

The cultural industries and a model of sustainable regeneration: manufacturing 'pop' in the Rhondda Valleys of South Wales

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Many UK cities that experienced industrial decline during the 1980s and 1990s have turned increasingly to the cultural industries and the production of consumer culture in an effort to diversify local economies and rebuild local communities. This paper attempts to synthesize a range of academic literature addressing the role of the cultural industries in delivering sustainable regeneration. Literature from geography, leisure studies, tourism studies and cultural studies is reviewed in relation to the wider policy context of urban regeneration, neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion. This paper then evaluates three specific policy issues that have given rise to previous debate. First, the issue of linking national and local policy agendas is discussed; second, the role of the cultural industries in generating and integrating economic and social capital is assessed; and third, the place of 'flagship' projects and the role of public-private partnerships is explored. Drawing on and developing guidance from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the paper then proposes a series of 11 principles that can be seen as forming the basis of potentially sustainable cultural projects that can contribute positively towards regeneration, renewal and inclusion. These principles are examined in relation to the case study of The Pop Factory, a recent cultural project developed in South Wales with explicit regeneration, renewal and inclusion objectives.

INTRODUCTION

Although the terms urban regeneration, neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion are now perhaps most commonly associated with the policy discourses or rhetoric of New Labour, academic interest in such matters has a far longer history. Pahl's (1970) *Whose City?* and Harvey's (1973) *Social Justice and the City* can be seen as heralding the beginnings of the sub-disciplines of urban sociology and social geography where concerns with regeneration, renewal, social inclusion and local democracy were given centre stage. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s the developing subject fields of leisure, tourism and cultural studies, both informed by and informing of policy and practice in leisure, tourism and cultural services,

expanded the research literature with increasing evaluations of the role of the arts, leisure, sport and tourism in community development (Aitchison, 2000; Bianchini and Parkinson, 1993; Bramham, 1989; Coalter, 2001; Coalter *et al.*, 1988; Hall and Robertson, 2001; Hardy *et al.*, 1996; Haywood, 1994; Henry, 1997; Keens *et al.*, 1989; McDonald and Tungatt, 1992; Richards, 1995; Voase, 1997; Wynne, 1992). Simultaneously, authors such as Redhead (1992) and Corrigan (1995) explored the role of popular music as a creative or cultural industry with the potential to develop local social economies. This paper attempts to synthesize these overlapping academic discourses within the wider policy context of the role of the cultural industries in contemporary urban regenera-

tion, neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion (DCMS, 1999, 2001; DETR, 2000).

A case study of the development of one cultural industry project with explicit regeneration, renewal and inclusion objectives is offered in an attempt to test a model or to 'expand and generalize theory' (Yin, 1994, p. 10). The presentation of the case study was informed by academic literature, documentary and local media sources and interviews with key informants in the public and private sectors including the Managing Director of the cultural industry featured in the case study and the Head of Cultural Services and Head of Regeneration within the relevant local authority. The paper culminates in the development of a rudimentary model rather than proposing any new theoretical advancement in this field. As such, the case study is seen as being 'exploratory' rather than 'explanatory' (Yin, 1994). Nevertheless, the model presented has been developed following an evaluation of a range of previously published theoretical expositions of the role of the cultural industries in urban regeneration, renewal and inclusion and provides a starting point for better refined and more widely tested models in the future.

The paper evaluates three specific policy issues that have given rise to previous debate. First, the issue of linking national and local policy agendas is discussed; secondly, the role of the cultural industries in generating and integrating economic and social capital is assessed; and thirdly, the place of 'flagship' projects and the role of public-private partnerships is deliberated upon. Drawing on and developing guidance from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (1999) the paper then proposes a series of 11 principles that can be seen as forming the basis of potentially sustainable cultural projects that can contribute positively towards regeneration, renewal and inclusion. These principles are defined as: valuing diversity, embedding local control,

supporting local commitment, promoting equitable partnerships, defining common objectives in relation to actual needs, working flexibly with change, pursuing quality across the spectrum, connecting with the mainstream of cultural activities, recognizing the importance of commercial-led investment, balancing flagship projects with smaller initiatives, and working to develop existing skills bases and/or cultural interests.

