggested that these matters be considered a priority to ensure that a proactive maintenance regime is seen as a priority.

Much discussion undertaken by Members of the Group centred around the use of outside organisations being encouraged to promote and develop further community awareness of such maintenance issues.

The Group also considered that further work should be undertaken with the possibility of community projects being delivered within the Town which could involve young offenders repainting and decorating various aspects within the community i.e. school railings, etc.

Recommendation 2

That a Maintenance Action Plan for Penarth be developed in order to address the issues identified by the Group, examples of which are detailed at **Appendix 1** to this report.

9.2 Signage

Signage within the area needs to be addressed and a number of signs require attention (examples of which can be seen at [Appendix 1](#)). The issue of signage in general was also considered by the Group to be essential as there was a distinct lack of signage in various locations. The pedestrian signage system is essential to ensure that visitors etc. can find their way around the Town appropriately, not only to determine it but must also work alongside the development of a legible townscape and other interests / initiatives such as public space enhancement, public lighting and public art etc. to reinforce primary routes that would logically link the places that residents / visitors would want to access.



Visitor attractions should be further identified together with ways to identify links between the Town Centre, the Esplanade and other outlets i.e. retail outlets at Cornerswell Road. The Group wished to encourage the use of fingerposts to signpost attractions and identified a number of areas where these could be advantageous. For example

- On the Esplanade to signpost to the Town centre,
- Cardiff Bay water taxi entrance Penarth side to be signposted showing the way to the Town, beach and attractions,
- Information point signage required on the hill from the Bay,
- Directional signposting throughout the Town advising of various amenities such as toilet facilities,
- From Alexander Park to the Esplanade opposite the Railway station advising of attractions etc.

The style of such signage was also considered important and in keeping with the locality, examples of which are attached at [Appendix 5](#).

The issues of signage considered were twofold:-

- Highway / health and safety signage
- Tourist information and directional signage.

Throughout the site visits a number of signs were noted as requiring urgent attention which again should be dealt with via an action plan in order for the relevant department to consider via an ongoing maintenance programme. This can further be enhanced by way of a strategy audit to not only consider state of repair but to identify the urgent and non-urgent issues.

Members considered that fingerpost signage would not only be suitable for the number of attractions / facilities but also be aesthetically pleasing for the area.



From the middle picture above maintenance is required as visibility is poor. Whereas with regard to the third picture the sign is actually incorrect and should be turned to face the right direction – all the above provides evidence of insufficient, poorly maintained, inappropriate signage.

Recommendations

3. That a Signage Strategy be developed for pedestrians and motor users in Penarth and an audit action plan be included.
4. That the Vale Council considers adopting a similar approach to signage throughout all town centres in the Vale.
5. That OneVale be further utilised to pursue service / maintenance requests for Penarth with regular reporting on outcomes being referred to Members on a quarterly basis and that this be extended to all town centres in the Vale.

10. MARKETING

Marketing of the Town is seen as an essential element in order to encourage visitors and residents to the area. To encourage further working with Penarth Town Council the development of a Penarth Forum is considered an advantage for the Town for a co-ordinated approach to assist and to ensure that literature, maps of the area and all signage is in keeping with the views of all and a master plan agreed.

The lack of Town Centre maps and literature was evident throughout the Town and as a result of the site visits the Group considered that a relaunch of Town Centre maps would be advantageous detailing the attractions, amenities and including Welsh Language issues.

There were however some tourist information panels at key locations which feature a map and local information to help guide visitors but these needed to be regularly updated and a proactive maintenance approach enhanced to ensure accurate information was available.

Penarth Town trails leaflets have been produced by the Vale Council and the Penarth Society, together with a Town Guide by the Penarth Town Council which provides good local information on the area and visitor attractions, but little evidence was found on the site visits of the literature. There therefore needs to be regular monitoring of such information to ensure its availability at various locations in particular the Train station, Town council offices and various locations throughout the Town.

The Vale Council features a Penarth section on its tourism website i.e. www.visitthevale.com but further work to enhance the attractions and other links should be encouraged to be developed.

It is recommended that Penarth Town Council liaise on a regular basis with the Tourism office in the Vale and the web editor to maximise the potential to promote Penarth Town. It is also suggested that further links be encouraged to be developed between the Vale, Cardiff Council and Cardiff Bay Harbour Authority to look into further publicity issues on a partnership approach.

Presently a seasonal Tourist Information Centre is based at the entrance to Penarth Pier which is open from Good Friday until 6th September. Opening times are 11.00am to 5.00pm plus Bank Holiday Mondays and on all Mondays during the school holidays. The Centre is also a booking agent for the Waverley and Balmoral which are a paddle steamer and cruise ship that provide trips mostly around the Bristol Channel.

In view of the fact the Tourist Centre is based on the Pier which is some way from the Town it is suggested that the office be relocated within the Town and as the Town Council office has some spare office space that discussions be undertaken with Penarth Town to consider use of such space and the possible integration of a Tourist Information Centre with the Town Council.

In order to promote good working relationships and encourage tourism and the town development it is considered good practice that the establishment of a forum to assist the development of the Town be encouraged which will ensure that promotional activities, maintenance issues, liaison between stakeholders and businesses is encouraged between the Town Council and the Vale Council.

Members considered a number of venues within Penarth but due to limited funds agreed that the best way forward would be to utilise part of West House as a Tourist Information base.

Other Marketing Initiatives

Penarth and the Vale of Glamorgan have a number of sites of interest and the area needs to capitalise on these attractions.

The production of a history leaflet to provide details of the historical attractions available or a living history programme would be a tool to further encourage visitors to the area.

The Council should take the opportunity of promoting the virtues of Penarth and the Vale with its accommodation facilities in time for the anticipated Ryder Cup of 2012.

FUNDING STREAMS

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is seen to be an affluent area and unfortunately is not able to tap into a number of grant regimes that other Local Authorities are eligible to apply for, i.e. Objective 1 Funding areas are eligible to apply for. The Vale Council however endeavours to take every opportunity to apply for grant funding that it can.

With regard to the Town Council the Council should consider all opportunities and in particular take advantage of the Community Self Help Action Scheme offered by the Local Authority.

Funding for town centre regeneration schemes is limited and uncertain. The closure of the Physical Regeneration Fund in 2006 has limited the availability of funding to drive forward town centre regeneration and the Council has to consider other ways of progressing future projects / areas.

