

**National  
Enforcement  
Priorities for Wales**

Supplementary Volume:  
Supporting Evidence for the  
Selected Priorities

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**LBRO**  
Better Local Regulation

Prepared by the Local Better  
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Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

Priority 1: Protecting individuals from harm and promoting health improvement

One Wales emphasises the commitment shared by the Welsh Assembly Government, the health sector and local government to deliver significant improvements in the health of all people in Wales and to improve the wellbeing of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Compared to the other UK countries Wales has the highest percentage of the population who are aged 65 and over, and the most common causes of death in Wales are diseases of the circulatory and respiratory systems and cancer<sup>1</sup>, with diet, lifestyle choices and work related ill-health playing a contributory factor in these conditions.

The role of local regulation

Regulatory services have an important and unique contribution to make to improving public health and reducing health inequalities through their responsibilities in regard to reducing the availability of alcohol, tobacco and other age restricted products, promoting informed consumer choices about food and nutrition and ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of individuals at work.

Local authorities are responsible for health and safety enforcement in approximately 53,000 premises in Wales<sup>2</sup>. In 2008-9, local authorities carried out 1225 test purchases at a range of retail premises across Wales, of which 20% resulted in a sale of alcohol<sup>3</sup>.

Why this matters

**Nutrition**

- Poor diet is recognised as one of the main causes of ill-health and premature death. It has been estimated that approximately one third of deaths from heart disease and a quarter of deaths from cancer can be attributed to poor diet. With an increasing proportion of the population being classified as overweight or obese – which increases the risk of developing a range of chronic illnesses including heart disease, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes – the public health implications of poor diets are becoming more significant<sup>4</sup>.

**Alcohol and tobacco**

- Around 1,000 deaths annually in Wales are attributable to alcohol<sup>5</sup>. Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to certain types of cancer, memory loss or brain damage, increased risk of heart disease and certain types of stroke and liver disease. Guidance issued by the Chief Medical Officer highlights the particular impacts of excessive consumption of alcohol on children<sup>6</sup>.
- The cost to the Welsh economy of alcohol misuse is estimated at around £1.18 billion per year and the cost to the NHS in Wales has been estimated at £70-85 million per year<sup>7</sup>.
- Evidence shows that Wales has a higher percentage of 13 year olds drinking alcohol at least once a week compared to England and Scotland. Of 40 countries surveyed, Wales has the fourth highest percentage amongst 13 year old boys and third highest amongst girls.<sup>8</sup>
- In Wales in 2006-7, 114 children aged under 14 years old and 257 children aged 14-15 years old were admitted to hospital with admission codes relating to alcohol. 1551 of all the patient referrals for alcohol treatment in Wales were young people between the ages of 12 and 15, and a further 51 were under the age of 12<sup>9</sup>.
- In relation to tobacco, the latest figures for Wales (2004) suggest that 28% of 15 year old girls and 19% of 15 year old boys smoke regularly (higher than England at 24% and 16% respectively) and that the average age at which these regular smokers began smoking was just 12<sup>10</sup>.