THE CULTURAL INDUSTRIES: LINKING NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY AGENDAS

The 1970s and 1980s witnessed a period of unprecedented industrial decline in the UK. Sites of traditional extractive industry that had fuelled Britain's industrial revolution, together with neighbouring heavy industrial works related to iron, steel and shipbuilding, were abandoned in favour of cheaper foreign imports or overseas manufacturing bases. The spatial concentration of decline experienced in the industrial heartlands of Northern England, South Wales and Central Scotland was further exaggerated in the industrial ports which had grown in size and population to support the increasingly export-oriented economy of the UK during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As economic decline and social deprivation took hold cities like Glasgow, Dundee, Liverpool, Newcastle and Cardiff turned increasingly to the cultural industries and the production of consumer culture in an effort to reverse the industrial decline by diversifying local economies and rebuilding local communities. In contemporary Wales, for example, 'tourism [now] contributes more to GDP than construction and agriculture put together ... the political world is beginning to realize that tourism is essential to the future of Wales' (Evans, 2001).

The increasing recognition of the role of the cultural industries in economic regeneration and neighbourhood renewal was keenly

felt at a national UK level where a Conservative-controlled government (1979–1997) was becoming increasingly concerned by both criticism of an expanding ‘North-South divide’ and growing calls for devolution of government coming from Wales, Scotland and the regions most remote from Westminster. A series of national policies was therefore developed and implemented in an attempt to replace the earlier forms of heavy industry with new forms of cultural industry. These national policies were, in turn, supported by European policy that designated many of the most deprived areas as qualifying for ‘Objective One’ funding status thereby providing the highest possible level of subsidy for new initiatives and projects designed to stimulate the local and regional economies and increase employment. For example, the national programme of Garden Festivals attempted, with mixed results, to stimulate regeneration on the sites of previous heavy industry. Through enhancing the image and aesthetic of ports that had experienced industrial decline, initiatives such as Garden Festivals, leisure, sport and heritage developments, accompanied by wholesale place rebranding, were attempts to promote longer-term, sustainable inward investment (McCarthy and Lloyd, 1999, p. 265). Alongside these new leisure-related developments was a growing interest in the role of the cultural or creative industries in urban regeneration (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1993; Hall and Robertson, 2001). Not only would the national brand of ‘Cool Britannia’, embracing early 1990s fashion, music and art, be developed into one of the UK’s largest export lines of the time but it would also stimulate a series of local regeneration projects built around the increasingly vibrant cultural industries sector. The significance of local cultural initiatives to regional economies throughout the UK has been recognized previously by, for example, Bianchini and Parkinson (1993) and is currently acknowledged by central government in their three-

tier approach to the development of cultural strategies at national, regional and local levels (Regional Issues Working Group, 2000). Whilst tensions do exist in translating policies across different geographical scales, disparate social identities and diverse economic priorities the acknowledgement of the need for Local Cultural Strategies goes some way to redressing the imbalance in cultural provision whereby an estimated 33% of the cultural industries sector is based in London (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2000).

The cultural or ‘creative’ industries, encompassing music, film, television, performing and visual art, drama and dance are estimated to generate annual revenue of around £112.5 billion, employ 1.3 million people and account for more than five per cent of the UK’s Gross Domestic Product (DCMS, 2000). McRae (2001) argues that the cultural industries are among the UK’s strongest industrial assets predicting that, within 10–15 years, this sector will be bigger than UK manufacturing. McRae’s prediction may well hold true as the cultural industries sector grew twice as fast as the economy as a whole during 2000 (DCMS, 2000).

