

‘The third dimension’

***A Strategic Action Plan for the
Voluntary Sector Scheme***

**Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government**

‘The third dimension’

A Strategic Action Plan for the Voluntary Sector Scheme

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‘The third dimension’

A Strategic Action Plan for the Voluntary Sector Scheme

Executive Summary

Creation of the National Assembly for Wales heralded the introduction of a Voluntary Sector Scheme with statutory force. It is unique in the United Kingdom and has helped nurture a close working relationship between the voluntary sector and both the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government. It has enabled a sharing of knowledge and views, and facilitated closer policy and practice than might otherwise have been possible.

Experience gained over the last eight years, together with the coming into force of the Government of Wales Act 2006 and commitment to the ‘One Wales’ programme of government for the next four years, now requires a greater clarity of thinking and purpose to guide the next stage in developing the Scheme. This document therefore presents the Assembly Government’s strategy and programme of action that will underpin its support for, and working relationship with, the third sector. Its production affirms the importance we attach to our collaboration with the sector, and the vital contribution the sector makes to the prosperity and quality of life of Wales.

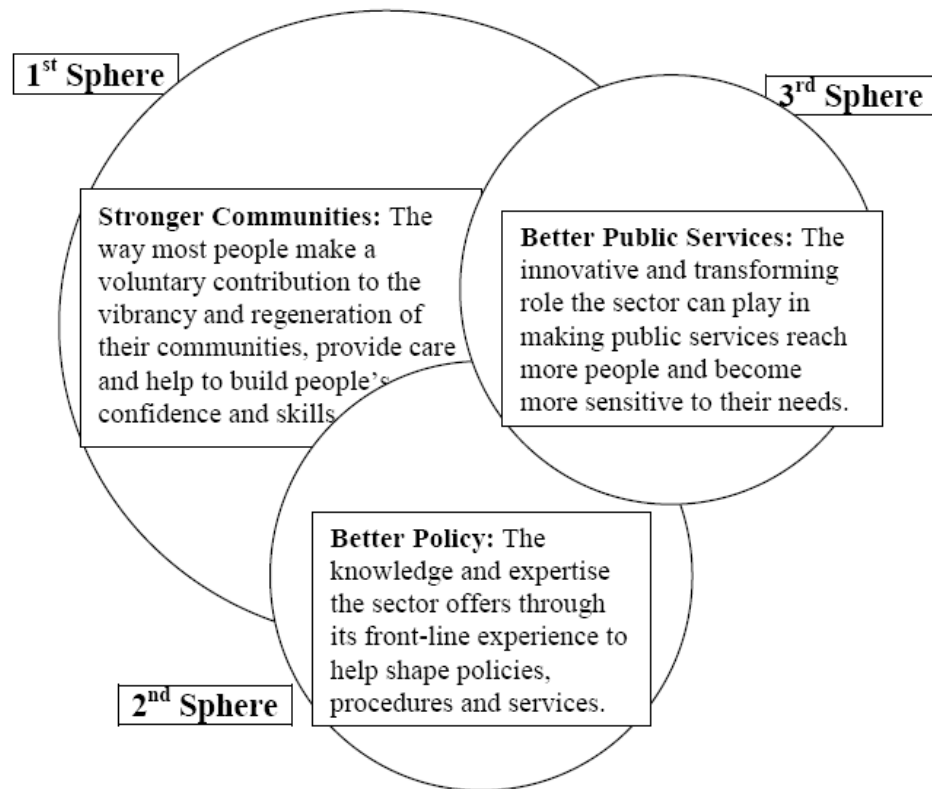
The third sector is very broad, spanning virtually every facet of human interest. There are community associations, self-help groups, voluntary organisations, charities, faith-based organisations, social enterprises, community businesses, housing associations, cooperatives and mutual organisations. They display a range of institutional forms, including registered and unregistered charities, companies limited by guarantee (which may also be registered charities), Community Interest Companies, Industrial and Provident Societies and unincorporated associations. Each organisation has its own aims, distinctive culture, set of values and way of doing things, but they all share some important characteristics in common, being:

- independent, non-governmental bodies;

- established voluntarily by citizens who choose to organise;
- ‘value-driven’ and motivated by the desire to further social, cultural or environmental objectives, rather than simply to make a profit; and
- committed to reinvesting their surpluses to further their social, cultural or environmental objectives.

We believe there is a strong case for viewing bodies with these characteristics as a distinctive sector - one that makes a huge contribution to the social, economic, cultural and environmental well being of Wales. Its breadth recognised in clause 2.1 of our statutory Voluntary Sector Scheme in which the sector is described as including *“voluntary organisations, community groups, volunteers, self-help groups, community co-operatives and enterprises, religious organisations and other not for profit organisations of benefit to communities and people in Wales.”*

Although at first sight the Assembly Government’s relationship with the sector appears complex, it is possible to identify three distinct, overlapping ‘spheres of interest’ that define and structure this relationship:



The first sphere, which represents the sector's broad contribution to a healthy and active society, is schematically bigger than the other two because it forms the bedrock on which the others are built. Without the citizen involvement, the operational experience and expertise, and the public credibility and support that springs from this mainstream activity, it would not be possible for the sector to contribute effectively to better policy and better public services.

Our support for, the third sector is therefore three dimensional:

- to support the further growth and development of the sector's capacity to strengthen communities of place and interest;
- to harness the knowledge and expertise of the sector to help design better public policies and services; and
- to encourage and help the sector to contribute to the personalisation and greater accessibility of quality, citizen-centred public services.

We also firmly believe that a third sector that involves and empowers citizens and communities is one that contributes positively to democratic governance locally and nationally. Such an approach does not undermine the responsibilities of elected politicians or democratically run public institutions. Rather, it encourages a more participative form of representative democracy in which people and politicians are in closer contact. Both are better informed, and there is a mature understanding of decision-making and the consequent allocation of resources.

In the years ahead we want to facilitate closer and more effective working relationships between the Assembly Government and the third sector. We expect the public sector more broadly to respond to the strategic direction being pursued at a national and local level. The private sector also has a key role to play in helping strengthen the third sector.

This document sets out how we intend to build a relationship based on our three spheres of shared interest over the coming years. We will do this by focusing our efforts in five action areas which are aimed at empowering people and communities so that they can contribute more fully and effectively to the building of a better Wales:

- a) by valuing and promoting voluntary action;

- b) by strengthening and empowering communities;
- c) by enhancing opportunities for citizens to be heard;
- d) by supporting and accelerating social enterprise; and
- e) by making public services more accessible and citizen-centred.

These five objectives will be underpinned by three key supporting frameworks through which effort and resources will be concentrated. They will be designed to enable the third sector to achieve worthwhile and lasting outcomes. They will support all three of our spheres of interest, with special emphasis on encouraging the third sector to help us fulfil our 'One Wales' programme of government. Through these support frameworks we will:

- f) strengthen the practical means and mechanisms of public / third sector dialogue, sharing and collaboration at every level;
- g) sustain and enhance the existing infrastructure of generic and specialist support available to the third sector; and
- h) work with this support infrastructure to help the sector raise the quality and reliability of its performance, and extend its impact.

Our priorities for action under each of these eight headings are set out in this document, with further detail contained in the Action Plan at the end. Implementation will begin with each Assembly Government department working with the third sector to clarify the actions they will take to respond to the priorities we have identified. Other parts of the public sector will be encouraged to do likewise, with the aim of enhancing opportunities for people in every walk of life to get actively involved in shaping a better Wales through their participation in third sector organisations.

It is clear that the role and contribution of the third sector is achieving greater recognition. It is no longer a poor relation to the public and private sectors, but a critical third dimension of the engine of change. Day in and day out, the sector is proving itself a major Welsh asset and a powerful force for improvement – challenging, complementing and extending the roles played by the public and private sectors. The time has come for all three sectors to think more deeply about the way they interact, based on a clearer respect for their relative strengths and weaknesses, and a more profound appreciation of the benefits of closer working for the people.

‘The third dimension’

A Strategic Action Plan for the Voluntary Sector Scheme

1 Purpose of the Strategic Action Plan

- 1.1 Creation of the National Assembly for Wales heralded the introduction of a statutory Voluntary Sector Scheme unique to the United Kingdom and probably to the world:

114 – (1) The Assembly shall make a scheme setting out how it proposes in the exercise of its functions, to promote the interests of relevant voluntary organisations.

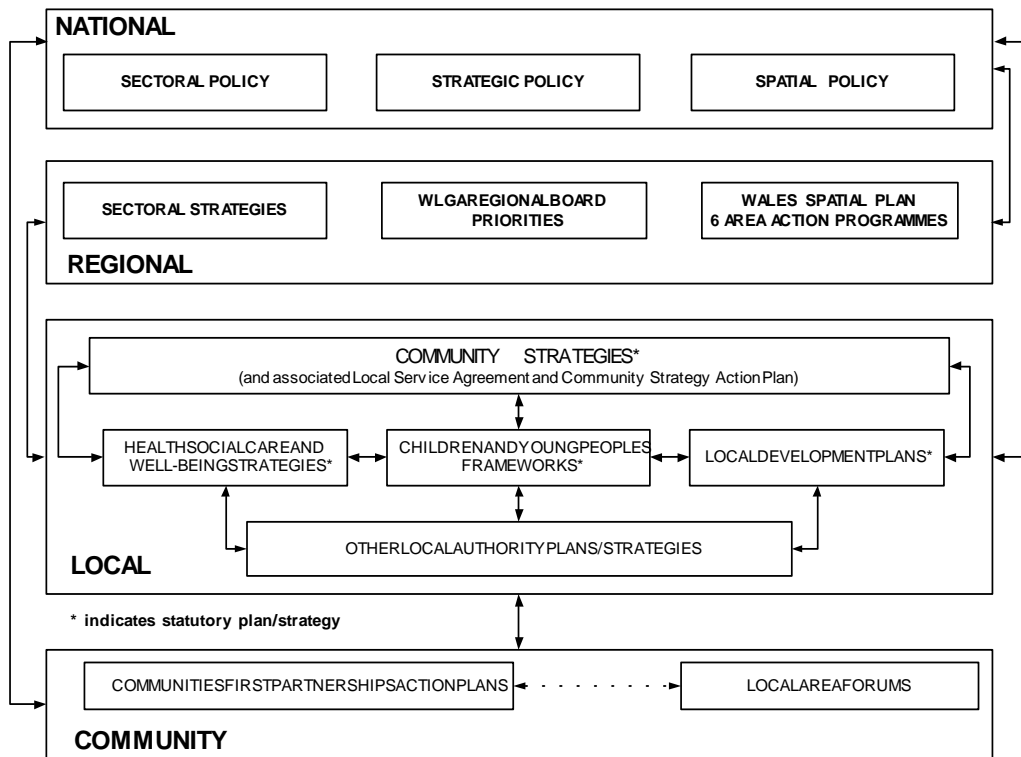
Section 114, Government of Wales Act, 1998

- 1.2 The Scheme established the principles and mechanisms which have nurtured a close working relationship between the voluntary sector and both the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government during the first two government terms.¹ Experience gained over the last eight years, and our commitment to the ‘One Wales’ programme, now requires a greater clarity of thinking and purpose to guide the next stage in developing the Scheme.
- 1.3 This document therefore presents the Assembly Government’s vision, strategy and programme of action which will underpin its support for the sector. Its production should be seen as affirming the importance that the Assembly Government attaches to its collaboration with the sector, and to the vital contribution which it makes to our quality of life. Whilst acknowledging the independence of the sector, we hope that it will join with us to help transform Wales into a self-confident, prosperous, healthy society, which is fair to all.
- 1.4 Clause 114 – (1) of the 1998 Government of Wales Act places a statutory duty on the Welsh Assembly Government to promote the interests of voluntary

¹ The Government of Wales Act 2006 further clarifies the distinction between the National Assembly (the legislature) and the Assembly Government (the executive). The Voluntary Sector Scheme becomes the exclusive responsibility of the Assembly Government. Arrangements for liaison between the National Assembly and the sector are under consideration.

organisations in the exercise of all its functions. Consequently this Strategic Action Plan operates within the overall strategic planning framework in Wales (Figure 1). It will need to be reflected in activity right across the Assembly Government, as well as at regional, local and community levels throughout Wales.

Figure 1: The Strategic Planning Framework



1.5 The Plan also uses the term 'the third sector' which is defined in paragraph 3.8.

2 The third sector in Wales

HEADLINES:

- There are at least 30,000 third sector organisations in Wales.
- 26,000 have a primarily local focus and rely entirely on volunteers.
- More than 1.5 million people volunteer – contributing as many hours as 90,000 full time workers annually.
- 250,000 people act as trustees for third sector organisations.
- The third sector's paid staff represents 2.2% of the total workforce.
- The annual Gross Value Added of the third sector was calculated as over £3 billion in 2003.
- Nearly 50% of third sector income comes directly from the public, but funding from such sources and from the Lottery is declining.
- There are about 600 social enterprises in Wales generating approximately £170,000 million per annum and employing 5,600 staff.

