



Pontcysyllte Aqueduct & Canal World Heritage Site

Tourism Development Plan

Final Draft – May 2011



Foreward

The Tourism Development Plan for the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site identifies key recommendations and actions for all the partners involved in the stewardship of the site. It sets out to ensure that the potential economic regeneration benefits from World Heritage Site status are realised, but that this process is carefully balanced with the need to protect the Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity of the site. Furthermore, there is a delicate balance to be achieved between ensuring the visitor has a memorable and enjoyable experience and will want to return, whilst safeguarding and improving the quality of life of local residents, and in broader terms between economic regeneration and sustainable local communities.

DRAFT

Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site

Tourism Development Plan

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1. Background

1.1 Inscription as a World Heritage Site

On 27th June 2009 Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal was inscribed on to the World Heritage List at the 33rd Session of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee in Seville, Spain. Inscription confirmed Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal's place among the World's elite 'cultural' sites and that the case put forward for its authenticity, integrity and Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) was accepted. It is the OUV for each World Heritage Site (WHS) which defines its very essence and global significance. The OUV for Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal was confirmed by UNESCO as a:

'remarkable example of the construction of a human-engineered waterway in a difficult geographical environment, at the end of the 18th century and start of the 19th century'.

The OUV sets the site's boundaries, and should be at the heart of its management and promotion, for it is this aspect that above all else raises the site to its elite position. In addition to the OUV, a site must meet one or more of the ten World Heritage Criteria for World Heritage Site inscription. The World Heritage Committee agreed that the site meets three. Briefly, these are:

- **Criteria (i)** it is the masterpiece of two of the exceptional figures in the heroic phase of civil engineering in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries;
- **Criteria (ii)** it exhibits an important international interchange of values in inland navigation, civil engineering and the use of iron, and
- **Criteria (iv)** it is an outstanding example of the pivotal importance of transport improvement to the worldwide process of industrialisation initiated by the British Industrial Revolution.

When developing and promoting the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS the OUV and three World Heritage criteria should provide the context for any projects which are taken forward.

1.2 WH Committee Recommendations for the Site

In conferring WHS inscription, UNESCO also included four recommendations for the site. The production and contents of this Tourism Development Plan are a specific response to Recommendation 4.d:

'In view of the large number of visitors and the probable growth in this number over future years, a thorough tourism development plan should be prepared as a section of the management plan. It should cover all issues relating to tourism, the coordination of tourism between all the property partners and a homogeneous policy on the interpretation of the property'.

Finally, it must be said from the outset that WHS status is a 'badge of honour', the top designation any site could receive, but it does not bring any prize or monetary reward

directly. Yet, for Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS chasing this designation has been driven by the benefits which will subsequently accrue – a raised public profile for the site and region, a quality badge to be used to increase visitor numbers, the chance to work with the elite 24 mainland UK World Heritage sites – Stonehenge, Ironbridge, Hadrian’s Wall to name but a few, the prospect of using the ‘badge’ to drive the regeneration of the whole canal corridor, and the anticipation that in times of restricted resources surely priority should go to where the best return on investment will be achieved, the winners, the big ticket?

1.3 Relationship to the Management Plan

All nominated sites put forward for WHS inscription must have a comprehensive Management Plan in place. The Management Plan for Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal was written at the end of 2007 and covers the period 2007-2012. It was the subject of comprehensive public consultation during 2007 and received overwhelming public support. It is, however, a living document with progress already made against some actions and naturally World Heritage inscription has brought greater profile, increased expectation and further actions. The Tourism Development Plan takes all tourism-related actions from the Management Plan and adds new actions as a response to new opportunities and the current economic climate, which have evolved since 2007.

2. The Scope of the Tourism Development Plan

Pursuit of the World-renown World Heritage Site designation has been relentless by Wrexham County Borough Council and British Waterways supported by Denbighshire County Council, Shropshire Council and former Oswestry Broough Council) since 2003 and has been based upon two key drivers:

2.1 Key drivers

- **civic pride** - a belief in the importance of our industrial and associated cultural heritage and its rightful place in the World; and
- **wealth creation** - a belief that designation would bring significant economic gain to the whole of North West Shropshire and North-east Wales and in particular to the Dee Valley corridor, through tourism and associated spin-offs (improved infrastructure, business enterprise, job creation and retention, growth in associated services and all-round improvement in the quality of life for local people).

2.2 Vision

A Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal Steering Group was established to agree the nomination process and now that the first phase of the work is complete (the nomination phase), the new focus is to oversee the implementation of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal Management Plan. The Steering Group’s business is delivered by it’s themed sub-groups (See Section 11), each with a clear and focussed remit. The vision of the Management Plan is that the WHS will be managed as an exemplary demonstration of sustainable development and heritage-led regeneration.

A Concordat signed in June 2007 by the 7 key partners confirmed that they would work together to improve the protection, management, presentation and interpretation of Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal to deliver ‘sustainable development for the economic and social benefit of communities that live alongside it.’

The second or ‘Implementation Phase’ is evolving, not only is it based upon implementation of the WHS Management Plan, but additional actions which have been

identified more recently. The whole success of the project is based upon developing key infrastructure at Trevor Basin next to the 'jewel in the crown', the one site all visitors are expected to want to visit and experience – the majestic Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. The vision is to establish this as:

- a) the key destination with a dedicated World Heritage Site Visitor Centre and associated car, coach and public transport connections;
- b) as the main hub for the site from which visitors are moved on, east and west, along the whole corridor and supported by the satellite but important alternative access points and sites at either end of the WHS Corridor.

2.3 The Site

In accordance with UNESCO World Heritage guidelines, the World Heritage Site's boundaries have been drawn to include all those areas or attributes which are a direct and tangible expression of its Outstanding Universal Value – i.e. as a masterpiece of canal engineering and an outstanding representation of the improvement of transport during the Industrial Revolution. The Site includes the canal and its engineering features together with remains associated with its construction and historical operation such as engineer's houses, wharves and lengthman's cottages. It contains 11 miles/18 kilometres of waterway from Horseshoe Falls at Llantysilio to Gledrid Bridge near Rhoswiel; two major Aqueducts at Pontcysyllte and Chirk plus two others, two tunnels at Chirk and Whitehouses; thirty-one bridges; fifteen embankments; sixteen sluices; Horseshoe Falls and two floodweirs; eighteen culverts and associated buildings at Chirk Bank, Froncysyllte, Trevor, Llangollen and Llantysilio. The site boundary also includes limited areas of additional land relating to important views of the key structures, for instance upstream and downstream of Pontcysyllte Aqueduct itself, (Map1). The central feature of the Site is the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

2.4 Buffer Zone

UNESCO requires that both the Site and its setting are protected from any development which would be deemed harmful to the Site and its Outstanding Universal Value. In order to meet this requirement, a protective 'Buffer Zone' has been designated for Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal to encompass its visual setting, related industrial archaeological features and to safeguard against inappropriate development. The Buffer Zone, (Map 1) takes in land around Horseshoe Falls and most of the Dee Valley downstream before turning southwards to Chirk and the Ceiriog Valley. Landscape Planners from the respective local authorities have identified a boundary which follows the topographical ridgeline on both sides of the valley. In places where the ridgelines are less distinct, the buffer zone is drawn to incorporate all areas which contribute to related interest identified in an Industrial Archaeological study. The majority of the Site and Buffer Zone incorporates an area already designated as a Landscape of Special Historic Interest.

The World Heritage site is some 105 hectares in total, the Buffer Zone is 4,145 hectares; 10.5 miles/17 kilometres lie within Wales and 0.5 miles/1 kilometre is in England. For the purposes of the Tourism Development Plan the main focus is the WHS and Buffer Zone, however, the wider context of the Dee Valley corridor from Corwen through to Chirk, and the whole area through to Oswestry and north to Wrexham town, will inevitably feel and benefit from the impact of the WHS as it grows over the years to come into a major visitor destination.

2.5 Site Sub Sections

Whilst Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, and hence Trevor Basin and Froncysyllte, will remain the most popular site for the visitor, other key sites are Chirk Aqueduct and tunnel and the Horseshoe Falls and of course away from the actual site itself, the town of Llangollen. In terms of visitor infrastructure, tourism development and regeneration, it may be useful to divide the Site and Buffer Zone into the following sections, as each can then have a particular focus and consideration in the wider plan:

- a. Gledrid to Chirk Aqueduct (English section);
- b. Chirk Aqueduct and associated Buffer Zone within the Ceiriog Valley;
- c. Chirk Aqueduct through to Froncysyllte;
- d. Pontcysyllte Aqueduct ;
- e. Trevor Basin, through to the Flexsys site and Cefn Mawr;
- f. Trevor Basin to Llangollen, (including links with the AONB) and
- g. Llangollen to Llantysilio.

Additionally, the following key settlements/communities need individual attention as their future is likely to be significantly impacted upon and go hand in hand with the successes and challenges of developing the WHS, its visitor infrastructure and regeneration:

- h. Chirk
- i. Froncysyllte
- j. Trevor
- k. Cefn Mawr,
- l. Llangollen and
- m. Llantysilio

Appendix 1 shows sections a- g of the WHS and key settlements within the 11-mile corridor (as listed above).

3. **Strategic Context**

This Tourism Development Plan aims to fulfil the tourism and related agendas for both Welsh and English Governments. In Wales, it is cognisant of WAG's wider agenda in terms of:

- One Wales, Wales: A Better Country;
- People, Places, Futures – The Wales Spatial Plan;
- Wales: A Vibrant Economy;
- Learning to Live Differently: Sustainable Development Scheme;
- Making the Connections;
- Wales Transport Strategy;
- Climbing Higher and Wales Transport Strategy; and
- Operational Programme for the East Wales Regional Competitiveness and Employment Programme (2007-2013) Rural Development Plan (2007-2013).

It also complements the Regional Tourism Strategy North Wales 2010-2015 which identifies the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal Corridor as a priority for action under three of its four strategy themes:

- 1) projecting our distinctive strengths;
- 2) investing in product excellence; and
- 3) providing an outstanding experience.

Locally the Tourism Development Plan supports the aims and objectives of:

- the Local Development Strategy for Rural Wrexham 2007-2013;
- The Local Development Strategy for Rural Denbighshire 2007-13
- Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal Management Plan;
- Denbighshire Economic Growth Strategy 2007-13; and
- Wrexham County Borough Council's Economic Development Department Service Strategy 2010-2013

Within Wrexham, tourism is recognised by the Council as a key employment provider and creator and generator of revenue. The local area around Cefn Mawr has recently faced major job losses as a result of the closure of the Flexsys site (164 job losses) and the demise of Air Products (198 jobs). These were highly skilled manufacturing jobs and will not easily be replaced. However, the success of gaining WHS status is timely and is a genuine opportunity for the Council and key partners to be effective in achieving positive outcomes to help mitigate the effects of these job losses. The focus for the future will be to sustain a tourism product which is economically viable and sustainable, generates local benefits, is welcomed by and helps local communities and protects and enhances the local environment. Key priorities in achieving this will be:

- Developing the local distinctiveness of the County Borough;
- Developing and celebrating our heritage and culture;
- Maximising the opportunities for destination marketing and regeneration which successful inscription has provided.

Within Denbighshire too, the tourism sector is recognised by the County Council as a large provider of employment and a source of income for the county's economy which has been experiencing fundamental changes in demand for some time. Gaining WHS status provide an opportunity to appeal to different markets and raise the quality of services provided thereby increasing the value and sustainability of the sector and the jobs which it supports.

