

Valleys Taskforce – Pilots

Overview

Pilots will be delivered in three valleys communities which will look at how services and local delivery can be better integrated. The pilots provide an opportunity to develop a model for change which will be scalable and deliverable in other valleys communities. Evidence suggests there is currently a “disconnect” between the perceptions and expectations of people living in the valleys and what’s being delivered locally in relation to investment and local services. The pilots also offer an opportunity to address this disconnect – through a focus on genuine engagement to identify local priorities and ways of going forward.

They will focus on the following key areas:

- Engaging with communities to identify local priorities.
- Developing innovative approaches to the provision of public services that directly reflect local need.
- The delivery of services which are well used and well integrated with their local communities.
- Building momentum and signalling the importance of working collaboratively to address local priorities.
- Giving permission and encouragement to partners and front-line staff to work differently.
- Building strong and trusting relationships between organisations.
- Sustaining momentum and buy-in from all those involved.
- Communicating a compelling vision and narrative for change.

Furthermore, there are opportunities explore the alignment of a number of initiatives taking place across the valleys, such as Resilient Communities Early Adaptors, Childcare Pilots, Children Zones/ ACEs Hubs and the All Age Employability Pilots.

Selection of pilots

Three areas have been identified for the location of the taskforce pilots across a geographical spread:

- **Llanhilleth, Blaenau Gwent:** Located near Crumlin and Six Bells. Mid / Eastern Valleys. population of 4,797. Llanhilleth Institute is a community building which hosts Communities First, Flying Start, social enterprises, the Police Information Service, Local Health Board Baby Clinic, the Local Health Board doctor’s practice and an independent doctor’s practice connected to St. Illtyd’s Primary School.
- **Ferndale, RCT:** Located in the Rhondda Valley, population of 4,178. Mid / North Location. Ferndale Community School is based in the centre of the town and is linked to a number of ongoing community based initiatives.
- **Banwen/ Glynneath, Neath Port Talbot:** Located in the Upper Dulais Valley, the two communities have a population of 1,194 and 4,278 respectively, which are approximately 4 miles apart. There are two community training centres, Dove and Glynneath, which are operated by the same charity and exist as a multi-agency hub.

Approach

A senior civil servant will be deployed to work with each of the pilot areas. Initially, their key responsibility will be to work with their pilot hosts to identify the barriers to the better integration and coordination of services and support. They will also be responsible for working with other Welsh Government officials to identify ways to “unblock” and address these barriers and issues – as well as identify further opportunities for learning lessons and improving local outcomes.

The senior civil servant will report back to Welsh Government and Ministers to explore community led solutions to some of the perceived barriers and issues identified during the pilot stage. There will not be any funding attached to the pilots, instead the focus will be placed on exploring how delivery and flexibility through existing resources, funding and collaborative ways of working can be best shaped at a local level. This will include exploring positive practice. The pilots will run for a 6 month period and commence in April 2017.