

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Recreation and Sports Development Section**

Dowlais Community Centre

**Business and Service
Improvement Plan**

Year 2006 - 2007



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Customer Community Services Department

Recreation and Sports Development Section

Community Facilities Upper Dowlais Community Centre

Purpose of this Document

To produce a yearly plan to deliver service improvement, to meet and exceed the expectation of the residents and visitors to the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil.

Mission Statement

“Health Wellbeing and Quality of life through Recreation and Sport”.

Vision

By 2010 Merthyr Tydfil will be a safe, healthy and exciting place to live and visit. Our ambition is to become a sustainable confident County Borough, which recognises and promotes equality of opportunity and where people want to achieve in all aspects of their life, through work, leisure and learning. Our vision is to be recognised as a vibrant, thriving regional centre for the valleys.

Strategic Aim

- **Leisure** – developing a wide range of flagship, sporting and cultural facilities that reflect the diverse needs and expectations of our community.
- **Accessible** – There should be fair an equitable access for all.
- **Responsive** – To focus on the needs and aspirations of local communities.
- **Integrated** – Developing cross-department and cross-agency relationships
- **Appropriate** – In being mindful of the diversity of traditions and heritage that have underpinned current activity and in conjunction with the community will strive to maintain and improve them.

Strategic Context

The Dowlais Community Centre is situated to the North of the Merthyr Valley within the Dowlais ward. The ward itself is situated approximately 1.5 miles North of the town centre of Merthyr Tydfil.

The Dowlais Community Centre was opened in May 1981 as a recreational facility and is sited on the old Dowlais railway yard. The main building was used for housing trains whilst under repair. There are also two smaller buildings on site one of which is used as a drop in centre by the Oasis group whilst the Merthyr Amateur Boxing Club uses the other building.

The ownership of the centre belongs to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC).

The centre is run by M.T.C.B.C via its Recreation and Sport Development section. The section has found it difficult to deliver the service in an ever expanding and ever more competitive market. The impact of progressive resource constraints, historical influences, competing political priorities, national social agendas and changing public expectations have significant implications for the quality of service and the ways in which they are provided. There are no clear national priorities for the service. Recreation does not have its own inspection service such as Ofsted to provide a focus. It is for individual Authorities to identify deficiencies in provision and justify the amount they spend on recreation and sport.

Merthyr Tydfil has a poor record on health and when compared to the rest of Wales, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough has:

- Highest levels of people reporting that their health is “not good”(18% compared with 12.5% in Wales)
- The proportion of individuals in Merthyr Tydfil who are obese is higher than the Welsh average.

Recreation and sport remains a discretionary service for Local Authorities throughout the UK but many forward thinking Authorities are now seeing it as an essential ingredient as they strive to develop and implement their corporate or community plans.

In July 2003 the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) launched a strategy document for sport and active recreation (‘**Climbing Higher**’), which sets out a strategic direction for recreation, and sport over the next 20 years. The document recognises the fact that sport and recreation impacts on many dimensions of every day life and its objective includes:

- Health – to increase physical activity across all age, gender and social groups.
- Economy – to maximise the economic impact of sport and active recreation.
- Society – to use sport and active recreation to develop and enhance vibrant communities.

Baseline Service Assessment

The Recreation and Sport Development section sits within the Customer Community Service Department and is headed by the Director of Customer Community services. There is some 60 full time staff employed within the Recreation and Sport Development section and up to 90 casual and seasonal staff employed.

The Team Leader and Assistant Team Leader of the upper valley section manage the facility as part of the upper valley leisure facilities that include, Gurnos Community Centre, Gwaunfarren Swimming Pool and Cae Mari Dwn Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP). There are currently two attendants employed at the main building. The administrative support for the facility is based at the local, Gwaunfarren swimming pool (staff structure Appendix i).

Because of the age and design of the building it is difficult for full access to the facility. There is a ramp to the facility and disable toilets but door size and fitness equipment fall short of DDA recommendations.

The M.T.C.B.C parks department controls the parkland around the building, The main building consists of: -

Ground Floor

- Large hall measuring some 450 square meters, the hall is marked for two Badminton courts, one Football/Netball court
- The hall doubles up as a function hall that can accommodate some 300 people for social events; other events include dog shows, boot sales and church functions.
- A small office/reception area. This area also serves as the shop sales area selling a selection of sweets and drinks.
- Kitchen
- Storage area
- Male and Female changing rooms including toilets.
- Drinks vending machine.

