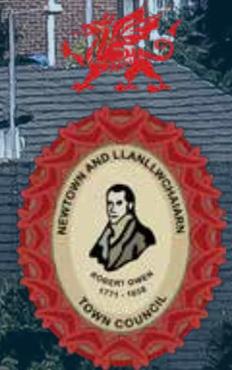


CYNLLUN LLE Y DRENEWYDD A LLANLLWCHAEARN  
**EIN TREF, EIN CYNLLUN!**

NEWTOWN & LLANLLWCHAIARN PLACE PLAN  
**OUR TOWN, OUR PLAN!**



# NEWTOWN & LLANLLWCHAIARN DRAFT PLACE PLAN

V 4.1 JANUARY 2021

**Newtown Drenewydd**  
Where the Severn Smiles | Lle Mae'r Hafren Yn Gwenu

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# Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Place Plan.

Newtown has not been short of plans for its future. The Development Board for Rural Wales in the 1970s and 1980s shaped the town that we live in now. A succession of Local Development Plans since then established land use plans that are still current and influence current developments. These plans, drawn up by professionals in their fields, were strategic, top down and followed strict planning processes.

This Place Plan however is the first that comes from the people of Newtown. It has been brought together not by just consultation but by the town residents, businesses and organisations being fully involved in its production and its ideas. I very much hope that it will be instrumental in helping the town grow and develop in a way that its residents wish. It is interesting to note that residents are not seeking to restrict growth as may be the case in some areas, but are instead seeking changes that are sympathetic to Newtown's place as an employment and trading centre rooted to its unique position in Mid Wales.

The plan has already provided evidence to attract investment into the town. I hope and indeed expect that this will be a continuing and welcome result of its production.

I thank all those who have been involved in its production, in particular Cllr Richard Edwards and Sorelle White from Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Town Council who led the process and without whose dedication this plan would just have been an unfulfilled "good idea".

More than anything, I look forward to Place Plan's ideas, and aspirations leading the development of our town for many years ahead.

Cllr David Selby  
Mayor of Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn



Cllr. David Selby  
Mayor

When I first heard of the idea of Place Plans I thought this could be a useful tool for our community, to be used as a way to plan for and help shape the future of Newtown. There have been many plans for Newtown over the years and I have heard time and again from residents how, for example financial security, feeling safe, physical and mental well-being and being able to get out and about, are important to them and the community. It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that because we feel we have no influence in particular areas of life in our communities we should not get involved in the very thing that would allow us such influence in the future. Happily this has not been the case here; over the 18 months of the consultation - listening to the residents' ideas and comments regarding Newtown - we had 48 local organisations contribute and over 7,000 comments received from individuals within the community. This really is "Our Town, Our Plan".



Cllr Richard Edwards  
Lead Councillor,  
Place Plan

Our plan will also fit in with and influence other plans in both Powys and Wales-wide using a bottom up community-led approach, working both regionally within Powys and at a strategic level for Wales as a whole. We must also look to the next Powys Local Development Plan and help shape that much more than our community has previously done. Will it make a difference? I believe so; from speaking to many residents it is plain that we want a town and community that is prosperous and resilient, to be a good place to live, raise our families and allow Newtown to develop in a way that is sustainable.

We started work on the Place Plan long before we had all unfortunately become familiar with Covid-19. Covid has thrown up new problems to solve, but it has also accelerated the change that was already taking place in Newtown, especially in the town centre.

A lesson from history shows that we have always been good at reinventing Newtown, be it with the first Newtown established in 13th Century, the coming of the canal and flannel and textile industry, the regeneration starting in the 1970s, and more recently with the new by-pass. Now it is necessary to do so again, looking to the trends of the 21st century; developing our town in a sustainable way that will promote, not hinder, economic development, but accepting the challenges and rising to them. And with this Plan we have built up policies, projects and an evidence base that can be used by local government, private businesses, organisations and individuals to plan projects and seek inward investment for Newtown. Of course it won't solve every problem, but it does suggest a way forward helping us to create a town where people want to live, work and visit.

Cllr Richard Edwards  
Lead Councillor, Place Plan.

On behalf of the officers of the council may I welcome you to the first Place Plan for the community of Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn – indeed the first Place Plan to be adopted by the Powys Planning Authority.

With the backing of the community, the town council and the county council, the Plan is born of the community's own ideas and priorities for its own future. It is a product of the largest public participation exercise of recent years, and one cannot fail to be impressed by the enthusiasm and efforts of everyone who took part and embraced the idea of 'Our Town, Our Plan'.

Though starting out as something concerned only with land use and the built environment, the Plan has an expanded scope, taking in 'health, wealth, and well-being' so that it reflects the community's wider aspirations and intentions. Throughout the process the community has developed a sense of place and provided evidence of its own depth and breadth of community assets.

Looking forward, the Place Plan also provides a foundation for forming a Town Partnership of the Private-Public-Voluntary sectors in Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn – one which can influence far greater than each alone.

I would like to thank the town council officers for their dedication, commitment and sheer hard work which sometimes went well beyond day to day expectations. I also thank the town councillors for their support and patience during the preparations, the county council for its co-funding and professional advice, and Planning Aid Wales and Place Studio, for their expert support and guidance. Most significantly, it being a community-led plan, I acknowledge the members of the public and the business, voluntary and public sector organisations who have contributed to the work. To all of them I say thank you for making the work of the councillor and staff team more interesting, fulfilling, far-reaching, and I hope effective.

I hope you find it interesting, empowering, and useful.

E J Humphreys  
Town Clerk



EJ Humphreys  
Town Clerk

# Thanks

Place Plan produced by:

Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn Town Council

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Publication date: (to be added)

Access digital copies of the plan and supporting evidence at:

[www.newtown.org.uk](http://www.newtown.org.uk)

Supported by: Powys County Council

Consultants: Planning Aid Wales and Place Studio

Thanks to:

- The people of Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn
- Stakeholder organisations (see list of organisations in “Community Involvement” section)
- Volunteers who contributed significant time collecting evidence
- The Place Plan consultants
- Powys CC, Planning Policy Team
- Powys CC, Regeneration Team
- Town Council Councillors & Officers
- The Newtown Community Action Plan Team

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Cover: Photo - Russ Edwards, Clock Tower Logo - Georgia Williams



Planning Aid **Wales**  
Cymorth Cynllunio **Cymru**

# Introduction

## ABOUT NEWTOWN & LLANLLWCHAIARN

Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn is located in the county of Powys, within the historic boundary of Montgomeryshire, and on the picturesque upper reaches of the River Severn. It comprises two settlements: the larger market town of Newtown and the smaller settlement of Llanllwchaiarn. The combined population is 11,357 <sup>1</sup>.

Founded by Edward I in 1297 as an administrative centre with Charter Market status and designated a new town in 1967, Newtown may be Britain's oldest "new" town! Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn benefits from location and size – on the junction of east-west / north-south road and rail links, and the largest town in Powys.

The community is an industrious one. The town grew strongly with the expansion of the woollen industry in the early 19th century. It was an international hub for the flannel industry.

The old Flannel Exchange survives to this day as an entertainment venue. Social reformer and industrial pioneer Robert Owen was born in Newtown in 1771 and left to seek his fortune ten years later. He returned to the town shortly before his death on November 17th 1858. Owen's ideas have had worldwide influence and became the cornerstone of the international co-operative movement. There is a museum dedicated to Owen's memory in the town centre.

Newtown is also famous for the birth of the mail order retail business which local entrepreneur Pryce Jones started in the mid nineteenth century by dispatching goods to Britain and Europe from Newtown. His Royal Welsh Warehouse still dominates the townscape. Amongst his customers were Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale. It is believed that parcel post in Britain was started as a result of a suggestion made by Pryce Jones to the Postmaster General.



Photo: DU

The town's connection with the textile industry was revived in the 20th century when businesswoman Laura Ashley established her home furnishing and clothing company in the area.

Today's Newtown is an attractive town, set against the backdrop of the beautiful Severn Valley featuring historic buildings, the river Severn, ancient monuments, abundant green spaces, theatre and entertainment venues, museums, a renowned art gallery, local sports facilities, the Severn Way and other walks. It is twinned with Les Herbiers in France.<sup>2</sup>



Photo: RE

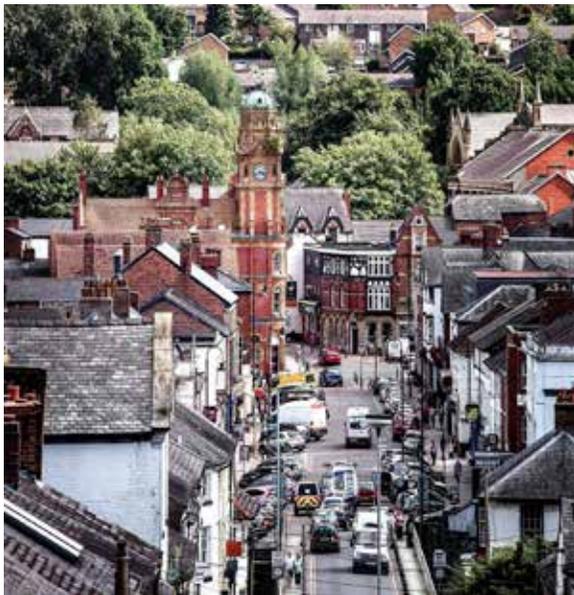
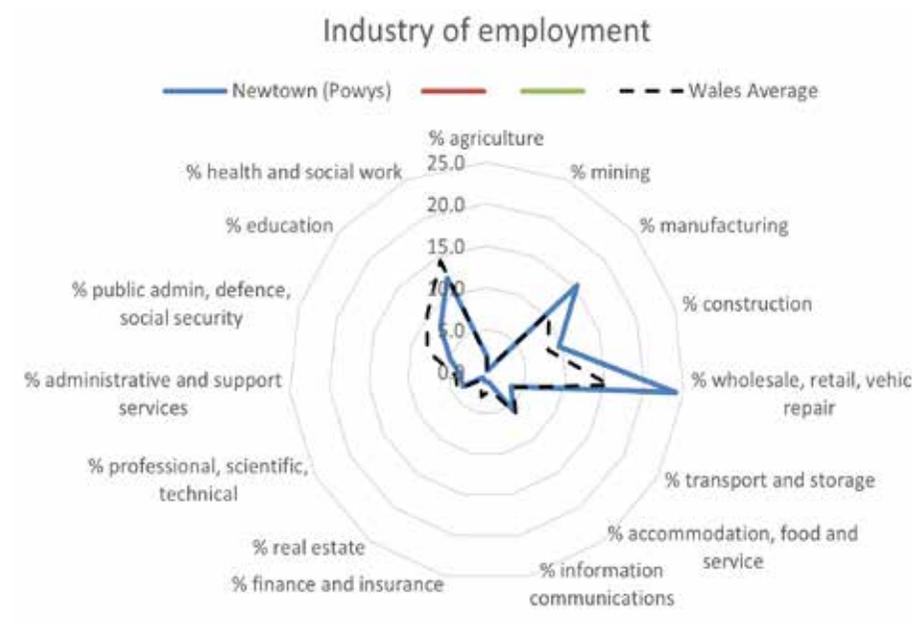
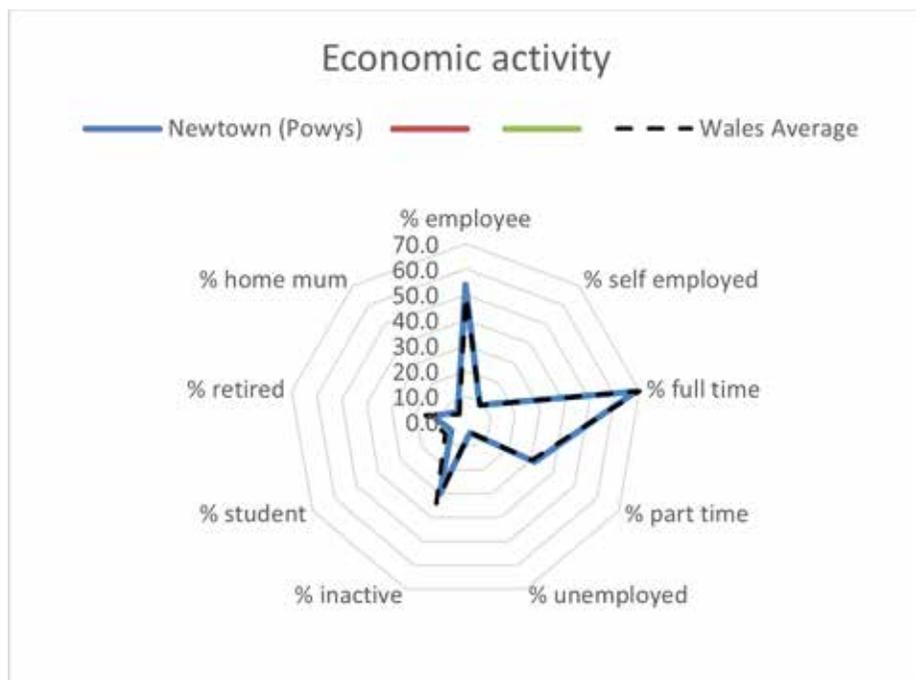
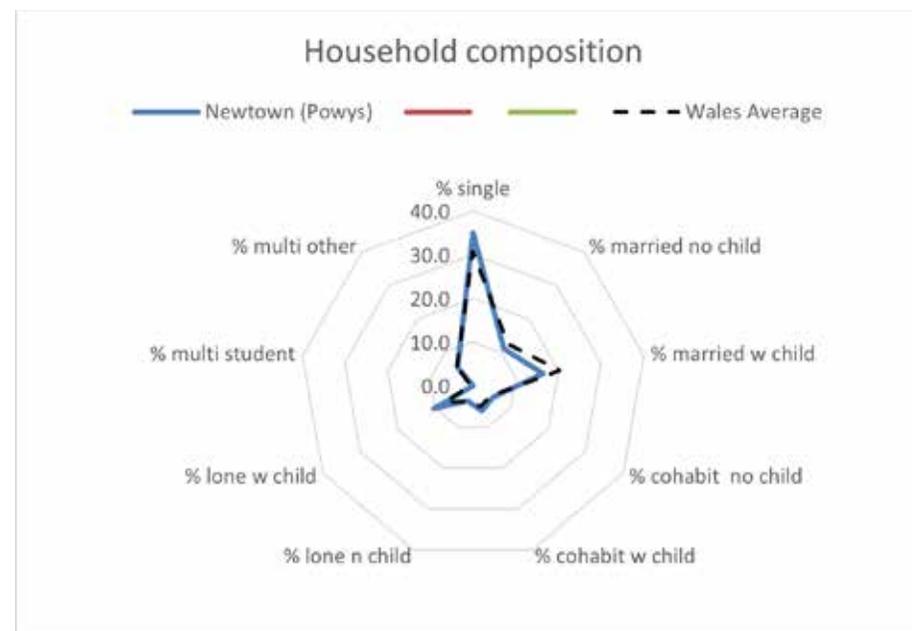
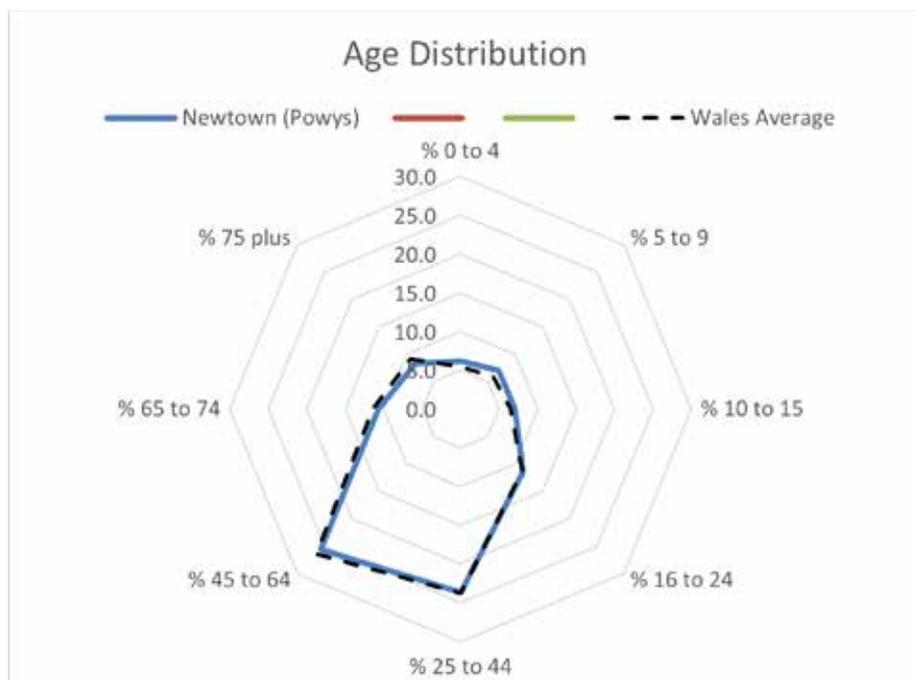


Photo: RE

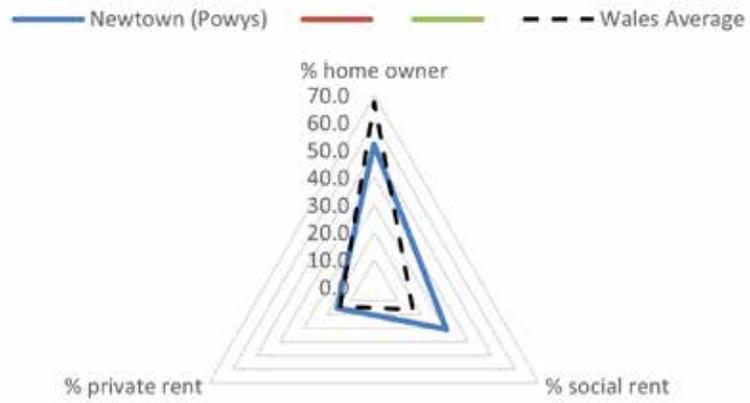
Aspects of Newtown & Llanllwchaearn celebrated by the community in the Public Survey



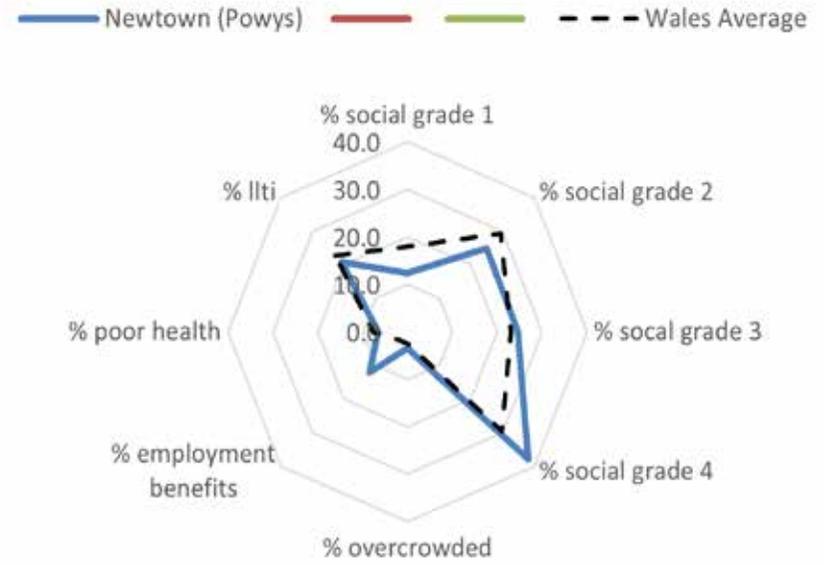
## KEY DATA FOR NEWTOWN WITH WALES COMPARISON<sup>3</sup>



## Housing



## Deprivation



## A WORLD CHANGED BY COVID-19

*“The crisis has drawn into sharp focus the importance of the communities in which we live and the essential services and infrastructure we rely on. Access to green spaces, the importance of local shops, the reliance on digital connectivity, the ability to work at home for those who can and to walk and cycle to work for those who can’t have caused us all to reflect on the things we really value about where we live.”* Julie James, Minister for Housing and Local Government, July 2020

Much of the consultation and drafting for the Place Plan was carried out before the impact Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. The full impact of the virus is yet to be understood, but the crisis has been felt here in Newtown and around the world, by us all: families, workers, care providers, businesses and the vulnerable. Many aspects of our lives and plans have altered dramatically in our new post-Covid-19 landscape. In addition to the challenges, there has also been some positive change in the way people live and work and benefits for the environment. Further details of the impact of Covid-19 in Powys, can be found in the topic chapters.

In Town Planning terms, Covid-19-recovery efforts are currently focused on protecting and expanding our public spaces, rethinking the scale and design of pavements, open spaces and community facilities such as libraries and meeting spaces.

Welsh Government planning priorities for recovery going forward include:

New and improved low carbon council and social housing; investment in local town centres; protection and enhancement of natural resources and investment in active travel. <sup>4</sup>

*“This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for us to reset the clock and think again about the places we want to live, work and play in. We need to rebuild a greener, cleaner society with decarbonisation and social justice at its heart which respects our environment, whilst giving people good places to live in, which are accessible on foot, bike and public transport”.* <sup>5</sup>

It is likely that some of the policies and projects in the Place Plan will need to be tailored and re-prioritised to match a new way of life now and in the future. For example, where one talks about events, one needs to consider alternative ways of hosting them. There have already been changes to Newtown’s town centre streets to allow more space for people to pass safely and for businesses to make use of outside space. There has also been an increase in the numbers of people walking and cycling, so the quality of our footpaths & cycleways takes on a new importance. When reading the plan, the reader is asked to assume that policies, projects and actions will align with the latest legislation and government guidance, in order to keep the town thriving and the community as safe as possible.

# Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 in Powys 'on a page'

In order to consider how Powys may look in the future, it is necessary to clearly see the current situation, what has changed or stayed the same and what this might mean for the County **over the short (6 months), medium (1 year) and long term (5 years).**



## Economy



**Business Support - £46.6m paid out to 4,020** businesses with a further **support package** to be made available for small charities in Powys



**Employment trends - 23% of Powys' workforce (13,100 employees)** furloughed. From March to May claimant count increased **156% (+2,225) in Powys**



**Impact on key sectors - Accommodation & food services** have been the worst hit since COVID-19, with an estimated **fall in GDP of 92%**

### Short, medium, long term

March and April 2020 compared to 2018 Powys, it is estimated that:

**Short term** Powys' GVA decreased by 24.5% with 25.2% fewer jobs

**Medium term** Powys' GVA decreased by 11.8% with 18.1% fewer jobs

**Long term** Powys' GVA decreased by 4.4% and 7.3% fewer jobs



## Capable, confident & fulfilled residents



**Pupil and student trends - 16** childcare hubs, **307** pupils accessing. **1,413** devices and MiFi dongles distributed



**Free school meals- 14% increase** in students who are eligible, **20% increase** in free school meal take up since Sept 2019



**Well-being of pupils and students -** Demand for children and young people's counselling service **increased by 60 referrals** since lockdown to 190 active cases

### Short, medium, long term

The impact on children, young people and education staff is yet unknown

## Vibrant, connected & resourceful communities



**Volunteers - 372** health and care volunteers across PCC and PTHB. **66%** volunteer increase on [powys.volunteering-wales.net](http://powys.volunteering-wales.net)



**Community provided services - 5,504** vulnerable persons in Powys communities are recognised



**Environmental impacts - massive reduction in airborne pollution**, most noticeably reduction in Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) and particulate matter

### Short, medium, long term

**Short term** Communities with high numbers of vulnerable persons continue to need additional help

**Medium term** A possible rise in the need for food banks in the most 'financially stretched and urban adverse' areas

**Long term** Risk that smaller Environmental NGOs may be lost without additional funding

## Residents start well, live well & age well



**Referral numbers -** Referrals to Adult social care increased by **11%**. Children's referrals have **reduced**, mostly because of the schools closures (schools usually refer 10%) this could imply a **safeguarding risk to young people**



**Homelessness and housing impacts - 112 homeless** as at 29th May 2020, **119% increase** compared to May 2019. **80% of those accommodated are single persons**

### Short, medium, long term

**Short term** Adult support will continue, delivered virtually where possible

**Medium term** Referrals will increase. More homeless once private landlords can enforce evictions

**Long term** Adult social care needs will be met in the community. Increase in homelessness for family groups due to unemployment



## High Performing & well run council



**Financial outlook for the council -** potential **£16m deficit** for financial year 2020/21. **201 staff furloughed recouping £206k March-May**



**Service Performance Impacts -** Significant changes to the way the council is operating. **+1,100% daily VPN connections, +634% in Teams activity**



**Well-being of staff - 562** staff have responded so far. **66% staff** reported they have **increased productivity** and **70%** have better **work/life balance**

### Short, medium, long term

**Short term** Significant loss of income

**Medium and long term** Revisit our MTFs, austerity means we are likely to have a significantly worse financial settlement in future years

# Your Place Plan

## PURPOSE & BENEFITS OF THE PLAN

*Place Plans are a mechanism introduced by Welsh Government for communities to engage creatively with the planning process and for planners to support in place-making initiatives with local people.* <sup>7</sup>

They give communities more of a say in local planning decisions and the development of their local area.

To devise the Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn Place Plan, the Town Council worked with the community, to gather views and evidence on several topics suggested by the community. With the help of planning experts, the Town Council identified ways in which both council and community could address those issues together, through making policies and setting out projects and actions for the next 15 years.

### The Place Plan will:

- Influence future planning decisions in the town.
- Identify priorities for investment
- Create a body of evidence that can be drawn on to attract investment into the town
- Direct the future work of organisations in the town, including the Town Council.

### Influencing Future Planning Decisions

The Place Plan will be submitted to the Planning Authority (Powys County Council) for adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). SPG provides *“detailed planning guidance for policies and proposals in the adopted Powys Local Development Plan. Once approved, these will become material planning considerations in the determination of planning applications.”*<sup>8</sup> So, the Place Plan, as SPG, will provide the County Council with a more detailed understanding of Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn, on which to base its planning decisions. The Place Plan can also help to influence the development of future Local Development Plans.

760 hrs

Estimated hours contributed  
by the community to the  
preparation of this plan



**The views of the Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn community  
are at the core of the Place Plan.**

**Every policy & project in the plan is based on  
suggestions from the community.**



**“our Town, our Plan”**

# Place Plan Boundaries

The Place Plan covers the Community of Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn, as indicated on the map.

There are 5 electoral wards in Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn:

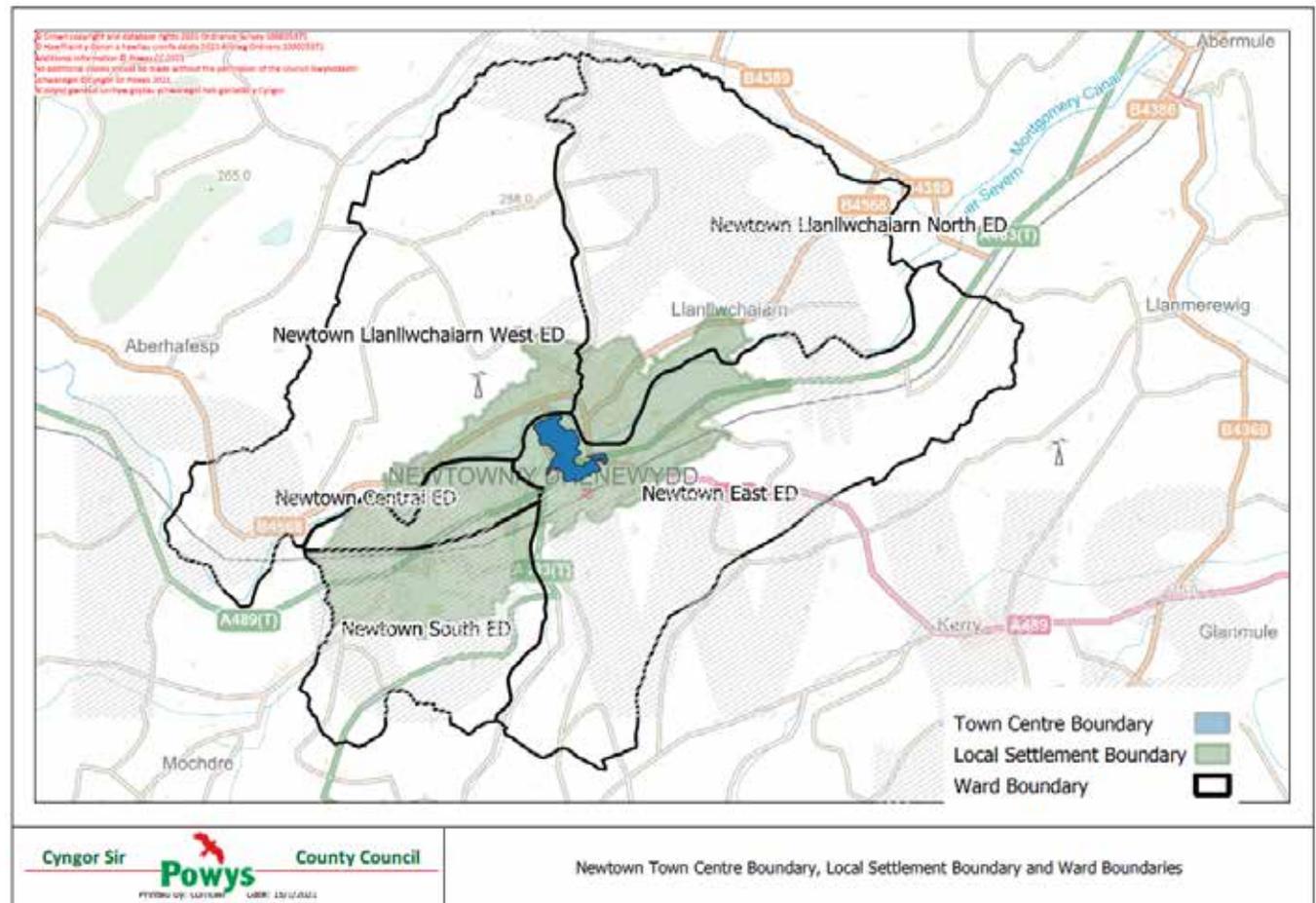
- Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn North
- Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn West
- Newtown Central
- Newtown East
- Newtown South

Many statistics including census data, are based on geographical boundaries called Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs) and Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs):

As illustrated in the map in the Appendix, 2 MSOAs cover the Place Plan area:

- Newtown North-East
- Newtown South-West

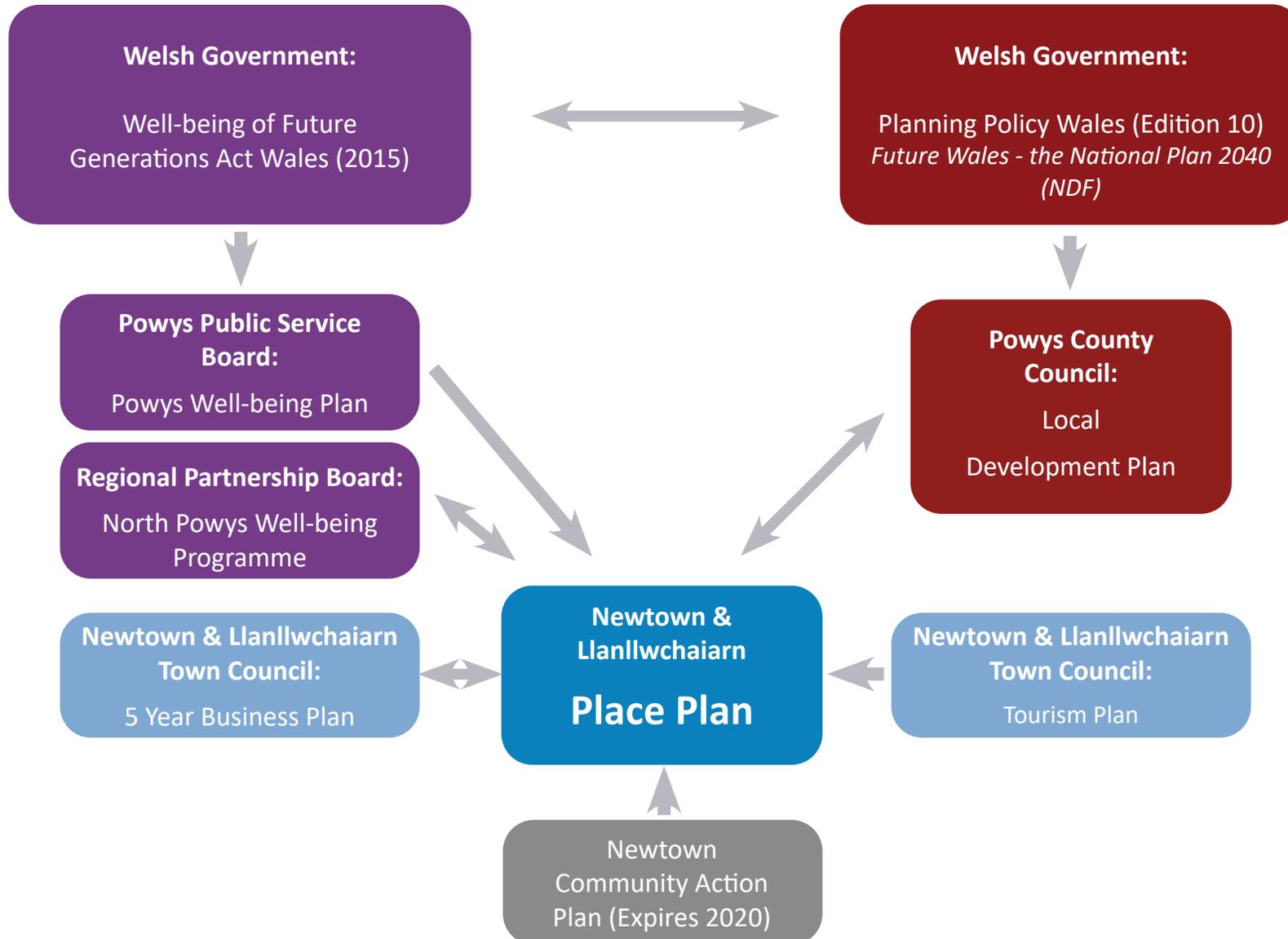
The LSOA areas correspond with the electoral wards.



Map: Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn Community Boundary, Local Settlement Boundary & Town Centre Boundary

# Links to other plans

## Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn Place Plan - Links to County and National Planning & Well-being Plans



At **NATIONAL LEVEL**, Welsh Government issues national planning policy (currently Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 - [PPW]) and Future Wales – the National Plan 2040. (previously called the *National Development Framework* [NDF]). Sitting alongside these is the Well-being of Future Generations legislation, setting out the national 7 Well-being Goals.

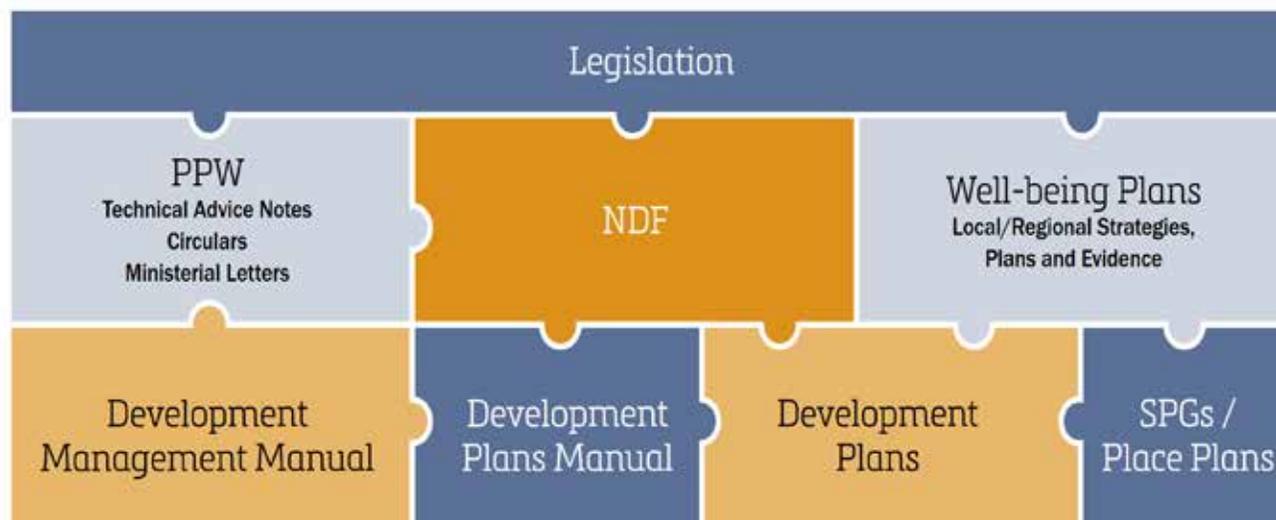
*Future Wales – the National Plan 2040* is expected to be published in 2021. In the draft document, Newtown is identified as a focus for growth as a “Regional Centre”:

*The Welsh Government supports the role of the regional centres of Carmarthen, Llandrindod Wells, **Newtown**, Aberystwyth and the four Haven Towns (Milford Haven, Haverfordwest, Pembroke and Pembroke Dock). These places play important sub-regional roles, providing jobs; leisure and retail; education and health services; and connectivity infrastructure that is used and relied on by both their own populations and communities around them. It is important that these settlements maintain their regional role and support a managed growth approach that allows their roles to be enhanced.*  
(from the *National Development Framework* consultation draft<sup>10</sup>)

At **COUNTY LEVEL** sits Powys County Council’s Local Development Plan plus the Powys Well-being Plan and the North Powys Wellbeing Programme. As a larger council, Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn Town Council must by law, take all reasonable steps towards meeting the objectives in the Powys Well-being Plan and report annually on how it did so.

### The National Planning Framework<sup>9</sup>

(*Planning Policy Wales Edition 10, Welsh Government*)



At **TOWN LEVEL** sits:

#### Town Council 5-Year Business Plan

In 2018, after consultation with the community, the Town Council published its first 5-Year Business Plan. This sets out what the Town Council intends to do each year on a number of different themes, and the Council reports each year, on whether it met its objectives. When the current 5-year plan expires in 2023, it will be replaced by a subsequent 5-year plan, informed by the projects and actions in the Place Plan. The Place Plan differs from the Town Councils own business plan in two key ways:

- it focusses on land use and is intended to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the Planning Authority
- it highlights issues and solutions that cannot be addressed solely by the Town Council and which will require partnership working to deliver.

#### Newtown Community Action Plan (NCAP)

In December 2015, a Newtown Community Action Plan (NCAP) was published by a group of organisations, businesses and individuals under the sponsorship of Powys County Council. It was based on extensive consultation with the public on their priorities and set out what various parties in the town could do between 2016-20. The Town Council delivered on several of the NCAP actions and details of this work can be found in the Town Council's Annual Report 2018/19.

In many ways, the Place Plan follows on from NCAP and the work of the "I Love Newtown" group, in consulting widely with the community, creating more up to date evidence of the needs and aspirations of the town and commencing in 2021, when NCAP comes to an end.



Photo: DU

# How did we get here?

**Nov 2018: Project Start**



**Jan 2019: Stakeholder Event**

Representatives from local organisations attend a first meeting to share their expertise and suggest what should be included in the Place Plan.



**Jan - Sep 2019: Community Engagement**

**Drop In Events**

**Workshops**

**Public Survey**

**Evidence Collection**

Members of the public and stakeholder organisations share their local knowledge, ideas, concerns and aspirations at drop-in events, workshops and a survey. In addition, volunteers go out and collect specific evidence relating to the topics (more details below).



**Oct - Nov 2019: Stakeholder Evidence Review**

Stakeholders organisations attend 3 meetings to review the gathered evidence and identify priorities for each topic for a first draft of the Place Plan.



**Dec 2019 - Feb 2020: Drafting**

A first draft of the plan is produced in close consultation with Planning Aid Wales and the Powys CC Planning Policy Team.

# How did we get here?

## Feb - Mar 2020: Stakeholder Review

Stakeholder organisations give feedback on a first draft of the Place Plan.



## Apr - Jun 2020: Project Paused Due to COVID-19 Response Work



## Jul - Dec 2020: Drafting

Final draft of plan produced and submitted by the Town Council to Powys CC.



## Dec - Jan 2021: Public Consultation

Powys CC issue the Place Plan for public consultation as Supplementary Planning Guidance. Comments are reviewed and appropriate revisions made.



## Spring 2021: Adoption & Publication

Powys CC adopt the Place Plan as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The Town Council adopt and publish the Place Plan.

Further details of activities during the different stages of the process, can be found in the consultants reports in the “Supporting Evidence”.

# Community Involvement

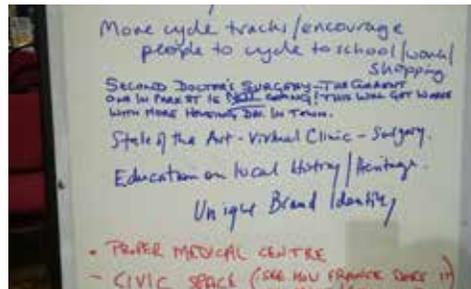


**321** event attendances

**106** survey responses



**48** local organisations involved



**7,000** comments received (est.)



**11** events and **10** stakeholder meetings



The key principle of Place Plans is to put the community at the centre of the planning process. The community of Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn were involved from the very beginning of the 2-year process. Consultants, Place Studio, created an effective programme to engage local people.

### How Did The Community Get Involved?

- 4 Public Drop in Sessions
- Public Survey
- 2 Youth Workshops
- Stakeholder Events & Meetings
- Volunteers collecting specific evidence

### Stakeholders: Shaping and Reviewing The Plan

- At the beginning of the project, over 80 local organisations were invited to contribute to the Place Plan. 47 organisations requested to join the mailing list of “stakeholders”. Individuals representing 36 local organisations, then met at Newtown Football Club and laid the foundations for what should be in the Place Plan by suggesting issues that should be addressed. They also started to map out the different areas of the town.
- Later, over several meetings, the stakeholders looked at the collated evidence and used their expertise to identify key points and proposals for addressing the issues raised.
- A first draft of the plan was sent to stakeholders in Feb 2019, to tell us if the information was accurate or had anything missing. 154 comments were returned. These were reviewed by The Town Council, Planning Aid Wales and the Powys CC Planning Policy team and revisions made to the draft plan. All the comments can be seen in the Supporting Evidence.



Photos: TC. Drawings: Treowen CP School Pupils

### Sharing Views and Information

- Local people shared their opinions and knowledge at 4 drop-in sessions held between Mar and May 2019 at All Saint’s Church, Newtown High School, Treowen Hall and the Waggon & Horses. Interactive exercises included highlighting on large maps “the good, the bad and the ugly” aspects of the town. Views were also invited on open spaces, play areas, community facilities, housing, footpaths and aspects lacking from the neighbourhood.
- Over 80 young people took part in 2 separate workshops. Representatives from the school councils of 7 local primary and secondary

schools informed us of the issues they felt were important. Over 50 GCSE geography students shared their knowledge about footpaths, community facilities and open spaces and their aspirations for the town.

- Drawing on all of the previous feedback, a community survey was drafted and open to the public from June to September 2019. The responses helped us gather more evidence for existing topics plus additional subjects such as wildlife, climate, health provision, safety. It also gave local people an opportunity to put forward community projects.

