

GUIDE FROM VIEWPOINT OF THE LEAD APPLICANT TO ILLUSTRATED REVIEW OF THE 'COMMUNITY ROUTES' PROGRAMME BETWEEN 1991-2009

INTRODUCTION The present LCCC application begins, and in a sense ends, with Flood Risk Management as principal leitmotif. However its TAEP (Travel Awareness and Engagement Plan) component has a history in the form of the Community Routes story:-

Refs B12-14: these are from successive issues of the 'Rainbow Magazine', a community newsletter set up under the then Clwyd County Council Librarian Mr Mike Palmer in order to help the community itself to come to terms with, and if possible make sense of, events and their aftermath. The articles are all from two successive issues appearing approximately one year after the floods, and also contained Refs B2 & B3. There is much concern about whether resilience-building would - as suggested unanimously the previous May by the All-Party Commons Select Committee - be taken up by the Welsh Office or the local authorities. Though it is clear from the APCSC and Refs B2 and B3 that sea level rise was already coming to prominence as a serious underlying concern, unfortunately since Welsh Secretary David Hunt had already completely ignored the APCSC report his advice to the local community to 'look to the future' had a hollow ring.

Refs B15-18: in the absence of any central or local government support for planning built-in resilience it was hard for a mere Town Councillor to do more than go to the Land Authority and major builders to appeal to them not to build more bungalows. A visitor from the Peak District researching the floods told me about the work there in preserving railway lines for tourism and this put me onto the idea of a formal survey. The new sea defences had potential for path improvements, as did many embankments etc, and this visitor planted the idea that access would improve general awareness in the future. merely Via Sustrans the link was soon made with Mr Mike Chown and a 6-month-long, £5,000 local study was performed. The two brochures reproduced here give a summary of the study itself and of early work to clear a 700 m length of disused railway path. The charitable association Community Roots (later changed to 'Routes') was formed to bring people together from around Morfa Rhuddlan to help promote this work.

Refs B19-24: these pictures show the first flush of enthusiasm that lay behind Community Routes work. At last one had something to show for one's efforts! With the help of a £7,000 grant from the Prince of Wales Trust a substantial programme totalling £25,000 in value was achieved for an outlay of around 40% of that total. Along the way the ESSO Footpaths Award was won – an all-Wales prize of £1,000. Meanwhile a 'Spot The Difference' comparison between Refs B24 and B25 shows dramatically the way that Sustrans' own thinking was transformed - our own partnership-building example helping them to banish their own preconception that North Wales was a place where neighbouring local authorities did not talk to each other. Hence whereas Route 5 did not feature on their 1994 National Cycle Network, by the next year it was there - despite all the technical problems with continuity along the A55 etc.

Refs B26-B36: a collection of pictures that formed the basis for Community Routes' winning entry to BT Environment Week 1997, showing the ongoing commitment to set out a vision for locally connecting network that served many uses including getting to work and for tourism – starting within Towyn and Kinmel Bay but already linking to neighbouring communities. Considerable attention to detail was required, for example for the picnic area and in helping to negotiate a new path around the sewage works

extension. Both of these aspects were at the point where the old pack-horse bridge, first built in the 1790's when Dutch drainage techniques involving tidal sluice gates and a 4-miles diversion of the R Gele into the R Clwyd had first been brought to North Wales. The symbolism of this bridge, situated as it is on the S town boundary of Kinmel Bay, spoke for itself of the need to link social and environmental aspects of sustainability.

Refs B37-38: Community Routes' 1999 brochure is shown, setting out its stall with a list of successes up to then, including the 'D-Day for Integrated Transport' conference at Bodelwyddan on 6.6.98 - an event planned carefully with the involvement of Conwy and Denbighshire Highways officers. For this we were rewarded by the attendance of over 100 people including Sue Essex AM as keynote speaker, and subsequent moves to set out of a £5m Package Grant system for the cross-County Clwyd Rivermouth Area.

Refs B39-B4: a compendium of ancillary awareness- and fund-raising activities. For example the 1997 Schubert Bicentennial concert at Rhyl Town Hall attracted 200 people and raised £1,000. A further concert in 1998 drew attention to the need for a Harbourmouth Foot/Cycle Bridge at the Foryd - an idea not previously entertained even by Mike Chown in 1992 (who instead advocated reopening the Vale of Clwyd Bridge). Ultimately success in persuading Sustrans to go for Route 5 was the key factor - the idea of the Harbourmouth Bridge being persisted with by Denbighshire officers and finally being entered successfully by them into Sustrans' 1997 Connect2 bridges competition.

Refs B46-48: ongoing concerns here about what exactly the Harbourmouth Bridge should connect with! Earlier ideas of cross-County green linkages centred on Bodelwyddan (B46) must surely remind one of Ebenezer Howard's idealised 'Garden City' (B47). What Garden City would ignore its harbour as a focus of attention? Surely there were enough items of historic interest to justify some sort of visitor attraction?

Refs B49-59: Peter Ullman's advent seemed fully to justify this argument. But despite putting on an event in his honour in 2003, involving persuading the Eden Project architects to do a drawing at enormous expense, his attitude seemed set on a strictly commercial approach – which subsequent review has shown was not justified by the existing state of art of the turbine technology. Nevertheless the name Resurgam has powerful and potentially highly relevant resonances both in Portsmouth and London – two places that also named by the experts as being at particular risk from Storm Surge.

Ref B60: this Outline Brief for a pilot TESAR scheme contains within it a Foryd Harbour Pavilion visitor centre idea that still stands as something that I hope both Counties can study in partnership - even if the pilot TESAR scheme itself were to be based at say Llanddulas. To be successful in a UK tourist area that suffers from a seriously depressed economy and doubts as to viability for habitation, the LCCC project surely needs to be about firing the public imagination as much as about documenting every detail of how to conserve energy. For instance if the Eden Project is any example it seems perfectly possible for success to mean marginally or temporarily increasing carbon emissions in this region that are more than offset by decreases in overall emissions from reduced foreign travel. A wider Integrated Coastal Zone Development Study approach ultimately needs to be sophisticated enough to account for such matters, in order for local studies to be worth the paper they aren't written on! Meanwhile, though Community Routes itself has served its purpose, the drive to develop and market Route 5 must continue through destination development and rebranding, and not just passive destination management.