First Floor

- Fitness suite area overlooking the main hall. The fitness suite comprises some 6 fixed weight stations, Free weights, a number of lose weights and 8 pieces of cardio vascular equipment.
- Storage area. A large lockable storage area for miscellaneous equipment for the centre and its customers.

The type of activities currently taking place in this area include

- Football/Netball training, area marked out, clubs and courses
- Karate, Welsh Shotokan, mats provided
- Circuit training, evening and day classes
- Sequence dance class
- Mother and Toddler groups
- Education
- Heart link projects
- Social functions

Annex 1

- Used as a drop in centre for Dowlais Forum organisation.

Annex 2

- Used by Merthyr Tydfil Amateur Boxing Club.

S.W.O.T.

In order to attain optimum usage at the facility it is important to analyse the existing internal strengths and weaknesses at the centre whilst at the same time being mindful of external threats and/or opportunities, a S.W.O.T analysis was undertaken: -

| SWOT Analysis | |
|---|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a existing operational building in place• The facility lies within 2 heavily populated wards some 12794 potential users• Substantial free car-parking• The facility is close to public transport routes• Staff at the facility already posses a number of relevant fitness and first aid qualifications• A highly motivated management team in place.• Large area is available to extended the building externally• Competitive pricing policy• Refurbished Fitness suite | <p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The building is some 21 years old• The changing room and toilet areas need refurbishment• External areas of the building in need of immediate attention• Lack of major capital funding• Not able to expand internal area , small fitness area• Annex 2 used by the boxing club is unsuitable in its present condition and is unlikely to attract female users.• Open access to car-park, security can be a problem.• A restricted programme in the main hall due to its size.• Poor disable access and design of building.• No disable access to Fitness suite on first floor• Building signage |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To develop G.P. referral scheme with the facility being close to two medical practices• To develop links with major employers in the area such as ASDA, St Merrion Meats and OP Chocolates and to negotiate staff discount schemes.• To work in conjunction with Education Department and local schools.• To adopt a pricing policy that reflects the socio-economic conditions of the area• To offer a product which is user friendly to all and in particular to females? Access the WGA leisure centre challenge• To offer packages to customers (i.e. rover /Gold card tickets) that can be used at Gurnos C.C. and Gwaunfarren swimming pool. | <p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There will always be the threat from competitors who may wish to develop similar facilities in the same area.• Dowlais and Pant boys and girls club acquire their own facility.• Worsening social deprivation• Recreation/Leisure/Sport being a discretionary service.• The lack of capital available to increase the standard of the building• Failure to meet legislative requirements including equal opportunities and discrimination acts. |

The Market

The centre is situated centrally in the ward so it is easily accessible by foot or by car. The centre has ample car parking facilities. Through the wide range of activities it has become one of the leading suppliers in this type of sporting and community market within the area.

The centre serves in the main, the population of Dowlais and Pant electoral division as well as those people who reside in the neighbouring Penydarren Ward. Out of the 865 electoral divisions in Wales, the wards are ranked 45 and 46 respectively on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). This indicates extremely high levels of social deprivation in terms of health, income, employment, education, housing and access.

Dowlais

- 35th worst ward in relation to health,
- 39th in relation to employment.

Penydarren

- 29th worst ward in relation to health,
- 38th in relation to employment.

Recent figures from the sports council of Wales (SCW) suggest that female participation in sport (any activity) in Merthyr Tydfil Borough is 42% compared to 60% for males, and that female participation in indoor games (excluding billiards and snooker) is 19% compared to 23% Wales as a whole and 33% of females have never participated in extra curricular sporting activity.

The centre is situated in a low socio-economic area; given this factor the pricing policy must be reflected.

At present there is limited access to the facility for the disabled due to the age and design of the building.

There is at present little or no competition in the local area, how ever in the near future the pant boys and girls club will be opening their own facility and in the local town of Merthyr Tydfil there a number of clubs/centres offering similar facilities.

Because of the size and design of the building it lends itself to specific functions that bring in customers from outside the Borough such as Dog shows and Church events.

Marketing

There is now intense competition for the "customer"; there fore it is important to have a targeted and aggressive marketing strategy. Data will be collected internally and externally to help develop a market strategy. A marketing plan is in place until the strategy is produced.

Ownership

It is currently owned and run by M.T.C.B.C.

Financial Analysis

The operational costs at present are borne solely by the Local Authority.

The manager is responsible for the efficient and effective use of the annual revenue budget (Appendix ii).

