

# Gwernymynydd 2030

A Community Development Plan for the next 20 years | May 2011



Cyngor Cymuned  
**Gwernymynydd**  
Community Council



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# Foreword

I am honoured to be able to contribute a brief foreword to the Gwernymynydd Plan. It enables me to congratulate the Community Councillors and others in the village who have given so much time and effort to the creation of the document. The County Council recognises and welcomes the Plan. We support the concept that such plans can galvanise communities and concentrate the energies of local people and public bodies as they seek to address local priorities together. We commend Gwernymynydd and will promote their work as an exemplar both locally and nationally.

The Gwernymynydd document will be drawn upon as material to inform the Local Development Plan when it succeeds the Unitary Development Plan. Community involvement will be an important part of the process and hopefully the County and other Community and Town Councils will be able to learn from the Gwernymynydd experience. All of us want to maximise the potential of the area where we live and work.



**Colin Everett**

Chief Executive, Flintshire County Council  
May 2011

## \*The name, 'Gwernymynydd'

The name is made up of three Welsh words.

"Gwern"	translated either as "Swamp" or "Alder trees"
"y"	the definite article "the"
"Mynydd"	"mountain"

There have been various translations such as "A place where Alder trees grow at a wet spot on the mountain," or "Mountain of Elder trees". The name first appears on a map of the early 1700's as the area of the present day Gwernymynydd Farm in Swan lane.

## \*Cadole

Cadole is on the western edge of Gwernymynydd close to the border with Denbighshire. The term cat-hole was used to describe machinery raising an anchor, specifically the hole through which the chain or hawser passed. In this instance it probably referred to the device used to lift men or buckets through the shafts in the lead mine and accounts for the origin of the name Cadole. On the other hand there was a tale that a Flintshire mine was named Cathole after a member of a mining family found a cat in an old shaft. Yet another suggestion is that miners who moved here from Cornwall used the name "Cathole" because of its association with "Mousehole" in their county of origin.



# Introduction, May 2011

The Gwernymynydd Community Development Plan was conceived during 2007 when it was recognised by the Community Council that it needed to set out a vision for the future of our village. This required a fundamental change within the Community Council in developing a proactive approach to determine the future of the community. This is the first Community Development Plan in Flintshire. The plan required the additional task of having to develop the process needed to create a credible document that would be recognised by local residents and Flintshire County Council. A Community Development Plan can be influential on local government processes but the real value of a successful plan is the extent to which it energises the local community to lobby for what it wants and to achieve its needs through its own efforts.

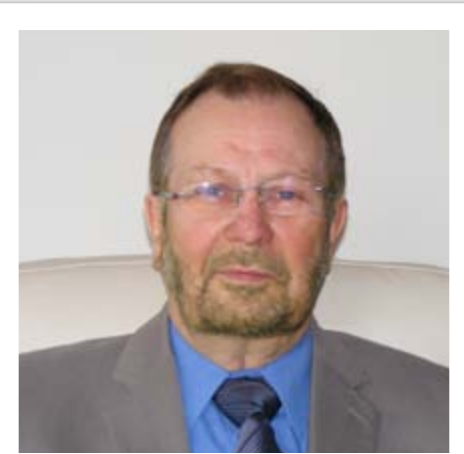
Central to the process of developing the plan was consultation and involvement with the residents of Gwernymynydd and Cadole and a regular dialogue with Flintshire County Council Officers. The initial Development Plan Steering Group consisted of four members of the Community Council. After the launch of the plan process and questionnaire at the Showcase Gwernymynydd Festival during May 2009, many residents joined the Steering Group. Meeting regularly since then, the Steering Group has issued further questionnaires to every home within the village followed by a Key Issues Document after analysing the result of the consultation. The resulting plan is an “evidence based document” supporting the policies. The Process of developing the plan during 2010/2011 is shown in Appendix 2.

The completion of the plan represents a milestone in determining our vision of Gwernymynydd in the future. It is, however, the beginning of the process to manage the development of our community. The implementation of the policies represents a considerable challenge for us and will be regularly reviewed. Flintshire County Council is to develop a Local Development Plan (LDP) for the County. The adoption of our plan as part of that LDP will be important.

Many people have become involved in developing our plan in a spirit of partnership within the village. The Community Council would like to thank Flintshire County Council officers, executives and members, the Village Centre Committee, local MP and AM and the residents of Gwernymynydd and Cadole who have contributed to its completion.



**Chris Bradshaw**  
Chairman, Gwernymynydd Community Council



**Chris Bradshaw**  
Chairman, Gwernymynydd Community Council

## \*Early local initiatives

As a direct result of starting the plan process, the following have already been kicked off:

- Positive discussions with the North Wales Trunk Road Agency (NWTRA) to improve road safety in Gwernymynydd and Cadole that will be implemented during 2011
- The beginning of a Carbon Saving Initiative
- A local running club
- Book Club
- Welsh Classes
- Village Pantomime
- Improved web site



# History and Setting

Gwernymynydd is the first village encountered when travelling south west away from the town of Mold on the trunk road that continues across North Wales to Dolgellau (A494). As it enters the village the road rises steeply into the Clwydian range of mountains and the designated “Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty”. With a population of about a 1000, these days the village is a ribbon development comprising largely but not entirely, retirement and dormitory accommodation for those who commute daily to other parts of Flintshire, Wrexham, Chester, Merseyside or even Manchester.

The main feature of the geology of the area is the limestone belt running roughly North – South. It has been utilised as a natural commodity providing the raw material for local industry especially quarrying and mining for centuries. There is evidence of settlements in or around the village for thousands of years. The upper areas such as the Hafod and Bryngwyn were used by early settlers as summer refuges, safe in the belief that being at the top it was easier to defend themselves. In 1989 a metal detector found a group of items known as the “Gwernymynydd Axe hoard” on rough ground on Hafod Moor. They date back to at least 2000B.C. and copies can be viewed in the Museum in the Daniel Owen Centre in Mold.

From pre-history, through Roman times until the modern era, limestone has been extracted for road construction, building and agriculture. In addition there have been attempts to profit from the mining of minerals such as lead, zinc and even silver and gold making the area a source of industrial endeavours and lucrative gains. At the same time the more usual upland occupations of herding and grazing sheep and cattle continued.

The various “Enclosures Acts” of the 17th & 18th centuries led to the clearing of much of the naturally occurring woodland and opened up the hilltops to more profitable agricultural use. The Industrial Revolution, the advancement of mining techniques and the surge to establish ownership and mineral rights sometimes created considerable local tension. During the eighteenth century competing owners on the Flintshire/Denbighshire border, at “Loggerheads”, were in conflict. Matters were only resolved after several years by the High Court on 10th November 1763 when the “Carreg Carn March Arthur boundary stone” (visible today) was established as the county boundary marker for all time.



**The Boundary Stone - from a painting in 1794**

Located on the western edge of Gwernymynydd it marks the spot where there was considerable tension during the eighteenth century which was only resolved by the High Court. It's the origin of the term “at Loggerheads”.