The music industry is a major contributor to the cultural industry sector and Haslam (1999) has demonstrated that popular music was one of the main contributors to the regeneration of many deprived areas of Manchester during the 1980s and early 1990s. Here, the music business became a source for re-employment, economic regeneration, cultural expression and a resurgent international profile, all of which acted as precursors and catalysts for other forms of cultural investment and development including nightlife and major sporting events. In Sheffield, the role of the music business in the creation of a ‘Cultural Industry Quarter’ has had mixed success but has undoubtedly formed a pivotal role in transforming a previously run-down area of the city into a successful location for business, education

and culture (Skelton, 1996). The former Department of the Environment, Transport, and the Regions (DETR) estimated that this area now employs around 17,000 people and generates £900 million a year for Sheffield's local economy (DETR, 2000).

CULTURAL CAPITAL: INTEGRATING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS

The previous section has highlighted some of the economic benefits that the cultural industries have brought to areas of industrial decline. Warpole (2000) has observed that public sector urban regeneration policies have often appeared to prioritize economic and environmental objectives over social and community interests. In such cases poor co-ordination and co-operation among departments within and between local and national government can have the effect of rendering even these economic-led urban regeneration policies ineffective (Orr, 2001). In addition to stimulating the economy, however, it is argued that the cultural industries can play a significant role in promoting social developments by contributing to the vibrancy and positive identity of places to live and work in, by encouraging community involvement and enhancing civic pride, and developing the skills base of the local community (DCMS, 1999, 2000; Jermyn, 2001; Long and Sanderson, 1996; Long *et al.*, 2002). O'Connor (1992, p. 69) has summarized these benefits in relation to the need to work within a strategic approach to the development of the cultural industries: 'An arts and cultural industries strategy not only has significant benefits for the local community but can also enhance the quality of life. It can establish and focus new civic pride and sense of citizenship'. In relation to popular music Corrigan (1995) has stressed that the cultural industries can bring young people together and can create a social institution with which they can identify and Dwelly (2001) has

emphasized the role that popular music can play in engaging younger members of communities where such young people may be hard to reach.

The potential of cultural investment to stimulate economic *and* social development was highlighted in the Policy Action Team 10's report to the Social Exclusion Unit on the role of sport and the arts in tackling social exclusion (DCMS, 1999). The Policy Action Team for Sport and the Arts (PAT 10) was one of 18 teams established following the publication of *Bringing Britain Together: A National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal* (Cabinet Office, 1998). *Arts and Sport: A Report to the Social Exclusion Unit* was intended to report on 'best practice in using arts, sport and leisure to engage people in poor neighbourhoods, particularly those who may feel most excluded such as disaffected young people and people from ethnic minorities' (DCMS, 1999, p. 5). The report showcases a number of initiatives that have worked successfully towards these goals. For example, TS†k (Trafalgar Square 2000) was established in 1996 to support training and skills development for young unemployed people seeking jobs in the expanding cultural industries sector and between November 1997 and the publication of the PAT report in 1999 'around 12,000 young unemployed people engaged with TS†k, over 50% from ethnic minority groups' (DCMS, 1999, p. 25).

Such integration of social and economic policies has become a hallmark of the 'Third Way' politics practised by the two successive New Labour UK Governments since 1997. Through the creation of the Regional Development Agencies and Regional Cultural Consortia, together with the remit given to local authorities for the development of Community Strategies and Local Cultural Strategies, public policy related to the cultural industries has sought to illustrate the government's 'joined-up thinking' approach to urban regeneration, neighbourhood renewal, social inclusion, healthy living

and lifelong learning. Thus a series of policies and practices have been designed to stimulate inter-relationships between the extrinsic and intrinsic benefits of economic capital, cultural capital and social capital. In developing *A Culture Strategy for Wales* such an approach is expressed in the assertion that:

Culture has an intrinsic value, but it also brings economic benefits. The flowering of individual talents as well as the success of cultural industries can raise the profile of Wales to potential investors and visitors alike. But the connection between our culture and the economic measures of our lives is much deeper than the simple statistics of how many are employed in the arts and media, or in the monetary turnover of cultural industries, important though those factors are. A modern, culturally rich society will be a society that is also economically prosperous, because it will have nurtured curiosity, imagination, creativity and diversity—as well as particular skills—in its young people. It will have valued those attributes throughout their lives, and ensured their full expression in the arts, in business, in science and in every kind of service to our society ... it will have opened doors to learning and new skills—artistic, technical, managerial and physical. It will have built confidence in individuals and cohesion in communities. (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002, p. 3)

