



**The future of Merthyr Tydfil is in your hands
 Improving our health and well-being**

**HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE & WELL-BEING STRATEGY
 2008 – 2011 CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

Welcome to a Brighter Forecast for Merthyr Tydfil.

For many years Merthyr Tydfil has sat under a cloud being renowned for the high unemployment rates due to sickness and ill health. All this is set to change as the rain clouds clear and with the sun and a rainbow comes a brighter outlook.



This change is all about you, the community and ensuring the Health Social Care and Well-being of the people living, working and visiting the County Borough.

The draft consultation document that follows looks at what the key priority areas that will ensure that we live healthier, longer and more fulfilled. Taking in to consideration the needs of the population via a detailed needs assessment that will soon be available via a new website.

This document is produced by the Health Social Care and Well-being Partnership, which consists of key public and voluntary bodies and is jointly led by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil Local Health Board. The Partnership was created in 2004 to oversee the development of the first Health Social Care and Well-being Strategy.

The first Health Social Care and Well-being Strategy covered the period 2005-2008 and has allowed us to begin making improvements and tackle the underlying factors which cause ill health.

As part of the process of developing the revised strategy we will hold a 12 week Consultation period. We will be consulting with key user groups, local population, stakeholders, carers, and you to ensure that we meet the needs of everyone. If you would like to comment on the draft Strategy or feel that we are not meeting your families or your needs please go to page 19 for details on how to get in touch or give your comments on the Health Social Care and Well-being website www.brightermerthyrttydfil.co.uk.

We are excited by the opportunities that the revised Strategy will create and the challenges it offers. Through joint working we believe we can create a brighter future for Merthyr Tydfil.



1. WHAT IS A HEALTH SOCIAL CARE AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY?

It is increasingly recognised that the needs of our population cannot be met by organisations working alone, and that many of the challenges we face locally will need organisations working together to meet them.

Therefore, all Local Authorities and Local Health Boards across Wales have been asked to work together, in partnership with key organisations and local people to set out how in partnership, they will address the health social care and well-being needs of the local population.

This strategy is an exciting joint development led by the Local Authority and Local Health Board in the County Borough. It sets out how through working with individuals and communities, we aim to improve the health and well-being of the population of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough by tackling all factors that affect our health.

The strategy covers all ages, and contributes, along with the Children and Young Peoples' Single Plan and Local Development Plan towards meeting the priorities of the Community Strategy.

2. THE HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE & WELL- BEING PARTNERSHIP

In Merthyr Tydfil, we are committed to working in partnership to improve the lives of people who live in the County Borough. The Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategy 2008-2011 will help us realise this aim and will support our efforts to work together in addressing the issues that concern local people.

The revised strategy will give us greater flexibility to direct resources where they are needed most, and support the improvement of local public services.

The revised strategy will outline proposals for the continued improvement of health social care and well-being throughout the County Borough and will concentrate on the key actions that are highlighted during the consultation period.

OUR VISION

“A BRIGHTER FORECAST”

***Together we will improve Health, Social Care
and Well-being in Merthyr Tydfil.***

Whilst we have made a good start, there is still a lot of work that needs to be carried out and it is now time to review what has been done and what still needs to be done during 2008 until 2011.



3. HEALTH CHALLENGE MERTHYR TYDFIL

Challenges are in Merthyr Tydfil. These are highlighted over the next few pages.

Assessing health and well-being need

Being healthy is much more than not being ill. Our health and well-being is influenced by many factors including where we live, work and learn; our lifestyle; our relationships with family and friends and access to services and facilities. These factors are often described as the 'wider determinants of health'. The needs assessment should be viewed as information for action and is intended to:

- inform local strategy development.
- share with the people of Merthyr Tydfil information about factors that affect their health and well-being.
- assist with planning which aims to improve health and reduce inequalities.
- foster increased co-operation and partnership working.
- provide a framework for more detailed research into needs and inequalities in health and well-being.

What do Health Determinants Mean?

"Why is Jason in the hospital?

Because he has a bad infection in his leg.

But why does he have an infection?

Because he has a cut on his leg and it got infected.

But why does he have a cut on his leg?