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	<p><b>Work related ill health and injury</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Wales in 2007/08, 132,000 people were suffering from an illness they believed was caused by or made worse by their current or past work; 58,000 of these were new cases in the previous 12 months.</li> <li>• In 2007/08, 1.9 million working days were lost overall; 1.7 million of these were due to work related ill health and 0.3 million due to workplace injury<sup>11</sup>.</li> <li>• 86 people died from mesothelioma in 2006 (mesothelioma accounts for 1 in 40 of all male cancer deaths below the age of 80 in the UK)<sup>12</sup> and thousands more from other occupational cancers and lung diseases.</li> <li>• For all industries, the estimated prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD), stress and breathing or lung problems in 2006/07 per 100,000 employees were 3130, 1290 and 540 respectively. GPs were more likely to see people suffering from stress, MSD, skin or respiratory disease than any other reason<sup>13</sup>.</li> <li>• The losses resulting from this level of ill-health are primarily suffered by the workers in these industries, but also impact on businesses (disproportionately on small businesses) and society. Costs can be significant<sup>14</sup>, and include lost production, opportunity costs, costs to the local community and health services, and lost earnings. Significant suffering is also caused, with many workers unable to return to productive work. The nature of certain health risks, such as cancer, can take many years to develop.</li> <li>• The costs to employers in Wales of injury and ill-health for the industry sector enforced by local authorities<sup>15</sup> can be estimated to be between £39.6 million and £84.9 million. These statistics have been calculated using UK figures 'Costs to Britain of Workplace Accidents and Work-Related Ill Health' held by the Health and Safety Executive.</li> </ul> <p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing standards impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of individuals. There were 4,501 hazards to occupants identified in dwellings during 2007-08, the most common types being excess cold and damp and mould growth. In houses of multiple occupation across Wales, the most common hazard was fire<sup>16</sup>.</li> </ul>
Views of citizens and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy eating and diet are of growing importance to consumers. In the 2006 Consumer Attitude Survey carried out by the Food Standards Agency, 89% of UK consumers agreed with the statement, 'healthy eating is important to me.' They also reported concerns about levels of salt, fat and sugar in the diet.</li> <li>• Many also reported that they were attempting to reduce their consumption of such products and increase their dependence on labels to help choose healthy products. 52% of respondents claimed they always or usually studied labels before buying a product, for the first time.<sup>17</sup></li> <li>• Estimated costs to the Welsh economy of work related and other ill health through lost productivity and opportunity costs make health improvement a significant issue for businesses and employers.</li> </ul>
How this contributes to One Wales, Strategic Framework and national priorities	<p>One Wales has a vision of <b>A Fair and Just Society</b> which all citizens are empowered to determine their own lives and <b>A Healthy Future</b> for all of the people of Wales, ensuring that children have the best start in life and the population of Wales is healthy with a good quality of life.</p> <p>Reducing harm and promoting health improvement provides citizens with the information they need to make informed choices about their diet and lifestyle, while having confidence that effective regulatory enforcement ensures their health and wellbeing at work and protects young people from the harmful effects of alcohol, tobacco and solvents.</p>

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Partnership working	Reducing health inequalities and delivering improvements in the health of the nation is a complex and challenging issue that can only be addressed through collaborative effort that focuses on the needs of citizens. This will involve local partners and other local authority services, including Local Service Boards, and national partners including the Food Standards Agency Wales, the Health and Safety Executive and the National Public Health Service for Wales.
<b>Priority 2: Ensuring the safety and quality of the food chain to minimise the risk to human and animal health</b>	
<b>The farming industry is a key part of the Welsh landscape, heritage and economy. Regulation aims to protect the health and welfare of farmed animals to minimise the risk to human and animal health by preventing disease entering the food chain. The impact of food borne illness has been tragically highlighted by the E coli 0157 outbreak in South Wales in September 2005 which led to the death of one school aged child, the hospitalisation of a number of others, and had a huge impact on local residents.</b>	
The role of local regulation	<p>The production of food and its safe consumption is a key priority for Wales, impacting on the health of the nation but also supporting the rural economy. Local authority regulatory services are involved in regulatory activity through the food chain, from farm to fork. Animal health and welfare controls prevent disease entering the human food chain. Food borne disease, including e-coli, presents a high risk to human health with the likelihood of exposure to such disease also being high.</p> <p>The control of animal disease and promotion of farmed animal health and welfare requires a collaborative approach involving all local authorities, the Welsh Assembly Government and Animal Health<sup>18</sup>. The Animal Health and Welfare Framework Agreement sets out clear outcomes to be achieved through collaboration, including reducing the risk of animal disease incursion and spread to protect public and animal health. It also aims to protect local communities, including the effects of animal disease on the local economy<sup>19</sup>.</p> <p>Local authorities are responsible for ensuring that food products are properly labelled, meet the compositional standards required by law and inspecting food businesses to guarantee that the food produced and consumed in Wales is safe to eat, fit for consumption and will meet public expectations. Local authorities in Wales have responsibility for 33,771 food businesses. In 2008, 9% of the recorded incidents dealt with by the Food Standards Agency directly related to Wales (111 incidents)<sup>20</sup>.</p>
Why this matters	<p><b>Farmed animal health and welfare</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wales has a large proportion of small farms in comparison with the rest of Great Britain, rearing just over 25% and 10% of the UK's sheep and cattle<sup>21</sup> respectively. Wales has a high stocking density with large number of animal movements. In 2008-2009, there were 24,157 risk assessed premises (animal health and welfare) across Wales and in 2009-2010, 432 critical control points are identified<sup>22</sup>.</li> <li>• The total value of output at market prices from farming in the UK was £15.7 billion and farming contributed £5.8 billion to the UK's GDP<sup>23</sup>. There are opportunity costs associated with dealing with disease outbreaks effectively and efficiently through local authority and agency co-operation. In relation to avian influenza, the turnover of the poultry industry in the UK in 2006 was £1.6 billion (the H5N1 strain has a high mortality rate when passed to humans), and in relation to foot and mouth disease, beef exports in 2006 totalled £823 million.<sup>24</sup></li> <li>• 2008-2009 saw four separate incidents of exotic animal disease in the UK- avian influenza, bluetongue, rabies, contagious equine metritis - with effective collaborative action involving local authorities preventing the spread of disease<sup>25</sup>.</li> </ul>