## List of Organisations Actively Involved

The following organisations attended an event or meeting, collected evidence or submitted comments on a draft of the Place Plan:

Action For Children (Our Space)	Newtown Youth Club
Bike To The Future	Newydd Housing Association
Bryn Walking	Northside Residents Association
Business Improvement District	Open Newtown
Celf Able	Oriel Davies Gallery
Chamber of Trade	PAVO
Climate Action Newtown	Penygloddfa CP School
Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust	Ponthafren Association
Cultivate	Powys CC, Active Travel
Cwm Harry Land Trust	Powys CC, Children First
Dementia Friendly Newtown	Powys CC, Cllr David Selby
Disability Powys	Powys CC, Cllr Joy Jones
Friends of the Earth Montgomeryshire	Powys CC, Cllr Daniel Rowlands
Hafren Cycling Club	Powys CC, Education
Hafren Junior School	Powys CC, Highways
Heritage Hub 4 Mid Wales	Powys CC, Housing
Hughes Architects	Powys CC, Planning Policy
Maesyrhandir Primary School	Powys CC, Regeneration
Menter Iaith Maldwyn	Powys Teaching Health Board
Mid & North Wales Destination Network	River Severn Custodians
Mid Wales Housing	Russell George MS
Montgomery Canal Partnership	SharEnergy
Morris, Marshall & Poole	St Michaels School, Kerry
Natural Resources Wales	Theatr Hafren
Newtown & District Civic Society	Treowen CP School
Newtown High School	Wales Co-op
Newtown Library	Walking Newtown
Newtown Rugby Club	
Newtown Sports Clubs	
Newtown Women's Institute	

## Gathering Specific "Field" Evidence

Volunteers were provided with questionnaires relating to specific topics in the plan and went out into the town to record detailed information. Types of information that was gathered by the volunteers included:

- Character Area Surveys (photos / observations of features of individual areas of the town)
- Footpaths and cycle paths audits
- Bike racks audit
- Green spaces and play areas audits
- Town centre accessibility survey
- Community Facilities surveys (a record of neighbourhood shops, schools, community halls, churches etc)

## The Numbers!

- No. of events Jan - Dec 2019 **11**
- Additional meetings with stakeholders **10**
- No. of attendances at events **321**
- No. of responses to public survey **106**
- No. of organisations actively involved **48**
- No. of comments received (estimated): **over 7,000**
- Estimated hours contributed by the community: **760**

Plus Town Council / County Council Officers & Councillors time over 2 years.

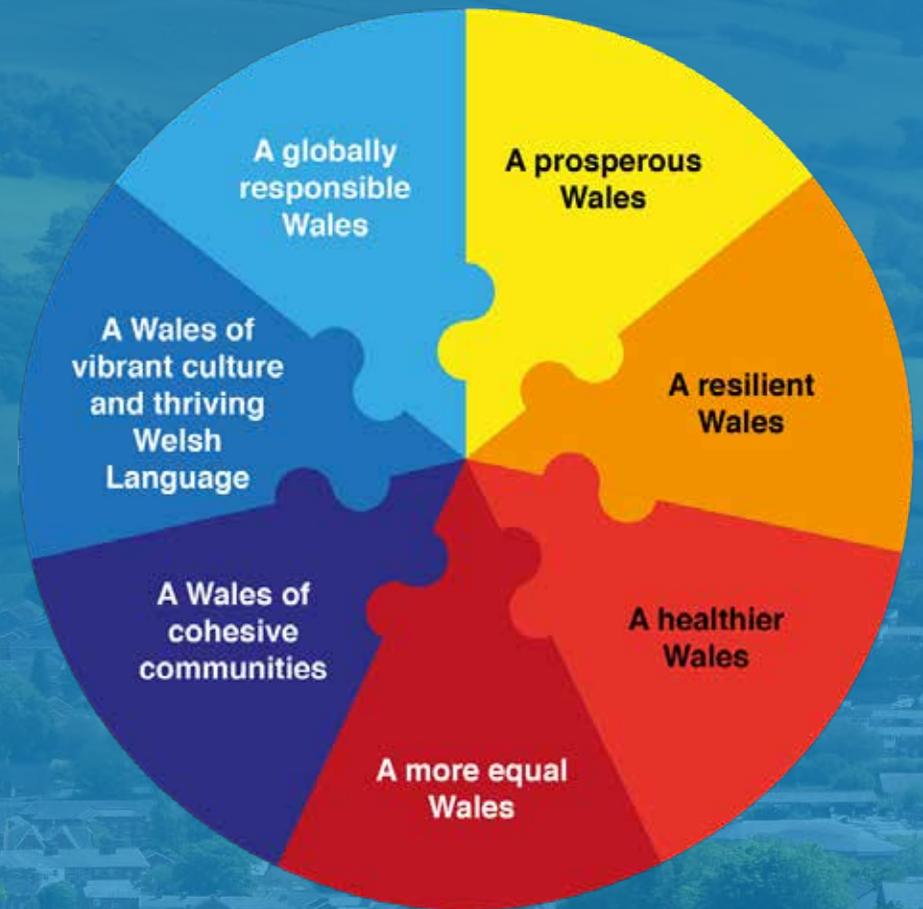
# Delivering Well-being

The **Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015** gives a legally-binding common purpose – the seven well-being goals – for national government, local government, local health boards and other specified public bodies. It details the ways in which these bodies must work, and work together, to improve the well-being of Wales.

Welsh Government's latest Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 also places a strong focus on well-being. It makes it clear that the purpose of the planning system, including LDPs, is to manage the development and use of land in the public interest, contributing to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, to accord with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

In its Covid-19-related guidance for the planning system, Welsh Government identifies Local Development Plans as a crucial mechanism for support well-being in the future:

*“The Covid-19 response means that we need to plan effectively for future crises and take a long-term view to improve health and well-being for all. In the planning system it is our local development plans (LDPs) which do this the best.”<sup>4</sup>*



# Well-being In Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn

Powys residents think of well-being as:

- Being healthy in both body and mind
- Having financial security
- Feeling safe
- Connecting with others
- Being able to get out and about
- Being able to take part in enjoyable activities

They say, the things that promote their well-being are:

- Access to their GP
- Local services like libraries, banks, chemists, leisure facilities, good schools, local shops and restaurants
- A good job, good housing, financial security
- Access to nature and community groups and activities
- Support for the vulnerable <sup>11</sup>



Photo: TD

Each of the Place Plan policies and projects will contribute to the delivery of one or more of our well-being objectives.

The well-being objectives are set out below and align with those in the “Powys Well-being Plan”.

Throughout the plan, the icons below will indicate which well-being objective(s) the policies and projects will support.

(Table showing how the Place Plan and the Town Council 5 Year Plan, align with the local objectives of the Powys Well-being Plan and the 7 national well-being goals.)

<p><b>Local Objectives from 'Towards 2040, the Powys Well-being Plan', - applied to Newtown &amp; Llanllwchaiarn</b></p>	<p><b>Town Council 5 Year Plan 2018-2023 Topic Areas</b></p>	<p><b>Place Plan – 2021-2036 Topic Areas</b></p>
 <p>People in <b>Newtown &amp; Llanllwchaiarn</b> will experience a stable and thriving economy</p> <p>Prosperous, Resilient, Healthier, More equal, Cohesive Communities, Language and Culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Centre</li> <li>• Visitors &amp; Marketing</li> <li>• Culture Arts &amp; Events</li> <li>• After The Bypass</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Character &amp; Heritage</li> <li>• Housing and Future Development</li> <li>• Community Facilities</li> <li>• Business, Learning &amp; Employment</li> <li>• Town Centre Experience</li> <li>• Tourism, Culture &amp; Attractions</li> </ul>
 <p>People in <b>Newtown &amp; Llanllwchaiarn</b> will enjoy a sustainable and productive environment</p> <p>Prosperous, Resilient, Healthier, Cohesive Communities, Language and Culture, Globally responsible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Spaces and the Environment</li> <li>• Residential Areas</li> <li>• Visitors &amp; Marketing</li> <li>• Young People</li> <li>• Culture, Arts and Events</li> <li>• After the By-Pass</li> <li>• Sport and Recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Character &amp; Heritage</li> <li>• Housing and Future Development</li> <li>• Health and Well Being</li> <li>• A Safe &amp; Tidy Town</li> <li>• Open spaces</li> <li>• Active Travel</li> <li>• Climate Change and Biodiversity</li> <li>• Town Centre Experience</li> <li>• Tourism, Culture &amp; Attractions</li> </ul>
 <p>People in <b>Newtown &amp; Llanllwchaiarn</b> will be healthy, socially motivated and responsible</p> <p>Prosperous, Healthier, More equal, Cohesive Communities, Globally responsible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Centre</li> <li>• Young People</li> <li>• Heritage</li> <li>• Culture, Arts and Events</li> <li>• Sport and Recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Facilities</li> <li>• Business, Learning &amp; Employment</li> <li>• Health and Well Being</li> <li>• Open spaces</li> <li>• Active Travel</li> <li>• Climate Change and Biodiversity</li> <li>• Tourism, Culture &amp; Attractions</li> </ul>
 <p>People in <b>Newtown &amp; Llanllwchaiarn</b> will be connected by strong communities and a vibrant culture</p> <p>Prosperous, Resilient, More equal, Cohesive Communities, Language and Culture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential Areas</li> <li>• Visitors &amp; Marketing</li> <li>• Young People</li> <li>• Heritage</li> <li>• Culture, Arts and Events</li> <li>• Sport and Recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Character &amp; Heritage</li> <li>• Housing and Future Development</li> <li>• Community Facilities</li> <li>• Business, Learning &amp; Employment</li> <li>• Open spaces</li> <li>• Town Centre Experience</li> <li>• Climate Change and Biodiversity</li> <li>• Tourism, Culture &amp; Attractions</li> </ul>

# Vision

## By 2036 in Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn...

The town has attracted further significant financial investment and has developed as a “Regional Centre” as identified in the Welsh Government’s *Future Wales – the National Plan 2040*, with adequate infrastructure to host major services such as the North Powys Wellbeing programme.

People continue to feel **safe** in the town and proud of the level of **cleanliness**. Residential areas are attractive places to live with opportunities to play, relax, and socialise. People of all ages enjoy a range of all-weather / year-round sports and recreational activities.

Residents have increased local access to a wider range of **health** services and access to adequate opportunities and **facilities** to lead active, healthy lives and feel involved in their local communities, including community halls, neighbourhood shops and spaces for young people to meet.

A mix of new **housing** is developed to meet demand with consideration given to developing new areas between the existing **development** boundary and the bypass.

**Businesses** are supported to provide more sustainable **employment** opportunities. Private and public sector employers continue to work with education and training providers to produce a skilled local workforce.

Private, public and voluntary sector organisations are working in partnership for the benefit of the town.

Transport infrastructure and services balance the needs of both the economy & environment.

# Place Plan Themes & Objectives

## A great place to live, learn & work



**1.1 Character & Heritage**

**1.2 Housing and Future Development**

**1.3 Community Facilities**

(community centres, youth centres, libraries, leisure centres, public swimming pools, indoor recreational facilities, museums, art galleries, theatres, places of worship, colleges, schools, hospitals, surgeries, emergency service stations, courts & neighbourhood shops)

**1.4 Business, Learning & Employment**

**1.5 Health and Well-being**

**1.6 A Safe & Tidy Town**

## Green Newtown



**2.1 Open spaces** (includes play areas, outdoor sports facilities & allotments)

**2.2 Active Travel** (walking and cycling) **& Transport**

**2.3 Climate Change and Biodiversity**

## Destination Newtown

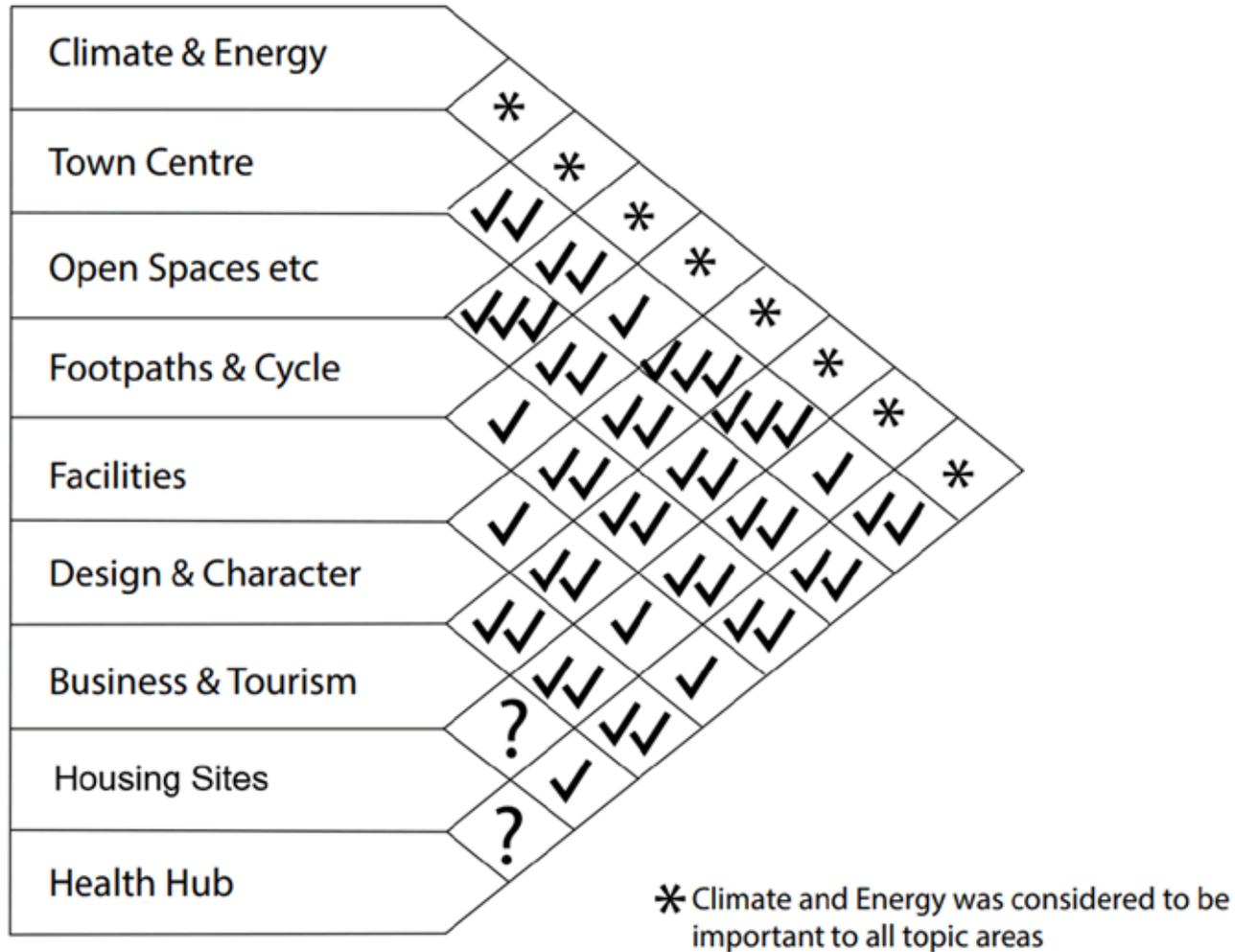


**3.1 Town Centre Experience** (Shops, services, accessibility, pedestrian signage)

**3.2 Tourism, Culture & Attractions**

# How do the topics link?

As expected, the topics in the Place Plan are interlinked and their contents cross reference. At one of the stakeholder meetings we asked those assembled, to tell us how much each topic related to the others. Their responses are set out in the diagram below:



# How do Place Plan policies link to the LDP policies?

One of the main purposes of a Place Plan is to add an additional layer of local knowledge, to the planning authority's Local Development Plan. We have indicated in each of the topic chapters, the relevant, corresponding policies in the Powys Local Development Plan (LDP). Full descriptions of the corresponding Powys LDP policies can be seen in the "Supporting Evidence"

The Planning Policy team at Powys County Council have been closely involved throughout the development of the Place Plan. They have contributed a significant number of hours work over the 2 years, giving specialist advice, attending stakeholder events, scrutinising the contents of each draft of the plan and giving detailed advice on how the Place Plan policies can best align with the policies in the Powys LDP.

The intention is for the Newtown & Llanllwchaiaran Place Plan to be adopted by Powys County Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Powys LDP.

It is important therefore, that the contents of the Place Plan do not contradict or over-ride what is written in the Powys LDP. Some ideas, proposals and views raised by the Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn community, do indeed fall outside of the remit of the current Powys LDP.

Where this is the case, these items have been included in a separate chapter entitled "The Next Local Development Plan". These items will be put forward for consideration to Powys County Council, for when they start the review process for the next LDP.



**Powys**  
**Local Development Plan**  
**2011 – 2026**  
1/4/2011 to 31/3/2026  
**Written Statement**  
**Adopted April 2018**

(Proposals & Inset Maps published separately)

This document is also available in Welsh



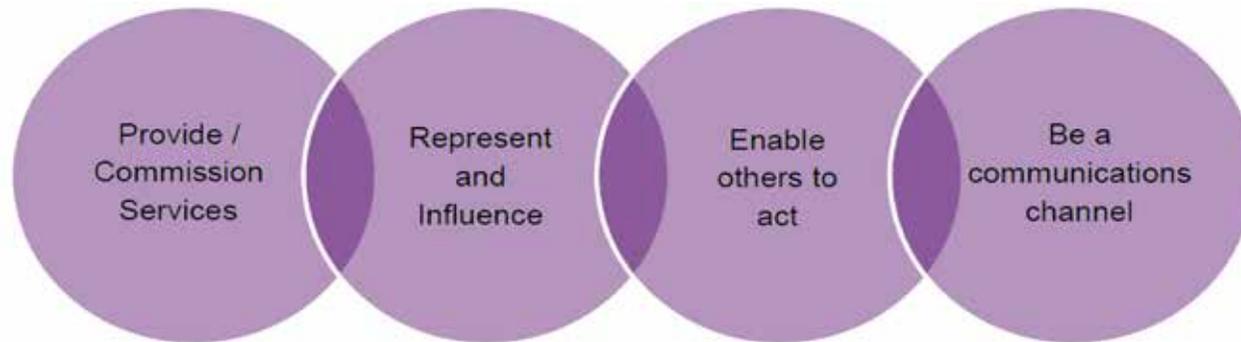
# The role of the Town Council

Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn Town Council is the lead organisation producing the Place Plan. While the Town Council has an elected role and democratic mandate to lead in the community, the contents of the plan are based on the views and aspirations of the whole community. In this way it hopes that the Place Plan belongs to the wider community. "Our Town, Our Plan".

The Town Council will share the role of delivering on the plan, with many other organisations in the town.

Town & Community Councils are limited in the specific things they can do. They have duties (things they must do) and powers (things they may do) set out in law. A local council must not do anything unless it has a legal power to do so. If it acts outside the list of its duties and powers (even if it would be popular with the community) the Town Council could be challenged for acting beyond its powers.

Local councils have four basic roles...



Source: Independent Review Panel 2018

## Town Council's Role: Planning Policies

The Town Council is consulted on each planning application in Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn by the local planning authority (Powys County Council), before they make their decision. The Town Council will use the Planning Policies in this document (representing the community's wishes), when responding to each of these consultations.

## Town Council's Role: Projects & Actions

Within the limits of its legal duties and powers, The Town Council commits to either:

- Delivering projects and actions (D) or
- Enabling others to deliver projects and actions (through a grant for example) (E) or
- Influencing others to deliver projects and actions (I)

as marked in the individual Projects & Actions details.

## Town Council Increased Powers

At the time of publication, the Town Council does not have the powers required to deliver some of the Projects / Actions denoted with (D). However, it is expected that this will be remedied by 2022, when new legislation is expected to allow the Town Council to have enhanced powers through the introduction of the new "General Power of Competence".

# Inclusive access principles

The Powys Local Development Plan refers to accessibility in terms of access to services and open space, and supports accessible design of developments. LDP policy DM13 (7) requires proposed developments to be 'inclusive to all, making full provision for people with disabilities'.

The intention with the Place Plan policies and projects, is to strive towards the broadest possible definitions of access and inclusion, not limited to disabled access. For example, Place Plan community evidence highlighted the needs of the elderly, people living with dementia and those with sensory loss.

In 2010, Disability Wales's Welsh Government funded, "Way To Go" project worked to equip planning officers, and disability and access organisations, with the practical tools to work together to ensure a fully inclusive built environment in Wales. Their definition of "Inclusive access", is one that the Place Plan aligns with:

**"Inclusive access ensures that everyone can get to, into and around developments, and take part in activities and services provided. 'Everyone' includes parents with buggies, older people, people with less than perfect sight, less than perfect hearing, less than perfect mobility or less than perfect understanding of the world around them."** <sup>12</sup>

An aerial photograph of a suburban town, likely Newtown, with a red overlay. The image shows a dense residential area with many houses and streets, surrounded by green hills and fields. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# Newtown: A great place to live, learn & work

# 1.1 Character & Heritage



## Why is this topic important to Newtown?

Newtown is rich with industrial heritage, distinctive architecture and blessed with beautiful natural surroundings. These features make the town unique and enjoyable for residents and visitors alike.

## Key Facts

Green spaces and trees are key features in many areas of the town and views out to the valley sides, are noted frequently.

Architecture is varied and reflective of the various eras and stages of the town's growth, but commonality in materials is noted across the various styles. St Mary's Church in the town centre is the one surviving medieval building. There are a number of timber framed buildings in the town centre, such as The Buck and The Bank. Several buildings such as the Black Boy have older internal cores hidden by their Georgian or Victorian frontages. Newtown is also home to three structures by innovative architect, Thomas Penson – St David's Church, The Flannel Exchange, and the Long Bridge. Other buildings of note include the Royal Welsh Warehouse, Brisco House and the iconic Town Clock.

Newtown has two designated conservation areas: Town Centre and Penygloddfa and 206 Listed Buildings. (see Appendix for map & Supporting Evidence for a list of the buildings). Scheduled monuments in the town include the prehistoric Bryn Bank Hillfort and two medieval mottes: one in the town park and the other at the Gro to the east of the town.

The area has been home to several social and industrial pioneers:

- Laura Ashley (1925 – 1985) - textile, home furnishing and fashion pioneer and significant rural employer.
- Robert Owen (1771-1858) philanthropic social entrepreneur, education reformer and creative of international significance.
- David Davies (1818-1890) - coal & railway pioneer, and his philanthropic family - Lord Davies; Gwendoline & Margaret Davies.
- Pryce Pryce-Jones (1834-1920)- pioneer of international mail order and home shopping, purportedly the initiator of Royal Mail Parcel Post and inventor of the modern sleeping bag.



Photo: TC



Photo: TC

## What's Been Happening Recently?

New information has been collated for the Place Plan. The community identified 16 distinct areas of the town (See Appendix for maps)

1. Town Centre
2. Canal Area
3. Llanllwchaiarn
4. Riverside
5. Vastre & Dyffryn Industrial Estate
6. Barnfields & Bryn Lane
7. Penygloddfa
8. Milford Road
9. Vaynor
10. College & Mochdre Industrial Estate
11. Maesyrhandir / Maesyddail
12. Llanidloes Road Area
13. Garth Owen
14. The Station & New Road
15. Trehafren
16. Treowen

### Character Surveys

Detailed survey forms and photos have been collated for 10 of the 16 areas (Areas 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12 & 14. See Supporting Evidence). Newtown & District Civic Society generously adapted their previous work to provide character area surveys for 5 areas: Town Centre, Canal Area, Penygloddfa, Milford Rd and The Station & New Rd.