**The Boundary Stone - 2010**

Representatives of Gwernymynydd, Llanferres, Flintshire and Denbighshire met officers from the North Wales Trunk Road Agency to talk about ways of resolving parking problems in the area.



Where the Rainbow public house now stands was a turnpike on a historical trade route from Mold into the more rural areas in the Vale of Clwyd. The road with its natural “bwlch” (gap) through the hills has been a major artery for industry and commerce for generations. After the end of the 18th century lead mining and limestone quarrying thrived. The village changed from being a collection of lone farms on boggy land to become a thriving community with houses, shops, pubs, school, chapels, stables, post-office, and numerous small businesses. As the lead mines were “worked-out”, so other industries opened up. Silica was extracted for the production of bricks by the Cambrian Clay Co. and later for “Vim” by the chemical giant Lever Brothers Ltd.

The Waln family who lived at Fron Hall were major benefactors for the village and the town of Mold during the early 20th century. They were considered to be generous landlords and they employed several staff in their household and on their farms. Having lost a son in the first world war they were instrumental in having a cenotaph erected on the roadside between the entrance to Fron Hall Drive and the Twm path. They gave to the village the field adjacent to the Village Centre which is now administered by the National Playing Fields Association and to the town of Mold the original hospital together with some important pieces of equipment.

The village also benefitted from the generosity of the Peyton family who lived at Plas Hafod. They donated the land on which the original Village Hall was built. It was located on the western side of the road that is now known as Hafod Drive.

The twenty first century has seen further change. The village lost its post office, the one remaining shop is anticipating closure and the number of pupils in the school has declined. Those who moved into the village when they were in their twenties and thirties during the seventies are becoming pensioners.

It was against this backcloth that members of the Community Council decided in 2007 that Gwernymynydd needs a plan for its future that is written by residents in partnership with the County Council (See Appendix 2 for a detailed description of the process). Public events were organised and surveys conducted and the findings analysed.



**The Rainbow in the fifties**

It was the location of a turnpike on the historical trade route from Mold into the more rural areas of the Vale of Clwyd. Some older residents can recall wedding receptions held in the building on the right of the picture.



**The Plas Hafod in 2011**

Now a hotel and restaurant it was formerly the home of the Peyton family who own much of the surrounding land.



The twentieth century saw significant physical and relatively rapid changes to the village.

- There was a programme of public housing when Erw'r Fron and Maes y Wern were built in 1928.
- The main road underwent a series of major reconstructions and widening which led to the demolition of a Public House (The Lamb), the original post office and several terraced houses. It is now a major arterial route that facilitates travel between the North Wales countryside and the more industrialised and urban areas of Deeside, Merseyside and North-west England.
- In 1968 a new school was opened on the Ruthin Road, and the old one which had doubled as a church at weekends was closed and converted into a home.
- The following decades saw the demise of two chapels that had thrived during the early part of the century. One, opposite the Rainbow known as Carmel, was demolished and the other, known as Soar, at the bottom of Glyndwr Road, converted into a home. The village experienced its most dramatic expansion during the 1970's with new housing estates on Tros-y-Wern land and adjacent to the Rainbow.
- Following the expansion in the early seventies a Community Association was established which focussed initially on the provision of a wooden community hall adjacent to a new school building on the Tros-y-Wern estate. The Community Association facilitated a wide range of village activities amongst all ages in the village.
- In April 1985, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, the Mold Rural Community Council was broken up into its various constituent villages and Gwernymynydd Community Council was established.
- In 1988, the two school sites were amalgamated by expanding the Tros-y-Wern building. The former Ruthin Road school was then developed as the current "Village Centre". The building is owned by Flintshire County Council but managed by a committee of residents.
- Four public houses, The Owain Glyndwr, the Rainbow, the Colomendy and the Swan have remained as important parts of the fabric of the village.
- As farms continue to be important in the community the larger ones have expanded into large specialised businesses and some of the smaller ones provide contracted services for other farms.



**Gwernymynydd Hill during the fifties**

Tros-y-Wern is on the left and one of the entrances to Fron Hall on the right.



**Social activities for all ages**

The playing field donated to the Village by the Waln family is very popular and much used. The Swan in the background.



# Plan Policies

The Key issues that emerged out of the comments and discussions about a plan fell into 4 broad categories. These have been used as the main headings for presenting the plan policies:

1. Social and Community Development
2. Transport and Roads
3. The Environment
4. Housing and Land Development

Each heading covers a background explanation and then a set of policies.

The background presents where appropriate any relevant factual, legal and historical information and a summary of what the Council assesses as the view of residents as a result of the consultation exercises. It also explains what role the Community Council has in the decision making process; on many issues, the Community Council is in fact not the decision maker and can only influence through comment and working in partnerships with the relevant statutory authorities such as North Wales Police Authority and Flintshire County Council.

The policies are recorded in a separate table for each category. They read as general guidelines, specific objectives or definite statements of intent. This distinction depends largely on the subject matter and whether implementation would be controlled by the Community Council or some other body.

Prefixing each policy is a reference number. A time frame is also applied in which the Council envisage the main implementation of the policy.



**The Village Centre**

The former school building was handed over to a committee of local residents during the nineteen eighties. It is crucial to the social life of the village.



**War memorial**

It is situated now adjacent to the Village Centre having been located previously on the main road. A Service of Remembrance is held annually.





# Social and Community Development

## Changing ages in changing times

Old pictures of Gwernymynydd point to a lively and active social community centred on local interest groups, the various churches and chapels and the many local pubs. This was of course pre-television, pre-internet and where the majority of the population worked locally within walking or cycling distance.

In their comments during preparation of this plan, many older residents remark that the level of community activity is a lot less than it was even 20 or 30 years ago. There are probably two main reasons for this.

Firstly, in common with the rest of society, many residents now base

their social life away from the village such as with workmates, in leisure activities and interests or even in cyberspace.

Secondly, the age range of village residents has altered. When the new estates were built in the 1970's a Community Association was formed amongst the predominantly young families who had come to live in the village. A wooden village hall was constructed in the grounds of the then new school, and over the years, with continued enthusiasm, the Community Association provided a number of annual village events which were always well supported.

This "young family" nature of the population encouraged community activity largely around the children with successful playgroups, "mothers and toddlers", youth clubs, cubs and scouts, football teams etc.

The adjacent table shows how the age range of the population has changed since then. The cohort of "baby boomers" who came to live in the village in the 1970's and 1980's will now be in or approaching retirement.

In very general terms therefore, in contrast to the "young family" atmosphere of the last 30 years, the next 20 years will probably be more one of older people, many of whom will be living alone.

Perhaps therefore the possibility of a social life within the local community will once again be welcomed.

