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Neuadd y Sir
Y Rhadyr
Brynbuga

Dydd Mawrth, 19 Gorffennaf 2022

Dear Cynghorwyr,

CABINET

Gofynnir i chi fynychu cyfarfod **Cabinet** a gynhelir yn **Conference Room - Usk, NP15 1AD** ar **Dydd Mercher, 27ain Gorffennaf, 2022, am 5.00 pm.**

AGENDA

1. Ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb
2. Datganiadau o Fuddiant
3. 2021/22 DATGANIAD ALLDRO REFENIEW A CHYFALAF 1 - 52

Is-Adran/Wardiau yr Effeithir Arnynt: Pob Un

Diben: Pwrpas yr adroddiad hwn yw darparu gwybodaeth i Aelodau ar ganlyniadau'r Awdurdod ar gyfer blwyddyn ariannol 2021/22 o ran y gyllideb refeniw, y rhaglen gyfalaf a'r arian wrth gefn.

Awdur: Jonathan Davies, Pennaeth Cyllid Cynorthwyol (Dirprwy Swyddog A151)

Manylion Cyswllt: Jonathandavies2@monmouthshire.gov.uk

4. STRATEGAETH RHAGLEN CYMORTH TAI 2022-26 53 - 240

Is-Adran/Wardiau yr Effeithir Arnynt: Pob Un

Diben: Cymeradwyo a mabwysiadu'r Strategaeth Cymorth Tai arfaethedig ar gyfer 2022-26 a'r dogfennau cyswllt, fel sydd angen gan Lywodraeth Cymru.

Awdur: Ian Bakewell, Rheolwr Tai a Chymunedau

Manylion Cyswllt: ianbakewell@monmouthshire.gov.uk

5. DIWEDDARIAD AR GRONFA FFYNIANT GYFFREDIN Y DU - CYNLLUN BUDDSODDI ALLANOL/CLUSTNODI CYLLID YN SIR FYNWY 241 - 262

Is-Adran/Wardiau yr Effeithir Arnynt: Pob Un

Diben: Diweddarau'r Cabinet ar gynnydd Cronfa Ffyniant Gyffredin Llywodraeth y DU

(UK SPF) fel rhan o Raglen Ffyniant Bro Llywodraeth y DU a'n gofyn am gymeradwyaeth i weithredu'r argymhellion sydd yn dilyn.

Awdur: Frances O'Brien, Prif Swyddog Mentergarwch

Manylion Cyswllt: francesobrien@monmouthshire.gov.uk

6. ASESIAID O DDIGONOLRWYDD CYFLEOEDD CHWARAE 2022 A'R CYNLLUN GWEITHREDU CHWARAE 263 - 354

Is-Adran/Wardiau yr Effeithir Arnynt: Pob Un

Diben: Cymeradwyo'r Aseiad o Ddigonolrwydd Cyfleoedd Chwarae a'r Cynllun Gweithredu fel sydd wedi eu cyflwyno i Lywodraeth Cymru erbyn y dyddiad cau statudol, sef 30ain Mehefin 2022.

Awdur: Matthew Lewis, Rheolwr Amgylchedd a Diwylliant
Mike Moran, Cydlynnydd Seilwaith Cymunedol

Manylion Cyswllt: matthewlewis@monmouthshire.gov.uk
mikemorán@monmouthshire.gov.uk

7. CYLLID A CHYFLENWI ADFYWIO 355 - 384

Is-Adran/Wardiau yr Effeithir Arnynt: Y FENNI, CIL-Y-COED, CAS-GWENT, MAGWYR, BRYNBUGA

Diben: Mae uchelgais y Cyngor ar gyfer gweithgarwch adfywio, ac uchelgais y cymunedau y mae'n eu cynrychioli, yn fwy o lawer na'r adnoddau a'r cyllid sydd ar gael i gyflenwi pob dim, ac felly, mae angen penderfynu ar flaenoriaethau a dilyniant. Pwrpas yr adroddiad yw gwahodd y Cabinet i gytuno ar y pecyn dangosol o'r prosiectau ar gyfer y Grantiau Creu Lleoedd (a fydd yn ffurfio rhan o'r cynnig ar gyfer grant Trawsnewid Trefi Llywodraeth Cymru ar gyfer y tair blynedd nesaf) a chytuno ar ddatblygu 'Cynlluniau Creu Lle' ar gyfer Trefynwy, Magwyr a'r Fenni. Cynigir bod penderfyniad ar y prosiectau strategol yn cael ei oedi tan Hydref 2022, gan y bydd y Cyngor erbyn hyn wedi derbyn penderfyniad ar y ceisiadau sydd wedi eu cyflwyno am arian o'r Gronfa Ffyniant Bro.

Awdur: Mark Hand, Pennaeth Creu Lleoedd, Priffyrdd a Llifogydd
Daniel Fordham, Rheolwr Adfywio

Manylion Cyswllt: markhand@monmouthshire.gov.uk
danielfordham@monmouthshire.gov.uk

8. POLISI CLUDIANT RHWNG Y CARTREF A'R YSGOL DRAFFT 2023/24 385 - 416

Is-Adran/Wardiau yr Effeithir Arnynt: Pob Un

Diben: Mae'r Mesur Teithio gan Ddysgwyr (Cymru) 2008 yn amlinellu'r cyfrifoldebau cyfreithiol ar gyfer darparu cludiant ysgol. O fewn y ddeddfwriaeth, mae'n

gosod dyletswydd ar awdurdodau lleol i adolygu eu polisi cludiant yn flynyddol.

Mae angen cadarnhau'r polisi yma erbyn 1af Hydref er mwyn medru ei weithredu ar gyfer y flwyddyn academaidd ddilynol.

Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn cyflwyno'r Polisi Cludiant arfaethedig ar gyfer 23-24 ac yn gofyn i Aelodau i'w gymeradwyo er mwyn cynnal ymgynghoriad. Bydd adroddiad pellach yn cael ei gyflwyno i Aelodau ym mis Medi yn dilyn adolygiad o'r ymatebion i'r ymgynghoriad.

Awdur: Debra Hill-Howells, Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Datgarboneiddio, Cludiant a Chymorth

Manylion Cyswllt: Debrahill-howells@monmouthshire.gov.uk

9. ADRODDIAD MUCH (HYBIAU CYMUNEDOL MAGWYR A GWNDY) 417 - 466

Is-Adran/Wardiau yr Effeithir Arnynt: Dwyrain Magwyr a Gwndy, Gorllewin Magwyr

Diben: Gofyn am gymeradwyaeth i adeiladu hyb cymunedol newydd aer y safle a adwaenir fel y 'Three Fields' ym Magwyr a Gwndy.

Cytuno ar brydles hirdymor gyda'r Grŵp Cymunedol 'MUCH' ar gyfer meddiannu a rheoli'r safle

Awdur: Nicholas Keyse – Rheolwr Datblygu Ystadau

Manylion Cyswllt: nicholaskeyse@monmouthshire.gov.uk

10. CYNLLUN DYFODOL PENTREFI DYFFRYN GWY 467 - 734

Is-Adran/Wardiau yr Effeithir Arnynt: CC Trylech, CC Dyfawden, CC Dyffryn Gwy, CC St Arvans

Diben: Pwrpas yr adroddiad hwn yw briffio'r Cabinet ar y cefndir i'r Cynllun Dyfodol Pentrefi Dyffryn Gwy sydd wedi ei baratoi ar y cyd, sut y mae'r prosiect o bosib yn mynd i ddatblygu wrth symud ymlaen a gofyn am gytundeb y Cabinet i fabwysiadu'r Cynllun er mwyn llywio gweithgareddau a phenderfyniadau yn y dyfodol. Y bwriad yw bod yr holl bartïon (cyngorau cymuned, swyddfa Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol Dyffryn Gwy a Chyngor Sir Fynwy) yn mabwysiadu'r Cynllun. Os caiff ei fabwysiadu, bydd grŵp cyflenwi yn cael ei sefydlu.

Awdur: Mark Hand, Pennaeth Creu Lleuedd, Priffyrdd a Llifogydd Daniel Fordham, Rheolwr Adfywio

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danielfordham@monmouthshire.gov.uk

11. AIL-AGOR STRYD FAWR CAS-GWENT I DRAFFIG CERBYDOL 735 - 774

Is-Adran/Wardiau yr Effeithir Arnynt: Cas-gwent

Diben: Pwrpas yr adroddiad yw gwahodd y Cabinet i benderfynu a ddylid dileu'r Gorchymyn Arbrofol sydd yn gau'r Stryd Fawr yng Nghas-gwent i draffig ac eithrio'r sawl sydd yn meddu ar Fathodynau Glas a'n defnyddio'r manau parcio ar Stryd y Banc ac unrhyw fusnesau sydd yn derbyn nwyddau rhwng 4pm a 10am. Byddai dileu'r Gorchymyn yn ail-agor y Stryd Fawr i'r holl draffig cerbydol, yn union fel y trefniadau cyn y pandemig.

Awdur: Mark Hand, Pennaeth Creu Lleoedd, Priffyrdd a Llifogydd

Manylion Cyswllt: markhand@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

Paul Matthews
Chief Executive

PORTFFOLIOS CABINET

Cynghorydd Sir	Maes Cyfrifoldeb	Ward
Mary Ann Brocklesby	<p>Arweinydd Swyddogion Arweiniol – Paul Matthews, Matthew Gatehouse</p> <p>Stratgaeth a Chyfeiriad yr Awdurdod Cyfan Adolygiad a gwerthusiad o berfformiad yr Awdurdod Cyfan Cabinet Cyfun Prifddinas-Ranbarth Caerdydd Gweithio rhanbarthol Perthynas gyda'r Llywodraeth CLILIC, LGA a'r Bwrdd Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus</p>	Llanelly
Paul Griffiths	<p>Aelod Cabinet ar gyfer Economi Gynaliadwy a'r Dirprwy Arweinydd Swyddog Arweiniol – Frances O'Brien</p> <p>Dygnwch economaidd a ffocws ar Gynaliadwyedd gan weithio tuag at economi sylfaenol Cynllun Datblygu Lleol a Chynllun Datblygu Strategol Buddsoddi a Stiwardiaeth o ran Canol Trefi a Chymdogaethau Rheoli Datblygu a Rheoli Adeiladu Sgiliau a Chyflogaeth gan gynnwys swyddi gwyrdd a phrentisiaethau Bandeang Safonau masnach, Iechyd Amgylcheddol, Iechyd Cyhoeddus, Trwyddedi</p>	Chepstow Castle & Larkfield
Rachel Garrick	<p>Aelod Cabinet ar gyfer Adnoddau Swyddogion Arweiniol – Peter Davies, Frances O'Brien, Matthew Phillips, Jane Rodgers</p> <p>Cyllid Datblygu a chynnig y gyllideb i'r Cyngor Technoleg ddigidol a technoleg gwybodaeth Adnoddau Dynol, y Gyflogres, Iechyd a Diogelwch Caffael Strategol – hyrwyddo lleoliaeth Tir ac Adeiladau Cynnal a chadw a rheoli eiddo Rheoli'r Fflyd Cynllunio Brys/Argyfwng</p>	Castell Cil-y-coed

Martyn Groucutt	<p>Aelod Cabinet ar gyfer Addysg Swyddogion Arweiniol – Will McLean, Ian Saunders</p> <p>Addysg Blynyddoedd Cynnar Addysg statudol ar gyfer pob oedran Anghenon dysgu ychwnageol / Cynhwysiant Addysg ôl-16 ac addysg oedolion Safonau a Gwelliannau Ysgolion Dysgu Cymunedol Rhaglen Ysgolion ar gyfer yr unfed ganrif ar hugain Gwasanaethau Ieuentid</p>	Lansdown
Sara Burch	<p>Aelod Cabinet ar gyfer Cymunedau Cynhwysol a Byw Swyddogion Arweiniol – Frances O'Brien, Ian Saunders, Jane Rodgers, Matthew Gatehouse</p> <p>Strategaeth Tai Fforddiadwy Digartrefedd Diogelwch Cymunedol Teithio Llesol Canolfannau Hamdden Chwarae a Chwaraeon Gwybodaeth i Dwrystiaid, Amgueddfeydd, Theatrau ac Atyniadau</p>	Cantref
Tudor Thomas	<p>Aelod Cabinet ar gyfer Gofal Cymdeithasol, Diogelu a Gwasanaethau Iechyd Hygyrch Swyddog Arweiniol – Jane Rodgers</p> <p>Gwasanaethau Plant Maethu a mabwysiadu Gwasanaethau Troseddu Ieuentid Gwasanaethau Oedolion Diogelu ar draws yr Awdurdod Cyfan (plant ac oedolion) Anableddau Iechyd meddwl a llesiant Perthynas gyda'r darparwyr iechyd a mynediad at ddarpariaeth iechyd</p>	Park
Catrin Maby	<p>Aelod Cabinet ar gyfer Newid Hinsawdd a'r Amgylchedd Swyddogion Arweiniol – Frances O'Brien, Matthew Gatehouse</p> <p>Datgarboneiddio Cynllunio Trafnidiaeth Cynhyrchu bwyta a chaffael bwyd lleol gan gynnwys amaeth-goedwigaeth a garddwriaeth leol Cynllunio'r rhwydwaith traffig Trafnidiaeth Gyhoeddus Priffyrdd gan gynnwys cefnffyrdd Palmentydd a'r lonydd cefn</p>	Drybridge

	<p>Lliniaru rheoli ac adferiad yn dilyn llifogydd, ansawdd dŵr afonydd Rheoli gwastraff Gofalu am y strydoedd, sbwriel a manau cyhoeddus Cefn gwlad, Bioamrywiaeth a hawliau tramwy cyhoeddus gan gynnwys parciau a manau agored Cyfleusterau Cyhoeddus</p>	
Catherine Fookes	<p>Aelod Cabinet ar gyfer Cydraddoldeb ac Ymgysylltu</p> <p>Swyddogion Arweiniol – Frances O’Brien, Matt Phillips, Matthew Gatehouse</p> <p>Anghydraddoldeb cymunedol (iechyd, incwm, maetheg, anfantais, gwahaniaethu, arwahanrwydd) Budd-daliadau Yr iaith Gymraeg Hyrwyddo democratiaeth ac ymgysylltu dinasyddion Hybiau Cymunedol a’r Canolfan Gyswllt Gwasanaethau i gwsmeriaid a phrofiadau dinasyddio Cyfathrebu, cysylltiadau cyhoeddus, marchnata Gweithio gyda mudiadau gwirfoddol Gwasanaeth Cofrestryddion Gwasanaethau Etholiadol Adolygu’r Cyfansoddiad Moeseg a Safonau</p>	Y Dref

Nodau a Gwerthoedd Cyngor Sir Fynwy

Ein diben

Adeiladu Cymunedau Cynaliadwy a Chydnerth

Amcanion y gweithiwn tuag atynt

- Rhoi'r dechrau gorau posibl mewn bywyd i bobl
- Sir lewyrchus a chysylltiedig
- Cynyddu i'r eithaf botensial yr amgylchedd naturiol ac adeiledig
- Llesiant gydol oes
- Cyngor gyda ffocws ar y dyfodol

Ein Gwerthoedd

Bod yn agored. Rydym yn agored ac yn onest. Mae pobl yn cael cyfle i gymryd rhan mewn penderfyniadau sy'n effeithio arnynt, dweud beth sy'n bwysig iddynt a gwneud pethau drostynt eu hunain/eu cymunedau. Os na allwn wneud rhywbeth i helpu, byddwn yn dweud hynny; os bydd yn cymryd peth amser i gael yr ateb, byddwn yn esbonio pam; os na allwn ateb yn syth, byddwn yn ceisio eich cysylltu gyda'r bobl a all helpu - mae adeiladu ymddiriedaeth ac ymgysylltu yn sylfaen allweddol.

Tegwch. Darparwn gyfleoedd teg, i helpu pobl a chymunedau i ffynnu. Os nad yw rhywbeth yn ymddangos yn deg, byddwn yn gwranddo ac yn esbonio pam. Byddwn bob amser yn ceisio trin pawb yn deg ac yn gyson. Ni allwn wneud pawb yn hapus bob amser, ond byddwn yn ymrwmo i wrando ac esbonio pam y gwnaethom weithredu fel y gwnaethom.

Hyblygrwydd. Byddwn yn parhau i newid a bod yn hyblyg i alluogi cyflwyno'r gwasanaethau mwyaf effeithlon ac effeithiol. Mae hyn yn golygu ymrwymiad gwirioneddol i weithio gyda phawb i groesawu ffyrdd newydd o weithio.

Gwaith Tîm. Byddwn yn gweithio gyda chi a'n partneriaid i gefnogi ac ysbrydoli pawb i gymryd rhan fel y gallwn gyflawni pethau gwych gyda'n gilydd. Nid ydym yn gweld ein hunain fel 'trefnwyr' neu ddatrysyr problemau, ond gwnawn y gorau o syniadau, asedau ac adnoddau sydd ar gael i wneud yn siŵr ein bod yn gwneud y pethau sy'n cael yr effaith mwyaf cadarnhaol ar ein pobl a lleoedd.

Caredigrwydd – Byddwn yn dangos caredigrwydd i bawb yr ydym yn gweithio gyda nhw, gan roi pwysigrwydd perthnasoedd a'r cysylltiadau sydd gennym â'n gilydd wrth wraidd pob rhyngweithio.

SUBJECT:	2021/22 REVENUE & CAPITAL OUTTURN STATEMENT
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	27th July 2022
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the Authority's financial results for the 2021/22 financial year in respect of the revenue budget, capital programme, and associated reserves position.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet recognises a positive net revenue budget position at outturn of £5.62m prior to transfers to earmarked reserves of £4m, and that this represents a significant improvement of £5.3m from the position forecast at month 9, primarily as a result of:
- Receipt of £1.87m of Welsh Government Covid-19 hardship funding since month 9 to compensate the Council to support its enhanced costs of service delivery and loss of income as a direct result of Covid-19 impact;
 - Receipt of circa £1.3m in unbudgeted grants that were communicated to and received by the Authority late in the financial year and that have offset core budget funding;
 - Improved income and reduced expenditure across many service areas as a result of in-year budget recovery action as well as the impact of the ongoing operating conditions experienced during the financial year and where services have been reduced or stopped, travel requirements have reduced, office and buildings have remained closed and substantial staff vacancies have remained unfilled.
- 2.2 That Members acknowledge the extent that the Welsh Government Covid-19 Hardship Fund has covered all Covid-19 related additional costs directly incurred during the financial year of £12.3m together with compensation for loss of income of £3.6m, noting that the Hardship Fund closed on the 31st March 2022 and that continued budgetary pressures and risks result for 2022/23 and beyond.
- 2.3 That Members endorse the strategy applied to replenish reserves as noted within the report to support future financial challenges and ensure financial resilience during a period of continuing uncertainty and as we continue to recover from the pandemic and as the delivery of our services take shape in light of a severely altered socio-economic landscape, a period of significant economic uncertainty, and as wider policy commitments both locally and nationally begin to take shape.

- 2.4 That Cabinet acknowledges the continued improvement in Schools reserve balances of £3.5m as contained in **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 4** that reflects the significant levels of grant support from Welsh Government that was notified late in the financial year.
- 2.5 That Cabinet reaffirms the requirement for schools carrying significant surplus balances that are above levels guided by Welsh Government to provide investment plans setting out how they intend to spend their significant surplus balances, whilst also appreciating that the inherent structural budget deficits that led to 17 schools being in deficit prior to the pandemic will in some cases still require resolution, irrespective of the unprecedented funding received.
- 2.6 That Members acknowledge the capital outturn spend of £25.2m, introducing an under spend of £1.1m and that subsequently releases £640k of capital receipts back to reserve to support future capital investment.
- 2.7 That Members approve the capital slippage requests of £68.5m as listed in **Appendix 5**, acknowledging the challenging operating conditions and external influences impacting progress during the year.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Overall Summary

3.2 The 2021/22 revenue budget outturn position is summarised in **Table 1** below with the Authority at a headline level returning a £5.621m surplus against budget for the year, prior to contributions to reserves.

3.3 **Appendix 1** provides the detailed explanation of the reasons for the variance to budget, alongside a full assessment of the movement in School balances, and details of the progress of the Authority's Capital programme during the year.

3.4 The sections that follow look to provide an overview of the key issues influencing the financial position of the Authority during 2021/22 and the consequential impact upon the 2022/23 budget and beyond, and are categorised as follows:

- A financial assessment of the core service delivery
- The progress made against mandated savings and budget mitigations
- Assessing the ongoing financial impact of the pandemic on the Council
- The recommended use of 2021/22 Revenue surplus and reserves
- The movement in School balances during the year
- The Capital budget programme outturn position

Table 1: Overall Revenue outturn position

Directorate	2021/22 Budget	Total variance at outturn: Deficit or (Surplus)
	£000's	£000's
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	52,643	14
Children & Young People	56,479	1,014
Communities & Place	21,119	(1,588)
Monlife	3,968	(345)
Chief Executives Unit	2,812	(136)
People & Governance	3,830	(378)
Resources	4,964	(588)
Corporate Costs & Levies	24,271	(1,335)
Appropriations	8,095	(422)
Expenditure budget	178,180	(3,764)
Financing	(178,180)	(1,857)
Total budget	0	(5,621)
Transfers to earmarked reserves		4,000
Closing surplus transferred to Council fund reserve		(1,621)

3.5 Financial assessment of core service delivery

3.6 The overall 2021/22 revenue outturn position, prior to contributions to earmarked reserves, of £5.621m surplus was brought about by numerous factors impacting services and financing budgets during the year, and a full service commentary is provided in **Appendix 1** to this report. However in summary, the variances primarily driving the surplus relate to:

- Receipt of £3.25m additional Welsh Government or Health grants that have been used appropriately to offset core Social care budget funding;
- Receipt of other unbudgeted Welsh Government grant funding of £1.45m;
- Receipt of further unhypothecated Welsh Government settlement funding of £1.58m;
- Positive variances across many areas of service delivery in relation to staffing costs, service provision costs and from additional income;
- Offset by; increasing demand placed on children's social care services, adult social care and our children with additional learning needs budgets.

3.7 Importantly the overall outturn position was supported by £1.57m of identified eligible expenditure to be funded from capital receipts under the flexible use of capital receipts directive. Reliance on these mitigations is a short term measure only and is clearly not sustainable over the medium term.

3.8 It is important to note that the majority of the savings or income identified above that assist the in-year budget are one-off in nature and will not bring any recurrent benefit to future year's budgets. Conversely, the majority of the pressures services continue to

accommodate are recurrent pressures, some of which would have been partially considered as part of the wider budget process for 2022/23 and beyond.

- 3.9 Of note, the continuing level of staff vacancies being carried in the establishment is not considered to be sustainable position in the medium term, and services across the Authority report that active recruitment is ongoing to mitigate the ongoing impact and pressure this is having upon service delivery.
- 3.10 Whilst the final outturn position is welcomed, there remain areas of significant concern and risk going forward, especially in light of the wider challenging economic climate. Some services continue to face significant demand led pressures, some continue to operate at below pre-pandemic levels, whilst other services continued to have a level of significant reliance on Welsh Government Hardship funding which has now ended. Whilst ongoing plans are in place to deliver services within budget during 2022/23 it is highly likely that considerable levels of mitigation will be required as the Council progresses through the year.

3.11 Progress against mandated savings and budget mitigations

Table 2: Progress against mandated savings

Directorate	2021/22 Budgeted Savings £000	Saving achieved £000	Delayed Savings £000	Savings Unachievable £000	% Achieved
Children & Young People	(1,510)	(1,275)	(235)	0	84%
Social Care & Health	(874)	(874)	0	0	100%
Communities & Place	(821)	(821)	0	0	100%
Monlife	(100)	(80)	0	(20)	80%
Resources	(165)	(123)	(42)	0	75%
Chief Executives Unit	(32)	(20)	(12)	0	63%
Corporate Costs & Levies	(1,508)	(1,508)	0	0	100%
Appropriations	275	275	0	0	100%
Total	(4,734)	(4,426)	(289)	(20)	93%

- 3.12 The 2021/22 budget was set based on the requirement for £4.7m of mandated savings to be achieved by service areas. Given the challenging operating environment that services have performed under during 2021/22 it is pleasing to note their performance in achieving 93% of their budgeted savings.
- 3.13 There has been a delay in the implementation of £289k of budget savings proposals and this was primarily due to being unable to increase the recoupment income from other Local Authorities for pupils who were out of county and attending our mainstream schools, as a number of pupils have moved into Monmouthshire during the year.

- 3.14 A full list of the progress against savings mandates can be found at **Appendix 2** to this report.
- 3.15 The 2021/22 budget included the budgeted use of a Capitalisation direction of £2.2m where one-off costs are eligible to be capitalised under the guidance issued by the Welsh Government in respect of the flexible use of capital receipts. Given the reduced service activity during the year only £1.57m of the budgeted use was utilised resulting in £640k remaining in the capital receipts reserve for future use.

Those costs capitalised are listed and **Appendix 3** to this report and in summary relate to:

- Sharing back-office and administrative services with one or more other council or public sector body;
- Funding the cost of service reconfiguration, restructuring or rationalisation (staff or non-staff), where this leads to ongoing efficiency savings or service transformation;
- Driving a digital approach to the delivery of more efficient public services and how the public interacts with constituent authorities where possible;
- Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies to generate savings or to transform service delivery.

3.16 **Assessing the ongoing financial impact of the pandemic on the Council**

3.17 The 2021/22 budget was set against the backdrop of an unprecedented period of uncertainty, both in Local Government and in the wider context. The Covid-19 pandemic continues to have a major impact on all local authorities and wider public services across Wales. From a financial perspective, the response to the pandemic has required the Council to incur significant additional expenditure, for example, costs relating to infection control measures, safeguarding the public and employees and support for elderly and vulnerable residents. In addition, income losses have also been substantial, during the period where services either have been closed or have experienced significant reductions in demand or footfall due to conditions experienced.

3.18 During the year Welsh Government continued to provide significant one-off support through numerous funds as the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic continued in 2021/22. The extent of this support is outlined in **Table 3** below.

Table 3: Direct Grant funding received to aid in Covid-19 pressures

	£000s
Welsh Government Covid19 Hardship Fund - Additional costs incurred	12,320
Welsh Government Covid19 Hardship Fund - Compensation for loss of service income	3,587
Council Tax Income Collection shortfalls	1,018
Business Grants - administration costs	156
Total	17,081

3.19 The Welsh Government communicated clearly during the year that the Hardship Fund in its current form had an end date of the 31st March 2022, and that the increased Local

Government funding settlement for 2022/23 contained an element of funding expected to meet any further pressures relating from the impact of the pandemic upon Local Authorities.

- 3.20 In addition to the specific grant funding outlined above, the Welsh Government announced in March 2022 the distribution of £60million of additional Revenue Support Grant to Welsh Authorities, with Monmouthshire receiving an additional £1.58m of unhypothecated funding. In distributing this resource Welsh Government indicated that it could be used to assist with the management of inflationary and service pressures and the closure of the Covid-19 Hardship Fund, as well as helping to continue to decarbonise Council services, including providing access to electric vehicles. In this latter regard this report is predicated upon transferring £214k to a specific reserve to help support the transfer of an element of the Councils' transport fleet to EV technology.
- 3.21 Clearly, given the significant level of support that has been provided from the Hardship Fund in both 2020/21 and 2021/22, there remains a significant budgetary risk for the Authority to carry into 2022/23 in light of a severely altered socio-economic landscape, a period of significant economic uncertainty, extended national policy commitments, and the continuing legacy impacts of the pandemic upon service delivery.
- 3.22 The Authority, as part of its budget deliberations for 2022/23, looked to partly mitigate some of these risks with further investment into some of the key services continuing to be impacted by the pandemic, notably Social care, Additional learning needs, and in meeting the needs of the Homeless.
- 3.23 However it is clear that these service areas, along with services such as Leisure, Outdoor Education, Investment properties and Car parking continue to be significantly impacted by the underlying impact of the pandemic, and for which that impact is very difficult to measure, with the factors influencing the demand pressures and income levels being multifaceted. Alongside this, the risks presenting in the wider economic environment are expected to place upward pressure on our pay budgets over the medium term. This undoubtedly presents further budgetary risks over and above those budgeted for as we move into 2022/23.
- 3.24 In light of these continuing budget risks, the Authority has prudently set aside further reserve funding at the end of 2021/22 totalling £4m for specific Covid-19 related pressures which are yet to fully materialise, and in the event that further funding commitments from Welsh Government fall short of mitigating some of these key budget risks. Given the Councils comparatively low level of reserve cover, and the financial challenges still presenting over the medium term and beyond, recourse to this funding should be seen as an absolute last resort after exhausting all other alternative options.
- 3.25 In working with all parts of the Welsh Public Sector, the Welsh Government provided significant one-off support to the Welsh population through numerous funds which have been administered by the Council during the year. This has ranged from support to local businesses via Business Support Grants, payments made to care workers, support for those self-isolating and for Winter fuel pressures. The extent of the support administered by the Authority during the financial year is detailed in **Table 4** below:

Table 4: Welsh Government support funds administered in year

Support fund	£000s
Care worker Payments	1,894
Statutory sick pay enhancement for Care workers	147
Business support grants	1,836
Self-isolation payments	1,002
Winter fuel pressures	476
Total	5,355

3.26 Recommended use of 2021/22 Revenue surplus

3.27 Irrespective of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic the Authority was already dealing with underlying service pressures which resulted in £10.3m of pressures being accommodated within the 2021/22 budget, primarily consisting of:

- Pay and pension-related spending pressures in our schooling system;
- The increasing demand placed on children’s social care services, adult social care and our children with additional learning needs budgets;
- Significant service pressures within the passenger transport unit and within recycling and waste and that look to ensure that the Council supports and sustains key service delivery;
- Investment that ensures that homeless people are provided adequate support, advice and accommodation in their time of need;
- An ongoing commitment to recognise and value the contribution made by the workforce and ensuring that local government staff are paid no less than the minimum wage set by the Living Wage Foundation, extending to the apprenticeship roles within the Council.

3.28 Despite this further investment, and that accommodated within the 2022/23 budget round, it is clear that demands upon services and operating models continue to be impacted as we move through and past the recovery phase of the pandemic, presenting significant further budgetary risks, notably:

- The pandemic has brought about Welsh Government policy change, significantly in the area of Homelessness, and where the funding picture still remains unclear;
- The continuing impact on the most vulnerable members of the County and the ongoing and additional support that this may require, notably in the areas of Social Care and Additional learning needs;
- Implications on demand levels for some of our income generating services such as Leisure facilities, Outdoor Education, Investment properties and Car parking;
- The risks presenting in the wider economic environment that are expected to place upward pressure on our pay budgets over the medium term;

- Supply chains continue to be radically disrupted.

- 3.29 It is also important to recognise the impact of the current economic environment with global economies having been hit hard by the pandemic, the impact of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and the continuing resolution of Brexit agreements. All of these will inevitably impact on future public spending and Local Government settlements.
- 3.30 In particular as we look towards 2022/23, the inflationary environment and the cost of living crisis in our communities is of significant concern and the ongoing support for the most vulnerable residents in our County will be a key service consideration as we move forwards.
- 3.31 Welsh Government has helpfully provided indicative funding settlements on an all Wales basis of 3.4% and 2.5% respectively for 2023/24 and 2024/25. Whilst this provides a degree of funding certainty over the medium term, when coupled with the impact of the wider economic environment, pandemic recovery and taking into account the current demand led pressures on services, it is clear that future budget rounds will continue be challenging.
- 3.32 Maintaining a sustainable level of reserve cover, alongside targeted and effective reserve investment will ensure a degree of ongoing financial resilience to the Council, and will allow the Authority to form an appropriate and risk informed budget approach as the picture resolves itself.
- 3.33 Given all of these uncertainties it remains difficult to identify the timing and quantum of investment required into the Council's key corporate priorities moving forward and also in responding to the wider national policy agenda commitments.
- 3.34 In considering all of the above and in apportioning the outturn position the future financial stability of the Council was considered, alongside the potential additional unknown costs that could occur in dealing with post Covid-19 recovery, whilst also giving financial resilience to service areas to deal with service pressures and the wider policy commitments that will shape future service delivery. In this regard the revenue surplus is proposed to be allocated to the following reserves:

Table 5: Reserves balances and proposed replenishment

Reserve	31st March 2021	31st March 2022	Proposed replenishment	31st March 2022
	£000's	Draft £000's		Final £000's
Council Fund (Authority)	(8,907)	(8,907)	(1,621)	(10,528)
Council Fund (School Balances)	(3,418)	(6,954)		(6,954)
Sub Total Council Fund	(12,325)	(15,861)	(1,621)	(17,482)
Earmarked Reserves:				
Invest to Redesign	(1,356)	(1,456)		(1,456)

IT Transformation	(854)	(931)	(931)
Insurance and Risk Management	(935)	(925)	(925)
Capital Receipt Generation	(416)	(365)	(365)
Treasury Equalisation	(590)	(590)	(590)
Redundancy and Pensions	(857)	(769)	(769)
Capital Investment	(627)	(627)	(627)
Priority Investment	(1,905)	(1,905)	(1,905)
Covid19 Reset Reserve: Social Care	0	0	(1,400)
Covid19 Reset Reserve: Homelessness	0	0	(1,400)
Covid19 Reset Reserve: Leisure income	0	0	(300)
Covid19 Reset Reserve: Pay inflation	0	0	(900)
Other Earmarked Reserves	(3,131)	(4,547)	(4,547)
Total Earmarked Reserves	(10,671)	(12,115)	(4,000)
Total useable revenue reserves	(22,996)	(27,976)	(5,621)

4 MOVEMENT IN SCHOOL BALANCES

Table 6: Movement in school balances

2021/22 School Balances Summary outturn position	Opening Reserves (Surplus) / Deficit £000's	In year Draw / (Contribution) £000's	Reserve Balances at 2021/22 Outturn £000's
Cluster			
Abergavenny	(1,158)	(987)	(2,145)
Caldicot	(1,091)	(1,075)	(2,166)
Chepstow	(349)	(346)	(695)
Monmouth	(794)	(1,074)	(1,869)
Special	(26)	(53)	(79)
Total	(3,418)	(3,536)	(6,954)

- 4.1 In a similar manner to the general revenue activities of the Council, Schools have continued to benefit from Welsh Government hardship funding of £1.047m during the year to compensate for additional general Covid costs incurred (e.g. PPE, staff cover due to self-isolation, enhanced cleaning) and income lost and this is included within the figures outlined in **Table 6** above.
- 4.2 From a financial perspective, 2021/22 continued to see schools receive several significant Welsh Government grants to support them and their pupils during a period of continued disruption to learning and recovery from the impact of the pandemic on schools. This has resulted in all but one of the schools carrying forward a surplus balance into the 2022/23

financial year. The movements in individual school balances are outlined in **Appendix 4** to this report.

- 4.3 The Authority continues to require schools carrying significant surplus balances that were above levels guided by Welsh Government (£50k for a Primary, £100k for a Secondary) to provide investment plans setting out how they intend to spend the significant balances being held. These plans are assessed regularly and inform the budget monitoring process.
- 4.4 It is clear that the inherent structural budget deficits that led to a situation of 17 schools being in deficit prior to the pandemic may in certain cases still remain, and the Authority will look to work with those schools in particular to look to develop a sustainable medium term budget structure irrespective of the additional Welsh Government funding received. It is expected that the additional funding made available to those schools will allow a period of transition and as to allow those underlying budgetary issues to be rectified without impacting on educational standards.
- 4.5 In specific relation to Chepstow Comprehensive, when the windfall Welsh Government grants are disregarded, it continues to mask a significant recurring budget deficit that has been brought about predominately due to the curtailing of any staff redundancy processes during the pandemic. These were pivotal to their recovery plans. This leaves the school comparably weaker than if they had executed their recovery plans as intended. Consequently they do not now have the level of surplus balances that the other three comprehensive schools now have. The Authority will continue to work with and support the school to develop a sustainable budgetary position over the medium term.

5 CAPITAL BUDGET PROGRAMME OUTTURN

- 5.1 The capital expenditure outturn detailed in **Appendix 1** shows a net under spend of £1.139m against budget which can largely be attributed to specific grant funded schemes where the full grant allocation initially offered by funding partners was greater than the actual scheme costs required to deliver the schemes (£685k). This under spend does not release any capital financing for future use as the grant actually received matches the overall expenditure.
- 5.2 An additional surplus of £640k relates to under-utilisation of the capitalisation direction and primarily where redundancy costs incurred within the revenue budget (and which were eligible to be capitalised) were significantly lower than budgeted. This subsequently releases £640k of capital receipts back to reserve for future capital investment.
- 5.3 The remaining variance relates to vehicle acquisitions and within unsupported borrowing and leasing, where it was more cost-effective to the Authority to finance vehicle purchases from borrowing instead of leasing as initially budgeted. It is important to note that any variance in this budget is met in full by the service department from their existing revenue budget for vehicle fleet costs over the course of the vehicles life.

- 5.4 Members are asked to approve the slippage requests totalling £68.558m as shown in detail in **Appendix 5** to this report. The vast majority of the slippage requests are due in some degree to the delays encountered relating to the impact of Covid-19 and was very much outside of the control of the Authority, with two schemes (Asset Investment Fund and Abergavenny 3-19 School) accounting for two thirds of the total slippage.
- 5.5 The impact of Covid-19 on the capital programme has varied and is very much been dependent on the nature of the works being undertaken. Following initial delays on schemes during periods of operating restrictions, contractors adapted to revised working arrangements, although the wider indirect impacts of cost inflation and supply chain issues continue to present a challenge to project delivery. Some of these issues will be temporary, however it still remains unclear whether certain increases in cost inflation will be sustained over the medium term.

5.6 Useable Capital Receipts Available

Table 7: Useable Capital receipts forecast

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance as at 1st April	9,581	9,030	11,904	11,818	10,873
Capital receipts used for financing	(1,880)	(4,264)	(1,294)	(1,194)	(1,094)
Capital receipts used to support capitalisation direction	(1,567)	(2,650)	(507)	(507)	(507)
Capital receipts Received or Forecast	2,896	9,788	1,715	756	104
Forecast Balance as at 31st March	9,030	11,904	11,818	10,873	9,376

- 5.7 The movement in capital receipts balances for the year is shown above. Whilst overall balances on the face of it are healthy, there remains the risk that forecast receipts receivable for 2023/24 onwards are at comparatively low levels, and combined with the fact that receipts are continuing to be used to subsidise the revenue budget through capitalisation direction means that the scope for further capital investment funded via receipts will be limited.
- 5.8 The clear focus for 2022/23 will be on securing the forecast receipts of £9.7m which will ensure the medium term position is stabilised, and until such time that further development potential opportunities are clarified both locally and nationally via the LDP framework.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The report itself covers the resource implications of the entirety of the revenue and capital budget activity during the year. There are no further resource implications as a result of the recommendation in this report.

7 EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 7.1 This report provides Members with information on the revenue and capital outturn position of the Authority and carries no decisions. There are therefore no equality of future generations' implications directly arising from this report.
- 7.2 Any such impacts will be fully considered subsequently when Council receives further budget proposals.

CONSULTEES:

Senior Leadership Team
Performance & Overview Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet

Feedback from Performance & Overview Scrutiny Committee 7th July 2022:

Following detailed scrutiny of the revenue and capital position at outturn, the committee requested a breakdown of the inflationary pressures being faced be emailed to members to assist them in gaining an understanding of the impact of rises in inflation on the Council's budgetary position.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix 1 – Revenue and capital outturn report including school balances
Appendix 2 – Progress made against mandated savings
Appendix 3 – Capitalisation directive schedule
Appendix 4 – Movement in individual school balances
Appendix 5 – Capital slippage schedule

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Overall Revenue Position

Table 1: Council Fund 2021/22 Final Outturn Summary Statement

Service Area	Original Budget 2021/22	Budget Adjustments	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ M9	Variance M9 to Outturn
	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	52,825	(182)	52,643	52,657	14	28	(14)
Children & Young People	56,526	(47)	56,479	57,493	1,014	1,128	(114)
Communities & Place	21,884	(765)	21,119	19,523	(1,596)	47	(1,643)
MonLife	3,951	17	3,968	3,623	(345)	430	(775)
Chief Executives Unit	2,912	(100)	2,812	2,676	(136)	(160)	24
People & Governance	3,383	447	3,830	3,542	(288)	(179)	(108)
Resources	7,236	(2,272)	4,964	4,293	(671)	38	(709)
Corporate Costs & Levies	23,414	858	24,271	22,937	(1,334)	(692)	(642)
Net Cost of Services	172,130	(2,045)	170,085	166,744	(3,341)	640	(3,982)
Appropriations	5,836	2,259	8,095	7,674	(421)	(400)	(21)
Expenditure to be Financed	177,966	214	178,180	174,418	(3,763)	240	(4,003)
Financing	(177,966)	(214)	(178,180)	(180,038)	(1,858)	(550)	(1,308)
Net General Fund (Surplus) / Deficit	0	0	0	(5,621)	(5,621)	(310)	(5,311)

Table 2: Council Fund 2021/22 Final Outturn Detailed Statement

Service Area	Original Budget 2021/22	Budget Adjustments	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ M9	Variance M9 to Outturn
	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's
Adult Services	8,341	(81)	8,261	8,431	170	(4)	174
Children Services	16,147	(85)	16,061	16,595	534	397	137
Community Care	24,386	(43)	24,342	24,070	(272)	(67)	(205)
Commissioning	1,431	(37)	1,394	1,163	(231)	(155)	(76)
Partnerships	436	0	436	436	(0)	(0)	0
Public Protection	1,523	18	1,541	1,372	(169)	(115)	(54)
Resources & Performance	560	47	607	590	(17)	(27)	10
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	52,825	(182)	52,643	52,657	14	28	(14)
Individual Schools Budget	46,488	43	46,531	46,503	(28)	(29)	1
Resources	1,167	(91)	1,076	1,073	(3)	8	(11)
Standards	8,871	1	8,872	9,917	1,045	1,149	(104)
Children & Young People	56,526	(47)	56,479	57,493	1,014	1,128	(114)
Enterprise, Housing & Community Animation	3,024	(61)	2,963	2,715	(248)	236	(484)
Facilities & Fleet Management	5,487	(54)	5,433	4,992	(441)	(4)	(437)
Neighbourhood Services	11,233	(196)	11,037	10,749	(288)	(368)	80
Placemaking, Highways & Flood	2,140	(454)	1,686	1,067	(619)	183	(802)
Communities & Place	21,884	(765)	21,119	19,523	(1,596)	47	(1,643)
Countryside & Culture	1,422	(0)	1,422	1,361	(61)	92	(153)
Finance & Business Development	1,735	23	1,758	1,561	(197)	(107)	(90)
Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure	794	(6)	787	701	(86)	446	(532)
MonLife	3,951	17	3,968	3,623	(345)	430	(775)
Policy, Scrutiny & Customer Service	2,912	(100)	2,812	2,676	(136)	(160)	24
Chief Executives	2,912	(100)	2,812	2,676	(136)	(160)	24

Service Area	Original Budget 2021/22	Budget Adjustments	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ M9	Variance M9 to Outturn
Democratic Services	2,424	(54)	2,370	2,251	(119)	(85)	(34)
Emergency Planning	152	0	152	152	(0)	(0)	0
People	807	501	1,308	1,139	(169)	(94)	(75)
People & Governance	3,383	447	3,830	3,542	(288)	(179)	(108)
Finance	3,339	(970)	2,369	1,720	(649)	(325)	(324)
Information, Communication Technology	3,029	(813)	2,216	2,194	(22)	(21)	(1)
Commercial & Corporate Landlord	868	(489)	379	379	0	384	(384)
Resources	7,236	(2,272)	4,964	4,293	(671)	38	(709)
Precepts & Levies	21,362	0	21,362	21,376	14	13	1
Coroner's	147	0	147	191	44	(0)	44
Archives	182	0	182	182	(0)	(0)	0
Corporate Management	339	0	339	(74)	(413)	(94)	(319)
Non Distributed Costs (NDC)	643	0	643	648	5	62	(57)
Strategic Initiatives	(836)	823	(13)	(1,018)	(1,005)	(676)	(329)
Insurance	1,578	34	1,612	1,632	20	3	18
Corporate Costs & Levies	23,414	858	24,271	22,937	(1,334)	(692)	(642)
Net Cost of Services	172,130	(2,045)	170,085	166,744	(3,341)	640	(3,982)
Fixed Asset Disposal Costs	30	0	30	234	204	171	33
Interest & Investment Income	(134)	0	(134)	(303)	(169)	(69)	(100)
Interest Payable & Similar Charges	3,736	0	3,736	3,399	(337)	(403)	66
Charges Required under Regulation	6,404	0	6,404	6,391	(13)	(11)	(2)
Other Investment Income	0	0	0	(15)	(15)	(2)	(13)
Borrowing Cost Recoupment	(3,619)	0	(3,619)	(3,710)	(91)	(85)	(6)
Contributions to Reserves	195	1,554	1,750	1,750	(0)	(0)	0
Contributions from reserves	(777)	519	(257)	(257)	0	(0)	0

Service Area	Original Budget 2021/22	Budget Adjustments	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ M9	Variance M9 to Outturn
Capital expenditure financing	0	185	185	185	0	(0)	0
Appropriations	5,836	2,259	8,095	7,674	(421)	(400)	(21)
Expenditure to be Financed	177,966	214	178,180	174,418	(3,763)	240	(4,003)
General Government Grants	(69,465)	(214)	(69,679)	(71,049)	(1,370)	0	(1,370)
Non Domestic Rates	(32,018)	0	(32,018)	(32,018)	(0)	0	(0)
Council tax	(83,636)	0	(83,636)	(84,190)	(554)	(650)	96
Council Tax Benefit Support	7,152	0	7,152	7,219	67	100	(34)
Financing	(177,966)	(214)	(178,180)	(180,038)	(1,858)	(550)	(1,308)
Net General Fund (Surplus) / Deficit	0	0	0	(5,621)	(5,621)	(310)	(5,311)

DIRECTORATE – DIVISION VARIANCE COMMENTS

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & SAFEGUARDING DIRECTORATE	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,665	1,181	28	14

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & SAFEGUARDING DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

Overall a closing 2021/22 position of £14k over spend, against a circa £53m budget is a good outcome, especially operating under extreme pressures brought about by the COVID pandemic, challenges of managing an ageing population, the need for more high cost care packages for children and younger adults, as well as the well-publicised difficulties in the health and social care sector.

Underpinning the outturn position are some £4m+ grants and funding assistance, of which £3m are one off payments from Welsh Government, as well as one off Intermediate Care funding from Health. If these funds were not made available, the outturn position would be more in the region of £4.5m adverse, coupled with closing unmet need weekly hours in Adult care of 1,860. Given this, the positive outturn position achieved this year should not mask the underlying significant resource challenges ahead.

On a more positive note, Children Looked After numbers have stabilised at a closing number of 208, we have successfully navigated the service through the COVID pandemic, supporting our care providers, managing the number of Welsh Government initiatives and our Public Protection service leading up Track, Trace and Protect.

There are a significant number of staff vacancies currently being carried within services, however these are one-off in nature and the resource gap is currently being filled by external agency whilst work is actively ongoing to fill these posts and to ensure suitable and sustainable structures are in place after an extended period of disruption.

Adult Services

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	289	629	(4)	170

Additional recruitment of carers, over and above budget, into our in house care at home service to facilitate additional packages of care.

Children Services

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,127	695	397	534

Even with reducing CLA numbers, new children have required high cost residential placements as a result of increased complexity, as opposed to those leaving which have been more in the lower cost fostering/kinship/family placements, accounting for £346k of the over spend.

A recent legal case has led to the need for the directorate to pay kinship carers in line with foster carer rates, along with the increase in payment to foster carers due to increasing skills training, along with increased fostering placements, producing £329k of the over spend.

Further to this, legal costs associated with court proceedings has resulted in a £154k over spend, with a further £47k within staffing budgets.

There are £150k of compensating savings through the delayed recruitment to the Head of Children's Services post, reduced partner contribution into the Youth Offending Service and reduced contracted

transport costs achieved due to the pandemic, and £192k as a result of delayed implementation of the partnership accommodation project.

This service area has benefited by reducing it's in year costs by £1,789,000 from one off ICF funding and various Welsh Government grants and funding assistance.

Community Care

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	397	95	(67)	(272)

The over spend in the South of the County in our Chepstow Integrated team resulting from increased care packages. However one off ICF funding, the Social Care Sustainability Grant, the new Social Care Recovery fund and a one off injection from Welsh Government to cover Social Care over spends have helped to offset the potential over spend by £3m.

Commissioning

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	(134)	(162)	(155)	(231)

Ongoing vacant Commissioning Officer post and due to the continued closure of day facilities transport, costs are lower than budget.

Partnerships

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	0

No variances

Public Protection

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	2	(60)	(115)	(169)

Due to delayed recruitment into vacant posts.

Resources & Performance

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(16)	(16)	(27)	(17)

Vacant post within the Finance team.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE DIRECTORATE

	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	832	1,262	1,128	1,014

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

The Directorate's Outturn position is an over spend of £1,014k, which can mainly be attributed to ALN. The detail of this can be found below, in the Standards section.

This pressure has been forecast throughout the financial year and the pressure on the budget is expected to continue into 2022-23 and was subsequently added as a budgetary pressure during the 2022-23 budget process.

Individual Schools Budget

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	166	(29)	(28)

Back pay due to school staff is less than anticipated and there is an under spend on Covid-19 expenses from the 2020-21 grant.

Resources

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	3	18	8	(3)

The decrease in over spend is due to staff cost savings within the service.

Standards

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	829	1,078	1,149	1,045

The below over spends have impacted the service during the financial year:

Recoupment decreased by (income received from other LA's)	£227,000
Independent placement costs overspent	£195,000
Other LA placement costs overspent	£228,000
Additional support for pupils attending our schools overspent	£381,000
Breakfast Club reduction in income & increased costs	£42,000
Deri View SNRB/Virtual School Staff & Overmonnow SNRB	£63,000

These have been partially offset by the following savings:

Staff cost savings in Psychology Service	(£20,000)
Recent Early Years grants released to cover staff costs	(£26,000)
ALN Management Grant released to cover staff costs	(£50,000)

COMMUNITIES & PLACE DIRECTORATE	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	2,470	913	47	(1,596)

COMMUNITIES & PLACE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

The Communities and Place directorate has returned a £1.596m under spend in 2021-22.

The directorate received over £4.28m of Covid-19 funding during 21-22, which has covered in full our main pressures found within Homelessness (B&B and Security costs), Car Parking (loss of P&D and PCN income) and Waste (Staff cover and vehicles).

The non-Covid-19 related under spend of £1.596m is considerable, all departments have under spent with contract savings, improved income and staff vacancies being the main reasons. In respect of staff vacancies, work is actively ongoing to fill these posts and to ensure suitable and sustainable structures are in place following a period of sustained disruption to service delivery.

It is unlikely that the other savings will re-occur in 22-23 as some have already been built in as part of the MTFP (contract savings) or were a one-off contribution (windfall grants).

More detailed explanations and the reason for the overall improvement in non-Covid-19 related variance of £685k from month 9 will be explained in detail in the sections below.

Enterprise, Housing & Community Animation

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,143	534	235	(248)

Enterprise, Housing & Community Animation has returned a £248k under spend, this is mainly due to:

- **Business Growth & Enterprise** – £52k under spend – Mainly in our Employment & Skills service where we were able to claim budgeted core costs against WEFO grant funding. The availability of funding is not confirmed until year end so this under spend could not be factored into earlier reporting periods.
- **Communications** – £6k under spend – improved income generation in the last quarter has pushed this service into an under spend, the level of which was not known at M9 and is the reason for the £12k swing in performance.
- **Community & P/Ships development** - £71k under spend – mainly due employee under spends as the service was able to claim core staff costs against grant funding and the capitalisation directive. The level of available grant funding was not known at M9 and is the reason for the £37k improvement in outturn position.
- **Housing** - £75k under spend, this can be broken down into these main areas:
 - **Homelessness** – £37k under spend – All Covid related expenditure (£2.2m) has been covered by WG Covid fund in 21-22. The remaining net under spend is mainly due to staff vacancies and a small reduction in premises costs.
 - **Sewage Treatment Plants** - £19k over spend – Delays in NRW decision to approve a replacement system at Shirenewton has meant that the plant still needs to be emptied on a regular basis to avoid leaks.
 - **Social Housing Grant** - £60k over spend – Change in grant T&Cs meant that core staff costs were no longer claimable causing a budget pressure.
 - **Shared Housing & Private Leasing** - £97k net under spend - Rental income within Shared housing and Private leasing has exceeded budget in 21-22 creating a bottom-line under spend.
 - **Careline** - £22k under spend – Mainly due to reductions in equipment spend and income increase from recharges to other LAs.
- **Enterprise Management & Procurement** - £42k net under spend – Mainly due to employee savings as not all posts have been appointed within the new Strategic Operations team.

The improvement in forecast position from Month 9 can mainly be attributed to the receipt of Covid-19 funding in the 4th quarter of the year. The non-covid related improvement for the department between Month 9 and 12 was £51k and is mainly due to the ability to fund core staff costs from grants late in the year.

Homelessness remains a particular concern, all costs incurred in 21-22 were covered by the Covid Hardship fund but this ended in March. WG will continue to provide financial assistance but at a reduced level so if activity remains the same as 21-22 then there is potential for a significant budget pressure in 22-23.

Facilities & Fleet Management

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	551	437	(4)	(441)

Facilities & Fleet management have underspent by £441k, due to:

- **Schools Catering** – £144k under spend – Covid 19 funding has supported losses caused by the pandemic and alongside improved meal uptake has meant that we have been able to maintain our income at pre-pandemic levels, in addition we have seen a number of staff vacancies during the year that have reduced employee costs – this has meant that the service has come in under budget. We were not able to accurately forecast income levels until quarter 4 and is the reason for the £144k improvement from Month 9.
- **Building Cleaning & Public Conveniences** - £92k under spend – mainly due to improved income generation due to contracts coming back in-house, a reduction in rates & utilities in public conveniences and a reduction in equipment costs. We were able to claim some staff costs back via the covid hardship fund – this was not known at M9 and along with the improvement in income is the reason for the £92k swing at outturn.
- **Passenger Transport** – £458k under spend – this is a favourable variance from month 9 of £189,000 and is mainly due to us not needing to utilise the contingency on external contracts, we saw very few hand backs in the last quarter in comparison to the first three quarters of the financial year – in addition we were holding back a contingency of £100k on external contracts at month 9 for expected cost of living price inflations, these were finally agreed to be paid from the 1st April so no in-year impact on 21-22. The section has also received additional BES funding to mitigate the gross contract costs of £60,386, this additional grant was unknown at month 9.

The likelihood of this underspend re-occurring in 22-23 is low, the service bottom line benefited from Covid due to income loss being covered but also by our contractor payments reducing to 75% when the schools were closed, this had a positive impact on our budget that will not happen in the new year. In addition expected inflation increases on contracts were delayed until 1st April, this helped 21-22 outturn figures but the service will now have to bear these in the new financial year.

- **Fleet Maintenance** - £224k over spend – The cost of maintaining the authority’s fleet has exceeded available budget by £211k. In addition, the number of members of the car salary sacrifice scheme have reduced meaning savings are below budgeted levels by £13k.

The outturn position has improved by £437k from month 9, this can be attributed to the receipt of covid funding in quarter 4 but also to improvements in non-covid areas such as :-

- Catering & Cleaning - £236k improvement – income levels could not be accurately predicted until late in the year so prudent forecasts were put in for earlier reporting periods.
- Passenger Transport - £189k improvement – expected external contract spend did not hit expected levels due to a reduction in contract hand backs and the need not to use a contingency held back for contract inflation.

Neighbourhood Services

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	346	(185)	(367)	(288)

Neighbourhood Services underspent by £288k, this is due to:

- **Highways, SWTRA & Streetlighting** – £89k under spend - This is mainly due to Streetlighting (£124k), the LED replacement programme is now complete and the resultant reduction in KWH output means our energy costs have reduced below budget. We have also seen a saving in our maintenance budget as our Havard monitoring costs have reduced. This has been partially offset by an over spend in Highways Operations of £20k due to a potential backdated pay adjustment and a £7k over spend in SWTRA & External Clients due to increased maintenance spend on Wonastow Road Pumping Station in Monmouth.

- **Waste & Street Scene** - £198k under spend – we had forecast in previous reporting periods the possibility of a non-covid-19 related under spend in Waste & Street Scene and it has materialised at year end. The main reasons for this is an under spend on the HWRC transfer station contract due to a move to a new provider and the buoyancy of the recycle market, in addition the planned investment into depot infrastructure in the South of the county did not take place due to the lack of suitable site availability to house recycling and waste fleet which reduced expected service expenditure in 21-22. Outturn is a little lower than originally forecast due to lower than expected income in Grounds and a late adjustment in the accounts to reflect a potential backdated pay issue.

Placemaking, Highways & Flood

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	430	127	182	(619)

Placemaking, Highways & Flood has underspent by £619k, due to:

- **Planning & Building Control** – £47k under spend – Building Control has come in on budget, this is because the forecast shortfall in income has been covered by WG Covid-19 funding. Planning has returned a £47k under spend, this is due to an increase in planning income as a large site application came in at the end of quarter 4. This was not known at M9 and is the reason for the improvement in outturn position.
- **Planning Policy & LDP** – £167k under spend – The delay in the LDP means that there has been a marked reduction in spend on professional & specialist fees in 21-22, the level of drop-off could not be quantified at M9 and is the reason for the £167k improvement at outturn.
- **Car Parks** - £90k over spend – Mainly due to over spends in expenditure and primarily transport, premises & software costs. All pandemic income losses have been covered by the WG Covid-19 grant.
- **Highways Management & Flooding** - £503k under spend – The service overall has a number of staff vacancies that they have struggled to fill during the year but which are being actively advertised. The resource gap is currently being filled via external expertise but it is hoped that the service will return to a more sustainable footing in the near term following a period of significant disruption. In addition income levels have improved in Quarter 4 and we have seen a marked increase in Road Closure income and recharges to grant schemes.

The improvement in outturn position since month 9 of £801k is down to a number of elements :-

- The receipt of Covid-19 funding in Quarter 4.
- Better than expected income in Planning and Highways & Flooding.
- The delay in filling vacant posts that have increased staff under spends.

MONLIFE DIRECTORATE	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	3,010	1,228	430	(345)

MonLife DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

The MonLife Directorate has returned a £345k under spend in 21-22.

The directorate received over £2.121m of Covid-19 Income loss funding during 2021-22, which mainly supported our leisure services along with £78k of Covid-19 Hardship funding to support additional expenditure.

The non-Covid-19 related under spend of £345k is considerable and across all departments, the majority of this under spend is due to staff vacancies, and improved grant income. In respect of staff vacancies, work is actively ongoing to fill these posts and to ensure suitable and sustainable structures are in place following a period of sustained disruption to service delivery.

A more detailed explanation for the overall improvement from month 9 will be explained in detail in the sections below.

(Monlife) Countryside & Culture

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	54	72	92	(61)

Countryside & Culture has underspent by £61k, this is due to:

- **Museums** - £2k over spend – our sites have had limited opening this year due to the pandemic resulting in a loss of income from retail sales and event income, £78k has been funded by the WG Covid-19 fund which mitigates the impact of this loss of income resulting from the pandemic.
- **Learning** - £10k over spend – reduced income as the service hasn't been able to fully deliver programmes and events as planned due to the pandemic. The section has received £19k WG Covid-19 funding to help mitigate the loss of income.
- **Countryside** - £35k under spend and the section has received £10k of WG Covid-19 funding to offset the loss of income due to the pandemic.
- **Play** - £42k under spend - the section has received additional unbudgeted grants
- **Tourism** - £4k over spend – sections inability to achieve employee related savings and slightly higher than expected supplies and services.

The improvement in outturn position since month 9 of £153k is down to a number of elements-

- The receipt of Covid-19 funding in Quarter 4
- Additional Grants

(Monlife) Finance & Business Development

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	8	(107)	(197)

Finance & Business Development has under spend by £197k, this is due to:

- **Attractions** - £84k under spend – due to senior staff savings in attractions management and overtime savings in our TICs, the section has received £141k in WG Covid-19 funding to help offset the loss of income at both the Castle and Old Station Tintern.
- **Leisure Services Management** - £128k under spend – due to savings from staff vacancies due to delays in filling posts.

- **Business Support, Sales & Marketing** - £14k over spend – mainly due to a reduction in grant funding and higher than anticipated supplies and services.

The improvement in outturn position since Month 9 of £91k is down to a number of elements-

- The receipt of Covid-19 funding in Quarter 4.

Further staff savings due to delays in filling vacant posts.

(Monlife) Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	2,956	1,148	445	(86)

Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure has underspent by £86k, this is due to:

- **Leisure Services** - £49k under spend - Leisure Centres were able to reopen during the year but remained affected by the pandemic, we have seen high levels of membership cancellations and reductions in general bookings with some memberships remaining frozen, the WG Covid-19 fund has supported this loss of income with the section receiving £1.404m in funding during 21-22.
- **The Outdoor Adventure Service** - £9k under spend – Covid-19 Restrictions have impacted on residential visits for schools, significant impacting on income with no visits between April and August and limited bookings for the rest of the financial year, customers remained hesitant about returning, although the service is hopeful that as confidence returns that income levels will improve through to year end. These income losses were supported by the WG Covid-19 fund with the section receiving £469k of funding during 21-22.
- **Sports Development** - £27k under spend – The sections ability to attract a wide range of funding allowed them to deliver the necessary services and under spend by £27k.

The improvement in outturn position since month 9 of £531k is down to a number of elements-

- Mainly the receipt of Covid-19 funding in Quarter 4.
- Additional grants

CHIEF EXECUTIVES UNIT DIRECTORATE	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	53	(41)	(160)	(136)

HEAD OF POLICY, PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMENTARY:

The Chief Executive's department underspent by £136k. This has primarily resulted from increased third party income in community education which could not be fully utilised as a result of the pandemic and which needed to be set aside in case it was clawed-back. An additional factor in the under spend is a delay in implementing a new telephony system which is being procured as part of a collaborative arrangement.

The overall under spend position masks over spends in Welsh language translation and difficulty achieving income targets in community hubs, including the operation of the Post Office in Usk which, like most similar operations, operates at a loss but delivers significant community benefits.

Policy, Scrutiny & Customer Experience

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	53	(41)	(160)	(136)

Policy, Scrutiny & Customer Experience has under spent by £136k, this is mainly due to:

- **Community Education** - £226k under spend – this is due to improved external partner income that has been carried forward from 2020-21 and a further grant windfall that came in late in the year, both of which have helped offset core service costs. These have been part offset by increased lecturer costs.
- **Contact Centre** - £47k under spend – due to budget savings because of the delay in the implementation of a new telephony system.

Offset by:

- **Community Hubs** - £104k over spend – caused by a shortfall in library and room hire income due to unachievable income budgets (£42k), the inability to make staff vacancy savings (£31k) and additional spend within Caldicot hub (£30k) – this spend is linked with the Adult Ed grant and is offset by under spends reported above. The income targets have been removed from the 22-23 budget making this service area more sustainable.
- **Corporate CEO** - £15k over spend – due to inability to meet staff vacancy factor saving and an increase in license costs.
 - **Policy & Partnerships** – £18k net over spend, this is mainly due to an over spend in Welsh Language translation costs of £66k due to a significant increase in translation requirements offset by a £50k under spend in Improvement due to staff vacancies.

The £24k adverse variance from Month 9 is mainly due to:

- Welsh Language - £29k additional translation costs not known at Month 9.

PEOPLE & GOVERNANCE DIRECTORATE	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(8)	(176)	(179)	(288)

PEOPLE & GOVERNANCE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

People & Governance has returned a £288k under spend. It has been the first year of this new Directorate and it has seen the retirement of two people in management positions and a delay to the implementation of the major systems deliverables that are priorities for the Directorate. It is anticipated that there will not be a repeat of this under spend once the new structures and systems are in place. Similarly, the land charges income has eclipsed expectations as a result of the boom in house purchases during CV.

Democratic Services				
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(8)	(122)	(84)	(119)

Democratic Services has under spent by £119k, this is due to:

- **Members Costs** - £8k under spend - savings in mileage and allowance claims due to more agile attendance of meetings has been offset by an increase in staff and advertising costs. Member equipment refresh has been fully funded by grant and reserve contributions.

- **Electoral Management** – £33k under spend – The service received late settlement figures from Central & Welsh Government for previous elections, this income was higher than expected so has helped push the service into an under spend at year end.
- **Committee Section** – Break-even – reported an £18k over spend at Month 9 but funding received to cover apprentice costs in Quarter 4 has moved the service back to on budget.
- **Legal Services** - £37k under spend – staff savings resulting from the delay of the employment lawyer
- **Land Charges** - £48k under spend – this is because of increased search income and savings from a staff vacancy.

Emergency Planning

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	0	0	0	0

Emergency Planning have returned a break-even budget.

People

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(62)	(94)	(169)

- **People Services** - £153k under spend – due to a senior staff vacancy in People Management, an £18k under spend in Occupational Health due to a reduction in demand and a £50k under spend in HR due to a delay on the implementation of a new recruitment system.
- **Corporate Training** – £15k under spend – due a small staff saving resulting from a delay in filling a post and an increase in external training income.
- **Organisational Development** – overspent by £8k – increase in staff costs as a post has gone from part-time to full time.

The £75k improvement from Month 9 can be attributed to the delay in filling the posts in People services and Training and the delay in system implementation in HR.

RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,107	1,504	38	(671)

RESOURCES DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

The Resources directorate has returned a £671k under spend in 2021-22.

The under spend whilst significant was in part driven by vacancies held during the year and that contributed to assist in mitigating the wider Council budget pressures reported during the year. Vacancy savings are one-off as posts are subsequently filled as part of delayed restructuring needing to be completed within finance and landlord services. Work is actively ongoing to fill these posts and to ensure suitable and sustainable structures are in place after an extended period of capacity constraints that have impacted on service delivery.

Other savings have resulted from one-off late receipt of grant from Welsh Government and additional income across a number of departments that had not been anticipated at month 9.

A review will be undertaken ahead of the first formal reporting at month 4 to identify scope for recurrent

savings to be achieved and that if identified will be brought forward to support future budget savings.

More detailed explanations and the reason for the overall improvement in non-Covid-19 related variance of £709k from month 9 will be explained in detail in the sections below.

Finance

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	756	760	(325)	(649)

Finance has underspent by £649k, this is mainly due to:

- **Revenues** - £275k under spend, this is due in the main to:
 - **Housing Benefits** - £2k over spend - The small over spend at outturn reflects the net overall position once all grants and funding has been accounted for. The position continued to improve into year-end following the decision for Monmouthshire to retain the administration funding associated with the Winter Fuel scheme (this was due to be transferred to the Shared Revenues and Benefits service based in Torfaen).
 - **Council Tax** - £27k over-spend – There was a £60,000 over spend against salary costs as the budget has been vired to other service areas pending the finance restructure. This over spend was offset by £34,000 one off unexpected income following news in January 2022 that local authorities were to be reimbursed for overpaid magistrate court fees paid for council tax liabilities between April 2014 and July 2018.
 - **Debtors and Charity relief** - £272k under spend – This is made up of £144,000 administration funding that was released by Welsh Government in January 2022 for the latest round of business grants and an under spend of £126,000 as the money set aside for NDR support was not utilised.
- **Finance** - £273k under spend – This is as a result of senior staff vacancies within Central Finance and the Departmental Management Team that have not been filled during 21-22.
- **Audit** - £20k under spend – This is due to staff vacancy savings.
- **Cashiers** – £29k over spend – The delay in fully implementing the decision to remove cheques has meant we have been unable to achieve the £20,000 staff saving that was carried over in the budget from 2020/21. Also there has been an increase of £18,000 in card payment fees, as more customers have moved to making payments themselves either online or by automated telephone. These over spends have been partially offset by a £9,000 savings against the security carrier contract, as not all services were operating at normal activity levels in 2021/22.
- **Financial Systems & Support** - £58k under spend - The staffing budget under spent by £18,000 as there were some unfilled vacancies in the team. There was also a £40,000 under spend against the system development budget. Of which £24,000 relates to the decision to move away from Oracle, the remaining £16,000 were in year savings resulting from delays in the planned upgrade to Business World. Additional income of £4,000 for procurement card fees was also received.
- **Payroll** – £82k under spend – Staff savings due to the retirement of a senior post plus further savings from delays in filling vacant posts.

The outturn position has improved by £325k since month 9, this can be attributed mainly to the receipt of income in Quarter 4 that was not known in December such as the late Covid Business support funding in Charity Relief and the reimbursement of overpaid magistrates costs in Council Tax, in addition delays in filling vacant posts will have pushed the under spend up further.

Information, Communication & Technology

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(17)	(21)	(22)

ICT has under spent by £22k mainly due to our SRS contribution for 2021-22 coming in under available budget and savings in cyber security where we have brought the service in-house reducing costs to external provider.

Commercial & Corporate Landlord

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	352	754	384	0

Commercial & Corporate Landlord has returned a balanced budget for 2021-22. This is due to:

- **Investment Properties** – £296k over spend – this is broken down into 2 main areas:
 - Newport Leisure Park & Castlegate Business Park – with the legitimate help of the WG Covid-19 fund we were able to maintain our rental figures at pre-pandemic levels – this subsequently results in actual income outperforming budgets by £302k (£177k NLP) and (£125k Castlegate) – this surplus has been transferred to the investment properties reserve.
 - Control Account Adjustment - £296k over spend – there was a requirement during the year to adjust for a control account imbalance which was raised during the 2020/21 financial accounts external audit. This issue has now been rectified and the over spend has been covered by other under spends within the department.
- **Landlord Services** - £104k under spend – mainly due to staff vacancies of £120k caused by delays in filling vacant posts offset by a small increase in premises and supplies & services costs (£5k) and a net loss on office rental due to vacant premises (£10k).
- **County Farms** - £32k over spend – due to additional consultant costs associated with dilapidation surveys and a reduction in rental income due to a reduction in tenants.
- **Cemeteries** - £31k under spend – due to improved income through the latter part of the year.
- **Industrial Units** - £15k under spend – reported a break-even position at month 9 but income has improved in the last quarter due to vacant units being filled.
- **Shared Accommodation** - £24k over spend – this is due to a bad debt adjustment that was not known at Month 9 and a reduction in rental due to vacant properties.
- **Solar Farm & Sustainability** - £108k under spend – we have seen savings on premises and supplies & services costs but the main reason is an improvement in income as the energy crisis has meant export tariffs have increased, this has meant that income from our Solar Farm and PV installations has exceeded budgeted targets.
- **Markets** - £50k over spend. Mainly due to premises and waste disposal cost increases.
- **Property Services** - £140k under spend. This can be split into 3 main areas:
 - **Accommodation** - £92k net over spend – mainly due to increases in building maintenance across our council offices and additional building supervisor costs.
 - **Corporate Building Maintenance** - £135k under spend – Previously reported as break-even this service area is now reporting an under spend, we were able to move school

related spend across to grant funding that was provided by WG late in the year for School Refurbishment and Free School Meals. This was not known until Quarter 4 and is the reason for the large improvement in outturn position.

- **Property & Office Services** - £98k under spend. Reporting an over spend at month 9 the position has now improved due to project income coming in higher than expected for the year, staff savings improving due to vacant posts, under spends in photocopying and postage and an improved under spend in telephony as call costs were not as high as originally projected.

The outturn position for the division has improved by £381k from month 9, and can be attributed to :-

- The receipt of Covid-19 funding in Estates in quarter 4.
- Increased income in Property Services, Solar Farm, Cemeteries and Industrial units that was not known at Month 9.
- The late award of grant that allowed us to move school maintenance costs creating an under spend in Corporate Building Maintenance.

The delay in filling vacant posts increasing staff under spends.

CORPORATE COSTS & LEVIES DIRECTORATE	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	21	(132)	(692)	(1,334)

Precepts & Levies

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	13	13	13	13

The National parks levy was notified after budget was produced – an increase in levy of circa 10% was seen based on increased staff and project work required

Coroners Services

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	44

During the year, the coroners' service has been engaged in an investigation into care homes, which involved unbudgeted costs. This, along with increased post mortem costs has resulted in additional cost being recharged to partners.

Corporate Management

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(24)	(68)	(94)	(412)

Primarily due to:

- The release of a bad debt provision in relation to the SRS financial administration whereby it was originally estimated that there may be a bad debt burden upon transfer of the administration to TCBC, but which has not materialised (£86k)
- Business rate refunds in relation to the revaluation of Council owned properties (£232k)
- A larger than expected distribution from the Greater Gwent Crematorium arrangement as some reserves have been used to top up the overall level of surplus achieved (£83k)

Non-Distributed Costs

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	32	62	62	5

Additional pension strain costs of circa £50k were notified after the budget was set. These costs reflect the additional payment the Council need to make to the pension fund when an employee is permitted to leave employment prior to their normal pensionable age and wishes to immediately draw on their pension.

This has been offset by lower than budgeted contributions in respect of legacy pension contributions relating the former Monmouth Borough Council & Gwent County Council which are administrated outside of the main Local Government pension scheme.

Strategic Initiatives

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	837	(676)	(1,005)

Primarily due to the notification of an unbudgeted grant of £1.019m from Welsh Government in relation to the reduction in Council tax collection rates during the period.

Insurance

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(140)	3	20

Primarily due to savings in premium costs for the year of £35k, savings in professional fees of £34k, and a saving in settlement expenditure. This has been offset by an uninsured settlement of circa £200k in respect of a repairing obligation to the former Usk grammar school foundation trust for a former property owned by the trust and occupied by MCC.

APPROPRIATIONS DIRECTORATE

	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(93)	(400)	(447)

The Appropriations budget surplus has increased by £47k from that forecast at month 9 to end in a surplus position of £447k. Whilst this represents a pleasing outcome, towards the end of the year the uncertainty in the UK and global economies grew considerably, with interest rate rises starting to impact on our position as a net borrower from the market. This uncertainty will continue into the 2022/23 financial year and is expected to have a significant impact on the budget position.

Fixed Asset Disposal Costs

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	136	171	179

An over spend due to additional security costs related to the sale of the Hilston Park Outdoor Education Site.

Interest & Investment Income

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	11	(69)	(169)

Additional investments were made in year into pooled funds whose performance has been better than expected leading up to the end of the financial year. Commitment to longer term borrowing and low spending levels have also increased general investment balances which have also seen an increased rate of return given base rate rises in recent months.

Interest Payable & Similar Charges				
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(230)	(403)	(337)
The short-term borrowing market has been at near historic lows over the last twelve months reducing borrowing costs. Further savings have been made by well-timed forward starting loans before rises in interest rates.				
Charges Required Under Regulation				
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(10)	(11)	(13)
Slight under spend due to vehicles which were written off and where outstanding finance was therefore cleared ahead of schedule.				
Other Investment Income				
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	(2)	(15)
A small number of unbudgeted Wayleaves + Easements income has been received since month 9.				
Borrowing Cost Recoupment				
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	(85)	(91)
Under spend due to additional borrowing recoupment from vehicles financed at previous year end and that was therefore unbudgeted. An insurance settlement also allowed the clearance of finance earlier than planned on two vehicles.				
FINANCING DIRECTORATE				
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(130)	(564)	(550)	(1,858)
Council Tax Benefit Support				
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	370	186	100	67
This budget continues to be under pressure, as a direct result of Covid-19. However, over the course of the year some easing of demand was seen.				
Council Tax				
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(500)	(750)	(650)	(554)
The latest council tax data shows a slight reduction in anticipated income for the year. We continue to see new properties being added to the tax base however we have now also started to see an increase in the number of exemptions and discounts being requested and awarded.				
General Government Grants				
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 6	Month 9	Outturn

Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	(1,370)
The Authority received a late distribution from the Welsh Government which was un-hypothecated.				

2. SCHOOLS

2.1. A Board of Governors who are responsible for managing the school's finances directly governs each of the Authority's Schools. However, the Authority also holds a key responsibility for monitoring the overall financial performance of schools. Below is a table showing the outturn forecast Schools' balances position based on month 9 projections for each Educational Cluster.

2021/22 School Balances Summary outturn position	(A) Opening Reserves (Surplus) / Deficit	(B) Draw / (Contribution) School Balances forecast @ Month 2	(C) Draw / (Contribution) School Balances forecast @ Month 6	(D) Draw / (Contribution) School Balances forecast @ Month 9	(E) Draw / (Contribution) School Balances Final	(A+E) Reserve Balances at 2021/22 Outturn
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Cluster						
Abergavenny	(1,158)	309	426	(197)	(987)	(2,145)
Caldicot	(1,091)	539	372	(197)	(1,075)	(2,166)
Chepstow	(349)	516	417	42	(346)	(695)
Monmouth	(794)	457	354	(318)	(1,074)	(1,869)
Special	(26)	(39)	(11)	(16)	(53)	(79)
Total	(3,418)	1,782	1,558	(687)	(3,536)	(6,954)

2.2. Collective School Balances at the beginning of the financial year amounted to a £3,418,120 surplus. The majority of the surplus balance brought forward was due to two grants being awarded to schools at the 2020-21 year end; the Schools Revenue Maintenance Grant and Recruit, Recover and Raise Standards.

2.3. At month 9, the forecast was a contribution to reserves of £686,954, resulting in a forecast surplus balance of £4,105,074. However, several grants were awarded to schools at year end, which has resulted in a further increase in school balances and a surplus balance of £6,954,025. The additional grants received from Welsh Government are detailed below:

- £1,089,288 to cover revenue maintenance
- £117,306 Winter of Wellbeing
- £184,076 ALN new system funding
- £668,971 Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards funding
- £132,260 Attendance Support & Community Schools
- £742,181 Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant
- £57,380 Local Authority Education grant
- **£2,991,462 Total**

All schools are expected to provide investment plans setting out how they intend to spend these grants.

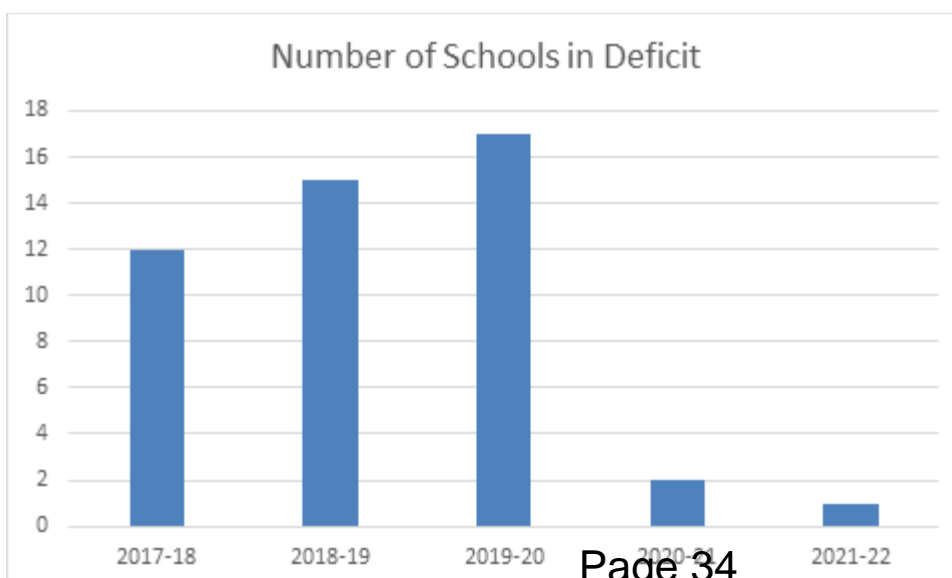
2.4. The movement of individual schools forecast to be in deficit since the start of the financial year is shown below:

Schools in deficit				
Start of Year	Month 2 (Forecast)	Month 6 (Forecast)	Month 9 (Forecast)	End of year
2	4	3	2	1
Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive
Llandogo Primary	Llandogo Primary	Llandogo Primary	Llandogo Primary	
	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni		
	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin			

- 2.5. All schools in a deficit budget have or are in the process of agreeing recovery plans. These recovery plans will be confirmed with both the Local Education Authority and each School's Governing Body. Once finalised the schools with significant deficits will be monitored by the Cabinet member for Children and Young People and Resources on a termly basis.
- 2.6. There is not a consistent picture of schools' balances. There has been a fluctuating trend with some schools showing a continuing reduction in schools balances, which is of concern, and others a more stable trend. However, as previously advised, grants awarded to schools at 2020/21 and 2021/22 year ends have resulted in a large increase in overall school balances. Schools have developed grant plans in line with the terms and conditions of these grants and the balances are expected to reduce during 2022-23.

Financial Year-end	Net level of School Balances
2014-15	(1,140)
2015-16	(1,156)
2016-17	(269)
2017-18	(175)
2018-19	232
2019-20	435
2020-21	(3,418)
2021-22	(6,954)

- 2.7. The increase in school balances has resulted in a reduction in the number of schools in deficit, as illustrated in the following table:-



3 CAPITAL OUTTURN

3.1 The Capital position at 2021-22 Outturn is as follows:

	Slippage B/F	Original Budget	Budget Revisions	Approved Slippage	Revised Budget 2021/22	Actual Outturn	Variance at Outturn
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Expenditure							
Capitalisation Directive	0	2,208	0	0	2,208	1,567	(640)
Development Schemes Over £250k	28,216	185	4,713	(29,775)	3,339	3,291	(48)
Development Schemes Under £250k	350	360	372	(701)	381	368	(13)
Schools & Education	14,760	14,383	50	(27,865)	1,328	1,328	0
Infrastructure	1,434	3,428	290	(1,062)	4,090	4,074	(16)
ICT Schemes	296	361	791	(552)	896	645	(250)
Property Maintenance	1,830	2,190	1,845	(2,829)	3,036	3,036	0
Renovation Grants	602	900	140	(912)	730	730	0
Section 106	686	0	1,176	(1,147)	715	715	0
Specific Grant Funded	969	1,000	9,849	(3,715)	8,103	7,647	(456)
Vehicle Leasing	0	1,500	24	0	1,524	1,809	285
Total Expenditure	49,143	26,514	19,250	(68,558)	26,349	25,210	(1,139)
Financing							
Supported Borrowing	0	(2,431)	0	0	(2,431)	(2,431)	0
General Capital Grant	0	(2,438)	0	0	(2,438)	(2,438)	0
Grants and Contributions	(19,096)	(13,160)	(12,963)	31,846	(13,373)	(12,688)	685
S106 Contributions	(711)	0	(1,652)	1,854	(509)	(509)	0
Unsupported Borrowing	(27,031)	(4,094)	(2,000)	31,348	(1,777)	(3,463)	(1,686)
Reserve & Revenue Funding	(241)	0	(185)	192	(234)	(234)	0
Capital Receipts	(2,064)	(2,891)	(2,450)	3,318	(4,087)	(3,447)	640
Leasing	0	(1,500)	0	0	(1,500)	0	1,500
Total Financing	(49,143)	(26,514)	(19,250)	68,558	(26,349)	(25,210)	1,139

3.2 The capital expenditure at outturn shows a surplus outturn position of £1.139m.

3.3 It is important to note that a significant part of the surplus (£685k) represents grant funded schemes where the full grant allocation initially offered by funding partners was greater than the actual scheme costs required to deliver the schemes. This funding was not drawn down from the funding body during the year and does not represent surplus financing that can be carried forward to be used by the Authority.

3.4 An additional surplus of £640k relates to under-utilisation of the capitalisation direction and primarily where redundancy costs incurred within the revenue budget (and which were eligible to be capitalised) were significantly lower than budgeted. This subsequently releases £640k of capital receipts back to reserve for future capital investment.

3.5 This is offset by the use of unsupported borrowing to finance the purchase of the authority's additional vehicle fleet requirements instead of utilising the leasing budget as originally anticipated (£1,785k). It is important to note that borrowing is only utilised if it attracts a beneficial whole life cost to the Authority when compared to leasing, and that the service department will meet the cost in full from their existing revenue budget for vehicle fleet costs.

3.6 Capital Slippage at outturn is £68.558m (£54.353m at Month 9) as major schemes have been impacted by delays. A full breakdown of the slippage and the reasons sitting behind the delays is outlined in **Appendix 5**.

3.7 Useable Capital Receipts Available

3.8 In the table below, the effect of the changes to the forecast capital receipts on the useable capital receipts balances available to meet future capital commitments are illustrated.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Balance as at 1st April	9,581	9,030	11,904	11,818	10,873
Capital receipts used for financing	(1,880)	(4,264)	(1,294)	(1,194)	(1,094)
Capital receipts used to support capitalisation direction	(1,567)	(2,650)	(507)	(507)	(507)
Capital receipts Received or Forecast	2,896	9,788	1,715	756	104
Forecast Balance as at 31st March	9,030	11,904	11,818	10,873	9,376

REF.	Mandated Savings 2021-22	2021/22 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 6	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable	% Achieved
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
	Children & Young People	(1,510)	(1,313)	(1,266)	(1,275)	(1,275)	(235)	0	83.9%
	Social Care & Health	(874)	(874)	(874)	(874)	(874)	0	0	100.0%
	Enterprise	(821)	(821)	(821)	(821)	(821)	0	0	99.9%
	MonLife	(100)	(80)	(80)	(80)	(80)	0	(20)	80.0%
	Resources	(165)	(165)	(117)	(123)	(123)	(42)	0	70.9%
	Chief Executives Units	(32)	(20)	(20)	(20)	(20)	(12)	0	62.5%
	Corporate Costs & Levies	(1,508)	(1,508)	(1,508)	(1,508)	(1,508)	0	0	100.0%
	Appropriations	275	275	275	275	275	0	0	100.0%
	Totals Disinvestments by Directorate	(4,734)	(4,506)	(4,411)	(4,426)	(4,426)	(289)	(20)	93.2%

		2021/22 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 6	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable	ASSESSMENT of Progress
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Page 37	Children & Young People								
	Mounton House closure impact on ISB	(1,258)	(1,258)	(1,258)	(1,258)	(1,258)	0	0	Achieved
	Additional recoupment income - mainstream	(252)	(55)	(8)	(17)	(17)	(235)	0	Did not achieve full saving as several pupils have moved into Monmouthshire, meaning we can no longer recoup from other LA's
	Total Children & Young People	(1,510)	(1,313)	(1,266)	(1,275)	(1,275)	(235)	0	

	Social Care & Health								
SCH 1	Fees & Charges 2021/22	(79)	(79)	(79)	(79)	(79)	0	0	Achieved
SCH 2	Increase in Social Care Workforce Development (SCWD) grant	(247)	(247)	(247)	(247)	(247)	0	0	Achieved
SCH 3	Removal of TWUD base budget	(548)	(548)	(548)	(548)	(548)	0	0	Achieved
	Total Social Care & Health	(874)	(874)	(874)	(874)	(874)	0	0	

	Enterprise								
ENT1	PLANHOUS - Staff Saving - 20-21 Staff Restructure Savings (£11,950) + £50k LDP senior officer saving, frozen until 23/24.	(62)	(62)	(62)	(62)	(62)	0	0	Achieved
ENT2	NEIGHBOURHOOD - Waste - Service Savings	(685)	(685)	(685)	(685)	(685)	0	0	Achieved
ENT3	NEIGHBOURHOOD - Grounds Maintenance - Remove Sweeper & Staff savings	(65)	(65)	(65)	(65)	(65)	0	0	Achieved
ENT4	Increase in discretionary Fees & Charges	(9)	(9)	(9)	(9)	(9)	0	0	Achieved
	Total Enterprise	(821)	(821)	(821)	(821)	(821)	0	0	

	MonLife								
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		2021/22 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 6	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable	ASSESSMENT of Progress
	Children & Young People	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
MonLife1	MONLIFE - Removal of Events Co-ordinator Post	(25)	(25)	(25)	(25)	(25)	0	0	Achieved post has not been filled.
MonLife2	MONLIFE - Introduce Car Parking Charges at Caldicot Castle	(20)	0	0	0	0	0	(20)	Will not be achieved this financial year as charges are not being introduced.
MonLife3	Increase in discretionary Fees & Charges	(55)	(55)	(55)	(55)	(55)	0	0	Increase has been implemented, any shortfall will be claimed from WG loss of income claims.
	Total MonLife	(100)	(80)	(80)	(80)	(80)	0	(20)	
	Chief Executive's Unit								
CEO1	GOVDEMSUP - Members Supplies & Services	(15)	(15)	(15)	(15)	(15)	0	0	Achieved
CEO2	GOVDEMSUP - Staff Vacancy Saving	(17)	(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)	(12)	0	Increased staff hours have partly offset saving
	Total Chief Executive's Unit	(32)	(20)	(20)	(20)	(20)	(12)	0	
	Resources								
RES1	CORPLORD - Property Accommodation Savings.	(50)	(50)	(2)	(8)	(8)	(42)	0	Will not be achieved in full in 21-22, maintenance costs have increased across our office sites this year.
RES2	FUTUREMON - Mileage Savings	(71)	(71)	(71)	(71)	(71)	0	0	Achieved
RES3	FUTUREMON - Staff Secondment Savings	(44)	(44)	(44)	(44)	(44)	0	0	Achieved
	Total Resources	(165)	(165)	(117)	(123)	(123)	(42)	0	
	Corporate Costs & Levies								
COL1	Capitalisation directive	(1,508)	(1,508)	(1,508)	(1,508)	(1,508)	0	0	Achieved
	Total Corporate Costs & Levies	(1,508)	(1,508)	(1,508)	(1,508)	(1,508)	0	0	
	Appropriations								
APP1	Net Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) increase based on additional activity	275	275	275	275	275	0	0	Included in overall MRP charge for year
	Total Appropriations	275	275	275	275	275	0	0	

Appendix 3 - Capitalisation directive 2021/22

Directorate	Expenditure	Justification to capitalise	Amount £000s
ENT	PTU Software - Route/pupil optimisation.	Driving a digital approach	56
RES	Implementing digital design & innovation	Driving a digital approach	440
	Sub-Total Driving a digital approach		496
All	Capitalisation of redundancy costs - non-schools	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	37
CYP	Capitalisation of redundancy costs -schools	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	257
ENT	Waste/Transport - Move to electric fleet	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	122
RES	Innovation Team - Service Transformation/Systems Thinking	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	102
SCH	Improvement & performance management team	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	139
	Sub-Total Funding the cost of service reconfiguration		657
SCH	Joint Local authority working (GWICES, Sc. 33, Frailty, regional safeguarding board, Gwent foster fee harmonisation and care home pooling	Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies	101
ENT	Passenger Transport - Sharing Senior Management with Newport CC	Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies	39
RES	Procurement SLA with Cardiff	Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies	152
SCH	Deprivation of liberty safeguards	Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies	84
	Sub-Total Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies		376
RES	Audit - Sharing Audit manager with Newport CC	Sharing back-office and administrative services	38
	Sub-Total Sharing back-office and administrative services		38
	Total		1,567

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Appendix 4 - Movement in individual school balances - (Surplus)/Deficit

School	Balance 31st March 2020	Movement	Balance 31st March 2021	Movement	Balance 31st March 2022
Caldicot School	179,693	(409,257)	(229,564)	(578,377)	(807,941)
Chepstow School	63,570	23,231	86,801	38,133	124,934
King Henry VIII Comprehensive	225,700	(423,196)	(197,496)	(558,074)	(755,570)
Monmouth Comprehensive	462,530	(676,722)	(214,192)	(600,190)	(814,382)
Mounton House Special School	(172,060)	172,060	0	0	
Cross Ash Primary School	(64,157)	(18,313)	(82,470)	2,715	(79,755)
Durand Primary School	(12,691)	(65,193)	(77,884)	(27,095)	(104,979)
Gilwern Primary School	(64,549)	(102,302)	(166,851)	(64,103)	(230,954)
Goytre Fawr Primary School	(34,893)	(56,646)	(91,539)	(26,195)	(117,734)
Llandogo Primary School	176,535	(89,705)	86,830	(87,044)	(214)
Llantwit Major Pertholey CiW Primary School (VC)	21,016	(88,231)	(67,215)	(42,483)	(109,698)
Llanfihangel Crucorney Primary School	(49,684)	(54,986)	(104,670)	(32,152)	(136,822)
Magoed CiW Primary School (VA)	18,785	(135,987)	(117,202)	(79,614)	(196,816)
Overton Primary School	33,928	(75,032)	(41,104)	(121,366)	(162,470)
Raglan CiW Primary School (VC)	33,112	(141,989)	(108,877)	(51,715)	(160,592)
Rogiet Primary School	4,404	(82,499)	(78,095)	(11,128)	(89,223)
Shirenewton Primary School	(128,890)	(47,356)	(176,246)	(63,046)	(239,292)
St Mary's RC Primary School (VA)	46,518	(67,378)	(20,860)	(84,072)	(104,932)
The Dell Primary School	(3,032)	(45,378)	(48,410)	(98,429)	(146,839)
Thornwell Primary School	47,150	(112,037)	(64,887)	(45,735)	(110,622)
Trellech Primary School	(50,948)	(64,743)	(115,691)	(38,248)	(153,939)
Undy Primary School	145,925	(152,295)	(6,370)	(204,273)	(210,643)
Usk CiW Primary School (VC)	(45,942)	(97,113)	(143,055)	(127,785)	(270,840)
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	4,408	(38,775)	(34,367)	(37,648)	(72,015)
Archbishop Rowan Williams CiW Primary School (VA)	(83,716)	(122,680)	(206,396)	35,075	(171,321)
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin	45,883	(61,521)	(15,638)	(51,145)	(66,783)
Deri View Primary School	(73,956)	(74,153)	(148,109)	(41,681)	(189,790)
Cantref Primary School	(105,193)	(94,604)	(199,797)	(54,295)	(254,092)

School	Balance 31st March 2020	Movement	Balance 31st March 2021	Movement	Balance 31st March 2022
Osbaston CiW Primary School (VC)	11,250	(51,859)	(40,609)	(52,538)	(93,147)
Dewstow Primary School	(136,455)	(101,356)	(237,811)	(120,805)	(358,616)
Our Lady & St Michael's (OLSM) RC Primary School (VA)	(15,859)	(38,534)	(54,393)	(4,256)	(58,649)
Pembroke Primary School	(1,205)	(124,302)	(125,507)	(93,161)	(218,668)
Kymin View Primary School	(37,955)	(97,350)	(135,305)	1,591	(133,714)
Llanfoist Fawr Primary School	(24,871)	(68,562)	(93,433)	(125,986)	(219,419)
Castle Park Primary School	(2,153)	(119,700)	(121,853)	(37,445)	(159,298)
Pupil Referral Unit	22,931	(48,943)	(26,012)	(53,454)	(79,466)
Total	435,129	(3,853,406)	(3,418,277)	(3,536,026)	(6,954,303)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT SCHEME CATEGORY	TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED SLIPPAGE	Reason Project has been delayed against original budgeted profile
Asset Investment Fund	Development Schemes Over £250k	18,067,403	18,082,137	Slippage Requested - No major investment purchases were undertaken in 21-22 mainly due to the uncertainty around covid - request to slip funding into 22-23.
Crick Road Care Home	Development Schemes Over £250k	5,964,030	5,465,308	Slippage required to ensure funding is aligned to the current building programme timeline
RE:FIT Programme	Development Schemes Over £250k	2,031,329	1,205,430	Slippage Requested - RE:Fit programme has been delayed due to access issues etc... SALIX have been informed of the delays and have agreed to extend drawdown of funding into 22-23.
Property Acquisition for Children and Young People with Complex Needs	Development Schemes Over £250k	2,000,000	1,999,540	Slippage required as property acquisition is a time sensitive process and suitable accommodation is yet to be secured from the market.
Abergavenny Leisure Centre - upgrade to Fitness equipment & ...	Development Schemes Over £250k	1,700,000	102,109	Slippage required due to the delayed defects works at Abergavenny Leisure centre these works have been started and will be finished within the first qtr of 22-23.
Capital Region City Deal	Development Schemes Over £250k	1,014,326	1,014,326	Slippage requested due to delay in the CCR Programme
Usk County Hall J Block Major Refurb	Development Schemes Over £250k	773,617	759,178	Slippage Requested - Work has been put on hold due to SUDS consent and Covid lockdown. Budget will need to be slipped to continue the EV installation project (currently with SSE for design and technical solutions) and the associated car park expansion project.
Chepstow Leisure Centre – upgrade to Fitness equipment and Centre alterations.	Development Schemes Over £250k	500,000	497,381	Slippage required approved scheme runs over two financial years, slippage required to complete the project, project expected to be completed by the end of June 2022
Abergavenny Borough Theatre Works	Development Schemes Over £250k	424,489	424,418	Slippage Requested - Scheme was programmed to span two financial years and is due to be completed by end of August. Funding will need to be slipped to allow completion.
Car Park Improvements/Refurb	Development Schemes Over £250k	95,050	19,995	Slippage Requested - Scheme has not been completed due to Contractor availability and drainage works in Market Street, scheme will be completed in 22-23 so remaining budget needs to be slipped.
Abergavenny Community Hub Development	Development Schemes Over £250k	72,583	72,583	Slippage Requested - Market Hall refurbishment is nearly complete, some elements of the scheme could not be completed in 21-22 due to access issues and contractor availability (clock refurb and stall canopy works) so funding needs to be moved into 22-23 to allow this work to be completed.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT SCHEME CATEGORY	TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED SLIPPAGE	Reason Project has been delayed against original budgeted profile
Trellech Primary Nursery Childcare Scheme A9480	Development Schemes Over £250k	67,002	67,002	Site found and plans are with planning for consideration, once agreed the works will start.
Caerwent House, Major Repairs	Development Schemes Over £250k	50,800	50,800	Slippage Requested - Project delayed due to potential appeal. Funding needed for 22-23.
Schools Improvement Grant 1819	Development Schemes Over £250k	33,513	15,108	Programme of spend agreed, this will be spent in 2022-23
Access For All	Development Schemes Under £250k - Other Recommend	334,941	111,016	Slippage Requested - schemes delayed due to access issues and contractor availability due to Covid, funding will be required in 22-23 to enable us to complete delayed projects.
Car Park Granville St & Wyebridge St	Development Schemes Under £250k - Other Recommend	300,000	238,572	Slippage Requested - Works were delayed due to planning issues and the need to discharge conditions, these have now been resolved and works will start in June.
Shire Hall/Monmouth Museum Move	Development Schemes Under £250k - Other Recommend	250,000	240,395	Expenditure has been delayed pending further detailed security, heritage and environmental assessments, detailed discussions with the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the heritage conservation team over LBC consent and the outcome of a capital grant bid to Welsh Government, which has only recently been approved. The slippage is required to match the capital grant and allow the delivery of the initial phase of works in Shire Hall to be carried out concurrently with the grant aided works in 22/23.
Upgrade School Kitchens	Development Schemes Under £250k - Essential Works	110,792	110,792	Slippage requested - Expenditure passported to WG Free School Meal Grant with requirement that underspend would be slipped into 22-23 to continue essential Kitchen works needed in relation to the upcoming roll-out of free school meals.
Carriageway Resurfacing - Various	Infrastructure	950,778	334,792	Slippage Requested - Schemes were delayed due drainage issues and contractor availability - funding needed in 22-23 to complete schemes.
Reconstruction of Bridges & Retaining Walls	Infrastructure	768,122	42,600	Slippage Requested - Some costs were able to be moved against the flooding grant. Budget needed in 22-23 to address further land slip issues within the county.
Recycling Vehicles and Boxes	Infrastructure	261,022	210,842	Slippage Required - Budget funded by service borrowing, budget needs to be slipped forward to support the ongoing investment in equipment as part of service changes.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT SCHEME CATEGORY	TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED SLIPPAGE	Reason Project has been delayed against original budgeted profile
Street Lighting Defective Column Programme	Infrastructure	171,408	117,792	Slippage Requested - Majority of repairs in 21-22 were revenue in nature so were funded out of the revenue budget, in addition there were no major traffic light replacement projects in 21-22. Unspent budget is required in 22-23 to fund an illuminated sign and bollard replacement scheme which falls outside of the normal repair programme.
Road Safety & Trafficman Programme	Infrastructure	134,603	49,237	Slippage Requested - Schemes delayed due to supply chain issues - funding needed in 22-23 to continue essential Health & Safety Works.
Penyrhiw Sewage Treatment Works	Infrastructure	100,000	100,000	Slippage Requested - Has been delayed due to ongoing discussions with Welsh Water.
Shirenewton Sewage Treatment	Infrastructure	99,385	99,385	Slippage Requested - Has been delayed due to design issues and discussions with NRW - now resolved and at point to go to tender so project should be completed in 22-23.
Signage Upgrades And Disabled Facilities	Infrastructure	76,182	76,182	Slippage Requested - Schemes delayed due to supply chain issues - funding needed in 22-23 to continue essential works.
Structural Repairs - PROW	Infrastructure	62,906	1,767	Slippage Requested - small amount of ongoing works to various bridges required in 22-23.
Mounton Road Footpath	Infrastructure	17,837	17,837	Slippage Requested - Works have been on hold due to the need for consultation and a traffic order. Works are now expected to start in June so budget is needed to complete the works.
Flood Alleviation Schemes	Infrastructure	11,427	11,427	Slippage Requested - Windfall grant was provided in 21-22 which meant MCC match was not required - request to slip to allow budget to be used in 22-23 to help with match funding of further flood schemes.
King Henry VIII - Future Schools Tranche B	Education Strategic Review	28,425,382	27,228,161	Full business case has been signed off by WG. Slippage is required to align budget with the planned build programme.
21st Century Schools Team	Education Strategic Review	572,302	491,281	Full business case has been signed off by WG. Slippage is required to align budget with the planned build programme.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT SCHEME CATEGORY	TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED SLIPPAGE	Reason Project has been delayed against original budgeted profile
ESR: Access For All	Education Strategic Review	103,142	103,142	Slippage Requested - 2 parts 1) Expenditure passported to WG School Refurbishment Grant with the requirement that underspend (£42,463) would be slipped into 22-23 to continue School Refurbishment programme. 2) Underspend on Access works due to site access issues, funding needed in 22-23 to continue school DDA works.
Monmouth Leisure Centre/Pool Redesign	Education Strategic Review	42,089	42,089	Slippage required - funding is required to rectify issues around disabled parking at the sight, however the design works have been delayed the slippage is required to fund these works in 22-23.
WG -Broadband Fund for the Llanthony Community Scheme	IT Schemes - Infrastructure/Hardware	356,000	305,181	Slippage Requested - Rollout has been delayed due to complexity of project with provider encountering issues with terrain, WG have been informed of delays and have agreed to extend the funding to October 22. Request that unspent budget is slipped into 22-23 to continue programme.
SRS administered network and infrastructure replacement	IT Schemes - Infrastructure/Hardware	170,000	170,000	Slippage Requested - Infrastructure replacement of CAE switches and Access points has been delayed into 22-23 due to Covid and supply chain issues, works have been ordered and scheduled to be completed by Nov 22 so budget needs to be slipped to provide funding.
Windows 10 Laptops	IT Schemes - Infrastructure/Hardware	112,631	63,881	Slippage Requested - Laptop purchases have been delayed by supply chain issues, budget needs to be carried forward into 22-23 to form part of the ongoing laptop replacement programme that formed part of 22-23 capital MTFP.
Provision of online facilities Revenue's section	IT Schemes - Infrastructure/Hardware	13,000	13,000	Slippage Requested - This is linked to the work that the Shared Service are undertaking in improving the self service options available to customers. Work is ongoing in this area and as yet we have not needed to fund any system developments, although this is expected to change in the future.
School Refurbishment Grant	Maintenance Schemes - General	2,585,852	833,581	This is required to support the refurbishment of kitchens for FSM rollout and for other school maintenance projects.
County Farms Maintenance & Reinvestment	Maintenance Schemes - General	431,101	189,408	Slippage Requested - Works delayed by supply chain and contractor issues. There are a number of structural and compliance schemes that need to be completed in 22-23 so funding is required to pay for these.
Caldicot School Adaptions 2021-23	Maintenance Schemes - General	55,000	55,000	Following review, work will be completed over the summer holiday period.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT SCHEME CATEGORY	TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED SLIPPAGE	Reason Project has been delayed against original budgeted profile
Disabled Facilities Grants (Private)	Renovation Grants	1,537,738	912,037	Slippage requested - Supply chain issues early on in the year hampered spending, backlog remains so funding needs to slip forward to assist in clearing these works. Question mark over the level of latent demand still to come through as a result of covid (this could influence the actual amount of slippage required).
S106 Abergavenny Velo Park	Section 106	400,000	400,000	Slippage Required - Planning approval granted but awaiting Welsh Govt decision on call-in request.
S106 – Lion Street Works	Section 106	250,000	194,264	Slippage Requested - Scheme has been delayed as WG decide on layout and design, funding will need to be slipped to contribute to construction once scheme has been finalised.
S106 Rockfield Community Nature Spaces – Major Maintenance	Section 106	120,764	40,027	Slippage Required - Delay due to availability of stock i.e. trees & signage. The trees cannot be ordered until Autumn and we need to commission the signage/interpretation package.
S106 Chippenham Mead Play Area	Section 106	118,993	25,758	Slippage Required - Awaiting plans and footpath diversion order before works can proceed
S106 Clydach Ironworks Enhancement Scheme	Section 106	116,620	37,648	The scheme has partly been delayed due to the lateness of a decision on the LEI grant from National Grid, which is still anticipated to be approved. To avoid duplication of set up costs some works to be funded from the capital allocation have been delayed
S106 - Kingswood Gate - Williams Field Lane - Active Travel Path	Section 106	102,301	102,301	Underspend - we maximised the grant funding so no need to call on S106 Funding. Further discussions needed on how this will be spent in 22/23. Will need to be slipped.
S106 – ALN Overmonnow Special Needs Resource Base	Section 106	87,263	15,987	Work started and nearing completion this is required to complete the works
S106 Goytre Playing Field Recreational & Play Facilities upgrade	Section 106	82,572	82,572	Slippage Required - Progress on this scheme was halted due to forthcoming elections will continue in 22-23
S106 - Star Road/School Lane Zebra Crossing and footpath Improvements	Section 106	40,419	40,419	Slippage Requested - Consultation has been completed , construction to start in 22-23.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT SCHEME CATEGORY	TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED SLIPPAGE	Reason Project has been delayed against original budgeted profile
S106 - Off Road Cycling Feasibility Study	Section 106	28,000	18,246	Slippage Required - Funding being held to cover legal costs of land acquisition (now with Legal Services) and relocation of topsoil from Plot 7 of Westgate site
S106 Little Mill Trail (Little Mill)	Section 106	27,636	27,636	Slippage Required - This is partial funding towards a much larger scheme, which depends on Active Travel funding. The scheme can only be commissioned (and the money spent) when the current feasibility study has been completed
S106 Children's Voices in Play Project (Forensic Science Lab)	Section 106	25,000	25,000	Slippage Required - Balance held back until capital grant approval received for the Chepstow Community Nature Spaces project
S106 - Monmouth Allotments (Wonastow Road)	Section 106	25,000	16,160	WG grant income covered some of the original anticipated cost - need to go back to Cabinet to re-allocate this funding to another project
S106 – Abergavenny Skate Park	Section 106	25,000	25,000	Slippage Required - Awaiting match funding from other sources to enable project to proceed
S106 Manelly Hill Welfare Car Park (Caerfeldon)	Section 106	22,441	22,441	Slippage Required - Funding transferred from original scheme to play area refurbishment, that work is part of a wider programme of play area improvements scheduled for 2022-23
S106 - Sudbrook Play Park Equipment (The Old Shipyard Sudbrook)	Section 106	20,580	3,080	Slippage required to purchase last bit of new equipment for play park
S106 - Capel Ed Chapel Internal Alterations (School Lane Goytre)	Section 106	20,000	10,000	Slippage Required - Scheme delayed by Covid and has had to be re-designed
S106 Llantilio Pertholey Primary School Pedestrian Access	Section 106	20,000	20,000	Active S106 pedestrian school currently in progress, late addition to S106 schemes in early 2022 and works inevitably fall into 2022-23 year.
S106 Goytre Play Space – LAP (School Lane Penperlleni)	Section 106	17,895	395	Slippage required for minor invoices
S106 Wyesham Highways Road Safety Improvements	Section 106	13,645	13,645	Slippage Requested - Suitable spend yet to be identified, potential for installation of SIDS.
Warrenslade Woodland Management	Section 106	9,119	8,159	Slippage Required - Scheme has not been completed due to contractor availability earlier in the year. Slippage required to complete the scheme in 22-23
Magor Walking Routes, Access & Promotion	Section 106	4,608	4,608	Slippage Required - Works delayed earlier in the year due to covid/lockdown and staff availability. Slippage required to complete the scheme in 22-23

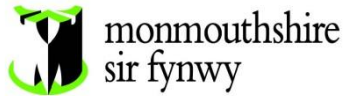
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT SCHEME CATEGORY	TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED SLIPPAGE	Reason Project has been delayed against original budgeted profile
S106 Gilwern OEC (Cae Meldon)	Section 106	4,190	4,190	Slippage Required - on going discussions with outdoor education to spend balance in 22/23
S106 - Chepstow Town Football Club Facility Improvement	Section 106	3,958	583	Slippage Required - Grant income exceeded expenditure - further work to be carried out on site pending FAW decision on 6th June 2022
S106 - Mardy Growing Space Group (Croesonen Farm - Infants School)	Section 106	2,669	2,669	Balance of funding yet to be claimed by recipient organisation.
S106 -Monmouth Leisure Centre 3G MUGA resurfacing (Wonastow Road)	Section 106	2,255	2,255	Car parks work which have been delayed but will still need to be completed
S106 - Goytre Scouts – Kayaking Resources (School Lane Goytre)	Section 106	2,066	2,066	Balance of funding yet to be claimed by recipient organisation.
S106 - Goytre Primary School Environmental Sustainability (School Lane Goytre)	Section 106	1,885	1,885	Balance of funding yet to be claimed by recipient organisation.
WG - Comm C- S106 – MUCH Project (Magor with Undy Community Hall)	Specific Grant Funded	2,245,000	2,179,979	Slippage Required - Grant funding to be received in 22-23 which must be spent by September 2022. Build was always planned to start in 22-23 (currently July/Aug) - issues of funding need to be resolved as cost has increased.
WG – Flood Recovery Grant 2021-22	Specific Grant Funded	1,121,552	183,570	Slippage Requested - Not all flooding grant was committed in 21-22 due to delays on some schemes - grant funding needs to be moved in 22-23 in order for works to be completed.
LTF Severn Tunnel Junction Improvements 2019-20	Specific Grant Funded	980,000	505,358	Slippage Requested -Funding moved into 22-23 by grant awarding body to allow works to progress the scheme which was always intended to be delivered over a multi-year period.
WG – Place Making Grant – Transforming Towns	Specific Grant Funded	715,330	96,202	Slippage Required - MCC match funding not fully required - request to slip and move back to central pot, £75k needs to be set aside for MCC agreed funding for Borough Theatre Refurb project..
ATF - Caldicot Church Road Connections	Specific Grant Funded	468,428	9,900	Slippage Required - MCC match funding not required - request to slip and move back to central pot.
WG – Resilient Roads Fund Grant	Specific Grant Funded	465,847	40,000	Slippage Required - MCC match funding not required - request to slip and move back to central pot.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT SCHEME CATEGORY	TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED SLIPPAGE	Reason Project has been delayed against original budgeted profile
Grant –Match Funding Support Allocation	Specific Grant Funded	362,004	362,004	The original budget of £1m is drawn upon as and when suitable and robust schemes supported by partial grant offer are put forward. It is requested that the remaining surplus is carried forward to support further such schemes in 2022/23.
ATF Castle Meadow Links	Specific Grant Funded	331,090	23,310	Slippage Required - MCC match funding not required - request to slip and move back to central pot.
ATF - Caldicot Newport Road	Specific Grant Funded	208,318	9,450	Slippage Required - MCC match funding not required - request to slip and move back to central pot.
Monmouthshire Infrastructure & Place Regeneration	Specific Grant Funded	142,157	36,271	Slippage Requested - Not all funding was required for the Regeneration team in 21-22 as we were able to move costs to grant funding. Budget needs to be slipped into 22-23 to provide continuing funding for the Town & Strategic Regeneration teams.
UK Gov - Levelling Up Fund	Specific Grant Funded	125,000	73,925	Slippage Requested - funding required in 22-23 to support our next bid submissions. All of funding was not needed for our first round of bids, the remainder will be used to employ consultants to assist with second round.
Chepstow LC Pitch –Outdoor Facilities Improvements (Sport Wales FAW – MCC)	Specific Grant Funded	101,907	101,907	Slippage Required - Grant funding not secured until late in financial year and will be received in 22-23 to complete the project. Funding awarded in Jan 2022 and must be spent by March 2023.
ATF Core Llanfoist Bridge & Meadow Links	Specific Grant Funded	88,407	11,902	Slippage Required - MCC match funding not required - request to slip and move back to central pot.
ATF Bridge Connections	Specific Grant Funded	86,511	7,830	Slippage Required - MCC match funding not required - request to slip and move back to central pot.
AONB – Wye Valley Villages Project 2021-22	Specific Grant Funded	55,000	29,000	Slippage Requested - Leftover grant needs to be slipped into 22-23 in order for scheme to be completed. Reports were not going to be commissioned until 22-23 but funding was received up front from awarding bodies.
WG - ULEV – EV charging strategy and implementation plan	Specific Grant Funded	34,950	10,000	Slippage Required - Funding required for match funding and to complete commission of EV strategy

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT SCHEME CATEGORY	TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED SLIPPAGE	Reason Project has been delayed against original budgeted profile
Castle Dell Play Area Chepstow Upgrade - NLCF - Match	Specific Grant Funded	25,000	25,000	Slippage Required - Grant application due to be submitted shortly to the Lottery fund for 100k. 25k is the match funding - if application is successful work will start in 22-23.
WELTEG Chepstow Transport Study 2020-21	Specific Grant Funded	9,670	9,670	Slippage requested - Cost covered by LTF grant in 21-22 - slippage needed to provide MCC match towards further stages of study.
School Refurbishment Grant	Maintenance Schemes - Property	1,184,970	1,184,970	Refurbishment Grant requirement that any underspend will be slipped into 22-23 to continue School Refurbishment Programme
Free School Meals Infrastructure Grant	Maintenance Schemes - Property	142,882	142,882	Any 2021-22 underspend will be slipped into 22-23 to continue essential kitchen works to help prepare service for universal roll out of free school meals for primaries.
General Property Maintenance	Maintenance Schemes - Property	1,948,049	423,451	Projects have been delayed by a number of factors which can mainly be attributed to Covid - site access has been restricted by Covid so jobs have been put on hold, in addition works have been delayed due to supply chain issues with problems with both material acquisition and contractor availability. It is requested that the full £423k is slipped forward to allow these schemes to be completed.
Total		83,284,732	68,558,288	

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SUBJECT:	HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAMME STRATEGY 2022-26
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	27TH JULY 2022
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

- 1. PURPOSE:**
 - 1.1 To approve and adopt the proposed Housing Support Programme Strategy 2022-26 and associated documents, as required by Welsh Government.

- 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**
 - 2.1 To consider the findings of the Homeless Need Assessment (**See Appendix 1**) and the current related homeless risks and challenges.
 - 2.2 To approve and adopt the draft Housing Support Programme Strategy (**See Appendix 2**) and Action Plan (**See Appendix 3**).

- 3. KEY ISSUES:**
 - 3.1 The Council is required by Welsh Government to produce a Housing Support Programme Strategy by 31st March 2022. The Strategy needs to be a four-year plan to cover the period April 2022 to March 2026, with a mid-point review after two years. (The draft Strategy was completed by 31st March 2022 and forwarded to Welsh Government. Welsh Government agreed that the Strategy could be formally adopted after the local elections).
 - 3.2 The Strategy combines the Local Authority's statutory duty to produce a Homelessness strategy and the strategic planning requirement to establish and maintain a Housing Support Grant programme. This is a key but appropriate change from previous arrangements because of the role of housing support in respect of homeless prevention.
 - 3.3 The document provides a single strategic view of the Council's approach to homelessness prevention, housing support service delivery, statutory homelessness functions (delivered by the Housing Options Team) funded through the revenue settlement and non-statutory preventative services funded through the Housing Support Grant programme.
 - 3.4 The Strategy effectively provides updates and replaces the Council's previous Homeless Strategy published in 2018 and the Homeless Transition Plan approved in 2021.
 - 3.5 To inform the Strategy the Council is required to undertake a local Homeless Needs Assessment. It identifies and sets out the key priorities for the Council and its partners. The findings from the Needs Assessment, informed through stakeholder engagement, illustrates:
 - The profile of homeless need and the requirements to meet this need has changed significantly over the last two years;
 - The need for a range of temporary, supported and permanent homeless accommodation has risen significantly, particularly in relation to young people,

single people and those experiencing mental health and substance misuse issues;

- There is an over reliance on B & B accommodation;
- A high proportion of those needing homeless assistance require medium to high housing support provision;
- Social housing turnover is inadequate, and the private rented sector has contracted, impacting detrimentally on low income and vulnerable households. This accommodation issue is creating challenges in moving people on to suitable permanent accommodation;
- Some homeless expenditure is not sustainable e.g. Bed and Breakfast. This is due to high costs and the inability to fully recover costs with housing benefit leading to a budget deficit situation;
- The importance of collaborative and partnership working to increase both the level of existing provision and new and innovative solutions; and
- The importance of supporting staff and appropriate staffing levels

3.6 The proposed strategic priorities to tackle and address the need identified are:

- **Priority One:** To identify those at risk of homelessness earlier and provide timely interventions to prevent homelessness occurring;
- **Priority Two:** To provide timely and effective support for vulnerable residents particularly for those with high and complex needs;
- **Priority Three:** To Increase access to a range of affordable and suitable housing solutions for homeless households, both temporary and permanent;
- **Priority Four:** To move to a Rapid Re-Housing Approach [as required by Welsh Government];
- **Priority Five:** To maximise and increase the availability and effectiveness of financial, staffing/workforce and collaborative resources available for tackling homelessness.

3.7 The Strategy and Action Plan will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team; People Scrutiny Committee; the Strategic Housing Partnership and the Children and Communities Grant & Housing Support Grant Executive Board.

3.8 In the run up to the local elections, the Council received explicit permission from Welsh Government for the Strategy to be approved and adopted retrospectively. Therefore, the pre-approved document was forwarded to Welsh Government by 31st March 2022 in order to meet the required timescales and a request is now being made for Cabinet to formally approve the Strategy, post-election.

4. **EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

4.1 There are no negative implications with this proposal. **See Appendix 4.**

5. **OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

5.1 The following options are available:

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
Option 1: The recommended option is to agree the proposed Homeless Support Programme Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sets out the Council's direction and priorities for meeting it's homeless responsibilities and meeting homeless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no risks associated with the actual development of the proposed Strategy itself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be resource implications associated with meeting the priorities of the Strategy and

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
	<p>need in Monmouthshire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It enables the Council to create a strategic statement of intent. • It establishes a co-ordinated whole Authority approach • It raises awareness, understanding and importance of homeless need in Monmouthshire • It supports Welsh Government vision and policy to transition homeless services in Wales. • The Strategy supports and contributes to the Council's priorities of delivering additional affordable housing, providing additional homeless accommodation, and town centre regeneration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are, however, risks associated with the current homeless situation in Monmouthshire that the Council is seeking to address. For example, reducing and eliminating the unsustainable use of B & B accommodation. 	<p>delivering individual actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk will be taken into account in respect of any decision making necessary in respect of any individual actions within the report. This would be outside of the consideration needed for this report.
<p>Option 2: Do nothing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no benefits to this option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council would be in breach of its statutory duty to both have a Homeless Strategy in place and to review that Strategy • The Council would be vulnerable to reputational risk 	<p>This is not considered an option</p>

6.
6.1

REASONS:

The Council has been requested by Welsh Government to establish a Housing Support Programme Strategy. The Strategy meets the Council's statutory obligation under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 to establish a Homeless Strategy. It effectively reviews the previous Strategy agreed in 2018.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no resource implications associated with approving the proposed Strategy. There are, however, resource implications associated with the implementation of the Strategy which are reflected in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

7.2 The following are funding sources that will be accessed by the Council subject to any necessary approvals:

Revenue Funding

- Housing Options Team and Housing Support Grant Cost Centres;
- Welsh Government Covid-19 Hardship Grant 2021/22 (funded the pre-payment of B & B requirements for 2022/23);
- Welsh Government Housing Support Grant;
- Welsh Government Homeless Prevention Grant;
- Welsh Government National Leasing Scheme;
- Children's Services revenue funding (contributing to the Pobl Young People Supported Housing);
- Compass and Youth Support Grant;
- Discretionary Housing Payments;
- Property rental income

Capital

- Social Housing Grant;
- Land Buildings Development Fund;
- Transitional Accommodation Fund;
- S106 Contributions;
- Potential MCC borrowing (subject to potential Cabinet approval)

8. CONSULTEES:

8.1 To inform the development of this Strategy, the Council has engaged with:

- Current homeless clients;
- Current housing support clients;
- Agencies directly delivering homeless services and agencies indirectly delivering or interfacing with homeless services around the themes of homeless prevention; health; young people and community safety

8.2 The draft Strategy has been consulted upon internally, to Welsh Government and to external stakeholders. **See Appendix 5**

8.3 The Cabinet Member for Active and Inclusive Communities requested that consideration be given to Housing Co-Operatives as a potential additional housing option for Monmouthshire. This has been added to the action plan.

9. **BACKGROUND PAPERS:** Welsh Government, Phase 2 Homeless and Housing Support Planning Guidance, 2021; Welsh Government Local Authority Housing Support Programme Strategy April 2022 - March 2026 Template; Welsh Government, Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans: Guidance for Local Authorities & Partners, 2021

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Statement of Need

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Consultation Documents:

- Stakeholder Event,
- Service User Survey and Staff Focus Groups
- Service User Survey Report
- Homelessness Strategy

Chapter 1: Summary

- 1.1.1 Monmouthshire is predominantly rural county consisting of the five major towns of Abergavenny and Monmouth in the north of the county: the town of Usk in the centre and Chepstow and Caldicot in the south.
- 1.1.2 Economically it is a county with more people in work with fewer people claiming benefits than other parts of Wales. However those who work in county earn less than those who work out of county.
- 1.1.3 Monmouthshire's housing stock is predominately owner occupier with just under 74% of the market with limited availability of one or two bedroomed properties, which is often the traditional route on to the housing ladder for first time buyers.
- 1.1.4 The rest of housing stock consists of social housing making up just under 14% of stock with 5,721 properties, (4,510 general need stock plus 1,211 older person stock) and shared across three Registered Social Landlords; And the Private Rented Sector (PRS) making up just under 11% of housing stock with 4,817 properties and 3,200 landlords registered with Rent Smart Wales.
- 1.1.5 In terms of affordability and home ownership the average price of a property is just shy of £360,000 with an entry level price of £200,000. To be able to get on the first rung of the housing ladder requires a household income of over £48,000 (3.5 household income multiplier) and deposit of £30,000 (15%). This makes it extremely difficult for first time buyers and those on lower incomes trying to access the housing market in Monmouthshire.
- 1.1.6 In terms of affordability and the private rented sector Monmouthshire as a whole the rental values have seen an average increase of almost 25% on 2010 values. Rental values can vary across the county with rental values for a 2 bed property typically ranging between £634 and £697 per month while for a three bed property typically ranging between £770 and £845 per month.
- 1.1.7 For those receiving housing benefit, Monmouthshire has one single rate for each bedroom category. For 2020 -2021 the rates for a 2 bed and 3 bed properties is £549 and £648 respectively. For many households on benefits this discrepancy between the housing benefit rate and the actual rental payment renders the private rented sector a non-viable housing option,
- 1.1.8 Accessing accommodation can be a challenging experience for households threatened with homelessness both in the private rented sector (PRS) and the social housing sector (SHS).
- 1.1.9 Monmouthshire's Housing register, Homesearch, has seen an increase of just over 38% on the total number of applicants registered since 2018 with a 26% increase of applicants registering a recognised need. For homelessness and our duty to accommodate this translates to an increase of almost 95% on the March 2018 figure and a 54% increase since March 2020. The number of lets through Homesearch has decreased by almost 26% since 2016 impacting on "move on" options (Section 7).
- 1.1.10 For the PRS the data shows that Monmouthshire has a contracting market with the number of available properties decreased by almost 50% since 2010. Conversely, rental values have seen an increase of nearly 25% over the same period (Section 7, paragraphs 7.5.16 – 7.5.17).

1.1.11 A contracting market with high rental values and a stagnated Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate means that between 2010 and 2019 only 5.75% of all available properties fell within the LHA rate. In addition data from Housing Benefit shows that over 800 households are currently in receipt of LHA. This could suggest that the market has reached saturation in terms the number of properties that would ordinarily fall within the LHA rate applicable to the bedroomed property type without intervention either at a national level, that is, increase the LHA rates, or at a local level by offering substantial landlord incentives (Section 7, paragraphs 7.5.14 - 7.5.19).

1.1.12 An analysis of the homelessness data for the 4-year period 2017 2021 identified the following (Section 8, below):

- Applications
 - Total applications has seen a fall of just over 32% over the past 4 years (paragraph 8.3.1).
 - The number of single households remains relatively stable at around 65.5% of total applications (paragraph 8.3.2).
 - Around 61% of all single households are males (paragraph 8.3.2.2).
 - Around 39% of all single households are females (paragraph 8.3.2.2).
 - Around 29% of applicants have dependent children (paragraph 8.3.3).
- Main Age Range of Applicants
 - Around 25% of applicants were aged between 16 to 24 years old (paragraph 8.3.4.2).
 - Around 4% of applicants were 16 - 17 years old.
- Main Causes of Homelessness (S66)
 - 30.6% of all causes were rent arrears (paragraphs 8.5)
 - 30.5% of all causes was a loss of private rented sector accommodation
 - Around 29% of all causes was family and friends no longer able to accommodate
- The Prevention Duty (S66 Housing (Wales) Act 2014)
 - Just under 64% of households owed a S66 duty have their threat of homelessness prevented either through preventing their loss of their current accommodation or through securing alternative accommodation (paragraph 8.6.1.6).
 - The most successful prevention intervention is debt and financial advice followed by mediation and conciliation services.
 - The most successful intervention of securing alternative accommodation is securing accommodation in the private rented sector (63% of households) followed by the social sector Housing (37% of households) (paragraph 8.6.5.4,)
- The Relief Duty – Help to Secure (S73 Housing (Wales) Act 2014)
 - Just under 57% of households owed a S73 duty have their threat of homelessness relieved through securing alternative accommodation (paragraph 8.6.1.7)
 - The most successful intervention was helping to secure alternative accommodation in the Social Housing Sector (51% of households)

followed by securing accommodation in the Private Rented Sector (49% of households).

- The Accommodate Duty (S75 Housing (Wales) Act 2014)
 - There has been a steady decline in the number of households being owed a S75 duty
 - The three main priority reasons for a s75 being awarded is
 - Household with dependent children;
 - Households where there is a vulnerability and
 - A person fleeing domestic violence.
- Support Needs
 - 1042 people were supported by HSG funded services in the period April-September 2020 and 98.8% achieved positive outcomes (**Error! Reference source not found.** 10.4.3.1)
 - Managing Accommodation was the most successful positive outcome, followed by Managing Money (Table 49, paragraph 9.4.3.3).
 - There was a 65% decrease in those either homeless or threatened with homelessness following engagement with HSG support services during this period (Table 50, paragraph 9.4.3.4).
 - There is overwhelming demand for mental health support- 23% of those in TA and 33% of those engaged with HSG services were recorded as having Mental Health issues as a lead need (paragraph 9.3.3.1, Table 46, paragraph 9.4.2.1).
 - There has been a significant increase in referrals to Domestic Abuse support services since 2020, and this is reflected in Domestic Abuse being the second highest lead need amongst the HSG support population (Figure 50, paragraph 9.2.2.3, Table 46, paragraph 9.4.2.1).
 - There is an overrepresentation of young people and those with substance misuse issues in TA, and an underrepresentation of over 55s (paragraphs 9.3.5.7, 9.4.2.6, 9.4.4.2).
 - Of the support needs captured for those in TA young people and those with substance misuse issues had the highest proportion of High-Intensive needs recorded (paragraphs 9.3.5.8, 9.3.5.12, 9.5.1.4).

Chapter 2: Introduction

2.1.1 Preventing and addressing homelessness remains a high priority for the Welsh and Local Government in Wales.

2.1.2 The Statement of Need analyses the nature and extent of homelessness and housing support in Monmouthshire. It focused on the following areas:

- The wider environment that homelessness services operate within
- The accommodation in place to prevent and alleviate homelessness
- Demand for homelessness services and trends – past, current and estimated future levels of homelessness.
- The main causes of homelessness.
- The resources currently in place to prevent homelessness and support those who are homeless and possible gaps.

- Potential areas of improvement.
- The expected resources the Council has to devote to statutory homelessness services moving forward.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

3.1.1 Key policy documents, research and statistics were referenced throughout this document – to provide an overview of the wider environment that homelessness services operate Monmouthshire.

3.1.2 In addition the Statement of Need relied on information collected during feedback from consultation exercises and a questionnaire.

3.1.3 The following exercises informed the Statement.

- A desktop review of key literature and statistical data
- Focus groups and group discussions with key staff relevant to the preparation and implementation of homelessness planning using both SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) and PESTL (Political, Economic, Social, Technology and Legislation) analyses.
- A stakeholder questionnaire feedback from service providers, partners and other stakeholders
- Surveys with people who have experienced homelessness and related services first hand
- Direct engagement with different service user groups.

Chapter 4: Definitions

4.1.1 As a general overview, under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 (Section 55), a person is homeless where:

- They have no accommodation in the UK or elsewhere, which is available for them to occupy*.
- They do have accommodation but can't secure entry into it.
- The accommodation is a moveable structure (e.g. caravan) but someone has nowhere to place it to reside in.
 - *If it is not considered reasonable for someone to continue to occupy accommodation, then they would also be treated as having no accommodation.
- Someone is threatened with homelessness where they are likely to be homeless within 56 days.

4.1.2 A large amount of detail is contained within the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and Welsh Government's Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness 2016 Code of Guidance, both of which include a number of definitions in relation to homelessness. There are other definitions connected to the statutory homeless data that local authorities submit to the Welsh Government on a quarterly basis as well.

4.1.3 The use of the broader definition of homelessness covering people:

- Owed statutory homelessness duties under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 (i.e. sections 66, 68, 73 and 75).
- Sleeping rough (e.g. living on the street).
- Living in insecure/temporary accommodation – excluding assured/assured shorthold tenancies (e.g. private sector property leased by a council).
- Living in short-term accommodation (e.g. bed and breakfast or a direct access hostel).
- Who are hidden homeless (e.g. someone 'sofa-surfing with friends, relatives or squatting).
- Who are unable to remain or return to their home (e.g. relationship breakdown or domestic abuse).
- Who are leaving an institution, without a home to go to (e.g. hospital or prison).

Chapter 5: Context: Strategic Links

For the purposes of the Statement of Need, the following strategic documents are key:

5.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

5.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 seeks to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in order to create a Wales that all want to live in, now and in the future. The Act sets out seven well-being goals:

1. A prosperous Wales;
2. A resilient Wales;
3. A healthier Wales;
4. A more equal Wales;
5. A Wales of cohesive communities;
6. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language; and
7. A globally responsible Wales.

5.1.2 The provision of sufficient good quality housing for people's needs, including affordable housing is a cross-cutting theme that will help deliver many of the well-being goals, including a more equal Wales, a Wales of cohesive communities, a prosperous Wales and a healthier Wales.

5.2 Monmouthshire Public Service Board Well-being Assessment

5.2.1 The eight statutory members of the Gwent Regional Public Service Board, or GRPSB, are the five local authorities, the Local Health Board, Fire and Rescue Authority and Natural Resources Wales. Other organisations are also invited; these include Gwent Police, Local Housing Associations, Melin Homes and voluntary organisations represented through the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations.

5.2.2 The PSB must prepare and publish an assessment of the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in the area and then agree priorities to address these.

5.2.3 Monmouthshire County Council Corporate Business Plan 2017 / 2022

Sets out a clear direction for the Council and resources required to deliver it. It inform and shapes a whole set of enabling and delivery plans around People; Digital; Economy; Customers, Land and Assets.

The plan sets out sets out our five Organisational Goals. These goals incorporate the four Well-being Objective

1. The best possible start in life
2. Thriving and well-connected county
3. Maximise the potential of the natural and built environment
4. Lifelong well-being
5. Future-focused Council

5.3 People, Place Prosperity: A Strategy for Social Justice 2017 – 2022

5.3.1 The Aim of this Social Justice Strategy has always been 'To put Social Justice at the heart of what we do' and over the past two years the Strategy has set out a broad programme of work to help to make a real difference to the lives of local people by working in partnership.

5.3.2 The Commitments made in the Strategy have therefore focussed and continue to focus on the following:

- Enabling connected and caring communities supporting people to live independently;
- Delivering on social justice, better prosperity and reducing inequality; and
- Enabling better local services through supporting volunteers and social action

5.3.3 All of this has aligned with the Public Service Board priorities and aspirations:

- To reduce inequalities between communities and within communities;
- To support and protect vulnerable people; and
- To consider our impact on the environment.