### Vacant Buildings

The Town Council researched the following key vacant buildings in the town and wrote to their owners in August 2019, enquiring about intentions for the buildings and inviting dialogue. One reply was received regarding the Old Fire Station:

- St David's Church
- Bethel Chapel
- United Reform Church
- Old Fire Station
- The Grapes
- No.2 Commercial St.
- Former Flannel Factory, Bryn Street

(see Appendix: Vacant Buildings & Buildings At Risk Audit)

The audit confirms:

- Owner(s) details (removed for data protection),
- if the building is listed or in a conservation area,
- if the building is on the "listed buildings at risk register 2014"



Architectural heritage - photos: Left top to bottom (TC, TD, CS), Right (TC)

A green infrastructure project is currently underway in the town, delivered in partnership by Powys CC and the Town Council and supported by Welsh Government funding. The focus is on rejuvenating four areas: Back Lane and High Street junction, High Street, Severn Square, and Gas Street Car Park.

## LDP Policies & Other Planning Guidance

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

- LDP Strategic Policy SP7 - Safeguarding of Strategic Resources and Assets
- LDP Policy DM13 - Design and Resources
- LDP Appendix 6 - Historic Environment Information
- LDP Draft Conservation Areas SPG
- Powys County Council Residential Design Guide (Newtown Appraisal)
- TAN 24
- The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016,
- Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales (10) – Chapter 6
- Welsh Government/CADW best practice guidance

## Other Relevant Documents

- Newtown & District Civic Society (2018), *Explore Newtown – The Historic Town Centre - Buildings and Character*
- Newtown & District Civic Society (2013), *The Canal Area Character Appraisal*
- Canal & River Trust / Montgomery Canal Partnership (2016), *The Montgomery Canal: Regeneration through Sustainable Restoration*
- Heritage Hub 4 Mid Wales (2019) *Powys Pioneers Digital Heritage Feasibility Study*
- Welsh Government (2007), *Manual For Streets*

## New Place Plan Evidence

- Map: Conservation Area and Listed Buildings - Penygloddfa
- Map: Conservation Area and Listed Buildings - Town Centre
- List of Listed Buildings in Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn
- List of Buildings of Significance To The Community
- Character Area Surveys (Town Centre, Canal Area, Llanllwchaiarn, Vastre & Dyffryn, Barnfields / Bryn Lane, Penygloddfa, Milford Rd, College & Mochdre Ind Est, Llanidloes Rd, Station & New Rd.)
- Map: Character Areas
- Map: Character Areas - Development Types
- Character Surveys Overview
- Vacant Buildings And Buildings At Risk
- Community Comments: Character & Heritage

## What did you tell us?

# Character & Heritage: Community Comments

A summary from the consultation events and public survey  
(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

*“Make more of the historic buildings in Newtown - we have a lot of heritage to celebrate and to encourage tourism”*

*“More greening and tree planting is needed ... in and around the bus station and car park, so that something of the character of the country park could be returned”*

*“Environmental sustainability and attractive design are important for new housing in our town”*

### Popular Themes

- Conservation & development of key areas and buildings
- Protecting the valued views of open countryside
- Promote and educate people of our history, archaeology and heritage
- Improve and do more with the neglected important buildings

### Ideas For The Future

- Celebrate towns industrial heritage (guided walks, trails.)
- Improved signage to areas of interest
- Better promotion of the Robert Owen, WHSmith and Textiles museums
- Festival to celebrate pioneers such as Robert Owen and Laura Ashley
- Re-use of deteriorating former churches
- Better use of the Pryce Jones building
- Preservation of the conservation’s areas
- Eco friendly housing and sustainable design for new developments
- Improve quality, affordability and energy efficiency of private housing stock
- Pedestrianise Broad Street
- Celebrate strong musical heritage – more opportunities for performances

### Key Feedback

- 66% agreed that Newtown has a unique heritage
- 29.2% were satisfied that aspects, features and historic buildings are looked after and will be preserved.
- The Conservation Areas of Penyglodfaa and the Town Centre are important assets for the town – though Pengloyddfa conservation area was noted as being in decline.
- Views through to the hills from Broad Street are unique to Newtown
- Historic buildings throughout the town are mentioned regularly
- The distinctive use of materials such as brick and slate were noted as an asset for the town
- The need for eco-friendly houses was noted a number of times and one person cited “The Wintles” in Bishops Castle as a good example.
- Canal Road Area is another of our assets – like the old Wool Board building – red brick, green alongside river, grass on the square
- The area around the railway station has some beautiful buildings but has many opportunities for improvement
- A strong consensus on finding solutions to empty and run-down landmark buildings such as St David’s Church and Bethel Chapel on New Road.

## How Will We Address The Issues?

### Character & Heritage Planning Policies

The Town Council will use these Policies when responding to consultations about local planning applications. If adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance they will also be used by Powys County Council when assessing planning applications.

No.	POLICIES	SUGGESTED LOCATIONS? (where applicable):
CH-a	All new development and redevelopment within Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn should contribute positively to the character & local distinctiveness of the character area, as mapped and described in the evidence (Map: Character Areas - Development Types in Appendix X and Character Area Surveys in Supporting Evidence)	<b>Areas of the town as identified by stakeholders and shown on Appendix Map: Character Areas</b> (1) Town Centre, (2) Canal Area, (3) Llanllwchaiarn, (4) Riverside, (5) Vastre & Dyffryn Industrial Estate, (6) Barnfields & Bryn Lane, (7) Penygloddfa, (8) Milford Road, (9) Vaynor, (10) College & Mochdre Industrial Estate, (11) Maesyrrhandir / Maesyddail (12) Llanidloes Road, (13) Garth Owen, (14) The Station and New Road, (15) Trehafren, (16) Treowen
CH-b	Development proposals within Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn's Town Centre and Penygloddfa Conservation Areas and developments that affect the towns listed buildings and their settings, must show how they enhance and preserve the characteristics and special qualities that make up their architectural and historic character.	Town Centre and Penygloddfa Conservation Areas The towns Grade II and Grade II* listed buildings (see Supporting Evidence)
CH-c	Other areas of local heritage importance together with buildings or structures that are unlisted local heritage assets as defined in the evidence should demonstrate what consideration has been given to retaining: the asset itself; the positive elements of its setting and immediate surrounds; and, the contribution the asset and its setting makes to the character of the local area (whether in the Conservation Area or not).	See Appendix: Buildings of Significance To The Community
CH-d	Developments that facilitate the appropriate re-use of vacant / underused buildings associated with the heritage of Newtown will be supported where: They are designed to complement and/or enhance the character of the building, but also taking into account any listed building or conservation area requirements that may be associated with them	Including: St David's Church, New Rd; Bethel Chapel, New Rd United Reform Church, Church St; Old Fire Station, New Rd; The Grapes, Commercial St; No.2 Commercial St.; Former Flannel Factory, Bryn Street

No.	POLICIES	SUGGESTED LOCATIONS? (where applicable):
CH-e	Developments that protect or enhance the historic environment in Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn to support business growth and tourism will be supported.	
CH-f	Proposals for the repair and restoration of the Montgomery Canal that seek to minimise loss of the existing fabric together with compatible and alternative uses for associated historic buildings will be supported. (Canal policies and projects also feature in topics: Tourism, Health & Well-being & Climate & Biodiversity).	

## Character & Heritage Projects / Actions

Town Council's role: (D) = Delivering, (E) = Enabling others to deliver and (I) = Influencing others to deliver.

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
CH1	Identify partners & funding opportunities for projects which will conserve, improve, maintain and promote the character and history of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Penygloddfa area (including the historic Crescent and adjacent roundabout)</li> <li>The area around Pryce Jones to include the station &amp; St David's Church</li> <li>Greening and tree planting in and around the bus station and car park (the site of the former Country Park)</li> <li>Greening of the area around the flats in St Mary's Close</li> <li>Improvements to and potential uses for the alleyways leading off Broad Street</li> <li>Improvements to the architecturally significant buildings such as St David's and The Flannel Exchange.</li> </ul>	L	Town Council (D, E) PCC, Civic Society, Building owners, Cadw
CH2	Discuss with Powys CC and investigate additional funding for the repair & renovation of Long Bridge (links with Tourism policy & projects).	S	Town Council (I), PCC
CH3	Discuss with Powys CC and investigate additional funding for the repair & renovation of Dolerw Bridge	M	Town Council (D, E), PCC
CH4	Identify partners & funding opportunities for "Discover Newtown" / projects to support, celebrate and showcase the architecture & heritage of the town.	S	Town Council (D, E), Civic Society, Heritage Hub For Mid Wales, Cadw, CPAT, PCC

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
CH5	Install gateway signage at entrances to the town, to reflect the character & heritage.	S	Town Council (D, E), PCC
CH6	"Green" the town – through planting – street scene and entrance / gateway routes	M	Town Council (D, E), PCC, Open Newtown
CH7	Install improved signage to areas of interest	M	Town Council (D, E), PCC, Open Newtown
CH8	Develop projects relating to the 4 local pioneers: Laura Ashley, Robert Owen, David Davies and Pryce Pryce-Jones: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Festival 2021 - an ambitious, year-long arts, culture and heritage festival tied to the 250th anniversary of Robert Owen's birth and the 60th anniversary of the opening of Laura Ashley's first shop;</li> <li>• Digital projects to ensure the conservation of collections held in private ownership across Mid Wales.</li> <li>• Promotional and educational awareness of the pioneers to develop their profile and impact on the future of Mid Wales, and to drive entrepreneurship.</li> <li>• A permanent exhibition plus permanent object and archive store in Newtown.</li> </ul>	M	Heritage Hub For Mid Wales
CH9	Develop other events and attractions that celebrate local heritage & culture (wool, textiles etc)	M	Town Council (E), Voluntary Sector / PAVO.
CH10	Identify partners & funding to implement solutions to key empty / run down buildings as identified in the Vacant Buildings Audit (In the Appendix)	L	Town Council (D, I), PCC, building owners
CH12	Investigate partners willing to use the character work undertaken as a basis for preparing formal Conservation Area Character Appraisals along with Conservation Area Management Plans for the town's Conservation Areas.	L	Civic Society
CH13	Investigate with Powys CC, the designation of the area around Pryce Jones to include the station & St David's Church as a Conservation Area	L	Town Council (D), PCC
CH14	Publication of a new book about Newtown, North of the River Severn (including the Penygloddfa area)	S	Civic Society

# 1.2 Housing & Future Development



## Why is this topic important to Newtown?

Housing development is needed to accommodate the growing and changing household needs of Powys and Newtown. There is a particular need to consider affordable housing for our young people and accommodation for the elderly.

## Key Facts

The draft NDF (2020 – 2040) (now known as Future Wales – the National Plan 2040) identifies Newtown as a Regional Centre to include housing as a growth area.

The Mid and West Wales region as identified by the Draft NDF notes that 23,400 additional homes are needed in the region until 2038 and over the initial five years (2018/19 to 2022/23) 44% of the additional homes needed should be affordable homes. These estimates provide part of the evidence and context on which Housing Requirements for Strategic Development Plans can be based and should be considered at the regional scale.

## 3 sites are identified in the LDP for housing:

- P48 HA2 - Hendidley 15 units
- P48 HA3 South of Heol Treowen Extension 70 units
- P48 HA4 South of Heol Treowen / Great Brimmon 136 units

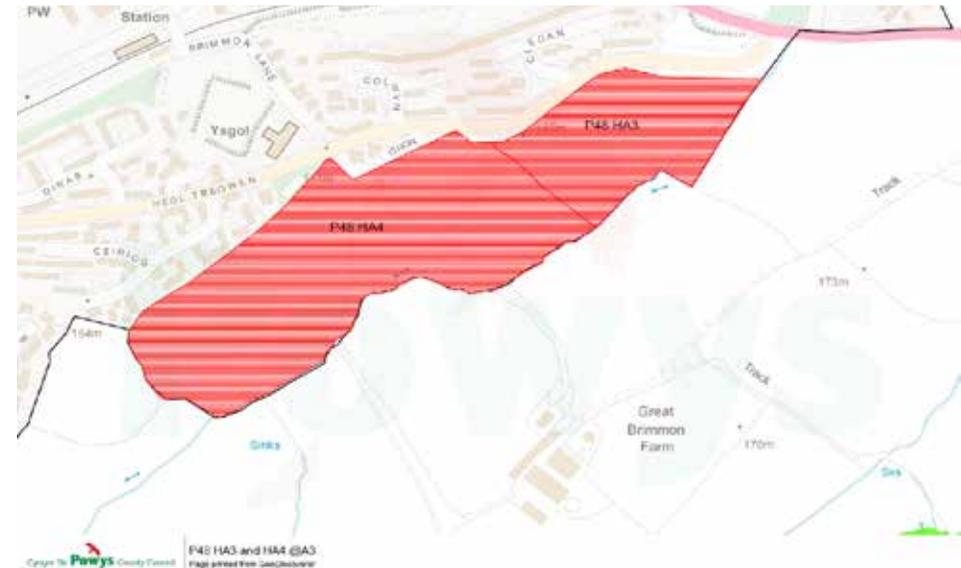
## What's Been Happening Recently?

As of 24th June 2020, there were 407 applicants on the Common Housing Register, seeking social rented accommodation in Newtown. This figure represents only applicants who have indicated Newtown as their first choice of location. <sup>13</sup>

Two new developments of affordable housing for social rent by applicants on the common housing register are underway at:

- Former Bowling Green, Back Lane
- Former Red Dragon and Youth Centre Site, Plantation Lane, Maesyrrhandir.

Land at the former Robert Owen House site is also secured for affordable housing.



Source: Powys County Council

## Existing LDP Housing Allocations

Of the sites that are already allocated for housing in the LDP, 2 sites at Treowen HA3 & HA4, together form one of the largest sites in the LDP. The community are therefore, encouraged to develop a “site brief” for these sites. A site brief can put forward the community’s views on aspects such as the housing mix and density, housing style, layout and boundary treatment, landscaping, vehicular and pedestrian access, and open space provision.

Initial discussions took place about a site brief for the P48 HA3 & HA4 allocations, at a Place Plan event in October, with stakeholders including representatives from the Treowen Community Hall. Their initial suggestions for the site (see Supporting Evidence) are included in Policy HF-b and the completion of the Site Brief is scheduled in Project HF1.

### Suggested Housing Sites

At 5 Place Plan community engagement events, members of the public were asked to suggest small sites that may be suitable for housing development. Each of these was reviewed by the Planning Policy team at Powys CC. The sites taken forward in the policies and projects section of the plan are listed in the Appendix. The full list of suggestions is in the Supporting Evidence.

### The Impact of Covid-19

Figures for Powys in May 2020, showed a 119% increase in homelessness, with further increases expected due to unemployment plus the lifting of restrictions on private landlords enforcing evictions.<sup>6</sup>

### **LDP Policies & Other Planning Guidance**

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

- LDP Strategic Policy SP1 - Housing Growth (pg33)
- LDP Strategic Policy SP3 - Affordable Housing Target
- LDP Strategic Policy SP5 - Settlement Hierarchy
- LDP Strategic Policy SP6 - Distribution of growth across the settlement hierarchy
- LDP Policy H1 - Housing development proposals
- LDP Policy H2 - Housing sites
- LDP Policy H3 - Housing Delivery
- LDP Policy H4 - Housing Density
- LDP Policy H5 - Affordable Housing contributions
- LDP Policy H6 - Affordable Housing exception sites
- LDP Policy H7 - Householder development
- Welsh Government: Draft National Development Framework
- Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales (10)

### **Other Relevant Documents**

- Welsh Government (forthcoming), Mid Wales Economic Strategy
- Growing Mid Wales Partnership (2019), *Strategic Economic Priorities for the Mid Wales Region*
- Marches Local Economic Partnership & Welsh Government (2018) *The Marches & Mid Wales Freight Strategy*

### **New Place Plan Evidence**

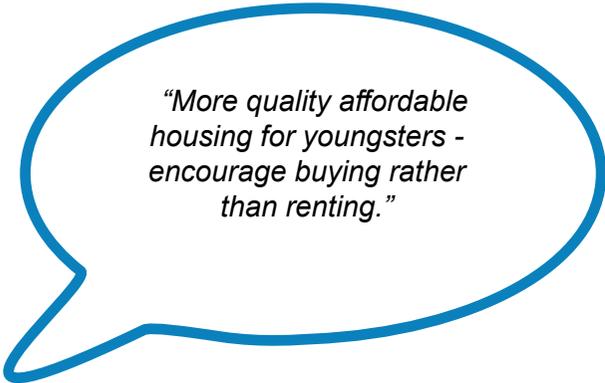
- Map: Housing Sites - Community Suggestions
- Housing Sites To Take Forward
- Housing Sites Suggestions - Full List
- Treowen HA3 & HA4 - Stakeholder Comments and Site Ideas
- Community Comments: Housing & Future Development

## What did you tell us?

# Housing & Future Development: Community Comments

A summary from the consultation events and public survey

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)



*“More quality affordable housing for youngsters - encourage buying rather than renting.”*



*“More sheltered accommodation like Llys Glan yr Afon close to the town centre”*



*“Schemes to get homeless and disabled people into safe housing.”*

### Popular Themes

- More appropriate family homes
- More affordable / social housing/ flats/ bungalows
- More help to buy schemes
- More environmentally sustainable homes
- Address empty properties

### Ideas For The Future

- More and better sustainable employment opportunities with better range and wages
- Infrastructure provision: No more housing until there are more doctors, dentists, support services etc.
- Look to build between the by-pass in the town.
- Better public transport
- Provision of mixture of housing in the town centre as well as the edges of town to create a balance (not just social housing)

### Key Feedback

Satisfaction with housing provision for younger people:

Extremely Satisfied: 2.8%  
Satisfied: 13.2%  
Neutral: 48.1%  
Dissatisfied: 23.6%  
Extremely Dissatisfied: 11.3%

Satisfaction with housing provision for elderly people:

Extremely Satisfied: 2.8%  
Satisfied: 25.5%  
Neutral: 54.7%  
Dissatisfied: 12.3%  
Extremely Dissatisfied: 2.8%

Satisfaction with housing provision for disabled people:

Extremely Satisfied: 0.9%  
Satisfied: 19.8%  
Neutral: 62.3%  
Dissatisfied: 11.3%  
Extremely Dissatisfied: 4.7%

Satisfaction with housing provision for people on low incomes:

Extremely Satisfied: 2.8%  
Satisfied: 17.0%  
Neutral: 49.1%  
Dissatisfied: 21.7%  
Extremely Dissatisfied: 7.5%

## How Will We Address The Issues?

The Town Council will use these Policies when responding to consultations about local planning applications. If adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance they will also be used by Powys County Council when assessing planning applications.

### Housing & Future Development Planning Policies

No.	DRAFT POLICIES	SUGGESTED LOCATIONS? (where applicable):
HF-a	<p>The Place Plan supports the following key principles for new housing developments in Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An appropriate mix of housing types and tenures are encouraged to meet local needs</li> <li>• The delivery of affordable homes will be supported to meet the future needs of the town</li> <li>• Provision to be made for the health and well-being of future residents such as play areas, cycle paths, open spaces and allotments where appropriate</li> <li>• New development to have regard to the character and quality of the surrounding townscape and to reflect the existing form of development (See character area surveys – Supporting Evidence)</li> <li>• High quality design is encouraged to enhance local character and distinctiveness</li> <li>• High standards of energy efficiency and sustainable construction principles to be encouraged including green infrastructure such as electric hook up points where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>All locations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treowen housing allocation (P48 HA3 &amp; HA4)</li> <li>• Hendidley housing allocation (P48 HA2)</li> <li>• Former Bowling Green, Back Lane</li> <li>• Former Red Dragon and Youth Centre Site</li> <li>• Former Robert Owen House site</li> </ul>
HF-b	<p>For Powys LDP Allocations P48 HA3 and P48 HA4 (total 206 units), Treowen, the following specific criteria should be applied. It is noted that a Design Brief for Treowen is included in the Projects section of the Place Plan.</p> <p>Key principles to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement (eg the development of a design brief) is encouraged by the developer in advance of pre-application consultations. Community engagement in all stages of the design process would be desirable.</li> <li>• A mix of housing to meet local needs, should be provided to cater for young and elderly people and a target of 20% affordable housing. Lifetime Homes Standards will be supported.</li> <li>• Mixed use opportunities to be considered on site eg. Café, launderette, community hub</li> <li>• Strong pedestrian, cycle and vehicular linkages should be made to the town centre including links to Newtown Bypass if appropriate</li> <li>• Active Travel routes should connect to the town (see Place Plan topic 2.2)</li> <li>• Development proposals should consider renewable energy sources and communal heating systems.</li> <li>• New or improved community facilities will be encouraged in accordance with Place Plan Policy CF-c</li> </ul>	<p>Treowen housing allocation (P48 HA3 &amp; HA4) (See Supporting Evidence: Stakeholder Comments and Site Ideas)</p>

## Housing & Future Development Projects / Actions

Town Council's role: (D) = Delivering, (E) = Enabling others to deliver and (I) = Influencing others to deliver.

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
HF1	Consult community & prepare detailed site brief for LDP Housing Allocations HA3&4 at Treowen.	S	Town Council (D), PCC
HF2	In line with LDP policy, where possible pursue change of use of vacant buildings or redevelopment of vacant sites, to residential or other appropriate uses. (See Appendix - <i>Housing Sites To Take Forward &amp; Map</i> )	L	Town Council (I), PCC, Building Owners
HF3	Support the community to develop design briefs for other existing housing allocations and pursue other potential small housing sites as identified in the Appendix - <i>Housing Sites To Take Forward &amp; Map</i> .	L	Town Council (I), PCC
HF4	Identify partnership & funding opportunities to develop Community-led housing schemes. Seek advice from Wales Co-operative Centre.	M	Town Council (E), Community sector

# 1.3 Community Facilities



(community centres, youth centres, libraries, leisure centres, public swimming pools, other indoor recreational facilities, museums, art galleries, theatres, places of worship, colleges, schools, hospitals, surgeries, emergency service stations, courts plus neighbourhood shops.)

