

‘MAKING HERITAGE MATTER’

**A HERITAGE STRATEGY FOR
WREXHAM COUNTY BOROUGH**

**Final Draft
September 2005**

WREXHAM COUNTY BOROUGH HERITAGE STRATEGY

1. Introduction

1.1 Why a Heritage Strategy?

This document aims to show how and why our heritage is important to Wrexham County Borough. Our heritage is part of our way of life - it touches everyone and contributes to our quality of life. It helps us understand where our communities have come from and to build understanding and respect for our increasingly diverse communities in the 21st century.

Our heritage strategy is concerned with all aspects of human activity including our impact on the natural landscape, but does not cover the natural environment itself which will be part of a complementary strategy dealing with wider environmental and countryside issues.

Heritage is not just about conserving the past but also about how it can contribute to the present. It sets out the overarching issues that confront our heritage and an agenda of priority areas that need to be addressed over the next five years.

It is a strategy for the whole County Borough and for everyone involved in the heritage sector, whether in the community, in the Council or the many other organisations involved in the heritage of our area.

Our heritage strategy needs to contribute to what is important for our communities. In our Community Strategy, ***Wrexham Refreshed***, the Council and partner organisations working in the County Borough have set out the priorities for tackling the issues that face Wrexham and how they will work towards a vision 'To improve the quality of life for all in Wrexham County Borough'.

The Community Strategy is informed by a number of cross-cutting principles which are also at the heart of this heritage strategy. They are:

- Sustainability
- Fairness and Equality
- Citizenship
- Social Inclusion
- Bilingualism
- Partnership
- Welsh Culture and Heritage

2. Heritage – More Than the Past

2.1 Wrexham's rich heritage

What do we mean by heritage in Wrexham? The heritage of Wrexham County Borough is both rich and diverse – from the Mesolithic flint scatters of our hunting and gathering forebears to the industrial innovations of the 18th and 19th centuries. Over 10,000 years of human existence in this area of the Welsh borderlands have left an indelible mark on the landscape around us, but human activity in the area has also been influenced by the natural environment.

Wrexham County Borough has a very varied landscape across its 500 square kilometres, ranging from the high Berwyn Mountains in the south west to the low flat floodplain of the River Dee in the north east. The whole area, apart from Fenn's Moss on the south east border, forms part of the catchment area of the River Dee, and one of its main tributaries, the River Ceiriog, rises within the County Borough. The influence of English farming practice is apparent in the lowlands, but the Ceiriog Valley has a predominantly Welsh rural landscape, and the former mining villages on the lowland-upland edge also have a strongly Welsh character. It can be described as the area where the English plain meets the Welsh mountains, where the communications routes that had made their way from the east with comparative ease had to seek out passes through the mountains to the west. The area has also been an important north-south route between Chester and regional centres to the south – the town of Wrexham itself, Oswestry, the head of the Severn navigation at Welshpool, and Shrewsbury.

This crossroads situation has brought with it much of the cultural diversity that typifies the County Borough. It is a border region, and Wrexham itself is a border town, well aware of its position as the meeting place between the Welsh cultures to its west, and the English cultures to its east. The agricultural communities of the eastern parts of the area have long-established connections with Shropshire and Cheshire. The towns and villages that sprang up through industrial development have tended to develop their communications links with the industrial areas of Merseyside and Manchester. Nevertheless, local communities, urban and rural, industrial and agricultural, have developed a strong sense of their own unique Welsh identity, particularly those areas which have retained Welsh-speaking communities such as Rhosllanerchrugog and Dyffryn Ceiriog.

The earliest people to live here began the long process of deforestation across the upland areas creating the now familiar open moor lands, whilst the lower lying areas still reflect the methods of early farming – such as the distinctive field patterns and boundaries of the borderland and Ceiriog valley; or the rare mediaeval ridge-and-furrow field systems which still survive in the Maelor. Local farming and agriculture gave rise to Wrexham's key role as a Market town, which continues today.