5.3.4 The Community Partnership and Development Team have also been the 'Engine Room' for the Social Justice movement in Monmouthshire 'the Bridge between community needs and aspirations and the wider strategic priorities of the Council and its PSB partners'.

5.4 Gwent Regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-2023

5.4.1 The Gwent Regional Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-2023 sets out six Strategic Priorities that will contribute to the pursuit of the prevention of violence and abuse, the protection of victims and the support of all those affected.

- Strategic Priority 1: Increase awareness and challenge attitudes of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across Gwent.
- Strategic Priority 2: Increase awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong
- Strategic Priority 3: Increase focus on holding perpetrators to account and provide opportunities to change their behaviour based around victim safety
- Strategic Priority 4: Make early intervention and prevention a priority
- Strategic Priority 5: Relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors
- Strategic Priority 6: Provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs led, strength based, gender responsive services throughout the region.

5.4.2 Ensuring regular engagement by people who have been affected by VAWDASV has been essential for identifying the Strategic Priorities. Involvement and engagement will continue to be an essential requirement for informing the Partnership Board on the effectiveness of its on-going work.

5.5 Gwent Housing Support Grant Regional Collaborative Group Statement 2021-2022

5.5.1 The Housing Support Grant (HSG) Programme is an early intervention programme that funds a wide range of housing related support and homelessness services for vulnerable people across Gwent, and supports activity, which prevents people from becoming homeless, stabilises their housing situation, or helps potentially homeless people to find and keep accommodation.

5.5.2 The vision for the Housing Support Programme is:

"A Wales where nobody is homeless and everyone has a safe home where they can flourish and live a fulfilled, active and independent life".

5.5.3 The Strategic goals of the Gwent RHSCG are:

- Deliver high quality, effective and responsive services;
- Expand our reach by collaborating & working in partnership
- Strengthen engagement and accessibility

5.6 National Policies

5.6.1 Strategy for Preventing and Ending Homelessness

5.6.2 Sets out the strategic approach the Welsh Government is taking to prevent and address homelessness in Wales. It's vision is for "A Wales where everyone has a safe home that meets their needs and supports a healthy, successful and prosperous life. A Wales where we work together to prevent homelessness and where it cannot be prevented ensure it is rare, brief and unrepeated".

5.6.3 Other Relevant Legislative Acts and Policies considered in the Strategy's development were the following

- Welsh Government Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2018-20.
- Housing Support Grant Practice Guidance.
- Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016.
- The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014.
- Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

Chapter 6: Context - Population, Health, Poverty and Income

- 6.1.1 This section gives a broad picture of the social and economic conditions for the County of Monmouthshire. The areas looked at in this section are only intended to be an overview to show the environment that homelessness services operate within the County
- 6.1.2 Monmouthshire is a predominantly rural county and is noted for its rich and diverse landscape. It covers an area of approximately 88,000 hectares and shares a border with the neighbouring counties of Newport, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent and Powys in Wales and Gloucestershire and Herefordshire in England. The estimated population is 94,950 (Source: ONS, April 2020). The main towns in the county are Abergavenny, Monmouth, Chepstow and Caldicot.

6.2 Demography

- 6.2.1 In terms of age demography, Monmouthshire has a median age of 49 years, a significantly higher proportion of older age adults (65+) and a lower proportion of younger age adults (16-44) compared to the Welsh average (ONS).
- 6.2.2 Life expectancy for people in Monmouthshire is the highest in Wales, By 2039 the population aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 61% and, more significantly, the number of people aged 85 and over will more than double.
- 6.2.3 These headline figures mask some variations with those living in the least deprived areas of the county expected to live longer than those in the most deprived areas.
- 6.2.4 **The ethnic identity of the County is that 97% of residents self-identified as white with 3% self-identifying as Black, Asian and minorities¹.**
- 6.2.5 In terms of Gypsies and Travellers the 2011 census shows that six households identified themselves as Gypsy and Irish Traveller, 0.006% of the population.

6.3 The Economy

- 6.3.1 A common perception of Monmouthshire is that it is affluent with a high proportion of people of working-age that are economically active than most other parts of Wales and with less people claiming out-of-work benefits.
- 6.3.2 Again these headline grabbing statements mask some clear disparities. The wages on offer in Monmouthshire are 10% below the UK average and only marginally above the average for Wales. 34% of our working population commute out of the county to earn a living.
- 6.3.3 Average earnings for those who work in Monmouthshire are £570 per week or £29,640 per annum. This is above the Wales average of £535 per week or £27,820 per annum. The average earnings of people who live in Monmouthshire and travel to work elsewhere are higher at £694.60 per week or £36,119.20 per annum. This is above the Wales average of £540.70 or £28,116.40.

Source: ONS - Annual survey of hours and earnings (2019 figures)

¹**<https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Ethnicity/Ethnicity-by-Area-EthnicGroup>**

6.3.4 Economically the county appears to fare well compared to the rest of Wales with no areas in the most deprived 20%. However, social deprivation and in particular poor access to services is widespread across much of rural areas of Wales including Monmouthshire.

6.4 Health

6.4.1.1 For Monmouthshire the general consideration is that the general health of its population is healthier than other parts of Gwent.

6.4.1.2 However mental health and substance misuse issues are often an extremely significant problems for homeless people (HAVGHAPs).

6.4.2 Mental Health

6.4.2.1 The below graphs demonstrate the number of admissions of Monmouthshire residents to inpatient treatment for Mental Health (Adult and Older Adult) and Learning Disability. The data has been provided by the Aneurin Bevan Health Board.

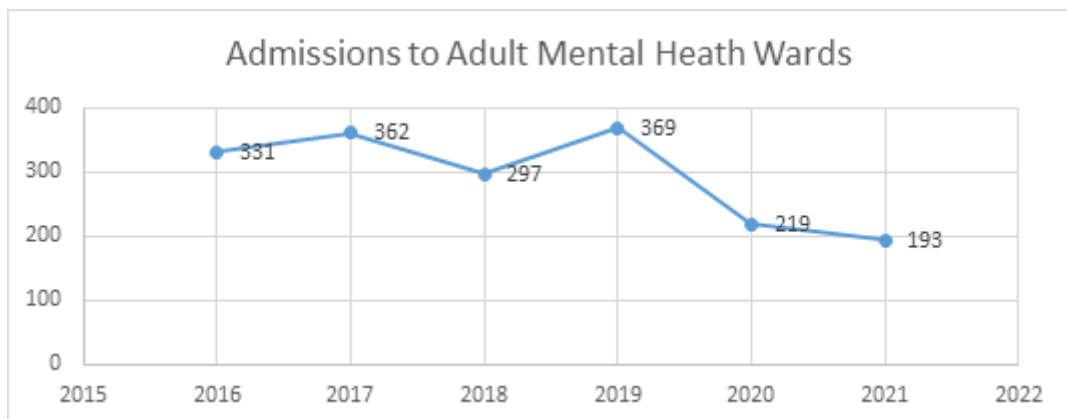


Figure 1: Adult Mental Health Admissions

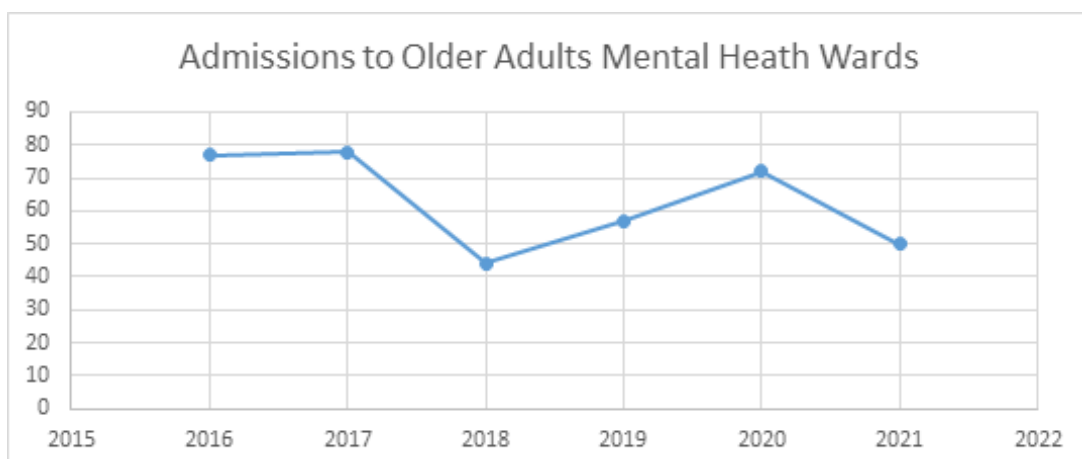


Figure 2: Older Adults Mental Health Admissions for patients with a Monmouthshire postcode, 2015-2022

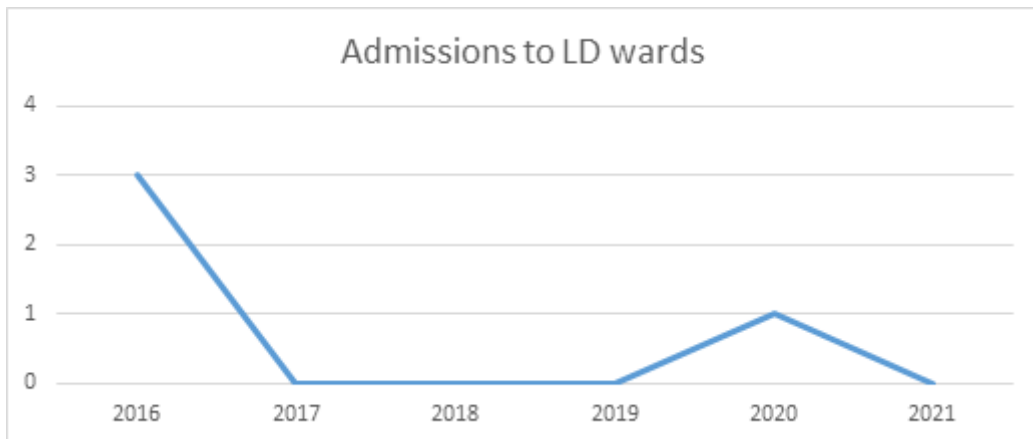


Figure 3 Figure 3: Learning Disability admissions for patients with a Monmouthshire postcode, 2015-2021

6.4.2.2 Numbers of residents admitted to Learning Disability wards is consistently low in Monmouthshire across the 5-year time span. Admissions to both Adult and Older Adults Mental Health wards have seen a decrease in numbers, both dipping in 2018 and 2021. Admissions to Adult wards has been in decline since 2019.

6.4.2.3 Figure 4, below, shows the gender breakdown of admissions shows a trend of more males than females for Adult, and this reversed for Older Adults.

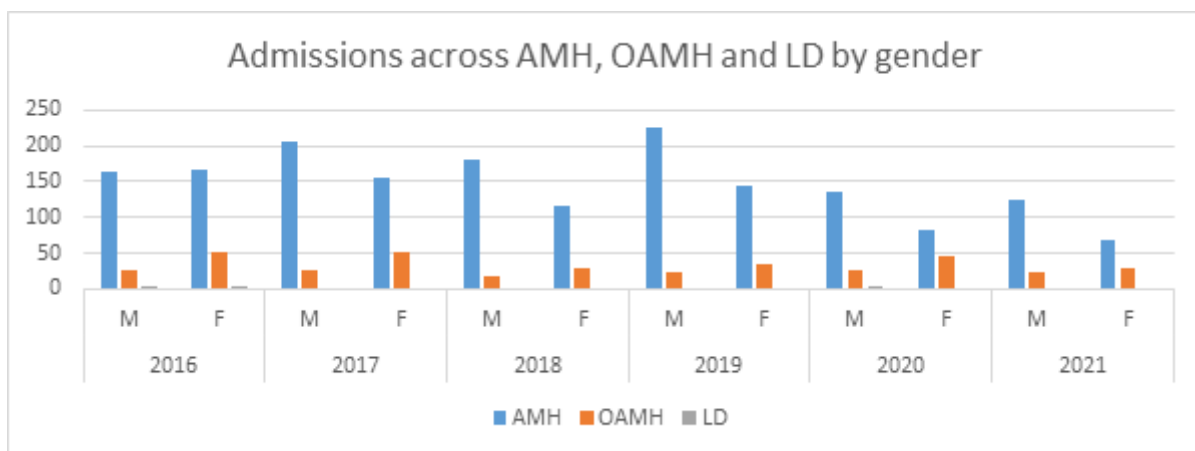


Figure 4 Figure 4: Admissions across Adult, Older Adult and Learning Disability wards by gender for patients with a Monmouthshire postcode, 2016-2021

6.4.2.4 From figure 5 below, when looking at the age breakdown of all admissions those between the ages of 20 and 29 are most frequent, though people aged between 30-39 and 40-49 also make up a significant number of admissions.

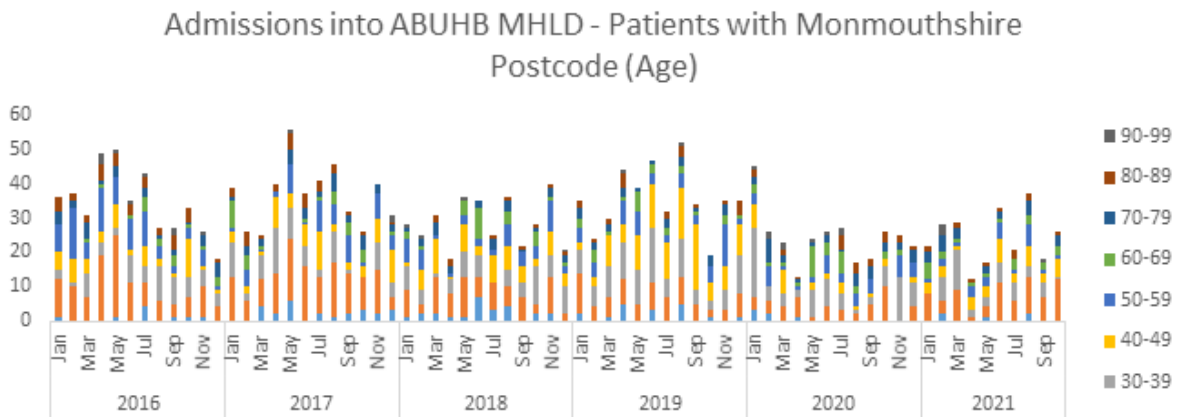


Figure 5: Admissions across Adult and Learning Disability Mental Health by age for patients with a Monmouthshire postcode, 2016-2021

6.4.3 Substance Misuse

6.4.3.1 The below table shows the number of referrals made to the Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) for treatment for residents of Monmouthshire between the years 2017-2020.

Year	Gwent referrals	Monmouthshire referrals	As a % of Gwent total
2017	1105	48	4.34
2018	1455	83	5.70
2019	1365	89	6.52
2020	869	53	6.10

Table 1: Referrals of Monmouthshire residents made to Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) for treatment

6.4.3.2 As a proportion of Gwent wide referrals, Monmouthshire makes up a small percentage, however, there has been a general trend of referral numbers increasing. In the first two quarters of 2021 GDAS has received 737 referrals across Gwent, 32- or 4.34%- of which came from Monmouthshire. If this trend continues to the end of 2021 it will be the first year that a marked decrease in referrals will have been recorded.

Chapter 7: Housing Market

7.1.1 It is possible to split Monmouthshire into 3 distinct housing market areas following the 2011 census travel to work areas as detailed in Figure One below:

- Chepstow Housing Market Area (Newport Travel to Work Area);
- Monmouth Housing Market Area (Cinderford and Ross-on-Wye Travel to Work Area);
- Abergavenny Housing Market Area (Merthyr Tydfil Travel to Work Area)

7.2 Tenure

7.2.1 At the time of the 2011 Census, there were 38,233 households in the borough with almost a quarter of residents owning their home. Figure 6 shows the tenure of residents in Monmouthshire.

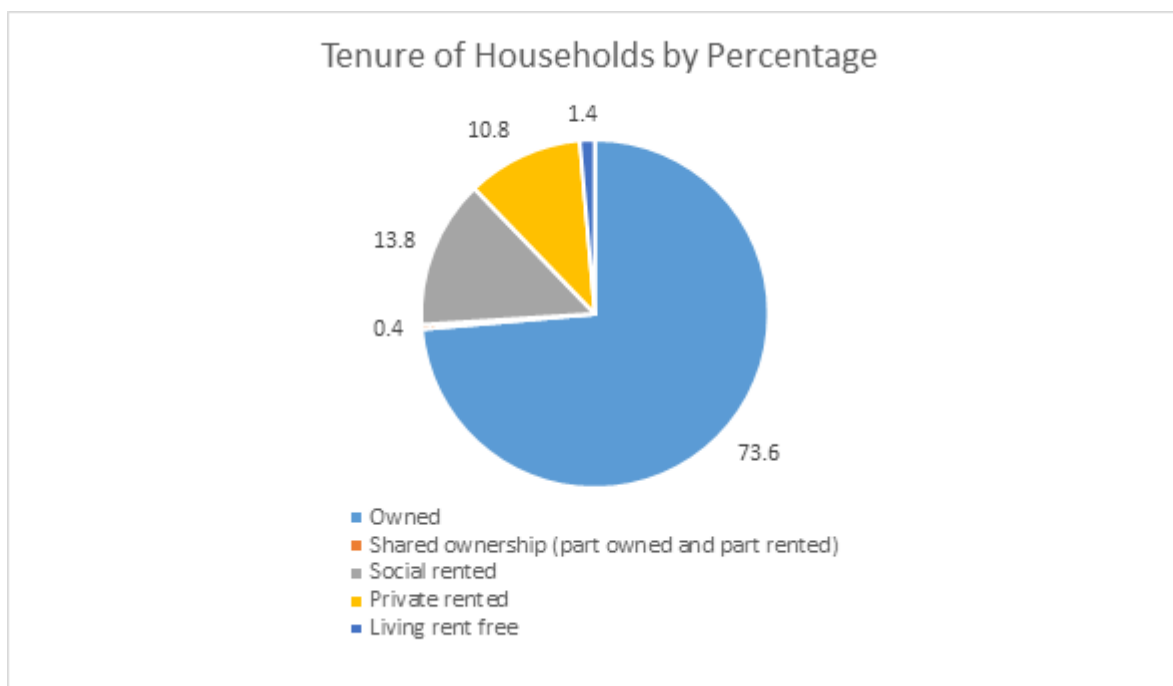


Figure 6: Tenure of residents in Monmouthshire

7.3 Home Ownership

7.3.1 Figure 7 below illustrates the average price of each property type in Monmouthshire. This is important to acknowledge as it impacts on the availability of suitable accommodation for first time buyers and those on lower incomes trying to access the Monmouthshire Housing Market. Of particular note, the average price of a flat, maisonette or apartment in Monmouthshire (£124,666) exceeds the average price of all property types in Blaenau Gwent (£112,619), and the average price of a terraced home in Monmouthshire (£222,814) exceeds the average price of all property types in Torfaen (£174,670) or Newport (£204,283).

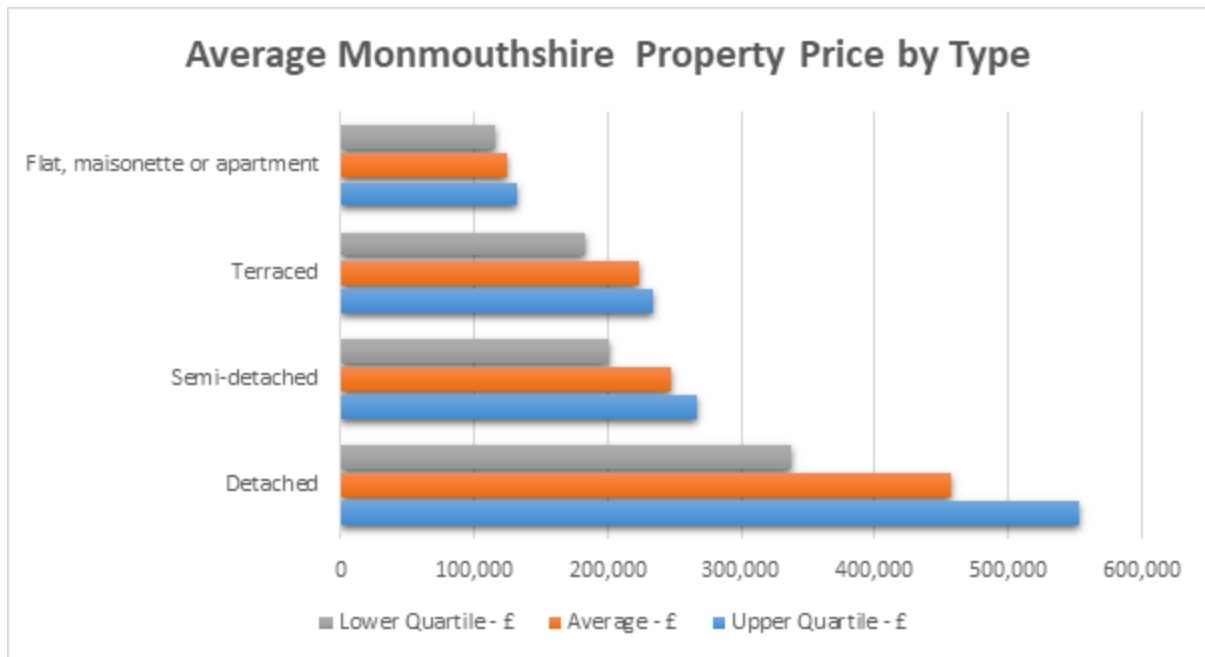


Figure 7: Average property price in Monmouthshire by type

7.4 Property Type

7.4.1 The majority of properties in the county borough are detached homes (44.01%) with next most popular property type being semi-detached (28.33%) properties.

7.4.2 In Monmouthshire, there is limited availability of terraced homes or apartments which are often a traditional way of people taking their first step into homeownership.

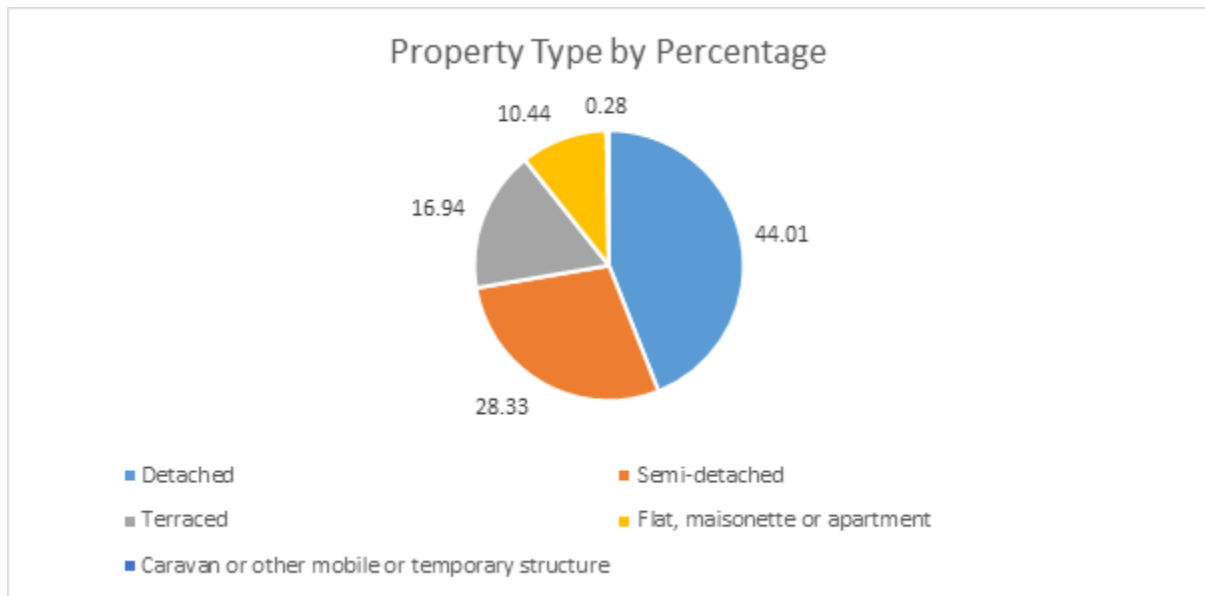


Figure 8: Breakdown of Property type in Monmouthshire

7.4.3 Data obtained from Hometrack (August 2021) shows the current average price of a home in Monmouthshire is £359,159, based on sales and valuations up to June 2021, compared to £336,760 up to September 2020 as identified in the Local Housing Market Analysis (LHMA), 2020. The rise in house prices is likely due to increased demand as households look to move to larger properties in more rural areas, influenced by the increased ability to work from home due to COVID-19 and an increased focus on quality of life.

7.4.4 The entry level house price for Monmouthshire is £200,000. This figure is the lower quartile price of a semi-detached house in Monmouthshire, based on sales and valuations. As seen from figure 8 above, Semi-detached properties account for just under 30% of all housing in Monmouthshire, so they are widely available in all areas of the county whereas terraced houses which would normally be considered “entry level housing” elsewhere in Wales only accounts for 17% of stock.

7.4.5 In terms of affordability, the house price to income ratio for Monmouthshire is 8:1 but levels vary across the county, the rural north between Abergavenny and Monmouth has the highest ratio at 11.5:1 (source: Hometrack).

7.4.6 Therefore to be able to access home ownership in Monmouthshire, with an entry level price of £200,000, after allowing for a 15% deposit of £30,000 a household’s income would need to be over £48,500 based on a typical mortgage offer at 3.5 times the household income.

7.5 The Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA)

7.5.1.1 The LHMA provides a snapshot of the housing market at a particular point in time, which is projected forward 5 years with a review the data within every two years.

7.5.1.2 Monmouthshire’s LHMA for the period 2020 – 2025 estimates a net need of 468 additional affordable homes per annum up until 2025.

7.5.2 Social Rented Sector

7.5.2.1 Monmouthshire Housing Association, Melin Homes and Pobl own and manage the majority of affordable housing stock. There are around 5700 units of affordable housing across Monmouthshire (LHMA, 2020) as detailed in Tables 2 and 3 below:

Submarket Area	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	6 bed	8 bed	Total
10.Abergavenny	354	463	621	59	2	0	0	1,499
Chepstow	536	788	861	69	1	1	0	2,256
Monmouth	158	257	322	17	0	0	1	755
Total	1,048	1,508	1,804	145	3	1	1	4,510

Table 2: Existing Housing Stock – General Needs

Submarket Area	Bedsit	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
Abergavenny	20	289	148	9	0	466
Chepstow	0	322	156	2	1	481
Monmouth	0	208	54	2	0	264
Total	20	819	358	13	1	1,211

Table 3: Existing Housing Stock – Older Person's Housing

7.5.3 Housing Need and Demand

7.5.3.1 The LHMA carried out in 2020 estimated a shortfall of 468 affordable homes per annum between 2020-2025 with the majority to be provided as Social Rent (68%), followed by Low Cost Home Ownership (25%) and finally Intermediate Rent (7%). Further analysis of the data allows for the shortfall to be broken down across the three housing market areas, as shown below.

Area	Social Rent	LCHO	IR	Total
Abergavenny	94	39	13	146
Chepstow	183	59	17	259
Monmouth	43	17	3	63
Total	320 (68%)	115 (25%)	33 (7%)	468

Table 4: Affordable housing need and tenure per housing market area per annum

7.5.4 Affordable Housing Completions

7.5.4.1 Table 5 below shows the total number of additional affordable housing completions delivered & planned.

	Delivered 19/20	Delivered 20/21	Planned 21/22

Affordable housing completions	113	146	81
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Table 5: Number of additional affordable housing completions

7.5.5 Monmouthshire's Common Housing Register (Homesearch)

7.5.5.1 Monmouthshire operates a choice based lettings scheme for social housing, known as Homesearch. Households requiring social housing apply to join a waiting list and are placed into bands representing their level or priority of need for an allocation of a property.

7.5.6 Level of Need / Band Priority

- Band 1 - Applicants registered in this band are those who have an exceptional / urgent need to move, such households being decanted.
- Band 2A: Applicants registered in this band are those who have a high housing need.
- Band 2B & Band 3B: Applicants registered in these bands are subject to Homelessness intervention. Band 2B is awarded for applicants that have been awarded a section 75, homeless duty.
- Band 3: Applicants with a medium housing need are placed in this band.
- Band 4: Applicants registered in band 4 have a low housing need. Most applicants in band 4, are applicants who are adequately housed in the private rented sector who have a local connection to Monmouthshire.
- Band 5: Applicants in band 5 have no housing need. The majority of housing waiting list applicants have no housing need or who have no local connection to the county

7.5.7 Waiting List Data

7.5.7.1 The table and graph below show the number of applicants registered on the waiting list at the year end for years 2017 – 2021.

	31 st March 2018	31 st March 2019	31 st March 2020	31 st March 2021
Total number of Applicants registered	2295	3164	3316	4043
Applicants with a recognised housing need (i.e. bands 1-4)	2052	2143	2237	2588

Table 6: Number of applicants on Homesearch Waiting List

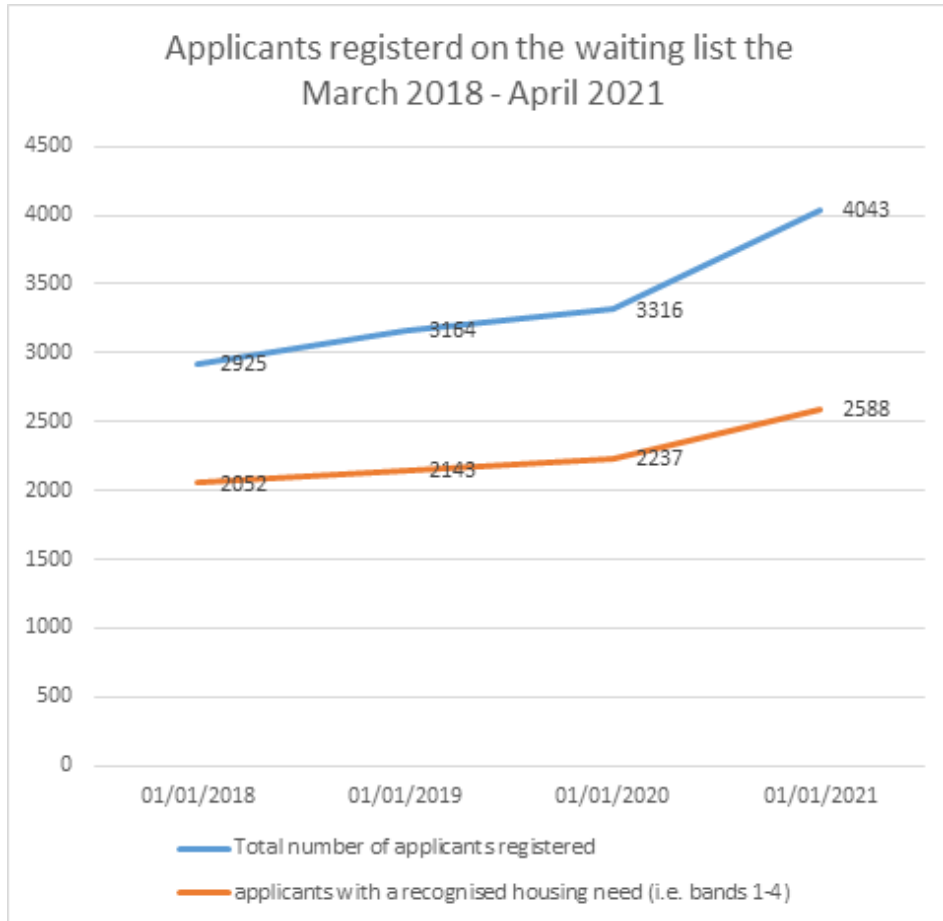


Figure 9: Number of applicants on Homeseach Waiting List 2018-2021

7.5.7.2 The above table and graph shows that there has been an increase of just over 38% on the total number of applicants registered on the waiting list across all bands (1 to 5) and a corresponding increase of just over 26% of applicants with a recognised need (bands 1 to 4). The majority of the increase occurs in band 5 (applicants with no need).

7.5.8 *Banding*

7.5.8.1 Although there has been an increase across all the bands, band 2b (the homelessness band) has seen an increase of almost 54% since March 2020 and is up almost 95% on the March 2018 figure (see figure 10, below).

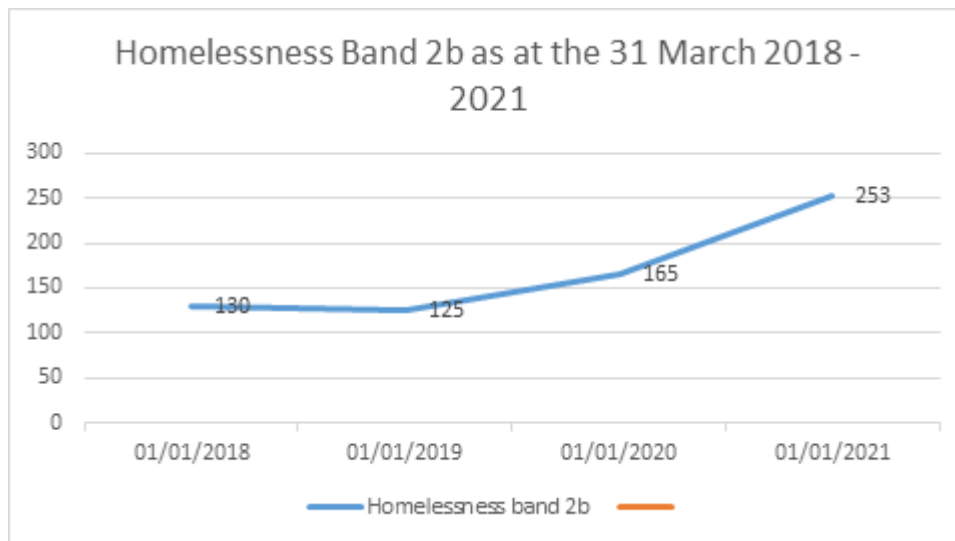


Figure 10: Number of applicants in Band 2b 2018-2021

7.5.9 *Number of Properties Let during years 2017 to 2021*

7.5.9.1 The following table shows the number of lets during the years 2017 to 2021.

2017 / 2018	412
2018 / 2019	486
2019 / 2020	481
2020 / 2021	355

Table 7: Number of lets per year 2017-2021

7.5.9.2 The figure below shows the trend over the period and represents almost a 14% reduction in the number of lets available since 2017/18 and almost 26% reduction over the previous year 2019/20

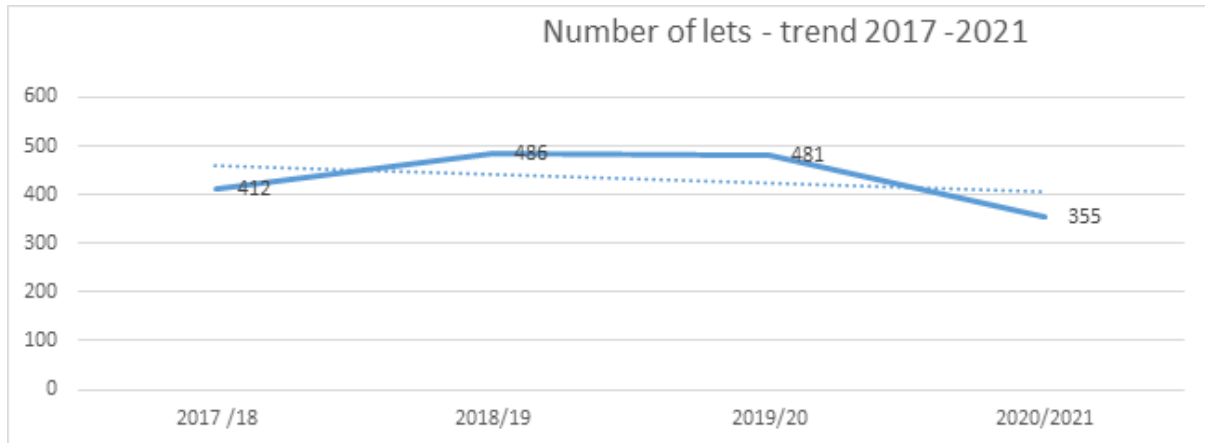


Figure 11: Number of Homesearch Lets 2017-2021

7.5.10 Number of lets per band

7.5.10.1 The figure 12 below show the number of lets per band 2017 to 2021.

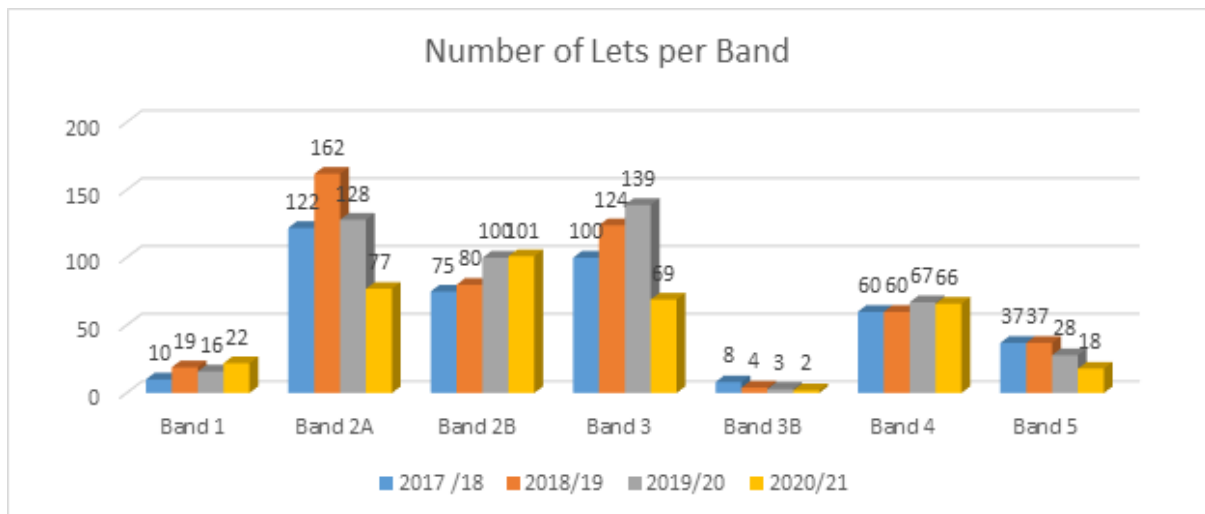


Figure 12: Number of Homesearch lets by band 2017-2021

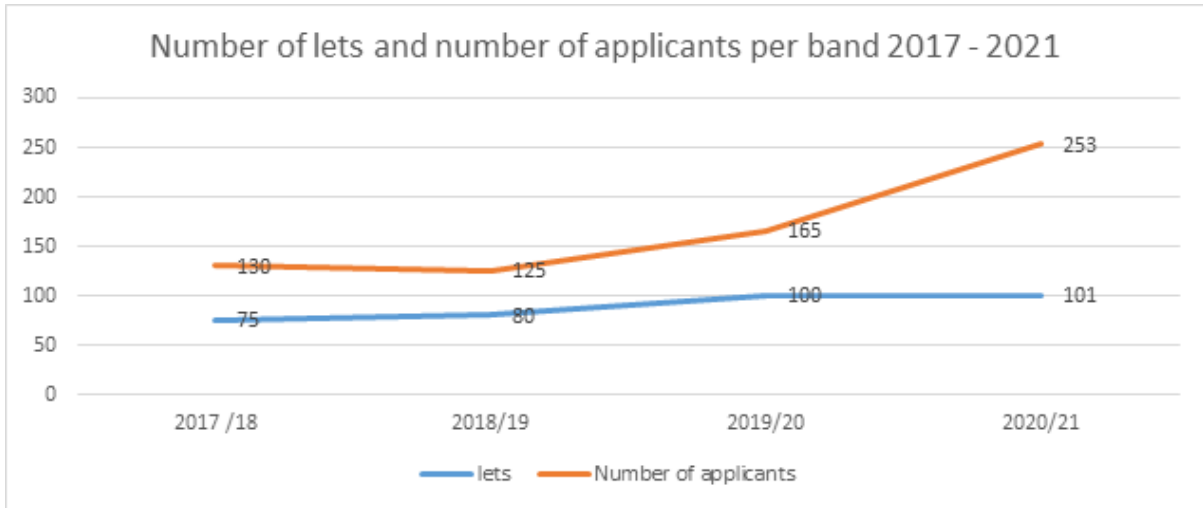


Figure 13: Number of Lets and number of applicants 2017-2021

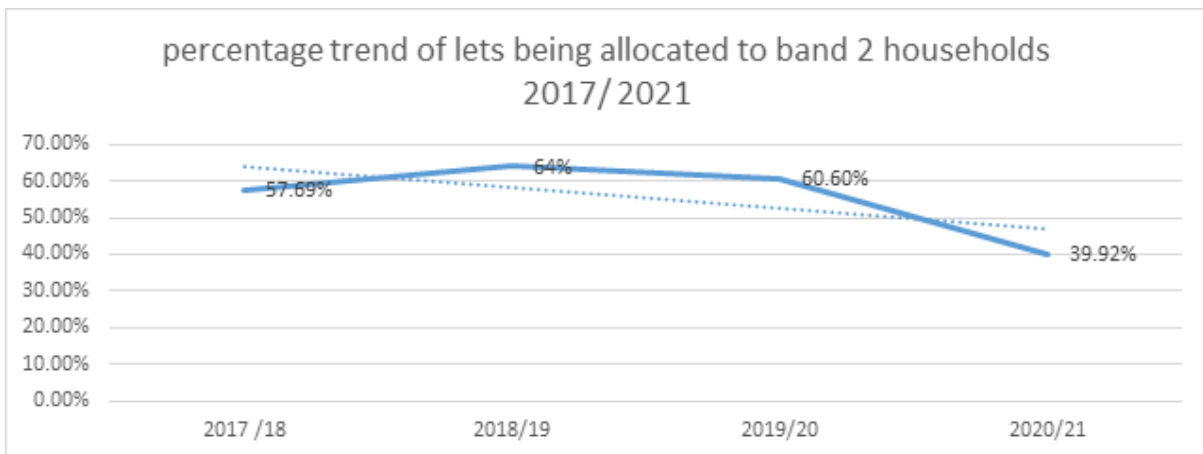


Figure 14: Percentage of all Lets being allocated to Band 2 2017-2021

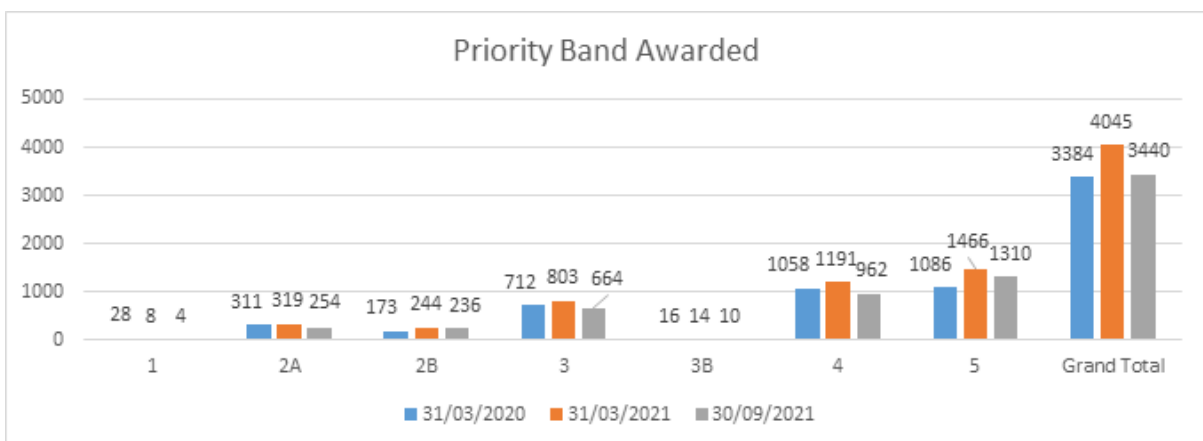


Figure 15: Number of applicants allocated to each band 2020-2021

7.5.11 Monmouthshire Homesearch Data

7.5.11.1 The lead reason for applying during the previous two financial years was “Homeless or in danger of losing your home”:

Lead Reason	2019/20	2020/21
Homeless or in danger of losing your home	50 (16.6%)	147 5.0%)

Table 8: Number of applicants with lead reason of ‘Homeless or in danger of losing your home’ 2019-2021

7.5.12 Social Rent Lettings

7.5.12.1 Past letting trends were analysed over the previous 4 years – 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Year	Number of Lets
2017/18	412
2018/19	486
2019/20	481
2020/21	355

Table 9: Lettings Data 2017 - 2020

7.5.12.2 The number of lets has seen a decrease of almost 26% between 2019/20 and 2020/21. This could be attributed to successful preventative measures being undertaken by RSL’s for their own tenants and would translate into limited “move on” options for those experiencing homelessness and being accommodated in temporary forms of accommodation See figure 16 below.

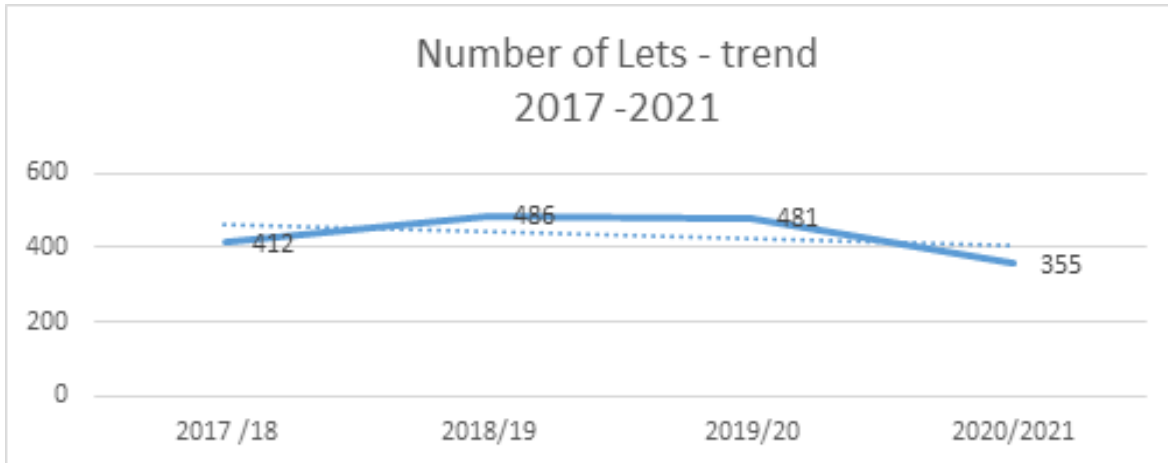


Figure 16: Number of Social Rent Lets 2017-2021

7.5.13 Private Rented Sector

7.5.13.1 The private rented sector is important in meeting the housing requirements of those who are in housing need but cannot access social rented housing and those who cannot afford to purchase on the open market. Since the change in legislation allowing local authorities to utilise the private rented sector to house homeless applicants it has become an increasingly important sector for Monmouthshire.

7.5.13.2 During July 2020, a desktop study of the residential rental market was undertaken. The study was an historical analysis of rental activity from 2010 to 2020 using Hometrack's comprehensive database of properties advertised to let and looked at the following:

- Rental market and activity within Monmouthshire
- Distribution of properties and rental values by bedroom category
- Rental values and Local Housing Rates
- Affordability

7.5.13.3 This section reflects the study but the following statements caveat the findings:

- The collation of information and data on private rental activity, costs and affordability is not as reliable as collating data on housing sales due to the lack of data currently available. As a result the data is not robust and, therefore, only for a very broad analysis of the rental market in Monmouthshire.
- The data does not differentiate between rents for furnished/unfurnished properties, nor for whether utility bills and council tax are included/not included within the value of rent.
- The study concentrates on properties where the bedroom category is known as this demonstrates the issue of affordability especially when referring to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates.

7.5.14 Private Rental Market and Activity

7.5.14.1 As of July 2020 there are 3,200 Landlords registered with Rent Smart Wales representing 4,817 properties spread throughout the five rental areas of Monmouthshire, which are, Abergavenny and Monmouth in the north of the County, Usk in the centre and Chepstow and Caldicot in the south. It should be noted that these five areas relate to postcode areas in the county and the Hometrack system provides a breakdown only for these areas below the county as a whole. It was therefore not possible to correlate the rental analysis with the three housing market areas for Monmouthshire.

7.5.14.2 The following figures (17 & 18) show the distribution of rental properties by bedroom count and rental area.

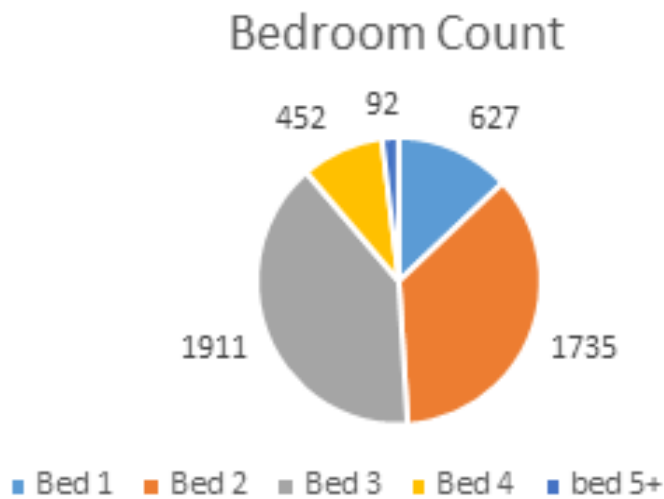


Figure 17: Number of Properties by Bedroom Count

Source: Hometrack

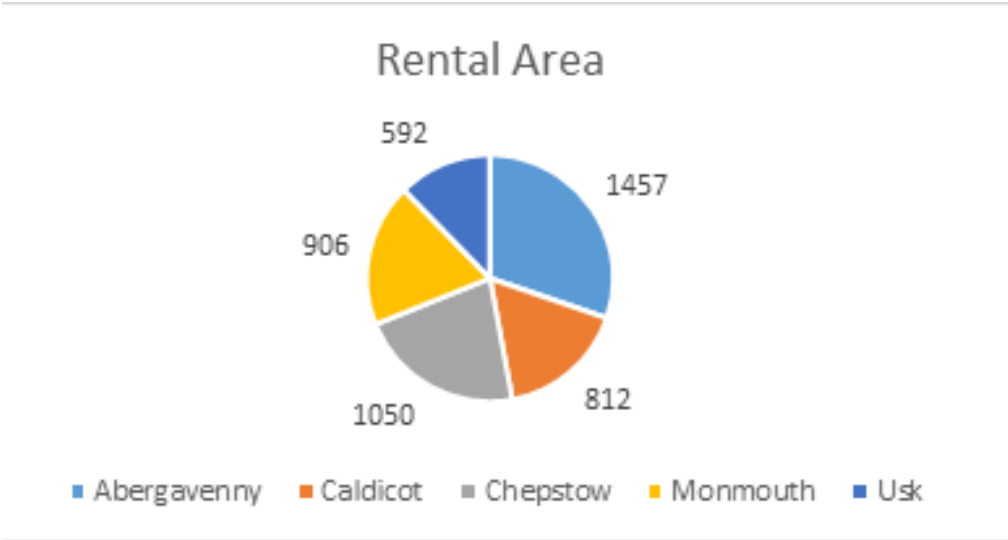


Figure 18 Number of Properties by Rental Area

Source: Hometrack

7.5.15 Historical Market Activity

7.5.15.1 The following paragraphs analyse market activity over the last ten years 2010 to 2020 using Hometrack’s comprehensive database of properties advertised, which is a sample size of 5,844 properties.

7.5.15.2 The following graphs (19 & 20) shows the spread of the properties within the five main rental areas of Monmouthshire and by bedroom count.

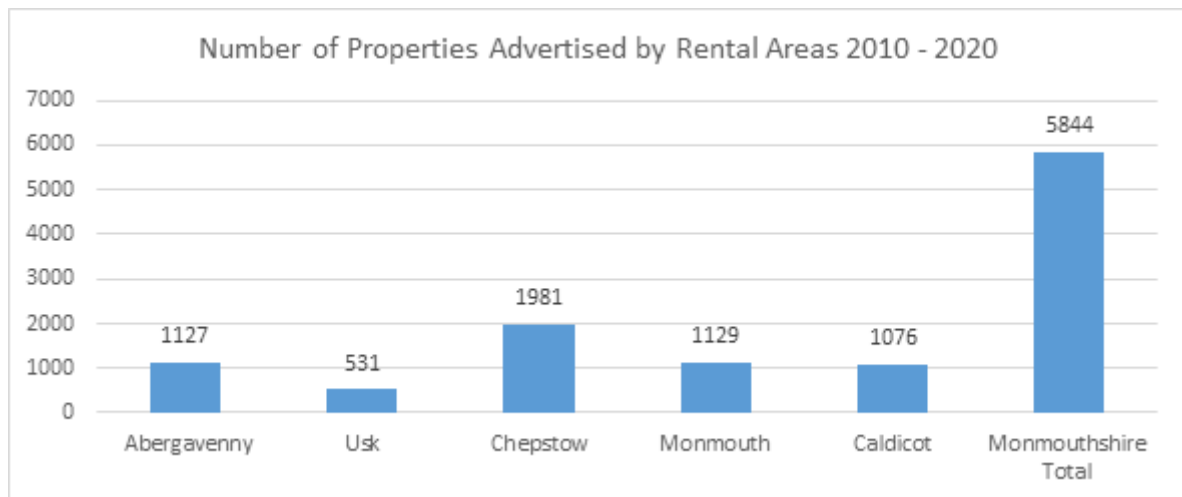


Figure 19: Number of Properties Advertised by Area 2010-2020

Source: Hometrack

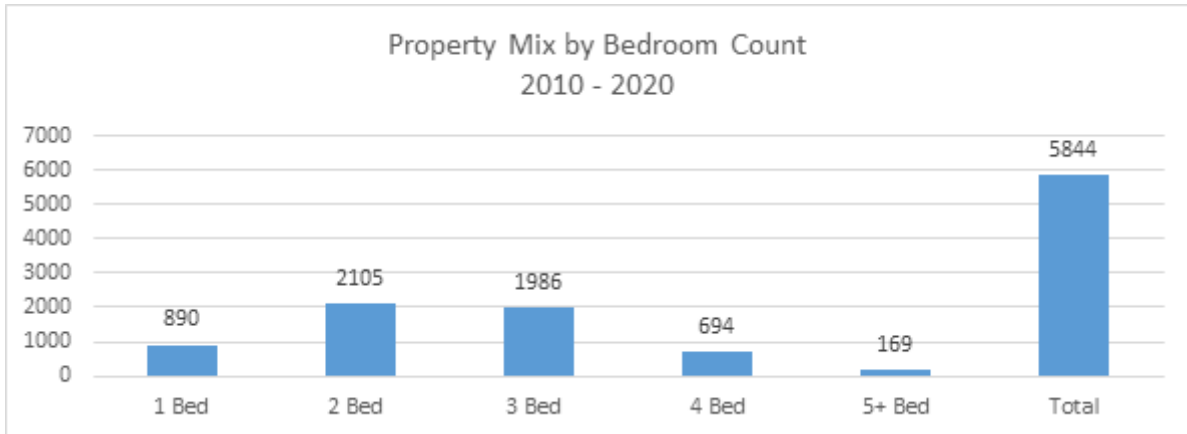


Figure 20: Property Mix by Bedroom Count 2010-2020

Source: Hometrack

7.5.15.3 Figure 15 below shows the mix of rental listings over the last 12 months by bedroom count. The largest share was two-bedroom properties with 36%, followed by three-bedroom properties with 34%. One, four and five bedroom properties made up 3%, 12% and 15% of the share respectively.

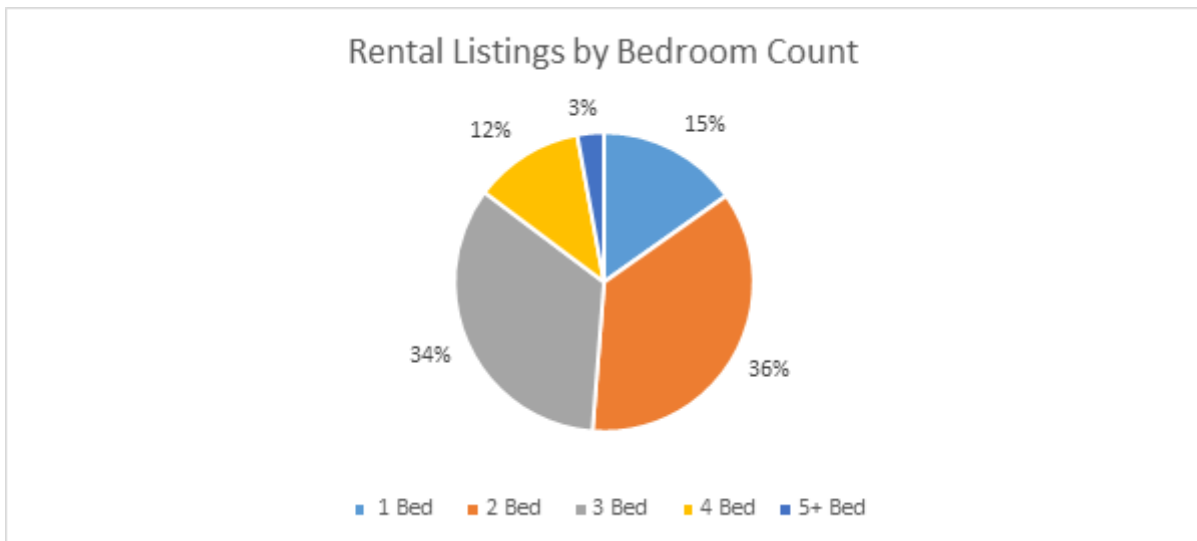


Figure 21: Rental Listings by Bedroom Count

Source: Hometrack

7.5.16 Market Activity

7.5.16.1 The data for this section includes only full years from 2010 – 2019.

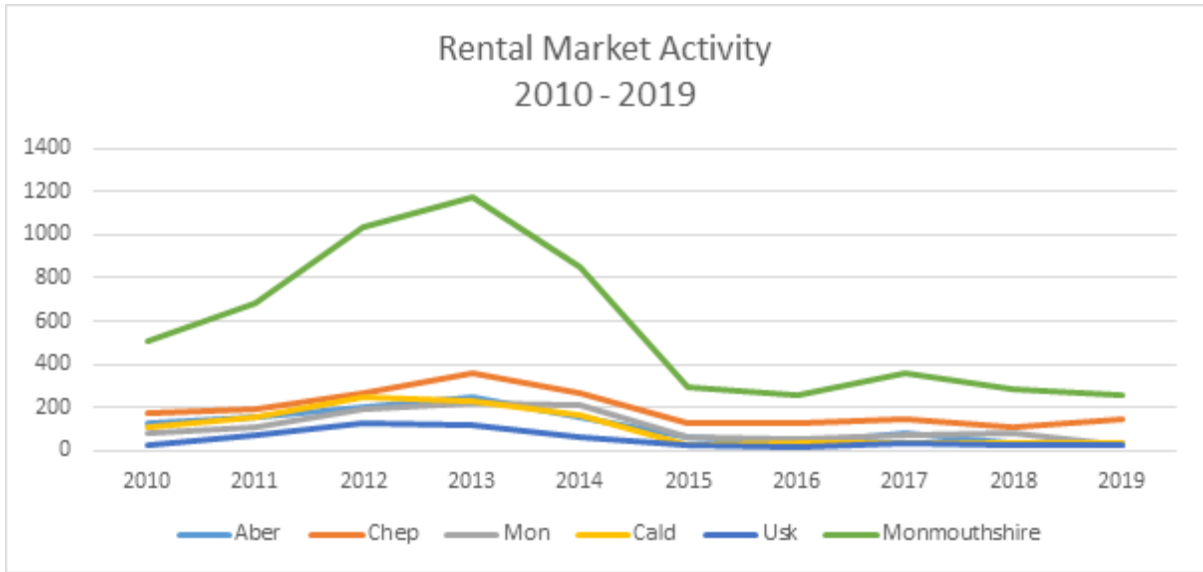


Figure 22: Rental Market Activity in Monmouthshire 2010-2019

Source: Hometrack

Market Activity by Rental Area 2010 - 2019

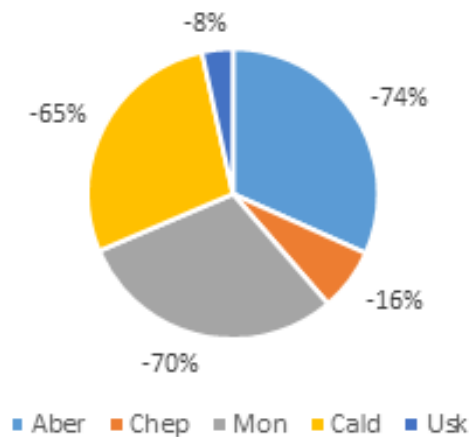


Figure 23: Market Activity by Rental Area in Monmouthshire 2010-2019

Source: Hometrack

7.5.16.2 Figure 23 shows the market activity has contracted quite considerably in the five rental areas and Monmouthshire as a whole the rental market contracted by almost 50% between 2010-2019.

7.5.17 Market Rental Value Growth

7.5.17.1 For this section, only data between one and four bedrooms was used due to the lack of available data five bedrooms.

Percentage Increase / Decrease of Monthly Rents		
2010 - 2019		
Rental Area	Number of bedrooms	Average Rent Price Increase Since 2010
Abergavenny	1 Bed	22%
	2 Bed	16%
	3 Bed	22%
	4 Bed	11%
Usk	1 Bed	13%
	2 Bed	19%
	3 Bed	17%
	4 Bed	-1%
Chepstow	1 Bed	34%
	2 Bed	26%
	3 Bed	28%
	4 Bed	43%
Monmouth	1 Bed	30%
	2 Bed	25%
	3 Bed	19%
	4 Bed	13%
Caldicot	1 Bed	34%
	2 Bed	26%

3 Bed	19%
4 Bed	46%

Table 10: Percentage Increase/ Decrease in monthly rental amounts across 5 areas of Monmouthshire 2010-2019

Source: Hometrack

7.5.17.2 Other than the Usk rental area, the other rental areas have seen a significant rise in monthly rental values over the past ten years. For Monmouthshire as a whole the rental values have seen an average increase of almost 25% on 2010 values.

7.5.18 Current Rental Values

7.5.18.1 Table 11 below illustrates the monthly rental values for the five rental areas as at Summer 2020. For example, the rental value for a one-bed property in Abergavenny ranges from £815 (highest value) to £295 (lowest value) with an average value of £513 and a median value of £475, based on a sample size of 192 properties.

	Bedroom Category	Sample Number of Properties	Highest Current Monthly Rent	Lowest Current Monthly Rent	Average Current Monthly Rent	Median Current Monthly Rent
Abergavenny	1 Bed	192	£815	£295	£513	£475
	2 Bed	444	£925	£330	£634	£638
	3 Bed	347	£1,200	£405	£771	£755
	4 Bed	109	£2,195	£390	£1,070	£965
	5 + Bed	35	£3,535	£600	£1,649	£1,535
	Total	1127				
Usk	1 Bed	61	£710	£360	£535	£535
	2 Bed	178	£870	£398	£663	£660
	3 Bed	211	£1,190	£476	£805	£783

	4 Bed	65	£1,735	£424	£1,047	£960
	5 + Bed	16	£3,020	£1,100	£1,896	£1,818
	Total	531				
Chepstow	1 Bed	350	£770	£285	£559	£565
	2 Bed	650	£1,030	£485	£697	£695
	3 Bed	677	£2,055	£475	£845	£830
	4+ Bed	236	£2,380	£685	£1,295	£1,215
	5+ Bed	68	£3,165	£1,055	£1,663	£1,553
	Total	1981				
Monmouth	1 Bed	191	£710	£350	£529	£560
	2 Bed	450	£925	£410	£664	£665
	3 Bed	297	£1,545	£470	£836	£820
	4+Bed	151	£2,185	£700	£1,243	£1,170
	5+ Bed	40	£3,535	£1,065	£1,902	£1,813
	Total	1129				
Caldicot	1 Bed	96	£970	£250	£512	£520
	2 Bed	383	£885	£460	£655	£665
	3 Bed	454	£1,105	£535	£775	£770
	4+Bed	133	£1,515	£790	£1,051	£1,015
	5+ Bed	10	£2,010	£420	£1,450	£1,503
	Total	1076				

Table 11: Monthly Rental Values across 5 areas of Monmouthshire summer 2020

Source: Hometrack

7.5.19 Local Housing Allowance Rates (LHA)

7.5.19.1 Monmouthshire has one single rate for each bedroom category (maximum bedroom rate of four bedrooms for the county). Table 12 illustrates the details for 2020/2021.

Shared Allowance	£329
1 Bed	£414
2 Bed	£549
3 Bed	£648
4+Bed	£779

Table 12: Local Housing Allowance Rates for Monmouthshire 2020/2021

7.5.19.2 The following table illustrates the number of available properties that are affordable to those in receipt of the appropriate LHA rate for their bedroom category.

Rental Area	Bedroom Count	Sample Number of Properties	Monthly LHA Rate	Number of properties at or below LHA rate	Percentage of properties at or below LHA
Abergavenny	1 Bed	192	£414.00	24	12.5%
	2 Bed	444	£549.00	81	18.2%
	3 Bed	347	£648.00	38	11.0%
	4 Bed	109	£779.00	5	4.6%
Usk	1 Bed	61	£414.00	0	0.0%
	2 Bed	178	£549.00	21	11.8%
	3 Bed	211	£648.00	15	7.1%

	4 Bed	65	£779.00	3	4.6%
Chepstow	1 Bed	350	£414.00	14	4.0%
	2 Bed	650	£549.00	9	1.4%
	3 Bed	677	£648.00	5	0.7%
	4+ Bed	236	£779.00	1	0.4%
Monmouth	1 Bed	191	£414.00	22	11.5%
	2 Bed	450	£549.00	41	9.1%
	3 Bed	297	£648.00	5	1.7%
	4+Bed	151	£779.00	4	2.6%
Caldicot	1 Bed	96	£414.00	8	8.3%
	2 Bed	383	£549.00	19	5.0%
	3 Bed	454	£648.00	11	2.4%
	4+Bed	133	£779.00	0	0.0%

Table 13: Number of Properties at LHA Rate in Monmouthshire

Source: Hometrack

7.5.19.3 Table 14, below, details the number of properties that came within the LHA rate applicable to their bedroom count is 326, which equates to 5.75% of the total number of available properties. This data shows that it is highly unlikely that recipients of local housing allowance could afford to rent a property at market rent. Data from Housing Benefit shows that over 800 households were in receipt of LHA of which 253 households were having their payments made directly to the Landlord (156) or were receiving DHP (97).

Total by Rental Properties	5675	Total Number of Properties at LHA Rate	326	Percentage	5.75%
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Table 14: Total number of properties in Monmouthshire within the LHA rate

7.5.20 Affordability

7.5.20.1 A comparison between the median net annual household income and the median rental values for each property type by area determined whether a household could afford to rent privately.

7.5.20.2 In addition there is an assumption that a maximum of 35% of net income is spent on renting and that net income is 74% of gross income (accounting for tax and NI contributions). The calculation method and assumptions are in line with guidance on calculating affordability issued by the Homes and Communities Agency.

7.5.20.3 Table 15 below shows the net median family income required to meet the median rental values of each bedroom count. Note that the median wage has two values. This represents those residents that work “in county” and those that work “out of county”. This latter category represent 40% of the total work force.

Rental Area		Sample Number of Properties	Highest Current Monthly Rent	Lowest Current Monthly Rent	Median Current Monthly Rent	Rent as a percentage of Median Monthly Wage (In County)	Rent as a percentage of Median Monthly Wage (Out of County)	In County Median Net Wage.	Out of County Net Wage.
Abergavenny	1 Bed	192	£815.	£295.	£475.	26.0%	30.6%	£1,828	£2,085
	2 Bed	444	£925.	£330.	£638.	34.9%	30.6%		
	3 Bed	347	£1,200	£405.	£755.	41.3%	36.2%		
	4 Bed	109	£2,195.	£390.	£965.	52.8%	46.3%		
	5 + Bed	35	£3,535.	£600.	£1,535.	84.0%	73.6%		
	Total	1127							
Usk	1 Bed	61	£710.	£360.	£535.	25.7%	25.7%		
	2 Bed	178	£870.	£398	£660.	36.1%	31.7%		
	3 Bed	211	£1,190	£476.	£782.	42.8%	37.5%		
	4 Bed	65	£1,735	£424	£960.	52.5%	46.1%		

	5 + Bed	16	£3,020.	£1,100.	£1,817.	99.4%	87.2%
	Total	531					
Chepstow	1 Bed	350	£770.	£285.	£565.	30.9%	27.1%
	2 Bed	650	£1,030.	£485.	£695.	38.0%	33.0%
	3 Bed	677	£2,055.	£475.	£830.	45.4%	40.0%
	4+ Bed	236	£2,380.	£685.	£1,215.	66.5%	58.0%
	5+ Bed	68	£3,165.	£1,055.	£1,552.	84.9%	74.0%
	Total	1981					
Monmouth	1 Bed	191	£710.	£350.	£560.	30.6%	26.9%
	2 Bed	450	£925.	£410.	£665.	36.4%	31.9%
	3 Bed	297	£1,545.	£470.	£820.	44.9%	39.3%
	4+ Bed	151	£2,185.	£700.	£1,170.	64.0%	56.1%
	5+ Bed	40	£3,535.	£1,065.	£1,812.	99.2%	87.0%
	Total	1129					
Caldicot	1 Bed	96	£970.	£250.	£520.	28.5%	25.0%
	2 Bed	383	£885.	£460.	£665.	36.4%	31.9%
	3 Bed	454	£1,105.	£535.	£770.	42.1%	36.9%
	4+ Bed	133	£1,515.	£790.	£1,015.	55.5%	48.7%

5+ Bed	10	£2,010.	£420.	£1,502.	82.2%	72.18%		
Total	1076							

Table 15: Affordability – Net Median Wage Based on Median Rents by Bedroom Category

Source: Hometrack

7.5.20.4 With the net monthly median earnings for people residing and working in Monmouthshire being £1,828 and for people residing in Monmouthshire but working outside the county being £2,085, accessing properties in the private rental sector in Monmouthshire remains a challenge for a large number of households (Source: Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics).

7.5.20.5 Although average wages have increased over the last two years for Monmouthshire residents, the high house prices in Monmouthshire still puts owning a home beyond the reach of many families who live and work in Monmouthshire.

7.5.20.6 Average earnings for those who work in Monmouthshire are £570 per week or £29,640 per annum. This is above the Wales average of £535 per week or £27,820 per annum. The average earnings of people who live in Monmouthshire and travel to work elsewhere are higher at £694.60 per week or £36,119.20 per annum. This is above the Wales average of £540.70 or £28,116.40.

Source: ONS - Annual survey of hours and earnings (2019 figures)

7.5.21 Higher Managerial Socio-economic Status

7.5.21.1 Monmouthshire's economically active population can be broken down by occupation, 51.5% of residents are recorded as working in Higher Managerial or Professional positions and this compares to a Wales average of 42.6%. The house purchasing ability of this socio-economic group is far greater than local people on local incomes, and is one of the reasons why house prices, especially in rural areas are so unaffordable. With the removal of Severn Bridge tolls at the end of 2018, it is quite likely that there will be further counter-urbanisation from Bristol into Monmouthshire with both house prices and rental values in the private rented sector being pushed up even higher.

Source: ONS - Annual survey of hours and earnings (2019 figures)

7.5.22 *Entry Level Property Price*

- 7.5.22.1 The entry level house price for Monmouthshire is £200,000.
- 7.5.22.2 There are cheaper properties available to buy in the county, but this figure reflects the market evidence of where the majority of first-time buyers access home ownership in Monmouthshire.
- 7.5.22.3 The £200,000 figure is the lower quartile price of a semi-detached house in Monmouthshire, based on sales and valuations. The reason it is based on sales and valuations is with far fewer sales taking place in 2020, combining it with valuation data gives a more up-to-date and robust figure.
- 7.5.22.4 Semi-detached properties account for just under 30% of all housing in Monmouthshire, so they are widely available in all areas of the county, as opposed to terraced properties which account for only 17% of the housing stock and detached properties which account for nearly 45% of the stock. Detached properties are significantly more expensive and therefore not considered entry level.
- 7.5.22.5 Although there are obvious differences between housing markets within Monmouthshire, the differences in semi-detached prices is not significant. The most recent market data shows the figure for Abergavenny to be the cheapest for semi-detached at £175,000, with Caldicot being the most expensive area at £210,000. Although the figure for Abergavenny does appear low, using sales only data the lower quartile figure is then £210,000, but this is based on a property count of only seven properties.
- 7.5.22.6 To be able to access home ownership in Monmouthshire, with an entry level price of £200,000, after allowing for a 15% deposit of £30,000 a household's income would need to be over £48,500 based on a mortgage offer at 3.5 times the household income.
- 7.5.22.7 According to the latest Hometrack data, the current Monmouthshire average house price to average income ratio is 7.23:1. In other words, people living in Monmouthshire would need over seven times their income to be able to afford an averaged priced property. That ratio increases to 9:1 for someone on a lower quartile income.
- 7.5.22.8 Rural house prices in Monmouthshire usually attract a significant premium and with the majority of housing being detached a separate entry level price for the rural parts of the country was not considered to be necessary.

Chapter 8: Profile of Homelessness : Use of Statutory Homelessness Services

8.1.1 Section 8 considers the profile of homelessness in Monmouthshire. The section incorporates quantitative data, such as household characteristics, causes of homelessness and reoccurring themes and considers future trends. This data consists of locally collated data and statutory data sourced from Welsh Governments WHO 12.

8.2 Background

8.2.1 The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the legal definition of homelessness. As recommended by the Welsh Government and for the purpose of this strategy the following broader definition of homelessness is used.

8.2.2 Section 55 of the Act set out the meaning of homeless and threatened homelessness:

- A person is homeless if there is no accommodation available for the person's occupation, in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, which the person—
 - is entitled to occupy by virtue of an interest in it or by virtue of an order of a court,
 - has an express or implied licence to occupy, or
 - occupies as a residence by virtue of any enactment or rule of law giving the person the right to remain in occupation or restricting the right of another person to recover possession.
- A person is also homeless if the person has accommodation but—
 - cannot secure entry to it, or
 - it consists of a moveable structure, vehicle or vessel designed or adapted for human habitation and there is no place where the person is entitled or permitted both to place it and to reside in it.
- A person is not to be treated as having accommodation unless it is accommodation, which it would be reasonable for the person to continue to occupy.
- A person is threatened with homelessness if it is likely that the person will become within 56 days.

8.2.3 In its revised Code of Guidance for Allocations and Homelessness (2016) Welsh Government provided a broader definition and describes homelessness as:

8.2.4 'Where a person lacks accommodation or where their tenure is not secure'. This will include people who are:

- Sleeping rough
- Living in insecure/temporary housing (excluding assured/assured short-hold tenants)
- Living in short term hostels, night shelters, direct access hostels
- Living in bed and breakfasts
- Moving frequently between relatives/friends
- Squatting
- Unable to remain in, or return to, housing due to poor conditions, such as
 - overcrowding,
 - affordability problems,

- domestic violence,
- harassment,
- mental, physical and/or sexual abuse,
- unsuitability for physical needs or learning disabilities, sensory impairments or mental health conditions
- Threatened with losing their home and without suitable alternative accommodation for any reason, e.g. domestic abuse
- Leaving hospitals, police custody, prisons, the armed forces and other institutions or supported housing without a home to go to,
- Required to leave by family or friends or due to relationship breakdown,
- Facing possession proceedings or threat of eviction within 56 days of the end of tenancy.

8.2.5 In addition the Act introduced several new duties in relation to homelessness for local authorities with particular emphasis on prevention.

8.3 What is the data telling us about homelessness and prevention in Monmouthshire?

8.3.1 Initial presentation to the Council’s Housing Options Team is the starting point of determining the overall demand on the service of households seeking housing-related advice.

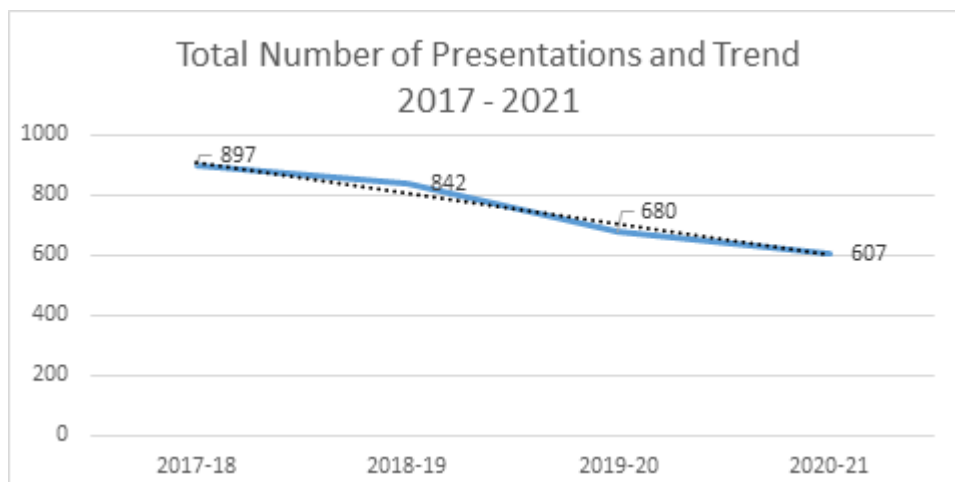


Figure 24: Number of presentations to Monmouthshire County Council’s Housing Options Team 2017-2021

8.3.1.1 The graph (Figure 24) shows that presentations have fallen over the past 4 years, from a high of 897 presentations in 2017/18 to 607 presentations in 2020/21 a fall of 32.33%.

8.3.2 Single Households

8.3.2.1 The following table shows the percentage of single household presentations as a percentage of the total number of presentations. This has remained relatively stable over the past 4 years fluctuating between 62% and 68%.

2017-18	65.77%
2018-19	62.7% ¹
2019-20	64.12%
2020-21	68.86%

Table 16: Number of single presentations as a percentage of total

8.3.2.2 Figure 25 and Table 17 shows the breakdown between male and female presentations.

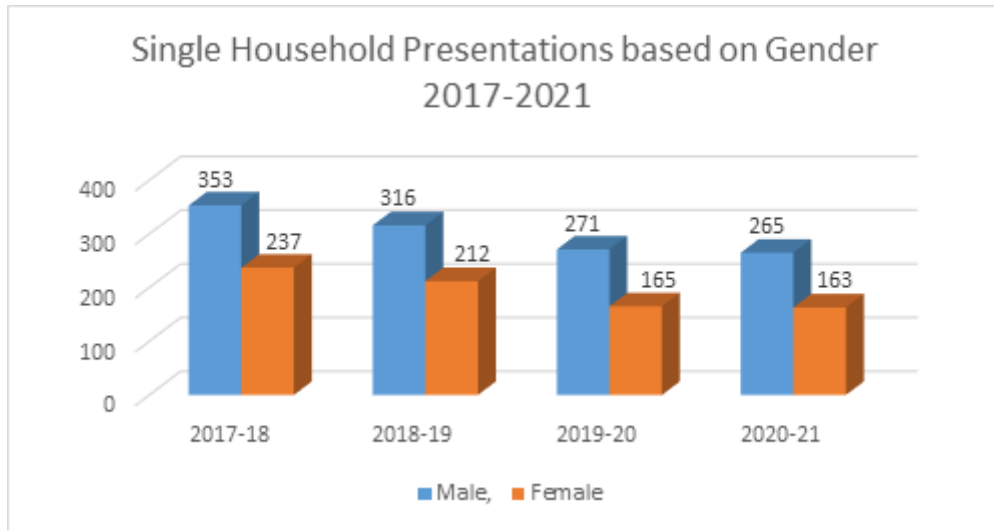


Figure 25: Breakdown of single household presentations by gender 2017-2021

2017-18	59.83%
2018-19	59.85%
2019-20	62.16%
2020-21	61.91%

Table 17: Male single households as a percentage of total single household presentations 2017-2021

8.3.2.3 Again the percentage of male to female presentations remains relatively consistent across the 4-year period with males making up almost 61% of all presentations.

8.3.3 Households with Dependent Children

8.3.3.1 The figure below shows that the number of presentations of households with dependent children fell by around 50% over the same period.

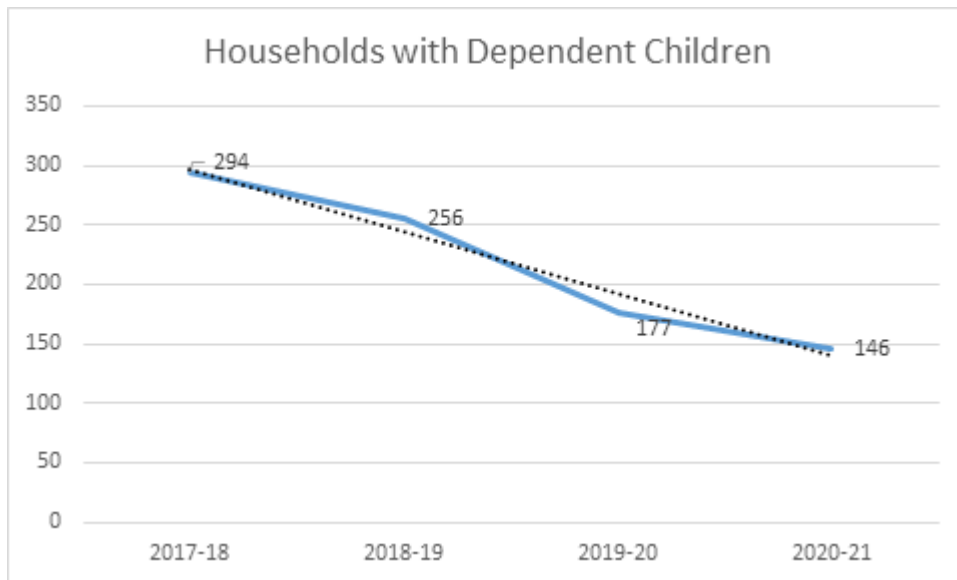


Figure 26: Number of households presenting to Monmouthshire Council Housing Options Team with Dependent children 2017-2021

8.3.4 Young Persons: 16/ 17 year olds and 18 to 24 year olds

8.3.4.1 Figure 27 below displays the number of young person households presenting April 2017 to March 2021.

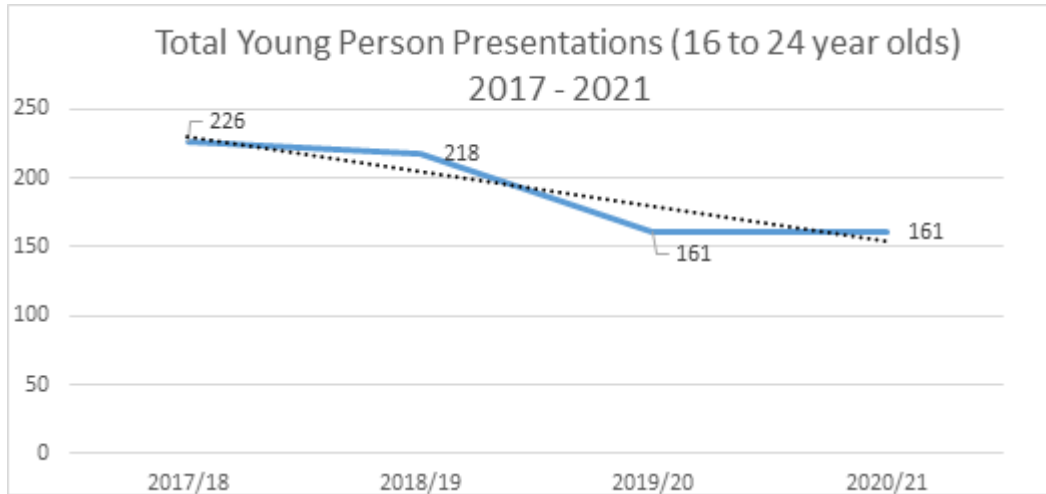


Figure 27: Number of Young Person presentations to Monmouthshire County Council Housing Options Team 2017-2021

8.3.4.2 The total number of presentations from young persons (16 – 24 olds) has followed almost the same line as the total number of presentations – a fall of 28.76%. Young people make up 25% of all applications.

8.3.4.3 In terms of gender the Figure 28 below shows a fall in presentations across the genders with females making up 57.44% percentage of presentations over the four-year period (2017 – 2021)

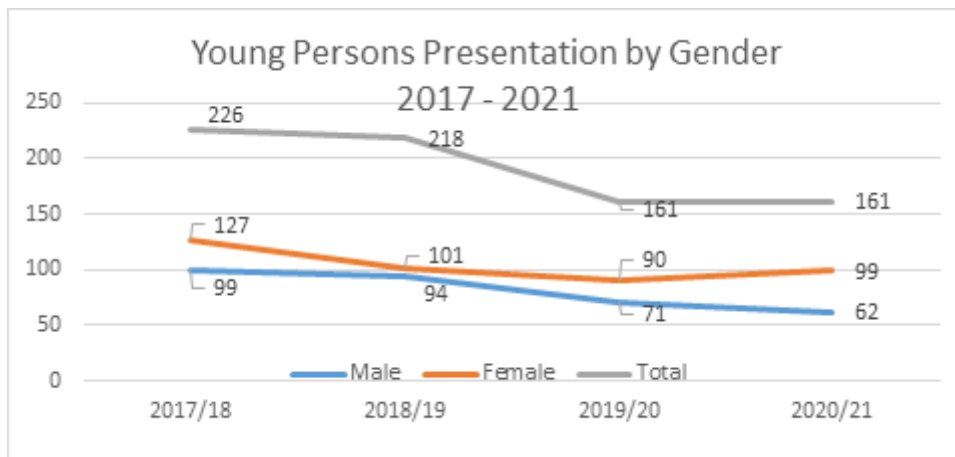


Figure 28: Young Person presentations broken down by Gender

8.3.4.4 Young persons are divided into two age cohorts 16 and 17 year olds and 18 to 24 year olds, Figure 29 below shows there was a spike in presentations during 2018 – 19 for 16 and 17 year olds and that the trend has fallen since then. However overall the trend shows presentations has increased by just under 65% with female presentations making up the majority of that rise.

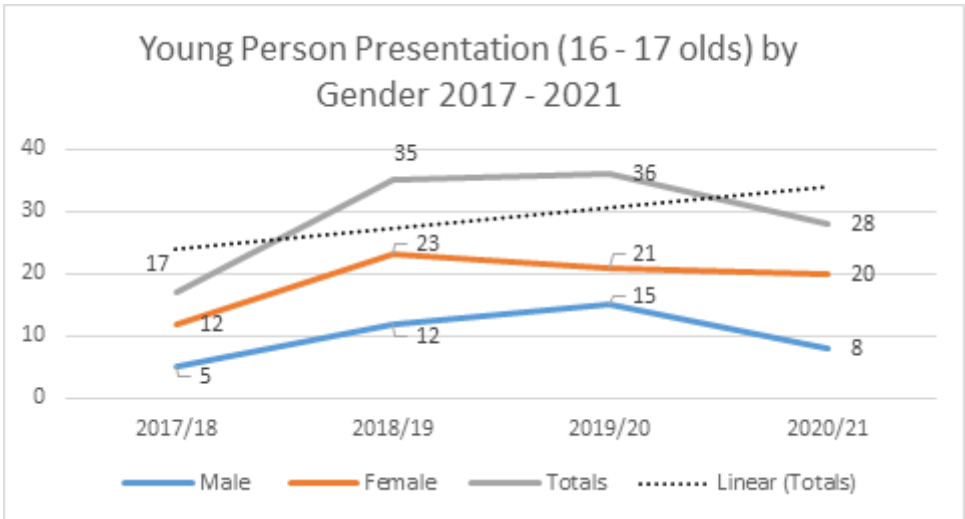


Figure 29: Young Person presentations- 16-17 year olds- by Gender 2017-2021

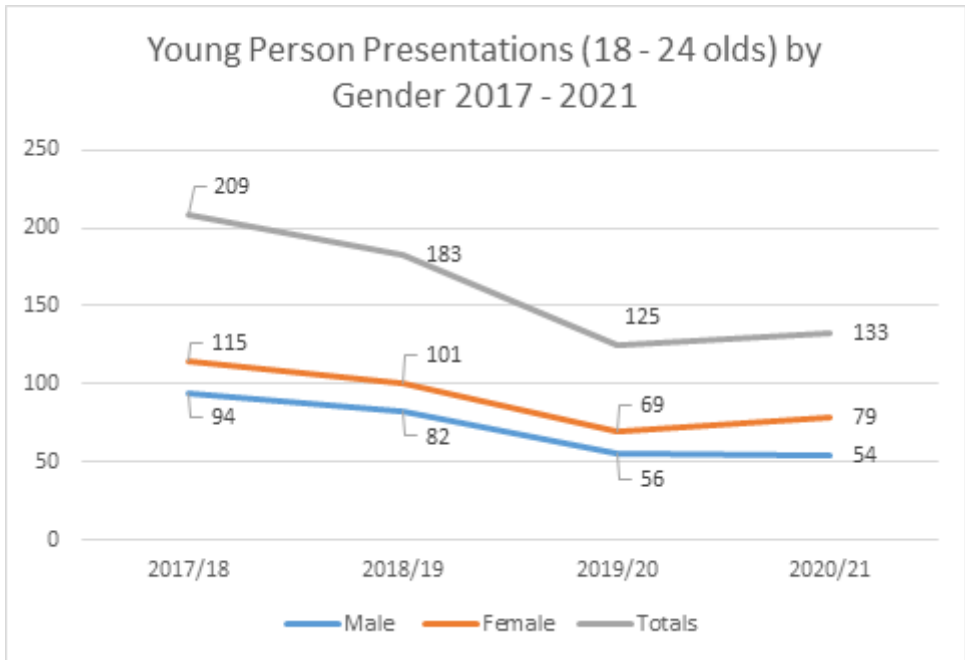


Figure 30: Young Person presentations- 18-24 year olds, by gender 2017-2021

8.3.4.5 For the 18 to 24 year old cohort Figure 30 above shows of just over 36% fall during over the four year period 2017 – 2020 with a slight increase during 2020 – 21. As with the 16- 17 year old cohort females make up the majority of the 18 – 24 year old cohort.

8.3.4.6 The gender split for the young person cohort (more female than male) is opposite to the gender split for all presentation (more male than female).

8.4 The Duties

8.4.1 Section 60 – The Duty to provide housing advice, information and assistance that is free and easily accessible.

8.4.2 Section 62 – The duty to undertake an assessment

8.4.3 The local authority has a duty to assess every household who could be at threat of homelessness. At this point the Council must satisfy itself what further duties apply to the household applicant.

8.4.4 Section 66: The Prevention Duty. The duty placed on the Council to take reasonable steps to prevent or alleviate homelessness. It applies to all households threatened with homelessness within 56 days of approaching the Council regardless of their priority status or connection to the County.

8.4.5 Section 73: To Help to Secure Alternative Accommodation – A prevention duty. The activation of this duty occurs when all other forms of assistance to prevent or alleviate homelessness occurring under the S66 duty are exhausted and the household has to leave their current accommodation. Again this duty applies to all households regardless of their priority status or connection to the County. Under this duty the Council will help the applicant to secure alternative accommodation through various means such as.

8.4.6 Section 75 – The Duty to Accommodate. Only households with a priority need, local connection and unintentionally homeless will fall under this duty. This duty applies once all other preventative options under the duties above have failed.

8.4.7 This duty ends any one of the following happens

- The household applicant accepts an offer of suitable accommodation
- The household applicant refuse offer of suitable accommodation
- The household applicant voluntary ceases to occupy the accommodation,
- The household applicant is no longer eligible,
- There is a mistake of fact during the investigation stage,
- The household applicant withdraws their application
- The household applicant unreasonably fails to cooperate.

8.5 The main reasons for being threatened with homelessness under a Section 66 or 73 Duty

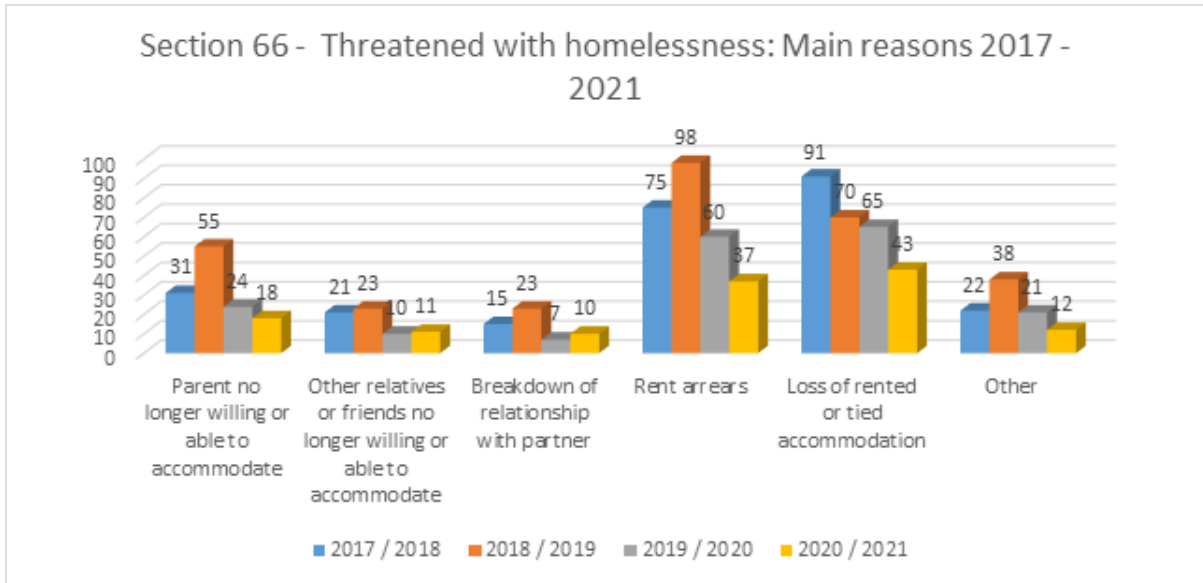


Figure 31: Main reasons for the threat of homelessness under a Section 66 2017-2021

8.5.1 When it comes to Section 73, the main reasons for being threatened with homelessness is the applicant is no longer able to remain in their current accommodation either due to parental eviction or other relatives or friends evicting (300) followed by breakdown with partner (233) and by loss of private rented accommodation (including rent arrears) (220), see figure 32 below.

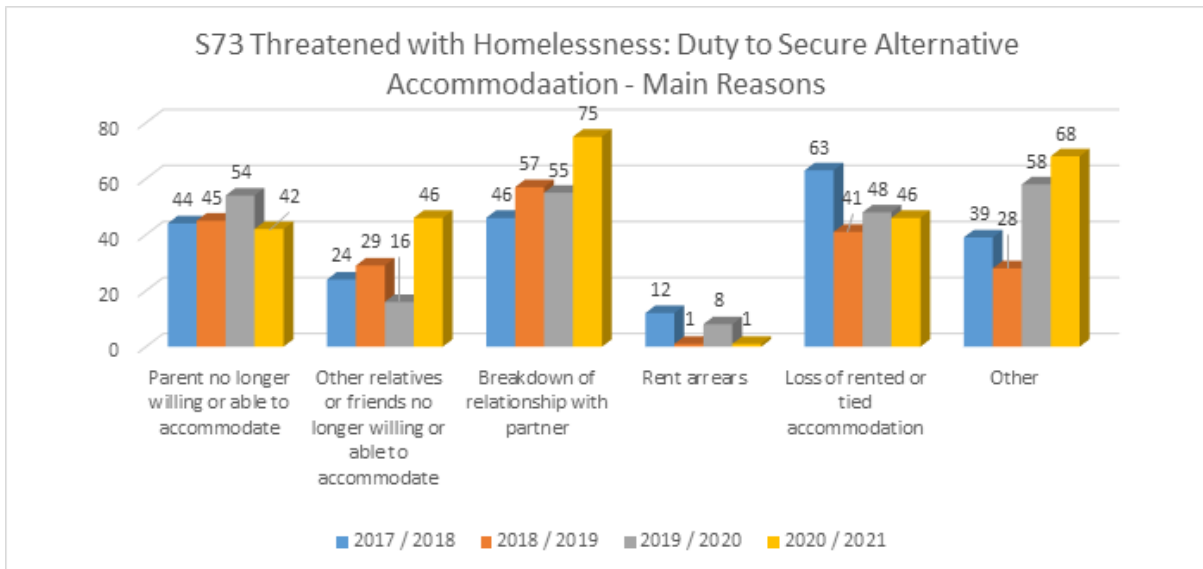


Figure 32: Main reasons for the threat of homelessness under a Section 73 2017-2021

8.5.2 The category “Other” for both S66 and S73 covers the following

- Current property unaffordable
- Violence or harassment:
- Mortgage arrears (repossession or other loss of home)
- Current property unsuitable

- Prison Leaver
- In institution or care (e.g. hospital, residential home, army etc.)
- homeless in emergency eg, returned from abroad, sleeping rough or in hostel)

8.5.3 Loss of a Private Sector rented accommodation has consistently remained the most common reason for household threatened with homelessness (both rent arrears and loss of accommodation) followed by parent and friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (both from parents and relative and friends).

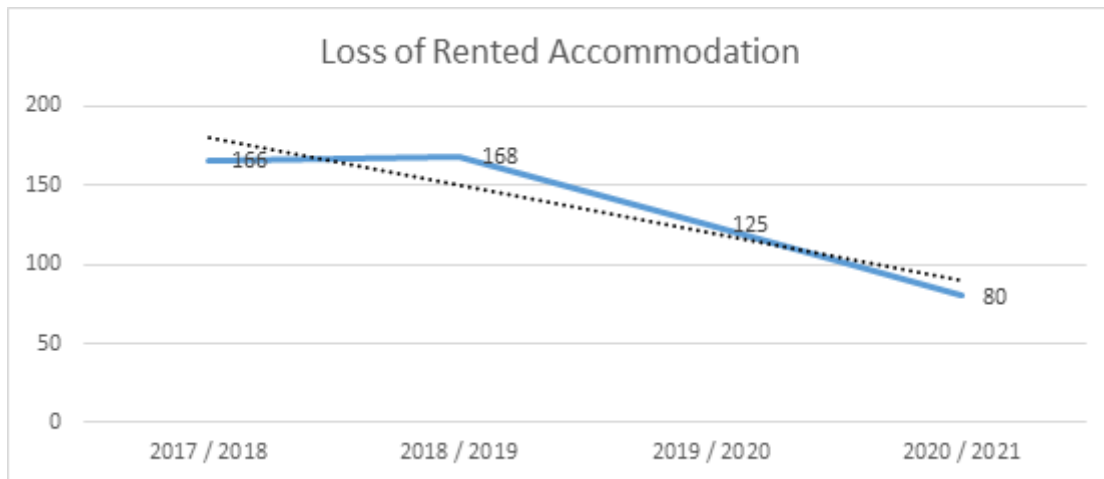


Figure 33: Number of applicants who have lost Private Rented Accommodation 2017-2021

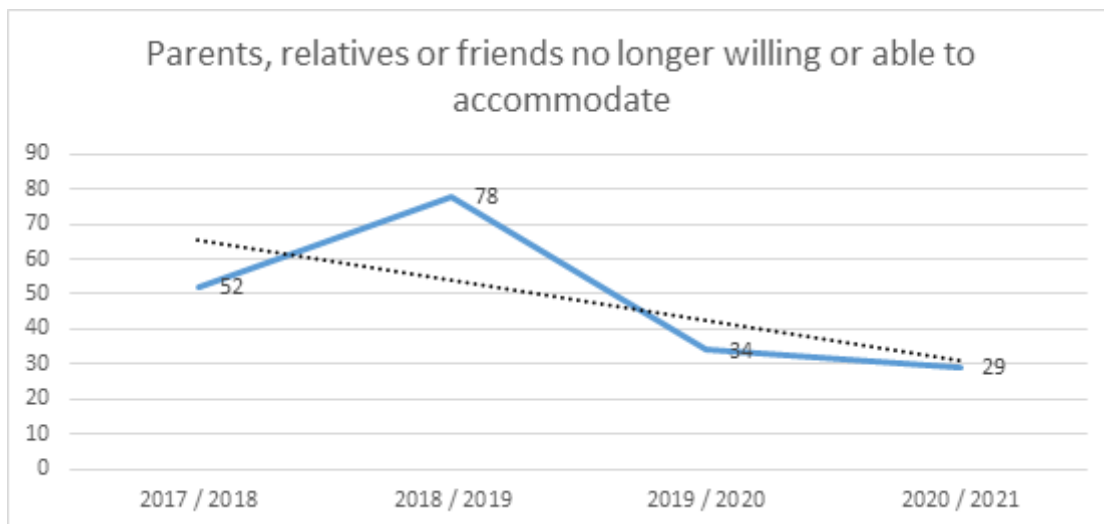


Figure 34: Number of applicants whose Parents, Friends or Relatives are unable to accommodate 2017-2021

8.5.4 When cross referencing with data on single people gives some indication that parents no longer willing to accommodate is broadly more of an issue for single households, compared to all households that present to the Council.

8.5.5 When we look at the number of single households they account for almost 43% of all household under a S66 duty during 2017/18 and rises to almost 65.5% for the financial year 2019/20.

8.5.6 Under a S73 duty single household's account for almost 69% of all households rising to just under 75% for the 2019/20 financial year.

S66	Male applicant	Female applicant	Total single Households	Total Households	Percentage of single to total household	Percentage of male single households as a percentage of total single households	Percentage of female single households as a percentage of total single households
2017/2018	55	55	110	255	43.13%	50%	50%
2018/2019	92	58	150	307	48.88%	61.33%	38.67%
2019/2020	73	57	130	187	69.51%	56.15%	43.85%
2020/2021	38	23	61	130	46.92%	62.29%	37.71%

Table 18: Breakdown of Section 66 Households

S73	Male applicant	Female applicant	Total Singles Households	Total Households	percentage of single to total household	Percentage of male single households as a percentage of total single households	Percentage of female single households as a percentage of total single households
2017/2018	106	52	158	228	69.29%	67.08%	32.92%
2018/2019	82	47	129	201	64.17%	63.56%	36.44%
2019/2020	112	66	178	239	74.47%	62.92%	37.08%

2020/2021	138	67	205	278	73.74%	67.31%	32.69%
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Table 19: Breakdown of Section 73 Households

8.6 The Duties and the Data

8.6.1.1 As discussed at paragraph 8.4, above, the Council has a number statutory duties to help alleviate households from being homelessness. To recap the duties

- S66 and S73 the “preventative” and help to “secure” duties that are available to all households irrespective of their local connection or priority status, and the “reasonable steps” the Council must undertake to alleviate the threat of homelessness.
- S75 the duty to accommodate – is available to those households that have a local connection and priority need and preventive work under sections 66 and 73 has failed to prevent the household from becoming homelessness.

8.6.1.2 The following paragraphs show the demand and effectiveness of the service.

8.6.1.3 **Section 66** to prevent homelessness occurring in the first instance either by helping households to remain in their current accommodation if it is safe and practical to do so or through the securing of alternative accommodation.

8.6.1.4 All cases where positive action succeeded or did not succeed in preventing/relieving homelessness.

S66				
	Unsuccessful	Successful	total	Success as a Percentage
2017/18	100	155	255	60.78%
2018/19	101	206	307	67.10%
2019/20	74	113	187	60.43%
2020/21	46	83	129	64.34%

Table 20: Number of Section 66s broken down by successful and unsuccessful outcomes 2017-2021

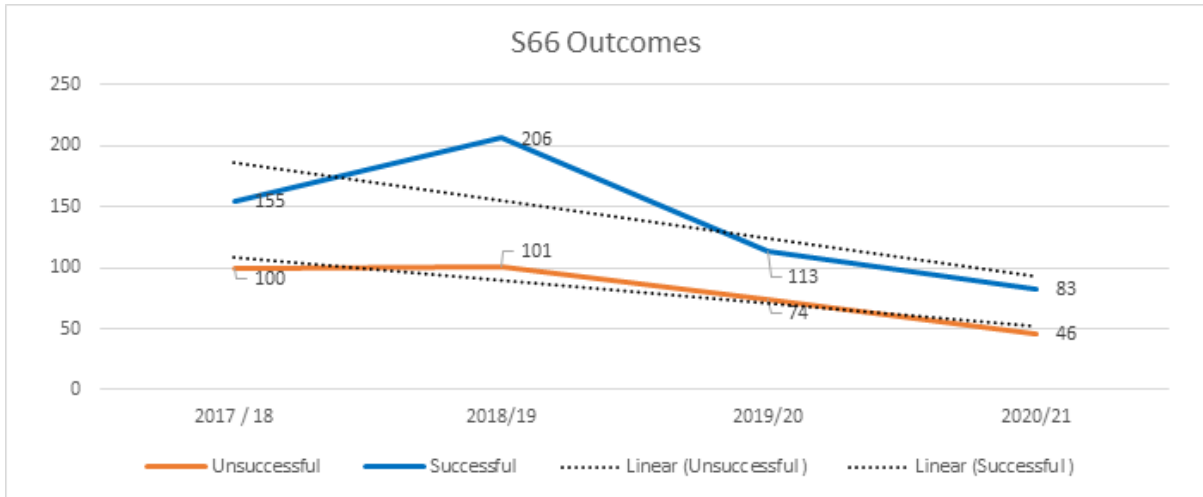


Figure 35: Number of Section 66s broken down by successful and unsuccessful outcomes 2017-2021

8.6.1.5 Table 20 and Figure 35 above shows that for households owed a Section 66 duty across all four years the Council success rate in alleviating the threat of homelessness was just under 64%.

8.6.1.6 **Section 73:** Help to Secure Alternative Accommodation. Households are owed this duty when all other forms of assistance to prevent or alleviate homelessness occurring under the S66 duty are exhausted.

S73				
Year	Unsuccessful	Successful	Total	Success as a Percentage
2017 / 18	115	113	228	49.56%
2018/19	71	130	201	64.68%
2019/20	77	162	239	67.78%
2020/21	135	127	273	46.52%

Table 21: Number of Section 73s broken down by successful and unsuccessful outcomes 2017-2021

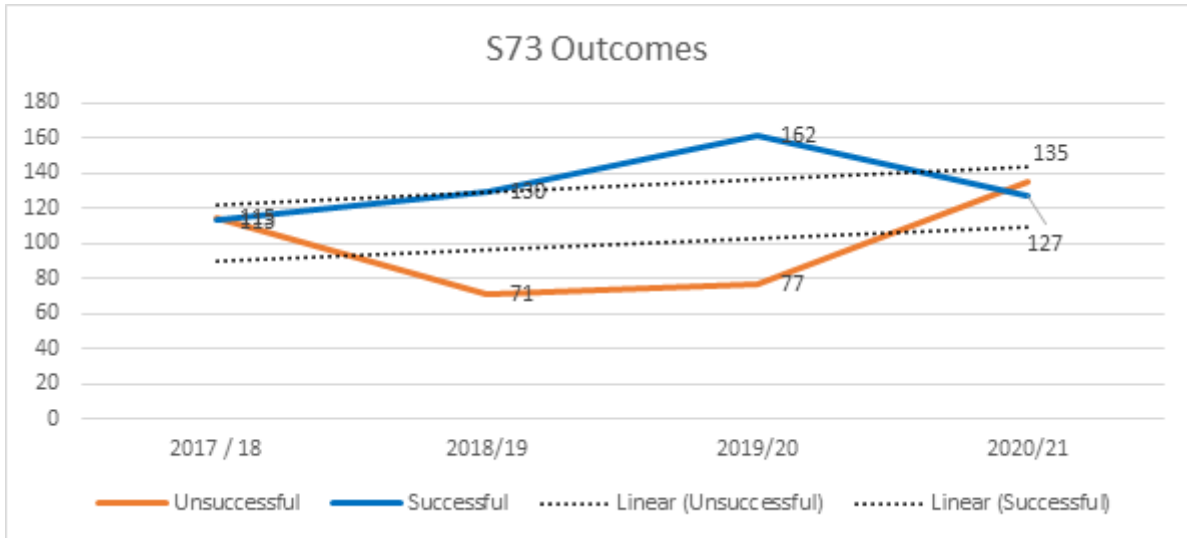


Figure 36: Number of Section 73s broken down by successful and unsuccessful outcomes 2017-2021

8.6.1.7 Table 21 and Figure 36 above shows that for households owed a Section 73 duty across all four years the Council success rate in alleviating the threat of homelessness by securing alternative accommodation was just under 57%.

8.6.1.8 The following table (Table 22) shows the total number of successful and unsuccessful outcomes across both S66 and S73 duties.

S66 and S73	Successful	Unsuccessful	Total
2017/18	268	215	483
2018/19	336	172	508
2019/20	275	151	426
2020/21	210	181	391

Table 22: Total outcomes S66 & S73 2017-2021

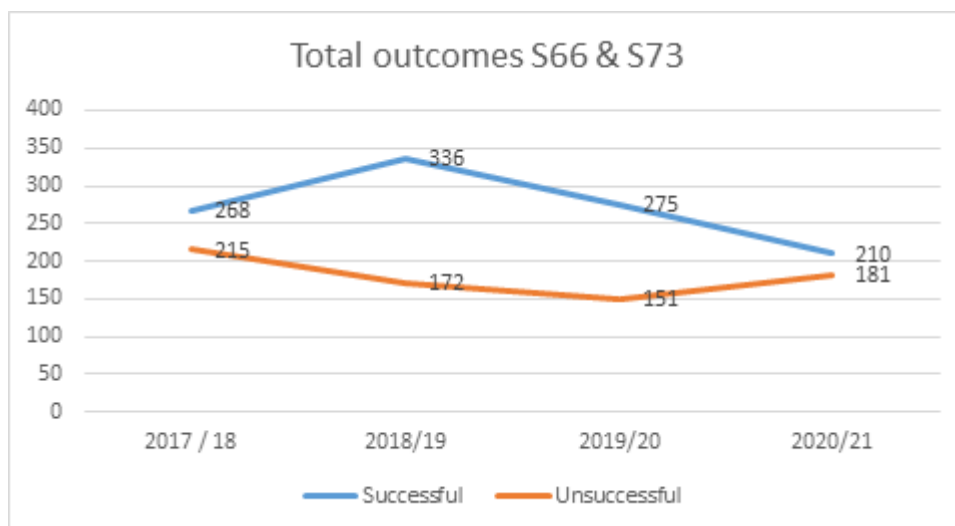


Figure 37: Total outcomes S66 & S73 2017-2021

8.6.1.9 From the table below (Table 21) our successes as a percentage of the total preventative outcomes reduced during 2020/21 to below the 2017/18 level.

	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021
Successful Outcomes	55.5%	66.14%	64.55%	53.71%
Unsuccessful Outcomes	44.5 %	33.86%	35.45%	46.29%

Table 23: Breakdown of preventative outcomes 2017-2021

8.6.2 The “Reasonable Steps” taken to Prevent Homelessness (S66)

8.6.2.1 Reasonable steps can include any of the following:

- Services offering mediation between young people and their parents / other relatives that will allow young persons to remain living their current accommodation if it is safe to do so.
- Services offering financial and debt advice to address issues such as
 - Mortgage and rent arrears.
 - The use of discretionary housing payments (DHP)
 - Prioritising debts
 - Services offering support to mortgage lenders and landlords to resolve issues that would prevent an eviction or withdraw an eviction notice.
- The use of a “prevention fund” that can resolve issues or assist households secure alternative accommodation, such as
 - rent/ mortgage arrears
 - Rent in advance
 - Rent deposits
 - Introduction payments
 - Landlord incentive measures

8.6.2.2 The following graph (Figure 38) shows the type of S66 interventions that enable the household to remain in their existing home.

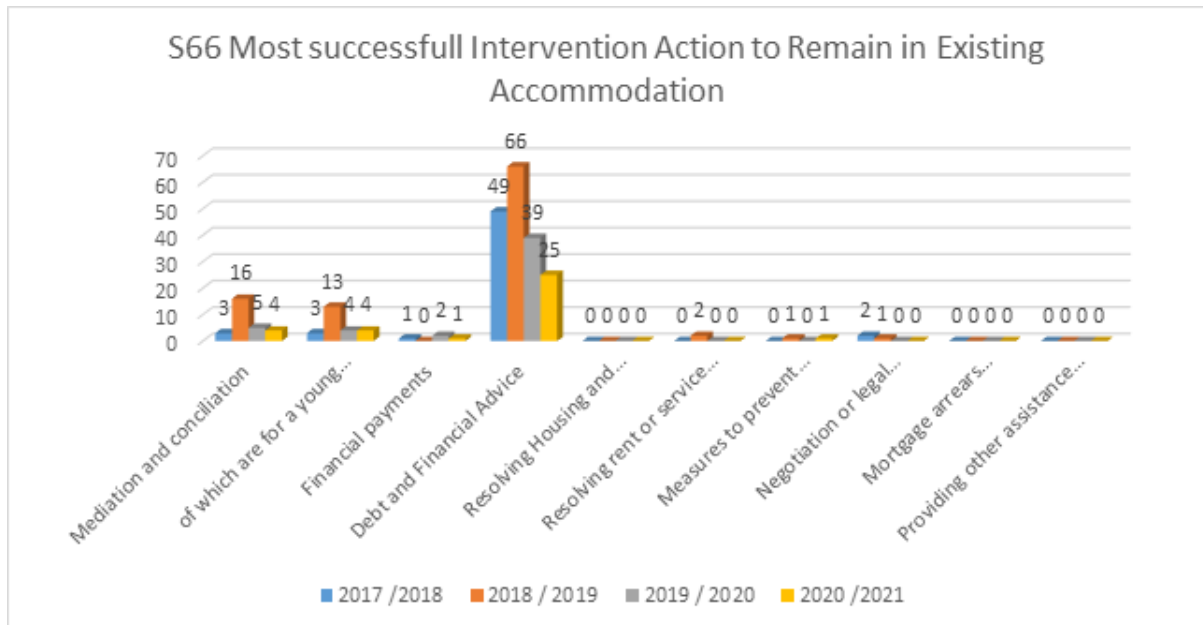


Figure 38: S66 Most Successful Intervention Action

8.6.2.3 Between 2017 – 2021, the most successful intervention allowing households to remain in their existing home has consistently been debt and financial advice (179 households) followed by mediation and conciliation (28 households)

8.6.3 Debt & Financial Advice

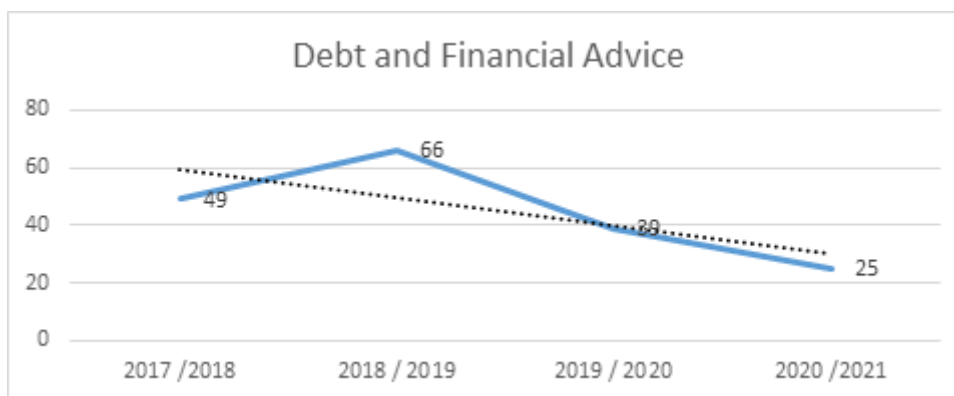


Figure 39: Debt & Financial Advice Intervention 2017-2021

8.6.3.1 However there has been a steady decline in the number of outcomes from a high of 66 during 2018/19 to 25 during 2020/21.

8.6.4 Young Persons Services

8.6.4.1 Mediation

8.6.4.2 Llamau provide a service for under 25s who are at risk of relationship breakdowns in the family home which could result in homelessness. Llamau work with the young person and their family as a mediator with the aim being for the young person to remain in the family home.

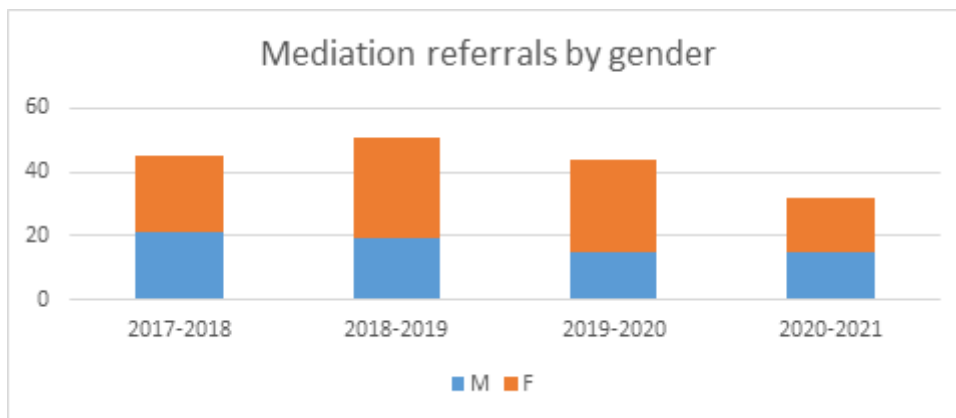


Figure 40: Number of referrals for Mediation 2017-2021 by Gender

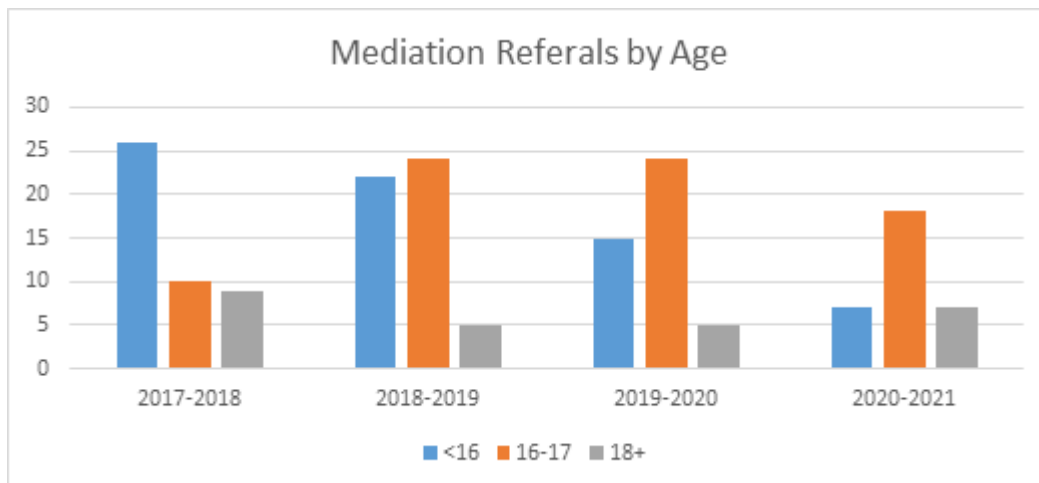


Figure 41: Number of referrals for Mediation 2017-2021 by Age

Year	Number of referrals	Number remaining/returning	Success rate (%)
2017-2018	45	38	84.44

2018-2019	51	40	78.43
2019-2020	44	32	72.73
2020-2021	32	26	81.25

Table 24: Number of referrals who were able to stay or return to accommodation

8.6.4.3 As the above table (Table 24) shows mediation has a high success rate in supporting young people to avoid homelessness and rebuild relationships. In general there are more female referrals than males with the number of U16s referred in decline.

8.6.4.4 Compass

8.6.4.5 Compass is a service working with young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

8.6.4.6 Compass receives referrals from schools, MCC Gateway, MCC Community HUBs, Self-referrals, Social Services, Job Centres, POBL group (hostels) and Llamau (Mediation and Emphasis projects). For those at risk of homelessness Compass provides support through holistic support approach based on assessment of individual needs from a single support factor to combined factors (**Note:** this will include where required collaboration with specialist support) inclusive of: mental/emotional well-being, at risk of NEET, Family Relationship Support, Advocacy, Mentoring, Independent Living Skills/budgeting, Employment and Training.

8.6.4.7 Those who approach as or find themselves homeless are provided with advocacy and support through presenting to HOT, Homesearch registration plus ongoing support where required.

8.6.4.8 The below tables (Table 25 and 26) demonstrate a rise in referrals in the last two years, with successful outcomes remaining relatively stable. Successful outcomes include actions leading to accommodation and/ or referrals to other services. As these are in- year outcomes and do not record for those whose cases span more than one financial year the actual success rate may be higher.

Year	Led to accommodation	Closed			Remained open/ support ongoing	Total number of referrals
		Referred to/in receipt of specialist support e.g. mental health. Employment, etc	Non-engagement	Disengaged from support		
2019-2020	15	7	3	3	13	41
2020-2021	19	13	3	6	17	58

Table 25: Number of referrals broken down into outcomes

	Positive	As a % total referrals	Negative	As a % total referrals
2019-2020	22	53.66	6	14.63
2020-2021	32	55.17	9	15.52

Table 26: Referrals broken down into positive and negative outcomes 2019-2021

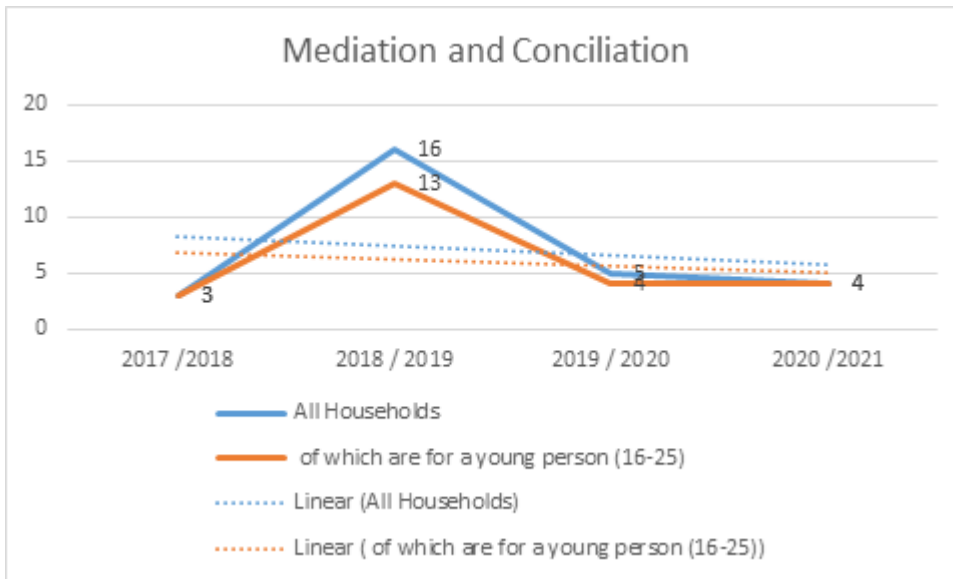


Figure 42: Mediation and Conciliation – Total of all households and the number of young persons (16-24)

8.6.5 Section 66 and Section 73: Help to Secure Alternative Accommodation

8.6.5.1 There are a number of actions recorded by WHO 12 data to alleviate the threat of homelessness through assisting applicants to secure alternative accommodation:

- I. Any form of non-self-contained supported accommodation.
- II. Self-contained supported accommodation
- III. Private rented sector accommodation with landlord incentive scheme (e.g. cashless bond, finders fee, deposit payment, rent in advance, landlord insurance payment)
- IV. Private rented sector accommodation without landlord incentive scheme
- V. Accommodation arranged with friends, relatives or returning home
- VI. Social Housing - Local authority
- VII. Social Housing – RSL
- VIII. Low cost home ownership scheme, low cost market housing solution

8.6.5.2 The following figures show the most successful intervention action to secure alternative accommodation through S66 and S73 intervention. In figures 43 and 44, below, and actions III and IV above, have been combined to create total for the private sector and likewise actions VI and VII have been combined to create a total for the social sector.

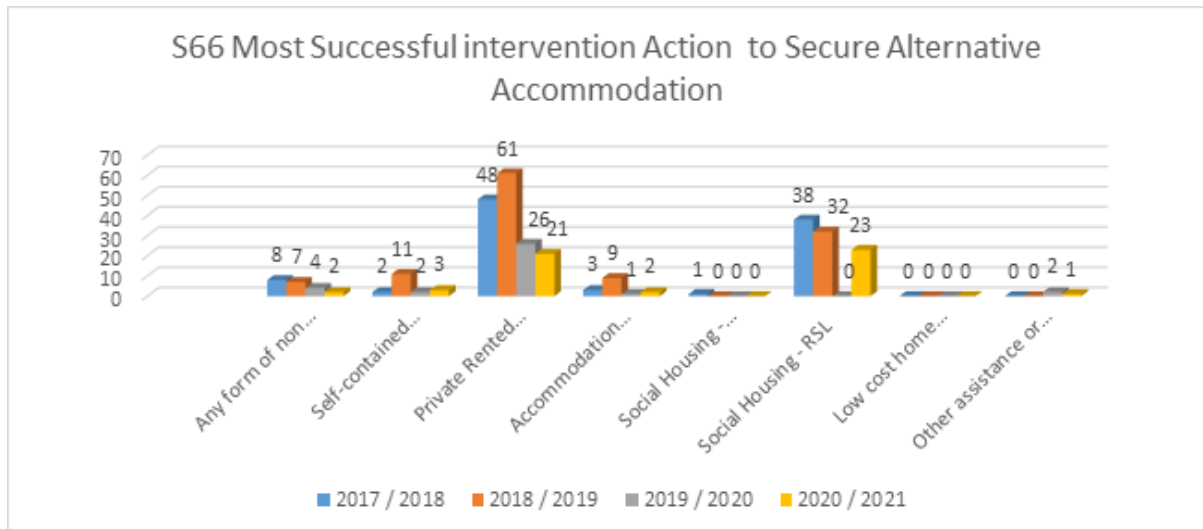


Figure 43: S 66 Most successful intervention action to secure alternative accommodation

8.6.5.3 When it comes to preventing homelessness and finding alternative accommodation options under a S66 duty the most successful option was the PRS with 63% of all household securing alternative accommodation (156) followed by the Social Housing Sector 37% (94 households).

8.6.6 Section 73: The duty to take reasonable steps to alleviate homelessness

8.6.7 However when it comes to Section 73 duty Figure 40, below shows that the most successful intervention for securing accommodation was in the social housing sector followed by securing accommodation in the private rented sector 187 and 177 households respectively.

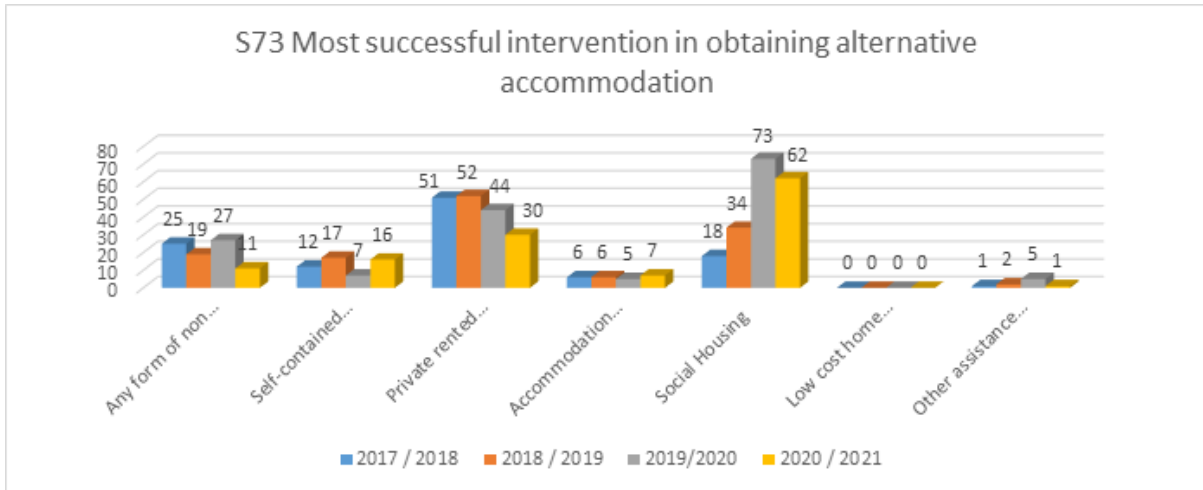


Figure 44: S73 Most successful intervention action to secure alternative accommodation

8.7 Accessing Private Rented and Social Rented Accommodation

8.7.1 Table 27 below shows the demand for both private rented property (PRS) and social housing (SHS) across S66 and S73 duties. A total of 614 households were assisted to find alternative accommodation within the PRS and SHS between April 2017 and March 2021.

Alternative Accommodation	PRS		SHS		Total
	S66	S73	S66	S73	
2017 / 2018	48	51	39	18	156
2018 / 2019	61	52	32	34	179
2019 / 2020	26	44	0	73	143
2020 / 2021	21	30	23	62	136
	156	177	94	187	614

Table 27: Demand for both private rented property (PRS) and social housing (SHS) across S66 and S73 duties

8.7.2 In terms of household being accommodation in both the PRS and the SHS and across both S66 and S73 duties the PRS accommodates 54.23% of households, see Table 28 below

		Percentage
PRS	333	54.23%
SHS	281	45.77%
Total	614	100%

Table 28: Number of those accommodated broken down into PRS and SHS

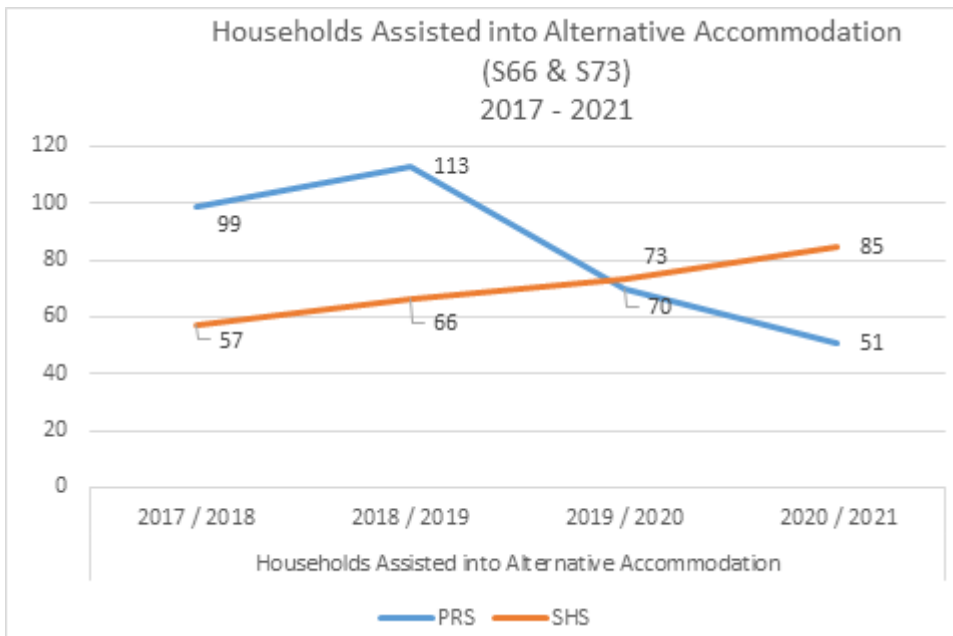


Figure 45: Number of Households Assisted into Alternative Accommodation 2017-2021

8.8 Landlord Incentives

8.8.1 As part of the toolkit to assist households find alternative accommodation within the PRS the use of landlord incentives such as cash and cashless bond, finders fee, deposit payment, rent in advance and landlord insurance payment helped to secure almost 59% of accommodation.

8.8.2 An invaluable intervention - without being able to use this we would be looking to find other forms of accommodation and more likely emergency temporary accommodation in bed & breakfast establishments.

8.9 S75: The Duty to Accommodate

8.9.1.1 This is the final duty owed to households threatened with homelessness and is only triggered when all the duties mentioned above have failed. In addition to the qualifying criteria required to meet the S66 and S73 duties, above, S 75 requires the applicant household to prove a “priority need” and “local connection”.