Because he was playing in the scrap yard next to his apartment building and there was some sharp, jagged steel there that he fell on.

But why was he playing in a scrap yard?

Because his neighbourhood is kind of run down. A lot of kids play there and there is no one to supervise them.

But why does he live in that neighbourhood?

Because his parents can't afford a nicer place to live.

But why can't his parents afford a nicer place to live?

Because his father is unemployed and his mother is sick.

But why is his father unemployed?

Because he doesn't have much education and he can't find a job.

But why ...?"



What are our health and well-being challenges?

Overall Health

The most recent Welsh Health Survey shows that when asked, people in Merthyr Tydfil do not feel that their physical or mental health is as good as people living in other parts of Wales. A higher score means better health.

- Results show that our score for physical health is 46.4 compared with a Welsh average of 48.8. The survey also shows that 25% of adults report being treated for high blood pressure compared to 19% across Wales; 21% for Arthritis compared to 14% across Wales and 16% for a respiratory illness compared to 14% across Wales.
- For mental health, our score is 47.2 for Merthyr Tydfil with a Welsh average of 49.7. In Merthyr Tydfil, 14% of adults report being treated for mental illness compared to the Welsh Average of 9%. Poor mental health is linked to suicide and in Merthyr Tydfil the suicide rate is 13.7 per 100,000 people compared with the average of 12.1 across Wales.

This poor health means that the people of Merthyr Tydfil live shorter lives than the average for Wales.

- The average life expectancy for men in Wales is 76 years whereas in Merthyr Tydfil it is 73.8 years.
- Although the life expectancy at birth for females in Wales is higher with an average of 80.3 years, the life expectancy for females in Merthyr Tydfil is 78.1 years

Worklessness

There is strong evidence that being without a job is bad for your health; in particular it has been found that worklessness is associated with:

- Higher mortality
- Poorer health overall
- Poorer mental health
- Higher medical consultation, medication use and hospital admission

In Wales as a whole, 7 out of every 10 people have a job, but in Merthyr Tydfil only 6 out of every 10 people work.

Education

How well children do at school affects their chances of finding a job, and of employment in an occupation which offers the prospect of a fulfilling and well paid career. Children in schools with poor attendance records and low educational standards are more likely to leave school without qualifications. Teacher's expectations of disadvantaged children and their support for their education are critical in breaking this cycle.



People without qualifications are most at risk of not working, and job opportunities tend to be restricted to lower paid work which often lacks security.

- In 2006, 43% of young people in Merthyr Tydfil achieved 5 or more GCSEs, at grade A*-C, or vocational equivalent, compared to 54% for Wales. Pupils in Merthyr Tydfil continue to achieve lower educational attainment than in most other Welsh Authorities. Nonetheless, overall performance are at or above the benchmark figure calculated by WAG as the expected level of performance, based on the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.
- In 2003, the percentage of people of working age with no qualifications was 23.2% in Merthyr Tydfil compared to 16.6 for Wales.

Poverty

While education is part of the link between childhood poverty and adult disadvantage, growing up in poverty is of underlying importance, over and above the difficulties it places in the way of a child doing well at a school.

- The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2005 is the official measure of multiple deprivations for small areas in Wales. The index is made up of seven separate kinds of deprivation – income, employment, health, education, access to services, environment and housing. Wales is made up of 1,896 Lower Super Output Areas [LSOAs], and Merthyr Tydfil comprises 36. Thirteen of Merthyr Tydfil's LSOAs rank in the worst 10% of the index, and 20 in the worst 20% of the index.
- Lone parent households tend to have lower incomes and a greater need and demand for health and social care. The 2001 census showed that in Wales, a quarter of dependant children live in lone parent households with the percentage in Merthyr Tydfil being the highest in Wales at 32 %.
- Young mothers also tend to have low birth weight babies and in Merthyr Tydfil, the percentage of conceptions to girls aged 16 or under is 9.8 per 1,000 compared to the Welsh average of 8 per 1,000.
- Low birth weight babies tend to have poorer long term health. Figures for 2002-2004 shows that at 7%, a significantly higher number of babies in Merthyr Tydfil were low birth weight compared to the Welsh average of 5.9%.
- Amongst children, tooth decay is the most important oral disease. Regular surveys are carried out to record the level of decayed missing and filled teeth for children aged 5 and 12 years old. The latest survey of 5 year-olds in 2003-04 showed that in Wales, 54.43% of children had some experience of tooth decay and that in Merthyr Tydfil; the percentage of children is just over 70%.