The natural resources of the area encouraged early industrial activity – mining, quarrying, and ironworking. These have left a very tangible legacy of buildings and other structures, permanent changes to the natural landscape where hillsides have been quarried away or new artificial hills created from waste products, and a complex network of associated road, canal and railway systems. The industrial revolution also had a major impact on the settlement and movement of people out of, into and within

the county, new villages growing to house the workforces who drove the industries forward.

Over time, the cumulative effect of the industrial revolution, the Education Acts of the 19th century, the Depression and two World Wars led to a gradual change from what had been a predominantly Welsh-speaking area to one where English has now become the majority language, with scattered concentrations of Welsh-speaking communities in particular in Rhosllannerchrugog, Dyffryn Ceiriog and Wrexham town.

Many aspects of the heritage reflect the area's borderland nature – the need to delineate territory as well as to develop beneficial trading links. Visible remains include the massive earthworks of Offa's and Wat's Dykes, fortifications such as the castles at Holt and Chirk, and transport links to the neighbouring industrial and commercial centres of England. The flow of people into and through the area goes back to the earliest times, but is particularly associated with the industrial developments of the 18th and 19th centuries, and continues to the present day.

All these factors have combined to provide the communities of the present with a sense of their own identity and place in the world, and account for the fact that the general public, in defining their heritage, tend to use phrases such as:

- “things that give us a sense of place”
- “things that we want to keep”
- “things that are significant to our communities”

Our heritage is the product of this long-established interaction between the natural environment and human endeavours, and this is reflected in the principal themes of the county's heritage.

The **industrial heritage** is especially prominent being more recent in time and more tangible in nature – but it is much more than the surviving buildings, slag-heaps, and disused railway lines of the actual industries. It has also left a clear legacy in the pattern of settlement in the urban villages, many of which have remained as distinct communities long after the decline of the original industrial development that created them.

The cultural interaction between older settlements and incoming populations that typified the industrial revolution was just one phase in the area's long history of cultural and commercial interaction. It reflects the **borderland and trading crossroads** characteristic of the area that has also accounted for so many of the prominent structures and earthworks – from Offa's and Wat's Dykes, through military fortifications such as the castles, to the trading infrastructure of canals and railways. The pressures on the Welsh language and cultural traditions, its survival and revival, are also a part of this borderland heritage.

Our local **landscapes** have not only been shaped by the industrial development of the 18th and 19th centuries, but have also been affected by the different agricultural systems adopted across the lowland and upland parts of the county. These practices have had a significant influence on settlement and field patterns, as well as reflecting the interaction with, and attempts to control, the natural environment.

This distinctiveness in the county's communities is being captured through the recollections and researches of individuals and groups – **community and oral history** projects are helping to keep alive memories of the area's social fabric, the working lives and community activities of local people. This collective knowledge about the past is a vital part of our heritage and enables the dry and inanimate structural remains to be given new meaning and be brought to life for future generations.

Today, the largest concentration of the County Borough's resident population of 128,500 lives in Wrexham, the largest town in North Wales. However, there are significant concentrations of population amongst the distinctive urban villages to the west of Wrexham and the various contrasting rural environments which reflect the County Borough's border position between the hills of central Wales and the lower lying Dee Valley.

In recent times Wrexham has undergone a major decline in the steel making, coal mining and other industrial activities on which it has depended for more than two centuries. It has faced up to the challenge by developing new modern industries, and attracting people, businesses and jobs to the County Borough.

It now has a younger age profile than most Welsh local authority areas but with an increasing number of very elderly residents. Wrexham is generally prosperous but has pockets of deprivation, in particular located within three designated 'Community First' areas. 14% of the total population is Welsh speaking. Over two thirds of local people consider themselves to be Welsh.

2.2 Heritage Involves Us All

The diversity of the local heritage is also reflected in the range of organisations, many of them community-based, which are involved in its conservation, interpretation and promotion.

2.2.1 The Council & Our Heritage

The County Borough Council has a significant role in the conservation, promotion and provision of access to our heritage.