Age	1981	1991	2001
0-4	76	46	57
5-9	98	79	64
10-14	120	80	81
15-19	103	80	94
20-24	52	54	55
25-29	81	55	68
30-34	<b>165</b>	42	59
35-39	89	82	87
40-44	95	<b>144</b>	78
45-49	61	79	98
50-54	78	82	<b>139</b>
55-59	70	63	78
60-64	64	52	92
65-69	65	63	51
70-74	51	49	44
75-79	36	44	39
80-84	19	15	27
85-89	2	11	15
90+	1	2	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1326</b>	<b>1122</b>	<b>1238</b>

Population figures for Gwernymynydd and Cadole. Source UK Census (See Appendix 3)



### Village outing

A charabanc trip prepares to leave from outside the Post Office – probably during the nineteen thirties.



### Getting organised

Informal contacts will always be made and valued amongst friends and neighbours and many residents appreciate the effective role played by the village pubs in developing and maintaining social links. This is particularly important for young people, though, with the current concerns regarding the “drink culture” amongst young adults, some have expressed regret that this is the only “informal” facility available to this age group.

Looking at more organised activity, the Community Association faded during the eighties when Gwernymynydd Community Council was established. The former school became available as a Village Centre and the old wooden hut was dismantled. The Village Centre is owned by the County Council and run as a Trust by the Village Centre Management Committee.

In the event, the role of the former Community Association has fallen largely onto the shoulders of the Village Centre Management Committee. Their main role is to maintain and promote the use of the actual Village Centre building which often involves trying to foster interest in community based activities and events.

In the preparation of this Community Development Plan, various new ideas have been suggested for community activity (e.g. running club, reading group, Pantomime). These of course will only happen if there are residents willing to contribute their time and enthusiasm. It is pleasing to note that even before publication of this plan, some success has already been achieved simply by bringing people together with similar interests identified during the consultations. The Community Council feel it can continue to play a more effective role in helping to organise such initiatives especially in their early stages of development.

### A village shop

Several respondents expressed the importance of maintaining a shop/post office in the village.

However any policy on this subject must recognise that provision of a shop is essentially a commercial undertaking and has to be triggered by commercial initiative. As a public body the Community Council cannot itself provide a shop though it will do what it can to encourage and support any existing proposed local business.



#### Pantomime

David Hanson MP poses for a photograph with members of the cast of Cinderella in February 2011.



#### Festival

scene from the Village Festival in May 2010. The festival was one of the initiatives launched as a direct result of the work on the Village Plan.



### Welsh language

In the 2001 Census the Gwernymynydd Ward (which included Nercwys) had the lowest proportion of Welsh speakers in Flintshire

The Community Council presently conducts in English as is the monthly newsletter and website.

Concern was expressed in the consultations about the area's lowest ranking and some less confident Welsh speaking residents would welcome the chance for further practice and exposure.

With a bit of organisation, the Community Council feel that, Welsh speakers within the village could help to promote the language more amongst its activities (for example a Welsh section on the web-site) and possibly help students or even non speakers with their learning of the language.

### Web Site

The Community Council feel that there is great potential for continued development of the website ([www.gwernymynydd.org.uk](http://www.gwernymynydd.org.uk)). This could include:

- the monthly newsletter becoming primarily an e-newsletter
- a community notice board
- a "buy and sell" facility
- a (monitored) discussion forum

However, with any such technical developments, the Community Council recognise that many residents, particularly the elderly, will not be using the internet and their requirements must not be overlooked.

### Web Access

The Community Council are aware that parts of the area suffer from poor internet access and regularly lobbies broadband providers to improve the quality of their services. The Community Council acknowledge the potential of the web site and appreciate the vast improvement since it was revamped recently. The Council will continue to support further development and expansion of the site.



Village Website: [www.gwernymynydd.org.uk](http://www.gwernymynydd.org.uk)

The site is used increasingly as a tool for communicating throughout the village.



Tea and chat

The Plan hopes to help locate ways of promoting opportunities for people to meet and "just talk".



# Social and Community Development Policies

## \*SC1

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council will look to support and encourage initiatives aimed at developing greater organised social activity within the village. Specifically it will:

- ▶ Work with the current Village Centre management Committee to strengthen its role as a facilitator of social activities in the community
- ▶ Publish on a quarterly basis a “Contact Bulletin” which lists contact details for all current activities (e.g. Rainbow Ramblers, Youth Club) and offer the opportunity for residents to suggest or join any new initiatives.
- ▶ Where needed, facilitate the initial setup of new initiatives by arranging first meetings, further promotions and possible financial help.

## \*SC2

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council will look to support any initiatives aimed at providing local amenities. This may include less mainstream proposals such as Member Co-operatives or facilities run from local pub buildings, should these be forthcoming.

## \*SC3

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council recognises the significance and importance of the Welsh language. It will look to encourage existing Welsh speakers within the village to assist them in promoting its use both in the field of council affairs and in raising the proportion and confidence of Welsh speakers in the community.

## \*SC4

✓ Short term 2010-2012

The Community Council view the Internet as the future primary means of community correspondence. Specifically it will designate a member of the Council as co-ordinator to promote this potential whilst not ignoring the requirements of any residents who cannot use the internet. The co-ordinator will also lead any communication with existing or alternative broadband providers to improve quality of service throughout the area.



# Transport and Roads

## The Main Road

The main road (A494) through Gwernymynydd follows a route that goes back to ancient times. In the last 50 years however it has changed dramatically from being a country lane to become one of the busiest of the West-East trunk routes through North Wales.

The road brings obvious disadvantages principally around safety, noise and pollution. But it also brings convenience in that, rather than having to wind their way through country lanes or slow urban streets, residents who are motorists can be onto a main road and then away to the shops or job in a matter of minutes from leaving their home.

Control of the main road is the concern of the North Wales Trunk Road Agency (NWTRA).

Road widening in the early 1980's caused traffic speed to increase. In the last couple of years, traffic management schemes together with the public's more general concern about being caught for speeding means there is better observation of the 40mph limit. However there are still the occasional reckless drivers and tragic accidents.

The Community Council have been lobbying for a statutory lower traffic limit for at least 30 years and continue to do so. However, based on comparison from elsewhere, NWTRA categorically do not consider the road suitable for a 30mph speed limit. The Police Authority also do not consider the observed number of speeding motorists to be such as to merit further traffic slowing measures such as speed signals (as on the approach into Mold).

Rather than continue to campaign in vain for a reduced speed limit, the Community Council feel that the more important objective of reducing the actual speed of drivers on the A494 is more likely to be successful by accepting the expert advice and views of NWTRA and the police and working co-operatively with them on further traffic control and enforcement initiatives.



### Country pursuits

One of the many positive features in the village is the easy access to open countryside. The pony is being ridden near to the Owain Glyndwr Inn.



### "A sign of the times"

The main road (A494) is now a busy trunk road. It has turned the village into a "Ribbon Development". At the same time it provides easy access to other parts of the region.