FLAGSHIP URBAN RENEWAL PROJECTS: MANAGING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The term 'flagship project' has become well-established within the leisure management lexicon over the last decade (Urban Task Force, 1999; Voase, 1997). Smyth (1994, pp. 4–5), however, emphasizes the need to define what we mean by 'flagship project' and offers the view that a flagship development comprises 'a development in its own right, which may or may not be self-sustaining; a marshalling point for further investment; a marketing tool for an area or city'. Islam (1999) goes as far as to state that a single

flagship project is an essential element of any major regeneration project and that the creative industries can play a major role in defining such a flagship. The Glasgow Garden Festival, for example, became instrumental in defining Glasgow as European City of Culture in 1992 whilst the Baltic Centre and the 'Winking Eye' bridge across the Tyne, awarded the status of 'Building of the Year 2002' have provided a focal points for the Newcastle/Gateshead bid to become European City of Culture in 2008. Niesewand (2000) cites the Lowry Centre in Salford as a flagship for urban regeneration and a blueprint for future cultural developments. Funded by the National Lottery, the Lowry Centre provides a venue for visual and performing arts and has been a key development in the transformation of an industrial wasteland into both an international arts venue and a commercial business park. In the UK, National Lottery funding has given rise to a number of flagship projects related to the cultural industries. But these projects are often nominated independently of any wider planning proposal or regeneration project and such decontextualization can have the effect of reducing their impact and disenfranchising small community groups from local planning processes (Law, 1996).

The need for an identifiable relationship between a flagship project and the local community cannot be overstated. Bianchini (1993) has observed that, in an attempt to secure financial support from central government and the commercial sector, those leading urban regeneration initiatives often concentrate their resources on developing an elite flagship project at the expense of community-based projects or more popular cultural activities. Smiers (2000), although acknowledging that flagship projects can be beneficial to local residents, notes that their sustainability depends on the existence within the community of an established social and artistic base to support the further development of a cultural

sector. In other words, the flagship project should stimulate growth and development in cultural industries that already exist rather than expecting a flagship project to generate entirely new areas of cultural industry. Moreover, many flagship projects are unsustainable without attracting either ongoing investment once they are 'established' or some form of investment from substantial consumer spending associated with the project (Smyth, 1994).

It is widely accepted that urban regeneration is best led by the private sector if long-term growth is to be achieved (Audit Commission, 1989). However, Smyth (1994) has observed that such views have developed implicitly and iteratively rather than being expressed explicitly within formal policies. Notwithstanding the importance of the commercial sector, there is recognition that the public sector has a major role to play in devising and implementing policies that facilitate a strategic overview and in ensuring that the development of the cultural industries adheres to wider public interest agendas (Wynne, 1992; Landry and Bianchini, 1995, p. 54). In reality, many of the projects that have been most successful have been supported by strategic public-private alliances or partnerships. For example, the continued cultural renaissance of Manchester, Sheffield or Edinburgh city centres has been cultivated by commercial sector bar and club owners supported by a relaxed licensing regime operated by the local authority, together with public and private investment from a national level designed to promote international arts and sports events. In similar vein, Aitchison *et al.* (1999, p. 155) have highlighted the work of the City Fringe Partnership in London where funding from the government's Single Regeneration Budget (1996–1999) brought partners together in a programme of action called the 'Developing Cultural Quarters Project' which was designed to enhance the area's appearance and accessibility, stimulate employ-

ment, generate visitors and increase productive consumption in the City Fringe areas of Clerkenwell and Spitalfields/Brick Lane.

The mutual dependence of public and private sector investment in cultural development is now therefore widely acknowledged (Smyth, 1994). Wynne (1992) argued that public and private sector partnerships are essential if arts-led urban regeneration projects are to be successful and if they are to gain the support of the wider community. Redhead (1992) has made similar arguments in relation to the sustainability of popular music initiatives and has asserted that the development of the popular music industry is dependent upon the public and private sectors recognizing that a local popular music economy is both a viable cultural industry in its own right and may even have the potential to become a national or international industry.