However, some funding exists including external funding from WAG (Welsh Assembly Government) and the Council's Capital Programme. Although the application to WAG was unsuccessful for Penarth, other funding was secured for the town centre of Barry.

The Group have recently been made aware of the proposed traffic management and enhancement scheme at Penarth (£270,000 scheme) which is being funded from the Visible Services Asset Renewal and Public Protection capital budget which will address part of the initiatives proposed in

2006. The Group is pleased that Penarth has been considered for this funding and would wish this review to be considered alongside the scheme.

Recommendations

6. That regular monitoring takes place to ensure that all promotional literature is widely available and advertised for the public.
7. That Penarth Town Council be encouraged to liaise on a regular basis with the Tourism office and the web editor in the Vale to maximise the potential to promote the Town.
8. That further exploration be undertaken to relocate the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) in Penarth to West House and that the feasibility of relocating the TIC to West House be fully explored.

11. THE ROLE OF LOCAL WARD MEMBERS

The Group agreed that Local Ward Members play a lead role in local communities through liaising with local residents and acting as an interface between the Council and local residents. They can also act as a conduit for town centre issues by feeding them through the relevant channels.

The Council's OneVale Contact Centre is seen as an important mechanism to assist Members in this role. All referrals for maintenance requests should be channelled through the Contact Centre which not only provides speed of contact but also provides the Council with a management information tool. Local Members and officers can be provided with details of the number of referrals made, the frequency, how / when the work is completed, if not completed why not and the cost.

Members also agreed that the walkabouts proved extremely useful and highlighted matters of concern and issues that may require further involvement.

Recommendations

9. That, in addition to their ongoing reporting, Penarth Members be encouraged to undertake at least one walkabout annual appraisal of their areas within the Vale and report back to the relevant officers / departments in order to encourage a proactive maintenance reporting mechanism.
10. That all Local Members, Town and Community Councils and the public continue to be advised to refer all maintenance matters to the Contact Centre to ensure effective monitoring, information gathering and completion of work can be recorded.

12. ACCESS TO TOWN CENTRES

Accessibility to the Town Centre was seen as an issue at the stakeholder meetings. Members were informed that shoppers liked to know that parking was available before they actually set out on their trip.

The Town and District Centres Retail Study attached at **Appendix 6** to the report advises that Penarth has a good walk in access from surrounding residential areas. The Town Centre has a frequent rail connection to Cardiff for commuters and shoppers and as a result of a survey undertaken the quality and frequency of train and bus services scored well as positive aspects for the Town. The negative aspect was the lack of car parking facilities. This was also borne out by the site visits undertaken by Members and complaints at the meetings held.

There are no off-street car parks in the centre, the nearest being the small station square and whilst on street parking was free it was also time restricted.

Local residents, when asked what they would like to see, advised the Task and Finish Group that in their opinion the Town Centre should be a place where people can meet and socialise and that the traffic issues, the noise, car parking and the pollution in Penarth are major problems.

Car parking - Throughout the review it was apparent that car parking required further consideration. Members suggested that further sites should be identified by the Council within the Town for the provision of car parking. However in acknowledging the capital cost that could be accrued, further suggestions were identified, for example chevron parking at places like Plassey Street where the width of the road could be rearranged to include chevron parking even if restricted hours were introduced. However the Task and Finish Group would still like the Council to look for sites.

Shuttle bus service - Discussions had taken place with local bus companies regarding the Esplanade and Penarth Marina but as this had not been considered a viable option by them little progress could be made. However, Members considered that further discussions should be held with other organisations who may identify an interest particularly with the fact that there was to be greater expansive development taking place in and around the Cardiff Bay area. A shuttle bus service could not only service the Esplanade, but Penarth, Cosmeston and the Cardiff Bay Barrage. It was also felt that the Council could look to sponsor routes along with commercial partners.

Improve cycle, pedestrian, safe routes within the town - Physical measures to improve cycle, pedestrian routes and safe routes could include looking at opportunities to widen pavements, improve lighting, implement further dedicated lanes and give greater pedestrian and cycle priority

functions. With this in mind the improvement of the infrastructure for cyclists would be important together with the installation of cycle racks in and around the Town.

Members have already requested that the Council consider the issue of cycle hire in and around the Vale and further discussions on this aspect will be considered by the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) in the next few months.

Consideration of discussions with taxi services to this possibility could be arranged if the bus companies were unable to provide such a service.

For major events taking place in and around the Vale, the Council could be proactive like the Vale of Glamorgan show when buses were arranged for residents and visitors to visit the Show in the Summer of 2009.

Recommendations

11. That chevron parking be considered throughout the Town where the wider roads appear in and around the centre.
12. That consideration is given to the development of a strategy for the provision of cycling facilities in Penarth.
13. That options be developed for the creation of further links between the Esplanade and the Town Centre to improve traffic flows through the Town.

13. FINDINGS

The findings of the review are summarised as follows:

- Penarth has good features, both historic and modern, that should be promoted.
- Maintenance issues should be addressed as it is vital for a town for visitor “first impressions” that these areas are addressed.
- Planned maintenance regimes should be considered for all towns in the Vale in order to ensure that the “State of the Area” is regularly monitored and maintained.
- Signposting of various attractions were not completely evident and directions needed to be fully considered in order to provide appropriate information to local residents and visitors.
- There was evidence of good working relationships between the Town Council and the Vale of Glamorgan but these could be further developed and enhanced to ensure good partnership working. The Charter between the Town and Community Councils and the Vale of Glamorgan Council is considered to be a good route where this can be developed.
- The lack of public information boards highlighted to Members the need for closer working relationships within the Town and with the Council to highlight the opportunities and information available.
- With regard to Disability issues the maintenance of the dropped kerbs was considered essential and as such that any capital works for the future should include a planned maintenance programme to ensure that up to date maintenance is timely scheduled.

Members were disappointed to see on their investigations that investments that had been made in many areas were now overshadowed by a lack of proper maintenance which was now having an adverse effect on the Town. The Group was aware that a draft of a Town Centre Strategy had been developed and considered that the findings of the Task and Finish Group be developed in accordance with a Strategy. A Town Centre Strategy was seen as an important way forward to develop a joint Council wide approach to Town Centre Management Information.