The **County Borough Heritage Service** is directly responsible for the provision of a range of museums, archives, local studies and archaeological services. The Council owns and operates three 'Registered' museums: the County Borough Museum, Bersham Heritage Centre and Ironworks, and Minera Lead Mines. Other Council heritage assets include Holt Castle, Penrhos Engine House, Bersham Colliery Headgear and Winding House.

The County Borough Museum Service acquires and maintains collections, principally with a social history and industry bias. It provides public access to these collections through a variety of services, including a programme of heritage-based temporary exhibitions and related events throughout the year, and its education programme supports the lifelong learning needs of schools and the wider community. It also fulfils a

wider role, for example through its developing links with the Royal Welch Fusiliers Museum, and by maintaining the Welsh Football Collection. Exhibitions on themes of regional or national interest give local people access to collections that could normally only be seen in more distant museums and galleries.

The County Archives and Local Studies Services are also based at the County Borough Museum. The Archive Service has been collecting primary material since 1996 and the Local Studies Service collects published material on the subjects of local history and genealogy. Public access to these collections is provided through the A.N. Palmer Centre (the search room facility based at the County Borough Museum). Locally relevant archives are also held by neighbouring councils, as a result of the disaggregation of services provided by the former Clwyd County Council. The dispersed nature of these collections, and variable regimes for access to the material, has created some difficulties in ensuring wide-ranging and convenient public access to this part of our heritage.

The County Archaeologist works in close co-operation with the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust in monitoring planning developments for their impact on archaeology. This can involve writing briefs for archaeological contractors, and occasionally undertaking fieldwork in person. The County Archaeologist also oversees the works to conserve and interpret monuments in the ownership of the Council and to engage the local community in its archaeological heritage e.g. organises the Archaeology Club.

Other Council Departments have an involvement with, or impact upon, heritage – the **Planning Department** is primarily responsible for the conservation of the built heritage as part of the planning process, and employs specialists in building conservation to support this work. With grant aid from the Countryside Council for Wales the Department has created a landscape mapping system (LANDMAP), one layer of which is devoted to the historic environment. A 'Buildings at Risk Survey' was undertaken in 2002, and a strategy approved in 2004, to identify and target those buildings considered to be at risk from neglect and decay within the County Borough.

Although not having any direct responsibility for its conservation, maintenance or presentation, the **Education Department** and the **Economic Development Department** are also involved closely with heritage in a variety of ways, the latter in particular through its role in regeneration and tourism. The Council makes available small grants for community projects via the Welsh Church Acts Fund.

2.2.2 National & Regional Heritage Organisations

Some of the most prominent sites in the county are managed by national organisations – for example, Erddig Hall and Chirk Castle, are owned and managed by the **National Trust**. Both attract significant numbers of visitors, and offer extensive educational programmes that bring to life the varied histories of the properties. Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, which celebrates its bicentenary in 2005 and the adjacent Trefor Basin, are in the care of **British Waterways**. The Aqueduct is already on the tentative list for designation and WCBC is leading on an initiative to have the site subscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

2.2.3 Community-based Heritage

Individuals also become more closely involved with our heritage through organisations such as the '**Friends of Wrexham Museums**' or by joining one of the many **community local history groups**, for example at Holt, Llay, Chirk, Cefn Mawr and Coedpoeth. These groups are actively involved with a variety of heritage projects – researching and presenting exhibitions, recording oral history, collecting and publishing old photographs and community recollections, and working with others to preserve and sustain buildings and sites of historical significance.

There is also a well-established club for **metal detector users**, based in Wrexham, which works closely with the County Heritage Service. For example, this successful collaboration has increased our knowledge about earlier settlement in the area, most notably through the discoveries of Bronze Age artefacts.

The **Wrexham Area Civic Society** is concerned with the built environment, and seeks to record and promote the architectural and historical importance of individual buildings within their overall setting.

The **Ceiriog Memorial Institute**, (a Registered Charity), is an important community facility which incorporates an independent museum. This recently refurbished museum houses a collection of Welsh cultural material with particular reference to the Ceiriog Valley. It has a well-established and mutually beneficial working relationship with WCBC Heritage Services. Most recently this has involved practical assistance in connection with the Institute's successful implementation of a HLF-supported development project.