'Third Sector in Wales 2007' (WCVA)

- 2.1 Third sector organisations are an expression of the motivation to take action independent of the state and private enterprise to improve people's quality of life. First thoughts about the sector may bring to mind some long-established and familiar charities, such as those in the fields of child protection, overseas aid and conservation. But they are just a handful compared to the tens of thousands of small local organisations and groups that are active at a community level. This 'community' may be a town, a village or a neighbourhood, but it can also be a 'community of interest' that draws together people with special needs and/or particular concerns.
- 2.2 The sector is very broad, spanning virtually every facet of human interest. It comprises a range of institutional forms, including registered and unregistered charities, companies limited by guarantee (that may also be registered charities), Community Interest Companies, Industrial and Provident Societies and unincorporated associations. Each organisation has its own aims, distinctive culture, set of values and way of doing things. There are small community and self-help groups, more formally structured voluntary organisations, social and community enterprises, housing associations, faith-based organisations, and mutuals or co-operatives.

- 2.3 The overall economic value of the third sector is considerable. Social economic activity enables people the living on the fringe to be included and helped to be economically active; it provides services in circumstances where they often cannot be afforded, or where the private sector will not operate; and it provides employment in areas which would otherwise not receive investment. The total value of this activity as Gross Value Added (GVA) is over £3 billion. This was equivalent to 7.3% of Welsh GVA in 2003, and is similar to the GVA for the education sector for that year.
- 2.4 The sector has grown significantly in scale and diversity in recent years. The ‘third sector’ is extremely fluid and diverse. Its dynamism and continual adaptation makes it difficult to corral into neat fitting arrangements. Yet we believe it makes sense to identify the sector as an entity and to work with it as distinctive force in society – a powerful third sector of activity that makes a huge contribution to the social, economic, cultural and environmental well being of Wales.
- 2.5 Of the 30,000 third sector organisations active in Wales, it is estimated that at least 26,000 have a primarily local focus². The great majority have no staff and are wholly dependent on volunteers. About a quarter of all third sector organisations are registered charities, half of which have an annual income of less than £10,000. In recent years the income of national charities has increased the most and that of local charities the least. However charities are becoming more efficient, with every £1 spent on generating funds producing £11.34 in income, up by £2 since 2005.
- 2.6 The All Wales Database of Voluntary Organisations³ separates them all into 46 different categorises and allocates them to 21 subject-focused forums that feed into the Assembly Government’s Voluntary Sector Scheme (Table 1). Clearly, vast areas of social and community activity are dependent on volunteer effort, many of which would completely collapse without this input.
- 2.7 Estimates of the percentage of the population who volunteer either formally for an organisation or more informally to help a neighbour or friend vary considerably, indicating the need for better quality information at a Wales level. Analysis of the

² There are hundreds of third sector organisations in each local authority area, with larger numbers in rural authorities.

³ Managed by the WCVA.

Citizenship survey 2005 by WCVA suggests that about 77% of adults volunteer in one or both ways, with 47% doing it formally and 69% informally. Over half of those who volunteer, volunteer for five hours or less a month, and there is great scope to increase this contribution with better promotion and support. It has been calculated, nonetheless, that volunteers contributed over 250 million hours per year, being the equivalent of 150,000 full-time workers.

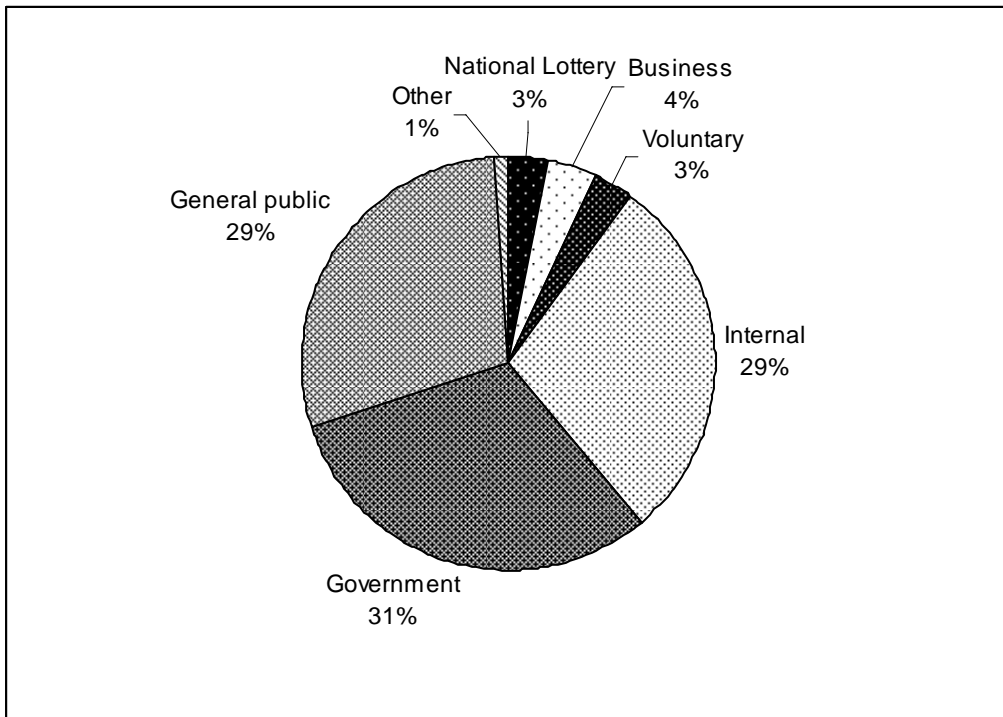
- 2.8 A vitally important aspect of volunteering involves people acting as trustees, and it is estimated that there are over 250,000 trustees in Wales. People's willingness to take on significant levels of responsibility in this way, and to give freely of their time and expertise, provides the backbone of the third sector in Wales. Yet there is a continual search for new trustees, especially to make management committees more representative of the communities they serve. Given the range of duties they shoulder, trustees need training and support which is gradually improving, but busy people also need to find the time to become better informed.
- 2.9 The number of paid employees in the sector in Wales has reached over 46,000, 52% of whom are full time. This workforce now represents 2.2% of the total working age population. In 2000, over 1 in 10 of the workforce was employed on a temporary or casual basis, this being nearly twice the rate for the paid workforce as a whole. Whilst a small handful of organisations now employ over 100 staff, most Wales-wide bodies have just one or two staff and the majority of local bodies have none.

Table 1: Distribution of third sector organisations across subject forums / networks

Voluntary Sector Scheme Subject Forum / Network	per cent of organisations
Sport and recreation Groups with an interest in sports and recreation, including local rugby or bridge clubs as well as regional or national sports associations	23.9
Community Groups working to regenerate their local communities, through community facilities, local access to services, community newsletters and development programmes	17.1
Benevolent organisations All organisations, which give grants to individuals or organisations	14.0
Health and Social Care Organisations concerned with addictions, HIV/AIDS, carers, counselling, the elderly, mental health, health promotion and specific health conditions.	12.7
Children and Families Preschool provision, local centres providing services, adoption and fostering services, children's rights organisations and services for disabled children.	11.7
Youth Groups that involve young people, youth centres, young farmer's clubs, uniformed organisations and cultural groups.	9.5
Arts, Culture and Heritage Organisations involved in the production of all forms of art, organising cultural activities and organisations that aim to conserve, explain or develop heritage.	9.5
Religion Faith based groups and the social and community activities that they undertake.	8.8
Gender Gender specific groups of other activity areas, such as male voice choirs, women's organisations offering support and working for equality of opportunity.	7.0
Disability Groups which provide support for people with disabilities and their families, empower people to live in the community and campaign for change	6.3
Environment Groups concerned with natural and built environment, conservation groups, community transport groups and recycling groups.	6.6
Education and training Organisations involved in education or training as part of their work.	4.2
International aid & emergency relief Groups with an international element, be it provision of aid or cultural exchange, and local life saving societies.	3.1
Housing Housing associations, homelessness projects, care and repair schemes, housing advice services and tenants and residents associations.	3.0
Advice and advocacy Citizen Advice Bureaux, welfare rights organisations and organisations specialising in other activities but which provide advice.	2.7
Animal welfare Organisations directly concerned with animal welfare and those interested in conservation of animals or sports organisations where animals are involved.	1.8
Ethnic minorities Groups concerned with racial equality, refugees, religious and cultural activities and general activities where the group is run by members of an ethnic minority.	1.3
Community justice Organisations working with offenders, victims, prison visiting schemes and neighbourhood watch schemes.	1.0
Employment Organisations providing supported or sheltered employment and those providing facilities or advice to those seeking employment or starting businesses	0.8
Volunteering Groups that support and develop volunteers and volunteer centres.	0.7
Intermediaries Groups, which support other voluntary organisations.	0.4

2.10 Total income for the sector was estimated as over £1 billion in 2005, and Figure 2 shows the main sources. There has been a decrease in public giving in recent years, a gap that has only be partly filled by the National Lottery, a source that is also now declining, particularly because of the Olympics. A survey⁴ suggested that the average annual gift per person in Wales is around £10, compared with £14 for the UK as a whole, with the bulk of the money (circa 75%) donated to national (UK) organisations.

Figure 2: Sources of third sector income:⁵



2.11 Funding from public sector sources has been increasing, especially since the advent of the National Assembly for Wales. However this is unlikely to continue. For the third sector this will mean seeking more diverse forms of income and adopting more entrepreneurial approaches, including bidding for public service procurement contracts or negotiating service level agreements for the provision of specific forms of services.

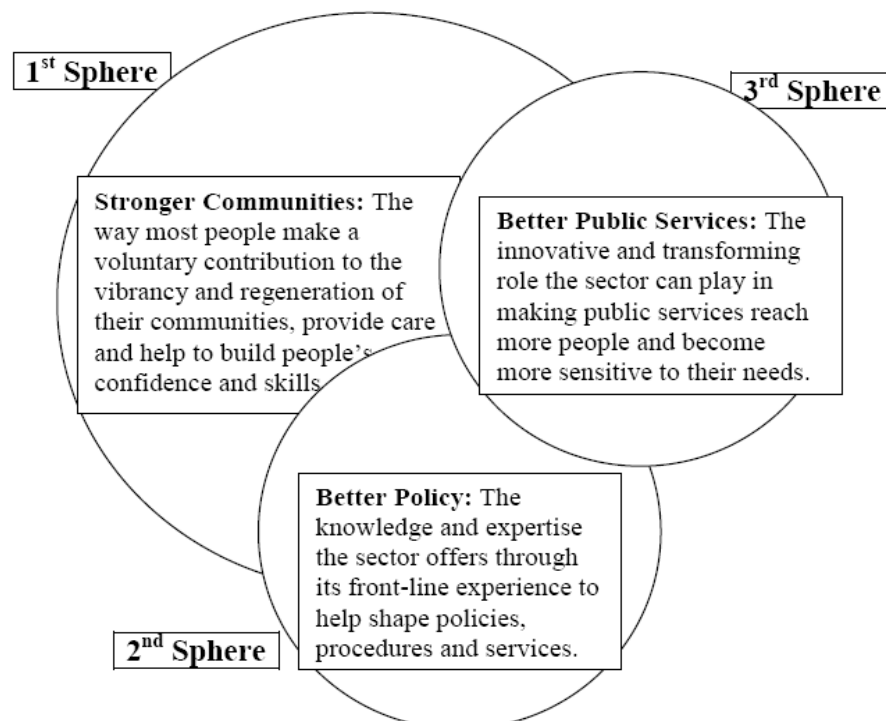
⁴ NCVO/CAF Giving Survey 2004-5.

⁵ Source is the most recent WCVA Panel Survey.