The budget is broken into the major headings: -

- Employee costs including salaries and Training and Development
- Premises related costs including utilities, Equipment and Repair & Maintenance (Appendix iii)
- Transport related expenditure, haulage costs, car allowance
- Supply and services, equipment, printing, advertising
- Income

To ensure that the budget is used in the most efficient and effective way, Key Killer Performance Indicators (KKPI) and Killer Performance Indicators (KPI) are used. The KKPI's are formulated in the accounts section while the KPI's are done within the centre locally (Appendix iv)

Risk

- If recreation and sport activity are not provided this could impact on the local community as there is a problem of vandalism and anti social behaviour.
- The local youth will not have a local focal point for sporting activities.
- The lack of sporting facilities in the area makes it difficult for sporting organisations to provide for local sporting activities.
- The safety of young people is compromised because of the need to travel long distances to attend sporting facilities.
- Health risks, from poor health and obesity in all age groups from lack of recreation and sport provision.
- The Welsh Assembly Government Strategy for Sport & Physical Activity "Climbing Higher" will not be achieved

Rewards

- Reduced levels of vandalism and anti social behaviour.
- A focal point for the community.
- Local sporting organisations with local sporting activities.
- A safer environment for the local community.
- Increased health of the local community and less drain on the NHS.
- To provide a facility and guidance to help adults achieve the recommended 5 x 30 minutes physical activity per week
- To provide a facility and guidance to help children achieve the recommended 5 x 60 minutes physical activity per week
- Increased physical activity across all age, gender and social groups
- To enrich and develop or cultural and social life
- To use sport and physical activity to develop and enhance vibrant communities

Objectives

- To maintain, improve and develop the high standards of service demanded by our customers. To make sure that the centre is both affordable and accessible to the local community.
- Sustain IIP status
- To provide functional and appealing facilities, including changing rooms and toilets to increase usage of women and young girls.
- To renew signage internally and externally of the facility.
- To actively promote opportunities for participation in sport particularly within the wards of Dowlais and Pant, via marketing plan.
- Increase opportunities for sports participation for specific target groups to include Woman, Young girls and people with Disabilities.
- To produce an interim marketing plan and develop a marketing strategy for the future.
- To increase IT communication between sites and administrative centre at Gwaunfarren.
- To provide a safe environment for those participating in recreation and sport, in line with M.T.C.B.C, Health and Safety policy.
- To incorporate an effective and extensive monitoring and evaluation package that will give accurate and detailed information so targets can be set through performance indicators.

Completed action points 2005/2006

Training and Development

- Staff trained to Football Leaders Award
- First Aid Qualifications

Equipment

- Increased Equipment was sought from Rhydycar LC and Aberfan CC for the fitness suite.
- A new floor/tile cleaning machine was purchased
- A new PC and modem was purchased

Affordable

- There was little or no price increase in the period via the budgets.

Appealing Facilities

- New front door and all exterior doors painted

Signage

- Fire signage was completed

Promotion

- Promotion via Web site and Leisure Booklets

Repairs and Maintenance

- Renewed male urinal
- Works carried out to for fill Fire evacuation regulations
- Extension to boxing gym
- New lights and emergency lighting in the boxing gym

Usage

2005/2006 - Target 23,826

2005/2006 - Actual 27,668

2006/2007 - Target 28,000

| What | How | By Whom | By when | Completed |
|--|---|--|------------------|------------------|
| To maintain and develop the high standards demanded | Through continuous training and development of staff. | Management team and all | 01.04.06 | Ongoing |
| | Introduction of a preventative maintenance programme. | members of staff | 01.04.06 | Ongoing |
| | Questionnaire customers/Non customers | Assistant Team Leader and Attendants | 31.08.06 | Complete |
| | Change the opening times to reflect the demands of the public | Management | 01.04.06 | Ongoing |
| | Change shift patterns to reflect the demands of the public | Management | 01.04.06 | Ongoing |
| Accessible | The section recognises its role in meeting leisure needs by ensuring full access for all sections of the community and will create methods of working which allows involvement of local people to provide a appropriate and effective service | Management team and all members of staff | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| Affordable | The sections pricing policies will give special consideration to the needs of disadvantaged people whilst at the same time maximising cost effectiveness and ensuring high quality value for money. | Management team | 2006/2007 budget | Ongoing |
| IIP status | Update IIP status, through a partnership with Qualtech. | Management team and all members of staff | 01.04.06 | Ongoing |
| Functional and appealing facility | Decorating the changing rooms and toilets. | Centre staff | 01.09.06 | Complete |
| | Decorating the fitness area | Centre staff | 01.09.06 | Complete |
| | Purchasing Mirrors for the fitness suite | Management | 01.07.06 | Complete |
| | Refurbish the kitchen area, painting and Decorating | Management team and all members of staff | 01.07.06 | Complete |
| General signage | Door signage e.g. Toilets | Management | 01.08.06 | Complete |
| | Price road signage | Team Leader | 01.06.06 | Complete |
| To make the existing fitness area more appealing Increase usage | General decoration and Signage | Centre staff | 01.05.06 | Complete |
| | More user-friendly weights and equipment i.e. Balls, ladies weights. | Assistant Team Leader | 01.05.06 | Ongoing |
| | Sessions with instruction, Ladies only classes | Centre Attendant | 01.06.06 | Ongoing |
| | | | | |
| GP referral | Have staff trained to NVQ 2 GP referral standard | Fitness Wales | 01.10.06 | N/A |
| | | | | |