### Speeding on side roads

Most local motorists respect the need for driving at a safe speed on estate roads or along the Hafod Road, Swan Lane and Glyndwr Road. However there are some who drive too fast endangering pedestrians in particular. Some danger spots have already been marked up (such as the red 30mph marking on the junction of Hafod Road/ Godrer Coed). The Police Authority's opinion is that the problem is mainly caused by a limited number of individuals who, if spotted, should be reported to the Community Police Officer.

### A Community Speedwatch scheme

Community Speedwatch schemes can be seen on a number of main roads throughout the UK. (Nearby examples include the busy A56 through Mickle Trafford and the A5 through Pentrefoelas.)

The idea behind such schemes is for volunteers within the community to work with the police and local authorities on various measures to improve traffic safety. This can include help with local promotions and residents taking part in actual traffic speed monitoring exercises.

The Community Council supports the idea of such a scheme but recognise that success would depend upon local volunteers coming forward as well as the agreement of North Wales Police.

### Public Transport

Bus services are seen as an increasingly important element in transport for the village. Many residents do not have access to the motor car and strong environmental and financial pressures may limit car usage by everyone in the years to 2030.

Many of the comments received concerned aspects of the bus service which the Community Council is also concerned about. It will look to increase its contact with bus companies in order to maintain and develop standards of frequency, reliability and possible extension of services provided in the evening and at weekends.

In practical terms however, Gwernymynydd is only part of the network of bus routes, management and finance of which is outside the control of the Community Council.

Community based transport provision may be a possibility; however it is currently felt that there would be insufficient demand to make such a scheme viable. The Community Council will however look to promote and encourage any initiative that might be forthcoming based on successful experiences elsewhere



### Car sharing schemes

Given that many residents commute daily into Wrexham, Chester and towards Liverpool and Manchester, the Community Council feels there must be opportunity for some degree of car-sharing. This would have the benefit of saving money for individuals as well as contributing to the reduction of traffic in the increasingly congested road network. The Council's role would simply be that of intermediary to bring together interested parties, but recognise it would require a volunteer coordinator to carry out the organisation of the scheme which would probably be web-based.

### Cycle Lane and dedicated cycle routes

Community Council want to assist and support the growing use of cycles both amongst local residents and people passing through from Mold to Loggerheads and enjoying the side roads. Being located on a relatively steep hill does of course present a number of challenges in this respect. The practical problem of a dedicated, cycle lane on the main road is how to cater for the speeds of "racing cyclists" descending the hill on either side of the Rainbow who can themselves often exceed the 40mph speed limit. A cycle lane would therefore require significant re-construction and widening of the roadside.

There is also the possibility of "Cycle Paths" being developed either along existing minor roads and footpaths, or even across totally new routes.

### Public Footpaths

There is a well established network of Public Footpaths around the village and the Community Council is keen to see them well used and accessible. Its has supported local organisations who have published a small pamphlet "Walk(s) around Gwernymynydd and Cadole."



#### Rural footpaths

The network of public footpaths around the village provides a pleasant "get away" from the busy working day.



#### Urban walkways

On the whole, walking around the housing estates in the village can be a pleasant experience.



# Transport and Roads Policies

## \*TR1

✓ Short term 2010-2012

The Community Council will accept the 40mph on the A494 on the advice of the North Wales Trunk Road Agency and North Wales Police as the most appropriate. It will continue to campaign for enforcement and improved traffic management with the objective of lowering the actual speed of motorists.

## \*TR2

✓ Short term 2010-2012

The Community Council will look towards introducing a Community Speedwatch scheme which will specifically target speeding motorists on both the A494 and the minor country and estate roads.

## \*TR3

✓ Medium term 2010-2020

The Community Council will press for the introduction of a 20mph speed limit on all local estate roads.

## \*TR4

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council will always look to encourage the greater use of public transport by residents.

## \*TR5

✓ Short term 2010-2012

The Community Council will look to introduce a facility to bring together residents who have similar daily commuter runs and might be interested in car sharing.

## \*TR6

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council would welcome the introduction of “cycle lanes” along the A494 as part of any future road re-construction. It would also welcome further designated “cycle paths” along the country lanes.





# The Environment

## Our best kept secret?

Gwernymynydd village is now a vibrant residential community. Many residents have come to live here specifically because of the natural beauty and the peace that can be found (away from the main road!). Half of the village in fact lies within the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The “Rainbow at the top of the hill” is recognised by thousands of tourists from Merseyside and Manchester as the gateway to the Welsh countryside.

However whilst Loggerheads will be bursting with people on a sunny weekend, the walks around more local areas such as Hafod Moor and towards Moel Findeg remain largely quiet.

The Community Council feel that there is potential to expand the provision of facilities such as information and access signs, cycle routes and benches to encourage visitors to stop and explore our area and for it to become perhaps a more recognised destination for family days out in the countryside.

As well as enhancing the identity of Gwernymynydd this would improve trade for the local pubs and hotels and even possibly encourage the setting up of other tourist related business ventures.

It is recognised that any increase in visitor numbers would have to be properly managed particularly in respect of car-parking. There is already a problem of overspill parking on the A494 between Cadole and Loggerheads at busy times which the Community Council is looking to resolve in conjunction with Flintshire and Denbighshire

## A centre to the village

Where is the centre of Gwernymynydd? It is a difficult question to answer because of the linear nature of the development along the main road. A suggested candidate is the area around the Village Centre (building), in front of the old school and up to the Swan Inn. This also includes the pedestrian road crossing and over the road to the bus stop, the wooden fence and council garages. A landscape architect could perhaps convert what is essentially a rather barren and anonymous tarmac area into something much more attractive to be in and to drive through.



### “Why we live here”

Many residents live in the village because of the peace and natural beauty that can be found – away from the main road!



### “Gateway”

“The Rainbow” at the top of the hill is recognised by many as the “gateway” to the Welsh countryside.



### A greener future

Issues concerning the environment are however not just visual. Residents in 2030 will be following a wholly different approach to management of energy resources and the disposal of waste. On an international basis, technology and innovation, including various neighbourhood based initiatives, is advancing rapidly.

The Community Council is of the view that the residents have a definite environmental conscience and in anticipation of the likely arrival of new technology initiatives in the future would generally welcome policies aimed at reducing carbon footprints, reducing landfill waste etc.

The Council also appreciate that a vast amount can be done using what is already available by way of services and technology. It has always supported and done what it can to encourage initiatives to simply “do the basics correctly”. It will continue to support Flintshire County Council and other bodies in this respect.

Throughout the night, much of Gwernymynydd and particularly the main road is lit up. Some residents welcome this on grounds of safety. However on environmental grounds well-lit empty roads represent a huge waste of energy. Many authorities are looking to reduce permanent street lighting or even replacing them with lights that are activated by noise.

### Quarries

In former times, Gwernymynydd was essentially a mining community. Quarrying and mineral extraction continues to be a major factor in the economy of the area and the appearance of the landscape. Quarry lorries form a high proportion of the HGV traffic on the A494. A list of local quarries is included in Appendix 4.

Quarrying is essential to the construction industry and local quarries will be in place until at least 2030.