Within Shropshire, tourism is recognised as a priority area for generating business growth and prosperity. Work to develop strategy has started across Shropshire and will be led in the north west of the county by the Destination Development Partnership for Oswestry and North Shropshire. The WHS is already acknowledged as the main opportunity to drive appropriate tourism development in the wider area.

4.0 Tourism - Current and Projected

4.1 Current

Undoubtedly tourism numbers are growing at key honeypot sites within the WHS. However, this is based more upon anecdotal information such as problems with visitor car parking at Chirk and Trevor Basin, than upon hard systematically collected evidence. There would appear to be a dearth of quantitative information as demonstrated in Table 1 below. A key recommendation from this Tourism Development Plan will be to establish a systematic methodology for recording visitor numbers at key sites henceforth, (see Section 10). It is envisaged that the methodology will be developed and in place by 1 April 2011 this will act as a baseline from which to monitor trends in future.

From the few statistics which are available it can be gleaned that there is a good basis from which to further develop a strong tourism industry within the WHS corridor and there is a great deal to offer different types of visitor (market segments) , but in particular those interested in heritage and the outdoors. Reference needs to be made to the Audience Development Plan commissioned by British waterways in 2008 on behalf of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS Steering Group to guide strategic planning to widen engagement along the 11 mile WHS corridor.

Table 1. Current Visitor Numbers to the World Heritage Site, Buffer Zone and within 5 Mile radius

Attractions in the WH Site	Visitor Figures	Comment
Pontcysyllte Aqueduct	200,000 p.a	BW estimate
Chirk Aqueduct	n/a	BW
Horseshoe Falls	n/a	Open access
Chirk Marina	n/a	BW
Trevor Marina	n/a	BW
Llangollen Marina	n/a	BW
Llangollen Wharf	90,381	Private
Attractions in the Buffer Zone	Visitor Figures	Comment
Chirk Castle	79,760	National Trust property
Ty Mawr Country Park	46,256	WCBC
Plas Newydd	11,281	DCC
Llangollen Motor Museum	5,845	Private
Llangollen Steam Railway	121,996	Trust
Castell Dinas Bran, Llangollen	n/a	Open access/ DCC
Amgueddfa Llangollen Museum	?	?
Attractions within 5 miles	Visitor Figures	Comment
Erddig Hall	107,257	National Trust property
Bersham Heritage Centre	*	WCBC
Plassey Craft Centre	*	Private
Plas Madoc Leisure Centre	225,759	Usage – not visitors
Valle Crucis Abbey	9,676	Cadw owned
Horseshoe Pass	n/a	Open access
Park Hall Farm, Oswestry	50,500	Private operator
TICs in the site, buffer zone and within 5 miles	Visitor Figures	Comment
Llangollen Tourist Information Centre	66,105	Owned by DCC, operated by North Wales Tourism
Oswestry Mile End	69,000	Owned/operated by SC
Chirk Tourist Information Point	n/a	WCBC approved/ privately owned
Oswestry town centre	9,400	Owned/operated by SC

(BW – British Waterways, DCC - Denbighshire County Council, SC – Shropshire Council, WCBC – Wrexham County Borough Council).

n/a = not available.

4.2 Boat Movements/Moorings

There are substantial boating movements and activity on the canal per annum. The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and canal experiences 15,000 boat movements per annum. There are two main marinas at Chirk (the largest with in the region of 300 berths) and at Trevor Basin, with a Mooring Basin at Llangollen which currently attracts 120,000 visitors per annum. There are also numerous mooring points along the length of the canal where width of channel permits this, these include:

- Chirk Bank (5 private moorings)
- Chirk Marina – Private Pleasure Boat (69 moorings)
- Froncysyllte Old Lime Kilns (18 moorings)
- Froncysyllte (10 moorings)
- Trevor Basin (4 moorings)
- Trevor Basin Old Wharf (4 moorings)
- Llangollen Wharf (2 moorings)
- Llangollen Mooring Basin – winter mooring (12 moorings)

Figures provided by British Waterways (2010)

The variety of boating experiences on offer is already very broad and includes visits by boats in private ownership, a variety of hire boats, short trip boats (45 minute Aqueduct cruises), restaurant boats, boats for the disabled and horse-drawn boats. The canal is only navigable as far as Llangollen Mooring Basin, the only exception to this being the Horse-drawn boats which do not need to be turned around as such (the horse is untethered from one end and tethered to the other end whilst the boat stays in position) – these extend typically as far as Llywn Twr. It is perhaps this aspect, the unique way of experiencing Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal, which makes it so popular with all members of the public and gives it so much more potential.

4.3 Accommodation base

Statistics on accommodation provision are reliant upon the Local Councils keeping up to date information through comprehensive accommodation stock surveys (due to the expense these are done every 4-5 years) and in the intervening periods it is good practice to keep these records updated by checking the monthly planning lists for change of use or applications for new permissions. Table 3 shows the information currently available from each of the three Councils. It should be noted that the accuracy will vary from County to County dependent upon the following:

- a) the length of time since the last full accommodation stock survey; and
- b) whether the statistics have been updated based upon planning lists in the meantime.

For convenience, the accommodation stock is usually divided into the following types of accommodation:

- a) serviced accommodation - hotels, B & Bs, guesthouses, farmhouse B&B's
- b) self-catering - self-catering houses, cottages, barns, static caravans);
- c) caravan and camping - touring caravans and camping sites; and
- d) hostels - such as YHA.

It should also be remembered that the private and hire canal boats are a form of accommodation too, bringing staying visitors into the WHS corridor. For the purposes of this plan, the accommodation statistics are based on Community Council areas. This information is detailed per accommodation type per community council area in table 3 (below) to enable this information to be used as a baseline from which to monitor change in provision as the WHS becomes more popular, and local people respond by developing their own family-based accommodation businesses. Information on accommodation in terms of the number of establishments within each sector, total

bedrooms/ units/ pitches/ bedspaces available and their cost per visitor per night is all important information which feeds in to the STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor) model.

Table 2. Accommodation Base

Area	Type	Number of establishments
Shropshire (Gledrid to Chirk Aqueduct)	Data updated: 2005 Data obtained from Oswestry Borough Council's Economic Impact Assessment (2005).	
Weston Rhyn	Serviced Accom.	1
	Self-catering	4
	Caravan & Camping	0
	Hostels	0
Wrexham CB (Chirk Aqueduct to border with Denbighshire) :	Data updated: 2007 Last Accommodation stock survey	
Chirk North	Serviced Accom.	4
	Self-catering	n/a
	Caravan & Camping	3
	Hostels	n/a
Chirk South	Serviced Accom.	4
	Self-catering	4
	Caravan & Camping	1
	Hostels	n/a
Ceiriog Valley	Serviced Accom.	7
	Self-catering	9
	Caravan & Camping	4
	Hostels	n/a
Llangollen Rural	Serviced Accom.	2
	Self-catering	4
	Caravan & Camping	n/a
	Hostels	n/a
Cefn	Serviced Accom.	n/a
	Self-catering	1
	Caravan & Camping	1
	Hostels	n/a
Denbighshire Border with Wrexham through to Llantysilio	Data updated: 2009 Last Accommodation stock survey.	
Llangollen	Serviced Accom.	29
	Self-catering	6
	Caravan & Camping	4
	Hostels	n/a
Llantysilio	Serviced Accom.	4
	Self-catering	2
	Caravan & Camping	n/a
	Hostels	n/a

STEAM is a valuable tool which gives an overview of the state of tourism within an area. It does, however, come at a price requiring both operators and councils to invest time in producing and collating all the statistics needed by the STEAM computer model. For example, participating tourism operators provide their commercially confidential room and bedspace occupancy figures for each month. Data on accommodation, its occupancy levels and rack rates, visitor attractions their entrance fees and visitor numbers, events, tourist car parks and their usage, TIC visitor numbers - are all collated and inputted into the STEAM computer model. This also requires regular updating of related information from visitor surveys such as how much the average day visitor spends during their visit, etc. The outcomes are a set of volume and value figures for tourism which can be used to monitor trends over time (see Table 4). The weakness in STEAM is that in order to be robust the numbers of accommodation establishments in an area have to be sufficiently high to be statistically valid. Hence, it is not possible to provide STEAM figures for the individual wards or parts of the WHS. Currently, the only areas for which STEAM is used are Wrexham County Borough, rural Wrexham, Denbighshire and the part of Denbighshire in the North Wales Borderlands i.e. south of the A55. It would be possible to create a STEAM zone for the WHS but this would need resourcing. Section 10 covers the wider aspects of research and monitoring.

Table 3. STEAM figures for 2008 and 2009

Area	Indicator	2005	
Shropshire (whole County)	Total Value of tourism	£561 million	
	Day Visitors	9.34 million	
<u>Shropshire data is for 2005 but is not comparable to the data below for Wrexham and Denbighshire on the basis that us its</u> calculated using the Cambridge model, rather than STEAM.			
Area	Indicator	2008	2009
Wrexham CB*	Total Value of tourism	£78.8 million	£78.8 million
	Day Visitors	1,176,000	1,176,000
	Employment in tourism	1,246 (FTE)	1,246 (FTE)
Rural Denbighshire	Total Value of tourism	£107.35m	£114.01m
	Day Visitors	1,857,000	1,913,000
	Employment in tourism	1,819 (FTE)	1,951 (FTE)

Source: *North Wales STEAM Initiative, Wrexham Council

4.2 Future Potential

As a guideline, Table 5 (below) shows the visitor numbers achieved by a number of established WH sites. It shows that figures vary greatly; reflecting the differing levels of appeal to the general public, and to a certain extent, ease of access/proximity to centres of population. Perhaps a key comparator is Ironbridge. Ironbridge, like Pontcysyllte, is a multi-site WHS, but with significant visitor infrastructure built up over the 24 years since the Ironbridge Gorge became one of the first group of 7 UK sites to be awarded World Heritage status by UNESCO in 1986. It does, however, comprise 10 museums and in particular 'Blists Hill' is a major complex for visitors to enjoy.

Included in Table 5 are two World Heritage Sites which are also lengths of canal. The Rideau Canal in Canada is 202 kilometres/125 miles long. Inscribed in 2007, by 2009 the site was already showing canal traffic up by 9.3% on the previous year at 75,981

boat movements. The Canal du Midi in Southern France is 240 kilometres/150 miles long and connects the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, having been built as a 'short cut' between 1667 and 1681. It is interesting to note that there appear to be no visitor numbers (other than boat movements) available for these two sites (or Pontcysyllte), as they all suffer from the same issue of there being no admission and no main facility where visitors go and are recorded by admission charges, visitor counters etc.

Table 4: World Heritage Visitor Numbers

World Heritage Site	Visitor No's	Size of site	Date inscribed
Pont du Gard, France	2million		1985
Ironbridge	750,000	550ha	1986
Giant's Causeway, Ireland	751,693	70,000 ha	1986
Stonehenge	800,000	4,985 ha	1986
Edwardian Castles of Wales:			
Beaumaris	78,131		
Caernarfon	193,683		
Harlech	94,340		
Conwy	181,947		
Total for the WH site	548,101	6 ha	1986
Canal du Midi (France)	N/A	1,172ha	1996
Blaenavon Industrial Landscape	165,000	3290ha	2000
Derwent Valley Mills	135,000	1,228 ha	2001
New Lanark Works	400,000	146 ha	2001
Rideau Canal (Canada)	N/A	21,454ha	2007
Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal	200,000 est	4,250	2009

Source: UNESCO and individual WHS websites

Whilst there is the challenge of how to ensure visitor numbers and potential visitor spend are both captured along the length and at key sites along the WHS, it is clear that the tourism potential is significant. One need only look at the catchment population based on Wrexham just a short drive away from the WHS (Table 6), with a staggering 11.9 million adults living within a 2 hour drive time. This pool of people will provide a target for day and short break visits in the future, (80% of short break and day visitors travel under 2 hours to their destination). Clearly, once the visitor infrastructure is in place, public transport schemes running and marketing and PR kick in, there is potential and capacity along the 11-mile corridor for in the region of 500,000 visitors per annum.