3 Why the third sector matters

- 3.1 At first sight the relationship between the Assembly Government and the third sector is a complex one. It includes:
- the exchange of data and information
 - the sharing of views through various consultation processes
 - joint planning, design, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and schemes
 - the funding of generalist and specialist support services
 - direct and indirect funding of individual third sector organisations across various subject areas
 - the outsourcing of an increasing range of public services
 - a shared interest in the way local authorities, Assembly Government Sponsored bodies (AGSBs), the UK Government, the EU and other public authorities interact with the third sector
 - the approach of a range of major third sector funders...and so on.
- 3.2 Within this complexity, however, it is possible to identify three distinct, overlapping 'spheres of interest' that define and structure our relationship with the third sector:

Figure 3: Our three spheres of interest in the third sector



- 3.3 It is important to understand why the first sphere, which represents the sector's broad contribution to a healthy and active society, is schematically bigger than the other two. This is because it forms the bedrock on which the other two are built. Without the citizen involvement, the operational experience and expertise, and the public credibility and support that springs from this mainstream activity, it would not be possible for the sector to contribute effectively to better policy and better public services. Yet this mainstream activity can easily be taken for granted.
- 3.4 We value the vast range of activities taking place within the first sphere makes to a vibrant, cohesive and self-supporting society. It reflects the fundamental right and desire of people to organise and cooperate in a free society, making voluntary action a powerful expression of active citizenship. Whilst fully respecting this right to independent action, we have a keen interest in helping the third sector to flourish and grow.
- 3.5 In addition we value the way the sector can help us and others develop more effective policies, as well as design and deliver better public services. In particular, the sector offers personal and humane insights into the impacts of existing public services or of gaps in provision on people. It forms a channel through which the voices and daily experiences of 'ordinary people' can be heard. And it can test alternative, innovative approaches with the potential to be mainstreamed to improve the quality of services.
- 3.6 Our interest in, and support for, the third sector is therefore three dimensional:
- to support the further growth and development of the sector's capacity to strengthen communities of place and interest;
 - to harness the knowledge and expertise of the sector to help design better public policies and services; and
 - to encourage and help the sector to contribute to the personalisation and greater accessibility of quality, citizen-centred public services.

Box 1: The special qualities that the 3rd sector can contribute to public service delivery identified during the consultation

It was felt that the third sector is:

- **very flexible and responsive, and able to meet needs quickly;**
- **non-judgemental, independent and widely trusted, giving it credibility as an effective advocate;**
- **caring in its approach and focused on people and their multiple needs, often drawing on direct experience of the issues;**
- **capable of achieving a ‘virtuous circle’ which delivers benefits to the providers of support as well as the beneficiaries;**
- **able to penetrate more deeply than others into challenging areas, making public services and resources more widely accessible;**
- **able to generate community-ownership, releasing latent talent and energy;**
- **excellent at networking and blending a wide range of funds and resources together to meet needs effectively;**
- **a repository of special skills and expertise not available anywhere else;**
- **capable of delivering services that go ‘above and beyond’ the usual norms; and**
- **cost-effective, especially in achieving multiple outcomes and helping people to grow and develop as individuals.**

3.7 The Assembly Government’s unique Voluntary Sector Scheme has been designed to facilitate a structured dialogue with the third sector, and it supports our second sphere of interest. We need to make the most of these representative channels of communication, judging their merits on the worthwhile outcomes they help achieve for citizens in the real world, rather than on the detail of the processes themselves. In other words, we must remember that the Scheme is a means to an end rather than an end in itself.

3.8 During the public consultation on this document a great deal of interest focused on our use of the term ‘the third sector’. A majority of respondents were comfortable with this use, but it is vital to appreciate the considerable breadth of organisations and types of activity that the term embraces. There are community associations,

self-help groups, voluntary organisations, charities, faith-based organisations, social enterprises, community businesses, housing associations, cooperatives and mutual organisations. They display a range of institutional forms, including registered and unregistered charities, companies limited by guarantee (which may also be registered charities), Community Interest Companies, Industrial and Provident Societies and unincorporated associations. Each organisation has its own aims, distinctive culture, set of values and way of doing things, but they all share some important characteristics in common, being:

- independent, non-governmental bodies;
- established voluntarily by citizens who choose to organise;
- ‘value-driven’ and motivated by the desire to further social, cultural or environmental objectives, rather than simply to make a profit; and
- committed to reinvesting their surpluses to further their social, cultural or environmental objectives.

3.9 We believe there is a strong case for viewing bodies with these characteristics as a distinctive sector - one that makes a huge contribution to the social, economic, cultural and environmental well being of Wales. Its breadth is recognised in the statutory Voluntary Sector Scheme in which the sector is described as including *“voluntary organisations, community groups, volunteers, self-help groups, community co-operatives and enterprises, religious organisations and other not for profit organisations of benefit to communities and people in Wales.”*

3.10 This document sets out how we intend to develop our relationship with the third sector and pursue our three spheres of interest in partnership over the coming years. We will do this by focusing our efforts in five action areas which are fundamentally aimed at empowering people and communities so that they can contribute more fully and effectively to the building of a better Wales:

- a) by valuing and promoting voluntary action;
- b) by strengthening and empowering communities;
- c) by enhancing opportunities for citizens to be heard;
- d) by supporting and accelerating social enterprise; and
- e) by making public services more accessible and citizen-centred.

3.11 These five citizen-focused objectives will be underpinned by three key supporting frameworks through which effort and resources will be concentrated. They will be designed to enable the third sector to achieve worthwhile and lasting outcomes for the people and communities of Wales. They will support all three of our spheres of interest, with special emphasis on encouraging the third sector to help us fulfil our 'One Wales' programme of government. Through these support frameworks we will:

- f) strengthen the practical means and mechanisms of public / third sector dialogue, sharing and collaboration at every level;
- g) sustain and enhance the existing infrastructure of generic and specialist support available to the third sector; and
- h) work with this support infrastructure to help the sector raise the quality and reliability of its performance, and extend its impact.

4 Empowering people and communities

“Our vision is of a fair and just Wales, in which all citizens are empowered to determine their own lives and to shape the communities in which they live.”

One Wales, 2007

- 4.1 We believe that a third sector that engages, involves and empowers citizens and communities is one that contributes positively to democratic governance locally and nationally. Such an approach does not undermine the responsibilities of elected politicians or democratically run public institutions. Rather, it encourages a more participative form of representative democracy in which people and politicians are in closer contact, are better informed, and there is a mature understanding of decision-making and the consequent allocation of resources.
- 4.2 It should always be remembered that many people who make a voluntary contribution through the third sector, also make a contribution through their work in the public or private sectors. The third sector is therefore where people in the other two sectors (as well as those in neither) can make a vital additional contribution. It follows that there are strong connections between the sectors, even if the approach of each is different. It also follows that the public and private sectors are well placed to help the third sector flourish.
- 4.3 The Assembly Government plans to enable and empower people and communities by supporting the activities of the third sector in five strategic and complementary ways.

Valuing voluntary action

“The Assembly values volunteering as an important expression of citizenship and as an essential component of democracy.” Chapter 5, Voluntary Sector Scheme

- 4.4 Chapter 5 of the Voluntary Sector Scheme sets out our objectives to:
- raise the status and enhance the image of volunteering;
 - broaden what is meant by volunteering to include all types of participation that enhance the quality of community life and neighbourliness;
 - improve access to volunteering for people from all parts of society;

- make it easier for people to make a voluntary contribution;
- encourage the more effective involvement of volunteers;
- improve the organisation and infrastructure of volunteering.

4.5 We are pursuing these objectives through several funding programmes including the Volunteering in Wales Fund, Millennium Volunteers and Active Communities. We will continue to invest in the Wales-wide network of local Volunteer Centres and the national support services provided by the WCVA. We are currently pursuing a step-change in youth volunteering in partnership with the third sector. We will encourage more volunteering by private sector employees, and display leadership in this field in the Assembly Government and the wider public sector.

4.6 The WCVA integrates the following central functions into its wider services to the sector:

- strategic leadership and representation
- policy and research
- infrastructure support
- dissemination of good practice and standard setting
- development and capacity building
- promotion and recognition of volunteering

We support this integrated approach because of the intrinsic importance of voluntary effort to all aspects of the third sector's activities.

4.7 We intend to work with the WCVA, the CVCs, the Volunteer Centres and public, private and third sector organisations to:

- raise the status of volunteering in the eyes of the public so that it is more widely valued and appreciated;
- design and run a sustained media campaign to enhance the scale, quality, diversity and impact of volunteering in communities of interest and place;
- achieve a step change in the commitment of public, private and third sector bodies to increase the number of volunteers and the quality of volunteering experiences;
- remove any barriers to formal and informal volunteering; and
- continue to strengthen the infrastructure of support for volunteering.

- 4.8 The media campaign will be ‘slow burn’ and sustained over several years, using specialist marketing to raise awareness primarily through local communication media, with secondary reinforcing messages at a national scale. The campaign will work closely with Wales’ network of volunteer centres and country voluntary councils to ensure that the increased interest generated in existing and new volunteers is matched by improved levels of support from the third sector. A variety of messages and media will be employed to improve the image of volunteering and its benefits, increase the numbers of volunteers especially from disadvantaged communities, and enhance the quality and impact of the volunteering experience.
- 4.9 We also need to gain a better understanding of the factors that motivate people to volunteer, as well as the things that hold them back. Such an understanding is especially important in communities where ‘social capital’ is low. We will commission research to improve the effectiveness of the support services and volunteer managers. In doing, we will seek better ways of measuring and valuing volunteering, and of achieving a wider public appreciation of volunteers’ contribution to people’s quality of life.
- 4.10 Volunteering is an essential prerequisite of voluntary action – a term that embraces the activity of third sector organisations governed by committees of volunteers. Over time some third sector bodies have grown into big organisations with large numbers of professional staff, significant resources and considerable levels of specialist expertise. Such organisations often operate across the UK. We greatly value the contribution they make, and will continue to support further development of their special expertise where this responds to the distinctive needs of Wales and is of direct practical value to communities of place and interest.
- 4.11 People who are prepared to volunteer as committee members and trustees play a vital role in the governance and management of most third sector organisations. Without them the sector would not be what it is today. Yet the responsibilities they shoulder, often with little induction or training, are considerable, especially where staff are employed. We will work with the sector support bodies to provide committee members and trustees with relevant and effective support, and we will campaign to recruit more volunteers into this role, and to celebrate the superb contribution they make to improve the lives of people and communities.

Strengthening communities

4.12 The willingness and ability of people to make a voluntary contribution to the life of their communities is one of the most important ingredients of community development. This is a process of change in which people work together on shared issues and aspirations that enhance learning, encourage participation, create a culture of informed and accountable decision-making, and improve the general quality of life. It is concerned with tackling inequalities and bringing about change and social justice. It helps to build the 'social capital' that can move communities from a position of powerlessness and dependency to one of asserting influence and control, in order to begin a process of long term sustainable change.

Box: 2 Understanding 'social capital'

Three types of social capital are now recognised:

Bonding social capital describes relationships and networks between people within communities.

Bridging social capital describes relationships and networks across social groups and communities.

Linking social capital describes networks and connections between communities and institutions, which cut across status and allow people to exert influence and reach resources outside their normal circles.

4.13 The strengthening of social capital through community development processes is also of value to communities of interest, although it is most commonly practiced in communities of place. Skilled facilitation and 'light touch' support can help groups of people sharing a special need or particular interest to work more effectively together to influence positive change. Many third sector organisations have grown out of this coalescence of views on the need for urgent voluntary action.

4.14 A recent Young Foundation⁶ study found that participation in community organisations helps build trust and reciprocity in communities, indicating a positive relationship between a sense of belonging to a neighbourhood and volunteering in the community and generating increased levels of trust in other local people. It also provides valuable opportunities for informal learning and personal development.

⁶ Improving small scale grant funding for local voluntary and community organisations, Discussion paper, Young Foundation, March 2007

- 4.15 Community organisations can help to build people’s confidence, especially among those less likely to participate, and can increase civic participation whether into more formal institutions or in the wider community, building social networks and cohesion. Community activity and volunteering can also boost individuals’ employment aspirations, nurturing new skills in settings where people feel confident and empowered. Hidden economic benefits often result from strong community activities which provide informal services, potentially reducing the demand on formal statutory services. The third sector is also well positioned, and often strongly committed, to promoting sustainable forms of development. This is an important resource for the Assembly Government as it strives to meet its statutory duty to promote sustainable development.
- 4.16 The words ‘local’ and ‘community’ are now widely used to emphasise the importance of responding to experiences and needs in places and situations that mean the most in people’s daily lives. It is often at this very local, neighbourhood and family level that third sector organisations can make the greatest difference. Their accessibility and responsiveness to individual and group needs are amongst their greatest strengths. It is our intention through this Strategic Action Plan to recognise and promote the sector’s special work at this level, and to encourage others to do the same.

“...communities are not without power. Their advocacy may be based on experiences as a resident in a regeneration area or a service user or a victim or survivor of crime. This experiential power provides a source of expertise that professionals or politicians may not have and gives them credibility and legitimacy with the community and, possibly with other stakeholders.”

National Evaluation of Community Strategies in Wales, 2006

- 4.17 Communities First is aimed at enabling disadvantaged communities to have a greater say in defining their needs and the design of services to meet them. The next stage of the programme, Communities Next, will develop this strategy with an emphasis on delivering outcomes. Third sector organisations in the form of local community organisations and voluntary sector bodies active locally, are key players in this important work. For them and the many public sector agencies involved, the Communities First structure should be used to ensure that services respond to the needs identified by the community itself.