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	<p><b>Food borne disease</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The E coli 0157 outbreak in South Wales in September 2005 which led to the death of one school child and the hospitalisation of a number of others had a huge impact on local residents. The Report of the Public Inquiry into the outbreak highlights the critical role that the effective conduct of official controls has in preventing food borne illness<sup>26</sup>.</li> <li>• There were an estimated 925,767 cases of food borne disease in the UK in 2007 of which 443 resulted in death and 18,300 resulted in hospitalisation<sup>27</sup>. The cost of this amount of food borne disease on the UK as a whole and on local communities is very high.</li> <li>• It has been estimated that the costs due to loss of production, health care costs and damage to business, amounts to £1.4 billion every year in the UK. This does not include the costs of major incidents and food scares and there is evidence that those costs can be very large, including the estimation of the total cost of the foot and mouth crisis over the 2001-4 periods to be £4.7 billion, representing roughly half a percent of UK GDP<sup>28</sup>.</li> <li>• Food scares reduce consumer confidence in the safety of their food, which induces large adjustments in demand, destabilises markets, and harms food producers. It can also impose large costs on other sectors of the economy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Economic impacts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has been estimated that the Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) reduced revenue from tourism by £7.5 billion, or 13%, in 2001. The related loss of value added in the sector over the entire period of the FMD crisis was almost £2 billion. The lower level of economic activity also reduced tax revenue by an estimated £581 million in 2001 and £379 million in 2002<sup>29</sup>.</li> <li>• Food scares can result in large scale product recalls and associated costs. For instance, more than 600 products were recalled following the Sudan I incident at an estimated direct cost to businesses of £100 million<sup>30</sup>.</li> </ul>
<p>Views of citizens and businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60% of UK consumers reported that they had concerns about the hygiene of food businesses but 90% didn't do anything about this. Of those who did take action, 90% complained direct to the food business and only 10% complained to the local authority<sup>31</sup>.</li> <li>• In the latest published Consumer Attitudes Survey, 69% of people in the UK polled expressed concerns about food safety and indicated they thought it was an important area. 57% of UK consumers say they are concerned about food poisoning.</li> <li>• Food enforcement is particularly important to small businesses. In a research study carried out on effective enforcement approaches for food safety in SMEs, the majority of businesses reported that they relied on local authority inspections to make them aware of legal requirements<sup>32</sup>.</li> </ul>
<p>How this contributes to One Wales, Strategic Framework and national priorities</p>	<p>Some areas of rural Wales are experiencing rapid economic, social and cultural change, facing unique challenges and having to adapt to new circumstances. As part of efforts to ensure <b>A Sustainable Environment</b>, the Welsh Assembly Government is committed to providing support to communities in rural Wales.</p> <p>Ensuring the safety and quality of the food chain to minimise the risk to human and animal health will support rural communities and also contribute to <b>A Healthy Future</b>, with healthy population with a good quality of life.</p>