## Why is this topic important to Newtown?

Access to the appropriate necessary facilities for day to day living is important for quality of life and maintaining one's health and well-being through social interaction, access to food, learning and recreation.

## Key Facts

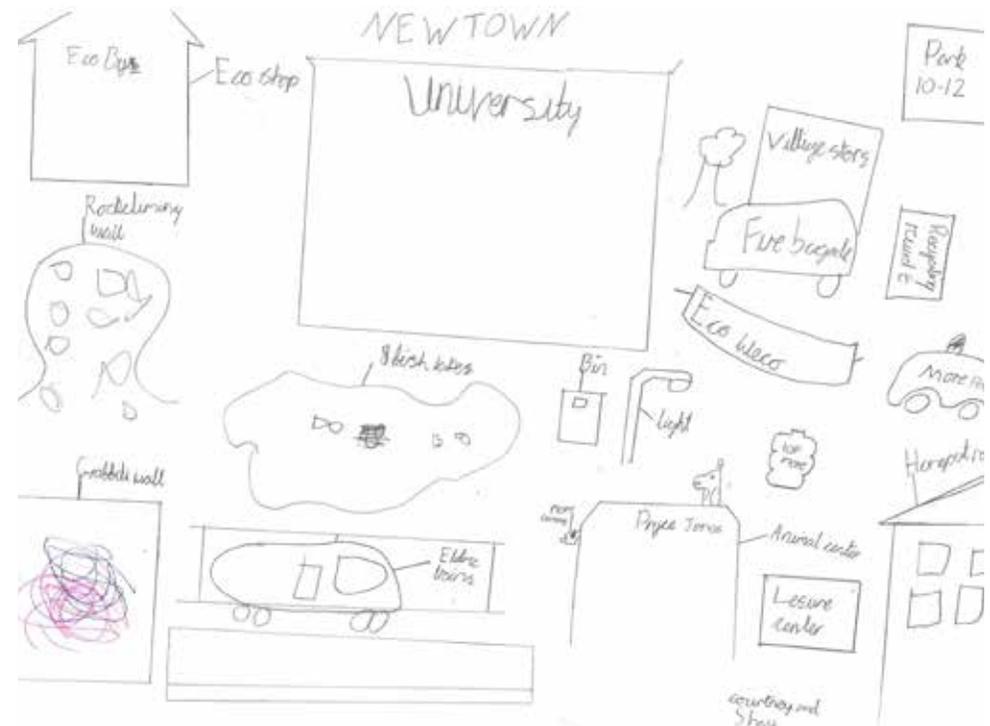
Community facilities in all areas of the town were audited as part of the evidence gathered for Place Plan. The results were plotted on a map (see Appendix).

Information was also gathered for several facilities regarding their condition, accessibility and usage. (see Supporting Evidence).

Brief information was also gathered on three of the town's community halls regarding their condition, accessibility and usage. A fourth hall is currently undergoing a major refurbishment.

At the drop-in events, the following facilities were identified by the community as "good":

- Oriel Davies Gallery - regional / national importance
- Community Centres / Halls across the town where various groups can meet / activities are hosted
- Allotment
- Hospital
- Schools / the College
- Theatre - regional / national importance
- Leisure Centre
- Library
- Textile Museum
- Football Club
- Cinema
- Scout Hut
- Skate Park
- Cricket club & ground
- Rugby club and grounds
- Tennis club and grounds
- Golf course



Drawing: Treowen CP School Pupil. Photos: TD, Google

Key meeting places for young people were identified as:

- Football Club
- Leisure Centre
- Cinema
- Scout Hut
- Skate Park
- Many facilities - especially sports are run by volunteers

**What's Been Happening Recently?**

- Some local neighbourhood facilities have been lost - the youth centre, the shop at Treowen, the closed pubs at Maesyrrhandir and Heol Vaynor.
- There are currently 14 health service locations in the local area. There are issues with GP recruitment at the town's medical practice. Proposals for the new health hub in the town are expected to incorporate alternative methods of healthcare delivery using new technologies and allow for services to be housed in one location.
- A "school's transformation" scheme is underway which may impact on the locations of schools.

A new welsh medium school was constructed in recent years.

Impact of Covid-19

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the majority of community facilities, were forced to close their doors. The government has recently announced a £26 million support package for the whole of Wales, intended to provide grants of £10,000 to eligible small charities within retail, leisure and hospitality. Powys County Council will administrate the grants provision which it is hoped will support a wide range of organisations that up until now have not qualified for financial support including charity shops, sports clubs and community centres.<sup>6</sup>



Photo: TD

**LDP Policies & Other Planning Guidance**  
(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

- LDP Policy DM11 - Protection of Existing Community Facilities and Services
- LDP Policy C1 - Community Facilities and Indoor Recreation Facilities
- LDP Policy DM12 - Development in Welsh speaking strongholds
- Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales (10)

**New Place Plan Evidence**

- Map: Community Facilities
- Community Facilities Surveys
- Community Comments: Community Facilities

## What did you tell us?

# Community Facilities: Community Comments

A summary from the consultation events and public survey  
(see Supporting Evidence for full details)



*"We need a large community hall with a good kitchen and plenty of parking. The existing halls are small, or don't have good parking, or are church halls with usage restrictions."*



*"We need a free Wi Fi hotspot with a roof and somewhere safe. So we can go there and be ourselves."*



*"Create a "one stop" shop for information about events and local activities"*

### Popular Themes

- A strong need was voiced for more facilities and activities for teens / young people – recreational and educational
- Accessibility to services is key - including travel to the facilities and within the premises themselves.
- Need for accessible spaces for the whole community to meet
- Several community spaces exist but some are difficult to access or in poor condition
- Many requested a broader range of activities available for all ages
- Also a need to increase access to and promotion of existing activities and community venues.
- There are very few facilities in Treowen and further housing is expected in this area. Other housing areas also low on facilities.

### Key Feedback

- 49.1% were satisfied with the provision of community facilities in Newtown with 1.9% extremely satisfied
- 42.5% were dissatisfied with the facilities for younger people
- Young people report wanting more football pitches, sports facilities and activities

### What's Good?

- Oriol Davies Gallery
- Community Centres / Halls across the town for groups / activities
- Conference Centre
- Allotment
- Hospital
- Schools / the College
- Theatre
- Leisure Centre
- Library
- Textile Museum

### Ideas For The Future

- More youth clubs
- A large community hall with a good kitchen and parking provision
- Venue for music, sports and arts events
- Services for the aging community e.g. Lunch clubs
- Have a toilet with a lift for disabled people
- More activities for younger children e.g. soft play, creative activities

## How Will We Address The Issues?

### Community Facilities Planning Policies

The Town Council will use these Policies when responding to consultations about local planning applications. If adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance they will also be used by Powys County Council when assessing planning applications.

No.	POLICIES	SUGGESTED LOCATIONS? (where applicable):
CF-a	Where a continuing need is demonstrated, proposals that will result in the loss of existing community facilities will be strongly resisted, unless there is sufficient justification for the development, including the exploration of alternative solutions to keep and maintain the existing facility.	Map identifies a range of existing facilities (Appendix)
CF-b	Proposals that provide new community facilities or improve the quality, accessibility and connectivity of existing facilities will be supported.	
CF-c	New development proposals should be encouraged to provide community facilities and infrastructure onsite or contribute to the delivery of facilities and / or projects identified within this Place Plan, appropriate to the scale and location of the development.	Housing allocation at Treowen (P48 HA3 & HA4)
CF-d	New developments that provide appropriate indoor facilities for young people will be strongly supported.	
CF-e	<p>New community facilities will be supported provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are located within / adjoining the settlement boundary</li> <li>• They are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and accessible to all</li> <li>• There are opportunities to integrate services</li> <li>• They would not have an adverse effect on residential amenity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Settlement boundary map</li> <li>• Housing allocation at Treowen (P48 HA3 &amp; HA4)</li> </ul>

## Community Facilities Projects / Actions

Town Council's role: (D) = Delivering, (E) = Enabling others to deliver and (I) = Influencing others to deliver.

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
CF1	Undertake further audit work to identify any issues or gaps in provision of community halls (are they accessible, of adequate quality and promoted sufficiently?)	S	Town Council (D)
CF2	If a need is highlighted through the audit work (project CF1), identify partners and funding to develop an accessible community centre, re-using an existing public building where possible.	M	Town Council (E), PCC
CF3	Identify partners to review Place Plan evidence (see Community Comments in Supporting Evidence) and source funding (such as Participatory Budgeting Scheme, Flow & Town Council Community Grants) for: improved activities for teens, including focus on skills development. New activities for younger children; soft play etc. (links with Projects CA1 & CA2)	S	Town Council (E), PCC Youth Services, Open Newtown, Schools, College, Vol & Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce .
CF4	Increase promotion of existing activities and community venues. Investigate partners & funding to establish a central source of information for the town such as a Directory / What's On listing (links with project HW3).	S	Town Council (D,E), PCC Youth Services & Tourism, Voluntary Sector c/o PAVO, Magik Incorporated
CF5	Development of an Activity Hub at Trehafren Hill. A new start-up / expansion of an existing business, in the form of an Activity Centre, to complement nearby Mountain Bike Trail and BMX Pump Track facilities, with development of canoe and bike hire enterprises, along with coaching opportunities, climbing wall development, youth and family recreation, tourist destination, with refreshments and welfare facilities available on site, with a secure compound area for maintenance teams and a visitor car park	M	Open Newtown and partners yet to be determined.

# 1.4 Business, Learning & Employment



## Why is this topic important to Newtown?

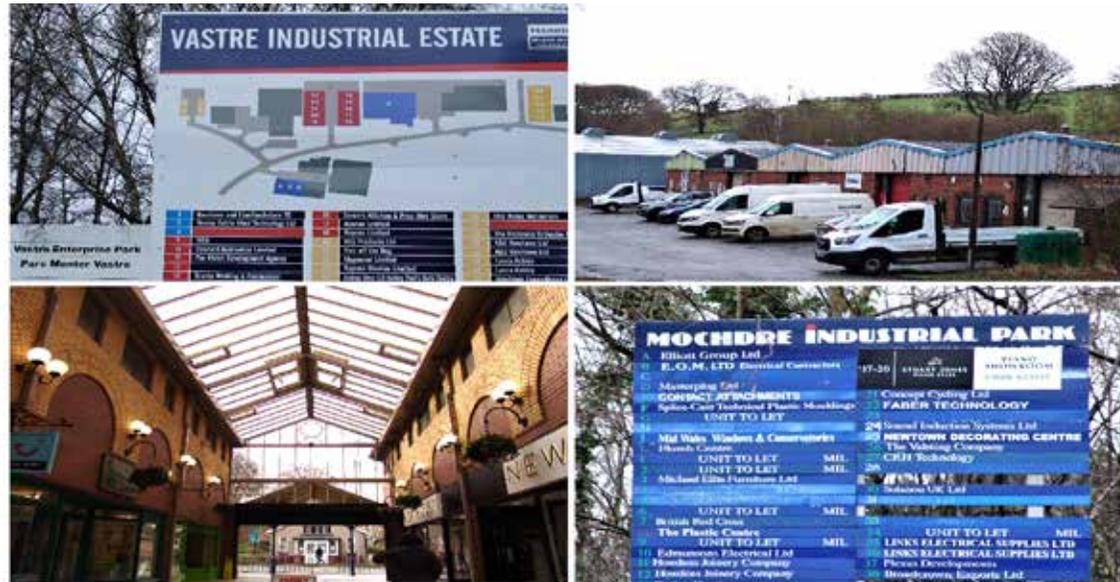
A thriving economy is key to the prosperity of all towns and the well-being of its community. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a detrimental effect on jobs and businesses and there is an urgent need to focus on the economic recovery of the town.

## Key Facts

Powys has very few large employers (i.e. businesses with 250+ employees) outside the public sector. The majority of businesses are small, 93% having less than 10 employees in 2013 and there are many one person enterprises. Self-employment and part-time employment are also high.<sup>14</sup>

The Business Register and Employment Survey for 2012 showed that excluding Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, the three largest employment sectors in Powys by percentage of jobs were Health (16.4%), Retail (11.6%) and Manufacturing (10.6%).

The public sector, comprising Health, Education, Public Administration and Defence is one of the largest employers and accounted for 34% of the employment.<sup>14</sup>



Photos: TD

In Powys there is a dominance of micro and small businesses and high levels of new business start-ups in the county.<sup>14</sup>

## What's Been Happening Recently?

- Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, many town centre businesses were concerned about the negative effects of the decline of the high street and competition.
- A Business Improvement District scheme was launched but was not progressed. A need has been highlighted by public and voluntary sector organisations in the town for improved engagement with the business sector.
- In 2018, £55 million of UK Government funding was confirmed towards a growth deal in the Mid Wales region. The Growing Mid Wales Board was established and a Strategic Economic Plan and Growth Deal Road Map has been drafted. It is hoped that a total investment of up to £165 million will be secured for the region.

### The Impact of Covid-19

The pandemic has had a dramatic effect on the economy to date. The UK officially entered recession in August 2020, based on the announcement by the Office for National Statistics that the economy had fallen by a record 20.4 per cent between April and June.

The sectors hardest hit by the pandemic in towns in England and Wales are: Accommodation; Non-food Retail; Pubs and Restaurants; and Arts and Leisure. <sup>15</sup>

30% of workers in Newtown are employed in Wholesale, Retail, Hotels & Catering. <sup>15</sup> And Newtown has 50 businesses registered in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation industry. <sup>6</sup>

At September 2020, £5,469,150 in government grants had been issued to 453 businesses in the Newtown locality. <sup>17</sup> The government has also been subsidizing the salaries of 23% of workers in Powys. <sup>6</sup> Unemployment figures are set to increase as furlough schemes come to an end and employers assess the viability of their businesses. It is expected that there will be between 7-25% fewer jobs in the local economy between 2020-2025. <sup>6</sup>

As you would expect of the county's largest town, Newtown area has the highest number of new benefits claimants in Powys but other towns have a higher percentage increase. <sup>6</sup> Several hundred jobs have also recently been lost due to the closure of the Laura Ashley business.

The timeline for economic recovery is uncertain as it depends on the persistence of Covid-19 during the months and years ahead. It is estimated that while several sectors will make a 100% recovery within 5 years, those most at risk sectors may only see a 50% recovery in that time. <sup>18</sup> In August 2020, Powys County Council set out its commitment to supporting local retailers and businesses and developing "new look" town centres in its plan

*#SupportLocalPowys with safe and resilient towns:*

*By working with businesses and local town and community councils, the aim will be to open up space for people to enjoy and improve the retail and social experience for shoppers and encouraging visitors to stay longer. <sup>19</sup>*

One of the positive outcomes for some employers and employees is the increase in home-working and ability to undertake business effectively online. The crisis could also be used as an opportunity to kick-start the green economy in order to reverse the effects of climate change.

### The Impact of Covid-19 on Learning

There has been a great deal of disruption to children and young people's education and training: the closure of schools and colleges, the move to online



Photo: TD

learning, the cancellation of exams and last-minute changes of policy on awarding grades. There is still much uncertainty around the future of education, training and how this will affect the labour markets.<sup>20</sup>

### Brexit

The UK left the European Union on 31st January 2020, at the time of writing, negotiations are still underway regarding future trade deals between the UK and Europe ahead of the end of the transition period on 31st December 2020

The impact of Brexit is currently uncertain but it will likely impact in the following areas:

- Impact on Public Services will depend on a number of factors, such as: the amount of tax revenue and borrowed funds the UK government has to spend and migration of overseas workers for example, from health and social care sectors.
- Trade - 40% of Welsh exports go to the EU and many jobs depend on those exports.
- Loss of funding: Wales receives substantially more EU funding per head than other UK countries: £628 per person, compared to England £102 per person: farming subsidies of over £350 million per year and £1.9 billion of EU structural funds between 2014-2020. Also funds from the European Investment Bank, which have subsidised projects in Powys such as road upgrades. Much will depend on whether the UK Government decides to make up any funding shortfall to Wales. Negotiations between the UK and Welsh governments about future funding will be key.<sup>21</sup>

### **LDP Policies & Other Planning Guidance**

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

- LDP Vision
- Strategic Policy SP2 - Employment Growth
- LDP Policy DM11 - Protection of existing community facilities and services
- LDP Policy DM16 - Protection of existing employment sites
- LDP Policy E1 - Employment Proposals on allocated employment sites
- LDP Policy E2 - Employment proposals on non-allocated employment sites
- LDP Policy E4 - Safeguarding employment sites
- LDP Policy E7 - Homeworking
- Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales (10)

### **Other Relevant Documents**

- Business Improvement District Survey Responses
- Powys CC (2020) COVID-19 Powys industries impact and recovery estimates
- Powys CC (2020), #SupportLocalPowys with safe and resilient towns
- Powys CC (2016) Powys Employment Needs Assessment (including Newtown Site Inventory)
- Powys CC (forthcoming) Employment Land and Premises Review
- Powys CC (2011, updated 2015) Economic Needs Assessment Study
- Edge Foundation (2020). The Impact of Covid-19 on Education: evidence on the early impacts of lockdown.
- Welsh Government (forthcoming), Mid Wales Economic Strategy
- Growing Mid Wales Partnership (2019), Strategic Economic Priorities for the Mid Wales Region
- Marches Local Economic Partnership & Welsh Government (2018) The Marches & Mid Wales Freight Strategy
- Federation of Small Businesses (2018) The Future of Town In Wales

### **New Place Plan Evidence**

- Community Comments: Business, Learning & Employment

## What did you tell us?

# Business, Learning & Employment: Community Comments

A summary from the consultation events and public survey

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)



*"We need smaller spaces for start-ups"*



*"More skills development and training opportunities. Work placements and apprenticeships. College to work with businesses to see what skills are needed."*



*"We need new industrial units that are fit for 21st Century...."*

### Popular Themes

- Lower business rates
- Improved signage off the bypass
- Tidying up the industrial estates (particularly unauthorised signage)
- More business support
- More active business forum
- More spaces for new businesses
- More training / skills development opportunities

### Ideas For The Future

- Re-use vacant buildings for business incubators
- More work placements and apprenticeships
- Lower parking charges
- Create a USP for the town
- More publicity for Newtown's businesses
- Better signage on industrial estates
- Need a good second-hand book shop and toy shop
- Lower shop rents – promote new shops to come to the town
- Encourage growth of Tuesday market – particularly green grocers
- Upcycling shop – combined with artists / refashioned items

### Key Feedback

#### From Business Improvement District Survey (32 responses)

- 72% rated Newtown as a good place to do business with 13% citing it as bad
- 44% said that investing in improved signage on the bypass, bringing people into town was critical to their business
- 44% said that Improving Newtown as an attractive place to come to live and for families to raise children was critical to their business with 28% saying it was very important.
- 25% said that encouraging pop-up and meanwhile uses for vacant commercial / retail properties was very important to their business.

#### From Place Plan Survey (106 responses)

- 39.6% were satisfied with the provision for business growth in Newtown (with 23.6% extremely satisfied).

## How Will We Address The Issues?

The Town Council will use these Policies when responding to consultations about local planning applications. If adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance they will also be used by Powys County Council when assessing planning applications.

### Business, Learning & Employment Planning Policies

No.	PLANNING POLICIES	SUGGESTED LOCATIONS? (where applicable)
BL-a	The expansion of Newtown's existing employment sites, the development of new local employment opportunities and homeworking will be supported by the Place Plan provided they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are in accordance with LDP Policy E2.</li> <li>• Give priority to the re-use of brownfield sites, or the conversion of existing buildings</li> <li>• Are of a scale appropriate to the immediate surroundings</li> <li>• Do not have a detrimental impact on surrounding residential amenity</li> <li>• Do not lead to the loss of public open space</li> <li>• Are located close to existing highways and do not have an unacceptable impact on traffic.</li> </ul>	
BL-b	The Place Plan supports proposals for the conversion of existing buildings for the provision of start-up incubator businesses providing they do not have a detrimental impact on residential amenity.	

### Business, Learning & Employment Projects / Actions

Town Council's role: (D) = Delivering, (E) = Enabling others to deliver and (I) = Influencing others to deliver.

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
BL1	Identify partners & funding to explore collaboration opportunities and further development of business incubator and conferencing facilities in the town	L	Town Council (E), Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce / Mid Wales Manufacturing / Federation of Small Businesses, PCC
BL2	Explore the feasibility of a town partnership between the business, public and voluntary sectors in the town, in order to support the economy & environment for example via tourism and climate change initiatives	S	Town Council (D,E), Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce / Mid Wales Manufacturing / Federation of Small Businesses / Public / Voluntary Sector / PAVO
BL3	Liaise with Welsh Government and Powys CC about provision for "bypassed communities", in order to invest in improved signage on the bypass, bringing people to destinations in Newtown.	S	Town Council (I), Welsh Government, PCC, Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce / Mid Wales Manufacturing / Federation of Small Businesses

# 1.5 Health & Well-being

## Why is this topic important to Newtown?

Health and well-being are central to everyone's quality of life. For the majority of us, the Covid-19 pandemic has presented the most significant healthcare challenge that we have known in our lifetimes. How we will keep ourselves healthy, well and thriving post-Covid, is a vital topic for communities everywhere.

## Key Facts

Powys Teaching Health Board is responsible for meeting the health and well-being needs of the people of Newtown and Powys as a whole. Due to the rural nature of the county, many services are provided locally through GPs and other primary care services, community hospitals and community services.

There is no District General Hospital in Powys, so these services are provided elsewhere out of county in Wales and England. The nearest District General Hospital for Newtown residents is the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.

After a lengthy NHS review of health services in Shropshire, Telford and Mid Wales (Future Fit), it was announced in Jan 2019 that emergency hospital care for Newtown & Llanllwchaearn residents, would remain located at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.