The Community Council has traditionally chosen to support local quarries although it has looked to have any developments carried out as sympathetically as possible. This is facilitated by membership of various liaison committees operated by the quarry companies. However in the future it will have to be prepared to take a more critical stance if there are proposals from a quarry which contravene principles set out in this plan or threaten the environment in or around the village.

“Landfill” is the term used to describe waste that cannot be recycled; it is effectively waste that has to be buried. Given that the County Council has a target of reducing annual waste allowance per person from 295kg in 2012/13 to 150kg in 2024/25, the Community Council feel there should be no requirement for redundant quarries to be used for landfill purposes.



**Bryn Gwyn Quarry**

Now worked out as a quarry it is a favourite with rock climbers provided they have permission from the farmer.

# Environment Policies

## \*E1

✓ Medium term 2012-2020

The Community Council will look to identify and develop a suitable “focal point” for the village.

## \*E2

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

Where it does not compromise safety, the Community Council would welcome a reduction in the level of night lighting, particularly on the A494.

## \*E3

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council will continue its co-operative relationship with local quarries, taking where appropriate firm action to limit the damage from future developments.

## \*E4

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council will oppose any use of redundant quarries for landfill.

## \*E5

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council welcomes any initiatives to encourage and make provision for more people to come to visit our village and surrounding country areas.

## \*E6

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council supports and looks to develop further recycling schemes and all community beneficial sustainable initiatives.



# Housing and Land Development

## The role of a Community Council in the planning process

Land development is controlled through the planning process. If someone wishes to carry out development, for example to build a new house, they must apply for planning permission. All such planning applications are processed and decided upon by Flintshire County Council. If the applicant disagrees with the decision, a planning appeal may be held which is through the national Planning Inspectorate.

It is important to note that the Community Council is not responsible for making decisions at any stage of the planning process. It is routinely informed by Flintshire of planning applications but its role is restricted to that of passing comment which is reinforced where necessary, by attending Flintshire planning committee meetings and any local appeal enquiries. In this respect, the Community Council sees its role as being a collective and responsible voice for the majority of the community.

Planning applications are considered within a “strategic” planning framework. This looks more broadly at developments over the County as a whole for the next 15 or so years. It determines for example what land should be allocated for future housing, shopping, employment etc. and what road and transport improvements will be needed. (See Appendix 1 for a more detailed explanation of the strategic plans in Flintshire.)

Rather than take a “top down” approach to their strategic plan, the Community decided to work towards producing a plan (the document you are now reading) that represents the views of the residents and takes account of the policies and position of the County Council. Gwernymynydd is the first of these plans to be prepared and it is hoped that the work will be of significant benefit to other Community and Town Councils.

The aim of this chapter is therefore to provide Flintshire with guidance on what Gwernymynydd residents would like to see included in their future strategic planning policies. The challenge in writing this chapter has been to reflect as accurately as possible the views of residents in what is often the most hotly debated aspect of Community Council activity.



### Preserving the space

The Community Council will rigorously oppose any proposed development on the land separating the village from Mold.



### Expansion

The main expansion of Gwernymynydd took place during the nineteen seventies.



### Flintshire’s planned, current and previous policies

Since the main housing estates were built in the 1970’s, there has been very little further housing development in the open countryside surrounding Gwernymynydd and Cadole. This is because, on the various council land-use plans, there has been a defined “Settlement Boundary” around the village.

In addition, part of the surrounding countryside is further protected by having AONB (“Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty”) status and the land between the village and Mold is defined as “Green Barrier”. Development in the Flintshire part of Cadole is further restricted by its designation as a Conservation Area (see below).

Another important change affecting housing occurred in the 1980’s and 1990’s when, under UK government policy, the majority of publicly owned property in the village was sold off. Up until that time, the stock of “council housing” made it possible for some of the younger local residents to remain in the village when the time came for them to set up their own home. Although local people were never “guaranteed” local council housing, the council operated a needs-based system for housing allocations, and local connections did give the applicant more points in this assessment. The current number of council owned properties in Gwernymynydd is shown in Appendix 6

As explained in Appendix 1, Flintshire County Council will be starting preparation of the Local Development Plan (LDP) in early 2012. As in all other Welsh counties, part of the standard LDP process is to invite owners of land throughout the County to register any interest they might have in releasing land for future development purposes. This will include land outside of any areas currently zoned for development. It is called the Strategic Housing Land Availability survey (or SHLA).



#### Local shop

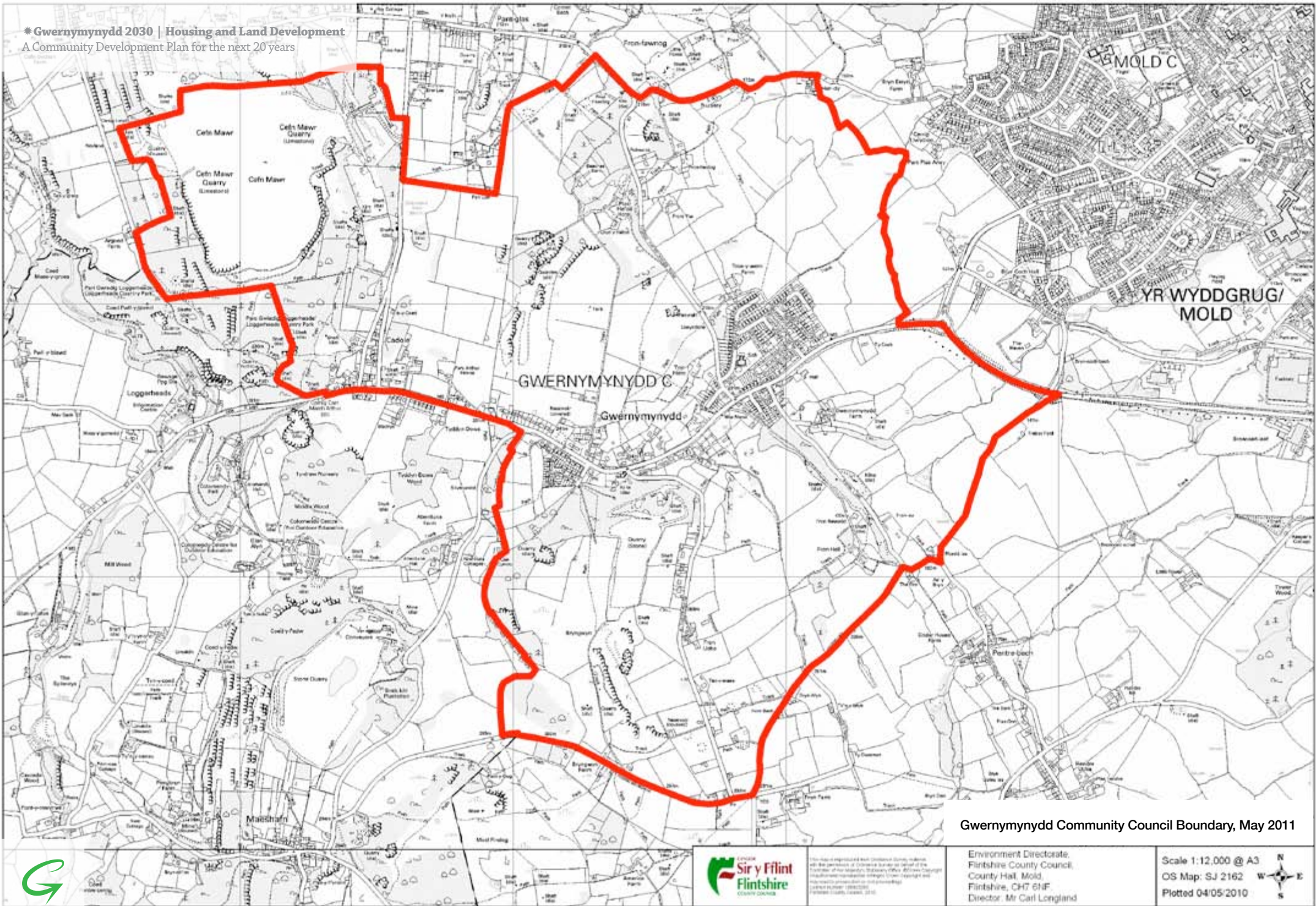
The provision of a shop is essentially a commercial undertaking. The Community Council cannot provide a shop but it could consider any proposal that may be put forward. See text on page 8.