Table 5. Catchment Populations – drive time from Wrexham

Population & Households	30 minute contour	60 minute contour	120 minute contour
Total Adult Population	348,433	2,421,251	11,927,595
Total Households	182,953	1,276,565	6,235,685
Household categories			
Wealthy Achievers	61,012	327,852	1,237,701
Urban Prosperity	7,945	80,554	364,604
Comfortably off	57,035	396,129	1,935,061
Moderate means	14,890	144,807	1,042,350
Hard pressed	41,767	322,760	1,632,145
Unclassified	304	4,463	23,644
Sports & Leisure Profile			
Membership of National Trust	52,390	329,704	1,385,921
Member of English Heritage	5,992	39,933	249,600
Member of Cadw	tbc	tbc	tbc
Exhibitions/ Outings in last 12 months			

Art Galleries	81,958	569,214	2,343,768
Beauty Spots/Gardens	74,187	505,358	2,274,092
Museums	126,415	869,763	3,766,949
Theme Parks	136,610	964,746	4,423,986

Source: Visit Wales (Based on CACI data)

The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS is also within 120 minute drive time of 4 of the UK's major airports: Manchester International Airport, Liverpool John Lennon Airport and Birmingham Airport and East Midlands Airport. The proximity to these major airports creates an additional source of overseas visitors into the north east Wales region.

One of the side-wide initiatives detailed within this plan is the need to support the development of both new and existing accommodation provision throughout the 11-mile corridor. To some extent, the needs and preference of visitors will determine the type of accommodation that develops within the 11-mile site, as will the level of investment into accommodation from local entrepreneurs and developers. In order to meet a wide range of needs the development of accommodation should be encouraged across the accommodation sector, including serviced, self catering, caravan, camping and hostel provision. In order to complement aim of the wider North Wales Tourism Strategy 2010-15, accommodation providers within the World Heritage Site should be encouraged to raise the quality of accommodation they offer, with specific focus on the need for an increased number of establishments and providers offering 4 and 5 star quality accommodation. The aim is therefore to seek improvements in both the quality and quantity of accommodation on offer to visitors.

5. Regeneration

5.1 Context

From the outset the rationale behind the drive for World Heritage Site status has been the aspiration to bring heritage-led economic regeneration to the WHS corridor and to achieve sustainable economic growth by increasing the value of the tourism sector and conserving the area's heritage assets. In 2008, a consultation paper issued by UK Government through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport noted:

“ it could be said that WHS status is what you make of it. Where the status has been used to full effect it has brought partners together, leveraged additional funding, led to new development and enhanced educational benefits, improved conservation and even led to regeneration in some locations. Where these opportunities have not been seized there have been more limited benefits. The benefits that the sites attribute to WHS status are therefore strongly related to the motives they had for bidding and correspondingly what they have used the status for.”

(World Heritage For the Nation: Identifying, Protecting and Promoting our World Heritage, A Consultation Paper, DCMS, UK Government, December 2008).

More recent research published on behalf of the Lake District World Heritage Project looked at all 890 World Heritage Sites and attempted to classify them into four types defined by perceptions held of WHS status. Namely:

- a celebration designation (a celebration or reward for heritage already preserved);
- a heritage SOS designation (to assist heritage at risk);
- a marketing or quality logo/brand (these sites see the WHS brand as a quality marketing or quality brand for historic places), and
- a 'place making' catalyst (as a powerful catalyst for economic development, using heritage as a tool to develop new identities for places and programmes for action to change places).

It is this final, small group of sites which basically have used WHS status to deliver heritage-led regeneration and into which the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal site falls. (*World Heritage Status: Is there opportunity for economic gain? Rebanks Consulting Ltd and Trends Business Research Ltd on behalf of the Lake District World Heritage Project. 2009*).

Returning to the rationale for Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal's nomination, whilst tourism is already a significant industry for part of the site, it was felt that most of the site including the major 'jewel in the crown' Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and the area around Trevor Basin, were not fulfilling their economic potential. This strategy identifies some of the current issues and sets out suggested actions for each settlement and section along the 11-mile corridor together with some suggested actions which are common to the whole site and will require joint working. The sections of the WHS are those listed on pages 6 and 7, namely Gledrid to Chirk Aqueduct (English section), Chirk Aqueduct and associated Buffer Zone within the Ceiriog Valley, Chirk Aqueduct through to Froncysyllte, Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Trevor Basin, through to the Flexsys site and Cefn Mawr, Trevor Basin to Llangollen, (including links with the AONB), Llangollen to Llantysilio.

The key settlements are Chirk, Froncysyllte, Trevor, Cefn Mawr, Froncysyllte, and Llangollen. The details are then given in the Action Plan (Appendix 1).

5.2 Overview of Each Section of the WHS and Key settlements

Section A:

i) Gledrid to Chirk Aqueduct (English section)

The eastern entry point into the WHS already has mixed commercial activity including two major hotel facilities, and the potential to spread the benefit to a wider area. However, the Lion Quays Hotel complex, Lord Moreton Hotel, Moreton Garden Centre and the Poacher's Pocket are established businesses which will all benefit from increased visitor movement, as will secondary elements such as the two petrol stations and small industrial estate at Moreton. Signage as the gateway into the WHS, plus towpath improvements and more parking is likely to be led by the public sector. Other access improvements such as boat trips will help consolidate what already exists and may be private sector led once WHS white on brown signing, on site signage, interpretation and marketing of the WHS are in place. There is also potential for community led enhancements and interpretation along this stretch e.g. public art. A pilot project giving visitors access to interpretation via digital means is underway along a short stretch.



Imagery of the canal behind the poachers pocket public house at Gledrid (source: the Tuesday Night club official website)

Section B:

i) Chirk Aqueduct into the Ceiriog Valley

The WHS Buffer Zone covers the start of the Ceiriog Valley within the Glyn Traian Community Council area. There is associated industrial heritage within the valley (its mining heritage in particular) which could be linked into the WHS via trails, Guided tours etc. The valley is a hidden gem with much tourism potential, however, it has very limited capacity for increasing car traffic, having a narrow road with little car parking capacity for much of its length. There is also potential conflict between visitors and the farming community. It is recommended, therefore, rather than this section be promoted as a day visitor destination, it is sensitively used to attract the 'green tourist' using public transport. There has always been the potential to use the Offa's Dyke National Trail as a link into the valley for the keen walker and the Valley also benefits from long distance bridle trails. There is scope to use new circular routes developed from Offa's Dyke Trail and the Shropshire Way to attract more walkers." Add to end "Businesses will need to gear up with appropriate facilities and offers for walkers and non car based visitors. Further potential exists for the development of transport links that do not increase car-based visitors into the valley, but provide a park and ride experience into it e.g. land train, reconstructed tramway, buses etc.



Imagery of the Chirk Viaduct and Aqueduct (source: chirk.com)

Section C:

i) Chirk:

Chirk has seen a downturn in its 'high street' offer and vibrancy in recent years and is much in need of a catalyst to rekindle the local economy and benefit the independent and interesting shops which are present. This is further exacerbated by recent doubts over the future of the Cadbury factory at Chirk and its workforce – a major local employer. The economic downturn is evidenced by the noticeable decline in the tourist offer within the town i.e. a reason for tourist to visit. It is hoped that by signing car and coach traffic down from Gledrid through Chirk (giving a view of Chirk Aqueduct en route) and to the WHS car park at Chirk Estate Office, this will again provide impetus for tourism-orientated SMEs to develop (B & B, self-catering, souvenir and crafts etc).

Wrexham Council has already used its ownership of Chirk Estate Office to great advantage in terms of its work in supporting the Glyn Wylfa Development Trust. The former estate office in Chirk has the potential to become a key tourism hub – particularly as a stopping pint for visitors of the WHS. The development of a coach park, cafeteria, toilet facilities and visitor information/ interpretation provision would provide much needed visitor infrastructure which is currently lacking in this area. Furthermore, it would be advantageous to develop dedicated car parking, plus providing the platform for social enterprise activities within the building, some of which will be visitor-focused no doubt.

The opportunity to view/visit/take a boat trip over Chirk Aqueduct and through Chirk Tunnel (the Darkie) will all constitute a reason to visit Chirk in future. Once again WHS white-on-brown signing, on site signage, interpretation and marketing of the WHS are all key factors, but also the continued provision of Chirk Estate Office, possibly followed by the provision of business advisory service (both start-up and business reviews). There is a need to investigate the potential for coach parking and additional car parking in the vicinity of Chirk Station and the potential to explore tourism packages with Chirk Castle.



Chirk Castle is a magnificent 700 year old marcher fortress built by King Edward I which is in the ownership of the National Trust. Chirk high street and the castle are easily accessible via both road and rail. The rail infrastructure at Chirk has recently benefitted from capital investment, the train station has been upgraded and links have been established more effectively links developed with the local bus operators as a result of a new bus/ rail interchange off the main high street in Chirk.

ii) Chirk Aqueduct through to Froncysyllte

This stretch of canal winds its way through gentle countryside with little opportunity for development. Two elements which are currently missing are the presence of any type of boat trip experience (which should extend into this stretch from Gledrid), and secondly the possibility of linking the towpath to Chirk Marina and Golf Club via a footbridge to enable walkers to access refreshments, toilets and boat trips from Chirk Marina – if provided in the future. The views of Kronospan from the canal and towpath are unsightly and could be screened, but apart from that this section is a joy to walk especially the section from Irish Bridge to Froncysyllte where the quality of the towpath is high and suitable for wheelchairs and prams. Indeed, it warrants promotion as a section where wheelchair users can enjoy the canal and open air, and parking at the small car park at Froncysyllte could be made blue badge and local resident only. The current car park provides parking for elderly residents, visitor parking and is a drop-off point for group visitors coming by coach to access the trip boats. There is a need to resolve the current conflict between users here.



Image of Chirk Marina (source: narrowboats.co.uk)

iii) Froncysyllte

This is a residential settlement with little opportunity for economic regeneration, (despite the traffic flow along the A5), due to its linear nature and lack of non-residential development sites. The recent upgrade of the Aqueduct Inn has been most welcome. A general tidy-up of the public realm would greatly improve the approach to the village and WHS. It is likely that Highways Officers will wish to restrict increased traffic flows down 'the Bont' as the bridge is single-traffic and a pinch point in addition to the narrow country lane with its residential usage. The most potential on this side of the Aqueduct rests with Froncysyllte Community Centre and its successful social enterprise 'Cakes and Company'. There is real potential for this to be developed further, but this will depend upon the needs and views of the members of the Social Enterprise/Local Community. In the future, coaches should be discouraged from this site and signed to Trevor/ the proposed WHS Visitor Centre location.

Sections D: Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Trevor Basin

As stated previously, the whole success of the project is based upon developing key infrastructure at Trevor Basin next to the 'jewel in the crown', the one site all visitors will want to visit and experience –Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. The vision is to establish this as:

- the key destination with a dedicated World Heritage Site Visitor Centre and associated car, coach and public transport connections, and
- as the main hub for the site from which visitors are moved on, east and west, along the whole corridor.