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Partnership working	<p>The Report of the Public Inquiry into the E coli outbreak demonstrated the need to achieve better engagement, communication and coordination across the many different organisations and stakeholders involved in, and impacted by, local regulation.</p> <p>Reflecting the shared responsibilities set out in the Animal Health and Welfare Framework Agreement, local authorities are working closely with Welsh Assembly Government, Animal Health and LACoRS to promote effective animal health and welfare controls and with the Food Standards Agency to deliver better regulation and effective enforcement and educational resources to reduce food borne illness.</p>
<p>Priority 3: Promoting a fair and just trading environment for citizens and business</p>	
<p><b>Wales’ proud tradition of ‘Chwarae Teg’ – fair play for all – underpins the vision of a fair and just Wales, in which all citizens are empowered to determine their own lives. Research suggests that over half of all adults in Wales have poor numeracy skills<sup>33</sup>, and low levels of literacy and numeracy. This can make it difficult for consumers to make informed choices and get a fair deal. A fair and just trading environment also supports the ambition to create a prosperous society and stimulate enterprise. Well run, compliant businesses can prosper by ensuring rogue businesses do not enjoy an unfair competitive advantage. Over 98% of businesses in Wales are designated as small businesses<sup>34</sup> and 32% of businesses in Wales are micro-businesses<sup>35</sup>, higher than the UK figure of 30%. The frequent contact between regulatory services officers provides a key opportunity to provide the tailored advice and guidance businesses, particularly SMEs, crave.</b></p>	
The role of local regulation	<p>The consumer protection work of local authorities aims to ensure that consumers are not deceived about the nature or quality of goods or services, and that they are not subjected to unscrupulous sales tactics or pressure selling. In some sectors, there is a history of rogue trading using high pressure selling and targeting vulnerable consumers. The consumer protection work of local authorities delivers total savings to UK consumers of at least £347 million a year. Two thirds of these savings are delivered through tackling unfair trading practices and one third through advice and assistance to consumers. For every £1 that local authorities spend on consumer protection work, they deliver direct consumer savings of at least £6<sup>36</sup>.</p> <p>Local authorities deliver consumer protection and support for businesses through a range of activities, including providing consumer education and awareness, establishing trader accreditation schemes, delivering tailored advice and guidance to businesses, gathering intelligence and carrying out targeted and risk-based enforcement to tackle rogue traders and trading practices.</p>
Why this matters	<p><b>Protecting vulnerable consumers, focusing on debt and credit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More households in Wales have active credit commitments (57%) than the British average (47%)<sup>37</sup>, and when surveyed in 2005, a quarter of households in Wales (26%) had consumer credit commitments and one in six households (16%) owed money on three or more credit facilities.</li> <li>• From April 2008-April 2009 Citizens Advice Bureaux in Wales have seen a 19% annual increase in the number of people seeking advice on debt issues (111,339 client problems). The highest number of queries relate to credit, store and charge card debts with 22,532 queries, an increase of 22% on the previous year<sup>38</sup>.</li> <li>• In Wales, the proportion of consumer credit related problems brought to Citizens Advice has increased by 56% since 1998 (compared to a 47% increase across Britain), and debt clients of Welsh Citizens Advice have the highest debt to income ratio in the UK (Wales = 16.2; UK average = 13.9)<sup>39</sup>.</li> </ul>

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- Research among financially excluded households has shown that access to credit is of equal, if not greater importance to people on low incomes, however they are faced with a scarcity of loan products that are affordable and appropriate to their needs. As a consequence, many financially excluded households often turn to the alternative lending market, such as home credit companies, pawnbrokers and unlicensed moneylenders<sup>40</sup>.
- Loan sharks can charge between 500% to 11,000,000% interest on loans and the total amount of money lent by illegal money lenders in the UK is some £40 million per annum.
- In 2007, it was estimated that there were approximately 165,000 households in the UK using illegal money lenders, and that approximately half of these are located in the most deprived communities. Illegal money lenders operate primarily in urban areas with high proportions of rented accommodation, suggesting potentially high rates of prevalence in major towns and cities, including Cardiff, Newport and Swansea.
- The illegal money lending team in Wales has had almost 60 referrals of loan sharks operating in Wales and has identified loan books totalling £1.5 million<sup>41</sup>.

