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LOCAL GROWTH FUND DRAFT INVESTMENT PLAN

2026-27

The UK Government has confirmed £547m of local growth funding will be made available to the Welsh Government over three years between April 2026 and March 2029. This funding will be transferred to the Welsh Government each year to deliver a Local Growth Fund.

Across the whole of the UK, Local Growth Funds will deliver on the UK Government Plan for Change, five missions for boosting growth, the UK Industrial Strategy, and contribute to UK-wide strategies like Backing your Business. In Wales, the objective for the Local Growth Fund is to support productivity growth and tackle issues leading to economic inequalities.

Monmouthshire has been allocated £1.78m from the Local Growth Fund for project activity in 2026/27. This is made up of £1.25m of capital funding, and £532k of revenue funding. All activity within the fund will contribute to the **three national themes**:



Support for Business

including business support, investment funds, research and development and fostering innovation



Skills and employment support for growth

including support for skills programmes and addressing vacancies in growth sectors



Enabling local growth infrastructure

including infrastructure development and transport and mobility to improve access to jobs and boost productivity



SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS

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Business Monmouthshire

This project will build on the previous iteration of the Business Monmouthshire project. It will enable the authority to maintain capacity and utilise existing experience to support the Local Growth Fund priority of 'More productive and competitive businesses' by focussing on supporting start-ups with growth potential (including under-represented groups and social enterprises) and supporting existing SMEs and social enterprises with high growth potential. It will also bring match funding to create an additional role that will ensure that demand for support continues to be met, bringing additionality to the capacity funded through the local growth fund.



RESILIENT FARMS AND RURAL ENTERPRISES PROGRAMME

The programme will support Monmouthshire's farms, agri-food businesses and rural enterprises to strengthen business resilience in the face of ongoing change. The programme focuses on people, skills and collaboration, helping businesses build capability, confidence and stronger connections across the agri-food sector. Through tailored business support, peer learning and knowledge sharing, we will support rural businesses to improve digital skills and technology readiness alongside core business capability. This will build resilience across rural industries and ensure the sustainability and long-term competitiveness of the areas significant Agriculture sector.



RESILIENT FOOD ECONOMY

The project will invest in scaling and growing food-based businesses across Monmouthshire working collaboratively with supply-chain partners. Building upon existing relationships, networks and understanding of Monmouthshire needs. Funding will support the purchase of equipment, create opportunities for shared cooperative equipment use, and enable businesses to diversify into new products and markets, including cooperative market activity. The project will also explore productivity improvements through regenerative practices, such as using cattle collars to support land management.



SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT FOR GROWTH

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This project provides targeted, sustained support for 16-18-year-olds who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). Through a blend of one-to-one mentoring, personalised action planning and structured group-based sessions, the programme helps young people build confidence, develop essential life and employability skills, and access meaningful training and qualifications that support long-term progression.

Our approach focuses on identifying and addressing the root causes that prevent young people from engaging in learning or work. These barriers often include low confidence, limited work experience, disrupted education, poor wellbeing, and a lack of clear pathways into future opportunities. By offering tailored upskilling activities, wellbeing support, and practical guidance, the programme enables participants to make informed, positive decisions about their next steps.



The Future Focus project will deliver targeted employability support to three priority cohorts: 18–24-year-old claimants, economically inactive women, and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Building on the success of the pilot 12-week programme for young people, delivered in partnership with DWP and achieving strong outcomes, Future Focus will offer both structured group learning and intensive one-to-one wrap-around support to accelerate progress toward work. The project will continue with the 12 week programme for young people and provide 6-week confidence and employability building programmes for the other two priority groups, designed to reconnect participants with labour market opportunities. All cohorts will benefit from activities including generic employability skills development, access to accredited work-related qualifications, employer talks, and opportunities for work tasters or experience across key sectors such as hospitality, construction, retail, care, and warehousing/logistics.



ENABLING LOCAL GROWTH INFRASTRUCTURE

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DESTINATION FOR ALL

The project delivers a comprehensive package of support to develop Monmouthshire as a fully accessible “Destination for All.” It includes a capital and revenue grant scheme for organisations and businesses to enhance visitor experiences across attractions, towns and events. It will also implement inclusive access improvements across the County, such as Changing Places, toilets, access gates, and improved circulation. Training, toolkits and an ambassador scheme will build local accessibility expertise, while collaboration with wider Welsh projects will share best practice and strengthen inclusive tourism.



**MONMOUTHSHIRE
SKILLS CENTRE**

Funding the redevelopment of premises to create a modern skills centre that supports apprenticeships, training, and long-term economic growth. Working with recognised and established training providers and stakeholders, the project will transform the site into a high-quality learning hub equipped with industry-standard facilities, aligning with local employer needs, and providing clear pathways into skilled employment. By securing capital investment, we can re-purpose an underused asset into a vibrant centre for innovation, collaboration, and career progression, strengthening the region’s talent pipeline and delivering lasting benefits for learners, employers, and the wider community.

GrowthSpace
Monmouthshire

GrowthSpace is Monmouthshire’s programme to unlock the economic potential of vacant, disused or underutilised sites and premises, or sites with growth potential. Working collaboratively with public, private, and community partners, in a local and regional context, GrowthSpace brings disused and under utilised spaces back into productive use. The programme focuses on creating new opportunities for enterprise, innovation, growing target sectors, and economic resilience across the county. The programme will aid in addressing market failure, complemented by private-sector or alternative grant funding where appropriate, ensuring additionality and leveraging wider investment.



LIP SUMMARY

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	LGF Priorities	£ Cap	£ Rev
Business Monmouthshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address barriers to growth (e.g. expansion, capital investment, export and attracting investors) for high-growth potential SMEs and social enterprises. Increase the creation of start-ups and spinouts with growth potential, including a focus on under-represented groups and social enterprises. 	-	113,495
Resilient Farms and Rural Enterprises Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase levels of investment in RD&I capacity and knowledge exchange in businesses and research organisations. 	-	80,990
Resilient Food Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address barriers to growth (e.g. expansion, capital investment, export and attracting investors) for high-growth potential SMEs and social enterprises. 	85,000	61,626
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce levels of economic inactivity, notably among young people, disabled people, women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. 	-	50,000
Future Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce levels of economic inactivity, notably among young people, disabled people, women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Improve qualification and/or skills levels, focusing on basic and higher-level skills 	-	170,000
Destination for All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in prioritised heritage, tourism, or cultural assets to support regional growth ambitions and local opportunities. 	115,000	56,141
Monmouthshire Skills Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve local economic infrastructure, including transport, digital connectivity, and community assets to support sustainable communities in rural, coastal, city and urban areas. Higher level skills investments targeted at existing or emerging gaps in key sectors or places, in particular where linked to long term plans 	420,000	-
GrowthSpace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop key sites and premises important for regional growth and in regionally prioritised growth sectors where there is market failure. 	625,335	-