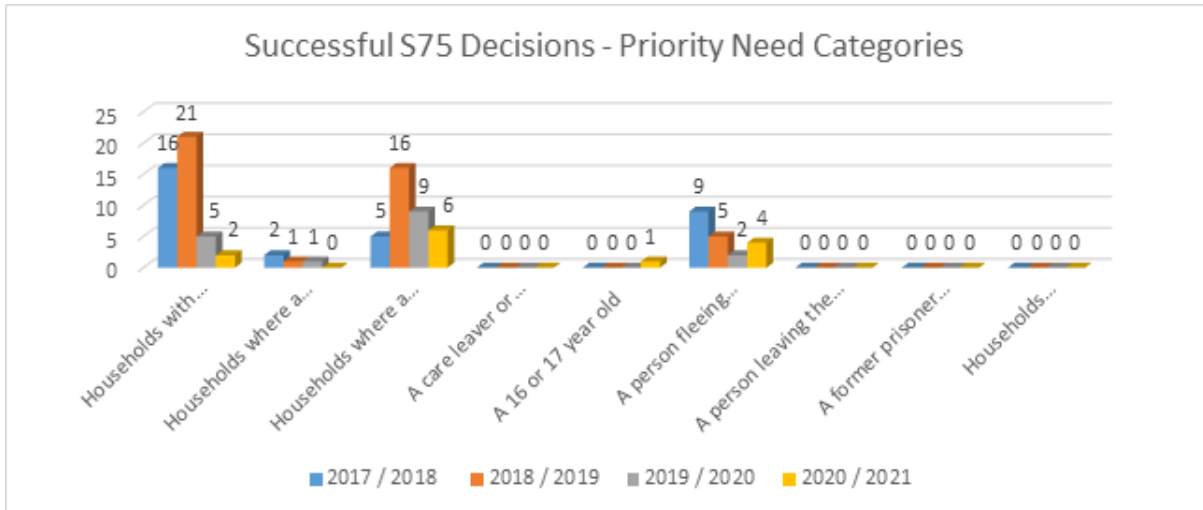


Figure 46: Households found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need during the year: Categories of priority need by type of household (Section 75)

8.9.1.2 The three main priority reasons for a s75 being awarded is

- Household with dependent children;
- Households where there is a vulnerability and
- A person fleeing domestic violence.

8.9.1.3 Figure 47 below shows the trend of the number of households owed a Section 75 duty and although there was a 34.5% spike during 2018 /19, since then there has been a steady decline.

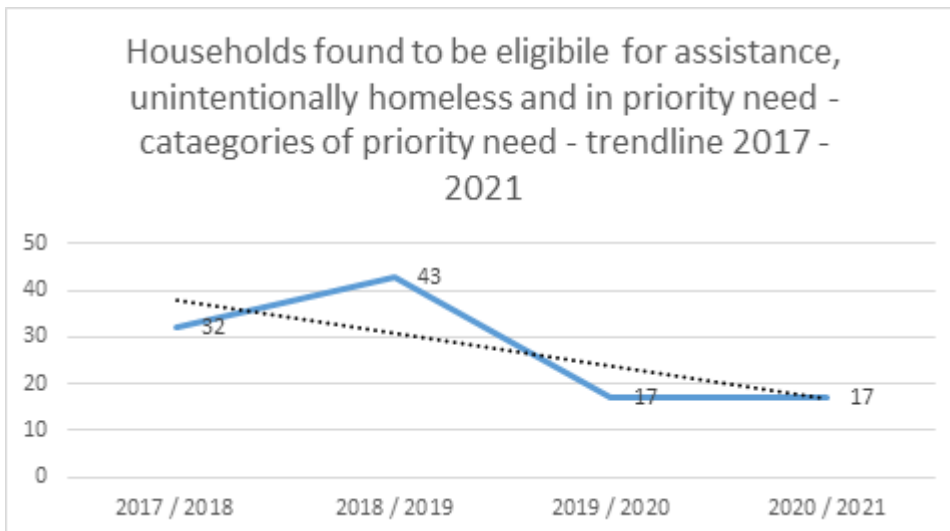


Figure 47: Number of Households owed a Section 75 duty 2017-2021

8.9.2 Household Composition

8.9.2.1 From the table below (Table 29) we can see that single household's accounted for almost 35.5%% of all households during 2017/18 to 70.6% for the 2020/21 financial year.

S75	Male applicant	Female applicant	Total single Households	Total Households	Percentage of single to total household	Percentage of male single households as a percentage of total single households	Percentage of female single households as a percentage of total single households
2017/2018	3	8	11	32	35.54%	27.28%	72.72%
2018/2019	6	9	15	43	27.90%	40%	60%
2019/2020	7	3	10	17	56.82%	70%	30%
2020/2021	9	3	12	17	70.59%	75%	25%

Table 29: Section 75s owed 2017-2021 by Household composition

8.10 Discharge of S75 Duty to Accommodate

8.10.1 Table 30 breaks down the reasons behind the discharge of the section 75 duty (household numbers). Key themes and trends include:

Reason for Discharge (Section 75) – Household numbers	2017 - 18	2018 - 19	2019 - 20	2020 - 21
Ceased to be eligible	0	0	0	0
Withdrawal of application	0	1	1	1
Mistake of fact	0	0	0	0
Became homeless intentionally from accommodation provided under section 75	1	1	2	1

Accepted an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme (part vi 1996 HA)	24	23	13	10
Accepted a private sector offer	4	12	0	4
Voluntarily ceased to occupy accommodation made available under section 75	1	1	0	1
Refusal of an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme (Part VI 1996 HA)	0	2	1	0
Refusal of an offer of suitable accommodation in the Private Rented Sector	0	0	0	0
Refusal of an offer of suitable interim accommodation under section 75	2	2	0	0
Refusal to co-operate	0	1	0	0
Total	32	43	17	17

Table 30: Reasons for Discharge of Section 75 duty 2017-2021

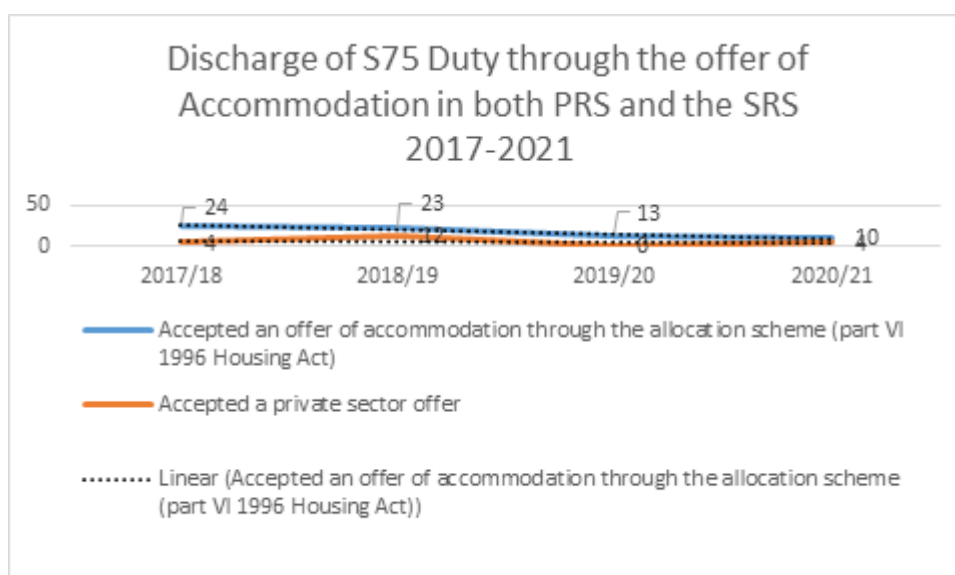


Figure 48: Breakdown of the Discharge of 75 Duty by Accommodation Offer Type 2017-2021

8.11 Ethnicity

8.11.1.1 Figures show that the ethnic identity of the county is 97%² of Monmouthshire's population are of white ethnicity with 3% being of Black, Asian and minority ethnicity.

8.11.1.2 The ethnicity of clients accessing homelessness services broadly follows the pattern of the County:

2017 - 18	1.1%
2018 - 19	5%
2019 - 20	2.1%
2020 - 21	3.1%

Table 31: Percentage of ethnic applications

8.11.2 Gypsy and Traveller

8.11.2.1 In terms of Gypsies and Travellers the 2011 census shows that six households identified themselves as Gypsy and Irish Traveller, 0.006% of the population.

8.12 What is the data telling us?

8.12.1 The table below shows how households fared as they journeyed their way through the homelessness process of presenting to the council, the preventative duties S66 and S73 and finally S75.

Year		2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Totals
Presentations		897	842	680	607	3026
Section 66 Duty	Unsuccessful	100	101	74	46	321
	Successful	155	206	113	83	557
Section 73 Duty	Unsuccessful	115	71	77	135	398
	Successful	113	130	162	127	532

² <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Ethnicity/Ethnicity-by-Area-EthnicGroup>

Section 75 Duty	Unsuccessful	4	8	4	3	19
	Successful	28	35	13	14	90
	Total outcomes	515	551	443	408	1917

Table 32: Household journey through Duties 2017-2021

Total successful Outcomes	296	371	288	224	1179
Total Unsuccessful Outcomes	219	180	155	184	738

Table 33: Breakdown of Successful and Unsuccessful outcomes

8.12.2 We can conclude from table, that the Council were able to alleviate the threat homelessness or actual homelessness of almost 61% of households over the four year period 2017 – 2021. However, for almost 39% households the outcomes were unsuccessful. Further research is required to understand this figure.

Success Rate as a Percentage	61%
Unsuccessful Rate as a Percentage	39%

Table 34: Total number of Successful and Unsuccessful outcomes as a percentage 2017-2021

Chapter 9: Temporary Accommodation

- 9.1.1 Monmouthshire council currently (February 2022) has 177 units of Temporary Accommodation.
- 9.1.2 Prior to the Global Pandemic in 2020 the number of individuals placed in TA accommodation remained relatively stable. Following a change in guidance from WG to bring everyone indoors under Public Health Measures, Monmouthshire has seen a steep increase in the demand for TA that has made it necessary for the council to employ costly B&B accommodation at levels not previously seen, despite the number of overall presentations slightly declining. At the end of 2019 MCC had 15 households in TA Accommodation and no households in B&B accommodation; in March 2020 that had risen to 21 households in TA Accommodation, with 1 family in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation due to the flooding across the County during late February. By the end of March 2021 there were 74 households in Bed and Breakfast, including 3 families; with a further 67 households in TA Accommodation. By December 2021, this had increased to 92 households, including 12 families in Bed and Breakfast, with a further 84 households in TA Accommodation.
- 9.1.3 Expenditure on TA and related costs has significantly increased between 2017-2021. A large portion of this increase in expenditure is related to security costs across B&B and TA accommodation due to the increase in households with complex needs (see section 10).
- 9.1.4 The expansion of the “Duty to Accommodate” for those who may not have previously been considered ‘Priority Need’ has seen an upsurge of single households in TA. The obligation of the Local Authority to continue to accommodate those who have lost their Homeless Duty, i.e. those who have effectively exited accommodation due to Anti-Social Behaviour or left accommodation voluntarily, also continues to put a significant strain on current existing TA provision, in both housing management and physical capacity. The issue remains that for those who have no Homeless Duty, who are excluded or demoted on the Local Housing Register, there is very little opportunity for people to move on from Temporary Accommodation once the Homeless Duty is withdrawn. This is mainly due to a lack of affordable Private Sector properties and shared housing in Monmouthshire.
- 9.1.5 For those single households who remain on the Housing Register, waiting times for move on from TA Accommodation continue to grow. In the year 2018-19, the average waiting time for a one-bedroom flat was 5 months; this dropped to 3 months in the year 2019 -20. However, this escalated to an average of 7 months in the year 2020-21, with the average waiting time hitting 11 months from April – December 2021. This peaked in November 2021 to an average of 15 months.
- 9.1.6 There has been a 516% increase in single households being accommodated between 2017 and 2022, while couples decreased by 42% over the same period. ‘Other’ Households which includes households with children has seen an 80% increase.

9.1.7 With the sudden leap in single households in TA the demand for 1 bed self-contained move on accommodation is overwhelming the availability in both the social and private rented sectors. Added to the temporary ban in evictions during the Pandemic it is not a surprise that households are having to spend longer on average in Temporary Accommodation.

Chapter 10: Housing Support Grant Data

10.1.1 Monmouthshire County Council Housing Support Grant supports the aim of working together to prevent homelessness and where it cannot be prevented, ensuring it is rare, brief and un-repeated. The HSG focusses on the root cause of homelessness and work to enable people to stay in their own homes longer.

10.1.2 HSG funded services augment, complement and support the statutory service to ensure that the overall offer authorities provide helps people into the right homes with the right support to succeed. Housing related support seeks to enable vulnerable people to address the, sometimes multiple, problems they face, such as debt, employment, tenancy management, substance misuse, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, and mental health issues, to maintain and increase their independence and capacity to remain in their own home.

10.1.3 The HSG does NOT fund personal care services (e.g. help with bathing, dressing, prompting/taking medication), or housing management activities (e.g. rent arrears, anti-social behaviour problems).

10.2 Current Services funded through HSG

10.2.1.1 Currently Monmouthshire Council is commissioning 24 projects through its allocated HSG budget to meet the needs of its residents. The table below illustrates the number of clients accessing each service, collated by primary service area (some services will be cross sectional). Though full comparative data for this financial year will not be available until April 2022, figures for the first half of 2021-2022 have been included in the table to provide an indication of potential trend.

	Project Name	Number of referrals			
		2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021 (April - Sept)
	MCC Gateway – Housing Support Team	1525	1639	1301	709
VAWDASV Services	Cyfannol WA CRISIS	168	135	207	105
	Cyfannol WA Refuge	20	22	36	11
	Cyfannol WA Group Work	235	79	44	18
	Llarnau MODAS	83	80	113	86
	Target Hardening	5	6	9	5
Mental Health Services	MIND TASL	188	283	162	150
	MIND Welfare Rights	217	121	153	118
	MIND Farmers Project		15	31	15
Young People's Services	POBL Mon YP Scheme (Hostels)	57	40	58	44
	Emphasis Project	27	23	19	17
	Young Persons Accommodation Officer	26	76	32	
Older People's Services	Care & Repair				
	Healthy at Home Project	192	262	221	100
	POBL Derwin 55+	53	62		
Families Services	POBL Family Intervention	11	15	44	16
Generic Services	POBL Gwalla TSS	234	199	216	
	POBL Reach Housing Support	124	104	134	
	POBL Solas Low Level Floating Support	32	25	39	
	POBL Lifestyles	124	121	257	
	POBL Temporary Accommodation & Resettlement Service				211
	POBL Tenancy Support Service				232
	Llarnau Tenancy Support	43	48	130	54
	CHYPS (Crisis Housing Young Person Service)	8			
	MHA Social Inclusion	96	96	58	
	Gateway Universal Credit Officer	42	62	112	35
	MHA Resettlement	74			
	Place Based Services	Data for all Housing & Wellbeing Projects	199	216	
MHA Housing & Wellbeing				168	114
POBL Housing & Wellbeing				75	68
Llarnau Housing & Wellbeing				37	23
Housing Support Grant funded new projects from Phase 2	Llarnau Assertive Outreach				72
	POBL Housing First				12
	POBL Gwent Pathways			17	13
	GDAS Outreach Service				

Table 35: Number of Referrals across all HSG funded projects 2018- Sept 2021

Key	
	Project not operational at this time
	Decommissioned end of financial year 2020-2021
	From 1st April 2020 merged with POBL Lifestyles service
	Amalgamated with POBL TARS and POBL TSS
	This service was merged with Llarnau TSS
	19/20 amalgamated with MHA Housing & Wellbeing Project
	Data now split between projects

Table 36: Key for Table 35

10.2.1.2 All requests for support come through the Monmouthshire’s Gateway Team who act as a single point of contact for housing support referrals. Officers in the Gateway then triage clients and allocate them to the most appropriate service for their needs.

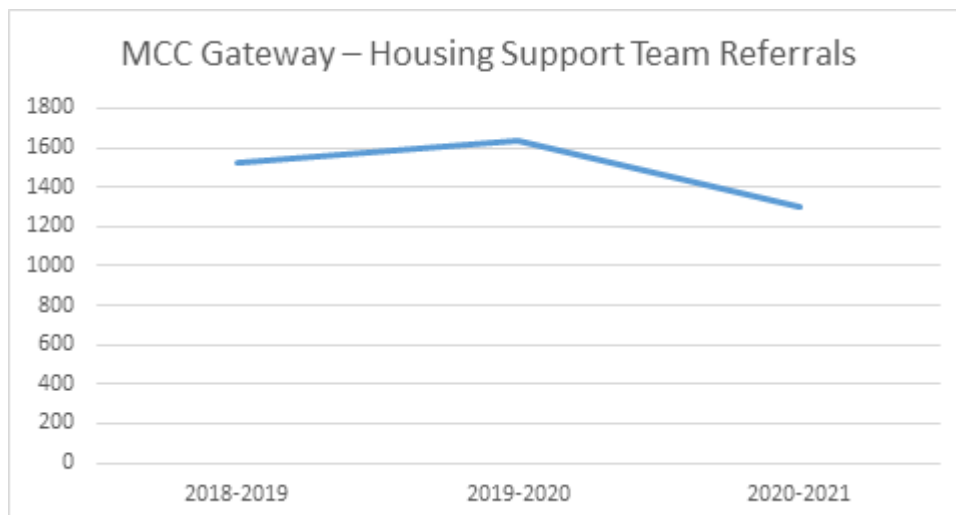


Figure 49: Number of Requests for Support to Gateway 2018- Sept 2021

10.2.1.3 The number of referrals into the MCC Gateway Housing Support Team is largely stable, though dipped slightly in 2020-2021. However, it is anticipated that the number of referrals will rise again to 2018-2020 levels, with the Gateway having seen 709 referrals in the first 6 months of the 2021-2022 financial year.

10.2.2 VAWDASV Services

10.2.2.1 There are currently 5 services for those fleeing or seeking support with Domestic abuse. Llamau MODAS and Target Hardening measures are available for whoever is experiencing any form of domestic abuse, whereas Cyfannol services are strictly for women and children.

10.2.2.2 Cyfannol WA work group runs three projects which can be accessed:

- Recovery Toolkit
 - The Recovery Toolkit is for any woman who has suffered domestic abuse and no longer has contact with her perpetrator or their perpetrator is on a recognised programme.
- Freedom Project
 - The Freedom Programme is for any woman who has experience of domestic abuse; be it in their personal or professional lives. The course identifies tactics abusers use, the beliefs held by abusers and the effects of domestic abuse on women and children.
- Own My Life
 - Online course for any women who has experience of domestic abuse. Many courses over the last eighteen months have been run online due to the pandemic.

Number of Referrals to VAWDASV services 2018-Sept 2021

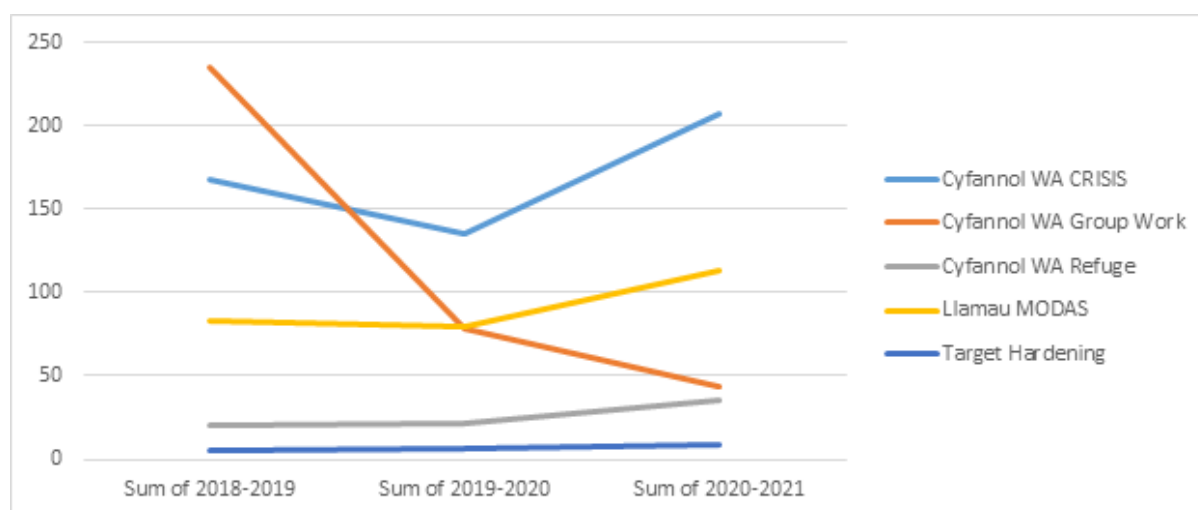


Figure 50: Referrals to VAWDASV 2018- Sept 2021

10.2.2.3 As the data illustrates, there was a significant increase in demand for Cyfannol’s Crisis service which provides emergency support for women fleeing abuse- and this trend is likely to continue given the projection of data from the first 6 months of 2021-2022. Similarly, Llamau has also seen a marked increase since 2020 which looks likely to be a continuing trend. Llamau MODAS is currently operating a waiting list with 27 referrals as of October 2021 which illustrates high demand.

10.2.2.4 The increase in demand for VAWDASV services converges with the Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. The data would suggest that the lockdown measures taken nationally had an impact on the levels of domestic abuse and violence experienced, something which had been a national concern. Anecdotally there has also been feedback to suggest that those experiencing DA feel more comfortable to report and come forward to seek support- possibly in part due to the extensive media campaign during this time. As the data also shows no sign of this demand decreasing as we have seen a relaxation of Coronavirus measures it is unclear whether this trend will continue.

10.2.3 Mental Health Services

10.2.3.1 Monmouthshire has 3 projects devoted to those with low to medium mental health and housing needs, all delivered by MIND. TASL provides floating support, Welfare Rights is a free service which assists with benefits and income maximisation including expertise and documentation for Mandatory Reviews and for appeals to a Tribunal and the Farmers Project work within the villages and more rural areas of Monmouthshire to support those in farming industry to maintain their tenancy/accommodation.

Number of Referrals to Mental Health services 2018-Sept 2021

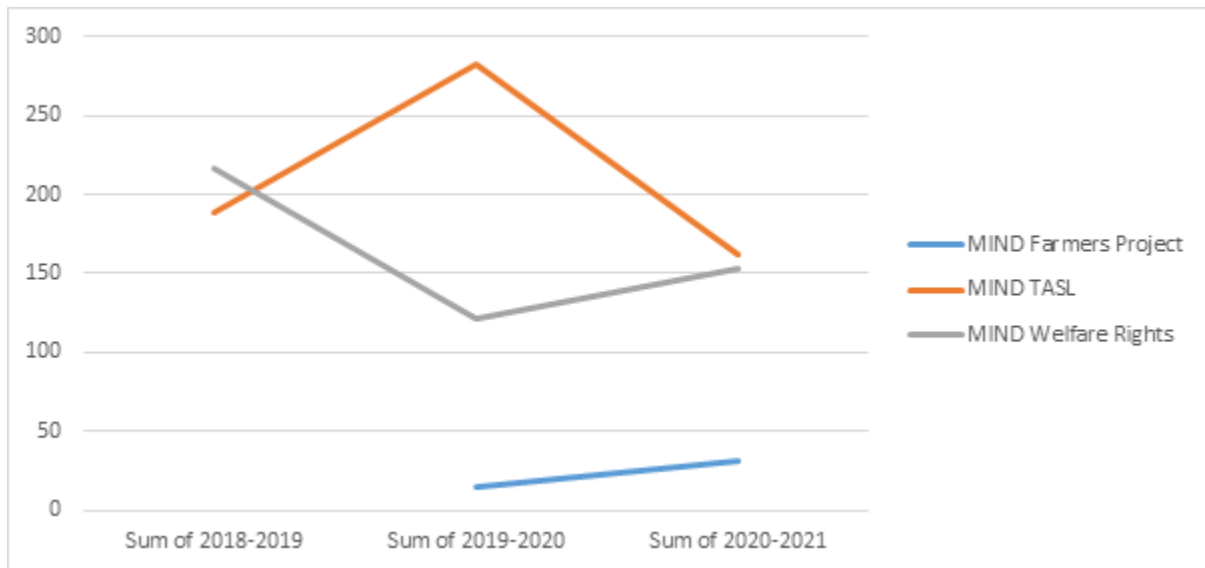


Figure 51: Referrals to Mental Health Services 2018- Sept 2021

10.2.3.2 Interestingly MIND’s mental health floating support service saw a sharp decrease in clients during 2020-2021 which covers the period of the pandemic. However, this decrease does not look like it will become an ongoing trend. If the current rate of clients accessing the service continue at the same pace 2021-2022 looks like it could see the highest demand on the service that we have seen yet as client numbers for the first 6 months have almost reached 2020-2021’s total. There is also a waiting list of 8 clients for this service as of October 1st 2021. The demand for the Farmers Project could also climb significantly by the end of this financial year.

10.2.3.3 The demands for Welfare support picked up in 2020-2021 and look like it will continue to increase this financial year. This is unsurprising given the changes in household income felt by many due to the Coronavirus measures brought in 2020 and continuing into this year, such as furloughing and the £20 per week UC uplift.

10.2.4 Young People's Services

10.2.4.1 Young people’s services cater for those between 16 and 24 with a housing need.

Number of Referrals to Young People’s services 2018-Sept 2021

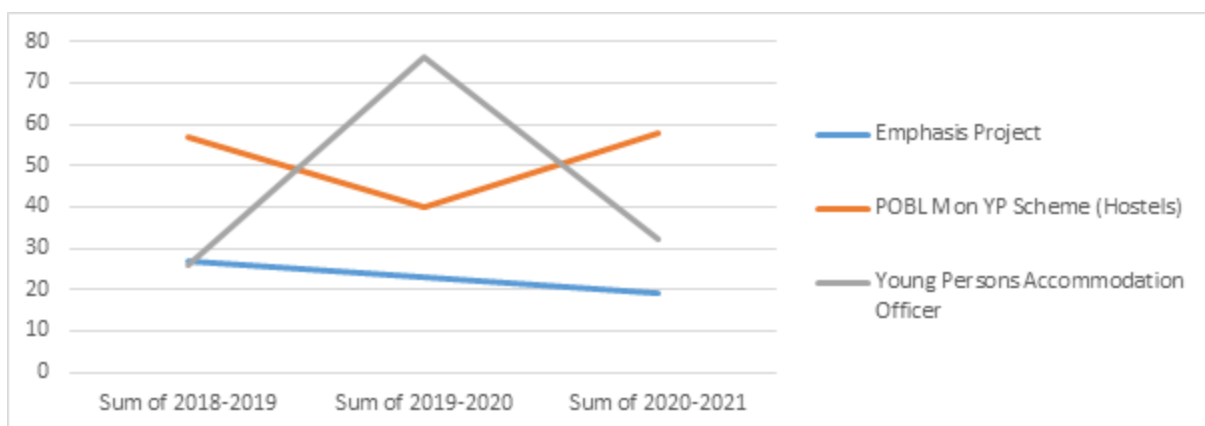


Figure 52: Referrals to Young People’s Services 2018- Sept 2021

- 10.2.4.2 There are currently 21 units of supported accommodation across two separate schemes in Abergavenny and Chepstow provided by Pobl. As dedicated accommodation for young people, this is an extremely important resource within the county. The schemes, however, are for young people with low needs and are not suitable for all young people, particularly those who are more vulnerable and with higher needs. Furthermore, there is no ‘step-down’ accommodation in Monmouthshire for those young people who make good progress towards independent living but are not quite fully ready for independent living.
- 10.2.4.3 Due to the nature of this scheme numbers will remain largely consistent as turnover and demand remains stable. Going forward however we anticipate that this figure will change as the projects are currently being remodelled with the input of Children’s Services and the number of bedspaces altered to accommodate an emerging need for 24 hour staffed high support provision.
- 10.2.4.4 Emphasis is a floating support service which aims to provide support to ‘non-engaging’ young people who are or at risk of NEET(Not in Education, Employment or Training) / homeless. Client numbers so far for 2021-2022 indicate that the service will surpass last year’s figure.
- 10.2.4.5 The Young Person’s Accommodation Officer was decommissioned 31st March 2021 due to requirements of the pandemic where priorities changed

10.2.5 *Older People's Services*

Number of Referrals to Older People’s services 2018-Sept 2021

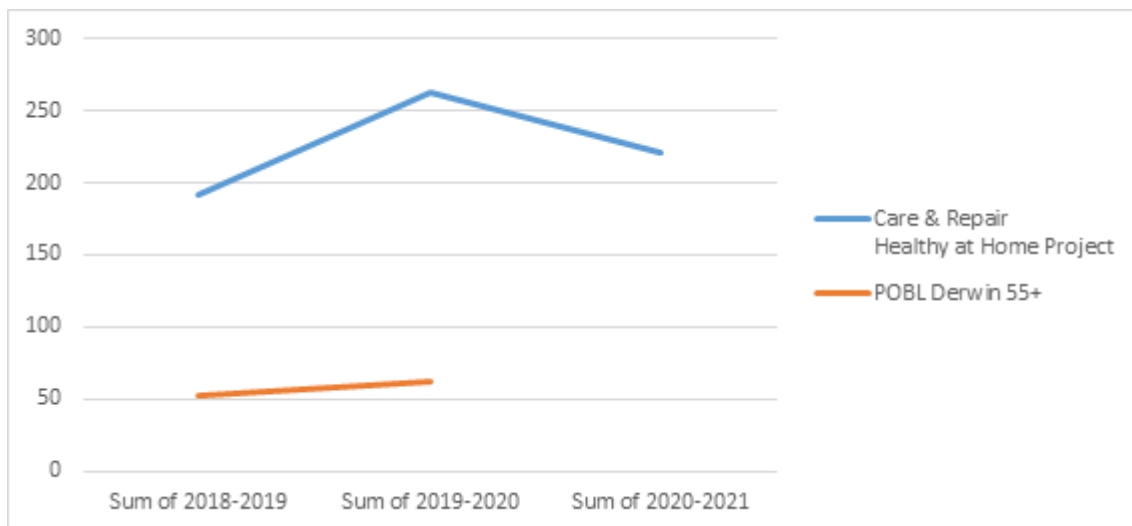


Figure 53: Referrals to Older People’s Services 2018- Sept 2021

- 10.2.5.1 The Healthy At Home Project provides a service to reach people who are socially inactive and/or isolated, in addition to assisting with hospital prevention and sustainable independent living. Assistance is provided to clients to gain income maximisation, grants and a Healthy Home Check for additional works/services to sustain independent living. Although there was a slight dip in client numbers for 2020-2021 numbers have remained fairly consistent and so far this looks to continue for 2021-2022.
- 10.2.5.2 POBL's Derwin project provides tenancy floating support is available to anyone above the age of 55 plus who would benefit from housing related support but was merged in 2020 with POBL Lifestyles and is now captured within these projects.

10.2.6 Families Services

- 10.2.6.1 The Family Intervention and Prevention Project (FIPP) is designed to work with families facing eviction or other enforcement action due to anti-social behaviour. The service takes a whole family approach and combines intensive support to confront and change behaviour. Prior to April 2021 this service was provided by MHA with part time (0.75) officer. From April 2021 this service has been delivered by POBL with one full time officer.

Number of Referrals for Family Intervention 2018-Sept 2021

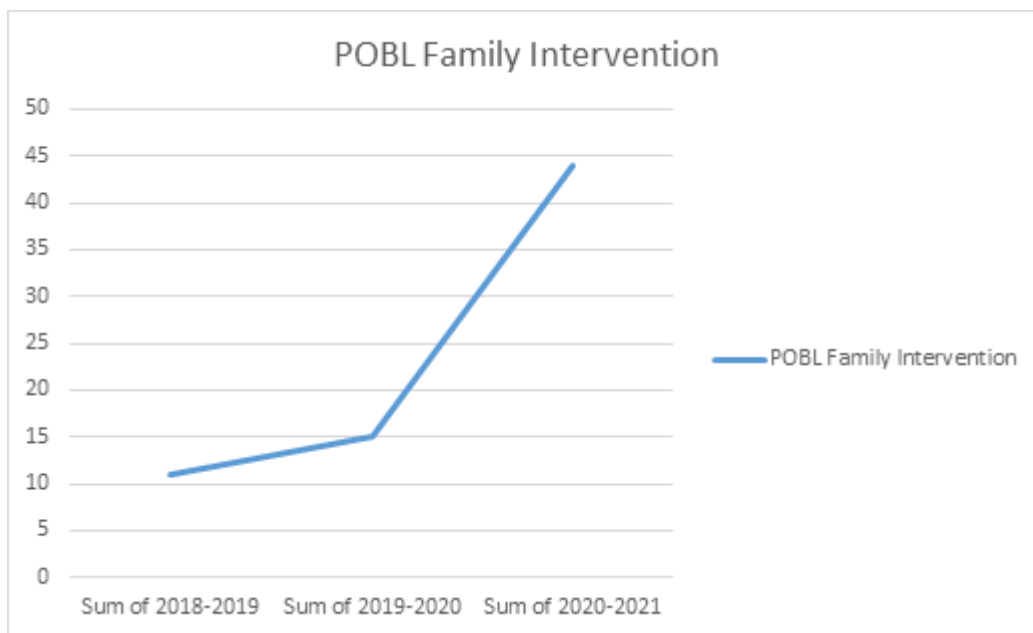


Figure 54: Referrals for Family Intervention 2018- Sept 2021

10.2.6.2 As the graph demonstrates, there was an almost 300% increase in the number of families accessing the service between 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. This increase correlates to the national lockdown measures due to the Pandemic and would suggest that there was an increase of ASB during this time, possibly due to families having to remain at home.

10.2.7 Generic Services

10.2.7.1 Generic floating support is available to anyone above the age of 16 who would benefit from housing related support. Generic floating support aims to prevent homelessness and tackle tenancy breakdowns and covers all vulnerable people.

10.2.7.2 There has been significant restructuring of generic services in 2020 which has seen a number of services amalgamated. POBL Gwalia TSS, POBL Reach Housing Support, POBL Solas Low Level Floating Support and POBL Lifestyles merged and became POBL Temporary Accommodation & Resettlement Service and POBL Tenancy Support Service from 2021. However prior to this for all but one service the number of clients accessing these services rose in 2020-2021, with the highest being the POBL Lifestyles. Whilst part of this increase could be explained by the services absorption of the Over 55s Derwin service, which occurred in this year, the rapid rise is probably also a consequence of the effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

10.2.7.3 This trend is also largely replicated in the non POBL commissioned services, with Llamau TS and the Gateway Universal Credit officer seeing the highest increase in clients from 2019-20 to 2020-2021.

Number of Referrals to Generic services 2018-Sept 2021

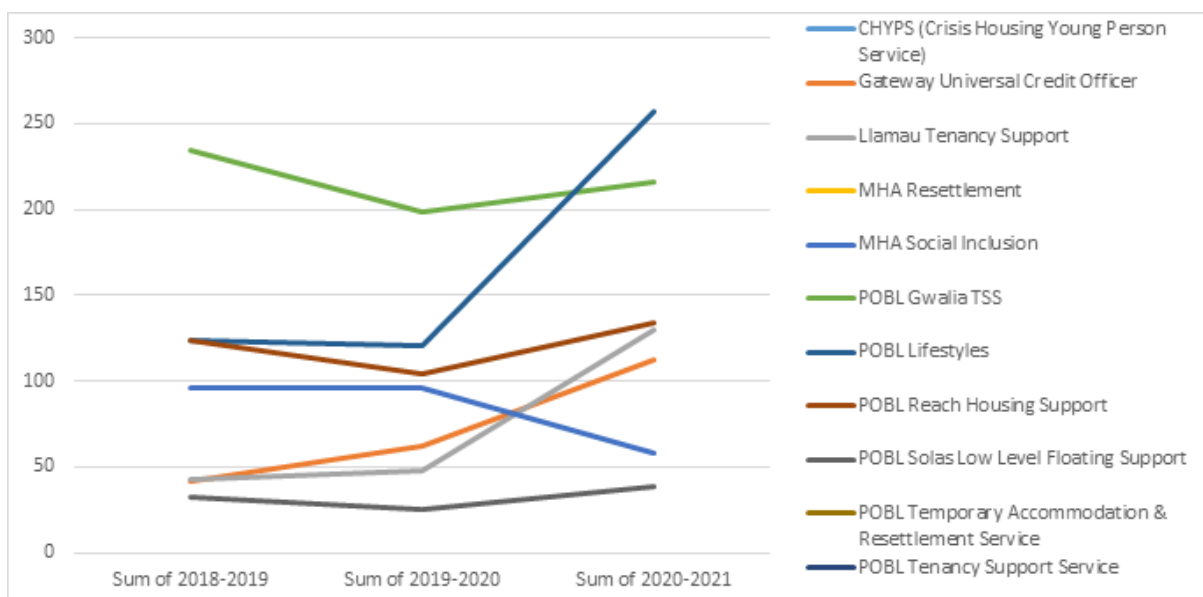


Figure 55: Number of Referrals to Older People's services 2018-Sept 2021

10.2.8 Place Based Services

10.2.8.1 These projects provide tenancy and/or housing related support to service users whose wellbeing would be enhanced and improved as a result of enhancing their housing needs. The projects deliver housing-related support to vulnerable individuals and their families in one location in Monmouthshire and hold surgeries via One Stop Shops in Monmouth, Abergavenny, Usk, Caldicot and Chepstow.

Number of Referrals to Place Based services 2018-Sept 2021

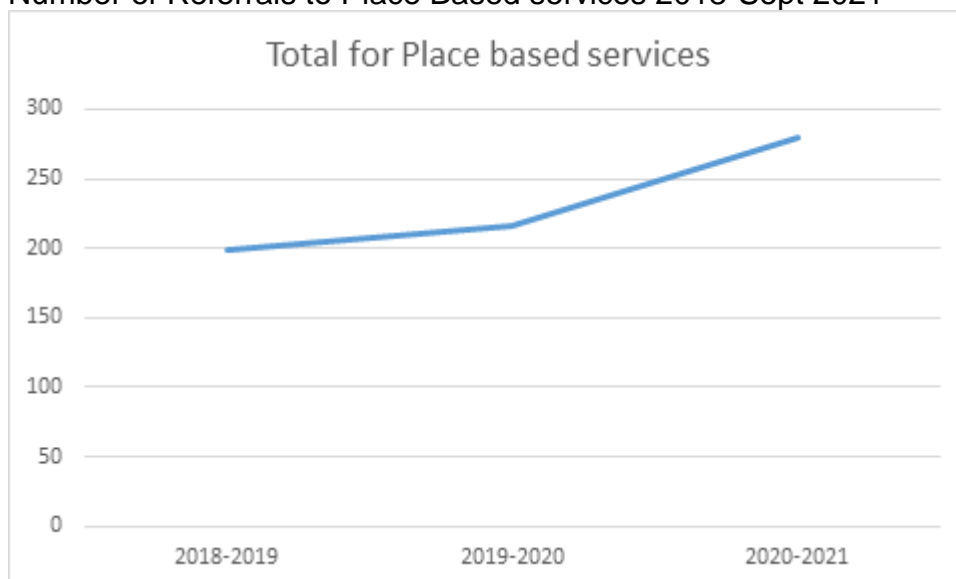


Figure 56: Number of Referrals to Place Based services 2018-Sept 2021

10.2.8.2 Up until 2021 the data for all placed based services were collated together, but from this financial year onwards data will be collected for individual sites which will help to demonstrate regional variances in demand. The individual figures for 2020-2021 were added together to achieve a figure that can be compared to previous years. 2020-2021 saw a significant increase in clients which is slightly surprising when it is considered that physical one stop shops will have been closed for significant periods during the pandemic. This demonstrates that mitigating actions taken to ensure clients could still access the support needed worked.

10.2.9 Housing Support Grant funded new projects from Phase 2

10.2.9.1 There are 3 projects which were commissioned and have started or are due to start in the financial year 2021-2022 and so there is currently no comparative data.

- **Llamau Assertive Outreach**

- The Assertive Outreach Team provides support to high need individuals at the interim multiple needs accommodation and other temporary residential settings in Monmouthshire. The Assertive Outreach service also provides direct support to any arising rough sleepers identified.

- **POBL Housing First**
 - POBL's Housing First project accommodates highly complex and entrenched clients who have experienced repeated tenancy breakdowns and provides wrap around support to prevent homelessness. This model is in line with Welsh Government strategic objectives and will meet the requirements of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. The Housing First Scheme has worked with 12 clients so far in 2021-2022 and is currently oversubscribed.
- **GDAS outreach worker**
 - This project is expected to start in October 2021 following problems with recruitment. The service will support clients with substance misuse issues in TA and B&B accommodation.
- **Gwent Pathways**
 - POBL offer a floating support service to prolific and priority offenders. The support is focused on resettlement and aims to help people change their behaviour long term.

10.2.10 *HIP*

10.2.10.1 The Housing Intervention Panel (HIP) provides a multi-agency forum to identify, consider and co-ordinate multi-agency support to vulnerable individuals and households with multiple and complex needs.

10.2.10.2 The key emphasis is to prevent homelessness and to assist those who are actually homeless or threatened with homelessness. However, the Panel will also consider cases where there is anti-social behaviour or where the actions of an individual are having a detrimental effect either to themselves, or to others in the community under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

10.2.10.3 The aim is for agencies to collectively agree actions that will support individuals and families to avert a crisis or prevent further crisis. In addition to homeless prevention and homelessness it also includes Promoting Personal and Community Safety, Promoting Independence and Control, Promoting Economic Progress and Financial Control, Promoting Health and Wellbeing and stopping any antisocial behaviour or crime and disorder in a community

10.2.10.4 Membership

10.2.10.5 Membership of the Core Panel of the HIP has increased over the months as the importance and popularity of the Panel has grown. The current Core Membership of the Panel consists of representatives from the Organisations below:

- Housing Support Gateway
- Housing Support Providers
- Housing Options Team
- Partnerships Team
- Social Services
- Adult Safeguarding Team

- Aneurin Bevan Health Board
- Registered Social Landlords operating within Monmouthshire
- Youth Offending Team
- Community Safety Team
- Gwent Police
- Welsh Ambulance Service
- Youth Enterprise Team
- Early Help Panel Co-Ordinator
- HM Prison and Probation Service
- Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service
- Department of Works and Pensions

10.2.10.6 The HIP meets every two weeks to discuss cases of concern. The total number of referrals from 1st April 2021 to 9th December 2021 is 49. The referral agencies and departments are shown below:

Organisation	Number of Referrals
MCC social Services	5
MCC Partnership Team	3
MCC HOT	1
MCC Gateway Team	5
MCC Early Help Panel	1
MCC Councillor	1
MHA	15
Mind	7
Llamau	4
Pobl	2
Compass	1
Gwent Pathways	2
Gwent Police	2
Total	49

Table 37: Referral Sources to HIP April- December 2021

10.3 Temporary and Emergency Accommodation- Needs Assessment of those in TA

10.3.1.1 A comprehensive needs assessment was conducted September-November 2021 by partner agencies for all of those currently residing in temporary accommodation, placed by Monmouthshire County Council. As professionals who know the clients best, support workers were asked to report on the level and type (up to 3) of need of each of their clients using the definitions below.

Definitions of Need			
Level of need		Equivalent Support required	Definition
1	LOW NEEDS	Less than 1 hour support per week	Likely to be a significant proportion of clients who have no or very low support requirements and who can be supported into settled accommodation with either a low level of support or potentially just signposting
2	MEDIUM NEEDS	Between 1 and 2 hours support per week	Likely to be the majority of clients who will require a Rapid Rehousing service with floating support. May also be the need to include some other professional support in order to support them to live independently in settled accommodation
3	HIGH NEEDS	Over 3 hours support per week	This category is where we would expect to see those who have complex needs and who should be offered, as a default, a form of Housing First support or intensive housing-led intervention.
4	INTENSIVE NEEDS	Potentially 24/7 support requirements	These should be clients who are unable to live independently at this moment in time, perhaps due to concerns around risk to self or others or perhaps even choice. Our expectations would be that professionals are engaged from a health and social care sectors, moving into settled accommodation must continue to be objective.

Table 38: Definitions of Level of Need as a guide for Support Workers conducting the Needs Assessment

Need Type
Families with Support Needs

Generic/Floating Support/Peripatetic
Men experiencing Domestic Abuse
People over 55 years of age with Support Needs
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV,Aids)
People with Criminal Offending History
People with Developmental Disorders (i.e. Autism)
People with Learning Disabilities
People with Mental Health Issues
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities
People with Refugee Status
People with Alcohol Issues
People with Substance Misuse Issues
Single Parent Families with Support Needs
Single People with Support Needs not listed above (25 to 54)
Women experiencing Domestic Abuse
Young People who are Care Leavers
Young People with Support Needs (16 to 24)
Black Minority Ethnic
Gypsies and Travellers
Frail Persons
Vulnerable Two Parent Families
Migrant Workers

Table 39: Type of Need options used by Support Workers in conducting Needs Assessment

10.3.2 *Demographics*

10.3.2.1 A total of 207 people were assessed as part of this evaluation of needs.

10.3.2.2 Of the 207 clients there are more than double the number of males (143) than females (63). As part of the assessment support workers recorded the bedroom need for clients currently in TA. 148 clients are in need of a 1 bed property, of which 109 are Male. 32 clients are in need of 2 bed accommodation (17 female, 13 male and 1 trans), and 14 are in need of 3 bed accommodation (7 male and 7 female). 22 clients are recorded as having a pet or pets which is often a barrier to moving on to private rented or supported accommodation.

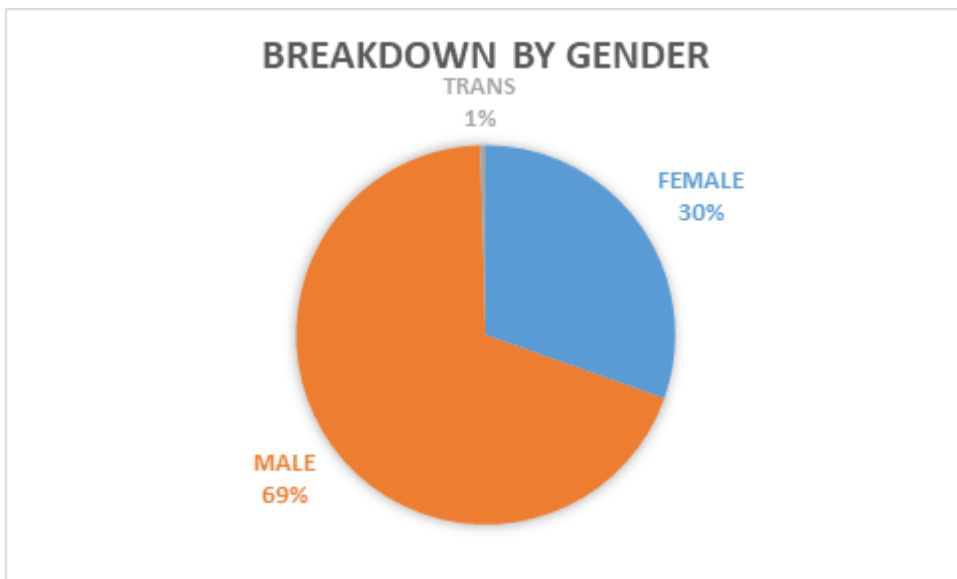


Figure 57: Gender Breakdown of those captured in the Needs Assessment (TA)

10.3.2.3 The age breakdown shows that younger residents (those under the age of 40) make up a significant proportion of those requiring emergency accommodation, with the age category 30-39 being particularly overrepresented, closely followed by 16-24 year olds. The number of clients under 40 is almost double the number of those over. This data would suggest that moving forward Monmouthshire needs to focus support and resources towards the younger population to prevent homelessness.

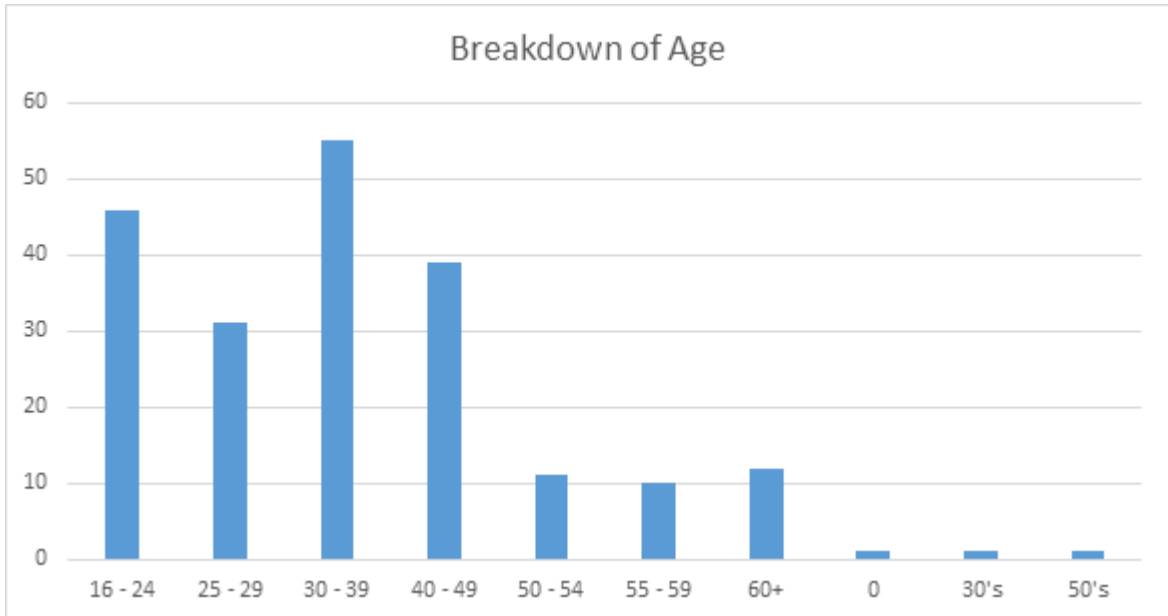


Figure 58: Age Breakdown of those captured in the Needs Assessment (TA)

10.3.2.4 As we do not have comparative data for the years prior to 2021 we cannot identify any trends. However, these figures are undoubtedly affected by the Coronavirus Pandemic. One theory for the high levels of younger residents in TA could be due to the likelihood of this age group being negatively impacted financially, but also potentially relationship and family breakdowns due to the pressure of subsequent lockdowns.

10.3.3 Type of Need

10.3.3.1 Support workers were asked to select the lead need for clients they are currently working with from the set list above and where appropriate record a secondary and third need.

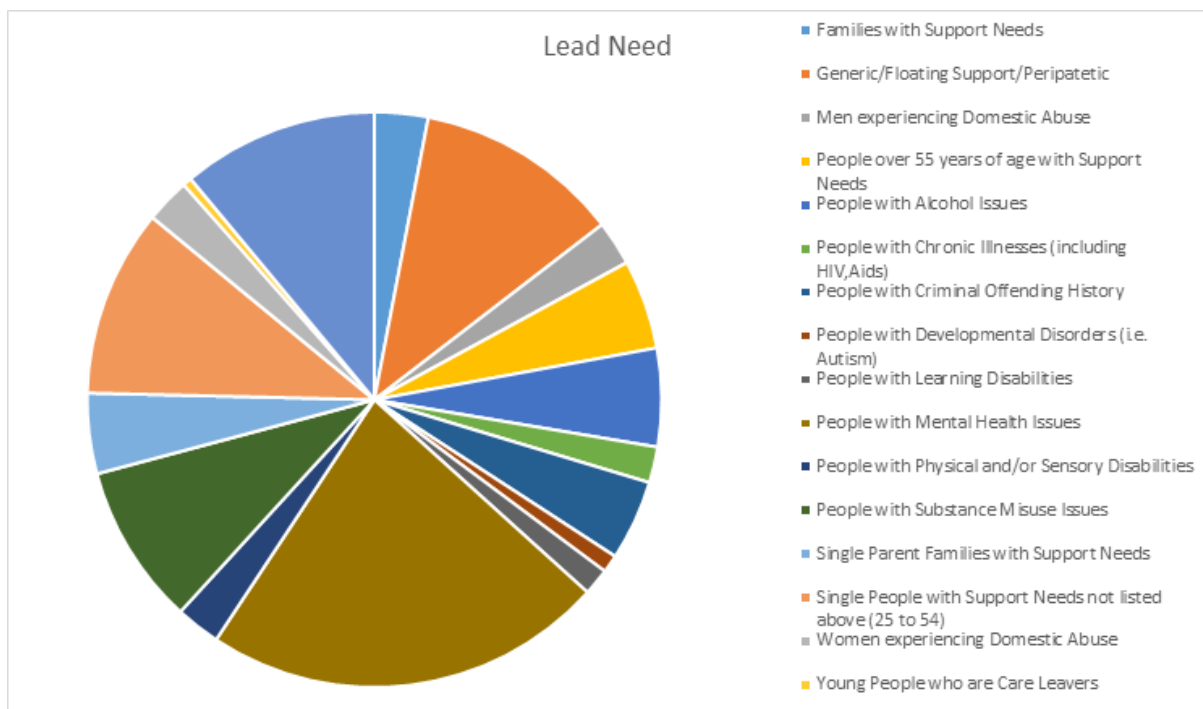


Figure 59: Spread of Lead Need amongst those in TA Needs Assessment

10.3.3.2 Out of the 207 cases 199 had a lead need recorded. The most commonly identified lead need was mental health with 45 cases, or 23%. The following most common lead needs are Generic (23 cases, 12%), Young People with support needs (22 cases, 11%), Single people with support needs not listed (21 cases, 11%) and People with Substance misuse issues (18 cases, 9%). People with alcohol issues have been recorded separately to those with other substance issues but should these be amalgamated there are a total of 29 cases or 15% of the total, the second highest need type behind mental health.

10.3.3.3 Of the top 5 lead needs recorded all except Single people with support need not listed are also the most common secondary needs recorded, and moving to tertiary need Mental health, Generic and Substance Misuse are the most occurrent.

Frequency of Need Recorded separated into Lead, Secondary and Tertiary

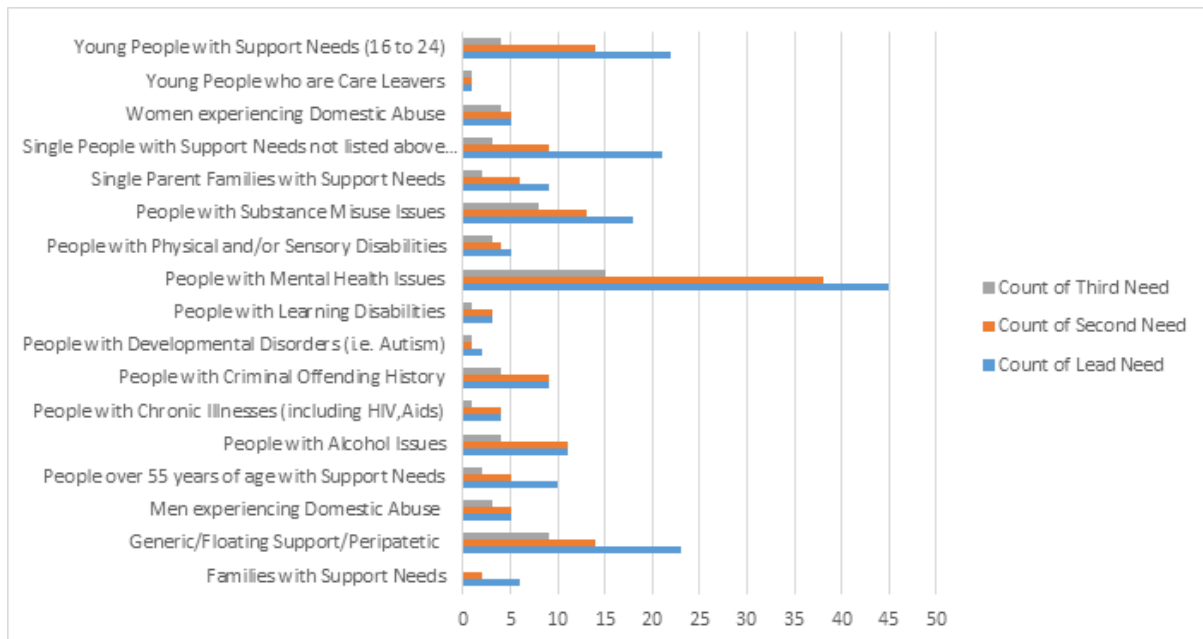


Figure 60: Frequency of Need Recorded separated into Lead, Secondary and Tertiary

10.3.3.4 A total of 408 support needs are recorded across lead, secondary and tertiary need for the 207 clients. The below chart demonstrates the most commonly occurring support needs. Again, Mental Health numbers are particularly dominant, along with generic, young people and substance misuse.

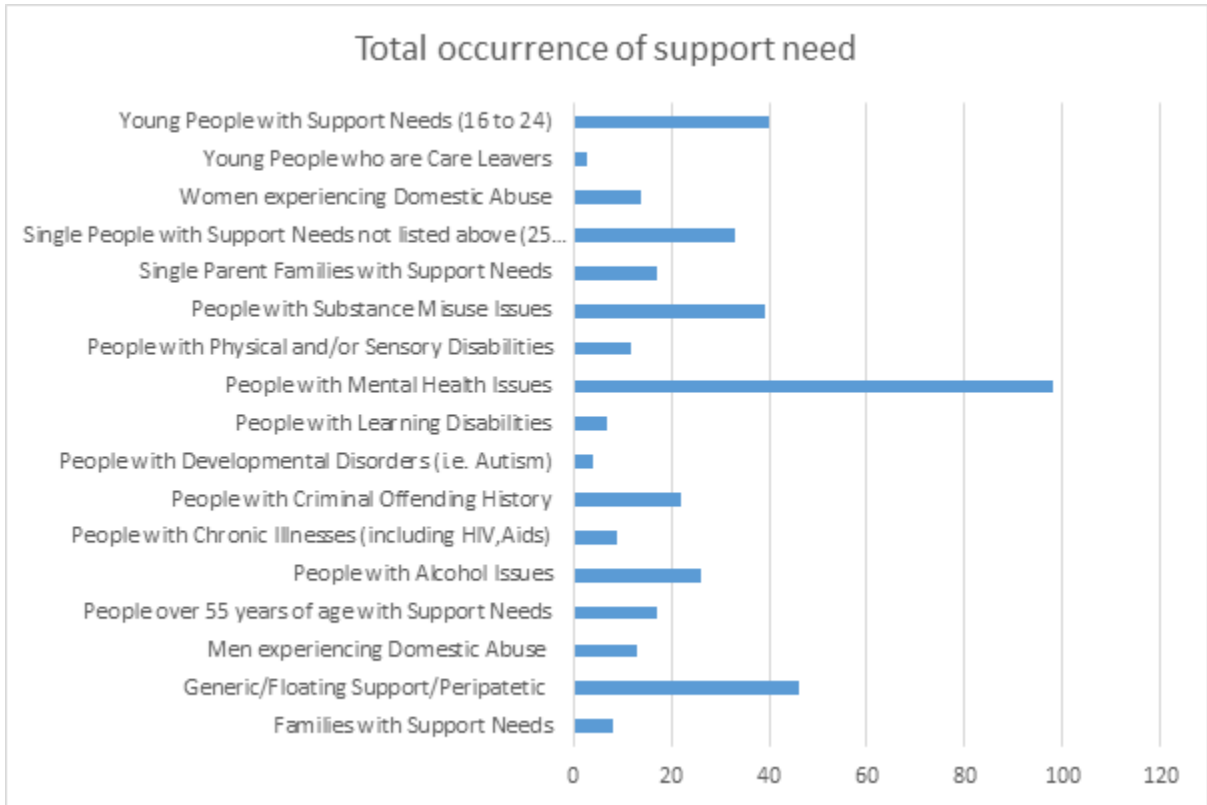


Figure 61: Total occurrence of Need Recorded

Need Type	Occurrence (1st, 2nd and 3rd need)	% of total
Families with Support Needs	8	2.0
Generic/Floating Support/Peripatetic	46	11.3
Men experiencing Domestic Abuse	13	3.2
People over 55 years of age with Support Needs	17	4.2
People with Alcohol Issues	26	6.4
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV,Aids)	9	2.2
People with Criminal Offending History	22	5.4
People with Developmental Disorders (i.e. Autism)	4	1.0
People with Learning Disabilities	7	1.7
People with Mental Health Issues	98	24.0
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities	12	2.9
People with Substance Misuse Issues	39	9.6
Single Parent Families with Support Needs	17	4.2

Single People with Support Needs not listed above (25 to 54)	33	8.1
Women experiencing Domestic Abuse	14	3.4
Young People who are Care Leavers	3	0.7
Young People with Support Needs (16 to 24)	40	9.8
Total	408	100.0

Table 40: Total Occurrence of Need Type and as a Percentage of total

10.3.3.5 The prevalence of Mental Health, Young People and Substance Misuse needs across the assessment highlights areas that Monmouthshire Housing Support need to focus on with the help of partner agencies.

10.3.4 *Level of need*

10.3.4.1 Using the definitions above (Table 36) to gauge the level of needs support workers recorded the following need level breakdown for clients in TA.

SUPPORT NEEDS	
Level	Number of clients
LOW	50
MEDIUM	108
HIGH	38
INTENSIVE	10
BLANK	1
Total	207

Table 41: Breakdown of Level of Need from Needs Assessment (TA)

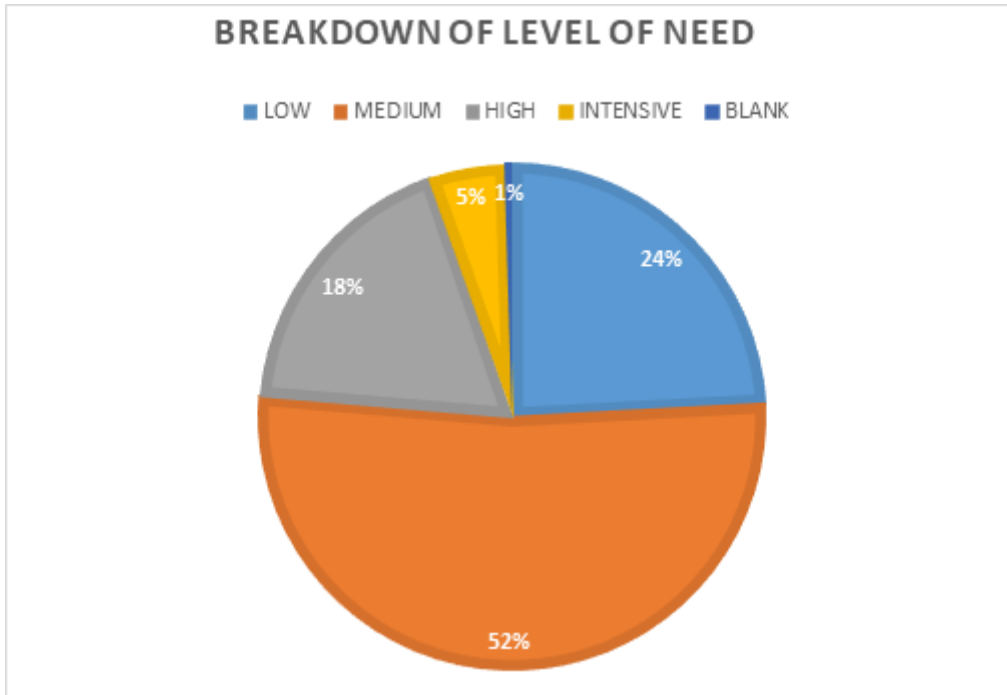


Figure 62: Breakdown of Level of Need from Needs Assessment (TA)

10.3.4.2 Unsurprisingly the majority of clients captured in this snapshot are deemed to have a ‘medium’ level of support need/s, the majority of whom will be in a position to maintain a tenancy with floating support. However, there is a notable number of people with high to intensive needs- almost as many as there are those deemed to have low level support need/s. This is a concern to Monmouthshire Housing Support as at present, excluding Housing First, support services funded through the HSG are set to support those with low to medium needs. Outside of Housing First which has so far worked with 12 individuals this financial year, and is currently oversubscribed, Monmouthshire does not have a high/ intensive supported provision. At present it is not clear where the most suitable move on accommodation would be for this cohort.

10.3.5 In Focus

10.3.5.1 Mental Health

10.3.5.2 As has been noted above, Mental Health is by far the most occurring support need recorded for those in TA at present. Monmouthshire HSG currently funds 3 mental health projects provided by Mind in a floating support model, and Mind also run supported accommodation for those with low-medium level mental health needs. There are currently 28 bed spaces split between properties in Abergavenny and Cheptsow. At present the data shows that there are currently 36 clients in TA with a lead need of Mental Health who are entitled to a one bedroom property- a significant number of these will be single people who would be suitable for supported housing.

Mental Health Lead Need	
Intensive	1
High	5
Medium	24
Low	15
Total	45

Table 42: Level of Need for those identified as having a Lead Need of Mental Health

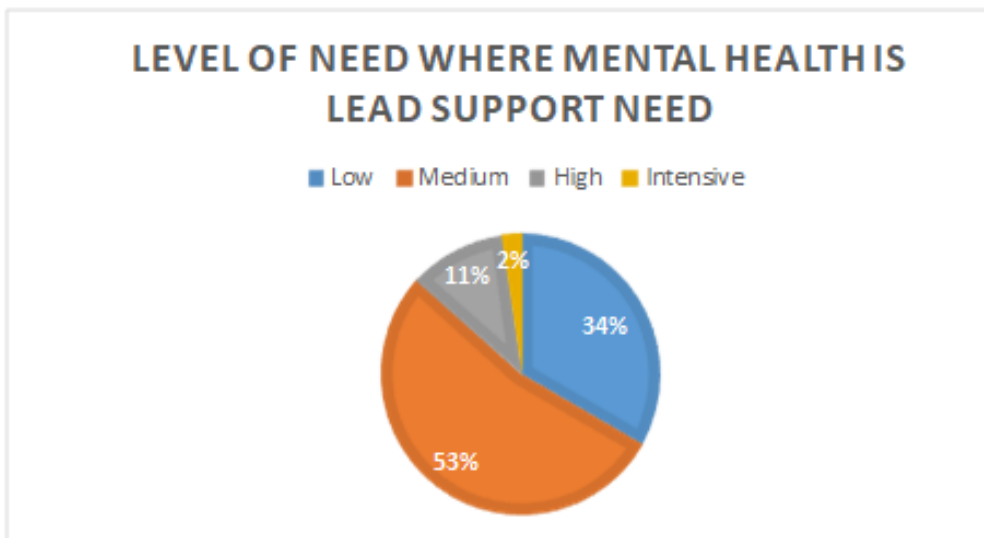


Figure 63: Level of Need for those identified as having a Lead Need of Mental Health

10.3.5.3 As with the general level of need data, the majority of those with Mental Health identified as a lead need are deemed to have 'medium' support requirements a proportion of which, along with those identified as having 'high' and 'intensive' needs, would not meet the criteria of the low- medium support need mental health services currently available.

10.3.5.4 The demographics of those who were recorded as having a Lead Need of Mental Health show that Males under the age of 40 are overrepresented and slightly above the trend of overall demographics for this cohort.

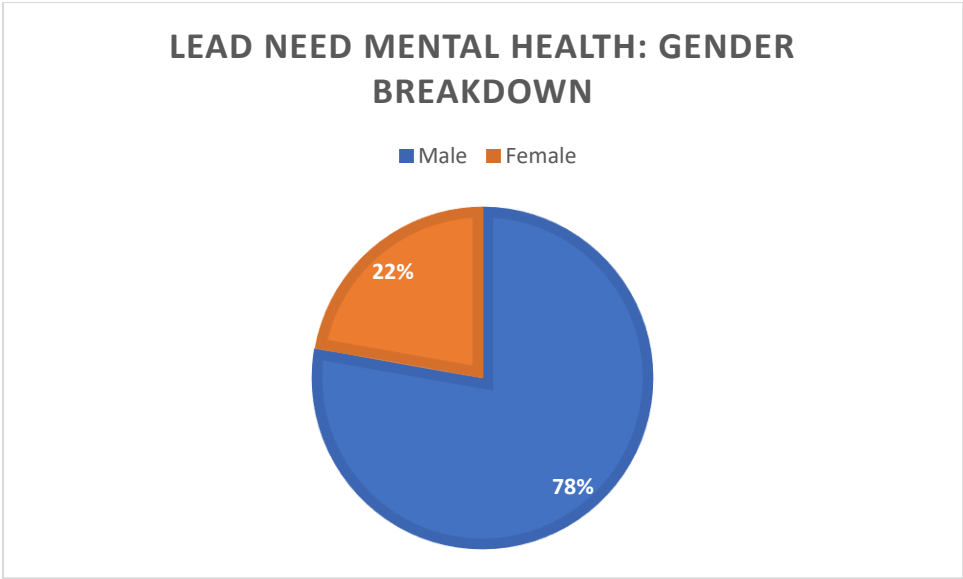


Figure 64: Gender breakdown of those with Lead Need of Mental Health

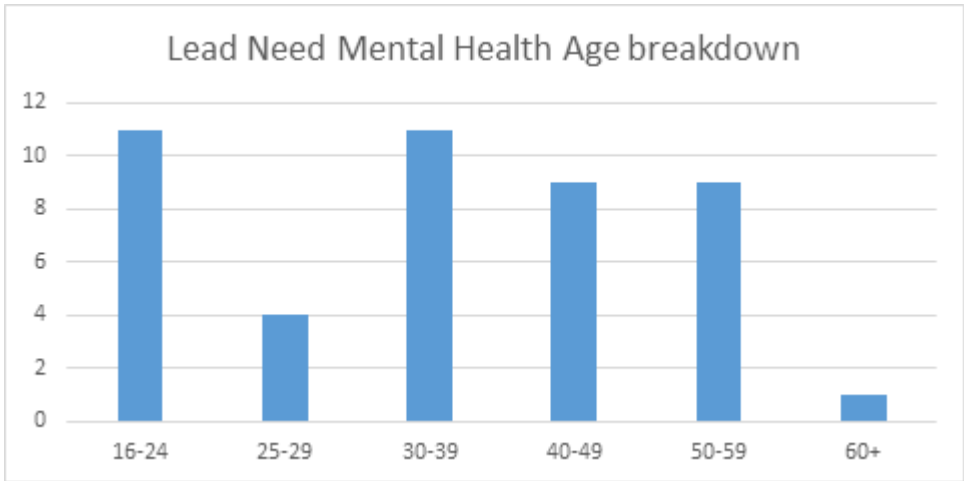


Figure 65: Age breakdown of those with Lead Need of Mental Health

10.3.5.5 Young people (16-24)

10.3.5.6 Monmouthshire currently commissions supported accommodation for young people across 3 sites and are currently restructuring one of these sites to accommodate young people with higher needs. At present all sites cater for young people with low to medium support needs.

10.3.5.7 The assessment has shown that young people aged between 16-24 are greatly overrepresented in this cohort. Being a young person in and of itself is not necessarily a support need, but when mixed with other needs can add a level of complexity and vulnerability which corresponds to the approach in support that is required. The data below (Table 43, Figure 66) illustrates the level of needs amongst all of those under the age of 25 and is not limited to those whose needs (1st, 2nd or 3rd) were recorded as 'Young person with support needs'.

Young person with Support Needs	
LOW	7
MEDIUM	25
HIGH	12
INTENSIVE	2
Total	46

Table 43: Level of Need amongst all Young People

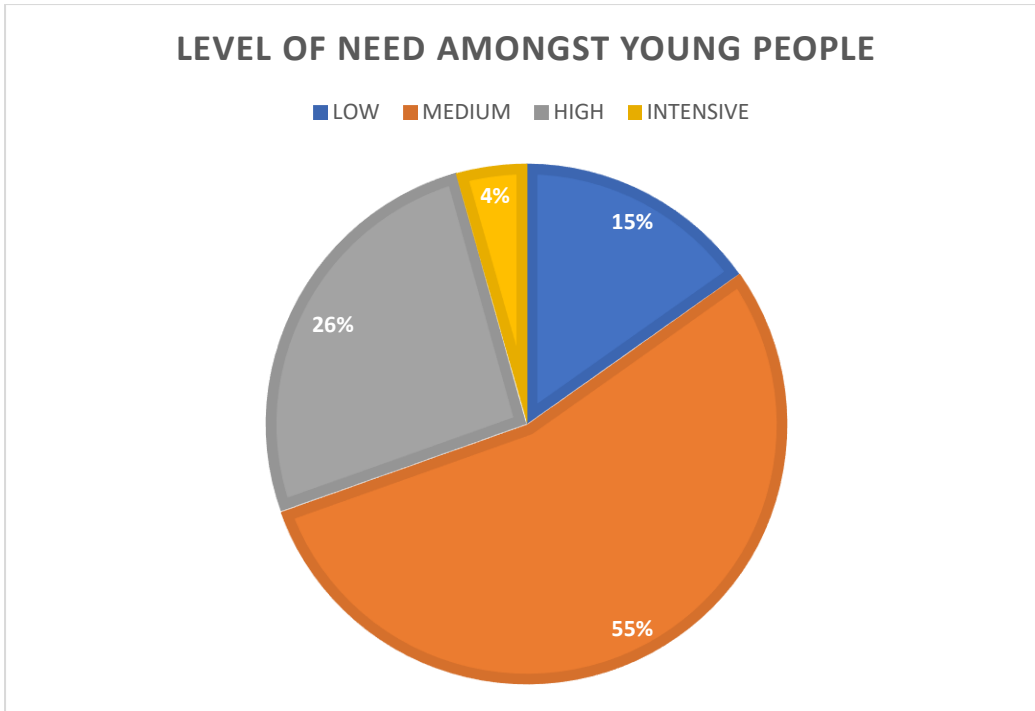


Figure 66: Level of Need amongst all Young People

10.3.5.8 Again, and in line with general trends, the majority of those under 25 are deemed to have 'Medium' needs, but a sizable minority have 'High' or 'Intensive' support needs and will require a higher level of support than housing support services are currently able to provide.

10.3.5.9 Amongst the 46 young people in this cohort the most occurrent lead need is 'Young Person with Support needs' (22) followed as above by 'People with Mental Health' (11), however when secondary needs are considered an additional 14 young people are recorded as having a Mental Health issue. The demand for mental health support is covered above.

10.3.5.10 Substance Misuse

10.3.5.11 The third most occurrent need in this assessment is those with substance misuse issues, with 18 clients having this recorded as their lead need. Of these the number of males is 5 times that of females, at 15, with the number of over 30s double that of under.

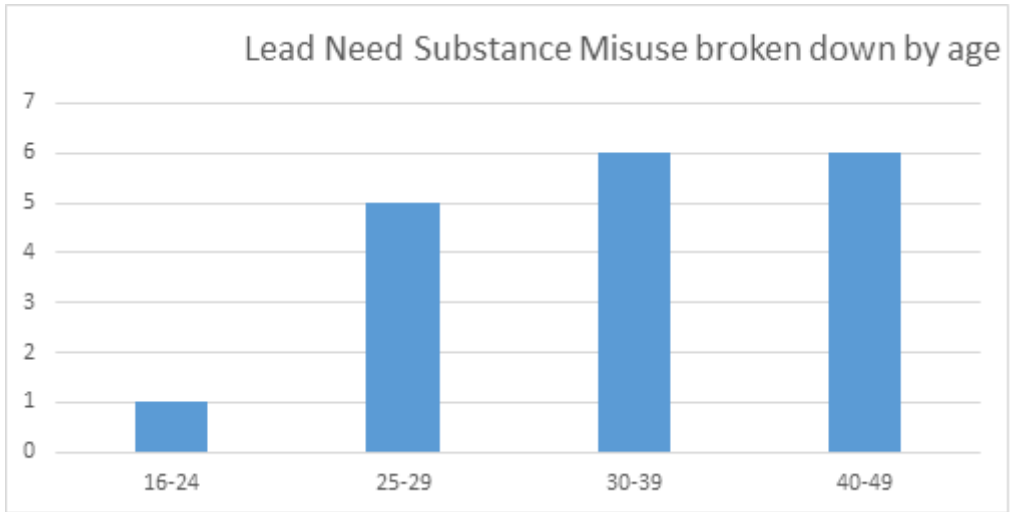


Figure 67: Those with Lead Need of Substance Misuse broken down by Age

Level of Need	Number
Low	2
Medium	8
High	4
Intensive	4

Table 44: Level of Need Breakdown of those with Lead Need of Substance Misuse

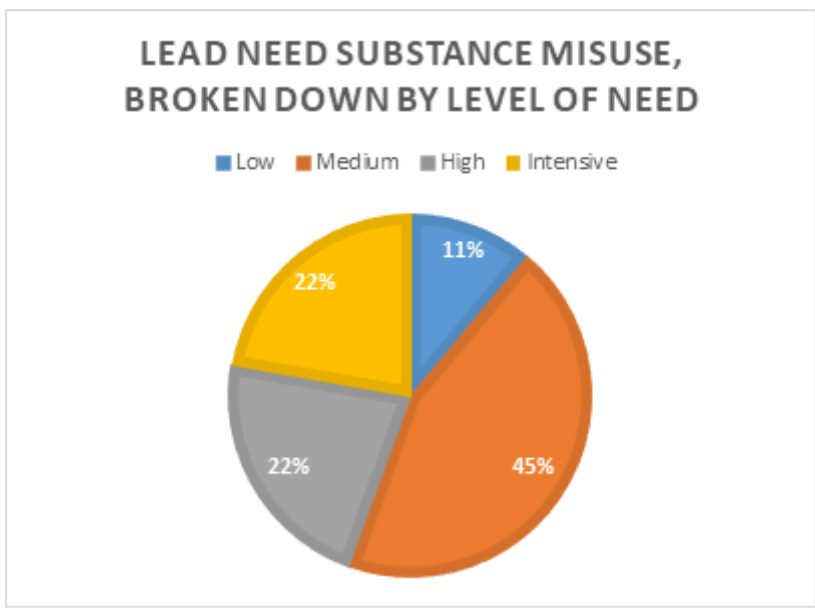


Figure 68: Level of Need Breakdown of those with Lead Need of Substance Misuse

10.3.5.12 Out of the support needs looked at here in focus, the proportion of those deemed to have 'High' or 'Intensive' level of need is highest as shown below.

10.3.5.13 Monmouthshire have commissioned a Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) outreach worker to support those residing in TA with substance (including alcohol) issues which is due to start pending recruitment but does not currently have any supported accommodation with the resources to work with this cohort.

10.3.5.14 Substance misuse often exists in comorbidity with mental health (also known as *dual diagnosis*) and can present additional complex support needs. With this in mind it is pertinent to look at the needs data to see how many cases have a combination of Mental Health and Substance Misuse across lead and secondary need.

10.3.5.15 A total of 10 clients were recorded as having this combination, 9 male and 1 female. Again the data shows a higher proportion of 'high' and 'intensive' level of need.

Level of Need	Number
Low	2
Medium	4
High	3
Intensive	1

Table 45: Level of Need breakdown for those with both Mental Health and Substance Misuse Needs recorded

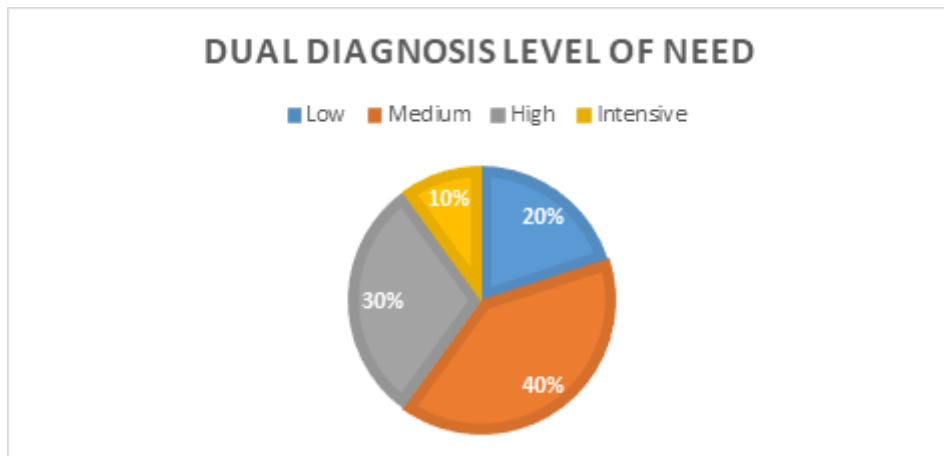


Figure 69: Level of Need breakdown for those with both Mental Health and Substance Misuse Needs recorded

10.3.5.16 This would suggest that those with Substance Misuse issues and Dual Diagnosis in this cohort have a higher proportion of high and intensive needs. It is also a need that is not currently met by a HSG funded provider.

10.3.5.17 In this assessment substance misuse and alcohol issues are recorded separately, but when these figures are combined they occur a total of 65 times across lead, secondary and tertiary need.

10.4 HSG Needs Assessment and Outcomes data

10.4.1.1 All HSG funded services are required to provide a breakdown of the clients they are supporting, and the outcomes achieved for monitoring purposes. Comparable to the needs assessment conducted on those in TA, all service users are allocated a lead, secondary and tertiary need (though not level) and the outcomes for these clients recorded. This data for April- September 2021 has been analysed as below and provides a wider context of support needs for those threatened with homeless as well as those who are homeless.

10.4.1.2 Those who were captured as part of the TA needs assessment will also feature within these stats.

10.4.2 Need Type

Support Need Type	Lead need	Secondary Need	Tertiary Need	Total
Domestic Abuse	149	128	41	318
Families with Support Needs	44	32	13	89
Generic Floating support to prevent homelessness (tenancy support services which cover a range of user needs but which must be exclusive of fixed site support)	70	49	12	131
People over 55 years of age with Support needs (this category must be exclusive of alarm services).	80	35	14	129
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV, Aids)	15	15	5	35
People with Criminal Offending History	22	16	9	47
People with Developmental Disorders (I.e. Autism.)	8	8	3	19
People with Learning Disabilities	17	10	4	31
People with Mental health Issues	361	200	89	650
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities	91	86	43	220
People with Substance Misuse Issues (Alcohol)	28	23	13	64
People with Substance Misuse Issues (Drugs and Volatile substances)	30	14	8	52
Single parent Families with Support needs	25	18	5	48
Single people with Support Needs not listed above (25-54)	73	41	22	136
Young People who are Care Leavers	5	5	0	10
Young People with Support Needs (16-24)	64	36	14	114
Total	1082	716	295	2093

Table 46: Occurrence of each Support Need Type across Lead, Secondary and Tertiary need

10.4.2.1 As was found in the TA needs assessment, Mental Health is resoundingly the most common Lead need, and need that appears most frequently across primary, secondary and tertiary needs recorded. Similarly need for DA support is high, and this fits with the figures from the HSG data which shows a sharp increase in engagement across DA services from 2020 onwards.

10.4.2.2 What hasn't previously been captured however is the level of demand for support from those aged over 55.

Need type	Age 55+			Total
	Lead Need	Second Need	Third Need	
Domestic Abuse	14	12	5	31
Families with Support Needs	5	5	3	13
Generic Floating support to prevent homelessness (tenancy support services which cover a range of user needs but which must be exclusive of fixed site support)	14	12	5	31
People over 55 years of age with Support needs (this category must be exclusive of alarm services).	75	33	13	121
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV, Aids)	10	10	3	23
People with Developmental Disorders (I.e. Autism.)	1	1		2
People with Learning Disabilities	2	2	1	5
People with Mental health Issues	73	48	21	142
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities	81	77	38	196
People with Substance Misuse Issues (Alcohol)	6	4	2	12
Single parent Families with Support needs	1	1		2
Single people with Support Needs not listed above (25-54)	4	2	1	7
Young People with Support Needs (16-24)	2			2
Grand Total	288	207	92	587

Table 47: Occurrence of Support Need Type across Lead, Secondary and Tertiary Need for Over 55s

*Cells in Light Pink highlight the most occurring needs. Cells highlighted in yellow show inputting errors.

- 10.4.2.3 Looking into the needs of the Over 55s more closely (Table 47), outside of the generic needs category a high proportion of those over 55s have a support need relating to mental health and/ or a physical or sensory disability.
- 10.4.2.4 As a support need Mental Health is covered extensively and appears consistently high across age ranges and gender. However, within this age group a significant number have a support need around disabilities. The HSG funding does not commission a service dedicated to those with physical or sensory disability but it may be prudent to liaise with stakeholders such as Adult Social Care should this be a continuing trend.
- 10.4.2.5 When considered alongside the needs assessment of those in TA and those who have approached the Council or become homeless without recourse to stay elsewhere, there is an underrepresentation of over 55's. This would suggest that this age group are less likely to find themselves homeless, possibly due to the support received successfully preventing this, or the resources Monmouthshire has with regards to age restricted accommodation stock.
- 10.4.2.6 At the other end of the spectrum those with Substance Misuse issues as a lead need are overrepresented in those in TA (Table 40) when compared to this wider data (Table 46). Overall, of all those accessing support from HSG the lead need of Substance Misuse ranks as one of the lowest. The data suggests that those with this as a lead need are more likely to find themselves homeless and in need of emergency and temporary accommodation. HSG has not had a commissioned service for those with substance misuse issues throughout the time period analysed here, but the commission of a GDAS outreach worker is pending.
- 10.4.2.7 When breaking down the lead needs by gender more women are accessing HSG support services than men- the opposite to that seen in the breakdown of TA (Figure 57, Table 48). Those with a lead need of Domestic Abuse and Single parent families are more likely to be female whereas those with lead needs of Offending, Substance Misuse or Generic needs are more likely to be male (Table 48).
- 10.4.2.8 Again, in comparing this to the isolated data around those in TA there is an overrepresentation of men in TA than amongst the wider support data. As has been noted, there are significantly more males than females in TA (Figure 57). This could be that the support needs where there is a stronger male skew are more pervasive in contributing to homelessness, or that support services are not able to cater to this cohort as effectively as for females, or a combination of the two.

Breakdown Lead need by Gender where recorded	Gender	
	F	M
Lead need type		
Domestic Abuse	139	10
Families with Support Needs	26	16
Generic Floating support to prevent homelessness (tenancy support services which cover a range of user needs but which must be exclusive of fixed site support)	20	50
People over 55 years of age with Support needs (this category must be exclusive of alarm services).	44	33
People with Chronic Illnesses (including HIV, Aids)	7	8
People with Criminal Offending History	2	20
People with Developmental Disorders (I.e. Autism.)	3	5
People with Learning Disabilities	9	8
People with Mental health Issues	181	179
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities	53	38
People with Substance Misuse Issues (Alcohol)	10	18
People with Substance Misuse Issues (Drugs and Volatile substances)	8	22
Single parent Families with Support needs	23	2
Single people with Support Needs not listed above (25-54)	25	48
Young People who are Care Leavers	4	1
Young People with Support Needs (16-24)	38	24
Total	592	482

Table 48: Breakdown Lead need by Gender where recorded

10.4.3 Outcomes

Outcome category	Outcome Achieved	Number of people
Promoting personal and community safety	Feeling safe	368
	Contributing to the safety and well-being of themselves and of others	286
Promoting independence and control	Managing accommodation	594
	Managing relationships	270
	Feeling part of the community	127
Promoting economic progress and financial control	Managing money	476
	Engaging in educational learning	66
	Engaging in employment/voluntary work	79
Promoting health and well-being	Physically healthy	215
	Mentally healthy	386
	Leading a healthy and active lifestyle	105

Table 49: Type and Number of Outcomes

- 10.4.3.1 Of the 1082 people recorded by support services to have a lead need, 1042 people were supported in the period April-September 2020 and 1030 people achieved positive outcomes as a result of the support they received, and 12 are continuing to work with support. These figures suggest that approximately 40 people did not engage to proceed with support.
- 10.4.3.2 A significant number of those supported achieved a positive outcome around Mental Health, and also to feel safe (Table 49) which demonstrates that HSG support services are working successfully to address the county's most prominent support needs, but that the continuing demand would indicate that an expansion of these services would be welcomed.
- 10.4.3.3 What hasn't been recorded in the survey of needs amongst those receiving support, or at least explicitly, is the demand for support around finances. Managing money is the second highest outcome achieved (Table 49). Budgeting, benefit advice, help into employment and training and income maximisation are shown here to be necessary services to support residents to maintain tenancies and ensure that any periods of homelessness are brief and unrepeatable- all the more so in the context of unstable income and benefit changes through the Pandemic and beyond.
- 10.4.3.4 Just under half of those supported during this 6 month snapshot were successfully supported to manage their accommodation, and this is supported by the figures recorded below (Table 50).

Status	Homelessness Status at start	Homelessness status at exit
Homeless	164	34
At threat of Homelessness within 56 days	61	6
In interim accommodation	191	105
Need support to remain in own home	470	149
Maintaining stable accommodation independently (6mths +)		251
Total	886	545

Table 50: Homeless Status at the Beginning and End of Support

- 10.4.3.5 The number of homeless households, or those facing homelessness are significantly reduced following intervention of support. Those requiring support to remain in their own home are clearly receiving the support appropriate to build resilience and empowerment to remain independent. HSG support services are clearly successful in preventing homelessness for vulnerable households with support needs.

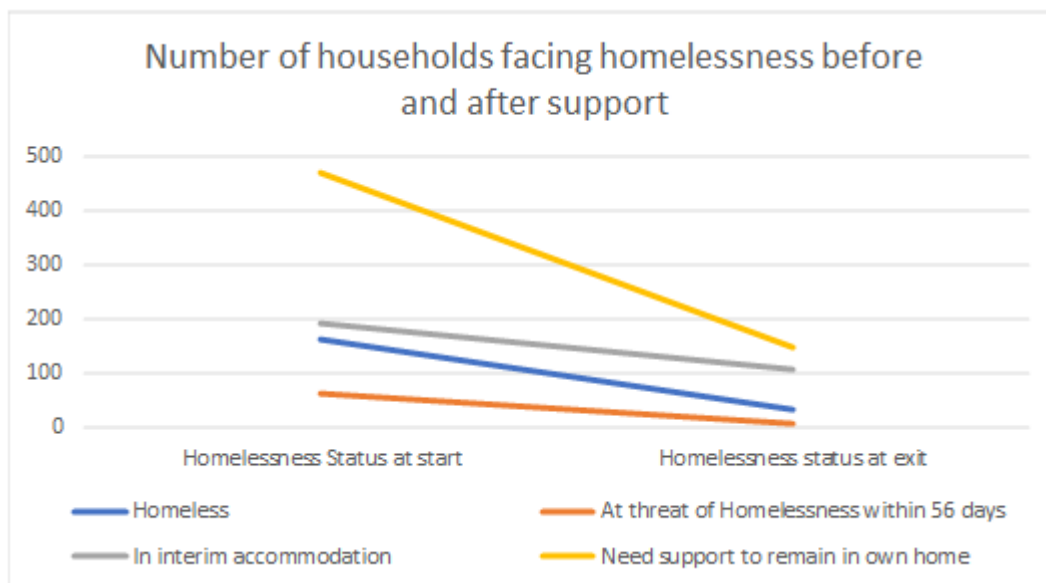


Figure 70: Number of Households Facing Homelessness at the Beginning and End of Support

10.4.4 HIP

10.4.4.1 The HIP panel has frequently been referred to as an example of good practice by stakeholders. The panel brings together a range of appropriate agencies fortnightly to discuss highly complex cases where a multi-agency approach is required. Due to the complexity of the cases outcomes are not captured statistically, however there are a number of positive testimonies which are testament to the power of the panel. The anonymised cases below are a sample of these.

- “A” was referred in November 2020 by Aneurin Bevan Health Board. “A” has a diagnosis of ASD and had been evicted from a couple of properties due to ASB, homophobic and racist abuse which had involved the police. “A” was housed at in B&B accommodation by HOTS and supported by Pobl Lifestyles. Pobl Lifestyles referred “A” to residential care where they are now happily settled with 24-hour care.
- “B” was referred in March 2021 as the family were experiencing ASB in their block of flats as well as a rodent infestation. The family needed to move quickly and so the HIP arranged for the Homeasearch team to be emailed a list of Police calls to the property, the Minutes of a recent CASP meeting and for Homeasearch to then consider a Banding change for “B”. Since going to Panel the banding has been changed to 2A and backdated to September 1st 2019. The Family successfully bid for 3-bedroom property in July 2021 and are delighted.
- “C” was re-referred to Panel in April 2021. Case of self-neglect, alcoholism, suspected financial abuse by a Neighbour. A DTR form was completed and Safeguarding Team investigated. A care package was put in place. Unfortunately, the Police were not able to investigate the suspected financial abuse as “C” denied any exploitation.

10.5 HSG data conclusion

- 10.5.1.1 Aside from a handful of services the number of residents accessing support dipped during the Coronavirus Pandemic 2020-2021 (Table 35, Figure 49). At first glance this might seem surprising, as it would intuitively been expected that the demand for support would have been higher. However, the lockdown of communities in March 2020 in response to COVID-19 saw an unbelievable response from both support providers and the citizens of Monmouthshire. During this period of time housing associations expanded their remit and sought to check in on all tenants- not just those who were receiving support. In the community 60+ CV19 volunteer groups convened almost instantly across the county, made up of multiple residents who recognised a fundamental 'need to help others' and to help sustain life at all costs. This rapid expansion of informal support most likely provided a level of pre-emptive assistance that helped families to avoid or delay crisis and approach formal support provisions.
- 10.5.1.2 It is expected, with the support of the data for the first half of 2021-2022 (Table 35), that for many services the demand will significantly increase as Wales continues to emerge from the pandemic and its social and financial implications reverberate through communities.
- 10.5.1.3 Looking across the HSG support data Mental Health issues feature prominently (Table 46), something which is supported anecdotally through the stakeholder workshops. The significant number of vulnerable adults requiring support with poor mental health far outweighs the support currently available, particularly for those with higher to intensive needs. Floating support and supported accommodation delivered by MIND would benefit from expansion to help with this increasing demand. However, there are limits to what HSG projects can achieve when issues can overlap with the need for medical treatment and specialist care. The HSG team will welcome any future partnership working with local Mental Health Teams to address this increasing need.

- 10.5.1.4 Young people (16-24) and those with substance misuse issues are overrepresented amongst those who access emergency and temporary accommodation through Monmouthshire County Council when the wider support data is considered (Figure 58, Table 40, Table 46). These two support needs also have a higher proportion of 'high' and 'intensive' needs and indicate that residents with these needs are more likely to become homeless. The Council's HSG team currently funds 2 supported accommodation provisions for young people through Pobl and are currently restructuring an additional facility to provide supported accommodation specifically for those with higher needs. However, it is clear from the data that the demand continues to outweigh the provision. For those with substance misuse issues a dedicated assertive outreach worker from the Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) has been procured and is due to start imminently but there are no suitable accommodation provisions for this cohort. The council aspires to a 24 hour staffed provision for those with high and intensive needs to complement the Housing First model, the need for which has also been raised by stakeholders, but at present HSG does not have the available finances to fund this.
- 10.5.1.5 As a county with an aging demographic it is not surprising that HSG projects support a significant number of over 55s, many of these with sensory or physical disability (Table 47). As this trend is not replicated within TA it can be assumed that interventions by support services, as well as the accommodation stock for older people, is successfully preventing homelessness.
- 10.5.1.6 98% of those supported by HSG funded projects from April to September 2021 achieved a positive outcome (Table 49). As well as Mental Health support, HSG providers supported residents to achieve positive outcomes around Managing money and Managing Tenancies. The success of this support in reducing homelessness can be evidenced by the decrease in those either homeless or facing homelessness following intervention.
- 10.5.1.7 To ensure the best outcomes are achieved for those with high and complex needs the Council has created the Housing Intervention Panel (HIP), a multi-agency forum where partner agencies are able to work on cases collaboratively and effectively. This has been heralded by stakeholders as an example of good practice and has delivered positive results.

Chapter 11: Qualitative Data

11.1 Themes from Stakeholder Workshops and Questionnaires

The qualitative data below was captured at Stakeholder events, 5 of which were hosted by MCC with a mixture of partner agencies in attendance, and from the stakeholder questionnaire which was sent to individual professionals. This feedback

was structured into SWOT/PESTL analysis and trends can broadly be broken down into the below themes.

11.1.1.1 There was a consensus through the PESTL that services are currently operating in a context of rising costs and diminishing income. In particular services are bracing for the impact the increase in energy costs and the removal of the £20 per week UC uplift. The pandemic has also seen housing in Monmouthshire more in demand, with house prices and rents rapidly increasing. LHA rates were also acknowledged to be significantly out of line with market rents. In addition to this Monmouthshire has a number of restrictions to building or remodelling properties due to the high levels of phosphates found in the local rivers.

11.1.2 *Communication:*

11.1.2.1 Strengths

- General consensus that partnership working had improved, largely due to the change in working brought about by the pandemic. There has been more of an appetite for all agencies to work together flexibly and creatively to meet the challenges of the last 18 months. The HIP was mentioned several times as an example of good practice in this area which allows professionals to come together to seek creative solutions, and also serves as a preventative resource.
- Communication with PRS landlords has improved due to procuring TA over the last 18 months.
- The use of various digital platforms for communicating with service users is a positive advancement, especially for Monmouthshire being a semi-rural area. The increased use of MS Teams has in some ways made collaboration easier between partner agencies.

11.1.2.2 Weaknesses

- Whilst the increase use of technology to communicate with residents has had positive results it's limitations should also be recognised. As a rural county Monmouthshire does not have consistency in infrastructure with regards to internet and mobile signal and so some people risk becoming isolated from services. Similarly, some residents would have a preference in face to face working to build trust and a relationship with services. All services would like to see a blended approach to communicating with residents to meet individual preferences and needs moving forward.
- Services noted that there has been a decline in the quality of information coming through on the referrals from Gateway. This is contributing to a culture of clients becoming retraumatised by having to repeat their issues and challenges every time they move between services. The lack of robustness of the referrals can also do service users a disservice as they may not be allocated to the correct service for their needs and having to go through the system again.
- As Monmouthshire is such a decentralised county without a central focal point it poses a challenge to disseminating information. It was generally felt during

the workshops that Monmouthshire could do more to promote its services, both so that those who may need them know where they can access information, and to raise awareness around homelessness as an issue.

11.1.2.3 Opportunity

- To continue and develop the multi-agency partnership working that has emerged from the pandemic and to broaden the services included, for example, to community resources. In particular making connections with health colleagues as we move forward from the pandemic. There was a feeling that there has been a history of silo working between housing services and health, and that this area still needs to see an improvement in partnership working.
- To build a centralised hub where residents can get easy read information and advice whether that be online, or in person, or both. To avoid confusion for the service user it would be ideal to provide a central point of contact. A centralised system such as this would also benefit support staff, as although there are a number of services on Monmouthshire staff are not always aware of them all.

11.1.3 Staffing

Strengths

- It was acknowledged that staff across all services had shown dedication, compassion and professionalism in the face of extreme pressures brought about by the pandemic. Staff have had to work and adapt very quickly and have largely risen to this challenge.

11.1.3.1 Weaknesses

- Staffing remains an issue across the sector in line with national trends. Services are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit staff and retention rates are currently poor. The stresses of working during the pandemic was identified as taking its toll on the wellbeing of staff, but also the emerging competition from other sectors luring staff with increases in pay and additional bonuses.

11.1.4 Accommodation and support

11.1.4.1 Strengths

- Services supporting young people has grown through the youth work approach encouraged by WAG. As a result support services are now able to better identify and support young people at risk of homelessness which strengthens prevention.
- The HOTs team have been restructured and expanded to include Prevention officers which will now help to broaden the remit of prevention, support people earlier and avoid a 'revolving door' of clients. The role of specialist benefit support workers has also been a good tool in preventing homelessness, particularly with clients who may not engage with other services.
- The HOTs team have been creative and flexible in their approach, taking risks with initiatives such as becoming guarantors for those wanting to access the PRS.

- Questionnaire responses also praised the work of Homesearch and RSLs. Social housing providers were considered to provide support to those at risk of tenancy breakdown.

11.1.4.2 Weaknesses

- The theme that overwhelmingly dominated discussions around weaknesses is resources. It was widely acknowledged that Monmouthshire has a lack of accommodation of all types- larger properties for families, single units, specialist supported and move on accommodation. The private rented sector in Monmouthshire is small and expensive (over the LHA rates in most cases) and there was a feeling amongst participants that landlords are reluctant to take homeless clients, particularly those with support needs.
- The shortages of suitable, appropriate accommodation have caused stagnation in TA and B&B which support services in turn felt were contributing to a backlogs in services as they were supporting households for longer periods.
- Stakeholders identified an unmet need amongst service users in the county who experience mental health issues. Mental health issues appear to have a high prevalence amongst the homelessness community in Monmouthshire and services felt that there is a distinct lack of support options for this cohort. Alarmingly, one group identified that for some residents criminalisation was the only means of accessing mental health support.
- Participants noted a lack of housing options for those with medium to high needs, as there aren't any provisions suitable to ex-offenders, those with entrenched drug and alcohol misuse issues, and as above, those with medium to high mental health needs. At present the county does not have a dedicated GDAS worker for TA due to the challenges of recruitment (see below), and there is no current framework for dual diagnosis teams. Although WAG would like to move away from shared accommodation, for some residents this would be a positive solution for the short to medium term. The idea of specialist 24 hour supported hostel provision was raised in a number of the focus groups as support services have identified a larger number of complex cases coming through the system.
- Where there is supported accommodation, providers have identified barriers for those who find employment, as their rent quickly becomes unsustainably high. This can create a disincentive for residents to go into employment and an additional barrier to securing move on accommodation due to a build-up of arrears.

11.1.4.3 Opportunities

- There is scope to work with adult social care to improve services for those who are neurodiverse.

11.1.5 *Transport*

11.1.5.1 Weaknesses

- Monmouthshire does not have developed public transport links which causes a number of issues for homeless residents.

- Supported accommodation providers raised the problems they have faced when trying to support clients to medical appointments and for emergency treatment. Some clients are not able to get the treatment they need due to these logistical barriers.
- Similarly, further education establishments are spread throughout Monmouthshire and beyond, and the lack of regular and affordable transport to the campuses poses a real barrier to those seeking to obtain further qualifications.

11.1.6 *Legislation, policy and processes*

11.1.6.1 Strengths

- Staff are now more aligned to PIE practices and it is considered that services are now working with the individual in mind and have been tailoring support to meet individual needs.

11.1.6.2 Weaknesses

- Participants discussed the funding processes for services and identified that this tends to be on a short-term basis which makes it difficult for them to develop long term solutions to issues. Services do not feel that they can work with longevity when funding can be removed or changed regularly.
- It was mentioned that the way that services are funded fosters gatekeeping of individual pots of funding, rather than encouraging services to pool resources to address needs. Homelessness services rely very heavily on HSG funding, and it would be good to see other services such as health contribute on joint programmes that will achieve multilateral goals.
- Uncertainty around WAG's intentions with regards to statutory requirements such as intentionality and priority need, and what will happen to those in TA/B&B should this change.

11.1.6.3 Opportunities

- Practices in other LAs were mentioned, including the Tenancy Training offered by Cardiff City Council which may ease the concerns of private sector landlords in placing homeless households in their properties.

11.1.7 *Community*

11.1.7.1 Weaknesses

- There has historically been a lack of appetite in the communities for homeless accommodation. Plans for homeless accommodation has frequently been met with resistance and has caused friction between the community and the council.

11.1.7.2 Opportunities

- The pandemic awoke the public to often hidden societal issues such as homelessness and encouraged communities to come forward and support each other. It was identified that this culture of 'good will' may provide opportunities to bring the public onside and encourage private landlords to work

with services. As with the recent Afghan refugees resettlement, there may be an appetite to go to directly to the public for help.

11.2 Feedback from Service User workshops

Service users accommodated in one of Monmouthshire's supported projects and a B&B used to accommodate those approaching as homeless during the Covid pandemic were asked a series of questions on their experiences. Below is a summary of their responses.

11.2.1 B&B participants

- 11.2.1.1 The majority of participants accessed the Housing Options Team through other agencies, usually with the support of a key worker or healthcare professional. This delayed the process for service users to access the housing support that they needed and gave the appearance of the system being convoluted.
- 11.2.1.2 Once in contact with the HOTs team participants relayed being put off by the attitude of staff and finding it difficult to meet the legislative requirements around eligibility and local connection. This however has changed during the pandemic, and some participants stated that they would not have received the housing support they have outside of these special arrangements. Those with pets felt they faced an additional barrier due to a lack of emergency and temporary accommodation provision that will accept animals.
- 11.2.1.3 Once in contact with the HOTs team participants relayed being put off by the attitude of staff and finding it difficult to meet the legislative requirements around eligibility and local connection. This however has changed during the pandemic, and some participants stated that they would not have received the housing support they have outside of these special arrangements. Those with pets felt they faced an additional barrier due to a lack of emergency and temporary accommodation provision that will accept animals.
- 11.2.1.4 Once having submitted a homeless application and engaging with the process responses were generally positive but identified ways the process could have been made easier. A lack of clarity of information was identified and participants noted that they would have appreciated more 'straight answers' around their homeless application. Although a number of participants described approaching the HOTs team through other support agencies it was considered that these agencies could have communicated better- particularly with Probation and Criminal Justice departments.
- 11.2.1.5 Overall feelings on the homelessness process was not positive, with participants describing feeling 'lost', 'broken', 'vulnerable', 'shit' and as 'less of a person' and that the experience had negatively affected their mental health. Service users were largely satisfied with the accommodation they had received and spoke well of support services but did not rate contact with Monmouthshire council well. The aspirations of the service users from this workshop was to be accommodated in suitable accommodation (largely 1 bed units) near to their support networks.

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11.2.2 Supported accommodation participants

11.2.2.1 On the homelessness process those in supported accommodation felt that there needs to be more advertisement of services available to people who are homeless in Monmouthshire. However the overall experience was described as 'swift' though frightening.

11.2.2.2 Those residing in supported accommodation responded positively when asked about the support they receive and the accommodation they are residing in. They identified that communication was the tool that they felt was most important. Those residing in supported accommodation also identified that the cost of the accommodation for those working acts as a disincentive for people to seek employment and take opportunities.

11.3 HSG Feedback

11.3.1 Due to resource constraints, exit interviews are conducted by phone with a sample of service users recently closed to support services. Service users are asked to rate their experience based on the two questions below and are given the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience.

Clients were asked...	Support had made things worse	Support had made no real change to their life	Support had made their life a bit better	Support has made life a lot better	Support had made life significantly better	Total
to rate their overall experience of receiving support from HSG funded projects and changes it had made to their everyday life.	0	8	8	17	15	48
since support how do you rate your ability to live independently and	1	12	7	20	8	48

manage your own home?						
Total	1	20	15	37	23	

Table 51: Responses from HSG Support Service Exit Interviews

11.3.2 The table above illustrates the responses gathered between May and December 20221. Contacting those within the sample can be challenging, as staff have found that a number of service users have either changed their telephone number or are reluctant to answer calls from unknown numbers. Despite this, over 50% of those contacted resulted in a complete interview. Feedback on the efficacy of support is overwhelmingly positive- 83.3% of responders asserted that their experience was positive and had brought changes to their life (question 1) and 72.9% of responders felt that the support received had increased their ability to live independently (question 2).

11.3.3 Some of the main themes that came from the interviews where that people had benefited a great deal from someone to talk to, especially in the period of lockdowns.

11.3.3.1 Lots of clients felt they had been able to address their debt which had been a big part of their daily stresses.

11.3.4 The questionnaire didn't ask about banding but the majority had mentioned that they had been helped with new banding on the housing register.

11.3.5 Service users were asked about barriers they faced during the support process during their exit interviews, a selection of which are shown below.

- [I] Found it really difficult to find support when I needed it, didn't know where to go, and would like to have seen helpful numbers on a bus stop or something.
- I had 3 different workers in 3 months, (Found it really had telling lots of different workers my story).
- I wasn't in a good place when support was being offered and didn't answer the phone so people gave up on me and support ended.

11.3.6 When asked to provide a brief outline of how support has helped to achieve something that was important to service users the responses broadly followed the themes of the statements below.

- I have had support previously, but nothing like this, my worker was down to earth and we got on well, she was always there for me.
- I am dyslexic and have had lots of support to read and write which has made me understand things better, especially when it comes to having contact with my children.
- Helped with benefits after my breakdown and losing job. I became a full time carer and needed to get on housing register, I have had help with foodbanks when we have got into a difficult situation and support has been fantastic.
- Support has helped me get a flat, Help with DA, help with Social Services.
- I am slowly learning to do things for myself with support.
- It has greatly helped with family relationships.

11.4 Housing Options Feedback

- 11.4.1 Customer feedback forms provide the Local Authority with invaluable feedback about the current status quo regarding the initial contact with Housing Options and the subsequent placements into temporary accommodation. Responses remain low to medium across the service with room for an updated system of collecting and measuring responses given. Feedback received via questionnaires across the two services overall were positive or very positive, with 95% of clients being satisfied or very satisfied with the service from Housing Options; and 91% very satisfied or satisfied with allocated temporary accommodation.
- 11.4.2 The overarching positive themes from Housing Options was that the service was prompt; quick and reliable, and that individuals in the team were easy to speak to, kind and understanding.
- 11.4.3 The challenges raised related to communication with the Team who were “not easy to contact” due to a lack of phone numbers, or communication being by email.
- 11.4.4 In temporary accommodation clients in the main felt listened to; that staff were friendly; fast and helpful.
- 11.4.5 Challenges clients raised were around the location of some of the B&Bs being outside of a main town when people don't drive; and the rent in house share is expensive for those who were working, or wished to work. Other comments were about the accommodation itself, which some felt was small and sometimes slow to be maintained after requests were made for improvements.
- 11.4.6 None of the responses has come as a surprise, with work already underway to improve communications with people during their first point of contact with the team. Video and face-to-face calls are being developed within local hubs to enable clients to feel comfortable with their approach to the service.
- 11.4.7 A minimum standard review of all accommodation started pre-pandemic, and with the move towards Rapid Rehousing and self-contained temporary accommodation, the points raised about current properties should be met with the improvements planned in the near future.

Chapter 12: Conclusion

- 12.1.1 What the preceding chapters are showing is that these are challenging times for households and the Council when confronted with dealing with homelessness in the County.
- 12.1.2 For many households it is around accessing affordable housing in whether it is through home ownership or renting within both the PRS and SHS while for others it is having the appropriate support to maintain existing accommodation.
- 12.1.3 The Council too has a number challenges, The Statement of Need highlights that the profile of homeless need and the requirements to meet this need has changed significantly over the last two years. Whilst there has essentially been minimal change in the number of applications, the need and demand for a range and type of temporary, supported and permanent homeless accommodation has risen significantly, particularly in relation to young people, single people and those experiencing mental health and substance misuse issues, a high proportion of which require medium to high housing support provision. In part, this can be attributed to the challenges of the local housing market, including a contracting private sector, which impacts detrimentally on the housing options available to low income and vulnerable households. For example, both social housing and private rented housing is difficult to access.
- 12.1.4 The increase in demand for homeless temporary, supported and permanent accommodation has highlighted three issues, firstly, the importance of homeless prevention and identifying scope to strengthen further existing arrangements. In addition, there is a need to identify additional permanent housing solutions both in the social and private rented sector due to the inability to rely on 'normal/typical' turnover to facilitate move on from temporary accommodation, particularly one bedroomed accommodation.
- 12.1.5 Secondly the need for additional and a greater range of supported housing and housing support provision to help people, particularly those with medium to high complex needs, both to maintain their existing accommodation whilst also preparing for independent living.
- 12.1.6 Lastly, there is a need for additional self-contained temporary accommodation, (as per Welsh Governments standards) to facilitate a phased reduction and eventual elimination in the use of B & B and shared temporary housing. The continued use of such accommodation has a detrimental effect on those being housed by this means and creates an unsustainable cost for the Council.
- 12.1.7 The Statement of Needs assessment has also highlighted the relevance and importance of collaborative working. The current delivery of homeless services is based on a wide range of partnership working, which provides a strong platform upon which to continue building and strengthening existing partnerships and establishing new and innovative arrangements. A key focus will be to continue to explore opportunities within Monmouthshire County Council and between the Council and Registered Social Landlords, support providers, the Aneurin Bevan Health Board and Welsh Government.

Monmouthshire County Council

Housing Support Programme Strategy

2022- 2026

1 Introduction:

- 1.1.1 Monmouthshire County Council is required to develop a Housing Support Programme (HSP) Strategy ('the Strategy') every four years, with a mid-point review every two years, outlining the strategic direction of the Council's housing related support services.
- 1.1.2 The Council also has a duty under the Homelessness (Wales) Act 2014 to produce a four-year homelessness strategy. This document, therefore, provides a single strategic view of the Council's approach to homelessness prevention and housing support services within Monmouthshire. The document particularly sets out how the Council will continue to implement the required transformational shift to improve the quality and availability of homeless accommodation, that homeless should be brief and non-recurring and a move to a Rapid Re-housing approach, as determined by Welsh Governments Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support.
- 1.1.3 The development of the Strategy followed a review of homeless data and services and a comprehensive needs assessment that included a series of stakeholder engagement exercises and focus group meetings with both service users and partner organisations.
- 1.1.4 This Strategy sets out the key actions the Council will be working on in the medium term. It provides direction and a sense of what is important for the next four years to tackle the current homeless challenges and transform homeless services in Monmouthshire.

1.2 Purpose of the Strategy

- 1.2.1 This Strategy sets out a single strategic direction for both homelessness and housing support services in Monmouthshire for the next four years (2022 - 2026), and meets the Council's statutory requirements to produce a Homeless Strategy under Part 2, Housing (Wales) Act 2014. The Strategy sets out the homeless priorities for Monmouthshire (See Section 3) for the Council and partner agencies.
- 1.2.2 This Strategy effectively reviews and updates the Monmouthshire dimension of the Gwent Regional Homeless Strategy, established in 2018, which the Council was party to. The Strategy also reviews and reflects the Council's Homeless Transition Plan established in early 2021, as required by Welsh Government's Phase 2 Guidance.
- 1.2.3 The Strategy identifies and sets out key themes and priorities for the Council and its partners to prevent homelessness wherever possible through early intervention: and where we cannot prevent homelessness, it is rare, brief and unrepeated.
- 1.2.4 The Strategy seeks to contribute to the Council's commitment to the vision for Monmouthshire to be:
- an ambitious place full of hope and enterprise
 - a fair place where your family is safe
 - a sustainable place where people care about each other
 - a place you are proud to call home
- 1.2.5 Central to the Council's vision are the principles of social justice. A socially just society is one in which everyone's rights and dignity are equally respected, where all citizens are able to participate fully, and where nobody's life chances are held back for reasons that are beyond their personal control. The Council considers homeless services individually and collectively have an extremely important role to play in this regard.
- 1.2.6 The development of the Strategy ensures that there is full alignment between homelessness and the Council's Housing Support Grant Programme and that the on-going review, development and commissioning of the programme is informed by homeless need in the County. In this regard the Strategy sets out the priorities for the Housing Support Grant programme over the next 4 years.

1.3 Legislative and Policy Context

1.3.1 National context

1.3.2 A number of legislative acts, national plans and policies informed the drafting of the Strategy. The two principle pieces were the following legislative acts,

1.3.3 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

1.3.4 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 seeks to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in order to create a Wales that all want to live in, now and in the future.

1.3.5 The Act requires public bodies to think about the long-term impact of the decisions they make and to better work together to prevent inequality issues such as poverty and ill health. Decision makers should benchmark the decisions they make against the well-being goals introduced by the Act,

- I. A prosperous Wales;
- II. A resilient Wales;
- III. A healthier Wales;
- IV. A more equal Wales;
- V. A Wales of cohesive communities;
- VI. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language; and
- VII. A globally responsible Wales.

1.3.6 Preventing and relieving homelessness has a role in meeting those well-being goals, particularly goals ii to iv, above.

1.3.7 The Housing (Wales) Act 2014

1.3.8 The Act introduced new statutory duties on local authorities to ensure that those at risk of homelessness are able to receive help at the earliest opportunity. Homelessness prevention became a statutory duty under Section 66 and 73 of the Act. The duty to prevent also removed the qualifying criterion of “priority” that had previously excluded many households from accessing any form of assistance. Strengthening homeless prevention and seeking to identify potential issues further ‘up-stream’ is an outcome sought from the strategy.

1.3.9 To enable local authorities to meet their statutory duties the Act allows local authorities to access the private rented sector for suitable accommodation. In this regard, the Council established its Monmouthshire Lettings arms-length branding several years ago. A key outcome is to further develop MLS to encourage more private landlords to make available their properties to the Council.

1.3.10 Other Relevant Legislative Acts and Policies considered in the Strategy's development were the following

- Welsh Government Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2018-20.
- Housing Support Grant Practice Guidance.
- Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016.
- The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014.
- Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

1.3.11 Phase 2 - Planning Guidance for Homelessness and Housing Related Support Services

1.3.12 In June 2020 and in relation to the Covid pandemic, Welsh Government published the Phase 2 homeless guidance. Having previously asked all local authorities in Wales to help protect individuals and communities by supporting people facing homelessness into safe and stable accommodation, the Phase 2 guidance requested local authorities to ensure that everyone brought into temporary accommodation is supported into long-term accommodation.

1.3.13 In addition, the Phase 2 guidance articulated Welsh Government's vision for homelessness and homeless policy to transform the whole approach to homelessness provision so that those who present as homeless experience a system focused on prevention and where that fails homelessness is rare, brief and non-repeated. The core of the vision is a move to 'Rapid Rehousing.'

1.3.14 Rapid Re-Housing Guidance

1.3.15 Welsh Government vision is that the prevention of homelessness must remain the primary focus in order to achieve a higher rate of success in relation to keeping people in their own homes.

1.3.16 Where prevention has not worked, Rapid Rehousing is essential to reduce the impact of homelessness and ensure it is unrepeated. The benefits of secure, settled and self-contained housing for people who have experienced or been at risk of homelessness should not be underestimated. The majority of people experiencing homelessness should be provided with such homes as quickly as possible. This will help avoid the effects of prolonged homelessness or prolonged stays in emergency or temporary settings while remaining homeless. (This is a particular challenge for the Council at present). Rapid rehousing is based upon a systematic approach of understanding what housing is required to meet local need, how that housing is going to be funded, developed and allocated to people who find themselves homeless. This approach, when properly applied, means the need for many forms of temporary accommodation will diminish and where it is needed, is for a shorter period than currently.

1.3.17 A priority of the Strategy is to develop a Rapid Rehousing Plan by June 2022.

1.4 Local/Regional context

1.4.1 Gwent Regional Public Service Board Well-being Assessment

1.4.2 The eight statutory members of the Gwent Regional Public Service Board, or GRPSB, are the five local authorities, the Local Health Board, Fire and Rescue Authority and Natural Resources Wales. Other organisations are also invited, these include Gwent Police, Local Housing Associations, Melin Homes and voluntary organisations represented through the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations.

1.4.3 The RPSB must prepare and publish an assessment of the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in the area and then agree priorities to address these.

1.4.4 Monmouthshire County Council Corporate Business Plan 2017 / 2022

1.4.5 Sets out a clear direction for the Council and resources required to deliver it. It informs and shapes a whole set of enabling and delivery plans around People; Digital; Economy; Customers, Land and Assets.

1.4.6 The plan sets out sets out our five Organisational Goals. These goals incorporate the four Well-being Objectives. The role of homelessness services has an important contribution to make to the majority of below:

- I. The best possible start in life
- II. Thriving and well-connected county
- III. Maximise the potential of the natural and built environment
- IV. Lifelong well-being
- V. Future-focused Council

1.4.7 People, Place Prosperity: A Strategy for Social Justice 2017 – 2022

1.4.8 The Aim of the Social Justice Strategy is ‘To put Social Justice at the heart of what we do’.

1.4.9 The Commitments made in the Strategy focuses on the following:

- Enabling connected and caring communities supporting people to live independently;
- Delivering on social justice, better prosperity and reducing inequality;
- Enabling better local services through supporting volunteers and social action

1.4.10 And has aligned with the Public Service Board priorities and aspirations:

- To reduce inequalities between communities and within communities;
- To support and protect vulnerable people; and
- To consider our impact on the environment.

1.4.11 Gwent Regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-2023

1.4.12 The Gwent Regional Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-2023 sets out six Strategic Priorities that will contribute to the pursuit of the prevention of violence and abuse, the protection of victims and the support of all those affected.

1.4.13 Housing Support Grant Programme

1.4.14 The Housing Support Grant (HSG) Programme is an early intervention programme that funds a wide range of housing related support and homelessness services for vulnerable people across Gwent, and supports activity which prevents people from becoming homeless, stabilises their housing situation, or helps potentially homeless people to find and keep accommodation.

1.4.15 The Monmouthshire HSG Programme supports the National vision for the Housing Support Programme, which is:

A Wales where nobody is homeless, and everyone has a safe home where they can flourish and live a fulfilled, active and independent life”.

1.4.16 Furthermore, the Council will participate in the Gwent Regional Housing Support Grant Collaborative Group in order to identify shared needs and deliver on shared goals. The Strategic goals of the Gwent RHSCG are:

- Deliver high quality, effective and responsive services.
- Expand our reach by collaborating & working in partnership.
- Strengthen engagement and accessibility

1.5 The Council's Strategy to Summer 2022 – Looking Ahead, Delivering Now

1.5.1 The Purpose

In December 2021, the Council revised its own Strategy to Summer 2022 and reviewed its purpose. This Strategy contributes to the Council's 'Looking Ahead, Delivering Now Strategy to Summer 2022' whereby the Council wants Monmouthshire to be:

- An ambitious place full of hope and enterprise
- A fair place where your family is safe
- A sustainable place where people care about each other and
- A place you are proud to call home

1.5.2 The Council's Strategy is underpinned by a clear sense of who we are as a local authority. The Council expects people and partner agencies who work with us to share a strong value set and expect that these are evident in the ways we work and engage with our communities. Our values reflect who we are, how we do things and how we are transforming homelessness:

- Openness
- Flexibility
- Fairness
- Teamwork
- Kindness

1.5.3 The Council remains committed to preventing and reducing homelessness, tackling the main causes of homelessness, and supporting those in need. Where we cannot prevent homelessness occurring, we strive to make it rare, brief and unrepeatable.

1.5.4 The Principles

- To deliver an accessible quality service that ensures every person receives good quality advice and assistance at the earliest opportunity to prevent homelessness and protect people from harm.
- To reduce inequality by promoting social and community cohesion.
- To maximise resources by improving partnership working both regionally and locally to deal with homelessness.

2 Needs assessment:

2.1.1 Needs Assessment process.

The needs assessment process consisted of analysing key policy documents, statistical research and information collected during feedback from consultation exercises and a questionnaire.

2.1.2 The Statement of Need focused on the following areas:

- The wider environment that homelessness services operate within;
- The accommodation in place to prevent and alleviate homelessness;
- Demand for homelessness services and trends – past, current, and estimated future levels of homelessness;
- The main causes of homelessness;
- The resources currently in place to prevent homelessness and support those who are homeless and possible gaps;
- Potential areas of improvement; and
- The expected resources the Council has to devote to statutory homelessness services moving forward.

2.1.3 The methods used to inform the Statement of Need were:

- A desktop review of key literature and statistical data;
- Focus groups and group discussions with key staff relevant to the preparation and implementation of homelessness planning);
- Both SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) and PESTL (Political, Economic, Social, Technology and Legislation) analyses were used;
- A stakeholder questionnaire feedback from service providers, partners and other stakeholders;
- Surveys with people who have experienced homelessness and related services first-hand;
- Direct engagement with different service user groups;
- Empirical data used to inform the strategy and evidence need included: WHO12 data, LHMA prospectus data, Mental Health data from Aneurin Bevan Health Board and Outcomes data (HSG)

2.1.4 [Click here for access to the Statement of Need](#) (link to be inserted later)

2.2 Key findings

2.2.1 An analysis of the homelessness data for the 4-year period 2017 - 2021 identified the following:

- Applications
 - Total applications have seen a fall of just over 32% over the past 4 years¹;
 - The number of single households remains relatively stable at around 65.5% of total applications²;
 - Around 61% of all single households are males³;
 - Around 39% of all single households are females;
 - Around 29% of applicants have dependent children⁴;
 - 96% of those in Temporary Accommodation (TA) have at least one recorded support need⁵.
- Main Age Range of Applicants
 - Around 25% of applicants were aged between 16 to 24 years old⁶;
 - Around 4% of applicants were 16 - 17 years old⁷.
- Main Causes of Homelessness (S66)
 - 30.6% of all causes was rent arrears⁸;
 - 30.5% of all causes was a loss of private rented sector accommodation⁹;
 - Around 29% of all causes was family and friends no longer able to accommodate¹⁰.

2.2.2 The Needs Assessment Review particularly highlighted Mental Health, Young People, Substance Misuse, a lack of homeless and permanent accommodation as key issues/themes which have been relevant to the development of the Strategy and the future delivery of homeless services in Monmouthshire. These key areas have been adopted as priorities for the Strategy for addressing homelessness in Monmouthshire.

¹ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 8.3.1.1

² (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 8.3.2.1

³ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 8.3.2.3

⁴ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); Figure 26

⁵ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 9.3.3.1

⁶ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 8.3.4.2

⁷ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); Figure 29

⁸ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); Figure 31

⁹ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 8.5.3

¹⁰ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); Figure 34

2.2.3 Mental Health

2.2.4 The Statement of Need demonstrated an overwhelming demand around Mental Health issues for those facing or becoming homeless¹¹. A survey of the support currently provided through HSG funding alongside the quantity and level of need highlights both accommodation and support gaps particularly for those with mental health needs. This supports the anecdotal evidence raised by stakeholders around the barriers to supporting this cohort¹². The data suggests that Mental Health is very likely to be a significant factor in those finding themselves with housing and homelessness issues¹³.

2.2.5 To effectively meet this need Monmouthshire Housing Support Team will need to look at expanding mental health support services accommodation services. Alongside procuring and commissioning services, this will also include forging relationships with local Mental Health teams so people can access the treatment required- something that has anecdotally been raised as a hurdle to providing appropriate support and homelessness prevention.

2.2.6 Young people

2.2.7 For an overall aging population Monmouthshire has an overrepresentation of young people (16-24) within its housing support population, particularly in TA¹⁴. Being a young person of itself is not necessarily a support need, but when mixed with other needs can add a level of complexity and vulnerability, which corresponds to the approach in support, that is required. Monmouthshire currently commissions two services for young people, one being a provision of supported accommodation and the other being Emphasis.¹⁵

2.2.8 Looking at the level of need amongst young people in TA there is a higher proportion of those with High and Intensive needs¹⁶. The current services provided do not have sufficient capacity and are therefore not currently equipped to support those with anything above medium level of needs. The data from the needs assessment shows that Monmouthshire needs to expand the number of units for young people and the capacity of services to support service users with high and complex needs.

¹¹ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.2.3, 10.3.3.1, 10.4.1.2

¹² (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.4.1.2

¹³ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.3.3.1, 10.4.1.2.

¹⁴ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.3.5.7

¹⁵ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.2.4

¹⁶ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.3.5.8

2.2.9 Substance Misuse

2.2.10 In the needs assessment for those in TA, Substance Misuse issues as a lead need are overrepresented when compared to the wider support data¹⁷. Monmouthshire Council's HSG is currently recruiting for a GDAS Outreach Worker for TA. The data suggests that those with these issues as a lead need are more likely to find themselves homeless and in need of emergency and temporary accommodation¹⁸.

2.2.11 Similar to young people captured in the TA needs assessment, there is a higher proportion of those with High and Intensive needs amongst those with a lead need of Substance Misuse¹⁹. At present there is no clear housing route for these clients and no supported accommodation equipped to provide appropriate support.

2.2.12 Suitable Accommodation

2.2.13 Monmouthshire has a deficit of housing in relation to those approaching as homeless, which is only widening²⁰. There is a shortage of housing of all types but as explored in the data, over half of all applications are made by single people²¹. This has created unprecedented pressure on one bed properties throughout the county. Monmouthshire Council has and will continue to seek creative solutions to expand stock.

2.2.14 The TA Needs Assessment has also demonstrated a significant minority of homeless applicants with high to intensive support needs where traditional housing routes would not be conducive to a successful tenancy²². Monmouthshire has a Housing First Scheme, but this provision is currently small, and will not be suitable for those with the highest of needs. As was mentioned frequently during stakeholder events, Monmouthshire does not have a high needs/ 24 hour staffed accommodation and it was felt that this is a noticeable gap in services for those who are homeless with high needs in Monmouthshire²³.

2.2.15 Prevention

2.2.16 Available data has shown Monmouthshire Housing Options Team (HOTS) to have a 60% success rate in preventing homelessness suggesting there is room for further improvement²⁴. Monmouthshire has recently invested in additional resources to work directly with those who are at risk of homelessness and in doing so gain further knowledge and experience in prevalent triggers. Monmouthshire County Council will also pursue ways to identify at risk households further upstream before issues become entrenched and unsurmountable.

¹⁷ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.4.2.6

¹⁸ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.4.2.6

2.2.17 It has been stated by stakeholders that information around support and services offered to those at risk of homelessness is not always easy to find or accessible. Monmouthshire County Council is looking to review the way it disseminates this information to reach a larger audience in an easy to follow format.

2.2.18 The need and demand for a range and type of temporary, supported and permanent homeless accommodation has risen significantly, particularly in relation to young people, single people and those experiencing mental health and substance misuse issues, a high proportion of which require medium to high housing support provision beyond what is currently available through HSG. The increase in demand for homeless temporary, supported and permanent accommodation has first highlighted the importance of homeless prevention and identifying scope to further strengthen existing arrangements. In addition, there is a need to identify additional permanent housing solutions both in the social and private rented sector. Lastly there is a need for additional self-contained temporary accommodation, as per Welsh Governments Annex D standard) to facilitate a reduced and eliminated use of B & B and a phasing out of shared temporary housing. These key findings are addressed in the priorities identified for MCC below.

3 Strategic priorities:

3.1.1 Monmouthshire County Council is committed to empowering its residents to lead prosperous, sustainable lives. This starts with stable, appropriate accommodation and effective, timely support for those who need it.

3.1.2 The strategy sets out the four key priorities Monmouthshire County Council has identified, to tackle homelessness and its underlying causes over the next four years and beyond. The objective is to prevent homelessness occurring in the first instance but if it does occur to ensure it is brief and non-repeating.

¹⁹ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.3.5.12

²⁰ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 7.5.3.1, 7.5.7.2, Figure 11

²¹ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 8.3.2

²² (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.3.4.2

²³ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.4.1.2

²⁴ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 8.12.1

3.2 Priority One: To identify those at risk of homelessness earlier and provide timely interventions to prevent homelessness occurring.

3.2.1 Reason for this priority:

- The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 introduced new statutory duties to prevent or relieve homelessness;
- Amongst others it is a key action of the Council's 'Looking Ahead, Delivering Now' strategy to 2022.
- There is a desire to move to a proactive approach that is able to identify and be responsive to changing housing need rather than to deal with housing need on a reactive basis;
- Monmouthshire's Housing Options Team currently has a prevention success rate of 60% for those who present as threatened with homelessness²⁵;
- There is a disproportionate prevalence of young people experiencing poor mental health and those with substance misuse issues within temporary accommodation²⁶.

3.2.2 What we will do:

- Review of homelessness services information to ensure there is clear and easily accessible information to help prevent homelessness at the earliest possible stage;
- Target households at risk of becoming homeless through partnership working with other support agencies;
- Incorporate Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) approach to our service;
- Work alongside colleagues to promote services available to those who are at risk of homelessness through the Council's emerging Tackling Poverty and Inequality Campaign;
- Make better use of information technology to capture and analyse data to identify opportunities and improve planning;
- Investigate how to increase the number of households accessing the service at an earlier stage thereby reducing the number of households presenting in a crisis;
- Continue to invest to deliver upstream homelessness prevention in places of education including wider family networks;
- Seek to identify funds and invest in resources to directly engage with households considered high risk groups such as:
 - Mental Health.
 - Young Persons.
 - Substance misuse.

3.3 Priority Two: To provide timely and effective support for vulnerable residents particularly for those with high and complex needs.

3.3.1 Reason for this priority:

- ‘.....providing support for those who find themselves without a roof over their head’ is a key action of the Council’s ‘Looking Ahead, Delivering Now’ Strategy to 2022;.
- The adoption of a psychologically-informed and trauma-informed approach to commissioning and service delivery as required by Phase 2 Guidance requires support to be flexible and tailored to meet individual needs;
- The survey of support needs conducted by HSG providers highlighted two main priorities for Monmouthshire County Council: mental health and substance misuse²⁷;
- 96% of those in TA were recorded as having at least one support need. 23% of these were described as having High and Intensive needs²⁸;
- Monmouthshire does not have a high and complex needs accommodation provision. Currently there is no clear housing pathway to cater to this cohort. A shortfall of HSG funding means that MCC are unable to rectify this²⁹;
- Stakeholders have described the difficulties in getting clients with high level mental health support needs the appropriate support, and the deterioration of a client’s situation during this time³⁰;
- 31% of those receiving support are identified as having support needs around mental health, and current services for mental health support are oversubscribed³¹;
- Those with identified support needs around Substance Misuse are disproportionately represented in TA, suggesting that this need is a prominent contributing factor to homelessness³². At present HSG commissions an outreach worker from the Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) to provide support, but there is not currently any other specialist service or accommodation provision for this group³³;

²⁵ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 8.12.1

²⁶ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.3.5

²⁷ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.5.1.3, 10.5.1.4

²⁸ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.3.3.1

²⁹ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.5.1.3; 10.5.1.4

³⁰ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.1.4.2

³¹ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022), Table 46, 10.2.3

³² (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.4.2.6

³³ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.3.5.13

- There is current demand to expand the existing Housing First scheme. At present there is only one Housing First worker and there are individuals waiting for Housing First support and accommodation³⁴;
- MCC has seen an increase in the proportion of Young People making homelessness applications, a high proportion of which have needs higher than currently funded services can meet;
- The demand for VAWDASV services has seen a steep increase which appears to be a continuing trend³⁵. Services need to be monitored to ensure they continue to embed best practice, implement the National Training Framework and collaborate with key partners and stakeholders to tackle all forms of VAWADSV for citizens across Gwent and Monmouthshire.