| What | How | By Whom | By when | Completed |
|---|---|--|--------------------------|------------------|
| Promote opportunities in sport. | Provide a wide range of activities | Management team | 01.04.06 | Ongoing |
| | To have a workable sporting programme | Management team | April/Sept Sept/April | Complete |
| Increase participation in sport for target groups | Participate in SCW Leisure Centre challenge. Identify new programmes in line with SCW criteria | Assistant team leaders / Duty officers. | 01.10.06 | Complete |
| Marketing. | To develop a more planned approach to marketing | Assistant Team Leader | 01.10.06 | |
| | Develop a Borough wide marketing strategy | Borough Management Team | | |
| IT communication plan. | Provide a Broadband link to the PC | M.T.C.B.C | 01.10.06 | |
| | Provide training | M.T.C.B.C | 01.04.06 | |
| | Install relevant software to include office and monitoring capabilities. | M.T.C.B.C | 01.05.06 | Complete |
| | On line to main centre | M.T.C.B.C | 01.05.06 | |
| | Paper free office | All staff | 01.10.06 | |
| Provide a safe environment | The section will ensure that all its services and facilities comply with relevant current health and safety legislation | M.T.C.B.C AND ALL leisure staff | On going | Ongoing |
| | Risk assessments will be carried out on all process | Management team and all members of staff | 01.04.06 | Ongoing |
| Monitoring and evaluation package. | A monitoring sheet is filled in after each activity and broken down to the appropriate categories. | Centre Attendants | On going | Ongoing |
| | Start Databases via the IT systems | Centre Attendants | On going | Ongoing |
| Training and Development | To train and develop Centre staff to deliver a high standard of classes and courses | Centre Staff | 01.04.06 | |
| | Football leaders award Fitness suite induction Customer Care | Centre Staff | 01.04.06 | |

Appendix i
Current Staff Structure

Staff Structure – Current

Upper valley Leisure Facilities



Appendix ii
Annual Budget

Revenue Estimates

| Estimate 2005/2006 £ | Dowlais Community Centre | Estimate 2006/2007 £ |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 61,110 | <u>Expenditure</u> | |
| | - <u>Employee Costs</u> | 64,130 |
| 20,760 | <u>Premises Related Expenditure</u> | 20,760 |
| 810 | <u>Transport Related Expenditure</u> | 810 |
| 6,280 | <u>Supplies & Services</u> | 6,280 |
| 320 | <u>Third Party Payments</u> | 320 |
| 89,420 | Gross Expenditure | 92,300 |
| Estimate 2005/2006 | Dowlais Community Centre | Estimate 2006/2007 £ |
| | <u>Income</u> | |
| 13,370 | Gross Income | 14,270 |
| | | |
| 75,150 | Net Expenditure | 78,070 |