14. ESTABLISHMENT OF A FORUM FOR THE TOWN

In considering all the evidence it is suggested that a Penarth Town Centre Regeneration Forum be established. A previous group known as the Penarth Development Group had been established some time ago but approximately three years ago was disbanded. The Group considers that attempts to establish a new forum should be made to consist of the following:- a Vale Cabinet Member, Penarth Vale Council Members, two Penarth Town Council representatives, Penarth Chamber of Trade, representatives from the retail trades at Cornerswell Road, The Esplanade, Station Approach, Penarth Fairtrade Forum, Greener Penarth, Penarth Society, Penarth Youth Project, the Washington Gallery. It is further suggested that the Town Centre Manager when appointed be in attendance at the meetings as the Liaison contact.

The Forum would be designed to provide consistency of approach throughout Penarth, address issues of concern and to:-

- Consider funding opportunities to assist with Town Centre regeneration i.e. sponsorship, etc.
- Encourage and promote visitor attractions
- Promote the positive aspects of the area to attract new investment, visitors and residents
- Provide a constant approach to managing maintenance issues and liaise with the Vale and Town Council to ensure that all issues are closely monitored.

The remit of the Forum to include street furniture, paving stones, maintenance issues, licensing issues, antisocial behaviour, conservation, transport, traffic and parking.

It is suggested that the Chair of the Forum be the Vale Council's Cabinet Member for Regeneration. The quorum to be a third of the membership and that the group meets no less than four times a year with administrative support from the Vale with any recommendations being referred to Cabinet and Scrutiny for consideration.

Developing local partnerships to achieve improvements should be a key action of any strategy for success. They can provide excellent opportunities to bring stakeholders and key interest groups etc. together to work towards a shared common goal for improving town centres.

Partnership success can be good for all in particular retailers where, for example, suggested initiatives could also be considered e.g. shopper vouchers designed to encourage more shoppers into an area by providing a range of special offers by local retailers etc.

Greater local ownership of towns will be achieved by forging such good partnership workings. This can also be a useful group for ensuring good

communication / messages are conveyed to the public, in particular in light of the recent suggested new one way system for the town.

Fairtrade Town

Work is already underway within the Town to renew the Town's Fairtrade status. This will encourage all organisations, schools, businesses, individuals and faith groups to contribute by pledging to do what they can to support Fairtrade and promote the Fairtrade mark.

A Fairtrade Town is any community in which people and organisations use their everyday choices to increase sales of Fairtrade products and bring about positive change for farmers and workers in developing countries.

Recommendations

14. That a Town Centre Strategy be developed by the Vale Council taking into account the local management objectives for town centre management and with overall responsibility and championing being endorsed by the relevant Cabinet Member portfolio holder.
15. That the principles outlined in this review be carried forward for all town centre strategies within the Vale.
16. That the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) reviews the actions outlined in the report on an annual basis.
17. That an action plan be developed with Penarth Town Council to identify and prioritise marketing options for the Town Centre.
18. That a similar exercise be undertaken throughout other towns in the Vale to further enhance Members' awareness and for a consistent approach to be undertaken throughout the Vale.
19. That a Forum be established comprising key stakeholders including Vale Council Members, Penarth Town Council, Penarth Society, Fairtrade Forum, Greener Penarth etc. to consider town centre issues.

15. CONCLUSION

Members of the Group acknowledge that regeneration proposals are long term and major changes cannot be delivered quickly.

The successful implementation and delivery of any proposals and guidance contained within this document will require not only the support of the Council and its officers but also the support of key stakeholders.

It was also considered important that regeneration be seen as a corporate issue and not the sole responsibility of one Service or Directorate.

EXAMPLES OF MAINTENANCE ISSUES OF CONCERN

SIGNAGE



Junction with Victoria Road
No "Westbourne Road"



Junction with Stanwell Road
No "Plymouth Road"



STREET LIGHTING



Street light (later seen illuminated) obscured by growth.

EXAMPLES OF DEFECTS TO FOOTWAYS AND LACK OF CARRIAGEWAY MAINTAINANCE



Cornerswell Road
"Trip" between adopted and private



Stanwell Road
poor detail at drop crossing



Grove Terrace
Trip hazard at tree pit



Victoria Avenue
Pothole marked for attention some time ago



Stanwell Road etc roundabouts
defects

GRAFFITI & LITTER



Victoria Avenue



Debris and a misplaced traffic sign in the Dingle



C532 THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011 - 2026 (LDP) - REPORT ON THE REVISED CACI RETAIL PLANNING STUDY AND THE LDP BACKGROUND PAPER TOWN AND DISTRICT CENTRES RETAIL STUDY' (DEER) (SCRUTINY - ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT) -

Both of the above studies had been prepared to support and inform the production of the emerging Vale of Glamorgan LDP. The Town and District Centres Retail Study had been prepared by external consultants, namely Martin Tonks, and had examined the viability and vitality of the Vale's main retail centres in Barry, Cowbridge, Llantwit Major and Penarth and had assessed how those centres performed against a set of national indicators of viability and vitality. That information provided baseline data to inform the retailing policy of the emerging LDP and provided useful information that would assist in progressing the Council's town centre strategy and town centre services. The key findings of the study for each of the centres was contained within the report under consideration and further details on the survey results and recommendations for each centre were provided within the full report. As indicated above, the report provided specific recommendations for each centre including SWOT analysis and the designation of retail frontages within which specific planning policy guidance would need to be developed as part of the Deposit LDP. One key outcome, it was noted, was the recommendation for Upper Holton Road to be re-classified as a local centre within the current retail hierarchy. The study had also identified several common themes such as the management of parking in most centres and also the encouragement of appropriate fascia designs through the Council's grant regime and a recommendation for the introduction of shop front guidance for all district centres.

As regards the CACI Retail Planning Study previously reported to Cabinet in March 2009, an alternative retail capacity study prepared by Nathaniel Litchfield and Partners (NLP) had since been received. That report had utilised a different methodology to that employed by CACI and, as such, had raised questions. Having discussed those questions with CACI, CACI had identified an error in the earlier report. To conclude, therefore, the main amendment to the report related to the level of convenience spend for Barry which now concluded that it could support 3,803m² of convenience capacity by 2012 and 3,928m² by 2026. Detailed within the report were the main points in respect of convenience and comparison goods from the revised report. This was a matter for Executive decision.

RESOLVED - T H A T the report be approved and the studies noted and endorsed to enable them to be used to inform the production of the Deposit Local Development Plan.