Currently visitors arrive at the aqueduct to experience restricted parking capacity and amenities, but on the plus side they have unlimited free access to the site. The car park and toilet block at Trevor Basin provided by Wrexham Council are on Flexsys/Solutia owned land. The toilet facilities struggle to meet the current demand and require investment in the near future to ensure these facilities are equipped to meet the needs of increasing visitor numbers.

The Flexsys company (strictly-speaking its American parent company Solutia,) has considerable land holdings at Trevor Basin and the whole of the Flexsys industrial complex. This site, plus the nearby Air Products site, has experienced major job losses (360+) in the last 12 months and there is a need to regenerate the whole area and provide employment through the development of a master plan for the Flexsys site to include provision of much-needed visitor infrastructure at Trevor Basin. This is a major plan in its own right and not, therefore, included here. The jobs lost were highly skilled manufacturing jobs and will not easily be replaced. WHS status provides a genuine opportunity for Wrexham Council and key partners to be effective in achieving positive outcomes to help mitigate the effects of these job losses.

Section E: Trevor Basin through to Flexsys site and Cefn Mawr

i) Trevor Basin – Flexsys site

A key vision for this section of the WHS is the extension of the Llangollen Canal onwards from the Trevor Basin involving the reinstatement of the former Plas Kynaston Canal and development of a WHS visitor centre. Wrexham Council with its partners including British Waterways, Cadw, Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RACHMW) has recently commissioned a feasibility study to ascertain the technical feasibility of extending the canal and to obtain design ideas for the proposed WHS visitor centre. One of the main aspects of the study is to look at how the Trevor Basin can better link with the settlement of Cefn Mawr and create regeneration of the area both socially, physically and economically in doing so.



ii) Cefn Mawr

The village of Cefn Mawr is intrinsically linked to the building of the Aqueduct and Canal through the location of the Plas Kynaston Foundry (where the iron troughs were made) and the local Cefn quarry which provided stone for the piers. The good work that has and is being delivered through Phase 1 of the Cefn Mawr Townscape Heritage Initiative (Wrexham Council working with local landowners to upgrade shop frontages/buildings within the designated THI area and funded predominantly by Heritage Lottery Funding), has made a major impact on the feel and environment along the High Street. This work will also continue through a Phase 2 THI scheme from April 2011 onwards. In addition to this Wrexham Council has supported the Dee Valley Community Partnership to redevelop key buildings within Cefn Mawr such as the Ebenezer Chapel on Crane Street. As a result of this work and investment Cefn Mawr is now ripe for the influx of visitors which WHS designation could bring in order to consolidate the potential which has been created by improvements to the physical realm and streetscape. Cefn Mawr could so easily be turned into a thriving village and tourism hub, akin to Ironbridge village and Blists Hill at Ironbridge. Trails, car and coach parking and branded bus routes could spread visitors from the hub at Trevor Basin in to the village.

Section F: Trevor Basin to Llangollen

This is perhaps the most attractive section of the WHS in terms of the quality of the landscape setting and is already popular with boaters and walkers. Apart from signage and improvements to the quality of the towpath's surface there is little improvement to be made, as it is best left to retain its natural qualities without man-made intrusions. There is one major opportunity along this route, but away from the canal itself. The disused railway line from Llangollen through to Trevor. Much of the line is intact and there has been a policy at Wrexham Council to protect that County's section in order to keep open options for re-use as a railway, tramway or cycle and walking route. Given there are two major tourism honeypots at Llangollen and Trevor Basin, this possibility has increasing potential and viability. It is well worth a feasibility study into actions needed, ownership and

costs. There is also the possibility of developing a circular route utilising the canal towpath.



Section G: Llangollen to Llantysilio

i) Llangollen

With a reputation as one of North Wales' main inland tourism honeypots, it has suffered some decline in recent years, in common with many towns, with a number of long-term vacant premises. It continues to experience traffic management-related problems and insufficient car and coach parking. Denbighshire County Council recently commissioned consultants to conduct a feasibility study which addresses the potential to improve Llangollen in relation to parking provision, visitor flow and signage. Key recommendations regarding traffic measures and public realm improvements are key outcomes from this work (referred to as the Locum report). It is felt that Llangollen's full potential is still not being achieved and it could aspire to fewer higher spending visitors rather than those who come for a day out, increase traffic congestion yet spend very little. This view will not be shared by all businesses in Llangollen, who would prefer to see volume of footfall irrespective of the consequences, but it is a thorny issue to be grasped in order to ultimately raise spend per visitor. The links between the town and the WHS need to be raised through signage, displays, merchandising and events to name but a few.



ii) Llangollen to Llantysilio

Back up to the canal in Llangollen and of course to Llangollen Wharf, a hive of activity and with every potential to benefit hugely from WHS status. The 32- berth mooring basin opened in March 2005 has added significantly more mooring capacity than previously available and the landscape planting is improving its immediate setting as it matures. The towpath along the stretch from here through to Horseshoe Falls is in need of upgrading, being dreadful in wet periods and showing signs of very heavy usage. Signage, some interpretation, benches and information on distance to public toilets are all needed to enhance the visitor's experience. There is ad hoc parking on Abbey Road and at the front tarmac area outside the enclosed grounds of the Llangollen Pavillion – these could do with being proactively managed before they develop into major problem areas. Links to and interpretation on the associated mineral heritage, wharfman's cottages etc could all be developed, spreading visitors up into the hills and to the Horseshoe Pass.



iii) Llantysilio

The car park serving the Horseshoe Falls is in much need of resurfacing, improved signage and a clear pedestrian route down to the Horseshoe Falls being put in. Apart from the Chainbridge Hotel, there is no commercial activity at this end of the site and little potential for it apart from the prospect of linking the canal and the steam railway on the other side of the river by restoring the old chain bridge to a safe and usable route.



Site –wide initiatives

The previous sections on regeneration have taken a site (or section of canal) based approach and so are geographically focussed. There is a need, however, to develop regeneration initiatives which span the whole 11-mile corridor with cross-border agreement from the relative organisations. The following are suggested actions based upon a thematic approach:

Table 6: Site- wide initiatives

Theme	Examples	Who
WHS Standardised Visitor / transport Infrastructure	<p>Site-wide programmes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • white-on-brown signage from A55(T) & A483 • boundary signage • interpretation • pedestrian signage • use of logos <p>(In this context reference needs to be made to the Audience Development Plan commissioned by British waterways in 2008 on behalf of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS Steering Group to guide strategic planning to widen engagement along the 11 mile WHS corridor).</p>	DCC, WCBC, SC, BW
Business Development & Support	<p>Tourism introductory courses</p> <p>General business advice</p> <p>Business grants</p> <p>Business events</p>	DCC, WCBC, SC, WAG
Social Enterprise	<p>Assistance/advice to groups</p> <p>Possible provision of premises</p>	DCC, WCBC, SC,
Volunteers	<p>Assistance to further develop AQUEDUCKS</p> <p>DCC Countryside volunteers</p> <p>Back to work schemes (Denbighire)</p>	DCC, WCBC, SC, BW
Funding Programme	<p>Agreement to prioritise bids with the greatest benefit irrespective of organisation, to avoid competing bids from partners</p>	DCC, WCBC, SC, WAG, NMC
Destination Management	<p>Setting & applying quality standards in e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all WHS communications & promotion • training for tourism industry staff 	DCC, WCBC, SC, BW, Private sector

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrated public transport services • all aspects of visitor infrastructure • accommodation and attractions 	
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Business Opportunities

Businesses (commercial and social enterprises) have already started gearing up to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the WHS Inscription e.g. restoration of the Aqueduct Inn at Froncysyllte, the social enterprise 'Cakes and Company', Community Aqueduct Group which is researching production of merchandise to generate income for the local area and ultimately provide local jobs.

There will also be opportunities for small entrepreneurial business (tourism related and catering for niche markets) to develop. Wrexham County Borough Council in conjunction with the Wrexham Tourism Forum has secured funds totalling in excess of £850,000 from the Welsh Assembly Government's Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 for a WHS Tourism project. The funds will be utilised to deliver a four strand project which will provide tourism businesses with increased opportunities to capitalise on the WHS inscription. Businesses will be able to access one-to-one business support and advice as well as two separate grant scheme for individual businesses and clusters of businesses to work together. Furthermore the project will deliver 5 electronic information kiosks which local businesses will have the opportunity to advertise their products and services on to both tourists and local residents alike. This project runs between 1 April 2011 and 31 December 2013.

6. Access, Signing & Interpretation

Section A of the plan attached contains actions relating to access, signage and interpretation provision at individual sites/sections along the WHS. These requirements are now explained more fully as most of them require major programmes of jointly funded and agreed work by the three local councils and their partners, thus ensuring synergy along the whole 11-mile site. These schemes should ensure the visitor feels he/she is visiting one site with a common standardised approach to all signage and interpretation irrespective of which administrative area he/she is in.

6.1 Access

Adequate access to the WHS is critical to its success, the quality of experience for the visitor and the quality of life of local residents. To be comprehensive, access needs to be considered for each of:

- Car-based visitors
- Coaches
- Public Transport – bus and train
- Canal boat
- Cyclists
- Walkers
- Other – steam railway, canoe etc.
- Disabled access

6.2 Car and Coach Parking

The majority of visitors arrive by car (source: 2009 Visitor survey), and currently there are major concerns over shortage of car parking at Chirk, Froncysyllte, Trevor, and Llangollen. 20 permanent spaces have recently been created within the grounds of the former Chirk Estate Office, and a temporary 2 year provision for an additional 69 cars at Trevor Basin (former Read's Builders Yard site) whilst talks are completed to provide a major and permanent solution on land owned by Flexsys/Solutia. Wrexham County Borough Council is also exploring the possibility of acquiring land within the Trevor Basin area to use as additional parking for up to 250 cars and a separate coach park area.

Denbighshire County Council has over the past 12-months improved public car parking facilities at the Llangollen Pavilion through the establishment of a pay and display system. Parking in the town of Llangollen itself is very limited, especially an at peak time which sees hundreds of cars flock to the town. Denbighshire County Council's 'Locum Study' looked specifically at the accessibility of Llangollen, particularly by car and coach as well as movement of visitors and signage in the area. An aspect of this study is to consider parking at 3 key sites in Llangollen i) town centre, ii) Llangollen Pavilion and iii) Llantysilio.

Shropshire Council also has aspirations to see additional car parking facilities developed near to the Poachers Pocket public house at Gledrid. The needs and aspirations for additional/ improved parking facilities along the WHS corridor are summarised in table 8 (below). It will be the role of the Visitor Management and Economic Regeneration Sub-group to oversee these proposed actions.