- 4.18 Although the Community Strategy is formulated at a local authority level, it must also respond to local community experiences, identifying common themes and marshalling inter-organisational and cross-sectoral resources to address them. The involvement of local people is central to the development and implementation of community strategies. They are often a source of untapped ideas, knowledge, skills, experience, energy and enthusiasm which, if realised, can be a real driver for change. The third sector is often best placed to reach and involve such people, especially those that the mainstream public sector may find hard to reach. We will work together with the third sector to achieve this engagement, supporting special efforts to involve under-represented groups such as ethnic minorities, women, faith communities, older people, young people and children, and disabled people.
- 4.19 We also view third sector organisations, for example the county voluntary councils, as key vehicles that can help build ‘bridging’ and ‘linking’ social capital. We expect local authorities and other statutory agencies to take a similar view, and to ensure effective representation of the third sector on partnership boards and in important decision-making processes. In particular, local service boards should bring together the leaders of local organisations from across the public and third sectors to ensure the citizen focused improvement of joined- up services.

Box 3: Conclusions of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation:

Sustainable local capacity requires:

- a strong base of participation;
- the capacity to engage with the diversity of local communities;
- effective leadership and accountability;
- a strategic action plan with effective management systems; and
- sustainable resources.

A responsive and engaged public sector requires:

- structures for neighbourhood working that are real to the people who live there;
- support and incentives for officers and councillors;
- informal opportunities for learning and dialogue; and
- the time and continuity for changes to work and trust to be built.

Source: Lessons from the JRF Neighbourhoods Programme, 2007

- 4.20 Through our work with the third sector and in programmes like Communities First we have come to recognise the value of community development practice. Far from being a ‘quick fix’, community development is about building long-term and

deep-rooted local capacity for change, and this usually takes time. It also requires opportunities for learning and the acquisition of skills, and a growth in awareness across the public and third sectors (and funding bodies), which is why we support and will help to implement the eight recommendations in the National Strategic Framework for Community Development.

“...no other approach or process can offer the same rich history of experience in enabling the voices of communities to be heard, particularly from those sections of the community that have traditionally been ignored.”

National Strategy for Community Development, 2006

- 4.21 The last fifteen years has seen the growth of numerous multi-functional community enterprise and regeneration organisations. They can take a variety of forms such as Leader and ‘menter’ groups, development trusts, and training and enterprise agencies, and are usually run by local people to meet a range of local needs. They are often run as social enterprises which generate income through trading and contracting, sometimes through ownership or management of a major asset. They play a unique role, recognised within communities and by external agencies and able to act as an intermediate between these agencies and grassroots activity. They can deliver services beyond the capacity of smaller groups, operate as a platform for community activity, facilitate wider community forums and networks, and generate wealth for the community. We will work more closely with them and local authorities to create an enabling environment in which these vital ‘community anchor’ organisations can continue to grow their services and become sustainable.
- 4.22 Our National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales, ‘Iaith Pawb’ recognises that *“the health and energetic development of the Welsh language will be under serious threat if it ceases to be a language that has a strong presence in the community.”* We believe that the third sector has an especially important role to play in supporting use of the language at a community level. Where third sector organisations are delivering public services it is likely that the Welsh Language Act will apply, but even where the provision of bilingual services is not a statutory requirement many third sector organisations are making a strong commitment through the adoption of Welsh Language Schemes, and we wish to encourage this approach by working strategically with the sector and the Welsh Language Board.

4.23 The desire to achieve social justice is a key motivation in the third sector's work to strengthen communities of place and interest. Tackling inequality and exclusion is central to this approach, since their existence usually reflects marginalisation and disempowerment. We will work with the sector to build effective working relations around a 'compact' with the new Equalities and Human Rights Commission to enable both to promote good community relations and help people seek redress if they experience discrimination.

Facilitating 'citizen voice'

"The [citizen] model relies on voice to drive improvement... mechanisms for informing and engaging the public need to be transformed... Engagement with citizens needs to be much more professional, with capacity and expertise shared across local organisations."

Beecham Review, 2006

- 4.24 Making the Connections has ignited debate about how citizens can be empowered to exert a real influence on decision making. Its vision places *"citizens at the centre"* and states that: *"every citizen must have the opportunity to contribute to the social and economic life of Wales."* This means more than just occasional elections. It means greater participation and influence by citizens in the way public services and institutions respond to people's needs.
- 4.25 Our 'One Wales' programme is based on the principles of inclusion, pluralism and fairness, ensuring that all sections of the Welsh population are fully engaged as citizens. We will promote and test new ways of public engagement through participative and deliberative methods, and use them to empower people to rebuild the social, economic, environmental and cultural fabric of their communities. In so doing, we will engage positively and purposefully with community representatives, and encourage and support elected representatives to play an interactive role with their electorates to inform, challenge and improve public sector performance.
- 4.26 Third sector organisations have a big part to play in facilitating greater citizen engagement and in helping people's voices and experiences to be heard and taken properly into account. The sector has intrinsic strengths in mobilising citizens and articulating their concerns. Greater value consequently needs to be drawn from the sector's expertise in citizen engagement and community based

participation. At the same time, third sector organisations should also consider whether they need to refine and redouble their efforts to engage, involve and empower people through their activities.

- 4.27 In *Delivering Beyond Boundaries* we made it clear that the third sector should be helped through this Strategic Action Plan to develop an enhanced role as citizens' advocates and providers of frontline expertise to inform policy and service delivery. Building on this in *A Shared Responsibility*, we said we would seek measure-making powers to enable local authorities to coopt members of other organisations onto scrutiny committees, with the discretion to give them voting powers. We envisage that such cooptions will include members of third sector organisations, especially people with established expertise or who are recognised as community leaders in specific areas. This will enhance the involvement of the third sector in scrutiny processes and generate the 'challenge' advocated by Beecham as one of the key drivers of service improvement.
- 4.28 Third sector organisations offer access to citizens as users and volunteers, and enable their collective and uniquely informed voices to be heard. This includes groups that are hard to engage or disadvantaged, particularly people who are experiencing poverty. We recognise that it is more difficult for those voices to be heard where third sector organisations are weak and under-resourced; where members and beneficiaries lack confidence in speaking out; and where decision makers or service providers are resistant to listening or are unresponsive.
- 4.29 We would like to see very local community organisations becoming stronger and more joined up so they provide a more effective channel through which people can influence decisions on public service provision. Communities First partnerships, county voluntary councils and community and town councils all have an important role in helping to achieve this.
- 4.30 Increasingly, public services are being provided on a collaborative basis and beyond a single local authority's boundaries. As a result we want to ensure that local community organisations can connect effectively with services at these levels so that citizens' voices can influence powerful institutional agendas. We are therefore working with our partners to ensure that the third sector can fully

participate in Local Service Boards, Community Strategies and Spatial Plan Groups.

4.31 Better public engagement is an important part of our 'One Wales' programme. We recognise that people are not just passive consumers but are increasingly interested in playing an active part in discussions that will influence the types of services they receive and the kind of communities in which they live and work. We are preparing a strategic policy statement on public engagement across all public services that will include a set of core standards and sources of practical support for citizens, facilitators and public officials to make it work much more effectively.

Box 4: Scottish National Standards for Community Engagement:

- Identify and involve the people and organisations with an interest in the engagement.
- Identify and overcome any barriers to involvement.
- Gather evidence of the needs and available resources and agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken.
- Agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose.
- Agree and use clear procedures that enable the participants to work with one another.
- Ensure the necessary information is communicated between the participants.
- Work effectively with others with an interest in the engagement.
- Actively develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants.
- Feed back the results of the engagement to the community and agencies affected.
- Monitor and evaluate whether the engagement has met these standards.

4.32 Enhancing and facilitating opportunities for a continuous dialogue with citizens requires skill and an understanding of appropriate processes. To help spread best practice and raise standards across the board, we will prepare a Good Practice Code for Public Consultations. We will seek the assistance of the public, private and third sectors with this task, and pay particular attention to ways in which the views of the most marginalised in society can be better heard.

“Apart from the courses offered by Participation Cymru, there are no specific Community/Public Engagement training or education courses available in Wales, although some consultancies in Wales offer tailored training.”

Wales Centre for Health, 2006

4.33 Chapter 4 of the Voluntary Sector Scheme describes the way we consult with the third sector. More recently we have accepted that a period of 12 weeks should be the minimum for consultations. Introduction of our Policy Gateway has further refined our approach, and enables us to formally involve third sector participants in the policy development process. To show leadership and display best practice every Assembly Government department will clarify publicly how it will work with the third sector to enhance the influence of ‘citizen voice’ on the department’s priorities and methods of work in future.

“The Assembly will build consultation into plans for policy development... [and] ... will undertake consultation at a sufficiently early stage... so that the resulting proposals are in line with current experience and thinking in the field and avoid incorrect assumptions and misunderstandings at later stages.”

Chapter 4, Voluntary Sector Scheme

4.34 The Government of Wales Act 2006 has strengthened the powers of the National Assembly and the Assembly Government to shape ‘made in Wales’ policies and to back them where necessary by legislation. There are also opportunities for more direct involvement in scrutinising our performance and that of other public bodies. We recognise that the third sector’s knowledge and expertise, and its close contact with citizens, especially the most disadvantaged and marginalized, make it a crucial player if these new democratic mechanisms are to prove effective.

4.35 To try to evaluate the degree to which all these actions genuinely improve citizen engagement over time, we are currently developing a new approach to measuring citizens’ satisfaction with the public services they receive, and the degree to which they feel informed and involved, and able to influence local and national decisions. We are also developing an evaluation tool to be used to assess the effectiveness of engagement, on a case by case basis. These measures will allow us to judge the success of enhanced ‘citizen voice’ together in a uniform way, and to assess what works best.

Accelerating social enterprise

4.36 As businesses, but part of the third sector, social enterprises engage in trading or contracting to create surpluses to reinvest either within the business or in its wider social or environmental mission. Social enterprises offer a range of services and span a wide diversity of organisations including businesses trading entirely in commercial markets to ones delivering public services via contracts with the public sector. They all, however, offer an alternative way of doing business through a model driven by social and/or environmental objectives. This model can achieve a number of outcomes simultaneously, such as fulfilling social and environmental needs, increasing enterprise activity locally, regenerating communities, improving public services, developing people and promoting ethical markets.

“A social enterprise is a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders or owners.”

Social Enterprise Strategy for Wales, 2005

4.37 It is important to recognise, however, that while some social enterprises are set up as businesses from the outset, others may start out as community or voluntary organisations that respond to a locally identified need and devise a social enterprise solution to meet part or all of this need. There is therefore a great range of situations in which a social enterprise method can be applied within the social economy⁷. Our strategy to accelerate social enterprise consequently recognises this range by:

- creating a climate in which fully-fledged social enterprises can thrive and grow; and
- providing support to all third sector organisations interested in diversifying their income streams through enterprise and trading activities.

The Assembly Government’s aims for social enterprise are:

- **the creation of an environment that encourages new social enterprises and capitalises on opportunities for growth;**
- **the establishment of integrated support for the sector involving mainstream and specialist agencies leading to;**
- **the creation of a thriving social enterprise sector in Wales.**

⁷ Put simply, the ‘social economy’ is that part of the overall economy generated by the third sector (see definition at 3.8).

The objectives of our Strategy are:

- **creating an enabling environment by coordinating government action and policy; ensuring that legal and regulatory issues do not hinder development of the sector; and increasing the involvement of social enterprises in delivering public services;**
- **making social enterprises better businesses by ensuring a high level and quality of support for social enterprises; and securing appropriate finance and funding to enable the sector to grow;**
- **establishing the value of social enterprises by determining the size, strength and spread of the sector; recognising success and promoting the sector; and helping social enterprises to ‘prove’ their value;**
- **encouraging the development of new opportunities by supporting specialist networks; supporting the development of clusters; and linking to regeneration programmes.**

4.38 Steady progress has been made against the package of actions identified in the Social Enterprise Strategy, and with the support of our partners⁸ we now want to accelerate its implementation. In particular, we wish to:

- gain a clearer picture of social enterprise activity across Wales through a detailed mapping exercise conducted with the assistance of our partners;
- create an inclusive body to act as a representative voice for social enterprise activity in Wales, and a forum through which effective working relationships can be forged to support the full range of social enterprise situations;
- form a structure of regional networks to enable social enterprises to learn, share and trade together on a regular basis;
- establish and help fund an integrated social enterprise support service that assigns appropriate roles to third sector generic and specialist support organisations, and includes links with mainstream business support services;
- strengthen the framework of financial and asset related support available to new and expanding social enterprise businesses;

⁸ The Social Enterprise Joint Working Group has enabled the Assembly Government to work closely with key parties including members of the Social Enterprise Network and practitioners in the field.

- promote greater awareness of social enterprise as a career option and as a mechanism for social and community regeneration; and
- clarify how each Assembly Government department will work with the third sector to promote social enterprise solutions that support their objectives.