3.3.2 What we will do:

- Seek to engage with Welsh Government and other partners to identify additional resources to increase the capacity of the housing support programme and support availability;
- Seek to expand the existing Housing First service to meet unmet demand;
- Seek to expand the Young Persons floating support service and remodel existing shared housing to increase the availability of dedicated young person's accommodation;
- Review and evaluate the newly re-modelled Young Persons accommodation in relation to outcomes achieved for those with higher needs and consider whether there is a need for Young Persons Housing First.
- Increase the supply of accommodation and support for people with complex needs around substance misuse and mental health;
- Review, evaluate and recommission Housing Support Grant services by April 2023.

3.4 Priority Three: To Increase access to a range of affordable and suitable housing solutions for homeless households, both temporary and permanent.

3.4.1 Reason for this priority:

- Many households are finding renting and home ownership unaffordable³⁶;
- There is insufficient housing in both the social and private rented sectors to meet demand and therefore limited options to move households out of temporary and emergency accommodation³⁷;

³⁴ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.3.4.2

³⁵ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.2.2

³⁶ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 7.5.3.1

³⁷ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 7.5.20, 7.5.12.2

- The Council relies on the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation to supplement temporary accommodation provision. Monmouthshire has seen an increase in its use of emergency accommodation in the last 18 months and currently has the highest number of homeless households in B&B³⁸. The use of B & B accommodation is not conducive to the wellbeing of households and is unsustainable from a cost analysis;
- There is a need to ensure the Council fully utilises its Social Housing Grant allocation and it is fully aligned with homeless accommodation requirements;
- There is a need to provide a range of temporary and supported accommodation particularly medium to high need emergency accommodation³⁹;
- S66 Prevention duty ended by placing 37% of applicants in social and 63% in privately rented housing⁴⁰;
- S73 Relief duty ended by placing 30% of applications into social and 28% in privately rented housing⁴¹.

³⁸ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022) 9.1.2

³⁹ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 10.3.4.2

⁴⁰ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 8.6.5.3

⁴¹ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 8.6.6.1

3.4.2 What we will do:

- Work with Homesearch partners to operate flexible Housing Register quotas to maximise the number of lettings of social housing vacancies to homeless households;
- Work with Homesearch partners to implement actions to make the 'best use' and maximise occupancy of the stock to facilitate more people to move-on from temporary accommodation;
- Review the use of all forms of temporary accommodation and reduce our reliance on it over the length of the strategy;
- Continue to co-ordinate Monmouthshire's newly established Strategic Housing Partnership with housing association partners to help identify opportunities to develop new affordable housing;
- Continue to factor homeless need into the Council's development and Social Housing Grant Programme;
- Appraise the opportunities for the Council to utilise Council owned assets for homeless purposes;
- Appraise the option of the Council directly developing new homes that can be used as homeless accommodation;
- Appraise the option of directly purchasing properties from the open market for use as homeless accommodation;
- Implement the Empty Property Action Plan to target empty homes and town centre opportunities;
- To seek to establish links with local voluntary organisations and local churches/faith groups to develop new services;
- Review and evaluate Monmouthshire Lettings to identify opportunities to improve the service and encourage further private landlords to make available their properties to the Council;
- Develop a 'rapid rehousing' approach to help people into and sustain permanent housing;
- Further develop the 'Housing First' approach to provide long term housing solutions for people who have been unable to sustain accommodation in the past because of their complex and/or multiple needs.

3.5 Priority Four: To move to a Rapid Re-Housing Approach

3.5.1 Key objectives to meet this priority will include:

- As main priority seeking to continue to identify opportunities to strengthen homeless prevention as the most efficient way of tackling homelessness. Where homelessness can't be prevented:
 - Systematic planning to make settled accommodation available;
 - Move into settled accommodation at the same time as, rather than after, addressing support needs;
 - An improvement in the quality and a reduction in the need for temporary accommodation;
 - Offering a package of assistance and multi-agency support, specially tailored to individual needs where this is required;
 - Rapid Rehousing should be flexible and recognise that people who present as homeless may have different levels of need.

3.5.2 Reason for this priority:

- There is a need to implement Welsh Government policy direction and establish and implement a Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan

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4.1 Priority Five: To maximise and increase the availability and effectiveness of financial, staffing/workforce and collaborative resources available for tackling homelessness.

4.1.1 Reasons for this priority:

- At present, funding hasn't been identified for a number of actions within the Strategy. Due to these budget shortfalls, there is a need to identify additional short and long-term funding and resources to meet the homeless need identified in the statement of need and to fully fund the priorities and actions within the Strategy. Without this some proposals are not deliverable;
- There is a need to ensure all homeless services are financially sustainable and effectively deliver cost benefits;
- Working with others is a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions is a key principle of the Council's 'Looking Ahead, Delivering Now' Strategy to summer 2022;

- Feedback from the stakeholder events highlighted the potential risk of funding processes for services producing short-term ‘fixes’ rather than long-term sustainable solutions⁴²;
- Tackling homelessness and achieving successful outcomes successfully requires the input of other specialist organisations, skills and knowledge that doesn’t necessarily sit within the Council;
- Many homeless and housing services are already delivered through a partnership approach, such as Monmouthshire Homesearch, the Housing Support Grant Programme and the Housing Intervention Panel. These are platforms that can be further build upon;
- There is a need to ensure there is adequate staff capacity and capability to deliver homeless services and this strategy. Equally, in recognition that delivering homeless services can be highly reactive and demanding for homeless staff, staff need to be supported accordingly.
-

4.1.2 What we will do:

- Identify funding for those aims and objectives where funding currently hasn’t been allocated;
- Transition from short-term arrangements established quickly due to the Covid Pandemic and in response to Welsh Government guidance to more sustainable long-term solutions;
- We will work collaboratively both internally and externally with organisations that offer a broad range of skill sets and knowledge, expertise and experience to address homelessness successfully;
- We will develop further the Housing Support & Homelessness forum;
- We will evaluate the effectiveness and cost efficiency of using data analytics for the prevention of homelessness;
- To continue to monitor existing staff structures of teams delivering homeless services to ensure there is sufficient capacity
- Undertake a training needs audit and establish a programme of training to support staff to deliver and transform services.
- Adopt and maintain a Psychologically Informed Environment/ Trauma informed approach;
- Identify opportunities for increasing collaborative arrangements with Aneurin Bevan Health Board;

⁴² (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.1.6.2

- Engage with Welsh Government and the Welsh Local Government Association in respect of future funding arrangements to align with homeless need in Monmouthshire;
- Identify opportunities for homeless services and solutions to support wider strategic priorities. For example, Social Care needs, tackling empty properties, Town Centre regeneration and decarbonisation.

5 Stakeholder Engagement

5.1.1 Detailed consultation took place with service users and partner organisations to ensure that the Statement of Need and the development of this strategy is both relevant and current to enable the Council address homelessness within the county⁴³.

5.1.2 One method of consulting with stakeholders would have been in pre COVID times through a consultation event at a venue large enough for representatives to meet in person. However, because of COVID the Council decided that the safest method for stakeholders to participate in the consultation would be through an on-line questionnaire.

5.1.3 The following organisations received the questionnaire for completion:

- Health services
- Social services
- Probation & Community Safety services
- Domestic abuse services
- Substance misuse services
- Registered Social Housing Providers
- Housing advice services
- Service users

5.1.4 In total 45 individuals received the questionnaire.

5.1.5 In addition to the stakeholder questionnaire a number of focus groups sessions took place using video conferencing and covering the following five service areas:

⁴³ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); Chapter 11

- Community Safety & Domestic Violence Services
- Health Services
- Homelessness Prevention Advices Services
- Housing Support Provider Services
- Young Persons Services

5.2 Stakeholder feedback

5.2.1 Feedback received via the above methods were broadly categorised into 6 themes: Communication, Staffing, Accommodation and Support, Transport, Legislation, Policy and Processes and Community.

5.2.2 **Partnership Working:** General consensus that partnership working had improved, largely due to the change in working brought about by the pandemic. There has been more of an appetite for all agencies to work together flexibly and creatively to meet the challenges of the last 18 months. The Housing Intervention Panel (HIP) was mentioned several times as an example of good practice in this area which allows professionals to come together to seek creative solutions, and also serves as a preventative resource. The HOTS team has recently been expanded and they have become more creative in how they approach homelessness and reach solutions⁴⁴.

5.2.3 However, unlike strategic partners, service users felt that there could be an improvement in communication between MCC and partner agencies⁴⁵.

5.2.4 **Communication:** The use of various digital platforms for communicating with service users is a positive advancement, especially for Monmouthshire being a semi-rural area⁴⁶. The increased use of MS Teams has in some ways made collaboration easier between partner agencies. However, this was also raised as a concern by many who also emphasised that it's limitations should also be recognised. As a rural county Monmouthshire does not have consistency in infrastructure with regards to internet and mobile signal and so some people risk becoming isolated from services. Similarly, some residents would have a preference in face to face working to build trust and a relationship with services. All services would like to see a blended approach to communicating with residents to meet individual preferences and needs moving forward⁴⁷.

⁴⁴ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.1.2.1, 11.1.4.1

⁴⁵ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.2.2.3

⁴⁶ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.1.2.1

⁴⁷ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.1.2.2

- 5.2.5 **Accommodation and Support:** The theme that overwhelmingly dominated discussions around weaknesses is resources. It was widely acknowledged that Monmouthshire has a lack of accommodation of all types but in particular participants noted a lack of housing options for those with medium to high needs, as there aren't any provisions suitable to ex-offenders, those with entrenched drug and alcohol misuse issues, and those with medium to high mental health needs. The idea of specialist 24 hour supported hostel provision was raised in a number of the focus groups as support services have identified a larger number of complex cases coming through the system⁴⁸.
- 5.2.6 The Housing Support Grant team conduct exit interviews on a sample size of service users whose support is ending. 83.3% of responders asserted that their experience was positive and had brought changes to their life and 72.9% of responders felt that the support received had increased their ability to live independently⁴⁹.
- 5.2.7 **Policy and Processes:** Services noted that clients are being required to repeat their circumstances and antecedent history which in turn is contributing to a culture of clients becoming retraumatised by having to repeat their issues and challenges every time they move between services. The lack of robustness of the referrals can also do service users a disservice as they may not be allocated to the correct service for their needs and having to go through the system again. Additionally, this contributes to the efficiency of services provided.
- 5.2.8 Service Users did not rate the homelessness process particularly highly, describing what they felt was a convoluted process with a lack of clarity on how their application was being processed. Service users described the process as having a negative impact on mental health⁵⁰. Respondents to a questionnaire however were largely positive when considering the service they received from Housing Options, with 95% of clients being satisfied or very satisfied with the service from Housing Options; and 91% very satisfied or satisfied with allocated temporary accommodation⁵¹.

⁴⁸ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.1.4.2

⁴⁹ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.3.2

⁵⁰ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.2.2.4

⁵¹ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.4.1

5.2.9 **Staffing:** Staffing remains an issue across the sector in line with national trends. Services are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit staff and retention rates are currently poor. The stresses of working during the pandemic was identified as taking its toll on the wellbeing of staff, but also the emerging competition from other sectors luring staff with increases in pay and additional bonuses⁵².

5.2.10 **Funding Policy:** Participants discussed the funding processes for services and identified that this tends to be on a short-term basis which makes it difficult for them to develop long term solutions to issues. Services do not feel that they can work with longevity when funding can be removed or changed regularly⁵³.

6 Impact assessments: [to be completed]

7 Implementing, monitoring and reviewing the Strategy

Working with Partners

7.1.1 The Council recognises that although it has the statutory duty to prevent and alleviate homelessness within the County, it will require many organisations working together in partnership that will deliver the priorities of the Strategy.

7.1.2 We will continue to work with our partners working across the statutory and non-statutory sectors to efficiently utilise resources and deliver effective outcomes.

⁵² (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.1.3.2

⁵³ (Monmouthshire County Council, 2022); 11.1.6.2

7.2 Funding Sources

To deliver this Strategy, the Council will seek to access and maximise the availability of the following funding streams

7.2.1 Revenue

- Welsh Government Covid Hardship up until 31st March 2022 to support the current reliance on B & B provision and the need to provide a concierge service
- Housing Support Grant - funding prevention and housing support services and supported accommodation
- Housing Options Team Revenue funding including:
 - Homeless Prevention Fund
 - Private Leasing budget
- WG Tenancy Hardship Grant
- WG National Leasing Scheme funding
- WG Empty Property Enforcement Loan funding
- Discretionary Housing Payments to support homeless prevention
- Children's Services revenue to contribute to the provision of low to high needs young persons accommodation
- Rental income from temporary accommodation
- S106 Contributions to support private sector owners

7.2.2 Capital

- Social Housing Grant
- ENABLE disabled adaptation funding
- Potential local authority prudential borrowing
- Potential use of additional local authority capital assets

7.2.3 At the time of adoption, the Council had not identified all of the resources necessary to deliver the provision necessary to meet the identified and projected homeless demand. For example, the revenue to fund Multiple Needs Housing Supported Accommodation. It will, therefore, be a key priority of the Council to continue to identify resources to fund this strategy fully.

7.2.4 The Housing Support Grant provides a wide range of support services. The Statement of Need document provides a detailed analysis of current provision of services in Monmouthshire.

7.2.5 The Council will continue to work with its partners to bid for external funding wherever opportunities arise.

7.3 Monitoring, reviewing and evaluation arrangements

7.3.1 The Strategy and the accompanying Action Plan is the result of a number of consultation exercises with our stakeholder partners, which influenced the Strategy's vision and priorities for tackling homelessness within Monmouthshire.

7.3.2 The Council will utilise a number of channels to monitor Strategy. The main channel will be the Monmouthshire's CCG & HSG Executive Group that will monitor the Strategy and the Action Plan on a quarterly basis to determine progress in achieving actions, and meeting our targets and outcomes⁵⁸. In addition a comprehensive review will take place at the mid-point of its life.

7.3.3 The Action Plan is live document, which means the Executive Group will be able to address any new developments that arise by adding additional actions as and when required.

7.3.4 An additional level of monitoring will be through Monmouthshire's scrutiny structure and the newly established Strategic Housing Forum.

8 Bibliography

Monmouthshire County Council. (2022). *Statement of Need*.

⁵⁸ See Appendix 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE; Children and Communities-Housing Support Executive Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE
Children and Communities-Housing Support
Executive Group

PURPOSE

The Children and Communities-Housing Support Executive Board (CCHSEG) formally undertakes the Public Service Board's (PSB) statutory responsibility in-line with the Social Services and Well Being Wales Act 2014 and Future Generations Act 2015, which includes strategies for Providing Children & Young People with the best Possible Start in Life.

In response to the findings of the previous reviews, wellbeing assessment and countywide objectives, Monmouthshire PSB established a Children & Young Peoples Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) consisting of senior level officers from across multi-agencies organisations. One of the CCHSEG key functions is to support the CYPSP to align all funding sources (statutory, core and grant) to meet the needs of families and children across the county, ensuring that gaps in provision and service are addressed. The Children & Communities Grant and Housing Support Grant will become integral to the work of this partnership, and the broader strategic objectives, in addressing the needs and challenges across the county. The grant will not be used to substitute core or statutory service delivery but rather complement, maximise and enhance public and third sector support for families and children.

Monmouthshire PSB has delegated this responsibility to the 'Children and Communities-Housing Support Executive Group' (CCHSEG).

The CCHSEG fulfils its broad function in supporting the Families, Children and Young People of Monmouthshire by:

- Overseeing specific delivery of Children and Communities grant to address the support needs of the most vulnerable children and adults in our communities through a range of early intervention, prevention and support mechanisms. . It will seek to mitigate or remove disadvantage to vulnerable people to enable them to have the same life chances as others, and therefore contribute to a more equal Wales.
- Overseeing specific delivery of Housing Support grant to address the housing and housing related support needs of the most vulnerable individuals in society through the range of early intervention, prevention and support mechanisms. It will seek to mitigate or remove disadvantage to vulnerable people to enable them to have the same life chances as others, and therefore contribute to a equal Wales. As such, Housing Support Grant will be about accessing and maintaining a home.
- Overseeing financial management of grants to ensure compliance with Welsh Governments Terms and Conditions

- Being a hub of best practice and innovative ideas around Community Engagement to inform long-term vision and delivery of plans in line with overall Wellbeing of Families, Children and Young People and Welsh Governments aspirational 'More equal Wales'.
- Ensuring consistency and the application of statutory responsibilities and agreed standards in partnership working with statutory, private and third sector methodologies
- Ensuring that local community initiatives and interventions are able to demonstrate impact and outcomes
- Working in partnership to reduce families' exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), such as homes experiencing domestic violence or substance or alcohol misuse.
- Overseeing the action plans for the Children and Communities and Housing Support Grants
- Providing leadership and support to all sub-groups that sit under the CCHSEG
- Connection with Welsh Government
- Connection with Monmouthshire C.C. Children & Young Persons (CYP) Strategic Partnership

BACKGROUND

Welsh Government believes the Public Service Board is the heart of local multi-agency working. Given the collaborative leadership role of PSBs, Welsh Government considers them to be the appropriate forum for formulating and reviewing Wellbeing and Future Generations Act priorities.

Monmouthshire PSB has adopted, as one of key objectives to; ***Provide Children & Young People with the best Possible Start in Life***. This objective provides a broad focus throughout the start of people's lives from conception through to early adulthood.

All grants are delivered across a wide range of partnership agendas under the PSB. The multi-agency partnerships are the main delivery mechanism for the priorities across the county and are overseen by the PSB and PSB Programme Board, ensuring all available resources are targeted effectively and in-line with needs across the county.

The Children & Young Peoples Strategic Partnership (included in landscape) is senior level multi-agency group, with Chief Officer Representation from across Monmouthshire County Council who are currently the responsible officers for both the Children & Communities-Housing Support Grant streams within their respective directorates. This is a key partnership under the PSB that oversees how the wide range of services, (statutory & non-statutory) are shaped. They remain responsive to the challenges across the county; whilst also remaining responsive to new emerging issues as they arise and link to other partnership groups who may be better placed to support, for example, Safer Monmouthshire Group who have the Community Safety function for the county.

Under the direction of the Monmouthshire PSB, the CCHSEG brings together managers and key representatives of the organisations responsible for shaping and delivering CCHSEG actions and initiatives, which contribute, to Wellbeing of Families, Children and Young people in line with the Monmouthshire PSB Priorities.

MEMBERSHIP

DESIGNATION	ORGANISATION
Families First Programme Manager	MCC – Communities & Partnership
Financial Accountant	MCC – Communities & Partnership
Housing and Communities Manager	MCC – Housing and Communities
Supporting People Manager	MCC – Housing and Communities
Flying Start Manager	MCC – Children’s Social Services
Families First/Flying Start Strategic Lead	ABUHB
Childcare and Play Manager	MCC – Children’s Social Services
Communities For Work Plus Manager	MCC – Housing and Communities
Communities and Partnerships Manager	MCC – Communities & Partnership
Children’s Services - Service Manager	MCC – Children’s Social Services

CHAIR: The Chair will be appointed by ‘Children and Communities-Housing Support Executive Group’ membership. A Vice Chair will be appointed annually.

MEETING FREQUENCY

The ‘Children and Communities-Housing Support Executive Group’ meets quarterly. Task & Finish groups will be established to undertake an identified piece of work on behalf of the group.

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

The ‘Children and Communities-Housing Support Executive Group’ reports directly to the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership quarterly and on an exception basis.

STRATEGIC LINKS

Monmouthshire Public Service Board: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/psb>

Future and Generations Act 2015:

Social Services and Well Being Wales Act 2014:

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Last Update By:		Reason :	
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Housing Support Provision & Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2022 - 2026

Priority One: To identify those at risk of homelessness earlier and provide timely interventions to prevent homelessness occurring.			
Action required to deliver the priority	Lead Person	Timescales / By When	Outcome/Outputs
1.1 To investigate how to increase the number of households accessing the service at an earlier stage thereby reducing the number of households presenting in a crisis.	Strategy & Policy Officer	On-going to 31/03/26	<p>To move to a more proactive service rather than a reactive service and reducing the number of people presenting in crisis.</p> <p>To distinguish between primary prevention, secondary prevention and tertiary prevention.</p> <p>To be a consideration for Rapid Re-Housing</p>
1.2 To review homelessness services information to ensure there is clear and easily accessible information to help prevent homelessness at the earliest possible stage.	Strategy & Policy Officer - Homelessness	31/03/23	<p>Increase awareness of housing options and accessibility of information.</p> <p>Updated web pages</p> <p>Establish bespoke information for young people.</p>
1.3 To ensure the Monmouthshire's Protocol for Care Leavers and Young People is up-to-date and that all parties that have signed up to it are complying with it eg ensure it is operating effectively	Housing Options Team Manager	31/03/23	To provide care leavers and young people with a managed pathway into appropriate accommodation.
1.4 To work alongside colleagues to promote services available to those who are at risk of homelessness through the Council's emerging Tackling Poverty Campaign.	Strategy & Policy Officer - Homelessness	31/03/23	To provide a planned approach to homelessness prevention and housing options.

<p>1.5 To continue to invest to deliver upstream homelessness prevention in places of education including wider family networks</p>	<p>Youth Enterprise Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing to 31/03/2026</p>	<p>To reduce causes of homelessness for the future by increasing awareness of housing options and accessibility of information. And to have clear housing pathways in place.</p>
<p>1.6 To review exclusion practices from social housing.</p>	<p>Strategy & Policy Officer – Affordable Housing</p>	<p>31/03/2023</p>	<p>To aid “move on” options by ensuring that those most in need of social housing are not unreasonably excluded: and support is available to address the causes of exclusion.</p>
<p>1.7 To seek to identify funds and invest in resources to engage directly with households considered high-risk groups such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mental Health. ○ Young Persons. ○ Substance misuse 	<p>Housing & Communities Manager & Flexible Funding Strategic Manager</p>	<p>On-going to 13/03/2026</p>	<p>To avoid unsuitable placements and minimise placement break-down</p>
<p>1.8 Make better use of information technology to capture and analyse data to identify opportunities and improve planning.</p>	<p>Flexible Funding Strategic Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing to 31/03/23</p>	<p>To provide the Housing Support and Homelessness Group with regular reports on homelessness trends and the main causes of homelessness</p>
<p>1.9 To develop better use of technology and the sharing of data for analysis and planning.</p>	<p>Housing & Communities Manager & Flexible Funding Strategic Manager</p>	<p>31/03/23</p>	<p>Full utilisation of the functionality of Locata to improve efficiency and generate regular monitoring reports.</p> <p>Acquire and develop a rents system for Monmouthshire Lettings</p> <p>To evolve services to ensure it is structured to meet the needs of those that are threatened with homelessness eg use of TEAMS; WhatsApp etc</p>
<p>1.10 To consider the co-location of services to provide a holistic needs assessment and support planning process</p>	<p>Housing Options Team Manager</p>		<p>To provide an environment whereby there is a better sharing of expertise that will provide a</p>

and a single point of access for all households threatened with homelessness.	&		more efficient and effective service and offers a better experience to households threatened with homelessness.
1.11 To incorporate Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) approach to the homeless service. .	Housing & Communities Manager & Flexible Funding Strategic Manager	31/03/26	To achieve high levels of client user satisfaction and to have a better understanding of the needs of those affected by homelessness. Provide support for staff. Reflect in service specifications for future commissioning.
1.12 To develop a Youth Homeless Action Plan to ensure that young people's specific needs are addressed	Housing & Communities Manager & Flexible Funding Strategic Manager	31/03/23	To evolve services to ensure it is structured to meet the needs of young people threatened with and actually homeless.

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Priority Two: To provide timely and effective support for vulnerable residents particularly for those with high and complex needs.

Action required to deliver the priority	Lead Person	Timescales / By When	Outcome/Outputs
2.1 To seek to engage with Welsh Government and other partners to identify additional resources to increase the capacity of the housing support programme and support availability to meet local need.	Flexible Funding Strategic Manager	On-going to 31/03/26	Ability to meet the need identified in the Statement of Need. Collaborative partnerships facilitating blended funding packages
2.2 To seek to expand the existing Housing First service to meet unmet demand.	Flexible Funding Strategic Manager	Ongoing to 31/03/26	To improve people's journey into permanent suitable accommodation
2.3 To seek to expand the Young Persons floating support service and remodel existing shared housing to increase the availability of dedicated young person's accommodation.	Flexible Funding Strategic Manager	31/03/23	To improve a young person's journey into permanent suitable accommodation

2.4 To review and evaluate the newly re-modelled Young Persons accommodation in relation to outcomes achieved for those with higher needs and consider whether there is a need for Young Persons Housing First model.	Flexible Funding Strategic Manager	31/03/23	To improve a young person's journey into permanent suitable accommodation
2.5 To increase the supply of accommodation in the County for people with complex needs around substance misuse and mental health.	Strategy & Policy Officer – Affordable Housing & Flexible Funding Strategic Manager	31/03/23	Identify revenue funding to establish multiple needs supported housing north and south
2.6 Seek to engage with Social Care to improve services for those who are neurodiverse	Strategy & Policy Officer – Affordable Housing & Flexible Funding Strategic Manager	31/03/2023	Homeless services that meet peoples needs which helps to improve homeless prevention and reduce placement failure. To be factored into Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan development
2.7 To review, evaluate and recommission Housing Support Grant services by April 2023.	Flexible Funding Strategic Manager, Housing Support Development & Operations Manager	31/3/23	To ensure service meets the needs and demands of the most vulnerable members of our community
2.8 To review Place Based Teams with a view to re-commissioning services from 1/4/23	Flexible Funding Strategic Manager, Housing Support Development & Operations Manager	31/3/23	Ensure service meets the needs and demands of the most vulnerable members of our community
2.9 To review Young Persons in TA with a view to development of a bespoke YP contract for TA from 1/4/23	Flexible Funding Strategic Manager, Housing Support Development & Operations Manager	31/3/23	Ensure service meets the needs and demands of the most vulnerable members of our community

2.10 To review TA/ Resettlement Scheme with a view to either remodelling or re-commissioning services from 1/4/23	Flexible Funding Strategic Manager, Housing Support Development & Operations Manager	31/3/23	Ensure service meets the needs and demands of the most vulnerable members of our community
2.11 To review Assertive Outreach with a view to either remodelling or re-commissioning services from 1/4/23	Flexible Funding Strategic Manager Housing Support Development & Operations Manager	31/3/23	Ensure service meets the needs and demands of the most vulnerable members of our community
2.12 Review and evaluate the outcomes of the re-modelled young persons accommodation for those with low to high needs	Flexible Funding Strategic Manager Housing Support Development & Operations Manager	31/3/23	Ensure service meets the needs and demands of the most vulnerable members of our community
2.13 Re-model an existing shared housing property to provide dedicated provision for young people with lower needs	Housing Options Team Manager	30/09/22	Increase dedicated accommodation provision for young people

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Priority Three: To Increase access to a range of affordable and suitable housing solutions for homeless households, both temporary and permanent,			
Action required to deliver the priority	Lead Person	Timescales / By When	Outcome/Outputs
3.1 To review the use of all forms of temporary accommodation and reduce our reliance on it over the length of the strategy.	Housing & Communities Manager	On-going to 31/03/26	To mitigate against un-sustainable expenditure and reliance on WG Hardship funding in relation to B & B and concierge use and B & B focused Accommodation Officers Procurement of security service Identify alternative funding for Temporary Accommodation Officers based in B & B

<p>3.2 To continue to co-ordinate a newly established Strategic Housing Forum with housing association partners to help identify opportunities to develop new affordable housing.</p>	<p>Housing Communities Manager</p>	<p>On-going to 31/03/26</p>	<p>To maximise the number of affordable homes built and Social Housing Grant spend.</p>
<p>3.3 To work with Homesearch partners to operate flexible Housing Register quotas to maximise the number of lettings of social housing vacancies to homeless households.</p>	<p>Affordable Housing Strategy Officer</p>	<p>On-going to 31/03/26</p>	<p>To increase move-on into permanent accommodation</p>
<p>3.4 to work with Homesearch partners to implement actions to make the 'best use' and maximise occupancy of the stock to facilitate more people to move-on from temporary accommodation.</p>	<p>Affordable Housing Strategy Officer</p>	<p>On-going to 31/03/26</p>	<p>To provide more options for those who are at risk of homelessness</p> <p>Target households/transfer applicants occupying overcrowded one bedroom accommodation to facilitate one bedroomed vacancies</p> <p>Utilise existing housing stock for shared accommodation</p> <p>Re-designation of existing accommodation</p>
<p>3.5To consider alternative housing options such as converted commercial units and modular housing</p>	<p>Affordable Housing Strategy Officer</p>	<p>On-going to 31/03/26</p>	<p>To increase the supply, particularly for single people.</p>
<p>3.6 To appraise the opportunities for the Council to utilise Council owned assets for homeless purposes and explore options with other public bodies.</p>	<p>Affordable Housing Strategy Officer & Development Manager</p>	<p>31/03/26</p>	<p>To maximise the development of new affordable housing</p>
<p>3.7 To appraise the option of purchasing properties from the open market for use as homeless accommodation and consider partnership option in respect of management</p>	<p>Affordable Housing Strategy Officer</p>	<p>31/03/26</p>	<p>To maximise options for delivering affordable housing</p>
<p>3.8 To increase the provision of other forms of temporary accommodation working with a range of landlords, both RSL and private sector and to secure additional units of</p>	<p>Affordable Housing Strategy Officer</p>	<p>On-going to 31/03/26</p>	<p>To minimise the use of expensive nightly paid accommodation</p>

temporary accommodation, direct access and supported housing.			<p>Establish a dedicated emergency self-contained family accommodation in the North.</p> <p>Re-model an existing shared housing property to provide dedicated provision for young people</p> <p>To ensure temporary accommodations costs to the Council are contained and to provide better quality accommodation</p> <p>Identify opportunities to re-designate existing social housing</p>
3.9 To develop effective pathways to and from temporary accommodation ensuring move on is timely.	Housing Options Team Manager	On-going to 31/03/26	To gain a better understanding of why length of stay can vary and barriers for move on.
3.10 To review and evaluate Monmouthshire Lettings to identify opportunities to improve the service and encourage further private landlords to make available their properties to the Council.	Housing Options Team Manager	On-going to 31/03/26	Sign up to Welsh Government National Leasing Scheme
3.11 To establish self-contained emergency family accommodation in the North of the County	Housing & Communities Manager	31/03/24	To improve provision for families meet WG accommodation standards
3.12 To seek to establish links with local voluntary organisations and local churches/faith groups to develop new services	Housing & Communities Manager	Ongoing to 31/03/26	To provide additional private sector accommodation
3.13 To implement the Empty Property Action Plan to target empty homes and town centre opportunities.	Strategy & Policy Officer - Homelessness	Ongoing to 31/03/26	<p>To provide additional private sector accommodation</p> <p>Where possible align with Social Housing Grant</p>
3.14 To develop innovative use of S106 affordable housing contributions to create additional affordable housing	Strategy & Policy Officer - Homelessness	Ongoing to 31/03/2026	To provide additional homeless accommodation facilitated by making use of S106 contributions as an additional resource.

3.15 To consider and evaluate the business case to identify potential scope to support RSL's where there are viability issues impacting on the ability to develop or retain affordable housing	Strategy & Policy Officer – Affordable Housing	31/03/23	Maximise options for affordable housing delivery
3.16 To consider and evaluate the potential for using the housing co-operative model as an additional vehicle for the provision of affordable housing.	Strategy & Policy Officer – Affordable Housing	31/03/24	Maximise options for affordable housing delivery

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Priority Four: To establish a Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan

Action required to deliver the priority	Lead Person	Timescales / By When	Outcome/Outputs
4.1 There is a need to implement Welsh Government policy direction and establish and implement a Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan .	Housing & Communities Manager	Sept 2022	Draft plan to be established by June 2022.

Priority Five: To maximise and increase the availability and effectiveness of financial, staffing/workforce and collaborative resources available for tackling homelessness.

Action required to deliver the priority	Lead Person	Timescales / By When	Outcome/Outputs
5.1 To review and evaluate existing staff structures of teams delivering homeless services to ensure they continue to provide sufficient capacity and continue to be fit for purpose.	Housing & Communities Manager	31/03/23	To support staff, maximise capacity, improve efficiency and maximise flexibility.

<p>5.2 To improve procedures to enable partners to work together successfully e.g. information sharing, referral mechanisms</p>	<p>Housing & Communities Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing to 31/03/26</p>	<p>To streamline the processes so that multi-agency working is easier and more efficient and therefore a better experience for those threatened with homelessness.</p>
<p>5.3 Identify funding for those aims and objectives where funding currently hasn't been allocated.</p>	<p>Housing & Communities Manager & Flexible Funding Strategic Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing to 31/03/26</p>	<p>Address the need identified in the Statement of Need</p>
<p>5.4 Transition from short-term arrangements established quickly due to the Covid Pandemic and in response to Welsh Government guidance to more sustainable long-term solutions.</p>	<p>Housing & Communities Manager</p>	<p>31/03/23</p>	<p>To mitigate against the use of B & B use and concierge services in lieu of supported housing</p>
<p>5.5 We will work collaboratively both internally and externally with organisations that offer a broad range of skill sets and knowledge, expertise and experience to address homelessness successfully.</p>	<p>Housing & Communities Manager & Flexible Funding Strategic Manager</p>	<p>On-going to 31/03/26</p>	<p>Maximise the availability of internal and external resources with particular emphasis on increasing homeless prevention and increasing accommodation opportunities.</p>
<p>5.6 We will develop further the Housing Support & Homelessness Forum.</p>	<p>Flexible Funding Strategic Manager Housing Support Development & Operations Manager</p>	<p>31/03/26</p>	<p>To positively and proactively engage with housing support providers in order to maximise housing support provision as an available resource</p>
<p>5.7 We will evaluate the effectiveness and cost efficiency of using data analytics for the prevention of homelessness.</p>	<p>Strategy & Policy Officer – Homelessness</p>	<p>31/03/23</p>	<p>Determine whether an automated approach would deliver cost benefits</p>
<p>5.8 Undertake a training needs audit and establish a programme of training to support staff to deliver and transform services, in particular substance misuse and violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV)</p>	<p>Housing & Communities Manager</p>	<p>31/12/22</p>	<p>To increase staff awareness, enhance staff professional development and embed best practice</p>

<p>5.9 Work collaboratively both internally and externally with organisations that offer a broad range of skill sets and knowledge, expertise and experience to address homelessness successfully.</p>	<p>Housing & Communities Manager & Flexible Funding Strategic Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing to 31/03/26</p>	<p>To maximise capacity, improve efficiency and maximise flexibility.</p>
<p>5.10 Support and develop staff in respect of adopting and maintain a Psychologically Informed Environment/ Trauma informed approach.</p>	<p>Housing & Communities Manager</p>	<p>31/03/23</p>	<p>Staff training will be undertaken Action plans will be established to take forward the implementation.</p>
<p>5.11 Identify opportunities for increasing collaborative arrangements with Aneurin Bevan Health Board</p>	<p>Housing & Communities Manager & Flexible Funding Strategic Manager</p>	<p>31/03/23</p>	<p>Additional accommodation and/or support for those who have both a homeless need and a health need, particularly mental health</p>
<p>5.12 Engage with Welsh Government and the Welsh Local Government Association in respect of future funding arrangements in order to align with homeless need in Monmouthshire</p>	<p>Housing & Communities Manager & Flexible Funding Strategic Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing to 31/03/26</p>	<p>Address the need identified in the Statement of Need</p>
<p>5.13 Identify opportunities for homeless services and solutions to support wider strategic priorities. For example, Social Care needs, tackling empty properties, Town Centre regeneration and decarbonisation.</p>	<p>Housing & Communities Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing to 31/03/26</p>	<p>Implement that meet homeless needs and contribute added value (eg cost benefits) in respect of other strategic priorities</p>
<p>5.14 Implement the Strategic Housing Partnership to increase opportunities that support and contribute to the priorities of this Strategy</p>	<p>Chief Officer – Communities & PLace</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Increasing opportunities to facilitate and develop additional homeless accommodation</p>



Integrated Impact Assessment document (incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio Economic Duty)

Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Ian Bakewell Phone no: 01633 644479 E-mail: ianbakewell@monmouthshire.gov.uk	Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal Housing Support Programme Strategy
Name of Service area Housing & Communitues	Date 30 th December 2021

1. **Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	<p>This proposal positively affects people of all ages threatened with or actually homeless from 16+. It will also benefit children of families who may be assisted.</p> <p>The priority focus of the Strategy is to help prevent homelessness of people falling within all protected characteristics groups. This includes older persons.</p> <p>This Strategy will increase the amount homeless accommodation available, the type of accommodation available and the quality of accommodation available. Similarly, it will increase the type of housing support available</p> <p>All homelessness activity, regardless of advice and information, homeless prevention or homeless accommodation will support people of all protected characteristics</p>	None	<p>No negative impacts will arise as a result of this Strategy, which will seek to continue building on homeless actions already delivered over the last year which includes:</p> <p>New Accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-contained x 4 units and shared emergency family accommodation in the south • Self-contained one bedroomed flats x 8 for single people <p>New Housing Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary accommodation housing support • Assertive Outreach • Drug & Alcohol Assertive Outreach • Housing First • High need Young Persons Supported Housing
Disability	<p>The Strategy specifically mitigates against a lack of accessible homeless accommodation and will seek to increase the availability of accessible accommodation.</p>	As above	<p>New self-contained emergency family accommodation in the South has already increased the availability of accessible homeless accommodation. New single persons accommodation in Chepstow has provided additional ground floor units which whilst not specifically adapted at this point, provide 4 additional units that will support the issue of accessibility.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Gender reassignment	<p>This proposal positively affects people of all ages threatened with or actually homeless from 16+. It will also benefit children of families who may be assisted.</p> <p>The priority focus of the Strategy is to help prevent homelessness of people falling within all protected characteristics groups.</p> <p>This includes older persons. This Strategy will increase the amount homeless accommodation available, the type of accommodation available and the quality of accommodation available. Similarly, it will increase the type of housing support available</p> <p>All homelessness activity will support people of all protected characteristics.</p>	As above	<p>No negative impacts will arise as a result of this Strategy, which will seek to continue building on homeless actions already delivered over the last year which includes:</p> <p>New Accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-contained x 4 units and shared emergency family accommodation in the south • Self-contained one bedroomed flats x 8 for single people <p>New Housing Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary accommodation housing support • Assertive Outreach • Drug & Alcohol Assertive Outreach • Housing First • High need Young Persons Supported Housing

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Marriage or civil partnership	<p>This proposal positively affects people of all ages threatened with or actually homeless from 16+. It will also benefit children of families who may be assisted.</p> <p>The priority focus of the Strategy is to help prevent homelessness of people falling within all protected characteristics groups.</p> <p>This includes older persons. This Strategy will increase the amount homeless accommodation available, the type of accommodation available and the quality of accommodation available. Similarly, it will increase the type of housing support available</p> <p>All homelessness activity will support people of all protected characteristics.</p>	As above	As above
Pregnancy or maternity	As above	As above	As above
Race	As above	As above	As above
Religion or Belief	.As above	As above	As above
Sex	As above	As above	As above
Sexual Orientation	As above	As above	As above

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions. This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
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Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

<p>A positive benefit of the Strategy is that it will help to tackle and mitigate against socio economic disadvantage.</p> <p>The Strategy is seeking to transform the delivery of homelessness services. In this regard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be no need to sleep rough • Homeless prevention is a priority of this Strategy. This includes financial inclusion support eg income maximisation, budgeting support, digital inclusion support, minimisation of outgoings, financial assistance (for example - to access private sector accommodation or address arrears etc) which mitigates against socio-economic disadvantage. A key aim will be to intervene earlier and 'higher-up' stream • The Strategy will improve the quality and availability of temporary, permanent, semi-permanent and supported accommodation. • The aim will be for homelessness to be brief and non-recurring • A key action is to establish a Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan • A move to Temporary 'Homes' – not the bare the necessity, which are safe & secure and where lives can be re-built. <p>In this context, good quality and warm 'homes' which provide safety, security and stability is positively conducive to children completing homework and studying, adults training and studying and adults accessing and maintaining employment. It's also similarly relevant to other areas of 'inclusion' such as access to broadand and financial services, such as insurance.</p>
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<p>There are no negative impacts of the proposal.</p>

<p>The Strategy will build on existing homeless prevention services and Housing Support Services that mitigate against socio economic disadvantage. Such services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention fund • Discretionary housing payments • Temporary accommodation support • Re-settlement housing support • Generic floating housing support • Pobl Young Persons Supported Housing • Llamau Emphasis • Housing First
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	In addition to the provision of higher standards of accommodation which will offer greater stability for households, housing support will be available to households. Support assessments will give consideration to training and employment needs		
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3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
<p>Policy Making</p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p>	<p>Welsh Language will be factored into those areas of services where there is written information. Such examples where bi-lingual can be applied include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation agreements • Standard letters • Personal Housing Plans • Housing Support Plans • Accommodation signage • Website information • Hard information eg flyers 	None	N/A
<p>Operational</p> <p>Recruitment & Training of workforce</p>	<p>There is no requirement for Welsh speakers in respect of operational delivery and, therefore, recruitment and training. Welsh speakers are however, positively encouraged to apply for vacancies.</p> <p>Existing staff are encouraged through the Council's training unit to access Welsh lessons.</p>	None	At present there are two members of the Housing team who have taken up this opportunity.
<p>Service delivery</p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p>	<p>Actions to improve the Council's delivery of the homeless service provide an opportunity to promote that anyone approaching the Council in respect of homelessness can deal with the Council in Welsh in person, by phone, email, Twitter, Facebook, letters, forms etc</p>	None	The Housing Register policy was reviewed last year and the changes are being implemented. One such change is establishing a Welsh version of the Homeseach website. The Homeseach website contains

Promoting use of the language			homeless information and, thereby, provides a building block for going forwards.
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4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>Positive: Homelessness is increasingly a priority for Welsh Government. Thereby it is a strategic priority for the Council. Due to the change in need and demand profiles, there has been a need to create additional posts/jobs and employment across the homeless sector to manage this change in demand. The Council has recruited additional staff in this regard</p> <p>The proposal contributes positively to increasing housing options for those who are threatened with homelessness or those who are actually homeless.</p> <p>The whole service is focused on delivering sustainable solutions that make efficient and best use of available resources. The central focus of this is for households needing homeless assistance being able to acquire their own sustainable accommodation and live as independently as possible. The service can provide wider benefits to other services eg facilitate hospital discharge; reduce reliance on Social Care packages; support criminal justice resources etc</p>	<p>Homeless services relating to accommodation provision will be positive in respect of employment because of the need for repairs and maintenance services that will benefit local companies and supply chains.</p> <p>An impact of Welsh Government policy has seen the increased use in B & B use in both numbers needing B & B and average lengths of stay due to the current lack of affordable housing and suitable temporary/supported accommodation. This isn't sustainable accommodation in terms of expenditure or the well-being of households accommodated. The Strategy will mitigate against this. For example by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More flexible quotas of social housing being allocated to homeless households • Introducing shared housing within the social sector • Re-designation of social housing • Seeking to use the social housing grant programme to increase the availability of accommodation that will benefit homeless applicants • Seeking to develop Monmouthshire Lettings to promote and identify new accommodation opportunities in the private rented sector

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>Stable and good quality accommodation that is safe and secure provides a good platform for homeless households to rebuild their lives, which will include</p> <p>Negative: The change in policy by Welsh Government, whilst for positive reasons (eg to minimize rough sleeping) there has been a resulting need to use additional B & B accommodation, which isn't considered as sustainable accommodation.</p>	
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>Positive: N/A</p> <p>Negative: N/A</p>	<p>For emerging accommodation projects, the Council will use this as an opportunity to consider scope to incorporate accommodation standards that mitigate against climate change and tackling carbon emissions eg PV panels</p>
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>Positive: Homeless services in Monmouthshire positively contribute to positive health outcomes for homeless persons. This includes supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those with a physical disability, particularly through more accessible accommodation. The homeless team will also liaise with the Sustainable Living team and housing associations in respect of opportunities to adapt either temporary accommodation or permanent accommodation. • There will be increase support for those with substance and alcohol abuse issues through specific accommodation and specialist support 	<p>The Council already has established additional homeless services such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Intervention Panel • Additional temporary accommodation in general • Specific Temporary Accommodation Support and Resettlement Support • Housing First • Assertive Outreach for Drug and Alcohol • Rough sleeper Assertive Outreach <p>The above are all services that can be built on and wherever possible, expanded.</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similarly there will be increased support for those experiencing mental health issues. <p>Key actions for the Council through the Strategy will be to establish a Rapid Rehousing Transition plan, part of which includes a triage arrangement. The result will be that the needs of individuals will be a more systematic and robust approach to assessing needs.</p> <p>Another key action will be to strengthen current links with Health.</p> <p>Good housing supports well-being</p> <p>Negative: None.</p>	
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>Positive: The Strategy and the focus on additional homeless accommodation and a wider range of housing support services will reduce the likelihood of people not being able to remain living in their homes communities.</p> <p>For example, establishing provision, such as dedicated Emergency Family Accommodation both North and South to minimize the likelihood of households having to move to an alternative location and away from schools, facilities, health services, employment and other support networks.</p> <p>Supported housing schemes contribute to community safety through regular or permanent presence of professionals.</p>	<p>The Council previously only had dedicated family accommodation in the north of the County. The Council now has established dedicated provision in the south. However, it has been necessary to temporarily utilize the family accommodation in the north for high need single people</p> <p>In terms of community safety, homeless procedures are under-pinned by rigorous risk assessment procedures to inform homeless and support assessments and potential placements.</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>Accommodation standards will include elements such as CCTV.</p> <p>Negative Whilst not a negative of the Strategy itself, due to the shortage of accommodation, there may be an on-going necessity, albeit a reduced necessity, for households to be displaced away from their homes communities in order to access accommodation, particularly specialist or temporary accommodation. This Strategy continues to mitigate this.</p>	
<p>A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>Positive: This Strategy will contribute positively to this goal. Examples of how the Strategy will contribute includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of homelessness • Seeking to avoid the need for rough sleeping; • Providing homeless people with good higher quality accommodation which will have higher environmental standards • Settled accommodation will help with health and well-being (eg warm, safe and secure) and will facilitate access to appropriate housing support which can be accessed for support such as employment and training. Homeless applicants will be supported to be less dependent on support services • The Strategy will result in increased financial investment into homeless services which will be 	N/A.


Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>positive for the local economy eg housing support services, repair and maintenance etc</p> <p>Negative: N/A</p>	
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p>Positive: N/A</p> <p>Negative: N/A</p>	N/A
<p>A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p>Positive: The proposal both strengthens the availability of residential accommodation in Monmouthshire. Any accommodation helps to increase the stability in people's lives improving opportunities in respect of personal finances; employment; training etc</p> <p>Negative: None.</p>	N/A

5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?



Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>A priority of the Strategy is short-term Prevention. The Strategy is specifically aiming to identify more opportunities to intervene 'earlier' and higher 'up-stream.' For example, one action is to link with the Council's campaign for mitigating against poverty. Another examples includes establishing a process for identifying young people potentially at risk of homelessness. Those identified as at risk will be monitored and a 'housing pathway' established as a contingency.</p> <p>The Strategy is aiming to establish additional temporary accommodation which will help to meet short-term needs. This settled provision together with housing support aligns with the medium to long-term in terms of supporting people to rebuild their lives and become less dependent on support.</p> <p>A further priority of the Strategy is to establish a Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan. This will project future accommodation and support requirements.</p> <p>Housing & Communities are working with Social Care in respect of a joint planning arrangement to identify and project future housing needs relating to Social Care. An element of this will include Social Care clients at risk of homelessness. This planning will help inform the development of the Affordable Housing Development programme and future commissioning of the Housing Support Grant programme.</p>	<p>None.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>This proposal is based on a partnership approach through the following parties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing & Communities and Housing Support Grant Commissioning • Welsh Government • Housing Associations • Housing Support Providers • Private property owners and letting agencies • Env Health • Planning • Aneurin Bevan Health Board • Social Care • Private developers • Church community 	



Involvement

Involving those with an interest and seeking their views

Stakeholders to this Strategy will be consulted up. A number of opportunities have already been implanted for stakeholders to influence the Strategy and there will be mechanisms that effectively support operational delivery

Strategy Development

The following were used to inform the Strategy:


- Stakeholder survey
- Themed stakeholder workshops
- Client satisfaction surveys
- Housing Support reviews
- Specific meetings with partner agencies eg RSL's; HSG Provider Forum
- General operational meetings eg Homesearch Operational Group
- Empty Property Working Group
- Health Board need information


Involvement Opportunities

The following will be implemented to provide on-going opportunities to involve stakeholders:

- On-going implementation of client satisfaction surveys and housing support reviews
- Strategic Housing Partnership/Forum
- Gwent Strategic Social Care, Health & Housing Group
- Tackling Poverty Network
- CCG & HSG Executive Group
- Housing Intervention Panel
- HSG Provider Forum
- Homesearch Operational Group
- Empty Property Working Group
- Private Landlords
- Police
- Social Care housing needs monitoring

N/A

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General operational arrangements with agencies such as Housing Associations, Support Providers, Social Care, Estates, Partnerships - Community Safety 	
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p>Prevention</p>	<p>The core of this proposal is increased resources being put into homeless prevention, homelessness, support and accommodation. The Strategy will co-ordinate a significant increase in investment into homelessness. The medium to long-term aim is to achieve a more planned, managed and sustainable approach that will move the service towards a more pro-active approach and minimize the a reactive approach, albeit due to the 'safety-net' element of the service there will always be a reactive element to the service.</p> <p>For example, the Strategy seeks to increase homeless prevention to reduce the need for people needing homeless accommodation; for those that need accommodation and support the intention is to have a triage arrangement; for those that need accommodation the intention is for that accommodation to be available rather than rely on B & B etc etc</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>The proposal impacts positively on aspects of well-being. The Strategy supports well-being in a variety of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness generally supports safeguarding. Risk assessments are key processes as part of homeless procedures • Good quality, safe, warm and secure temporary, permanent and supported homes that are located in places that they are needed. The Strategy will continue to improve the standard of homes • Homes will provide stability eg to facilitate access to health services, training, employment etc • Housing support aligns with well-being and helps applicants tackle barriers to well-being eg tackling substance misuse; accessing mental health services • Closer links between homeless services and health services. Joint commissioning is a particular opportunity. 	N/A

6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	<p>The proposal can and will support households where there could be safeguarding issues by providing safe and secure temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Stringent risk assessment processes are utilized for applicants presenting as homeless. This informs placements and referrals to agencies.</p>	None.	<p>The following are used to mitigate against any negative impacts:</p> <p>Procedure documents; staff meetings; briefing notes and training</p>
Corporate Parenting	The proposal supports Corporate Parenting by potentially providing safe and secure accommodation.	None.	

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What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

<p>Evidence has been gathered in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Statement of Need has been established to inform the Strategy • Statistical data – particularly homeless and Housing Support Grant related data • Anecdotal operational evidence and feedback • Stakeholder survey • Stakeholder themed workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Homeless prevention ○ Young people ○ Criminal justice ○ Health • Service user meetings • Service user satisfaction on homelessness, accommodation and housing support -
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8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

This section should summarise the key issues arising from the evaluation. This summary must be included in the Committee report template

Positive

The positive benefits of this proposal are:

- It defines and articulates the homeless need in Monmouthshire. The Council and Welsh Government will fully understand the homeless situation in the County and the service short-falls and gaps.
- It meets Welsh Governments requirements to have a strategy in place by 1st April 2022
- It helps inform future planning and commissioning
- It meets the Council's statutory duty to establish a homeless strategy
- It continues the transformation of homelessness in Monmouthshire – simplistically to a service that has a higher quantity of homeless accomodation wider range of homeless accommodation, a higher standard and quality of accommodation and a higher and wider range of housing support
- The strategy will contribute to the well-being goals, particularly the prosperous Wales goal and will have a positive impact on the protected characteristics and on people suffering socio-economic disadvantage.

Negative

At the time of writing, the required funding to fund all aspects of the Strategy is not currently available. There will be a need to identify funding to meet some aspects of the strategy.

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9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Consult on draft Strategy	14 th January 2022	Strategy & Policy Officer Homelessness
Prepare report for Enterprise DMT	24 th January 2022	Strategy & Policy Officer - Homelessness
Report to Adults Select	15 TH February 2022	Strategy & Policy Officer - Homelessness

Report to Cabinet/Full Council	2 nd /3 rd March 2022	Strategy & Policy Officer - Homelessness
Submit to WG	31 st March 2022	Strategy & Policy officer - Homelessness

10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Draft HSP Strategy submitted to WG	31.12.21	

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Appendix 5

Consultation Feedback

Welsh Government Feedback

Overall the Strategy has a clear structure and layout.

- **Section 1- Introduction**

- 1.2.5: The Strategy should set out the priorities for the Housing Support Programme which covers both the HSG and statutory homelessness functions funded through the revenue settlement. You therefore need to update this sentence to reflect that.
- 1.4.13: the heading doesn't seem to correspond with the narrative which appears underneath in 1.4.14 and 1.4.15.
- The information that has been included in the Introduction (1.1) section and the Purpose of the Strategy (1.2) is very detailed and there is some duplication of information. You may wish to consider combining these two to create an '*Introduction and Purpose*' section.
- 1.5 It is not clear if the vision included is the overarching vision for the Council or a specific vision for housing support/homelessness services? Can you confirm? It also currently reads as a list of aims rather than an overall vision.
- 1.6: Whilst it's good to see the key achievements and what is currently being delivered, it is not particularly relevant as the Strategy should focus on the priorities for future delivery of services. Would suggest you could incorporate some of it in an Annex or relevant detail included in your needs assessment document.

- **Section 2: Needs assessment**

- 2.1 - It would be useful if this section also listed the data sources (as set out in the HSP Template) used to inform your needs assessment as well as the process/method.
- The key findings section is very detailed. There could be an opportunity to better draw out the key themes by perhaps using thematic sub-headings.
- You will need to include a conclusion paragraph to highlight the key needs, gaps in provision and issues that need to be addressed as a result of the findings from the needs assessment.

- **Section 3: Strategic Priorities**

We welcome that you have provided the context for each strategic priority setting out the how and why, although some of 'reasons why' listed don't always appear to be relevant to the priority. We have made the following suggestions for how the strategic priorities could be strengthened:

- P1 – you may want to make it clearer exactly what you're prioritising and the specific gap that is being addressed. Is this about strengthening targeted

prevention i.e. pathways for certain cohorts, or general early intervention and prevention services, or both? The priority combines a number of cohorts/needs i.e. young people, mental health, substance misuse and would therefore benefit from being more focused/specific. Suggest rephrasing to '*strengthen early intervention and prevention services.*', and then draw out the key cohorts/groups in the detail underneath.

- P2 – this priority slightly overlaps with P1 and reads as a business as usual activity rather than a priority. Would suggest making it clearer and more action focused around what is the specific gap being addressed i.e. is this priority around strengthening support services or increasing supply of suitable accommodation? The priority also combines a number of cohorts/needs i.e. young people, mental health, substance misuse and would benefit from being more focused. Therefore, you may wish to consider rephrasing and splitting into 2 priorities as follows: One to '*Increase or strengthen support provision for people with complex needs*' focusing on mental health and substance misuse provision (linking in a multi-agency approach, including health, to support those with complex need), and the other priority around strengthening housing support provision for younger people.

P3 – this priority could be clearer about what you are prioritising i.e. is it about increasing allocations for people already in temporary accommodation or building more temporary accommodation? What type of accommodation (single person accommodation etc.)? You could therefore explicitly draw out in the narrative what you are going to do, what are the gaps and the cohorts that you are trying to address. Would also suggest changing 'Welsh Government 'Annex D' accommodation standards' to 'Welsh Government relevant standards'.

- We note that there is no priority around workforce development although you mention that staffing is an issue in the stakeholder engagement section (4.2.6).
- You will also need to include a priority around your approach to targeted prevention as set out in the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, that perhaps is not covered sufficiently in P1.
- The Strategic regional priorities of the Gwent RHSCG could be referred to here instead of in 1.4.16 (local policy section), under a 'Regional priorities' sub heading and drawing out any specific actions for Monmouthshire.

- **Section 5: Impact assessment and Action Plan**

- As you have noted, this section will need to be completed. We note that some information in the Action Plan is missing. You will need to complete these before the Strategy is published.

- **Section 6: Implementing, monitoring and reviewing the Strategy**

- You may wish to consider listing some of the key partners integral to delivering the strategy.

End Youth Homelessness Cymru Feedback

Question 1- Do you agree the draft Housing Support Provision & Homelessness Strategy identifies the key priorities to tackle homelessness within Monmouthshire?

Yes

Partially X

No

Don't know

Please explain:

EYHC broadly welcomes the four key priority areas identified in the Strategy and believe they will be effective in tackling homelessness within Monmouthshire. As our focus at EYHC, is on youth homelessness, and our main piece of work – the 'Roadmap to Ending Youth Homelessness in Wales' is soon to be published, below follow a number of comments on how the priority areas relate to youth homelessness and some ways in which provision can be enhanced.

It's great to see such a focus being placed on prevention of homelessness, as we know that to be successful in ending both youth homelessness and broader homelessness, we have to make a pro-active effort to shift our services, and our focus, further 'upstream' to try and prevent people from even coming into contact with the homelessness system per se. Within this section it was also good to see the appreciation of the interconnectedness with issues such as poverty; as we know this is a key indicator of propensity homelessness.

Furthermore, we believe that the three other priority areas will also be effective in tackling homelessness, as they ensure that support will be provided to those who at need it, exploring a greater range of accommodation options and committing to the systems shift of 'rapid re-housing'.

Within the prevention section, focusing on young persons as a key group at 'high risk' of homelessness was good to see, a claim that was well-backed up throughout the Statement of Need, and is well supported by extensive research into homelessness and youth homelessness. At EYHC we would recommend the formation of a separate Action Plan, specifically focused on young people, that sits below this strategy and in partnership with the wider Action Plan to ensure that young people's specific needs are addressed throughout every aspect of the strategy. The data shows us that in Wales 48% of people became homeless for the first time before the age of 21, and of that number, 73% went on to experience homelessness more than once, showing the likelihood of reoccurring homelessness. The greater number of young people Monmouthshire can prevent from coming into the homelessness system, the more likely it will be in successfully tackling homelessness. Furthermore, young people are at a key developmental, social and psychological time in their life, often without the resilience of adulthood, and research has consistently shown that they have frequently differing causes of homelessness from their older adult peers, with family breakdown being the key cause, compared to 'rent arrears' as stated in the Statement of Need. This, coupled with the fact that are treated differently by a number of different aspects of the law, primarily the welfare system, means that youth homelessness requires an approach that reflects these differences.

Within the 'what we will do' section of each priority, it's very encouraging to see young people's needs and potential schemes addressed specifically. At EYHC we would recommend the creation of a separate young person Action Plan to sit under this strategy. Having a distinct but complimentary specific Action Plan would allow you to reflect the aforementioned differences between youth homelessness and broader homelessness in greater detail, than is

currently possible in an all-ages Action Plan and ensures that the best possible support is provided to young people in your local authority; in relation to all four priority areas. It would allow you to explore the establishment of a Housing First for Youth scheme, which again has complimentary but distinct principles for implementation from wider Housing First Models. What increasing housing options looks like for young people, when we know, as a cohort, they are treated differently by the welfare system and whose employment is frequently characterised as being insecure and low paid. Finally it would allow you to examine what Rapid Re-Housing means for young people, to ensure that their aforementioned distinct needs continue to be addressed in such a significant systems change to the housing system.

Question 2 – To address the key priorities and deliver the Strategy Monmouthshire County Council has identified a number of actions as set out in the attached draft Action Plan.

Do you agree with the planned actions?

Yes (Tick Box)

Partially X

No (Tick Box)

Don't know (Tick Box)

Please explain: There a number of commendable actions identified in the Action Plan, below follows a few comments on some of the actions identified. As above, EYHC would recommend the formation of a separate young person specific Action Plan but hopefully the comments below are helpful in relation to a number of the plans.

1.3 – as I'm sure you're aware, Shelter Cymru have been commissioned by Welsh Government to review and update the 'Barnados Framework for Care Leavers' which will attempt to make the document more user friendly and will contain a lot of practical guides and advice for local authorities. Due to be published by the end of March. Furthermore, Welsh Government are also working with stakeholders on updating their 'corporate parent' guidelines, which may some findings relevant to this area. Also due to be made available soon.

1.5 – Upstream Cymru is the perfect example of homelessness prevention, based on an Australian model where in the regions it's been rolled out in over the past decade, they have achieved a nearly 40% reduction in youth homeless presentations. The initial findings from the Welsh pilot can be found [here](#).

1.13 – there's a number of local authorities who have well established co-located services, commonly focused specifically at young people. EYHC will be publishing a best practice guide on this area in the near future which will be available on our website.

2.4 – A number of Housing First for Youth schemes are now up and running across Wales, with a specific HF4Y Network meeting quarterly, facilitated by Cymorth Cymru. There is also the evaluation of the Rock Trust's (Scotland) HF4Y scheme, specifically for care leavers that might be of [interest](#).

2.11/12 – A great example of this is the work of Tai Ffres, a Welsh Government innovation Funded project between Llamau and United Welsh with the specific aim of increasing housing options for young people, ensuring that the homes on offer are safe, secure and affordable.

Support is available if required but is not a pre-condition of a tenancy. More information is [here](#).

3.5 – another option that could be explored to increase the supply side, in particular for young people is Community Hosting (sometimes known as supported lodgings). We have recently completed a study into this accommodation model and how it can relief homelessness whilst providing young people with a strong support network around them. There are a number of models, focused on both short-term (more emergency stays) or long-term were on average a young person stays with a host family for 18 months or so. The report will be published at the end of March and would be happy to provide you with any further information if interested.

4.1 – this again underlies the need for a separate young person specific Action Plan to ensure that their diverse and separate needs are recognised and addressed in such a significant shift in our housing system.

Compass Feedback

Question 1- Do you agree the draft Housing Support Provision & Homelessness Strategy identifies the key priorities to tackle homelessness within Monmouthshire?

Yes (Tick Box)

Partially (Tick Box)

No (Tick Box)

Don't know (Tick Box)

Please explain: the strategy provides a clear progressive set of priorities through 1-5: early identification and prevention being key from as young as pupils attending Key Stage 3 education (although future consideration needing to be applied to even younger age groups) to identify and apply appropriate interventions for them and their families to reduce future homelessness; through to availability of options to support initiatives such as rapid rehousing underpinned by the appropriate resources and staffing from across all sectors to support it.

Question 2 – To address the key priorities and deliver the Strategy Monmouthshire County Council has identified a number of actions as set out in the attached draft Action Plan.

Do you agree with the planned actions?

Yes (Tick Box)

Partially (Tick Box)

No (Tick Box)

Don't know (Tick Box)

Please explain: re: 1.5 it makes reference to continue investment in Upstream homeless prevention in places of education. Upstream provision is not currently operating in MCC educational provisions: this being delivered via the MCC Compass programme across all secondary schools and PRS. This equally linking into relevant family support provision inclusive of Children's Services Care and Support Plan meetings, SPACE panel, School multi-agency panels, etc. Working collaboratively with CAMHS and PMHCS, substance misuse organisations inclusive of GDAS/N-Gage, mediation services, etc.

Re: point 1.14, Compass staff have completed PIE Foundation training to contribute toward this.

Shelter Feedback

Question 1- Do you agree the draft Housing Support Provision & Homelessness Strategy identifies the key priorities to tackle homelessness within Monmouthshire?

Yes

Question 2 – To address the key priorities and deliver the Strategy Monmouthshire County Council has identified a number of actions as set out in the attached draft Action Plan.

Do you agree with the planned actions?

Yes

Please explain

We think this is a comprehensive plan of action to deliver on the strategy. In particular we welcome the inclusion of 1.7 “To review exclusion practices from social housing” and the stated purpose “to aid “move on” options by ensuring that those most in need of social housing are not unreasonably excluded: and support is available to address the causes of exclusion” In relation to former tenant arrears in both the private and social rented, but particularly the former, we do not believe that people should be penalised for arrears upon rents that were unaffordable for them. Please see our good practice guide on former tenant arrears [here](#).

We also welcome 1.3 and feel that this inclusion and managed pathway approach could be key in ensuring care leavers do not leave care under risk of repeat homelessness and that they can receive support necessary in the first years of adulthood. They are still likely to benefit from additional support at this stage.

We also welcome 3.2 “continue to co-ordinate a newly established Strategic Housing Forum with housing association partners to help identify opportunities to develop new affordable housing.”

We welcome that you have sought to address housing issues for a wide range of vulnerable groups, (including young people, those experiencing substance misuse and/or mental health issues, victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence) in the Action Plan. We suggest the strategy would benefit from considering BAME, LGBTQ+ and Gypsies & Travellers inclusion in the action plan, to ensure that equal consideration is given in terms of what needs to be considered when addressing the housing needs of marginalised groups.

The statement of need, at paragraph 11.1.4.3 states that there is “scope to work with adult social care to improve services for those who are neurodiverse”. We believe there should be solid reference to this in the Action Plan and main strategy document, as it is not mentioned in either. In our report [Working together to end evictions into social housing](#) we noted that there was a good approach to joint-working in Monmouthshire, with a wide range of agencies sitting on the Housing Intervention Panel. This report also contains a wide range of good practice examples from across the UK relating to partnership-working and other areas. We would also like to see consideration of adding actions upon ‘ending evictions from social housing into homelessness’ In relation to 3.12 To seek to establish links with local voluntary organisations and local churches/faith groups to develop new services; although this action clearly references

Melin Homes Feedback

Question 1- Do you agree the draft Housing Support Provision & Homelessness Strategy identifies the key priorities to tackle homelessness within Monmouthshire?

Yes

Partially (Tick Box)

No (Tick Box)

Don't know (Tick Box)

Please explain (Text Box)

Question 2 – To address the key priorities and deliver the Strategy Monmouthshire County Council has identified a number of actions as set out in the attached draft Action Plan.

Do you agree with the planned actions?

Yes

Partially (Tick Box)

No (Tick Box)

Don't know (Tick Box)

Please explain

Question 3 – Do you have any other comments about the Council's draft Housing Support Provision & Homelessness Strategy?

Answer

Very thorough process followed with wide reaching feedback across sectors which has been taken into account, looking forward to see the further development work surrounding the HIP panel, Housing Support & Homelessness forum.

I also feel that there is scope to develop a further a complex case allocations panel, linked to the identified high/complex needs from the surveys. MCC & Partners could then discuss the range of available accommodation and ensure that the right properties are matched to the right person/applicant eg: supported housing move on, homelessness, prison leavers, Detoc etc. This would help support with community integration and tenancy sustainability.

Monmouthshire Housing Association Feedback

Question 1- Do you agree the draft Housing **Support Provision & Homelessness Strategy** identifies the key priorities to tackle homelessness within Monmouthshire?

Partially (X)

Please explain (Text Box)

MHA's comments are:

- The strategy makes no reference to working with the Regional Partnership Board and working with ABHB to access ICF capital and revenue funding for supported accommodation, particularly for people with complex needs.
- The strategy does not link to the Population Needs Assessment recently produced by Phil Diamond from the Regional Partnership Board. The RPB's housing priorities include: taking a collaborative approach to homelessness and ceasing to use B&B for young people. There is no link in the strategy to the RPB's work.
- MCC to continue to lobby Welsh Gov and NRW to exempt social housing developments from the phosphate issues due to acute affordable housing shortages in the County and the numbers of households in temporary accommodation.
- Housing support should continue once a homeless client is rehoused by an RSL and there should be a clear support plan in place on handover to ensure that the tenancy is sustained, appropriate support is in place and future homelessness is prevented.
- We couldn't find any mention of recycled capital grant (MCC don't hold but other RSL's may). Could this be shared around if another RSL has a scheme that could come forward?

- The mention of *...S106 contributions to help private owners...* MHA wouldn't be comfortable with this without knowing the specifics. We fully endorse and support the general idea of preventing homelessness but we would want to see as much S106 contribution going towards affordable housing provision as possible... Not subsidising a homeowner?
- Sally has previously mentioned internal funding available for reducing temporary accommodation users. This was ad hoc and requires a business case to be put together on each occasion. We couldn't find any mention of this in the Strategy or action plan. This funding could be utilised with RSL's to purchase and/or refurbish existing stock to prevent disposal where SHG is not available.
- Beyond funding, the greatest barrier to new affordable homes is land availability. MCC should ONLY dispose of land and bring forward land for affordable housing development only. MCC may find that the reduction in temporary accommodation requirements push the effective land receipt way past open market prices. Could even be a case that one department subsidise land receipt for another department to benefit.
- We couldn't see any reference to MCC developing an intermediate market housing framework or a rapid rehousing framework –

Question 2 – To address the key priorities and deliver the Strategy Monmouthshire County Council has identified a number of actions as set out in the attached draft **Action Plan**.

Do you agree with the planned actions?

Partially (X)

Please explain

MHA's comments are:

- Section 1.7 The exclusion policy was recently reviewed by the Homesearch partners and current procedures ensure that all mitigating information is taken into account before reaching a decision, therefore, we disagree that applicants in the most housing need are "unreasonably excluded".
- Section 1.10 MCC already have full access to the reports in Locata. Is this a staff training need instead?
- Section 2.3 MHA supports the decision to re-model shared housing due to first-hand experience of vacancies being hard to let and issues around the compatibility of sharers leading to disputes/ASB.
- Section 2.5 – Need to understand the type of accommodation required to support successful outcomes for those with long term complex needs e.g. shared housing, supported living schemes or hub & spoke models.
- Section 2.6 Review of HSG – the review should include support offered by specialist providers particularly for those with protected characteristics e.g. women only domestic abuse services. Review should avoid a race to the bottom where the quality of the service is equally weighted to the price and that those with specialist and/or local knowledge are not disadvantaged. **Lyn**
- Section 3.3 Flexible letting quotas are already in place and agreed quarterly by the Homesearch partners.

- Section 3.4 - we are unsure of what you mean with this action? RSL's allocate properties in accordance with the Monmouthshire Allocation Policy which sets out a household size criteria.
- Section 3.6 - in addition to land owned by MCC what about Health and other statutory agencies who have a land portfolio?
- MHA agree that MCC should develop a clear and co-ordinated private sector offer to Landlord Developers through innovative use of S106 monies, however, this should not be to the detriment of affordable housing being created.

Question 3 – Do you have any other comments about the Council's draft Housing Support Provision & Homelessness Strategy?

Answer

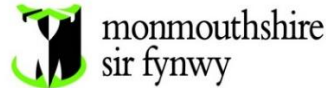
MHA's additional comments are:

- There is no mention of the Renting Homes Act and the impact that this will have on the private rented sector by giving tenants greater security and potentially reducing homelessness. On the other hand it may force private landlords to leave the sector thus reducing the amount of PRS available. –
- See earlier comment about social housing developments being exempt from the phosphate issue and social housing developments being allowed to proceed.
- There doesn't appear to be any analysis of hidden homelessness but its referred to in the definition of homelessness in the document. The number of households presenting to statutory homeless services are unlikely to reflect the issues facing Monmouthshire due to lack of supply and affordability
- Affordability – there's no mention of social housing and the living rent model etc. Could compare that with the PRS analysis.
- Economy/future trends – we couldn't see any mention of the cost of living crisis and the potential impact this will have on homelessness. Increase in temp accommodation is linked to Covid and the Everyone in policy – but demand in temp housing was already on an upward trajectory prior to this.
- Rural homelessness/rough sleeping – brings its own issues but we couldn't see any analysis of rural rough sleeping.
- It might be useful if MCC can gauge/estimate how many people move out of the County due to lack of affordable housing.

We wish to make the following comments in relation to the **Statement of Need document:**

- a) Section 6.4.3 – is the reduction in referrals to GDAS due to the pandemic whereby services were closed and more difficult to access?
- b) Does graph 14 include lets to both Band 2A and Band 2B?

- c) Section 7.5.7.2 – what is the reason for the increase in applicants in Band 5? Are we seeing an influx of applicants wishing to move into the County or more home owners seeking more affordable housing?
- d) Section 7.5.12.2 – the decrease in MHA lets is due to several of our new developments being on hold due to the phosphate issue and an increased proportion of lets going to homeless applicants rather than transfers.
- e) Section 7.5.17.1 – change to 1 to 4 bedrooms.
- f) Section 8.4.5 – Renting Homes Act will give private tenants greater security which may result in a reduction of homeless applications.
- g) Section 9.1.1 – does the 177 units include B&B? If not, your numbers of households in TA would indicate you have voids.
- h) Section 9.1.4 – does “duty to accommodate” still apply and if yes, do you know when this requirement will be lifted?
- i) Section 9.1.5 – waiting time in temporary accommodation – how much of this can be attributed to homeless applicants not bidding on suitable properties or limiting their choice to areas where there is low turnover.
- j) Section 10.2.4 – there is no mention of the shared housing project and the difficulties the support provider is having trying to source suitable applicants (also omitted from Table 35).
- k) Section 10.2.6 – no mention of dads Can Cymru which is funded by MCC Social Services, MHA and the Ministry of Justice.
- l) Section 10.3.4.2 – we agree that there is a significant gap in the support provision for applicants with high and intensive support needs. This will undoubtedly impact on their ability to maintain general needs housing as floating support is insufficient.
- m) Section 10.3.5.8 – provision needs to be made to support clients with high and intensive support needs, which should include the provision of specialist supported housing projects and planned move-on accommodation.



SUBJECT:	UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND UPDATE - REGIONAL INVESTMENT PLAN/ALLOCATION OF MONMOUTHSHIRE FUNDING
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	27th July 2022
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on progress of the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF) as part of the UK Government's Levelling Up Programme and to seek approval to proceed as detailed in the recommendations that follow.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider the three investment priorities of the UK SPF and the opportunities for investment which contribute significantly to the Council's strategic aims of the 'Plan on a Page' Looking Ahead, Delivering Now: Our Strategy to Summer 2022, which are namely:
- Communities and Place;
 - Local Businesses; and
 - People & Skills
- 2.2 Agrees that Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (RCTCBC) acts as the Lead Local Authority for the UK SPF for the ten Local Authorities across the South East Wales Region. RCTCBC, will therefore have overall accountability for the funding and how the fund operates.
- 2.3 Endorses submission of the Regional Investment Plan, by RCTCBC, which incorporates Monmouthshire County Council's (MCC's) outline Local Investment Plan, to UK Government in readiness for the submission deadline of 1st August 2022.
- 2.4 Agrees to enact a 'Monmouthshire People and Place Partnership' to inform and assess the appropriateness of MCC's outline Local Investment Plan, and monitor progress over the funding period.
- 2.5 Delegates powers to the Chief Officer – Communities and Place, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Economy, Deputy Leader, to agree the legal agreements associated with the UK SPF, with RCTCBC, on behalf of the Council.

- 2.6 Extends the contracts of NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training) related staff who are currently at risk of redundancy in December 2022, due to the cessation of the European Social Fund programmes – Inspire2Achieve, Inspire2Work and Skills@Work. Staff will be funded via UK SPF until March 2025 by taking a locally delivered, regionally coordinated approach. Should confirmation of UK SPF be delayed beyond December, and the statutory three month’s notice period required, a further report will be brought to the Chief Officer – Communities and Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Economy, Deputy Leader, to seek approval to extend the staff contracts to March 2023.
- 2.7 To agree to utilise up to 4% of the funding for financing the administration of the Monmouthshire element of the Fund to establish a delivery team from within the existing Economy, Employment and Skills Team.

KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Approval Progress to Date

- 3.1.1 In June 2021 [Cabinet](#) endorsed the selection process of projects to be submitted to the UK Government Community Renewal Fund (UK CRF). The UK CRF was designed to help areas prepare for the launch of the UK SPF in 2022, the programme replacing the European Union Structural Funds ending in 2023, following the UK’s exit from the European Union. The purpose of the UK CRF was to pilot new projects to tackle challenges and trial new approaches/ideas at a local level, supporting people and communities most in need across the UK. UK CRF invested in skills, community and place, local business, and supporting people into employment.
- 3.1.2 In December 2021, [Cabinet](#) approved the principle of a locally delivered, regionally coordinated approach to employability post-EU funding, providing a Framework for Future Employability in South East Wales. As a result, Connect, Engage, Listen Transform (CELT) was approved for funding via the UK CRF, to enhance the current Employment and Skills service with Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC) as the Lead Authority). This has enabled Council to;
- Develop a Triage system –to ensure clients are referred to the right support;
 - Employ a Wellbeing Engagement Worker;
 - Enhance Digital and Outreach Engagement;
 - Source employment opportunities in Construction and Digital and Target employment for homeless/at risk of homelessness.

This project has been further developed for the UK SPF South East Wales Regional submission, under the People and Skills Investment Priority with TCBC continuing to be the Lead Authority.

3.1.3 In January 2022, [Cabinet](#) were informed of the final list of approved UK CRF projects. Since then, the UK CRF projects have been extended and will now end in December 2022 as opposed to the original June 2022 end date.

3.1.4 In March 2022, [Cabinet](#) were provided with an update on the UK Government Levelling Up White Paper and details of the UK SPF Pre-Launch Guidance. Approval was also given to establish a citizen focussed, Local Partnership to inform the development of a Monmouthshire Investment Plan – now termed the ‘Monmouthshire People and Place Partnership’.

3.2 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund

3.2.1 The UK SPF is a central pillar of the UK Government’s Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. It provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation from the Fund via a funding formula rather than a competition.

3.2.2 The UK SPF will support the UK Government’s wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK by delivering on each of the ‘levelling up’ objectives to:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging;
- Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest;
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost; and
- Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency.

The primary goal of the UK SPF is therefore to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK.

3.2.3 Underneath the overarching Aim of building pride in place and increasing life chances, there are three UKSPF investment priorities: Communities and Place; Supporting local business; and People and Skills:

- The **Communities and Place** investment priority will enable places to invest to restore their community spaces and relationships and create the foundations for economic development at the neighbourhood-level. The intention of this is to strengthen the social fabric of communities, supporting in building pride in place;
- The **Supporting local business** investment priority will enable places to fund interventions that support local businesses to thrive, innovate and grow;
- The **People and Skills** investment priority will provide funding to help reduce the barriers some people face to employment and support them to move towards employment and education. This theme can also target funding into skills for local areas to support employment and local growth.

3.2.4 Within the context of the Fund’s aims, each place will have the flexibility to invest across a range of activities that represent the right solutions to improve local pride in place,

increase life chances, to help spread and create opportunity, and a sense of community and belonging. The balance of priorities should reflect local need and opportunity.

- 3.2.5 All places in the UK will receive a conditional allocation from the UK SPF. Monmouthshire County Council has a conditional allocation of £5,919,533 and an allocation of £1,235,631 for *Multiply (*UK Gov Adult numeracy programme). Details of the breakdown for each of the Local Authorities in South East Wales is included in Table One below:

Table One: A breakdown of each Local Authorities SPF allocation in S E Wales.

Individual authorities	Core UKSPF £	Multiply £	Total £	% of SEW allocation
Blaenau Gwent	23,301,572	4,863,920	28,165,492	10.11
Bridgend	19,116,296	3,990,295	23,106,591	8.3
Caerphilly	28,272,298	5,901,499	34,173,797	12.27
Cardiff	34,587,594	7,219,740	41,807,334	15.01
Merthyr Tydfil	22,698,977	4,738,136	27,437,113	9.85
Monmouthshire	5,919,533	1,235,631	7,155,164	2.57
Newport	27,177,563	5,672,986	32,850,549	11.79
Rhondda Cynon Taf	37,320,994	7,790,305	45,111,299	16.2
Torfaen	20,431,241	4,264,774	24,696,015	8.87
Vale of Glamorgan	11,606,505	2,422,717	14,029,222	5.04
Total	230,432,573	48,100,003	278,532,576	

- 3.2.6 Monmouthshire's allocation is 2.57% of the total allocation for the South East Wales region. The total funding is broken down to a yearly allocation; 12% in Year 1 (22/23), 24% in Year 2 (23/24) and 64% in Year 3 (24/25) as detailed in Table Two below.

Table Two: UK SPF allocation per year for Monmouthshire

Total SR (UKSPF core)	22-23 (UKSPF core)	23-24 (UKSPF core)	24-25(UKSPF core)
£5,919,533	£718,390	£1,436,780	£3,764,363
Total SR (Multiply)	22-23 (Multiply)	23-24 (Multiply)	24-25 (Multiply)
£ 1,235,631	£373,563	£ 431,034	£ 431,034

- 3.2.7 The local split of capital and revenue for the Fund in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland is detailed in Table Three below as follows:

Table Three: UK SPF Capital/Revenue Split

Year	Core UKSPF: revenue	Core UKSPF: capital	*Multiply: revenue
2022-23	89.6%	10.4%	100%
2023-24	87.5%	12.5%	100%
2024-25	82.1%	17.9%	100%

- 3.2.8 The ten Local Authorities in South East Wales have a combined conditional allocation of £230,432,572 and £48,100,003 for *Multiply. Note: Up to 4% of the funding can be used for financing the administration of the Fund. This 4% does not need to be spent wholly by the Lead Authority, a proportion of the administration budget can be allocated to individual authorities as appropriate.
- 3.2.9 Local authorities within South East Wales have been invited to collaborate and feed into one Regional Investment Plan. As part of this process there is a need to appoint one Local Authority to assume the role of the 'Lead Local Authority' for the UK SPF, and it is proposed that Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC performs this role.
- 3.2.10 The Regional Investment Plan will need to be submitted to UK Government by RCTCBC during the investment plan window between 30 June and 1 August 2022. The anticipated date for the first investment plans to be approved and payment awarded to Lead Local Authorities by UK Government thereafter is October 2022 onwards.
- 3.2.11 As the 'Lead Local Authority', RCTCBC will have overall accountability for the funding and how the Fund operates and some flexibility over how they deliver the Fund. If a specific Local Authority within the region takes lead responsibility for a particular UK SPF intervention or policy for the wider geography (for example Torfaen CBC is leading on People and Skills), the Lead Authority can allocate a proportion of the 4% administration budget to them.
- 3.2.12 Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Office, are coordinating the regional allocation element for the South East Wales Region and are engaging with regional partnership groups to effectively develop the Regional Investment Plan. To this end, several workshops have been held throughout May/June to engage with a diverse range of partners, all regional MPs and Constituent MS's have also been engaged in the process.
- 3.2.13 The Council is not required to develop its own local investment plan for submission to UK Government. However, it is required to provide an outline of proposed local activity that it wishes to undertake, to achieve specific interventions, targets and outputs with its UK SPF funding allocation, which will be used to inform the Regional Investment Plan.
- 3.2.14 In developing its outline of local activity, the Council has taken a soft approach due to the very short timescales and the limited funding availability impacting on deliverability. The team therefore contacted the Monmouthshire UK CRF projects, who had been trialing new approaches in advance of the UK SPF, who provided 'Declaration of Interest' forms outlining their proposed projects. These projects have been developed into an outline plan which is being used to inform Monmouthshire's Investment Plan which will feed into the South East Wales Regional Investment Plan.
- 3.2.15 Over the summer months, the team will instigate the Monmouthshire 'People and Place Partnership' which will assess the appropriateness of MCC's outline Local Investment Plan with a view to developing detailed local interventions in partnership with local stakeholders and monitoring progress over the funding period.
- 3.2.16 As indicated the Fund can support investment in interventions that start from 1 April 2022, in advance of UK Government approval, however any such interventions will be

at risk, albeit the Council needs to ensure that the 2022/23 allocation is fully utilised, regardless of the date that UK Government approval is given.

3.2.17 Lead Local Authorities can also incur administrative and preparatory costs from 1 April 2022. This is subject to provisions on the use of the Fund for administration and all other fund requirements, including but not limited to branding and publicity, and reporting.

3.2.18 Once approval is given, funding is confirmed for three financial years: 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 providing a predictable baseline element of local growth funding. All interventions should end by March 2025 or have a break clause allowing for closure by March 2025 if required (for example, yearly renewable funding).

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

4.1 The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation Assessment detailed in Appendix One, anticipates that the projects detailed within this report will have a positive impact on peoples’ social, emotional, health and wellbeing, education, and skills. This will develop resident’s resilience and improve their life chances.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

5.1 An options appraisal has been undertaken in Table Four that follows:

Table Four: Option Appraisal

Option	Benefits	Risks
Work with the ten Local Authorities within the Cardiff Capital Region to develop a Regional Investment Plan.	<p>Investment at a regional and local level to reflect Monmouthshire’s priorities focused on the three UK SPF themes and the Levelling Up objectives.</p> <p>Local priorities reflected within the Interventions selected.</p> <p>Local Engagement Plan developed to ensure stakeholder commitment and community focused engagements for accountability against the interventions.</p>	<p>UK government does not agree with the Regional Plan. Therefore, working in partnership with the Lead Authority the Team will ensure the submission meets the required criteria and standard.</p> <p>Limited investment compared to other local authorities in Southeast Wales, therefore essential investment for greater impact and results.</p> <p>Limited timeframes to mobilise engagement activity, further consultation to be undertaken over the summer months.</p>

6. REASONS:

6.1 The UK SPF's three Investment Priorities – Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Places, align with the Council's, Strategic Aims of its 'Plan on a Page' Looking Ahead, Delivering Now: Our Strategy to Summer 2022:

- Communities and Place investment will strengthen social fabric, sense of community and pride and develop capacity to drive grassroot change.
- Supporting Local Business investment will support local productivity, local business development alongside providing sector specific support.
- People and Skills investment will improve opportunities for our citizens to gain sustainable employment to those furthest away from the labour market; contributing towards helping citizens to upskill to meet labour market demands.

6.2 Development of the UK SPF South East Wales Regional Investment Plan has provided a tangible opportunity for regional collaboration, working as ten Local Authorities, to maximise the impact of UK Government investment for wider benefit.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 All places in the UK will receive a conditional allocation from the UKSPF. Monmouthshire County Council has a conditional allocation of £5,919,533, and an allocation of 1,235,631 for *Multiply (*UK Gov Adult numeracy programme).

7.2 The ten LAs in South East Wales have a combined conditional allocation of £230,432,57 and £48,100,003 for *Multiply. Note: Up to 4% of the funding can be used for financing the administration of the Fund. This does not need to be spent wholly by the Lead Authority, a proportion of the administration budget can be allocated to individual authorities as appropriate.

7.4 As Lead Authority for South East Wales, RCTCBC will have overall accountability for the funding and how the Fund operates.

8 CONSULTEES:

- DMT – Communities and Place;
- Cabinet;
- Strategic Leadership Team;
- Local MPs and MS's;
- Local communities and businesses

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix One - Equality and Future Generations Evaluation Assessment

10 AUTHOR:

Frances O'Brien, Chief Officer Enterprise

Lead officers

Cath Fallon, Head of Enterprise, and Community Animation

Hannah Jones, Head of Economy Employment and Skills

11 CONTACT DETAILS:

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Integrated Impact Assessment document

(incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Duty)

<p>Name of the Officer Hannah Jones</p> <p>Phone no: 07738 430418 E-mail: hannahjones@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve RCT being the Lead Authority for the CCR under the SPF funding. • To approve RCT submitting the Regional Investment Plan by the 1st of August with our local offer • To agree to enact a Monmouthshire People and Place Partnership to inform and assess MCC's outline Local Investment Plan and monitor progress over the funding period
<p>Name of Service area: Enterprise</p>	<p>Date 11th July 2022</p>

1. **Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	Yes: The primary goal of the Shared Prosperity Fund is to build pride in place and to increase life chances across the UK.	There are therefore no negative impacts anticipated.	
Disability	Yes: As above	None identified	
Gender reassignment	Yes: As above	None identified	
Marriage or civil partnership	Yes: SPF Monmouthshire investment will ensure fairness and equity	None identified	
Pregnancy or maternity	Yes: Monmouthshire SPF investment will help to address any perceived barriers that might impact on residents' participation in their community and routes into employment.	None identified	

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Race	Yes: Monmouthshire SPF investment will ensure equity of opportunity regardless of race	None identified	
Religion or Belief	Yes: Monmouthshire SPF investment will offer opportunities that will consider peoples' religion and religious beliefs	None identified	
Sex	Yes: Monmouthshire SPF investment will offer opportunities that will consider individual needs regardless of sex.	None identified	
Sexual Orientation	Yes: Monmouthshire SPF investment will offer opportunities that will consider individual needs regardless of sexual orientation.	None identified	

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice	The purpose of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund is to level up communities by boosting productivity where it is lagging; spreading opportunities, improving public services where weaker; restoring a sense of community and pride and empowering local leaders.	Not applicable	Not applicable

3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

<p>How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:</p>	<p>Describe the positive impacts of this proposal</p>	<p>Describe the negative impacts of this proposal</p>	<p>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts</p>
<p>Policy Making</p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably</p>	<p>The delivery team will ensure that they adhere to the Council's Welsh Language Standards.</p>	<p>None identified</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>Operational</p> <p>Recruitment & Training of workforce</p>	<p>Where new posts are required, the need to communicate through Welsh and English as part of the recruitment process and any necessary training offered as needed.</p>	<p>None identified</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>Service delivery</p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p> <p>Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>Any advertising about the projects will promote the fact that people can deal with the Council in Welsh by phone, email, twitter, Facebook, letters, forms, website transactions etc.</p>	<p>None identified</p>	<p>n/a</p>




4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!



Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>The proposal strongly supports the Prosperous Wales wellbeing goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The UK SPF will enable noticeable investment in the places people live, as well as support individuals. - Supporting local businesses Investment will support local productivity, local business development alongside sector specific support. - People and Skills Investment to support to residents will lead to improved labour market positions for those in employment; will lead to employment, and increased income for those who are currently seeking work and will lead to improved productivity and growth for companies in the region. <p>SPF investment is due to end of European Union for the Uk.Post Brexit investment for previously EU funded programmes</p>	<p>There is a strategic imperative to maximise our economic growth and wealth creation capability and increase our productivity to increase the GVA for the county and the country.</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g., climate change)</p>	Non applicable	
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximised, and health impacts are understood</p>	Communities and Place Investment to contribute toward citizens health and wellbeing at a grass roots level to improve their resilience and ability to take part in their community and work life.	
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>The primary goal of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. Levelling Up communities for a better future</p> <p>The proposal strongly supports the A Wales of cohesive communities' wellbeing goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investment to support community and social resilience within communities and encourage greater levels of community interaction. Investment to focus on building sustainable employment within communities, reducing inequalities between communities. 	

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>People and Skills Investment will work closely with priority industries to help steer the labour market towards those growing industries. Many of these industries focus on developing products that will support global health (medtech, life science etc) or reduce greenhouse gas emissions (e.g. e-mobility)</p>	
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p>Investment for local arts and culture interventions to create a sense of pride and community cohesion</p>	Not applicable
<p>A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p>Investment focus on building sustainable employment within communities, reducing inequalities between communities.</p>	Not applicable

5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>The local investment Plan is intended to balance short term need with long term and planning for the future for the duration of the plan and SPF investment until March 2025.</p>	<p>None identified</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>The development of Monmouthshire People and Place Partnership will encourage a range of partners to work collaboratively to the benefit of their community, local business, local employment, and skills opportunities at a local and regional level.</p>	<p>None identified</p>
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>Following UK SPF guidance, we have sourced approval from our local MPs and MSs for the regional investment plan to be submitted to UK government by 1st August.</p>	<p>None identified</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The purpose of the UK SPF funding is to empower each place to identify and build on their own strengths and needs at a local level, focused on pride in place</p>	<p>None identified</p>
 <p>Integration</p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>.As part of the local engagement process all aspects of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act will be embedded in our local investment plan</p>	

6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	Not applicable		
Corporate Parenting	Not applicable		

7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

When submitting the County's Investment Plan Officers will evidence strategic fit and link activities to local social, economic and business need. Strategies to be referenced will include Monmouthshire NEET Reduction Strategy 2018 – A Great Start for All Vision Monmouthshire 2040: Economic Growth and Ambition Statement; the Digital Infrastructure Action Plan; the MCC Apprenticeship, Graduate and Internship Strategy alongside alignment with UK Government Investment Priorities and Cardiff Capital Region regional priorities.

8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

.This section should summarise the key issues arising from the evaluation. This summary must be included in the Committee report template

It is anticipated that the UK SPF will have a positive impact on peoples' social, emotional, health and wellbeing, education, and skills. This will develop resident's resilience and improve their life chances.

9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Cabinet	27 th July 2022	Frances O'Brien, Chief Officer for Enterprise

10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision-making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built-in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Enterprise DMT	13 th June 2022	
2	SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM	14 th June 2022	

SUBJECT: PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT 2022 & PLAY ACTION PLAN

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 27 July 2022

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To approve the Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan as submitted in draft to Welsh Government by the statutory deadline of 30 June 2022.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To approve the 2022 Play Sufficiency Assessment and the Action Plan for 2022/23

3. KEY ISSUES:

Background

- 3.1 Statutory Play Sufficiency Assessments (PSA) were undertaken in 2013, 2016 and 2019. The duty on local authorities is to undertake a full review of the PSA every three years. The new PSA had to be submitted to Welsh Government by 30 June 2022, having either been approved by cabinet or in a final version timetabled to be so approved. The PSA and action plan were submitted as a final draft subject to cabinet approval, which is now sought.
- 3.2 **“Wales: A Play Friendly Country”** is statutory guidance to local authorities on assessing and securing sufficient play opportunities for children in their areas. It gives detail to the duty under Section 11 of the Play Opportunities, Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010.
- 3.3 In summary, the statutory requirements are that a local authority
- must assess the sufficiency of play opportunities in its area; and
 - must secure sufficient play opportunities in its area for children, so far as reasonably practicable, having regard to its assessment.
- 3.4 Cabinet has previously recognised the importance of play in children’s lives, for both its recreational value and for the important part that it plays in children’s physical and emotional health and well-being and in their personal development. Play provides a platform for children to learn, to have fun and to develop friendships with other children in a variety of settings from the school playground to formal open spaces and the wider physical environment. Play is a common denominator that should be capable of being enjoyed by all children irrespective of their social or cultural background or the ability of their parents to pay for the opportunity to participate.

- 3.5 The appended assessment (Appendix 1) sets out in more detail the background, policy context, progress against the 2019 PSA and the proposed areas for action in the next three-year period. In summary the 2022 review seeks to refine and reflect progress and ambition against the core actions set in 2019 rather than fundamentally change direction. Given that the authority is now providing increased direct play provision new actions have been added to reflect the importance of workforce development to support our aspirations.
- 3.6 The proposed action areas for the next three-year Play Sufficiency Assessment period are:
- **Space for Play** – maintaining improvement of fixed play provision, enabling community action, continuing to encourage and enable child friendly and playable environments
 - **Supervised Provision** – building on the open access community play model reviewing progress and considering future delivery options to widen its reach, extent and inclusiveness
 - **Providing for Diverse Needs** – recognising that there is still progress required to achieve full equality of access across service delivery and a need to further investigate the barriers to access for specific user groups.
 - **Workforce Development** - the development of a flexible and specialist workforce to play a pivotal role in our future play ambitions.
 - **Engagement and Information** – including rolling out the Young People’s Voices in Play toolkit and supporting young people’s engagement, improving the play information, and developing a localised marketing and play brand
 - **Partnership and Policy Integration** – maintaining and extending partnership work

Appended to the policy statement is the PSA toolkit (Appendix 2) RAG rating each criterion, and the 2022/23 play action plan setting out the proposed actions against the play measures, as required by guidance.

- 3.7 The creation and appointment of a new Play Development Lead post to contribute to the strategic direction and delivery of play right across Monmouthshire is an important development to support our future ambitions. This post based in MonLife’s Youth, Community and Sport and Community Teams, will coordinate the statutory play duties, and support the Play Strategy Group.

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 4.1 The statutory matters mean that the PSA includes an assessment of the extent that play opportunities are inclusive and recognises the positive impact that securing sufficient and accessible play opportunities can have on children, families and communities. The provision of free open access play contributes to addressing issue identified in the Well-being Assessment and to corporate policy including the Social Justice Strategy. The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation is appended (Appendix 3).

4.2 The safeguarding responsibilities of the Authority and partners for children and young people are fully integrated into the identification of appropriate actions and reflected in the PSA and guidance.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

5.1 Reviewing and considering the Play Sufficiency Assessment meets the statutory requirements, to have a Play Sufficiency Assessment and a Play Action Plan, so doing nothing is not an option. Approval of the sufficiency assessment and action plan provides direction and vision in delivery. It allows access to All Wales Play Opportunities Grant and associated funding and will support existing relationships / future partnership development.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.1 Assessment criteria for the PSA measures are set out in Statutory Guidance / the PSA Toolkit prepared by Play Wales on behalf of Welsh Government and the requirement to undertake an annual review of achievement against the action plan.

7. REASONS:

7.1 “Wales: A Play Friendly Country” is Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on assessing for and securing, as far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient play opportunities for children in their area by addressing the defined measures set out in legislation.

7.2 Accessible play opportunities contribute to children’s lives and to the well-being of their families and communities, thereby contributing to the well-being objective to provide children and young people with the best possible start in life and helps deliver the social justice strategy to address inequalities in our county by contributing to developing child friendly communities.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 The 2022/23 budget round identified the creation of a new Play Development Lead post to contribute to the strategic direction and delivery of play right across Monmouthshire. Beyond this there is no dedicated play budget, so provision depends on partnership working.

8.2 The last two years have seen substantially increased Welsh Government support through the All Wales Play Opportunities Grant (AWPOG) as a reaction to the impacts of the pandemic on children and young people which has been very welcome. The assessment identifies that play delivery and strategic planning would be best supported by a longer-term commitment to sustain AWPOG funding to avoid the previous uncertainty which mitigate against fully strategic spend.

8.3 In addition, financial support is received from Town and Community Councils and from the Welsh Government Families First Fund to support the delivery of inclusive summer play provisions, and via WLGA to support the Food and Fun programme. Open space / recreation contributions obtained as part of Section 106 agreements relating to new

developments (with the revised approach) are used to improve spaces for play, and access to these areas, together with integration with other grant sources including the Local Places for Nature and Active Travel programmes.

- 8.4 There are no other direct resource implications associated with the PSA. Having an up to date PSA and Action Plan is a pre-requisite for accessing any AWPOG support and positions the authority and its partners to seek external funding for specific initiatives and actions in the plan.

9. CONSULTEES:

Cabinet	Senior Leadership Team
Chief Operating Officer MonLife	Play Strategy Group

Minor amendments have been made to Appendix 2 the Toolkit to better reflect the current position.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix 1: Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan
Appendix 2: Play Sufficiency Toolkit
Appendix 3: Equality and Future Generations Evaluation

11. AUTHORS & CONTACT DETAILS:

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Appendix 1



Monmouthshire Play Action Plan and Play Sufficiency Assessment June 2022

Introduction

“Wales: A Play Friendly Country” is statutory guidance to local authorities on assessing and securing sufficient play opportunities for children in their areas. It gives detail to the duty under Section 11 of the Play Opportunities, Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010.

In summary, the statutory requirements are that a local authority must

- assess the sufficiency of play opportunities in its area; and
- secure sufficient play opportunities in its area for children, so far as reasonably practicable, having regard to its assessment.

The duty on local authorities is to undertake a full review of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) every three years and update the Play Action Plan on an annual basis. The new PSA has to be submitted to Welsh Government by 30 June 2022, having either been approved by cabinet or in a final version timetabled to be so approved.

The guidance provides the following internationally recognised definition of play:
“Play encompasses children’s behaviour which is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. It is performed for no external goal or reward and is a fundamental and integral part of healthy development – not only for individual children, but also for the society in which they live”.

Play is defined for the purposes of the measure as including (but not limited to) *“any recreational activity”*. This recognises that children enjoy and benefit from taking part in a wide range of activities that are, in the main, organised by adults for children. These can include junior and youth clubs; leisure centre and sporting activities; cultural and arts activities; indoor play centres and events organised for children and their families. These recreational activities may offer a combination of adult led organised activities, and opportunities for freely chosen and child led play.

Welsh Government sees the range of play opportunities for children covered under the measure as being:

- Freely chosen play – with or without adult supervision/facilitation.
- Structured recreational activities – in the main led by adults, with predefined rules.

These opportunities can be available in a range of spaces and settings and any setting may afford both opportunities for freely chosen play and structured recreational activities.

Play Sufficiency Assessment

The matters to be taken into account in the PSA, each of which is assessed against fixed criteria set out in the guidance (in total 100 criteria), are broad in their scope impacting widely across the authority's activities:

Matter A:	Population
Matter B:	Providing for diverse needs
Matter C:	Space Available for Children to Play (open spaces; outdoor unstaffed designated play spaces)
Matter D:	Supervised provision (play work provision; structured recreational activities)
Matter E:	Charges for play provision
Matter F:	Access to space/provision & Information; publicity and events
Matter G:	Securing & Developing the Play Workforce
Matter H:	Community engagement and participation
Matter I:	Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas (education/schools; town & country planning; traffic & transport; early years plans; family policy & initiatives; inter-generational policy and initiatives; health and safety)

The play sufficiency assessment against the criteria is appended (**Appendix 2**)

Policy Statement

All children have the right to play as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article 31 of the Convention says:

Every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

The Council recognises the importance of play in children's lives, for both its recreational value and for the important part that it plays in children's physical and emotional health and well-being and in their personal development. Play provides a platform for children to learn, to have fun and to develop friendships with other children in a variety of settings from the school playground to formal open spaces and the wider physical environment. Play is a common denominator that should be capable of being enjoyed by all children irrespective of their social or cultural background or the ability of their parents to pay for the opportunity to participate.

Accessible play opportunities contribute to children's lives and to the well-being of their families and communities, thereby contributing to the well-being objective to provide children and young people with the best possible start in life and helps deliver the social justice strategy to address inequalities in our county by contributing to developing child friendly communities.

Our Approach

The approach adopted for both the 2016 & 2019 Play Sufficiency Assessments was to identify fewer, focused and more integrated themes/actions to sustain over the three-year period to the next assessment. This approach, founded on a view that a strategic approach was more likely to support partnership progress, has proved sound. The 2022 review takes the same approach, to refine and reflect progress and ambition against the core actions set in 2019 rather than fundamentally change direction. Overall, the intent is that the Play Action Plan should continue to prioritise freely chosen play rather than attempt to duplicate wider leisure and recreational planning processes.

Space for play

Identified in 2019 as the overall approach to fixed play provision and the opportunities for play within open spaces and the wider environment; including fully assessing the condition and play value of existing provision and identifying new opportunities; the review of play space standards/developer contributions; and the potential for multi-use spaces/natural play etc. through integration of a wider “green infrastructure” approach.

Progress includes:

- Completing play value assessments of 110 existing fixed play areas
- A more integrated and innovative approach to multi-use spaces / natural play etc. supported by play opportunity grant, use of section 106 contributions and Local Places for Nature grant, including a pilot rationalisation scheme in Monmouth. Other grant funding opportunities, such as the Active Travel Fund, has been used to support the integration of play provision into transport projects – supporting a wider agenda and filtering into key policies such as the Active Environments element of the Healthy Weight Healthy Wales strategy.
- Approving a new approach to identifying play requirements in new developments
- Delivery of a new destination play area at Chippenham Fields, Monmouth
- Supporting the community aspirations to improve The Dell playground in Chepstow
- A move towards the use of more sustainable materials and a greater proportion of accessible equipment
- Completing play audits of our museums and attractions

Previous consultations, including the Bulwark and Thornwell play research pilot, identified the limiting factors for outdoor play as including local environmental quality, traffic and perceived safety risks. This has highlighted the need to adopt a broad community-based approach in the next PSA period to secure increased play opportunities. Community consultation over the Monmouth pilot showed widespread support for this new approach, as well as wider children and young people data captured through the recent Active Travel Network Map consultations.

The proposed action areas are:

- **Local environment quality / wider green infrastructure** – continue to encourage and enable child friendly and playable environments
- **Community development** – supporting and enabling community action, including street play via training on road closures etc, as required
- Potential for **school grounds** use outside the school day
- **Fixed play**
 - Maintaining a fixed play capital investment strategy as opportunities and funding arise including securing developer contributions as applicable, prioritised to reflect the results of the play value assessment, inclusivity of use, more accessible new schemes for fixed play and specific user groups, e.g. teenage girls and natural play potential
 - Completing the Monmouth pilot of rationalisation / improvements and extend this approach to Chepstow in 22/23 and seek further funding to rationalise and improve fixed play based on this approach.
 - Applying the revised play standards when assessing new development proposals
 - Supporting and enabling community driven play proposals
 - Further consideration of play opportunities in rural areas including partnership with Community Councils and other providers
- **Indoor Play Provision** – Following the success of the indoor play provision at Monmouth Leisure Centre other sites, most notably Caldicot is being explored to scope future potential through investment. Another area that is being focused on is working with local providers to deliver indoor play provision at existing facilities.
- **Museums and Attractions** – developing the play offer inside and outside our museums and heritage attractions to reflect the play audits recently completed
- **Recreation and sport** - Continue to promote the importance of participation in play and active sports and continue to develop young people as sports ambassadors through schools and local voluntary sports clubs and coordinating potential for play delivery through the Active Gwent Delivery Plan (via Sports Development). Following council approval, the draft Leisure and Physical Activity strategy will play a key role in shaping the future Sport, Leisure and Play provision across Monmouthshire. By ensuring a coordinated approach with key partners such as Sport Development, Leisure and Youth Service it will enable a targeted approach to our play offer ensuring a children and young people focused approach.

Supervised provision

Identified in 2019 as building on the open access community play model – reviewing progress and considering future delivery options, seeking to develop the model and engage new partners and exploring the potential for further inclusive community based provision including at other times of the year.

This area of delivery has been significantly impacted by the pandemic both in terms of flexibility of delivery and the recognition of the importance of play opportunities and resulting significant changes in funding streams.

Progress includes:

- Developing the School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP) “food and fun” offer
- A rapid pivot from delivery via a partnership with Torfaen Play Services to direct delivery by MonLife to support activity hubs alongside Children Services disability hubs specifically for children with more complex needs
- The development of a targeted Family Engagement open access holiday provision spreading across Monmouthshire to combat the rurality of our county and provide localised opportunities
- A flexible response across 2021 to support a wide range of activities under the “Summer of Fun” and “Winter of Well Being” programmes alongside expansion of the Food and Fun offer and a half term Holiday Playworks provision

Despite the challenging period we have faced in response to the Covid 19 pandemic significant progress has been made across our play offer and foundations put in place for continued growth over the next three-year period The proposed action areas are:

- Building on the **open access community play** model – reviewing progress and considering future delivery options including supporting equality of access (see Providing for Diverse Needs below)
- Maintaining a **bilingual play** scheme offer
- Sustaining the **Holiday Hunger /Food Offer** (SHEP / Food & Fun / Playworks)
- **Widening community provision** – including identifying new partners and coordinating with other community provision and providers; working more proactively to share information between services and with partners in the voluntary sector; including seeking to extend open access play opportunities in more rural parts of the county.
- **Provision beyond summer holidays** – seeking to extend open access play opportunities at other times of the year.
- **Structured play provision** – continuing to coordinate with Monmouthshire Games, Playmakers, Positive Futures and the wider youth offer

Providing for diverse needs

Identified in 2019 as, adopting a more integrated approach across the authority to join up provision and ensure the needs of children with disabilities and/or families with diverse needs are better supported to access play opportunities.

Progress includes inclusive provision at the open access playschemes for children with disabilities, specific provision for children with greater needs and working across the authority to further develop our wrap around provision, such as access to the Monmouthshire Games. However, it is recognised that there is still progress required to achieve full equality of access across service delivery and a need to further investigate the barriers to access for specific user groups.

The proposed action areas are:

- **Inclusivity of supervised provision** and provision for **children with greater needs** – to explore the options to ensure the needs of children with disabilities

and/or families with diverse needs are better supported to access play opportunities, including research with parents of children with disabilities or behavioural / specific needs around the accessibility and suitability of existing supervised play provision (both specific provision for children with disabilities and the wider integrated provision) to identify the barriers, and the required measures to overcome these, to assist in greater equality of provision.

- **Inclusivity of fixed play** – assessment and improvement (as above).

Workforce Development

The development of a flexible and specialist workforce will play a pivotal role in our future play ambitions. To enable us to seek continued progress in this essential agenda we have recently appointed a 'Play Development Lead' who will join us in September 2022 following their notice period, this is an exciting appointment and resource to support our future ambitions. Staff and volunteers who are able to move confidently between programmes across our wider youth offer will ensure that a coherent programme of delivery is put in place ranging from open access mainstream opportunities through to targeted direct interventions. The future development of our workforce will be based on a data led approach, making informed decisions across the play strategy group and with wider stakeholders.

With a closer alignment to Sport Development, Leisure and Youth Services within MonLife's portfolio, along with Children's Services and wider MCC stakeholders we will explore existing leadership and pathway into employment programmes to provide the specialist knowledge, skills and training to develop a comprehensive inclusive play offer with children and young people at the heart of the planning.

We will work with other play providers and in cooperation with Monmouthshire Early Years to assist them in meeting their training needs.

Engagement and Information

Identified in 2019 as the proposed roll out of the Young People's Voices in Play Toolkit (based on the young person led Chepstow play pilot) and engaging with young people utilising the playmakers programme and direct feedback from play schemes.

Progress includes engagement and feedback from young people via play provision, the playmakers programme and Monmouthshire Games. The Young People's Voices in Play Toolkit was developed but the impact of the pandemic meant this school cluster led approach could not be rolled out. The authority also participated in Play Wales funded research to explore the conditions that support local authorities to secure sufficient play opportunities.

The proposed action areas are:

- Rolling out the **Young People's Voices in Play Toolkit** to obtain young people's views on local play issues and opportunities

- Continuing to engage, and seek feedback from young people supporting play opportunities and links to wider well-being
- Research to identify the barriers to assist in identifying measures to ensure greater equality of provision (as above)
- Improving the play information available online through the **Family Information Service** and other platforms, such as the **MonLife holiday Activities Website**
- The development of a localised marketing and play brand that children, young people and parents / guardians can relate to

Partnerships and Policy Integration

Identified in 2019 as maintaining and developing partnership with Town and Community Councils, other partners and community groups, and maintaining the Play Strategy Group.

Progress includes sustaining partnerships with Town and Community Councils to support play delivery and following a period of abeyance during the pandemic, restarting the Play Strategy Group, now as a subgroup of the Children and Young People's Partnership.

The proposed action areas are:

- Maintaining partnerships with **Town and Community Councils**
- Engaging with **community partners and social landlords** to improve our understanding of their provision and opportunities for future collaboration
- Maintaining the **Play Strategy Group** and extending the representation of external partners

Way forward

The intent is that these action areas remain the focus for action over the next 3-year period of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (2022 - 2025), which the Play Strategy Group will address.

The 2022/23 budget round identified the creation of a new **Play Development Lead** post to contribute to the strategic direction and delivery of play right across Monmouthshire.

This post based in MonLife's Youth, Community and Sport and Community Teams, will coordinate the statutory play duties and co-ordinate, and support the Play Strategy Group.

As required by guidance the proposed actions for 2022/23 are highlighted against the statutory matters below.

Proposed actions for the period of 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Matter	Priorities	Targets	Links to other Matters	Resources, including costs	Funding source (new or existing funding streams)
Statutory Guidance-policy framework	Maintain and review the Play Action Plan	<p>Keep the Play Action Plan under review with reports to Select Committee / Cabinet as necessary</p> <p>Maintain the play strategy group as a subgroup of the Children and Young People’s Partnership with a focus on the implementation of the play action plan.</p>	All matters	Core MCC / partners	Core MCC
Matter A: Population	Using available data to contribute to a better understanding of the demand for, and sufficiency of play opportunities	<p>Maintain progress, including working across services, with schools, town and community councils; sharing existing data, building a fuller picture of existing provision and the play workforce.</p> <p>Utilise the 2021 census data when available to inform future plans and programmes</p> <p>Create a pupil engagement survey to capture data and information on existing play baseline data to support future implementation'</p>		Core MCC / partners	Core MCC / partners
Matter B: Providing for diverse needs	Seek to gain a better understanding of the local demand for, and sufficiency of play	Continue to adopt a more integrated approach across the authority to join up provision and ensure the needs of children with disabilities		Core MCC	Core MCC

	opportunities for diverse needs groups	<p>and/or families with diverse needs are better supported to access play opportunities.</p> <p>Undertake a specific research project, including parents of children with disabilities or behavioural / specific needs, around the accessibility and suitability of existing supervised play provision (both specific provision for children with disabilities and the wider integrated provision) to identify the barriers, and the required measures to overcome these, to assist in greater equality of provision.</p> <p>Continue to work with the LGBTQ+ community in Monmouthshire to ensure that young people feel supported and confident and that they have a genuine opportunity to influence the way that the council supports young people with issues and concerns with their sexual orientation or gender reassignment</p>		Core MCC	Core MCC
Matter C: Space available for children to play	To improve fixed play provision and the opportunities for play within open spaces, prioritising increasing play value and inclusivity, and supporting and enabling community driven play proposals	<p>Complete the pilot fixed play / local places for nature scheme in Monmouth and implement its roll out to Chepstow.</p> <p>Review progress and undertake preliminary work to support the extension of this approach to other communities</p> <p>Continue to incorporate play assessments and seek developer contributions based on the revised approach agreed by Cabinet in January 2021 into Green Infrastructure comments on planning applications. Closer alignment to Active Travel routes to provide better access to play</p>	Matter F	£87,000 Core MCC	WCVA Local Places for Nature Preparatory Grant Core MCC

		<p>provision and creating a more connected environment.</p> <p>Deliver the currently funded fixed play capital investments and seek funding for further improvement schemes</p> <p>Supporting and enabling community driven play proposals, including the play area renewal project at Castle Dell, Chepstow</p> <p>Continue to support Playing Out (encouraging street play in communities) with interested parties; supporting and enabling wider community action.</p>		<p>£390,000</p> <p>£25,000 MCC</p> <p>Core MCC</p>	<p>MCC/Section 106 Funding</p> <p>Core MCC & lottery bid /other funding</p> <p>Core MCC</p>
<p>Part D: Supervised provision</p>	<p>Continue to build on the community play framework for open access play provision</p>	<p>Direct delivery of the “Summer of Fun” including open access playscheme / Food and Fun in Summer 2022 and Holiday Playworks provision over the school October half term period</p> <p>Explore grant funding opportunities to grow reach and level of provision provided across Monmouthshire, both in term time and holiday periods.</p> <p>Continue to promote the importance of participation in play and active sports and continue to develop young people as sports ambassadors through schools and local voluntary clubs (Including links to the Monmouthshire Games, Playmakers and Positive Futures programmes and the wider youth offer)</p>		<p>Core MCC</p>	<p>Core MCC</p> <p>Partnership and external grant bids for 21/22: Town & Community Councils, Families First, SHEP (WLGA) etc.</p> <p>Welsh Govt Holiday Playworks funding</p>

		Deliver supervised play opportunities for primary aged children over the other school holidays (Subject to prevailing Covid restrictions)			
Matter E: Charges for play provision	Enhance our information base, including building a fuller picture of existing provision. Develop the community play framework for free open access play provision	As Matter A above As Matter D above	Matter A & D	Core MCC	Core MCC
Matter F: Access to place/provision	Improve our information base and fully integrate these measures to better understand the local barriers to play for children and young people so we can increase access to play opportunities Enhanced information, publicity and events	Continue to engage with children, young people and parents to better identify the limiting factors & barriers to accessing play opportunities, Coordinating with promotion of the wider youth offer, the Family Information Service and the MonLife holiday Activities Website	Matter C	Core MCC	Core MCC
Matter G: Securing and developing the workforce	Develop a flexible and specialist workforce to support our future play ambitions.	Support Playworks training at appropriate levels and explore existing leadership and pathway into employment programmes to provide the specialist knowledge, skills and training required.	Matter A & D	Core MCC	Core MCC

	Enhance our information base, including building a fuller picture of existing provision and the play workforce	To form part of the approach to Matter A above			
Matter H: Community engagement and participation	Develop the community play framework for open access play provision Support and enable wider community action to enhance play opportunities	As Matter D above As Matter C above. Supporting and enabling community driven play proposals, including at The Dell, Chepstow Continue to support Playing Out (encouraging street play in communities) with interested communities; support and enable wider community action to enhance play.	Matters C & D	Core MCC	Core MCC
Matter I: Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas	Identify better links and integration with other programmes and partnerships through the Play Strategy Group	Extend participation in the play strategy group supported by the appointment of the Play Development Lead	Matter A	Core MCC	Core MCC

Appendix 2

Play Sufficiency Assessment Form



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Name of Local Authority: Monmouthshire County Council

Name of responsible officer: Mike Moran

Job title: Community Infrastructure Coordinator

Date of completion: Draft for Cabinet on 27 July 2022

Please note that the Play Sufficiency Assessment must be received by the Welsh Government by 30 June 2022



Conducting the Assessment – Play Sufficiency Assessment

As well as establishing a baseline of provision, the Play Sufficiency Assessment will enable the following:

- Identification of gaps in information, provision, service delivery and policy implementation
- Support the establishment of evidence to give an indication of distance travelled in relation to play sufficiency
- Highlight potential ways of addressing issues relating to partnership working
- The input and involvement of all partners increasing levels of knowledge and understanding
- A monitoring system which will involve and improve communication between professionals
- The identification of good practice examples
- Increased levels of partnerships in assessing sufficient play opportunities
- The identification of actions for the Securing Play Sufficiency Action Plan which accompanies the Play Sufficiency Assessment

A template has been produced to support a corporate appraisal of the matters that need to be taken into account as set out in the Statutory Guidance. The indicators listed within each matter are provided as sample indicators which should be amended to meet local issues as appropriate.

The Play Sufficiency Assessment must demonstrate that the Local Authority has taken into account and assessed the matters set out in The Play Sufficiency Assessment (Wales) Regulations 2012 and Statutory Guidance.

As well as providing baseline information, the Assessment can include examples of current practice that the Local Authority wishes to highlight.

Local Authorities might consider structuring the Play Sufficiency Assessment in the following way and as a minimum address all the identified sections.

Principle Statement

The Council recognises the importance of play in children's lives, for both its recreational value and for the important part that it plays in children's physical and emotional health and well-being and in their personal development.

Play provides a platform for children to learn, to have fun and to develop friendships with other children in a variety of settings from the school playground to formal open spaces and the wider physical environment. Play is a common denominator that should be capable of being enjoyed by all children irrespective of their social or cultural background or the ability of their parents to pay for the opportunity to participate.

Accessible play opportunities contribute to children's lives and to the well-being of their families and communities, thereby contributing to the well-being objective to provide children and young people with the best possible start in life and helps deliver the

social justice strategy to address inequalities in our county by contributing to developing child friendly communities.

Context

The approach adopted for both the 2016 & 2019 Play Sufficiency Assessments was to identify fewer, focused and more integrated themes/actions to sustain over the three-year period to the next assessment. This approach, founded on a view that a strategic approach was more likely to support partnership progress, has proved sound. The 2022 review takes the same approach, to refine and reflect progress and ambition against the core actions set in 2019 rather than fundamentally change direction. Overall, the intent is that the Play Action Plan should continue to prioritise freely chosen play rather than attempt to duplicate wider leisure and recreational planning processes.

Partnership working

The Council continues to maintain a close working relationship with the Town and larger Community Councils specifically to deliver open access play scheme play provision in the county and in each of their areas.

The Council also works closely and on an ongoing basis with a number of voluntary Friends Groups on specific play projects, to seek improvements to fixed play sites, parks and open spaces. The upgrading of the main play area in Usk came about as the result of a collaboration between the Council and a local Friends Group and there are approximately seven local groups that we are currently working with, including sites in Abergavenny, Monmouth and Chepstow – including the Friends of Garden City and the Friends of The Dell Park Group in Chepstow.

Since 2016 the Council had worked in partnership with Torfaen County Borough Council's Play Service to deliver its summer play schemes but pivoted in 2020 to direct delivery by the Council.

The interruption of the pandemic has impacted on partnership involvement in the Play Strategy Group and that will now be supported by the newly created post of Play Development Lead to rebuild wider representation of active organisations, including registered social landlords operating in the County. The Council has continued to participate in the Play Wales led Regional Play Sufficiency Assessment Network.

Consultation and participation

Given the wide engagement around play delivery this plan has been informed by ongoing participation and consultations, including the destination play area and the local places for nature funded projects in Monmouth. We have also drawn on previous

child questionnaires and the views of children and feedback from parents obtained at play sessions. These reinforced the messages regarding the barriers to greater play including opportunities for play, time for play (including competing demands on children's time) and attitudes to play (of parents and others).

Through our year 5 playmaker conferences which run annually, pre pandemic and due to commence again next academic year, a station is dedicated to pupil voice and insight. Part of this work captures information on physical activity and play with information then helping to shape our future PSA delivery plan and associated work. Our last data capture in 2019 saw 849 pupils take part in the consultation and focused on three key questions:

1. Do you feel you have enough time and opportunity to play where you live? 78% answered yes, 22% said no.
2. Do you use the playgrounds where you live? 77% answered yes, 23% said no.
3. Would you prefer to play in a playground or green space? 70% answered Green Space, 30% answered playground.

As we bring back previous provision in response to Covid we will be returning to the playmaker conference to capture comparative data during the summer term of the 22/23 academic year. Working closely with the Sport Development Team an annual 'hands up survey' is being planned to focus on key aspects such as physical activity levels, nutrition, play and active travel. This will provide annual baseline data and inform a data led approach for programme implementation with colleagues in education and the community.

During 2020 and 2021 100% of schools across Monmouthshire took part in our Active Travel Network Map Consultation, providing vital information on the proposed network to improve walking and cycling. Welsh Government praised the level of engagement seen from children and young people across Monmouthshire. Key issues such as traffic speeds and volumes of cars were seen as the main concerns to increased levels of Active Travel in their community by children and young people questioned. From the data provided, 80% of primary school children would like to actively travel more to school, 63% of secondary school pupils. The development of a more cohesive network of routes within our settlements will not only benefit active travel journeys but recreational access to play provision and community settings.

As we had previously identified the need to gather more local intelligence and children's views our intention had been to roll out the young people led research on play in the Bulwark and Thornwell neighbourhoods of Chepstow led by the local school cluster. This project produced rich information on play including views from children, parents, and the wider community. The toolkit to support extending this was completed but the impacts of the pandemic prevented its roll out. The intention remains to carry this out over the next play sufficiency assessment period.

A wide selection of officers from across the Council participated as a case study in the Play Wales sponsored research project "Making it possible to do Play Sufficiency: Exploring the conditions that support local authorities to secure sufficient opportunities for children in Wales to play" (Sept 2020) and the collaborative sessions and the report have helped inform this plan.

Maximising resources

The Council has not previously had a dedicated play budget, however as a result of the 2022/23 budget round a new Play Development Lead post has been funded to contribute to the strategic direction and delivery of play right across Monmouthshire.

This post based in MonLife's Youth, Community and Sport and Community Teams, will coordinate the statutory play duties and support the Play Strategy Group

Over the last three years the Council has directed play funding to work on the priorities identified in the 2019 Play Sufficiency Assessment and subsequent Action Plans.

Across service budgets there are revenue resources used by the Council to support children's access to play opportunities. As well as its coordination role MonLife services provide supervised play opportunities, promote recreational and sport involvement, and secure improvements to fixed and green space play provision. Play forms an important part of the Council's early years and pre-school provision and it is also an important element of the foundation phase once children enter the formal education structure. Children's Services use their budget to support families with children with disabilities to access suitable play provision. Neighbourhood Services manage green spaces and 110 fixed play areas across the county.

As noted below the impact of the pandemic has dramatically changed provision over the last two years and the additional Play Opportunity Grant and support via the hardship fund, Playworks, "Summer of Fun" and "Winter of Well-being" has enabled flexible and expanded play provision.

Taken together, despite the exceptional circumstances, these have allowed significant progress on the 2019 Play Sufficiency Action Plan, including delivery of the destination play area in Monmouth and a programme of improvement of fixed play facilities primarily supported by section 106 developer contributions, capital Play Opportunity Grant and in collaboration with other grant stream including the Local Places for Nature fund and Active Travel grant.

Progress on supervised provision includes targeted family engagement open access holiday provision spreading across Monmouthshire and a flexible response to support a wide range of activities under the "Summer of Fun" and "Winter of Well-being" programmes alongside expansion of the Food and Fun offer and a half term Holiday Playworks provision.

The Council and its partners will continue to prioritise available play budgets to concentrate on priorities identified as a result of ongoing consultation and demand from local communities.

As part of the 2022 PSA, the main areas reprioritised are

1. increasing provision to provide more access to play opportunities for disabled children and children & young people with other support needs.
2. providing accessible play opportunities on a year round basis rather than just in the school summer holidays.
3. developing open access play provision and participation opportunities in rural areas outside of the county's four main towns.

4. working in partnership with community groups and other partners such as town & community councils, schools, social landlords and other agencies.
5. developing a sustainable and flexible workforce that can deliver good quality play experiences alongside other programmes, and by providing CPD opportunities to those staff involved in direct delivery of play.
6. rationalise and improve the fixed play areas across the county to provide better levels of play value to local communities.

The Welsh Government programmes and funding provided through AWPOG, Holiday Playworks, Families First, Summer of Fun and the Winter of Well-being have been used locally to extend provision beyond the school summer holiday period, to work in partnership with more agencies, to increase provision for disabled and more vulnerable children and, in respect of capital funding, to improve and increase play value in a number of the Council's fixed play sites. Grant via the WLGA supports the Food and Fun scheme and the continuing contributions from Town and Community Councils support open access play provision.

More details on progress since 2019 and the Council's future plans are contained in the attached play policy statement and associated action plan.

The Play Sufficiency Assessment and local Well-being Plans

The Gwent Well-being Assessment 2022 identifies the links to authority's play sufficiency assessment and identifies key issues including securing and developing the play workforce, ensuring that play is integrated in all relevant policy and implementation agendas and measures to support equal access to play facilities.

The local Monmouthshire Well-being Assessment 2022 also identifies the importance of play to children's development; and cross references to the play sufficiency assessment.

Monitoring Play Sufficiency

Responsibility for play strategy and elements of play delivery rest with the Chief Operating Officer for MonLife. MonLife is a service group of the Council which delivers leisure, youth and outdoor education, green infrastructure and countryside access, play, learning, destination management, arts, museums and attractions.

The lead member for play is Councillor Sara Burch, Cabinet Member for Inclusive and Active Communities.

Following a period of abeyance during the pandemic, the Play Strategy Group has been re-established, now as a subgroup of the Children and Young People's Partnership. The Play Strategy Group currently comprises representatives of services right across the Council and will now be extended to include representation of external partners. The Play Development Lead will facilitate and support the Play Strategy Group including wider representation.

Insights from the Coronavirus

The impact of Coronavirus has required considerable flexibility in delivery over the last two years. In respect of supervised provision, it necessitated a rapid pivot from delivery via a partnership with Torfaen Play Services to direct delivery by MonLife to support activity hubs alongside Children Services disability hubs specifically for children with more complex needs

A flexible response across 2021 included supporting a wide range of activities under the “Summer of Fun” and “Winter of Well-being” programmes alongside expansion of the Food and Fun offer and a half term Holiday Playworks provision. The additional funding from Welsh Government and its continuation into 2022 is very welcome.

Despite the challenging period faced in response to the Covid 19 pandemic significant progress has been made across the play offer and foundations put in place for continued growth over the next three-year period. The impact of the pandemic on children and families has reinforced the importance of play to children’s physical and emotional health and well-being, in their personal development, and in enriching and supporting families.

Criteria

This section contains the “matters that need to be taken into account” as set out under section 10 of the Statutory Guidance.

The Criteria column: sets out the data that needs to be available and the extent to which Local Authorities meet the stated criteria.

The RAG status column: provides a drop down box, whereby the Local Authority can show its assessment of whether that criterion is fully met; partially met; or not met. These have been given Red, Amber Green markers, which appear as words in the drop down boxes. *(In the “RAG status column”, Double click on the word STATUS – this will bring up drop-down form fields options, use the arrow down key until the status required RED, AMBER or GREEN- is at the top then press ok)*

Red, Amber Green (RAG) status is a tool to communicate status quickly and effectively.

Criteria fully met.	Fully met
Criteria partially met.	Partially met
Criteria not met.	Not met

The 2022 column enables the local authority to indicate the direction of travel with the insertion of arrows.

The Evidence to support strengths column: should be used to provide the reason for the chosen criteria status and how the evidence is held.

The Shortfall column: should be used to explain the areas in which the Local Authority does not fully meet the criteria.

The Identified Action for Action Plan column: should be used to show the Local Authority action planning priorities for that Matter.

The Comments section: asks some specific questions for each matter that should enable you to give a clear overview of how the Local Authority complies with the intention and implementation of this matter as set out fully in the Statutory Guidance. It also provides the opportunity to identify challenges and how they might be overcome.

Matter A: Population

The Play Sufficiency Assessment should provide an overview of population and demographic data used locally to plan for play provision.

Information should also be included regarding:

- Ages of children
- First language Welsh speaking children
- Cultural factors (such as other language)
- Gypsy Traveller children - There are 9 gypsy traveller children attending Monmouthshire schools, 7 in primary schools and 2 in secondary schools
- Disabled children - As at April 2021, there were 1,069 children with minor and major disabilities or developmental delays in Monmouthshire primary schools and 929 children with either major or minor disability or developmental delay in the secondary schools

What has changed in terms of population and demographic trends since Play Sufficiency Assessment 2019?

Despite the fact that the population of Monmouthshire is on the increase, there is evidence to suggest that it is an aging population. In 2021 the population had increased to 95,134 and this is expected to increase still further reaching 97,089 by 2027. However, the percentage of children aged 0 – 17 is projected to decrease over the same period from 18.5% (17,586) of the total population to 17.9% (17,383).

Since the Play Sufficiency Assessment in 2019 there has been an increase of 105 children in Monmouthshire's schools with a major or minor disability, so the overall picture is one of a decreasing number of children to adults in the population as a whole, but an increasing proportion of children with disabilities.

How has/will the Local Authority use its population data to plan for sufficient play opportunities locally?

As the detailed 2021 Census data is made available, we will use that to inform the PSA action plan and if appropriate review our proposed actions.

Have there been challenges?

Lack of availability of detailed 2021 census data to paint a reliable up to date picture

How can these be overcome?

Utilise the data as it becomes available.

Comments

We will utilise local population data as it is updated. However, we recognise that this is only one component of better understanding the local demand for, and sufficiency of play opportunities in our towns and rural areas. As explained elsewhere we plan to supplement this information through further research and direct engagement with young people.




RAG Status for Matter A



Criteria partially met. 

Matter B: Providing for Diverse Needs

The Play Sufficiency Assessment should present data about how the Local Authority and partners aim to offer play opportunities that are inclusive and encourage all children to play and meet together.

RAG Status:

Criteria fully met.	
Criteria partially met.	
Criteria not met.	