Table 7: Car and Coach Parking provision

Area	Current provision	Need/Action
Gledrid	No public car or coach parking	Need to provide car/coach parking – possibly in agreement with private sector.
Chirk Bank	Limited provision	No action – do not sign for car parking.
Chirk	20 designated WHS spaces at Glyn Wylfa, limited car parking in town centre	Available spring 2010. Can be signed. Need to provide coach parking and additional car parking
Whitehurst	3 or 4 informal spaces	Very poor access off B road – do not sign
Froncysyllte	Rough parking area at canal side. Froncysyllte Community Centre	Needs to be designated residents and blue badge only, plus coach drop-off only – coaches encouraged/signed to new provision at Trevor in future. Community Centre Committee to agree how they wish to maximise potential earnings from WHS visitors
Trevor Basin	34 space car park on New Road Additional temporary 69 space car park opposite on the former Read's yard.	Negotiations in hand with Flexsys / Solutia for major car and coach parking provision - with potential to create additional parking for circa 250 spaces.
Cefn Mawr	Car parking available at 2 sites:	Both car parks in Cefn Mawr need better

	i) 38 space car park at Crane Street; and ii) 24 spaces at Well Street.	signing
Llangollen	Parking available at 3 sites: i) 16 coach spaces and 155 car spaces at Market Street ii) 59 car spaces at East Street iii) Llangollen Pavilion offers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Car Park 1 - 160 spaces for cars or 20 coaches • Lower Car Park 2 - 40 spaces • On Site Car Park - 160 spaces 	Issues with parking provision in the Summer, improvements needed to visitor flow, signage and parking at 2 x facilities in the town centre and at the Llangollen Pavilion.
Llantysilio	Space for up to 25 cars at the Horseshoe Falls	Car park in need of resurfacing. Signage and interpretation required at this site.

It is recommended that a piece written communication such as a leaflet be developed for visitors by car to the WHS. This piece of print could identify the location and size of parking areas and their proximity to the key settlements/ assets along the 11-mile corridor. It will be the role of the Visitor Management and Economic Regeneration Sub-Group to oversee this work.

6.3 Public Transport – bus and train

The WHS is blessed with being served by two rail stations, Chirk and Ruabon with access for disabled rail passengers from Gobowen station which is within close proximity to the WHS corridor. These provide access into the national rail network and already discussions are in hand with the train operators to facilitate joint working to encourage visitors nationwide, to access the site by rail and bus. It is proposed that 'running in boards' be installed at Chirk and Ruabon train stations, jointly funded by the three Councils and British Waterways, to publicise the two stations as access points into the WHS. There is so much potential to package day and short breaks to the WHS with joint rail, bus and attraction ticketing being possible in the future. This will also open up marketing opportunities that were previously unaffordable, because the train operators will undertake a lot of this work on behalf of the site.

Whilst there is great future potential working with the train operators, access by bus has been improved through an initiative implemented in 2010. Further work from 2011 onwards will help to address the immediate effect of easing the car parking issues, raising the site's profile and all its benefits, increasing the synergy between transport and destination, raising the profile of the whole canal corridor and increasing passenger numbers and service viability – all major wins. It is recommended that the three Local Authority public transport sections work together to ensure all buses between Wrexham and Llangollen, Llangollen to Chirk, Chirk to Wrexham, are badged with the new Pontcysyllte logo, the bus stops which access the WHS will be clearly badged as WHS hop on/hop off points and a new leaflet showing how to access the WHS by bus will be produced. This will be particularly helpful for walkers, as the linear nature of the site means it is possible to walk a section and then return home or to your car by bus. There will also be closer co-ordination between buses and trains into the two stations. As this

service grows and the infrastructure increases, it raises many possibilities for open top tourist bus routes, bus routes diverting to e.g. outside the new WHS Visitor Centre, smaller mini bus tours out into the Ceiriog Valley, up to Cefn Mawr etc. Once established it will be self-sustaining as more and more visitors will gain confidence in the regularity and dependability of the service (an example of this is the scenic public bus services in the Lake District).

On Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays between July and September, passengers can use the Clwydian Ranger leisure bus network of services. The X94 bus service which is operated commercially by Arriva from Mondays to Saturdays and by GHA Coaches under contract to Gwynedd on Sundays is a strategic bus route and part of the Traws Cambria Network extending from Wrexham via Llangollen through to Bala, Dolgellau and Barmouth in the West. The X94 service provides long-distance journey opportunities between the Welsh towns of Barmouth, Dolgellau, Bala, Corwen, Llangollen and Wrexham, while also catering for shorter-distance passenger flows along its route.

Connections to/from the north (Ruthin, Denbigh, St Asaph and Rhyl) are provided at the Corwen Interchange. Bus Service 5 also provides a through service from Corwen and Gwyddelwern in the West as well as from Wrexham in the East.

6.4 Canal boats

The WHS already has significant boat movements each year – 15,000, with marinas at Chirk and Trevor and a Mooring Basin at Llangollen and numerous moorings along the canal as far as Llangollen. The main concern is one of carrying capacity. In particular, access onto Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is now becoming problematical at peak times, leaving boaters waiting for long periods before they can cross. Clearly, this is not good for the quality of the visitor's experience of this key iconic site and is something British Waterways are set to address. BW are looking at options of 'policing' the boat traffic onto and off the Aqueduct to 'ensure right of way' is operated fairly from both sides and ultimately to speed things up.

There are a variety of trip boats operating from Froncysyllte, Trevor Basin and Llangollen Wharf, including 45 minute trips across the Aqueduct, horse-drawn boats, restaurant boats, and specially adapted boats operated by the Llangollen Boats for the Disabled Trust. These will no doubt go from strength to strength. There is an obvious gap currently and that is the absence of regular trip boats running along the stretch from Gledrid and/ or from the Lion Quays Waterside Resort Hotel through to Chirk cutting-Chirk Marina. This is an area in need of development and which could really help to establish more tourist activity at Gledrid/ Halton and Chirk, providing a reason to visit and acting as a catalyst to other tourism development in the area. This section could be fairly popular as it gives the visitor the experience of entering the WHS, crossing the Wales-England border, crossing the magnificent Chirk Aqueduct with the backdrop of the Railway viaduct and Ceiriog Valley and then through 'the Darkie' (Chirk tunnel) and into a major man-made cutting. The one potential issue that would need action is to screen off the view of the Kronospan site on the return trip back to Gledrid (unless the boat stopped short of this point).

6.5 Cyclists and Walkers

Whilst putting these two together, care needs to be taken that in actual fact they do not clash! The setting of the WHS lies within a high quality landscape which was a major contributing factor in the design and siting of Pontcysyllte Aqueduct by Jessop and

Telford. The combination of exquisite scenery, being in a World Heritage Site, the draw of water and the sheer tranquillity of walking a linear and safe route (no need to map read) whilst boats glide by, is clearly a winning combination. The experience of the site by walkers needs just a few relatively easily-provided conditions – good and well signed access by public transport/car to the site (and this is already in hand), a good surface to walk on, clear signing (distances between sections of the WHS/toilets/refreshments), occasional benches to sit and rest, toilets, interpretation at key points (and with time GPS electronically provided information which can be downloaded onto mobile phones), and good site information (guide book, map, leaflet). The most costly of these is the need to upgrade the surface of the towpath from Gledrid to Chirk Bank and from Trevor Basin to Llangollen and through to Ty Craig Bridge (access down to Chainbridge Hotel). By contrast, the stretch of towpath from Froncysyllte through to Irish Bridge is excellent and has potential to be promoted for use by those needing wheelchair access and pram/buggy access – this could be assisted by blue badge only parking at Froncysyllte.

Once the provision for walkers at the WHS is met, there is then the potential to start to develop/link numerous trails in and out of the surrounding Buffer Zone giving options in terms of degree of difficulty (length and gradient within each walk), specialist interest (industrial archaeology, viewpoints, nature conservation, Welsh culture etc), links to different modes of transport/destinations and so forth. This will build upon the work already done to develop walks based on the Shropshire way and Offa's Dyke, and further develop trails.

Much of what has already been said about provision for walkers can be replicated for cyclists. However, there is potential for conflict as walking, cycling and angling when there are large numbers of users, can be at odds. Depending upon the towpath surface and width of towpath there is also the potential for damage from bikes – as is the case between Llangollen and Ty Craig Bridge. A solution might be to designate some areas as cycle-free and actively direct cyclists to other sections which are more robust. The preferred option would be to develop of the old railway as a designated cycleway. However, a second, but equally expensive option is to upgrade the poorer sections of the towpath and to provide bike racks/lock-ups at honeypot sites. Either of these options would encourage more cyclists and perhaps family groups, fulfilling the active/healthy lifestyle agenda.

6.6 Other Access Options

The Site is unique in the variety of ways it can be accessed and experienced. There is the option of visiting by canoe (requiring a permit from BW) and these are increasing in number in particular as a WOW experience canoeing across the Aqueduct itself and also along the stretch between Llangollen and Llantysilio, where outward bound activity centres are using it either for learners or as a means of travel to access the River Dee. Clearly, over time there may be a need to look at capacity issues, but currently it adds colour and activity in the feeder channel section of the WHS. Another pleasant addition to the experience is the sight, sound and perhaps smell of the steam trains run by Llangollen railway. These are boarded at Llangollen and Berwyn stations within the WHS itself and provide yet another way of accessing/viewing the site.

6.7 Disabled Access

This Site has so much to offer those visitors with a disability. For the mobility-impaired visitor, as a flat, linear site there is much potential for providing wheelchair access (and for prams/buggies), a pleasant, flat, outdoor experience. In particular, the towpath from Froncysyllte to Irish Bridge stands out as almost purpose-made. This section could be actively promoted as such, but with restrictions at the small Froncysyllte car park to Blue

Badge only especially as able visitors will have such a wealth of other opportunities to access the site elsewhere. The towpath in this Section and other sections away from dangers such as vertical drops, roads, traffic also provide a relatively safe route for those with learning difficulties. For all these groups, access to disabled toilets and blue badge/proximity parking will really help provide, at very little cost, much needed healthy outdoor activity.

Specially adapted canal boats run by the Llangollen Canal Boat Trust for the Disabled offer trips for the broad spectrum of disabled visitors and their carers. Wheelchair users already enjoy angling at Trevor Basin and it is hoped that with thought provision can easily be made to provide new and exciting experiences along the 11-mile corridor. For some, just the provision of something as simple as a bench on which to sit and enjoy the colourful boats, canoes, walkers etc go by will provide so much enjoyment.

7.0 Community Engagement

7.1 The local communities are very proud of their canal and aqueducts and worked hard to support events and activities linked to the nomination. They have a crucial role to play in ensuring that the objectives of conservation and regeneration are achieved.

Extensive consultation undertaken during the World Heritage Site Nomination process highlighted a strong sense of local ownership high levels of support for and interest in the canal, its heritage and bio diversity and culture.

High levels of support for the canal are evidenced by the Community Aqueduct Group established by the local communities of Trevor, Froncysyllte and Garth to ensure the active involvement of the local communities in the development of the canal and its environs. Froncysyllte Community Centre Committee is generating income to refurbish its Centre, Llangollen has an active 'Tidy Town' Group which includes the canal towpath within its remit and Chirk Community Forum has proposals for volunteer action at Chirk Aqueduct.

Local communities along the canal corridor expressed a desire to become involved in its future conservation and promotion. Facilitated by funding under the Rural Development Plan for Wales and Northern Marches Cymru, a Community Development Project Officer has been appointed who will engage with communities the along the 11- mile canal corridor i.e. Chirk Bank, Chirk, Pentre, Froncysyllte, Trevor, Garth, Pontcysyllte, Llangollen, Pentrefelin and Llantysilio. This will include local residents, schools, communities of interest etc and will culminate in the formation of a "Friends of the canal" group. This Group will be the conduit for conservation activities, cultivating a greater understanding and awareness of the canal and its environs and instilling greater civic pride and community ownership of its future development. The activities proposed under this project focus on uniting disparate communities to a common interest based on the canal corridor and will enable communities to realise projects and actions which will in turn assist in safeguarding their own socio-economic future.