Reason for decision

To obtain approval and ensure Cabinet is kept informed of progress on the LDP and to ensure that the LDP is based on reliable evidence.

CHECK LIST FOR SCOPING**1. Focus**

To assist in the development of an holistic approach to the economy of Penarth Town Centre by examining:

- The identity of the area and how to brand it
- The area under consideration and its linkages
- Its character
- Its accessibility
- Its “health”
- Permeability and connectivity including traffic management/signage/car parking
- Public realm/public facilities
- Community Safety
- Sustainability – including cycling facilities/dog walking aids.

2. Objectives and Purpose

- To identify the roles and responsibilities of this Council and those functions undertaken by Penarth Town Council
- To evaluate how efficiently and effectively the Council responds to its roles and responsibilities
- To have regard to local views whilst adopting a realistic approach as to what can and cannot be achieved with the parameters of the optimum use of Council resources and availability of external funding
- To examine a partnership approach with the private sector
- To define a road hierarchy
- To define a user hierarchy to increase the attractiveness of walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

3. Desired Outcomes

- To ascertain what the Council and its stakeholders wish to achieve in the area under consideration
- To improve the vitality and viability of the town centre through the identification of key measures.

4. Information Required

- Vacancy rate
- Footfall
- Rental levels
- Mix of uses
- Relevant details from previous consultations/meetings

- Details pertaining to traffic flows and car parking
- Public transport
- Profile of users/visitors
- An understanding of the local property market
- Details of places of interest/attraction with adequate signage
- Information relating to the unsuccessful Physical Regeneration Fund (PRF) bid made in 2006, including revised on-street car parking regime, improved hard surfacing, street lighting, planting and street furniture, identified pedestrian desire lines, cycle routes
- Demographic / social economic profile including MOSIAC
- Examination of census data through neighbourhood statistics using ward and super output areas.

5. Format of Evidence

- Briefing/report
- Presentation
- Background information
- Responses to Members' questions
- Verbal/written evidence.

6. Method to be Employed

- Meetings
- Site visits.

7. External Witnesses

- Representatives from the local business community, e.g. Penarth Chamber of Trade, Plymouth Estates, local estate agents, Penarth Town Council.
- Civic Society/Local History Society/Penarth Arts and Crafts
- Police
- Penarth Youth Project/young people from local schools
- Arriva Trains and local bus companies
- Cardiff and Vale Coalition of Disabled People/ Royal National Institute for the Blind.

EXAMPLES OF REGENERATION WORKS AT WESTON-SUPER-MARE

INFORMATION BOARDS



TREE PLANTING



LIGHTING



FINGERPOSTS



STREET FURNITURE





5. Penarth District Centre

Introduction

- 5.1 This district centre is around six miles east of Barry and four miles south of Cardiff city centre. The town was developed as a garden suburb / resort for Cardiff and still very much reflects that role. The centre serves the surrounding suburban population in this part of the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 5.2 The centre is located on the A4160 that is the main road from Cardiff to Penarth and it is also connected by frequent rail services that terminate at Penarth. The buildings and street pattern still reflect the Victorian / Edwardian origins of the town with many fine buildings, parades, gardens and boulevards.
- 5.3 The centre is focused on the Windsor Road (A4180) that runs west to east and is home to most of the main shops in the centre – national multiples and independents alike. To the north of Windsor Road there are a number of secondary frontages in the streets set out in a grid iron pattern and there is also a small Victorian arcade. To the south of Windsor Road the shops peter out very quickly into surrounding residential areas except on Stanwell Road, the main road to the railway station where the secondary frontages continue. There are also some

attractive secondary parades leading off the station square itself.

- 5.4 Penarth continues its historical role as a service centre for the surrounding suburbs and has a good range of shops and banks. There are several national multiples including Tesco Express, Boots, WH Smith, Starbucks, Greggs, Specsavers, Blockbuster and Clinton Cards. In addition it has supporting professional services and all the main high street banks are represented. There are numerous quality independent stores, cafes and restaurants adding to the overall offer.
- 5.5 The shopper survey indicates that most visitors to Penarth come from the town itself but it also recorded several visitors from Barry and a few from Cardiff as shown in Map 4 (Appendix 1).

Turnover in Relation to Floorspace

- 5.6 TAN4 advises turnover figures vary greatly and can be of assistance as an indication of the relative activity of different shopping areas and centres. Unfortunately there is no published information for the Penarth District Centre and it is not possible to estimate due to the limited survey evidence. The business surveys for the District Centre indicated that turnover fortunes were mixed but the more businesses (41%) reported an increase over the last two years than a decrease (32%) whilst 28% reported they had remained static.
- 5.7 The business survey recorded a degree of pessimism about future turnover levels with (34%) expecting a decrease, (46%) static turnover and only 20% expected



turnover to rise compared to the 41% who reported an increase in the last five years. The business survey also recorded a decrease in employment levels over the last two years with more businesses with decreasing workforces (34%) than increasing (11%) but the majority (55%) had remained static. Overall these business performance indicators suggest confidence may be declining slightly which may reflect the national economy as much as local performance.

Commercial Yield on Non-domestic Property

5.8 The commercial yield on a property investment represents the return to the investor for risk taking. It is calculated by dividing the rental value of a property by the capital value at the time of purchase and expressing as a percentage. The lower the percentage yield the longer an investor is prepared to wait for a



return indicating confidence in the centre.



5.9 Again yields are not published for Penarth District Centre due to the nature of the shopping centre and the limited number of transactions. Consultations with local agents indicated that they expected yields to be relatively low for Penarth District Centre reflecting

reasonable business confidence in the centre.

Shopping Rents

5.10 Rental information is not available for Penarth District Centre Values due to the limited number of transactions. The business survey for Penarth indicated that many premises were rented (72%). The availability of short term leases and affordable rents was not a frequent reason given for locating in Penarth by respondents to the business survey suggesting this is not one of the commercial attractions of the centre. In addition affordable rents were ranked quite low amongst positive aspect of the centre as a business location. Conversely the cost of rents was ranked as one of the least problems with the centre perhaps reflecting mixed fortunes amongst businesses in the centre and / or that there are other greater problems with the centre. In addition reduced property costs was only ranked 3rd in the list of priorities for investment in the centre suggesting high rents is an issue for some but not all businesses in Penarth.