### Fair trading

- Each year, a third of British adults experience at least one known consumer problem that results in financial loss and, allegedly, is caused by a trader treating them unfairly. In total, they experience over 26 million problems and £6.6 billion worth of detriment.<sup>42</sup>
- There are an estimated 15,000 reported cases of rogue trading (i.e. the sale of overpriced and/or substandard goods or services) in the doorstep selling sector every year. Many more go unreported. The estimated average amount of money paid to these rogue traders is £2,000 and doorstep sales amount to some £2.4 billion every year in the UK<sup>43</sup>.
- UK consumers lose around £3.5 billion to scams every year. Nearly half of the UK adult population has been targeted by a scam and that every year one in 15 people (3.2 million adults) in the UK fall victim to a scam involving deceptive unsolicited mailings, phone calls, or emails. The average amount lost per scam was £850. The worst effects of such scams are often felt by the most vulnerable members of society, not only in terms of financial losses but also emotional harm. Scams also have a wider impact on the economy, undermining consumer confidence in legitimate direct marketing<sup>44</sup>.
- It is estimated that approximately £188 million per worth of household goods are sold per annum on the basis of the measurement of their quantity. Goods bought and sold by measure are particularly important for poorer households in the UK, constituting nearly one third of their total weekly expenditure<sup>45</sup>. A system of weights and measures which is accurate, reliable and fair is a fundamental part of an efficient trading economy. It enables consumers to be confident that they are getting what they pay for and for businesses to be confident they are trading in a fair marketplace.

### Product safety

- Approximately 10% of imported consumer goods sampled are found to be unsafe or incorrectly labelled. Data shows that risks arising from unsafe products include choking, electric shock, strangulation, fire and burns, and suffocation and injuries to individuals<sup>46</sup>.
- Often those most at risk are the most vulnerable members of society, including the elderly and young people. In the UK, 31% of recorded injuries in the home, many involving unsafe or defective goods, are to children under the age of 15 and 21% affect adults aged over 65 years old<sup>47</sup>.
- Cheap goods are the most common source of unsafe products, most notably electrical goods, toys and fireworks<sup>48</sup>.
- The negative impact on UK consumers, businesses and public services of unsafe imported goods is £155 million per annum and every pound invested in monitoring the safety of imported goods arriving into UK ports produces £40 benefit.

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	<p><b>Intellectual property</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research over 2007-8 has revealed that e-crime, including intellectual property theft, has cost business in Wales over £280 million in lost sales and productivity<sup>49</sup>. This figure is based solely on known and reported incidents.</li> </ul> <p><b>Supporting enterprise in Wales</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Wales in 2007, there were 38 VAT registrations per 10,000 people of working age, while the rate across the UK as a whole was 54<sup>50</sup>. However, the survival rate of enterprises with a birth date of 2004 and still active in 2007 was 67.1 per cent, 1.8 percentage points above the UK average (65.3 per cent)<sup>51</sup>.</li> <li>Enterprises with 0 to 9 employees (micro size band) accounted for 32 per cent of Welsh business sector employment, higher than the UK figure of 30 per cent. There is considerable variation between industry sectors, with employment in agriculture almost entirely amongst micro businesses (93 per cent) and employment in production industries concentrated in the large size band (55 per cent).</li> <li>Research has found that over half of the interactions between local businesses and local authorities are through regulatory services officers<sup>52</sup>. This provides an opportunity for regulatory officers to use their broad professional expertise to provide practical advice to improve business compliance. This role is particularly valuable to SMEs as over two-thirds of SMEs regard finding information on regulations a considerable burden<sup>53</sup>.</li> </ul>
Views of citizens and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A fair and just trading environment benefits both consumers and compliant businesses. Without such an environment, consumers lose out of the protection offered by current regulations and legitimate businesses suffer, as they have to put increased resources into distinguishing themselves from dishonest traders.<sup>54</sup></li> <li>The population of Wales represents approximately 5% of the UK population, yet 8% of calls received by Consumer Direct in 2008-2009 were from Welsh consumers. In 2008-2009, nearly 14,000 cases were referred to Welsh local authorities, over half of which related to complaints where a criminal incident may have taken place.</li> <li>In a survey of business perceptions carried out by Ipsos MORI, the majority of business surveyed across England and Wales felt that providing an advisory service, taking a joined up approach to inspections and maintaining an ongoing relationship all are important functions of local authority regulatory services. 90% of businesses surveyed said that their opinions have not been sought in relation to enforcement of regulations<sup>55</sup>.</li> </ul>
How this contributes to One Wales, Strategic Framework and national priorities	<p>A fair and just trading environment for citizens and businesses is a key element of <b>A Fair and Just Society</b> in Wales. Informed, confident consumers drive a strong and sustainable economy and promote financial inclusion. A focus on protecting vulnerable citizens and tackling debt and credit issues will help to reduce poverty and regenerate communities across Wales. Supporting enterprise in Wales, especially small and micro businesses, by providing accessible and reliable advice and reducing unnecessary burdens will contribute to <b>A Prosperous Society</b>.</p>
Partnership working	<p>Specialist regional teams, including Scambusters, the Illegal Money Lending team and regional intelligence, are coordinating a focus on intelligence led activity to target rogue traders, working closely with local authorities in Wales and the Office of Fair Trading and Department of Business, Innovation and Skills. Consumer Focus Wales provide an important voice for the interests of consumers in Wales, especially the most vulnerable members of society.</p> <p>LBRO and the Better Regulation Executive are supporting regulatory services in Wales to develop new relationships with business to deliver better local regulation.</p>