What emerges from the critical evaluations of cultural development outlined above is a set of criteria or a kind of check-list that has to be fulfilled if the cultural industries sector is to contribute as fully as possible to urban regeneration, neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion. These criteria have, in effect, been summarized by the DCMS in their 'Principles which help to exploit the potential of arts/sport in regenerating communities' (DCMS, 1999, p. 8). The nine principles that underpin a successful cultural intervention for the purposes of regeneration, renewal and inclusion are defined by the DCMS (1999, p. 8) as:

1. Valuing diversity
2. Embedding local control
3. Supporting local commitment
4. Promoting equitable partnerships
5. Defining common objectives in relation to actual needs
6. Working flexibly with change
7. Securing sustainability
8. Pursuing quality across the spectrum

9. Connecting with the mainstream of art and sport activities

In addition to these nine principles, the commentaries and evaluations outlined above have stressed the need for balanced relationships between public and private sector investment and between flagship projects and other smaller projects. It is also evident that the most successful and sustainable developments are those that build on existing pockets of interest, skill and community involvement. Thus we might add three further criteria to the list produced by the DCMS:

1. Recognizing the importance of commercial-led investment
2. Balancing flagship projects with smaller initiatives
3. Working to develop existing skills bases and/or cultural interests

In developing such a model against which to evaluate cultural projects that aim to promote sustainable regeneration, renewal and inclusion objectives it is appropriate to omit principle 7 on the grounds that it reflects a tautology. As this paper argues that securing sustainability is the primary long-term objective of regeneration projects all of the principles cited in the model should contribute towards the principle of sustainability rather than merely co-exist alongside such a principle. Moreover, the principles of the model should act together to make a coherent contribution towards the 'triple-bottom-line' of economic, social and environmental sustainability. Our proposed model of sustainable cultural development therefore has 11 features against which projects might be assessed for investment, grant-aid, planning or potential partnership purposes. The 11 principles of a proposed model of sustainable cultural sector development are thus defined as:

1. Valuing diversity
2. Embedding local control

3. Supporting local commitment
4. Promoting equitable partnerships
5. Defining common objectives in relation to actual needs
6. Working flexibly with change
7. Pursuing quality across the spectrum
8. Connecting with the mainstream of art and sport activities
9. Recognizing the importance of commercial-led investment
10. Balancing flagship projects with smaller initiatives
11. Working to develop existing skills bases and/or cultural interests

THE POP FACTORY: DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY

The development of the Pop Factory, a new popular music production, entertainment and education facility in South Wales can therefore be evaluated in relation to many of the criteria for successful and sustainable cultural industries discussed above. Following the contextualization of the Pop Factory development this final section of the paper evaluates the project's success in integrating economic and social developments and its role as a flagship commercial-led urban renewal project supported by public sector investment. Within this broad evaluation, the ability of the Pop Factory to meet the specific criteria outlined above, or the 11 principles that underpin a successful cultural intervention for the purposes of regeneration, renewal and inclusion, is assessed.

Located in the town of Porth on the edge of the Rhondda Valleys in South Wales, the Pop Factory has been developed in one of the poorest areas of South Wales. Economically depressed and socially deprived since the closure of the coal mines in the 1980s, the area has high unemployment, large areas of poor housing and, at twice the national average, the highest exclusion rate from secondary school in Wales. Dobson (2000, p. 1) describes a way of life in the Rhondda

'where opportunities are few, services are difficult to access, and people lose hope'. The Pop Factory has been described by Jones (2002, p. 4) as a 'multimedia emporium' designed to promote popular music from Wales and to bring world famous popular music stars to a Welsh audience. The project has been born out of a long association between South Wales and music in the form of singing; from the male voice choirs publicized widely in the film *How Green Was My Valley*, to Shirley Bassey and Tom Jones, to the contemporary music scene and the world-famous Manic Street Preachers, Catatonia and the Stereophonics.