4.39 The business support needs of social enterprises will vary depending on their activities and will change as they pass through different stages of development. Fledgling social enterprises may require sympathetic support including a lot of hand holding, mentoring and encouragement. The further along the enterprise scale they progress, the more akin to mainstream SMEs their support needs become. Research by Rocket Science⁹ has pinpointed some barriers that limit the availability of mainstream business support services that could otherwise help social enterprises improve their performance. These include evidence that social enterprises are reticent to access mainstream support, a shortage of first hand expertise, difficulties getting mainstream and specialist support services to work in partnership, and a poor understanding of the scale of social enterprise activities in an area and of the support they need.

4.40 In response to this the Assembly Government is working with the Social Enterprise Network to better match the business support service to the third sector's needs. Social enterprises with the potential for growth are already able to access General Support for Business, Account Management, Mentoring and Specialist Support. Seminars have also been held with social enterprises in relation to procurement and tendering, with work focusing on raising awareness of successful contracting experiences, and the guidance available to potential contractors. Regional networking of third sector bodies interested in social enterprise is also being facilitated with the aim of replicating the North Wales Social Economy Network in the other regions of Wales.

4.41 Housing associations are also an important part of the third sector. Over the last 25 years, the housing association movement has grown rapidly through a mix of new development and large-scale stock transfer from local authorities, and they are amongst the fastest growing third sector organisations. They represent some of the most mature and financially sustainable social enterprises, due in large part to the size of the housing assets that they own and manage. They are well placed

⁹ Mapping regional approaches to business support for social enterprise, Cabinet Office 2007

to assist with public engagement and community empowerment, to act as delivery agents for social inclusion initiatives such as debt management, and to provide back office services for other parts of the third sector. Crucially, they can raise collateral to resource projects using the strength of their financial assets.

- 4.42 In some areas, local authorities may seek to improve their housing stock and to achieve our “Welsh Housing Quality Standard” by balloting their tenants, and transferring their stock to one or more Registered Social Landlords (housing associations), provided tenants vote in favour. Where this occurs, there is considerable potential for these organisations to promote community regeneration and community enterprise, given their ability to raise loan finance using their asset base. In such situations there is significant inward investment and the Assembly Government will review transfer proposals to ensure that the benefits of the investment are maximised for the local community.
- 4.43 Other areas in which substantial growth in social enterprise could be achieved include childcare, care for the elderly, waste management and recycling, energy efficiency and small scale generation, community transport, training and special needs employment, and green and ethical trading. We will require each Assembly Government department to identify opportunities for social enterprise solutions within its functional area, and we will encourage other parts of the public sector to do likewise. We will also continue to strengthen promotion of social enterprise understanding through the education system and through general awareness and training initiatives.
- 4.44 Our Social Enterprise Strategy was informed by some research we commissioned to assess the size and scope of social enterprise activity in Wales. However we need to know more about its nature, dynamics and scale, its role in economic productivity, its contribution to the delivery of public services and its social and environmental benefits. More also needs to be known about its investment and financing needs, including the opportunities for asset transfers from the public sector¹⁰. We will build this vital evidence base through a mapping exercise and by contributing to a UK-wide, long term study being conducted through the Economic and Social Research Council. Drawing on this evidence and the achievements of

¹⁰ Making assets work: The Quirk Review of community management and ownership of community assets, May 2007.

recent years, we will review and update our Strategy during the current government term.

Personalising public services

There must be "...a willingness to consider new ways of providing services, including an increasingly mixed economy of provision, with the potential for a greater role for the third sector in delivery".

Delivering Beyond Boundaries

- 4.45 Our strategy for citizen centred services requires us to work together so that boundaries between sectors, organisations or professions do not stand in the way of meeting people's individual needs. The transformation we are seeking to an integrated public service for Wales envisages a significant role for the third sector working in partnership with the public sector to perform the roles in which it is uniquely well placed to excel.
- 4.46 Our strategy for achieving much improved service delivery and citizen experience of services will focus on three key areas of development:
- to create a new approach to local governance of public service delivery in the form of local service boards and local service agreements;
 - to develop a vibrant and effective cross-sector model of scrutiny; and
 - to produce excellent local and national information on citizen satisfaction and public sector performance.
- 4.47 The third sector has long played an important role in providing public services, identifying needs, campaigning for change and developing dynamic, innovative solutions. Social enterprises can also combine a business based approach with the provision of public services. The best organisations have a strong focus on the needs of service users and the knowledge and expertise to meet complex personal needs and tackle difficult social issues. They are flexible, offer joined-up services and are prepared to innovate.
- 4.48 The third sector's often close relationships with the users of its services can help it to promote 'co-production' of outcomes, where beneficiaries are equal partners with professionals in transforming services to suit their needs. By functioning as

intermediaries between people and public services, third sector organisations can often improve the interaction between the two. This can help drive innovation, give people a democratic voice and encourage active citizenship. The third sector can also promote accountability, by providing a challenge and advocacy role on behalf of citizens at the margins of society.

4.49 However, a partnership approach is vital because communities with multiple disadvantages may not have the capacity or energy to create ‘community owned’ services very quickly, and there may be few established third sector organisations available to assist. Local Service Boards may therefore need to work step-by-step towards a ‘mixed economy’ of service provision by helping build up the capacity of the third sector whilst ensuring the continuity of statutory services through the public sector.

4.50 Greater involvement of the third sector will therefore be about harnessing its distinctive strengths and expertise to transform the responsiveness and reach of public services to meet citizens’ personal needs. We believe the third sector is in a particularly strong position to provide front line services when:¹¹

- users have multiple disadvantages, requiring a coordinated portfolio of services from an informed provider;
- the service needs to be directed at sections of the community that have been excluded from traditional service provision;
- the service is targeted at users who are likely to mistrust businesses or state providers;
- the service is labour-intensive, where the flexibility and commitment of volunteers can be an asset;
- the needs of service users are highly variable;
- the quality of service required by procurers is difficult to specify, measure and monitor; and
- where procurers are unsure of the exact service required, and are seeking innovative proposals.

4.51 People’s multiple needs can often be complicated and intertwined, making it difficult to tackle them separately. Third sector organisations tend to focus on overall outcomes to clients who may themselves be intimately involved in the

¹¹ Source: HM Treasury Cross-Cutting Review: The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery, 2002

organisation's activities. They can also generate wider benefits such as public engagement, building the skills and experience of volunteers, keeping money and resources circulating locally, and strengthening trust within the community.

One of the important advantages of third sector organisations is their ability to engage clients with multiple disadvantages which can prevent them engaging with 'traditional' service providers:

- ***financial disadvantage: clients lack the money to purchase services from the private sector;***
- ***personal disadvantage: clients cannot easily articulate a coherent preference about what services they require (e.g. users with learning difficulties, mental health problems, children or older people);***
- ***social disadvantage: clients are 'blamed' or stigmatised by society, which can stop services they require being directed towards them;***
- ***community disadvantage: clients are living in a community where market, political and civil structures have broken down.***

Unlike third sector providers, those in the public sector are often unable to deal with more than one disadvantage and those in the private sector are constrained by the ability to pay.

Source: Billis and Glennerster, 1998

4.52 The role of the third sector will be hugely important in delivering this new order of partnership working and we expect local service boards to recognise the sector's role in facilitating and supporting public engagement, delivering and transforming public services so that they are genuinely citizen-centred, and bringing the direct experience of citizens and service users into the scrutiny process. This works best when the public and third sectors work together, rather than in competition. The third sector has a key role in supplementing and complementing public sector provision, so as to 'add value'. We therefore expect the third sector to be fully and effectively represented on service boards, and we will help build the capacity of the sector to ensure it has the weight to act as an effective partner.

4.53 The third sector can also improve public services by being involved in their design, commissioning and evaluation. Groups set up by, or involving people who use public services should play an active part in shaping improvements to those services. They should be able to do this in ways that do not prejudice opportunities for the third sector to deliver improved services. We envisage the county voluntary

councils playing an important facilitating role, ensuring that a constructive dialogue takes place with the wider third sector and citizens locally.

Carmarthenshire Twilight Service:

The third sector is aiding local A&E departments in Carmarthenshire through a new project aimed at preventing hospital admissions and enabling earlier discharge from home. The “Twilight” project is the product of excellent partnership working in Carmarthen between the local LHB, NHS Trust, Local Authority, Carmarthen Association of Voluntary Services (CAVS) and Menter Cwm Gwendraeth, who manage the project.

The Twilight Service is aimed at people aged 50 years and over who present at A&E departments across Carmarthenshire during the “twilight” hours of 5pm and midnight. The project team will support patients who are medically fit for discharge but are unable to do so due to little or no social support. The support workers will take the person home, settle them and assure they are safe. In addition, they will co-ordinate additional support services, for example from the British Red Cross, who will provide help and support the following morning.

It is hoped that the service will eventually run 24 hours a day, seven days a week as a social enterprise. It also aims to increase social support within communities, promote self care and independence for older people and increase health professionals’ and communities’ awareness of third sector support services available through the formation of an extensive database.

- 4.54 Public service procurement rules and practices have been identified as barriers which prevent third sector organisations competing successfully for contracts. As a result we are pursuing a range of initiatives including raising the third sector’s profile with procurers via Value Wales, helping the sector take better advantage of tender opportunities, and identifying how organisations can work together to increase efficiency, such as by sharing ‘back-office’ services. We propose to take this work forward through the Third Sector Procurement Group (reporting to the VSPC and Social Enterprise Joint Working Group) and buy issuing a refreshed version of our ‘Opening Doors’ Charter, outlining good practice in the procurement of services from the third sector.
- 4.55 We are also aware that the drive towards greater financial efficiency could lead to the award of bigger contracts which may present problems for small organisations. It is important that small specialist bodies or local groups close to the communities they serve are not squeezed out of the delivery market. We will try to incentivise

large, well resourced third sector organisations to form working partnerships with such small bodies, with the one offering capacity and the other local engagement. We will also adopt a flexible approach using both grants and contracts.

THIRD SECTOR DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES CAN BE ACHIEVED THROUGH:

GRANTS: funding that can be provided by the Assembly Government and other public bodies as a means of offering financial support to third sector organisations to enable them to undertake activities they wish to support. Grants may be aimed at assisting with the core costs of running and developing an organisation or more specifically to help it carry out a particular project or service. The grant giver is not contracting for a service that forms part of its own business.

PROCUREMENT: the acquisition of goods and services from third party suppliers under legally binding contractual terms where all the conditions necessary to form a legal contract have been met. Such acquisitions are for the direct benefit of the contracting authority, necessary for the delivery of its service or for the running of its own business.

- 4.56 Third sector organisations delivering public services are often able to generate ‘added value’, such as confidence-building, user-ownership, employability skills and environmental enhancements. The New Economics Foundation is currently developing a model for commissioning public services from third sector providers that builds economic, social and environmental outcomes into the procurement process using social clauses. In addition, the Office for National Statistics is trying to design a tool that service commissioning authorities can use to assess and monitor the performance of public services delivered by third sector organisations in a way directly comparable with public or private sector providers. We will keep abreast of these developments and consider their future introduction.
- 4.57 A citizen centred approach requires individuals and groups to have access to good quality information, advice and support on their rights and responsibilities. The third sector offers these services in a uniquely independent way that centres on people’s needs. There is a great diversity of such advice and advocacy services, but their provision across Wales is patchy. We recognise the need for a strategic approach, especially where such services are threatened by tightening standards, regulations and resources. As set out in ‘One Wales’ we will work with the third sector to achieve a more uniform and dependable range of advice services, so that comprehensive benefit advice is available in all local authority areas.

4.58 We recognise that enhancing the third sector's role in personalising public services will require further investment in capacity building. Several grant programmes and schemes are already helping to enhance the sector's performance, but we would like to accelerate this by introducing a third sector 'Invest to Serve Fund'. This fund could be used to:

- modernise business management systems;
- raise the skills of trustees, staff and volunteers;
- improve business management and tendering expertise;
- develop shared working arrangements to improve efficiencies;
- introduce quality assurance systems;
- better involve members / volunteers / beneficiaries in services;
- work across public service boundaries.

4.59 We will seek resources to create this fund over the next 12 months, perhaps through the utilisation of the banking sector's unclaimed assets¹². We envisage using the fund to provide capital grants, revenue grants, loans, or a mix of each. We will consult on the terms of the fund which will be open to local and national organisations that meet the Assembly Government's eligibility criteria.

Cardiff Ethnic Minority Communities' Physical Activity Challenge

The Sports Council for Wales was concerned that take up of its grants programmes was not benefiting the ethnic minorities. Through its involvement with the Communities First Ethnic Communities Partnership it gained a clearer idea of how to design a programme that removed some of the barriers to engagement. It drew on the expertise of third sector bodies such as the South Riverside Community Development Centre and Voluntary Action Cardiff to ensure that news about the special programme reached ethnic groups who were given the time and support to prepare their applications.