Housing

The links between housing conditions and health have long been recognised and improvement in housing conditions is responsible for much of the improvements in public health of the last century.

Of all the countries within the UK, Wales has the poorest quality housing stock, which is generally older and in poorer condition than housing in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Housing Strategy for 2007-11 shows that:

- Compared with the rest of Wales, Merthyr Tydfil has 6% fewer households living in owner occupied accommodation and 27% more of its population living in social housing.
- 41% of private sector homes were built before 1900.
- In Wales the house type that has the highest rate of poor quality or “unfitness” is terraced housing, mainly because much of it was built before 1919. Merthyr has 59% of terraced housing, significantly higher than the Welsh average of 34%.
- At the time of the 1997 Welsh House Condition Survey, Merthyr had the highest rate of unfitness of any Local Authority in Wales, with 12.5% of the housing stock unfit compared with the Welsh average of 8.5%.

Lifestyle Choices

It is recognised that what we eat and drink, how we exercise and if we smoke affects our health. Our ability to make healthier choices is affected by where we live, the facilities available to us, our relationships with family and friends and our level of education. In Merthyr Tydfil:

- Just over a quarter, 26% of adults smoke. This is near the Welsh average of 27%.
- The latest figures show that 58% of adults are classed as overweight or obese compared with 55% of people across Wales.
- 71% of adults are not reaching the recommended minimum level of 30 minutes exercise on 5 days of the week. This equals the Welsh average.
- Just over a third of our children are active for an hour or more every day of the week, this is the third highest rate in Wales, but 66% of children are still not reaching the required minimum.
- Just under half [48%] of people drink more than the recommended alcohol limits compared with an average of 39% for Wales.
- Only 38% of adults eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day compared to the Welsh average of 42%.



Monitoring and maintenance

There is a commitment to ensure that a wide range of organisations and individuals are involved in the process to develop a locally focused needs assessment resource document, as an on-line electronic source, with hyperlinks to available data and information. This document is currently in the process of being developed and is intended to be launched in January 2008.

When the Health Challenge Merthyr Tydfil website is launched, the multi agency Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategic Planning Team will be responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of the site, using the agreed protocol, to include periodic review, updating of new links, new research or reports and analysis.



3. TACKLING THE HEALTH CHALLENGES

In order to address the needs highlighted in the needs assessment we need to look at each issue and set out what needs to be done. We also need to know what you think about, what we propose and if we are meeting your needs.

The five key issues that we aim to look at in more detail will be centred around the following headlines:

- **Living Independently**
- **Learning for Health and Well Being**
- **Better Health and Social Care Services**
- **Creating an Environment for Healthy Living**
- **Working Together**

Each headline is listed on the next page along with our objective and aims for improvement.



LIVING INDEPENDENTLY

Objective

To enable individuals with specific support needs to live an independent, integrated and valued life within their own communities.

Here are a few things we have done since 2005

- The production of a Borough wide Play Strategy
- The production of a Disabled Children's Strategy and the (multi agency) Children with Disabilities team becoming operational.
- The Mental Health Crisis Resolution team is now in place.
- "50+ and all to play for" events held to promote access to leisure
We have involved Older Person's, through four fora, to promote a positive image of ageing. This has been achieved by implementing a national strategy and use of local educational theatre.
- *We have recognised that carers of all ages in the Borough require support. To address this we have tried to improve respite services, awareness on carers' rights and the setting up of numerous carers groups.*

The Healthy Schools scheme, is a partnership project between Merthyr Tydfil Local Health Board, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and the National Public Health Service for Wales. 33 local schools have now committed to the scheme and are undertaking a range of activities to improve the health and well being of the whole school community. They have included initiatives such as the health-promoting playground, fruit tuck shops, The Class Moves, staff health days and environmental projects.