Retailer Representation and Change

5.11 Successful centres also have a good range of shops including specialist independents and national multiples. The Experian Good Centre Report for the Penarth indicates that 47 of the 147 units in the centre were occupied multiples (7 or more branches to the business). The centre had 4 of the 30 Goad major retailers present although this included the now closed Woolworths, the other 3 being Boots, Clintons and WH Smith. 13% of business premises were given over to convenience shops, 34% to comparison goods, 16% to retail services, 13% to banks and financial services and 18% to leisure services (bars, cafes, restaurants and pubs).

5.12 The convenience sector (13%) is over-represented compared to national town centre averages (8%) which is typical for smaller centres and there are a number of



specialist food retailers although no fishmonger, frozen food shop or market. (Tesco Express has opened since the Goad survey in October 2007 so this will have increased the convenience goods representation.) The comparison sector (34%) is around the national town centre averages (35%) which is unusual for smaller centres and reflects the quality offer and specialist ladies clothing shops in particular.

5.13 In terms of floorspace occupied, the convenience service sector was slightly under-represented (13%) relative to the national average (14%), although the new Tesco Express should have addressed this, indicating convenience shops in Penarth occupy below national average sized units. The comparison goods floorspace in the centre was around the national average (39%), business services (16%) were over-represented (UK 13%), retail services (13%) were over-represented (UK 7%) and leisure services (19%) were slightly under-represented (UK 22%).

5.14 Penarth is the only centre other than Barry in the Vale to feature in the Javelin Venuescore ranking.

This national ranking is based on the quality of the multiple offer only and takes no account of the independent offer in the centre. Penarth has a Venuescore of 14 (compared to Barry's 53 and Cardiff's 312) and has fallen in the national rankings (now 1,538th) since 2007 (then 1,383rd) indicating below average levels of investment in the centre since then by national multiples in comparison to other centres.

5.15 The business survey recorded a significant number of respondents (47%) were long established businesses (over ten years) although 4 businesses (7.5%) were less than one year old. The majority of businesses expected to remain in their premises for more than one year and 28% for at least five years. The number of new businesses and few vacancies suggests the centre is a popular business location and there is demand for any premises that are vacated.

5.16 Several of the independent retailers / businesses can be described as quality independents. In the business survey several independents were named as key attractions including Windsor Arcade (collectively 5.5%), Wason's DIY (5.1%), The Ladies Clothes Shops (4.9%), Robert James Household Stores (4.3%), The Ocha Bar (3.8%) and Rowley's Jewellers (3.2%).

5.17 The visitor survey recorded above average levels of satisfaction with the choice of food shops and supermarkets in Penarth (149 on a 100 average index) and also with the clothes and non-food offer (129). However, there was still very high levels of 'leakage' for main-food shopping (89%) to a number of destinations with Penarth Marina Tesco being the most popular (57%) followed by Ferry Road Asda (11%) and Barry Morrisons (11%). There were lower 'leakage' levels for non-food with 42% of visitors stating this was their first



choice destination. Of those travelling elsewhere the most common destinations were Cardiff city centre (55%), Borry town centre (18%), Culverhouse Crass (8%) and Cardiff Bay Retail Parks (8%).

- 5.18 In terms of missing shops from the district centre the most common response in the visitor survey was the need for more clothes shops of one type or another and 11% of respondents specifically mentioned more cafes and restaurants. However, 58% of visitors couldn't think of a type of shop or missing retailer they would like to see reflecting the generally high satisfaction levels with the retail offer in Penarth.
- 5.19 Focus record three retail requirements for Penarth including Greggs Bakers, Superdrug and British Heart Foundation for a charity shop. Greggs are already represented in Penarth so presumably have a requirement for



o larger unit. Local Agents were unable to confirm any additional national interest but advised there was some local interest in the town centre despite the national downturn.

Diversity of Uses

- 5.20 Successful centres are diverse centres that perform a variety of roles to attract a wide range of

visitors and shoppers at all times of the day. TAN4 identifies the importance of diversity to the success of a centre. The Good Centre Report for Penarth indicated that leisure services (bars, cafes, restaurants and pubs) were slightly under represented (18%) in terms of unit numbers relative to the UK average (21%) and floorspace taken up (20%) (UK 22%). This indicates leisure services in Penarth are under-represented in terms of the number of units and floorspace occupied relative to the UK average at the time of the survey (October 2007). Specific gaps in local provision include bars and wine bars (the Ocho Lounge opened after the survey), Cinemas and Theatres (there are amateur productions at the Poget Rooms), Discos and Nightclubs and Hotels and Guest Houses.

- 5.21 The business survey recorded the cafes and restaurants in the town being regarded as the sixth main attraction and in the visitor survey the variety of places to eat and drink was regarded as a positive aspect of the town centre (scoring 157 on a 100 average index). The Good survey recorded cafes as being over-represented in terms of units and floorspace but restaurants were under-represented although some are in peripheral locations outside the Good town centre boundary.

- 5.22 In addition to the quality retail offer the centre also has a good financial services offer occupying 14% of units in the centre that is above the national average (12%) and in terms of the floorspace taken up in the centre (13%) is above the national average (9%). This indicates branches in Penarth are not only well represented they occupy above average size units.

- 5.23 There are a number of visitor and tourist attractions close to the centre including Windsor gardens, the marina, promenade and pier but there are significant level changes between the centre and these



attractions so there may not be that much linkage between them and the centre. The main attraction of the centre is its quality offer and pleasant high street



shopping environment. In the visitor survey the choice of leisure facilities was one of the few negative aspects of the centre (92 on a 100 average index) yet 68% of respondents could not think of a leisure facility they would like to see in the centre. Of those who could a cinema was by far the most common response to missing leisure facilities (56%). Overall the town centre has reasonable diversity for a smaller centre and performs fairly well on this TAN 4 indicator.

Accessibility

5.24 Penarth has good walk in access from surrounding residential areas although there is quite a slope down to the north and east which must discourage walking and cycling from these directions. Orientation in the centre is reasonably easy due to the grid iron layout of the centre focused on Windsor Road although the shops around station square are remote and somewhat peripheral to the main centre. In the visitor survey respondents gave the ease of walking around the centre the highest ranking (196 on a 100 Average Index where 200 is the

maximum) of positive aspects of the centre.