#### Cadole

The Flintshire-Denbighshire boundary runs down the middle of the A494 and parts of Cadole are in Denbighshire.





Gwernymynydd Community Council Boundary, May 2011



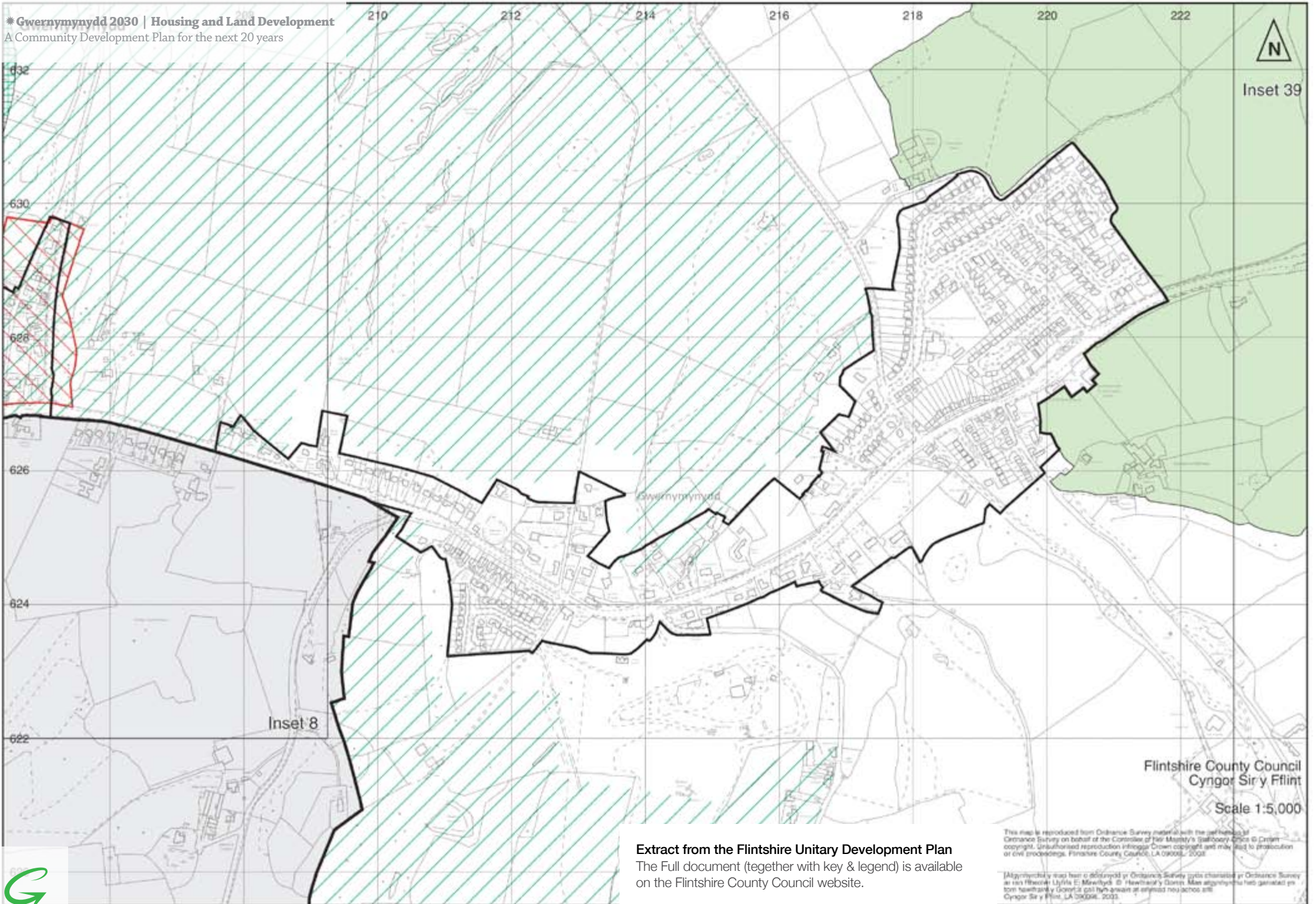
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Environment Directorate,  
Flintshire County Council,  
County Hall, Mold,  
Flintshire, CH7 6HF  
Director: Mr Carl Longland

Scale 1:12,000 @ A3  
OS Map: SJ 2162  
Plotted 04/05/2010



\*Gwernymynydd 2030 | Housing and Land Development  
A Community Development Plan for the next 20 years



**Extract from the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan**  
 The Full document (together with key & legend) is available  
 on the Flintshire County Council website.

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[Alynyddiaeth y map hon o ddolurwyd yn Ordnance Survey gyda chwmraeth yn Ordnance Survey  
 ar ran Fflewddur Llywelyn E. Mawrlydd © Fflewddur y Gorn. Mae alynyddiaeth hon gennad yn  
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 Cyngor Sir y Fflint, LA 09006L, 2023.]

Flintshire County Council  
 Cyngor Sir y Fflint  
 Scale 1:5,000

### Determining public opinion

In the past the Community Council has tended to oppose rather than support planning applications for large new developments. Often they have evidenced practical problems particularly in relation to road access, drainage and sewerage. On other occasions it is has been by way of representation of those people who may be adversely affected. Underlying all of this however is the inherent view that residents of Gwernymynydd strongly value the surrounding local countryside; it is often cited as the main reason why people choose to live here.

Surprisingly, in the various postal surveys carried out in the preparation of this plan (see Appendix 2) the only responses referring to any restriction of development referred to the specific need to maintain the open space between Gwernymynydd and Mold.