The Supporting People Initiative is a means of funding Supported Housing arrangements for vulnerable people. It is based on the idea of supporting people to get and keep tenancies, therefore avoiding problems of homelessness. The Supporting People programme is not meant to meet the short-notice needs of people with accommodation and/or support needs. Services however, such as emergency hostels or other support schemes, which can sometimes provide a rapid response can be developed using Supporting People funding.



What you told us....

During the production of this consultation document key user groups were contacted via questionnaires to look at what we need to consider when producing the revised strategy 2008 – 2011. You told us:

“We need to ensure that every person residing in Merthyr Tydfil can live as independently as possible.”

We are asking you

How can we ensure that every person residing in Merthyr Tydfil can live independently?

We aim to achieve:

- Improved use of assistive technology.
- The provision of purpose built housing enabling a home for life.
- Support for carers of all ages.
- Support to help people take better care of their own health.



LEARNING FOR HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Objective

To enable individuals and communities to make lifestyle decisions that enhances health and well-being.

Here are a few things we have done since 2005

- 14-19 learning pathways has introduced over the last 18 months 7 new vocational routes for 14-16 year olds & looking to introduce a further three subject areas.
- The Elite Supported Employment Project – this year the project was awarded a social care accolade.
- As part of No Smoking Day in 2007, a smoke bug event was held at Garwnant forestry which looked at the wider environmental cost of smoking. The event was supported by 250 primary school children.
- The delivery of an Annual Child Care Seat Safety check in partnership with Road Safety and Trading Standards and the development of a video and teaching pack and Child Care Seat and Safety Pack.
- The annual “Keep Well this Winter” event with advice and information being made available by over 30 organisations, the opportunity to try holistic therapy sessions, glass painting card making, “Moving More Often” – low physical activity sessions. In November 2006, approximately 650 older people attended the event.



The existing Rhydycar Leisure Centre will be replaced over the next two years with the new multi-million pound leisure facility. Offering unrivalled facilities, including 3 swimming pools, state of the art gymnasium, and lots more for a wide customer range. It is hoped that this will improve physical health and encourage the community to take regular exercise to improve overall health & wellbeing of the general population. The Merthyr Tydfil Leisure Project will be a flagship, state-of-the-art development providing a ‘complete’ leisure experience.



A *Tooth brushing* scheme to promote pre school oral health and develop dental services across the County Borough has been launched. The scheme will provide a mobile dental unit on a weekly fixed session basis as well as establishing a daily tooth brushing scheme in local nursery schools and playgroups.

This scheme will address the high prevalence of untreated dental caries in Merthyr Tydfil.



What you told us....

During the production of this consultation document key user groups were contacted via questionnaires to look at what we need to consider when producing the revised strategy 2008 – 2011. You told us:

“We need to support you to lead healthier lives and increase overall well-being.”

“Ensure there are more available easily accessible leisure facilities.”

We are asking you

How can we support you to lead a healthier life and increase your overall well-being?

We aim to achieve:

- Improved access to leisure facilities within the County Borough.
- Improved community and individual access to information, advice, facilities and support to improve the Health & Well-being of the community i.e. Healthy Living Centres.
- Improved Health of Children & Young People.



BETTER HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

Objective

To further develop community based health and social care services within a whole system approach.

Here are a few things we have done since 2005

- The introduction of the EVOLVE volunteer project delivered in partnership between Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil and the Integrated Adult Services Department of the Local Authority. This dual faceted project takes referrals from social work team managers utilising volunteers to provide social support to individuals with low to moderate physical abilities, individuals with mental illness and older people. Up to the end of 2007, the number of referrals received was 132 and the number of volunteers trained was 91.
- The delivery of the second element of the EVOLVE Project – “Moving More Often” a low level physical activity programme. This programme is now being delivered in 3 settings for approximately 30 individuals

The Merthyr Tydfil / Blaenau Gwent Mentro Allan project is one of fifteen projects throughout Wales which will run for four years from 2007 to 2011 under this national programme. All fifteen projects share the aim of increasing physical activity levels amongst the “hard to reach” sedentary population by increasing their recreational use of the local natural environment. Each project has a defined geographical area and target group, for this project the geographical area is Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent and the target group has been defined as those people with mental health problems.