The Pop Factory is situated on the site of a former derelict soft drinks factory called Welsh Hills Works that was famous for making Corona pop. The site now accommodates 39,000 square feet of television studios, state-of-the-art sound recording and filming facilities, rehearsing facilities, and conference and licensed entertainment venues at a total cost of £1.7 million. It is best known for its namesake popular music programme 'The Pop Factory' which brings world famous popular music stars to the location, is free for local schoolchildren and broadcasts on BBC2 Wales. Thus the development of the Pop Factory coincided serendipitously with an expansion of Welsh television (Talfan Davies, 2002). The Pop Factory has a two-year advance portfolio with Channel S4C and is currently negotiating to have a series with ITV2 or another digital channel to be broadcast throughout the UK. This link with wider television production and broadcasting is evidence of the Pop Factory's ability to meet Principle 8 of the sustainable regeneration model: connecting with the mainstream of arts provision. Not only can such connections take place locally but, in the case of the Pop Factory, connections with mainstream arts provision are now being made between local, regional and national arts provision thereby emphasizing the significance of the Pop Factory to more

than just the local economy (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1993).

The Pop Factory was officially opened in 2000 and, from the outset, the project has recognized the importance of commercial-led investment. The need to recognize and secure commercial investment is highlighted as Principle 9 in the model of sustainable regeneration. In the case of the Pop Factory this principle is enmeshed with that of Principle 2 which stressed the importance of embedding local control. The project was the creation of Emyr Afan, a local businessman from South Wales, and Mair Davis who together own the Pop Factory and its parent company Avanti which was established in 1996. The business success of the company and its owners has been recognized nationally with Avanti awarded the Welsh Innovation and Entrepreneurial Company of the Year Award in 2001 and Mair Davis awarded the Women in Media's Welsh Woman of the Year Award in the same year. Bennet and Butler (2000) have also stressed the potential for sustainable regeneration of creating and maintaining these interconnections between the public and the private and the local and national. Through its commitment to such principles, however, Avanti as a company, and the Pop Factory in particular, have contributed to developing the social and cultural capital of the locality, the region, residents and visitors. Although the Pop Factory is a commercial enterprise, a main feature of its operation is that of bringing benefits to the local community in the form of access to facilities, employment, training, education and the development of civic pride. Thus, the venue has proved to be commercially viable whilst providing for the needs of local residents, supporting local commitment (Principle 3) and promoting equitable partnerships (Principle 4).

Future plans include a further private-public partnership to establish the Pop Centre which will form part of a Pop Academy aimed at offering training and qualifica-

tions for local people in all aspects of the media and music business (Price, 2002). The Pop Centre is being built in a disused supermarket adjacent to the Pop Factory and will fulfil local education needs by providing computer-based interactive learning facilities in addition to offering a café and meeting place for young people. Thus the project can be seen as working towards defining common objectives in relation to actual needs, thereby fulfilling the requirements of Principle 5. In contrast to the criticisms levelled by the likes of Hall and Robertson (2001) in relation to the claims made about the role of public art in regeneration and the meeting of local need, the Pop Factory does appear to have been developed with local need firmly in mind. Clearly, the sustainability of the venture will require further commercial investment in a range of smaller related initiatives that can serve to meet the requirements of Principle 10: balancing flagship projects with smaller initiatives.

The two key informants to the study from Rhondda Cynon Taff Council (RCT) both spoke of the strong links that had already developed between the project's economic objectives and its social benefits. The Head of Cultural Services, Polly Hamilton, fully recognized what she described as the 'socio-economic value of the creative industries' and commented that the project's success was, in part, built on strong foundations of a local tradition of community music and professionally-led community arts which provided an existing skills base and interest in cultural activities and development. Hamilton has clearly stressed the ability of the Pop Factory to meet the requirements of Principle 11 of the model: working to develop existing skills bases and/or cultural interests. Such a principle is also embedded in the work of Landry and Mattarasso (2001) and in Landry's (2000) 'Toolkit for Urban Innovators' in *The Creative City* which is mirrored in many of the Pop Factory-related developments.