A Community sub group of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Steering Group has been specifically formed which oversees the work of the Community Canal Project and which will provide the continuity needed for future community involvement once the current Rural Development Funding Programme project ends in February 2011. This group has recently named itself 'AQUEDUCKS' and is the main mechanism for local residents and community groups to become engaged in the development and delivery of World Heritage Site actions.

The importance of maintaining and improving community links and communication must not be overlooked. Local ownership of and civic pride in the canal and its environs is immense and it is vital to build on the momentum created by the nomination process and continue to meet the expectations of local communities. The practice of inputting updates into existing Community Newsletters and producing Newsletters on the World Heritage Site should continue.

Future funding should be sought under the RDP collaboration funding for a cross boundary project between Northern Marches Cymru, Cadwyn Clwyd and Northern Marches England.

8. Marketing

This section is not intended to act as a WHS Marketing Plan. It serves to signpost the way to what could be done in general terms and some issues to consider. Reference needs to be made to the Audience Development Plan commissioned by British waterways in 2008 on behalf of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS Steering Group to guide strategic planning to widen engagement along the 11 mile WHS corridor.

The opportunities to drive large numbers of visitors to the 11-mile corridor are endless given sufficient budget and resources. The visitor numbers in Table 5 for sites which have been WH Sites since 1986 show what can be achieved in time. There are, however, a number of things to get right and think through first.

8.1 The Vision for the Site and Wider Corridor

An agreed vision of what the Site and corridor could be 'developed' into in the short, medium and long-term is required. Clearly this will be shaped by both resource availability and whether or not partners (public sector, private sector and communities) can agree to a common vision. From a sustainable tourism perspective the following are suggested as a starting point:

a) Short Term Vision: 3 years (2011-2013)

The WHS remains very much as it is, with some additional car parking at Gledrid, Chirk and at Trevor Basin, but little other development. Given limited visitor infrastructure (visitor centre/s, car and coach parking provision, cycleways, signage etc), the emphasis will be almost exclusively on enjoying the Site as an outdoor experience with visitors being encouraged to use public transport and come to walk or have a boat ride.

It is hoped that funds sought from the Rural Development Programme by both Wrexham County Borough Council and Denbighshire County Council for WHS tourism initiatives will prove fruitful. The main aim of the funds is support businesses in and surrounding the 11-mile corridor to capitalise on the WHS inscription. Other proposed activities include a WHS business cluster programme, digital marketing support for businesses, enhanced visitor information through the provision of new high-tech information kiosks and the creation of audio/ visual trails around the WHS.

There will be a key focus on the marketing of an integrated public transport initiative, specific events and more general tourism/ visitor campaigns such as those produced through the North Wales Borderlands Partnership.

b) Medium Term Vision: 3 to 10 years (2013-2020)

The Site sees the provision of increasing visitor infrastructure – permanent car and coach parking at Trevor Basin, upgrading of parking at Llantysilio, increased capacity at Llangollen (perhaps a park and glide scheme), links into Cefn Mawr, the establishment of the former Chirk Estate Office, Glyn Wylfa, as a venue for visitors to spend money in and with links into Chirk. Perhaps a WHS Visitor Centre built at Trevor Basin.

This phase will start to see marketing of the WHS as the major venue for North East Wales and North West Shropshire with its own marketing campaign encouraging staying visitors and green tourists wherever possible.

c) Long Term Vision: 11+years (2020 onwards)

The economic potential of the WHS is fulfilled as evidenced by the number of micro businesses, the number of direct and indirect tourism jobs and increased visitor spend. Whilst much of the Site can still be accessed and enjoyed for free, there are numerous ways that visitor spend is captured through visitor centres, guided tours, retail, car parking, public transport, catering and accommodation to name but a few. The economic spin-off has now reached into Chirk and to Cefn Mawr where local entrepreneurs and social enterprises have taken the opportunities presented by WHS status to develop and thrive. The WHS corridor is an established brand - marketed as one entity, presented to the public as one entity with standardised signing, visitor information, merchandising, events programme, accommodation and transport information – all seamlessly presented to the visitor as one, quality destination irrespective of administrative area etc. It has become one of the top 5 destinations in Wales, promoting Welsh culture and heritage on the World stage. It is having a positive impact on the profile of North Wales and borders including Shropshire and on the contribution of visitors spending within the economy of the wider area.

8.2 Carrying Capacity

Understanding the capacity of different elements of the Site will ensure that marketing and sustainable tourism go hand in hand from the start. This approach will benefit two key groups – the local communities who will see that care and consideration for their needs is at the heart of the management of the Site, and the visitor who will have a special, quality experience as opposed to feeling as though they are being herded through an impersonal, mass movement system.

The carrying capacity of each of the following will need particular attention, being monitored and carefully managed:

- the **Canal** itself and in particular at Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Trevor Basin, marinas and moorings;
- the **honeypot sites** – Chirk Aqueduct and Tunnel, Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Horseshoe Falls – to pedestrians;
- the **towpath** – for walkers and cyclists;
- **car and coach parking**;
- **toilet provision**;
- **capacity of Access roads**; and
- **Llangollen** – car parks and routes through.

Carrying capacity should inform a scheme of visitor management which in time can be implemented through selective marketing and signing so as to play down key sites which are at capacity, whilst spreading visitors elsewhere.

8.3 The type of visitor

Some thought needs to be given to the 'pros and cons' of attracting different types of visitor. In particular:

- The **mass market** – i.e. high volume low spending day visitor v the low volume, high spending visitor
- **Method of transport** – car v public transport
- **Language** – not just Welsh and English, but with time other languages as used at many UK WH Sites.
- **Disability** – being proactive in provision and promotion, not just ticking a box.
- **Visitor Management** on site – how to distribute visitors away from the honeypots to enjoy, and benefit, the whole corridor and beyond.
- **Niche markets** – which niche markets would bring most benefit, least issues, whilst ensuring the visitors enjoy their visit.

Clearly, the type of visitor coming to the site can be influenced by how the Site is developed and marketed. In 2010, for example, as car parking capacity is still an issue, the main marketing campaign will be through the public transport leaflet, detailing how to access the Site by rail and bus. The main tourism campaign for North East Wales, the North Wales Borderlands campaign, is aimed at encouraging staying visitors to the region and the Site. The Site's profile is also being raised by British Waterways, Tourism Partnership North Wales (as one of the True Giants of North Wales), Visit Wales and increasingly by the train and bus operators. All this will ensure an increasing profile. Again, this all feeds back into the vision for the site within each of the three phases and how the marketing is ratcheted up with each new phase.

8.4 Quality – from the outset the aim should be one which has Destination Management (formerly recognised as integrated quality management) at its heart. In all its dealings with the public Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal 'plc' will give reassurance through quality – of information, of experience, customer service, environment. The public will expect a World Heritage Site to deliver World class standards. The use of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal logo (which was developed for use earlier in 2010), must be guarded to ensure it is a recognised badge of quality. Along with the logo, a branding toolkit/ 'bible' has been prepared and its implementation will be overseen by the Visitor Management and Economic Regeneration Group. There is potential for a quality award scheme to be developed in terms of:

- a) businesses reaching a set standard being awarded a quality badge with the quality scheme being widely promoted to the public; and
- b) possibly through an annual award ceremony to recognise best practise and quality facilities and services.

Tourism Partnership North Wales is currently driving forward the Destination Management agenda with each of the local authorities (LA's) in North Wales. Destination Management is a key actions outlined in the Tourism Strategy North Wales 2010-15 which seeks to increase the quality of experience of visitors. This work has been initiated with tourism audits being undertaken for each of the LA's. The audits will then help influence the content of Destination Management Plans which are required to be developed and then implemented for each of the LA's. It is paramount that these plans for both Wrexham and Denbighshire ensure effective crossover and complementarity in relation to the WHS, as it spans each of the LA boundaries.

8.5 The Way Forward

There are a number of essential actions needed:

i) The development of a Marketing Plan jointly agreed by all partners is a priority. The Plan will need to consider the issues above and will need to be mindful of the restrictions of both marketing budgets and infrastructure. It is the responsibility of the WHS Marketing & Communications working group (which reports to the WHS Visitor Management and Economic Regeneration sub-group) to develop this WHS marketing plan. A draft is currently being developed and it is expected to be completed in early 2011 with implementation timescales corresponding to the proposed actions outline in this plan.

ii) Joint Budget - The next few years will see considerable difficulties for all public sector bodies, in particular Council budgets. Ways will need to be found of maximising joint resources, thinking outside of the box, and prioritising the winners instead of spreading resources too thinly and building upon the existing North Wales Borderland Partnership. Joining-up of marketing budgets and staff may be an option to consider. All partnerships have their strengths and weaknesses and often a partnership is only as strong as its weakest partner. This can be true in Local Government where Councils with larger budgets/resources are fearful of contributing more into a joint pot for fear of being seen to subsidise areas outside their remit. For the WHS, it is suggested that budget contributions for joint work such as marketing could be apportioned according to length of the site within each Council area.

Geographically specific work would obviously remain the responsibility of the Council/Public body within whose area it falls.

iii) Lobbying National Partners

At this time, WHS status should be used to lever as many resources as possible. National partners such as Visit Wales, Tourism Partnership North Wales, should be encouraged to bring their expertise and resources to raise the profile of the Site as a national icon. This work has begun through raising the aspirations for the WHS at the recently established North East Wales Cultural Steering Group meetings which are chaired by the Welsh Assembly Government's Minister for Heritage and have led to the establishment of a North East Wales Cultural Action Plan. Support to the WHS has been included in this action plan as a longer-term priority (2012-13 onwards). Other actions contained in this plan include the need for collaboration amongst local authorities and other organisations with regard to the provision of festivals and events, attraction of visitors to key cultural assets and the development of cultural assets. All of this work aims to raise the profile of north east Wales as a cultural destination. In Shropshire, projects in the wider area have already been submitted to the Regional Growth Fund and the WHS must be considered in the forward plans and aspirations of the recently created Marches Local Enterprise Partnership.

9. Events

9.1 Past Canal-based Events

For accuracy, this section should start with the first major event held at the site – the official opening of the Aqueduct on 26th November 1805 and for which there was said to be a crowd of 10,000 come to witness what for that period must have been a great occasion.

Roll forward 200 years and the WH site has seen two major events in recent times – the Bicentenary of the opening of the Aqueduct held on 26th November 2005 and the celebrations for World Heritage Site inscription on 3rd October 2009. In many ways these two events were exceptional. They marked key dates with due reason for major celebration, the like of which will not be repeated for some time. They were also well

planned in as much as Wrexham Council had applied in advance for external funding through the Rural Development Plan (£40,000 for the WHS celebrations) and the Bi-centenary event also received £40,000 through Leader +. For both these the grants were accessed through Northern Marches Cymru.

Other smaller events specifically linked to the WHS have included- a) an International Canal Conference hosted by Wrexham Council and held in June 2007 specifically as part of the nomination process to engage academics/international canal experts and to raise the profile of the nomination, which it duly achieved, and b) an annual fun day at Trevor Basin for which Wrexham Council has worked closely with British Waterways and the local communities to good effect; the budget for this has been £3,000 plus officer time. It is anticipated that this event will remain an annual event, rebadged under the name 'World Heritage Day' and held in the summer near the anniversary of World Heritage inscription i.e. a Saturday on or near the 27th June.

Since the inscription celebration event in October 2009, 2 further WHS-related events have been held. 'Aqueducks' – the community development partnership delivered a fun day event on 14 August 2010 which involved organisations and communities from along the whole 11-mile corridor joining together to deliver this event at the Trevor Basin. Funding from the RDP Business Plan 1 - Pontcysyllte Community Canal project was used to assist this event. Between 20th and 25th September 2010 a full programme of activities as for the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Week. Funding for this week long programme was provided by Wrexham County Borough Council and also the GIANTS North Wales initiative; it was also well supported by volunteer leaders and guest speakers.