The Sexual Health Advisory Project, managed by the Department of Community Gynecology of the North Glamorgan NHS Trust, provides ongoing sexual and reproductive health education for all young people in youth venues, in order to break down the barriers in relation to accessing mainstream services by young people. It aims to empower young people to take responsibility for their own sexual health, to decrease teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections and give an insight into the risks and benefits pregnancy and parenthood.

The Merthyr Tydfil Children and Young People's Partnership have also recently commissioned research into the attitudes and awareness of young people within the borough towards sexual health, sexual health services and barriers that exist to accessing these services. This piece of work will inform the process of future service provision in Merthyr Tydfil.



What you told us....

During the production of this consultation document key user groups were contacted via questionnaires to look at what we need to consider when producing the revised strategy 2008 – 2011. You told us:

“Appropriate services need to be provided as near to the home as possible.”

“Community based rehabilitation services.”

We are asking you

How can we improve the services we currently provide and what services do we need to create to meet your needs?

We aim to achieve:

- Appropriate local community based services.
- Better mental health provision for Children & Young People.
- Changes in the way services are provided for prevention and treatment.



CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR HEALTHY LIVING

Objective

To tackle the underlying factors that affect our health.

Here are a few things we have done since 2005

- A review of service to adults with learning disabilities is currently being carried out and will focus on adult learning either through formal courses or practice learning in supported employment.
- Courses for young people have been held on topics such as Drug & Alcohol Awareness, Emotional Intelligence, Confidence Development & Communication, smoking cessation, Healthy eating.

The Bridges to Work Programme is designed to build bridges from disaffection through personal development and into employment. Aimed primarily at young people, the project has been really successful as people get work placements, go on to college, and land jobs.

Through a range of activities young people come to believe in their own abilities, proving that young people who leave school with little or no qualifications can achieve qualifications after leaving school. More importantly they can sustain suitable employment or move onto other positive outcomes.



What you told us....

During the production of this consultation document key user groups were contacted via questionnaires to look at what we need to consider when producing the revised strategy 2008 – 2011. You told us:

“An integrated transport system needed to meet the needs of the population not the convenience of contractors”

“Continued schemes to enable people to return to the workplace”



We are asking you

How can we tackle the underlying factors that affect our overall health?

We aim to achieve:

- Improved availability of appropriate housing for all age groups.
- Improved accessible and affordable public and community transport.
- Reduction in the fear of crime and provide a safer environment for all.
- Support to enable people to work.



WORKING TOGETHER

Objective

To develop the local infrastructure to improve Health Social Care and Well-being for our local area.

Here are a few things we have done since 2005

- Merthyr Forum re-established and meetings held quarterly.
- the Primary Mental Health Resource Team, the School based Counselling Project.
- Merthyr Tydfil Borough wide Youth forum has established a Sexual Health sub group.

Communities First programme in Merthyr Tydfil, is the Welsh Assembly Government's long-term strategy for improving opportunities and the quality of life for people living and working in the most disadvantaged communities in Wales. The Programme ensures that the funds and support available from the Assembly, and other publicly funded agencies, are targeted at the poorest areas.

Communities First aims to:

- Build confidence and raising the self-esteem of people living in the community.
- Increase the incomes of local people.
- Improve health and well-being.
- Encourage and improve education and skills training for work.
- Create jobs.
- Improve housing and the quality of the environment.
- Build up ownership and control of assets.
- Encourage active involvement in the community.

What you told us....

During the production of this consultation document key user groups were contacted via questionnaires to look at what we need to consider when producing the revised strategy 2008 – 2011. You told us:

“More communication about service planning for the future across the sectors to avoid duplication and confusion.”

“Pooling of budgets and joint commissioning to create improved services.”



We are asking you

How can we work together to deliver the services that will improve the overall health and well-being of Merthyr Tydfil?

