

Project BRAND

Partnership Working Case Study

In late 2009, the Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit (WHIASU) was approached by Denbighshire County Council to assist in a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) on the BRAND Project. The HIA was carried out to identify the project's potential impacts on health and wellbeing, assessing these impacts and making recommendations, whilst identifying key vulnerable groups to be involved throughout the project. The BRAND Project is a three year project, 75% funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the EU's Ireland-Wales 2007-2013 Interreg IVA programme. The programme is a community initiative that aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion by promoting international and cross border cooperation. The partners in the project are Denbighshire County Council (lead partner) and Isle of Anglesey County Council, Wales and Kildare County Council and Dun Laoghaire- Rathdown County Council, Ireland.

Rationale for the project

The towns of Rhyl, Holyhead, Athy and Dun Laoghaire have all undergone regeneration works in recent years. However, issues have been encountered in all cases with how the developments are perceived by residents, businesses, the tourism and hospitality sector and others, leading to adverse effects on community regeneration.

The key aims and activities of Project BRAND are to:

- ❖ Develop and test a method of place by re-branding and re-engaging communities
- ❖ Create a toolkit of the methodology developed and make this available to other areas as a template for community regeneration
- ❖ Carry out a brand audit, including an exercise of ranking both the strengths and image contamination factors in each of the 4 towns
- ❖ Deliver brand action plans, helping to change perceptions from negative to positive
- ❖ Create groups to facilitate community engagement including a joint steering group to manage project risk, a local stakeholder group in each of the 4 towns to help engage a wide range of stakeholders, a stakeholder forum to engage each of the 4 stakeholder groups and a project officer team to manage and deliver the project.



Goals, objectives and impacts

- ❖ Identification and development of the brand of each town
- ❖ Establishing a sustainable cross-border model for urban re-branding (including the development of a methodology/toolkit)
- ❖ Developing community understanding of the need for sustainable development (through engagement with stakeholders)
- ❖ Devising new research and consultation processes
- ❖ The overall results will be the creation of new and positive place brands for the towns involved in the project and for each town to have completed a place branding programme; the development of one overall methodology for place branding; the creation of six sub actions/links between the towns. This will lead to community revitalisation, a positive self image for the towns and subsequent sustainability and increased and sustained socio-economic wellbeing.

The HIA

The rapid HIA was undertaken at a one day participatory stakeholder workshop and was attended by 18 participants from a variety of public sectors and business backgrounds, including voluntary/community groups, local authority and Public Health professionals and elected members. The workshop focused on the impact on initiatives, both direct and indirect, of the project within Rhyl.

Summary of key potential health impacts

	Positive	Negative
Lifestyles	Promotion and development of cycling and walking tracks; including linking with active lifestyles projects Promotion of existing and development of new restaurants and to improve the night time economy	Limited range of night time economy and lack of family food establishments
Community and Social Influences	Activities of BRAND may contribute to enhancing local pride, positive thinking via positive media	Potential to raise expectations then not deliver. Risk of enforcing or increasing negative

	stories, enhancing community identity and pride, project and service implementation. Links to local events. Encouraging community involvement. Wider regional benefits.	perceptions.
Environmental and Living Conditions	Linking in with regeneration agenda. Highlighting existing environmental assets e.g clean beach, botanical gardens. Ties in with county strategies such as LDP. Opportunity to show decrease in crime levels in the area.	Pace of change may not be quick enough for some whilst for communities affected by change it may not be welcome. Media may remain negative. Potential barrier of existing infrastructure. Need to address perceptions of risk.
Economic	Promote increased investment and employment in area	Need to 'myth bust' over seasonality of employment and black economy.
Access to services	Integrated primary care centre to enhance positive services. Promote quality and access to services through improved public transport.	Perceptions of drug use & lack of treatment and preventative services. Question of what will happen to existing hospital. Visual impact of area around train station poor.
Macro factors	Connections with other policy areas and market the difference made by project activities.	Budget and resource constraints across all areas.

Summary of recommendations

Having identified the potential health impacts through the use of a Health and Wellbeing Determinants checklist the remainder of the workshop was focused on suggesting recommendations to maximise potential improvements to peoples health and wellbeing and to minimise the potential harmful effects on health and wellbeing. Three key areas were recommended for action:

Media

A strategy needs to be developed in order to positively and actively engage the media with the project and associated activities, including the promotion of work undertaken by regional and national media. In order to facilitate dissemination of information it was suggested that a presentation be given by partners in the BRAND project to keep stakeholders informed of current and future developments.

Partnership working and integration

It is essential that partnership working should be integrated into all aspects of the work. The concept of partnership working is central to the project and the creation and maintenance of strong working relationships between all towns involved in the project is essential to project success. Engagement with communities and the continuing involvement of stakeholders was also identified as a key recommendation.



Image

Where buildings are derelict or under development information should be visible outlining what is happening to them. There is also scope to showcase the work of local artists. It was suggested that best practice from other seaside towns and project partners should be followed.

Conclusions and next steps

The HIA successfully identified potential health and wellbeing impacts of the BRAND project in Rhyll and identified local stakeholders to be involved throughout the project. The HIA workshop provided an opportunity to discuss the nature of the project and to engage and discuss with other partners and stakeholders, sharing perspectives and forming recommendations to maximise positive/minimise negative impacts. The HIA report will act as a guide as the BRAND project in Rhyll develops and will help to inform the influential stakeholder group as they formulate the action plan for the town. Media, partnership working and integration and image will be focal aspects of the project going forward, having been identified as part of the HIA process. The other three towns involved in BRAND will also carry out HIAs and a review and review has been scheduled for three years into the project. A link to the full HIA report can be accessed at http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/Documents/522/BRAND_Rhyl_HIA_Report_-_final_ver.pdf and other case studies can be found at www.whiasu.wales.nhs.uk