Also in the Ceiriog valley, the **Glyn Valley Tramway Group** seeks to record and preserve the history of this specific aspect of our local heritage, in particular the role of the tramway in the social and working life of the valley's communities.

The churches and chapels have long been an important part of the local communities, embodying more than just the religious heritage of our area, (for example St Giles' Parish Church & St Mary's Catholic Cathedral are distinctive landmarks), and which are now being made increasingly accessible through initiatives such as the **Open Churches Network**. This initiative is an example of **Northern Marches Cymru's** role in delivering community based heritage projects.

It is abundantly clear that many heritage projects are already the product of a close collaboration between professional organisations and community-based groups, and this partnership approach provides a sound basis for the future recognition, preservation, and enjoyment of our heritage in all its forms.

2.2.4 Educational Institutions

The local higher and further educational institutions - **NEWI** and **Yale College** - also have a significant role to play in providing courses and training to enable wider understanding and appreciation of our heritage, and to develop the skills needed for restoration and maintenance projects.

Schools introduce pupils to their local heritage through the National Curriculum, often by direct engagement with a local museum or heritage site, or investigation of their local community's past.

Wrexham Children's University is the first of its kind in Wales, and gives recognition to children who engage in activities outside normal school hours. The wide range of heritage-based activities being delivered across the County Borough can provide appropriate modules for registration under the scheme, thereby extending opportunities for the accreditation of learning outside the formal curriculum framework.

Community-based heritage learning programmes are delivered through **Adult Learning** providers such as the WEA and for young people by the **Youth Service**.

2.3 Part of the Bigger Picture

Neither Wrexham County Borough nor our Heritage Strategy, exist in isolation. The Strategy will also need to support the policies of major national and regional bodies that are responsible for our built heritage, our environment, economic development, rural and urban regeneration, and for tourism.

At the national level although the Assembly Government's document *Wales: a better country* does not focus on any specific heritage issues in its policy priorities, the heritage strategy can contribute to much of the document's overall vision to:

- Develop a diverse, high value economy
- Ensure a better future through education and lifelong learning
- Strengthen Wales' cultural identity and help to create a bi-lingual country
- Ensure the built and natural environment supports community pride and sustainability

The Heritage Strategy will also reflect other key Assembly policy documents, for example:

- *A Culture Strategy for Wales* stresses the importance of our historic landscapes and industrial heritage and the role for museums and heritage sites as social places supporting family education and learning.
- The *Cultural Tourism Strategy for Wales* highlights the uniqueness of Wales' history, language and way of life as distinctive tourism assets which can provide the authentic experience sought by increasingly discerning visitors

The Heritage Strategy will also reflect and support the strategies and programmes of national and regional bodies concerned directly with heritage. For example:

- **CyMAL**, which is the principal policy-setting unit of the Assembly Government for the Museums, Archives and Libraries sector, and whose overall purpose is to “enable local museums, archives, and libraries to meet the objectives of the Assembly Government through delivering services which support and develop people and their communities”. CyMAL operates a grant-aid scheme that can provide funding to support projects that contribute at a local level to the achievement of its nationwide objectives.
- **CADW**, whose role has been defined by the Assembly Government as “to protect, conserve, and promote an appreciation of the built heritage of Wales”. Cadw’s seven corporate objectives focus on the preservation and maintenance of those buildings, structures, and monuments with statutory protection (Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments), but also recognise the need to inform and educate, and to promote a wider understanding and appreciation of the built heritage of Wales. CADW is also able to make financial grants to assist with specific restoration projects, or wider heritage-based projects.
- **The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales** (RCAHMW), which also has a leading national role in promoting the understanding of the archaeological, built and maritime heritage of Wales. It maintains and develops the National Monuments Record of Wales, which provides the authoritative source of information for corporate and governmental decision makers, individuals and organisations involved in managing the heritage, and the general public.

Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) provides a regional perspective on all issues affecting the archaeological heritage. One of its primary roles is to work with the local authority to safeguard heritage, especially in relation to proposed building and other developments. It maintains the Sites and Monuments Register for the area to support this work. CPAT is also involved in wider initiatives, such as Tir Gofal, that recognise and safeguard historic landscapes, and the Historic Landscapes Register (in conjunction with CADW and the Countryside Council for Wales).

- The **National Museums & Galleries of Wales** and the **National Library of Wales**. Neither have any physical presence in the County Borough, but NM&GW has a partnership with the County Borough Museum under the ‘Cyfoeth Cymru Gyfan - Sharing Treasures’ scheme and both are committed to ensuring local access to their collections and services is facilitated as a result of the County Borough Museum refurbishment project.

At the local level the Heritage Strategy will support not just the Community Strategy, *Wrexham Refreshed*, but also:

- Council strategies including those for Planning Conservation, Economic Development and the Countryside which recognise the importance of our built and natural environment as a basis for a sustainable, prosperous future with a high quality of life for our residents.
- Other Council strategies such as those for Older People, social cohesion, and health and wellbeing, which promote activities that strengthen our communities and can draw on Wrexham’s rich heritage in their work.

- Strategies of the local community regeneration partnerships such as the Dee Valley Community Partnership whose plans include heritage initiatives.
- Strategies for the development of lifelong learning, training and personal skills, including key partners such as NEWI, Yale College, and schools.
- Plans and activity programmes of numerous community organisations primarily involved in local history and heritage activities, or in the broader community activities that draw on Wrexham's heritage.

Our Heritage Strategy will in turn provide a strategic overview for prioritising and managing within the heritage sector itself and provide a common basis for action for everybody working with heritage in the County Borough.

3. Our Starting Point

3.1 Strengths and weaknesses in our heritage

Our strategy needs to start from an understanding of where we are now if it is to demonstrate a realistic and effective way forward for our heritage. Many individuals and organisations have already been involved in the initial research and consultation for this strategy and the results of this work are summarised below.

We can identify some substantial strengths but also some weaknesses of our heritage sector, its sites, facilities and related activities and services.

For example, heritage **strengths** include:

- Widespread agreement on the distinctiveness and extent of Wrexham's heritage and artefacts, the quality of its historic landscapes, our religious heritage, the importance and impact of Wrexham's border and crossroads location.
- Coherent views on the importance of heritage to the community, appreciation of the commitment of the Council and formation of some important partnerships.
- Active local history and heritage groups based in our communities, which are responsible for much recording, conservation and promotion of our distinctive heritage.
- Good practice in promoting and using our heritage including the museum collections with strong specialisms in, for example; local industry and football, The Open Churches Network, and local schools who undertake work which draws upon on our local heritage.
- An appreciation of the value and contribution that heritage can make to support tourism and regeneration and vice versa.
- The attraction of Wrexham's older shops and streets
- The Council's Buildings at Risk strategy which seeks to conserve some of our most distinctive historic buildings and is one of the first to be created in Wales. The strategy is complemented by an up to date list of over 1,000 listed buildings and 22 Conservation Areas, with an ongoing programme of Conservation Area designation.

We have also identified some **weaknesses** in our heritage:

- Availability of resources specifically allocated for heritage is limited; core revenue budgets to support existing services and sites are too small for more extensive marketing and promotion, funding for the initial development stages of projects and to undertake archaeological investigations is non-existent; inadequate capital to drive forward new initiatives to enable the conservation and interpretation of important sites to be completed, a small core team of heritage services staff, dilapidation of some urban villages and buildings still at risk.
- Heritage is considered to be a lower priority in the planning and development process.

- The periodic nature and relatively low level of demand for traditional building skills and materials discourages the construction industry from investing and developing specialist expertise.
- Lack of a 'recirculating' fund for the repair and onward sale of Listed buildings.