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
B1	The play requirements of children living in isolated rural			Most supervised play provision takes place in the county's four main settlements. In most rural	There are still some gaps in fixed play provision and a 2019	Seek to gain a better understanding of the local demand for, and sufficiency of

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	areas are understood and provided for			communities children have access to fixed play areas and the majority of these are managed by the county council although some are the responsibility of town and community councils. With the use of the additional Summer of Fun funding made available in 2021 and 2022 we have been able to extend open access play provision in some rural communities.	independent assessment of 110 sites found that whilst these were safe and well maintained, most were deficient in terms of play value.	play opportunities for diverse needs groups Continue to adopt an integrated approach across the authority to ensure the needs of children with disabilities and/or families with diverse needs are better supported to access play opportunities. Undertake a specific research project around the accessibility and suitability of existing supervised play provision to assist in greater equality of provision.
B2 Page 289	The play requirements of Welsh language speaking children are understood and provided for			The commitment to providing opportunities to use the Welsh language in the community is a vital part of the council's 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy which aims to contribute towards the Welsh Govt vision of creating a million Welsh speakers by 2050. In 2022/23 there will be three Welsh language projects delivered in partnership with Menter Iaith BGTM for Welsh language speaking children, consisting of 5 sessions for 5-11 year olds, 5 shows for 12-18 year olds and a Welsh Language Youth Forum Gig in September 2022, primarily for the 19-25 years age group.	Previous bilingual play sessions held in 2019 were not well attended.	
B3	The play requirements of children from different cultural			There is some play provision at the Abergavenny Community Centre that includes a number of refugee families living in that area.	No specific provision exists to fulfil the play requirements of children	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	backgrounds are understood and provided for				from different cultural backgrounds.	
Page 290	B4 The play requirements and support needs of disabled children are understood and provided for.			<p>There is 1:2:1 support for disabled children to attend After School Clubs and Holiday Clubs. The Councils open access play model is inclusive through the employment of support workers to ensure access by children with disabilities & other support needs. Since 2019, the number of sessions specifically for children with disabilities (CWD) has increased and has been extended beyond the summer holidays to other school holiday periods, including Oct & Feb half terms. The council also works closely with the QB Project to provide additional family sessions for children with more complex needs..</p> <p>When improvements have been made to the Council's fixed play areas, the proportion of accessible items of equipment has increased both in overall terms and on a number of the individual sites that have been upgraded.</p>	<p>Although good progress has been made and stronger partnerships have been formed with the CWD Team in Social Services and with the QB (Quest Busters) project, there is still an imbalance in the amount of play opportunities for CWD as a proportion of overall play provision.</p> <p>In general, although we are moving in the right direction with our fixed play offer, there is still a considerable amount of work to do in terms of levelling up inclusive provision for children with disabilities</p>	
B5	Play projects and providers have access to a range of resources which support inclusion			Play projects run by the Council have access to resources that support inclusion. Inclusion packs have been loaned to voluntary groups for specific events.	Detailed information about the availability of resources is not widely shared with voluntary sector groups	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Page 7 291	B6			<p>The Council's policy and practice is to support inclusive provision wherever possible. In response to requests from families with diverse needs, the CWD Team has introduced disabled-only sessions commissioned through the council's single care provider, Action for Children (AfC). The aim of these sessions is to build confidence and resilience so that these children can transition into mainstream provision. In 2022 the target is to double the number of AfC sessions in the school summer holidays</p>	There are some disabled children whose families do not engage with Social Services	
				<p>Access audits for provision run by the council have been and are undertaken – evidenced documentation is available</p>	Information is not held about all projects provided by other agencies and/or the voluntary sector.	
	B8	Designated play space is provided and well maintained on gypsy traveller sites			<p>The adopted LDP Policy H8 is a criteria-based policy for the assessment of proposals for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople (G&T sites). This policy will be reviewed as part of the replacement Local Development Plan and the provision of designated play space will be considered as part of that process. Private G&T sites are equivalent of a private house and the council wouldn't provide</p>	Currently there are a few small private traveller sites located within the county that cater for one or two families in each location. There is no designated play space provided at these sites.

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				play facilities on this basis. If there was or is a council-operated site for multiple families, then appropriate play space would be provided.		
B9	The requirements of young carers are understood and provided for			Monmouthshire has a Carers Strategy and there is a young carers provision operating in the county delivered by Crossroads Care South East Wales. There is also regular contact between the Young Carers Group and the Youth Service	Young carers are often difficult to identify, in particular those living in isolated rural areas or those caring for a family member with substance misuse or mental health issues.	
B10	The requirements of lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) children are understood and provided for			The Youth Service (MYS) staff are trained in aspects of LGBT+ and they ensure that young people from this community have access to provision and support where required. There is an LGBT+ Group operating in four locations in each of the four main town centres, these operate as a mixed approach between support and social action. Following previous very successful events in 2018 and 2019 the groups are planning a further Youth Pride event and there are plans for another, larger event to promote equality and inclusivity in summer 2023, which will be organised as a coalition		

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				between MYS and young people from the LGBT+ community.		

Providing for Diverse Needs

How has data been used (or how will the data be used) to address the barriers that children with diverse needs face in accessing inclusive and accessible opportunities for playing?

We have an integrated approach across the authority to join up provision and ensure the needs of children with disabilities and/or families with diverse needs are better supported to access play opportunities, however we recognise that there are still gaps in our data as outlined above

Have there been challenges?

It is recognised that there is still progress required to achieve full equality of access across service delivery and a need to further investigate the barriers to access for specific user groups.

How can these be overcome?

Research with parents of children with disabilities or behavioural / specific needs around the accessibility and suitability of existing supervised play provision (both specific provision for children with disabilities and the wider integrated provision) is proposed to identify the barriers, and the required measures to overcome these, to assist in greater equality of provision.

Comments:

Progress includes inclusive provision at the open access playschemes for children with disabilities, specific provision for children with greater needs and working across the authority to further develop our wrap around provision and improving the accessibility of fixed play facilities. The research proposed is intended to assist in removing the barriers to access for specific user groups.

Matter C: Space available for children to play: Open Spaces and Outdoor unstaffed designated play spaces

The Local Authority should recognise that all open spaces within their area are potentially important areas where children can play or pass through to reach other play areas or places where they go.

RAG Status

Criteria fully met.	
Criteria partially met.	
Criteria not met.	

Open Spaces

OSA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
C1	The Local Authority has undertaken an Open Space Assessment (OSA) that maps areas that are used, or might be used for playing as listed in the Statutory Guidance			The Monmouthshire Open Spaces Study 2008 (OSS 2008) identifies standards of public recreation and open spaces, including fixed play, designated play space and casual play space. The information from that study is mapped.	The OSS 2008 did not map that part of the county where the Brecon Beacons National Park is the local planning authority, but these areas are covered by the Greenspace Study 2010	To improve fixed play provision and the opportunities for play within open spaces, prioritising increasing play value and inclusivity, and supporting and enabling community driven play proposals
C2	The Local Authority has undertaken an Accessible Greenspace Study that maps areas that are used for playing			The OSS 2008 also identified amenity greenspace and semi-natural green space within all of the county's main towns, urban areas & larger rural settlements. The Monmouthshire Greenspace Study 2010 extended the work of		

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				the OSS 2008 to provide a full survey of the adequacy of greenspace provision in the county following, as far as possible, the methodology developed by CCW. An analysis of greenspace provision within each settlement area is provided in the study, which includes areas used for informal play.		
C3	The Local Authority undertakes access audits at all open spaces and implements proposals to improve access and safety			Access audits have been undertaken at the majority of open spaces and improvements have been made at a number of sites, where resources have permitted, since 2019.	Audits do not extend to all sites that are in the ownership of, or managed by other bodies such as Town & Community Councils	
C4	The Local Authority has developed its own Open Space Standards in accordance with the advice and requirements of Planning Policy Wales			The council has adopted the Fields in Trust Six Acre Standard in relation to open spaces and has developed its own standard for the categorisation of fixed play areas in the county	The Council has not developed its own open spaces standard but we will seek to do this as part of the replacement LDP process	
C5	The Local Authority undertakes & actions play value assessments in public open space			In 2019 we commissioned an independent play value assessment of 110 play areas located on public open spaces across the county	The assessment found that although. The play areas were safe and well maintained, most offered very little in terms of play value	
C6	Brownfield sites owned by the Local Authority are assessed for the potential for the sites to be reclaimed to provide for				We do not assess brownfield sites for their play potential, however the number of such sites in council ownership is limited.	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	children's play					

Outdoor Unstaffed Designated Play Spaces

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Page 297	C7 The Local Authority keeps an up to date record of all designated play space as described in the Statutory Guidance			The council keeps an up to date record of all designated play spaces in its ownership and is aware of those that are not in its ownership. We also maintain a number of sites not in council ownership.	Some sites used as designated play spaces are in the ownership of other parties.	To improve fixed play provision and the opportunities for play within open spaces, prioritising increasing play value and inclusivity, and supporting and enabling community driven play proposals
	C8 The Local Authority assesses play spaces for play value and potential to increase in play use as set out in the Statutory Guidance			In 2019 the council carried out play value assessments of 110 fixed play areas in the county, using an independent assessor. The sites were scored as "good", "adequate" or "poor". Some sites have been upgraded since the date of the 2019 PSA and a further assessment will be undertaken in 2023 to update the assessment matrix.	A large proportion of sites were measured as "poor", although the results for some of the smaller sites were slightly skewed	
	C9 The Local Authority undertakes access audits at all designated play spaces and implements proposals to improve access and safety			Audits have been carried out at most but not all sites.		

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
C10	The Local Authority has developed and agreed a new fixed play provision standard			The council has agreed its own standard (neighbourhood and doorstep sites) in larger settlements and moved away from the traditional NEAP, LEAP and LAP categorisations	A separate standard needs to be developed for fixed play provision in the more rural parts of the county	
C11	The Local Authority undertakes and actions play space assessments in designated play spaces			Play space assessments have been assessed for usage and improvements have been made at some sites	All sites in Council ownership have been assessed.	
C12	The Local Authority has introduced smoke-free playgrounds The local authority complies with The Smoke-free Premises and Vehicles (Wales) Regulations 2020 that requires playgrounds in Wales to be smoke-free.			Smoke free signage, in the designated format, has been installed on all fixed play sites in council ownership. Guidance has also been given to those Town & Community Councils that manage their own playgrounds.		
C13	The Local Authority has removed 'no ball games' signs to encourage more children playing in the community			The council has removed the majority of "no ball games" signs but a small number still exist in some areas, usually in areas with a high concentration of social housing	A small number of such signs exist but these are mainly on sites not in council ownership	
C14	The Local Authority has erected signs, such as Play Priority Signs to encourage more children playing in the			The lack of priority given to children's play (through the presence of "no ball game" signs) has been identified by	No play priority or similar signs have been erected	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	community			children and older people in Chepstow.		
C15	The Local Authority includes a recognition of the importance of playing fields to children's play when any disposal decisions are made			The council recognises the importance of children's play where disposal decisions are made – this is also picked up in Future Generations Evaluations and Equality Impact Assessments		
C16	The Local Authority includes children and their families in any consultations regarding decisions to dispose of playing fields			There have been very few cases of the council disposing of playing fields. When this took place in Caldicot and Govilon, the views of families were sought as part of the consultation process.		
C17	The Local Authority refers to guidance around creating accessible play space when refurbishing or developing new playgrounds			The council does take into account guidance on accessibility when refurbishing or developing new playgrounds and increases the amount of accessible equipment when existing playgrounds are upgraded		

Open Spaces

How has the Local Authority ensured collaboration between Open Space Assessments / Green Infrastructure Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments to improve spaces for play?

The Council has a well-established collaborative approach based around applying its green infrastructure strategy, to ensure all relevant services are involved in decisions on proposed new areas of open space and improving connectivity and accessibility between existing play and open spaces, including integrating play need, nature recovery and active travel programmes.

Have there been challenges?

The play value assessment of existing fixed play indicated in many instances of low levels of play value. In response a programme of improvement and where appropriate rationalisation has been instigated, and the Council has reviewed the play standard it applies to new development. Despite success in integrating available grant schemes the challenges include securing the resources necessary to carry out a planned programme of improvement.

How can these be overcome?

Collaborative working is the main approach used to overcome these challenges and the use of off-site open space/recreation contributions obtained as part of Section 106 agreements relating to new developments (with the revised approach) are used to improve spaces for play and access to these areas. There are also a number of Friends and community groups in different settlements who work to raise funds from external resources to contribute towards improvements

Comments:

Both the Open Spaces Study (2008) and the Greenspace Study (2010) identified amenity and natural/semi-natural greenspace in the main settlements. The council has adopted a wider green infrastructure approach (as set out in the Green Infrastructure Strategy and the GI Supplementary Planning Guidance) and, in partnership with Fields in Trust, has designated 22 sites in the county that are protected in perpetuity for local communities to enjoy.

Outdoor unstaffed designated play spaces

How has the local authority considered all issues of accessibility in play space development?

Accessibility is a major factor when new developments in the county are being planned. The Council has recently amended its play standards to replace the Fields in Trust (classification in favour of a two-tier classification of Neighbourhood and Doorstep Play Areas) and that this is being used to rationalise the number of urban-based play areas in the four main towns; a pilot which includes repurposing some smaller play areas with low play value to alternative uses such as community food growing and wildlife nature areas that can include wild play areas is underway in Monmouth and is being extended to Chepstow in 22/23. The Council has also agreed to move towards the provision of play equipment constructed of more natural materials such as sustainable hardwoods, with a greater proportion of accessible equipment.

Have there been challenges?

The ageing stock of fixed play equipment in many urban settings that is functional but offers low play value.

How can these be overcome?

We are addressing these issues on an “area by area” basis by integrating available resources, the application of the new standards and by working with town & community councils and local Friends Groups to improve provision.




Comments

Our overall approach is to rationalise fixed play provision in the county to ensure that there is a balance between well-equipped and accessible neighbourhood play areas and doorstep play areas

Matter D: Supervised provision

The Local Authority should aim to offer a range of supervised play provision.

RAG Status

Criteria fully met.	
Criteria partially met.	
Criteria not met.	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

Playwork provision

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
D1	The Local Authority keeps an up to date record of all supervised playwork provision as described in the Statutory Guidance			Up to date records of supervised play settings are kept by the Family Information Service which provides the initial access portal to this information for families and their children	The information from different databases is not shared on a routine basis.	Continue to build on the community play framework for open access play provision
D2	The Local Authority offers playwork provision which offers a rich play environment as described in the Statutory Guidance			The council operates a range of inclusive play provisions which offer rich play environments for the children. There is evidenced feedback from children & families with high satisfaction ratings.		
D3	The Local Authority ensures that partners offering playwork provision are supported to offer rich play environments as described in the Statutory Guidance			The council works with playwork partners to support them in offering rich play environments as described in the Statutory Guidance,		
D4	Staffed playwork provision that the Local Authority provides meets the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards			The open access schemes that we operate are not required to be registered with the CIW but they do meet the regulatory requirements and the national minimum standards.		
D5	Staffed playwork provision that the Local Authority funds meets the regulatory			The open access playschemes are not required to be registered with the CIW but they do meet the regulatory requirements and the national minimum standards.		

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	requirements and National Minimum Standards					
D6	Staffed playwork provision that the Local Authority's partners provide meets the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards			The council works with Action for Children, with the Quest Busters programme and with other partners to deliver playwork provision that meets the regulatory requirements and the national minimum standards.		
D7	Staffed playwork provision across the Local Authority works to a recognised quality assurance programme			Staff across Sport and Learning are currently working through their level 2 in playwork to develop a more flexible and competent play offer.	Not currently working to a recognised quality assurance programme. The new Play Development Officer when she takes up her post will progress work in this area.	
D8	The Local Authority prioritises quality issues when engaging with/ commissioning the private sector to deliver recreational activities for children.			The council works with third sector partners to deliver activities for children and in those cases where it does (e.g., sports courses, etc.) quality issues are prioritised.		
D9	The Local Authority provides council premises and space free of charge to organisations which provide free (at the point of access) playwork provision for children			The council does not provide premises free of charge but it does provide outdoor space free of charge for play provision.		

Structured recreational activities for children

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
D10	Local authority sport, physical activity, and active recreation plans are contributing to increasing free play and recreational activities			<p>The council continues to work closely with communities, partners and schools to deliver opportunities identified through the Sport Wales School Sports Survey and other localised data sources.</p> <p>We continue to invest in young leadership programmes (such as the year 5 Playmaker programme, young ambassadors and secondary school leadership academies) and training to give young people the opportunity to create sustainable play, sport and physical activities. This has created an employment pathway from the age of 10 through to post 16 employment opportunities. We continue to work with our pre-school and after school providers to identify training and support to be able to offer physical literacy opportunities for young people.</p> <p>A closer alignment with Sports Development officers and those</p>	The implementation of the councils Leisure and Physical Activity Strategy will continue to identify areas for development and supported through our play delivery plans.	Continue to promote the importance of participation in play and active sports

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Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				officers responsible for play will ensure a coordinated offer, delivered through a competent and flexible workforce.		
D11	The sports agenda contributes to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children			<p>Through Dragon, multi skills and sport programmes we are focussing on the physical competency of children so that they can develop the appropriate skills at the appropriate stage of their physical development, which can then be transferred across to active sport.</p> <p>Partnership working with key statutory services, such as Early Years and Education, ensure these positive skills are embedded through enriching sport and play opportunities.</p> <p>Community sport provision is thriving and positive in response to Covid recovery. A wide range of localised opportunities are available to ensure barriers such as transport are reduced based on the rural nature of Monmouthshire.</p>		
D12	The cultural and arts agenda, is contributing to the provision			A playful places audit has been undertaken at the council's		

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Page 13 306	of sufficient recreational activities for children			<p>museums and heritage & cultural attractions to explore the physical infrastructure of the sites as well as the human and cultural conditions that support the development of play and playful opportunities for children and families.</p> <p>The staff at these sites have also received training around the nature and value of play and developing and supporting playful approaches and working with heritage sites and collections.</p>		
	The Local Authority Youth Service provides for children's opportunities for leisure and association			<p>Monmouthshire Youth Service (MYS) and its voluntary sector partners provide opportunities on a regular basis for young people aged 11 years+ to engage in leisure and recreational activities in youth drop in centres, more traditional youth club settings, village halls and outreach sessions.</p>		

Supervised play provision

Where the Local Authority has assessed settings as part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (CSAs), how have these settings been assessed in respect of the quality of play opportunities they provide and offer?

Monmouthshire Early Years organise a training programme each year to ensure that there are sufficient courses available that can be accessed by the childcare workforce. Early Years have previously funded the Transition to Playworks qualification for childcare practitioners working in play settings, to ensure settings were able to meet CIW regulations and would be happy to do so again if there was a need for it

How has provision that is not part of the CSA been assessed in respect of the quality of play opportunities they provide and offer?

The council reviewed and assessed its summer play provision in 2016 and subsequently moved to a model of free open access play, delivered by a commissioned provider. Since 2020 the Council has provided these services directly and the quality of these provisions is assessed mainly on the basis of feedback from parents, children and families. Specialist provision for children with disabilities continues to be provided on a commissioned basis and is reviewed against service standards.

Have there been challenges?

The main challenges are sustaining provision, attempting to match demand to capacity on each scheme and addressing equality of provision. Additionally, the rural nature of the county, making it difficult for children and families to access the opportunities in the four main settlements.

How can these be overcome?

Maximising the availability of grant and other contributions through partnership and integrated working. Extending provision either directly by the Council or by supporting community base provision beyond the main settlements where possible.

Comments:

Proposals are included in the action plan to develop to build on the open access community play model and supporting provision for children with disabilities, reviewing progress and considering future delivery options including supporting equality of access, widening community provision and provision beyond school holidays. The recent enhanced Welsh Government funding has demonstrated how new and extended provision can be provided to meet community needs, but it remains entirely dependent on future funding levels.

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Matter E: Charges for play provision

The Local Authority should consider which play opportunities involve a charge and the extent to which the Local Authority takes these charges into account in assessing for sufficient play opportunities for children living in low income families as set out in the Statutory Guidance.

RAG status

Criteria fully met.	
Criteria partially met.	
Criteria not met.	

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Page 308	E1			There are 10,629 households with dependent children in the county, of which there are 994 workless households and 2,057 lone parent households. Overall, 12.9% of dependent children in Monmouthshire live in low income families.		Enhance our information base, including building a fuller picture of existing provision. Develop the community play framework for free open access play provision
	E2			This information is held at ward and LSOA level and in the Census 2021 population and household estimates for Wales.		
	E3			This information is held at ward and LSOA level and in the Census 2021 population and household estimates for Wales		
	E4			There are 144 disabled children registered with the Children with Disabilities Team, including 54 children on the Disability Index.		

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	with particular needs.			There are (as at April 2021) 1,998 children in Monmouthshire's schools with a major or minor disability.		
E5	The Local Authority records the availability of no cost provision			The majority of the council's play opportunities are provided free of charge and the Family Information Service website contains details of these and on all other activities being run – whether or not there is a cost for participation.		
E6	The Local Authority records the provision of no cost / low cost premises used for play provision			Information on premises that can be used for play are available in the "Children's Entertainment" section of the FIS website.	The information is only updated annually and depends on providers submitting the relevant details.	
E7	The Local Authority records the provisions where grants or subsidies are available for play providers			Monmouthshire Early Years provides an out of school childcare grant for additional support at holiday clubs and after school clubs in the county.	There is a limited budget available for this and it is only available to children with additional needs. Also, the grant funds a 1:1 worker but does not subsidise the place for the child.	
E8	The Local Authority provides subsidised transport for children travelling to play opportunities			We provided free transport to some of the leisure centre-based playschemes in the past, but this does not form part of current provision, especially now that we are providing more free play sessions in rural communities	Subsidised or free transport to play opportunities in certain areas was trialled but this was discontinued due to lack of take up.	

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Charge for play provision

How is the Local Authority ensuring that children have access to no or low-cost provision?

The majority of play opportunities provided by the Council are free at the point of delivery.

There is a full day sports activity scheme for which there is a fee that is run at the Council's leisure centres known as the Monmouthshire Games (TMG) over the school summer holidays and other school holiday periods including the October and February half terms and over the Easter period. The scheme provides opportunities to participate in a wide range of recreational and sports activities, including a daily swim session. The council provides a number of free places for low income families at each holiday period and entry is gained by issuing a card to all participants in order to avoid any stigmatisation. Possession of the card also provides individuals with a full year's access to all free swimming sessions held at the centres. Greater promotion of free weekly opportunities, such as Welsh Government Funded Free Swimming, will be developed with an increased marketing presence and brand for Play that children, young people and families can relate to.

Have there been challenges?

The main challenges are sustaining the open access provision, attempting to match demand to capacity on each scheme and ensuring support for free places, where applicable is appropriately targeted. Additionally, the rural nature of the county, making it difficult for children and families to access the opportunities in the four main settlements.

How can these be overcome?

Maximising the availability of grant and other contributions through partnership and integrated working. Close working with partners including schools and social landlords to improve access and where applicable targeting of specific provision. Extending provision beyond the main settlements where possible.

Comments:

The availability of enhanced levels of Play Opportunity Grant have been very beneficial to extending access, however the short term nature of funding and the local of certainty over future grant levels still presents significant challenges to building effective and long term provision.

Matter F: Access to space/provision

The Local Authority should consider all the factors that contribute to children’s access to play or moving around their community.

RAG Status

Criteria fully met.	
Criteria partially met.	
Criteria not met.	

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Page 311	The Local Authority keeps an up to date record of the number of 20 mph zones/school safety zones in residential areas			The Welsh Govt policy is to reduce the speed limit on roads in all urban areas from 30mph to 20mph and Monmouthshire ran two of eight pilot projects in Wales in the Abergavenny and Severnside areas. All 20mph zones are mapped and are freely available for reference by members of the public.		Improve our information base and fully integrate these measures to better understand the local barriers to play for children and young people so we can increase access to play opportunities
F2	The Local Authority has an identified mechanism for assessing the impact of speed reduction and other road safety measures on the opportunity for children to play outside in their communities			The speed reduction plans referred to above and other road safety measures will be rolled out across the authority in 2023. Completed school travel plans that inform Safe Routes in Communities projects have monitoring requirements to assess the impact of such interventions.	Safe Routes in Communities and road safety schemes produce benefits & impacts much wider than allowing children to play, so it is difficult to attribute these benefits specifically to children’s play.	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Page 312	F3 The Local Authority has a plan(s) to reduce the negative effect of busy roads and junctions through the introduction of speed reduction measures and provision of safe crossing points/routes for pedestrians and cyclists			As above, with Safe Routes in Communities and general road safety schemes. The Integrated Network Maps set out the council's plans for improving active travel routes in and around key settlements. Also, there is a coordinated approach to proposed new residential developments in the county that consider the impact of existing and proposed roads and junctions and that give high priority to safe routes and crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists. The council has an extensive plan for rolling out 20mph zones across the county in line with the Senedd decision to make 20mph the new default urban speed limit.	Not all of the county is covered by these measures and some routes require the involvement of the Welsh Government (WG) and other agencies such as the South Wales Trunk Road Agency (SWTRA).	
F4	The Local Authority has a plan(s) to improve walking and cycle access to parks, outdoor play facilities and local leisure centres from residential areas			The Active Travel Network Maps set out the council's plans for improving active travel routes in & around key settlements over the next 15 years and there are a number of specific projects for improvement that we are working on with local groups, Sustrans and other partners. The council has also commissioned a cycling strategy for the county, funded from the Active Travel Fund.	A lot of the focus in the past for this work has been in relation to key generators of traffic such as schools, shops & employment sites but there is now a greater emphasis given to leisure based activities A closer alignment with some of our fixed play ambitions and creating better routes to access	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Page 313				In 2020 Active Travel was repurposed to sit within the MonLife portfolio and this has provided the opportunity for a more holistic, whole authority approach. Part of the recent Active Travel Network Map consultation saw 100% of schools take part, giving children and young people a voice. 67% of secondary school pupils and 80% of primary school pupils have indicated they would like to walk, cycle or scoot to school more often. A more connected network will support not only our education settings but access to recreational provision.	these via walking or cycling will play a key part in our future approach. Continued work with our internal GIS system will support this thinking and inform a data led approach for future funding applications & provision. Continue to engage in the pre planning process ensuring localised links and recreational activities are supported from the inception of developments	
	There is potential for the Local Authority to take further action to reduce traffic speed and improve road safety to promote play opportunities			Participation in the WG 20mph trial has allowed the council to take positive action to reduce road traffic speed and there is an extensive plan to roll this out on urban roads across the county. This is a particular priority when considering applications for new development.		
	F6 The Local Authority uses road safety grants and/or other funding to support delivery of cycling training for children to national standards			National Standards Cycle Training is offered to key schools in Monmouthshire. This involves on road and off road training with years 5 and 6 to give them the tools and understanding to cycle safely and confidently.		

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
F7	The Local Authority uses road safety grants and/or other funding to provide pedestrian safety training for children			<p>A six week child pedestrian training programme is offered to all schools in the county to enhance the knowledge and understanding of children in years 1 and 2 around being safe at the roadside and how to cross safely. Active travel workshops are offered to the foundation phase within schools in Monmouthshire. These include “scoot2school” that teaches children how to share footways, whilst underpinning key road safety messages. “Cool kids wear lids” teaches children the importance of wearing a helmet when using bikes, scooters and skateboards, etc. School transition training is offered to year 6 pupils and is an interactive workshop, highlighting the key road safety issues to this age group, as well as discussions around active travel and their new comprehensive school.</p>		
F8	The Local Authority has an accessible and well-known way of arranging temporary road closures, to support more children to play outside their homes			<p>There are well-defined procedures for Street Closures that are well known and used in some local communities. The Council also provides street closure training in local areas to encourage more take up of Street Play opportunities</p>		
F9	The Local Authority refers to <i>Manual for Streets</i> when			All new developments are considered under the Manual for		

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	considering new developments and changes to the highway network/urban realm			Streets and with reference to regional parking standards and guidelines. Some highways within the county are the responsibility of the South Wales Trunk Road Agency (SWTA), which tends to refer to the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and more detailed standards.		
IP10 Page 315	The Local Authority works to nationally recognised good practice guidelines when developing walking and cycling facilities			All new developments are considered under the Manual for Streets, Active Travel Design Guidance, adopted MCC LDP guidelines, Sustrans Greenway and all in line with the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013. Some highways within the county are the responsibility of the South Wales Trunk Road Agency (SWTRA), which tends to refer to the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and more detailed standards. A structured Active Travel Governance Board, Project Manager and Project Sponsor approach has been embedded over the last two year period – resulting in significant progress	Continue to engage with children and young people on all schemes, where relevant, to ensure they have a voice in Active Travel Scheme development.	

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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				<p>across all aspects of Active Travel.</p> <p>15 schools have benefited from increased cycling infrastructure, based on a data led approach through the ATNM Consultation, to support increased levels of cycling to school.</p>		
F11 Page 316	The Local Authority uses child pedestrian road accident casualty data to inform the location and design of interventions which help children get around independently in their communities			Accident data looks at all age groups and road user types. The council works jointly with Gwent Police and neighbouring councils to identify and to look to address known accident sites.		
F12	The Local Authority considers children's needs to access play opportunities when making decisions about public transport planning and expenditure			Safe Routes in Communities Scheme and Active Travel	Some decisions on public transport planning & expenditure are made at regional level and prioritisation methodology focuses on spatial benefits around economic and social issues and less towards play & leisure activities.	
F13	The requirements of disabled children are understood and provided for within traffic and			The council runs DDA compliant buses on school and inter school transport and provides public service vehicles and community transport through its Grass	All buses on service routes are DDA compliant, however capacity is not high for	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Page 317	transport initiatives			<p>Routes scheme – these vehicles are also offered to community groups on a private hire basis. Public service vehicles also provide DDA compliant vehicles on most routes. All bus stops in the county have DDA compliant boarding platforms. Some buses also have audio announcements and escorts are provided on SEN contracts to education establishments.</p> <p>We have safe routes in the community schemes that encourage walking and cycling for all and most paths are constructed to include compliance with DDA standards, including road crossings.</p>	<p>wheelchairs on public service vehicles.</p> <p>Some rural areas have poor accessibility and may not be suitable for accessible transport.</p>	

Information, publicity and events:

For children and families to take part in play opportunities, recreational activities and events it is necessary for them to know what is available in their area.

F14	The Local Authority has a clearly identified section on its website which gives information about play opportunities as described in the Statutory Guidance (play			Information about play opportunities is included on the MCC website, the FIS website, the Visit Monmouthshire website and the MonLife website – this provides comprehensive information on play provision, clubs and participation opportunities but does not include	No single “One Stop Shop” website for families to access the full range of information about play opportunities in the county – although the FIS website is particularly popular with	Enhanced information, publicity and events
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Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

	areas, play provision, clubs and their accessibility)			information on fixed play sites or open spaces.	local families that have young children.	
F15	The Local Authority provides information on access to play opportunities and contact for support if required			This information is available on a "service by service" basis, and joint publicity is produced for the summer holiday period. The MonLife website provides guidance and information about play activities organised by the play unit		
F16	The Local Authority supports and publicises events which encourage play opportunities and events for children and families			Events are publicised and supported by the FIS, which produces termly flyers advertising play opportunities and events for families. They also advertise specific events on the FIS website and through social media throughout the year.		
F17	The Local Authority publicises information which contributes to positive community attitudes to play			The council has supported and helped publicise information about workshops and activities delivered by other parties such as the housing associations, the Gwent Wildlife Trust and Groundwork Wales which all contribute to positive community attitudes towards play.	This work is done on an ad hoc basis and there is currently no systematic process for publishing or promoting the information.	
F18	The Local Authority publicises information and support for parents to help them encourage their children to play			Information about the importance of play is included in the Parenting Tips section of the FIS website.	The information available and its promotion is limited, although there are opportunities to do this as part of the organised activities held during the school holiday periods.	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

F19	The Local Authority widely uses on-site signposting to safeguard and promote play			There is some on-site signposting at the five skateparks in the county to promote safe play.	There is no consistent or regular process or programme for onsite signposting to promote play	
F20	The Local Authority engages with the media to encourage the positive portrayal of children playing in the local area			The council has an effective engagement with the media, and we promote positive portrayals as and when there is an opportunity to do so.	This work is not done on a regular basis as a part of a planned process.	

Access to space/provision

How has the Local Authority ensured collaboration to ensure children can move around their communities to increase access to opportunities for playing?

We have a collaborative approach to delivering improved safety and new opportunities for active travel (walking and cycling), general road safety measures and the provision of training and the assessment of proposals for new development. During 2020 and 2021 100% of schools across Monmouthshire took part in our Active Travel Network Map Consultation, providing vital information on the proposed network to improve walking and cycling. Welsh Government praised the level of engagement seen from children and young people across Monmouthshire. Key issues such as traffic speeds and volumes of cars were the main concerns to increased levels of Active Travel in their community by children and young people questioned. The development of a more cohesive network of routes within our settlements will not only benefit active travel journeys but recreational access to play provision and community settings.

Have there been challenges?

There remains a need to improve our information base to fully integrate these measures and to better understand the local barriers to children and young people to improve access to play opportunities.

How can these be overcome?

We intend to roll out the young people led research on play in the Bulwark and Thornwell neighbourhoods of Chepstow facilitated by the local school cluster. The tool kit to support extending this was completed but the impacts of the pandemic prevented its roll out. The intention remains to carry this out over the next play sufficiency assessment period. This will give us a rich and valuable source of information about how children access play opportunities and how they move around their communities to access spaces to play.

Comments

We will continue with our collaborative approach to delivering improved access and safety and to developing active travel solutions and seek Welsh Government funding for their implementation.

Information, publicity, events

How has the Local Authority positively used information to support access to play provision?

The FIS and MonLife websites contain information on how to access play opportunities in local communities and there is also information available on social media platforms. This is supplemented in the lead up to holiday periods by information provided through schools and general information at various outlets such as leisure centres, libraries & museums, and community hubs.

Have there been challenges?

The ongoing challenge is the timely supply of information on events and play opportunities and there is no information currently available about play areas in local communities

How can these be overcome?

The action plan includes proposals to enhance the promotion via the Family Information Service and the MonLife holiday activities websites.

Comments:

We will work with partners to seek to enhance information to support access to play provision over the next Play Sufficiency Assessment period.

Matter G: Securing and developing the play workforce

The Local Authority should provide information on the organisational structure of the policy area which manages the play agenda and the play workforce.

RAG status

Criteria fully met.	
Criteria partially met.	
Criteria not met.	

Page 33

Note – These criteria are specifically about Playwork: Playwork is a highly skilled profession that enriches and enhances play. It takes place where adults support children’s play but it is not driven by prescribed education or care outcomes. This includes both open access and out of school childcare settings.

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
G1	The Local Authority keeps up to date information regarding the playwork workforce across the Local Authority (this should include the number of playworkers, playwork management structure, qualification levels,			The council keeps up to date information regarding the Early Years and After School play workforce and this is updated as part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. As of 2022 there is a more defined play management structure within the authority,		Develop a flexible and specialist workforce to support our future play ambitions. Enhance our information base, including building a fuller picture of existing provision and the play workforce

Page 322	training opportunities and volunteers)			with responsibility for play policy and supervised play delivery now residing within MonLife where it sits within a suite of services including sport, sports development, youth provision, outdoor education and active travel. A Level 5 qualified Play Development Lead has been appointed and will take up her new role in Sept 2022 and the sports development and heritage & museums staff have undertaken Level 2 training.		
	The Local Authority supports all of the workforce to achieve the qualification level required by the Welsh Government's National Minimum Standards			The Youth Service (MYS) provides core and mandatory training for all the provisions with which it is involved. This includes clubs that are run by paid workers and by volunteers.		
	G3 The Local Authority has a staff development budget ring fenced for play, including playwork				There is currently no ring-fenced staff development budget for play.	
	G4 There is a comprehensive range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities available for playworkers in the area			The council promotes CPD to play workers, also providing underpinning knowledge courses – for example food hygiene, child protection and health & safety.	The provision, whilst valuable, does not cover all play workers in the area and it cannot be classed as comprehensive.	
	G5 Training is available for volunteers and parents to			The council has organised a number of training courses for volunteers and parents to	There is no comprehensive	

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	develop their knowledge on skills in playwork			deliver Street Play sessions in different parts of the county.	training provision in place	
G6	The Local Authority includes playwork within its Workforce Development strategies				This is not the case at the moment.	
G7	The Local Authority supports partners to deliver appropriate training to community groups, parents and volunteers			The open access play provisions in the summer deliver appropriate training to volunteers.	This provision, whilst valuable, only covers a proportion of the volunteer workforce.	

Note – these criteria are about the Play workforce: This encompasses anyone employed whose role has an impact on children playing – those who may either directly facilitate their play, design for playing, or those with the power to give permission for children to play, or not.

Page 323					The council has not undertaken such an analysis.	
	G8	The Local Authority has undertaken a comprehensive training needs analysis for the play workforce as defined in the toolkit glossary and above				
	G9	The Local Authority takes action to expand the variety of learning and development opportunities that are offered to staff			Training needs are assessed and learning opportunities are offered to staff engaged in play delivery	
	G10	There is a comprehensive range of CPD opportunities for a range of professionals who work with children			The council promotes CPD to staff that work with children, as well as providing underpinning knowledge courses, e.g. food hygiene,	This provision, whilst valuable, does not cover all play workers and cannot be classed as comprehensive.

				health & safety, safeguarding, child protection.		
G11	Training awareness sessions are available for professionals and decision makers whose work impacts on children's opportunities to play			Limited awareness raising on the importance of play and the need to provide for improved play opportunities has been provided. The review of the summer play provisions and the review of the PSA provides an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of children's play with the council's cabinet and select committees and with town and community councils.		

Pages 8, 24

Securing and developing the play workforce

How has the Local Authority met the requirement to undertake or secure the managerial and delivery functions necessary to achieve sufficient play opportunities?

The Council has identified a lead service, MonLife and has implemented arrangements to coordinate delivery via the Play Strategy Group as a subgroup of the Children and Young People's Partnership. The Council has created a new Play Development Lead post which will contribute to the strategic direction and delivery of play right across Monmouthshire

How has the Local Authority ensured it understands and provides for the workforce development needs of the play workforce (as defined in Wales: A Play Friendly Country and above)?

As the Council has now pivoted to direct provision of supervised play opportunities it has reviewed the experience from the first year of operation and identified workforce development needs as part of that process. External audits on how to develop play opportunities within our cultural and heritage services has also made recommendations.

Have there been challenges?

We recognise that our understanding of the wider play workforce and training needs, as also identified in the Childcare assessment, is not comprehensive and we have identified actions to address this shortfall.

How can these be overcome?

Playworks training is being provided for appropriate staff and the appointment of a Play Development Lead will support further progress on workforce development for staff and volunteers.




Comments



The development of a flexible and specialist workforce will play a pivotal role in our future play ambitions. Staff and volunteers who are able to move confidently between programmes across our wider youth offer will ensure that a coherent programme of delivery is put in place ranging from open access mainstream opportunities through to targeted direct interventions.

Matter H: Community engagement and participation.

The Local Authority should consult widely with children, their families and other stakeholders on their views on play provision. It should also promote wide community engagement in providing play friendly communities.

RAG Status

Criteria fully met.	
Criteria partially met.	
Criteria not met.	

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
H1	The Local Authority promotes initiatives to engage relevant groups in enhancing play			Feedback is routinely obtained from parents and children at every supervised play session run by the council and those	Whilst these represent innovative & useful ways of involving children, young people	Develop the community play framework for open access play provision

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Page 326	opportunities for children in its area.			<p>commissioned through external agencies such as Action for Children and some of the activity providers we use to deliver active play and recreation sessions.</p> <p>When improvements are planned to fixed play sites we engage with local children and families about the revised layout. equipment schedule and border treatments. We also consult on the items of accessible equipment to be included in the revised provision.</p> <p>The council also engages regularly with a number of Friend Groups across the county, set up to promote improvements to green open spaces and outdoor fixed play sites.</p> <p>Continue to support Playing Out (encouraging street play in communities) with interested parties, supporting and enabling wider community action,</p>	and local groups in enhancing play opportunities in their respective local communities, there is a need for a coordinated approach across all parts of the county to ensure equality of access and provision.	Support and enable wider community action to enhance play opportunities
	H2	<p>The Local Authority promotes community engagement in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - making space available and suitable for play - organising play events - positive attitudes towards children and play 			<p>There is a strong emphasis via the planning process on making space available and suitable for play and for the provision of play and recreational opportunities for children and young people. This helps to create positive attitudes towards children's play.</p>	<p>There is some community engagement in these processes, but this does not necessarily take place at an early enough stage.</p>

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	- training on the importance of play.				There is a lack of training on the importance of play at most levels.	

Community engagement and participation.

How has the Local Authority effectively used existing mechanisms for children’s participation and family consultation processes with regards to play?

Given the wide engagement around play delivery this plan has been informed by ongoing participation and consultations, including the destination play area and the local places for nature funded projects in Monmouth. We have also drawn on previous child questionnaires and the views of children and feedback from parents obtained at play sessions. We have also utilised the “playmakers” school conferences and Active Travel consultations to extract information relating to play opportunities.

Have there been challenges?

The proposed roll out of the “Young People’s Voices in Play Toolkit” to obtain young people’s views on local play issues and opportunities was delayed due to the impacts of the pandemic but is still our intention.

How can these be overcome?

We intend to rollout the Young People’s Voices in Play Toolkit to other schools and communities in Monmouthshire to gain more local intelligence. We also intend to recommence the playmaker conference to capture comparative data during the summer term of the 22/23 academic year. We intend to undertake focussed research to identify the barriers, and the required measures to overcome these, to assist in greater equality of provision (see Providing for Diverse Needs).




Comments

We will continue to gain direct feedback from users of the play schemes and use our engagement in the wider youth and family offers to gain additional input.

Matter I: Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas

The Local Authority should examine all its policy agendas for their potential impact on children’s opportunities to play and embed targets and action to enhance children’s play opportunities within all such policies and strategies.

RAG Status

Criteria fully met.	
Criteria partially met.	
Criteria not met.	

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
1Page 329	There is a named person on the Local Public Service Board who champions children’s play and ensures that the Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan contribute to and are incorporated within the Well-being Plan			<p>The Well-Being Plan includes action to ensure children and young people have access to flexible and appropriate play opportunities.</p> <p>The plan, which remains in place until March 2023, also has a set objective which is; ‘Providing children & young people with the best possible start in life’.</p>	<p>We have moved to a Gwent PSB model and as such there are now five local subgroups of the PSB for Gwent. In Monmouthshire our PSB Programme Board is the strategic sub-group for the county and is in the process of re-establishing a Children & Young Peoples Strategic Partnership, which is chaired by the Director of Education. This partnership will have the governance and oversight of play in Monmouthshire, on behalf of Gwent PSB</p>	<p>Identify better links and integration with other programmes and partnerships through the Play Strategy Group</p>

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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
12	The Well-Being Plan recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of rich play opportunities			During the consultation phase of the current Well-Being Plan there was significant public feedback on the need for children and young people to use the outdoors for play and recreation. This helped to contribute to the establishment of “Providing children and young people with the best possible start in life” as one of the Council’s four main well-being objectives in its current Well-Being Plan	<p>There is no specific reference contained in the Plan to the provision of rich play opportunities. The overall aim of the current wellbeing plan is to Build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current & future generations.</p> <p>The establishment of a children & young strategic people’s partnership (CYPSP) for the county recognises the need to have a clear governance and accountability framework that oversees the quality of delivery of services, support, intervention, and activity for all children & young people across Monmouthshire. Play and the PSA will form part of the board’s remit and will ensure there is a solid focus on play opportunities and equity of play for all</p>	

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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
					children across the county.	

Education and schools

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Page 331	13			Schools' outdoor areas, especially those built as part of the primary review, offer excellent environments with rich and varied provision for children's play		
				All schools provide access to play during breaks and lunchtimes, using a range of equipment and playground markings.		
	15			A number of schools and school grounds are used during school holidays for supervised play sessions and some schools do allow access to their grounds for playing out of school times. The four secondary sites are dual use, so these enjoy extensive use outside of school hours.	The use of primary school grounds for playing out of school times is not widespread. This lack of access was identified as an issue by children & young people in the pupil-led research in Bulwark & Thornwell.	
	16			Schools do encourage children to walk and cycle to school and they also participate in the annual "Walk to School" week.	This is not a practical option with some of the more rural schools in the county.	
	17	The Local Authority offers			The council's Food and Fitness Policy is currently under review	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	guidance to ensure schools understand and ensure that regular outdoor play is not curtailed			and a new policy will be issued to schools in the autumn term 2022. This will include appropriate guidance for schools on the importance of outdoor play.		

Town and Country Planning

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
Page 332	The Local Development Plan recognises and addresses the outdoor play needs of children of various age groups and abilities			<p>The adopted LDP contains a policy requiring the provision of open space and play provision in accordance with the Council's adopted standards. The replacement LDP when adopted will contain a similar policy approach.</p> <p>The adopted Green Infrastructure (GI) <i>Supplementary Planning Guidance</i> (SPG) recognises the need to increase both formal and informal play opportunities as a distinct benefit and a key design consideration.</p> <p>Over the last four years we have developed a more coordinated approach in responding to pre-application enquiries and to submitted planning applications. This encapsulates comments</p>		

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				relating to green infrastructure, ecology & biodiversity, play & recreation, trees, landscape & street services.		

Traffic and Transport

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
19	The local Transport Plan recognises the importance of local streets, roads and walking and cycling route in offering play opportunities for children of different ages and abilities			The council's Local Development Plan (LTP) includes Active Travel Networks in seven designated settlements, all of which consider the implications of the play sufficiency assessment & play action plans. In operational terms the importance of local streets, roads and walking & cycling routes are recognised for their importance in facilitating play opportunities.		
110	The local Transport Plan identifies ways of assessing and addressing the needs of all groups including those which are often marginalised.			The council's LTP was assessed against equality impact. Active Travel Network Plans have been designed and developed in accordance with relevant guidance, including Equality Impact Assessments.		

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Early Years Plans

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
I11	Early Years and Flying Start plans and services recognise the importance of play and contribute to the provision of rich play opportunities for younger children			The council's Early Years Policy deals mainly with early education and promotes the importance of play as an important educational tool. The fundamental principle of the Foundation Phase Framework is that learning should be active/play based and should take place both indoors and outdoors. The council's service specification agreement with approved early education providers states that all children must have access to a stimulating, safe & secure outdoor learning environment during every session.		

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Family policy and initiatives

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
I12	Family support initiatives provide up to date information and support for parents to enable them to support their			There is a concentration of family support initiatives based in the former Families First (FF) area in Abergavenny and in other areas to stress the importance of play & to encourage children's play.		

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	children to play					
113	The local implementation of the Families First programme recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of rich play opportunities			There is no FF area in the county, but the importance of play and providing rich play opportunities is recognised in all areas of the county identified as socially deprived (including the former North Abergavenny FF area).		
114	Plans to reduce the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of rich play opportunities			The council has identified play as an important contributor to promote positive childhood experiences and to make provision for children in socially deprived areas to have better access to rich play opportunities		

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Inter-generational policy and initiatives

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
115	There are a range of play based approaches to inter-generational activity			Family Learning activities within the county include a range of intergenerational activities. During the early part of the Covid pandemic play packs were produced by the Learning Manager and delivered to children of primary school age,		

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
				using local Covid volunteer groups in each area.		
116	There is a creative approach to inter-generational activity which encourages better interaction between children of different ages			Family Learning programmes include activities for children of different ages. Groundwork Wales has also engaged with parents, family members and community groups.		

Health and Safety

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LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
117	The Health and Safety policies explicitly recognise the value of children being able to experience risk and challenge			This is not recognised in the main health and safety policy but is covered in the Trips and Visits policy under “hazardous pursuits” and “adventurous activities”.		
118	The Health and Safety policies and procedures incorporate the risk-benefit approach to health and safety assessments as recommended by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)			The council works & operates in line with the All Wales Guidance for Educational Visits - a safety guide for learning outside the classroom, which embraces the HSE principles of sensible risk management.		
119	The Local Authority offers the provision of insurance through the Local Authority scheme to				The council does not offer the provision of insurance through its own scheme and can	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

LA Ref No	Criteria	RAG Status 2019	RAG Status 2022	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	Identified actions for Action Plan
	all third sector play providers and community councils				see difficulties in doing so, particularly the transfer of legal liabilities.	

Play within relevant policy and implementation agendas

Please use this section to highlight successes of collaboration across policy areas to improve play opportunities.

As noted under Matter C the Council has a well-established collaborative approach based around applying its green infrastructure strategy, to ensure all relevant services are involved in decisions on proposed new areas of open space and improving connectivity and accessibility between existing play and open spaces, including integrating play need, nature recovery and active travel programmes and this is delivering new benefits.

We have an integrated approach across the authority to join up provision and ensure the needs of children with disabilities and/or families with diverse needs are better supported to access play opportunities.

In rolling out the “Young People’s Voices in Play Toolkit” the intent is to reproduce the successful collaborative process both in carrying out the study, and looking at how to address the identified issues, between the Council, the schools involved and the relevant town or community council.

The successful delivery of the open access community model to date has involved collaboration between the council, town and community councils and the voluntary sector, delivering high quality play opportunities, and valuable employment, volunteering and training opportunities for young people.

Have there been challenges?

The challenges have been the lack of a dedicated play officer and therefore limits on the resource available to coordinate and encourage integration and obtaining, and sustaining, sufficient funding for specific initiatives.

How can these be overcome?

The appointment of a dedicated Play Development Lead will help considerably along with the continuation, and expansion, of the Play Strategy Group

Comments:

Longer term and more strategic planning would be supported by a longer-term commitment to AWPOG funding.

Conclusion and the Way Forward

The Council's key priorities and the way forward are identified in the attached play policy statement and associated action plan.

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Signed:

Date:



Actions to be taken to address the issues / shortcomings recorded in the Play Sufficiency Assessment

Proposed actions for the period of 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023

Matter	Priorities	Targets	Links to other Matters	Resources, including costs	Funding source (new or existing funding streams)
Page 339 Statutory Guidance-policy framework	Maintain and review the Play Action Plan	Keep the Play Action Plan under review with reports to Select Committee / Cabinet as necessary Maintain the play strategy group as a subgroup of the Children and Young People’s Partnership with a focus on the implementation of the play action plan.	All matters	Core MCC / partners	Core MCC
Matter A: Population	Using available data to contribute to a better understanding of the demand for, and sufficiency of play opportunities	Maintain progress, including working across services, with schools, town and community councils; sharing existing data, building a fuller picture of existing provision and the play workforce. Utilise the 2021 census data when available to inform future plans and programmes Create a pupil engagement survey to capture data and information on existing play	All matters	Core MCC / partners	Core MCC / partners

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

		baseline data to support future implementation'			
Page 340	Matter B: Providing for diverse needs	Seek to gain a better understanding of the local demand for, and sufficiency of play opportunities for diverse needs groups	<p>Continue to adopt a more integrated approach across the authority to join up provision and ensure the needs of children with disabilities and/or families with diverse needs are better supported to access play opportunities.</p> <p>Undertake a specific research project, including parents of children with disabilities or behavioural / specific needs, around the accessibility and suitability of existing supervised play provision (both specific provision for children with disabilities and the wider integrated provision) to identify the barriers, and the required measures to overcome these, to assist in greater equality of provision.</p> <p>Continue to work with the LGBTQ+ community in Monmouthshire to ensure that young people feel supported and confident and that they have a genuine opportunity to influence the way that the council supports young people with issues and concerns with their sexual orientation or gender reassignment</p>	Core MCC	Core MCC
				Core MCC	Core MCC

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

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<p>Matter C: Space available for children to play</p>	<p>To improve fixed play provision and the opportunities for play within open spaces, prioritising increasing play value and inclusivity, and supporting and enabling community driven play proposals</p>	<p>Complete the pilot fixed play / local places for nature scheme in Monmouth and implement its roll out to Chepstow.</p> <p>Review progress and undertake preliminary work to support the extension of this approach to other communities</p> <p>Continue to incorporate play assessments and seek developer contributions based on the revised approach agreed by Cabinet in January 2021 into Green Infrastructure comments on planning applications. Closer alignment to Active Travel routes to provide better access to play provision and creating a more connected environment.</p> <p>Deliver the currently funded fixed play capital investments and seek funding for further improvement schemes</p> <p>Supporting and enabling community driven play proposals, including the play area renewal project at Castle Dell, Chepstow</p> <p>Continue to support Playing Out (encouraging street play in communities) with interested parties; supporting and enabling wider community action.</p>	<p>Matter F</p>	<p>£87,000</p> <p>Core MCC</p> <p>£390,000</p> <p>£25,000 MCC</p> <p>Core MCC</p>	<p>WCVA Local Places for Nature Preparatory Grant</p> <p>Core MCC</p> <p>MCC/Section 106 Funding</p> <p>Core MCC & lottery bid /other funding</p> <p>Core MCC</p>
<p>Matter D: Supervised provision</p>	<p>Continue to build on the community play framework</p>	<p>Direct delivery of the “Summer of Fun” including open access playscheme / Food and Fun in Summer 2022 and Holiday</p>		<p>Core MCC</p>	<p>Core MCC Partnership and external grant</p>

	for open access play provision	<p>Playworks provision over the school October half term period</p> <p>Explore grant funding opportunities to grow reach and level of provision provided across Monmouthshire, both in term time and holiday periods.</p> <p>Continue to promote the importance of participation in play and active sports and continue to develop young people as sports ambassadors through schools and local voluntary clubs (Including links to the Monmouthshire Games, Playmakers and Positive Futures programmes and the wider youth offer)</p> <p>Deliver supervised play opportunities for primary aged children over the other school holidays (Subject to prevailing Covid restrictions)</p>			<p>bids for 21/22: Town & Community Councils, Families First, SHEP (WLGA) etc.</p> <p>Welsh Govt Holiday Playworks funding</p>
Matter E: Charges for play provision	<p>Enhance our information base, including building a fuller picture of existing provision.</p> <p>Develop the community play framework for free open access play provision</p>	<p>As Matter A above</p> <p>As Matter D above</p>	Matter A & D	Core MCC	Core MCC
Matter F: Access to space/provision	Improve our information base and fully integrate	Continue to engage with children, young people and parents to better identify the	Matter C	Core MCC	Core MCC

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

	<p>these measures to better understand the local barriers to play for children and young people so we can increase access to play opportunities</p> <p>Enhanced information, publicity and events</p>	<p>limiting factors & barriers to accessing play opportunities,</p> <p>Coordinating with promotion of the wider youth offer, the Family Information Service and the MonLife holiday Activities Website</p>			
<p>Matter G: Securing and developing the workforce</p> <p>Page 343</p>	<p>Develop a flexible and specialist workforce to support our future play ambitions.</p> <p>Enhance our information base, including building a fuller picture of existing provision and the play workforce</p>	<p>Support Playworks training at appropriate levels and explore existing leadership and pathway into employment programmes to provide the specialist knowledge, skills and training required.</p> <p>To form part of the approach to Matter A above</p>	Matter A & D	Core MCC	Core MCC
Matter H: Community engagement and participation	<p>Develop the community play framework for open access play provision</p> <p>Support and enable wider community action to enhance play opportunities</p>	<p>As Matter D above</p> <p>As Matter C above. Supporting and enabling community driven play proposals, including at The Dell, Chepstow</p> <p>Continue to support Playing Out (encouraging street play in communities) with interested communities; support and enable wider community action to enhance play.</p>	Matters C & D	Core MCC	Core MCC

Play Sufficiency Assessment Template

Matter I: Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas	Identify better links and integration with other programmes and partnerships through the Play Strategy Group	Extend participation in the play strategy group supported by the appointment of the Play Development Lead	Matter A	Core MCC	Core MCC
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<p>Name of the Officer Matthew Lewis Phone no: 01633 644850 E-mail: matthewlewis@monmouthshire.gov.uk Mike Moran Phone no: 07894 573834 E-mail: mikemoran@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <p>Play Sufficiency Assessment 2022 and Action Plan</p> <p>To approve the Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan as submitted in draft to Welsh Government by the statutory deadline of 30 June 2022.</p>
<p>Name of Service area: MonLife</p>	<p>Date 5 July 2022</p>

Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	The target ages for play opportunities are children up to the age of 18, but principally to children in the 0-12 age range and for staffed play provision aged 5 to 12. Some of the Summer of Fun and Winter of Well-Being funding has allowed us to target young people up to age 25	None	Close integration between the play, sports development, youth and community agendas

Age 345

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Disability	The PSA and action plan addresses inclusivity and meeting specific needs including open access play which provides inclusive play opportunities and the range of accessible fixed play equipment available.	None	<p>Actions identified to sustain and enhance inclusivity</p> <p>Proposed research with parents of children with disabilities or behavioural / specific needs around the accessibility and suitability of existing supervised play provision (both specific provision for children with disabilities and the wider integrated provision) to identify the barriers, and the required measures to overcome these, to assist in greater equality of provision.</p>
Gender reassignment	We have set up groups in each of the four towns to offer support and guidance to young people transitioning or identifying as non-binary. In addition to support we are offering a platform for young people to promote social action for change and acceptance within society based upon the views and needs of young people.	None, but there is always room for improvement – this is an increasing area of work for us to address.	Continue to support young people and offer guidance and assistance with practical matters such as gender neutral terminology, appropriate designated areas in schools and other public facilities.
Marriage or civil partnership	None	None	None
Pregnancy or maternity	None	None	None
Race	None	None	None
Religion or Belief	None	None	None

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sex	None	None	None
Sexual Orientation	We have set up LGBTQ+ groups in each of the four main towns and work with young people to promote equality and acceptance by working in partnership with young people to deliver a major pride event, that have been well attended. Additionally offer support to the family if requested by the young people when coming out.	None	Continue to work with young people so that they feel supported and confident. We are in the early stages of planning another Pride event in summer 2023, working in partnership with young people on the format, timing and location of that event, to be delivered via Equality Street

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice	Play is important in children's lives, for both its recreational value and for the important part that it plays in children's physical and emotional health and well-being and in their personal development. Play is a common denominator that should be capable of being enjoyed by all children irrespective of their social or cultural background or the ability of their parents to pay for the opportunity to participate.		Accessible play opportunities contribute to children's lives and to the well-being of their families and communities, and helps address inequalities by contributing to developing child friendly communities, including prioritising investment in more income-deprived LSOAs.

3. Policy making and the Welsh language.


How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
<p>Policy Making</p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p>	<p>We delivered bilingual playschemes in Abergavenny and Caldicot in 2019, which were well attended we will continue to seek to employ Welsh speaking staff so that children can have the opportunity to access the service in the language of their choice.</p>	<p>We have given this consideration and none have been identified at this stage.</p>	<p>Will continue to explore the demand for Welsh language provision and work with partners to make suitable provision. In 2022/23 there will be three Welsh language projects delivered in partnership with Menter Iaith BGM for Welsh language speaking children, consisting of 5 sessions for 5-11 year olds, 5 shows for 12-18 year olds and a Welsh Language Youth Forum Gig in September 2022, primarily for the 19-25 years age group.</p>
<p>Operational</p> <p>Recruitment & Training of workforce</p>	<p>We will continue to seek to recruit Welsh speaking staff in order to provide an effective Welsh language service.</p>	<p>We have given this consideration and none have been identified at this stage.</p>	<p>Will seek when recruiting to increase the level of Welsh speaking staff</p>
<p>Service delivery</p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p> <p>Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>Bilingual staff will allow children to undertake activities in the language of their choice. All play publicity is produced bilingually and we will continue to do this</p>	<p>We have given this consideration and none have been identified at this stage.</p>	<p>Will seek to employ Welsh speaking staff. Produce all promotion material bilingually.</p>





4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	Positive – Access to good quality play opportunities contributes to education, particularly the foundation phase	The actions proposed to deliver the PSA through the Play Action Plan are intended to support the delivery of good quality play opportunities
A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	Positive – play opportunities extend across all open spaces and include those for environmentally focused play such as the pilot local places for nature/ play programme in Monmouth.	The actions proposed to deliver the PSA through the Play Action Plan will help identify such opportunities and potential for partnership delivery
A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	Positive – Play is essential for the growth of children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional development	The actions proposed to deliver the PSA through the Play Action Plan are intended to support the delivery of good quality play opportunities
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	Positive – Play contributes not only to children's lives but to the well-being of their families and communities and looking at a community based delivery model for staffed play provision would further contribute to this.	The actions proposed are intended to support the delivery of good quality play opportunities and the delivery of the community open access play model
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	Positive - Children's right of play is enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Welsh Government has formally adopted.	
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Positive – recreational activities form part of play opportunities.	Bilingual playschemes delivered in Abergavenny & Caldicot in 2019 were well attended but the use of

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation		the Welsh language was minimal on the part of the children attending. We will continue to explore with appropriate partners the demand for Welsh language provision. In 2022/23 there will be three Welsh language projects delivered in partnership with Menter Iaith
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	Play is established as one of children's rights, internationally and by the Welsh Government. Access to good quality play provision can be a way of reducing inequalities between children, thereby reducing poverty of experience for all children.	The PSA through the Play Action Plan helps ensure a more integrated approach across the authority to provide for diverse needs and to seek to better understand demand, existing provision and opportunities

How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	Access to good quality play opportunities is a long term investment in children, families and communities. However short term pressures e.g. changes in the operating environment requiring changes in the delivery model require different approaches.	The delivery of the PSA actions are intended to provide a clearer and longer term focus and an attempt has been made to make these actions more strategic and integrated to support this approach.

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>Partnership working is central to the delivery of play opportunities.</p>	<p>The proposed actions include considerable reliance on partnership delivery, including with Town and Community Councils and with other partners an agencies.</p>
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>Children’s views are central to the assessment of the individual provision and through the Young People’s Voices in Play toolkit to the identification of play needs.</p>	<p>Actions include rolling out the Young People’s Voices in Play toolkit and continuing to engage, and seek feedback from young people supporting play opportunities and links to wider well-being assessments</p>
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>Actions are intended to support the longer term focus set out in the PSA/play action plan and contributing the delivery of the well-being objective to give children and young people the best possible start in life.</p>	
 <p>Integration</p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>As securing play opportunities contributes positively to children, families and communities it is inherently impacting on people, economy and environment as reflected in the breadth of the statutory measures to be addressed in the PSA.</p>	

Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	Safeguarding requirements are a fundamental component of staffed play provision.	N/A	Safeguarding procedures are reviewed through the SAFE process and where appropriate commissioning agreements as new provision is planned and developed to ensure maintenance of existing standards. The safeguarding responsibilities of the Authority and partners for children and young people are fully integrated into the identification of appropriate actions and reflected in the play action plan.
Corporate Parenting	Looked after children have been supported to access the open access play provision	N/A	Supporting looked after children to access the volunteering / employment opportunities through the open access playschemes

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6. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

- The Monmouthshire Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan 2016, 2019 and 2022 review
- The Welsh Government / Play Wales Play Sufficiency Assessment Toolkit
- Ongoing child and parent evaluation of open access play schemes and consultations on other play provision
- Play Wales research project “Making it possible to secure play sufficiency”
- Play value assessments of fixed play provision
- Annual feedback from engagement with Year 5 pupils through the Playmaker sessions

7. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

The positive impact that securing sufficient and accessible play opportunities can have on children, families and communities. The positive impact in providing for diverse needs. The challenges of better understanding demand, existing provision and opportunities including for disabled children. Developing mechanisms to engage with children and young people to enable a better identification of play needs.

8. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Seek approval of the 2022 Play Sufficiency Assessment and the actions contained in the Play Action Plan for 2022/23	Cabinet 27 July 2022	

9. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1.	Report for consultation	July 2022	Additional content re protected characteristics & Welsh language
2.	Cabinet Report		

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SUBJECT:	REGENERATION FUNDING AND DELIVERY
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	27 JULY 2022
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ABERGAVENNY, CALDICOT, CHEPSTOW, MAGOR, MONMOUTH, USK

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The Council's ambition for regeneration activity, and the ambition of the communities it represents, far outstrips the resources and funding available to deliver everything, and therefore decisions on priorities and sequencing are required. The purpose of the report is to invite Cabinet to agree the indicative package of Placemaking Grant projects (which will form the bid for Welsh Government Transforming Towns grant for the next three years) and to agree to develop 'Placemaking Plans' for Monmouth, Magor and Abergavenny. It is proposed that a decision on strategic projects is deferred until the Autumn of 2022, by which time the Council should have received a decision on its bids for Levelling Up Funds.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees to the co-production of 'Placemaking Plans' for Monmouth, Magor and Abergavenny with the respective Town Councils. These documents will provide an overarching masterplan for each of the towns to support future grant funding bids.
- 2.2 That Cabinet agrees the proposed indicative package of smaller Placemaking Grant projects (Appendix 2) for delivery in 2022/23 to 2024/25, and authorises the Chief Officer for Communities and Place to make adjustments to that package of projects as needed, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods.
- 2.3 That Cabinet notes the schedule of potential Strategic Projects and the scale of funding required for delivery, and agrees to defer making a decision on strategic projects until the Autumn 2022, allowing for alignment with the emerging new Corporate Plan and informed by the decision on our bids for Levelling Up Funds from the UK Government.

3 KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Strategic context

- 3.1.1 Within the current Corporate Plan, the need to support local economies is highlighted as a priorities:

'THE COUNCIL PROVIDES MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL LIVING, WORKING & LEISURE

Engage with communities to create plans for the redevelopment of Usk and Caldicot town centres and begin discussions on plans for Monmouth and Chepstow'

- 3.1.2 The new administration has embarked on a review of the Corporate Plan but it is anticipated that regeneration will remain a priority into the future ('promoting town centres' being identified as a manifesto priority).
- 3.1.3 Appendix 3 sets out a range of existing and proposed regeneration-related projects that report into the Communities and Place Project Board. This list has been informed by existing masterplans and strategies. It does not assess priorities, but illustrates the volume of projects to be funded and progressed going forward. As further town masterplans are prepared and other projects completed, the list will change.
- 3.1.4 The previous Cabinet considered a report in September 2021 and agreed funding priorities for 21/22 and an indicative programme for 22/23. This report seeks to build on that in the light of the new three-year funding arrangements.

3.2 **Placemaking Plans**

- 3.2.1 Several towns in the county already benefit from local strategic documents (master plans, town plans etc.) that assess the key opportunities and challenges for that settlement, set high level objectives for regeneration, and set out the key projects through which those objectives can be met. The existing plans include:
- The Caldicot Town Centre Regeneration Strategy originally developed in 2018. A refresh of the strategy reflecting delivery since 2018 has been prepared to support the Round 2 Levelling Up Fund bid.
 - The Usk Town Improvement Plan was jointly developed by MCC, Usk Town Council and Llanbadoc Community Council. It has been adopted by each body, being adopted by the County Council in December 2021. A Masterplan steering group has been established to oversee its delivery.
 - A 'Placemaking Plan' for Chepstow, now known as the 'Transforming Chepstow Masterplan', was jointly commissioned in 2021/22 by MCC and Chepstow Town Council, with funding from the Welsh Government. Further consultation on the plan and its proposals is planned for Summer 2022, after which a report and the final draft plan will be presented to Cabinet and Chepstow Town Council for formal adoption.
 - The Wye Valley Villages Future Plan has been jointly developed by MCC and Devauden, St Arvans, Tintern and Trellech United Community Councils and the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) office. This Plan is being reported for adoption elsewhere on the Cabinet's meeting agenda.
- 3.2.2 Abergavenny, Magor and Monmouth do not currently benefit from masterplan documents of this type. It would be beneficial to co-produce such plans with the Town Councils, in consultation and partnership with local stakeholders, to ensure that there is a clear shared vision for and understanding of the issues to be addressed through regeneration in those places, and to provide a consensus on the key projects through which this can be realised. In addition, the revised framework for Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding

includes an expectation that all projects funded through this grant will be derived from a Placemaking Plan or equivalent strategic plan for a given place, or that as a minimum a Placemaking Plan should be in development. The plans already prepared or in development for Caldicot, Chepstow and Usk are expected to satisfy this requirement, but it will be essential to produce plans of this type for Abergavenny, Magor and Monmouth if regeneration projects in those locations are to secure this grant funding.

3.2.3 It is therefore proposed that ‘Placemaking Plans’ be developed for those towns (noting that they will likely have a different name to avoid confusion with emerging community-level Place Plans). Given limitations of capacity and funding these need to be brought forward sequentially. It is proposed that the plan for Monmouth would be developed first, given the challenges in the town – in particular around town centre vitality, commercial vacancy rates, and pockets of worklessness and deprivation (identified through the development of the Levelling Up Fund proposals and other work). The plan for Magor would then follow given its new designation as a town (making Magor newly eligible for Welsh Government regeneration funding), followed by the plan for Abergavenny. Abergavenny has benefitted from significant investment in recent years and currently the town centre is performing relatively healthily.

3.2.4 It is expected that funding support for the development of Placemaking Plans will be made available via the Welsh Government Transforming Towns programme in 2022/23 (typically 70% grant with 30% match from MCC), although the timing of this grant is not yet known. This will influence how soon work can begin.

3.3 Funding for regeneration delivery

3.3.1 Project funding can be complex and often draws from a combination of grants, funds and budgets. The grants and funds are often Welsh Government awards (although LUF and SPF are awarded through UK Government). Other examples are Local Transport Fund (LTF), Safe Routes in Communities (SRiC), Active Travel (AT), Social Housing Grant (SHG), WG Economic Stimulus Fund and Lottery Heritage Grant. Further potential funding sometimes comes from Section 106 planning contributions. Grants often require match funding from MCC. Looking forward, WG grants are increasingly skewed towards active travel and town centre regeneration, the latter via the Transforming Towns Grant.

3.3.2 While some grants are allocated, most are secured through a bidding process, meaning project delivery often relies upon one or more grant award decisions. Annual grant programmes introduce a significant element of project risk. Prior to Transforming Towns funding, Targeted Regeneration Initiative (TRI) funding was also awarded annually (due to the funding criteria, Caldicot was the only town eligible for TRI funding). This annual process and changing grant streams has presented challenges for long term development and delivery of larger regeneration projects. Welsh Government has taken on board this feedback and changes to WG funding have allowed for the current round of Transforming Towns funding to cover the three-year period 2022/23 to 2024/25. This is welcomed and provides greater certainty about funding which in turn facilitates the longer-term planning and implementation of projects.

3.3.3 The grants that regeneration projects will rely on are described in more detail below:

3.4 Transforming Towns funding

- 3.4.1 Transforming Towns is the Welsh Government's key regeneration funding programme, and (other than the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund, information about which is provided below) is the principal source of funding for the delivery of regeneration projects in Monmouthshire over the next three years.
- 3.4.2 Transforming Towns is focused on regeneration of town centres. From 2022/23 onwards there will be an expectation that projects funded through Transforming Towns will be derived from a Placemaking Plan, or at least that a Placemaking Plan should be in development.
- 3.4.3 The Transforming Towns programme includes several funding streams. Largest among these is capital funding support available, which comprises support for 'Strategic Projects' (defined as projects with more than £250k Welsh Government funding) as well as Placemaking Grant (for projects with up to £250k Welsh Government funding).
- 3.4.4 The Welsh Government has allocated £44m of Transforming Towns capital funding to South East Wales, to include support for both Strategic Projects and Placemaking Grant for the ten local authorities in the region. In expectation that some projects to which funding is awarded will not come forward, ministers have agreed to 30% over-profiling of the allocated funding. This means that the total amount of funding awarded for the three-year period may be up to £57m, although only £44m is available to be spent.
- 3.4.5 Funding will be awarded on a competitive basis, rather than being divided equally between authorities as was the case in the past. Nonetheless there appears to be an expectation that there will be a broadly even distribution of funding across the ten authorities. Given that up to £57m of funding will be awarded, it is expected that a three-year package of MCC proposals for Placemaking Grant and Strategic Projects with a combined value of £5-6m would stand a reasonable chance of success of being approved.
- 3.4.6 A revised Transforming Towns framework has been prepared in produced by Welsh Government officials and approved by the Minister and the applications process for Placemaking Grant is now open. Cabinet's decision will inform MCC's submission. Transforming Towns funding requires at least 30% match funding from non-Welsh Government sources.
- 3.4.7 Although the Welsh Government approvals process for Transforming Towns Strategic Projects is separate, officials have indicated that they will request an initial indication of likely Strategic Projects to be submitted at the same time as the Placemaking Grant applications.

3.5 Levelling Up Fund

- 3.5.1 The UK Government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF) offers funding for investment in infrastructure to support town centre and high street regeneration, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets. Along with Transforming Towns, it is the other key potential source of funding which could support delivery of regeneration projects in Monmouthshire in the next three years.

3.5.2 Proposals for packages of projects in Caldicot and Monmouth were submitted to the first round of LUF in June 2021. Unfortunately neither bid was successful at that time. LUF round 2 was announced in March 2022, with 6th July 2022 as the deadline for submissions. Cabinet agreed in March 2022 that both bids should be revised for resubmission and more information can be found in that report (link below).

3.5.3 The following bids have therefore been completed:

- Monmouth, comprising an enhanced museum and visitor facility at Shire Hall; start up business units and agile working space with future affordable housing development at Market Hall; and public realm improvements to Monnow Street and Blestium Street with a new café and public toilets.
- Caldicot, comprising the acquisition of 7-43 Newport Road (commercial/community uses ground floor, residential above, external and internal refurbishment); improvements to the Leisure Centre; and public realm improvements to the town centre part of Newport Road.

The Project Sponsor for these is Mark Hand, and the Project Manager is Daniel Fordham.

3.5.4 A third LUF bid focuses on transport infrastructure in Chepstow.

- The bid seeks funding to create a public transport Hub (rail, bus, Taxi, EV, car parking, bike storage) at the railway station and compliments the WeITAG stage 3 study presently underway. The bid also includes funding for improving active travel routes in and around the town, again a WeITAG stage 3 study.

The Project Sponsor for this submission is Debra Hill-Howells, and the Project Manager is Christian Schmidt.

3.5.5 A decision on the round 2 LUF bids is expected in Autumn 2022. In general, activity funded through LUF will be expected to be complete by March 2025, although in exceptional circumstances an extension to March 2026 will be permitted.

3.5.6 At this time, Transforming Towns and Levelling Up Funds are the two main sources of funding to support regeneration work. Where grant funding is not secured and the Council wishes to pursue a project then it will fall upon the Council to secure suitable funding and each project may need a business case to arrive at a suitable funding strategy.

3.6 **Regeneration project pipeline**

3.6.1 Officers have compiled a “pipeline” list of regeneration projects focused on town centres in Monmouthshire which are in varying stages of development (from early concept to detailed design). For most of these, funding for implementation has not yet been secured. This list was informed by the multidisciplinary Placemaking officer group, which aims to identify placemaking projects and funding sources and ensure various service areas are sighted on wider activity and funding sources across and beyond the organisation. The full list of projects is provided at Appendix 1 and lists strategic and placemaking projects. This list is

a live document and will change over time, in particular through the identification of new priorities and the development of Placemaking Plans.

- 3.6.2 As can be seen, the appetite for placemaking and regeneration activity outstrips resource and funding capacity. Currently there are more than fifty projects on the pipeline list, with a combined cost (for those projects where cost estimates are available) of more than £56m. Cost estimates are not yet available for some large schemes, and further projects are likely to be identified through the development of Placemaking Plans for all towns. The scope and total cost of the projects list is therefore expected to rise substantially.
- 3.6.3 To align with the two categories used by Welsh Government in assessing proposals for Transforming Towns funding, the project pipeline list has been separated into Strategic Projects (requiring more than £250k Welsh Government funding) and Placemaking Projects (requiring up to £250k Welsh Government funding).

3.7 Strategic regeneration projects (>£250k)

3.7.1 The key Strategic Projects identified on the pipeline list are as follows:

Project	Description	Cost estimate (if known)
Cross Street, Abergavenny	Public realm enhancements to facilitate permanent pedestrianisation (if taken forward)	£2,000,000
Newport Road, Caldicot	Public realm improvements to pedestrianised area in town centre	£3,448,340
7-43 Newport Road, Caldicot	Acquisition and refurbishment of key town centre building	£7,148,340
Newport Road west, Caldicot	Active travel/public realm improvements to link between town centre and Caldicot station	£2,500,000
High Street, Chepstow*	Public realm changes (if the trial closure becomes permanent)	£2,500,000
Former Barclays building, Chepstow	Scope TBC	NA
Monnow Street, Monmouth	Public realm/active travel improvements	£6,021,000
Blestium Street, Monmouth	New riverside public space with café and toilets	£3,090,000
Bridge Street, Usk	Public realm improvements	NA
Twyn Square, Usk	Public realm improvements	NA
Total (where known)		£26,707,680

*It should be noted that a separate report to Cabinet on 27th July 2022 recommends that Chepstow High Street be re-opened to vehicular traffic, meaning this project falls away.

- 3.7.2 The combined cost of these projects means that it will not be possible to deliver all of them within the next three years using identified funding sources. Consequently, there is a need to prioritise the schemes against the funding (and officer resource) that is available.
- 3.7.3 Such a prioritisation exercise at this time is complicated by the inclusion of a number of these Strategic Projects in the LUF bids for Monmouth and Caldicot. A decision on the LUF bids is not expected until Autumn 2022. If successful, LUF will provide significant funding for the delivery of the Monnow Street and Blestium Street projects in Monmouth. The LUF bid factors in £2.70m of Transforming Towns Strategic Project funding for 7-43 Newport Road with additional funding from LUF and MCC: that funding requirement will increase if the LUF bid is unsuccessful. Similarly, the LUF bid seeks £2.90m towards Newport Road public realm in Caldicot, with active travel and MCC funding also added: that will need to be sought from other sources such as Transforming Towns if the LUF bid is not successful.
- 3.7.4 Cabinet is asked to defer a decision on the Strategic Projects until the Autumn, by which time a decision on LUF bids should be known. This will also allow for priorities to be aligned with the emerging new Corporate Plan.

3.8 **Placemaking Projects (<£250k)**

- 3.8.1 A significant number of smaller 'Placemaking Projects' has also been identified. These have been assessed and prioritised by officers for their deliverability over the next three years. The indicative priority list of Placemaking projects is provided at Appendix 2. It broadly aligns with the indicative 22/23 list agreed by the previous Cabinet in September 2021.
- 3.8.2 The Welsh Government has recently opened the application process for projects to be funded through Placemaking Grant over the next three years, so Cabinet's decision is required to inform MCC's grant bid submission. It is proposed that the prioritised Placemaking Projects indicated in Appendix 2 should constitute Monmouthshire's application for Placemaking Grant over that period. The total value of Placemaking Grant to be sought would be £2.156m, with an additional £1.278m match funding from MCC (30%). Cabinet is asked to agree this list of Placemaking Projects and to authorise the Chief Officer for Communities and Place to Place to make adjustments to that package of projects as needed, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods.
- 3.8.3 Assuming that approximately one tenth of the total £57m Transforming Towns capital funding for South East Wales is available to support the delivery of regeneration projects in Monmouthshire, an application for Placemaking Grant as proposed here (£2.156m) would leave approximately £3m-£4m available for a bid to support Strategic Projects. As can be seen from the table above at paragraph 3.7.1, this will not go far.
- 3.8.4 The Placemaking Project list is subject to change over the three-year period as certainty of deliverability evolves and as new projects are identified through the development of Placemaking Plans. Priorities would be revised, if needed, to align with the new administration's Corporate Plan, which is in development. It is understood that the proposals to be submitted for years two and three (i.e. for 2023/24 and 2024/25) will be

indicative and that there will be significant flexibility with Welsh Government to vary the prioritisation of projects in those years, within the constraints of the grant eligibility criteria.

3.9 **Conclusion**

3.9.1 In conclusion, it is recommended that:

- Placemaking Plans be developed for Monmouth, Magor and Abergavenny, in that order, to inform the vision and priorities for each town and to enable future funding bids to be made;
- The prioritised Placemaking projects indicated in Appendix 2 should constitute Monmouthshire's application for Placemaking Grant over the period 2022/23 to 2024/25. The total value of Placemaking Grant to be sought on that basis would be approximately £2.156m. The year two and three programmes can be subject to flexibility as new projects or priorities arise. This requires £1.278m in MCC match funding. Cabinet is asked to authorise the Chief Officer for Communities and Place to make adjustments to that package of projects as needed, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods; and
- A decision on the bids for Strategic Projects be deferred until Autumn 2022 when the decision on the Levelling Up Fund bids should be known.

4 **EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

4.1 The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation is attached at Appendix 4. There are no corporate parenting or safeguarding concerns, nor issues in relation to our economic impact duty.

5 **OPTIONS APPRAISAL:**

- 5.1 Place Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report, namely that the three Placemaking Plans should be sequenced and delivered, approval given to the Placemaking projects priority list in Appendix 2, and that the decision on Strategic Projects be deferred until the Autumn. Cabinet is invited to agree the officer recommendations.
- 5.2 Cabinet could decide against supporting the funding bid and progressing of the three 'Placemaking Plans' for Monmouth, Magor and Abergavenny. However, this will prejudice our ability to secure future grant funding, without which regeneration projects will not be possible.
- 5.3 There is already a Cabinet decision to submit LUF bids and this has been enacted, with bids ready for submission when the UK Government portal opens. Cabinet could decide against submitting any bids for Transforming Towns funding. However, this would result in a lost opportunity to support the regeneration of our towns, and is not therefore the recommended course of action.
- 5.4 There are various options surrounding how projects might be prioritised dependent upon what funding might come available. This is discussed within the body of the report. Cabinet might prefer an alternative set of priorities. However, the indicative list is developed from previous stakeholder and colleague engagement, evidence of past grant take-up, the position of the projects to actually be delivered within the funding window, and

compliance with WG's funding criteria. Approval of the indicative list of Placemaking Projects (under £250k) is sought now so that MCC's bid can be submitted promptly and WG can make an informed decision on grant awards. A delayed decision will provide uncertainty and will result in lost opportunities to deliver on regeneration this financial year.

- 5.5 Cabinet might wish to submit a bid for Strategic Projects now. However, it is recommended that this decision be made in the Autumn when we should know whether or not our LUF bids were successful. This will help inform the prioritisation at that time.
- 5.6 An alternative approach would be to focus wholly on the delivery of Strategic Projects, or to reduce the scale of Placemaking Grant projects to leave more funding available for Strategic Projects. However, it is considered that such an approach would limit regeneration delivery in the next three years to a smaller number of locations and fewer projects (particularly if the LUF bids are not successful), and would also require a pause in all regeneration delivery until there is clarity on the outcome of the LUF bids to inform prioritisation of delivery against Transforming Towns funding. If this approach were to be taken, the timescales for approval of funding for Transforming Towns strategic funding, as well as the time required to develop projects of that scale to the point where construction can begin, would in practice be likely to preclude any significant regeneration project delivery in 2022/23, because the first 6 months of the financial year would have already passed. Conversely, proceeding with an application for Placemaking Projects on the basis proposed here would allow regeneration delivery to resume this year and continue throughout the three year period, and to permit some degree of regeneration activity in all six towns.

6 REASONS:

- 6.1 The recommendations seek to ensure future grant funding can be secured by putting co-producing Placemaking Plans for Monmouth, Magor and Abergavenny; ensure that regeneration activity can continue to support our towns and communities by progressing with Placemaking projects (<£250k), and defers a decision on Strategic projects until the Autumn when hopefully we'll have a decision on the LUF bids. This ensures future funding can be secured and that projects are informed by community stakeholders via development of the Placemaking Plans. It ensures that regeneration activity across all of the County's towns can be maximised and continued promptly. It ensures that the decision on Strategic Projects is informed by the outcome of the LUF bids, and seeks to strike an appropriate balance between large and small schemes and ensuring all of our towns benefit to some extent.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 Officers are aware of the value of Transforming Towns grant being made available in South East Wales and the working assumption of this report is an award of one tenth of the overall budget. The funding assumptions are discussed in the body of the report but we are anticipating a grant over 3 years of £5m-£6m. With £2.156m going to Placemaking grants there is a balance of £3m-£4m available for other strategic projects unless Cabinet chooses to alter the ratio.
- 7.2 The £2.156m placemaking grant is based upon a wide spread of grant awards or different project types that can apply across the various county towns. Taking into account the

required 30% MCC match funding of £1.278m, the total funding budget would be £3.434m (see Appendix 2 below). In respect of the required match funding from MCC, subject to Cabinet approval of this report, a formal request will be made to allocate the £1.278m match funding from the annual budget for match funding contained within the MCC capital budget, in line with the expected profile of project expenditure.

- 7.3 It should be noted that additional match funding will be required for the Strategic Projects. This will be detailed in the Autumn 2022 report. Outside of the scope of this report, Members will be aware of the match funding requirement for the Levelling Up Fund bids.
- 7.4 Match funding (30%) will also likely be required for the three Placemaking Plans (estimated at approximately £32k). It is hoped that the respective Town Councils will contribute towards this match funding cost for a co-produced Placemaking Plan. As above, in respect of any required match funding from MCC, subject to Cabinet approval of this report, a formal request will be made for match funding from the annual budget for match funding contained within the MCC capital budget, in line with the expected profile of project expenditure.
- 7.5 Work will be undertaken by in-house officer resource in the newly formed Regeneration team, with assistance from colleagues elsewhere in the organisation as required. Some officer time will be eligible for grant funding, which helps fund the staffing structure in place.

8 CONSULTTEES:

Place Scrutiny Committee – considered the report on 30th June 2022 and supported the report recommendations
Cabinet
Senior Leadership Team
Communities and Place DMT
Communities and Place Project Board
Monitoring Officer
S151 Officer

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- 9.1 Relevant papers are attached as appendices.
- 9.2 The previous Cabinet approved the submission of the LUF bids in March 2021: the report can be viewed [here](#)
- 9.3 The previous Cabinet approved a forward programme for regeneration activity for 21/22 in September 2021: the report can be viewed [here](#).

10 AUTHOR:

- 10.1 Mark Hand, Head of Placemaking, Highways and Flooding and Daniel Fordham, Regeneration Manager

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APPENDIX 2: PLACEMAKING PROJECTS PRIORITY LIST 2022/23-2024/25

APPENDIX 3: BRIEFING NOTE: REGENERATION ACTIVITY AND PROJECTS 25 MAY 2022

APPENDIX 4: EQUALITIES AND WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX 1: REGENERATION PROJECT PIPELINE

Project	Town	Estimated cost (where available)
Cross Street gateway scheme	Abergavenny	£80,000
Abergavenny shop front enveloping	Abergavenny	£450,000
Brewery Yard canopy structure	Abergavenny	£100,000
St John's Square canopy structure	Abergavenny	£100,000
Cross Street public realm	Abergavenny	£2,000,000
Abergavenny station interchange	Abergavenny	
A40 bus stop	Abergavenny	£369,431
MCC land next to Morrisons	Abergavenny	
[Abergavenny Placemaking Plan projects TBC]	Abergavenny	
Church Road phase 2 (Transforming Towns and MCC only - ATF secured)	Caldicot	£604,000
Caldicot shop front enveloping	Caldicot	£345,000
Newport Road west - AT	Caldicot	£2,500,000
Caldicot school connections - AT	Caldicot	
7-43 Newport Road	Caldicot	£7,148,340
Newport Road town centre public realm	Caldicot	£3,448,340
Leisure centre refurbishment	Caldicot	£10,856,030
Caldicot comp site residential development	Caldicot	
Jubilee Way residential development	Caldicot	
Severn Tunnel Junction	Caldicot	
B4245 active travel routes	Caldicot	£3,406,000
Chepstow High Street public realm changes (if trial closure becomes permanent)*	Chepstow	£2,500,000
Welsh Street car park connectivity improvements	Chepstow	£150,000
Chepstow shop front enveloping	Chepstow	£450,000
Hanbury House - improvement to shopfront and lettable areas	Chepstow	£80,000
Barclays Bank Building	Chepstow	
Thomas Street/Moor Street Bus Station – Public Realm Improvements	Chepstow	
Bulwark Active Travel Links	Chepstow	
Bulwark Neighbourhood Shops & resi above	Chepstow	
Chepstow Transport Hub	Chepstow	
Upper Church Street/Bridge Street link	Chepstow	
The Castle/TIC/Museum linkage & Public Realm Improvements	Chepstow	
Chepstow River Front Improvements	Chepstow	
Chepstow Green Wall	Chepstow	£25,000
A48 Chepstow bypass	Chepstow	
[Transforming Chepstow Masterplan projects TBC]	Chepstow	
Magor Square public realm	Magor	£100,000
Magor Square canopy structure	Magor	£100,000
MUCH (Magor Undy Community Hub)	Magor	£2,901,120
Magor walkway station	Magor	
[Magor Placemaking Plan projects TBC]	Magor	

Monnow Street	Monmouth	£6,021,000
Monmouth Market Hall	Monmouth	£4,563,191
Shire Hall	Monmouth	£3,688,787
Blestium Street	Monmouth	£3,090,000
Monmouth shop front enveloping	Monmouth	£450,000
22 Monnow Street	Monmouth	
Hereford Road pelican crossing	Monmouth	£30,000
Wyebridge Street car park	Monmouth	£375,000
[Monmouth Placemaking Plan projects TBC]		
Bridge Street public realm	Usk	
Twyn Square public realm	Usk	
Building frontage cleaning and redecoration	Usk	£150,000
Car park resurfacing, Maryport Street South	Usk	£339,825
Usk Bridge St/Twyn Square phase 1 delivery	Usk	£250,000
[Usk Town Improvement Plan projects TBC]	Usk	
Empty property enforcement / meanwhile uses	All towns	
Vacant space above shops	All towns	
TOTAL		£56,671,064

*It should be noted that a separate report to Cabinet on 27th July 2022 recommends that Chepstow High Street be re-opened to vehicular traffic, meaning this project falls away.

APPENDIX 2: INDICATIVE PLACEMAKING PROJECTS PRIORITY LIST 2022/23-2024/25

Project	Town	Estimated cost
Cross Street gateway scheme	Abergavenny	£80,000
Abergavenny shop front enveloping / meanwhile uses	Abergavenny	£450,000
Brewery Yard canopy structure	Abergavenny	£100,000
St John's Square canopy structure	Abergavenny	£100,000
Caldicot shop front enveloping / meanwhile uses	Caldicot	£345,000
Church Road phase 2 - Transforming Towns/MCC contribution only (NB this is required as match against the ATF funding already secured)	Caldicot	£604,000
Welsh Street car park public realm	Chepstow	£150,000
Chepstow shop front enveloping / meanwhile uses	Chepstow	£450,000
Hanbury House - improvement to shopfront and lettable areas	Chepstow	£80,000
Chepstow green wall	Chepstow	£25,000
Magor Square public realm	Magor	£100,000
Magor Square canopy structure	Magor	£100,000
Monmouth shop front enveloping	Monmouth	£450,000
Bridge Street building frontage cleaning and redecoration	Usk	£150,000
Usk Bridge St/Twyn Square phase 1 delivery	Usk	£250,000
TOTAL		£3,434,000
<i>Transforming Towns – 70%</i>		<i>£2,156,000</i>
<i>MCC/other match funding – 30%</i>		<i>£1,278,000</i>

REGENERATION ACTIVITY AND PROJECTS FOR COMMUNITIES AND PLACE PROJECT BOARD – APPENDIX 3

TOWN	SUMMARY POSITION	CURRENT REGENERATION PROJECTS
ABERGAVENNY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid trial closure of upper part of Cross Street, 10-4pm Monday-Saturday • Placemaking Plan to be commissioned – timing TBC • Stakeholder group, potentially focused on future of Cross Street (including short term/interim measures), proposed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town centre regeneration programme to be derived from Placemaking Plan • Abergavenny Station Transport Hub • Abergavenny Tesco A40 Bus Stop • Borough Theatre. Refurbishment of theatre, part funded through Transforming Towns.
CALDICOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historically the main focus for regeneration activity in Monmouthshire – highest concentration of need; only town in Monmouthshire eligible for Welsh government Targeted Regeneration Initiative funding, which was main regeneration funding stream until 2021 (now replaced by Transforming Towns). • Caldicot Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan prepared 2018. Refresh of strategy currently in preparation to support LUF, reflecting progress since 2018. • LUF bid in preparation comprising acquisition and refurbishment of 7-43 Newport Road (ground floor commercial/ community uses, residential above, external and internal refurbishment); improvements to Leisure Centre; public realm improvements in town centre. • Caldicot regeneration stakeholder group was established in 2018 to as forum for updates on/discussion of regeneration delivery. Opportunity to reconsider/refocus role of group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town centre regeneration programme derived from refreshed Caldicot Town Centre Regeneration Strategy • 7-43 Newport Road. Development of business case for acquisition and refurbishment of commercial/retail units at ground floor and residential above. Opportunity to shape retail offer to attract more/wider range of residents and visitors, and to offer complementary community uses in town centre. Funding for acquisition to be sought through LUF bid. Potential to seek funding for refurbishment from Transforming Towns programme. • Leisure centre. Monlife proposals for improvements and refurbishment. Funding for implementation to be sought as part of LUF bid. • Church Road phase 2. Completion of active travel/public realm improvements. Active Travel funding secured for implementation in 22/23. Transforming Towns and MCC match funding to be approved. • Newport Road town centre. Concept proposals for public realm improvements in pedestrianised area completed April 21. Detailed design underway. Funding for implementation to be sought as part of LUF bid. • Newport Road west. Active travel/public realm improvements to link between town centre and Caldicot station. Consultation in October 21. Concept design to be completed in July 22. Funding secured for detailed design in 22/23.

TOWN	SUMMARY POSITION	CURRENT REGENERATION PROJECTS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASDA corner site. Strategic Housing Forum partners developing proposals for affordable housing on land formerly occupied by Caldicot Comprehensive School. • Jubilee Way. Proposal for affordable housing development on current car park site, with re-provision of parking to rear. • Severn Tunnel Junction southern car park. Formalised car parking (170 spaces) – awaiting planning permission. Funding available from Cardiff capital region to be completed in 22/23 • Severn Tunnel Junction footbridge. The bridge extension joins the platforms and ticket office to the south car park. Funding available to do design in 22/23 with a view to construct by TfW in 23/24
CHEPSTOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid trial closure of High Street 10am to 4pm except for disabled access • Placemaking Plan being prepared jointly by MCC and CTC to provide masterplan • Consultation on High Street, March 2022 – majority preferring that road is reopened • Further consultation planned on three options: re-open to traffic, one way up-hill with improved public realm, complete pedestrianisation • LUF transport bid – Transport Hub and active travel improvements included in bid – both aspects at WelTAG stage 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town centre regeneration programme aligned to the Placemaking Plan. • Chepstow Transport Hub. An integrated public transport hub – bus and rail with car parking, EV charging, bike storage at Chepstow rail station. Currently at WelTAG stage 3 and subject to a LUF bid
MAGOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placemaking Plan to be commissioned – timing TBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town centre regeneration programme to be aligned to Placemaking Plan • Magor and Undy Community Hub. Project under way • Magor Walkway Station. One of the new stations promoted by the Burns Commission • B4245 active travel improvements Undy to Rogiet
MONMOUTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary widening of pavements on Monnow Street as part of Covid response still in place. • Consultation on public realm proposals for Monnow Street, January-March 2022 – support for formalisation of current temporary layout. • Placemaking Plan to be commissioned in 22/23 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town centre regeneration programme to be aligned to Placemaking Plan • Monnow Street. High level concept design complete following consultation in early 2022. Funding secured for further development of concept design and detailed

TOWN	SUMMARY POSITION	CURRENT REGENERATION PROJECTS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LUF bid in preparation comprising infrastructure/enabling works for enhanced museum and visitor facility at Shire Hall; start-up business units and agile working space with future affordable housing development at Market Hall; and public realm improvements to Monnow Street and Blestium Street with new café and public toilets 	<p>design in 22/23. Funding for implementation to be sought through LUF bid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire Hall. MonLife-led project to provide an enhanced museum and visitor facility. Funding for implementation to be sought as part of LUF bid. National Lottery Heritage Fund development bid also in preparation by MonLife officers. Market Hall. Concept proposals in development for refurbishment and reuse of the Market Hall to provide start-up and agile working space and affordable housing. Funding for enabling works and delivery of workspace to be sought as part of LUF bid. Affordable housing to be delivered in later phase. Blestium Street. Proposal to create high quality public space on riverfront next to old Monnow Bridge, with café, public toilets, scope to accommodate market. Land currently occupied by public toilets and north-eastern part of car park. Funding for implementation to be sought as part of LUF bid. Hereford Road pelican crossing. Funding secured for delivery in 22/23 Wyebridge Street car park. Funding secured for delivery in 22/23; start on site imminent.
USK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usk Town Improvement Plan adopted December 2021 Usk Masterplan Steering Group established to guide implementation Concept design for Twyn Square and Bridge Street to be developed in 22/23 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town centre regeneration programme aligned with Town Improvement Plan. Usk Car Park resurfacing. (Maryport St South – completed)
WYE VALLEY VILLAGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wye valley Villages Future Plan is complete and being submitted to the partner councils for adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the plan is adopted the delivery group will be established to take the plan forward
COUNTY-WIDE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 mph zones. Highways resurfacing programme. Vacant space above town centre shops.

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<p>Name of the Officer Mark Hand</p> <p>Phone no: 07773 478579 E-mail: markhand@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <p>Regeneration funding and delivery 22/23 to 24/25</p> <p>The Welsh Government created the Transforming Towns funding scheme in 2020 to support its priority of town centre regeneration. The Council's recently formed regeneration team has been working with colleagues and stakeholders to identify a programme of regeneration projects and has sought to identify how these might be prioritised and funded over the next three years. The Council's ambition, and that of the communities it represents, far outstrips the resources and funding available to deliver everything, and therefore decisions on priorities and sequencing are required.</p> <p>The purpose of the Cabinet report is to secure agreement to the indicative package of Placemaking Grant projects for which Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding will be sought over the next three years, and the proposed development of 'Placemaking Plans' for Monmouth, Magor and Abergavenny. This will allow regeneration activity and business support to progress on smaller projects. It is proposed that a decision on strategic projects is deferred until the Autumn of 2022, by which time the Council should have received a decision on its bids for Levelling Up Funds. In addition, alignment can be assessed against the emerging new Corporate Plan.</p>
<p>Name of Service area: Placemaking, Highways and Flooding</p>	<p>Date 6th July 2022</p>

1. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	<p>The grant proposals will support the regeneration of town centres, helping to retain locally accessible services in thriving businesses. Enabling communities to safely access local shops and services will benefited those who are without internet access or who cannot travel far to shop/use amenities: these issues disproportionately affect older people. High Streets can be enhanced with planters, parklets and outdoor trading spaces, improved public realm and attractive buildings. Placemaking will providing thriving places that are pleasant to dwell in, both supporting local businesses and helping those who are lonely, which may disproportionately affect elderly people who are widowed.</p>	None	<p>Parklets and planters provide additional street seating allowing people with limited mobility, expectant or new parents or young children to rest.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Disability	The grant proposals will support the regeneration of town centres, helping to retain locally accessible services in thriving businesses. Enabling communities to safely access local shops and services will benefited those who are without internet access or who cannot travel far to shop/use amenities: these issues disproportionately affect people with disabilities.	Changes to the public realm can be disorientating for people with sight difficulties and visual impairment and could be distressing for people with severe autism. Planters, parklets and outdoor trading areas pose potential obstacles to those with visual impairments or mobility difficulties. Care will therefore been taken with the siting of these areas.	Parklets and planters provide additional street seating allowing people with limited mobility, expectant or new parents or young children to rest. Careful consideration will be given to the needs of people with disabilities before implementing any changes.
Gender Reassignment	No impact	No impact	-
Marriage or civil partnership	No impact	No impact	-
Pregnancy or maternity	Parklets and planters provide additional street seating allowing people to rest and feed children.	Planters, parklets and outdoor trading areas pose potential obstacles to those with pushchairs or prams. Care will therefore been taken with the siting of these areas.	Parklets and planters provide additional street seating allowing people with limited mobility, expectant or new parents or young children to rest.
Race	No impact	No impact	-
Religion or Belief	No impact	No impact	-

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sex	Retail and hospitality businesses provide a significant number of valued job opportunities. Supporting people to shop locally and buy goods and services locally supports the retention of those jobs. Data suggests the majority of these jobs are done by females.	No impact	Changes to the public realm will consider matters such as lighting to ensure that everyone is safe and feels safe. Feeling unsafe at night disproportionately affects females.
Sexual Orientation	No impact	No impact	Changes to the public realm will consider matters such as lighting to ensure that everyone is safe and feels safe.

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions. This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice	<p>The Social Justice strategy focuses on three main areas: tackling loneliness and isolation; tackling poverty and promoting equitable economic prosperity; and giving children the best start in life.</p> <p>People on low incomes or in poverty may not have internet access or be able to make non-cash payments. Supporting our High Streets will enable everyone to access a range of shops and services locally.</p> <p>Retail and hospitality businesses provide a significant number of valued job opportunities. Supporting people to shop locally and buy goods and services locally supports the retention of those jobs.</p>	None	Parklets and planters provide additional street seating allowing people with no outdoor space at home a safe outdoor space to meet family and friends.

3. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!




Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>The grants provide opportunities to create a safe and attractive environment for shoppers and visitors to support local businesses. Creating such an environment is widely used to support retail, services, hospitality outlets which in turn attracts businesses and subsequent employment whilst adding to the general appearance of prosperity and vitality in a town centre. Providing the infrastructure to enable citizens to enable communities to thrive and support local businesses.</p>	<p>A marketing campaign is proposed to promote the grant opportunities to local businesses.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>The grants support proposals to create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists and will hopefully encourage active travel instead of car use. The planters provide additional trees and flowers for pollinators. Improvements to green infrastructure, pedestrianisation, and cycle ways will raise awareness of biodiversity and climate change issues and encourage positive participation.</p>	<p>WG funding has been secured for wider active travel improvements and for regeneration enhancements and grants to support local businesses.</p>
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>The grants support opportunities to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists as well as support businesses. Active travel is being promoted and supported by government as a way to engender a healthier lifestyle.</p>	<p>Improved place-making and green infrastructure will provide the opportunity to increase physical activity and support physical and mental well-being and support Active Travel.</p>
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>To be successful our High Streets need to be safe and attractive for residents, workers and visitors. The grants will help businesses adapt to the changing role of the High Street.</p>	



Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>Measures to support local businesses, ensure pedestrian safety and to encourage active travel will encourage people to adopt a more healthy lifestyle through walking and cycling, as well as ensuring amenities and services are successful and therefore remain accessible locally.</p>	
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p>Monmouthshire is a county of historic market towns blessed with high quality independent traders and tourism attractions. As such, it is important that our towns and villages are safe and attractive to visitors and tourism, being places where people are safe and confident visiting and spend time. Improved access and facilities can raise awareness of culture, heritage and the Welsh language and encourage positive participation.</p>	
<p>A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p>Monmouthshire has a greater proliferation of small businesses than any other county in Wales. Creating an environment to support those seeking to invest or expand in retail thereby adding to the prosperity of our towns benefit from this project. Improved access and facilities can enable citizens to fulfill their potential, whatever their background or circumstances.</p>	<p>Effective dialogue has been started with a newly formed disability action group in Chepstow, along with similar existing groups in other parts of the County. This helps ensure decisions fully consider the needs of those with disabilities.</p>

4 Policy making and the Welsh language.

<p>How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:</p>	<p>Describe the positive impacts of this proposal</p>	<p>Describe the negative impacts of this proposal</p>	<p>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts</p>
<p>Policy Making</p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p>	<p>Co-produced Placemaking Plans will be translated when adopted. Consultation will be bilingual.</p>	<p>No negative impact</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>Operational</p> <p>Recruitment & Training of workforce</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>Service delivery</p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p> <p>Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>Signage will be proportionate to avoid physical and visual clutter. It will be bilingual to comply with Welsh language standards and to promote our local heritage.</p>	<p>No impact</p>	<p>Information to market and promote the regeneration projects will be bilingual.</p>

5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>Improved access and facilities within town centres and green infrastructure short term will assist with medium- and longer-term priorities of health, wellbeing and carbon reduction.</p>	
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>The existing Placemaking Plans have been, and new Placemaking Plans will be, drafted in collaboration with County Councillors, Town and Community Councils and business representatives sitting on the Business Resilience Forum and by the take-up of previous grant funding opportunities and associated feedback. There will be community engagement too.</p>	
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>The prioritisation list has been informed by ideas and feedback from County Councillors, Town and Community Councils and business representatives sitting on the Business Resilience Forum and by the take-up of previous grant funding opportunities and associated feedback.</p>	

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The proposals focus on supporting our High Streets in a post-pandemic climate. Measures being proposed will have wider health benefits longer term as more citizens will have access to improved facilities, green infrastructure, cycle ways, etc thus reducing the further deterioration in town centres, reducing car reliance, reducing carbon footprint and improving wellbeing.</p>	
 <p>Integration</p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>Improved infrastructure including access for cyclists and pedestrians will reduce carbon emissions, rural isolation and rural poverty.</p>	

6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	During the delivery of the programme of activities, safeguarding will be at the forefront to ensure that any future service delivery promotes the well-being of children and vulnerable adults, preventing them from being harmed and protecting those who are at risk of abuse and neglect.	Any negative impacts can be mitigated if suitable safeguarding strategies are put in place.	

Corporate Parenting	During the delivery of this programme of activities the needs of any 'looked after' children will be considered to ensure any future service delivery protects their welfare.	As above.	
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7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

Monmouthshire County Council Corporate Plan 22 for '22

- Shop vacancy data and town centre footfall data
- Active Travel consultation on integrated network maps 2021
- Monmouthshire Local Public Service Board plan priorities and community engagement identifying issues facing our communities
- Future Wales 2040 and the adopted Monmouthshire Local Development Plan 2011-2021
- Llwybr Newydd
- Existing and emerging 'Placemaking Plans'

Page 33 **SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?**

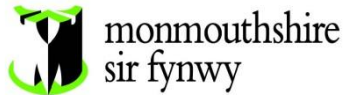
The grant funded projects will support our high streets, ensuring we have vibrant and vital town centres which retain amenities to serve our communitiies and are attractive to tourists and visitors.

9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Review take up of different grant opportunities, promote to local businesses and stakeholders	Ongoing	Regeneration Manager
Seek to co-produce new Placemaking Plans in Monmouth, Magor and Abergavenny	22/23 onwards	Regeneration Manager

10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Cabinet report	11 th July 2022	



SUBJECT:	Draft Home to School Transport Policy 2023/24
MEETING:	Cabinet
DATE:	27th July 2022
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 sets out the legal responsibilities for the provision of school transport. Within the legislation they place a duty on local authorities to review their transport policy on an annual basis. The policy needs to be confirmed by the 1st October for application in the following academic year.
- 1.2 This report presents the proposed Transport Policy for 23-24 and seeks Member approval to undertake consultation. It is intended that a further report will be presented to Members in September following a review of the consultation responses.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees to the commencement of public consultation on the proposed transport policy.

3.0 KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The provision of home to school transport is prescribed by the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure, 2008. The legislation imposes statutory duties on local authorities in the provision of home to school transport and the circumstances when transport must be provided. It also places a duty on all local authorities to undertake an annual review of the transport policy which sets out how the statutory responsibilities and any discretionary policies that are being applied. The transport policy should be agreed prior to the 1st October for application in the proceeding academic year.
- 3.2 The existing transport policy has been reviewed and re-drafted to provide more information for parents and guardians and be more transparent and

explicit in terms of how decisions will be made. The majority of the policies remain as existing and the table below sets out the key aspects.

Policy	Legal Requirement	Existing	Proposed
Distance Criteria	2 miles for primary learners and 3 miles for secondary pupils	1.5 miles for primary learners 2 miles for secondary	As existing: 1.5 miles for primary learners 2 miles for secondary
Nearest suitable school	Transport is only provided to learners whose nearest suitable school is further than the statutory distance criteria and capable of meeting the needs of the learner.	Transport will be provided to those learners meeting the 1.5- and 2- miles eligibility for their nearest suitable or catchment school.	As existing in terms of distance and nearest suitable or catchment school. Nearest suitable has been clearly defined as has elements that will be disregarded in terms of assessing suitability e.g. Estyn inspections
Provision of transport for Under 5's	There is no legal requirement to provide transport for under 5's	The policy is silent; however, we have provided transport for under 5's when requested.	We will continue to provide transport for 4 years old attending primary school if the learner is able to fasten and unfasten their own seat belt.
Provision of transport to welsh medium and faith schools	The provision of transport is discretionary not statutory.	We provide transport to welsh medium and faith schools if the distance criteria are met.	We will provide transport to the nearest suitable welsh medium or faith school.
Learners with dual residences	If a learner has more than two home addresses, then transport must be provided to no more than two homes.	The policy is silent	We will provide transport to the nearest suitable or catchment school from two home addresses
Learners with a statement of special educational needs	Transport should be provided to the closest education establishment that can support their needs.	Transport will be provided in the form of a specialist vehicle and each case will be considered on an individual basis which may result in the distance	Transport will be provided based on the learners assessed statement. The distance criteria will be applied, however only those schools meeting the assessed need

		criteria being disregarded.	will be considered when assessing suitability.
Medical Needs	If a learner is unable to walk to their nearest suitable school due to a disability or learning difficulty, then the Local Authority should consider what arrangements should be put in place.	Transport will be provided to the nearest suitable school if a learner has significant mobility problems.	Discretionary transport will be provided for learners with medical conditions that prevent them from travelling to school by walking on or public transport. Medical information will need to be provided on an annual basis to maintain transport. Transport may also be provided for primary aged learners only if parents provide medical information that confirms that they are medically unable to walk their children to school. The medical information needs to be updated annually. It is assumed secondary aged learners will be able to walk to school unaccompanied.
Learners changing address in years 10 & 11	Transport should be provided for those learners that move in their critical years subject to the standard eligibility criteria	Transport will be provided if a contracted or public service contract is available	We will provide transport for learners that were previously attending their nearest suitable or catchment school and they meet the distance criteria
Post 16 Transport	There is no statutory duty to provide free transport.	Post 16 learners can apply for concessionary travel if they are attending their nearest suitable educational	Post 16 learners can apply for concessionary travel if they meet the eligibility criteria. The pickup point however may

		establishment which is more than 2 miles from their home. Transport will be confirmed within 4 weeks of the commencement of the academic year.	be in excess of a mile from their home, but no more than 2 miles. Transport will be confirmed within 10 working days of the start of the academic year. If learners qualify for FSMs then they will be eligible for subsidised transport.
Concessionary Transport		Concessionary seats will be offered where vacant seats are available. Post 16 travel will have priority.	Concessionary seats will be offered where vacant seats are available. Post 16 travel will have priority, followed by those learners that live furthest away from their school.
Assessment of Available Walking Routes	The assessment should be undertaken on the shortest available route. A route is considered to be available if it is safe (as far as reasonably practicable) for a learner without a disability or learning difficulty to walk the route alone or with an accompanying adult if the learners age and levels of understanding requires this. A risk assessment procedure is outlined in the legislation	A route is assessed on the shortest distance between home and school and only considers topography, traffic, and highways considerations in accordance with the legislation and Road Safety GB guide	The route is assessed on the shortest distance between home and school. The assessment is undertaken based on the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure risk assessment protocol and the Road Safety GB guidance. It is assumed that all primary aged children will be accompanied by an adult.

3.3 It is proposed that consultation of the proposed policy is undertaken commencing on the 28th July and concluding on Monday 22nd August. This will enable officers to present a further report to Cabinet on 7th September which

details the outcomes of the consultation and the proposed final transport policy.

3.4 The consultation will involve raising awareness through social media channels, contacting all of the parents that currently have children using transport and drop-in sessions in the hubs. A response form will be available in either hard copy or electronically and this feedback will be used to inform the final version of the proposed transport policy.

4.0 EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

4.1 The Integrated Impact Assessment is attached.

5.0 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Option	Benefits	Dis-benefits	Comments
Undertake the consultation based on the proposed draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft is more transparent and provides more clarity to parents and learners Consultation will provide opportunities to improve the existing draft and identify unintended consequences. The draft is in line with legislation and continues to offer improved provision on distance criteria, under 5's and the provision of transport for welsh medium and faith schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consultation may result in dissatisfaction if proposals are not taken forward for operational or financial reasons. Limited timescales for consultation may result in lower levels of engagement 	<p>Whilst it is accepted that the consultation timescales are restricted due to the reporting and legislative timescales, a full consultation campaign will be implemented. Responses will be used to review, evaluate, and where appropriate change the existing draft transport policy. This approach is the recommended approach as it enables us to maintain compliance with the Measure and provides an opportunity for our communities to be heard.</p>

6.0 REASONS:

- 6.1 The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure places a requirement on Local Authorities to review their Transport Policy. The proposed policy has been developed through learning on current feedback and issues and a review of neighbouring authorities approaches.
- 6.2 The proposed policy exceeds the statutory duties placed on Local Authorities but is in line with current policy and practice. Given the current hardship being encountered by many families due to the cost of living crisis, it was not considered appropriate to revert practices to the statutory criteria at this time.
- 6.3 Welsh Government undertook consultation on home to school transport in 2020 and are yet to finalise their recommendations. They have however indicated that they are considering reducing the statutory distance criteria and considering altering the eligibility criteria to provide free transport for post 16 pupils, nursery age pupils, welsh medium and faith schools. They have acknowledged that there are resource implications in implementing these proposals in both cost and availability of transport providers. They also recognise that the costs for rural authorities are higher than their urban counterparts.
- 6.4 The proposed transport policy already provides for the majority of the WG proposals; however, it would need to be reviewed to accommodate any changes to post 16 or transport provision for under 5's.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 The cost of school transport for the financial year 22/23 is estimated to be circa £5,463,449. This includes the cost of external provision and our in-house transport provider. The proposed policy is in line with existing practice; therefore, it is not anticipated that it will result in a significant uplift in costs.
- 7.2 Due the nature of the transport market, the costs can change as contracts are handed back and re-tendered, new routes are added to accommodate new learners and contract uplifts to reflect the increasing cost of transport provision.

8 CONSULTEES:

Cabinet

Communities and Place DMT
Monitoring Officer
S151 Officer

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014

10 AUTHOR:

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Draft Transport Policy

Appendix 1 – Draft Transport Policy

Monmouthshire County Council - Home to School Transport Policy 23/24

Introduction

This document sets out Monmouthshire County Councils (MCC) statutory duties to provide free home to school transport for children who live within the Monmouthshire County boundaries. If you do not pay council tax to MCC, please contact your Local Authority to find out how to apply for their home to school transport.

The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure (2008), places a statutory duty on Local Authorities to provide free home to school transport if certain eligibility criteria are met. Monmouthshire County Council has developed its transport guidance in accordance with this legislation to enable it to meet its statutory duties for pupils up to and including year 11.

Free transport will only be available where a student fulfils the necessary criteria which will be explained in detail in this policy document. Parents should only apply for free home to school transport if they have read this guidance and ensured themselves that their children meet the criteria thresholds. If you have previously applied for free home to school transport and been refused, please do not reapply unless your personal circumstances have changed, e.g. you have moved to a new house or your children changed school.

The information given in this guidance relates to the 2023 – 2024 school year. This policy will be reviewed annually in line with the requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure.

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Monmouthshire County Council's Transport Policy

All applications for home to school transport are assessed on an individual basis by the Commissioning Team.

To qualify for free home to school transport a child must attend their nearest suitable state funded or catchment school **and** that school must be over the MCC distance criteria. Free home to school transport will not be provided unless a learner meets both criteria.

Nearest Suitable or Catchment School

The Learner Travel Measure defines nearest suitable school as a school where the 'education or training provided is suitable having regard for the age, ability and aptitudes of the learner and any learning difficulties he or she may have'.

In determining whether a school is suitable it will consider:

- Age appropriateness – relating to attendance at a Primary or Secondary School
- Ability appropriateness – relating to attendance at a mainstream, welsh medium or faith school.
- Special education requirements – if a learner has a statement of special education needs (SEN) which specifies a school.

The nearest suitable school for Transport purposes will be the state-maintained school which is closest to the applicant's home. Where parents have applied for welsh medium or faith education, the same nearest and catchment criteria will apply. A learner's catchment school is defined by the Access Unit. Further information on catchment areas can be found by accessing [School catchment areas - Monmouthshire](#).

Whilst parents are free to exercise parental preference when selecting their preferred

school, free home to school transport will not be provided if the preferred school is not their nearest suitable school (see 1.40 & 1.46 of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure) or catchment school. When assessing the nearest suitable school, the Commissioning Team will consider schools that are outside of the Council's administrative boundary.

When assessing suitability for Transport purposes the Council will not consider parental preferences, parental concerns with a specific school or the outcome of Estyn inspections.

If your nearest suitable school is full, eligibility will be assessed on the basis of the next nearest suitable school that has availability to accept the learner. The same distance eligibility criteria will apply.

Where a learner has to move schools due to incidents of bullying, free transport will only be provided where the Education Welfare Service or Access Unit have been involved and supported the change of schools. Evidence will need to be provided by either the Education Welfare Service or Access Unit to support the request for transport.

Where a younger sibling applies to attend the same school as an older sibling that receives free transport this does not guarantee that the younger sibling will receive it. Each learner is assessed on an individual basis according to the prevailing policy.

Safe walking routes are continually reviewed to reflect changes to the local footpath infrastructure. If an assessment results in a route that was previously designated as unsafe being re-categorised as safe, home to school transport will be withdrawn from the start of the next academic year. The delay in withdrawing the provision is to provide parents and learners the opportunity to prepare for the change.

No transport will be provided for a learner attending a fee paying mainstream independent school.

Distance Criteria and how it is Calculated

A learner's school must be over the prescribed distance for learners to be eligible for free home to school transport.

The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure provides minimum statutory walking distances of 2 miles for primary aged learners and 3 miles for secondary aged pupils. Monmouthshire County Council, however, has chosen to improve the statutory provision and has instead adopted the following distance criteria for all eligible learners:

- Primary aged learners – free home to school transport will be provided if the distance between the nearest suitable school and the learner's home is 1.5 miles or more.
- Secondary aged learners – free home to school transport will be provided if the distance between the nearest suitable school and the learner's home is 2 miles or more.

The Council will determine your nearest suitable school via the shortest available walking route. This will be measured using a Digital Information Mapping System from the point your property meets the adopted highway to the nearest available entrance to the school. A walking route will be considered available if it is safe (as far as is reasonably practicable) for a learner without a disability or learning difficulty to walk the route alone or with an accompanying adult if the learner's age or understanding requires this.

Free transport may also be provided where the Authority is satisfied that the route between home and school is sufficiently dangerous to warrant such provision, even though the distance is below the prescribed 1.5 miles (primary) and 2 miles (secondary).

As part of its assessment the Authority would have regard to the degree of danger involved and whether the accompanying adult is at risk from the particular traffic situation.

Transport for Children Under 5

The provision of free home to school transport is a statutory requirement for those learners aged 5 to 16. Transport for 4 year olds is discretionary and will only be provided if a learner is attending primary school and the parent confirms in writing that their child is able to fasten and unfasten their own seat belt. In the event that a 4 year old is unable to fasten or unfasten their own seat belts the learner will be removed from transport until such time that the parent can demonstrate that their child is now able to meet this requirement or they provide written confirmation a passenger assistant (if one is provided) may assist their child. This will ensure compliance with safeguarding policies and protocols.

Booster seats will not be provided for younger learners. A parent can however provide a booster seat for their child should they wish to do so.

Transport is not provided for learners attending nursery school.

Transport for Learners with Dual Residences

Where learners have more than one home, they will be able to apply for home to school transport for up to two homes which are the nearest to their school. They will still need to meet the eligibility criteria in terms of distance, age and ability as outlined above. Evidence of the dual residency will be required which may include copies of a court order or child benefit correspondence.

Looked After Children

Where children are looked after by the Council, the same distance criteria to their nearest suitable school will apply.

Learners with a Statement of Special Education Needs (SEN)

The same distance criteria apply; however, the Council will consider the specific learning needs specified by the learner's statement of special education needs (SEN). The nearest suitable school is determined by the closest school that can support their needs.

If a learner's SEN specifies a specialist resource, only schools with the specified resource base will be considered when assessing distance criteria. If, however the specified resource can be provided within a mainstream school then all age specific schools will be considered suitable.

Free transport is only available to post 16 SEN pupils if they attend a specialist school or Specialist Resource Base (SRB). Free transport is not available to those learners attending further education within a mainstream school.

Medical Conditions

To qualify for assistance on medical grounds, the learner must be attending their nearest suitable or catchment school.

If a learner's medical needs affect their ability to travel to and from school accompanied as necessary by an adult, parents must provide supporting evidence from their child's consultant. The evidence should detail the difficulties that the learner will experience walking or travelling by public transport.

If transport is granted on medical grounds, the learner's case will be reviewed on an annual basis and up to date evidence on their medical condition will be required at each

review. If up to date medical evidence is not provided transport will be withdrawn.

If a parent has a medical condition that prevents them from taking their primary aged children to and from school, discretionary transport may be provided. Parents must provide evidence of their medical condition from their consultant and their child must be attending their nearest suitable or catchment school.

Discretionary transport granted because of a parent's medical condition will be reviewed on an annual basis and up to date evidence of their medical condition will need to be provided for their review. If up to date medical evidence is not provided, then the discretionary transport will be withdrawn.

Discretionary transport will not be provided to secondary aged learners because of a parent's medical condition as it is expected that the learner will be able to travel to and from school without parental assistance.

Learners Changing Address During Year 10/11

If a learner changes their home address whilst studying for their GCSE exams in either years 10 or 11, they will be entitled to free home to school transport if they meet the following criteria:

- The school they attend was the nearest suitable or catchment school for their previous address.
- Evidence of their new address
- That their new address is more than 2 miles from their school.

If the learner attends a school that was not their previous nearest suitable or catchment school, they will not be provided with free home to school transport for their new address. If, however their new address does mean that the school they are attending is now their nearest or catchment school they

will be able to apply for transport in the normal way.

Length of the Journey

Where possible, journey travel times will be a maximum of 60 minutes for mainstream secondary aged pupils and 45 minutes for mainstream primary aged pupils. For those learners attending welsh medium, faith or special education settings, journey times could be more than an hour dependent on the location of the education setting.

It may not be possible for all learners to be collected from their home address and therefore it will be necessary for parents to take and collect their children from designated pick up and drop off points. Every effort will be made to keep this distance as short as possible and it should not exceed 1 mile under normal circumstances.

Parents are responsible for the safe travel and safeguarding of their children from their home to the agreed pick up and drop off points.

Available Walking Routes

All walking routes are assessed based on the Learner Travel Measure and GB Road Safety Guidance.

Walking route assessments will be undertaken by the Councils Road Safety Officer or other suitably qualified person who will consider both the traffic and social risk factors. When undertaking the assessments, it will be assumed that an adult will accompany all primary aged children.

Copies of walking risk assessments will be made available to parents or learners on request.

Post 16 Transport

The Council does not provide free transport to any learners over the age of 16 at the start of the academic year, unless specified by a statement of SEN.

Post 16 learners will have the opportunity to apply for concessionary travel, but this will be dependent on the availability of seats, that there are no additional financial implications to the Council, no disruption to the transport route and the learner meets the vehicle at a point determined by the transport provider.

Concessionary seats are not guaranteed to be awarded from the start of the academic year; however, all learners will be notified if a seat is available within 10 working days of the commencement of the academic year. If an application is made during the academic year, the applicant will be notified if a seat is available within 10 working days. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the child/children are transported to and from school whilst their application is being considered.

If a concessionary seat is awarded, learners will be collected from a specified point that may be different from any previous pick up and collection points and be in excess of a mile, but no further than two miles from their home.

Learners will not be authorised to use a concessionary seat until it has been officially confirmed in writing by the Commissioning Team.

Pupils allocated a concessionary seat midway through a term will be charged per week for the number of weeks remaining in that term. Payment may be paid in monthly instalments via a standing order by contacting the Sundry Debtor Team upon receiving an invoice.

On occasions it may be necessary to withdraw a concessionary seat, if the seat is withdrawn then we will provide 10 working days' notice and parents will be required to make alternative arrangements.

Applications for concessionary transport will not be considered for learners who are in arrears for previous concessionary transport. When the arrears are cleared the learner will then become eligible for concessionary travel if a seat is available.

The seat will be awarded for 33 weeks as it is assumed that learners will not travel once study leave commences. The cost of the seat is calculated on the basis of 33 weeks only, however if learners need to travel during the study or exam period they can do so at no extra charge.

Refunds will be payable from the date that the Commissioning Team receive written confirmation from the parent that they wish to cancel their child's seat. Retrospective refunds will not be made.

If a Post 16 learner is in receipt of free school meals, they can apply for subsidised travel if they are attending their nearest suitable school.

Concessionary Travel

Those learners that are not eligible for free transport are able to apply for concessionary travel.

Concessionary seats will be awarded if a vacant seat exists, there is no financial implication to the Council, no disruption to the transport route and the learner is taken to a specified pick up and drop off point as determined by the transport provider.

Concessionary seats are not guaranteed to be awarded from the start of the academic year; however, all learners will be notified if a seat is available within 10 working days of the commencement of the academic year. If an application is made during the academic year, the applicant will be notified if a seat is available within 10 working days. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the child/children are transported to and from school whilst their application is being considered

The pickup and drop off point may be more than a mile from the learner's home but no further than 1.5 miles for primary aged learners and 2 miles for secondary.

Learners will not be authorised to use a concessionary placement until officially confirmed in writing by the Commissioning Team.

Applications for Post 16 learners will take priority for concessionary seats. If vacant seats remain, concessionary seats will be awarded based on when the application form was received. For one or more applications received on the same date, the learner whose home address measures the furthest walking distance to the educational establishment will take precedence.

On occasions it may be necessary to withdraw a concessionary seat, if the seat is withdrawn then we will provide 10 working days' notice and parents will be required to make alternative arrangements.

Pupils allocated a concessionary seat midway through a term will be charged per week for the number of weeks remaining in that term. Payment may be paid in monthly instalments via a standing order by contacting the Sundry Debtor Team upon receiving an invoice.

Applications for concessionary transport will not be considered for learners who are in arrears for previous concessionary transport. When the arrears are cleared the learner will then become eligible for concessionary travel if a seat is available.

Refunds will be payable from the date that the Commissioning Team receive written confirmation from the parent that they wish to cancel their child's seat. Retrospective refunds will not be made.

Mode of Transport

Where a learner has been awarded free transport, travel will be in the form of a season ticket for public transport or on dedicated home to school transport.

The Council will always in the first instance seek to provide transport via season tickets on public transport and dedicated transport will only be provided if public transport is not available.

Parents are not able to choose which form of transport or specify vehicles their child will travel on. If a learner does travel on dedicated home to school transport, there is no guarantee that the driver or passenger assistant will stay throughout the learners' academic journey.

There is no guarantee that a learner with special educational needs will automatically receive a passenger assistant in the vehicle provided or be a sole passenger. The provision of passenger assistants is determined by the evidence provided by the learner's consultant or SEN statement.

Bus Passes

All learners travelling on dedicated transport will require a QR code to travel. This can be downloaded from the Councils Elitech software and parents will be provided with guidance how to do this when they are advised that their application for transport has been successful.

The QR code will need to be scanned by the learner when they embark and disembark a vehicle. A hard copy or digital QR code can be used. If a learner loses their QR code during the day, all drivers have a list of passengers so the learner will still be able to travel if they are on the passenger list. No learner will be able to travel without a QR code or inclusion on the passenger list.

Those learners who have been granted free travel on public transport will be issued a

season ticket by the operator prior to the commencement of the academic year.

Additional Journeys

Transport is only provided to and from the learner's home and school. Transport will not be provided to breakfast or after school clubs or for any journeys required during the school day.

Where a learner is taking part in an induction process or has a reduced school schedule, transport will not be provided, and parents will need to make their own arrangements. Transport will not be provided where a learner needs to leave school prior to the end of the school day for sickness or to attend medical appointments.

If a family have to reside in a temporary address, transport will not normally be provided. If there are however exceptional circumstances, e.g. the learner is in years 10 and 11 discretionary transport may be provided.

Right to Withdraw Transport

Where it becomes evident that free transport has been provided in error, the Council has the right to withdraw the transport with 21 days' notice.

Where circumstances change with the walking route measurement or assessment during an academic year, the free transport will be withdrawn at the end of the academic year.

Where concessionary transport has been awarded and the seat is subsequently no longer available e.g. it is required for a pupil eligible for free transport or the contract is terminated, the pass will be withdrawn with 10 days' notice.

Behavioural Issues

The safety of all learners travelling on home to school transport is paramount. If a learner misbehaves, the Council reserves the right to

withdraw the transport provision. Whenever the Commissioning Team is made aware of an incident on home to school transport they will liaise with schools and the Education Directorate to investigate the incident. Where necessary warning letters and or email correspondence will be sent to the parents of learners who misbehave, cause damage to a vehicle, threaten or cause injury to passengers or drivers / passenger assistants or behave in such a way that might jeopardise safety. Home to school transport may be withdrawn from the learner on a temporary or permanent basis in accordance with the Learner Travel Operational Guidance. The Council also reserves the right to either suspend or cancel transport for learners where drivers or passenger assistants have received verbal abuse or been physically assaulted by parents or guardians. In such cases the victims will be encouraged to report such actions to the police and any other necessary authorities.

Where transport is withdrawn, parents are responsible for ensuring that their child gets to school.

Personal Transport Budgets

The Council may choose to offer parents a personal transport budget (PTB), where it is the most cost-effective solution for the Council to meet its statutory duties. It will not automatically be provided and will not be granted where existing suitable transport is in operation.

The PTB is a payment designed to reimburse parents for the costs incurred in providing transport for their children. The payments are made directly into the parent's bank account monthly. The PTB will be calculated based on the driving distance between home and school (by using a Digital Information Mapping System), from the point your property meets the adopted highway to the nearest available entrance to the school. In addition, a calculation will be undertaken to determine the usual time it takes to travel from your home to the school and back again.

Payments to parents will be calculated on a daily rate which includes the travel time and mileage for two journeys to the school and back. The current reimbursement rates are £10 an hour for travel time and 65p per mile.

Payments will be made to parents as follows:

September: Full Monthly Payment based on the completion of all school days for the calendar month.

October to July – The Commissioning Team will contact the school to confirm any learner absences in the preceding month. If a learner has been absent the monthly payment will be reduced to reflect the days where travel has not been incurred.

There will not be any additional allowance for delays due to traffic conditions.

Unforeseen Circumstances

If a transport operator is unable to provide transport due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstance, the Commissioning Team will try to secure alternative transport provision. If, however alternative transport cannot be provided, parents will be contacted and asked to take their children to school. If parents agree they will be reimbursed for the mileage incurred at the rate of 65p a mile following the submission of a completed claims form.

Complaints Process

Only complaints received in writing from parents or learners will be investigated by the Council. Complaints should be made to: passengertransportunit@monmouthshire.gov.uk

The Commissioning Unit will acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days and respond within 10 working days. There may be occasions where we will need to take longer than 10 working days and we will advise you when this happens and provide a timescale as to when you will receive a response.

If a complaint is upheld, appropriate steps will be taken to remedy the issue as soon as is practicable.

they can make a formal complaint by contacting.
feedback@monmouthshire.gov.uk or calling 01633 644644.

Appeals Process

If an application for free transport is refused a parent can appeal the decision using the following process:

Stage 1

The parent should complete an appeal form which can be obtained from the Commissioning Team by emailing:

passengertransportunit@monmouthshire.gov.uk

or calling

01633 644777

The appeal form should be returned to the Commissioning Team with supporting evidence. Their appeal will be considered by the Commissioning Manager and they will receive a formal response within 21 working days.

Stage 2

If the parent is not satisfied with the appeal decision, they can refer the matter to the Head of Decarbonisation, Transport & Support Services. The Head of Service will consider the appeal and any supporting information against the Councils Home to School Transport Policy and the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure.

A response will be provided within 21 days. If the appeal is rejected, there will be no further right of appeal.

If the parent is dissatisfied with the decision process and believes that they have not been treated fairly and in accordance with the Councils Home to School Transport Policy,

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Integrated Impact Assessment document

(incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio Economic Duty)

<p>Name of the Officer completing the evaluation</p> <p>Debra Hill-Howells</p> <p>Phone no: 0775 851405 E-mail: debrahill-howells@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <p>The report seeks consent to consult on the Draft Transport Policy for 23-24. The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 requires that policies are reviewed annually and the agreed policy is published by the 1st October for application in the following academic year. The report provides a draft Transport Policy for 23-24 and seeks approval to undertake consultation before a final version is presented to Members in September.</p>
<p>Name of Service area</p> <p>Decarbonisation, Transport & Support Services</p>	<p>Date</p> <p>11th July 2022</p>

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Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	The proposal details the Transport Policy for statutory learners attending state funded education settings between the age of 4 and 16. It details the eligibility criteria for access to free transport which provides greater opportunity than that prescribed in the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure (LTM) e.g. transport is provided for those learners attending their nearest suitable or catchment school who live 1.5 miles from a primary school or 2 miles from a secondary.	The policy proposes that free transport will only be available to under 5's in the school term that they turn 5. All other 4 year old's attending primary school will need to be transported by their parents. Free home to school transport for post 16's is not provided in accordance with the LTM	Transport for U5's is not a statutory requirement in the LTM, however we are proposing to make it available from the school term that they turn 5. We provide concessionary travel to Post 16 pupils, however this is dependent on spare seats within existing contracts.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Disability	<p>The draft policy provides criteria for the provision of transport for learners with SEN and accessible transport is provided based on their assessed needs.</p> <p>All learners attending primary and secondary settings are able to apply for discretionary transport if they have a medical condition or disability.</p> <p>If a primary aged learners parents have a medical condition which prevents them from supporting their child walking to school , they can apply for discretionary transport if they live less than 1.5 miles from their nearest suitable school.</p>	<p>.Secondary aged learners can not apply for discretionary transport if their parent has a disability as it is assumed that they will be able to walk to school unaccompanied if they live less than 2 miles to their nearest suitable school.</p> <p>If they reside more than 2 miles from their nearest suitable school they will be able to apply for free transport in the normal way.</p>	<p>The discretionary proposal has been introduced to ensure that learners with a medically assessed condition where appropriate can access free transport. This will enable learners with non-mobility issues to access free transport if they can provide current supporting medical information.</p> <p>The distance criteria applied by MCC is lower than the statutory guidelines which results in more learners being able to apply for free transport.</p>
Gender Reassignment	<p>The provision of free school transport is available to all eligible pupils regardless of their gender.</p>	<p>Passenger assistants are not routinely provided on vehicles and therefore if there were issues of bullying or harassment action might be delayed until such time we receive a complaint from a learner or their parent if they are travelling by coach. If they are on a smaller vehicle the driver may be more aware of any issues arising on the vehicle and be able to intervene</p>	<p>Where incidents of bullying or harassment are alleged to occur, the Commissioning Team will work with the school to undertake an investigation. If the allegations are proven we will work with the school to put any reasonable recommended solutions in place including the provision of a PA. Sanctions will be imposed against the perpetrator of proven acts of violence, bullying or harassment.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	N/A	N/A	N/A

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Pregnancy or maternity	We will provide discretionary transport to any learner with a proven medical condition that meets the eligibility criteria or due to their condition are unable to walk to school or access public transport. We will work with the learner, their parents and the school to ensure that anyone who is pregnant and meets the criteria is able to safely travel on school transport.	N/A	We will work with individual learners, parents and schools to ensure that school transport is safe for pregnant learners.
Race	. The provision of free school transport is available to any learner that meets the eligibility criteria.	Passenger assistants are not routinely provided on vehicles and therefore if there were issues of bullying or racial harassment action might be delayed until such time we receive a complaint from a learner or their parent if they are travelling by coach. If they are on a smaller vehicle the driver may be more aware of any issues arising on the vehicle and be able to intervene	Where incidents of bullying or racial harassments are alleged to occur, the Commissioning Team will work with the school to undertake an investigation. If the allegations are proven we will work with the school to put any reasonable recommended solutions in place including the provision of a PA. Sanctions will be imposed against the perpetrator of proven acts of violence, bullying or harassment due to a learners ethnicity.
Religion or Belief	.Free home to school transport is provided for learners attending their nearest faith school.	Parents may wish to exercise parental preference and place their children in a faith school that is not their nearest, which will result in the loss of free school transport.	The provision of free school transport to faith schools already exceeds the requirements of the LTM.
Sex	The provision of free school transport is available to any learner that meets the eligibility criteria.	Passenger assistants are not routinely provided on vehicles and therefore if there were issues of bullying or harassment action might be delayed until such time we receive a complaint from a learner or their parent if they are travelling by coach. If they are on a smaller vehicle the driver may be more aware of any issues arising on the vehicle and be able to intervene	Where incidents of bullying or harassments are alleged to occur, the Commissioning Team will work with the school to undertake an investigation. If the allegations are proven we will work with the school to put any reasonable recommended solutions in place including the provision of a PA. Sanctions will be imposed against the perpetrator of proven acts of violence, bullying or harassment

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sexual Orientation	. The provision of free school transport is available to any learner that meets the eligibility criteria.	Passenger assistants are not routinely provided on vehicles and therefore if there were issues of bullying or harassment action might be delayed until such time we receive a complaint from a learner or their parent if they are travelling by coach. If they are on a smaller vehicle the driver may be more aware of any issues arising on the vehicle and be able to intervene	Where incidents of bullying or harassments are alleged to occur, the Commissioning Team will work with the school to undertake an investigation. If the allegations are proven we will work with the school to put any reasonable recommended solutions in place including the provision of a PA. Sanctions will be imposed against the perpetrator of proven acts of violence, bullying or harassment EQIA training will be provided as soon as it is available from the corporate training service and bespoke advice will be sought for individual cases.