The AQUEDUCKS (community development organisation which is part of the WHS governance structure) has in 2010 agreed one of its main remits is to address the provision of events across the 11-mile corridor. AQUEDUCKS aims to deliver events in the various communities along the 11-mile corridor to ensure that the benefits of these events are shared throughout the WHS. This has resulted in communities being identified as host locations for the themed events and include the provision of a Christmas market event in Chirk, and canal side summer fun day at Trevor Basin.

9.2 Events within the Buffer Zone - Dee Valley

The wider canal corridor is in fact rich in events. The largest and most significant being the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod held in July each year and with visitor numbers in the region of 120,000. The Pavilion and event showground are right next to the Canal in Llangollen and the whole region benefits greatly from both the day and staying visitors who come from overseas and throughout the UK. There is much potential to spread the benefit along the whole canal corridor even more than currently happens.

The Llangollen Pavilion is also the venue for other large, though lower profile events such as the Hot Air Balloon Festival, the Garden Show and the Food Festival. The National Trust operated Chirk Castle hosts numerous events throughout the year, whilst other event venues include Plas Newydd, Llangollen Steam Railway, international slalom events on the River Dee, and Llangollen town itself. Just outside of the canal corridor Erddig Hall, near Wrexham hosts numerous events and Park Hall showground near Oswestry hosts large-scale local events such as the Oswestry show.

9.3 Maximising the Potential

There is undoubtedly potential to major on event-based tourism along the whole 11-mile stretch. The draw of attending something interesting at a venue which is already a World Heritage Site (and therefore has kudos), is easily accessible from the major road and rail networks, has a growing tourism infrastructure in terms of accommodation and catering venues and is all within such a beautiful landscape backdrop – has to be a winning combination. The challenge will be for the three Councils and the local communities and trade/businesses to all pull together in order to achieve economies of scale. By joint working, pulling resources and budgets, timetables and marketing together, there is a mutual benefit for all partners, but this means changing to a new way of thinking, a new focus and believing in the bigger picture. It means agreeing to an annual events calendar, (thus avoiding clashes) and ideally joint marketing activity so that there is cross-promotion of events.

The Welsh Governments Major Events fund and the North Wales events forum provide opportunities to attract funds for significant events which have the potential to attract large audiences. There is therefore perhaps scope to develop a number of themed events which run along the whole corridor and thus attract greater numbers of visitors than can be achieved by any one partner working in isolation. This scaling-up could also turn many day visitors into the higher spending staying visitors as there will be too much to see/experience in a single day. There is plenty of scope for this with the wealth of topics the WHS covers such as World Heritage Weekend or Week, or World Heritage Transport Challenge (come by car or train, then walk, bus, steam train, canal boat, horse-drawn boat, cycle, canoe, ride, and horse-drawn carriage ride – all in a transport themed weekend or week). Similar themes could be based on food, music, art & poetry (many artists have based their work on the WHS over 200 years), heritage, archaeology, engineering, heritage management and so the list goes on. For many of these, there are opportunities for community events to ride on the back of the event marketing for the whole side and gain additional public profile and hence attendances.

10. Research and Monitoring

It is easy to overlook the importance of research and monitoring, especially at a time when budgetary resources are in decline. However, this is somewhat of a chicken and egg situation, as the dedication of some resource (officer time and/or budget) to data capture and analysis is the only means of understanding the efficacy of policy and its implementation. In particular, the data to support the argument that money invested in the development of the WHS will be a good investment with a high rate of return in terms of the impact on the local economy/quality of life of local residents.

The aim here, therefore, is to:

- measure the economic and social impact of the WHS inscription and the effectiveness of actions taken by the partners to improve the visitor experience;
- undertake monitoring as required by grant funding bodies, and
- undertake monitoring as required by UNESCO and as set out in the Management Plan.

10.1 Existing Data and Research

There is some research already available both on an annual basis (STEAM) and more ad hoc (Wales Visitor Survey). This research is outlined briefly below:

a) Tourism Quantitative Research

STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic activity Monitor)

Since 1999 Wrexham County Borough Council has operated the North Wales STEAM Initiative on behalf of all 6 North Wales Local Authorities and Tourism Partnership North Wales. Through this initiative the volume and value of tourism within each County, marketing area and on a North Wales basis, are evaluated. Using basic tourism business information, STEAM captures everything from visitor numbers, visitor days, accommodation, visitors who stay in serviced and non-serviced accommodation and those who stay with friends or relatives (SFR), Day visitors who visit for non-routine shopping, visitor expenditure, bed nights, and employment. It is dependent upon the support and co-operation of tourism businesses, both accommodation and attractions. Currently over 500 businesses across North Wales actively participate in STEAM. STEAM is not designed to provide a precise and accurate measurement of tourism in an area but rather to provide an indicative base for monitoring trends. The confidence level of the model is calculated to be within the ranges of plus or minus 10% in respect of the yearly outputs and plus or minus 5% in respect of trend.

The weakness with STEAM is that it provides data at County level so may only be suitable to provide context data rather than WHS data. In addition, whilst information is available for Wrexham and Denbighshire, it is not available for Shropshire. However, there is a solution - if desired and budget was made available, a new 'cross-border zone' could be established to cover the WHS and its Buffer zone provided that the number of tourism businesses participating in STEAM within the zone was sufficiently large enough to provide statistically robust data.

On-site People Counters

These comprise of automatic infra red counters which once calibrated, measure the numbers passing a particular point. The only British Waterways people counter in the WHS is currently in Llangollen Basin. It provides live data through the BW SCADA system. Denbighshire Countryside service also people counters at some of its sites within the WHS corridor.

Boat counters British Waterways has a lock (boat) counter at New Marton locks. There is also a private boat counter at Sun Trevor that provides accurate data on boat movements on the canal. It only covers boats moving above Trevor.

b) Tourism Qualitative Research

The Place Survey

In England the annual Place Survey collects information on 18 national indicators for local government, used to measure local government performance for 152 county councils, metropolitan district councils, London boroughs and unitary authorities. It provides information on people's perceptions of their local area and the local services they receive. This covers only the Shropshire element of the WHS.

Wales Tourism Research Partnership

This partnership between Visit Wales, the Local Authorities and Regional Tourism Partnerships undertakes a number of surveys. In 2009, a Wales wide survey 'National Wales Visitor Survey' was undertaken, with Wrexham and Denbighshire both participating. Wrexham CBC paid for three survey sites – Wrexham Town Centre, Erddig and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, also paying for additional questions at Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. Denbighshire paid for a number of sites including Llangollen. The research

reports are complete and have been used to inform this Tourism Development Plan and should be the basis for all marketing and customer-focused work.

British Waterways: Nationally

Each year British Waterways conduct between three and five national surveys aiming at specific user groups including towpath visitors, current boat owners, holiday boaters and visitors to priority sites, and overall visits to waterways. The sample sizes mean that data is best used at national level however in some cases it may be suitable for use at regional level.

Inland Waterway Day Visitor Survey

The British Waterways Inland Waterways Visitor Survey (IWVS) is conducted among the broadest audience of any of the consumer surveys carried out by British Waterways. It is designed to quantify and monitor participation in inland waterway activities (both British Waterways and under other management) among a large representative sample of the GB adult population. The survey has been operated by BDRC on a continuous year-round basis since 2003

The Survey is carried out by telephone using a nationally representative sample of 480 adults interviewed in each of two half-monthly periods (up to 16th and after 16th of each month). Data is weighted on a half-monthly basis to the national GB population profile in terms of region, sex, age and social grade. The questionnaire is executed using CATI (Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing), which ensures interviewers are guided automatically and logically through the questionnaire. This approach also facilitates rapid feedback of results. A Random Digit Dialling (RDD) approach is used. This is a system which offers a totally geographically unclustered sample that includes ex-directory numbers.

The survey was extended in April 2006 to include a comprehensive suite of questions establishing usage and opinion of British Waterways' towpath network. This replaced the Towpath Survey previously conducted in summer, face to face at locations across the towpath network.

All respondents are aged 15 or over. The survey includes demographics; numbers participating in particular activities, average spend per head by activity and demographic, etc.

Boat Owners Survey

This survey monitors the demographic profile of boat owners. It also obtains information on the characteristics of boat trips, on boating related behaviour and assesses levels of satisfaction in relation to key performance measures to identify key areas of improvement for the future. For the survey Self completion questionnaires are mailed to a random sample of 8,000 boaters in England, Wales and Scotland. The 2008 survey generated a 20% response rate.

Holiday Boater survey

This survey assesses the level of holiday boater satisfaction in relation to various key performance indicators (e.g. overall upkeep of the waterways, waterway services, visitor moorings, ease of lock operation, ease of mooring, helpfulness of waterway employees etc.). It obtains information on boat trip characteristics, e.g. length of holiday, level of familiarity with boating and builds a demographic profile of holiday boater, whilst also gathering suggestions for improving BW facilities.

5,890 postal surveys were sent out in England, Wales and Scotland in 2008. A 10.7% response rate was achieved.

Destinations

32 destinations, including Pontcysyllte, are surveyed by BW across two waves of visitor research in the summer and autumn. Face-to-face interviews are conducted with adults aged 16 or over who are visiting each site. The definition of visitor varies on a site by site basis depending upon the nature of the site.

Visitors include:

- Those visiting for leisure or recreation reasons or as a tourist (all sites)
- Those just using the towpath to get to somewhere else (at some sites)

Each site is weighted to the target number of 100 interviews each wave enabling sites to contribute equally to the national level results, regardless of the numbers of interviews actually achieved at each site. The survey did not take place in 2009.

This survey would probably have to be supplemented with a site-specific survey to pick up social measures (see below under “what may be missing”) and to ask retrospectively how people feel about changes that have taken place.

Sustainability Indicators

British Waterways have also developed an approach for appraising waterway regeneration and restoration projects, which identifies benefits using ‘quality of life’ indicators with economic, social and environmental themes. Each benefit can be quantified to provide a set of ‘sustainability indicators’, which measure progress throughout the life of the project.

Indicators are arranged in accordance with the groupings adopted for Quality of Life Counts i.e.:

A sustainable economy, Building sustainable communities, Managing the environment and resources, Sending the right signals, and International co-operation and development.

The indicators proposed may relate to either Headline Indicators or other core indicators. This methodology has been used for third party funded schemes attracting Lottery and RDA funds.

WAG is also developing Sustainable Development Indicators for Wales and Guidance was issued in August 2009, the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is in close proximity to the WHS corridor is part of the Sustainable Tourism Charter 2009.

What may be missing?:

Whilst the existing research is a good basis from which to work, there is a need to be more comprehensive and there are some glaring gaps, (For example, we do not yet have a system in place to monitor visitor numbers at key sites along the WHS). The research table on pages 40-43 attempts to show current research, indicators monitored and frequency in an attempt to identify the gaps. Clearly, there are some whole areas of research currently missing including wider economic measures (not just tourism), social measures and sustainability.

Economic measures:

Whilst tourism is covered in a number of ways, wider economic activity is not. The best approach might be to identify relevant businesses / development activity within a set distance of the canal and record changes in these over time, using business surveys as required (via telephone / face to face interviewing to maximise response). Such data would include numbers of existing jobs (i.e. those safeguarded by the partners' actions), FTEs, Jobs created FTEs and so on. Some specific categories such as number of businesses reliant in some degree upon the canal (and improvements in turnover/employment) could be used.