3.2 Opportunities for and Threats to our Heritage

Our heritage sector also faces opportunities and threats identified in our consultation process. **Opportunities** include:

- To celebrate the bi-centenary of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and promote a bid for World Heritage Site designation.
- There are substantial regeneration and economic development projects aiming to improve and ensure sustainable uses for historic buildings including the Cefn Mawr Townscape Heritage Initiative and the refurbishment of the County Borough Museum.
- There are opportunities for greater partnership working including between local community heritage groups, with the National Museums and Galleries of Wales (NM&GW), the National Library of Wales and with our neighbouring areas as well as for increased collaboration across Council departments to support heritage issues.
- Opportunities are already being explored for linking heritage projects with education, training and life-long learning projects, healthy living, community development and the celebration of diversity including our Welsh speaking communities, inter-generational work and community based tourism.

Among the **threats** that our Strategy needs to confront are:

- Competition for resources from other community priorities and statutory requirements and the changing face of national and European Union funding programmes.
- Failure to meet the requirements of the 'performance culture' and externally set targets and the dangers of thinking too short-term about the potential benefits of our heritage.
- The rapid loss of our community's recent shared heritage through our ageing population, the dislocation of young people from their own heritage and a failure to recognise and engage with the cultures and heritage of incoming and diverse communities which now make up our population.
- Competition for tourism and leisure visitors from neighbouring areas, some of whom have an established and high profile heritage offer.
- An inability to interest an increasingly busy and discerning public in visiting and supporting our local heritage.

4. Making Heritage Matter – A Heritage Strategy for Wrexham County Borough

4.1 Our vision and aims for heritage

Many people and organisations in our communities already recognise the importance of our heritage. We want our heritage to matter to everyone and to make a difference to everyone's lives.

Our **vision for heritage** in Wrexham is to:

Enable the full potential of our heritage to flourish, so that it can make the maximum possible contribution and enrich all aspects of life in the County Borough, for the benefit of local residents and visitors alike.

Our principle aims are to seek a sustainable future for as wide an array of heritage sites, facilities, artefacts and activities as possible and in doing so to support community priorities. These priorities are set out in the Community Strategy, *Wrexham Refreshed*, for the period up to 2020 and are to establish Wrexham as:

- **A safe place** – ‘to have communities where people feel safe and secure with low levels of crime and disorder’.
- **A healthy caring place** – ‘to create a healthier community by promoting and supporting healthier lifestyles, and to provide services that support those people who have health or care needs’.
- **A place where children and young people are valued** – ‘to provide a framework so our young people can have high aspirations and realise their dreams’.
- **An economically prosperous place** – ‘to create sustainable economic opportunities for local people’.
- **A place that cares for the environment** – ‘to protect and enhance our environment for future generations’.
- **A place that values learning** - ‘to provide excellent education, training and learning opportunities in Wrexham County Borough for all ages’.

4.2 Making Heritage Matter – our Key Priorities

If we are to make heritage matter there are **four priorities** for our Strategy. We must seek to:

Priority 1 Raise awareness and understanding of our heritage and the contribution it can make to everyone's life

First and foremost our heritage needs to be recognised by everyone in our community. Broadening understanding of and community involvement with heritage will not only

help to preserve heritage for the benefit of present and future generations but will also allow its potential to support the community's priorities to be more fully exploited.

Priority 2 Strengthen the partnerships and resources that support heritage

Heritage needs to matter to our partners and our funders. Resources are a critical issue for sustaining our heritage and partnerships are the key to finding a sustainable future for heritage assets and activities and widening access to resources, both human and financial.

Priority 3 Ensure that heritage plays a full role in strengthening our communities

Heritage has relevance for every community. Active understanding and involvement with heritage can help create an appreciation of who we are and where we came from and help to celebrate the increasingly diverse and bi-lingual community we are creating in Wrexham County Borough. Our Strategy must also play a full role in addressing the dislocations, divisions and social exclusion that many communities experience.

Priority 4 Ensure that our heritage is conserved for the benefit of future generations

The traces of our past are a finite and non-renewable resource, which is under continual threat whether through natural processes or human intervention. We must ensure that we identify what is important for us to keep and then ensure that through the planning process or through direct conservation, these remains are conserved for future generations to enjoy and benefit from.