5.25 The town centre has a frequent rail connection to Cardiff for commuters and shoppers. This was regarded as a problem along with bus services by some businesses (recorded as the main problems with Penarth as a town centre location) presumably because they see it as a conduit for leaking expenditure to this bigger competing centre of Cardiff. This was not reflected in the visitor survey where the quality and frequency of train (161) and bus services (185) both scored well as positive aspects of the centre.

There is, however, no central bus station within Penarth, buses setting down and collecting passengers from stops along Windsor Road and Windsor Terrace.

5.26 Both the business and visitor surveys found that car parking in Penarth was a major problem. There are no off-street car parks in the centre, the nearest being the small station square, and whilst on-street parking is free it is time restricted (1 hour) and in surrounding residential streets available only to resident permit holders. The visitor survey recorded the availability of parking spaces as being the biggest problem with the centre (25 on a 100 Average Index) followed by car access (58). The business survey recorded improving parking facilities as the main priority for investment in the centre. However, the solution to this was not regarded as introducing car parking charges but improving provision by other means.

5.27 Overall access to the Penarth is very good by all available modes but there is clearly a parking problem in and around town centre. There are no off-street car parks in the town centre and the on-street parking is time restricted. As a result of the poor parking provision the centre doesn't perform that well on this TAN4 indicator.

Pedestrian Flow

5.28 The Council have some limited pedestrian flow surveys that indicate the busiest area of the town centre is Windsor Road in the frontages opposite the Windsor buildings / arcade where the main multiples / key Goad attractors such as Boots, Clintons and WH Smith are to be found. Woolworths were also located here and were recorded as a key attractor by Goad, their closure leaves a big gap in the qualitative offer in the centre and will have reduced footfall on this parade. Immediately to the north of the Arcot Street / Hickman Road junctions the frontages immediately end, however they continue sporadically SW down to the station although footfall here is much lower.



5.29 The parade containing the Boots, WH Smiths, Starbucks and Clintons on Windsor Road is probably the main generator of footfall in the centre; however, this will have declined with the closure of Woolworths in this same block. This parade also has two charity shops which are not good generators of footfall. Across the pedestrian crossing on the other side of Windsor Road is the Victorian Windsor Arcade and this and the Windsor building itself is



home to some quality independent stores.

5.30 Because of the roughly grid iron layout of this Victorian town there are several pedestrian circuits including the Windsor Mall, however, due to the lack of a main car park and central bus station the starting point for circuits will vary with the railway station being the only constant start. There are two strategic (zebra) pedestrian crossings at two points along Windsor Road that assist pedestrian circulation. There are also zebra crossings at the roundabout at the eastern end of the centre. There are also no crossings in the northern part of the town that may hinder movement although the roads here are much quieter. Overall footfall is very high in the Penarth and the centre performs well on this TAN 4 indicator.

The Proportion of Vacant Street Level Property

5.31 Seven (5%) of the 147 retail / business premises in Penarth were vacant at the time of the Goad survey in October 2007. This was well below the then Goad UK average of 10.4%. However, the Goad plan for the centre ends before the station bridge and there is one additional vacancy here. In terms of floorspace the vacancy rate was even lower (3.4%) compared to the then UK average (8.4%). One of the vacancies in the primary frontages on Windsor Road has been occupied by the Ocha Bar since the Goad survey. However, there are two new vacancies in the same parade following the closure of Wine Rock and Ferraris bakery. Woolworths on the opposite side of Windsor Road is the most notable vacancy in Penarth although there are some charity shops in this primary frontage indicating the parade / centre may not have been performing that well prior to the (national) closure.

5.32 The Council's own floorspace survey that covered a wider area than the Goad Plan

/ Survey recorded 10 vacancies out of c. 175 business properties (pre-Woolworth's closure), a vacancy rate of 6% still well below the national average. Most of the



vacancies in Penarth are in peripheral areas and appear to be short term and there are no the former Woolworths store. Two former vacancies in secondary frontages recorded by Goad are now occupied by businesses and another has been converted to a residential property. Overall the centre performs reasonably well on this TAN4 indicator.

Customer Views

- 5.33 Business survey questionnaires were completed by 56 (32%) of the 175 businesses in Penarth town centre. In addition a visitor survey was undertaken by Pengwyn Market Research with a sample of 84 respondents.
- 5.34 Retail businesses were slightly over-represented amongst respondents to the business survey – 53% of respondents compared to 47% of businesses in the centre recorded in the Experian Goad category report. Most respondents were long established businesses – 47% over ten years and a further 15% over five years. In terms of why businesses were located in Penarth town centre (Q8) most were for commercial reasons – the local market, high footfall,

accessibility and proximity of other businesses. Together the responding businesses employed c. 355 people of whom around 176 worked full time.

- 5.35 In terms of positive aspects of Penarth as a location responses to Q17 indicated the strength of the local market as the main benefit, followed by accessibility and the presence of other businesses. Negative aspects of Penarth as a business location (Q18) indicated the public transport access was the main problem, however, this appears to be a reference to the strength of the access to the competing centre of Cardiff rather than local inadequacies. Car parking was frequently mentioned but was a much lower concern than the public transport access. Other problems reported in the business survey included personal safety and security problems (joint 3rd), vandalism and graffiti (joint 3rd), the condition of premises (5th), the unattractive town centre environment (joint 6th), vacant properties (joint 6th), poorly maintained properties (joint 6th), takeaways (joint 6th) and lack of room to expand (joint 6th).
- 5.36 In response to Q19 on what improvements to the centre businesses would like to see car parking improvements was ranked highest followed by 'not introducing car parking charges' (2nd), reducing property costs (3rd), environmental improvements (4th) and financial help for improvements to commercial buildings (5th).
- 5.37 The visitor survey recorded that most respondents were fairly frequent visitors (83% weekly or more often) but didn't spend very long in the centre (83% no more than 2 hours). Half the visitors (50%) had travelled by car, 30% had walked and 20% came on the bus. The most common reason for visiting was food shopping (mentioned by 31% of visitors in a multiple response Q5) followed closely by non

food shopping (29%), visiting the bank / building society (20%) browsing / window shopping (13%) and meeting friends / relatives (13%).

5.38 Positive aspects of the centre rated by visitors included the ease of walking around (196 a 100 average index), the quality and frequency of bus services (185), the range of banks and financial services (182), the quality and frequency of train services (161) and the variety of places to eat and drink (157). Other positive aspects included the choice of food shops and supermarkets (149), the cleanliness of the centre (149), the overall attractiveness of the shopping centre environment (139) and the choice of non-food shops (129).