A steering group bringing ethnic minority and other community representatives together with the Sports Council, Communities First and Cardiff County Council assessed the applications, approving ten innovative schemes with the possibility of approving others in future. The process allowed the Sports Council to develop excellent working relations with several community-based organisations and to better understand ways of engaging

¹² The 2005 Pre-Budget Report (PBR) announced the commitment of the Government and the bank and building society sector to develop a scheme to access genuinely unclaimed assets lying dormant in accounts and reinvest them to the benefit of society, whilst retaining a right for customers to reclaim their assets at any time.

with ethnic minority organisations.

4.60 In contracting services from third sector organisations, public sector procurers should apply the principles of ‘full cost recovery’, as endorsed by HM Treasury¹³. The third sector should not be viewed as a cheap form of out-sourcing. Service providers should be able to recover not only their direct service costs but also an appropriate proportion of their organisation’s overheads. Full cost recovery should increase the chances that:

- services will not fail because of under-resourcing;
- organisational sustainability is improved;
- core skills are developed and retained; and
- providers take account of the true costs of their service.

4.61 Over the years a number of practices have developed between public sector commissioners and third sector providers which now need to be challenged. These include ‘restricted funding’ arrangements which prevent providers from spending money outside strictly designated purposes. This is a disincentive to the making of efficiency gains and is an unacceptable encroachment on the autonomy of independent organisations. Like any other provider, a third sector body should be able to bid for a contract on the basis of price (i.e. cost-effectiveness to the commissioner). To ensure a fair playing field, the level of required disclosure on pricing and its relation to costs must be consistent across all potential providers from whatever sector. Once a contract has been awarded, performance should be judged on outputs, outcomes and the impact of the service delivered.

Gypsy & Traveller Consultation Project

Third sector organisation Planning Aid Wales has been commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to consult with Gypsy and Traveller communities on the draft circular ‘Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites’. The consultation phase is now complete and volunteers are helping with the preparation of a collective consultation response on behalf of the target group, including recommendations. The traveller consultation work has generated new cases, and more are likely to follow. The challenge now is to develop PAW’s capacity to help this marginalised and often discriminated-against group. Project partners have included the South Wales Race Equality Council, Travellers’ Aid Trust, Travellers’ School Charitable Trust, Save the Children and the

¹³ Improving Financial Relationships with the Third Sector: Guidance to Funders and Purchasers, HM Treasury, May 2006.

Commission for Racial Equality.

- 4.62 To ensure that the Assembly Government shows leadership and displays best practice in developing citizen-centred services, every department will clarify publicly how, within its field of activity, it will work collaboratively to enhance the third sector's role in the design and delivery of public services.

5 Frameworks for empowerment

- 5.1 If third sector organisations are to realise their full potential to contribute to a better Wales, the environment in which they operate must allow them to thrive. The Assembly Government has a duty to create a supportive environment and will underpin the five above citizen-focused objectives by three supporting frameworks through which we will:
- (i) strengthen the practical means and mechanisms of public / third sector dialogue, sharing and collaboration at every level;
 - (ii) sustain and enhance the existing infrastructure of generic and specialist support available to the third sector; and
 - (iii) work with this support infrastructure to help the sector raise the quality and reliability of its performance, and extend its impact.

Strengthening public / third sector engagement

“The Voluntary Sector Scheme has put Wales in the forefront of government-voluntary sector partnerships, and has drawn international interest and acclaim.”
‘Civil Society, Civil Space’, WCVA, 2003

- 5.2 At the four consultation events held to consider the draft version of this document we were heartened by the enthusiasm shown by both public and third sector participants to achieve a strong and complementary cross-sectoral relationship. Provided each side in this relationship values and respects the other in actions as well as words, there is a great opportunity to forge more effective partnerships that combine the distinctive strengths of each sector.
- 5.3 Our relationship with the third sector at the national level is facilitated through our unique Voluntary Sector Scheme. This was judged *“still fit for purpose”* when it was reviewed by an Independent Commission in 2003/4, but preparation of this Strategic Action Plan has suggested that the operation of the scheme should be more focused and effective in future. As well as ensuring balanced representation, its structures and processes need to enable an action-based dialogue between the sector and the Assembly Government that will result in beneficial outcomes for citizens. Neither side in this dialogue should ever be satisfied with a ‘talking shop’.

5.4 We will therefore focus on improving the way the scheme operates in practice, using the Strategic Action Plan to structure our approach. We would like to see the Partnership Council generating strategic leadership around the five action areas outlined in the previous chapter. It should be used to explore ideas and experiences of public / private / third sector engagement in and beyond Wales. It should also be action and outcome orientated, forming the means through which small task and finish groups can develop solutions to the most pressing strategic challenges. We will also facilitate occasional dialogue between all three of our sectoral partnership councils.

5.5 The same outcomes-orientated approach needs to be developed in the bi-annual Ministerial meetings. As a consequence, each department should explore and agree with relevant third sector organisations, perhaps using an ‘action learning’ framework, the actions that can be taken to promote departmental objectives and work streams through:

- increased appropriate use of supported volunteers;
- greater support for community development approaches;
- more responsive dialogue with citizens and users;
- promotion of social enterprise solutions; and
- an enhanced third sector contribution to public service design and delivery.

Progress with these actions should be reviewed annually, with further appropriate actions identified for the year ahead.

5.6 This focused programme of work, which will need to identify challenging targets, appropriate resources and implementation methods, will foster an outcome-based relationship between each department and the third sector. Ministerial meetings will monitor progress, highlight successes, identify solutions in areas of weakness, and agree new targets and ventures as the programmes roll forwards.

5.7 This cross-governmental work will be supported by an effective Third Sector Group combining a critical mass of functions spanning all five above fields. The Group will facilitate joined up working and monitor internal compliance, whilst promoting the same across the wider public sector, ensuring that the Voluntary Sector Scheme attains an equal status with other statutory cross-cutting themes. At the UK level we will seek compliance by Whitehall departments with the terms of the

scheme through our 'concordats' with them. We will also play an active role, alongside the sector, in influencing ideas and new developments at the UK level.

- 5.8 We also expect local authorities, AGSBs and other public agencies, including the health sector, to respond equally positively to the proposals in this document for stronger public / third sector engagement. In particular we view 'Compacts', backed up by effective Joint Liaison Committees, to be key vehicles through which this engagement can be facilitated. Some Local Compacts are now bringing local authorities, health agencies and the police service together in dialogue with the third sector, and this is a trend we wish to encourage given that Local Service Boards, Spatial Planning Partnerships and other strategic partnerships all require flexible cross boundary collaboration. Compacts are valuable in clarifying how this collaborative approach should work smoothly in practice.
- 5.9 We consequently expect to see a progressive strengthening of effective compact working at local, regional and national levels. This should include the adoption of local and regional Codes of Practice for Funding, to conform with the principles in the Assembly Government's own Code. The Minister responsible for the Voluntary Sector Scheme will act as a surrogate 'Commissioner for the Compact' and monitor public sector compliance, seeking improvements where the evidence suggests they are needed. We will also keep open our option to take statutory powers to require compliance with Compact principles.

Improving third sector support services

"...the Welsh Assembly Government is committed to ensuring that there is an integrated infrastructure that represents, promotes, supports, develops and is accountable to the full range of voluntary sector activity at national and local level."

Partnership agreement between the WAG and the WCVA, 2006

- 5.10 Development and growth of the third sector in Wales is assisted by a portfolio of support services. An important generic service, acting as a first point of contact for most organisations, is provided by the WCVA, the County Voluntary Councils and the local Volunteer Centres. In addition, other bodies provide specialist support in areas such as fundraising, community development, race awareness, equalities practice, environmental expertise, the rural context, and community enterprise.

5.11 The close working relationship between the WCVA, the CVCs and the independent Volunteer Centres has recently been strengthened through the Partnership Agreement between the Assembly Government and the WCVA¹⁴. This agreement has led to a fundamental review of the services provided and a commitment to ensure a comprehensive seamless service without duplication. We believe the agreement which we fund will achieve the following improvements:

- a comprehensive and affordable common training programme, accessible to groups anywhere in Wales;
- a comprehensive and continually updated information system;
- a common set of services available throughout Wales encompassing:
 - volunteering,
 - trustees and governance,
 - funding and fundraising,
 - general information, guidance and support,
 - development support and initiatives,
 - regeneration expertise, and
 - consultation and representation;
- a coordinated approach to support the sector's role in transforming public services encompassing:
 - participation practice,
 - partnership and commissioning,
 - service delivery, and
 - scrutiny and campaigning.

Under the Partnership Agreement, the WCVA, the CVCs and the Volunteer Centres have pledged to work together to ensure that the links and coordination at local, regional and national levels produce:

- **added value through best use of expertise and knowledge;**
- **equity and equality through a reliable level of service;**
- **best practice through effective monitoring, evaluation and sharing;**
- **value for money through economies of scale.**

¹⁴ The agreement clarifies the complementary services to be provided by the WCVA, the CVCs and the Volunteer Centres. Through its funding frameworks for the CVCs and the VCs, the WCVA has agreed minimum services standards with them.

- 5.12 The aim is to ensure that citizens as users, trustees, volunteers and campaigners, receive the help they need to make an effective contribution. It is envisaged that the infrastructure will become an integrated citizen action and support service. As part of a commitment to service quality, a programme of accredited staff training will be developed, and it is anticipated that staff involved in delivering each specified service through the county voluntary councils, the independent volunteer centres and the WCVA will meet as 'service delivery networks' to review their collective performance and look at ways of continually improving their services.
- 5.13 This generic support service, complemented by the other specialist services, is a hugely knowledgeable and effective resource that the Assembly Government believes should be utilised by all its departments, the AGSBs, local authorities and other public agencies wishing to strengthen their relationship with the third sector.
- 5.14 Some of the specialist services available in Wales also receive funding from us. Economies of scale tend to limit the scope and availability of such services, which makes them all the more precious. We would like to see a greater awareness of what they can offer, and to encourage their further development where possible. We would also like to see these organisations linking their services more closely to the generic service to maximise added value, and we will be encouraging them not to duplicate the core support services.
- 5.15 Adoption of the Wales Spatial Plan and the move towards more flexible cross-boundary patterns of service delivery mean that the regional level of administration and governance is becoming more important. There is a great need to connect the day-to-day experiences of people at local community level to this remoter tier of service configuration, and we envisage a vital role for the third sector in ensuring effective scrutiny and challenge. We believe the county voluntary councils are key to achieving this regional representation.
- 5.16 Large parts of Wales are rural with thousands of scattered communities located far from major centres of population. Third sector organisations working in rural areas have to face challenges and meet needs that are symptomatic of low population levels, weak and fragile economies, low levels of confidence and skill, and the constant need to travel to access services. Organisations consequently have to be

multi-functional, highly flexible, capable of achieving viable economies of scale and highly dependent on voluntary effort from within the communities they serve.

- 5.17 The Carnegie Commission recently published its Charter for Rural Communities which concluded that for rural communities to thrive in the future, they need to be given a greater say in their own affairs and the means to secure successful futures for themselves. This means strengthening local democracy and investing in local communities to enable them to manage and own important local assets and enterprises. Assembly Government departments and other parts of the public sector will need to be mindful of the distinctive needs of rural communities and work closely with third sector generic and specialist support services to maximise the benefits of public / private / third sector interaction.

Enabling raised performance and growth

- 5.18 Our third framework of support will focus on action to raise the performance of the sector and to enable it to grow. It will address funding practices, the development of skills within the sector, wider adoption of quality assurance systems, better regulation, closer working between third sector organisations, greater support from the private sector, and the building of a better evidence base for the sector.

“Across the range of its functions, the Assembly is committed to establishing and maintaining procedures to ensure accepted best practice in the administration of its grant schemes and those of agencies which administer funds on its behalf... The Assembly will maintain a Code of Practice for funding the voluntary sector....”

Chapter 2, Voluntary Sector Scheme

Funding

- 5.19 Funding is naturally a major preoccupation for the third sector, and one that often absorbs inordinate amounts of time, sapping energy and distracting organisations from their primary objectives. The Voluntary Sector Scheme’s Code of Practice for Funding the Voluntary Sector sets minimum standards and appropriate practices not just for Assembly Government departments but for other funders as well. The Scheme’s Partnership Council has appointed a Funding and Compliance Sub-Committee to exert pressure where it is needed to achieve compliance, and we will

continue to support its work. Our ambition is that application of the Code should become standard practice across the public sector as a whole.