The Head of Regeneration, Steve Fitz-Gibon, identified the unique role that the Pop Factory had played in engaging local young people through its ability to recognize and nurture aspects of youth culture. Echoing Corrigan's (1995), Dwelly's (2001) and Redhead's (1992) calls for popular music to be used as a vehicle for the social inclusion of young people in regeneration projects, the Pop Factory also embraces Principle 1 by valuing diversity within the community and not focussing resources solely towards those already in possession of recognized types of cultural capital or engaged in orthodox and established conspicuous consumption. Indeed, Emyr Afan, the Managing Director of the Pop Factory, commented that many local people had told him that the Pop Factory had brought pride to local residents and had helped to unite the community: '[T]he youth are proud to come from Porth because the Pop Factory is situated here. After the Simpson's the Pop Factory comes on with credits: 'recorded in Porth'. The young children living in the area now say they come from the home of the Pop Factory'. He went on to note that that there was a growing sense that things could be achieved in the Rhondda and that it was no longer necessary to be in London or Cardiff to run a successful cultural industry. Ironically, Cardiff had proved to be a prohibitively costly location for the Pop Factory because the success of the Cardiff Bay regeneration project had resulted in increased land and property prices. This sense of local pride, as emphasized by O'Connor (1992, p. 69), has the potential to build connections between any local flagship project and wider cultural industry developments.

In relation to flagship projects, the Head of Cultural Services defined the Pop Factory as 'an important icon' and 'a physical symbol showing that culture and creativity can be commercially viable in the Rhondda'. In recognition of the potential spin-off from such a cultural icon, Emyr Afan suggested

that the Rhondda Valleys could become a 'creative Silicon Valley' as digital technology made it possible to locate large cultural industries in areas outside cities and where property and rates were less expensive, labour was more freely available and the need for economic and social regeneration was often greater. The Head of Regeneration held the view that the Pop Factory was a 'one-off' for the area and that community-based music and media projects were likely to be the main beneficiaries of subsequent cultural development in the area. In contrast, the Head of Cultural Services believed that the Pop Factory will act as a catalyst for a range of wider economic developments associated with culture, creativity and consumption and including restaurants, bars, accommodation and public transport in similar vein to the developments that have taken place in a range of British cities and outlined earlier in this paper. The Pop Factory has thus undoubtedly become a major flagship for the development of the cultural industry sector, and the related tourism sector, in South Wales although its longer-term success has yet to be determined.

The Pop Factory has been a commercial development and all key informants agreed that the project would not have been successful if it had been developed entirely by the public sector. A range of factors including image, risk-taking and entrepreneurship were cited as being better developed and managed by the commercial sector. However, the project did receive public sector support in the form of £300,000 from the Welsh Development Agency (WDA) and Rhondda Cynon Taff Council (RCT) with this financial backing acting as an important lever in securing further finance from commercial banks. Fitz-Gibbon noted that although certain criteria had to be adhered to when using public funds, the WDA and RCT had appreciated the need for flexibility and allowed Avanti to pursue the development with minimal intervention thereby enabling the devel-

opers to meet the requirements of Principle 6: that of working flexibly with change.

At the time of the research, Rhondda Cynon Taff Council was finalizing its Local Cultural Strategy. The commercially operated Pop Factory has played a central role in the production of the public sector-led strategy and in raising awareness of the social and economic benefits that public and private sector involvement in the cultural industries can bring to urban regeneration and neighbourhood renewal projects thereby promoting equitable partnerships (Principle 4).

Thus, although the overall sustainability of the Pop Factory has yet to be determined there is clear evidence that this case study embraces elements of each of the 11 principles identified as components of a model of sustainable development for the cultural industries. If sustainability is determined by the ability to meet the series of principles guided by the DCMS, and modified above, then it seems clear that the Pop Factory and Rhondda Cynon Taff Council have in place many of the key elements required to ensure that the cultural industries will contribute to the sustainability of a regenerated South Wales. This is less a conclusion and more a state of the art review that will require ongoing evaluation at local, regional and national levels. Such evaluation should, where required, be followed by strategic intervention that demonstrates responsiveness to need to enable the triple-bottom-line of economic, social and environmental sustainability to be achieved.

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