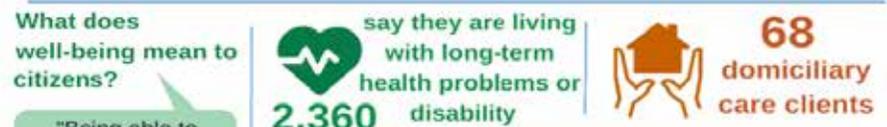
It is well evidenced that the following have a key role to play in supporting the health and well-being of the community: Nature, Gardening, Open Spaces (including waterways), Arts & Culture and Sport. This topic therefore links with the following other topics in the plan: *Open Spaces, Community Facilities, Active Travel, Culture & Attractions.*

## What's Been Happening Recently?

In recent years, the medical practice in Newtown has experienced challenges in recruiting GPs. With significant housing developments planned just outside the town boundary, there is a concern that health services in their current form,



## Newtown Town Council well-being fact sheet

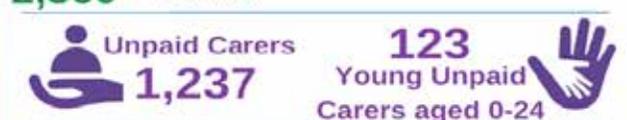


"Being able to access your community and local surroundings"

"Having secure work"

"Being able to enjoy a happy, productive and satisfying life"

"Being in good health and have enough money to pay your bills"



will be oversubscribed. The community has a strong interest in long-term plans for a new health & well-being campus to be located in the town (North Powys Wellbeing Programme).

### North Powys Wellbeing Programme

The North Powys Wellbeing Programme will deliver a significant change in the way health and care services are provided by promoting well-being, early help and support, and utilising social and green prescribing opportunities. The programme aims to encourage people to take greater responsibility for their health and well-being, and actively plan for their future health needs.

The project aims to:

- Enable citizens, staff and partners to be actively involved in the design and delivery of a new integrated model of health and care in north Powys.
- Improve equity of service to both urban and a rural population through integrated health and care pathways, including commissioned services from neighbouring counties.
- Enable more people to live independently and remain at home safely through technology enabled independence and care; and more integrated working to prevent needs from escalating and immediate intervention at time of crisis.
- Ensure joined up care involving neighbourhood teams and communities working together so that citizens have a more seamless service when they need it.

In May 2019, the Powys Regional Partnership Board (PRPB) received £2.5m of funding from Welsh Government to invest in new ways of delivering health and social care services within north Powys.

As part of the Programme, a Multi-agency Well-being Campus in the heart of Newtown, is proposed. The preferred site for the campus is adjacent to Park Street, Newtown. Services currently on the site include the Park Day Centre, Newtown Integrated Family Centre (formerly Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd) health services and two (soon to merge) primary schools, Ysgol Hafren and Ladywell Green.

The campus could host a new state of the art Rural Regional Centre serving the North Powys catchment. This may offer pre and post-operative care, day case procedures, diagnostics outpatients and rehabilitation services plus primary education, social care and supported accommodation.

In addition, a separate Community Well-being Hub could be sited on the campus. A place where different local partners can provide services for the



Photo: TD

residents of Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn.<sup>23</sup>

The programme is still at visioning and planning stage but has the potential to create significant change not only in terms of health and social care but also jobs, infrastructure, visitor numbers, facilities and services in the town.

#### The Impact of Covid-19

Between March and June 2020, a significant number of Newtown residents received Welsh Government sponsored food parcels and requested help with food and basic needs. It is anticipated that a significant number of people will continue to need additional help with food and basic needs in the longer term, as the economic impact of Covid-19 is felt and Welsh Government or Council support becomes less available.<sup>6</sup>

In immediate response to the pandemic, a group of Newtown organisations (Town Council, PAVO / Community Connectors, Ponthafren Association, The Salvation Army / Foodbank, All Saints Church) came together as “Newtown Network”, to respond to the well-being needs of residents as they arose. It supported the establishment of a network of over 100 informal volunteers, who provided help such as shopping, prescription collection and delivery of hot meals. A printed information directory was produced and delivered to every house in the town.

It is expected that vulnerable people will continue to need additional support and the need for food banks will increase. Also the level of referrals to social care will increase.<sup>23</sup>

Newtown Network has been joined by Citizens Advice Powys and Powys County Council Families First and will continue to respond to ongoing needs caused by Covid-19 and the economic downturn. It is currently formalising its membership, in order to continue its purpose of collaborating “*to support the residents of Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn, Powys in various ways to have healthy and fulfilled lives.*”

#### **LDP Policies & Other Planning Guidance**

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

- LDP Objective 16 – Community Well-being
- LDP Policy DM3 - Public Open Space
- LDP Policy W2 - Waste Management Proposals
- LDP Policy C1 - Community Facilities and Indoor Recreation Facilities
- LDP Policy DM1 - Planning Obligations
- Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales (10)

#### **Other Relevant Documents**

- Well-being of Future Generations Act 2017
- Welsh Government (2019), A Healthier Wales
- Powys CC Well-being Information Bank
- Powys Public Service Board (2018) Towards 2040: Powys Well-being Plan
- Powys CC & Powys THB (2017), The Health & Care Strategy For Powys

#### **New Place Plan Evidence**

- Stakeholders Comments on the Health Hub
- Community Comments: Health and Well Being

## What did you tell us?

# Health & Well-being: Community Comments

A summary from the consultation events and public survey  
(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

*“The nursing staff at the doctors are very good and the wait for an appointment to see them is not too long.”*

*“The BIGGEST challenge will be about how we build a new culture towards our health... how do we invest in and deliver a health service that is about prevention not cure.”*

*“Whilst we have most of the facilities that we need as a community, they are overstretched”*

### Popular Themes

To have access to medical centres and hospitals  
To have an emergency hospital close by  
To be able to get an NHS doctor's appointment when needed  
To have access to a dentist and appointment when needed  
Importance of access to green spaces for health and well-being  
Better access to mental health services

### Key Feedback

Satisfaction with facilities to support health, care and well-being in Newtown:

Extremely Satisfied: 2.8%  
Satisfied: 23.6%  
Neutral: 23.6%  
Dissatisfied: 33.0%  
Extremely Dissatisfied: 14.2%

### Ideas For The Future

- Improved hospital services
- GP's surgery with short waiting times.
- More outdoor activities / leisure facilities to encourage exercise e.g. health spas, active travel, outdoor activities for schools, a central cafe hub in the park, better waterside access ,
- clean air zones and dark skies at night, better playground facilities, riverside relaxing areas and GPs should prescribe time to join the walking / park run groups.
- 24-hour minor injuries unit
- More Doctors
- More support for mental health support groups, community clubs such as walking, arts and games clubs.
- LGBTQIA support services / groups.

## How Will We Address The Issues?

### Health & Well-being Planning Policies

For policies relating to Health & Well-being, please refer to *Community Facilities* topic, which includes health centres.

### Health & Well-being Projects / Actions

Town Council's role: (D) = Delivering, (E) = Enabling others to deliver and (I) = Influencing others to deliver.

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
HW1	Ensure that residents' views collected for the Place Plan and relating to Health and Well-being, is shared with the North Powys Wellbeing Programme team. (See Community Comments and Stakeholders Comments on the Health Hub in Supporting Evidence)	S	Town Council (D), Powys T Health Board
HW2	Strongly encourage the North Powys Wellbeing Programme team to continue to work with the local community on site design and other appropriate aspects of the proposed campus.	S	Town Council (D), Powys T Health Board
HW3	Investigate partners & funding to establish a central source of information (such as a Directory / What's On listing – ref project CF4) to promote engagement in sport, nature, creativity and social engagement as a means of keeping well.	S	Town Council (D,E), Powys CC, Powys T Health Board, Open Newtown, Voluntary Sector C/o PAVO, Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce
HW4	Provide a "Changing Places" Toilet either as part of the new "Well-being Campus" or elsewhere in the town.	M	Town Council (I), Powys T Health Board / Accessibility Powys
HW5	Walking Newtown is promoting and seeking funding for a project to construct an accessible path up and around Trehafren Hill in conjunction with the already built cycle track.	S	Walking Newtown
HW6	Continue joint working through the Newtown Network, "to support the residents of Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn, Powys in various ways to have healthy and fulfilled lives."	S	Town Council (D), Powys CC, Ponthafren Association, PAVO, Salvation Army / Foodbank, All Saints Church, Citizens Advice

*Other Projects / Actions that will contribute towards positive health & well-being are at CA4*

## 1.6 A safe & tidy town



### Why is this topic important to Newtown?

Attractiveness, cleanliness and safety are vital to people's positive experience of living and working in and visiting the town. These key aspects have a profound effect on people's community pride and well-being plus the economic prosperity of the town. Therefore, it is essential to get them right. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, safety in the town takes on an additional meaning and level of importance.

### Key Facts

#### Safety

On the whole, residents feel safe in the town: Extremely or very safe: 37.7%, Somewhat safe: 34.9%, Not so safe / not at all safe: 20.8%

#### Tidiness:

In the public survey (106 responses) 49.1% described the town as "Somewhat clean", 8.5% as "Very clean".

### What's Been Happening Recently?

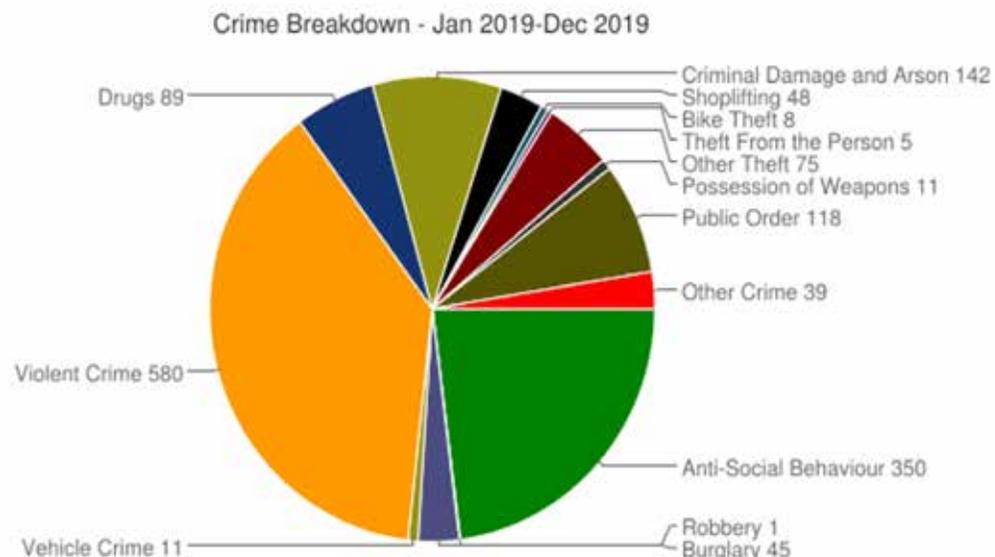
#### Safety

- There have been safety concerns following some violent attacks and an increase in drugs associated "county lines" activity in the town.
- Dyfed-Powys Police have recently installed CCTV at key town centre points.

#### Tidiness

- Several incidents reported of unattractive, overflowing bins in the town centre, particularly at weekends and bank holidays when high visitor numbers.
- The Town Council has been in discussion with Powys CC regarding a potential transfer of street cleaning services.
- The Town Council has written to the owners of key vacant buildings in the town to enquire about their status and future plans (see Appendix - Vacant Buildings & Buildings At Risk)

### Crime and Anti-social Behaviour Incident (ASBs) numbers for Newtown for 2019. <sup>24</sup>



### The Impact of Covid-19

Safety in the town has taken on a critical significance during the Covid-19 pandemic. Changes to the way in which we navigate around the town centre are currently taking shape, allowing adequate space for pedestrians to move safely and maintain safe social distances.

In August 2020, Powys County Council shared their new approach for “safe and resilient towns” in its plan *#SupportLocalPowys with safe and resilient towns*:

*With the support and financial backing from Welsh Government, Powys County Council will work with town and community councils, local businesses, chambers of trade and residents to design and install bespoke measures to create safe public areas for citizens to access freely and for businesses utilise to reopen and remain viable.*



Photo: TC

#### **LDP Policies & Other Planning Guidance**

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

- LDP Policy DM13 - Design and Resources
- Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales (10)

#### **Other Relevant Documents**

- Powys CC (2020), *#SupportLocalPowys with safe and resilient towns*
- UK Crime Stats Website, [www.ukcrimestats.com](http://www.ukcrimestats.com)

#### **New Place Plan Evidence**

- Community Comments: A Safe & Tidy Town

## What did you tell us?

# A Safe & Tidy Town: Topic Community Comments

A summary from the consultation events and public survey

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

*“The concrete wall alongside Ha’penny Bridge could be made more attractive.”*

*“Generally pretty good but there are hotspots where people really let it down and sometimes lack of bin emptying over weekends / bank holidays makes the town a bit of an embarrassment tourism wise.”*

*“Always felt safe in Newtown although crime appears to have increased in last 5 years. County lines is a problem.”*

## Popular Themes

### Safety:

- More and well monitored CCTV,
- More police presence on the street,
- Existing street lights switched back on plus additional lighting in the residential estates.
- Action to address drugs and alcohol related issues and anti-social behaviour.

### Tidiness:

- There is an overwhelming consensus requesting better litter management in the town and suggestions for
- schemes and funding to keep places clean.
- Dog mess is a regular concern

## Key Feedback

On the whole, residents feel safe in the town:

Extremely or very safe: 37.7%,

Somewhat safe: 34.9%,

Not so safe / not at all safe: 20.8%

- 49.1% described the town as “Somewhat clean”, 8.5% as “Very clean”.
- Some make the link between anti-social behaviour and the need for more activities for young people in the town.
- Safety concerns reported regarding road crossings in areas such as Canal Road and Milford Road.

## Ideas For The Future

- Activities / spaces for teenagers
- Solutions to improve street lighting
- Review public bin provision / more public recycling bins/ more dog waste bins
- review household rubbish collection to prevent fly tipping.
- Continue litter-picking / schemes to address litter “hotspots”
- Work with food businesses to consider solutions:
- Community skip days sponsored by the fast-food retailers
- Promotion & education work to encourage tidiness
- Regular reviews of maintenance needs - gardens, flowerbeds, benches, grass cutting, bridges
- Dilapidated buildings such as Bethel Chapel, need addressing.

## How Will We Address The Issues?

### A Safe & Tidy Town Planning Policies

The Town Council will use these Policies when responding to consultations about local planning applications. If adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance they will also be used by Powys County Council when assessing planning applications.

No.	POLICIES	SUGGESTED LOCATIONS? (Where applicable)
ST-a	Development proposals which deliver improvements to the public realm and enhance community safety within Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn, will be supported.	

### A Safe & Tidy Town Projects / Actions

Town Council's role: (D) = Delivering, (E) = Enabling others to deliver and (I) = Influencing others to deliver.

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
ST1	Address community concerns regarding lack of lighting and uneven paths, by working with PCC Officers to identify safety priorities, based on Place Plan evidence (see Supporting Evidence - Footpaths & Cycle Paths Audit Summary & Map)	S	Town Council (I), PCC
ST2	Work with partners to consider undertaking community consultation on appropriate levels of street lighting.	M	Town Council (E), PCC
ST3	Work with PCC Officers to consider improvements to road crossing facilities, including Canal Road and Milford Road by reviewing Place Plan evidence (see Supporting Evidence - Footpaths & Cycle Paths Audit Summary & Map)	M	Town Council (I), PCC
ST4	Identify partners and funding to address litter and dog mess at identified "hot spots" in the town (see Supporting Evidence – Community Comments) Suggested ideas include "litter pick walks".	M	Town Council (I), PCC / Open Newtown / Keep Wales Tidy / Bryn Litter Pickers

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
ST5	Work with PCC's Senior Waste Awareness and Enforcement Officer to consider the community's concerns about unattractive "hot spots" such as fly-tipping and buildings / structures needing maintenance, by reviewing the Place Plan evidence. (see Supporting Evidence – Community Comments)	M	Town Council (I), PCC, Problem Properties Board
ST6	Identify partners and funding for schemes to reduce specific food litter in the town centre, open spaces and residential areas.	S	Town Council (E), Food businesses / PCC / Open Newtown / Keep Wales Tidy / Bryn Litter Pickers
ST7	Identify partners and funding for promotional and educational schemes about keeping the town clean	S	Town Council (E), PCC / Open Newtown / Keep Wales Tidy / Schools / College / Library
ST8	Investigate transfer of "street scene" cleaning service from Powys CC to Town Council	S	Town Council (D), PCC
ST9	Create an overall "street scene" design for the town incorporating street furniture, planting etc	S	Town Council (D), PCC
ST10	Work with PCC, Professional Lead - Trading Standards, Community Safety and Emergency Planning Officer to obtain information on forthcoming highways works in the town and share the information with the local community.	S	Town Council (D), PCC

# Green Newtown

# 2.1 Open Spaces



*Includes: Public Parks & Gardens, Natural & Semi-Natural Green Spaces, Outdoor Sports Facilities, Amenity Green Space, Play Areas, and Allotments.*

## Why is this topic important to Newtown?

Newtown is fortunate to have many open spaces as well as the scenic River Severn running through its centre. These assets are greatly valued by local people and can contribute to a good quality of life, health and well-being as well as attracting visitors, to keep the economy thriving. Allotments have many benefits including local food production, contributing to health and well-being and tackling social isolation.

## Key Facts

Newtown hosts a series of football, rugby and cricket pitches, tennis courts, a bowling green and an athletics track. There is a large amount of amenity, natural and semi-natural green space, plus a range of play areas. A detailed breakdown of the town's open spaces can be found in Powys CC's Open Space Assessment (2018). Figures from it show that:

- Newtown features over 3 times the recommended amount of informal open spaces such as parks and gardens and other green spaces.
- 79% of people in the town live within the recommended distance

- of an equipped play area
- Less than half (44%) of the recommended amount of equipped play spaces are provided.
- Just under 100% of the Newtown population live within the recommended 1.2km of an outdoor sports pitch.
- There are 36 allotment plots, covering 0.99 hectares of allotment space and 25 people on a waiting list.<sup>25</sup>

The 1969 Thorpe Report recommends a minimum allotment provision equivalent to 15 per 1,000 households. There are an additional 40 micro-allotments at Cultivate Community Garden (equivalent to 1-2 full size allotments) – the site of which has doubled in the last 3 years.

Green spaces provide several important functions to society including:

- Supporting biodiversity
- Storing and removing carbon / reducing pollution
- Keeping soil healthy
- Reducing and preventing flooding / cleaning water



Photos: TC

- Connecting with nature / keeping us healthy and happy. <sup>26</sup>

## What's Been Happening Recently?

- In 2018, 130 acres of riverside land in Newtown, was transferred under a 99-year lease from Powys County Council, to the Town Council and then on to a social enterprise organisation, Open Newtown. This was one of the largest community asset transfers of amenity land in Wales. Open Newtown manage the land under contract.
- Management of the volunteers who maintain local public rights of way will transfer from Powys County Council to the Town Council.
- The construction of a new destination playpark in the town park, has recently completed.
- The Town Council has entered discussions with Powys CC regarding the potential transfer of the allotment service.

A new audit of Open Spaces in the town was undertaken as part of the Place Plan. Walking Newtown contributed a significant amount of

time auditing on this topic. (see Appendix Sport & Play Facilities and Supporting Evidence Open Spaces & Play Areas Audits & Map).

- A range of spaces were identified, some very good and well used but some in need of maintenance and others unusable.
- There are many small play areas around the town especially within housing estates. Some of these no longer have play equipment on them.
- A possible lack of amenity green space is highlighted in south ward (areas 11 & 13).

The community evidence highlighted a list of open spaces that are of value to local people (see Appendix - Open Spaces of Importance To The Community)

### The Impact of Covid-19

Some public open spaces are being reimagined and considered as locations for open air dining and safe socialising.

## LDP Policies & Other Planning Guidance

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

- LDP Objective 14 – Healthy Lifestyles
- Strategic Policy SP7 - Safeguarding of Strategic Resources and Assets
- LDP Policy DM1 - Planning obligations
- LDP Policy DM3 - Public Open Space
- LDP Policy DM13 - Design and Resources
- LDP Open Space Assessment
- LDP Policy H3 - Housing Delivery
- TAN16 - Sport, Recreation and Open Space
- Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales (10)

## Other Relevant Documents

- The Land Trust (2017), The Hidden Value of Our Green Spaces
- National Assembly (2010), Allotment Provision in Wales
- Welsh Government (2014), Consultation on improving the availability of allotments and community gardens
- Walking Newtown (2018), Proposals for an accessible walk and community space on Trehafren Hill

## New Place Plan Evidence

- Map: Open Spaces & Play Areas Audit
- Open Space Audits
- Play Areas Audits
- Sport & Play Facilities
- Open Spaces of Importance To The Community
- Map: Suggested Sites For Next Open Space Assessment
- Community Comments: Open spaces

## What did you tell us?

# Open Spaces: Community Comments

A summary from the consultation events and public survey

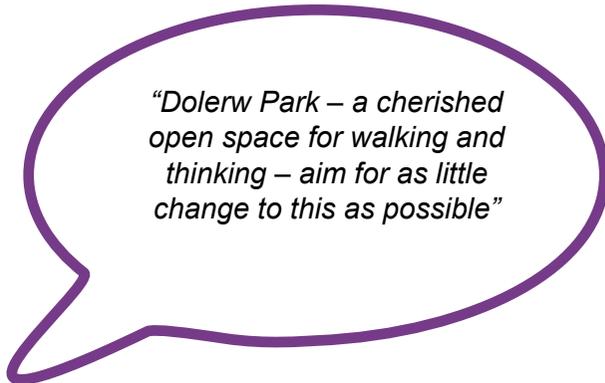
(see Supporting Evidence for full details)



*“Treowen needs a play park, benches. Something needs to be done to the shop.”*



*“Newtown has fantastic green spaces – we are privileged and should make more of them.”*



*“Dolerw Park – a cherished open space for walking and thinking – aim for as little change to this as possible”*

### Popular Themes

- People want to protect their open spaces
- Improving and making more of the river and green spaces
- More outdoor leisure facilities along the river (cooking areas / picnic places)
- More outdoor activities eg exercise classes, events

### What's Good?

- Dolerw Park and the new orchard
- Motte and Bailey (The Mound)
- The River
- Canal path
- Porthouse Woods
- Countryside within easy reach of the town
- Skate Park
- St Marys Close
- Trehafren Hill
- River Dulas meets River Severn (spot for wildlife)
- Allotments
- Cultivate Community Garden
- St Marys Church
- “Sheep Fields”
- Robert Owen gardens
- Barnfields amenity open space
- Maesyhandir green spaces / “Alec’s Hill”

### Key Feedback

- Consultation for the Newtown Community Action Plan revealed that “Green Spaces, environment and energy are considered the most important topics for the people of Newtown”....
- Young people report wanting more areas to relax and wifi spots in the green spaces

### Ideas For The Future

- Outdoor events at The Mound
- Improve accessibility at Dolerw Park
- Company sponsorship of grass cutting at Dolerw Park
- Utilise the river for more recreational activities
- Bridge to Dolerw Park needs painting and lighting
- Use our open spaces for outdoor activities, events for families, public announcements (electronic screens)
- Improve open space provision at Maesyhandir estate
- Large greenhouses at Dolerw Park to grow flowers & plants, a Butterfly Farm to bring in tourists!
- Treowen needs a play park and more benches
- Keep fit equipment in the open spaces
- Open spaces to encourage youth engagement / Places for teenagers to go
- Barnfields open space to be retained
- Utilise the space at St Marys Church grounds

## How Will We Address The Issues?

### open Spaces Planning Policies

The Town Council will use these Policies when responding to consultations about local planning applications. If adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance they will also be used by Powys County Council when assessing planning applications.