5.39 Negative aspects of the centre rated by visitors included the lack of parking (25), the difficulty of getting to the centre by car (58),



the limited range of leisure services (92) and the availability of toilets (96).

5.40 Overall the business and visitor surveys recorded generally positive views of the centre although there are clearly some problems with parking and the good public transport access appears to be regarded by some businesses as a greater benefit to Cardiff than Penarth. However, the town is

clearly an attractive place to live in and visit as reflected in its role as a dormitory town, suburban shopping centre, seaside resort and visitor / shopper destination for the wider Cardiff conurbation. There are many positive aspects to the centre recognised by businesses and visitors alike such as the range of shops and services and the strength of the local market. On balance, the centre performs reasonably well on this TAN4 indicator.

Environmental Quality

5.41 As already mentioned the town centre presents a very attractive high street shopping environment centred on Windsor Road. The streets follow the Victorian grid iron pattern and there are many quality buildings in the centre such as the Windsor building and mall, the station square parades and the art deco Washington buildings. Away from the shopping centre there are quiet gardens, St. Augustine's Church, the marina, the promenade and pier.

5.42 Within the centre itself there are some attractive buildings and frontages and Penarth does have a good sense of arrival and place. There are a few nodes to assist orientation within the centre although this is not difficult due to the grid iron layout of the centre.

5.43 After the good public transport access (to Cardiff) the main complaints with centre in the business survey were vandalism and graffiti (joint 3rd), followed by the condition of premises (5th) and the unattractive town centre environment (6th). In joint 7th in the perceived problems with the centre were vacancies, poorly maintained properties and too many takeaways. Observations on site visits confirmed some poor quality and inappropriate fascias as well as a few, but not many, badly maintained premises.

5.44 To the north of the primary frontages there are quite a few takeaways many with



shutters closed during the day. Clearly there are some problems with the shopping environment in the centre that are not helped by the growth in vacancies in the primary frontage. However, there



is also evidence of recent investment in the centre in the form of the Ocho Bor, the new Tesco Express and reoccupied vacancies.



3.45 Overall Penarth is a fairly attractive shopping centre and Windsor Road and connecting streets present a pleasant shopper / visitor experience. The centre contains a few quality buildings that add to the shopper / visitor experience but a few are beginning to look tired and in need of investment and the increase in vacancies in the primary frontages has not helped. As a result the centre performs less well on this TAN4 indicator than its 'garden by the sea' billing and local demographics suggest it should.

Perception of Safety and Crime

5.46 The business interviews recorded some concerns about crime and personal safety amongst respondents and this was ranked as the joint third highest problem with the centre along with associated vandalism and graffiti. However, these concerns were not

reflected in the priorities for investment with a greater police presence (joint 7th along with more CCTV coverage (joint 7th). There is little physical evidence in the centre of vandalism and graffiti so presumably the Council businesses deal with it quite quickly.

5.47 There didn't appear to be a great deal of support for this concern anywhere else in the business survey and the visitor survey recorded quite high levels of satisfaction with this aspect of the town centre. The visitor survey recorded 99% of respondents felt safe during the daytime and the 1% who didn't gave their reason as the traffic that made them feel unsafe – presumably the difficulty of crossing Windsor Road.

5.48 In the visitor survey 41% of respondents also visited the town centre at night – mainly for visiting the pubs (53%) or dining out at restaurants (27%). Of those who didn't visit 30% gave the main reason of the centre being too far away and 24% said they had no need. Only 6% gave personal safety reasons for not visiting Penarth at night although 22% stated they didn't go out at night which may reflect perceived problems nationally as much as the local situation.

5.49 The town may have a slight vandalism and graffiti problem that is quickly dealt with by the authorities and / or community as there is little evidence of it. Apart from this the centre scores fairly well on this TAN4 indicator.

The Amount of Edge / Out-of-Centre Retail / Leisure Floorspace

5.50 The main out-of-centre retail facility in Penarth is the Tesco superstore near the Marina and this is the most popular destination for main food shopping trips. Not far beyond this are an out-of-centre Morrisons and Asda superstores in Cardiff Bay and there is a fourth superstore (Asda)

near the new football stadium within a few miles of the centre. Cardiff Bay is also home to the Ferry Road Retail Park and the city centre is less than five miles and only a few minutes on the frequent train services. In addition the extensive out-of-centre retail facilities at Culverhouse Cross are quickly accessed by road and are only five miles away.

- 5.51 The business survey recorded the Penarth Marina Tesco as being regarded as the main competing destinations by more respondents (18%) than any other centre although Cardiff retail parks were close behind (14%) followed by Cardiff city centre (9%), Cardiff Bay Asda (Ferry Road) (9%) and Cowbridge (9). 12% of business respondents also mentioned the recently opened Tesco Express as the main competing facility although this may be in response to a negative campaign against it



and in any case the store is in Penarth and may attract / spin-off additional custom to the centre. The visitor survey recorded more people (89%) travelling out of Penarth for main-food shopping than non-food (58%) but despite this the survey recorded fairly high satisfaction levels with the food and supermarket offer (149 on a 100 average index).



- 5.52 The visitor survey confirmed the views expressed in the business survey with Penarth Marina Tesco being the main food shopping destination for those travelling out-of-town (57%) followed by Cardiff Bay Asda (Ferry Road) (11%) and Barry Morrisons (11%).
- 5.53 In terms of destinations for non-food shopping other than Penarth, 55% of respondents shopping elsewhere indicated Cardiff city centre was their main non-food destination followed by Barry town centre (18%), Culverhouse Cross (8%) and Cardiff Bay retail parks (8%).
- 5.54 Although for a small centre Penarth retains a high percentage of comparison goods expenditure the town is still losing considerable expenditure to competing centres including out-of-centre facilities at Cardiff Bay and Culverhouse Cross that are not accessible by public transport. However, the centre is losing even more convenience goods expenditure although this is mainly to the out-of-centre Marina Tesco that is closer although still relatively inaccessible by public transport.
- 5.55 Whilst the frequency of trips to competing destinations is not as regular as trips to Penarth the visitor survey only recorded those people who actually visited the centre and there will be some local residents who rarely visit the town centre. However, the centre will retain much more top-up expenditure between main-food shopping trips (that were less frequent to the distant centres) as there is a good specialist and top-up offer in the Centre. Overall Penarth underperforms on this TAN4 indicator despite the quality non-food offer due to the proximity of Cardiff and presence of extensive out-of-centre retail facilities at Cardiff Bay and Culverhouse Cross.