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?

<p>Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice</p>	<p>The provision of free home to school transport will ensure that all learners have equal access to education. The distance criteria is more favourable than that included within the LTM which results in more learners being able to access free transport. Where parents are able to provide current medical information that confirms they are unable to walk or driver their primary aged children to school, discretionary transport is provided. Subsidized concessionary seats are made available where vacant seats exist.</p>	<p>Post 16 pupils are not entitled to free school transport and are therefore reliant on vacant seats being available and their parents being able to support the £440 annual cost.</p> <p>Parents of under 5's are not able to access free school transport until the school term that the learner turns 5. This may create pressures for working parents who will be responsible arranging travel for their children.</p>	<p>Where parents can demonstrate that their primary aged pupils have medical conditions that prevent them from walking to school, discretionary transport may be awarded.</p> <p>Concessionary transport is subsidized by the Council, however if a parent can evidence that they are in receipt of benefits then the fee may be reduced dependent on the individual circumstances.</p>
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3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
<p>Policy Making</p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p>	<p>The LTM measure provides LA's with the ability to provide discretionary transport to welsh medium schools. This policy proposes that all those learners wishing to attend welsh medium education will have access to free transport to their nearest welsh medium school if they meet the eligibility criteria.</p>	<p>If parents choose to exercise parental preference and choose a school setting that is not their nearest suitable welsh medium school, transport will not be provided. This is in alignment with the LTM and mainstream education.</p> <p>The parents of pupils attending school before they turn 5 will need to provide their own transport arrangements until the term that their child turns 5.</p> <p>Post 16 learners will not have access to free school transport.</p>	<p>Post 16 learners will be offered concessionary travel where vacant seats are available. Where possible vehicle sizes will be increased to accommodate additional learners, but this will be dependent on the road network and the ability for a larger vehicle to safely travel along the required roads. It will also be limited by journey times, albeit that it is acknowledged that travel to welsh medium schools may take longer than the recommended travel times due to the distances involved.</p>
<p>Operational</p> <p>Recruitment & Training of workforce</p>		<p>Recruiting drivers is extremely challenging in the current climate and their driving qualifications take priority over their welsh language skills.</p> <p>Staff can only access welsh language training course where they do not impact in school transport duties.</p>	<p>All colleagues have access to welsh language training courses that are provided centrally.</p>




<p>Service delivery</p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p> <p>Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>Parents can apply for school transport through the medium of welsh. All communications can be undertaken through the Welsh Language.</p>	<p>Drivers and passenger assistants may not be able to converse in welsh on the vehicles.</p>	<p>All colleagues have access to welsh language training courses that are provided centrally.</p>
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4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

<p>Well Being Goal</p>	<p>Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.</p>	<p>What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</p>
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>The provision of free school transport ensures that learners can access mainstream, welsh medium or faith schools if they are more than 1.5 or 2 miles away from their homes. SEN transport is provided based on their individual assessments and needs.</p>	<p>The reduced distance eligibility requirements have increased access to school transport and the inclusion of medical reasons in the policy will prevent learners being disadvantaged due to their or their parents medical circumstances.</p> <p>School transport requires a local supply chain to operate home to school contracts. An in house passenger transport service has been created to respond to market failure that provides roles for drivers, passenger assistants and supervisory staff.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>Free school transport reduces the number of motor cars that need to undertake the school run thereby helping to reduce the county's carbon footprint.</p> <p>Where public transport is available, learners are provided with season tickets to reduce the number of dedicated school transport vehicles and increase the viability of the public transport infrastructure</p>	<p>The Council is developing its fleet transition plan that will transition our passenger transport vehicles from internal combustion engines to zero emission vehicles.</p> <p>Routes are continually assessed to identify opportunities to combine routes and reduce the number of vehicle travelling.</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	Where primary aged learners live within 1.5 miles of their school and secondary 2 miles of the school they are encouraged to use active travel to get to school.	We are working with Highways colleagues to identify how safe walking routes can be provided to reduce the numbers of learners who access free transport because a safe walking route is not available.
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	School transport provides access to learners to attend their nearest suitable or catchment schools thereby developing friendships and support networks.	
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	The procurement of external operators is undertaken through a collaborative procurement system with neighboring authorities and contractual terms and conditions are aligned. We have developed or own in house transport provision to respond to market failure so that resources can be provided locally.	
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	Free home to school transport is provided for learners who wish to attend their nearest suitable or catchment welsh medium school	
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	Free home to school transport is accessible to all learners who meet the eligibility criteria. In addition discretionary travel is proposed for specific sets of learners to ensure that they can safely access their nearest suitable or catchment schools.	

5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritized the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p> <p>Long Term</p>	<p>School transport changes on an annual basis as new learners start their education journey or move into the area and others leave the education setting. We work with the Access Unit to identify those learners that are eligible for transport, however we still need parents to apply. It is therefore extremely difficult to undertake long term planning.</p>	<p>Routes are assessed when new learners apply for transport to determine if routes can be aggregated or vehicle size is increased.</p> <p>The in house team continually review their operational needs in order to respond to contractor hand backs, lack of tenders etc. The transition of the fleet will help offset our carbon footprint and plan for future legislative requirements for accessible and net zero school transport vehicles</p> <p>The provision of annual Transport Policy provides a framework for how decisions will be made.</p>
 <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p>Collaboration</p>	<p>For school transport to be successful it needs to be delivered in partnership with operators, parents, schools and learners as well as other Council service areas. We also work with neighbouring authorities to procure operators on a standard contract, agree annual price uplifts and share learning.</p>	<p>The proposed consultation will enable us to understand the views of the local community and reflect on and review the proposed policy appropriate</p>
 <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p> <p>Involvement</p>	<p>The consultation will be open to Monmouthshire's residents and we will use a combination of digital platforms and face to face drop in sessions to maximize engagement opportunities.</p>	

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p>Prevention</p>	<p>Due to ongoing issues around lack of external bids or bids being excessive our internal provision has expanded to fill any potential service gaps. Whilst the majority of contracts are still undertaken through external operators the internal resource has increasingly has to step in to cover contract hand backs or operator failures.</p>	<p>When a new contract is taken on by the internal service, if this exceeds existing capacity we review existing routes to try and release one back to the market. This ensures that contracts are available for the external operators and mitigates the impact of additional contracts on the existing workforce. If no bids are received or they are higher than the internal cost of provision the contract is transferred to the internal team and capacity is adjusted accordingly.</p>
 <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p> <p>Integration</p>	<p>The provision of home to school transport is an essential service underpinning learners education journeys. The service is however resource intensive and reactive to the needs of the learners. The proposed policy provides a framework which ensures consistency in evaluating applications for transport, provides certainty for parents and learners and guidance on how discretionary transport will be awarded.</p>	<p>The proposed consultation will enable officers to reflect on the proposed policy and identify opportunities for improvement.</p>

6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	<p>All drivers, passenger assistants and operators are required to undertake safeguarding training.</p> <p>The policy sets out how school transport will be assessed and provided for looked after children, learners with special educational needs and mainstream learners.</p> <p>All learners, parents and operators are required to adhere to our Rule Book to ensure the safety for all those involved.</p>	.	
Corporate Parenting	The policy sets out the eligibility criteria for looked after children. The service works closely with Children's Services to provision specific transport needs as required.		

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7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

<p>The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008</p> <p>Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2008</p> <p>Existing Transport Policy and Lessons Learnt</p> <p>Existing transport contracts and engagement with individual learners and their parents</p> <p>School transport appeals and requests for discretionary transport</p> <p>A review of other LA Transport policies</p> <p>-</p>

8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

The form has highlighted the complexities of the provision of home to school transport including its substantial impact on resources, its impact on climate change and the need to continually evaluate the provision to respond to a changing social, economic and environmental back drop. The proposed consultation will enable us to consider the feedback against the legislative framework, resources constraints and the wants and wishes of service users. We will be able to articulate where we have been able to make changes to the policy as the result of the feedback and where we have been unable to change the policy the reason why.

It will also enable parents and learners the opportunity to plan for any changes from September 23.

9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

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What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Report to be presented to Cabinet seeking approval to consult on the draft policy	27 th July 22	Head of Service and Commissioning Manager
Undertake consultation on the draft policy	August 22	Commissioning Team
Review feedback, finalize draft and seek Member approval	September 22	Head of Service & Commissioning Manager
Publish Transport Policy 23-24	1 st October 22	Commissioning Manager

10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration

1	Cabinet approval to consult on proposed Transport Policy 23-24	27th July	

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REPORT

SUBJECT: MUCH (Magor & Undy Community Hub) Report

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 27th July 2022

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: Magor East and Undy, Magor West

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To seek approval for the construction of a new community hub at the site known as 'Three Fields' in Magor and Undy.
- 1.2 To enter a long lease agreement with the 'MUCH' Community Group, for occupation and management of the site.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To add the £2,864,316 development of the Magor and Undy Community Hub to the capital programme.
- 2.2 To delegate responsibility to the Chief Officer for Resources and Cabinet Member for Resources for approval of the business case and lease terms with the MUCH group, inclusive of a rent-free period of two years.
- 2.3 That the development is conditional upon granting of £400,000 additional contribution from Welsh Government's Economic Stimulus Fund,
- 2.4 That the development is funded via £800,000 S106 contributions from the Rockfield Farm development, and £222,120 advanced call on the Vinegar Hill development's S106 contribution.

3. KEY ISSUES:

Project Background

- 3.1 Since 1993, various local community groups have pursued the development of a new community facility in Magor and Undy. As established by the Open Spaces Study in 2008, Magor with Undy has a shortfall of provision of

recreation space and many of the existing village halls are not suitable or of sufficient size to accommodate many local user groups.

- 3.2 The 'Three Fields Site' in Magor, accessed via the B4245, was identified as the preferred location for development because of its central position, situated between two villages on a flat, level site with good access. The site benefits from cycle and footpath links to the Magor Village Square, and is in the ownership of the Council.
- 3.3 In May 2008 outline planning permission was granted for the erection of the new community facility, new vehicular access and car park on site. In June 2009 full planning permission was granted, however the local community group were unable to source adequate funding to progress the scheme.
- 3.4 Since 2009, Monmouthshire County Council has collaborated with local community groups to revive the scheme, and an updated planning consent was granted for the community hub development in August 2018 (DM/2018/00910). Extensive residential engagement and consultation has helped shape and inform the design of the building.
- 3.5 The approved scheme included a sustainably designed community hub facility that will cater for a wide range of social, cultural, recreational and sporting activities. The Hub facility and multi-purpose hall will offer spaces for community use and commercial events, as well as potential for small business growth. It is also proposed that the hall will offer an interface between the proposed Magor & Undy Walkway station, which will create employment opportunities as well as support job creation.
- 3.6 The building is designed to meet BREEAM 'Excellent' Standards. This will include the adoption of a low carbon 'green' design based on durability and resilience, inclusive of energy efficient solutions such as solar PV and air source heat pump.
- 3.7 In order to arrive at a total construction cost, a construction partner (Kier Construction) has been procured via the SCAPE Framework and detailed design works undertaken. Following open market testing and a value engineering exercise, the construction cost has been determined to be £2,579,829.
- 3.8 Construction of the community hall is scheduled to last 43 weeks. If approved, construction will commence in September 2022, with targeted completion in July 2023. An early works order has been placed to fix construction costs and maintain the construction program's proposed commencement date.

The MUCH Group

- 3.9 In 2016 the 'MUCH group' was created, a charitable incorporate organization of local volunteers with the purpose of developing and maintaining the community hub. As governed by the rules and regulations of the charity commissions, a board of trustees has been established which currently also doubles-up as a management team. The MUCH group work closely with both the County and Community councils, other local groups (e.g. The 'Magor Station' group and the Living Levels partnership) and involves residents in decisions and activities of the project.
- 3.10 The MUCH group, under its previous name of the Three Fields Community Trust, instigated a community-wide postal consultation in 2016 that received over 750+ responses. The survey results directed the visions and aims of 'the Hub', including the necessity to support social, education and recreational activities. A further survey was undertaken in late 2019/2020 that reaffirmed the aspiration to see a community hub developed.
- 3.11 The MUCH group have a longstanding interest in occupying and managing the proposed community hub, for the direct promotion of community use. The MUCH group manage existing properties in Magor (including Undy Memorial Hall), and this site will afford improved connectivity and publicity of the local offerings.
- 3.12 It is the recommendation of this report that a 25 year lease is granted to the MUCH group for occupation of the site. Entering a lease agreement of this length will enable the MUCH group to pursue additional grants for wider site improvements.
- 3.13 Given MCC is not required to underwrite the cost of development, and in order to support the MUCH group in establishing a successful and sustainable business model, it is recommended that two years rent free is granted upon completion of the build. Subject to approval of the business plan, a market rent will be introduced in year 3 of the MUCH group's occupation. As a registered charity, the MUCH group will be eligible for rental grant.
- 3.14 A business case has been provided by the MUCH group (Appendix B) to evidence their intended use of the facility and sustainable business model. The budget/cash flow forecast has been assessed against a comparable community hall. As per the recommendations of this report, MCC will continue to work with the MUCH group to ensure the predicted expenditure is sufficiently robust.

- 3.15 If the MUCH groups occupation and management of the building is successful, it is anticipated that formal transfer of the freehold via MCC's Community Asset Transfer policy could be considered in future. This would be subject to formal Cabinet approval.
- 3.16 The proposed lease would be inclusive of the community hall following completion of the build, and adjacent orchard. The car park will be excluded from the lease, in order to retain MCC's ability to support the promotion of the proposed walk-way station.

Funding

- 3.17 In order to support the delivery of the scheme, an application was submitted to Welsh Government via the Economic Stimulus Fund and £1.145million was successfully awarded. The £1.145million award is conditional upon expenditure within the financial year 2022-23, and achievement of BREEAM 'Excellent' Standard.
- 3.18 £800,000 of S106 funding has been awarded for the provision of adult recreation/community facilities at the Three Field site via the nearby Rockfield Farm housing development. A further £222,120 is available via S106 recreation/community facility contribution from the nearby Vinegar Hill housing development.
- 3.19 The MUCH group have successfully applied for funding via the 'Big Lottery', and £334,000 is available to support the schemes construction and fit out.
- 3.20 As a consequence of market volatility and cost increases through the design process, a further application to Welsh Government has been made and in principle an additional £400,000 is to be awarded to assist this schemes delivery.
- 3.21 Subject to confirmation of the increase in Welsh Government contribution, the total project budget is £2,901,120. Any savings to the budget will enable S106 funding to be redistributed to other local projects.

4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL:

In determining how to proceed with the project the following options were considered:

Option	Benefits	Risks
Enter into the construction contract and lease with the MUCH group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a long-standing local ambition for the creation of a community hub in the area. • Entering into contract will secure construction costs (subject to provisional sums), minimizing risks associated with volatility in the construction market. • Enable development to proceed without risk of forfeiting the WG funding and required timescales for spend. • The development will be to BREEAM 'Excellent' Standards and align with MCC's climate declaration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the time of writing, slow worm translocation is being undertaken and the results could cause programme delays. • Tenant could fail to manage the property and asset returns to MCC as liability. • MCC will be required to fund the shortfall should WG fail to provide the £400k additional contribution.
Redistribute S106 contributions to other schemes. Not proceed with the MUCH development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S106 funding can be redistributed to other adult recreation projects in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WG funding will be lost and therefore scheme no longer viable. • Construction costs would no longer be fixed and further market testing would be required, creating further delays.

5. REASONS:

5.1.1 Given the current financial climate, the Council is seeking to develop opportunities to reduce financial pressures whilst developing and supporting community resilience and new ways of delivering services. The proposed lease of the new property will secure the provision of the new facilities for the benefit of the community.

5.1.2 Development of the community hall would support results of local consultation, working groups, and long-standing aspiration to deliver this project to satisfy local demand, including satisfy a shortfall of recreation space.

5.1.3 The application is in accordance with the Councils adopted Asset Management Plan which when adopted in 2014 set out the intention to support Community Asset Transfer. It is the aspiration of the group that a formal application for the freehold transfer of the asset, via the Community Asset Transfer policy, will be submitted if the scheme is successful.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 The total cost of the project is approximately £2,864,316, inclusive of construction and client costs. The project budget is £2,901,120, consisting of the following funding awards:

Welsh Government Economic Stimulus Funding - £1,545,000
S106 Contribution via Rockfield Farm development - £800,000
S106 contribution via Vinegar Hill development – £222,120
Lottery grant via the MUCH group - £334,935

- 6.2 Grant of a two year rent free period will remove a potential annual revenue to MCC. The anticipated market rent for the facility is approximately £10,322, however the MUCH group would be eligible for rental grant.

7. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation can be found at Appendix B to this report.

8. CONSULTEES:

Cabinet
Strategic Leadership Team
Local Ward Members
Jon Davies – Central Accountancy Finance Manager
Mike Moran – Community Infrastructure Coordinator
Judith Langdon - Head of Community Led Delivery
S106 Working Group

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

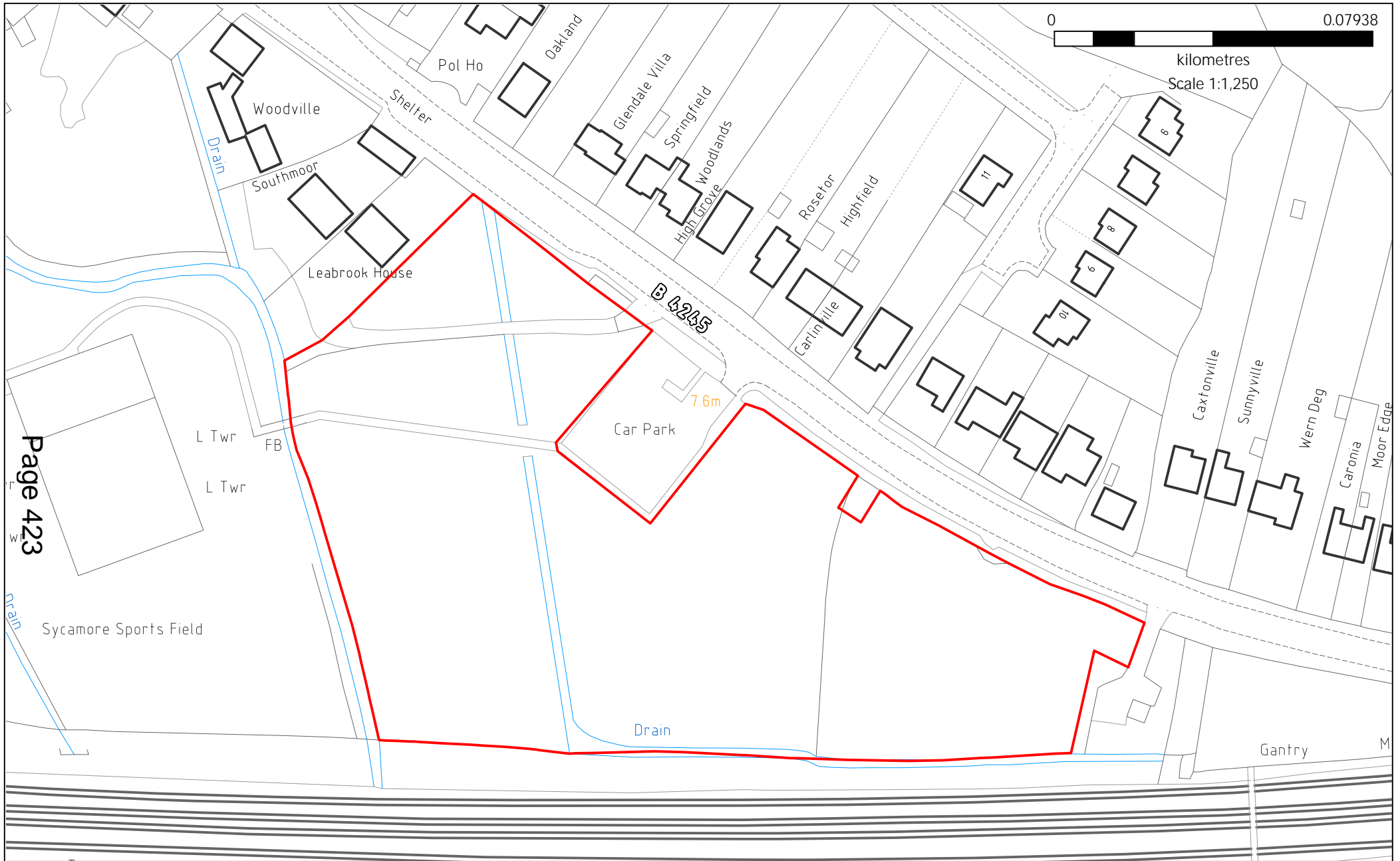
Appendix A – Redline Plan of the ‘Three Fields’ Site
Appendix B – Draft MUCH Business Plan.
Appendix C – Integrated Impact Assessment

10. AUTHOR:

Nicholas Keyse – Estates Development Manager

11. CONTACT DETAILS:

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MUCH

MAGOR & UNDY COMMUNITY HUB

Business Plan 2021-24



Version 8.0

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1. Executive Summary

For decades the people of Magor with Undy have been crying out for a sizable, secular centre where they can meet to socialise, learn, pursue hobbies and exercise, as the existing few 'halls' are small and principally non-secular and not fit for purpose. Fortunately, a local resident donated land, known as the Three Fields Site, to the county council on condition that it was used for such purposes. Various local groups have tried over the years, working with the county and community councils, to raise funds to erect a multi-purpose building, within a pleasant green site, that could be used for the various activities. For one reason and another the efforts of the previous groups failed, but since those times the community has grown and continues to grow, so the need has intensified dramatically. In 2016 a new group of keen volunteers formed, Magor & Undy Community Hub (MUCH), working with local authority staff, to try once again to bring the vision, shown on the front of this document, to fruition.

MUCH is now a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) but under its previous name of the Three Fields Community Trust, it instigated a community-wide postal consultation in 2016. This survey confirmed the vision and aims of 'The Hub' as being a centre that could facilitate not only the social, educational and recreational activities but also, working with other bodies, be a centre for wellbeing and a 'destination' for visitors to use the facilities, local businesses and the surrounding countryside.

The new building (The Hub) has been designed by Pentan Architects (Cardiff) via a contract let by Monmouthshire County Council. It is smaller than envisaged by earlier groups but is still of a size and type that will meet the needs and aspirations of the residents. It also has the capability of a conservatory-type extension, on the eastern elevation, being added in the future. Planning permission for the structure and the landscaping of the grounds, was granted in August 2018. The original building cost, as evaluated by MCC and Mott MacDonald, was estimated at £1.45m. Monmouthshire County Council earmarking £800k towards the cost. The challenge then for the MUCH group was to raise the balance (the 'funding gap') and to identify funding sources for its fit-out. In summary, the vision is that The Hub will become the accessible centre for the community, providing a large and small hall, situated in the green space of a wetland and orchard, that will be used for recreation and exercise, adjacent to the proposed site for a mainline railway station that integrates with the local bus services.

The timeline for the development had been amended several times since the start of this most recent iteration of delivering 'a centre'. The project has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic which further delayed delivery, increased costs and made consultations extremely difficult. However, the Trustees continued to meet monthly over 'Zoom' or socially distanced, during the pandemic, to continue to progress the project and communicate with residents and interested parties. For example, a joint announcement was made via the [local press in November 2020](#). In April 2021, the project was recognised by

Welsh Government by providing a massive grant from the Economic Stimulus Fund which allowed MCC to commence the detailed 'plan and build' phase, with a then expected completion date of Autumn 2022. Again, this was announced in the [local press in July 2021](#). Subsequent to this, in November 2021, MUCH was successful in obtaining a substantial grant from the Peoples Lottery Community Fund. This brought the budget up to £2.2m, which was the latest cost estimate by the appointed contractor, Keir, following RIBA stage 3.

Governance and management of the project, and eventually the Hub itself, follows the rules and regulations laid down by the charity commission. A board of trustees has been established which currently also doubles-up as a management team. It works closely with both the County and Community councils, other local groups (e.g. The 'Magor Station' group and the Living Levels partnership) and involves residents in decisions and activities of the project. 'Working Groups' have been set up for 'Policy & Administration', 'Resource Management', 'Communications' and 'Site and Building Development', delivering anything that will contribute to the eventual opening and operation of The Hub. In the longer term, it is expected that the centre will be run by a management team, possibly involving one or more of the Trustees, formed from existing and future volunteers, activity group leaders (e.g. from the Pilates group) and 1 or 2 full or part-time paid members of staff.

The Trustees carried out a community-wide survey of residents in late 2019/early 2020 that requested their latest thoughts and 'needs' from 'The Hub'. Reassuringly, this consultation not only re-affirmed the requirements identified in the 2016 survey but also added new ideas and further offers of help to run activity or social groups. Originally, of course, the concept of a new centre was purely locally driven, but as time has passed it has become more apparent that the need now fits with the strategic direction laid down by governments. It has evolved into a centre that can and will address the importance of the wellbeing of our current and future residents (prescribed in the 2015 Wellbeing and Future Generations Act). It also very much relies on the help of 'The Third Sector' (people in their communities identifying and delivering the services they need). If, as expected the much-vaunted concept of the 'Magor & Undy Walkway' station is opened and, as intended, it integrates with The Hub and the local bus service and other public transport, The Hub will be helping to facilitate the use of sustainable transport and promoting 'active travel'.

The Trustees have taken time to evaluate and calculate the projected demand of services provided by The Hub and the proposed charges to ensure that it is self-sustaining. It has done this by making comparisons with similar operations in other communities and the use and demand of the current facilities offered by the small non-secular halls. This has been set against a background of understanding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (a SWOT analysis) that may impact or effect delivery. Consequently, a risk management plan has been formulated and will be maintained throughout the project to ensure safe, timely and cost-effective delivery.

In mid-2022, it became clear that the impacts of COVID and conflict in Europe was having a detrimental effect the global and domestic economies and hence the estimated cost of build. This resulted in the cost raising from £2.2m to £2.7m. However, in partnership working with MCC, specifications were amended to reduce costs (Value Engineering). Simultaneously, funding sources were identified that could be either raised or justifiably introduced to bridge the gap.

There are undoubtedly many challenges ahead, both known and unknown but with the current team of competent and enthusiastic volunteers, working in partnership with the County Council, there is a high confidence that any problems can be solved and The Hub can now be built and operated.

2. Purpose & Aims

Magor and Undy Community Hub (MUCH) is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) whose purposes are to develop, maintain and administer a community centre and outdoor community site for the benefit of residents of Magor and Undy and immediate surrounding communities.

Aims:

- To bring the 'Three Fields' site into beneficial community use by providing facilities for educational, social, and recreational purposes for the residents of Magor and Undy
- To contribute to improving the health and well-being of all members of the community
- To facilitate the local delivery of non-statutory services to the community
- To cooperate with other organisations, voluntary and public bodies in achieving the goals of the Magor and Undy Community Hub charity.
- To encourage visitors from further afield to use the Hub facilities, visit the Living Levels, surrounding areas and use the local businesses during their visits

See Appendix 1 - Constitution.

3. Background

The need for a community centre for the growing population of Magor and Undy has long been recognised. Efforts have been made locally, since pre-2000, to secure such a resource to complement the existing, mainly non-secular, small halls.

In 2016 a new group of volunteers formed MUCH with the intention of establishing a Hub that serves the whole community, improving wellbeing and catalysing further community action. The Committee comprises of Trustees, interested residents and partner organisations.

Plans have been drafted, and numerous community consultations and surveys have been completed, to ensure developments are needs-based and community-led.

4. Hub Facilities

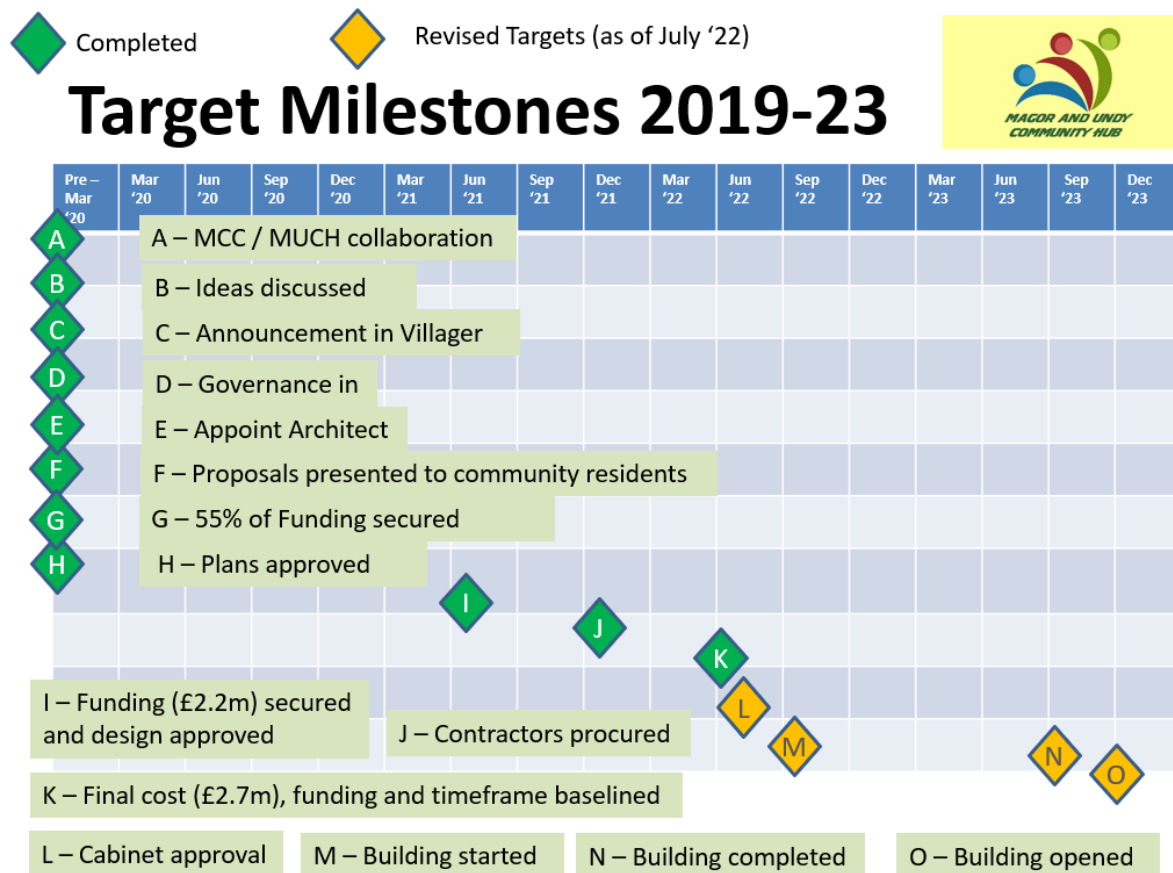
The Hub will offer a café and rooms for hire to local groups and organisations. Individual private hire will also be on offer. It will comprise of a main hall, a smaller hall, 2 small flexible meeting rooms, café area, kitchen and toilet facilities. Outside, the grounds will be developed to provide a place for exercise, recreation and leisure – including safe, off-road paths, ‘chatting-benches’ and picnic tables in the orchard.

5. Unique Selling Points (USP)

The Hub will address the following needs and current gaps in provision:

- A large hall will allow sizable events which are not possible in any of the current local facilities
- The Hub will hopefully adjoin a ‘Walkway’ railway station that will further promote well-being via ‘active travel’ routes
- The buildings position, in a large green space, will promote wellbeing and will include –
 - an orchard
 - a semi-wetland
 - community garden
 - a large, safe space for outside events
 - an adjacent Multi Use Games Area that is unrivaled in the locality.

6. Project Timetable



The Hub building will initially belong to Monmouthshire County Council, but on completion both the Hub and land will then be subject to a community asset transfer to MUCH.

MUCH was granted charitable registration, as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, in October 2019 - charity number **1185780**.

7. Management of MUCH & Personnel

Management Structure

Development is managed by the MUCH Trustees who meet monthly:

- Paul Turner – Chair
- Kevin Wright – Treasurer
- Linda Squire – Secretary
- Sally Raggett – without portfolio
- Mike Burke – without portfolio
- Sian King – without portfolio

With support from the wider MUCH Committee which meets a minimum of 4 times per year (to be revived when COVID constraints allow).

Presently the Committee consists of approximately 15 volunteers including:

- Trustees
- Monmouthshire County Council officers
- Community and County councillors
- Residents
- Ad hoc advisors

Work is delegated to four working groups, namely:

- Communications group Chair – Paul Turner
- Policy and Administration group Chair – Sian King
- Resources Chair – Kevin Wright
- Site and Buildings Chair – Mike Burke

The working groups meet on an ad hoc basis, as needed and report back to the wider MUCH Committee.

Further details outlining the management of the Hub, during development and once operational is contained in Appendix 2.

Personnel – Staffing & Volunteers

Staffing

The Trustees and wider MUCH Committee will oversee development, management and administration of the Hub. Ultimate responsibility for the development and delivery of the Hub lies with the Trustees.

Once operational, daily management tasks will be delegated to a paid, Caretaker/Manager. Alternatively, two separate part-time posts of Hub Manager and Caretaker may be sought.

Volunteers

All volunteers are expected to complete a short induction which includes discussion of their role and working arrangements. An Induction Pack containing policies and procedures, including Health & Safety and Safeguarding, is given as part of the induction.

A Volunteer Management Policy will be developed.

Training & Support

A Skills Matrix (Appendix 3,) has been completed for all trustees and volunteers to identify gaps in knowledge and skills. These are being addressed by -

- Attending courses and workshops provided by the local authority and other training bodies
- Seeking support and information from Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) and other Third Sector, public and private bodies.

8. Strategic Fit

MUCH dovetails strategically with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 and Monmouthshire County Council's Wellbeing Plan. It is a needs-led, community driven approach supports active citizenship and an asset-based development approach, advocated by statutory and Third Sector partners across the County. Volunteering, the development of social enterprise and Third Sector provision by the community, for the community, aligns with Public Service Board and Local Authority work.

Developing alternatives to statutory provision and empowering people to develop the services they need, locally and for the purposes of improving their own wellbeing, is at the heart of Welsh Government strategy.

Both the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, are based on the principles of wellbeing;

- placing people at the centre of decision making about their lives;
- working in partnership with individuals in order to achieve their desired outcomes, and
- on prevention and early intervention.

These principles are also fundamental to tackling loneliness and social isolation in Wales (Welsh Government Consultation document 'Connected Communities Tackling Loneliness and Social Isolation, 2018')

The Hub will play a pivotal role in helping to develop a Wales of 'cohesive communities' (one of the seven pillars of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015) and a 'thriving and well-connected county' (Monmouthshire County Council Wellbeing objective 2017/18).

The project also compliments other local initiatives including MAGOR's campaign to install a new railway station and a walkway adjoining to the Hub. The Hub will be within easy walking distance of the railway platforms and will receive foot traffic from commuters. Similarly, it is well placed to be accessed from the Gwent levels and Magor Marshes.

Monmouthshire County Council are working with Sustrans to develop active transport routes around Severnside and the Hub's position will link well with the cycle/walkways under development as part of its Active Travel strategy.

Local housing developments and a rapidly expanding population make the Hub critical for nurturing cohesive and inclusive communities, that are central to people's sense of wellbeing.

9. Evidence of Need

Currently there are approximately 6,500 residents in Magor and Undy. New housing developments mean this will shortly rise to 8,000. Monmouthshire County Council's plans see this rising to 10,000 over the next few years. Community spaces are over-subscribed and do not provide adequate capacity for large events such as dramatic or film performances.

In 2016 a Three Fields questionnaire was distributed to all local households. The headline results from over 760 responses indicated the need for the following:

- Large hall for amateur dramatics, choral performances, film shows, tea dances and exhibitions etc.
- Social hall for club and society meetings
- Hall available for private hire
- Outdoor venue for carnivals, fetes and markets etc.
- Community park for walks, jogging and picnics etc.

Community consultation is ongoing and takes place approximately every six months via the local, well-attended May and Frost Fayre's that act as a platform to engage with the wider community. The aim of the consultation has been to ensure people remain up to date with progress; to gain feedback on services people want to see at the Hub and to refine the design of the Hub. To aid the latter, building plans and images of the Hub have been used to stimulate debate.

A Community Duck Race was held in the Summer (2019) to raise awareness of MUCH plans and to encourage the community to come together. Building plans were marked out onsite to help people to envisage the size and design of the build. Feedback from people attending was overwhelmingly positive and attracted new volunteers. Further social events have also taken place since, again raising awareness.

A second, wide-scale survey of residents of Magor and Undy, started in October 2019.) principally using the local community magazine and 'Survey Monkey' has taken place. The survey asked for feedback on the range of services and facilities people want at the Hub and comments were also invited on plans and progress to date. The survey also appealed for volunteers.

Around 90 people responded to the recent survey. Appendix 4 Shows the results of the most recent survey of the community. It reinforces the findings of the large-scale 2016 survey, views expressed at engagement events and other anecdotal evidence.

The headline needs are –

- Somewhere to socialise indoors and outdoors
- Somewhere to exercise
- Somewhere to learn
- Somewhere for entertainment
- Somewhere for hobbies
- Somewhere for wellbeing support

The results of the survey are depicted in Appendix 4

-

10. Marketing

MUCH has a website detailing the projects background and purposes. The Project Timetable includes development milestones, so progress can be tracked.

The website (maintained by the communications sub-group) features news updates, forthcoming activities and minutes of meetings. The sub-group will continue to lead on marketing and promotional matters.

Other communications with residents are carried out by a range of methods including; Twitter, Face Book accounts, Public Notice Boards and advertising banners on the site. Local Newsletters such as The Villager, member mailing lists and local networks e.g. Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations, Magor Amateur Dramatics group, Magor Action Group on Rail (MAGOR) and Magor with Undy Community Council.

11. Charges

MUCH have looked at local providers and similar facilities in the wider area, to determine what its user charges may be. See Appendix 5 – Draft Charging Policy.

12. Budget/Cash Flow Forecast

Although we compared other Community Hall Accounts. MUCH used the Hartpury Hall accounts for 2017/18, as a basis of income and expenditure for a similar sized, Trustee operated Community Hall.

The chart predicts figures for the first four years of the Hub's operation. Should income figures be exceeded, MUCH will seek to appoint a Caretaker/ Manager ASAP to increase the availability of the HUB. The need for this increased availability is predicated due to the fact that Hartpury Hall has a catchment of approximately 3000 residents and Magor and Undy currently has double that - with the current Monmouthshire CC housing plans suggesting a further increase in population of approx. 4000 over the coming years.

Hartpury Income 2017/8	£	22,942.00
Hartpury Expenditure 2017/8	£	12,972.00

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	25% of Hartpury	40% of Hartpury	75% of Hartpury	100% of Hartpury
Predicted Income	£ 5,735.00	£ 9,176.00	£ 17,206.00	£ 22,942.00
Predicted Expenditure	£ 12,972.00	£ 13,296.30 Year 1 +2.5%	£ 13,628.71 Year 2+2.5%	£ 13,969.43 Year 3+2.5%
Surplus/Deficite ()	£ (7,237.00)	£ (4,120.30)	£ 3,577.29	£ 8,972.57

To further gauge business income, we have completed a totally independent conservative forecast exercise, based on conversations with likely users' indicating their use of the facilities. This second forecast closely mirrored the predictions gained from the Hartpury figures.

We again looked at Hartpury Income and Expenditure for 2021/22 and revised our table (below) for the first four years of operation. (These latest accounts have only just been prepared for Year End March 2022 so have not yet been independently verified).

Hartpury Income 2021/2 £ 18,069.82
Hartpury Expenditure 2021/2 £ 10,258.55

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	25% of Hartpury	40% of Hartpury	75% of Hartpury	100% of Hartpury
Predicted Income	£ 4,517.46	£ 7,227.93	£ 13,552.37	£ 18,069.82
Predicted Expenditure	£ 10,258.55	£ 10,771.48 Year 1 +5%	£ 11,310.05 Year 2+5%	£ 11,875.55 Year 3+5%
Surplus/Defacit ()	£ (5,741.10)	£ (3,543.55)	£ 2,242.31	£ 6,194.27

The first 2 years still show a deficit, but this would be off-set by the revenue element of the Lottery Grant.

Whilst having a Teams discussion, the Chair of Hartpury confirmed that they had done a similar 3-year forecast when they opened, but that they had started making a profit after only 3 months of operation, which was very encouraging.

Clearly, in the post-Covid era, it is very difficult to accurately predict future earnings but Hartpury do seem to have recovered quite quickly to pre pandemic usage levels. We are also faced with ever increasing energy costs, however the predicted income figures have not taken into account likely usage charge increases, which we could use to offset these increased costs.

The following is a copy of the Hartpury Accounts showing the itemised income and expenditure for 21/22. The lines highlighted have been excluded from the finance comparison figures as they will not be relevant to MUCH. (E.g. Additional Income streams and Hall improvements)

HARTPURY VILLAGE HALL - Accounts for Year ending 31st March 2022		
INCOME	2020/2021	2021/2022
Hire of Hall: Alexander Technique	202.50	745.00
Badminton	--	700.00
Balance Classes	--	315.00
Bowls	--	565.00
Drama Group	--	300.00
Election	--	300.00
Fitness Class	50.00	340.00
Health Walks	60.00	270.50
Leadon Choir	--	280.00
Line Dancing	247.50	855.00
Miscellaneous (incl deposits on keys)	90.00	438.00
Parish Council	--	284.00
Pilates	--	461.00
Private Parties	50.00	5,159.00
Produce Market	--	187.50
SupaStrikers	--	360.00
Weddings	-600.00	2,910.00
WI	40.50	244.50
Yoga	465.00	1,679.50
	605.50	16,394.00
Donations & Grants	23,715.50	10,843.96
Contribution from Bar	-70.69	921.51
Transfer from "100" Club	815.00	735.00
Marquee hire	100.00	2,000.00
Concerts & Theatre performances	--	749.77
Village BBQ	--	-187.40
Sale of surplus items	--	30.00
Investment Income	221.56	4.54
	<u>25,388.87</u>	<u>31,491.38</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Work on Hall & Grounds - Cleaning	2,347.88	2,511.02
- Gardening & Maintenance	1,556.14	2,873.60
	3,904.02	5,384.62
Additions & improvements to Hall & Grounds	26,110.58	7,226.90
Licences, Subscriptions, Fees, Taxes & Gifts	115.00	873.71
Other Expenses	790.96	212.91
Insurance	1,148.68	1,166.99
Electricity	1,896.62	2,284.52
Telecom	228.68	237.48
Water	139.55	98.32
	<u>34,334.09</u>	<u>17,485.45</u>
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	<u>-8,945.22</u>	<u>14,005.93</u>
MONETARY ASSETS (See note below)		
NS Investment A/c	28,239.68	28,242.50
Santander Savings Accounts	18,834.07	18,835.79
Cash in Hand	237.40	275.14
Bank Current Account	10,139.34	23,966.71
"100 Club" Working Account	525.00	425.00
Cash Float & Stock for Bar	1,005.72	1,242.00
	<u>58,981.21</u>	<u>72,987.14</u>
<p>Note: Of money held in the bank accounts the following sums are specifically earmarked - The sum of £1,523.44 is held for the Youth Club. - The nominal (depreciated) sum of £69,303 for replacement of hall equipment - now exceeds the available money held</p>		
G H Jones, Treasurer, 04/04/2022		Independent Examiner

Our hire charges are comparable to Hartpury's. Taking the three main income sources as examples, private parties, weddings and yoga, we have calculated the number of instances of each per year. These equate to –

- 15 private parties
- 4 to 5 wedding receptions
- 56 yoga sessions

We consider these numbers to be easily achievable and therefore validates the income we can achieve.

To further gauge business income, we have completed a totally independent conservative forecast exercise, based on conversations with likely users' indicating their use of the facilities. This second forecast closely mirrored the predictions gained from the Hartpury figures.

Business Plan Forecast Usage of HUB		
Year 1		
Large Hall		
3 clubs averaging 2hrs Week	£	90.00
1 large 3hr function per month eg Cinema, theatre, Social event		£200
Smaller Hall		
Youth evenings (2hrs) twice a week	£	48.00
Business usage 4hrs month	£	60.00
Clubs usage 3x 2hrs week eg art club, writing club	£	72.00
Coffee shop lease income	£	100.00
Monthly Income	£	570.00
Total for Year	£	6,840.00
Year 2		
Large Hall		
5 clubs averaging 2hrs Week	£	150.00
3 large 3hr function per month eg Cinema, theatre, Social event		£600
2 Childrens Parties		£100
Smaller Hall		
Youth evenings (2hrs) three times a week	£	72.00
Business usage 6hrs month	£	90.00
Clubs usage 5 x 2hrs week eg art club, writing club	£	120.00
Coffee shop lease income	£	200.00
Monthly Income	£	1,332.00
Total for Year	£	15,984.00
Year 3		
Large Hall		
8 clubs averaging 2hrs Week	£	240.00
3 large 3hr function per month eg Cinema, theatre, Social event		£600
3 Childrens Parties		£150
Smaller Hall		
Youth evenings (2hrs) three times a week	£	72.00
Business usage 10hrs month	£	150.00
Clubs usage 7 x 2hrs week eg art club, writing club	£	168.00
Coffee shop lease income	£	250.00
Monthly Income	£	1,630.00
Total for Year	£	19,560.00

13. Magor and Undy Community Hub SWOT Analysis

This table will be reviewed periodically at Trustee's meeting

Strengths	Weaknesses
Community led	Grant dependant
Charity registered & Trustee Constitution	Not fully funded for fit-out
On a site where nature and heritage protected	Community engagement / awareness medium
Design based on people's needs	Lack of marketing expertise
Sustainable design to BREEAM excellent standard	Lack of legal expertise
Skilled and experienced trustees and group members	Community engagement was restricted by COVID
Partnership approach – County and Community/Town Councils, Peoples Lottery, MAGOR and Living Levels	
Consultations completed in 2016, 2019/20 & 2021 to ensure requirements are valid and up to date	
Opportunities	Threats
Place for expanding population to use	Not reaching funding target (for fit-out)
Appropriate development for unused land	Lack of uptake of facilities by community
One-stop shop for council services	Station not approved
Complements proposed 'Walkway Station'	Increasing capital costs
Accommodates indoor and outdoor events	Parking limitations
Brings the 2 villages closer together	
Can be adapted for future requirements	
To seek various new funding opportunities	
To seek engagement and work with local businesses	
Provides post-COVID social help and wellbeing	

Reviewed July 2022

14. Risk Management

Risks have been assessed and are shown in Appendix 6 and, as for the SWOT analysis, will be reviewed periodically at Trustee / Management meetings.

15. Funding Opportunities

MUCH intends, if necessary, to seek funding from a range of grant providers, including:

- Lottery Awards for All – capital & revenue funding
- Community Facilities Programme (CFAP) – capital for build
- Heritage Lottery (Community green space - orchard)
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Foyle Foundation – Arts grants & small grants scheme
- Sports Wales - sports courts
- Arts Council Wales - amateur dramatics
- Lloyds Bank Foundation - youth projects
- Gwent High Sheriffs fund
- People's Health Trust
- Co-op Local Community Fund
- The Rank Foundation

Appendices:

Appendix 1. Constitution

Appendix 2. Skills Matrix

Appendix 3. Hub Management (development & operational phases)

Appendix 4. 2019 Community Consultation & Survey Results

Appendix 5. Draft Charging Policy

Appendix 6. Risk Management

Appendix 1 – Constitution

The following is a hyperlink to the Constitution of the CIO, [Magor and Undy Community Hub](#)

Appendix 2 – Skills Matrix

MUCH current skills analysis												Total Score
	CQUH	CTLH	CLXH	CSPH	CTSC	CMTH	CEUH	CNCH	CNCC	CHDC	DNCH	
Administration	2	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	1	4		21
Board/committee experience	1	2	4	2	2	2	1	2	1	3		20
Campaigning	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	4		37
Change management	1	3	1	4	4	2	2	1	2	4		24
Charity/voluntary organisation governance	3	2	3	2	2	4	2	3	2	3		26
Conflict resolutions	1	4	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	4		24
Customer care	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	3	3	1		18
Digital	2	3	2	2	3	2	1	2	1	3		21
Enterprise/business development	4	4	4	4	3	4	1	2	3	2		31
Facilitating meetings	1	3	1	2	3	2	1	1	1	4		19
Finance	2	3	1	4	3	2	2	2	3	2		24
Fundraising	4	4	4	4	1	4	3	3	3	4		34
HR/Training	2	3	2	4	4	2	3	4	3	4		31
Income generation	3	4	4	4	3	2	1	4	3	4		32
Influencing	1	3	2	4	3	2	1	2	2	3		23
IT/systems	1	3	1	2	3	2	1	4	1	4		22
Leadership	1	3	1	2	3	2	3	1	2	3		21
Legal	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4		39
Listening	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	3	2	2		21
Marketing	4	4	4	4	3	4	2	4	2	4		35
People management	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	3		16
PR/communications	3	3	4	1	3	3	3	4	1	4		29
Project management	1	3	1	4	4	2	1	1	1	2		20
Property	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	2		35
Relationship management	2	3	4	3	4	2	2	3	2	2		27
Service user/beneficiary of the organisation	2	4	4	2	2	3	4	4	2	4		31
Team development	1	2	2	2	3	1	1	1	2	4		19
Voluntary sector experience	4	2	4	1	1	4	3	3	2	3		27
	61	86	73	80	78	69	58	72	60	90	0	
	2.2	3.1	2.6	2.9	2.8	2.5	2.1	2.6	2.1	3.2	#DIV/0!	
Low score = strong												
High score = weak												

Appendix 3 - Hub Management (during development phase and once operational.)

Overall Policy decided by: -

- Meeting of trustees and any co-optees
- Or in writing or electronic format by a majority of trustees

Day to day decisions: -

- Urgent or important items will be communicated to the Trustee / Management Group via 'instant messaging' and decisions taken accordingly
- Once the Hub is established, non-urgent matters will be dealt with by the attending keyholder (who may be a Trustee, Manager/Caretaker or volunteer.)

Procedures for target setting

- comparing with similar size community centres and communities
- reviewing what has been achieved to forecast for the future

Management reporting/monitoring

- monthly update reports to MUCH trustees on progress on funding/build
- once built, monthly reporting of
 - bookings /events / footfall
 - type of community groups using the facility
 - income/expenditure
 - review of successes and any lessons learnt.

Staff supervision/appraisals

- not applicable initially
- In the future any manager appointed will have supervision/appraisals from 2 trustees. The manager will carry out supervision/appraisals for any staff reporting to them.

Accountability

MUCH Trustees are accountable to the following:

- The Charity Commission
 - As part of their charitable obligations, MUCH will report annually to the Charity Commission. (Note, every registered charity must produce a trustees' annual report and make it available on request. Those with an income below £10,000 are required to submit an Annual Update to the Charity Commission, which includes changes to the charity's details, changes to trustee details, plus income and expenditure for the year.)

- Our landlords, Monmouthshire County Council. (Once agreed, please refer to lease for terms and conditions.)
- To the local community and the community council

During the build MUCH will -

- Overall build will be managed by MCC – With MUCH representatives taking a holistic stakeholders view
- Compare progress against project Gantt chart on a monthly basis at Trustee meeting & on a 6-weekly basis at the Wider MUCH group
- Review risks and actions required to manage them, which will link in with achievements

MUCH will communicate with and involve the community, users, partners, funders by: -

- Publishing an annual report at the AGM on financial position, as well as progress/achievements, including photos and feedback on any future plans.
- Inviting users, partner and funders to the AGM, and circulating copies of the annual report to individuals upon request
- Sharing the annual report on social media and the MUCH website
Circulating and displaying information in prominent areas in the community. For example, the Community Council offices, P.O., churches, dentists and doctors etc. Also, once the Hub is built it will be displayed in reception
- Undertaking regular surveys and consultations with the community to ensure the Hub provides what they want and need
- Once established, to undertake regular user surveys to obtain views on the facilities
- Holding events promoting awareness of the Hub to all groups and the public in the Magor and Undy area
- Holding Public meetings
- Arranging a formal opening of the Hub, inviting all groups in the community and those that have provided funding and support
- Co-opting community representatives to obtain advice and provide information.

Appendix 4 – 2019 Community Consultation and Survey Results.

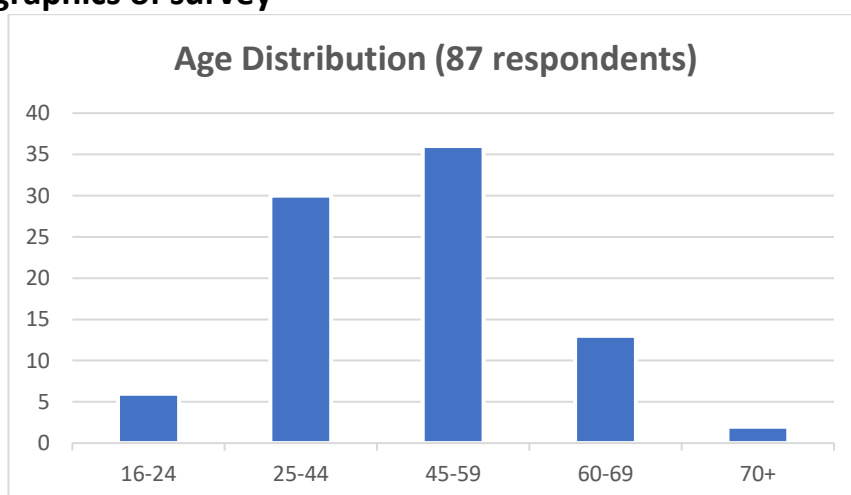
MUCH Community Survey (October 2019 – January 2020)

To build on the 2016 survey of residents and to aid business planning, views were again sought from the community via the Villager Magazine, Survey Monkey (courtesy of Magor with Undy Community Council) and hard copies of the survey form distributed at various opportunities.

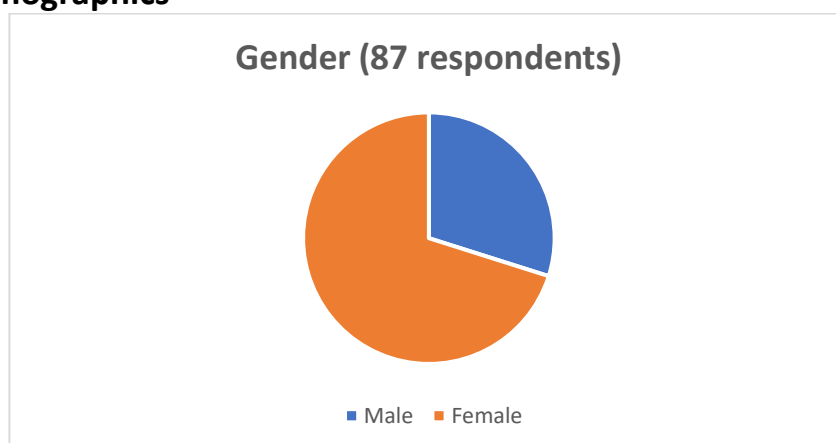
There were some 86 returns, which provided 'needs' and activity ideas for the Community Hub (community halls) and the surrounding grounds. The survey also captured offers of help to run such activities.

The results were summarised and are presented as follows –

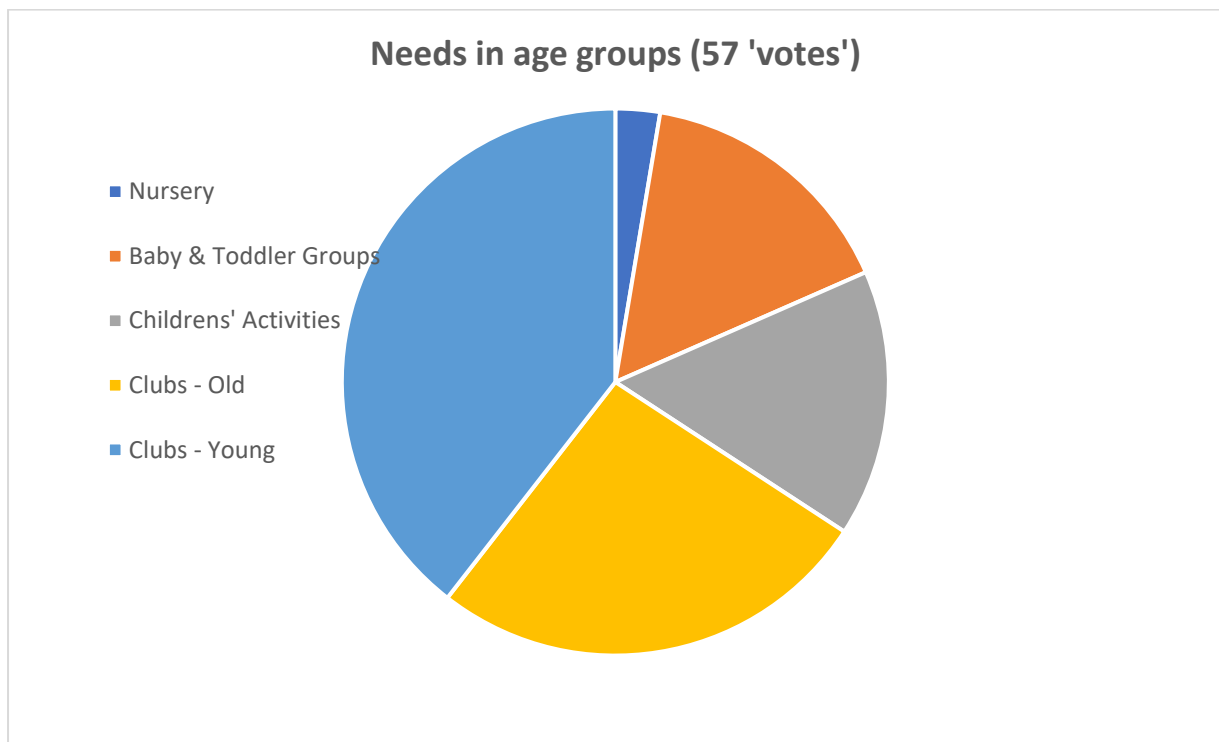
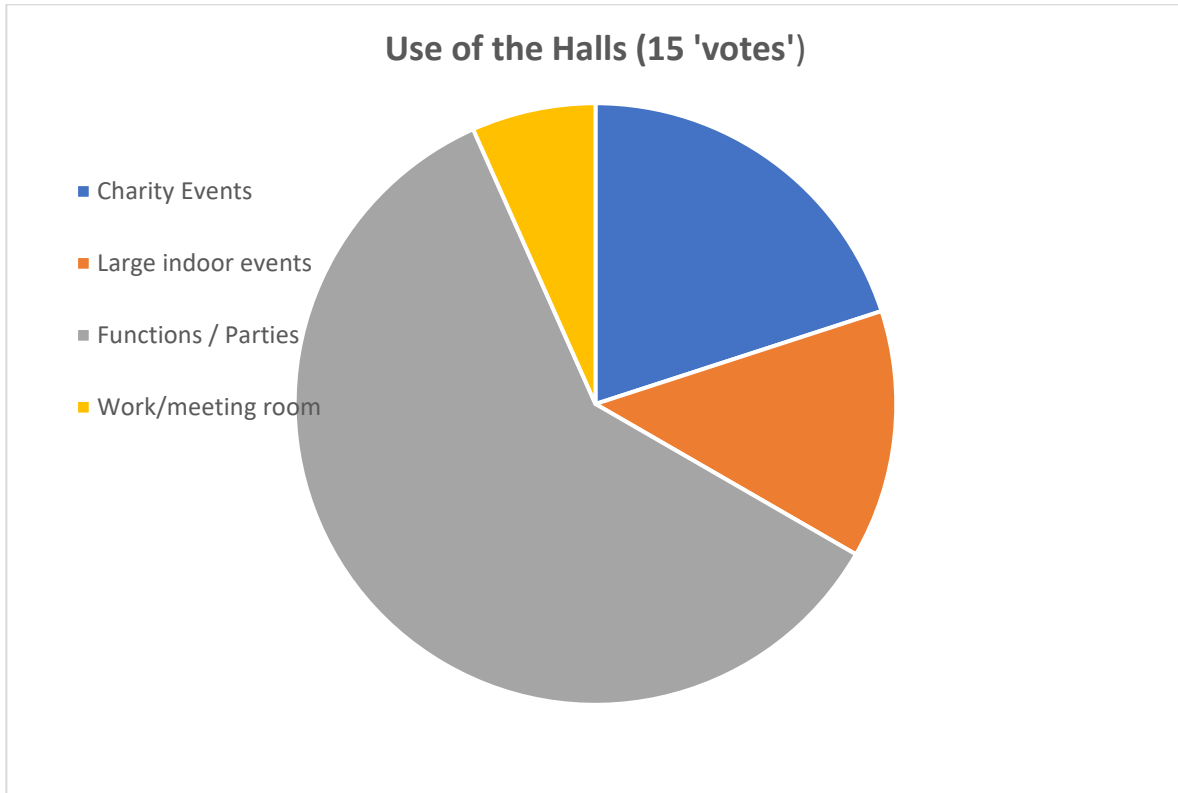
Age demographics of survey –

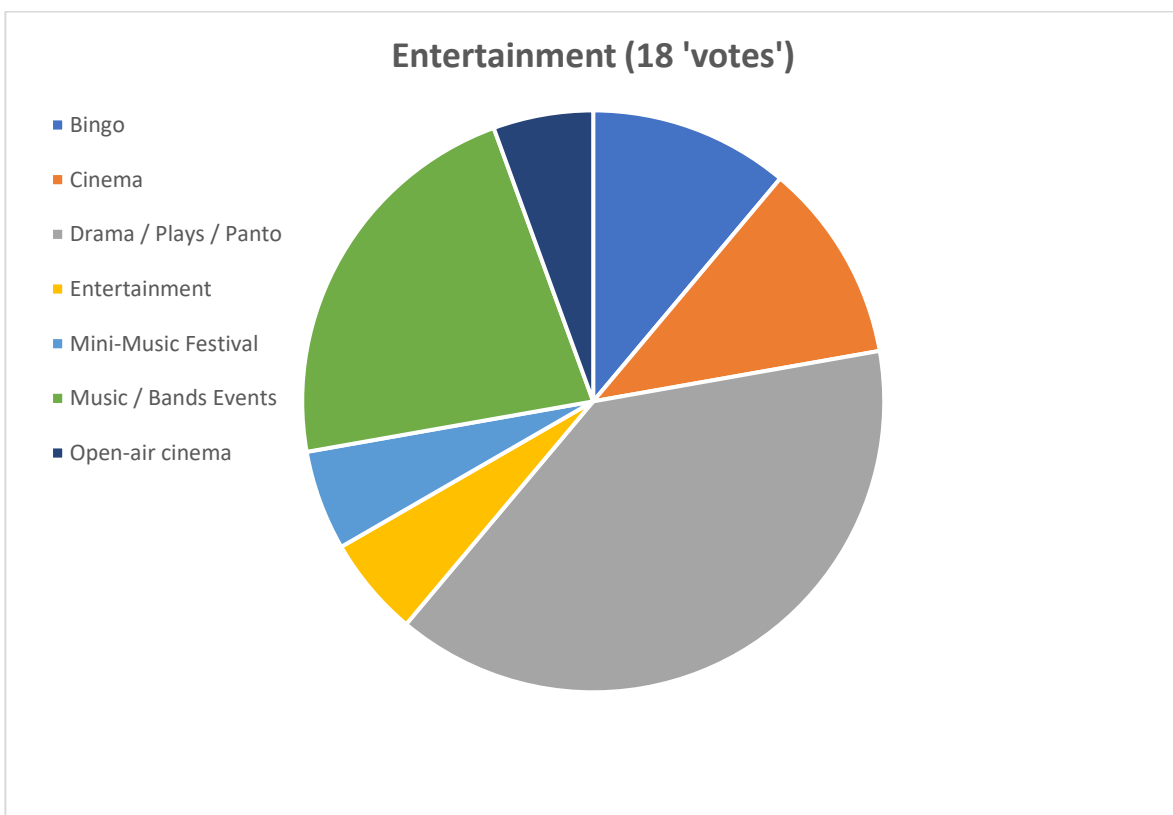
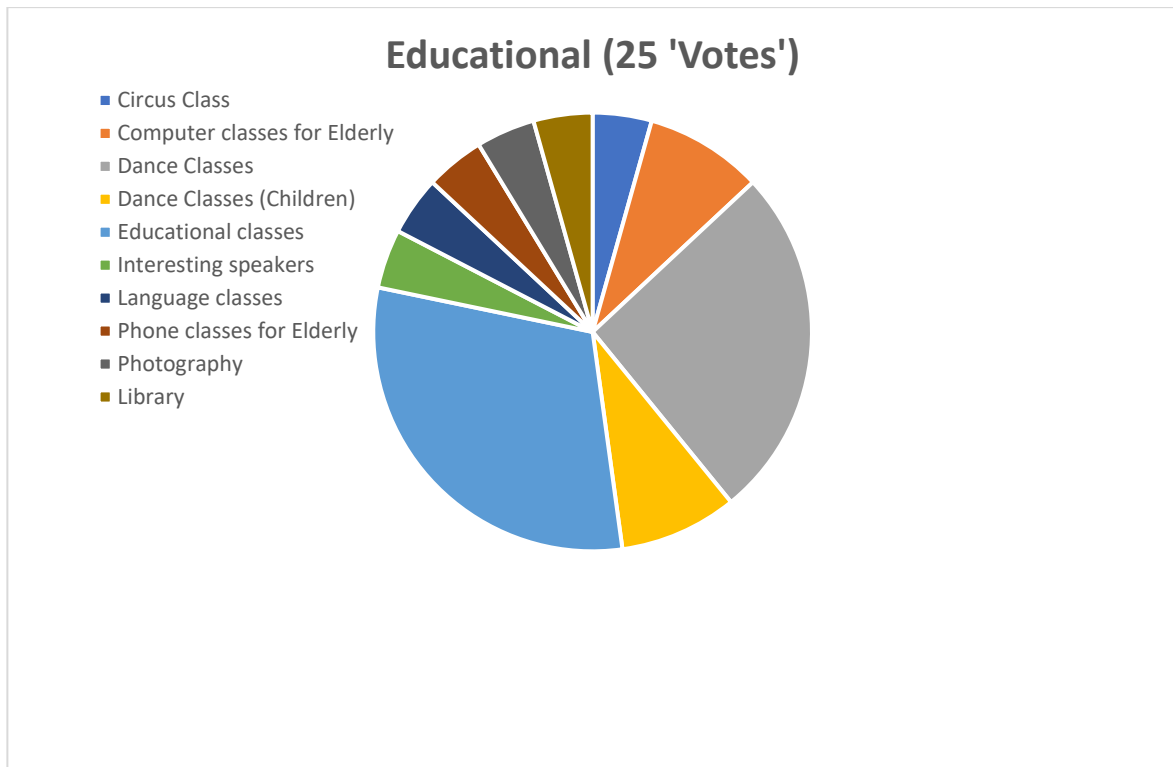


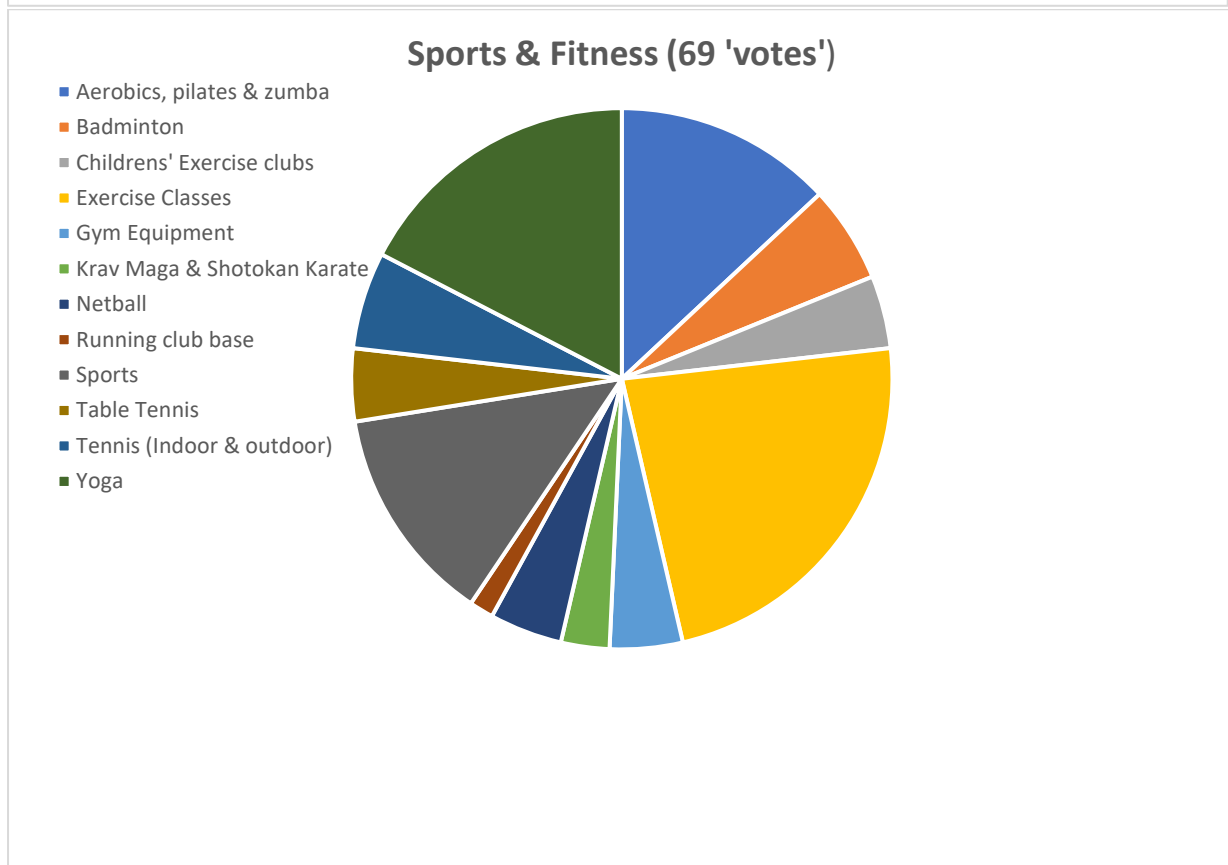
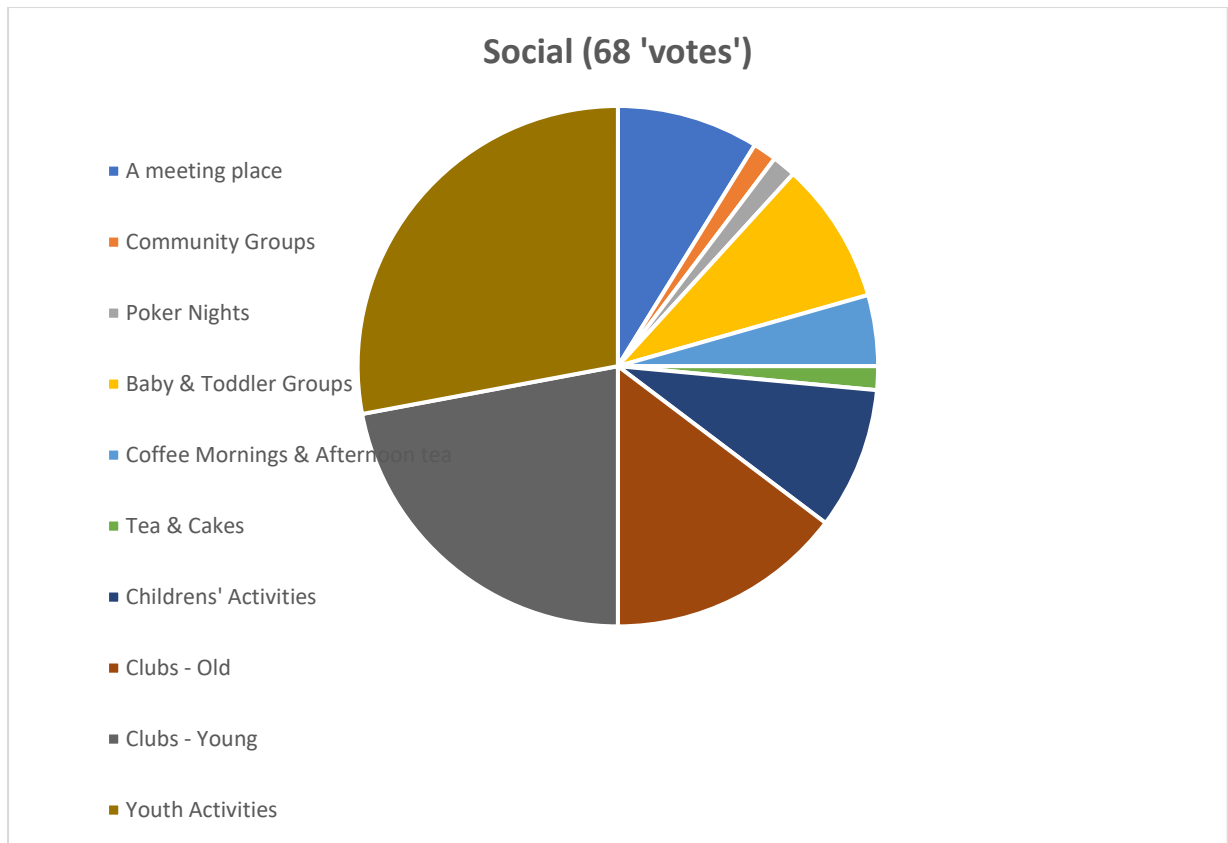
Gender demographics –

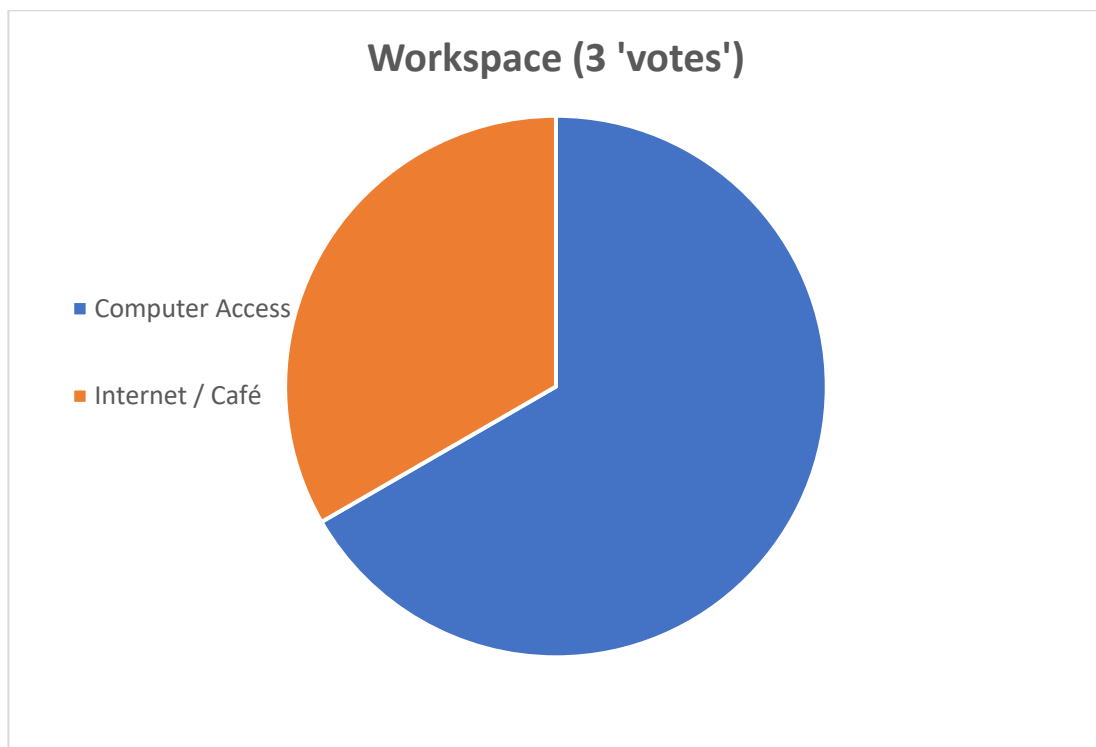
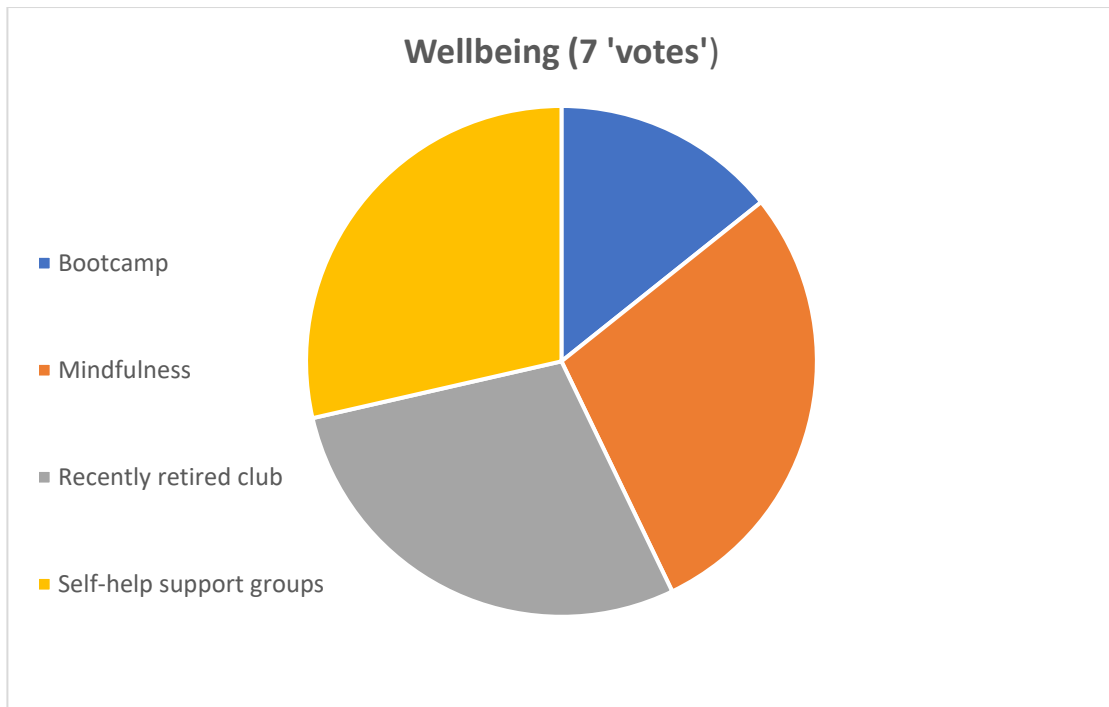


The Needs from the Hub itself . . .

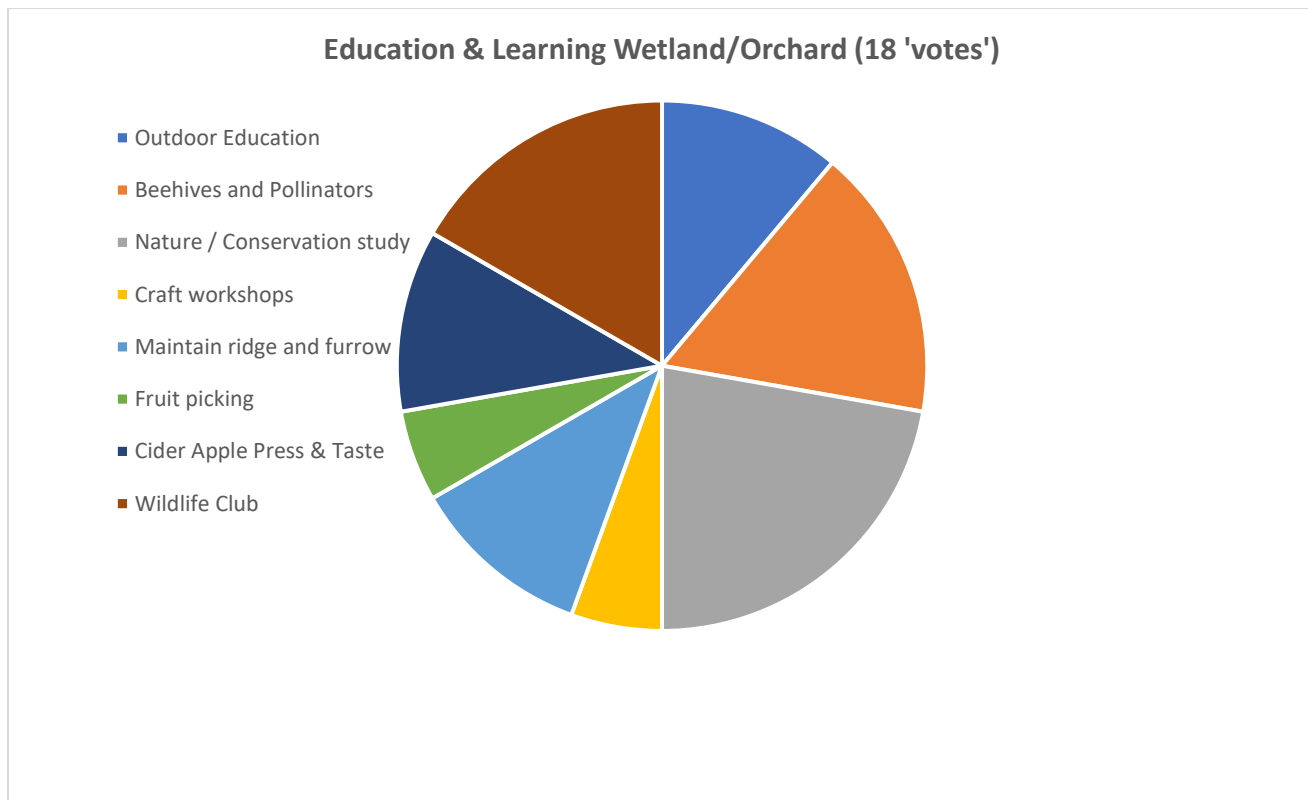
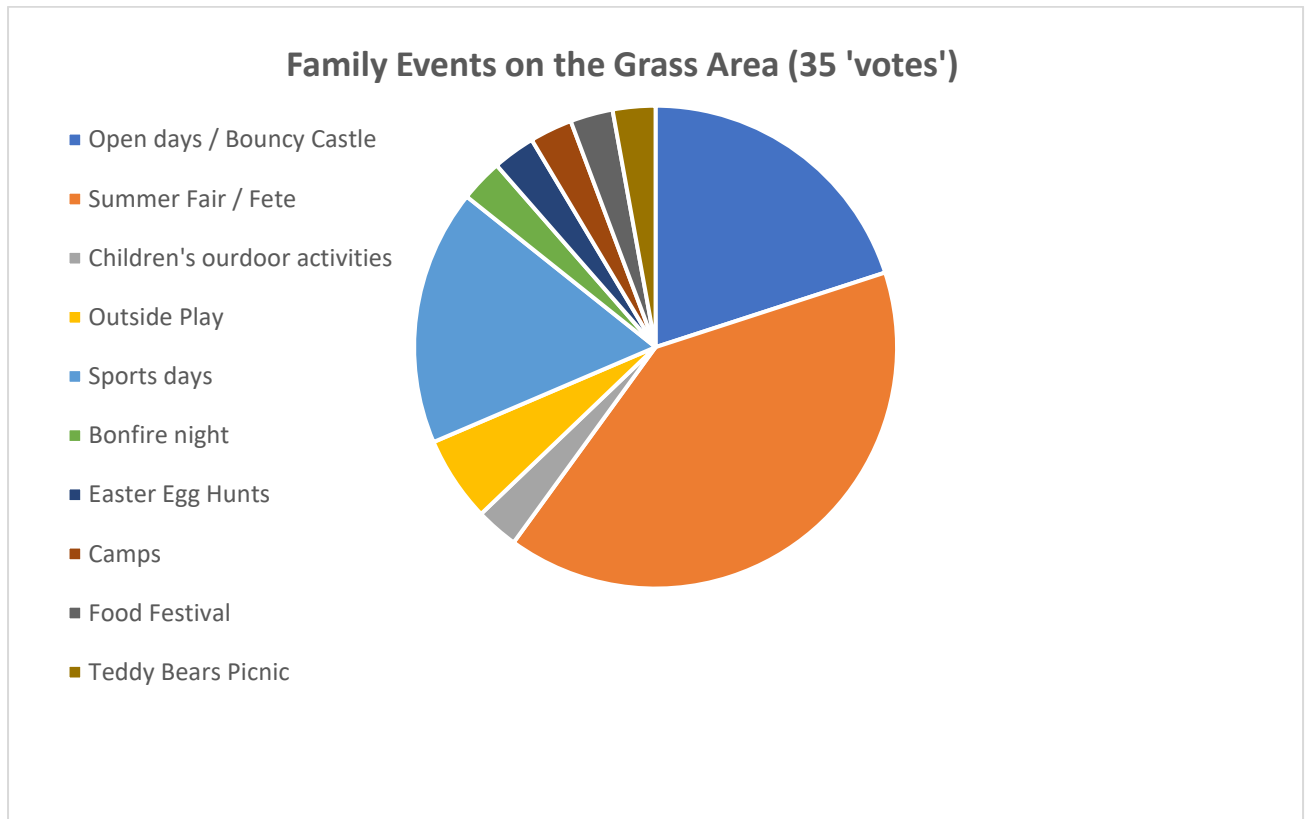


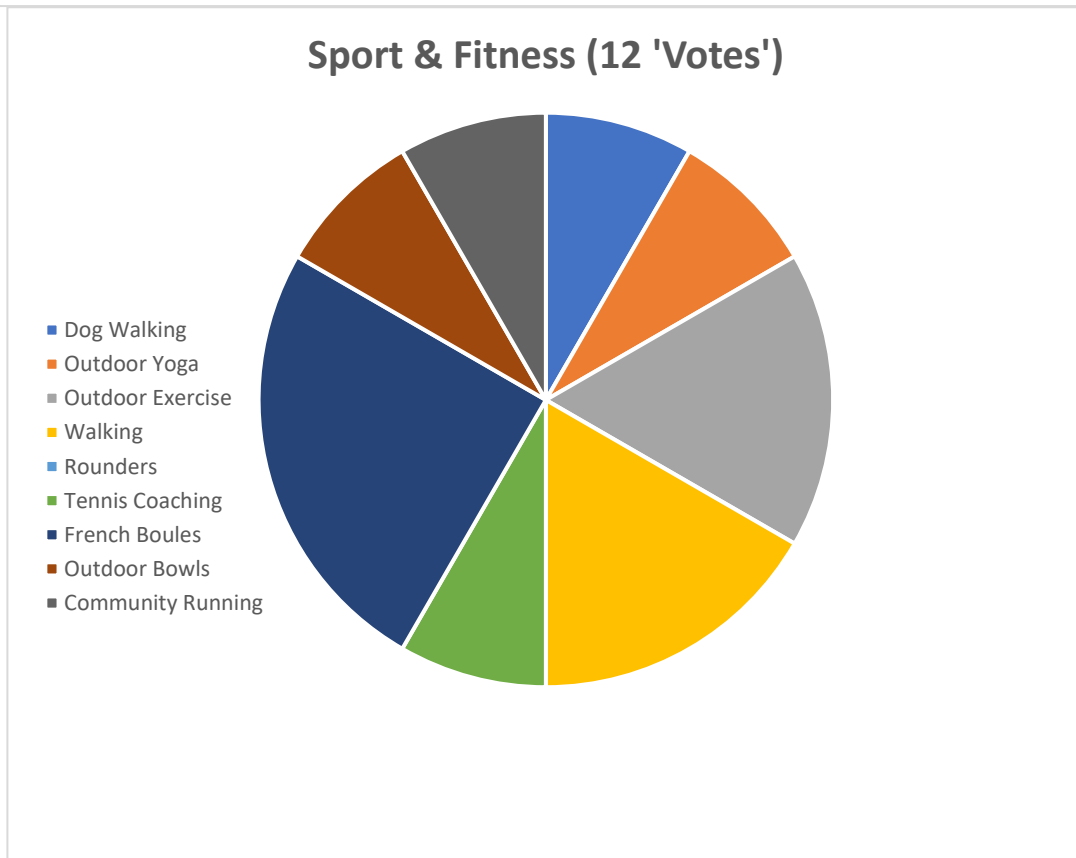
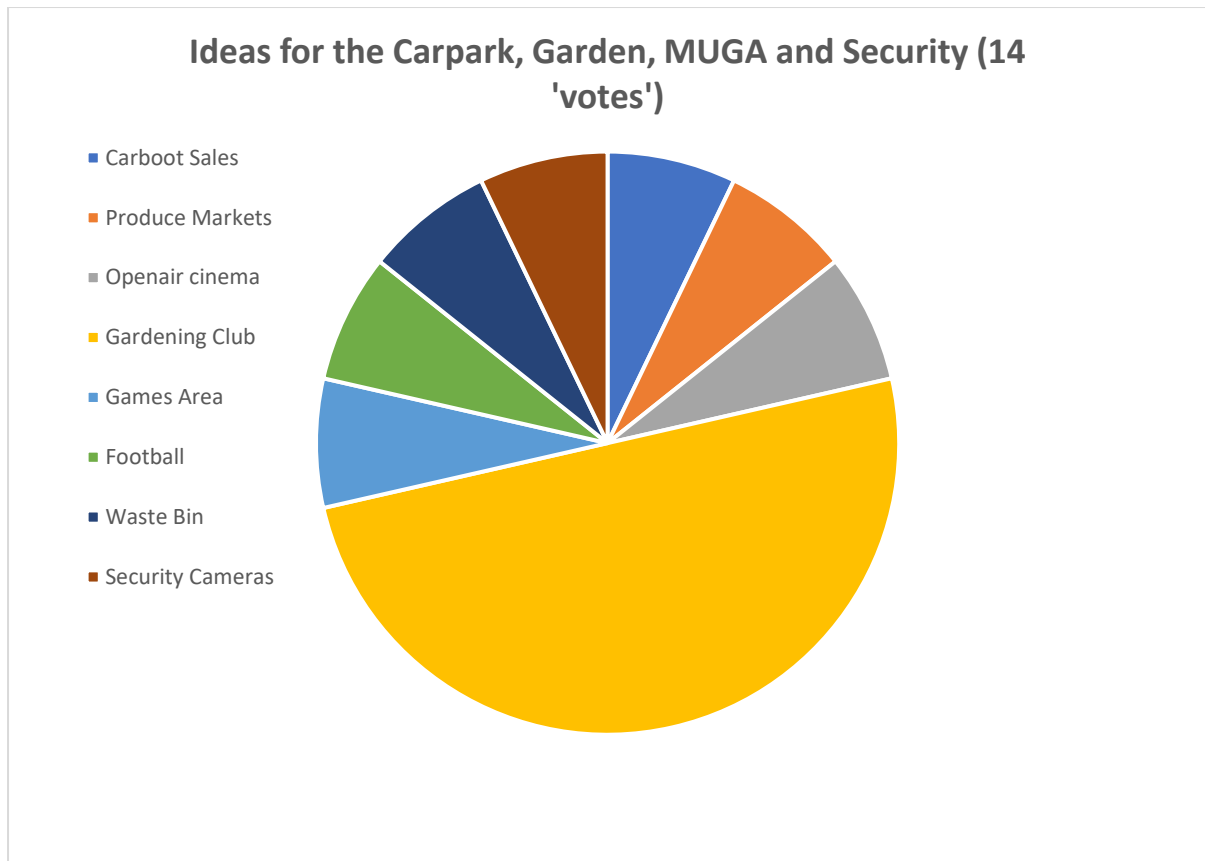


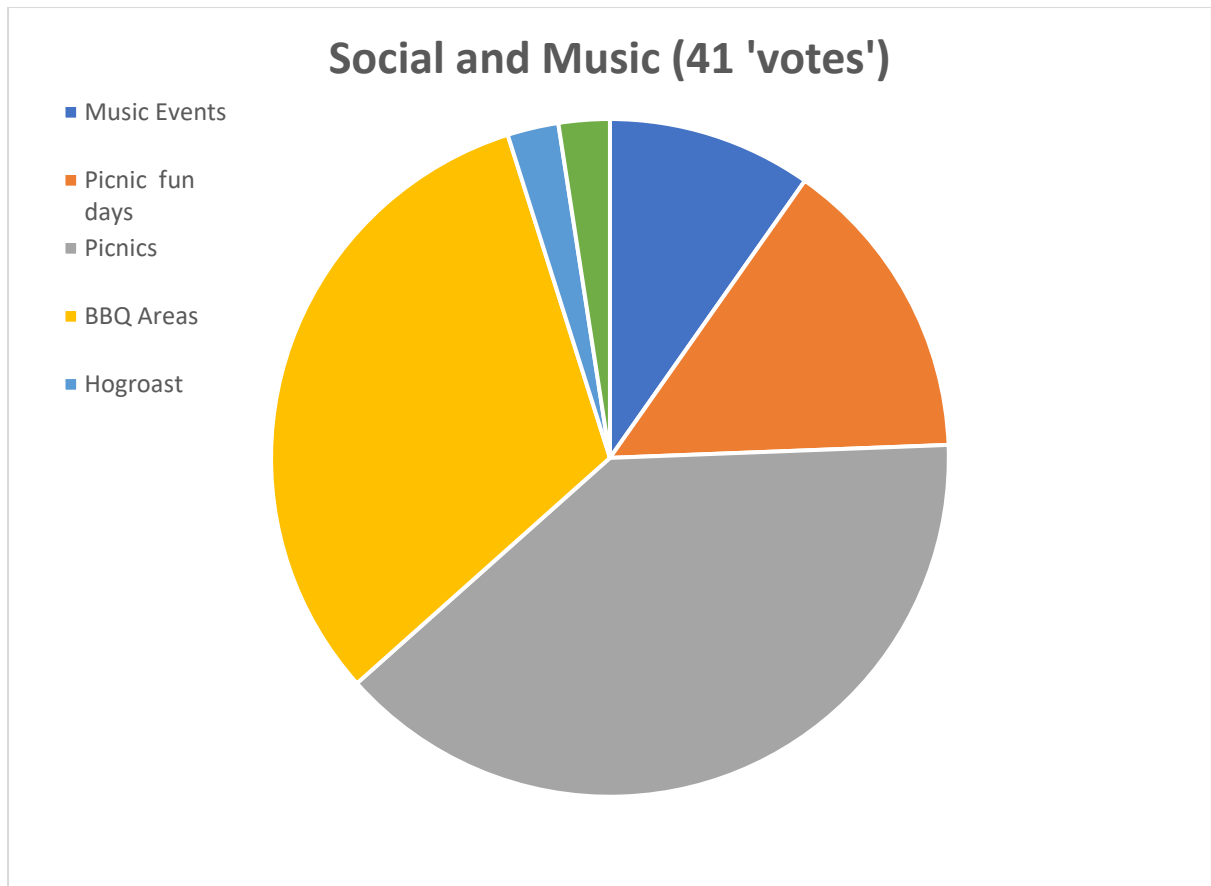




And the outside area specifically . . .







Appendix 5 – Draft Charging Policy

Hire Charges for Magor & Undy Hub & surrounding land

It is planned that the land will be available for use for special one-off events at the discretion of the trustees. Generally it is expected that this will be in conjunction with room hire at the rates below so no extra charges will be made for the surrounding land. Any request for use of surrounding land will be considered very carefully, as these areas would normally be available to the public.

Room Hire	Notes	Cost
Main Hall		£15 per hour
Small Hall		£12 per hour
Changing Room	By arrangement	

Kitchen related

Room Hire	Notes	Cost
Kitchen use	When booked with another room	£3 per hour
Kitchen only use	By arrangement	
Crockery & Cutlery hire		£0.50 per head
Tablecloth hire		£5 each

Parties	Notes	Cost
Children's Parties (under 12 years old)	Includes use of kitchen to prepare food & drinks	£50 (3 hours) + £15 for additional hour
Other Parties	6pm – Midnight, sole occupancy of main hall, small hall and kitchen. Prior approval from committee is required	£200 minimum + £200 refundable bond.
Entertainment/Alcohol Licence		£10

Commercial room rates are charged at an extra £3/hour fee

We regret that we cannot let the hall for teenage parties.

Adult parties are subject to the approval of the committee.

Full payment required at time of booking for "one off" bookings.

Risk Management

Reviewed July 2022

Risk No.	Risk Description	Category	Impact	Prob.	Score	Controls	Actions	Owner
1	Inability to achieve the shortfall in funding to build the HUB	Financial	3	1	3	Identify all likely grant providers e.g. Lottery Further 106 money Public Works loan New CC Precept, etc.	Use contingency options if necessary	KW/PT
2	Inability to generate enough revenue to run the HUB	Financial	2	2	4	Raise awareness of what is available at the hub in the community, social media and outside, promotional booklet Fully engage, market & communicate with potential hirers & community groups.	Contact the bank re potential overdraft facility. Consider possible loan requests from MCC/MUCC Consider other funding opportunities for revenue Fund raising events Some revenue funding obtained from Lottery	KW/PT
3	Project not meeting targets	Build Project	3	2	6	Regular monitoring of Gantt timetable identifying delays and reasons	Rectify through focussed discussion and action planning between MUCH, MCC and Keir	MB
4	Abuse/injury to young person/volunteer/other people	Compliance	3	1	3	DBS checks for all volunteers (as required) and staff; risk assessments, dealing with incidents promptly & proactively, safeguarding policy	Review & monitor on a regular basis	ALL
5	Business continuity-hub cannot be operated as volunteers unable to open or operate the facility. In the future inability to recruit staff or staff on long term absence	Operational	1	3	3	Ensure enough volunteers to open & operate the facility, full awareness when volunteers are unavailable-holidays, long term illness etc. so trustees can manage the situation	Continue to review skill-based training, succession planning and employment opportunities	ALL
6	Organisation is pursued for damages	Compliance	1	1	1	Public liability insurance. CIO registration to protect against personal liability. Trustees discuss emerging legal issues without delay	GDPR policy reviews. Maintain CIO filing and reporting requirements	ALL
7	Financial loss	Financial	2	1	2	Controls in place and are set out in the constitution. CIO protection.	Finances monitored at each meeting.	KW



Integrated Impact Assessment document (incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio Economic Duty)

<p>Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Nicholas Keyse</p> <p>Phone no: 01633 644773 E-mail: nicholaskeyse@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <p>To seek approval for the construction of a new community hub at the site known as 'Three Fields' in Magor and Undy. To enter a long lease agreement with the 'MUCH' Community Group, for occupation and management of the site.</p>
<p>Name of Service area</p> <p>Landlord Services</p>	<p>Date</p> <p>04/07/2022</p>

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Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	The development will promote healthier and local living, with the creation of multi-use space that's been designed around the supported principles of the local community. The development will create a positive environment for physical and mental health of all users. The facility will be accessible to local residents of all ages.	None identified. The promotion of the development, and intended use by the community group, align with the Future Generations Act 2015 and Wellbeing promotion. It is a needs-led community driven approach to asset development.	The MUCH group will continue to proactively engage with the local community regarding the proposed use.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Disability	The building will be fully DDA complaint. The development will improve accessibility to community facilities in the area.	No impact	The design of the building has been assessed in the context of the wider walkway railstation proposals.
Gender reassignment	No impact	No impact	No impact
Marriage or civil partnership	No impact	No impact	No impact
Pregnancy or maternity	No impact	No impact	No impact
Race	.No impact	No impact	No impact
Religion or Belief	.No impact	No impact	No impact
Sex	No impact	No impact	No impact

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sexual Orientation	.No impact	No impact	No impact

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>Page 459</p> <p>Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice</p>	<p>Development of the facility will enhance local provision of community facilities. The scheme, and desire to lease to a community group for management of the property, align with the Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015 based on principles of placing people at the centre of decision making and working in partnership to achieve desired outcomes.</p>	<p><i>No impact.</i></p>	<p>The sites location and design principles have been carefully considered to ensure it is enhanced to it's fullest capability, with due consideration for budget constraints.</p>

3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
<p>Policy Making</p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p>	<p>Promotion of the community hub development is offered bilingually, to ensure promotion of the Welsh Language.</p>	<p>None identified at this stage.</p>	<p>As a condition of the lottery funding, advertising of the facilities development will continue to be offered bilingually.</p>
<p>Operational</p> <p>Recruitment & Training of workforce</p>	<p>The operation and management of the site will be undertaken by the MUCH group, a local charity established to support the schemes delivery. Whilst the scheme will initially be supported by volunteers, the aspiration is to recruit a full-time member of staff. The recruitment of such a role will promote the benefit of Welsh language.</p>	<p>None identified at this stage.</p>	<p>MCC promote opportunities to communicate through Welsh Language and will continue to do so through communication on this scheme progress.</p>
<p>Service delivery</p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p> <p>Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>Bilingual advertising will be promoted through communication or promotion of the development.</p>	<p>None identified at this stage.</p>	<p>MCC promote opportunities to communicate through Welsh Language and will continue to do so through communication on this scheme progress.</p>



4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!




Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>The development will enhance the access to community facilities in the area. The development will create opportunities for employment.</p> <p>Local housing developments and a rapidly expanding population make the Hub critical for nurturing cohesive and inclusive communities, that are central to people's sense of wellbeing.</p>	<p>The proposals are to improve and enhance the existing facilities through continued engagement with the local community.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>The Hub facility and multi-purpose hall will offer spaces for community use and commercial events, as well as potential for small business growth. The improvements will enable the space to be used more and become more flexible to accommodate activities all year round.</p> <p>The building is designed to meet BREEAM 'Excellent' Standards. This will include the adoption of a low carbon 'green' design based on durability and resilience, encouraging energy efficient solutions, solar PV, air source heat pump, and sustainable water re-use in the operation of the building and wider site.</p>	<p>It is also proposed that the hall will offer an interface between the proposed Magor & Undy Walkway station, which will create employment opportunities as well as support job creation.</p>
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>The multi-use design of the space will enable increased indoor and outdoor activity, all year round sport/recreation and physical activity.</p>	<p>Monmouthshire County Council are working with Sustrans to develop active transport routes around Severnside and the Hub's position will link</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
		well with the cycle/walkways under development as part of its Active Travel strategy.
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>The development is promoted through the MUCH group, a charitable incorporate organization of local volunteers with the purpose of developing and maintaining the community hub. As governed by the rules and regulars of the charity commissions, a board of trustees has been established which currently also doubles-up as a management team. The MUCH group work closely with both the County and Community councils, other local groups (e.g. The 'Magor Station' group and the Living Levels partnership) and involves residents in decisions and activities of the project.</p>	<p>By definition, the proposed occupiers are community focused and able to offer an accessible space for a range of uses.</p>
<p>A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>The development will address the importance of the wellbeing of current and future residents (prescribed in the 2015 Wellbeing and Future Generations Act). The development will act as an interface with the proposed walkway railstation, and is designed to BREEAM 'Excellent' Standards, including carbon reduction measures. The new development will include solar PV and air source heat pumps, in order to ensure the property is both future proofed and energy efficient.</p>	<p>The MUCH group will publish annual reports on their financial position, progress and achievements, and hold events to promote awareness of the Hub.</p>
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People</p>	<p>Promotional materials regarding the MUCH development will be offered both in English and</p>	

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	Welsh, to ensure the promotion of the Welsh language.	
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	The development will enable community use without prejudice, and support access to facilities for the benefit of all residents. The new facility will operate as a community 'hub', and venue in which community cohesion and support can be provided. The new facility creates an attractive environment in which the community can come together.	MCC and the MUCH group will continue to work with local partners to promote diversity and inclusion.

5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>The lease to the MUCH group will be 25 years. This will allow the community group to pursue other funding avenues in order to enhance the site and its use. The scheme is designed to BREEAM 'excellent' standards and is therefore a sustainable development.</p>	<p>MUCH staff will be offered training to support the ongoing maintenance of the facility. Appropriate equipment for maintaining the facility will be purchased.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>MCC and the MUCH group have worked collaboratively to under detailed design of the scheme, achieve planning consent, and procure a construction partner. The development itself will be funded through support from Welsh Government, S106 funding and Lottery grant.</p>	<p>The progress of the scheme will be regularly reported by the MUCH group to key stakeholders and local residents.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p data-bbox="136 496 297 528">Involvement</p> <p data-bbox="349 280 517 464">Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p data-bbox="544 256 1328 520">In 2016 a Three Fields questionnaire was distributed to all local households, with over 750+ responses received. The findings directed the principles of the scheme, responding to the community feedback and need over a number of years of design. Further events and consultation has been undertaken to raise awareness of the MUCH plans and encourage community working.</p>	<p data-bbox="1350 256 2096 456">The MUCH group meet regularly, during which residents are able to make representation at the group. The MUCH group work closely with the Magor and Undy Community Council. Communication regarding the sites development and use will be promoted via social media, public notices and local networks.</p>
 <p data-bbox="136 799 297 831">Prevention</p> <p data-bbox="349 560 517 855">Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p data-bbox="544 560 1305 687">A lengthy design exercise has been undertaken to ensure the scheme best meets the requirements of the local community. The success of the project will be measured against engagement, participation and outcomes.</p>	<p data-bbox="1350 560 2096 624">The MUCH group will provide updates on performance to MCC in order to assess success of the proposals.</p>
 <p data-bbox="136 1142 297 1174">Integration</p> <p data-bbox="349 895 517 1158">Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p data-bbox="544 895 1328 1126">.Providiing suitable, fit for purpose, multi use hall will enhance the quality of recreational space in the area. It is a needs-led, community driven approach which supports active citizenship and an asset-based development approach, advocated by statutory and Third Sector partners across the County..</p>	<p data-bbox="1350 895 2018 991">The opportunity to collaborate with a number of stakeholders and agree shared goals improves our chances of success.</p>

6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	The community hub will create a safe environment for a range of activities. The site will also improve linkages between the proposed walkaway station and the surrounding residential estates.	.None identified at this stage.	MCC to explore appropriate training with the MUCH volunteers.
Corporate Parenting	The community hub will create a safe environment for a range of activities. The site will also improve linkages between the proposed walkaway station and the surrounding residential estates.	None identified at this stage.	

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7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

Evidence generated locally and regionally has been used to inform our decisions and develop the proposals. Currently there are approximately 6,500 residents in Magor and Undy. New housing developments mean this will shortly rise to 8,000. Community spaces are over-subscribed and do not provide adequate capacity for large events such as dramatic or film performances.

Community consultation has taken place approximately every six months via the local, well-attended May and Frost Fayre's that act as a platform to engage with the wider community. The aim of the consultation has been to ensure people remain up to date with progress; to gain feedback on services people want to see at the Hub and to refine the design of the Hub. To aid the latter, building plans and images of the Hub have been used to stimulate debate.

A Community Duck Race was held in the Summer (2019) to raise awareness of MUCH plans and to encourage the community to come together. Building plans were marked out onsite to help people to envisage the size and design of the build. Feedback from people attending was overwhelmingly positive and attracted new volunteers. Further social events have also taken place since, again raising awareness.

A second, wide-scale survey of residents of Magor and Undy, started in October 2019.) principally using the local community magazine and 'Survey Monkey' has taken place. The survey asked for feedback on the range of services and facilities people want at the Hub and comments were also invited on plans and progress to date. The survey also appealed for volunteers. Around 90 people responded to the recent survey. Appendix 4 Shows the results of the most recent survey of the community. It reinforces the findings of the large-scale 2016 survey, views expressed at engagement events and other anecdotal evidence.

8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

The development of the new community hub will create a highly sought after new multi-use space for recreation, leisure and educational use within the area Magor and Undy. The MUCH group are a charitable incorporated organisation whose purposes is to develop, maintain and administer a community centre and outdoor community site for the benefit of residents of Magor and Undy and immediate surrounding communities.

9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Liaise with the MUCH group regarding key indicators to demonstrate consideration of the protected characteristics.	Throughout the construction period	Nicholas Keyse/MUCH

Page 4 of 6

10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Cabinet	27/07/2022	

SUBJECT: Wye Valley Villages Future Plan

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 27th July 2022

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: Trellech United CC, Devauden CC, Wye Valley CC,
St Arvans CC

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to brief Cabinet on the background to the co-produced Wye Valley Villages Future Plan, how the project might develop going forwards, and to seek Cabinet's agreement to adopt the Plan to inform future activity and decisions. It is intended that the Plan will be adopted by all parties (community councils, Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) office and MCC). If adopted, a delivery group will be established.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet adopts the Wye Valley Villages Future Plan for implementation and to inform future decision-making (copy attached at Appendix 1).
- 2.2 That Cabinet authorises the Chief Officer for Communities and Place, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods and advised by the delivery group, to source funding, undertake community and stakeholder consultation as needed, and to decide to proceed with any of the projects outlined in the Wye Valley Villages Improvement Plan where those projects involve MCC.

3.0 KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Partnership work has been ongoing since 2019 involving the community councils and elected representatives for the Wye Valley, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) office and MCC officers to co-produce the Wye Valley Villages Future Plan. This seeks to draw together various shared emerging topics such as road safety, public transport, public rights of way, road maintenance, placemaking and tourism into a joint Plan.
- 3.2 An inaugural meeting was held in Tintern in October 2019 between representatives from the community councils, relevant county wards and Wye Valley AONB to gauge interest in proceeding and to agree the scope of the project. Support was received from all parties. Following further meetings and preparation of a tender document, ARUP consultancy secured the contract to prepare the Plan.
- 3.3 Various workshops and meetings (described in the Plan) were held along with consultation exercises, following which the Plan was presented to the community councils and AONB in March of this year. All parties, including MCC, are now invited to formally adopt the plan (many Community Councils have already done so). This report seeks Cabinet's agreement that MCC formally adopts the Plan.

- 3.4 Assuming the WVV Improvement Plan is adopted by all of the member organisations, a delivery group will be established comprising representatives from the community councils, county councillors for the relevant Wards, relevant cabinet member(s) plus officers from Wye Valley AONB and MCC. MCC would continue to act as the secretariat. It is intended that the delivery group will be empowered by the respective organisations to implement the Plan. To that end, Cabinet is invited to authorise the Chief Officer for Communities and Place, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods and advised by the delivery group, to source funding, undertake community and stakeholder consultation as needed, and to decide to proceed with any of the projects outlined in the Wye Valley Villages Improvement Plan where those projects involve MCC.
- 3.5 The project has been unusual in bringing together four community councils, county council and AONB to work and develop plans collectively, working across an area and multiple villages rather than a single town. Whilst this approach is innovative and brings collective ownership it also brings risks if the group fails to gain a consensus on how to proceed on any matter. The delivery group will be pivotal in ensuring that any such matters are resolved by agreement and subsequent joint common goals and recommendations are submitted to member organisations.

4.0 EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 4.1 The Future Generation and Equality Impact form is attached at Appendix 3. There are no corporate parenting of safeguarding concerns, nor issues in relation to our economic impact duty.

5.0 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Options	Benefits	Risks	Comments/Mitigation
Adopt the Wye Valley Villages Improvement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions can be prioritised and delivered on this co-produced Plan in a co-ordinated manner; • It cements the informal collaboration and offers opportunities to benefit placemaking and tourism activity to the benefit of communities and visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of identified funding for many of the projects 	The co-produced Plan provides a positive framework to shape and prioritise activity that would otherwise still arise but in an ad hoc and unco-ordinated manner.
Make amendments to the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments would presumably be intended as improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan has been co-produced, so any amendments would need the agreement of other parties who are already happy with the content 	

Do not adopt the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The positive collaboration and working relationships that have been established would be undermined 	
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5.1 The preferred option is for Cabinet to adopt the Plan as attached at Appendix 2.

6.0 REASONS:

6.1 The Wye Valley AONB Villages Future Plan has been co-produced and consulted upon and is now seeking agreement from all parties to adopt it. During Plan formulation, various options and priorities were considered and either included or discounted. It would seem regressive to decide against adopting the Plan at this stage. Overall, the Plan is seen as an opportunity to support a largely rural area and communities by inviting the local councils to work together. By working jointly, the project has become more meaningful and potentially has greater impact as community councils considered in isolation for this type of project may have insufficient impact or resources.

6.2 It should be noted that delivery of the actions within the Plan will be subject to ongoing discussion and evaluation during implementation by the delivery group. The delivery group will be responsible for reviewing and delivering actions within the Plan. In some instances ‘measurement’ might be more qualitative than quantitative e.g. impact of new signage whereas other aspects e.g. changes to public transport may be measured by patronage.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 The study has been funded through Wye Valley AONB grant. Community Councils have raised precept to help fund projects and funding has been found by Wye Valley AONB to fund the new village gateway sign project.

7.2 The plan has various initiatives outlined within it including cost estimates. Prioritising these projects will be the responsibility of the delivery group in consultation with the statutory responsible bodies. MCC will resource the delivery group via the regeneration team.

7.3 Similarly funding streams will be highlighted by the delivery group as projects are brought forward for implementation. Included within that exercise will be an analysis of funding demand and funding options (e.g. direct funding from county and community council budgets, grant application etc.). Resourcing some of the Plan recommendations will be challenging because most grant funding streams are geared at town centres rather than rural areas.

8 CONSULTEES:

As described within the body of the report, this Plan has been developed in partnership with:

- Devauden CC
- Trellech United CC

Tintern CC
St Arvans CC
Wye Valley AONB

Public consultation took place in 2021.

The Plan was considered by the Place Scrutiny Committee on 30th June 2022. That Committee endorsed the Wye Valley Villages Future Plan and was content that it be taken to Cabinet, but with the recommendation that the plan is aligned to other workstreams being undertaken on phosphates and river pollution i.e. that both groups work together to align their work. The Committee also wishes to scrutinise the report on Rivers and Ocean prior to it being considered by Council on 22nd September.

Officers note this recommendation and are satisfied that the recommendations arising in the Wye Valley Villages Improvement Plan align with and support wider work to address river pollution and to promote natural flood mitigation measures.

Senior Leadership Team
Communities and Place DMT
Monitoring Officer
S151 Officer

Ward Members, Community Councils and the Wye Valley AONB office
The Plan was subject to community consultation and engagement in 2021.

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Wye Valley AONB Villages Plan for the Future - attached

10 AUTHOR:

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Wye Valley Villages Future Plan

Appendix 2 Wye Valley Villages Future Plan executive summary

Appendix 3 Future Generations and Equality Impact Assessment

Wye Valley AONB Villages Plan for the future

February 2022



Devauden Community
Council

St Arvans Community
Council



ARUP

wye valley
Area of Outstanding
Natural Beauty

dyffryn gwy
Ardalo Harddwch
Naturol Eithriadol

Page 471



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

ARUP

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Prepared by Arup on behalf of Monmouthshire County Council, Wye Valley AONB Partnership, Tintern Community Council, St Arvans Community Council, Trellech United Community Council and Devauden Community Council.

This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party. In preparing this report we are relying on information contained in reports supplied by the client and third parties, as stated throughout the document. We have relied in particular on the accuracy and completeness of such reports and accept no liability for any error or omission in this statement to the extent the same results from error or omission in the other consultants' reports.

Please note, proposals on private land require further discussions with private landowners.

This report is intended to be viewed and printed as an A4 double-sided document with cover page.

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REVISION	DATE	DETAILS
2.0	18.02.2022	Final Draft

REVISION DETAILS	DATE
Prepared By Mana Fana	18.02.2022
Reviewed By Jamie Tucker	18.02.2022

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Appendix 2 Stage 1 Report

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Wye Valley AONB Villages - Plan for the future

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our communities and natural environment face significant and imminent change from the climate emergency and post-Covid recovery. These are radically changing the way we think about our communities and environment. We need to change our day-to-day life and leave behind many of the accepted approaches we have become used to such as our over reliance on car use. Remote working, online shopping and the internet are radically changing the way we live, access services and seek information.

Against this backdrop of major change, the natural beauty, local resources and human history of the Wye Valley has attracted residents, businesses and visitors for centuries. Each of these are intrinsically linked meaning that a careful balance is key to success or indeed failure. Where an imbalance occurs it becomes obvious. Local concerns over river pollution, speeding cars through the villages or the impact of large numbers of visitors to Tintern during peak times demonstrate how this delicate balance can shift the wrong way. To compound these challenges is the complex geography of the area as the convergence of multiple local authorities and the Wales-England border. Gaining consensus and consistency in policy, financing and governance is challenging.

Despite these challenges the area benefits from notable advantages. Beyond the obvious quality of the landscape, active and engaged community council's and residents are providing energy and ambition. Many independent local businesses have become part of the fabric each marketing the area to broad audiences and providing local jobs. The borderland location should become a point of celebration rather than a source of inertia. Success will mean embracing innovation, fronting up to contentious issues such as traffic, developing

new partnerships, accepting trial and error and building on the existing natural assets. It will require investment in a way that delivers far wider benefits to our health, our environment, our local communities and our local economies.

The question for the Wye Valley, its communities, businesses and visitors is how can this balance be struck and what does it look like?

The "Wye Valley AONB Villages Plan for the Future" sets a vision for change through short, medium and long-term projects aimed primarily at the villages that are located within Monmouthshire. At the heart of the study is a response to the community's concern over road safety. The plan provides a strategy for reducing vehicle speeds and increasing the use of sustainable transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. Importantly road safety is not considered in isolation. In recognition of the fact that within the Wye Valley tourism, landscape, local economy, governance, placemaking and transport all impact one other, the plan proposes measures for all of these six themes.

This has led to the creation of a **six-point plan for change** which responds to the six key themes identified with an emphasis on delivery. Phasing has been a key issue and the plan provides clear proposals for immediate changes to the villages such as gateway signage through to longer term aspirations for sustainable transport and tourism.

1 Ensure safe and sustainable transport

by delivering coordinated changes to the streets across the villages to make them slower for traffic, more attractive and safer for pedestrians and cyclists. To reduce car dependency 'Sustainable transport' including buses, walking and cycling should be improved by grouping bus stops, cycle hire and storage, tourist attractions and new public spaces at key locations such as Tintern as 'mobility hubs'. Bus services should be improved particularly during high season for both local people and tourists. Extending the Wye Valley Greenway could have a catalytic effect on walking, cycling and tourism if it were to be extended to the north and should be assessed for viability.

2 Conserve and enhance the landscape by working with other local authorities, agencies and land owners across the length of the River Wye to improve the health of the river as part of a 'whole catchment study'. To encourage community participation a 'Green Village' initiative is proposed to deliver small scale projects such as community food growing and habitat creation. A pilot should be delivered to test new farming practices that deliver wider benefits to nature such as less pesticide use and habitat management.

3 Enable sustainable tourism by updating the tourism strategy for the area around a business case which will provide a basis for measuring impact. The unique border location should be celebrated as a place where visitors can move between countries with just a few steps. A simple and effective brand should be developed along the lines of Iceland's Golden Circle or Scotlands North Coast 500. Delivering better tourism 'infrastructure' such as improved signage and wayfinding, bold village gateways and more opportunities to meet local people, eat local food and experience the authenticity of the valley should be considered.

4 Retain and improve the network of unique villages by recognising the distinct history and character of each of the villages and reflecting this in the proposed changes. Tintern for example has a much greater need to support tourism than a village such as The Narth which is much more attuned to local community life.

5 Support the local economy by working to delivering of high speed internet access with partners. It is recommended that a 'local circular economy' approach is adopted to support local business and to attract specific Welsh Government funding. This approach encourages local producers and supply chains to work closely with each other to retain money within the area for the people who live there rather than export to other areas. To allow people to work locally and attract new entrepreneurs new premises that allow 'co-working' or shared office space should be delivered. To ensure that local people can continue to live in the area, the Wye Valley Local Housing Needs Requirements should be updated to deliver affordable housing.

6 Provide joined-up governance by establishing a delivery group between key partners such as the local community council's, Monmouthshire County Council and the Wye Valley AONB. Cross border working with adjacent Local Authorities such as Forest of Dean District Council will be essential in sharing ideas and pooling resources. Both recommendations will be critical in making the plan a reality.

1.1 What is the background to this plan?

The plan has been put together between 2021 and 2022 by Arup who have worked closely with Monmouthshire County Council, Wye Valley AONB Unit and the local community councils.

This plan provides a blueprint for change for the villages in the Monmouthshire part of the AONB. The recommendations are strategic in nature and will direct more detailed study or set a clear path for the delivery of improvements on the ground. The plan outlines a series of proposals to improve road safety within the villages but casts the net wider to incorporate other key considerations such as transport, tourism and the local economy.

The project outcome is the result of a collaborative approach built around the courage and ambition of community leaders to improve the places they live in and an eagerness to enhance the outstanding character of the area. Arup have worked in close partnership with Monmouthshire County Council, Wye Valley AONB Unit and the four community councils (St Arvan's Community Council, Devauden Community Council, Tintern Community Council and Trellech United Community Council). A community consultation event during August-September 2021 gave local people and businesses the opportunity to shape their plan.

This report was preceded by two earlier stages of work:

Stage 1 identified the key issues, challenges and opportunities by reviewing the current situation. This included wide evidence based studies, reports, plans and strategies around green infrastructure (landscapes including habitats, woodlands, fields, parks etc), tourism, travel and transport, AONB management and regional development planning.

Stage 2 provided a draft vision and set of initial proposals for change. This formed the basis for public consultation. Following the consultation this has been reviewed and used as the basis for this final plan.

2.1 A plan for the future

The Wye Valley is a story of people and nature that has been shaped by many hands over centuries. The immediate challenges of climate change, post-Covid recovery, mobility and sustainable development require a new perspective on the future of this outstanding landscape and its settlements.

A vision is essential in providing a common approach and clear direction. The vision for this project reflects the character and importance of the Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the villages and communities nestled within and the two gateway towns of Monmouth and Chepstow.

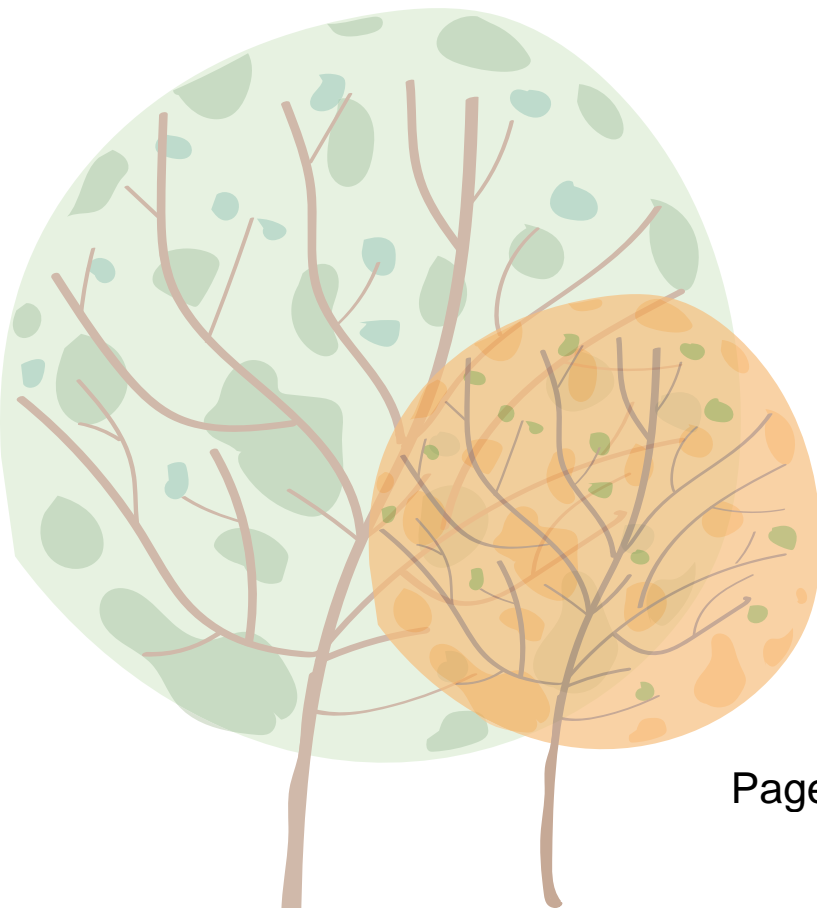
The placemaking vision aims to define, enhance, and celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of the Wye Valley villages and their community. It aims to explore and unlock their distinct character, building on location conditions, history, heritage, landscape and the ethnographic narrative of the settlement and their people.

The vision is to ensure that short term solutions are set within the context of long term needs and challenges. It is considered over a 100 year timescale to ensure it will endure for generations to come and work with a timescale for nature. It is founded upon three simple principles:

Conserving and enhancing the communities and natural and man-made assets that define this unique place for existing and future generations.

A joined-up approach to governance, territory and integral drivers of change

Evolving to respond to changes caused by climate change and to capitalise on opportunities created by the target of net zero carbon.



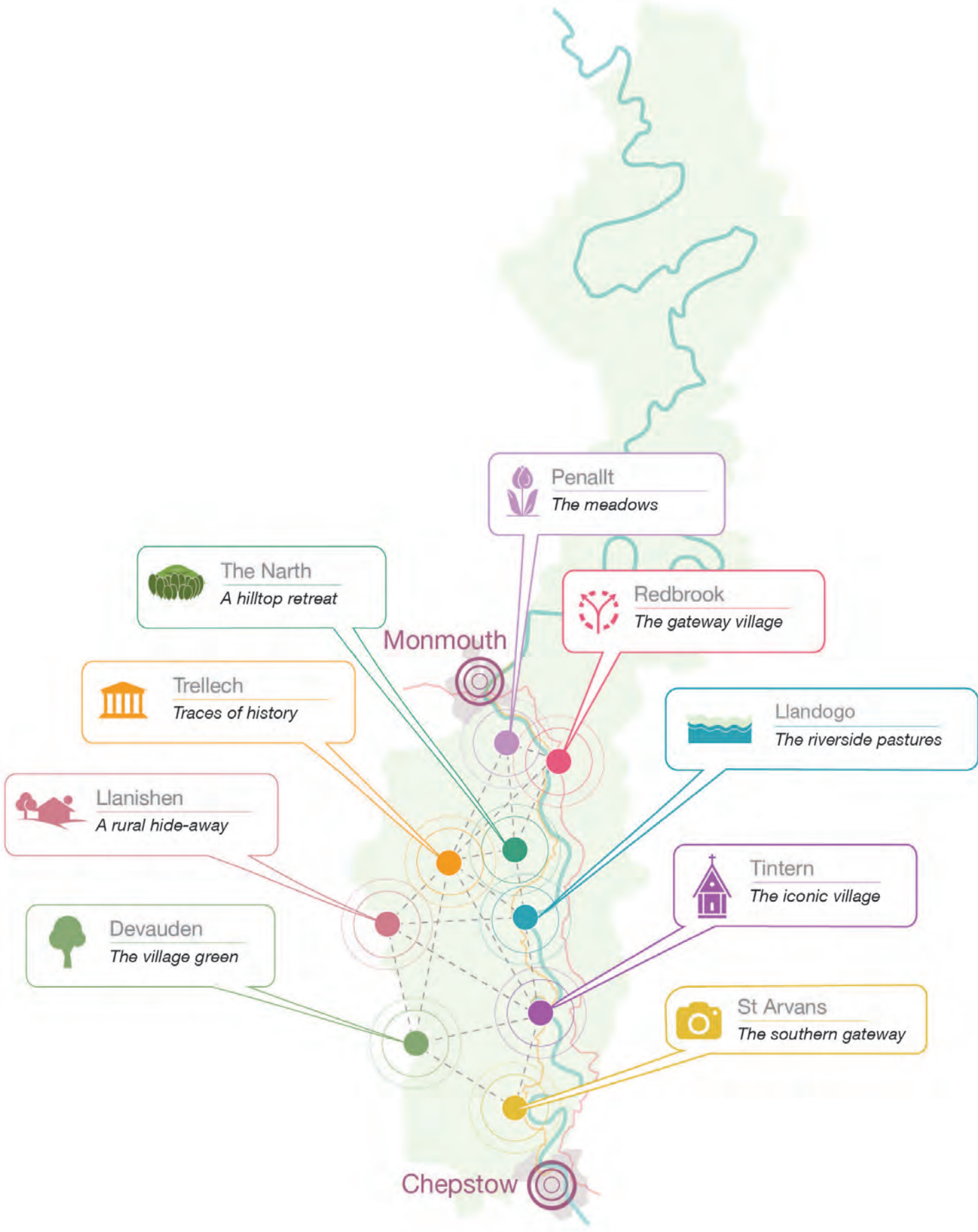
3. STUDY AREA

3.1 Study area

The scope of this study is limited to the Welsh part of the Wye Valley AONB and the 9 main settlements that have been identified with MCC:

Catbrook
Devauden
Llandogo
Llanishen
Penallt
St Arvans
The Narth
Tintern
Trellech

The geographic boundary of the study reflects the administrative boundary of Monmouthshire County Council and Welsh Government. In reality the villages of the Wye Valley AONB extend east and north into the Forest of Dean and Herefordshire. This is important because the social and economic function of the area is not restricted by the administrative boundaries. Any proposed changes discussed in this study will potentially impact other settlements. For example, a consistent approach to road safety would be more effective if managed at a broader geographical area (to include places such as Redbrook) that is consistent with the cross border AONB.



4.1 Overview

This section contains the six point plan for change in the Wye Valley AONB and its communities in Monmouthshire. The plan is formed from the six pillars of the vision, as contained in section 2 of the Stage 2 report (Appendix 1), and outlines the projects and initiatives which are recommended to meet community needs and wider sustainable development goals. Given the strength of community support for road safety improvements this is afforded priority. The plan addresses change over different timescales from smaller, localised projects such as speed reductions and signage which can be delivered early to broader and more complex initiatives such as improving the health of the River Wye.



90%



chance of survival when hit at 20mph (at 30mph this is only 50%). Source: World Health Organisation.

70%



of all emissions on our roads are from private vehicles. Source: BEIC

4.8%



The likelihood of individual obesity decreases 4.8% every km of walk per day. Source: TfL

1 in 6



species at threat of extinction in Wales

↓ 41%



Percentage of species to have declined since 1970

12%



Amount of land not used for agriculture in Wales

Source: State of Nature Report 2019

2.28 Million

Visitors to Monmouthshire in 2019

£245 Million

Generated for the local economy in 2019

Source: Visit Monmouthshire

3rd

Monmouthshire has the third highest GVA in Wales

£350k

Average house price in the Wye Valley vs the Welsh average of £213k

Source: Rightmove

4

Local authorities whose administrative boundaries cover the Wye Valley AONB

Page 481

4.2 Ensure safe and sustainable transport



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Coordinated village street design

Sustainable transport strategy

Active travel and recreational access

INTRODUCTION

The two key priorities for the Transport element of the strategy are as follows:

- Improving actual and perceived road safety within the villages with the help of coordinated village street design.
- Enhancing sustainable transport provision for both residents and tourists.