Improving the local environment to positively influence quality of life and promote sustainability

Wales has a historic and diverse environment in rural and urban areas that needs to be protected and enhanced for future generations to come. The local environment has a direct impact on communities and citizens' quality of life, including their health and wellbeing. Poor environmental quality, including that of towns, countryside and beaches, also has a detrimental effect on the tourism industry in Wales - in direct terms, tourism contributes 3.2% of whole-economy value added in Wales<sup>56</sup>.

The role of local regulation

Local authority regulatory services deliver improvements in environmental quality under the provisions of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act and other key legislation. Welsh local authorities carried out 20,400 enforcement actions in regard to fly tipping alone in 2008-2009. Welsh local authorities are also responsible for assessing conditions for occupation in both private and social sector residential properties. The Licensing Act creates a duty on local regulatory services to prevent crime, disorder and public nuisance and promote public safety through local licensing conditions.

The Welsh Assembly Government has identified environmental sustainability and adapting to the impacts of climate change is a key priority for action. This is a growing agenda and local authorities are taking an active lead. Regulatory services have a role to play in reducing this impact through a focus on waste minimisation, advising businesses and citizens and responding to local needs.

Why this matters

- Poor environmental quality, including the quality and safety of housing, nuisance, litter and fly tipping, is critical to the quality of citizens' lives, impacting on feelings of safety, health and wellbeing. In a wider sense, poor environmental quality can cause other social and economic problems – communities can become more prone to crime and vandalism, and attracting economic investment becomes much more difficult.

**Fly tipping, litter and reducing waste**

- 55,300 incidents of fly tipping occurred across Wales in 2008-2009, yet it is thought that the number of reported incidents is an underestimation of the true value of the problem. The estimated cost of clearance of illegally dumped waste reported by local authorities in 2008-2009 was £2.94 million<sup>57</sup>.
- It is estimated that 480 million single use plastic bags are currently used in Wales and where each plastic bag can take up to 500-1000 years to decompose, impacting on environmental sustainability. It has also been estimated that it costs local authorities in Wales £1 million annually to clean up plastic bag litter<sup>58</sup>.

**Nuisance and anti-social behaviour**

- 29% of 12-17 year olds in the UK report some form of anti-social behaviour after drinking<sup>59</sup>. Reports of criminal damage and theft were higher among those who drank at least once a week in comparison to those who drank less frequently or not at all<sup>60</sup>.
- Environmental noise affects quality of life and causes annoyance. Current research is unclear about the effects of noise on health, including whether excess noise weakens the immune system<sup>61</sup> and how noise-induced stress can lead to physiological problems. However, excess noise is commonly blamed for sleep disturbance and there are links to cardiovascular and mental health problems, and reduced performance in schoolchildren.