We aim to achieve:

- A more co-ordinated approach to deliver improved Health & Social
- Care services for all ages.
- Empowerment of local communities.
- Participation of service users in partnerships and service developments



4. THE NEXT STRATEGY 2008 - 2011

The 2008 – 2011 strategy builds upon the work of the previous work and continues to progress the identified five Health, Social Care and Well-being themes, listed above:

The revised strategy must improve life chances across the broad field of Health and Well-being as identified within the Health Challenge Wales initiative, Designed for Life, Designed to Work and Agenda for Change, Fulfilled Lives Supportive Communities and The Route to Health Improvement policy documents.

The intention of this Strategy is to enable effective commissioning of health and social care services across the whole system. This will result in service development, redesign and reorientation at the local level. It is therefore imperative that appropriate processes are put in place to ensure the effective commissioning of future service developments.

The implementation of the Strategy will require:

- **A focus on health improvement** – a determined effort to improve health and tackle the causes of ill health will require a strong drive across local government, the NHS and the wider community.
- **Service redesign and capital investment** – implementation of the new Strategy must create new models of care, based firmly around the needs of service users. The new models must interpret into local circumstances the relevant national policy documents including the National Service Frameworks.
- **Workforce re-design and capital investment** –The development and implementation of the Strategy must be closely aligned to workforce planning across the health and social care fields.
- **Commissioning** – The Health Social Care and Well Being Strategy will be the main driver for commissioning health improvement and health and social care services.
- **Financial Planning** – The Health Social Care and Well Being Strategy will need to make clear links between resource allocations for each partnership area, the services that will be commissioned for the local population and the workforce that will be required to deliver these services.
- **Health promotion** – The Health Social Care and well-being strategy will need to identify ways in which the partners can engage and teach the population of Merthyr Tydfil on how to improve their own health by taking simple steps e.g. eating healthily, smoking cessation and taking regular exercise.



5. HAVE YOUR SAY

The revised strategy is currently under construction and will be introduced in April 2008. It will lay down a number of key actions for the future in the County Borough.

Over the next few months the Health, Social Care and Well-being partnership will be working with you, the community, to find out what needs to be done to improve the Health, Social Care and Well-being of Merthyr Tydfil.

We are consulting with you for a 12 week period ending on the 12th January 2008. This will be carried out in various ways including talking with key users, carers, community groups, stakeholders, etc.

What we learn from you will inform the development of the new Health Social Care and Well-Being Strategy for Merthyr Tydfil until 2011 to create a brighter forecast for you and your families.

YOUR VIEWS ARE IMPORTANT TO US TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

A dedicated website has been created that allows you to view this document (the revised Health Social Care and Well-being draft forecast 2008-2011), along with a Leaflet which summarise the key priorities highlighted in this document.

We would welcome your comments on the forecast via the Questionnaire; all documents including the Questionnaire can be found at www.brightermerthyrtydfil.co.uk.

If you would like to discuss this document further or have any questions please Contact the Health Social Care and Well-being Team on:



Tel: 01685 727035



Fax: 01685 724623



hscwb@merthyr.gov.uk



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE HEALTH SOCIAL CARE AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY ARRIVES?

Much of the work we need to do to implement this strategy has already started, and we should see some changes in the way services are delivered over the coming months. We also hope to see a growth in individual responsibility and more action to prevent ill health at a community level.

We will aim to keep you updated on progress with some of the schemes through the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's Community Newspaper 'Contact', through the local media and on the dedicated Health Social Care Well-being website www.brightermerthyrtydfil.co.uk.

All partners involved in the Strategy have a statutory duty to adopt the HSCWB strategy by 31st March 2008. Copies of the final strategy will be available on all partners websites and on www.brightermerthyr.co.uk alternatively if you would like a hard copy of the strategy contact us on the details listed above and we will ensure that you get one.

Having a strategy is only the first step towards improving health, social care and well-being in Merthyr Tydfil. The main themes of the strategy will form the basis of an action plan against which performance can be measured over the next three years. The Local Health Board and Local Authority will be working closely with local and national partners to implement the action plan.

The Health Social Care and Well-being Strategic Planning Team will consider all comments made during the consultation period. We will then agree the final content of the strategy for 2008 – 2011, including the detailed action plans. We appreciate your comments and support during the consultation period.