Potential Capacity for Expansion

5.56 The business survey recorded the availability of room to expand as the joint sixth disadvantage of Penarth as a business location. In



particular the grid iron street pattern and Victorian buildings may present some problems for businesses wishing to expand in situ.

5.57 The 2008 Vale of Glamorgan Retail Planning Study produced by CACI identified significant leakage of main-food expenditure from the Penarth area and highlighted the existence of sufficient spending capacity to support a new supermarket within the town. Unfortunately the town centre is so compact and surrounded by residential areas and constrained by topography and the railway line to the south it is difficult to see where such a development could take place in or around the centre.

5.58 As a result Penarth town centre performs badly on this (PPS6) indicator of vitality and viability as there are no development sites for expansion to meet identified quantitative need and existing businesses find it difficult to expand.

Summary of Vitality and Viability

5.59 There appears to be a good range of non-food shops and town

centre uses in Penarth and for a small suburban district centre diversity is very good and in particular the banks and financial services as well as the specialist fashion and clothes shops. However, some visitors do complain about the lack of a cinema and also facilities / activities for youths. The choice of two small supermarkets (Tesco Express and Co-op) and some specialist convenience stores is not that good for a settlement of this size and CACI have identified significant leakage from the catchment area but there are no development sites to address the identified quantitative need.

5.60 There is some evidence of recent investment in the shopping centre (Tesco Express) and most premises are very well maintained. The potential capacity for growth may be thwarted as many businesses reported difficulty in expanding and there are no apparent development sites for a supermarket that the catchment can almost certainly support. The town centre does extend to the south-west towards the station and there is a case for consolidation around the retail core of primary frontages on Windsor Road.

5.61 The shopping centre environmental quality is very good and Windsor Road presents a very attractive shopping environment. In addition new developments such as the Tesco Express in the Washington Building have been sympathetic to the character of the centre. Vacancy levels are low and below the national average although there are some prominent vacancies in the primary frontages on Windsor Road including the former Woolworths shop. In addition there are charity shops in this parade that will not generate footfall. There is little evidence of graffiti and vandalism in Penarth despite some concerns expressed in the business survey.

5.62 Accessibility is very good for residents of the surrounding residential areas and



suburbs and the town draws visitors from the wider Cardiff conurbation. Bus and rail access are excellent although there may be concerns that this is taking trade out of the centre as much as bringing it in. The main access problem is the limited availability of parking in the centre recorded in the visitor and business surveys.

5 63 The business survey indicates generally high satisfaction levels with the shopping centre although business confidence might be starting to decline slightly as evidenced by lowering expectations of future turnovers and declining employment levels. The main concern is the limited parking. Apart from the car parking customers are very happy with the town centre although some complain about the lack of



toilets and leisure facilities. The centre is clearly losing considerable trade to competing centres / destinations including out-of-centre retail parks at Cardiff Bay and Culverhouse Cross.

5 64 In summary, Penarth generally presents very good TAN4 indicators of vitality and viability and compares favourably with other district centres in the Vale but as a suburban centre struggles to compete with nearby Cardiff city centre and out-of-centre destinations, particularly for main-

food shopping. The main strengths are the environmental quality, accessibility, the quality / specialist independents, restaurants and other services and sufficient spending capacity for a small supermarket to claw back excessive leakage. The main weakness is the limited car parking and the choice of food shops and the limited development opportunities for a small supermarket within or closely related to the centre. The main threat is continued expansion of out-of-centre retailing around competing centres and the possibility of the introduction of car parking charges.

SWOT Analysis Strengths

- The attractive Victorian town centre with attractive parades, buildings and a small covered mall
- The High Street Shopping Environment
- Good accessibility by train, bus, bicycle and foot from surrounding suburbs
- Two small supermarkets
- Four banks and many professional services
- Good choice of pubs, restaurants, cafes and takeaways that will attract passing and dedicated trade in the evening
- Strong demographic profile of immediate catchment area
- The seaside resort, gardens and marina that attract visitors from the wider Cardiff conurbation
- The Windsor Gardens and open spaces close to centre
- Low vacancy rate

Weaknesses

- The limited car parking
- Declining business confidence
- Proximity of competing centres and ease of access to them including Cardiff city centre and extensive out-of-centre destinations
- Proximity of five out-of-centre supermarkets

- Limited food shopping
- Limited development opportunities for a small supermarket within or closely related to the centre
- Limited leisure offer / activities



for young people

- Sporadic retail frontages at the south-west end of town

Opportunities

- Additional spending capacity for small supermarket to claw back excessive leakage
- Consolidation of retail core around primary frontages on Windsor Road

Threats

- Continued expansion of competing centres and surrounding out-of-centre destinations
- Introduction of parking charges
- Loss of key / specialist retailers from the town centre

Recommendations

- 5.65 The centre should retain its district centre designation.
- 5.66 Windsor Road between Arcot Street and the Windsor Terrace Roundabout should be designated as primary frontage as shown on Map 8. In the primary frontages non retail uses should be discouraged and no two non-retail uses should be permitted together to ensure the street remains vibrant

during the daytime and to discourage 'dead frontages.'

- 5.67 The remainder of the shopping centre as defined by Goad should be designated as secondary frontage where some non-retail uses will be permitted. This will enable the centre to develop supporting business and leisure services.
- 5.68 The Council will have to consider whether the parades focused around the station square that are beyond the Goad Map boundary should also be designated as secondary frontages as this has the effect of elongating the centre.
- 5.69 The Council will also have to consider if there are any sequentially superior sites in or around the centre or elsewhere in Penarth to stem excessive convenience goods leakage to out-of-centre superstores.
- 5.70 The Council should continue to develop its shop frontage policies to ensure inappropriate fascias that detract from the buildings above are discouraged throughout the district centre.
- 5.71 Consideration might be given to the replacement of some of the Zebra crossings with Pelican crossings.
- 5.72 Any future hot food takeaways that are permitted should be conditioned to ensure their shutters are opened during main daytime shopping hours and / or that they are open weave style shutters.
- 5.721 In consultation with the business community the Council should explore new car parking provision and management in the centre perhaps with a view to decreasing the waiting time in the central areas but extending it in more peripheral streets.