On the other hand, the most popular response in the postal surveys, on any subject, indicated a need for more locally available affordable property. Respondents wanted to make it possible for young people to remain in the village when they want to set up home for themselves.

The Community Council is however mindful that what could be termed, the “silent majority” may only give voice to their opinion in reaction to definite proposed developments. This was later supported by views expressed at a subsequent public meeting and is the general view of councillors from talking more informally to residents.

### “For or Against” Policies ?

Had there been definite agreement, then a policy to support or oppose future development could be included in this document. However, as explained in the above paragraph, no such consensus is apparent and so, the Community Council has decided that it is not possible or indeed appropriate to include a general ‘for or against’ housing policy statement which would be fully reflective of village opinion.

There were however three important points made that the Community Council feel do have consensus throughout the village:

- It is vital to retain the current open land between Gwernymynydd and Mold.
- Any new development or extensions to existing development should be mindful of the scale and character of the village in respect of building design, choice of materials and the natural contours of the land.
- It is preferable to develop on “infill” sites rather than on agricultural land, or land previously not built upon.



#### “Better together”

Each member of the Steering Group that worked on this Plan made a special contribution. They worked as a team.





The Community Council recognise and appreciate the fact that Flintshire County Council keep them routinely informed of planning applications and invite their comments. (They note that under current regulations this is not statutory and would welcome the Assembly Government making it a statutory requirement throughout Wales.)

The Community Council will therefore look forward to working with Flintshire on their forthcoming Local Plan and will continue to evaluate planning applications on a case by case basis. In order to facilitate both of these, they would particularly welcome the continued provision of the following information from Flintshire if and when it becomes available:

- Population numbers, age breakdown and any forecast
- Proportion of properties in each Council Tax band
- Numbers of council owned properties
- Results of Strategic Housing Land Availability survey
- Analysis of future housing demand parameters (average household size, migration etc.)

(Figures for Gwernymynydd-Cadole and Flintshire as a whole)

### Cadole – in Flintshire and Denbighshire

The Flintshire-Denbighshire boundary runs down the middle of the A494. If heading from the Rainbow towards Loggerheads, after the turn to Maeshafn, all the housing and land to the left is in Denbighshire.

It is important to record therefore the fact that any proposals or policies equivalent to those in this plan, affecting the Denbighshire part of Cadole is the responsibility of Llanferres Community Council.



#### Seventies housing

The estates developed during the nineteen seventies remain central in the identity of the village at the start of the new millennium.



#### Limits on major development

The Community Council will seek to ensure that the open space surrounding the village is preserved.

# Housing and Land Development Policies

## \*H1

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council will continue to comment on planning applications primarily on a case-by-case basis. This may be to offer support to an application where it has positive benefits for the community (as outlined in other chapters of this plan e.g. a village shop) or help oppose it, for example where it is shown to have a seriously detrimental effect on neighbouring properties.

## \*H2

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council will specifically and rigorously oppose any proposed development, of whatever nature, in the land separating Gwernymynydd from Mold.

## \*H3

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council would support a limited and appropriate housing scheme proven to be ideally providing for local first-time tenants or buyers.

## \*H4

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council supports the County Council in maintaining effective design control over any new build and housing extensions. In particular it would emphasise the need for:

- ▶ Respecting Gwernymynydd as a rural rather than an urban location
- ▶ Use of local building materials (slate, local stone)
- ▶ Housing of a size compatible with existing housing stock (e.g. no “executive size” houses in amongst smaller properties)
- ▶ An appreciation of the local topography of the village.

## \*H5

✓ Ongoing 2010-2030

The Community Council prefers development to take place on infill sites rather than on land previously not built upon.

## \*H6

✓ Short term 2010-2012

The Community Council will look to provide a facility to match residents with accommodation to let with those potential residents who may be seeking it.



# Monitoring and Updating the Plan

Production of this Community Development Plan has involved a significant amount of survey and consultation work by the Community Council over a period of approximately 18 months (See Appendix 2).

The Community Council can of course constitutionally decide to change the content of this plan at any time. This final plan is however written in the spirit of offering guidelines for the current and future Community Councillors on the broad objectives and policy direction for the foreseeable future. As such it should not need frequent alteration.

It is important however that the plan is not seen as a totally static document and that it is kept under regular review. The Community Council intend to maintain it on the following basis:

## \*Reviewing the Plan

The Community Development Plan will be formally reviewed annually at the October meeting of the Community Council. This will include:

- ▶ Have any decisions been made contrary to the content of the plan. If so does the relevant policy need amending?
- ▶ To what extent have objectives been achieved?
- ▶ Are there any new policies that need to be included?

Following this annual review, the plan will be updated and renamed with the year in question, for example “Gwernymynydd Community Development Plan – updated 2012”. It will be released on the Gwernymynydd Web site and as paper copies to local residents on request.

A wholly new Community Development Plan will be produced in 2019- 2020. This will plan for the period 2020-2040 and will involve a similar level of public consultation as took place in 2009-2010.



### Keeping the country clean

Rock quarried in Gwernymynydd was ground to a powder to become the main ingredient in “Vim” a much used cleaning agent which was popular until the nineteen seventies. Image credit: Mary Evans Picture Library



# Appendix 1: Flintshire and Strategic Planning

Amongst its other roles, this plan will provide important local information as part of the evidence Flintshire County Council will be using to develop their Local Development Plan, beginning hopefully mid-2011. The precise timing will depend on the still awaited agreement and approval of the County's Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

When formed in 1996, following local government reorganisation, Flintshire County Council were required to produce a UDP. This updated the Structure and Local Plans produced by the previous Clwyd County Council.

The UDP contains the key, county wide proposals for new development, including for example, the settlement boundary referred to in this Community Plan.