No.	POLICIES	SUGGESTED LOCATIONS? (where applicable):
OS-a	Development that would result in the loss or affect the use of public open space will not be supported, unless there is sufficient justification for the development including acceptable mitigation of the loss/harm to the public open space.	Locations as identified in LDP Open Space Assessment for Newtown. Also see project OS1.
OS-b	Any new development that will result in the loss of existing allotments and community growing spaces will not be supported, unless there is sufficient justification for the development including the provision of equivalent or enhanced alternative spaces to compensate needs.	
OS-c	Developments that provide new or extensions to existing allotments / community growing spaces will be supported	
OS-d	Proposals that provide new or improved play areas or sports facilities where required will be supported.	Play areas map
OS-e	Where Section 106 contributions are secured from developments towards open space, the Place Plan evidence will be used to inform decisions as to where and how monies are spent' (see Supporting Evidence Open Spaces & Play Areas Audits & Map)	

## open Spaces Projects / Actions

Town Council's role: (D) = Delivering, (E) = Enabling others to deliver and (I) = Influencing others to deliver.

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
OS1	Review the Place Plan evidence for green spaces suggested for protection (see Next LDP section) and submit these for consideration into the next review of Powys CC's "Open Space Assessment"	S	Town Council (D), PCC
OS2	Projects to enhance the use of the river and open spaces balanced with allowing wildlife to flourish : a) More activity trails, marked out pitches and tracks for outdoor exercise, outdoor gymnasiums b) Improve vehicular access to Dolerw Park for events c) More leisure facilities by the river such as picnic benches, barbeque areas d) Retain natural wild areas for enjoyment, quiet & reflection	M	Town Council (E), Open Newtown / Mont Wildlife Trust / Nat Resources Wales / Walking Newtown.
OS3	Use the Place Plan evidence (Supporting Evidence Open Spaces & Play Areas Audits & Map) to review the provision of small playparks (for example within the housing estates & Penygloddfa) and prioritise Section 106 money for play areas where needed.	M	Town Council (D), CC
OS4	Encourage action on outstanding play area commitments (such as Woodland Way)	S	Town Council (I), PCC, Developers
OS5	Gather evidence of the local demand for allotments	S	Town Council (E), PCC , Open Newtown, Social Farms & Gardens
OS6	If demand exists Projects should seek to establish new allotments .	M	Town Council (D), PCC, Open Newtown, Cultivate
OS7	Seek to transfer allotment services from PCC to NLTC	S	Town Council (D), PCC
OS8	Identify partners and funding to develop a food strategy for the town	M	Town Council (E), PCC, Social Farms & Gardens, Cultivate, Open Newtown, Mid Wales Food & Land Trust, Urban Agriculture Consortium.

## 2.2 Active Travel & Transport



(Includes: Footpaths, cycle paths, public rights of way, parking)

### Why is this topic important to Newtown?

Active Travel means making journeys in ways that are physically active, such as walking or cycling rather than using motorised transport. An increase in walking/cycling would improve residents' health & well-being & community cohesion. Improvements to walk/cycle routes would encourage visitors and the use of local shops and services. A reduction in car use would lower harmful carbon emissions.

### Key Facts

#### Newtown & Llanllwchaearn Car Ownership Statistics<sup>1</sup>

% households with no car or van: 26.3%  
% households with 1 car or van: 46.9%  
% households with 2 or more cars or vans: 26.8%

- Respondents to a local survey in 2019, said they would increase their walking if they had better knowledge of walking routes, paths were better maintained, accessible and felt safe.<sup>27</sup>
- There are concerns around traffic congestion and parking at school run times. (Particularly Penygloddfa and Treowen).
- Welsh Government plan to implement 20 mph as the default residential area speed limit, by 2023. Community engagement work is expected at the time of its introduction.

Numbers of commuters travelling between Newtown and nearby towns (2011)<sup>3</sup>



## What's Been Happening Recently?

- Following the completion of Newtown Bypass, the de-trunking of the main A483 Pool Rd/ New Rd/ Llanidloes Rd will create more walking and cycling opportunities
- A re-configuration of schools programme is being undertaken by Powys CC, which may bring about a change in school locations / active travel routes
- Active Travel schemes and facilities planned for the town by Powys County Council, the Town Council and Open Newtown include:
  - a cycle hub, more cycle racks and repair station
  - A new cycle/ pedestrian bridge downstream of the Cambrian Bridge
  - A new scheme to provide safer shared cycle and pedestrian access under Nantoer Bridge on Llanidloes Rd
- Community group "Walking Newtown" promote and maintain several walking routes in and around the town and host an annual walking / outdoor festival
- Footpaths and cycleways audit work began as part of the Place Plan evidence gathering

- Students at Treowen School have carried out traffic survey as part of their curriculum work
- There is strong commitment from the community on this topic. Key stakeholder organisations (Walking Newtown, Open Newtown), have volunteered significant time to submit evidence to the Place Plan. They are keen to be engaged, share their knowledge and expertise and be involved in future decision-making.

### The Impact of Covid-19

The lockdown restrictions have led to an increase in walking and cycling as people travelled short distances in their local area, for exercise or shopping. Powys CC has underlined their commitment to Active Travel:

*"The coronavirus pandemic has shown that reduced traffic levels generally encourages and/ or facilitates opportunities for people to feel happier to cycle and walk within their local areas. By introducing cycle lanes, pedestrianised areas and allowing people to safely walk and cycle around our towns gives them the confidence to engage in healthier lifestyles choices and benefit from improved physical and mental well-being."*<sup>28</sup>

## LDP Policies & Other Planning Guidance

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

- LDP Policy T1 - Travel, Traffic and Transport Infrastructure:
- LDP Policy TD1 - Tourism Development
- LDP Policy DM3 - Public open space:
- LDP Policy DM1 - Planning Obligations:
- LDP Policy DM13 - Design and Resources
- Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales (10)

## Other Relevant Documents

- Open Newtown (2019), "Newtown Walking Project" (Draft Report)
- River Severn Custodians (2014), Survey of River Users
- The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013
- Welsh Government (2011), National Transport Plan
- Welsh Government (2010), Creating an Active Wales
- Information on the National Cycle Network Routes in Powys: [www.powys.gov.uk/en/roads-transport-and-parking/active-travel/](http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/roads-transport-and-parking/active-travel/) and [www.sustrans.org.uk/wales/our-work-wales](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/wales/our-work-wales)
- Powys CC (2016) Active Travel: Existing Route Map (ERM)
- Powys CC (2016) Active Travel: Integrated Network Map (INM)
- Powys CC Active Travel: Draft programme of improvements work for Newtown (INM Scores)
- Powys CC Active Travel: Pedestrian footpath and cyclepath audit records

## New Place Plan Evidence

- Footpaths, Cycle Paths & Bike Rack Audit Map
- Footpaths & Cycle Paths Audit Summary
- Footpaths & Cycle paths Audits - original notes and maps
- Stakeholder Active Travel proposals
- Community Comments: Active Travel

## What did you tell us?

# Active Travel & Transport: Community Comments

A summary from the consultation events and public survey

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

*"We need more bus routes to outer areas of town like Morrison's, Poundstretcher etc and transport on Sundays"*

*"Should have cycle routes throughout town like they have in Europe not just by the river."*

*"Very happy with the train service but the platform is far, far too low when getting on and off the train with a pushchair and young children. It's actually dangerous."*

### Popular Themes

- Walking and cycling routes should be well maintained, safe and accessible.
- More cycle routes and facilities needed
- Schemes needed that would encourage people to change their habit of using the car for short local journeys.
- Strong desire for the route from the train station into the town to be improved
- A call for better public transport

### Key Feedback

In the public survey (106 responses)

- 15.1% of people were extremely satisfied with walking and cycling provision in Newtown with 50.9% satisfied.
- 24.5% were satisfied with the provision of public transport in Newtown with 41.5% being neutral and 20.8% being dissatisfied.

### Young People Would Like:

- More lighting on existing cycle paths and footpaths paths
- More bike paths, bike locks and cycle racks
- Google / You Tube routes – not paper maps!

### Ideas For The Future

- Electric bike renting
- A Bike Hub, with lockers, showers, secure bike store and changing facilities and better signage
- Improved cycle routes and better signage.
- A leaflet to show locations of all cycle routes
- Improvements to footpaths around Treowen, Maesyddail, Maesyrrhandir, Millfields and Barnfields
- Paths to be accessible for young and old (buggies and wheelchairs)
- More bike racks
- Incentives to avoid short car journeys (encourage cycling to school, work, shopping)
- Circular walks and paths to link areas of the town with the countryside
- A mountain bike loop starting and ending at the proposed new hub buildings
- More parking at rail station

## How Will We Address The Issues?

### Active Travel & Transport Planning Policies

The Town Council will use these Policies when responding to consultations about local planning applications. If adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance they will also be used by Powys County Council when assessing planning applications.

No.	POLICIES	SUGGESTED LOCATIONS? (Where applicable)
AT-a	Any new development should incorporate pedestrian and cycle-way linkages between existing active travel routes, existing housing, public open space and local services.	● Treowen housing allocation (P48 HA3 & HA4)
AT-b	Where funding and developer contributions can be sought, new pedestrian and cycle routes or improvements to existing networks should be provided, including appropriate signage	(various locations identified in Supporting Evidence: Footpaths & Cycle Paths Audit Summary & Map)
AT-c	The Place Plan encourages the protection of informal pedestrian paths and shortcuts to ensure that they continue to provide alternative passable pedestrian routes.	As above

### Active Travel & Transport Projects / Actions

Town Council's role: (D) = Delivering, (E) = Enabling others to deliver and (I) = Influencing others to deliver.

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
AT1	Continue to work with the Active Travel department at Powys CC to develop the Active Travel network for Newtown. In particular consider the audit work and other Place Plan evidence submitted by the community, when identifying priorities for investment. (See Supporting Evidence: <i>Stakeholder Active Travel Proposals</i> and <i>Footpaths &amp; Cycle Paths Audit Summary &amp; Map</i> and <i>Community Comments</i> )	S	Town Council (D), PCC
AT2	Continue the Place Plan footpath & cycle paths audit work. Prioritise locations already identified by the Active Travel Officer at Powys CC (e.g Barnfields)	M	Town Council (E), PCC, Walking Newtown, Open Newtown, Bike To The Future
AT3	Set up a Newtown Active Travel working group, including community stakeholders and schools	S	Town Council (E), PCC, Walking Newtown, Open Newtown, Bike To The Future, Schools, College

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
AT4	Encourage a feasibility study into additional active travel bridges: e.g: * river crossing at the West end of the town * footbridge across the railway line – near fire Station to connect up the town * Trehafren fields to Dolerw park to make a circuit	M	Town Council (D), PCC. Walking Newtown & River Severn Custodians as consultees.
AT5	Request a feasibility study into residents parking zones to address the parking issues in Crescent Street, Bryn Street, Commercial St.	M	Town Council (D), PCC
AT6	Provision of cycling training such as Cycling Proficiency and other confidence building schemes.	S	Schools, Open Newtown, Bike To The Future.
AT7	Encourage more walking and cycling by publicising the locations of routes and paths and providing free, led walks and cycle rides.	S	Town Council (E), Walking Newtown, Open Newtown, Bike To The Future, Schools, College
AT8	Encourage a review of the community need (as identified in the Place Plan evidence - see AT1) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ecologically sensitive improvements to lighting,</li> <li>• improved maintenance and reductions in overgrown greenery</li> <li>• improved signage on existing footpath and cycle routes</li> </ul>	S	Town Council (E), PCC, Natural Resources Wales, Walking Newtown, Housing Associations
AT9	Partnership working to maintain and improve existing paths & create more routes linking town centre to countryside walks including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footpaths and walks to link in with the new footbridge to be built over the river and adjoining Pool Road</li> <li>• A new shared use active travel route from the south side of Trehafren hill into town as well as an accessible path (see project HW5)</li> <li>• Identifying the community's priorities for work on the public rights of way network</li> </ul>	L	Town Council (E), PCC Active Travel, PCC Countryside Services and Outdoor Recreation, Walking Newtown, Open Newtown , Natural Resources Wales, Hafren Dyfrdwy, Canal & River Trust (where associated with the canal corridor), Housing Associations

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
AT10	Investigate the use of Definitive Map Modification Orders to protect informal paths, including those identified in the Place Plan evidence.	M	Town Council (E), PCC, Walking Newtown
AT11	Improvements to access opportunities linked to the Montgomeryshire Canal: to secure funding for improvements to both the canal towpath itself, and to linking public rights of way. Including improved signage and interpretation, and improved infrastructure (links with Projects AT9 & T6).	M	PCC Countryside Services and Outdoor Recreation team, PCC Active Travel, Canal and River Trust
AT12	Review the School Crossing patrols & consider the most appropriate locations with reference to schools re-configuration and the detrunking of the A483.	M	Town Council (I), PCC
AT13	Identify partners and funding for community transport projects such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• car share schemes,</li> <li>• electric car &amp; campervan pools,</li> <li>• communal school bus/bike,</li> <li>• car-free zones,</li> <li>• traffic free days,</li> <li>• walking bus for children,</li> <li>• cheaper public transport</li> <li>• reduced cost parking for car-shares &amp; electric vehicles</li> <li>• Event planning which actively promotes use of public transport (links with Project CA4)</li> </ul>	S	Town Council (E), Voluntary, Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce , Transport for Wales, PCC, Schools, College, Newtown Climate Action Group, Open Newtown
AT14	Request improvements to public transport links in order to reduce car use (e.g reinstatement of the currently disused bus stop at train station)	M	Town Council (I), PCC, Transport for Wales, Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Rail Passengers Association, Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Railway Liaison Committee, Cambrian Railway Partnership.

## 2.3 Climate Change & Biodiversity



### Why is this topic important to Newtown?

With the impending global risks that climate change brings, this topic is of importance to all towns and cities and Newtown would like to play its part in reversing the damage for the benefit of future generations.

Biodiversity means the diversity of living organisms. It is important because it underpins the health and resilience of all of our ecosystems. In turn, these support all life on Earth. Ecosystems that are more biodiverse tend to be more resilient and are better able to adapt to the pressures and changes we face, for example through the impacts of climate change.

### Key Facts

#### Climate Change

Human activities are estimated to have caused approximately 1.0°C of global warming above pre- industrial levels, with a likely range of 0.8°C to 1.2°C. Global warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and

2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate (IPCC Report). Left unaddressed, the rise in temperatures will lead to further damage including:

- Further extreme weather events (heat waves, wildfires, floods, droughts)
- Further melting of the ice caps & further sea level rise / coastal submersion
- Further habitat destruction, biodiversity loss, species extinction
- Increase in pollution
- Crop failures
- Human migration

The proximity of the River Severn to the town poses a significant long-term flood risk, which is exacerbated by climate change. However, the existing flood defences, erected in 1967, after the severe floods in 1960 and 1964, reduce the flood risk in the town centre.<sup>29</sup>

For a time, the levels of Nitrogen Oxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) on New Road, exceeded the objective level set out in the UK Air Quality Strategy.



Photos: TD & SW.

Following the designation of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in 2007, the levels of Nitrogen Oxide fell, allowing the AQMA to be revoked in March 2017.<sup>14</sup>

#### Biodiversity

One in six species of wildlife, plants and fungi is at risk of disappearing from Wales. The “State of Nature” 2019 report<sup>30</sup> found that:

- Of the 6,500 species found in Wales, 523 (8%) were threatened

with extinction from Great Britain

- Out of 3,902 species assessed for their likelihood of disappearing from Wales 666 (17%) were threatened with extinction from Wales, with another 73 having been lost already.

The saving of the Red Kites from extinction in the 1980s is a conservation success story that still resonates with local people.

The Powys County Council logo features a Red Kite and the birds are regularly spotted in the area.

Green Infrastructure refers to a network of multifunctional green spaces, bodies of water and routeways, urban and rural, that is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities and biodiversity.

### **What's Been Happening Recently?**

- There is now an obligation for Town Councils to report how they are addressing biodiversity objectives as set out in section 6 of the Environment Wales Act 2016
- In May 2019 the Town Council approved a motion to declare a 'Climate Emergency' (see Supporting Evidence), then in December 2019, it hosted a joint meeting with Montgomeryshire Friends of the Earth. A draft Climate Change Action Plan has been produced from that meeting. (see Supporting Evidence)

### Impact of Covid-19

Recent UK wide lockdown restrictions caused a halt to many of our activities outside the home. This in turn, reduced the levels of airborne pollution. Although these levels are likely to increase again as more normal activities resume, the change in lifestyles such as more people working from home and walking and cycling, may have a longer lasting effect.

### **LDP Policies & Other Planning Guidance**

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

- LDP Objective 4 – Climate Change and Flooding
- LDP Policy DM2 - The Natural Environment
- LDP Policy DM13 - Design and Resources
- LDP Policy RE1 - Renewable Energy (pg107 LDP)
- LDP Policy DM14 - Air Quality Management
- TAN15 – Flooding
- Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales (10)

### **Other Relevant Documents**

- Town Council Climate Emergency Declaration
- Draft Newtown Climate Emergency Plan
- Powys CC: LDP Supplementary Planning Guidance: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Natural Resources Wales, Flood Risk Assessment Wales Map
- State of Nature Partnership (2019), State of Nature Report
- Oxfordshire County Council et al (2012), Community & Parish Guide To Biodiversity
- Environment Wales Act (2016)
- National Transport Plan (2011)
- BBC (2019), Briefing: Energy
- Centre for Sustainable Energy (2020), Neighbourhood Planning In A Climate Emergency
- Government Business Website, [www.governmentbusiness.co.uk](http://www.governmentbusiness.co.uk) (2019), The Race To Zero Carbon
- SharEnergy (2017), Draft Report: Options For Land Based Community Energy Projects in Newtown
- Community Housing Cymru (2019), Better Homes, Better Wales, Better World

### **New Place Plan Evidence**

- Community Comments: Climate Change and Biodiversity

## What did you tell us?

# Climate Change & Biodiversity: Community Comments

A summary from the consultation events and public survey  
(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

*"Maybe have a nature reserve in Dolerw or Trehafren but maybe it would get wrecked?"*

*"Using small shops regularly instead of bulk buying weekly at the supermarket helps reduce food waste and reliance on plastic packaging."*

*"I really like the wind turbine trees they have in Paris"*

### Popular Themes

- More sustainable forms of travel (public transport & active travel)
- Community orientated solutions for energy, resources, food, land and transport
- Improve the infrastructure to encourage more walking and cycling for local journeys.
- Protect existing green spaces
- Allowing more areas to be left wild
- Protecting wildlife / wildlife habitats / enabling wildlife corridors
- Allow for maximum planting and landscaping in new developments
- Educational activities encouraging lifestyle change
- Alternative / community energy schemes
- New & existing housing to be more environmentally sustainable
- Minimising waste / Upcycling schemes
- Encourage circular economy development
- Encourage use of electric vehicles
- Encourage low carbon food

### Ideas For The Future

- Recycle bins in town centre
- Dialogue with landowners about sustainable land management
- Work with other councils to make a bigger impact
- Encourage walking and cycling
- Community energy schemes e.g. Hydro
- Free bus travel around the town
- Walking bus for children for school runs
- Zero-waste shops
- Rewards schemes for green practice e.g. Discounts on local products, veg box schemes
- Car share schemes
- Car free zones
- Rooftop solar panels
- Lights off scheme overnight and weekends for businesses
- More electric car hook ups
- Retrofit housing stock to make more energy efficient
- Wildflower meadows
- Find sponsors for particular areas – look at solar energy
- PVs on rooves of industrial buildings
- Water "refill stations"

## How Will We Address The Issues?

### Climate Change & Biodiversity Planning Policies

The Town Council will use these Policies when responding to consultations about local planning applications. If adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance they will also be used by Powys County Council when assessing planning applications.

No.	POLICIES	SUGGESTED LOCATIONS? (where applicable):
CC-a	Any new development in Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn will only be supported where it can be reasonably argued that it will contribute towards the mitigation of the effects of climate change.	
CC-b	Developments will be supported where they facilitate greater use of public transport and/or active travel.	
CC-c	Proposals that provide electric vehicle charging infrastructure will be supported.	
CC-d	New development proposals should take account of flood risk and be designed in accordance with the latest national and local guidance on development, flood risk, and sustainable land drainage. Suitable new development and the re-use of buildings in flood risk areas of Newtown will be encouraged and supported provided flood risk issues are properly addressed.	
CC-e	Development that will result in the creation of new Green Infrastructure (GI) and/or contribute to the protection, management, enhancement and connecting of existing GI and individual GI assets and priorities will be supported.	
CC-f	Any developments that would adversely affect the Montgomery Canal's status as a Special Area of Conservation would not be supported.	
CC-g	Developments that prevent additional storm runoff into the river, will be supported.	
CC-h	Developments that include measures to achieve the supply of electricity and heat from renewable sources will be supported.	

## Climate Change & Biodiversity Projects / Actions

Town Council's role: (D) = Delivering, (E) = Enabling others to deliver and (I) = Influencing others to deliver.