5.20 Our Code already makes it clear that three year funding should be the norm, since short term funding can divert valuable resources into continual bidding for funds. It often constrains organisations from making medium or long term commitments to its users or beneficiaries and can restrict the ability to recruit, retain and invest in the best staff. Implementation of the UK Government's Comprehensive Spending Review will create greater certainty and continuity through three year budgeting, and we expect Assembly Government departments and public agencies to pass on that certainty through three year funding to third sector organisations. This will also reduce burdens on public sector staff in terms of monitoring funding arrangements, encouraging a more sustainable pool of providers and suppliers, supporting better strategic planning and helping to professionalise third sector organisations so they can more effectively lever in other forms of finance.

5.21 There is an urgent need right across the sector to diversify funding sources to achieve greater security and sustainability. In this respect Wales faces some special challenges, including the fact that:

- tax efficient giving by the public is low;
- few major private companies have their HQs here;
- there are only a small number of grant-making trusts;
- there are few sources of loan finance;
- entrepreneurial and business management skills are in short supply;
- fundraising expertise is low and very public sector orientated.

5.22 There are challenges here for funding bodies. The last fifteen years has seen third sector funding regimes becoming more complex and sophisticated. Along with this has come a tendency for funders to be increasingly prescriptive in their aims, very competitive in their approach and more demanding in their monitoring. This makes managing a complex project involving several funders more difficult than it need be, and it can also put start-up funding beyond the reach of embryonic groups that lack the skills needed to beat the competition.

5.23 Funding criteria usually tend to emphasise newness over effectiveness, forcing applicants to reconfigure successful activities or abandon them altogether. Instead

of continually requiring third sector organisations to ‘reinvent’ their well regarded activities in novel and new sounding forms, tried and tested services should receive sustained support to enable them to develop and mature. We also accept that the Assembly Government and other funders need to be clear whether they are making a short-term contribution to support an organisation’s aims, buying or procuring services or goods from the sector, or making a longer term investment to build part of the sector’s capacity.

5.24 Third sector organisations need to plan their fundraising more strategically so that they remain focused on their goals whilst diversifying funding sources, building in all the costs involved and staying true to their values. We would like to see funding bodies adopting less prescriptive practices so that communities of place or interest can exercise greater control over the way funded activities develop in response to real community needs¹⁵. With this in mind we will bring key funders together to explore the development of a new ‘outcomes funding paradigm’, particularly in response to the partnership approach advocated in Delivering Beyond Boundaries.

5.25 We are also keen to promote greater partnership working between third sector organisations themselves, not only to ensure a stronger voice for citizens locally, but also to improve efficiency through the sharing and pooling of capacity. Such collaboration could mean anything from a full merger, to the forming of consortia (e.g. to tender for large contracts), to the sharing of back office services. We will work with the support services to help the sector pioneer this type of arrangement.

Environment Wales is a partnership of organisations in the voluntary sector, funded by the Assembly Government. It promotes voluntary action to protect and improve the environment. Five grant streams support practical environmental action including education or advisory services, projects generating social or economic benefits, and training for staff and volunteers.

Launched in 1991, Environment Wales is rooted in the third sector and has pioneered an approach that makes the capacity and expertise of its partner organisations accessible to hundreds of other groups across Wales. Skilful support by its team of development officers has nurtured many innovative sustainable development projects beyond initial feasibility to become well established and highly successful operations.

¹⁵ The Assembly Government’s Sustainable Health Action Research Programme adopted a successful action research approach over six years creating many sustainable projects, and the lessons learnt are now guiding the Mentro Allan scheme. The Communities First programme is also generating good practice in this area.

Crucial to its distinctive approach is the recognition that both projects and growing third sector organisations require more than just funding – they need information, guidance, training, research and networking support that promotes the sharing and cascading of knowledge and experience across the sector. Its latest innovation is Green Pages which facilitates trading between EW registered projects.

Although Environment Wales has received praise from several rigorous evaluations and has survived as a programme well beyond the usual life span of schemes, it has rarely if ever been replicated either within or beyond the Assembly Government. Its steady, long term investment approach has clearly paid dividends.

EW exemplars: Cylch, Wastesavers, Craft, Antur Waunfawr, Amelia Trust, Riverside Market, Shared Earth Trust, Sundance Renewables.

Support from business

5.26 The business sector can contribute in a variety of ways to strengthening the third sector. It can provide a major source of volunteers through employee volunteering schemes, it can cascade expertise into the sector especially in relation to business and financial management, it can promote and facilitate ‘payroll giving’ schemes, and it can of course provide sponsorship and other forms of funding. We are already working with the business sector, especially bodies like Business in the Community, to encourage all these approaches. We strongly support the idea of businesses large and small challenging themselves to do more for the community, and we will work with the sector to focus this challenge and celebrate the best efforts of companies and their staff to display ‘corporate social responsibility’.¹⁶

Third sector skills

5.27 When the UK Government reorganised the skills training structure in 2002 to create a smaller number of Sector Skills Councils, it took the view that the creation of a Voluntary (or Third) Sector Skills Council was not justified, since organisations in the third sector work across a large number of industrial sectors (e.g. care and development, health, creative and cultural services) and it was assumed that their skills needs would be met by the councils covering those sectors. However recent feedback indicates that this is not consistently happening because the sector’s

¹⁶ The multi-layered pilot project run in Carmarthenshire is an excellent example.

workforce is too small to exert any real influence. Consequently skills needs that are specific to the third sector are not being met.

- 5.28 We will therefore work with the UK Government to take forward the actions in the Department for Education and Skills' recent third sector strategy to help develop the skills of the third sector workforce. The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills will work together with the Sector Skills Development Agency, the Office of the Third Sector, the Welsh Assembly Government and third sector workforce representatives, to develop a programme of action to address the skills issues which have emerged. This will need to look ahead to the setting up of the new Commission for Employment and Skills. These actions will include a feasibility study on setting up a Workforce Development Council for the sector, which would sit within the Skills for Business Network and focus specifically on the development of skills in the third sector's paid and unpaid workforce.

Community entrepreneurs

- 5.29 At a community level there is a need to identify, train and support more 'community entrepreneurs' – often volunteers with special talents or leadership skills who can make things happen and motivate others to achieve genuine change. We will try to achieve this through our support for the county voluntary councils, community anchor organisations, UnLtd and others. They, and bodies such as the WCVA, Community Development Cymru, the Communities First Support Network and members of the Social Enterprise Network, need to provide good quality support for volunteer committee members and trustees to help them improve their skills. We will seek to achieve this through the Partnership Agreement, by encouraging more effective links between generic and specialist support services, and by establishing a Wales branch of the school for social entrepreneurs.

Quality assurance

“We’re delighted to be the first third sector organisation to achieve Investors in Excellence. I am particularly pleased because it recognises our commitment to continuous improvement and organisational learning.”

Graham Benfield OBE, Chief Executive, WCVA, 2006

- 5.30 Given the enhanced role we foresee the third sector playing in Wales, we want to help it raise the quality and reliability of its services. Passion for an organisation's aims is a characteristic of third sector culture, but achieving serious and sustained improvements to people's quality of life also requires some clear thinking and the adoption of management systems that can help raise performance and increase effectiveness. Organisations should gather regular feedback from its users and beneficiaries, and evaluate their impact on outcomes as an essential part of this continual improvement process.
- 5.31 In future, the achievement and monitoring of quality standards will require a more consistent approach to measuring outputs and outcomes, especially in the third sector's contribution to public services. Several quality assurance and business management systems are being used by the sector, including Investors in People, Investors in Excellence, Investing in Volunteers and Green Dragon. For small organisations there is also the Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO)¹⁷. An example of the greater need for quality assurance can be seen in third sector organisations that deliver learning which can be subject to an ESTYN inspection, especially if they have funding from the Department for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning or the European Social Fund. We will work with the third sector support services to promote the increased use of quality assurance systems.

¹⁷ PQASSO is available through Charities Evaluation Services.

Launch of Healthy Governance Toolkit for the Voluntary Sector:

In the developing climate of commissioning and procurement of health and social care services, voluntary sector providers are coming under closer scrutiny with regards to their 'clinical governance'. To assist third sector organisations, Health and Social Care Facilitators at interlink (RCT) and Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil have developed a 'Healthy Governance Toolkit', which is aimed specifically at voluntary and community groups. The toolkit is available as a CD-rom and comprises a range of information that supports good practice within organisations. It was funded through the Building Strong Bridges programme.

The toolkit is designed to give advice on clinical governance in its widest sense and includes information about the national and local strategic context, standards, legislation, good practice, training, quality assurance schemes, impact assessments and more. It also signposts groups to those organisations like the Local Health Board, the National Public Health Service, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) and the Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE) who can offer advice and support. It also contains examples of good practice from all sectors.

Better regulation

- 5.32 Although third sector organisations are independent of the state, the government has a responsibility to ensure that the legal and regulatory regimes within which they operate preserve their independence, allow them to work in innovative ways and sustain public confidence. Substantial improvements have been made in recent years, not least through the Charities Act 2006, and further reviews and measures are underway. We will work with the UK Government's Office of the Third Sector to ensure that regulation continues to be effective and proportionate.

Evidence base

- 5.33 Third sector organisations are active in every sphere of life, helping to improve society for the benefit of all citizens. However the true social and economic value of their contribution is not well-evidenced or understood. Building a better base of evidence about the impact of the sector is of great importance, especially as a means of influencing the commissioners of public services and those whose policies and practices third sector organisations are campaigning to change. We are therefore pleased to see the Economic and Social Research Council

acknowledging the attention now being paid to the sector by adopting a Third Sector Engagement Strategy to enable the social sciences to help:

- identify training, development and knowledge transfer needs;
- establish an evidence base of third sector research findings;
- facilitate knowledge transfer opportunities within the sector; and
- develop methodologies for evaluating the impact of social science research within the sector.

5.34 We will help the ESRC to develop its strategy in relation to the distinctive needs of Wales. We will also contribute to, and draw upon, the new centre for third sector research being established by the UK Government's Office for the Third Sector. Our aim will be to ensure that all such research produces evidence of real practical value to Wales.

6 A three dimensional Wales

- 6.1 We want our future work with the third sector summarised in this document to make a big difference in opening up the opportunities for people in every walk of life to get actively involved in shaping a better Wales through their participation in third sector organisations. We also want to create an environment in which third sector organisations can work more collaboratively with the Assembly Government and the public sector, using their distinctive expertise to improve the quality and sensitivity of public services, especially at a community level. We are fortunate that the partnership we are seeking can be built on the solid foundations already established through the Voluntary Sector Scheme. Our strategy is aimed at achieving even more from this relationship by giving it a broader and clearer focus and direction.
- 6.2 The direction we are proposing runs firmly with the grain of many recent strategic policies, not least Delivering Beyond Boundaries, Designed for Life, the Social Enterprise Strategy, Learning to Live Differently, Climbing Higher and the new opportunities arising from the Government of Wales Act. These and many other relevant policies emphasise the critical need to engage more effectively with the general public in order to respond more sensitively to their needs and tap more effectively into their knowledge, motivations and energies to achieve positive and lasting changes that improve lives.
- 6.3 It is clear that the role and contribution of the third sector is achieving greater recognition. It is no longer a poor relation to the public and private sectors, but a critical third dimension of the engine of change in Wales. Day in and day out, the sector is proving itself a major Welsh asset and a powerful force for improvement – challenging, complementing and extending the roles played by the public and private sectors. The time has come for all three sectors to think more deeply about the way they interact, based on a clearer respect for their relative strengths and weaknesses, and a more profound appreciation of the benefits of closer working for the people they are all seeking to serve.