The priorities identified above align with the views expressed by stakeholders alongside the key themes that underpin local and national planning policy. Both priorities complement each other as improving road safety is likely to encourage more journeys to be made by sustainable modes of transport, particularly active travel. Similarly, encouraging more trips to be made by sustainable modes of travel will reduce vehicle movements on the transport network, thus improving road safety.

COORDINATED VILLAGE STREET DESIGN

The most significant observation is the lack of distinction that is made to the road (and not street) design when entering or leaving each village. This lack of transition reinforces the sense of continuity for drivers and therefore any sense that you are entering a 'place' where people live or visit is lost. The result is an inevitable conflict between road users and people where drivers are given priority.

There are a number of measures to be explored further to reduce both perceived and actual road safety concerns. Some of these measures have been reflected in the diagrammatic plans for each village in section 5.1 "Village Plans" and further recommendations are included below:

- It is recommended that a detailed design for each of the villages is developed, where a common approach is undertaken to provide a 'kit of parts' applicable to any village. This consistent design approach will be based on shared objectives amongst stakeholders. Pilot projects, equivalent to RIBA Stage 5, can be identified to provide early trials and demonstrations of the ideas. An initial example of this has been provided for Llandogo within the Appendix of this report.
- It is also recommended that a road speed strategy is developed for the study area. We recommend this includes a 20mph speed limit for all streets within the villages. Speed reduction features will be required to enforce the proposed reductions in speed limit.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

There are opportunities to enable both residents and tourists to make more journeys to, from and within the Wye Valley by sustainable modes of transport. These include:

- Improvements to the existing bus service provision, including increased service frequencies and better connectivity with more strategic bus and rail services;
- Enhancing the pedestrian and cycle network, particularly focusing on the potential extension of the Wye Valley Greenway as touristic active travel and an opportunity for habitat creation. This could form the basis of a future Levelling Up Fund bid. Enhanced pedestrian and cycle networks could also be delivered through the potential introduction of Quiet Lanes; and
- Mobility hubs that become a 'new place' with a clear and distinct sense of arrival and departure for multiple modes of transport with services and facilities to support visitors and tourists alike. Potentially located both in the north and south of the Wye Valley, these hubs would enable tourists travelling by car to transfer to another mode. The mobility hubs would include access to hire vehicles such as cycles, e-bikes and potentially electric vehicles. There is also a future opportunity for e-scooters to be made available. Further investigation is required to identify potential locations for such hubs; however, Chepstow Racecourse is suggested as a potential site to be explored further.

ACTIVE TRAVEL AND RECREATIONAL ACCESS

The Wye Valley contains numerous walking and cycling routes which form a complex network of active travel, recreational and touristic routes. For expediency, this section notes the regionally significant Offa's Dyke Path National Trail and Wye Valley Walk footpath and the emerging Wye Valley Greenway. These are the primary north-south routes which at varying points connect the river villages. Both Offa's Dyke Path and Wye Valley Walk are part of longer

walking routes linking the Wales Coast Path. As previously noted, this offers potential for the area to celebrate the beginning and end of these long distance routes.

Inclusive active travel where the needs of all people are understood and catered for is becoming an increasingly important consideration. This includes groups with typically lower levels of uptake including the elderly, BAME groups, women and people with disabilities. There is a significant opportunity for the Wye Valley to pioneer an approach to inclusive active travel by offering safe and adapted routes and means, as well as targeted marketing and branding.



The potential to engage others is huge: 55% of people from ethnic minority groups, 38% of people at risk of deprivation, 36% of women and 31% of disabled people who do not cycle would like to start.¹

1. **INCLUSIVE ACTIVE TRAVEL: 2019 ARUP REPORT AND MIXED ABILITY CYCLING**

MOVEMENT STRATEGY

To make a truly meaningful impact on transport in the area, several strategies will need to be aligned. The diagram illustrates how these are layered from changing the street design of the villages, the connecting public transport and new mobility hubs to ‘get people out of their cars’ and experience the Wye Valley on foot or bike.



The Arup publication Future Mobility Hubs



Sustainable transport strategy

Left: Bee-friendly bus stop, Utrecht

Right: Greener Grangetown, Cardiff

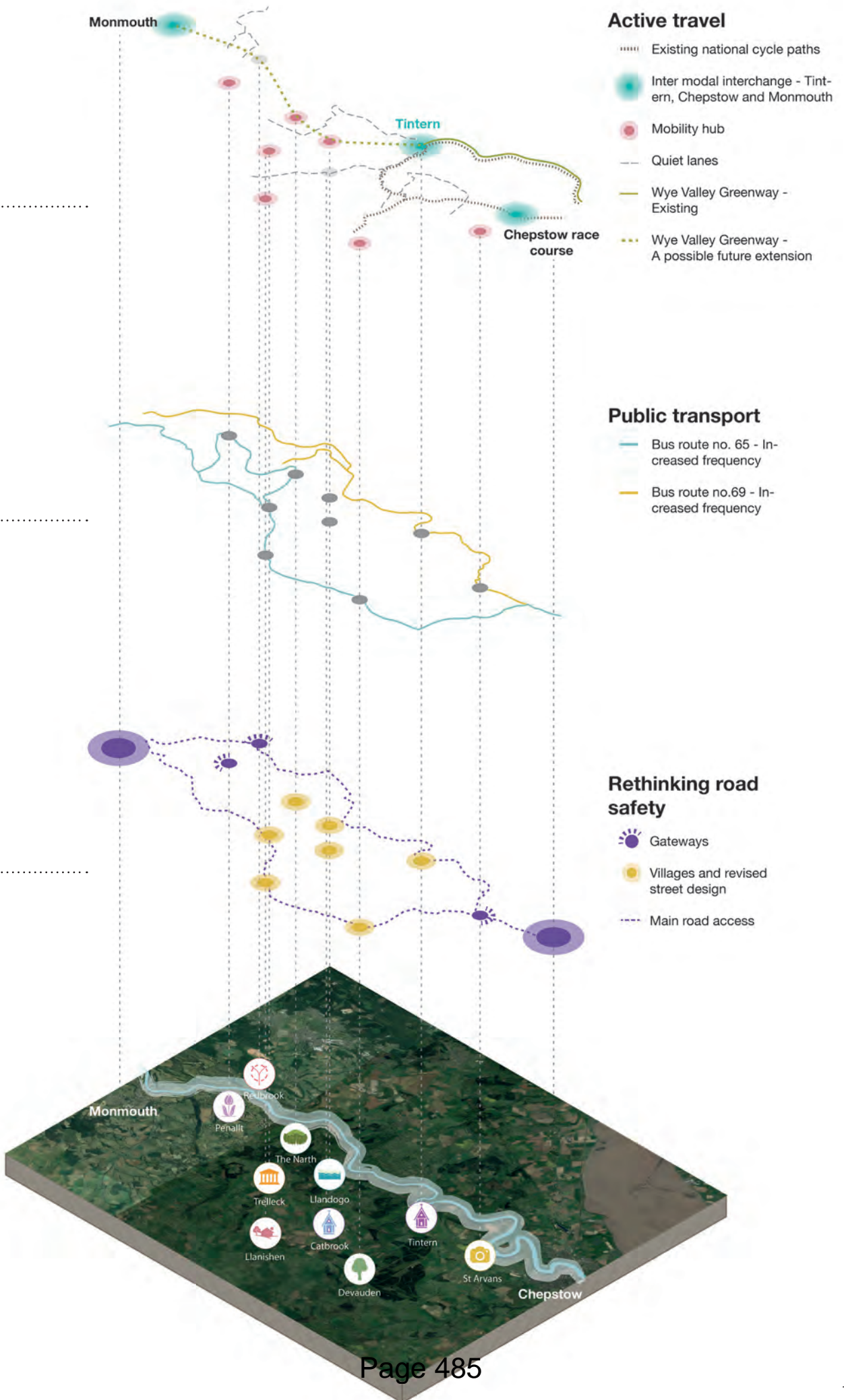


Coordinated village street design

Left: Blaenavon Ironworks, Blaenavon

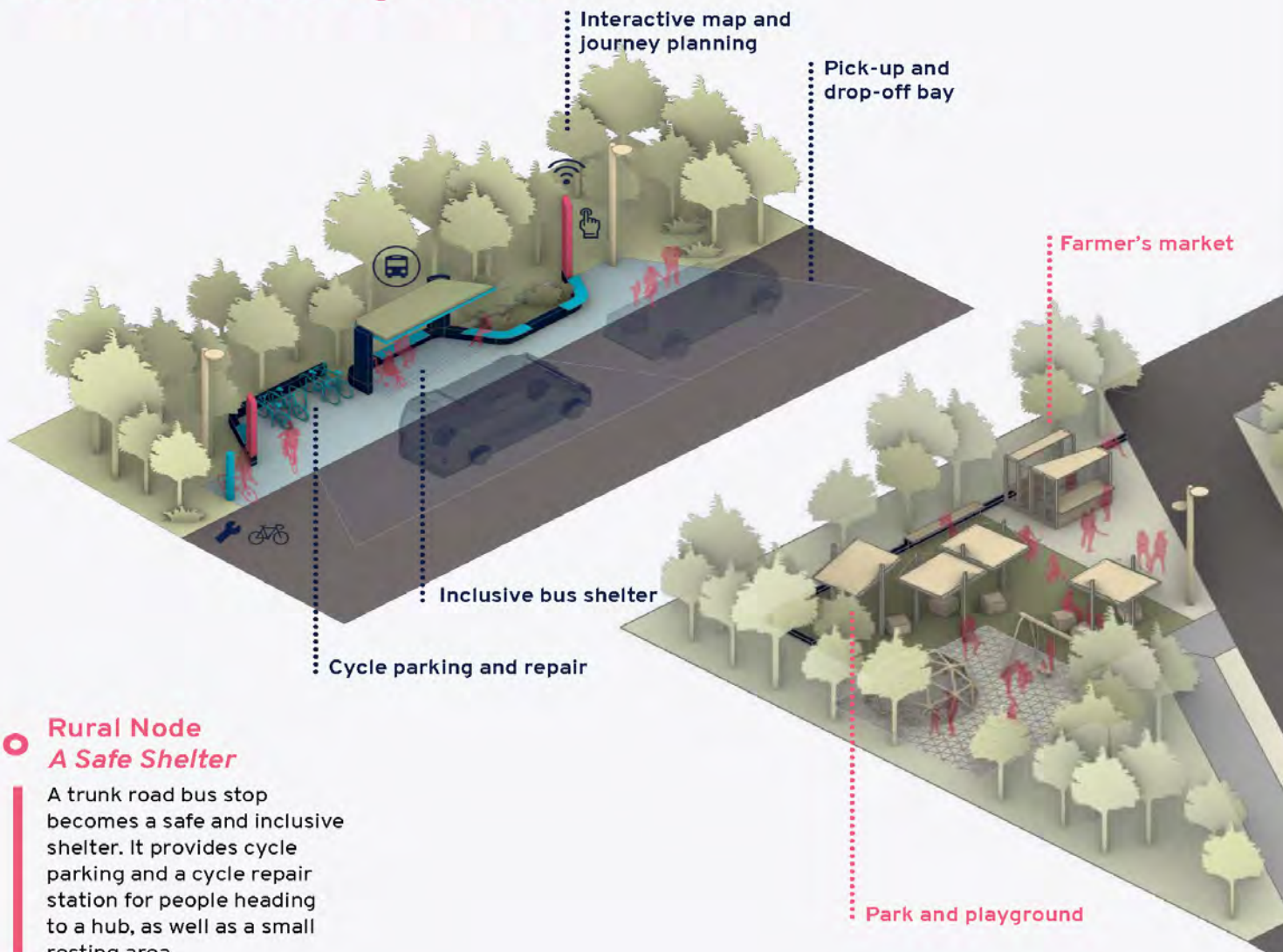
Right: Pedestrian priority spaces

2. THE LAYERS OF PROPOSED ROAD SAFETY AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AS THEY RELATE TO VILLAGES



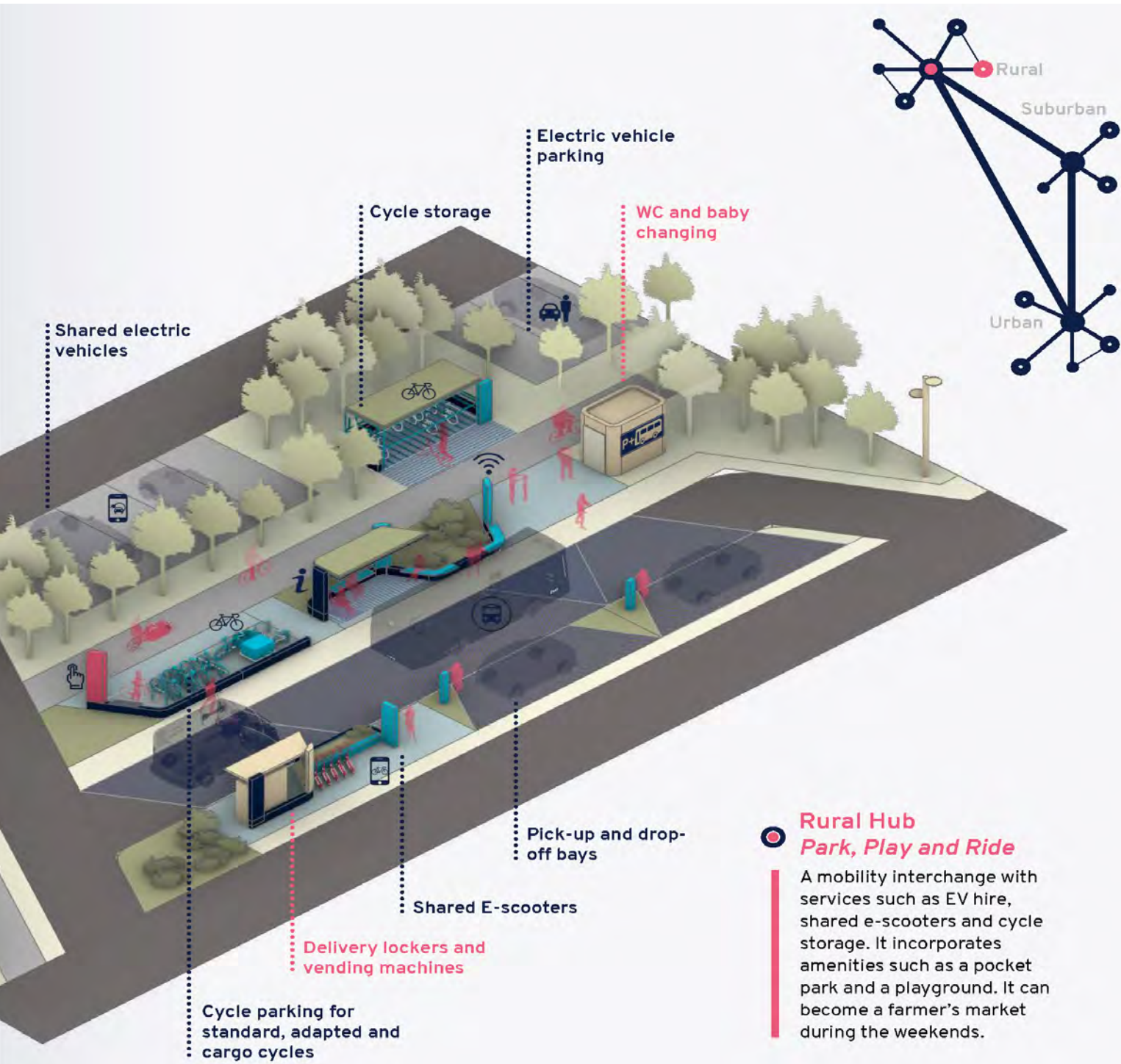
The Arup publication Future Mobility Hubs illustrates how these facilities can be delivered at three different scales namely rural, semi urban and urban. To help understanding what this may mean for the Wye Valley, the following pages contain extracts from the report to show how a rural mobility hub could look and function.

Rural Mobility Hubs



Rural Node **A Safe Shelter**

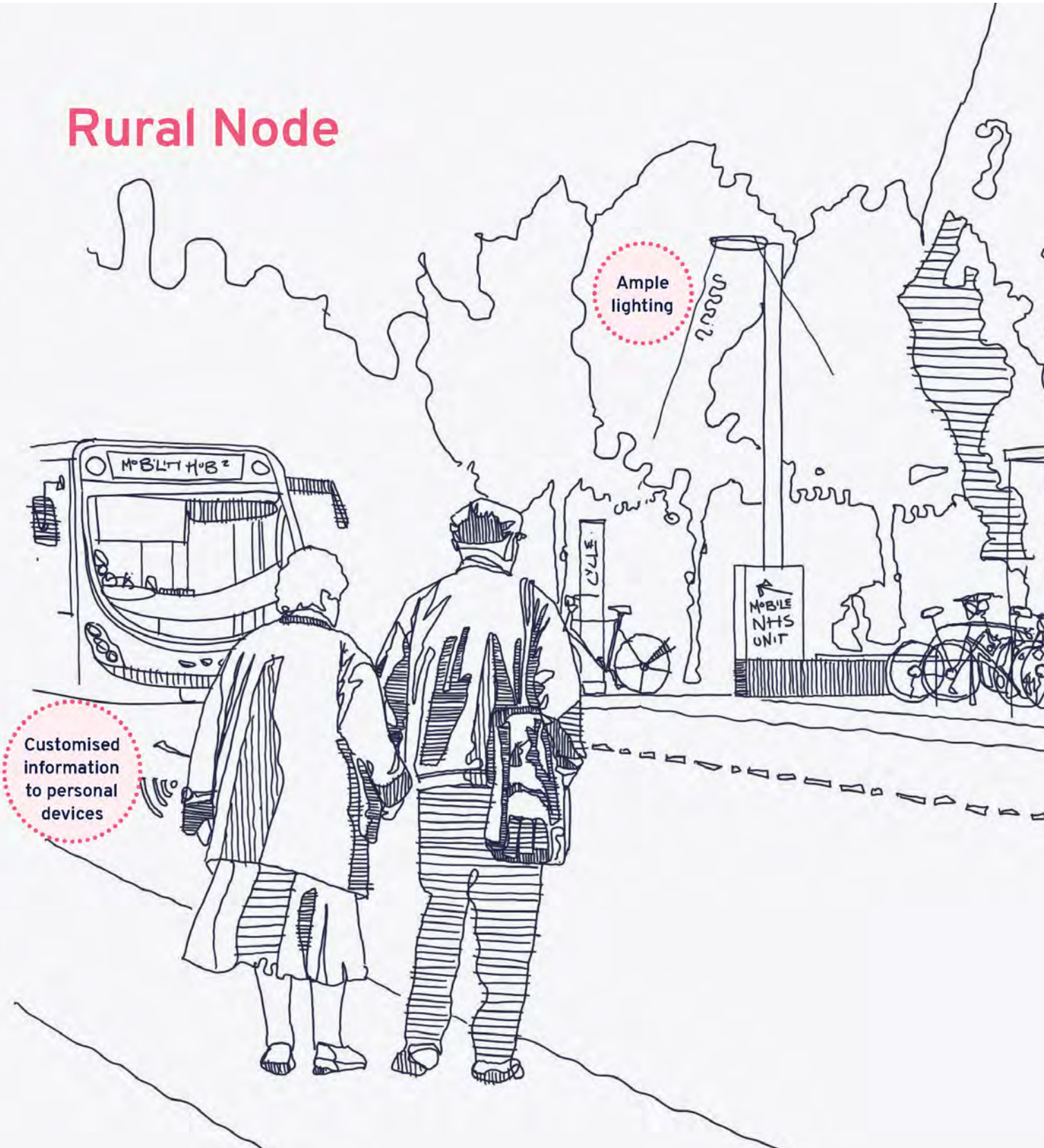
A trunk road bus stop becomes a safe and inclusive shelter. It provides cycle parking and a cycle repair station for people heading to a hub, as well as a small resting area.

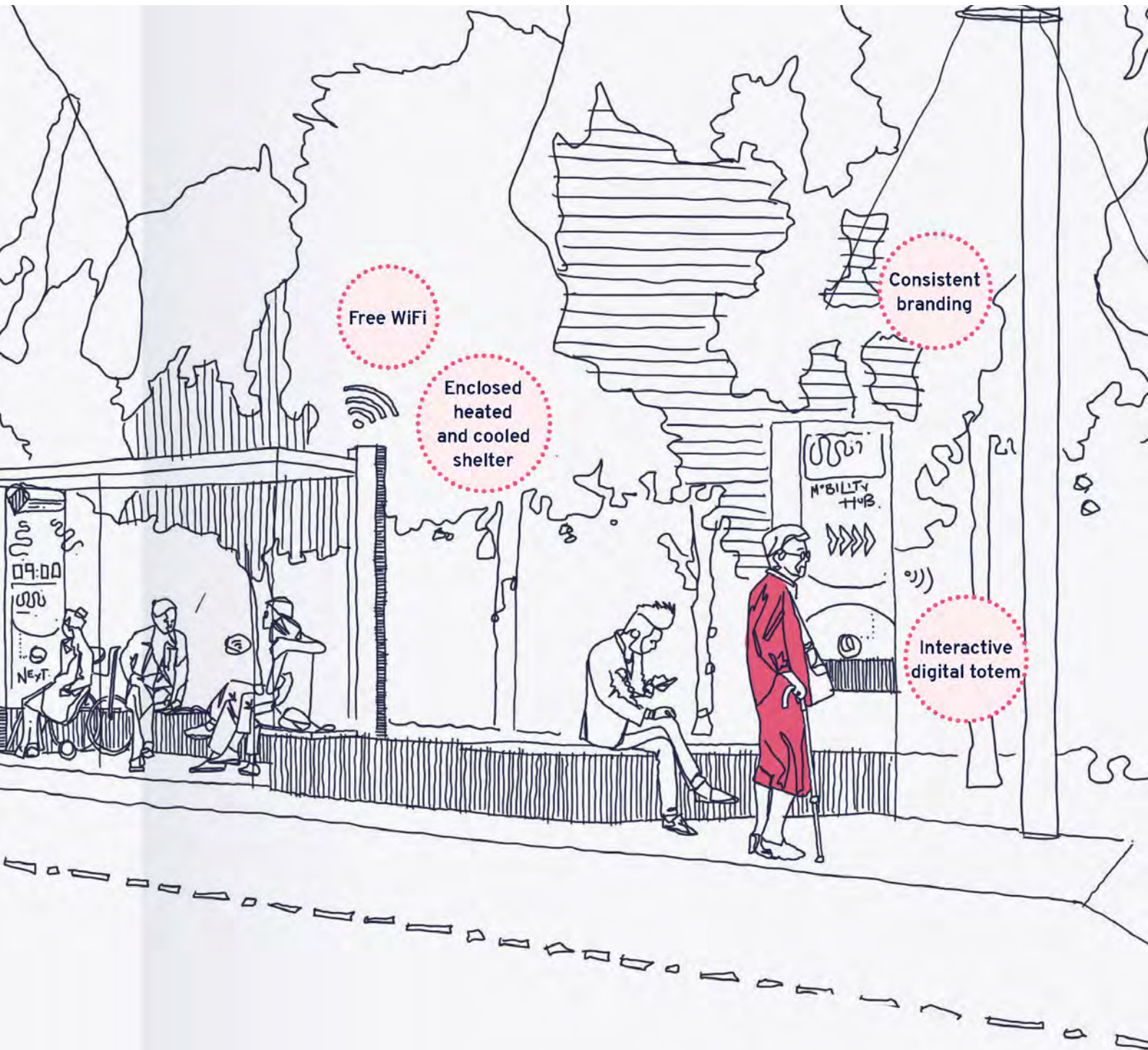


Rural Hub
Park, Play and Ride

A mobility interchange with services such as EV hire, shared e-scooters and cycle storage. It incorporates amenities such as a pocket park and a playground. It can become a farmer's market during the weekends.

Rural Node





4.3 Conserve & enhance the landscape

2

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A health plan for the River Wye

The 'Green' Villages initiative

Pilots for sustainable farming

Carbon footprint analysis

INTRODUCTION

Green and blue infrastructure refers to the landscapes (habitats, woodlands, fields, parks etc) and water systems (rivers, tributaries, streams etc). The recommendations offered around green and blue infrastructure are cognisant of the vast body of work contained by and managed by the AONB Partnership and the recently published Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2021-2026. In response, the recommendations of this study are not based around large-scale change to the landscape and water system of the AONB. Instead, the focus of this study is on recommendations which can be aligned with community-based projects, council led initiatives or the result of collaboration.

Interventions should support wider ecological connectivity through the enhancement and conservation of trees, hedgerows, verges, riparian habitat and lowland meadows for example. A local action group (Monmouthshire Meadows) is active within the area and have successfully delivered Trellech Wet Meadows Local Wildlife Site with Gwent Wildlife Trust. The potential to create additional schemes should be explored.

A HEALTH PLAN FOR THE RIVER WYE

The current level of river pollution and subsequent impact on ecology was cited as an issue during the public consultation and indeed poor river health across the UK is of growing concern. The reasons for increased pollutant levels are complex but contributors could include;

- Fertiliser and pesticide usage associated with the intensification of agriculture
- Water run-off from our road network
- Waste water and contaminants from homes

The section of the River Wye explored in this study is located at the lower reaches of the wider river catchment area. To fully mitigate and improve the health of the River Wye a strong vision and plan is needed that covers the entirety of the river catchment area. This will need to include multiple local authorities, land owners, stakeholders across the English-Welsh border. This is a significant undertaking but without this approach the lower reaches of the River Wye will continue to be affected by issues that are beyond the control of Monmouthshire County Council, the Wye Valley AONB Partnership and NRW.

Despite this there are actions that can be taken at the local level that can help create the conditions for change and demonstrate a 'better way'. These can include;

- Localised Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to filter harmful contaminants before they find their way into the river system. Such systems use planting and landscaped features such as channels and ponds to store, filter and slowly release rainwater into streams, rivers and watercourses.
- A proactive campaign to raise awareness around household waste water and to encourage more environmentally friendly cleaning products.
- Encourage local action through community awareness initiatives. Encourage participation in citizen science, including the Wye Catchment Monitoring Project.
- Regenerative agriculture pilots that demonstrate how you can reduce or remove pesticides and manage the landscape to reduce surface run-off

In this way, the Wye Valley Villages can lead the cause for change for the wider River Wye.

THE 'GREEN' VILLAGES INITIATIVE

At a village level, it is recommended that any improvements to localised streets and public spaces are taken forward with nature-based solutions to water management such as SUDs. This can deliver multiple benefits including the creation of low maintenance filtration systems, reducing flooding, new habitat and recreation value. These are now required by Welsh Government for new road and public realm schemes.

In addition, community led initiatives which align with and support the overarching aims of the AONB can play an important role in placemaking and raising awareness amongst the community. Micro habitat creation such as the so-called Tiny-forests initiative or local food production schemes such as Incredible Edible can prove an invaluable source of positive change and help further shape the character of the villages.

So-called 'Citizen Science' where the local community contribute to wider research can be a fantastic way of encouraging participation whilst delivering meaningful research.

PILOTS FOR SUSTAINABLE FARMING

There is an opportunity to engage the agricultural community in order to deliver shared benefits for the AONB, local communities, local ecology and to mitigate climate change. Regenerative agriculture can be defined as farming practices which actively seek to conserve and enhance biodiversity, improve soil health and support the local economy.

During the study we have discussed the opportunity for MCC to utilise publicly owned land holdings for a pilot project to explore the benefits, challenges and opportunities for regenerative agriculture. We recommend this is explored further.

CARBON FOOTPRINT ANALYSIS

In 2019 Monmouthshire County Council declared a climate emergency committing to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero by 2030. In achieving this target it is likely that Monmouthshire County Council will need to understand the contribution green and blue infrastructure can make both within the county and more specifically the study area of this report. Starting in January 2022 a carbon footprint analysis for the whole Wye Valley AONB will be undertaken. This will provide an invaluable resource which should be utilised to influence decision making and the prioritisation of projects.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The landscape recommendations are formed around three layers each of which complement the extensive and successful work of the AONB and are intrinsically linked. The first layer of 'green' includes the mosaic of habitats throughout and valley, the 'blue' captures the water system including the River Wye and the final layer recognises the importance of improvement and action within the villages and communities as part of a 'whole' approach.



Pilots for sustainable farming

Left: Lowland meadows

Right: FitzPark, London



A Health Plan for the River Wye

Left: Regenerative river edge, Selwyn River catchment, Canterbury

Right: Using planting and landscape to manage water, Wisconsin

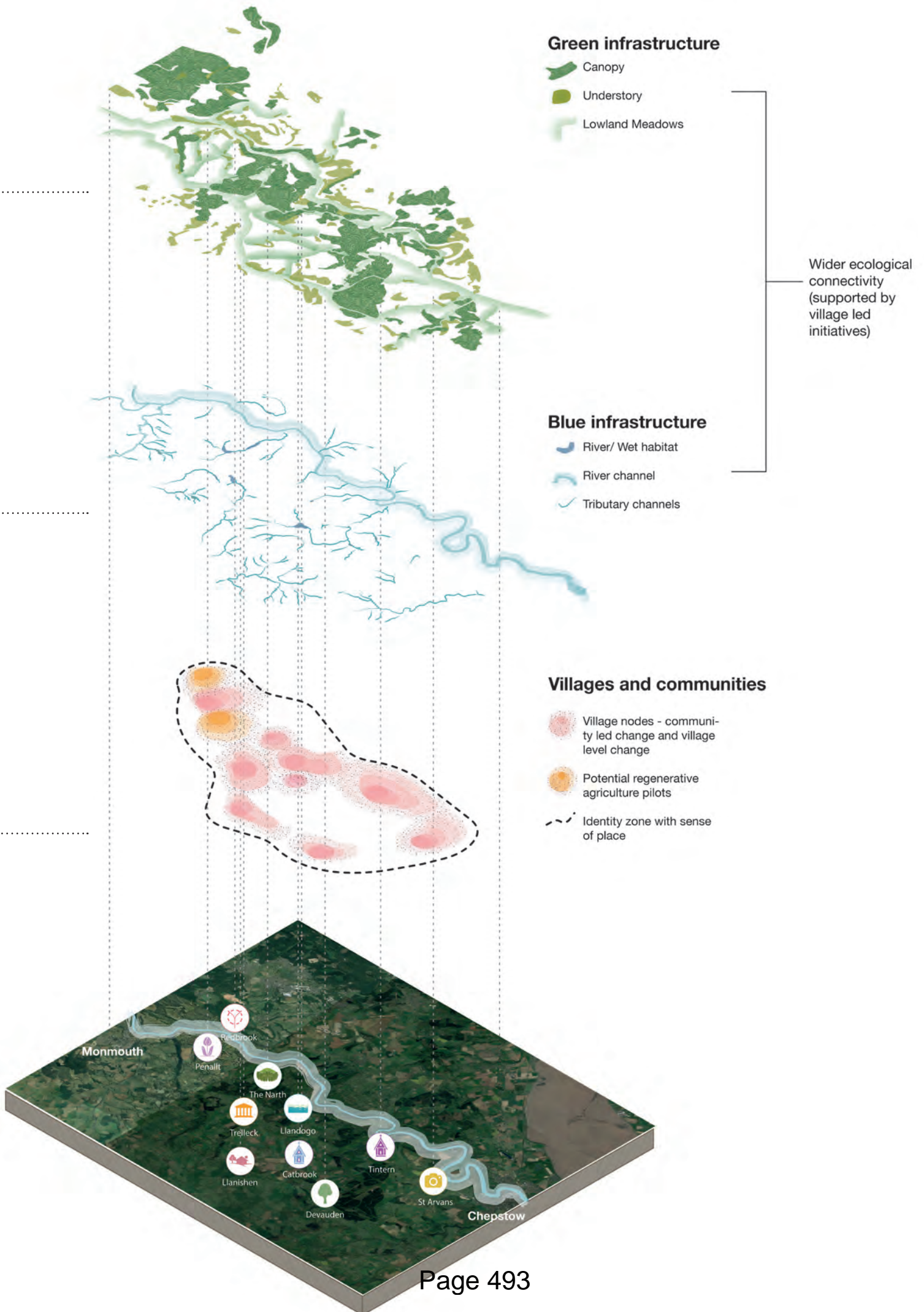


The 'Green' Villages initiative

Left: Incredible Edible (<https://www.incredibleedible.org.uk/>)

Right: FitzPark, London

3. THE LAYERS OF LANDSCAPE AS THEY RELATE TO THE VILLAGES



4.4 Enable sustainable tourism



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Formulate a new tourism strategy

The views, recommendations and ideas contained within this section have been discussed with key stakeholders and are focussed on the next steps and a possible way forward. To develop an effective, future action plan for the tourism aspects of “Wye Valley Villages Plan for the Future”, there is a need to step-back and look at opportunities and challenges with a slightly broader and more strategic view and to consult with local communities, residents and businesses regarding acceptable levels of tourism at different times of the year. Sustainable tourism has benefits in terms of growing tourism for the good of the area’s people, environment and communities.

Four key considerations have been identified as integral to a future tourism strategy. These are:

1. Geographic Boundaries

The geopolitical context of the Wye Valley is evidently complex being located across multiple administrative boundaries and straddling both England and Wales. The geographic boundary of future work and management will need to be agreed. This could be focused on the villages within this report, the entire AONB or a broader area yet undefined.

2. Leadership and delivery

There will need to be agreement on who will lead on the planning and delivery of a solution as destination marketing and destination management cannot be delivered in separate silos. Further agreement is needed on who forms

part of project governance which could include communities, local business and public sector agencies.

3. Balancing tourism benefit and effect

Increasing tourism (or potentially decreasing in certain areas) poses significant questions. There needs to be an agreement on optimum level of positive benefits from tourism and potential effect for individual communities and component organisations. A clear understanding of what successful sustainable tourism looks like will need to be agreed.

4. The condition of the tourism economy

Before proceeding with a new strategy it is essential to understand the current condition of the existing tourism economy to establish whether it is ‘fragile’ or more robust. The second consideration will be to define what scale the ‘tourism engine’ should be to be more resilient.

APPROACH TO FORMULATING A NEW TOURISM STRATEGY

The following recommendations outline a series of steps to develop and deliver a new strategy:

- The swift delivery of an updated strategy and action plan (with measurable outcomes) for sustainable tourism with hard metrics and a defined business case at its heart, that can be measured and monitored so that as the strategy gets implemented, the degree of its success can be measured, and its implementation guided and shaped.
 - A new strategy should build on, and update, the Wye Valley AONB Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2011-2016. Although this report did not contain detailed metrics and economics, it did provide a clear and comprehensive picture of what sustainable tourism could look like. A review of this plan is needed to determine which elements worked and those which did not. It will be essential to understand what has changed and what new opportunities and challenges have emerged.
 - The new strategy should be based on hard data – linking into the ongoing research and data collection already being done for example by MCC / Visit Wales
 - A new strategy should also be cognisant of, and align with the Monmouthshire Destination Plan.
 - Business cases should be quantified with either 'hard', economic outcomes or social value generation. For example, the number of new full and part time jobs created, the value this brings to the local economy and relative uplift against the existing situation.
- Any new strategy should be realistic and pragmatic – but should not be afraid to be ambitious and aspirational. Without an ambitious plan, that can deliver sustainable economic and social benefits, why should stakeholders and investors want to back it and provide the resources needed? This represents evolution as opposed to revolution but will require a significant and positive step-change, built-in.
 - A new strategy should be divided into what is termed 'hardware and software'.

Software – The behaviours, methodologies, and means used to market, manage and curate the visitor experience and the destination (in general terms- the destination management plan and the destination marketing plan)

Hardware - The physical and bricks & mortar facilities, amenities and infrastructure that support the delivery of the visitor experience.

SOFTWARE OPPORTUNITIES

Brand - The development and application of a more clearly defined place brand, in terms of common, shared values; strategic messages and visual identity. The current lack of singularity, clarity, and consistency of place brand within the wider Valley, dilutes and fails to enhance a unique and compelling sense of place.

Messages that can be developed, unified, and amplified across all channels & platforms such as websites, social media, printed form and signage. These messages can be focused on encouraging the tourism behaviours that we want to promote. They might (for example) include:

- Ditch the Car! The Wye Valley is an immersive, multi-sensory experience that you can only enjoy when you get out of the car. Any visit to the Valley needs to include parking-up and getting out and into the landscape whether it be by walking, cycling, or canoeing etc.

- More to see than just a day trip! Don't just pass-through, stay overnight. There is great potential for after dark experiences such as dark skies, bat watching and son et lumière.
- Avoid the queues! The Valley is just as incredible out of season and off-peak. The Valley's scenery changes with the seasons and is maybe even more beautiful & compelling and the welcome maybe even warmer, when we are not at our busiest. For example, autumn is a wonderful time for leaf peeping in the Wye Valley. Leaf peeping is an activity where people travel to admire the changing season as the foliage turns from summer greens to the vibrant colours of autumn.

The Borderlands Theme and Identity - The English and Welsh border represents an exciting melting pot, of differing histories, languages, ethnographies, and cultures. As long as boundaries separate places in political, socio-cultural, and economic terms, borderlands will continue to be a unique venue for tourist



©Peter Moore



SUCCESSFUL PLACE BRANDING

4. **BELOW: NORTH COAST 500, SCOTLAND** (www.northcoast500.com)

5. **RIGHT: GOLDEN CIRCLE, ICELAND** (www.visiticeland.com/article/the-golden-circle/)

©httpwww.cpgrey.com

HARDWARE OPPORTUNITIES

Hardware opportunities that the Wye Valley stakeholders can champion, lead, or partner on might include:

- Signage and Wayfinding - applying a reinvigorated and renewed place brand and visual identity, swiftly via new signage and wayfinding within the agreed geographic boundary. This could be a quick win and early deliverable demonstrating positive change for the local communities and visitors alike.
- Gateways – bold, physical forms on highways and footpaths, that signify arrival into or departure from this special and magical place. This could enhance and reaffirm the sense of place and create a positive sense of arrival which is currently missing. This represents another quick win and early deliverable.
- Visitor Attractions – especially those that celebrate and promote rural life and sustainable living, as tourists have become increasingly aware of environmental impact. If attraction opportunities are left to market forces, and the mix only curated passively, this risks a race to bottom – bringing the wrong sort of visitor for the wrong sort of occasion. Attraction operators with adequate finances are scarce across the UK and Europe. That is why partnerships, soft equity (capital grant support) and joined-up thinking will be required, to proactively plan, deliver and sustain a broader range of complementary attractions and attraction operators in appropriate locations.
- Supporting amenities – for example more serviced and or semi-serviced, accommodation and food and beverage opportunities. Celebrating the food provenance of the area, and offering the chance to really ‘meet local people’, as tourists are looking increasingly for authenticity in their experiences.
- Local Tourism Hubs – pockets of more dedicated tourist activity located strategically with parking, amenities and access to the landscape or recreation especially along the river Valley. This would mean actively curating this need in appropriate locations with the supporting amenities especially in potentially underused areas like NRW woodlands with cycle trails etc nearby.
- Main Tourism Hubs There may be scope for developing larger and more integrated tourism hubs. These could accommodate and integrate new attractions and amenities and be co-located with the inter modal interchanges discussed in section 4.2. These could be compact versions possibly, of the proposed PEAK - Peak District National Park resort campus near Chesterfield located at the prime gateways to the Valley such as Chepstow racecourse.

4.5 Reinforce the network of unique villages

4

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Celebrate the uniqueness of the villages

Coordinated approach to village improvements including village street design

Continued partnership working between community councils

To emphasise this uniqueness, the villages are a tapestry of settlements, moving away from the basic distinction between the villages in the valley and the ones high on the plateau between Wye Valley and Vale of Usk. This network of villages allows for unique identities to flourish and be reinforced, together with Monmouth and Chepstow as gateway towns. Of these, nine are explored within this study. Redbrook although part of the structure of villages and acknowledged here falls outside of Monmouthshire and therefore this study.

Using the same six point plan as for the overarching vision, common strategies and principles for placemaking can be defined, such as interventions that improve:

- travel and movement (road safety, active travel routes),
- tourism (signage and wayfinding, amenities and services),
- landscape (SUDs, biodiversity, trees and vegetation) and
- local economy (co-working hubs, local supply chains, digital economy and businesses)



4.6 Support the local economy



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Affordable housing strategy

Halls Together Project

Remote working hub pilot

Improving digital connectivity

Targeted circular economy fund

While Monmouthshire has the highest rate of active businesses and business births as well as the third highest Gross Value Added or GVA in Wales (this is a measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area), career opportunities and availability and quality of employment sites are limited, and the tourism industry is seasonal.

An older population is attracted to the region's high quality of life but are often in need of specific services such as health and social care and a younger population is in need of employment opportunities and incentives to drive initiatives forward locally.

Five drivers of change may support improvements and transformation of the local economy:

- Affordable housing strategy
- Remote working hub pilot
- Targeted circular economy fund for local producers and land managers
- Halls Together Project
- Improving digital connectivity

AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY

The Wye Valley is a desirable and expensive place to live but is unaffordable for many people employed locally and younger people. The high cost of housing may also be discouraging new and existing local businesses. Specific actions could be:

- Encourage construction of new houses and address the need for affordable and varied housing stock.
- Increase availability of housing sites to provide differing residential products and to enable higher rates of jobs per dwelling.
- Address the wider geographic differences in employment and housing markets in the region.

To address this issue it is important to to revise the Wye Valley Local Housing Needs Requirements specifically for the villages and to implement the Rural Allocations Policy.

REMOTE WORKING HUB PILOT

One way to raise the profile of the region as a dynamic place to do business is to work with Welsh Government and private operators to deliver a pilot remote working hub in one of the villages. This would provide office type accommodation on a flexible basis, access to IT, fast internet and attractive meeting and socialising spaces. This could benefit local communities and businesses in order to increase social capital, create skills networks and drive initiatives forward.

TARGETED CIRCULAR ECONOMY FUND

Exploring current circular economy funds can identify localised opportunities for local producers and land managers. There is an opportunity for increasing entrepreneurship (such as the Wye Valley Producers collective), capacity of businesses, earnings and retaining of economically active people within the production sector around the principle of a local circular economy.

HALLS TOGETHER PROJECT

This is a community project being guided by a steering group of representatives from village halls and community councils. The aim is to encourage and facilitate Community Facilities to work together to share best practice and benefit from joint ventures such as training, bulk purchasing, compliance and funding. Areas of focus have been identified through a questionnaire to hall community facilities.

IMPROVING DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Good quality digital infrastructure and connectivity is central in facilitating digital businesses, education, social inclusion, and inward investment in the region. The hills and valleys of the Wye Valley make it difficult to deploy traditional approaches to digital infrastructure such as laying cables. Specific actions could be:

- Provide better broadband infrastructure such as Next Generation Access or wireless broadband coverage to reduce out commuting.
- An application by MCC/RDP to the Welsh Government Local Broadband Fund 2022/23 following the completion of the Welsh Government Open Market Review. This will focus on technologies that take into account the topography of the valley.
- Continue to work with Monmouthshire Broadband/Broadband partners to deliver their current plan for 'Fibre to the Premises' internet in Tintern and Trellech



6. GLOVE FACTORY STUDIOS,
BRADFORD-ON-AVON

4.7 Provide joined-up governance



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish a delivery group

Cross border working

ESTABLISH A DELIVERY GROUP

Leadership, ownership and identity will be decisive when it comes to delivering the vision for the “Wye Valley Villages AONB Plan for the Future”. The action and delivery plan that will support the Plan for the Future will need strong, constant and proactive management and guidance. That will ensure successful and viable funding and delivery of a programme of projects that will be defined for each of the six points of the plan.

An integrated approach is essential to resolve issues and realise opportunities. The Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) is currently the main cross-border body, consisting of local authorities, government agencies and interested public, private and voluntary sector organisations, that oversees the AONB Management Plan and the AONB Unit, and advises partners on issues, initiatives and strategies relating to the AONB.

CROSS BORDER WORKING

Many of the challenges and opportunities in the Wye Valley are not bound by geographical or administrative boundaries and the “increasingly complex and widespread environmental, social and political challenges transcend traditional management boundaries” as the AONB management plan states. The opportunity is to create cross border partnerships with national entities, whose strategies and plans aim to achieve similar objectives and jointly coordinate, plan, deliver and fund future projects.

Clear and strong governance and removing traditional boundaries between the public and private sector could further enhance collaboration and integration between the existing plans and projects and offer support to new or grassroots initiatives.



THE WILD HARE



5.1 Village Plans

These plans illustrate the ideas developed during the course of the project. In some instances they fall within privately owned land or will require more design, feasibility and investigation. In such instances this will require a longer time frame to assess viability and will require more in depth conversations to build consensus.

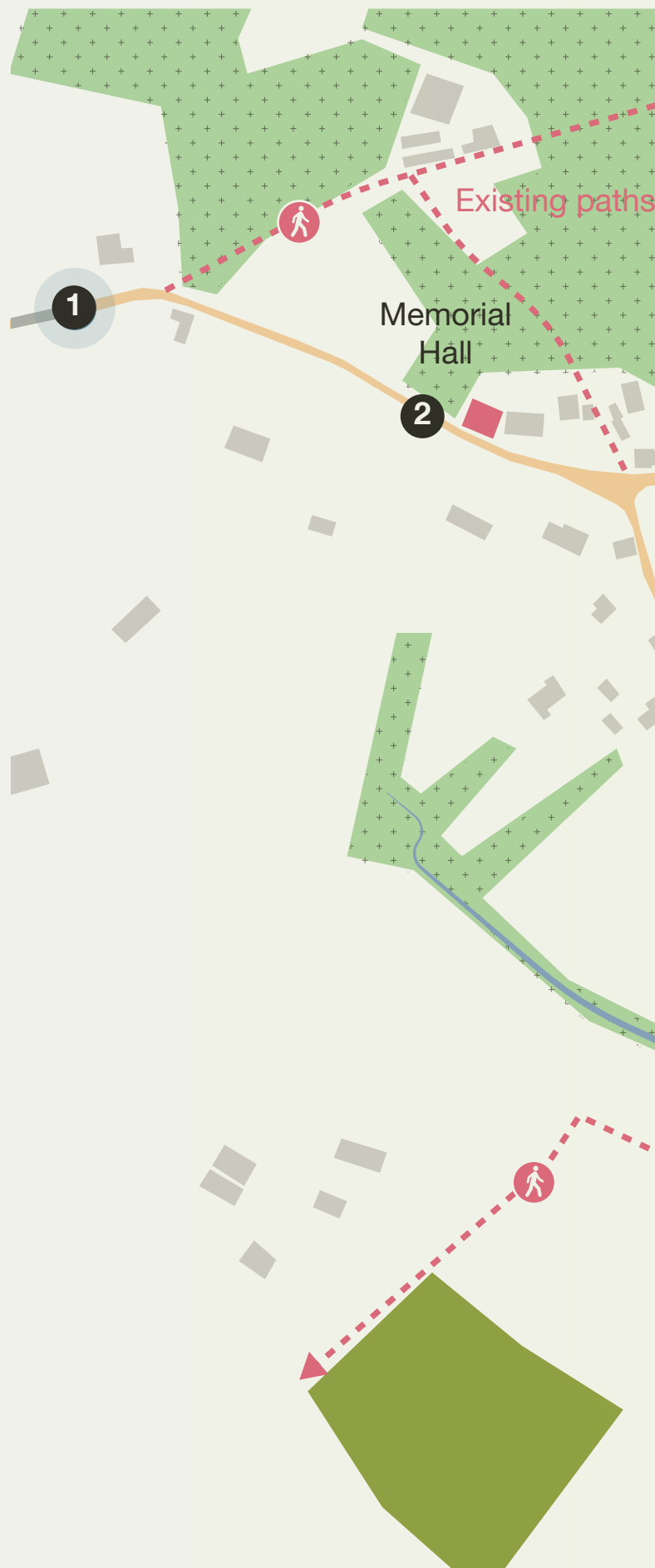
Suggestions are offered for particular uses within certain village halls. These should not be considered as the only potential uses and alternative ideas are recommended as the plans develop.

The following pages contain diagrammatic plans explaining how these proposed interventions could be implemented in each village and includes an individual action plan for each village setting out the projects and key information around timescale, the partners needed to delivery and the level of priority.

5.2 Catbrook

The village is a community rather than a focal point for tourism. As with the North the quiet, secluded character of the village is a defining feature. Accordingly, proposed change is limited. Subtle interventions could help garner greater community cohesion, increase the sense of place and cater for low impact tourism in the form of walkers/hikers.

- 1 Village gateway** with 20mph speed limit and unique gateway sign
- 2 Traffic calming** street design such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water





5.2 Catbrook Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
Opportunity -Encourage lower vehicle speeds. Overall recommendations here are limited to road safety in response to feedback from the public consultation				
5.2.1	Road Safety and placemaking	Creation of village gateway signage	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.2.2	Road Safety	20mph speed limit through village (2023 based on current proposals from WG).	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC	MCC/Community council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund, Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places funding.	Budget would need to be secured	£10-15k subject to detail design (please note this could vary significantly depending on the type of signage).	MCC, AONB, Community Councils,
MCC	MCC/WG	MCC Operational Budget - via WG 20mph plans	Exists within current budget	tbc	MCC, Community Councils, AONB, WG

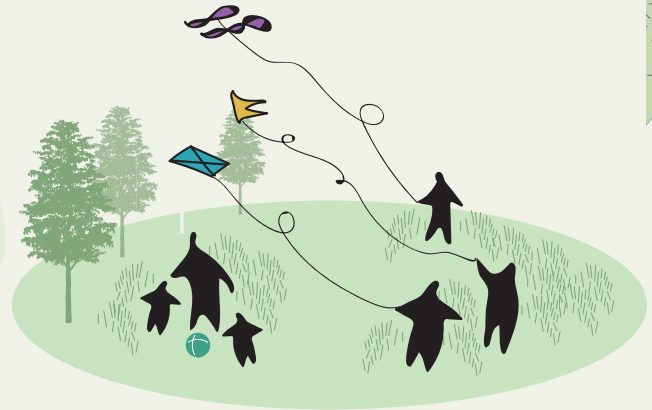
5.3 Devauden

By contrast to the destination villages such as Tintern, the character of Devauden reflects its function as a community and less as a tourism destination. During the engagement process concern was raised over the volume and speed of vehicle movement. The active community hall and community council can play a key role in delivering change on the ground. The initial proposals are:

- 1 Village gateway** with 20mph speed limit and unique gateway sign
- 2 Traffic calming** street design such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water.



- 3 Community agriculture scheme** such as Incredible Edible (Usk). Location to be determined.



- 4 Village green enhancements -**
The main feature of note is the village green which contains the interpretative feature for John Wesley . Given the importance of the Wesleyan movement and its global reach, there is an opportunity to enhance this space to support multiple purposes for the community and visitors. Small habitat creation such as species rich grassland or wildflower planting will bring ecological benefits and enhance the environment. Another opportunity is to relocate some bus stops to the village green area.
- 5 Memorial Hall -** a gathering place for the community with added facilities such as cycle parking, EV charging, wayfinding and wifi. It is also worth exploring other ideas such as temporary village pub and small habitat creation around the hall.
- 6 Safe cycle paths** for people of all abilities with bike facilities at Memorial Hall.



5.3 Devauden Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
Opportunity -Encourage lower vehicle speeds. Opportunity -Community agriculture				
5.3.1	Road Safety and placemaking	Creation of village gateway signage	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.3.2	Road Safety	20mph speed limit through village	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.3.3	Street Design	Detail design changes to the street to encourage lower speeds such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water. To be defined via the recommended coordinated village street design.	Development project/pilot	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC	MCC/Community council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund, Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places funding.	Budget would need to be secured	£10-15k subject to detail design (please note this could vary significantly depending on the type of signage).	MCC, AONB, Community Councils,
MCC	MCC/WG	Welsh Government Local Transport Fund	Identified within forthcoming budget	tbc	MCC,WG, Community Councils
MCC	MCC/Community Council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund (2021-22 Round)	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale and specification of improvement.	MCC, WG, Community Councils

5.3 Devauden Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
5.3.4	Community Agriculture/ Growing	Deliver a community agriculture scheme as an early win for the Green Village Strategy. Consider aligning to existing initiatives such as Incredible Edible (Usk). Communicate ideas with Coleg Gwent and Wye Valley AONB to explore opportunities for collaboration and knowledge share.	Community based project	High - Quick Win
5.3.5	Village Green Enhancements	Localised improvements to the green including small habitat creation (such as species rich grassland or appropriate wild flower planting to be agreed with MCC).	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.3.6	Relocation of bus stops	Consider relocating bus stops to the village green area.	Development project/pilot	High
5.3.7	The Hood Memorial Hall	Consider extending small habitat creation to areas around the hall aligned to the Green Village Strategy.	Community based proejct	High - Quick Win
5.3.8	The Hood Memorial Hall	Explore additional ideas raised during the consultation such as a temporary village pub (assumed as a 1 day a week event).	Community based proejct	High - Quick Win

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
Third Sector	Community Council	Community Funding tbc	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - such schemes can be realised with minimal to no capital expenditure assuming land is already acquired.	Community Councils, AONB, Coleg Gwent, Existing initiatives such as Incredible Edible
Partnership	MCC/Community Council	Community Funding, Sustainable Development Fund tbc	Budget would need to be secured	tbc	Community Councils, MCC, Bus Operators, Monmouthshire Meadows
Partnership	MCC/Community Council, Bus operator	Multiple Funding Sources to be defined	Budget would need to be secured	tbc	MCC/Community Council, Bus operator
Third Sector	Community Council	Community Funding, Collaboration with NRW/ Woodland Trust tbc	Budget would need to be secured	tbc	Community Council, Monmouthshire Meadows Groups AONB, MCC, Wildlife partner (e.g. Gwent Wildlife Trust).
Third Sector	MCC/Community Council	Community Funding,	Budget would need to be secured	Assumed as no additional cost or minimal community funding.	Community Councils, MCC, Bus Operators

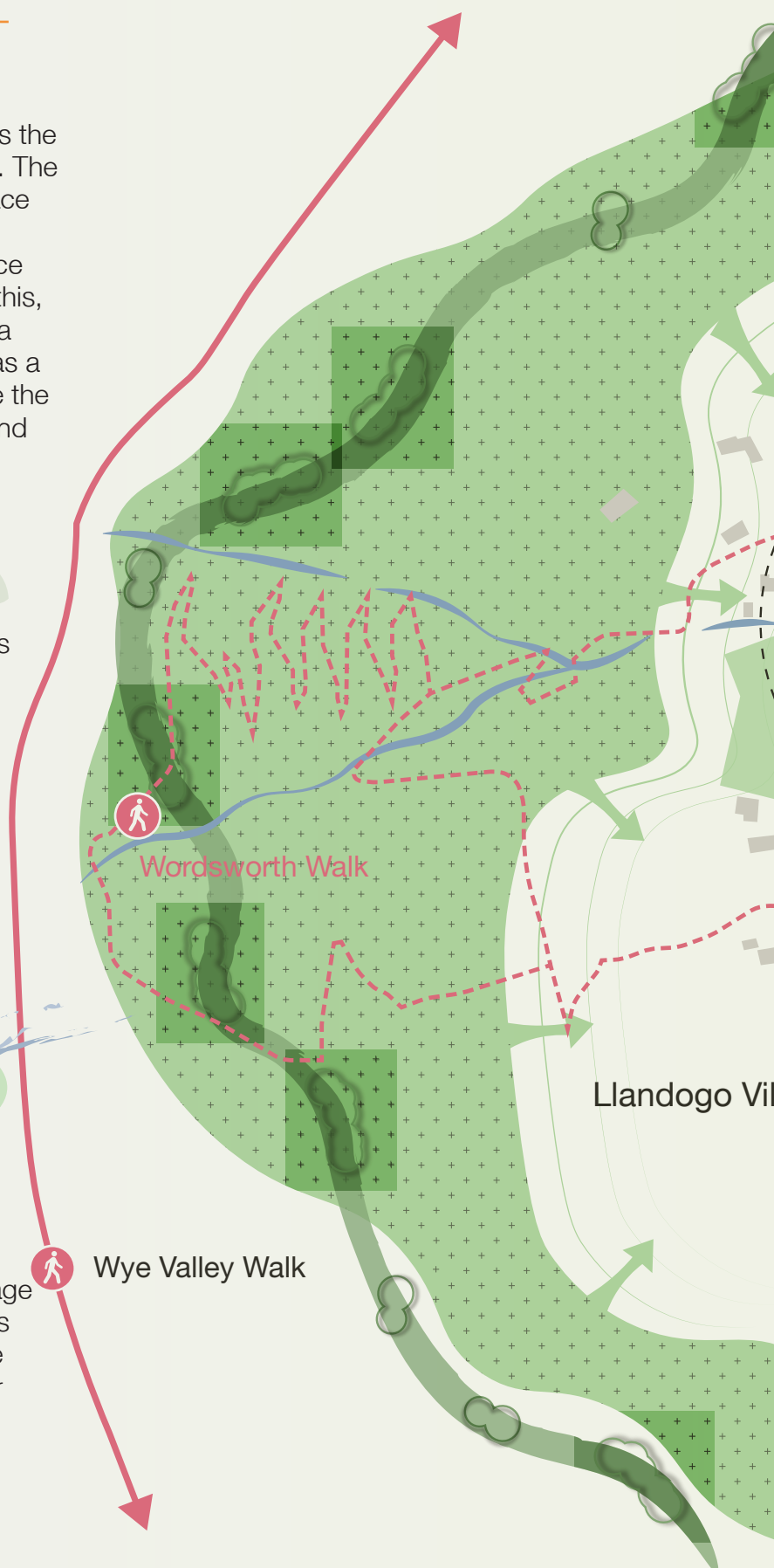
5.4 Llandogo

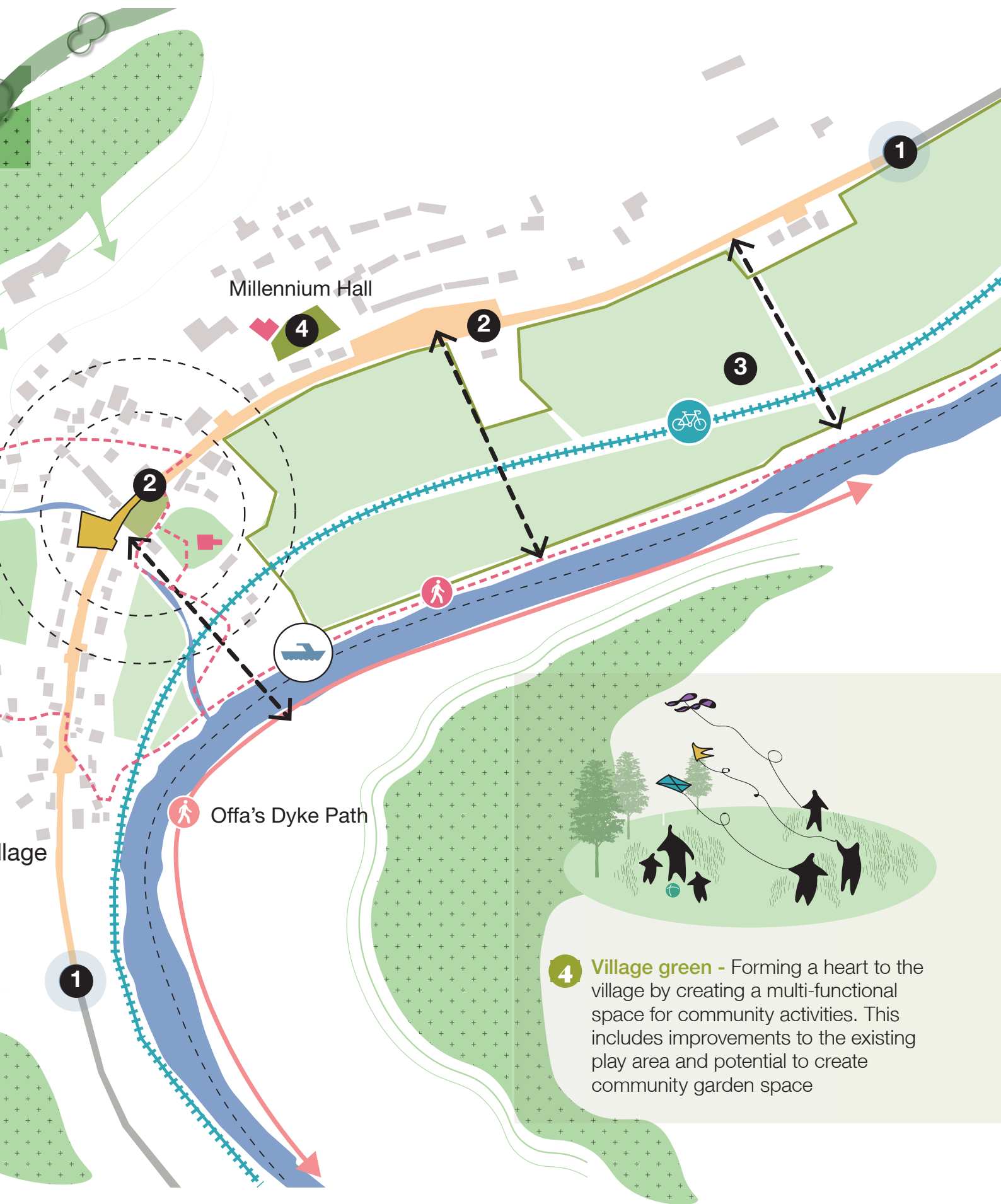
One of the riverside villages, Llandogo lacks the tourism profile and status of nearby Tintern. The village has no single defining feature or space and although it enjoys a riverside access, it feels disconnected from the river which once supported the local trow industry. Despite this, the village has significant potential as both a pivot point for multiple walking points and as a place. The initial proposals seek to reshape the village to harness the natural advantages and rediscover its history.

- 1 Village gateway** with 20mph speed limit and unique gateway sign
- 2 Traffic calming** street design such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water.



- 3 Llandogo Meadows** - Enhancing the biodiversity of the lowland river meadows and reconnecting the village to the river through improved access for walkers and cyclists. Please note this would require private landowner agreement.





Millennium Hall

Offa's Dyke Path

4 Village green - Forming a heart to the village by creating a multi-functional space for community activities. This includes improvements to the existing play area and potential to create community garden space

5.4 Llandogo Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
<p>Opportunity - Encourage lower vehicle speeds. Opportunity - Improved access to the river Opportunity - lowland meadow enhancement Opportunity - Improved park/green space adjacent to Millennium Hall</p>				
5.4.1	Road Safety and placemaking	Creation of village gateway signage. Align this with the approach to the network of villages by assigning a particular theme/name for each village.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.4.2	Road Safety	20mph speed limit through village	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.4.3	Street Design	Detail design changes to the street to encourage lower speeds such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water. To be defined via the recommended coordinated village street design	Development project/pilot	High
5.4.4	Community-led lowland meadow enhancement	Engage with local landowners, Gwent Wild life Trust and the local community to determine interest, viability and potential delivery of lowland meadow enhancement	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC	MCC/Community council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund, Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places funding.	Budget would need to be secured	£10-15k subject to detail design	MCC, AONB, Community Councils,
MCC	MCC/WG	Welsh Government Local Transport Fund	Identified within forthcoming budget	tbc	MCC,WG, Community Councils
MCC	MCC/Community Council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation	Budget would need to be secured	tbc	MCC, WG, Community Councils
Partnership	Monmouthshire Meadow Group	Multiple Funding Sources to be defined	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale of improvement. Consider the use of crowd funding	Community Council, Monmouthshire Meadows Groups AONB, MCC, Wildlife partner (e.g. Gwent Wildlife Trust).

5.4 Llandogo Action Plan

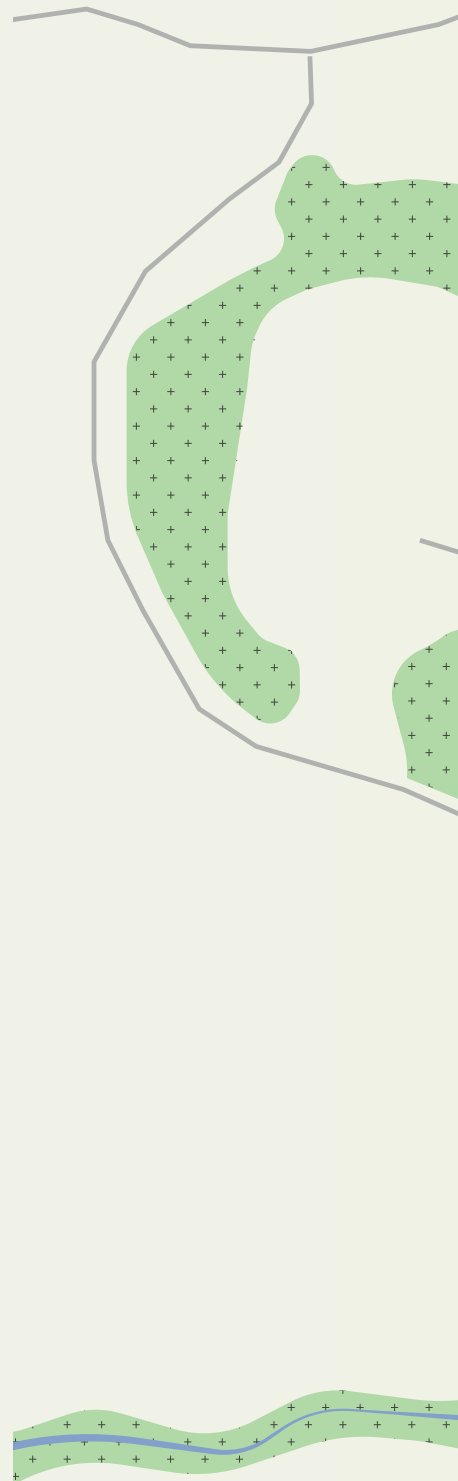
NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
5.4.5	Millennium Hall green	Improve the existing green space, small scale habitat creation in line with the Green Village Strategy and consider the potential to create community garden space (such as Incredible Edible)	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.4.6	Millennium Hall green	Provide improved play equipment and ensure this caters for all abilities	Development project/pilot	High
5.4.7	River access	Engage with local landowners to explore the potential for new access routes from the village to the river. Align with potential meadow enhancement noted above	Community based proeject	High - Quick Win

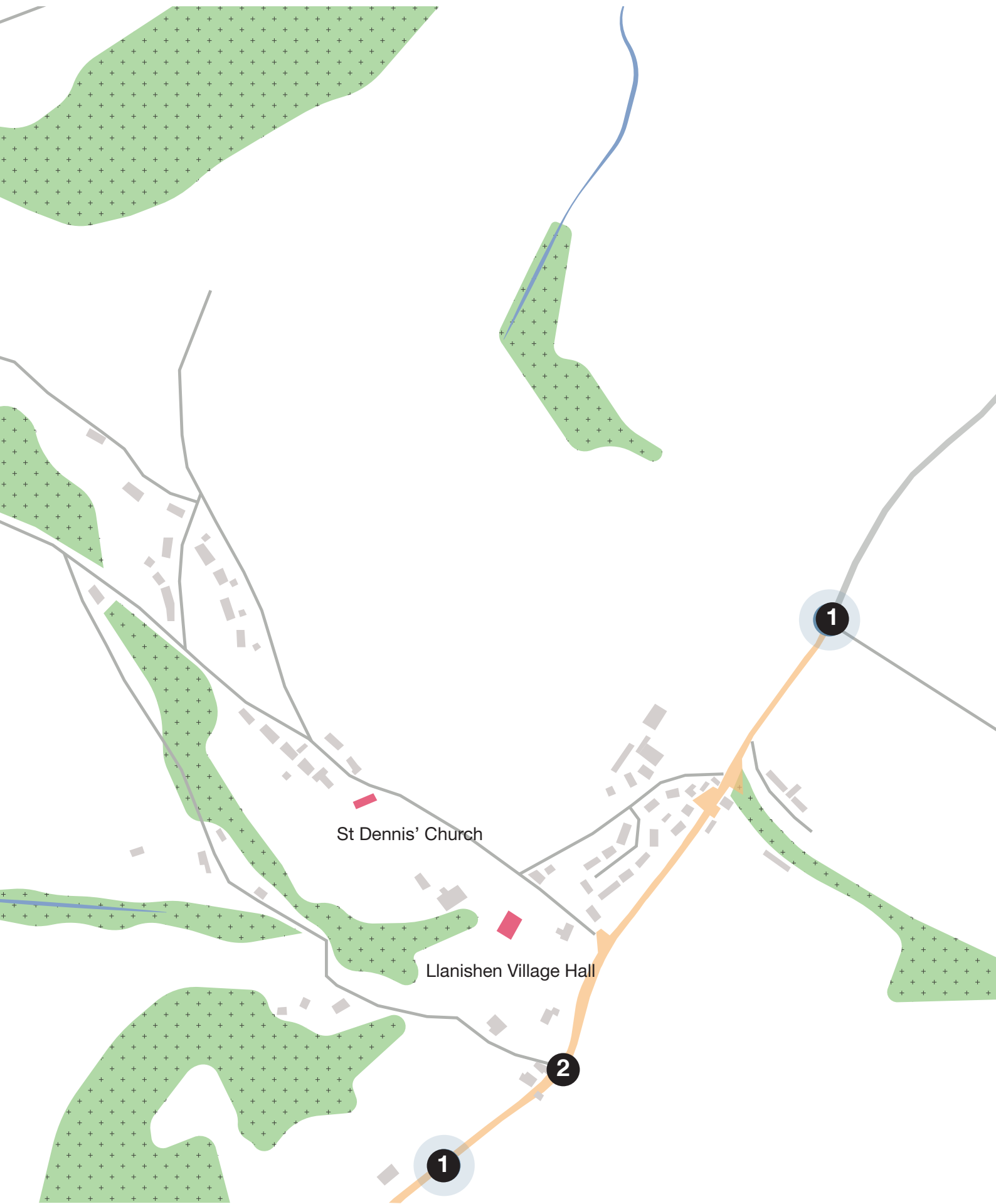
DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
Partnership	Community Council	UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Funding grant e.g. Ashley Family Foundation. Collaboration with NRW/ Woodland Trust	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale of improvement. Consider the use of crowd funding.	Community Council, third sector organisations such as Incredible Edible
Partnership	Community Council	Multiple Funding Sources to be defined	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale of improvement	Community Council, MCC, third sector groups and local school
Partnership	Community Council	Multiple Funding Sources to be defined	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale of improvement and routes. Potential to collaborate with third sector organisations such as Gwent Wildlife Trust	Community Council, third sector organisations such as Gwent Wildlife Trust, land owner(s)

5.5 Llanishen

Like Devauden and the Narth, Llanishen is largely community focused. The village backs on to the B4293 partially screening it from passing traffic. It is fragmented in form, extending west away from the main road. Whilst the screening helps mitigate the impact of passing traffic for residents the lack of an evident 'place' for those passing through does little to discourage speeding vehicles.

- 1 Village gateway** with 20mph speed limit and unique gateway sign
- 2 Traffic calming** street design such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water





5.5 Llanishen Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
Opportunity -Encourage lower vehicle speeds. Overall recommendations here are limited to road safety in response to feedback				
5.5.1	Road Safety and placemaking	Creation of village gateway signage. Align this with the approach to the network of villages by assigning a particular theme/ name for each village.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.5.2	Road Safety	20mph speed limit through village	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.5.3	Street Design	Detail design changes to the street to encourage lower speeds such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water. To be defined via the recommended coordinated village street design	Development project/pilot	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
k from the public consultation					
MCC	MCC/Community council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund, Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places funding.	Budget would need to be secured	£10-15k subject to detail design	MCC, AONB, Community Councils,
MCC	MCC/WG	Welsh Government Local Transport Fund	Identified within forthcoming budget	tbc	MCC,WG, Community Councils
MCC	MCC/Community Council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund (2021-22 Round)	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale and specification of improvement.	MCC, WG, Community Councils

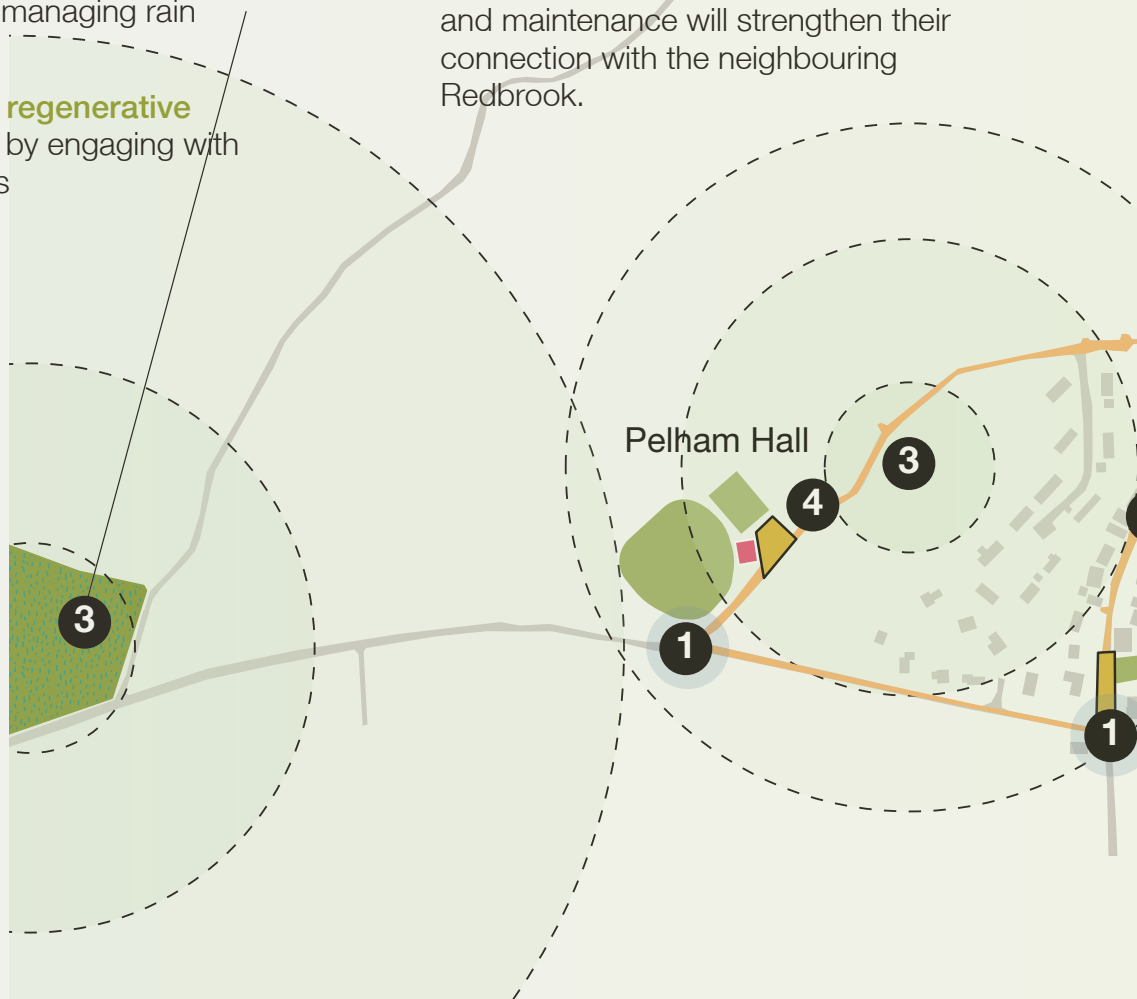
5.6 Penallt

The village enjoys a prominent location elevated at the head of the valley. The area is largely community focused with visitor destinations focused around Humble by Nature and Pelham Hall. Initial proposals are cognisant of these enterprises and build on these assets and the natural environment to shape a broader proposition around regenerative agriculture.



- 1 Village gateway** with 20mph speed limit and unique gateway sign
- 2 Traffic calming** street design such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water
- 3** The deployment of **regenerative agricultural pilots** by engaging with willing collaborators

- 4** The use of Pelham Hall as a **remote working hub** enhanced to cater for the community with gardens, allotments and coffee shops
- 5 Redbrook Bridge** is a vital part of the community life and its repair and maintenance will strengthen their connection with the neighbouring Redbrook.





5.6 Penallt Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
Opportunity - Encourage lower vehicle speeds. Opportunity - Sustainable farming plot Opportunity - Remote working hub				
5.6.1	Road Safety and placemaking	Creation of village gateway signage. Align this with the approach to the network of villages by assigning a particular theme/ name for each village.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.6.2	Road Safety	20mph speed limit through village	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.6.3	Street Design	Detail design changes to the street to encourage lower speeds such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water. To be defined via the recommended coordinated village street design	Development project/pilot	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC	MCC/Community council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund, Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places funding.	Budget would need to be secured	£10-15k subject to detail design	MCC, AONB, Community Councils,
MCC	MCC/WG	Welsh Government Local Transport Fund	Identified within forthcoming budget	tbc	MCC,WG, Community Councils
MCC	MCC/Community Council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale and specification of improvement.	MCC, WG, Community Councils

5.6 Penallt Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
5.6.4	Sustainable farming pilot	Public sector led demonstrator for sustainable land management. Engage with the NFU, NRW, Coleg Gwent, Humble By Nature and local farmers to identify willing collaborators for land management pilots. Support with the strategic aims of the project and help initiate. Measure outcomes and lessons learned. Align this with MCC	Development project/pilot	Medium
5.6.5	Remote working hub - Pelham Hall	Liaise with the operator to explore the potential to create a remote working hub. Please note this was raised as a possibility doing engagement	Development project/pilot	Medium
5.6.6	Redbrook Bridge improvement	Gloucestershire Couty Council to undertake maintenance works on the existing bridge. Consider a new lighting strategy to denote the importance of the bridge but ensure this is designed to mitigate any potential impact on wildlife/ light pollution. Potential to incorporate as part of the sustainable transport study and/or Wye Valley Greenway proposals.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
JV	AONB/MCC	Coleg Gwent contribution. Sustainable production grant (Wales). Farm Business Grant (Wales). Glastir Small Grants scheme (Wales). UK Shared Prosperity scheme.	Budget would need to be secured	If of sufficient scale consider UK Shared Prosperity Fund (For example as part of a county wide strategy). Alternatively small scale delivered in collaboration with Coleg Gwent - circa £25,000. Additional funding sources are available to supplement a smaller scale project.	NFU, NRW, MCC, Coleg Gwent, local land owners, Wye and Usk Foundation.
MCC	MCC	Private Sector investment	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - subject to private sector proposals and available funds	MCC, AONB, Community Councils, TfW, Bus operators
Partnership	AONB/GCC	Multiple Funding Sources to be defined	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - subject to level of intervention which could range from limited maintenance to more significant infrastructure and intrusive works to the bridge as part of a broader active travel system such as the Wye Valley Greenway.	MCC, WG, Community Councils, GCC, Sustrans, Railway Heritage Trust

5.7 St Arvans

The village marks the southern gateway to the Wye Valley and is immediately north of Chepstow racecourse. It marks the connection between the B4293 and A466 linking the lower reaches of the valley with the upper area. Despite this strategic importance there is little to mark this important location whilst local residents experience the dual negative of passing traffic with little direct benefit from visitors.

- 1 Village gateway** with 20mph speed limit and unique gateway sign
- 2 Traffic calming** street design such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water
- 3** The use of Chepstow racecourse as a **transport hub** to encourage greater use of sustainable transport and as an entry point to the strategic walking routes.





5.7 St Arvans Action Plan

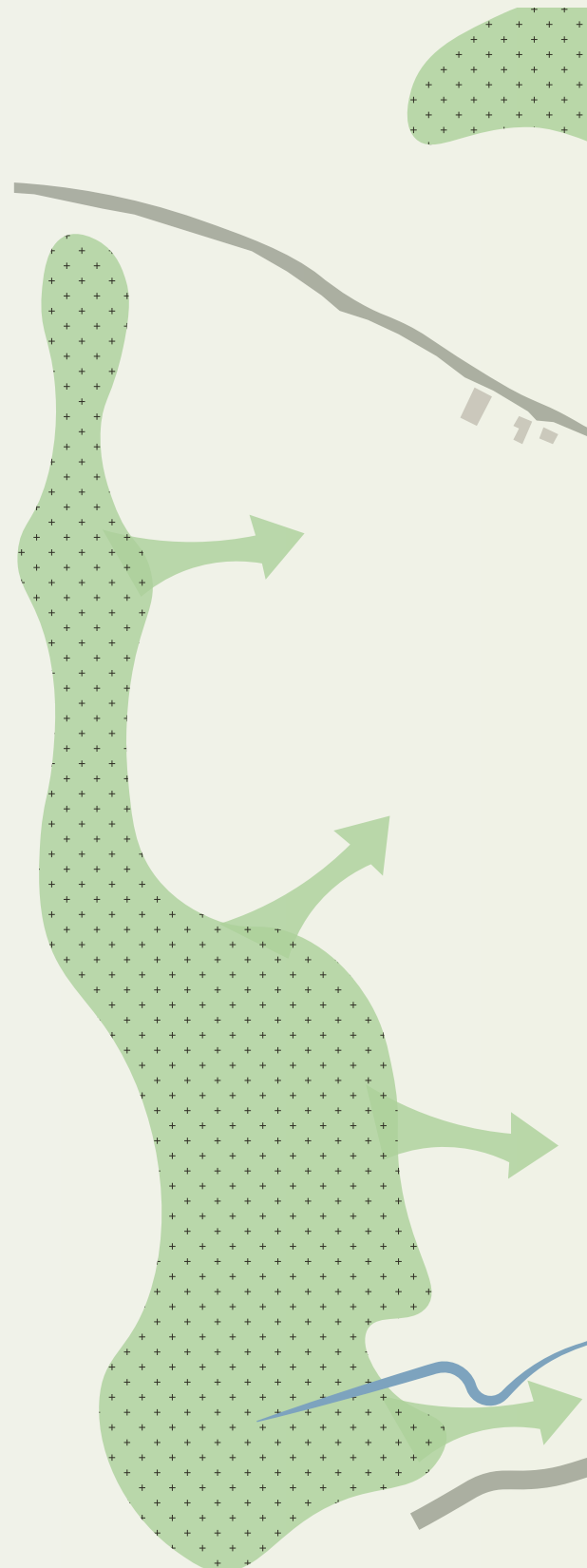
NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
Opportunity -Encourage lower vehicle speeds. Overall recommendations here are limited to road safety in response to feedback				
5.7.1	Road Safety and placemaking	Creation of village gateway signage. Align this with the approach to the network of villages by assigning a particular theme/name for each village. Particular opportunity to mark the entrance of the Wye Valley.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.7.2	Road Safety	20mph speed limit through village	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.7.3	Street Design	Detail design changes to the street to encourage lower speeds such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water. To be defined via the recommended coordinated village street design	Development project/pilot	High
5.7.4	Chepstow racecourse transport hub	As part of the recommended sustainable transport strategy undertake a feasibility study which includes design, funding and delivery for a potential new sustainable transport hub. Undertake this as part of the recommended Sustainable Transport Strategy	Further study	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
k from the public consultation					
MCC	MCC/Community council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund, Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places funding.	Budget would need to be secured	£10-15k subject to detail design	MCC, AONB, Community Councils,
MCC	MCC/WG	Welsh Government Local Transport Fund	Identified within forthcoming budget	tbc	MCC,WG, Community Councils
MCC	MCC/Community Council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale and specification of improvement.	MCC, WG, Community Councils
Joint Venture	MCC	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund (2021-22 Round)	Budget would need to be secured	refer to sustainable transport strategy action	MCC, AONB, Community council, Chepstow racecourse, private operators, bus operator

5.8 The Narth

Like Devauden, The Narth is a community rather than a focal point for tourism. The quiet, secluded nature of the village and wooded setting are defining characteristics. Proposed change in the Narth is limited considering the residential nature of the village. However, subtle interventions could help garner greater community cohesion, increase the sense of place and cater for low impact tourism in the form of walkers/hikers.

- 1 Village gateway** with 20mph speed limit and unique gateway sign
- 2 Traffic calming** street design such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water.





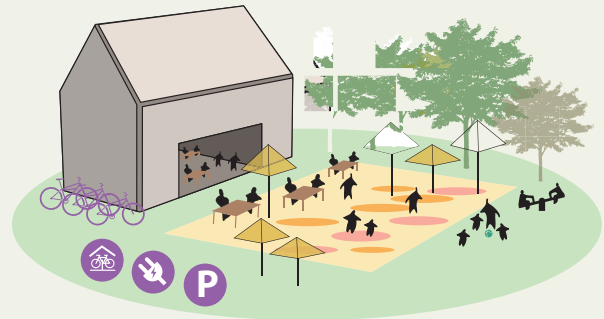
5.8 The North Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
Opportunity -Encourage lower vehicle speeds. Overall recommendations here are limited to road safety in response to feedback from the public consultation				
5.8.1	Road Safety and placemaking	Creation of village gateway signage. Align this with the approach to the network of villages by assigning a particular theme/ name for each village.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.8.2	Road Safety	20mph speed limit through village	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.8.3	Street Design	Detail design changes to the street to encourage lower speeds such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water. To be defined via the recommended coordinated village street design	Development project/pilot	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC	MCC/Community council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund, Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places funding.	Budget would need to be secured	£10-15k subject to detail design	MCC, AONB, Community Councils,
MCC	MCC/WG	Welsh Government Local Transport Fund	Identified within forthcoming budget	tbc	MCC,WG, Community Councils
MCC	MCC/Community Council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale and specification of improvement.	MCC, WG, Community Councils

5.9 Tintern

The remains of Tintern Abbey are one of the defining features of the Wye Valley. This is where visible history, past industry, the picturesque landscape and village life reflect the Wye Valley in one place. This places pressure on what is a small settlement to successfully manage the complex balance between visitors and residents. The initial proposal seeks to address this and enhance the village.

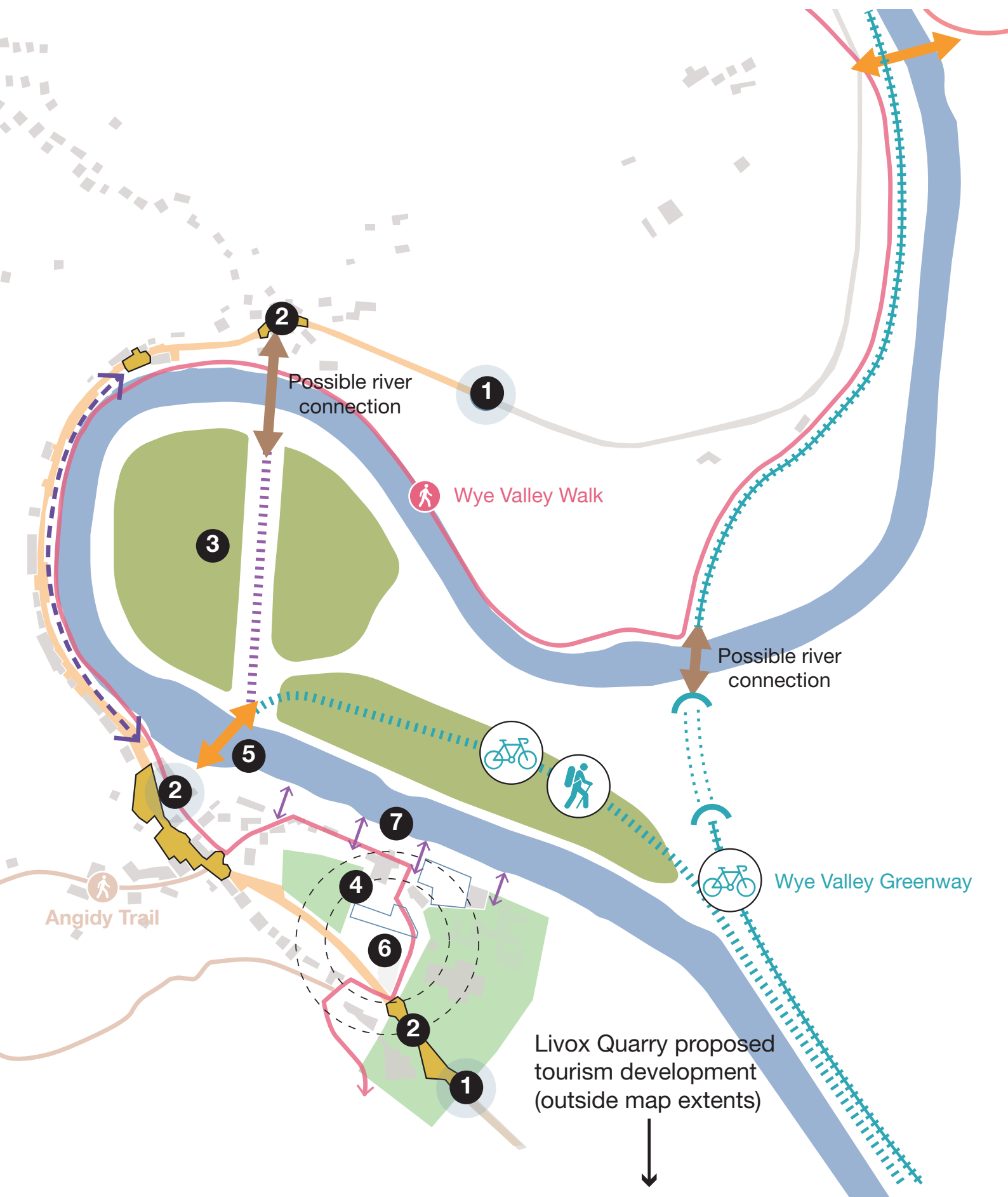


- 1 Village gateway** with 20mph speed limit and unique gateway sign
- 2 Traffic calming** street design such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water. Design interventions to create clear, attractive and safe routes between Tintern and Tintern Parva and the wider network of recreational routes. The design and maintenance proposals are extended to include verges and other areas of public realm including the car parking areas.



- 3 A car free environment**, with enhanced amenity and habitat. Please note this would require private landowner agreement.

- 4 Tintern hub** (subject to land owner approvals) - An agglomeration of services and uses around the Abbey such as tourist information, local businesses and a new transport hub to encourage greater use of sustainable transport and reduce the volume of traffic further along the valley. This includes bike hire stations, parking and links to Park & Ride. Other opportunities include adapting existing buildings to create space for new entrepreneurs and inclusive facilities such as adult changing facilities.
- 5 Wireworks Bridge improvements** and public realm, access and signage improvements on approach to the bridge
- 6 Temporary or seasonal art/signage/installations** aligned with trials for park & ride to help mitigate potential parking issues.
- 7 Low cost seasonal river crossings** such as ferry/chain crossings



5.9 Tintern Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
<p>Opportunity -Encourage lower vehicle speeds. Opportunity -Create a new transport hub for cycling (hire and safe storage), EV charging, buses, seating landscape Opportunity -Enhance the sense of place through new signage and gateway markers Opportunity -New river crossing</p>				
5.9.1	Road Safety and placemaking	Creation of village gateway signage	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.9.2	Road Safety	20mph speed limit through village	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.9.3	Street Design	Detail design changes to the street to encourage lower speeds such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water. To be defined via the recommended coordinated village street design. Ensure the design solutions create clear, attractive and safe routes between Tintern and Tintern Parva and the wider network of recreational routes. Given the importance of Tintern within the area to tourism, ensure the design and maintenance proposals are extended to include verges and other areas of public realm including the car parking areas.	Development project/pilot	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC	MCC/Community council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund, Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places funding.	Budget would need to be secured	£10-15k subject to detail design (please note this could vary significantly depending on the type of signage).	MCC, AONB, Community Councils,
MCC	MCC/WG	Welsh Government Local Transport Fund	Identified within forthcoming budget	tbc	MCC,WG, Community Councils
MCC	MCC/Community Council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund (2021-22 Round)	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale and specification of improvement.	MCC, WG, Community Councils

5.9 Tintern Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
5.9.4	Bike hire trial	Work with private sector operators to trial bike hire stations to provide access to the area's trails and roads for local people and visitors. Ensure provision is made for inclusive bikes and Electric bikes for the less-abled. Consider the trial over the summer season and in tandem with the park and ride trial which is noted below.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.9.5	Park and ride trial	Work with bus operators and MCC to create a trial park and ride during high season. Explore opportunities with local landowners such as Chepstow racecourse or Chepstow station operators to provide the park and ride facility. Link to bike hire trial (noted above) to provide continuous car-free movement.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.9.6	Transport hub	Undertake a feasibility study which includes design, funding and delivery for a new sustainable transport hub. Undertake this as part of the recommended Sustainable Transport Strategy	Further study	High
5.9.7	The Island	As part of Green Villages Initiative, work with the private land owner to explore the potential for habitat enhancement on the prominent area of land on the eastern bank of the River Wye.	Development project/pilot	Medium
5.9.8	Wireworks Bridge Improvements	GCC proposed refurbishment works to be undertaken end of 2022 based on current known plans.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
Private Sector	MCC/Cadw/Private operators	Private Sector investment	Budget would need to be secured	£15-20k	MCC, Community Council, Cadw, AONB, Private Operator
Joint Venture	MCC/community councils, local stakeholders (to be identified)	Private Sector investment	Budget would need to be secured	tbc	MCC, Community Council, Cadw, AONB, Private Operator
MCC	MCC/Community Council, Bus operator, Cadw, AONB, Private operators	Welsh Government Local Transport Fund	Budget would need to be secured	£25-50k for feasibility study. Please note that this should be either coordinated with the wider sustainable transport strategy or undertaken as part of that scope	MCC, Community Council, Cadw, AONB, Private Operator
Partnership	FoD/GCC/Community Council	Farming and protected landscapes Fund - England tbc	Budget would need to be secured	tbc	FoD/GCC/Community Council, MCC, AONB
Partnership	GCC	tbc	Budget would need to be secured	tbc	MCC, Community Councils, AONB, Gloucestershire County Council, Sustrans

5.9 Tintern Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
5.9.9	Wireworks Bridge Approaches	Partnership working required with Sustrans to improve the approaches to Wireworks Bridge - public realm, access and signage improvements	Development project/pilot	
5.9.10	Temporary public realm	Explore new opportunities temporary or seasonal signage/decoration/art works (for example the Luke Jerram art installation at Tintern Abbey, and Christmas markets). Align these with suggested trials for park and ride to help mitigate potential parking issues.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.9.11	Tintern Hub	To address immediate parking concerns - progress the concept to a detailed proposal with key stakeholders. Align this with the sustainable transport strategy. Engage with Cadw to explore opportunities for the adaptation of existing buildings or the delivery of temporary buildings to create space for new entrepreneurs, inclusive facilities (such as adult changing facilities) and the suggested bike hire and Park & Ride as early wins.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.9.12	River crossing	Consider low cost, light weight temporary or seasonal ferry/chain crossings subject to tidal. Consider high level feasibility for permanent crossing as part of the wye valley greenway	Development project/pilot	Medium

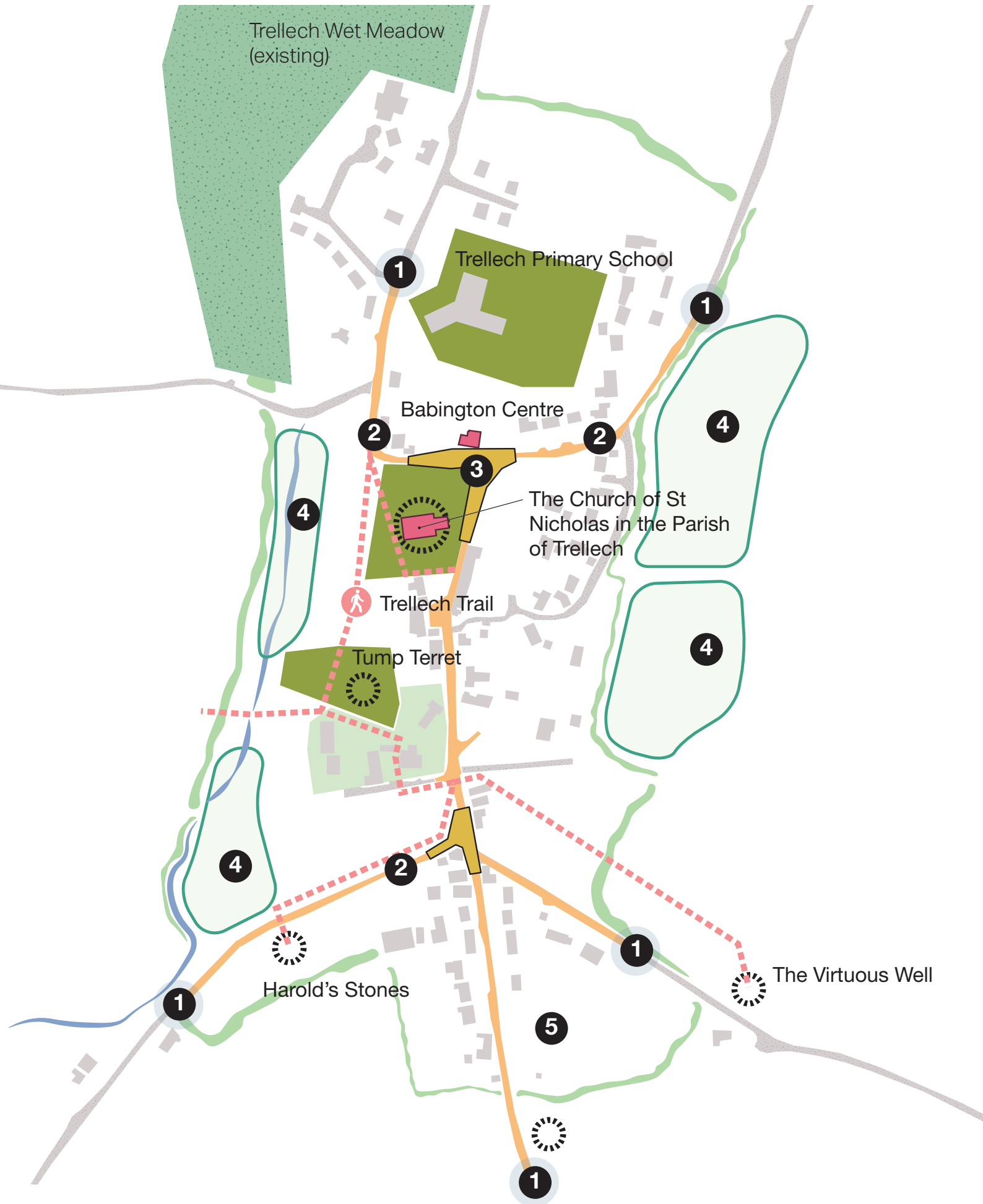
DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
Partnership	Sustrans	tbc	Budget would need to be secured	tbc	MCC, Community Councils, AONB, Gloucestershire County Council, Sustrans
Partnership	AONB, MCC, Community Councils, Cadw	Community Funding tbc	Budget would need to be secured	tbc. Opportunities to secure funds from Arts Council Wales	MCC, Community Council, Cadw, AONB, Arts Council Wales, Wye Valley River Festival CIC
Partnership	AONB, MCC, Community Councils, Cadw	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund (2021-22 Round). Potential Cadw funding and WG Remote Working Hub.	Budget would need to be secured	tbc. Opportunity to draw on multiple funding sources	MCC, Community Council, Cadw, AONB,
Partnership	AONB, MCC, Community Councils, NRW, private operator (tbc)	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential Levelling Up Funding as part of a potential bid for the Wye Valley Greenway.	Budget would need to be secured	tbc. Opportunity to draw on multiple funding sources. Feasibility of permanent structure	

5.10 Trellech

The historic pattern of buildings, archaeology and surrounding open pasture of Trellech create one of the most distinct villages. Although these features have the potential to attract larger visitor numbers, Trellech retains the feel of a rural village in contrast to the destination of Tintern. Addressing the future role of Trellech within the Wye Valley needs consideration. A carefully orchestrated offer which maintains tranquillity for residents while attracting a new audience of visitors could positively support the wider offer of the Wye Valley.

- 1 Village gateway** with 20mph speed limit and unique gateway sign
- 2 Traffic calming** street design such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water. Design interventions will focus on village entry points and key locations including the space between Babington Centre and the Church of St Nicholas
- 3 Trellech Welcome Point** - A focal point for tourists or hub formed around the existing pub

- 4 Community-led lowland meadow enhancement** - engaging with local landowners, Gwent Wildlife Trust and the local community to determine interest, viability and potential delivery of lowland meadow enhancement.
- 5 A low impact tourist site** related to the local historic assets and medieval village. Please note the location has not been confirmed and would require private land owner agreement.



5.10 Trellech Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
<p>Opportunity - Encourage lower vehicle speeds.</p> <p>Opportunity - Explore further the potential to create low-impact tourist accommodation</p> <p>Opportunity - Extend the existing community meadows project</p> <p>Opportunity - Lowland meadow enhancement</p> <p>Opportunity - Low impact tourism</p> <p>Opportunity - Enhance the sense of place through new signage and gateway markers</p>				
5.10.1	Road Safety and placemaking	Creation of village gateway signage. Align this with the approach to the network of villages by assigning a particular theme/ name for each village. Highlight the presence of the Trellech Trail.	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.10.2	Road Safety	20mph speed limit through village	Development project/pilot	High - Quick Win
5.10.3	Street Design	Detail design changes to the street to encourage lower speeds such as raised crossings, material changes, pedestrian priority spaces and landscape planting as part of nature based solutions to managing rain water. To be defined via the recommended coordinated village street design. Focus design interventions on village entry points and key locations including the space between the Babington Centre and the Church of St Nicholas.	Development project/pilot	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC	MCC/Community council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund, Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places funding.	Budget would need to be secured	£10-15k subject to detail design	MCC, AONB, Community Councils,
MCC	MCC/WG	Welsh Government Local Transport Fund	Identified within forthcoming budget	tbc	MCC,WG, Community Councils
MCC	MCC/Community Council	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund (2021-22 Round)	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale and specification of improvement.	MCC, WG, Community Councils

5.10 Trellech Action Plan

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
5.10.4	Trellech Welcome Point	Work with Babington Hall/operators of the Lion Inn to explore opportunities to align street improvements with broader touristic opportunities such as signage and wayfinding to nearby historic attractions and footpaths and tourist information.	Community based project	High
5.10.5	Low impact tourist site	Undertake early engagement with local landowners, MCC planning and community councils to test interest in developing a low impact tourist site related to the local historic assets and medieval village. Ensure synergy with any emerging update to the sustainable tourism strategy	Further study	Medium
5.10.6	Community-led lowland meadow enhancement	Engage with local landowners, Gwent Wild life Trust and the local community to determine interest, viability and potential delivery of lowland meadow enhancement	Development project/pilot	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
Partnership	Community Council/ private operator	Multiple Funding Sources to be defined	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - subject to level of intervention agreed.	MCC, Community Councils, private businesses
Partnership	MCC/Community Council	No initial capital required	Exists within current budget	n/a	MCC/Community Council
Joint Venture	Monmouthshire Meadow Group	Multiple Funding Sources to be defined	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - dependent on scale of improvement. Consider the use of crowd funding	Community Council, Monmouthshire Meadows Groups AONB, MCC, Wildlife partner (e.g. Gwent Wildlife Trust).

5.11 The Action Plan

The following pages contain the overarching actions that will deliver the six point plan.

1 Ensure safe and sustainable transport

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
1.1	Road Safety and sustainable transport strategy			
		<p>Opportunity - Encourage lower vehicle speeds</p> <p>Opportunity - Improve the appearance of the Wye Valley Villages through revised street design</p> <p>Opportunity - Improve the pedestrian and cyclist experience and safety to encourage more active travel</p> <p>Opportunity - Improve biodiversity flood resilience</p>		
1.1.1	Coordinated Village Street Design	Undertake detailed design and delivery for each of the villages using a common approach to provide a 'kit of parts' applicable to any village. Implement this consistent design approach, based on shared objectives amongst stakeholders. Identify pilot projects to provide early trials/ demonstrations of the ideas. Equivalent RIBA Stage 5.	Development project/pilot	High
1.1.2	Sustainable transport strategy	Instruct a study to detail a sustainable transport strategy. The study should provide details for delivering improved bus services, mobility hubs and active travel infrastructure to support sustainable tourism and community travel needs. The study should include the recreational routes within the Wye Valley to respond to concerns over maintenance and access for people of all ages and abilities. Particular focus should be afforded to the potential extension of the Wye Valley Greenway as touristic, active travel and habitat opportunity. This could form the basis of a future Levelling Up Fund bid.	Further study	High



DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
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MCC	MCC	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund	Budget would need to be secured	% of construction budget	MCC, AONB, Community Councils, Bus Operators
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MCC	MCC	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Potential project funding via WG Active Travel Funding & Local Transport Fund, Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places fund	Budget would need to be secured	£50k - £100k	MCC, AONB, Community Councils, TfW, Bus operators
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2 Conserve and enhance the landscape

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
2.1	Health Plan for the River Wye			
Opportunity - Improve the health and ecology of the River Wye				
2.1.1	Whole Catchment Strategy	Maintain input into the Wye Nutrient Board, the Wye Catchment Partnership and related activity to support and promote actions to improve river water quality.	Partnership activity	Medium
2.1.2	Nature based solutions	Support nature based solutions and climate change mitigation approaches for the Wye Valley to aid delivery of the AONB Management Plan, MCC Green Infrastructure Strategy and Nature Recovery Plans.	Partnership activity	High
2.1.3	Community Projects	Encourage local action, community awareness initiatives and demonstration projects. Encourage participation in citizen science, including the Wye Catchment Monitoring Project.	Community based project	Medium
2.2	Green Villages Initiative			
Opportunity - Create community projects aligned to the strategic aims of the AONB				
2.2.1	Green Villages Initiative	Work with community councils and other community groups (e.g. school) to initiate a series of localised projects which align with the AONB Management Plan, MCC policy (eg 2014 Pollinator Policy) and WG policy. For example, localised food production, micro habitat creation and community agriculture and planting at village entry points or approaches. Explore opportunities to integrate citizen science to help monitor and evaluate interventions	Community based project	High - Quick Win

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC/AONB/ NRW	MCC/AONB/NRW/ Welsh Water	Alignment of multiple operating budgets. Welsh Water, NRW,MCC, AONB.	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - subject to level of intervention agreed	AONB, MCC, Welsh Water, EA, NRW, Local Authorities (Wales and England)
MCC/AONB/ NRW	MCC/AONB	Alignment of multiple operating budgets/ new budgets, SLSP etc.	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - subject to level of intervention agreed	MCC/AONB/NRW
Third Sector/ MCC/AONB/ Community Councils	MCC/AONB/Welsh Water	Multiple operating budget alignment. Welsh Water, NRW,MCC, AONB operating budget, SDF grant	Budget would need to be secured	tbc - subject to level of intervention agreed	Welsh
Third Sector	AONB/Community groups and community councils	UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Funding grant e.g. Ashley Family Foundation. Collaboration with NRW/ Woodland Trust	Budget would need to be secured	£1m + to be eligible at scale for future fund criteria. Or Small Community Grants/ Philanthropic donations.	Community Councils, local school, MCC, NRW, AONB, Woodland trust Wales

2 Conserve and enhance the landscape

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
2.3	Pilots for sustainable farming			
Opportunity - Deliver a pilot project to demonstrate practices and techniques for sustainable agriculture and build new partners				
2.3.1	Sustainable Farming Pilot	Public sector led demonstrator for sustainable land management. Engage with the NFU, NRW, Coleg Gwent and local farmers to identify willing collaborators for land management pilots. Support with the strategic aims of the project and help initiate. Measure outcomes and lessons learned. Align this with MCC	Development project/ pilot	Medium
2.4	Carbon Footprint Analysis			
Opportunity - Understand existing carbon footprint of the AONB and share knowledge with partners				
2.4.1	Implement actions/ recommendations from the AONB Carbon Footprint Analysis	Starting in January a carbon footprint analysis for the whole Wye Valley AONB will be undertaken. The methodology is a carbon footprint model developed for the National Parks in England, based predominantly on bottom-up consumption-based estimates of postcode-level activities both for domestic and non-domestic actors, namely Residents, Visitors and Industries.	Further study	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
ships.					
JV	AONB/MCC	Coleg Gwent contribution. Sustainable production grant (Wales). Farm Business Grant (Wales). Glastir Small Grants scheme (Wales). UK Shared Prosperity scheme.	Budget would need to be secured	If of sufficient scale consider UK Shared Prosperity Fund (For example as part of a county wide strategy). Alternatively small scale delivered in collaboration with Coleg Gwent - circa £25,000. Additional funding sources are available to supplement a smaller scale project.	NFU, NRW, MCC, Coleg Gwent, local land owners, Wye and Usk Foundation.
AONB	AONB	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation	Budget would need to be secured	n/a	MCC, AONB

3 Retain and improve the network of unique villages

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
3.1	Placemaking			
Opportunity - Coordinated approach to improvement of the Wye Valley and its villages				
3.1.1	Village Improvement Plans	Please refer to the action plans for each village		

4 Enable sustainable tourism

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
4.1	New Tourism Strategy			
Opportunity - Define geographic boundaries/governance of a tourism strategy				
Opportunity - Create an improved balance between tourism benefits and tourism impacts on local communities				
Opportunity - Improved productivity of the local economy				
Opportunity - Clear alignment with other policies and initiatives such as AONB Management plan and MCC policies				
4.1.1	Sustainable tourism strategy and action plan update	Rapidly deliver an updated tourism strategy and action plan. This should be framed around a defined business case. The strategy should build upon the Wye Valley AONB Sustainable Tourism Strategy (2011-2016) and Monmouthshire Destination Management Plan.	Further study	High
4.1.2	Hospitality & Tourism Sector Circular Economy Strategy	Undertake a study which identifies opportunities for collaborative reuse and recycling of surplus food, drink and other materials. Opportunities for sustainable distribution (e.g. electric vehicle fleet). Improving efficiency and waste reduction in the local area. Translate the findings into action on the ground by undertaking an action plan.	Further study	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POTENTIAL BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR/ COLLABORATOR

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC	MCC	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation. Business Wales Tourism Funding.	Budget would need to be secured	tbd	MCC, AONB, Community Councils, VisitDeanWye, Adjoining LA's
MCC	MCC	WG Circular Economy Fund (Administered by WRAP). Welsh Tourism Investment Fund . Green Growth Fund (Wales). Circular economy for SMEs - NICER programme (part of Innovate UK).	Budget would need to be secured	£100k +	MCC, AONB, Community Councils, VisitDeanWye, Adjoining LA's

5 Support the local economy

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
5.1	Local Economy			
Opportunity - Improve entrepreneurship Opportunity - Provide more affordable housing Opportunity - Raise the profile of the area as a place for business				
5.1.1	Affordable housing strategy	Linked to Local Plan update -revise Wye Valley Local Housing Needs Requirements specifically for the villages. Identify rural exception sites and potential public sector land to provide a diverse affordable housing offer to retain younger people and support local employment. Work with local communities to develop affordable housing that meets local need and benefits the local community through implementing the Rural Allocations Policy.	Ongoing MCC initiative	High
5.1.2	Remote Working Hub Pilot	Work with WG and private operators such as IndyCube/ Pelham Hall to deliver a pilot remote working hub in one of the villages. Further feasibility on location, format and need for the hub to be progressed.	Development project/pilot	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC	MCC Affordable Housing Team	MCC Housing Revenue Account - subject to confirmation	Exists within current budget	n/a	Arup, AONB, Community Councils
MCC/ Community Interest Company/ Private Operator	MCC	WG Remote Working Hub initiative.	Budget would need to be secured	Potential £10k-25k for feasibility work (WG funding available).	Arup, AONB, Community Councils

5 Support the local economy

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
5.1.3	Targeted circular economy fund/bid support for local producers and land managers.	Explore current circular economy funds to identify localised opportunities. Increase entrepreneurship, capacity, earnings, retention of economically active people within the production sector (e.g. food and drink) around the principle of a local circular economy.	Further study	High
5.1.4	Halls Together Project	MCC/RDP project to encourage and facilitate Community Facilities to work together to share best practice and benefit from joint ventures such as training, bulk purchasing, compliance and funding. Areas of focus have been identified through a questionnaire to hall community facilities. Project is being guided by a steering group of representatives from village halls and community councils.	Community Project	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC	MCC	WG Circular economy fund. Sustainable development fund (AONB). Sustainable production grant. Accelerated Growth Programme (business wales). Green Growth Fund (WG). Project Helix fund Wales. Cywain programme	Budget would need to be secured	Total value of funding could exceed £500k+	Arup, AONB, Community Councils
MCC/ Project Steering Group	MCC	RDP LEADER			MCC/ Community Facilities & Community Councils

5 Support the local economy

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
5.1.5	Improving Digital Connectivity	On completion of the WG Open Market Review which will identify future plans for digital infrastructure rollout, MCC/RDP to consider an application to the WG Local Broadband Fund in 2022/23. Application will focus on improvements to digital connectivity through the use of a range of appropriate technologies which take into account the topography of the Valley.		High - Quick Win

6 Provide joined-up governance

NO.	INITIATIVE	DETAIL	TYPE	PRIORITY
6.1	Governance			
Opportunity - Continued partnership working Opportunity - Renewed cross border collaboration				
6.1.1	Establish a delivery group	Maintain the formal partnership between MCC, Wye Valley AONB and the community councils for project planning, feasibility, business development, implementation and engagement.	New/extended partnership	High
6.1.2	Cross Border Working	The project presents an opportunity to reinvigorate partnerships with adjacent LA's e.g. FoD, Herefordshire around key subjects such as sustainable tourism, sustainable transport and the River Wye water quality. Undertake knowledge share workshops and seek a common approach and identify opportunities for further collaboration.	New/extended partnership	High

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POSSIBLE BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR / COLLABORATOR
MCC			Budget would need to be secured		MCC/ Community Facilities & Community Councils

DELIVERY MECHANISM	RESPONSIBILITY	FUNDING SOURCE	BUDGET AVAILABILITY	POTENTIAL BUDGET	CONTRIBUTOR
Partnership	All parties. MCC lead	MCC Operational Budget - subject to confirmation	Exists within current budget	n/a	MCC, AONB, Community Councils
Partnership	All parties. MCC lead	Operational budget	Exists within current budget	n/a	MCC, AONB, Community Councils, Parish Councils, FoD District Council, Gloucestershire County Council, Herefordshire Council

6.1 How will the plan evolve and be delivered?

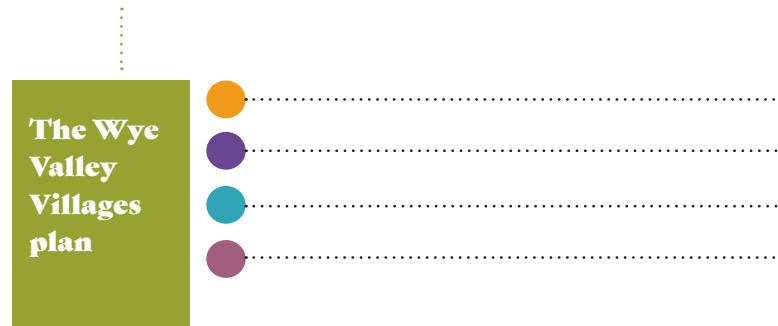
This is one of the most frequently asked questions and it is important to understand what this plan will do and where it will lead. Expectations will have been raised through the process and naturally people will be impatient to see change on the ground. The process is illustrated below. Immediate actions should be:

Establish the delivery group and define who is involved, who is leading and where responsibility lies.

Identifying and agree on priority projects to be taken forward. In doing so establish where funding is likely to come from with particularly attention to the Welsh Government Infrastructure Finance Plan (2022-23 to 2024-25).

Test the appetite for 'quick win' community led initiatives such as the 'Green Villages Initiatives' with local people and existing groups with similar aims and objectives.

This current project ends here

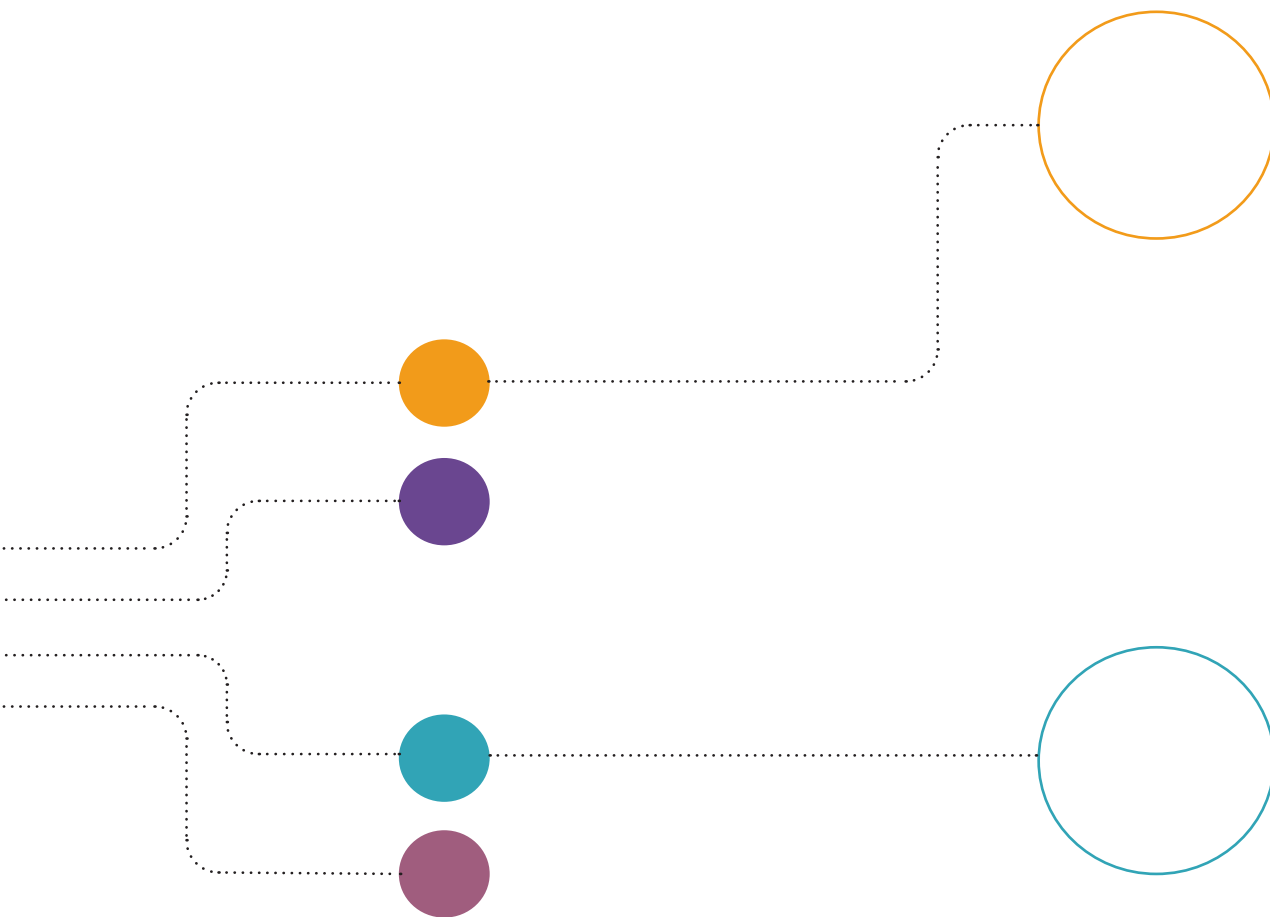


The Start 2020

Monmouthshire County Council, the Wye Valley AONB Partnership, Devauden Community Council, TIntern Community Council, Trellech United Community Council and St Arvan's Community Council agree a plan is needed to address road safety.

The six point plan 2022

- In partnership with Arup, the Wye Valley Villages plan is created.
- The plan identifies a number of priority projects and outlines how these can be delivered.
- The plan responds to the need for a more joined approach which includes for example tourism, landscape and the local economy.



Detailing the projects 2022

- The priority projects will be identified and developed further subject to funding.
- A decision will be made on who is best placed to take these forward and who they should partner with
- Early 'quick-win' projects will be delivered if possible such as gateway signage.
- Action Plan to be a living document, revised and added to overtime.


Change on the ground 2022 - onward

- Potential pilot projects may take place. Further public engagement will be conducted on the detailed proposals.
- Larger projects such as the coordinated street design will evolve and begin to be implemented subject to funding.
- Continued engagement between the key stakeholders including the community councils, Monmouthshire County Council and Wye Valley AONB Partnership

Appendix 1

Llandogo Illustrative plan





Following public consultation feedback and the formation of the Action Plan, an additional concept plan was developed to demonstrate the potential interventions in more detail. Llandogo was the suitable candidate for representing a typical village among the Wye Valley Villages. Also within this package is a mood board which uses sample imagery to describe the look and feel of the proposed interventions. Lastly, indicative costs are offered for potential budget estimation.

The enclosed drawings are a draft at this stage and are offered for discussion with Monmouthshire County Council.



TIMBER

Timber is used to represent the natural landscape of the Wye Valley



STONE

Stone is inspired by the landscape and local geology. It is also one of the materials used in historic buildings of the area



METAL

Metal is a tribute to the early industrialisation of the area

Community garden/
community gathering space

Tables and benches

Seating around play area

Raised beds - food growing

Improved play area with natural play elements

Outdoor classroom space with canopy

SuDS

Raised beds for school - food growing

2



Community garden/
community gathering space

Bioswale and SuDS with a new path and seating.

Potential new river access paths (subject to land owner approvals)

Disused railway converted to cycle path. Potentially linking with The Greenway cycle path

Seating along cycle path

Seating along river path

Lowland meadows interpretation boards

Lowland meadows interpretation boards

1



Raised road surface with a change in material. Ground lights and markings to slow traffic

3

New path

SuDS

Bus shelter

SuDS-drains

Seating

Raised road surface with a change in material. Bollards with lighting around Memorial Green to slow traffic

3

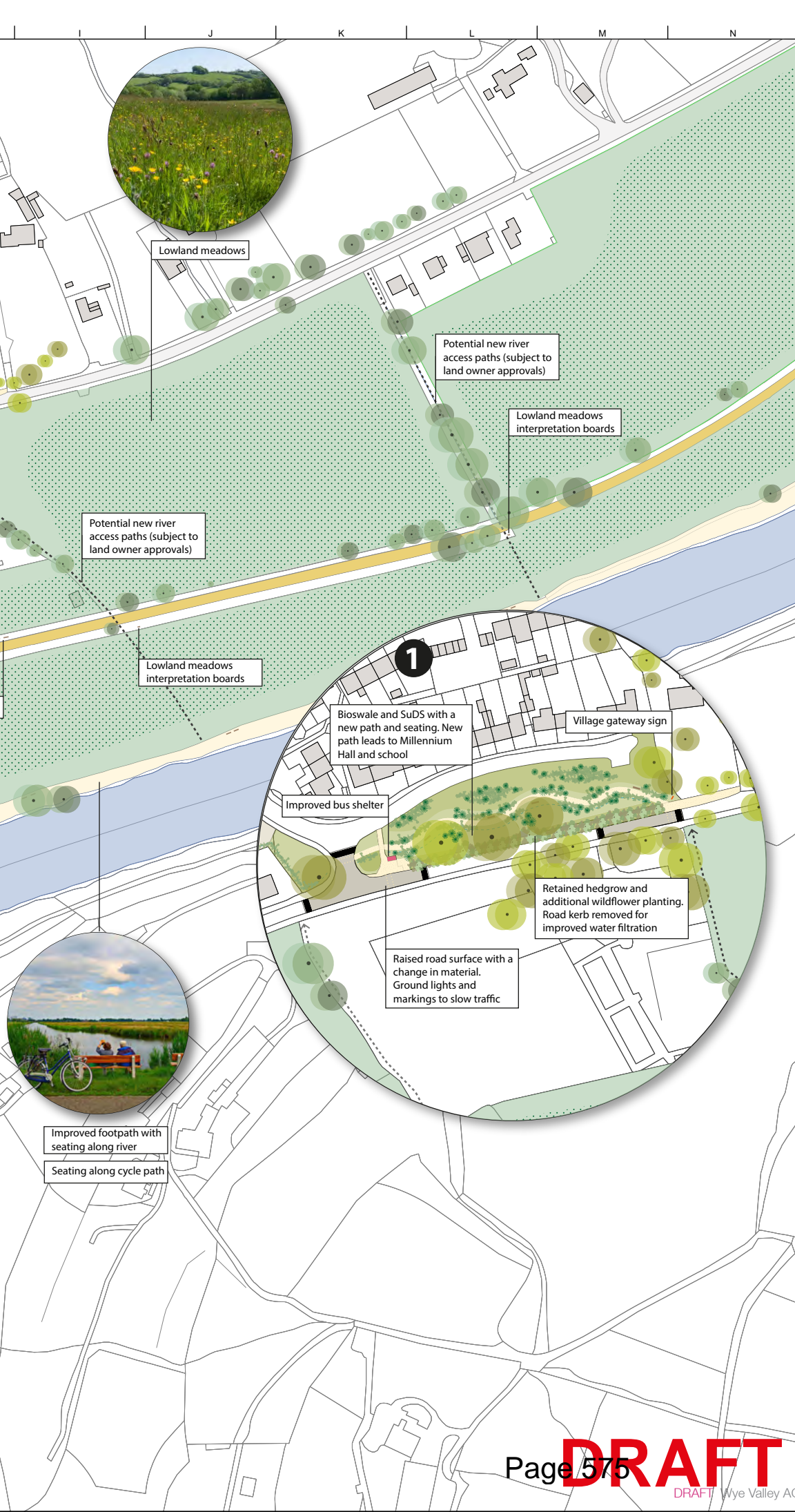
Raised road surface with a change in material. Ground lights and markings to slow traffic

Village gateway sign

4



Decking platform or kayak launch point



KEY

- - - - - Existing footpath/PROW
- - - - - Potential new paths (subject to land ownership agreements)
- Disused railway transformed into cycle path
- - - - - Potential extension of cycle path to connect to The Greenway
- Existing trees
- Improved/ new bus shelter
- Village gateway sign
- Seating
- Bollard with lights
- - - - - Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS)
- Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS)
- Retained hedgerow
- Raised road surface
- Low traffic zone
- Improved/ new footpaths
- Lowland meadow creation

Rev	Date	By	Chkd	Appd

ARUP

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Cardiff CF10 4GP
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Client

Monmouthshire County Council

Project Title
**Wye Valley Villages-
Plan for the future**

Drawing Title

Scale at A1: 1:1500
Role: Placemaking
Suitability: DRAFT

Arup Job No: 279417-00

Name: **Llandogo Illustrative Plan**

Page 575 **DRAFT**



Bee-friendly bus stops - green roofs and live bus schedules



Wayfinding & interpretation



Permeable surfaces & SuDS



Seating made of natural material such as stone or wood



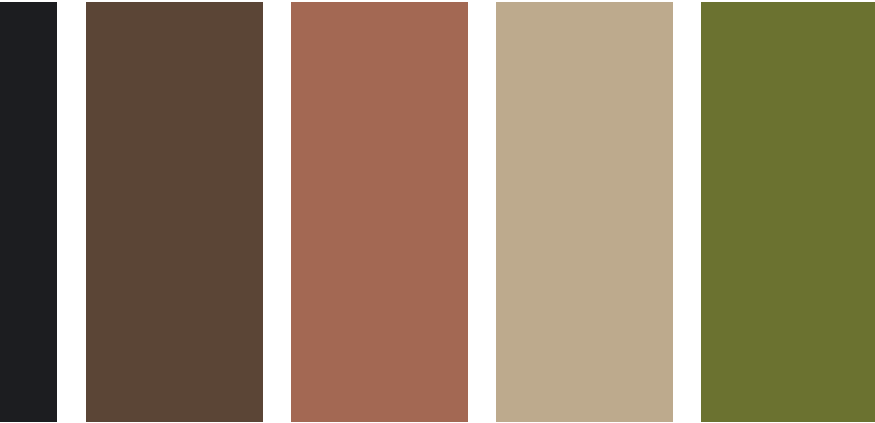
Natural play area



Wayfinding & interpretation



Village gateway signs



Natural play



River views - seating and footpath along river front



Lighting and street furniture



River access

INDICATIVE COSTING	Indicative Cost	Gateways	Streets around key spaces	
Green and blue enhancements (SuDS) - includes drainage, soil, edging, silt traps	£1,250/ m2			
Green enhancements (Planting) - Ornamental grasses; including imported subsoil and topsoil	£105/ m2			
Amenity grass; include imported subsoil and topsoil	£11.18/ m2			
Wildflower planting	£1.30/ m2			
Tree (PC £400); including excavating tree pits by hand (assumed 1500x1500x1000mm deep) and backfilling with excavating material	£580/ unit			
Build outs	£5,000			
Patching up road/fixing broken elements	£180/ m2			
Alterations to general layout, use of basic materials, limited interventions - i.e road is retained	£400/ m2			
Alterations to general layout, creation of extent of public realm, seating, lighting, tree planting, SuDS - i.e road is reduced	£560/ m2			
Alterations to general layout, creation of extent of public realm, seating, lighting, tree planting, SuDS - i.e road is removed	£720/ m2			
Bespoke sign (basic material)	£1,000/ unit			
Seating (average range)	£1,290/ unit			

INDICATIVE COSTING	Indicative Cost	Gateways	Streets around key spaces	
Play equipment - small	£5,000			
Play equipment - medium	£12,000			
Play equipment - high	£30,000			
Lighting (6-8m column, average cost)	£1,630/ unit			
Cycle racks	£350/ unit			
Picnic table	£1,380/ unit			
Fingerpost	£750			
Crossing - High friction surface	£22/ m2			
Natural stone paving	£170/ m2			
Footpath	£28/ m2			
PROW access; 50mm self-binding gravel, 100mm sub-base	£17/ m2			
Change of single speed limit where minimal infrastructure is required	£15,000			

	Play area	Village greens	Village hall improvements	Lowland meadows	Riverfront

INDICATIVE COSTING	Indicative Cost	Gateways	Streets around key spaces	
Change in speed limit where four new street lighting columns are required to illuminate a new 20mph speed limit	£15,000			
Vehicle Activated Sign. Solar powered, design and installation	£8,500			
Pair of dropped crossings with tactile paving	£4,000			
Zebra crossing, no additional lighting or road surfacing required	£35,000			
Zebra crossing, including street lighting upgrade and resurfacing	£65,000			
Cycle lane within existing carriageway	£90/ lm			
Shared, segregated or unsegregated footway/ cycleway within existing footway, including drainage but not including lighting	£1,125/ lm			
2-bay metal framed passenger shelter- including solar lighting	£8,500			
2-bay metal framed passenger shelter- including mains lighting	£10,000			
Raised access kerbs - per stop	£5,000			

	Play area	Village greens	Village hall improvements	Lowland meadows	Riverfront

Appendix 2

Stage 1 report



Wye Valley Villages Plan

Stage 1 Presentation Feb 9th 2021



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

| Wye Valley AONB | Community councils

ARUP

Wye Valley Villages – Where are we now?