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
CC1	Identify partners and funding to develop community-led energy schemes	M	Town Council (E), Newtown Open Energy, Voluntary Sector / PAVO, Newtown Climate Action Group, Community Energy Wales
CC2	Identify partners & funding for measures to reduce waste, conserve energy, reduce consumption and promote a circular economy including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• upcycling schemes,</li> <li>• repair cafe,</li> <li>• deposit schemes,</li> <li>• library of things,</li> <li>• low carbon food,</li> <li>• educational workshops.</li> </ul>	S	Town Council (E), Magik Incorporated, Circular Economy Mid Wales, Newtown Climate Action Group, Keep Wales Tidy.
CC3	Improve the town's green infrastructure and biodiversity (more trees /shrubs /wild areas/patches of wildflowers/wildlife corridors/bird boxes/ rewilding of areas / tree planting on approaches into town)	M	Town Council (D), PCC, Voluntary Sector / PAVO, Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce, Canal & River Trust (where related to the Montgomery Canal (or the former line of)), River Severn Custodians, Open Newtown
CC4	Discover & record new information about habitats and species throughout Newtown & Llanllwchaiarn area by hosting a "bioblitz" event	S	Town Council (E), Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust, River Severn Custodians, Open Newtown, Biodiversity Information System.
CC5	Support Climate Change & Biodiversity education projects.	S	Town Council (E), Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust, River Severn Custodians, schools & college, Newtown Climate Action Group.
CC6	Contribute Place Plan evidence to PCC's Green Infrastructure Assessment during the LDP review.	S	Town Council (D), PCC

# Destination Newtown



Y DRENEWYDD  
NEWTOWN

Gefeillwyd â  
Twinned with Les Herbiers

# 3.1 Town Centre Experience



Photo: TC

## Why is this topic important to Newtown?

What visitors experience when they visit the town centre is critical to their impression and enjoyment. Ensuring that they can find their way into the town centre and move around with ease in an environment that is engaging and prosperous, will lead to longer visits, return visits and word of mouth recommendations. This can enhance the economic prosperity of the town.

For people that live and work in the town, to be able to experience a thriving, well-functioning and maintained environment enhances quality of life, mood, health and well-being.

## Key Facts

The LDP identifies Newtown as an **Area Retail Centre**.

- The MHE (Management Horizons Europe Shopping Index 2008) ranks Newtown as the main centre in Powys
- Newtown serves the catchment of the North West of Powys



- Newtown has a key role for Convenience Shopping / Comparison Shopping / Services / Entertainment / Community Facilities.<sup>31</sup>

## What's Been Happening Recently?

### Shopping

As in many towns, there was already

a noticeable decline in prosperity of the high street. Several national chains and independent shops have closed.

### Accessibility

A small consultation was undertaken in partnership with Celf-Able, regarding accessibility in the town centre. It identified the need for more and better

disabled parking and access to town centre premises. It also highlighted the need for a more detailed audit to be carried out ("Accessibility Survey Responses" in Supporting Evidence).

A green infrastructure project is currently underway to make improvements to the town centre (as described in the Character & Heritage section).

### Impact Of Covid-19

The pandemic has exacerbated the issue of too-quiet town centre streets and vacant premises. Local Development Orders are highlighted by Welsh Government as a potential means of changing use of town centre vacant properties to bring back vibrancy to the town centre.<sup>5</sup> Welsh Government are also expected to offer some financial support to help town centres thrive. The first is a Strategic Sites Acquisition Fund, which will enable local authorities to acquire land and high street premises in local town centres, the second is a co-investment scheme, with local authorities, to enhance the attractiveness of town centres which may see increased footfall as a result of the increased propensity to work from home.<sup>4</sup>



Photo: TC

### **LDP Policies & Other Planning Guidance**

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

- Strategic Policy SP4 - Retail Growth
- LDP Objective Growth 1 - provide land for retail (pg 25)
- LDP Policy R1 - New Retail Development
- LDP Policy R3 - Developments within town centre areas
- Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales (10)

### **Other Relevant Documents**

- Disability Wales (2010) Planning for Inclusive Access in Wales: Good Practice Guidance Toolkit
- Glasu (2012), Powys High Street Feasibility Study
- Nathaniel Litchfield and Partners (2012), Powys Retail Study
- Also see "Business" section.

### **New Place Plan Evidence**

- Accessibility Survey Responses
- Community Comments: Town Centre Experience

## What did you tell us?

# Town Centre Experience: Community Comments

A summary from the consultation events and public survey

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

*"We need to be creative and find new ways to fill the empty shops. I think a mixture of unique independent shops plus community uses.."*

*"More welcoming routes needed from train station and back lane car park into town."*

*"Better crossing points for disabled people. Pavements need to be improved because of risk of tripping."*

### Popular Themes

- Improve accommodation offer - visitors and businesses
- Car parking charges
- Increase in medium / big scale events
- EV charger infrastructure
- Improved TIC / Improved promotion
- Fewer empty shops,
- A better mix of shops (less charity shops, more independent shops and larger chain stores)
- Addressing the key vacant / derelict buildings

### Key Feedback

- A strong consensus for pedestrianisation of some areas within the town centre, to create more pleasant, social spaces.

### Shopping

- 34.9% were dissatisfied with the shopping experience in Newtown with 24.5% satisfied
- 11.3% were extremely dissatisfied with the towns shopping experience.
- There is major concern about the decline of traditional high street, the challenging economic environment for town centre businesses and the number of empty shops.

### Accessibility

- Accessibility consultation key themes were:
- Uneven pavements
- Lack of or blocked dropped kerbs
- Several buildings inaccessible
- Insufficient and unsuitable disabled parking

### Ideas For The Future

- Free parking (or free for first 2 hours)
- Pedestrianise High Street / Broad Street
- Create more social places for visitors, seating, information boards
- More flower beds and displays / trees within the streetscene
- More litter bins to keep the town centre streets clean
- Improved parking with wider spaces and more disabled spaces
- Reduce shop rates / pop up shops
- A better range of shops: children's clothes, toy shop, art shop, quality clothes, plastic free shops.
- Improved bus routes to shops
- Local loyalty card
- Improved pedestrian and cycle routes – a clear route from the station to the centre
- A free Hop on and off shuttle bus around the town centre
- Allow redundant shops to become / remodel as residential? Many were in 19th Century
- Shop signage / frontages could be improved to enhance the historical features.
- Unique brand / identity for the town?
- Identify locally important unlisted heritage assets?
- Make Newtown a more accessible place for people with disabilities
- More benches/ seating en route from big car park to the town.
- Improve signage between the Station and the town centre.

## How Will We Address The Issues?

### Town Centre Experience Planning Policies

The Town Council will use these Policies when responding to consultations about local planning applications. If adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance they will also be used by Powys County Council when assessing planning applications.

No.	POLICIES	SUGGESTED LOCATIONS? (Where applicable)
TC-a	Proposals that maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of Newtown Town Centre, will be supported.	Town Centre boundary
TC-b	Development that encourages Town Centre shopping, services and employment facilities that are convenient, safe and accessible to all and meet the day to day needs of residents will be supported.	
TC-c	Improvements to the supply and quality of short and long stay car parking to support the Town Centre will be supported.	
TC-d	Proposals that result in improvements to the free flow of pedestrian, cycle and vehicular traffic in the Town will be supported.	High Street, Broad Street, Shortbridge St, New Road

## Town Centre Experience Projects / Actions

Town Council's role: (D) = Delivering, (E) = Enabling others to deliver and (I) = Influencing others to deliver.

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
TC1	Set up working group to develop & implement solutions to regenerate the high street (potentially via Town Partnership - see "Business" section)	S	Town Council (E), PCC, Voluntary Sector / PAVO, Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce
TC2	Explore the feasibility and implement if appropriate, the full or part time pedestrianisation of parts of the town centre.	L	Town Council (I), PCC, Voluntary Sector / PAVO, Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce
TC3	Improve the accessibility of the town centre by: * reviewing the Place Plan evidence (Accessibility Survey Responses) * carrying out a more detailed accessibility audit * undertaking necessary work to help improve access to the town's facilities.	L	Town Council (E), PCC, Accessibility Powys Voluntary Sector / PAVO, Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce
TC4	Create more safe town centre social spaces, street trees, seats, information boards, better links to green spaces	M	Town Council (D,E), PCC
TC5	Audit the existing pedestrian signage on key routes into the town centre (see TC6), including reviewing existing Place Plan evidence	S	Town Council (D), PCC Highways, PCC Active Travel
TC6	Improvement of signage, attractiveness and connections on key pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes including: The train station to the town centre Back Lane Car Park to the town centre Gravel car park to the town centre	S	Town Council (D,I), PCC, Transport for Wales, Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Rail Passengers Association, Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth Railway Liaison Committee, Cambrian Railway Partnership.

## 3.2 Tourism, Culture & Attractions



### Why is this topic important to Newtown?

Tourism has been one of the largest employers, increasingly rivalling agriculture in its economic importance across the county economy. Culture and attractions are vital aspects of tourism, which supports the prosperity of the town. They also contribute to the quality of life for local people, with a positive impact on their health and well-being.

### Key Facts

Tourism contributes £720 million in income per annum in Powys.<sup>32</sup> Visiting friends and family remains a key reason for trips within Mid Wales (16%, 2014-16), complemented by outdoor activities (12%) and taking part in sports (19%). 2.1 million, took part in sports in 2014-2016, making it the most popular activity undertaken on a Tourism Day visit to Mid Wales (compared to 3% in Wales overall).<sup>2</sup>

A high percentage of visitors to the current tourist information centre are not visiting Newtown necessarily as a

destination, but are either:

- passing through en route to or from perhaps the coast or
- are staying in accommodation out of town and have some into town to explore.
- a small number of coach parties stop of en route – seeing it as convenient stop off point due to the facilities (large car park, public conveniences, cafes etc.).<sup>2</sup>

Newtown specific data is expected in the near future.

Key attractions in the town include:

- Robert Owen Museum
- Textile Museum
- Hafren (Theatre)
- Oriel Davies Art Gallery
- Leisure Centre
- Historic urban architecture
- Over 20 published walking routes (Walking Newtown)
- River Severn and Severn Way
- The Montgomery Canal
- Open spaces / Dolerw Park
- Destination Playpark
- Skate Park
- Mountain bike trail

***“Newtown needs to keep itself alive by offering something different to attract more people into town”***



Photos: TC



Photo: DB

- BMX pump track
- Bowling alley
- Miniature railway
- Glanhafren Market Hall
- Pwll Penarth nature reserve
- Town heritage trail
- Key events: Park Run, Carnival, Food Festival, Outdoor Festival, Fireworks display, Lights Switch on
- Newtown also provides a base to explore the surrounding countryside.

### What's Been Happening Recently?

- The opening of the Newtown bypass in 2019, has increased the need to address what the town has to offer visitors.
- In 2018, the Town Council consulted with local, regional and national tourism stakeholders including local businesses, Powys County Council Tourism, the Mid & North Wales Destination Network and Visit Wales, to produce a Tourism Plan "Finding A New Route" and associated Action Plan, which runs from 2019-2023. The plan's progress is

reviewed annually.

- In October 2015 the Town Council resolved to work with the Canal and River Trust, the Montgomery Canal Partnership and others to lobby for the restoration and re-watering of the Montgomery Canal to Newtown for navigable use. The line of the Canal including the dry bed and in-filled sections between Freestone Lock and the town is protected

under LDP policy TD3 as identified on Inset Map P48F and Proposal Map PR08.

Attractions that have been completed recently or are currently in development include:

- The destination playpark
- The mountain bike trail
- The BMX pump track
- The Riverside Venue (in development)

### LDP Policies & Other Planning Guidance

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

- LDP Policy TD1
- LDP Policy TD3
- Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales (10)

### Other Relevant Documents

- Newtown & Llanllwchaearn Town Council (2019), Finding A New Route & Action Plan
- Powys CC: LDP Supplementary Planning Guidance: Historic Environment
- Canal & River Trust / Montgomery Canal Partnership (2016), The Montgomery Canal: Regeneration through Sustainable Restoration
- Waterway Routes (2020), Extract from Cruising Map Montgomery Canal - Issue 103

### New Place Plan Evidence

- Community Comments: Tourism, Culture & Attractions

## What did you tell us?

# Tourism, Culture & Attractions: Community Comments

A summary from the consultation events and public survey

(see Supporting Evidence for full details)

*"If we are to encourage our youngsters to stay in Mid-Wales and if we are to attract people to move to the area we will need to support the development of a contemporary nightlife economy."*

*"Promote a "tourism offer" of a day out / overnight package to include attractions in the town and opportunities for traffic free bike rides for all abilities (flat terrain for young children)"*

*"A general museum showcasing all aspects of the town would be good... could include war history, buildings' history, Abermule rail crash, roman site found under tesco, POW camp, wool industry.."*

### Popular Themes

- Improve accommodation offer - visitors and businesses
- Car parking charges
- Increase in medium / big scale events
- EV charger infrastructure
- Improved TIC / Improved promotion

### Young People Want:

- hotels
- new campsite
- more places for people to visit
- trampoline park
- water park
- zipline
- play areas for 10yrs plus
- airport
- Art / Graffiti Wall

### What's Good?

- College
- Theatre
- Oriel Davies Art Gallery
- Textile Museum
- Leisure Centre
- Historic urban architecture
- Canal Walk / open spaces
- Skate Park

- Dolerw Park – events
- Glanhafren Market Hall

### Key Feedback

58.5% said that there were not adequate facilities in Newtown for tourists.

### Ideas For The Future

- More fetes / fairs / Arts / Music festivals
- Celebrate local historical figures
- Family oriented events
- Better leaflets / signage
- Better public toilets
- An adventure park
- Promote Free car parking
- All weather attractions: indoor climbing wall, ice rink, large soft play, refurbished swimming pool
- A big glass geodome with indoor activities and beautiful views, would attract locals and visitors
- Use of River for tourism - particularly for cyclists – improved cycle paths, café
- A Cycle Sportive. Newtown used as a start and finish point.
- Model boating lake in the park / rowing boats on the river
- The Mound – great potential for outdoor events
- Electric bike renting
- St Marys Close – publicise and information needed
- Cultural Heritage Hub – St David's
- St Marys – Robert Owen state of the art museum
- Conference centre / hall for events

## How Will We Address The Issues?

### Tourism, Culture & Attractions Planning Policies

The Town Council will use these Policies when responding to consultations about local planning applications. If adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance they will also be used by Powys County Council when assessing planning applications.

No.	POLICIES	SUGGESTED LOCATIONS? (where applicable):
T-a	<p>The Place Plan supports development proposals that actively encourage tourism within Newtown and Llanwchaiarn including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hotels and holiday rental accommodation (particularly where they re-use existing buildings and cater for families).</li> <li>• Facilities that promote arts, culture and our industrial and Welsh heritage.</li> <li>• New venues that cater for music, events, sports &amp; recreation</li> <li>• New Tourist Information / Resource Centre (Riverside Venue).</li> <li>• The sensitive repair, sustainable restoration and protection of the line of the Montgomery Canal back to the town (beyond Freestone Lock), which will help promote the canal as an important tourism asset and recreational route (multi-functional resource) (see Appendix - Map: Character Areas - Development Types)</li> <li>• Sports &amp; recreation equipment hire .</li> <li>• Better signposting for tourists to venues, open spaces and activities (See TC6).</li> </ul>	
CA-a	<p>Development which involves the loss of key attractions (see list) will not be supported unless the current or previous use is no longer viable demonstrated by financial and marketing evidence over a 6 month period.</p>	<p>Key attractions includes: Robert Owen Museum, Textile Museum, Hafren (Theatre), Oriel Davies Art Gallery, Leisure Centre, Historic urban architecture, Over 20 published walking routes (Walking Newtown), River Severn and Severn Way, Canal route, Dolerw Park, Skate Park, Bowling alley, Miniature railway, Glanhafren Market Hall, Pwll Penarth nature reserve, Escape Rooms, BMX Pump Track, Mountain Bike Trail, Town Heritage trails The Riverside Venue (in development), Trehafren Hill Activity Hub (in development)</p>
CA-b	<p>Developments that facilitate the provision of events and attractions in Newtown will be supported.</p>	<p>Key events: Park Run, Carnival, Outdoor Festival, Food Festival, Fireworks display, Christmas Lights Switch on, Marching Bands Open Air Competition.</p>

## Tourism, Culture & Attractions Projects / Actions

Town Council's role: (D) = Delivering, (E) = Enabling others to deliver and (I) = Influencing others to deliver.

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
T1	Establish a unique brand and identity for Newtown; "Discover Newtown".	S	Town Council (D), PCC, Mid Wales Tourism
T2	Develop and promote a year-round calendar of events with indoor and outdoor activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporating and adding to the annual events listed in CA-b and</li> <li>Working with partners listed in Project CA4.</li> </ul>	M	See Project CA4
T3	Identify partners and funding to support the enhancement of the accommodation offer in the town (see project BL2).	M	Town Council (E), PCC, Tourism Businesses
T4	Deliver actions in "Finding A New Route" tourism plan until 2024, review and update the plan.	M	Town Council (D), PCC, Tourism Businesses, Voluntary Sector / PAVO.
T5	Progress with the next stages of the Town Council's Project Initiation Document for restoration of the canal back to the town including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install canoe access points</li> <li>Repairs to Dolfor Lock Hut</li> <li>seeking partners and funding</li> <li>Carry out a feasibility study</li> <li>Identifying a suitable location for a new terminal basin</li> <li>If Restoration goes ahead, consider an iconic structure as a tourist attraction similar to the Falkirk wheel</li> </ul>	L	Town Council (D,E), Canal & River Trust, Montgomery Canal Partnership, Natural Resources Wales, Montgomery Waterway Restoration Trust, River Severn Custodians
T6	Identify partners and funding for improved signage from the town centre to the canal path and illustrated signs promoting the heritage, along the former route of the canal. (links with Project AT11).	S	Civic Society, Canal & River Trust

No.	PROJECT / ACTION	Timescale No. of years to complete S - up to 3 M - up to 7 L - up to 15	Suggested Collaborators
T7	Development of an Activity Hub at Trehafren Hill. To complement nearby Mountain Bike Trail and BMX Pump Track facilities, with development of canoe and bike hire enterprises, along with coaching opportunities, climbing wall development, youth and family recreation, tourist destination, with refreshments and welfare facilities available on site, with a secure compound area for maintenance teams and a visitor car park.	M	Open Newtown and partners yet to be determined.
CA1	Increase the range of attractions for teens / young people: (zipline, trampoline park, water park, climbing walls) (see Supporting Evidence: Community Comments)	L	Town Council (E), Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce, Magik Incorporated, PCC, Voluntary Sector C/o PAVO
CA2	Improve attractions for other age groups: (indoor soft / play centre, improved miniature railway etc.) (see Supporting Evidence: Community Comments)	M	Town Council (E), Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce, Magik Incorporated, PCC, Voluntary Sector C/o PAVO
CA3	Develop more all weather attractions, particularly those that make use of existing buildings. (see Supporting Evidence: Community Comments)	M	Town Council (E), Business Sector via Chamber of Trade / Chamber of Commerce, Magik Incorporated, PCC, Voluntary Sector C/o PAVO
CA4	Increase the number and range of regular events to facilitate use of the town, park, canal and river for locals and tourism - e.g cycling training / racing, music / arts events (links with Project AT13). (see Supporting Evidence: Community Comments)	M	Town Council (E), Open Newtown, Walking Newtown, River Severn Custodians, Welsh Cycling, Scouts, Newtown Paddlers, Oriel Davies, Newtown Garden Club, Rotary Club, Food Festival CIC, Newtown Carnival, Wales GB Rally, Silver Band, Gregynog Festival, Magik Incorporated, Alliance Theatre, Celf Your Health.

# The Next Local Development Plan



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# The next Local Development Plan

These items will be submitted to Powys County Council for Consideration for the Next LDP.

## 1. Review of Town Boundary (size)

Consider increasing the size of the settlement boundary as befits the town's proposed status as a "regional centre" in Welsh Government's draft Future Wales – the National Plan 2040. Expansion is possible for example, where land exists between the current boundary & the new bypass road.

## 2. Town Centre and Housing

Consider means of permitting change of use to residential, for vacant town centre properties, in order to mitigate the effects of the decline in high street retail & the impact of the covid-19 pandemic.

## 3. Inclusivity & Accessibility

There is increasing acknowledgement in planning policy that the design of the built environment can have health impacts. For instance, Planning Policy Wales now requires Health Impact Assessments to be carried out at the LDP stage, and therefore this will be required for the next LDP.

Re. Accessibility - Consider a wider definition than the current LDP policy DM13 (7) which requires proposed developments to be 'inclusive to all, making full provision for people with disabilities. Consider inclusivity, not limited to the physically disabled. For example, the needs of the elderly, people living with dementia and those with sensory loss. There are opportunities to work on this with Dementia Friendly Groups and Accessibility Powys.

## 4. Energy

Request that new developments incorporate electric charging points for properties with off street parking

## 5. Open Spaces of Importance To The Community

Several open spaces were highlighted by the community to be of value for recreation and well-being (Appendix: Open Spaces of Importance To The Community). The majority of those listed, already feature in Powys CC's current Open Space Assessment (OSA). The following are not featured

in the OSA and are intended to be submitted to Powys CC for consideration as part of the next Open Space Assessment – Project OS-1

*For Consideration in the next Open Spaces Assessment – (see Appendix: Suggested Sites For Next Open Space Assessment Map)*

- 1. Porthouse Woods, Llanllwchaiarn
- 2. Cultivate Community Garden
- 3. Green space between Maesyrrhandir estate and the Mochdre Industrial Estate (south of 18 on OSA map)
- 4. Infill South of Brimmon Road (land at Severn Hts)
- 5. The land containing the electricity sub-station between Mochdre roundabout and Mochdre Lane plus sections to west of Maesyrrhandir primary school proposed as a green corridor / potential allotment site.
- 6. Woodland to east of pump house (in the Canal Area, as

marked on Open Spaces Audit map)

- 7. Space between Brimmon Close and Meadow View.
- 8. Small green at Cae Cymric, bordered by housing and lower Canal Road.
- 9. Land between Mochdre Industrial Estate (Heol Ashley) and Black Hall Hill (south of no. 15 on OSA map).

**6.** Establish a requirement for developers of all multiple housing sites to work with the community to produce a design brief.

**7.** Land East of Dolfor Rd and North of Milford Road, identified as potential housing site. Both outside of current settlement boundary. Consider as candidate sites in the next LDP.

**8.** Car park next to Riverside / Halfpenny Bridge – if currently earmarked for housing development, change to parking in next LDP.

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