Social measures:

The social measures will require a mix of specific towpath and neighbourhood surveys and would each cost on an ad-hoc basis c.£5k for 100 interviews (it is not considered necessary to undertake these annually). The measures could include such indicators as Adults (and children) taking physical exercise with Towpath surveys asking questions about level of activity or Volunteers taking part (likelihood to recommend to others) by counting numbers, valuing hours spend according to activity.

Sustainable transport measures:

These could include such indicators as the number of Cyclists on towpaths and other major routes (using *cycle* counters and/or calibration of pedestrian counters combined with surveys to identify health and transport outputs over and above recreational outputs) and passenger numbers on buses/trains.

Table 8: Current and Proposed Research for Tourism and Wider Economic Monitoring

	Indicator being/to be monitored	Survey/Research Methodology	Frequency	Proposed Changes	Responsible Organisation
Tourism	<i>Visitor numbers at Key sites along the WHS (only Llangollen Basin Currently Monitored)</i>	<i>People counters</i>	<i>Daily, with periodic reporting with like-for-like year on year comparisons enabling responses to events/ campaigns to be monitored</i>	<i>New initiative</i>	BW
Tourism	<i>British Waterways visitor research</i>	BW Destinations 5 individual surveys (Face to Face) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • towpath visitors; • current boat owners; • holiday boaters; • visitors to priority sites; & • general visitors of waterways. 	Annually	<i>Subject to review/ financial availability due to current BW organisational review</i>	BW
Tourism	Visitor Profile (demographics, origin, day or staying, spend, behaviour, method of transport, loyalty, experience etc)	2009 Survey: Pontcysyllte & Llangollen	Repeat every 3 years' Maximum with other sites included.	<i>Ideally Shropshire to join this work.</i> <i>Ensure 3-yearly repetition</i>	WCBC, DCC, SC, TPNW, VW

Tourism	<p>General Tourism volume & Value statistics:</p> <p><u>Bed stock (by category, month by month, year on year)</u> - Analysis of bed stock seasonal availability (by category of accommodation - Categories of serviced accommodation (under 10 rooms; 11-50 rooms; over 50 rooms; over 100 rooms), - Categories of non-serviced accommodation (Camping and Caravanning (Touring); Caravanning (Static); Flats, Chalets and Cottages; Hostels, Schools and Colleges)</p> <p><u>Estimates of revenue generated</u> by tourists (by category of accommodation and distribution by activity by month)</p> <p><u>Estimates of no. of tourists and no. of tourist days</u> (by category of accommodation by month)</p> <p><u>Estimates of employment supported by tourism</u></p> <p><u>Estimates of traffic implications of tourism</u> (by month)</p> <p><u>Trend information</u> annually for all output categories by zone</p>	<p>STEAM</p> <p>Surveys 1999 onwards for:</p> <p>Wrexham CB</p> <p>Denbighshire C</p> <p>North Wales Borderlands Marketing Area and North Wales</p>	<p>Reports are biannual (Jan-June, whole Year) and always retrospective by approximately 5 months.</p>	<p><i>Create a new Zone for the WHS & Buffer Zone.</i></p> <p><i>Retrospection Possible for WCB and DC, But probably not for Shropshire</i></p> <p><i>Subject to review in 2011 due to current budget constraints/ cuts being experienced within Local Authorities.</i></p>	<p>WCBC</p> <p>DCC</p> <p>TPNW</p> <p>SC</p>
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Tourism/ Boaters	Boat movements along the WHS. (only New Marton locks/movements as far as Trevor Available)	Boat Counters	Daily, with periodic reporting With like-for-like year on Year comparisons enabling responses to Events/ campaigns to be monitored.	Counters at Llangollen , Trevor, Fron, Chirk Tunnel This research is subject to review/ financial availability due to current BW organisational review.	BW
Boaters	Boaters' profile (demographic Profile, behaviour, trip length, Level of satisfaction, suggested improvements)	Holiday Boater Survey Postal survey to Approx 5,900 Boaters (2008)	Annual	Questions Specific to WHS? If not already Included if conducted in future. This research is subject to review/ financial availability due to current BW organisational review.	BW
Boaters	Demographic profile of boat owners, boat trips, boating behaviour, satisfaction levels	Boat Owners' Survey (national) Self-completion Questionnaires to 8,000 boaters	Annual	Questions Specific to WHS? If not already included	BW
Waterways Users	Usage of waterways and Towpaths, user demographics, user spend by activity.	Inland Waterway Day Visitor Survey (national sample, Telephone survey)	Continuous year-round basis since 2003	Questions Specific to WHS if possible and if not already included	BW

Economic Measures	<p><i>For the whole site and BufferZone:</i></p> <p><i>No. of businesses</i></p> <p><i>Jobs (FTEs) and jobs created since WHS (FTEs)</i></p> <p><i>No. of businesses reliant upon WHS/Canal & their employment figures</i></p>	<p><i>Desk Survey</i></p> <p><i>Telephone survey</i></p>	<p><i>Annual</i></p>	<p><i>New initiative – subject to availability of funds</i></p>	<p><i>WCBC</i></p> <p><i>DCC</i></p> <p><i>SC</i></p> <p><i>BW</i></p>
Sustainable Transport	<p><i>For the whole site and Buffer Zone:</i></p> <p><i>No. of people accessing the site by public transport</i></p> <p><i>Frequency of public transport services</i></p> <p><i>No. of cyclists using towpath</i></p>	<p><i>Desk Survey</i></p> <p><i>User Survey</i></p>	<p><i>Annual</i></p>	<p><i>New initiative- subject to availability of funds</i></p>	<p><i>WCBC</i></p> <p><i>DCC</i></p> <p><i>SC</i></p> <p><i>BW</i></p> <p><i>Public Transport Operators</i></p>

11. Implementation

The Action Plan (**Appendix 2**) highlights the priorities and key actions for up to the next 5 years, as drawn references made in Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of this Tourism Development Plan. Its implementation will be overseen by key partners through the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Governance Structure.

The key partners will need to source external funding to implement these actions and achieve the vision to use World Heritage status as a catalyst for sustainable economic, community and environmental regeneration. It is vital to build on the momentum created by the nomination process and first years work since inscription and to aspire to meet the expectations of local communities, businesses and visitors, and to maximise the opportunities for which successful inscription of Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal as a World Heritage Site has provided.

The Way Forward

It is suggested that the Tourism Development Plan once finalised after full consultation, is formally adopted by each of the key partners, in particular Wrexham Council, Denbighshire County Council, Shropshire Council and British Waterways. It is also recommended that it is acknowledged/ endorsed by Visit Wales, Tourism Partnership North Wales, Cadw and their English equivalents (English Heritage and Local Enterprise Partnership), as this will assist future funding bids.

The Role of the World Heritage Site Steering Group

The Steering Group comprises representatives of key partners, as shown in Appendix 3. Its role is to oversee the work of its working groups (Appendix 4) and to take an overview of policy and grant applications. In terms of the Tourism Development Plan, the key group will be the Visitor Management and Economic Regeneration Sub-Group first and foremost, but with a major role played by its Transport Working Group in addition to the AQUEDUCKS (community development) and Education Sub-Groups.

World Heritage Site Co-coordinator

Local Authorities (LAs) are involved in the management of all sites. As Local Planning Authorities they perform a key role in the protection of sites through development and building control legislation, through planning policy within their Local Development Plans/Frameworks, or through administration of conservation legislation and policy for the built and natural environments. Most WHS Management Plans cover a wide variety of policies or proposals which are not related to spatial planning and LAs therefore have to explore other means of implementing them than through highways, parks, cultural, tourism and economic development functions. Local Authority management for and of World Heritage sites across England and Wales are extremely varied. Many, however, have appointed a full time World Heritage site Co-ordinator to manage, co-ordinate and implement the Management Plan and be the focal point of contact.

WHS expenditure can sometimes be a poor relation to more traditional regeneration projects, despite the fact that WH sites collectively are at the forefront of the UK tourism industry and the role of the WHS Co-ordinators is in danger of being dominated by a constant search for funding (in some cases on a time-consuming bidding basis) rather than by the key tasks of implementing Management Plans.

The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal WHS Steering Group has recognised the importance of and the need for a WHS Co-ordinator for the 11-mile corridor to co-ordinate the implementation of the Management Plan. Consequently, it has been agreed between four the main WHS stakeholders (WCBC, BW, DCC and SC) that WCBC will perform the role of WHS Co-ordinator. The main purpose of this role is to manage the implementation of the WHS 6-year Management Plan and ensure partnership working amongst the stakeholders to deliver the actions. Due to the lack of external funding and budgets within BW and the three local authorities, WCBC has offered an existing member of staff from within the Economic Development Department to perform this role for 3 days per week. Ideally the role should be a full time remit and it is suggested that the current arrangements be reviewed periodically.

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Appendix 3: Role of the WHS Steering Group

Extract from Terms of Reference for Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site Steering Group

Aim and purpose of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site Steering Group

A World Heritage Steering Group was established during the nomination phase of the World Heritage Site, in order to focus the diverse range of interests into a strategic body that could agree a common way forward. The Steering Group meets at least quarterly, and its minutes and full terms of reference are published on the Site's website, (currently www.wrexham.gov.uk/aqueduct). The aims and purpose of the Steering Group are as follows:

- to uphold the outstanding universal values of the Site;
- to approve, review and monitor the Management Plan, in line with UNESCO;
- guidelines for the Management of World Heritage Sites, to ensure the outstanding universal value is upheld;
- to agree an annual, 3 year and 5 year action plan as part of the Management Plan;
- to approve an Annual Report describing progress against Management plan actions;
- to oversee the management of the World Heritage Site by establishing administrative arrangements including an Executive Group and working groups to further the aims, objectives and implementation of the Management Plan;
- to promote the World Heritage Site at local, national and international levels; and
- to periodically review its membership with regard to the above.

Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site Steering Group membership

Members of groups and organisations with significant business in the World Heritage Site are nominated by member organisations and invited by the Chair to become members of the Steering Group. Membership is reviewed annually and will comprise not less than:

Sector 1 Statutory/National Organisations

Dept of Culture Media and Sport	1 member
British Waterways	3 members
Cadw	1 member
English Heritage	1 member
RCAHMW	1 member
Visit Wales	1 member

Sector 2 Local Authorities

Wrexham County Borough Council	2 members
Shropshire Council	2 members
Denbighshire Council	2 members

Sector 3 Sub Group Chairs

Sector 4 Associated organisations

Inland Waterways Association	1 member
UNESCO Cymru Wales	1 member
ICOMOS UK	1 member
TPNW	1 member

Organisations Co-opted:

The National Trust	1 member
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World Heritage Site Working Groups

The World Heritage Steering Group carries forward its work through a range of Working Groups made up of officers from partner organisations and representatives from Community Groups and the Voluntary Sector, enabling private and voluntary sector organisations to make major significant contributions to the World Heritage programme. The Steering Group acknowledges and thanks the groups for this significant contribution.

The WHS Sub-Groups are:

- Visitor Management & Economic Regeneration;
- AQUEDUCKS (community development);
- Planning, Landscape, Heritage & Conservation;
- Education and Identification

Working Groups terms of reference

Each working group will establish its terms of reference (including issues and objectives) in accordance with the appropriate aims, objectives and actions of the WHS Management Plan Review. Each working group will establish its own programmes of action with appropriate budgeting.