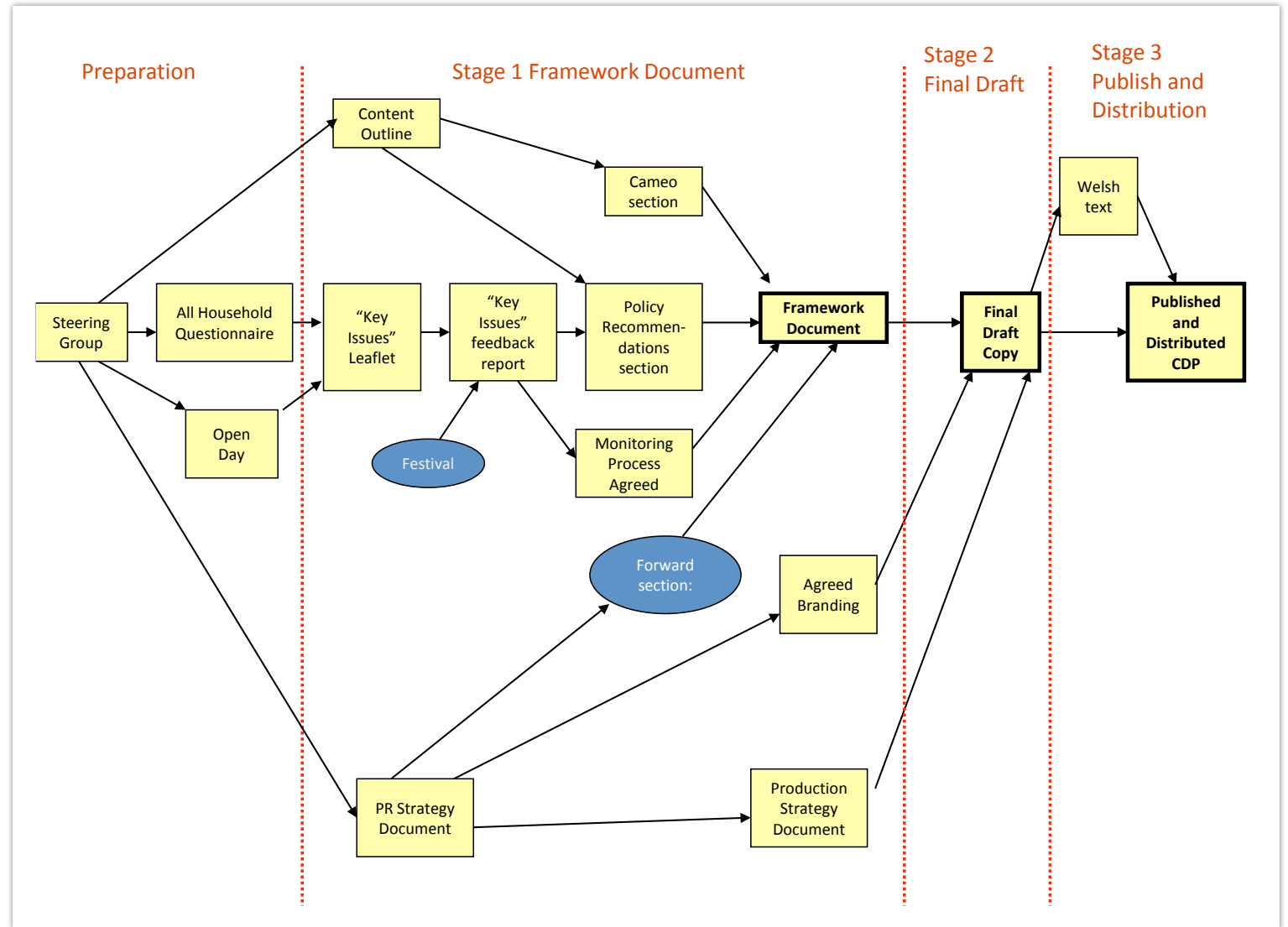
Work actually began on the UDP in 2001, and though still in the process of adoption, the UDP is now a substantially emerged plan having been through all the statutory processes including a Public Enquiry in 2007-2008. The UDP is approved by the Council for use when making Development Control decisions and significant weight can be attached to its policies.



# Appendix 2: The Process

Including details of all Surveys and consultations

The production of this Plan benefitted from the Steering Group employing a professional approach to the project using the UK Government standard method (PRINCE2). At the outset a "Project Initiation Document" (PID) was agreed by the Community Council and this served to ensure that all preparations, consultations and surveys were carried correctly and that everything was properly documented and agreed. Whilst the original timescale slipped a few months, the planned sequence of events as shown in the diagram opposite was still held to. A copy of the PID is available in the Library at [www.gwernymynydd.co.uk](http://www.gwernymynydd.co.uk)



## Appendix 3: Population figures

A census is held in the UK every 10 years. The data in this plan is from the 2001, 1991 and 1981 censuses.

Most frequently seen census data for this area is at Gwernymynydd “Ward” level which includes Nercwys.

The table is based on 1981 “Enumeration District” and 1991, 2001 “Output Area” data. These are areas smaller than Ward level and therefore allow Nercwys to be excluded.

Enumeration Districts and Output Areas are not geographically equivalent from census to census. However the outer boundary of the overall area is generally coterminous and anyway covers the less populated margins of the territory, so the aggregate area is generally the same.

1981 data was obtained by special request to the Office of National Statistics. 1991 and 2001 data is available on-line from [www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk). The results of the 2011 census will begin to appear in 2012.

## Appendix 4: Quarries

Name of quarry	Location	Current situation
Cefn Mawr (Castle/Hanson)	NW corner of the village Boundary – between Cadole & Pantymwyn	Active (although production outputs are currently reduced) Planning consents exist until 2030
Aberduna (Hanson)	In Denbighshire to the SW of The village between Cadole & Maeshafn	Active (although production outputs currently reduced) Planning consents exist until 2012
Cambrian	Centre of the village Off Glyndwr Road	Worked out as a quarry with no current licence to extract. Used as a “works yard” with frequent activity.
Bryn Gwyn	Southern end of the village On west side of Glyndwr Road	Worked out as a quarry although there was a relatively recent application to reopen working. This was refused by Flintshire and the LA imposed a Prohibition Notice. The owner appealed and there was a Public Enquiry which found in favour of the County Council. As a result the WAG upheld the decision made by Flintshire.
Rainbow	SW of Rainbow Inn	Currently disused
Hafod	Above Plas Hafod	Disused
Colomendy	Opposite the “boundary stone”	Disused
Loggerheads	In Loggerheads Country Park	Disused



# Appendix 5: Flintshire Council Properties

Number of current council owned properties in Gwernymynydd (as at June 2010)

Type of housing	Quantity owned
3 Bedroom House	6
2 Bedroom Bungalow	18
1 Bedroom Flat	4

Of the 600 (approximately) residential properties in the village 28 are owned by the County Council and rented to local residents. There are 6 three bedroom houses, 18 two bedroom bungalows and 4 one bedroom flats.

# Appendix 6: Those Responsible for the Plan

The idea of a Plan was first discussed by the Community Council in 2007 although it was during 2009 that the Council set up a Steering Group to take the lead in the work. The smaller Editorial Group undertook the final tasks to produce the Plan within the time scale set by the Community Council.

## \*Steering Group members

- Elizabeth Barlow†
- Carl Jackson\*
- Paul Roberts
- Chris Bradshaw\* † (chair)
- Gwyn Morris\* †
- John Seddon†
- Graham Cook
- Elwyn Owens\* † (secretary and editorial group coordinator)
- Olive Sweetman\*
- Graham Humphreys
- Liz Parry\*
- Keith Taylor\*
- Norma Humphreys
- Jane Roberts†
- Marjorie Thomson\*

\* Community Council member

† Editorial Group member

All the members of the Steering Group and the Community Council were saddened when Graham Cook passed away in 2010. He made a thoughtful and constructive contribution to the Plan with his knowledge of the history of Gwernymynydd and families who have lived in the village for generations.



Layout & design by  
Bob Walker  
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A print version of the Plan can be purchased from the Community Council. Further information may be obtained from:

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