Appendix iii
Repair and Maintenance and Equipment

Repair and Maintenance

| Name | | Repair and Maintenance | Cost | Contractor |
|---------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Dowlais Community Centre | | | | |
| | 1 | Pat testing/ electrics | £ 400.00 | Complete |
| | 2 | Gym systems | £ 200.00 | Complete |
| | 3 | Air stream | £ 250.00 | Complete |
| | 4 | Boiler service | £ 200.00 | Complete |
| | 5 | Cannon hygiene | £ 80.00 | Complete |
| | 6 | Intruder Alarm | £ 650.00 | Complete |
| | 7 | Water treatment | £ 300.00 | Complete |
| | 8 | Replace light fittings and tubes | £ 300.00 | Complete |
| | 9 | Fire extinguisher service | £ 200.00 | Complete |
| | 10 | External guttering | £ 1,000.00 | |
| | 11 | Replace cils on exterior walls | £ 1,000.00 | |
| | 12 | Replace external paving slabs | £ 650.00 | |
| | 13 | Paint brushes (Decorating material) | £ 10.00 | Complete |
| | 14 | Paint | £ 50.00 | Complete |
| | 15 | Re-grout tiles in changing room | £ 100.00 | |
| | 16 | Miscellaneous | £ 500.00 | Complete |
| | | Total | £ 5,590.00 | |
| | | Budget Total | £ 5,500.00 | |

Equipment

| Name | | Equipment | Cost | Contractor |
|---------------------------------|---|---------------------------|------------|------------|
| Dowlais Community Centre | | | | |
| | 1 | Mirrors for fitness suite | £ 900.00 | Complete |
| | 2 | Running Machine | £ 1000.00 | Complete |
| | 3 | 2x Life Fitness cycle | £ 800.00 | Complete |
| | 4 | Fitness Suite Posters | £ 200.00 | |
| | 5 | 1x fitness bike | £ 350.00 | |
| | | Total | £ 3,250.00 | |
| | | Budget Total | £ 2,450.00 | |

Appendix v
Training and Development

Training and Development

| Name | Training and Development | Number | Provider | Cost |
|------------------|------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Dowlais | IT Word, Excel, Out look | 4 | In house | Nil |
| Community Centre | Football Leaders | 3 | F.A.W. | £120 |
| Gurnos | Weight induction | 4 | Barry College | £400 |
| Community Centre | Customer Care | 1 | Qualtech | £200 |
| Cae Mari Dwn ATP | First aid Refreshers | 4 | New Co Training | £300 |
| | % MSC Masters, Business Management | 1 | MT College | £170 |
| | Rest Centre Management | 1 | R C York | Free |
| | | | Total | £1,280 |
| | | | Training Budget: | £1,160 |

Note: Training and Development plan is for the three sites, Dowlais, Gurnos and Cae Mari Dwn ATP, run by the same staff team.

Appendix v
Performance indicators

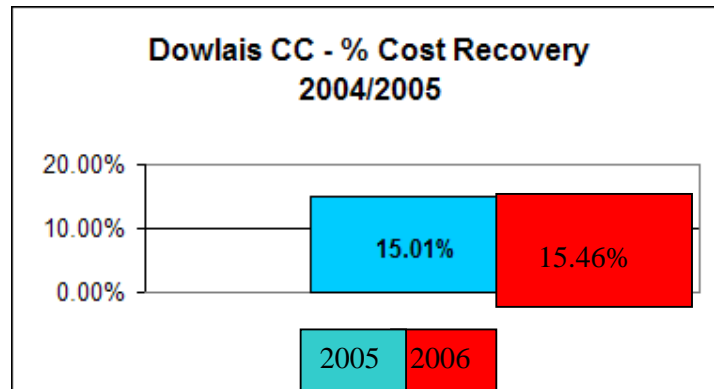
Key Killer Performance Indicators (KKPI)

Dowlais CC

% Cost recovery

Total income as % of total operating expenditure

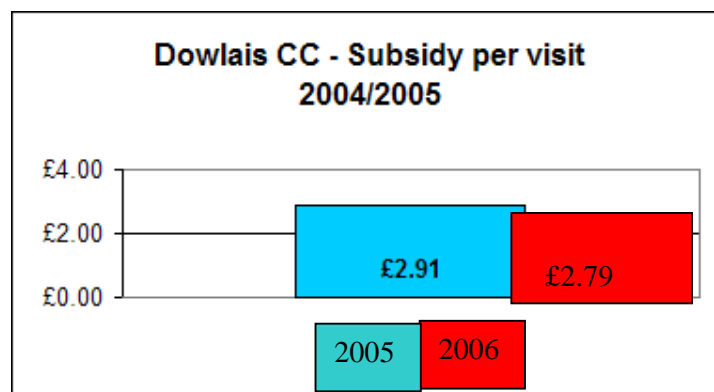
Estimate
2006/2007
15.46%



Subsidy per visit

Total operating expenditure - total income / annual visits

Estimate
2006/2007
£2.79



Secondary income per visit

Total income - direct income / number of visits

Estimate
2006/2007
£0.04