4.3 Making Heritage Matter - Our Key Recommendations for Improvement

Making Heritage Matter requires all stakeholders to focus on a number of areas for improvement over the next five years.

To guide these improvements the Strategy sets out 15 key recommendations. The implementation of all recommendations will require working in partnership, within the Council and across organisations in the public, private, not-for-profit and community sectors that are involved in heritage.

Priority 1 Raise awareness and understanding of our heritage and the contribution it can make to everyone's life

Recommendation 1 Establish a programme to raise the profile of Wrexham County Borough's heritage.

Recommendation 2 Co-ordinate ICT links between the Council, other heritage operators and community organisations, and the local

media (including the BBC) to facilitate access to information about the local heritage for both residents and visitors to the County Borough.

Recommendation 3 Promote sustainable physical and intellectual access to the local heritage asset - whether monument, archival material or artefact and ensure the authentic interpretation of heritage through the promotion of original research activities.

Priority 2

Strengthen the partnerships and resources that support heritage

Recommendation 4 The Council should work with community organisations to strengthen networking between community based heritage organisations and their ability to work with their local communities.

Recommendation 5 The Council should promote joint planning and marketing of local heritage assets and activities between heritage operators. This could draw on the Open Churches Network model to create sustainable ways of promoting otherwise scattered and smaller scale heritage opportunities and of linking them to their local communities.

Recommendation 6 Build on the good practice already established within economic and rural regeneration programmes to link heritage development with employment and training opportunities, sustainable tourism and environmental initiatives.

Priority 3

Ensure that heritage plays a full role in strengthening our communities

Recommendation 7 Provide a link between Council, education bodies and heritage providers to develop greater use of local heritage resources, both physical and human in the formal school curriculum and in life-long, community and family learning programmes and thereby to promote educational attainment.

Recommendation 8 Address the skills deficit by bringing together economic development, regeneration, planning conservation, education, training and learning organisations to consider skill development for the heritage sector including for community organisations and volunteers and the development of skills in the use of traditional construction techniques required in conservation and other projects.

Recommendation 9 Council departments promoting community development and the interests of young and elderly people should

work with education and learning bodies and with other organisations to coordinate programmes which:

- Recognise and celebrate the distinctive heritage of Wrexham County Borough's communities including its Welsh speaking community, and those newly arrived as well as established communities.
- Support local communities to explore their own heritage, particularly their recent community experience of industrial heritage through oral history and other approaches.
- Build inter-generational links within communities through involving older people, local community groups, with schools and young people in exploring family, local and community history.

Priority 4

Ensure that our heritage is conserved for the benefit of future generations

Recommendation 10 To continue to implement the policy for ensuring that planning and development processes seek to achieve alternative and sustainable uses for unlisted buildings of historic interest in preference to demolition.

Recommendation 11 Ensure that the basic information concerning our heritage held in the Sites and Monuments Record is up to date and that the Schedule of Ancient Monuments is reviewed so as to reflect current knowledge.

Recommendation 12 Ensure that adequate resources are made available so as to establish a rolling programme of monument conservation within the County Borough.

Recommendation 13 Undertake a phased programme to upgrade the County Borough Council's physical infrastructure for museum and archive provision in line with national standards.

Recommendation 14 Continue to develop and conserve collections that reflect the cultural heritage of Wrexham County Borough and ensure that they are maintained in line with national standards.

Recommendation 15 Work in partnership with other local authorities, national institutions and heritage bodies so that Wrexham related museum and archive collections currently held outside the County Borough, can be returned to the County Borough.

4.4 Making Heritage Matter- Summary Table of Recommendations

The recommendations are set out in Appendix 1, to indicate how they support the specific priorities of the Community Strategy, as expressed in *Wrexham Refreshed*.

4.4 Monitoring and Review Process

Appendix 2 is a Plan to indicate what actions are being taken in the current financial year that will help to deliver the Strategy.

An Action Plan for delivery of the Heritage Strategy in subsequent years will be developed in consultation with other heritage providers, community based heritage organisations and the wider public.

Progress against the identified actions will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.