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	<p><b>Housing standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh local authorities are responsible for assessing conditions for occupation in both private and social sector residential properties. In Wales, 99 dwellings were demolished or closed during 2007-08, more than twice the 2006-07 figure.</li> <li>• There were 4,501 hazards to occupants identified in dwellings during 2007-08, the most common types being excess cold and damp and mould growth. In houses of multiple occupation across Wales, the most common hazard was fire<sup>62</sup>.</li> <li>• National Energy Action Cymru estimates that 340,000 households in Wales were affected by fuel poverty in January 2009, an increase of 90,000 in the previous year alone<sup>63</sup>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other environmental issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 220,000 Welsh properties are at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea. The potential annual economic risk to residential and business properties and their contents was estimated at £200 million in April 2008. Welsh assets currently at risk of flooding, including commercial, industrial and key infrastructure, are estimated to be worth over £8 billion<sup>64</sup>.</li> <li>• There are currently 25 air quality management areas in Wales and air pollution is estimated to cost up to £20.2 billion per annum in health costs across the UK<sup>65</sup>.</li> <li>• It has been estimated that up to 100,000 sites across England and Wales are contaminated and that between 5 and 20% require action to ensure that unacceptable risks to human health are mitigated<sup>66</sup>. This is important due to increasing pressure to reuse such land to meeting requirements for new housing developments.</li> </ul>
Views of citizens and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor environmental quality appears amongst the top issues raised by local residents in the Living in Wales survey<sup>67</sup>, 32% of respondents were most concerned with litter and fly tipping issues.</li> <li>• Over a quarter of the population in Wales believe that drunk or rowdy behaviour is a very or a fairly big problem in their area<sup>68</sup>.</li> <li>• The Regulatory Impact Assessment of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill, December 2004, outlined considerable economic benefits to businesses and citizens associated with cleaner neighbourhoods. Benefits to the private sector include attracting more customers and increased consumer spending and increased tourism.</li> </ul>
How this contributes to One Wales, Strategic Framework and national priorities	<p>In seeking to ensure <b>A Sustainable Environment</b>, One Wales recognises the importance of the local environment, the effect on communities and citizens' quality of life. Effective regulation can ensure that Wales' natural historic environment is protected and that Wales is an energy efficient low carbon low waste society.</p> <p>The lack of good quality housing affects people's health and wellbeing, and to ensure <b>Living Communities</b> in Wales, everyone should have access to good housing.</p> <p><b>A Fair and Just Society</b> depends on regenerated and diverse communities where people live in safe, vibrant, inclusive rural and urban communities.</p>
Partnership working	<p>Work on environment protection and quality is divided between local authorities, who have responsibility for local environmental quality issues, the Environment Agency, responsible for environmental regulation and improvements, and the Welsh Assembly Government, who provide the funding, policy and legislative basis for improvements.</p> <p>At a local level, regulatory services work alongside other local authority services, including housing services, social services and street wardens, and community organisations to promote clean, green, safe and secure neighbourhoods.</p>

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The evidence above represents a summary of the information received from national regulators, local authorities, and government departments contributing to the review process. During the evidence gathering process, it was apparent that some regulatory policy areas are not the subject of research or data collection and as such, there was a lack of supporting evidence. LBRO and Welsh Assembly Government are committed to working with the national regulators to ensure regulatory policy development in Wales is evidence-based, while ensuring that unnecessary data burdens on local authorities are reduced. More information on this work can be found at [www.lbro.org.uk](http://www.lbro.org.uk).

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### References

- <sup>1</sup> Welsh Assembly Government, Health Statistics Wales 2009, available at: <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/publications/health2009/?lang=en>
- <sup>2</sup> Health and Safety Executive, Local Authority Inspection and Enforcement statistics 2006/07
- <sup>3</sup> Wales Heads of Trading Standards, *Report on Underage Sales of Alcohol in Wales 2008-2009*, July 2009
- <sup>4</sup> Information cited by the Food Standards Agency (Wales)
- <sup>5</sup> *Alcohol and Health: a profile of alcohol and health in Wales, 2009*, cited in WHOTS Report of Underage Sales of Alcohol in Wales 2008-2009
- <sup>6</sup> Cited in the Home Office/ Welsh Assembly Government evidence submission on reducing underage sales of alcohol and other age restricted products
- <sup>7</sup> Information cited by Home Office and Welsh Assembly Government in evidence submission
- <sup>8</sup> Data from the Health Behaviour in School Aged Children Survey 2005/6. The survey is a World Health Organisation cross-national study of adolescent health, health behaviours, and the family, school, and social-environmental contexts for health behaviours and can be accessed at: [http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs\\_details.cfm?from=&pubs\\_id=5723](http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs_details.cfm?from=&pubs_id=5723)
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