



## Discussion Paper 02/2026

### "Pride in Place" (Phase 2) Wales Operational Challenges: The Impracticality of the 3-Month Startup Period

While the programme's aims are ambitious and commendable, a significant challenge lies in its proposed three-month startup period. This timeframe is widely considered impractical for genuinely establishing robust, democratic, and capable Neighbourhood Boards ready to manage a decade-long, £20 million regeneration strategy. The core reasons why this brief period is challenging are:

- **Complexity of Governance:** Establishing a new legal entity (like a community benefit society or co-operative), recruiting a diverse board with a resident majority, and navigating legal compliance takes significant time and expert input. Rushing these risks flawed governance structures from the outset.
- **Meaningful Engagement:** In most areas, three months provides insufficient time to undertake the deep, trust-building community engagement required to ensure all local voices are heard. A rapid startup favours existing, vocal groups and may exclude marginalised residents, undermining the programme's core aim of empowerment. In contrast, some areas of high deprivation identified, could be 'arid deserts' requiring considerable cultivation and a longer time scale to build foundations for 'community wealth building'.
- **Capacity Building Needs:** Residents often require intensive training (co-operative education) in financial literacy, project management, and governance principles to take on these complex responsibilities effectively. Experience tells us this cannot be meaningfully achieved in just 12 weeks or even 12 months.

This operational reality highlights a critical potential gap between the programme's aspirational goals of community control and the logistical requirements of building true local capacity. It makes the structured, ongoing provision of practical co-operative education even more essential to bridge this gap. We are raising these strategy issues with decision makers and will update as required.

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