‘The third dimension’

A Strategic Action Plan for the Voluntary Sector Scheme

ACTION PLAN

2007/8 to 2009/10

Empowering people and communities:

- 1. Valuing voluntary action***
- 2. Strengthening communities***
- 3. Facilitating ‘citizen voice’***
- 4. Accelerating social enterprise***
- 5. Personalising public services***

Supporting empowerment:

- 6. Strengthening public/third sector engagement***
- 7. Improving third sector support services***
- 8. Enabling raised performance and growth***

ACTION PLAN:

1. Valuing voluntary action:			
Task	Indicators / Outputs	Deadline	Responsible
<p>a) Work with others to design and run a media campaign to raise the status of volunteering, to increase the numbers of volunteers and to increase the quality and quantity of opportunities and experiences.</p> <p>- Link this appropriately with Volunteering Week, Volunteer Awards and other promotional strategies. - Commission research to inform the campaign and gain a better understanding of the factors that motivate and prevent people from volunteering, as well as the kinds of support that would best support volunteers and volunteer managers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and roll out of the media campaign • Increase the volunteer hours contributed per person by 5% per year. • Research programme commissioned • First annual report produced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By April 2008 • Annual review • By April 2008 • By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • WCVA, CVCs and Volunteer Centres
<p>b) Work with others to produce a simple action plan to remove barriers and improve the quality of volunteering experiences. This plan to include promotion of Investing in Volunteers, Code of Practice for Involving Volunteers, training for volunteer managers and corporate policies for volunteering.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the action plan within the Partnership Agreement • Annual review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2009 • From Mar 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • WCVA, CVCs and Volunteer Centres
<p>c) Progress the Russell Commission Implementation Plan for Wales to achieve a step change in the numbers and diversity of young people involved in youth-led volunteering opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of agreed targets • Clarify long-term mechanisms for promoting youth volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Sept 2009 • By Mar 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • Programme Steering Group
<p>d) Work with the private sector to promote employee volunteering as an aspect of corporate social responsibility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% increase in business-led volunteering • 10% increase in business-led volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Sept 2009 • By Mar 2011 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • DE&T • BITC • Business sector networks
<p>e) Sustain and enhance opportunities for employee volunteering within the Assembly Government's workforce and challenge other public sector bodies to do likewise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale and nature of the workforce's volunteer contribution • Evidence of positive response by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Sept 2009 • By Sept 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group

ACTION PLAN:

2. Strengthening communities:			
Task	Indicators / Outputs	Deadline	Responsible
a) Develop an integrated and flexible Third Sector Group structure that can generate synergy between the Communities First programme, the Social Economy Strategy, the National Strategic Framework for Community Development, work on social and financial inclusion, the VSS Strategic Action Plan and other relevant Assembly Government strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective operational arrangements in place within WAG • Evidence of effective synergy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By April 2008 • By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WAG Cabinet and Management Board
b) Sustain commitment to Communities First and respond to the recommendations of the interim evaluation published Sept 2006.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of significant progression from the base-line evaluation in terms of outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • CFSN
c) Promote community development techniques Wales-wide, support the strengthening of training frameworks and professional development opportunities, and identify and share best practice. Support the use and further development of the National Occupational Standards for CD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of more effective, better supported training frameworks • Further capacity building of Community Development Cymru and other networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2009 • By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • DELLS • CDC
d) Refine and resource the mechanisms of support for trustees aimed at recruiting and retaining them, and developing their skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote enhanced package of support linked to the volunteering media campaign • Numbers of trustees benefiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From April 2008 • By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • DELLS • WCVA & CVCs
e) Strengthen the third sector's support for the use of Welsh as a community language through strategic collaboration between the sector, the Assembly Government and the Welsh Language Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement of a Compact between the WLB, the Welsh Assembly Government and the third sector • Evidence of the linguistic impact of this compact and the WLB's Voluntary Sector Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2008 • By Mar 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • WLB • Mentrau Iaith • WCVA
f) Support agreement on a compact between the third sector and the new Equalities and Human Rights Commission to promote good community relations and help individuals seek redress if they experience discrimination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on the EHRC Compact • Evidence of the compact's impact in furthering equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2008 • By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • WCVA • VSS Networks • EHR Commission

ACTION PLAN:

3. Facilitating 'Citizen voice':			
Task	Indicators / Outputs	Deadline	Responsible
a) Ensure guidance on Local Service Boards, Community Strategies, Spatial Planning, and other key planning and priority setting processes stresses the expectation of full involvement of the third sector as equal partners and a conduit for public engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of this advice in all guidance • Evidence that it is making an impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2008 • By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • SJ&LG • F&PSD
b) Publish a policy statement on public engagement to include a set of core standards and sources of practical support for citizens, facilitators and public officials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy statement published 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MtC Unit
c) Enhance the provision of training and practical support available to staff and citizens engaged in participative practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Package of support clarified • Report on its effectiveness and impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2008 • Bay Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MtC Unit • PMSW • Participation Cymru
d) Prepare and launch a 'Code of Practice on Public Consultation and Engagement', to apply to the Assembly Government and other public service agencies/providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of the Code • Level of internal and external compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Sept 2008 • Reported annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MtC Unit • Third Sector Group • VSPC
e) Obtain and apply new powers to enable local authorities to co-opt members to scrutiny committees from the third sector and other organisations, with voting powers as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of the new powers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Apr 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WAG Cabinet • WLGA & LAs • AGSBs etc. • WCVA
f) Work with the third sector, local government and others to ensure that the third sector is effectively represented on regional and sub-regional structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that such representation is effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MtC Unit • WLGA & LAs • CVCs • WCVA

ACTION PLAN:

4. Accelerating social enterprise:			
Task	Indicators / Outputs	Deadline	Responsible
a) Push forward progress with the implementation of the Social Enterprise Strategy for Wales, through collaboration with key partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual reports confirming satisfactory achievement of agreed milestones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third Sector Group SEN, WCVA, CVCs
b) Commission a comprehensive mapping exercise of the nature and extent of social enterprise activity in Wales, and contribute to the UK-wide study being conducted through the ESRC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping exercise commissioned Analysis of results used to inform next stage of the SE Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By Mar 2008 By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third Sector Group SEN, WCVA, CVCs
c) Facilitate the formation of a national representative body able to act as a unified voice for organisations with an interest in social enterprise. Link with the formation of regional networks for sharing and learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formation of the national body Formation of regional networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By Sept 2008 By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third Sector Group DE&T SEN, WCVA etc.
d) Refine and package a business development support service designed for the social enterprise business model and ensure all elements of the service are properly linked and integrated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of the improved service Evidence of improved take-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By Sept 2008 By Sept 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third Sector Group DE&T Business Eye SEN, WCVA etc.
e) Continue awareness-raising, training and support to encourage social enterprises to bid successfully for service procurement contracts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued programme of training for social enterprises and procurement officials Evidence of significant increase in the value of contracts secured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing From Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third Sector Group DE&T Value Wales Third Sector Procurement Group
f) Promote community asset development asset transfers by local authorities and others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of increasing asset values associated with social enterprise initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third Sector Group WLGA, LAs DTA Wales, WCVA
g) Continue to develop opportunities for social enterprise growth in key sectors such as childcare, care for the elderly, waste management, community transport, micro-generation etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of sector specific initiatives Evidence of significant sector growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All WAG Depts. Third Sector Networks SEN

ACTION PLAN:

5. Personalising public services:			
Task	Indicators / Outputs	Deadline	Responsible
a) Greater visibility and recognition for the sector in procurement protocols and practices, ensuring a 'level playing field' for all bidders on price, full cost recovery and service performance assessed on outputs, outcomes and impact. Raised awareness, familiarisation and training for public services procurement officers of third sector delivery potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of a refreshed "Opening Doors" Charter including good practice guidance on the procurement of services from the third sector • Evidence that procurement systems are facilitating increased third sector provision • Provision of training initiatives in all sectors • New indicators to monitor the number of contracts won, numbers registering on 'sell2Wales' and receiving training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2008 • By Mar 2009 • By April 2008 • By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value Wales • Third Sector Procurement Group
b) Appropriate use of 'social clauses' in contract specifications in which the 'added value' generated through personalised public services is better recognised within the terms of such contracts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective piloting of 'social clauses' • Evidence that 'added value' is being achieved and properly remunerated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By April 2008 • By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value Wales • Third Sector Procurement Group
c) Reinforce the requirement for effective third sector representation and involvement in public service design, commissioning and evaluation, including in arrangements for ensuring service scrutiny.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear guidance to this effect, plus action to ensure compliance where necessary • New powers achieved via Orders in Council to enable direct citizen involvement in scrutiny 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2008 • By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WAG Cabinet • All WAG Depts.
d) Development of collaborative working arrangements within the third sector to increase performance efficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of initial opportunities • Number and nature of such arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Sept 2008 • By April 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • SEN, WCVA, CVCs and Third Sector Networks
e) Development of effective strategic approaches to improve the coverage, independence and quality of information, advice and advocacy services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Legal Services Commission, local authorities and partners in the delivery of Making Legal Rights a Reality in Wales • Adoption of an Advocacy Services Strategy for Wales. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Community Legal Advice Network in place by April 2009; roll-out by 2012. • By Sept 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • Advocacy Wales • WCVA, CVCs and Third Sector Networks
f) Fund, design and launch an 'Invest to Serve' fund to build strategic capacity for service delivery within the third sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of the fund • Evidence of its effective impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By April 2009 • From Mar 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group

ACTION PLAN:

6. Strengthening public / third sector engagement			
Task	Indicators / Outputs	Deadline	Responsible
<p>a) Each WAG Department to work with the third sector to clarify the actions it will take in response to the Strategic Action Plan to further its remit, also challenge local authorities, AGSBs and other public agencies to take similar action to enhance this aspect of the third sector's role. Specifically, identify Departmental actions that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhance the contribution of volunteers - strengthen the contribution made through community development approaches - give a stronger voice to citizens' interests and concerns - promote social enterprise approaches - promote and support greater third sector involvement in design, commissioning, delivery and evaluation of quality public services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial programme of action agreed • Progress reported and actions rolled forward annually • Evidence of an effective response to this challenge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By April 2008 • Annually • By Mar 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministers • All WAG Depts. • Third Sector Group • VSPC • WAG Cabinet • WLGA • Public sector
<p>b) Create an integrated and flexible Third Sector Group comprising a critical mass of relevant expertise to promote all aspects of this Strategic Action Plan across and beyond the Assembly Government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of the Group arrangement • Annual performance reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By April 2008 • From Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Board
<p>c) Require all Assembly Government Sponsored Bodies to respond positively to the priorities and proposals in the Strategic Action Plan, and use influence on other public agencies to respond similarly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement in annual remit letters • Ensure that guidance to public agencies makes clear reference to the SAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Jan 2008 • From Jan 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministers • All WAG Depts • AGSBs.
<p>d) Stress the importance of bilateral and multi-lateral Compacts, underpinned by effective Joint Liaison Committees, and Codes of Practice for Funding, as the principle mechanism for local authority and public sector collaboration with the third sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue guidance to this effect • Annual performance monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2008 • From Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministers • All WAG Depts. • Third Sector Group • WCVA and CVCs
<p>e) Ensure Wales is effectively represented in relevant UK level discussions on third sector issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual performance reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • WCVA

ACTION PLAN:

7. Improving third sector support services:			
Task	Indicators / Outputs	Deadline	Responsible
a) Require all Assembly Government Departments and sponsored public bodies, and urge local authorities and other public agencies, to utilise the knowledge and expertise of the generic support service when coordinating their work or planning new initiatives with the third sector, and build on the opportunities for better integration of the generic support service through the Partnership Agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of increased use of the service • Annual monitoring through the VSPC • Performance measurement and reporting via the half yearly and annual reviews • Regular user satisfaction surveys • Full formal review of the Agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From April 2008 • From Mar 2009 • By Sept and March each year • As programmed • By Mar 2009s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • WCVA and CVCs • Volunteer Centres
b) Prepare and roll out appropriate generic service specifications and partnership initiatives to provide improved 'back office' services more efficiently to help drive up standards across the sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breadth and impact of these specifications and partnership initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • WCVA and CVCs • Volunteer Centres
c) Help to strengthen and promote specialist third sector services available in Wales where opportunities arise, ensuring they are suitably integrated with the generic service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of successful specific initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From April 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • WCVA
d) Ensure that the distinctive needs of the third sector in rural areas are appropriately recognised in guidance and in public sector activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of 'rural proofing' of guidance and operational activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From April 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All WAG Depts. • WCVA

ACTION PLAN:

8. Enabling raised performance and growth:			
Task	Indicators / Outputs	Deadline	Responsible
a) Revise the Code of Practice for Funding the Voluntary Sector to include Full Cost Recovery and to take account of procurement best practice. Require all Assembly Government Departments and sponsored public bodies to adopt and comply with the Code, and urge local authorities and other public bodies to do likewise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code suitably revised • Evidence of WAG compliance • Evidence of wider public sector compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Sept 2008 • By Mar 2009 • By Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • VSPC • All WAG Depts.
b) Promote greater partnership working between third sector organisations to improve efficiency through the sharing and pooling of capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and nature of sharing initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Mar 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • WCVA, CVCs and Sector Networks
c) Work with the private sector to celebrate and enhance its contribution to building the third sector through corporate social responsibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinvigorate strategic dialogue with the private sector • Evidence of an enhanced contribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2009 • By Mar 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • DE&T • BITC, CBI etc.
d) Work with others to raise public awareness about tax-efficient methods of giving to increase income to the third sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch campaign strategy • Evidence of a significant response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2009 • By Mar 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • IFC, WCVA, BITC
e) Work with HMG and third sector workforce representatives to ensure that the sector's skill development needs are effectively addressed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the feasibility study of a Workforce Development Council • Evidence of a more effective workforce skills development framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By Mar 2009 • By Mar 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Sector Group • WCVA
f) Encourage and support secondments between the public and third sectors (both ways) to share experience and understanding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of secondments achieved in both directions, including those to and from the Assembly Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By year end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Depts and wider public sector • PSMW • Third Sector