1. The wider picture
2. Transport and mobility
3. Placemaking
4. Socio-economic
5. Reflections and moving forward

The Wider Picture

Drivers of change post Covid

Demographics

1.5 million

people in CCR

20%

growth forecast
2017-2037

(www.cardiffpartnership.co.uk)

Climate change

**Net Zero
Carbon**

by 2050 in Wales

Announced today

2019

Welsh Government &
MCC declare climate
emergency

Health & Well-being

60%

Welsh population that are
overweight or obese

Public Health Act (Wales) 2017

Drivers of change post Covid

Movement

Legal requirement for Welsh LA's to map and plan for active travel infrastructure

Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

Tourism

10%

Increase in tourist visits (2007-2018) in Monmouthshire

2021 Staycation bounce

The heritage county of Wales

STEAM trend report 2007-2018
MCC LDP

Digital

17%¹

Growth in internet sales as percentage of total retail sales

-10%²

Decline of high street retail business in Wales

1 ONS data Nov 2006 - May 2019
2 ONS data 2012-2017



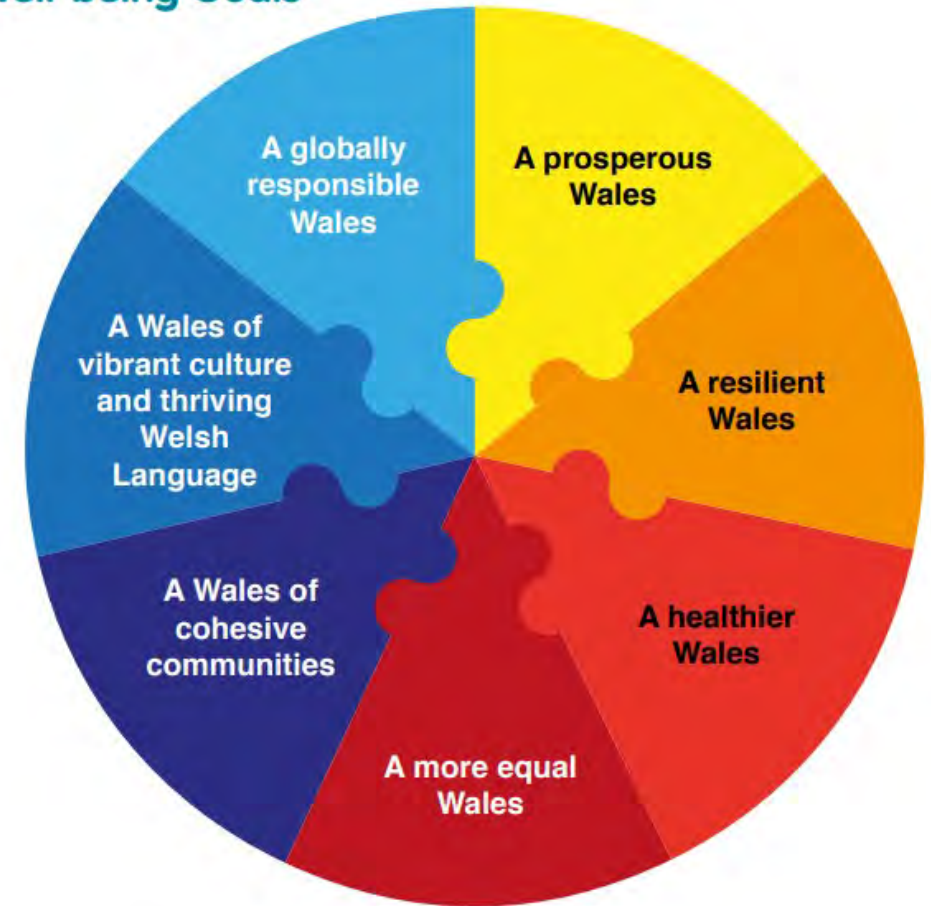
'Cathedral thinking'

Page 591

- It is a time of great change – we need to be thinking very differently about what we do and why
- Wellbeing Duty – The 7 Goals
- 5 Ways of working – Collaboration/partnership, community involvement
- Post-Covid – Build back better



Well-being Goals



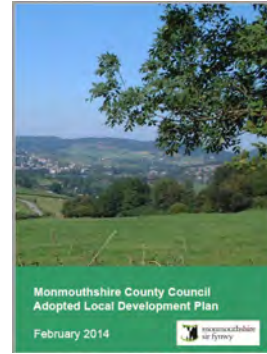
Planning Policy Context



Planning Policy Wales 10 (2018) Promotes well-being through placemaking

Key principles for guiding development:

- Growing our economy in a sustainable manner
- Making best use of resources
- Facilitating accessible and healthy environments
- Creating & sustaining communities
- Maximising environmental protection



Monmouthshire County Council LDP (2011 – 2021)

Key issues addressed through the plan are:

- Building sustainable communities
- Promoting sustainable economy
- Valuing the environment – designated environmental sites across the LDP area
- Achieve sustainable accessibility
- Respecting distinctiveness

Work is underway on the Replacement LDP (2018 – 2033) which is anticipated for adoption in Autumn 2023.

Planning Policy Context – Local



Summary of SWOT session

Conducted with Arup and the client team

17.12.2020

Page 594

- Transport weaknesses
- Threats to local economy
- But most opportunities in tourism and local economy

STRENGTHS

Tintern has an active business group	Strong sense of the 'village' by 2 immediately famous walking routes	Attractive villages along the route	You can get out and easily M-way connection	Authenticity and vibrant communities values reinforced by the national and international designations
Tintern - Local craft shops	Historic buildings and the High Street (historic)	Highly visible and well connected, include local shops, services and some of events	There is a highway network that takes you through the valley (but needs maintenance)	Long season autumn and shoulder seasons
Activities in surrounding local farms, traditional to the valley to agricultural surrounding	Tourism offer	Stakeholders linked in already for the study	accessible from M48 to South or A40 from North	Internationally recognised landscape
Road closure - 10. head, water/polluting valley, Attractors	Brand recognition nationally and locally	Historic and rolling King Valley, National Landscape, historic villages	Good connectivity with the rest of the UK	Dark skies (lack of light pollution)
Benefits from being part of Wye Valley brand	Tourism ambassadors	Unique - not Welsh/English /midlands.	A very popular area with cyclists	
Belief in World Tourism	Key England	Historic for day visitors accessible from Wales and England	Well established driving route - 'pleasure'	

WEAKNESSES

Lack of connectivity between businesses	Coordination/linkages between destinations	It suggest there needs to be a balance of day trip driving through tourists	Quality of walking routes	Road safety/speeding	of public trasport
Lack of digital infrastructure	Wrong people coming at the wrong time on the wrong missions	On the edge of Wales, slightly away from the original 'Welsh Valley' landscape	Narrowness of roads/lanes	Structural issues, Wreworks bridge - high cost repair	very boggy footpaths
Lack of business investment in lighting in other businesses	Lowest tourism destination - immediate Tintern but limited further north	Historical landscape	Widge through-maintenance, safety Annual closure in January after	SATNAV orientation	speeding traffic
Poor Mobile reception / broadband	Weakness with private infrastructure, services, Conventional areas	Lack of identity of the Wye Valley and individual villages	Traffic is prioritised over cyclists and pedestrians	Limited access and understanding of the upper valley areas	A very popular area with cyclists
Lack of adequate caravan sites	Subconscious focus on Tintern	Boundary issues - borders	Poor sustainable transport connections.	Tintern bottleneck	Threats to connectivity - access - parking - signage
Too few WCs	Too easy to be a drive through visitor, and too easy to leave	Lack of public transport connections.	A466 stability issues	Highway Maintenance design guide not adopted	Loss of vistas in some parts

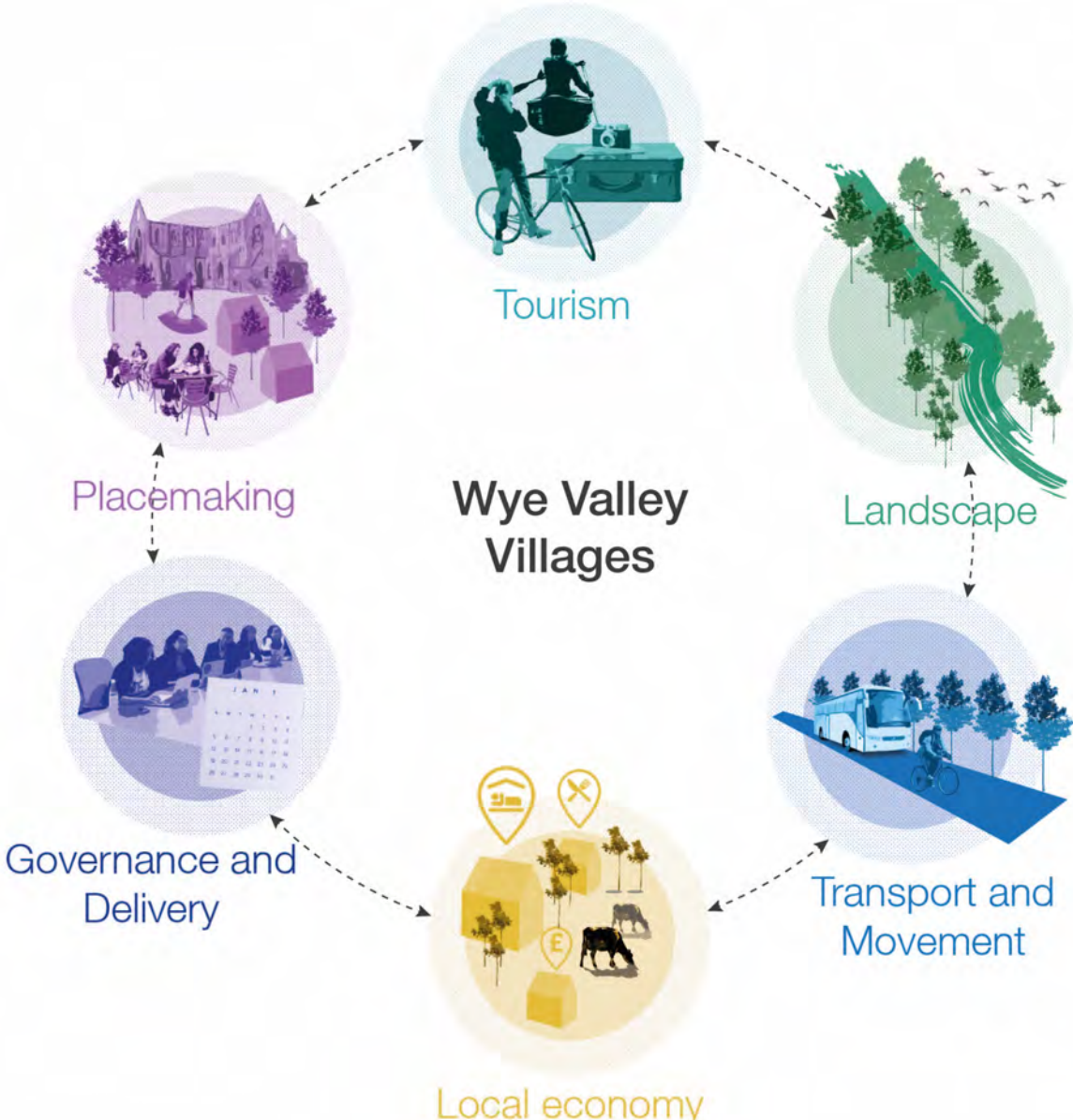
High cost of property may prevent opening 'shops' in other villages on the edge	Dormitory villages and unaffordable to people in local employment	Resistant towards visitor trails, which are our highest spending visitors	Anti cycling feeling - encourage some villagers	Local employment, local businesses, etc. being lost, rural landscape, these are important
Covid impacts on businesses. Risk some won't survive	Limited money on day-to-day basis	If the economy is to begin returning to normal, the tourism will be a major driver and will need to be supported	Lack of land for additional parking	Very difficult. A lot of land is owned by the local authority, but it's not clear if it's available for use
High cost of property, potential demand for new housing (Barnstaple)	Jobs in tourism businesses are often part-time and seasonal, not a consistent source of income for the local area	Unmanaged tourist shops - day trippers from longer stops	Lack of engagement from stakeholders. Need people	Historic houses who are owned by the local authority, but they are not being used for tourism purposes
Where will the funding come from to prime initiatives	Sustainability of local businesses - changing in local history of local businesses	Lack of engagement from stakeholders. Need people	A466 stability of existing road	Environmental - climate change, Flooding - local events
Closing businesses	No sustainable business network to tap into	Competition between businesses and residents	Access for all - narrow pavements, uneven surfaces, very busy	Tree disease - Ash die-back, impact on landscape
Affordability for younger people	20mph legislation changes	Challenging to have a network of people, but it's not clear if it's available for use	Investment needed for bridges	

THREATS

Chepstow Racecourse	Build in enthusiasm and support for new businesses	Increased popularity of staycations	Staycations post Covid	Motorway network - but it's not clear if it's available for use	20mph legislation changes	Increased opp for active travel
Livox Quarry Site	Diversification of businesses and agriculture	Opportunity to improve referrals between tourism offers / sites	Already a tourist market for the product	Conversations with coach operators	Introduction of electric bikes	Local opportunities to support tourism - but it's not clear if it's available for use
Growing interest in local food and goods	Coordination between businesses - opportunities to work together	Existing businesses - but it's not clear if it's available for use	Green tourism	Beginning of motorway network - but it's not clear if it's available for use	Blue sky thinking - opp to trial and test	
Increased focus on walking routes	Quarry site - south of Tintern. Purchased - log cabin scheme	Join villages as one entity - 'The Wye Valley' Branding app	New IDP could review policies to support tourism	Active travel	More strategic approach to GI	
Local businesses are struggling to survive	Engagement with local tourism businesses	Pragmatic tourism manager	Trained tourism ambassadors	Draw into expertise	More towards walking and cycling - getting active travel and leisure	
Local businesses are struggling to survive	Existing products - Gin, local cream etc.	Tourism management plan - Tourism ambassadors	Draw into expertise			

OPPORTUNITIES

Six Pillars



Transport and movement

Key issues



Despite enthusiasm for active travel in AONB, most trips made by car (commuters and tourists- > 80%) Mixed reasons: lack of alternatives, no seamless door-to-door links



Limited bespoke guidance for street design – status in design process



Traffic levels are generally stable, with lower than average levels of HGVs. Incompatibility between large agricultural vehicles, villages and road network



Car parking demand varies significantly by place and by season. There is very limited provision for EV charging.

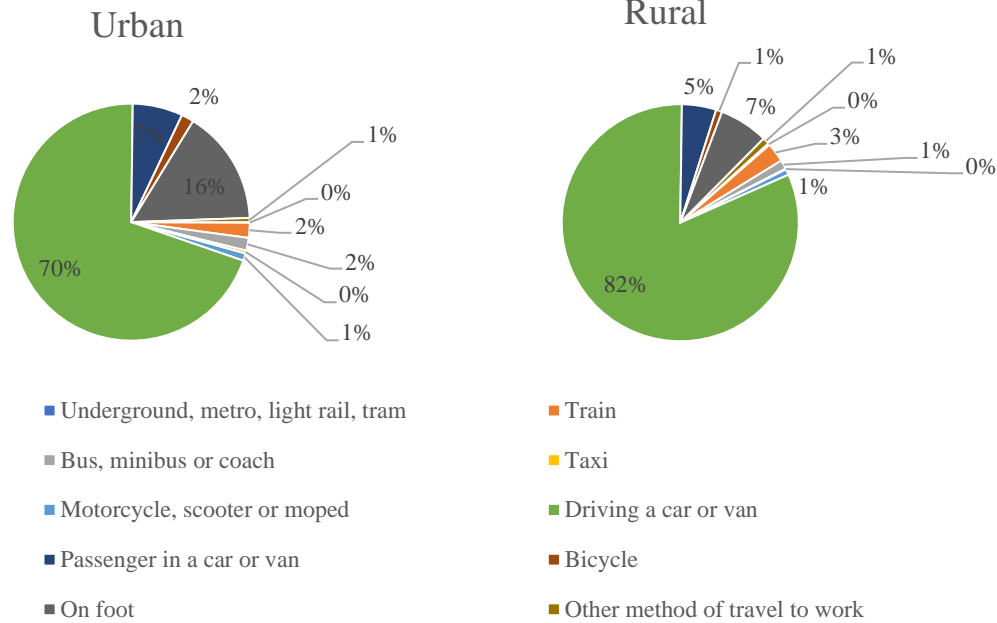


Public transport requires subsidy and is not currently seamlessly integrated with other transport modes. Does perform a vital service to many residents, including school pupils.

Mode of Travel

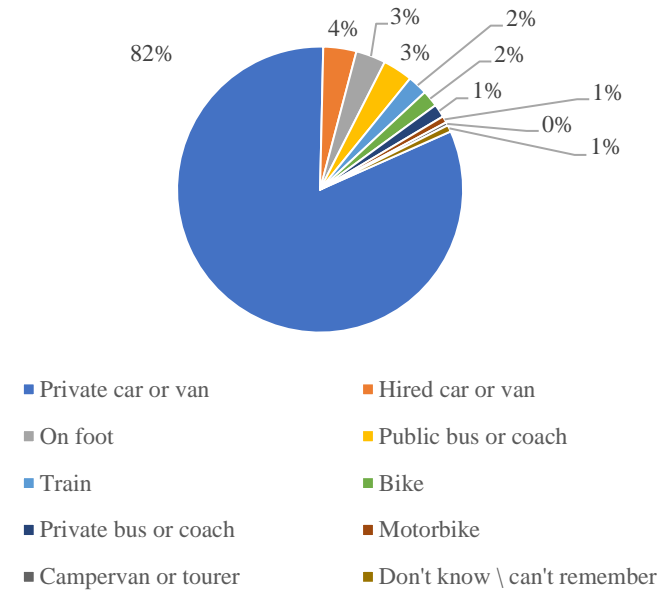
Commuting

Page 598



Source: Census Journey to Work data, Monmouthshire, 2011

Tourism



Source: Visit Wales Visitor Survey 2016

Active Travel – Key Themes

Severance caused by busy roads

Page 599

- Busy road such as the A466 can divide places and people
- The A466 routes through Llandogo, Tintern and Redbrook
- Redbrook have introduced a zebra crossing on the A466 which can reduce severance

Car has priority over other modes

- Road space prioritises cars over other modes
- Some footways reduce in width to accommodate on-street parking
- No road space designated to cycles
- Limited examples of controlled crossings



Controlled crossing on the A466, Redbrook



Narrow footway associated with on-street parking, Tintern

Active Travel – Key Themes

Page 600

Limited footway provision

- Some villages such as Trelleck, The Narth, Brockwier and Devauden have limited footway provision in places
- Many side roads/lanes have no footway provision
- Speed limit reduced to 20mph in Trelleck, improve pedestrian environment and safety

Formal crossings along desire lines

- Desire lines associated with local facilities and leisure routes
- Limited examples of formal crossing to facilitate movements over busier roads such as the A466 in St Arvens and Tintern
- On-street parking as potential to limit visibility for pedestrians



Limited footway provision, Brockwier

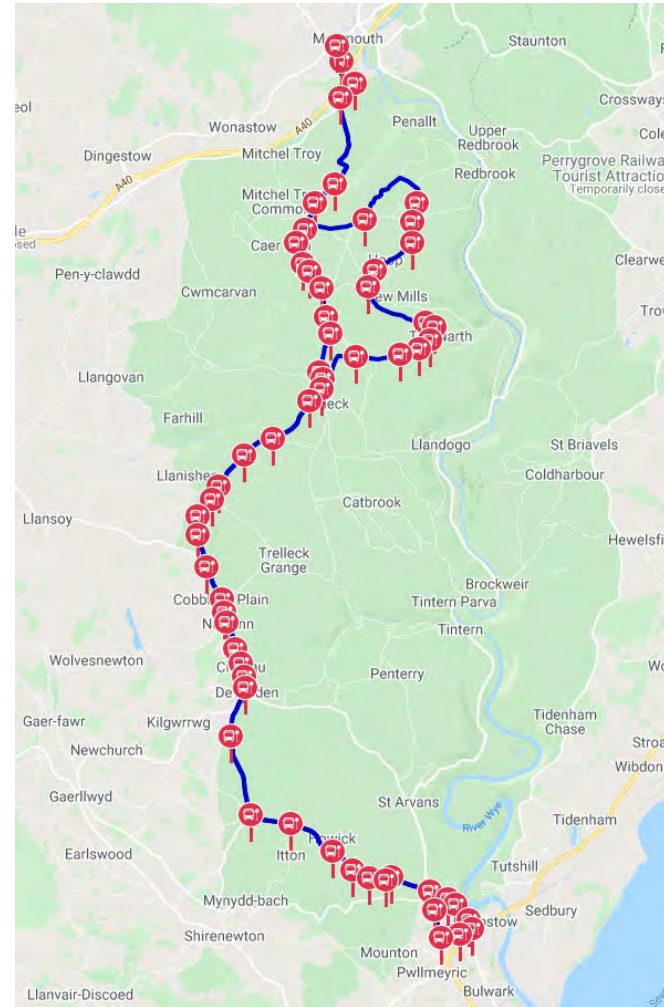


PROW without on crossing A466, north of Tintern

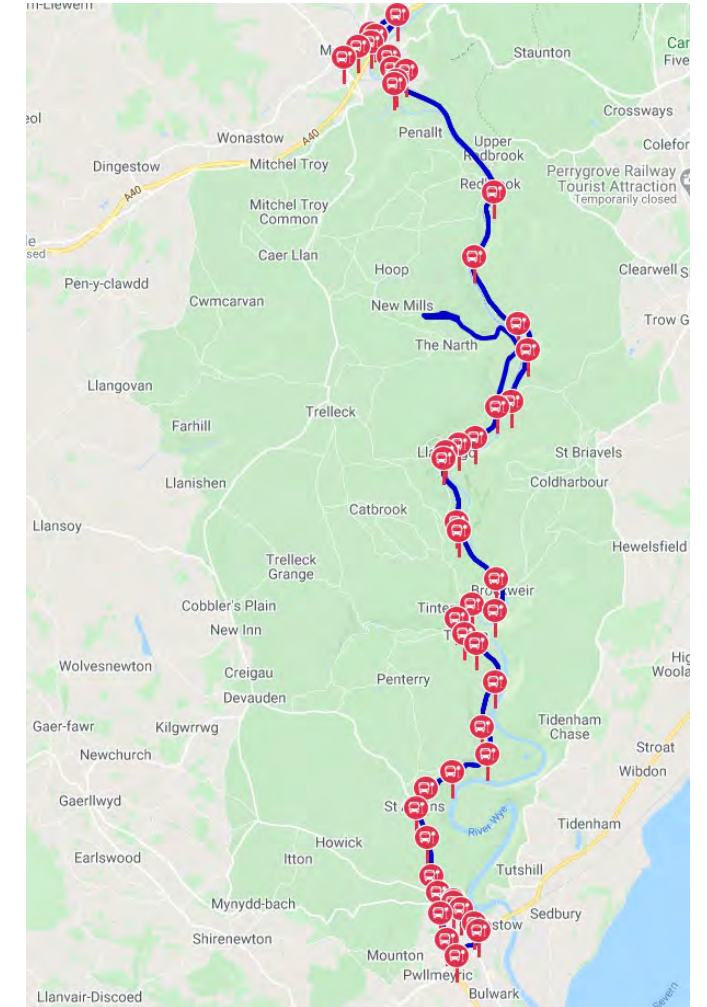
Public Transport

- No. 65 bus service routes between Chepstow and Monmouth via the B4293
- No. 69 routes via A466
- Both bus routes operate five services a day (Monday to Saturday)
- Two-three hours between each bus route
- Enables but does not encourage journeys to be made by bus

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No. 65 Bus Route (source traveline.cymru)



No. 69 Bus Route (source traveline.cymru)

Road Traffic Collisions

Page 602

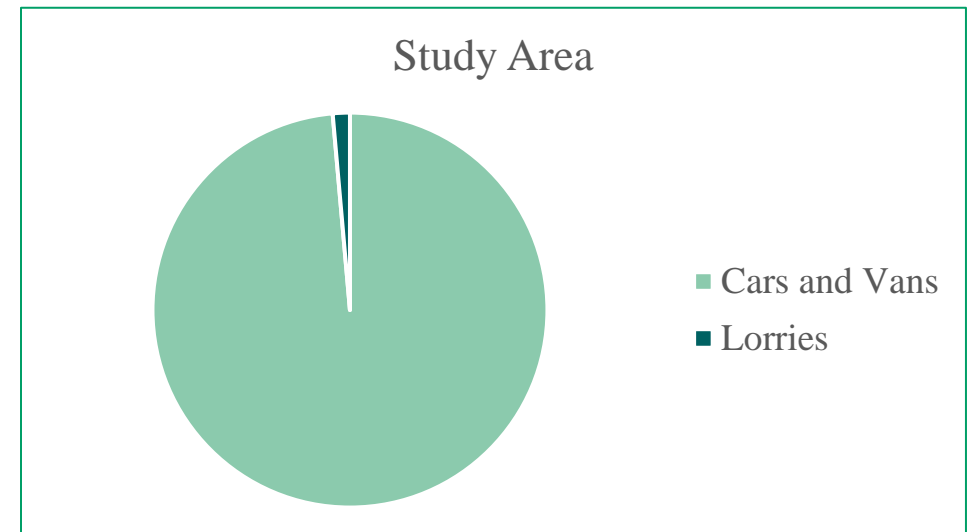
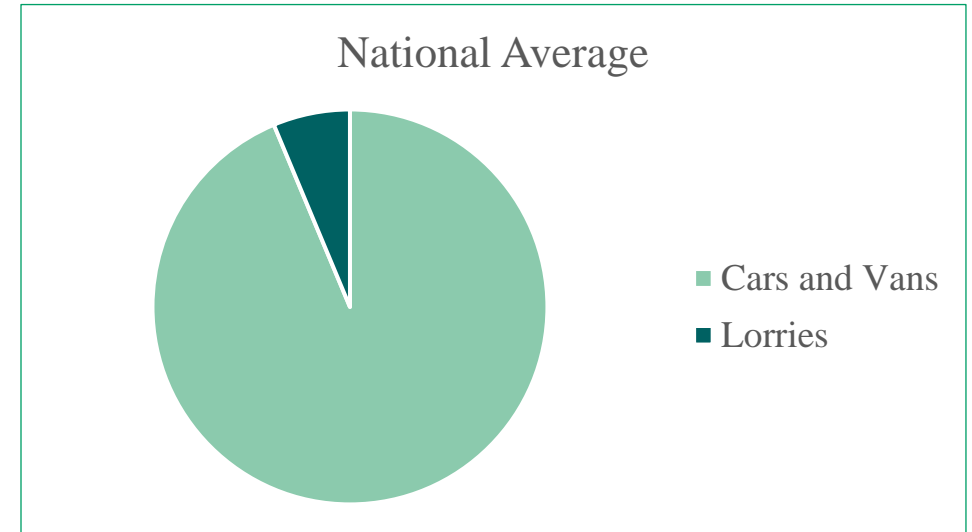
- No accident clusters identified over the past five years
- 1 collision involving a pedestrian within the study area
- Eight collisions recorded on the A466, including three serious
- Ten collisions involving cyclists, of which seven were serious



Collisions between 2015-2019 (crashmap.com)

Agricultural Traffic

- **Opportunities to consolidate agricultural movements**
- Average proportion of large vehicles on road network is 6.3%
- Large vehicles account for 1.4% of traffic on roads in the study area
- Reducing agricultural movements may not have tangible benefits

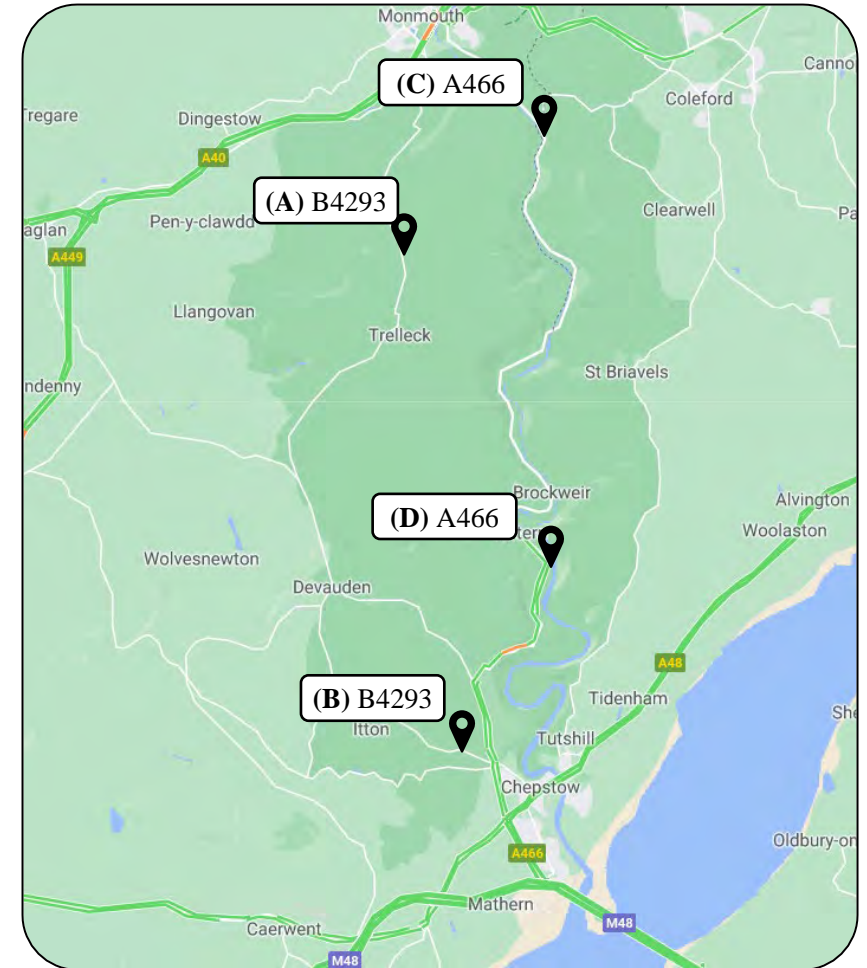


Traffic Flows and Speeds

Page 604

Link	2013	2016	2019	Growth
A) B4293	2756	3788	2818	0.37%
B) B4293	2567	2674	3570	6.51%
C) A466	3855	3278	3306	-2.37%
D) A466	4143	3919	3961	-0.73%

Daily Traffic Flow (roadtrafficdata.dft.gov.uk)



Utilisation of Car Parks

Page 605

- Visitor parking across Lower Wye Valley are of varying standards
- Parking at Abbey Mill and Old Station can suffer from congestion owing to lower capacities
- Larger car park at Tiintern (over 150 spaces) also reaches capacity at peak
- Surveys required to improve understanding of utilization



Design Guides

Page 606

Market stalls the street

Normal parking

Large planting where practical

Ballards (used sparingly) reinforce speed reduction

End of road markings

Market Cross, or other feature, with seating contribute to reducing vehicle speed.

Paving & kerbs appropriate to the context & pedestrian usage

Change in road surface

APPROACHING THE CENTRE OF THE VILLAGE/TOWN

Traffic in Villages

Safety and Civility for Rural Roads

A toolkit for communities

Traffic in Villages

- Prepared for Dorset AONB
- Emphasis on contextual design, as opposed to standardised approach across multiple localities
- Gateway treatments provide transition of environment for drivers
- Narrowing of carriageway and removing road marking to reduce speeds
- Defining the centre of the village and meeting places through highway layout, materials, parking availability and wider streetscape to ensure sense of place is maintained



St Armal,
Brittany

Design Guides



Streets for All

Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works
in Historic Places



Streets for All – Historic England

5 goals for public realm enhancement:

1. An inclusive environment
2. Public safety and ease of movement
3. A healthy environment that supports out wellbeing and cohesion
4. A high quality environment
5. Economic benefit

Wye Valley Highway Design Guide

- Prepared by Monmouthshire, Gloucestershire and Herefordshire highways offices in 2011, but not adopted.
- Based on 4 guiding principles:
 1. Unless there is an overriding safety issue, do as little as possible.
 2. Take account of the specific traffic flow and character of the road to ensure the proposals are not over specified.
 3. Unless there is an overriding reason, copy the style and materials that have been used over time.
 4. Consult with the staff in the AONB Partnership Office.



CONSULTATION DRAFT

HIGHWAY DESIGN GUIDE

for the

Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

July 2011

Andrew Blake,
Wye Valley AONB Officer,
Wye Valley AONB Office,
Hadnock Road,
Monmouth,
NP25 3NG
aonb.officer@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk

Case Studies



The National Forest,
East & West Midlands

Page 609

- Visitor gateways – to engage visitors in and raise awareness of its attractions and travel options
- Integrated public transport links to popular walking routes
- E-bike cycling holidays



Lake District National Park

- New 'bike bus', new routes and increased frequency
- Cycle hire improvements, including e-bikes
- Marketing campaign for coach and rail options
- Result: 14% mode shift away from car in Lake District

Case Studies

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Case Study
Sewta Car Share database
www.sewtacarshare.com



The ten local authorities in the Sewta region have joined together to create a regional car share database. This Internet facility will provide a free matching service to anyone in the region interested in car sharing.

Users are required to register by providing postcode details and information on their travelling habits. A search mechanism allows them to search for colleagues or neighbours with similar travelling patterns and returns contact details to encourage people to get in touch.

The service was launched on 14th June 2005 and is free to users, however, there is the facility to join a 'private' group which will provide additional security features. This service will cost an estimated £400 per year.

For more information visit: www.sewtacarshare.com



Case Study
Brecon Bike Bus

The award winning service operates every Sunday from Cardiff and Swansea from the end of May until the end of August. Cyclists can to hop on and hop off at a number of locations throughout the Beacons. The specially designed trailer is capable of carrying approximately 25 bicycles and the drivers have been given special training to help with loading and unloading. The service also provides excellent access to walkers who want to enjoy the Brecon Beacons.

A return trip from Cardiff costs £5.50 per person and £2 per bicycle.

For more information contact: Brecon Beacons Tourist Information
01874 622 485
Or visit:
www.visitbreconbeacons.com



Case Study
Car Clubs
MOORCAR

MOORCAR is a not-for-profit community Car Share scheme, the first rural-based car share scheme in the UK. MOORCAR is a co-operative and own a pool of vehicles for the use of the membership. It is not commercial car hire, these are community owned vehicles so all the benefits of cost saving, flexibility and freedom to get about, go straight where they're needed – the local community. Vehicles can be hired for an hour or the weekend as required. Members are free to choose the car that best suits your needs.

Typically costs can range from between £2.80 and £4.95 per hour depending on vehicle type and hire location. Users then pay between 17 and 19 pence per mile. The majority of Car Club schemes have an annual subscription of approximately £100.

Even if you can afford to own a private car, the cost of insurance, tax, MOT and the inevitable maintenance and service bills make many people ask whether it is worth the bother. Owning a modest family car can cost between £1,500 and £3,000 per year. Add to that the environmental hazards caused by ever-increasing car ownership, such as pollution, traffic and parking congestion. It is high time someone thought of an alternative. A decade of experience in Europe has shown that one car share vehicle can replace five privately owned cars.

For more information: www.moorcar.co.uk
www.carclubs.org.uk

Future of Mobility

‘Facilitating transition to net zero’

- Wales Transport Strategy - Improve sustainable access to key visitor attractions
- Wales EV Charging Strategy – Public/private partnerships to deliver charging hubs in rural areas, integrated with renewable energy

‘By 2025, all users of electric cars and vans in Wales are confident that they can access electric vehicle charging infrastructure when and where they need it.’

Key opportunities



Explore opportunities for inclusive active travel. Update Travel Plan. Increase funding for active travel schemes for both visitors and residents. Creation of new cycle loops with classified climbs. Reduced price ticketing for sustainable access.



Street design guidance could be introduced / enhanced to improve active travel facilities and sense of place in villages, reducing severance. Opportunity to implement through both development control and LHA action.



Support remote working and circular economy to reduce the need to travel. Review of HGV routing and preparation of mapping for hauliers. Freight consolidation; agricultural consolidation.



Parking - Integrated approach needed. Needs to be considered along with tourism. Agile/flexible strategy needed – seasonal variations (multi-purpose spaces). Mobility hub approach. Very limited provision for EV charging.



Public transport needs to be seamlessly integrated with other transport modes. Benefits need to be multi-faceted eg air pollution, modal shift, equality and reduced impact. Opportunities to brand and enhance Chepstow Station. DrT Grass Routes service to work with app booking

Placemaking

Page 613

What does this landscape need to thrive?

CONSERVE & ENHANCE

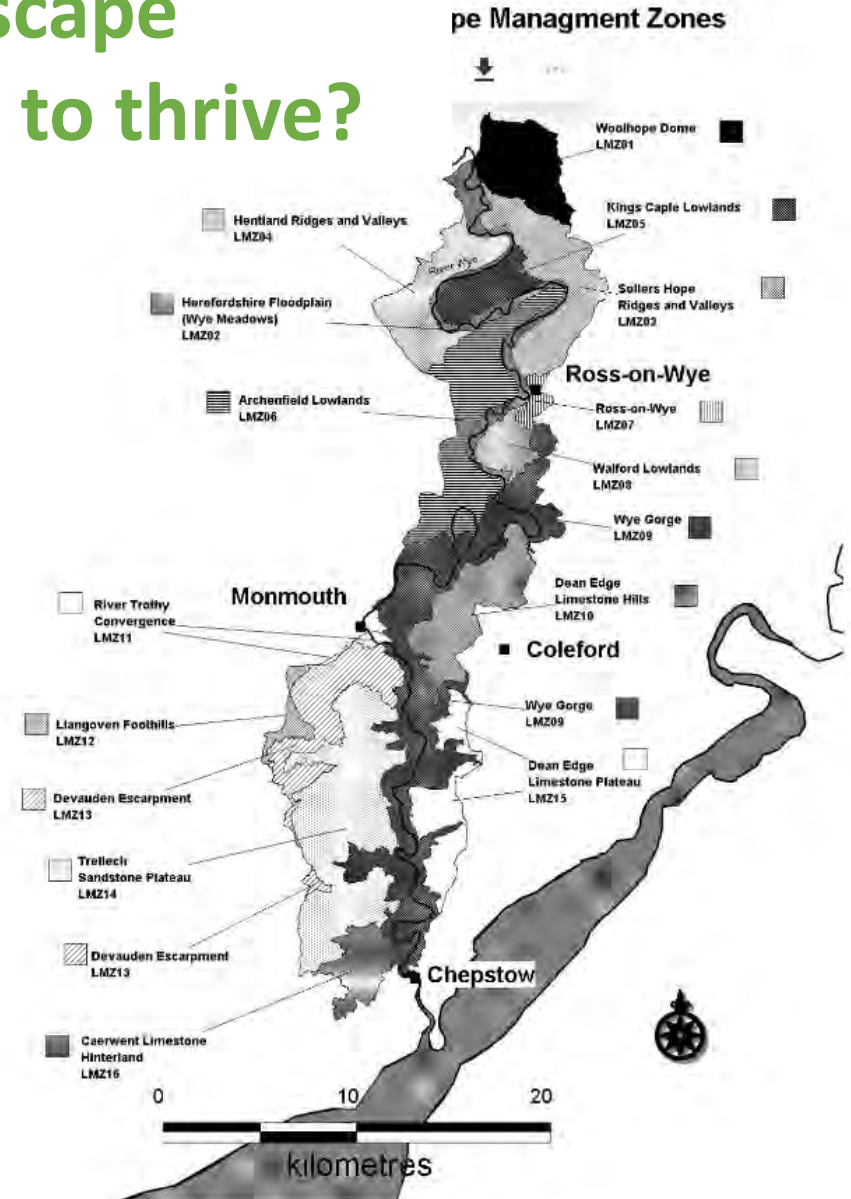
PEOPLE & PLACE

"To describe landscape to others without invoking an experience is to fundamentally ignore our relationship with place and miss what it is to be human" National Association for AONB's

NATURAL BEAUTY: flora, fauna and geological and physiographical features

RISKS:

- water
- soil
- tree fall
- flooding & transport
- species distribution
- pests & disease
- fire
- new crop introductions
- increase visitors
- historic environment



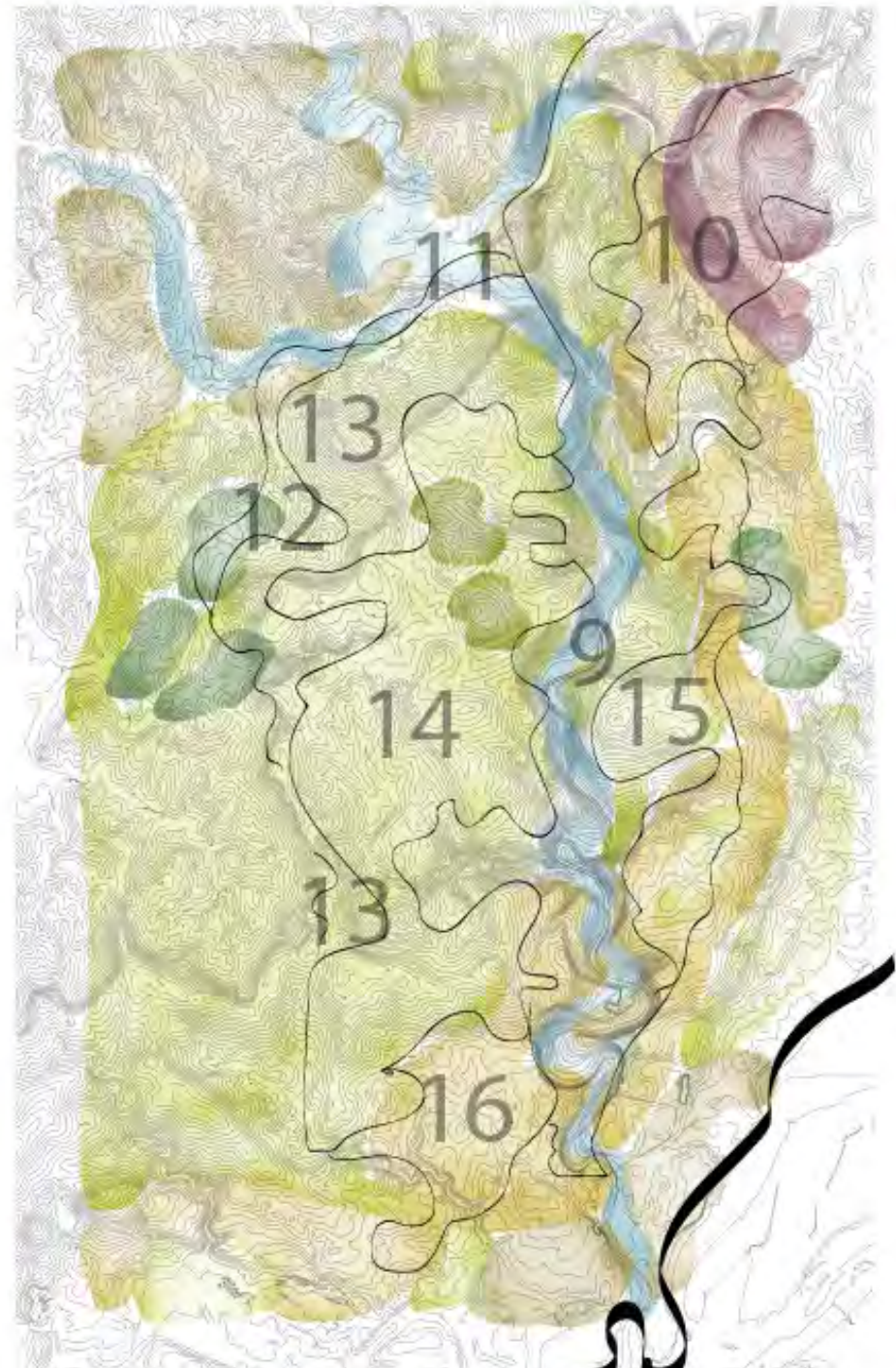
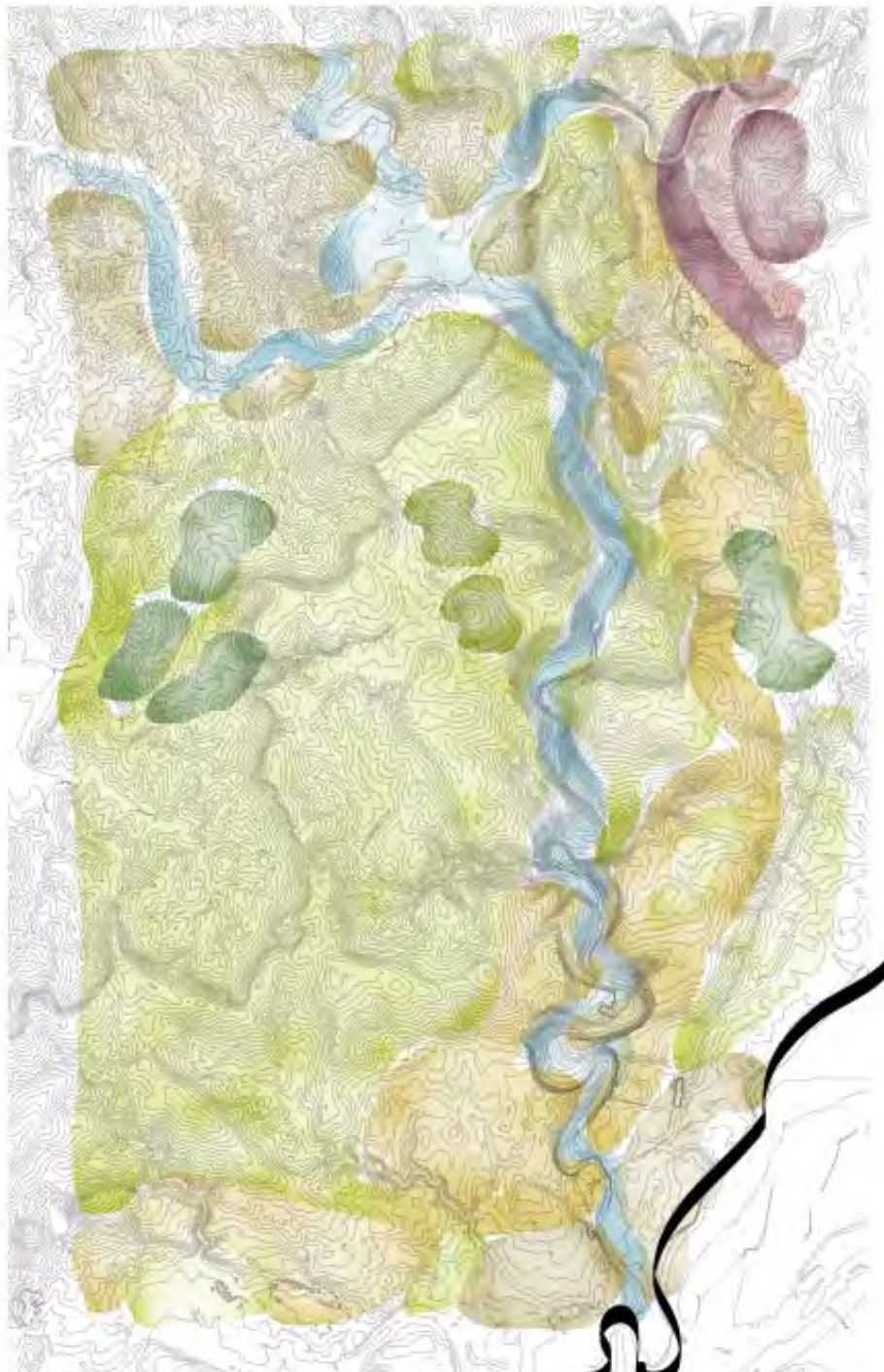
MAPPING DEDUCTIONS

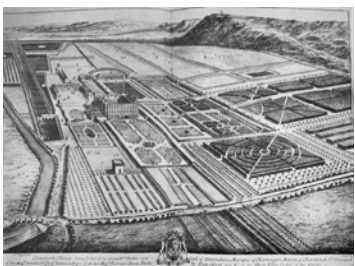
Heritage

Biodiversity

Recreation

Page 615







Resource extraction

'Invisible' Agriculture

Who is the landscape for?

Pre-industrial revolution settlement

Deforestation

Non-motorised transport



Disrupted habitat connectivity

Agrobusiness

Places for people?

Post-industrial Settlement

Infrastructure

Motorised transport

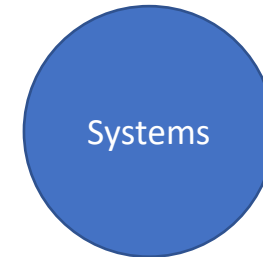
Wye Valley AONB Strategic Vision



- inspiration
- distinctive landscape mix
- heritage assets conserved & enhanced
- local work
- minimal visitor/resident conflict
- benefit to villages and businesses
- internationally important landscape



- natural & heritage assets conserved & enhanced
- robust, interconnected mosaic of habitats
- ecosystem services & resources
- internationally important landscape



- positive adaptation
- ecosystem services & resources
- local work
- partnership with broader communities

4.4.2 “The **landscape approach** as it relates to conservation, agriculture and other land uses seeks to address the increasingly complex and widespread environmental, social and political challenges that **transcend traditional management boundaries**. The landscape approach helps to bring together the disciplines associated with the humanities, and social and natural science in a way that creates policy useful to not only help deliver environmental outcomes but for the delivery of **important social and economic objectives**. To do this we have to really understand that meeting ground between **people and place**; the **intended and unintended** ways we interact with the environment up which we depend as a species. this means not just viewing traditional policy areas at a landscape scale but seeing **landscape as a framework where the skills and assets of people and the social and economic processes that drive them are fundamentally and intrinsically interconnected with nature and the physical environment.**”



Abundant mosaic

Living wage
For all

Ecoagriculture

Nature as
medicine

Inclusive Landscape

Clean atmosphere
& soil

Resilient Villages

Swimmable Rivers

Safe, expanded
active travel
radius for children

LESSONS FROM ELSEWHERE

Governance: People & Place



Whanganui: Legal Personhood

Tenure & Stewardship



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 www.nationalgeographic.com

This river in New Zealand is a legal person. How will it use its voice?

Soon, the government will recognize a mountain as a legal person as well. Here's how it happened, and what it may mean.

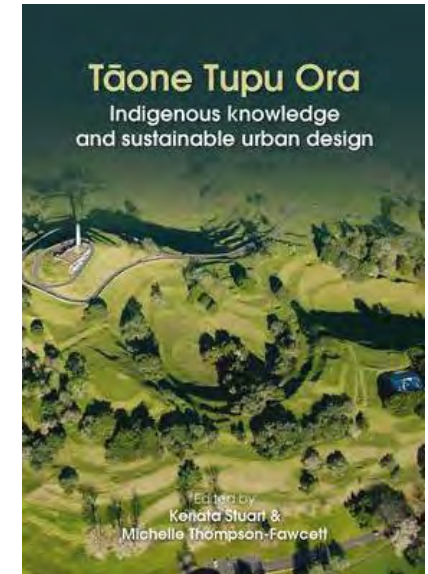
Research by indigenous peoples into the principles of their traditional knowledge has been growing significantly. A particularly exciting avenue in that research has been the relatively recent focus on the innovative application of traditional understandings to current situations and to planning for the future. What future can we envision from that traditional knowledge?

Indigenous knowledge is a complex concept that continues to be variously defined and debated, even with regard to what term to use: traditional knowledge, local knowledge, traditional wisdom, etc.... In general terms, indigenous knowledge is the accumulated understanding that a local community develops over many generations. It commonly encompasses values, skills and practices that guide the long-term behaviour and actions of a group in its locality.

One meaningful way of describing it for the purposes of this book is provided by Royal (5). In brief, he takes such a notion to be a,

Knowledge tradition or system that has arisen specific to a particular ecology, environment or place ... [that] has grown upon a lengthy tenure a particular people have enjoyed with that place.

The advantage of Royal's characterisation of indigenous knowledge is that it both prioritises the fusion of the human and natural world and diminishes the focus on colonisation in defining indigeneity.



The river is a living being. Parliament passed legislation declaring that Te Awa Tupua—the river and all its physical and metaphysical elements—is an **indivisible, living whole**, and henceforth possesses 'all the rights, powers, duties, and liabilities' of a legal person.'

Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au. I am the river, the river is me.

LESSONS FROM ELSEWHERE

Design: People & Place



Golden Circle, Iceland

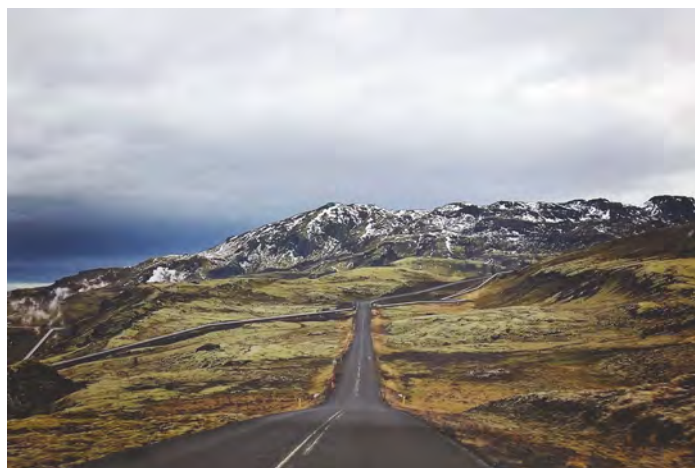


SOUTH ICELAND

ICELAND'S SOUTH COAST IS HOME TO SOME OF THE COUNTRY'S MOST BEAUTIFUL SCENERY. THE CLASSICAL TRIP IS BEYOND THE PEAKS AND THE TOWN ALONG THE COAST ARE PARADISE FOR THEIR FRESH CLIMATE.

SOUTH ICELAND

WITH THE GOLDEN CIRCLE ROUTE, CONNECTING REYNISFJALLAUR, SKALDFELL AND SOUTHERN ICELAND IS A VERY POPULAR DESTINATION FOR VISITORS.



Central Otago Rail Trail, New Zealand



OTAGO CENTRAL RAIL TRAIL

Share the love! [#OTC](#)

VIEW MAP

EXPLORE OUR TRAIL

- About Our Trail
- Tour Planners
- Independent Travel
- Accommodation
- Bike Hire
- Food & Wine
- Transport
- Other Services
- See & Do
- Events
- Get in Touch
- Latest

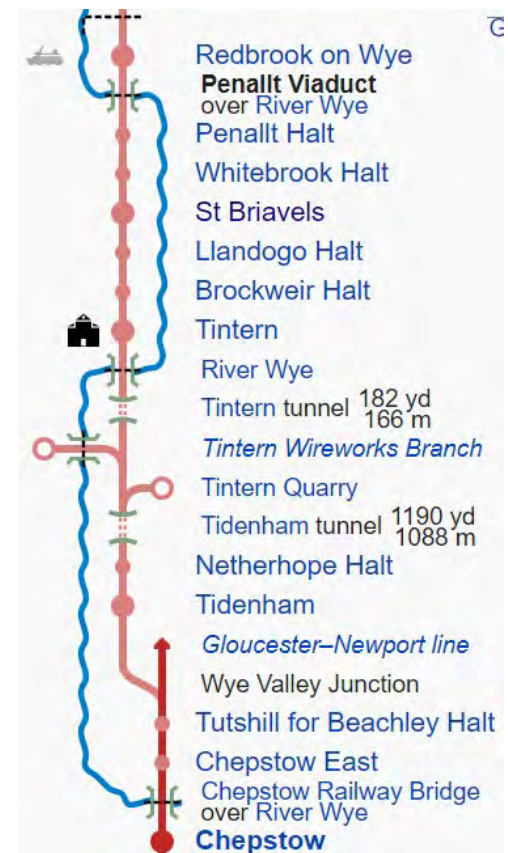
OTC's favourite places to cycle

2016

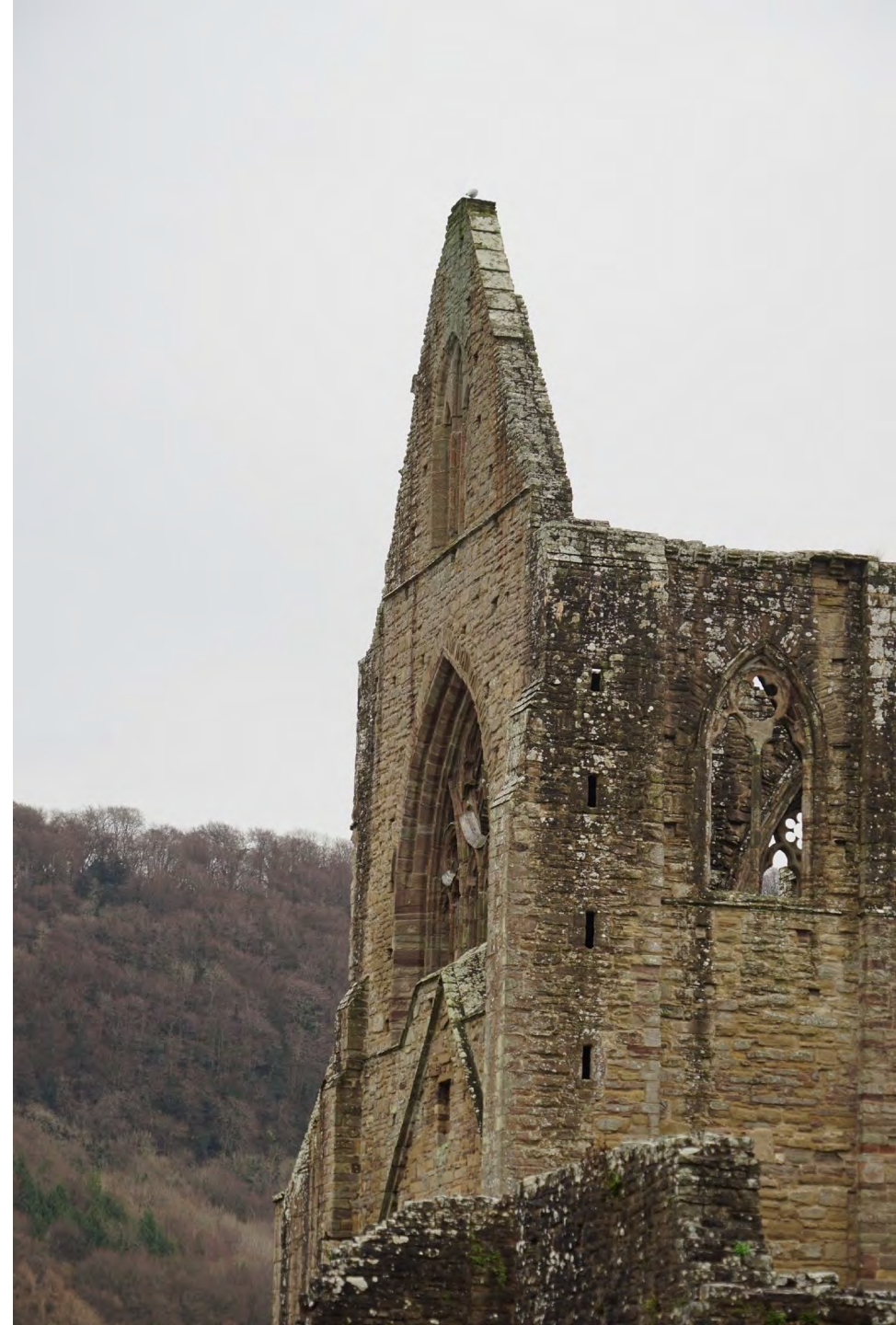
Wye Valley villages

Page 624

- Places to live
- Places to work
- Places to visit
- Places to stay
- Places to discover; identity, history, nature, traditions, culture



Tintern

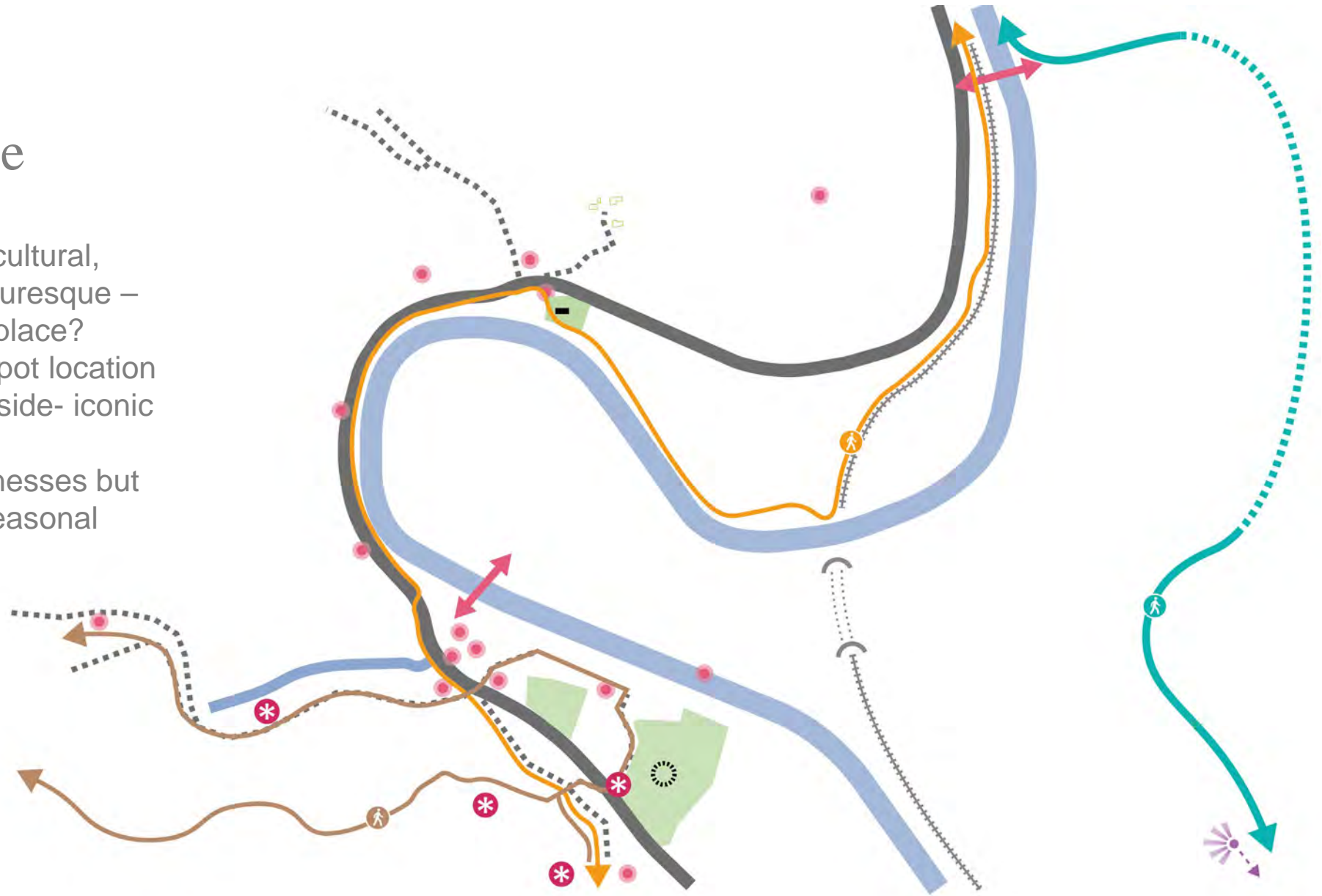


Tintern

The iconic village

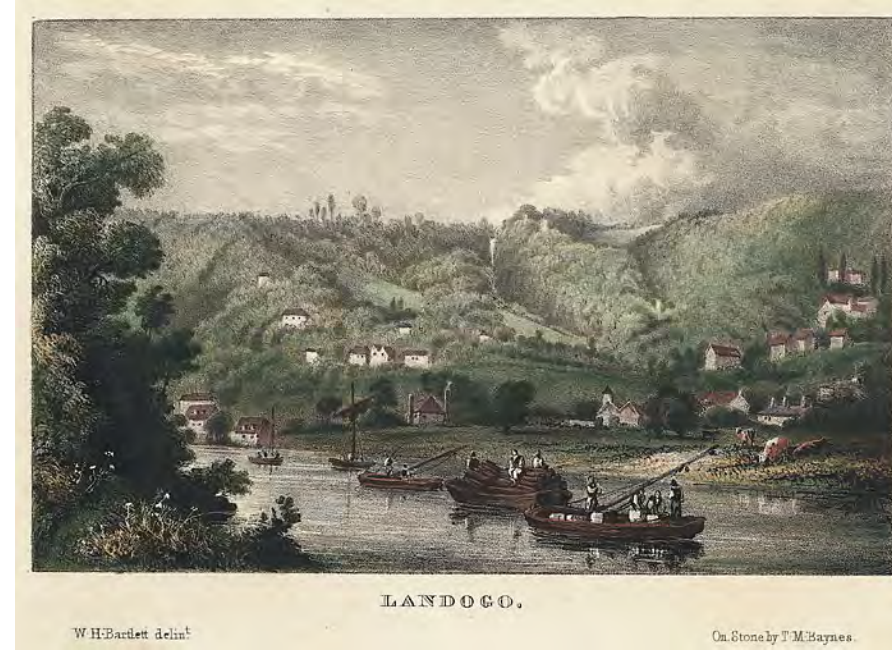
- Layers of history – agricultural, religious, industrial, picturesque – The Wye Valley in one place?
- One of if not *the* Honeytrap location
- Visible history and riverside- iconic landmarks
- Clustering of local businesses but fragmented offer and seasonal

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Llandogo

Page 627

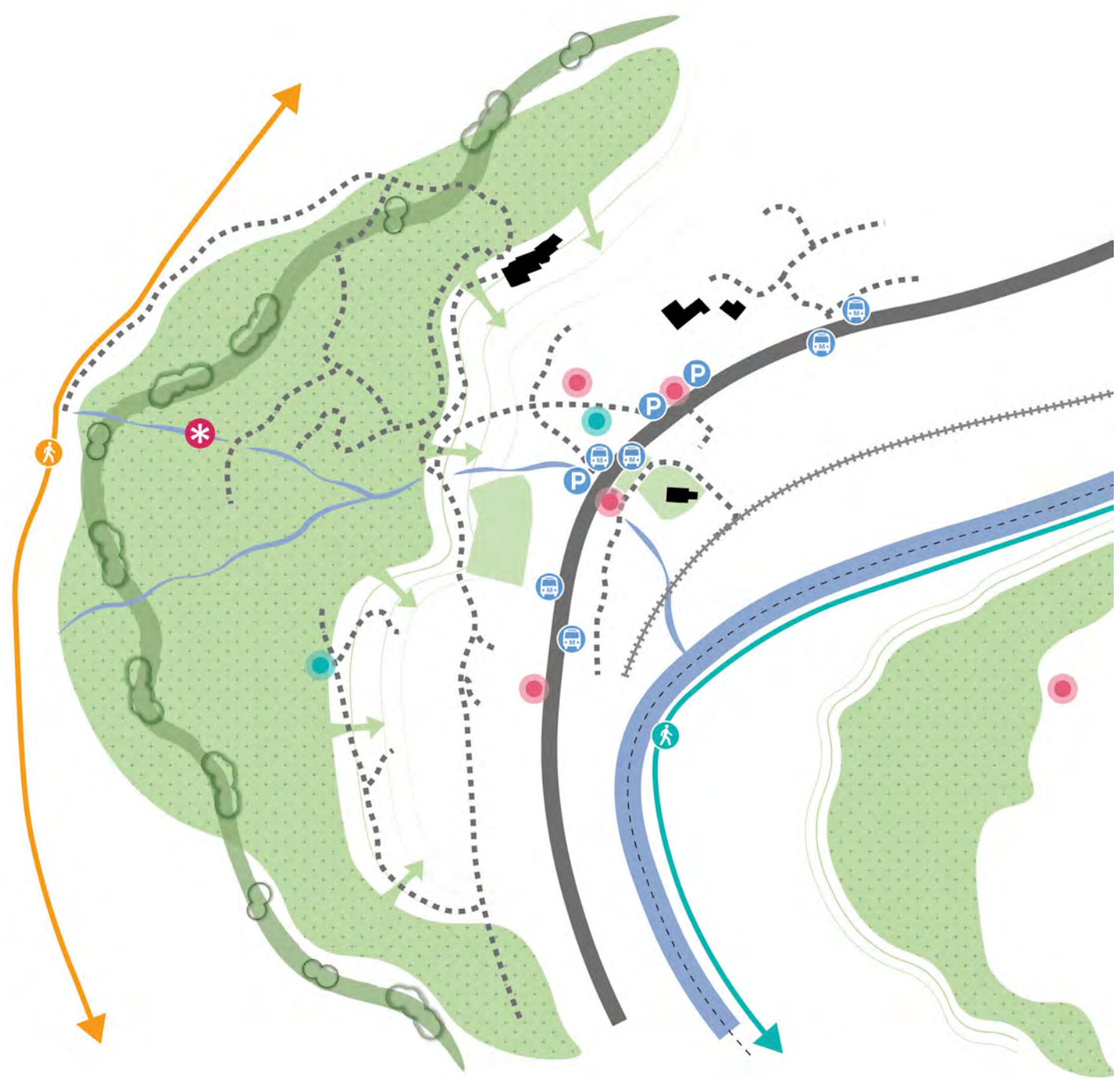


Llandogo

The riverside pastures

- Riverside conservation area-natural port and amphitheatre
- Boat making heritage (trow)-few obvious traces remain
- A pivot for many hiking routes (Wye Valley walk)
- Linear – a sequence of interest points but discernible heart
- All landscapes within the line of sight

Page 628



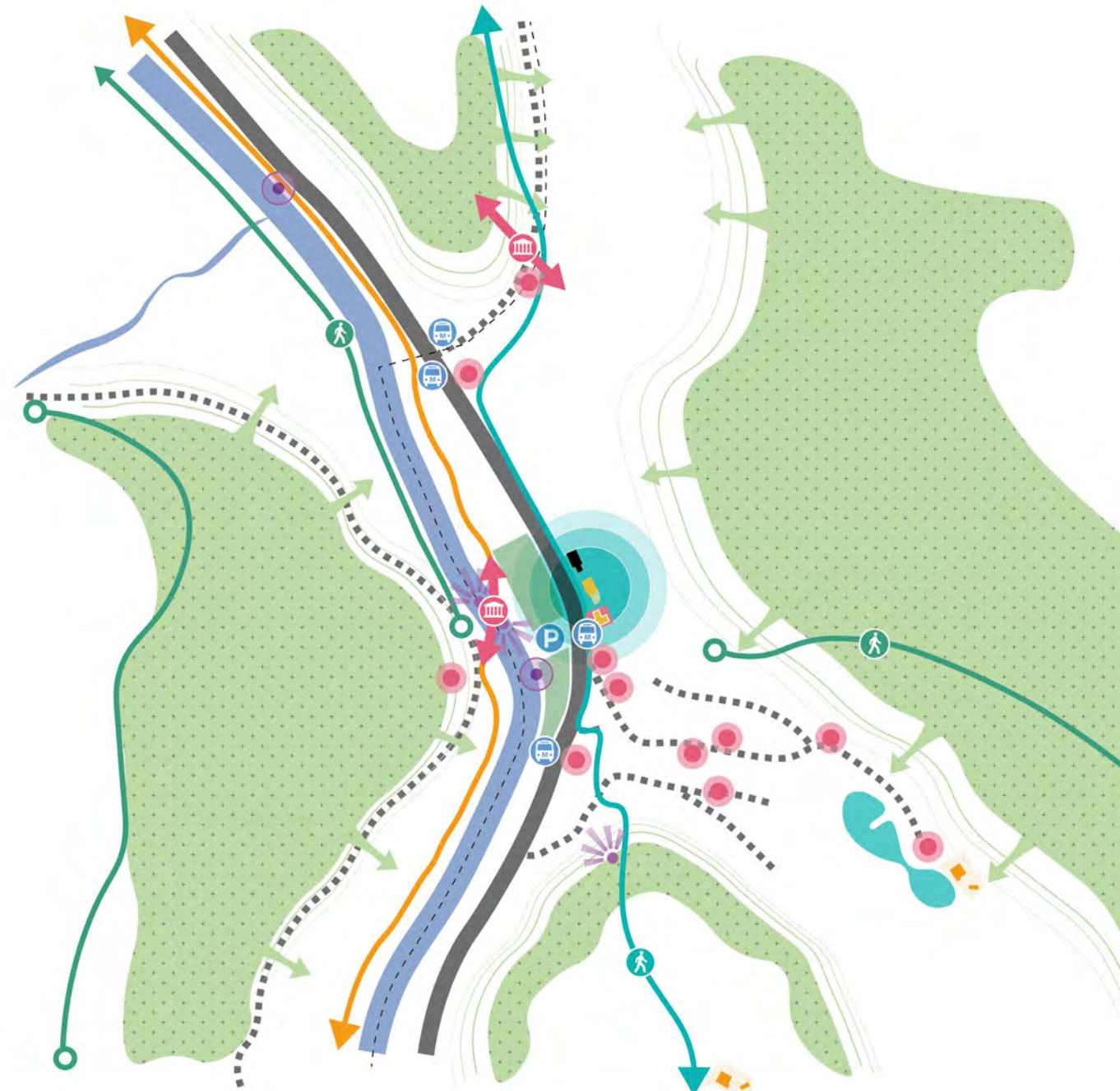


Redbrook

The gateway village

- A bridging point (Pennalt viaduct) between east-west and Wales and England
- Traces of industry
- Nestled in the valley(s)
- Gateway markers – hills and pubs
- Space for activation along the river edge

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The Narth

Page 631

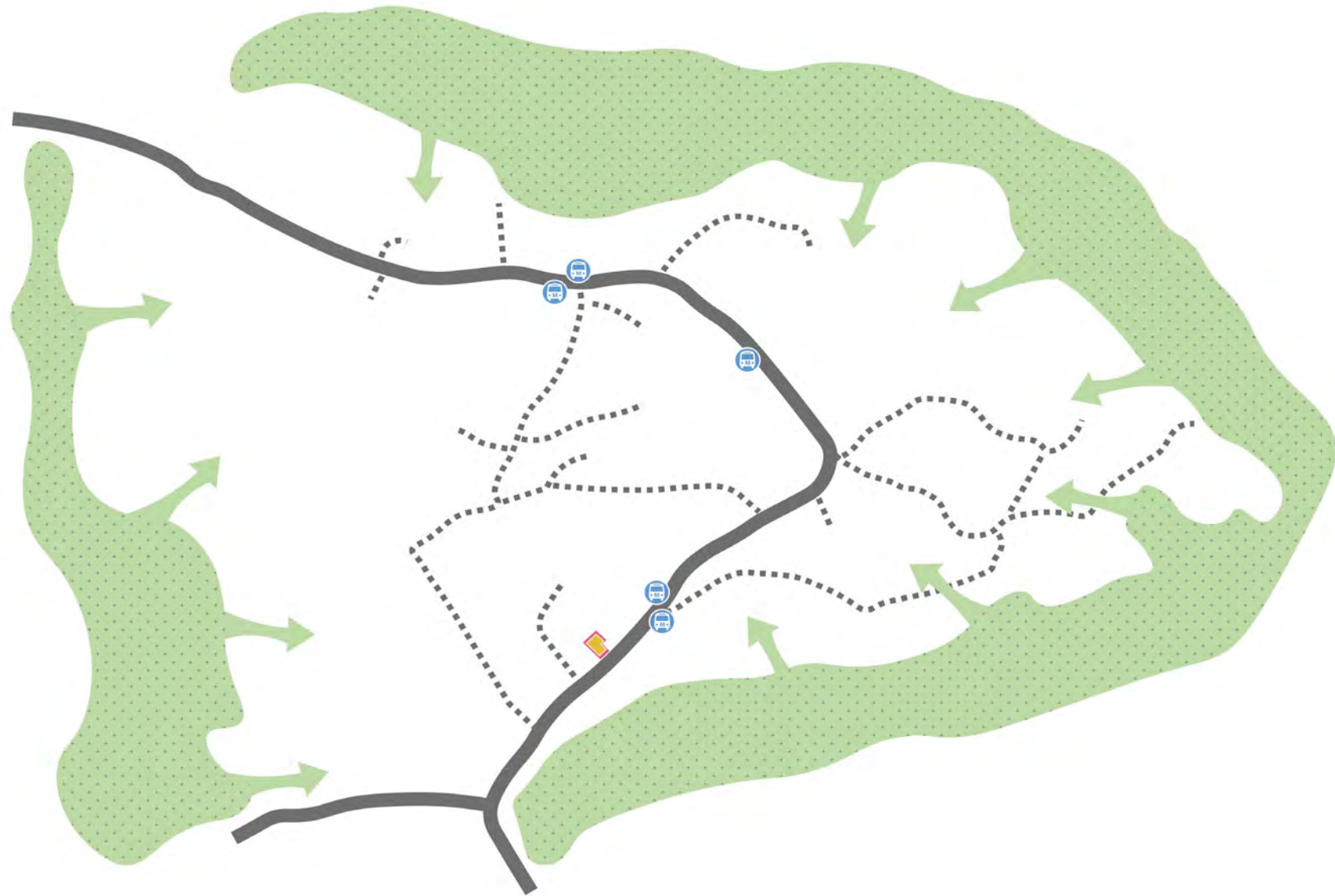


The Narth

A hilltop retreat

- Hilltop location, framed and defined by woodland
- Disperse, informal settlement
- Buildings set within landscape
- Quiet, secluded, soft
- A web of rural, village lanes
- Start of trails

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Trellech



Trellech

Traces of history

- Common language of buildings and materials in conservation area
- Historic pattern of buildings
- Serial views, spaces and landmark buildings
- Framed by open pasture
- Discover layers of history, myths and legends (Bronze age, medieval)

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Devauden

Page 635



Devauden

The village green

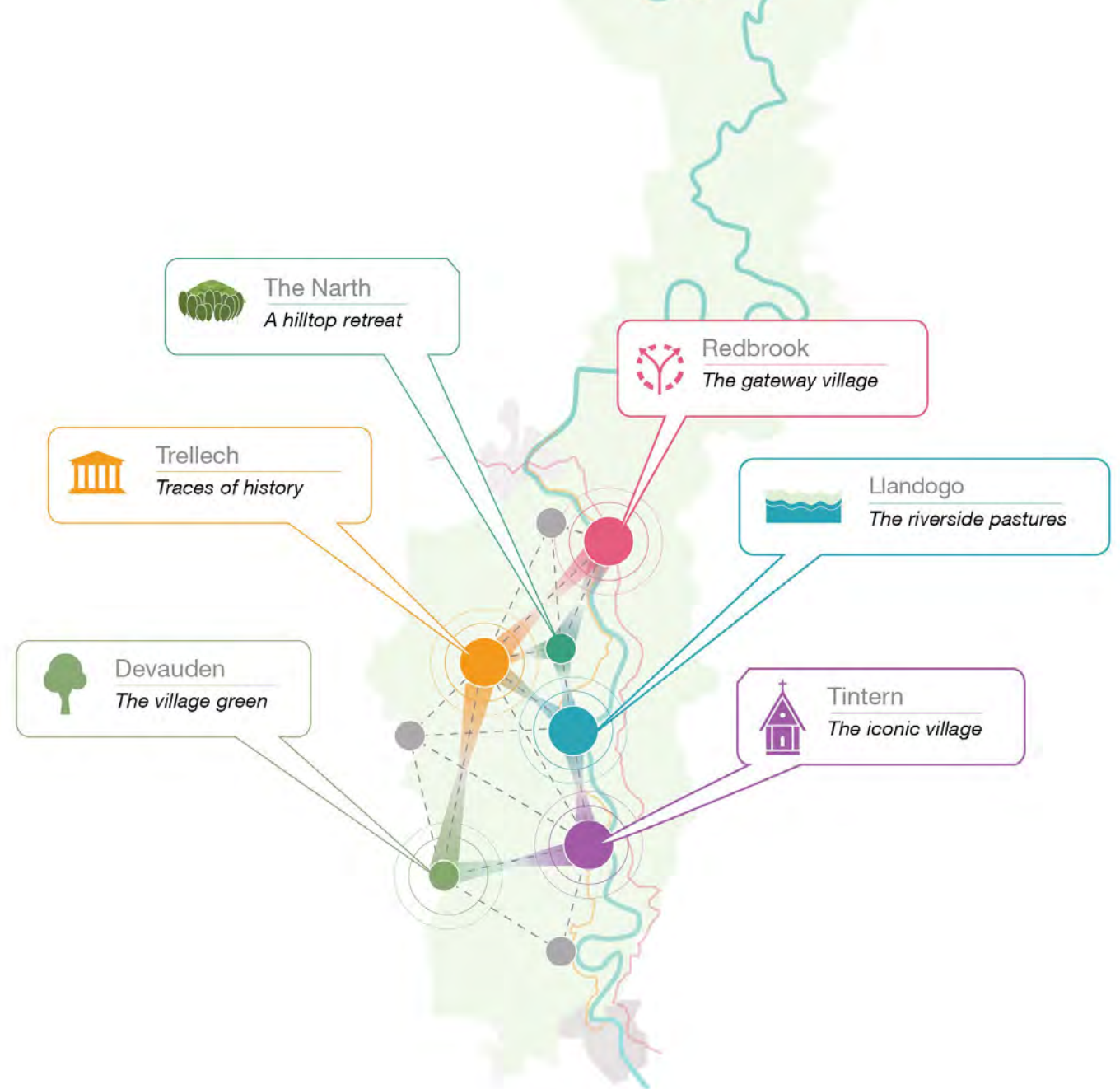
- The Ridgeway - spectacular views
- A true village green
- Pressure for new growth
- Gateway village
- Agricultural community
- Hidden treasures (Veddw garden)

Page 636



Tapestry of villages

- Define, extract and celebrate the diversity and uniqueness of each village -legibility
- Explore and unlock unique character and opportunities for each
- Consider common strategies eg street design, storytelling signage, digital
- Consider as a network
- the sense of community



Co-operative working, innovation, media and profile
Playing to strengths - independents

“We are competitors but we work together,”

BBC Sign in News Sport Weather iPlayer Sounds

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Crickhowell named Best Place to Live in Wales by Sunday Times

By Matt Lloyd
BBC Wales

12 April 2019

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Steven Morris
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Fri 16 Nov 2016 18:19 GMT

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Community could buy Crickhowell pub following planning row

9 July 2015

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Crickhowell: Welsh town moves 'offshore' to avoid tax on local business

The Powys tax rebellion, led by traders including the town's salmon smokery, local coffee shop, book shop, optician and bakery, could spread nationwide

Adam Sharwin @adamsharwin10 Tuesday 10 November 2015 17:28 | 162 comments



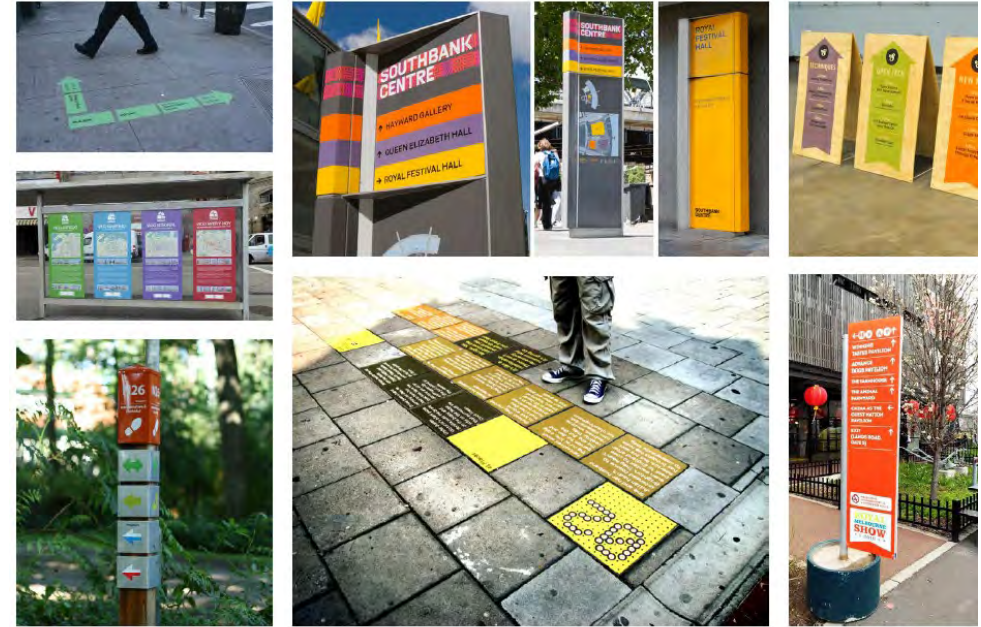
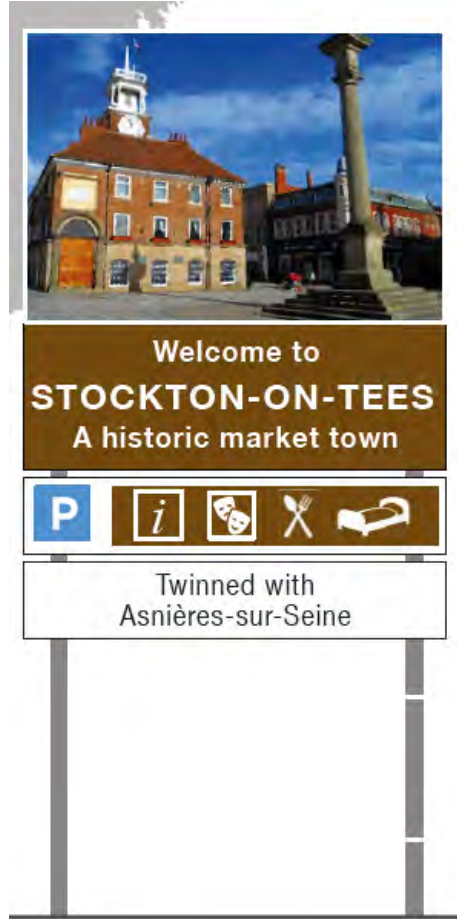
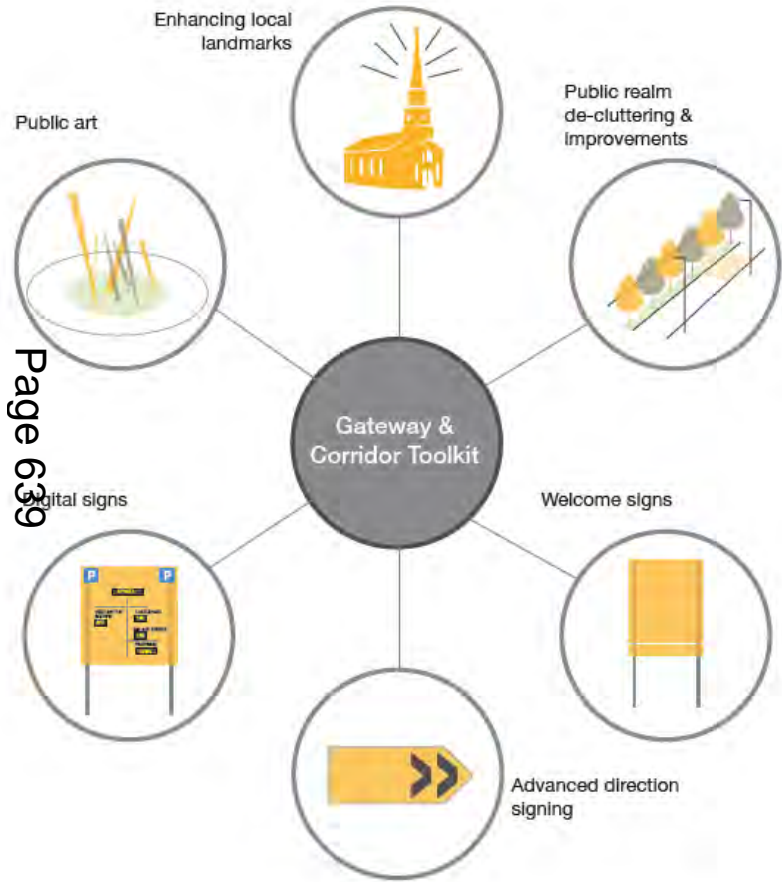



Fig. 27. Examples of event/ festival temporary wayfinding units



Portmeirion – multi functional places





Altrincham – adapting spaces

Socio-economics

Population & Demographics

Overview & Challenges

- **Disperse** population yet **distinctive** identify across AONB.
- **Younger Out Migration.** Well educated but face underemployment befitting qualifications. Lack of local University presence leading to out migration.
- **Ageing Population.** Median Age 48 – Oldest in CCR. Monmouthshire could have less than 2 people of working age for every over 65 by 2036.
- **Labour supply shortfall** relative to long term care provision will become increasingly acute

Opportunities

- **Talent Attraction & Retention:** Targeting the right opportunities will attract and retain a younger economically active demographic and reduce County's Median age. Plan for the golden thread of place specific education, employment and housing choice.
- **Embrace the Silver Economy.** Ensure consumers as well as active economic contributors are adequately provided for locally? Support those keen to use retirement as an opportunity to explore new lifestyle opportunities linked to Wye Valley.
- **Demonstration for innovative public services** such as rural healthcare provision. Transferable skills from Covid affected sectors (retail, hospitality)



Enterprise & Employment

Overview & Challenges

- Monmouthshire has **highest rate of active businesses and business births** as well as the third highest GVA in Wales.
- Local enterprises in the AONB are often characterised by **low pay and seasonal employment**.

The majority of County employment comes from distribution, education, manufacturing, public administration and tourism.

Pre Covid 40% of County residents out commuted to work. Out commuters on average earn approximately 28% more than those who work in County.

- Growth in sectors such as **restorative land management and education, local food & drink production, food tourism and digital health care.**
- Provide support structures for **entrepreneurship within Wye Valley..**

Opportunities

- **Grow on space requirements** to support healthy business growth and development within the Wye Valley.
- Feasibility for provision of **additional storage and distribution space** for local food and drink producers. Wye Valley Producers Hub
- **Co working and rural innovation space** for remote working residents to meet regularly as well as encouraging visitors to extend stays.
- Ensure **higher education pathways reflect the future skills needed in rural and land-based economies** - digital health, agronomy, arboriculture, recreation.
- Develop **business support packages** specifically targeted at rural sectors including food and drink, tourism, hospitality & care.
- **Design bespoke pathways** for young people through the Kickstart Scheme and FE/HE Placements.
- **Social Value in Procurement** - Increase number of local SME's securing public service contracts.



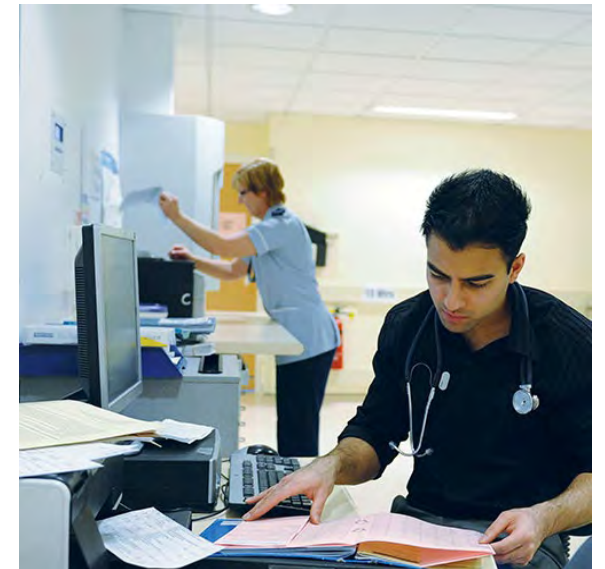
Digital Infrastructure

Overview & Challenges

Digital deprivation levels are high in rural Monmouthshire, at 12.5% compared to 3-4% of the rest of CCR which restricts micro enterprise activity and home working and impacts access, poverty and skills.

Opportunities

- Work with network providers to roll out better Next Generation Access Broadband coverage
- Improve mobile phone coverage
- Public sector led drive for digital upskilling and service provision through AI and Internet Of Things. Rural care and healthcare test bed.



Housing Need & Affordability

Overview & Challenges

Wye Valley is a desirable place to live. Average house prices are the highest in Wales (£307,000)

Opportunities for affordable housing provision are limited. Average ratio of earning to house prices is 12:1 for those living and working in the area.

Evidence that the high cost of housing drives out migration to cheaper adjacent areas such as Newport or Torfean and is also constraining local businesses growth & resilience.

Opportunities

- Ensure housing is inclusive supporting the needs of long-term balanced communities.
- Encourage landowners to bring forward rural exception sites for affordable housing schemes adjacent to settlement boundaries.
- Affordable rental housing in demand
- Operationally essential rural enterprise dwellings for land-based workers or for farm succession planning (TAN 6 :Planning for Sustainable Communities)



Wye Valley Villages Stage 1 Reflections

1. There is a clear legal and policy framework for change.
2. Cross-roads post-Covid and climate change - new models are emerging, are we proactive or reactive?
3. An integrated approach is essential to resolve issues and realise opportunities.
4. Transport issues needs a nuanced, agile solution.
5. We need a place-based approach to retain and celebrate the uniqueness of the villages and places.
6. Our thinking needs to be action-based.
7. Moving forward – think big, little, bold. Grassroots will be key.
8. Need to think about immediate needs and the long term - What if we developed a 100 year plan? What will success look like?

Appendix 3

Stage 2 report



Wye Valley Villages Stage 2 Report

August 2021

Issue 1.3

An amendment has been made on September 15, 2021

Page 650



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Community councils

wye valley

Area of Outstanding
Natural Beauty

dyffryn gwy

Ardalo Harddweli
Naturiol Eithriadol

ARUP

Stage 2 Report

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1. Page 3 Introduction Wye Villages Plan for the Future
 - 1.1 Purpose & objectives
 - 1.2 Drivers of change
2. Page 6 Draft vision
3. Page 7 Stakeholder engagement
4. Page 10 National and regional context
5. Page 13 Wye Valley context
6. Page 15 Six Pillars
 - 6.1 Sustainable Transport & Road Safety
 - 6.2 Landscape Green & Blue Infrastructure
 - 6.3 Tourism
 - 6.4 Local economy
 - 6.5 The Villages - Placemaking
 - 6.6 Governance
7. Page 51 Next steps

1. Introduction Wye Villages Plan for the Future

1.1 Purpose & objectives

The “Wye Valley AONB Villages Plan for the Future” will be a strategic framework plan that sets a holistic vision for transformation through a programme of short, mid and long-term interventions.

The need for the Plan was triggered by issues around road safety and village infrastructure, which form part of a much more complex set of issues and challenges. This means that potential solutions can only be effective if addressed and set in a broader context and with an integrated approach. In this case such a holistic approach and understanding offers a once in a lifetime opportunity to drive generational change on all fronts. The AONB Management Plan (2021-2026) describes this context driven approach by the need to ensure transport is sustainable, integrated, and compatible with the purpose of its destination.

The objective of this Plan is to define the key elements and structure of a holistic vision and to offer a perspective on how this vision can deliver a transformational change in an era that is already demanding we address socio-economic, political and environmental challenges. For visitors and residents, there is a bigger opportunity to promote and enhance the AONB with a long term perspective, while addressing immediate issues and challenges.

We will identify and define these key elements through three stages of work with the client team, specialist consultants and key stakeholders, and by doing so, jointly shape the vision. The results of the second stage and draft vision are presented here.

The aim of the first stage of work was to identify key issues, challenges and opportunities to set a solid evidence base. Our Stage 1 Report offers a cross cutting summary and distils the essence of a broad, sometimes divergent evidence base, consisting of studies, reports, plans and strategies around green infrastructure (landscapes including habitats, woodlands, fields, parks etc), tourism, travel and transport, AONB management and regional development planning.

The purpose of the second stage of work has been to define a draft vision for the Wye Valley AONB Villages Plan for the Future and six key themes as pillars of that vision. The objective of this stage 2 report is to submit the vision, the programme of key themes and potential projects to wider public consultation, in order to gain valuable feed-back and inform the final vision.

This Plan is funded by Monmouthshire County Council, the Wye Valley AONB Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) and the Welsh Government Sustainable Landscapes Sustainable Places programme.

1.2 Drivers of change

We have identified three key “drivers of change” that condition future transformation and are key to unlocking future potential and opportunities of the vision:

Sustainability

In response to the Paris Accord on Climate Change, The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals provide a blueprint at the highest level to direct decision-making towards environmental, political, social and economic sustainability for future growth and change.

At a national level The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) offers a radically different way of approaching development and change. The Act enshrines in law the need to consider the impact of our decisions on future generations. This can be thought of as ‘Cathedral thinking’ a reference to the altruism shown by the medieval craftsmen who dedicated their lives working on buildings they knew would not be completed within their lifetime.

In 2019 both the Welsh Government and Monmouthshire County Council declared a climate emergency recognising the need for urgent action to combat the effects of global climate change.

This will impact upon and permeate all decision making. It will mean prioritising sustainable travel (public transport and active travel), climate change mitigation, renewable energy, local circular economies and ensuring local people can sustain themselves through access to employment and housing.

Governance:

Engagement to date has laid bare the complex geopolitical context of the Wye Valley and the Wales-England border. The wide range of stakeholders and delicate balance required between tourism and residents adds further weight to the need for carefully considered governance. To avoid a disparate response without clear ownership there will need to be an integrated approach where efforts are joined-up around a shared objective. This will be essential in ensuring;

- That finite public funding is maximised and added value created
- There is one (external) voice which speaks for the (lower) Wye Valley
- The brand and reputation of the (lower) Wye Valley is consistent irrespective of political boundaries
- Leadership and ownership are clearly defined and agreed by stakeholders with greater cross border collaboration.

Well-being Goals



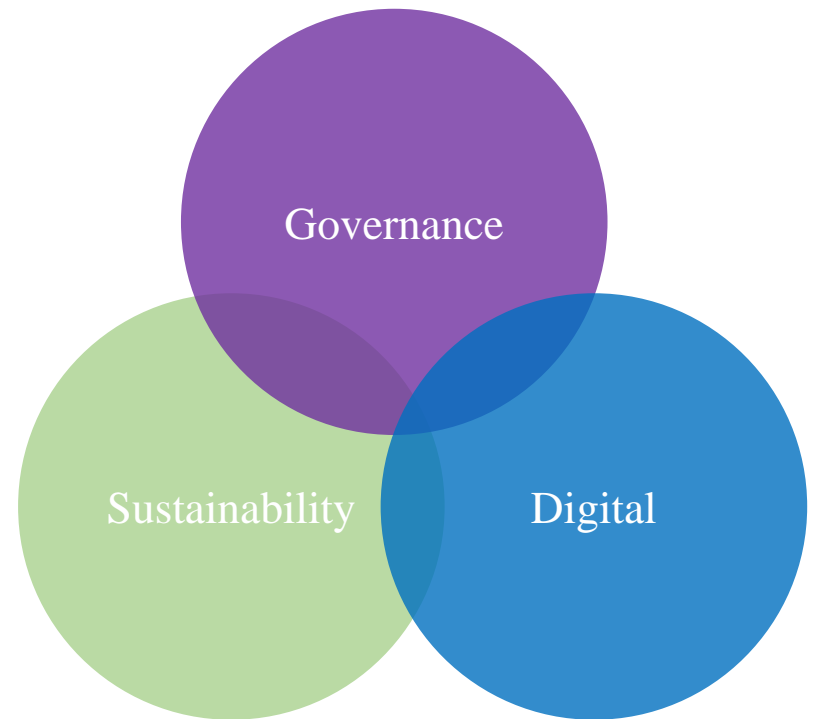
The 7 well-being goals of the WGFBFA

Digital:

Technology continues to rapidly change the way we live. The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated many latent trends enabled by the devices and software that are now part of daily life. Increased online services and remote working are:

- Allowing us to blend work and lifestyles with more working from home
- Increasing market reach for smaller enterprises who are no longer confined to a narrow geography
- Increasing the way we use, interact and access transport from app based bike hire, ticketless transport to live feed travel information
- Changing the way we explore an area through geolocation mapping or web sites which showcase a place or area.
- The rise of co-working spaces in place of traditional, 'fixed' office space.
- Increasing dependency on approval based platforms such as Tripadvisor for decision making

The current lack of widespread, fast internet largely due to the topography of the Wye Valley will continue to limit the potential of enterprise until a solution is found. The ability of the Wye Valley villages, its enterprises and people to capitalise on the societal changes that are taking place around us will be directly linked to the sophistication of the digital infrastructure.



The drivers of change for the Wye Valley

2. Draft vision

The vision builds on the existing AONB character and the distinctive identity of the different villages, as well as the two gateway towns of Monmouth and Chepstow.

Updated vision statement:

The Wye Valley is a story of people and nature that has been shaped by many hands over centuries. The immediate challenges of climate change, post-Covid recovery, mobility and sustainable development require a new perspective on the future of this outstanding landscape and its settlements.

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Our vision is to ensure that short term solutions are set within the context of long term needs and challenges. It is considered over a 100 year timescale to ensure it will endure for generations to come and work with a timescale for nature. It is founded upon three simple principles:

Conserving and enhancing the natural and man-made assets that define this unique place for existing and future generations.

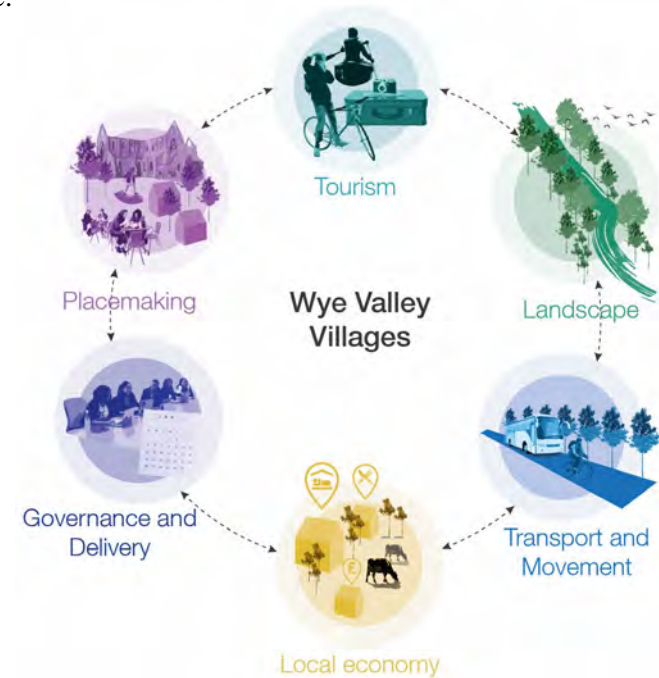
- A holistic approach to governance, territory and integral drivers of change
- Evolving to respond to changes caused by climate change and to capitalise on opportunities created by the target of net zero carbon.

We have defined six key themes that form the pillars of our vision, which are:

- placemaking,
- governance,
- tourism,

- landscape,
- transport and movement
- local economy.

The first two pillars, placemaking and governance, are also overarching themes to the other four. For each of these pillars we have set out a programme for future transformation, the guiding principles that define that transformation and the potential projects that can emanate from the programme.



The Six Pillars

3. Stakeholder engagement

Liaison with key stakeholders and the wider public which recognises the importance of consultation to understand issues and challenges and for a collaborative approach to project definition and opportunities is a fundamental part of our process.

Representatives of the client group that commissioned the work, Monmouthshire County Council, The Wye Valley AONB Partnership and Community Council representatives from Devauden, St Arvans, Tintern and Tellech United, have been an invaluable soundboard for our work throughout the process.

Targeted stakeholder conversations have been held with Andrew Blake, Manager of the Wye Valley AONB, Nicola Edwards, Destination Manager of MCC and Helen O’Kane (Puzzle Wood) and Rachael Geddes (Humble by Nature), members of the board of “Forest of Dean & Wye Valley Tourism” the official Destination Management Organisation. Their ideas and feedback have helped shape the vision and key pillars.

A wider public consultation period will be held in summer 2021, during which the vision and six pillars will be made available in digital format through a “Virtual Engage” format. Feedback and suggestions will be captured and summarised to inform the next and final stage of work.

SWOT

A SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) assessment was undertaken on December 17th 2020, as part of the inception meeting for the Wye Valley Villages project. The results of the assessment, that was based on the six pillars of the vision, are summarised here.

Strengths

- Recognised tourist location with 2 internationally recognised walking routes
- Wide range of experiences – eg micro breweries, vineyards and trails.
- Unique border location between Wales and England
- The people and communities of the valley
- History – birthplace of British tourism, Tintern Abbey and early industrialisation
- Internationally recognised landscape and habitats
- Good connectivity with the rest of the UK
- Existing businesses and entrepreneurs such as Wye Valley Producers

Weaknesses

- Lack of fast internet
- Uneven tourist pressures for example Tintern struggles to cope during high demand.
- Too many people simply drive through and don’t dwell
- Road safety within the villages

3. Stakeholder engagement

Weaknesses (continued from previous page)

- Lack of a clear separate identity for each of the villages
- Lack of public transport
- Lack of sustainable local employment opportunities for young people

Opportunities

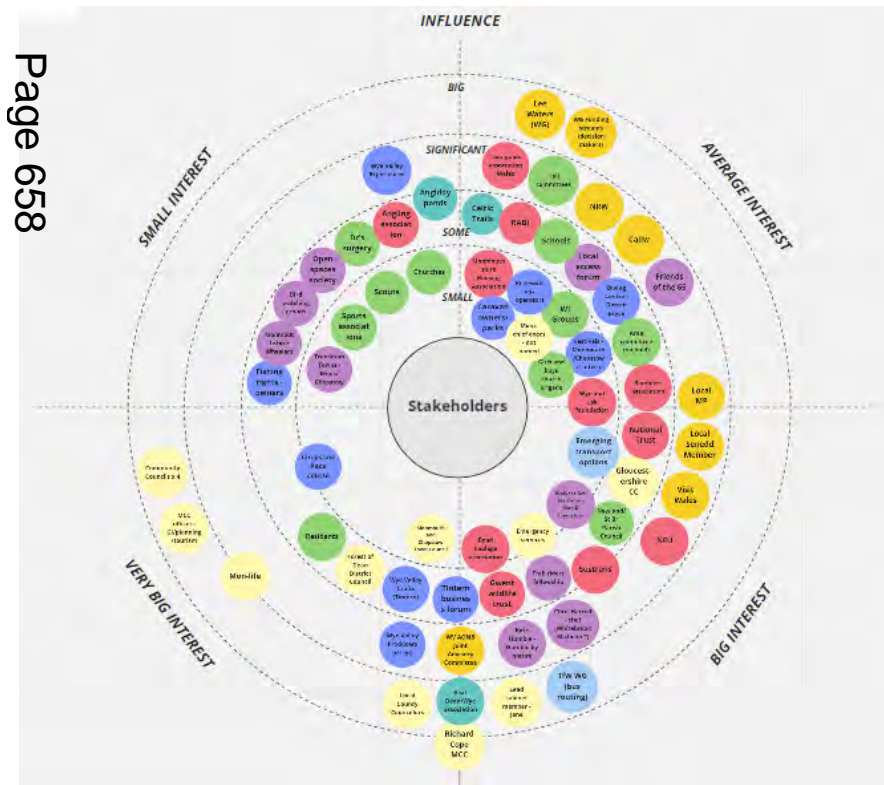
- Growing interest in local food and goods
- Reduced commuting because of home working and a subsequent reduction in traffic
- Increase in home-grown tourism
- Delivering truly sustainable tourism that assists the local economy without harming community life or the natural environment
- Attracting new visitors from outlying settlements (eg Cardiff, Bristol, Birmingham)
- Supporting and delivering sustainable transport

Threats

- Lack of affordable housing
- Environmental damage from climate change
- The complexity of geo-political relations (England and Wales and multiple local authorities may complicate delivery of proposed interventions)
- Competing views between residents and businesses
- Covid impacts on existing businesses
- Failing to adapt to future changes

Stakeholder mapping.

A stakeholder map has been produced with the client team. The purpose of this map is to identify all stakeholders relating to the project, create a clear summary overview of their relation to the project and the potential interest and influence on the project, future plans, delivery and governance.



Extract from the Stakeholder mapping and SWOT exercise January 2021

Road Safety.

A specific thematic stakeholder session around road safety in the villages was held on 15th of April with St Arvans Community Council, Devauden Community Council and Tintern Community Council and on 16th of April with Trellech United Community Council. During these sessions a deeper understanding was created of the current issues and challenges and potential solutions were discussed. The input and results have been fundamental for the development of our vision and plans, which can be found in the respective sections in this report.



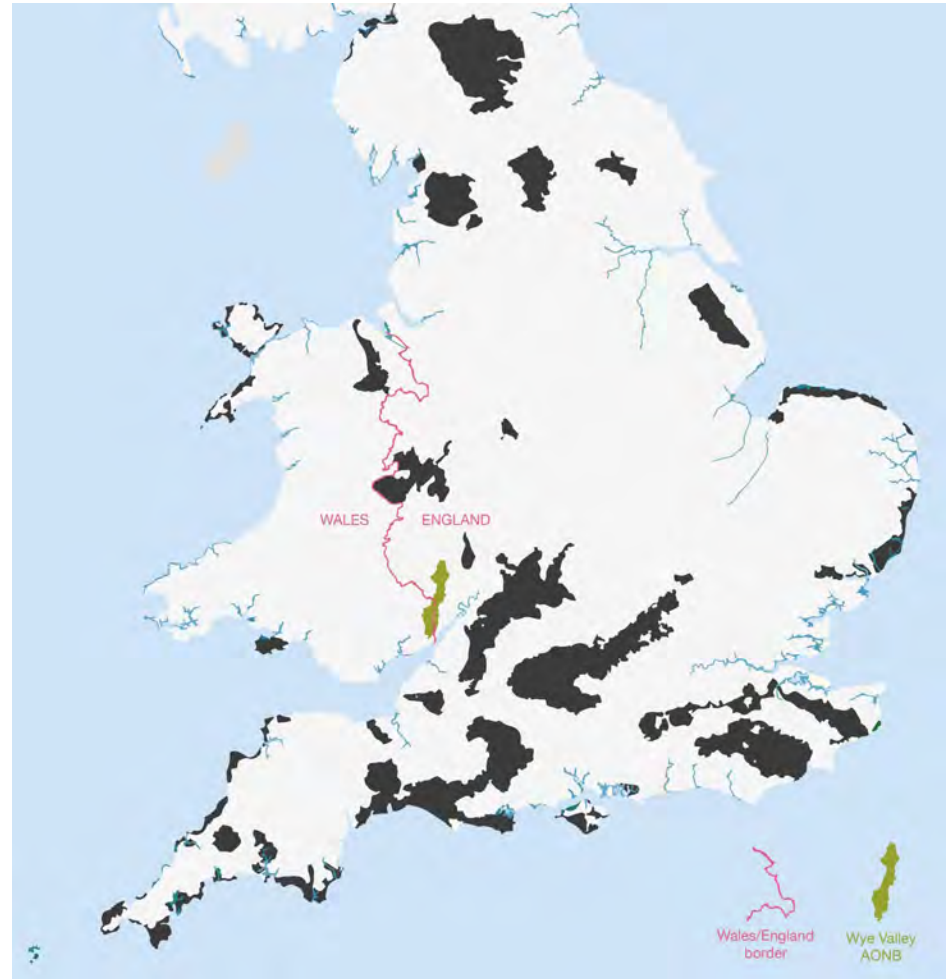
1. Removing road markings in Buriton, Hampshire to highlight key spaces and reduce traffic speeds
2. Junction design creates an entrance place to Dunston village, Somerset
3. Simple paving solution in West Meon, Hampshire to create a low-speed environment

4. National and regional context

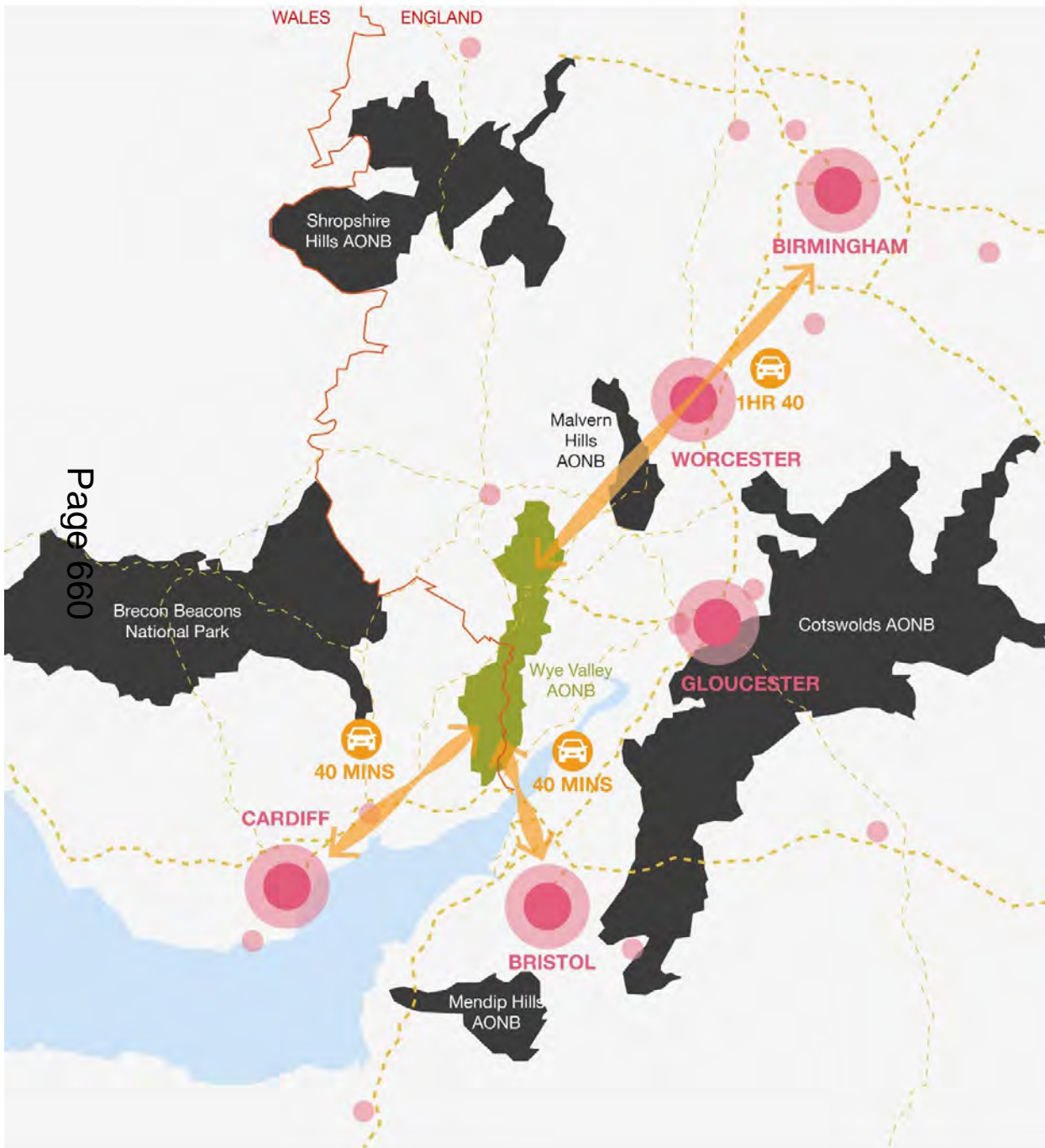
AONB National context

When considering the Wye Valley at a national scale it is useful to consider the extent and location of other AONB designations. Whilst each are unique in their own right it is noticeable that of the UK's 46 AONB's only the Wye Valley straddles national boundaries. The Wye Valley is a true 'border territory' where the interface of political boundaries, settlements, cultures, nationalities and the natural environment has shaped the 'uniqueness' of the area. This should be embraced and celebrated through the approach to tourism, branding and marketing but also points to the complexity of governance that exists.

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AONB's of England and Wales

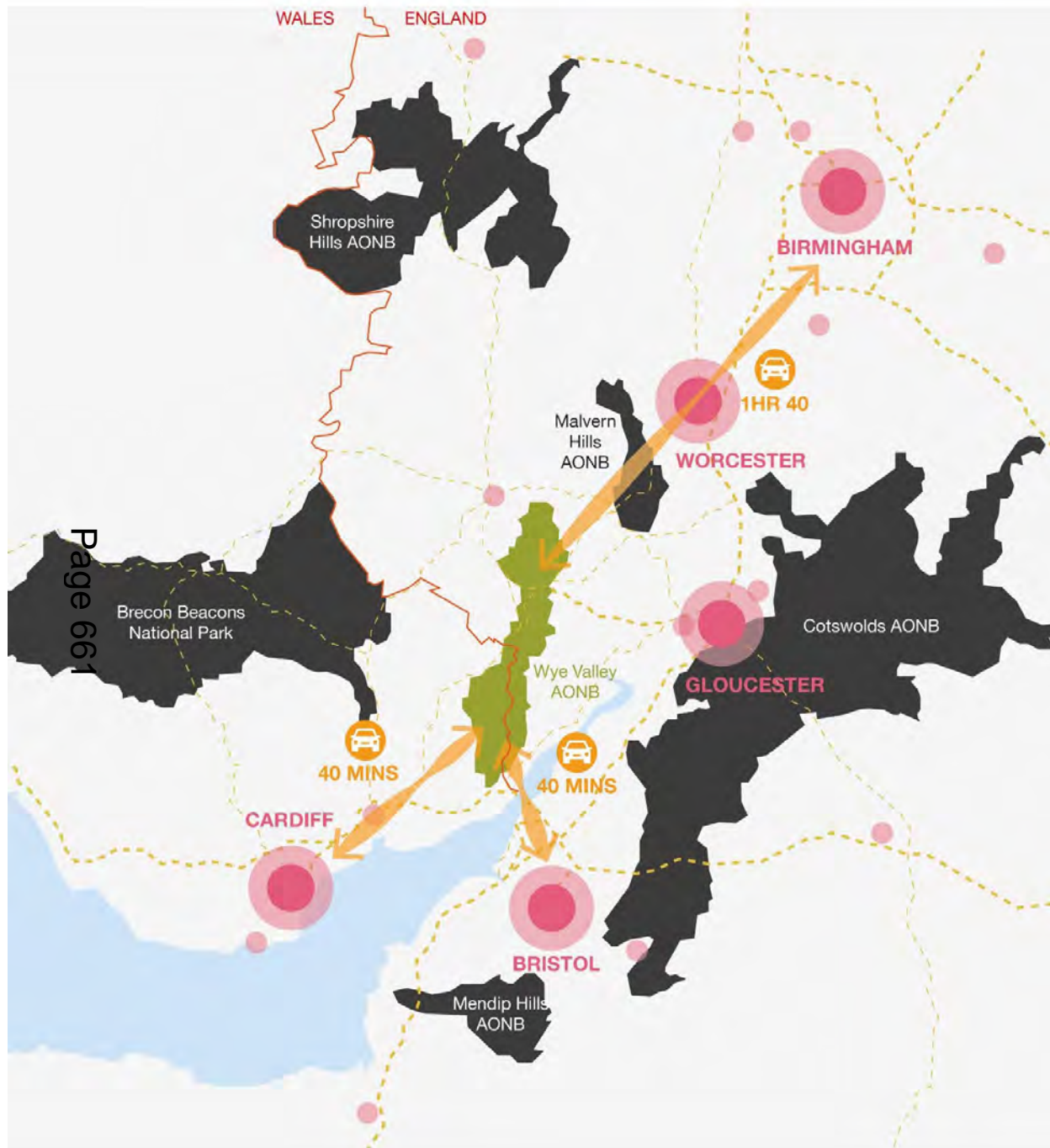


Regional context

For the purpose of this report, the regional context is illustrated in the accompanying diagram. This reveals a number of considerations:

The urban context

The proximity of Cardiff (40 mins travel time), Newport (30 mins), Bristol (40 mins) and Birmingham (1hr 40 mins) provides a significant pool of latent visitors and markets for local businesses. As technology continues to add greater flexibility to people’s living and working lifestyles, these same areas are also likely to generate ‘would-be’ new residents, further increasing pressure on finite local housing and community infrastructure. This should also be seen as an opportunity to attract a younger generation of entrepreneurs to help drive the local economy.



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The Wye Valley is part of a collection of landscapes including the Cotswolds, Shropshire Hills and Brecon Beacons. Despite separate governing bodies these are a network of nationally Protected Landscapes, not independent landscapes which have the potential for mutual gain through greater collaboration and cross-selling. Through the engagement process it had become evident that these invisible boundaries are ignored by entrepreneurs such as Visit DeanWye who see the value in sharing digital tourism platforms with partners in the Cotswolds. This perspective is essential in understanding how the Wye Valley interacts with surrounding areas. It will frame the outcomes of this study – the proposed transformations for the Wye Valley and its communities.

A conduit north-south

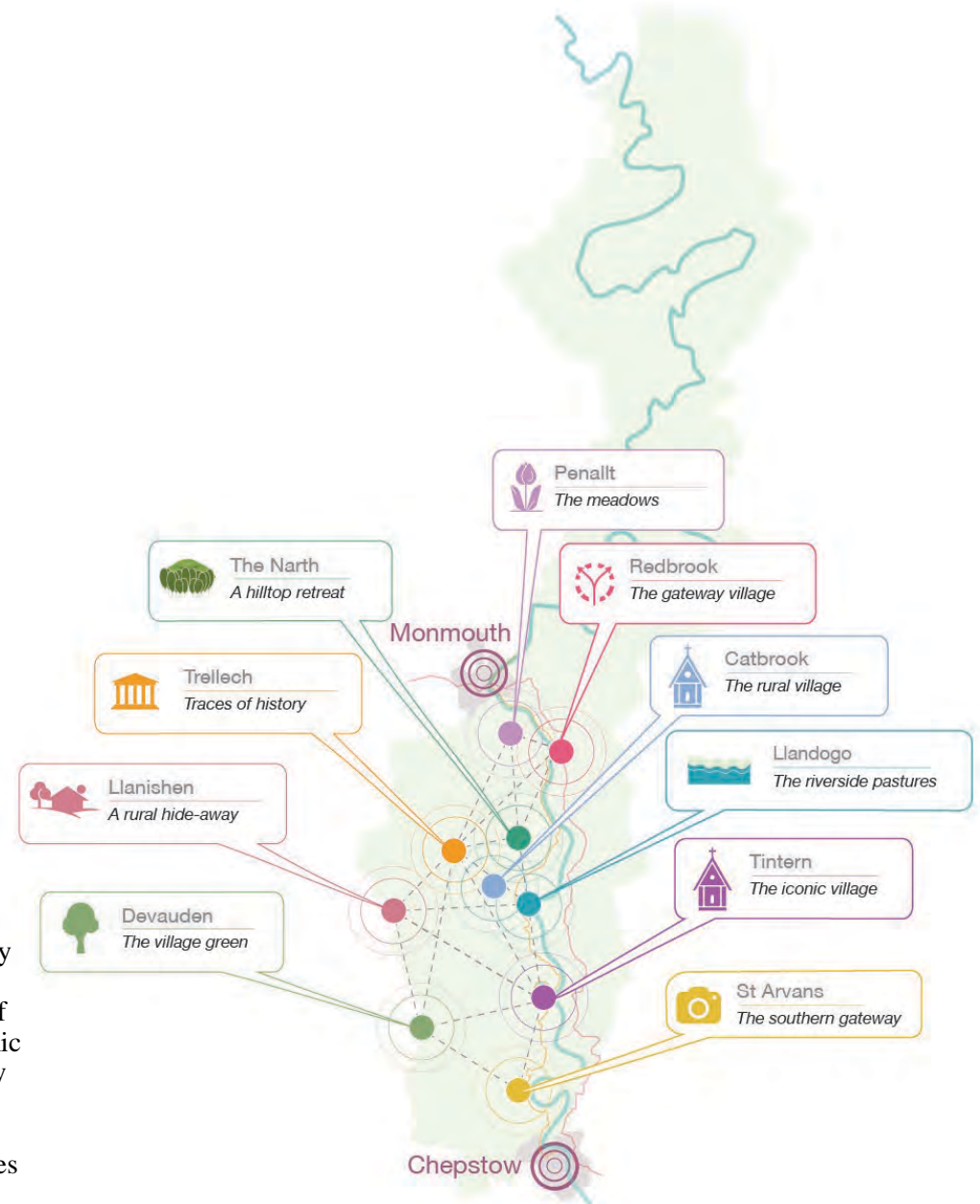
The natural east-west barrier formed by the River Wye is manifest in geopolitical boundaries that have existed in some form for centuries. The north-south alignment of Offa's Dyke remains an important historical monument, broad territorial boundary and walking route of national significance. The Wye Valley marks the southern gateway to this route and the landscapes to the north. For many it will be the start and end of journeys, experiences and visits and as such it is important to remember that the Wye Valley in itself is part of a broader offer.

5. Wye Valley context

Study area

The scope of this study is limited to the Welsh part of the Wye Valley AONB and the 9 main settlements that have been identified with MCC:

- Trellech
- Penallt
- The Narth
- Devauden
- Tintern
- St Arvans
- Llandogo
- Llanishen
- Catbrook



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The geographic boundary of the study reflects the administrative boundary of Monmouthshire County Council and Welsh Government. In reality the villages of the Wye Valley AONB extend east and north into the Forest of Dean and Herefordshire. This is important because the social and economic function of the area is not restricted by the administrative boundaries. Any proposed changes discussed in this study will potentially impact other settlements. For example, a consistent approach to road safety would be more effective if managed at a broader geographical area (to include places such as Redbrook) that is consistent with the cross border AONB boundaries.

Network of villages as presented in Stage 1
Please note Redbrook is outside of the study area

A network of Villages

During the initial stages of engagement with the community councils the villages were presented as a network or system not as separate and independent settlements. This reflects the community and social connections between villages, the movement of people and trade within the area and the need for a collaborative and joined-up approach to key issues such as road safety.

This network is bound by the river to the east, the higher land and escarpment to the west and bookended by Monmouth and Chepstow north and south.

Activity

Touristic activity is traditionally closely aligned to the river corridor. This is due in large part to the ease of access offered by the A466 and the presence of Tintern Abbey and historically by the river and then the railways as transport routes. The villages on the higher ground in contrast are generally more residential and community in nature, however have a different offer towards tourism that could be further explored.

Roads

Road safety and traffic concerns have been identified as a priority concern for the community councils. Understanding the exact causation of traffic and speeding is complex but an appreciation of the local road network reveals part of the problem.

The villages have developed around two key routes, The A466 and B4293 which effectively form a circuit. Both routes connect Chepstow and the M4 corridor with Monmouth and the A40 to the north serving as strategic transport routes. The linear nature of the valley and general lack of faster (and therefore convenient) east-west routes both within the study area and beyond help to amplify movement along these routes. The scenic value of the A466 in particular will entice movement based on recreational value.

Chepstow and Monmouth

Although both towns are situated outside of the study area they play an important role in the function of the valley. Both offer employment, education, retail and service provision for the villages. They are also existing and potential markets for enterprises within the study area.

Chepstow provides the nearest point of access to the rail network while Chepstow racecourse is an important generator of income to the local economy.

6. Six Pillars

6.1 Sustainable Transport & Road Safety

Introduction

The two key priorities for the Transport element of the strategy are as follows:

- Improving actual and perceived road safety within the villages; and
- Enhancing sustainable transport provision for both residents and tourists.

The priorities identified above align with the views expressed by stakeholders alongside the key themes that underpin local and national planning policy. Both priorities complement each other well as improving road safety is likely to encourage more journeys to be made by sustainable modes of transport, particularly active travel. Similarly, encouraging more trips to be made by sustainable modes of travel will reduce vehicle movements on the transport network, thus improving road safety.

Road Safety

The most significant observation is the lack of distinction that is made to the road (and not street) design when entering or leaving each village. This lack of transition reinforces the sense of continuity for drivers and therefore any sense that you are entering a ‘place’ where people live or visit is lost. The result is an inevitable conflict between road users and people where drivers are given priority.

There are a number of measures to be explored further to reduce both perceived and actual road safety concerns. Some of these measures have been reflected in the diagrammatic plans for each village in section 6.5 “The Villages-Placemaking” and further recommendations are included below:

- **Street Design Manual:** it is recommended that a design manual is prepared that details how streets within the Wye Valley should be designed to enhance both character and function. These design standards can be used to encourage consistent good quality street design within each of the villages. Design solutions will be tailored to the specific needs of each village.
- **Road Speed Strategy:** alongside the Street Design Manual, it is recommended that a road speed strategy is developed for the study area. We recommend this includes a 20mph speed limit for all streets within the villages.
- **Village Transport Schemes:** speed reduction features will be required to enforce the proposed reductions in speed limit. Bespoke transport schemes are recommended for each village, responding to the individual opportunities and constraints of the existing transport network. These should be delivered in alignment with the standards set out in the Street Design Manual.

The above recommendations will positively contribute to the wider strategy of each village acting as a disruptor to the wider road network, changing the overall character of the route.

Sustainable Transport

There are opportunities to enable both residents and tourists to make more journeys to, from and within the Wye Valley by sustainable modes of transport. These include:

- Improvements to the existing **bus service provision**, including increased service frequencies and better connectivity with more strategic bus and rail services;
- Enhancing the **pedestrian and cycle network (active travel)**, including the provision of a north/south cycle route extending the existing Wye Valley Green Way, and also could be delivered through the potential introduction of Quiet Lanes; and

• Page 665

Intermodal interchanges at tourism hubs that become a ‘new place’ with a clear and distinct sense of arrival and departure for multiple modes of transport with services and facilities to support visitors and tourists alike. Potentially located both in the north and south of the Wye Valley, these hubs would enable tourists travelling by car to transfer to another mode. The mobility hubs would include access to hire vehicles such as cycles, e-bikes and potentially electric vehicles. There is also a future opportunity for e-scooters to be made available. Further investigation is required to identify potential locations for such hubs; however, Chepstow Racecourse is suggested as a potential site to be explored further.

- There are also opportunities for smaller **mobility hubs** to be located in strategic locations across the Wye Valley, by relocating existing bus stops in the Villages to more strategic locations (such as village greens and village halls), to enable the transition from car to other modes of travel, both for residents and for visitors.

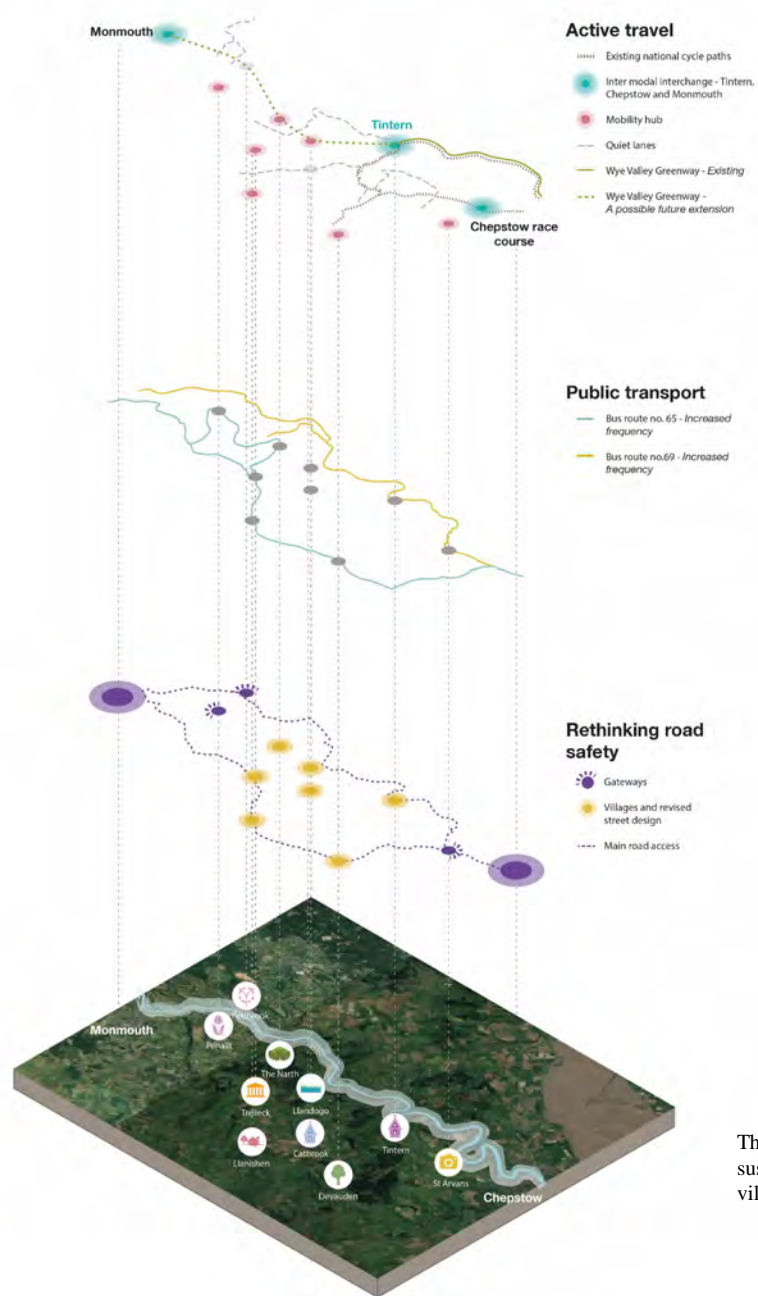
Active Travel and recreational access

The Wye Valley contains numerous walking and cycling routes which form a complex network of active travel, recreational and touristic routes. For expediency, this section notes the regionally significant Offa’s Dyke Path National Trail and Wye Valley Walk footpath and the emerging Wye Valley Greenway. These are the primary north-south routes which at varying points connect the river villages. Both Offa’s Dyke Path and Wye Valley Walk are part of longer walking routes with the former linking the Wales Coast Path. As previously noted, this offers potential for the area to celebrate the beginning and end of these long distance routes.

Inclusive active travel where the needs of all people are understood and catered for is becoming an increasingly important consideration. This includes groups with typically lower levels of uptake include the elderly, BAME groups and women. There is a significant opportunity for the Wye Valley to pioneer an approach to inclusive active travel by offering safe and adapted routes and means, as well as targeted marketing and branding.



Inclusive Active Travel: 2019 Arup report and mixed ability cycling.



The layers of proposed road safety and sustainable transport as they relate to the villages



Shared space Caernarfon



Top: Gravel riding is growing in popularity creating an opportunity for a new audience.
Above: Inclusive active travel caters for all ages and ability – Greater Manchester

6.2 Landscape - Green & Blue Infrastructure

Green and blue infrastructure refers the landscapes (habitats, woodlands, fields, parks etc) and water systems (rivers, tributaries, streams etc). The recommendations offered around green and blue infrastructure are cognisant of the vast body of work contained by and managed by the AONB Partnership and the recently published Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2021-2026. In response, the recommendations of this study are not based around large-scale change to the landscape and water system of the AONB. Instead, the focus of this study is on recommendations which can be aligned with community-based projects, Council led initiatives or the result of collaboration.

Net Zero Carbon

2019 Monmouthshire County Council declared a climate emergency and a target of net zero carbon by 2030. In achieving this target it is likely that Monmouthshire County Council will need to understand the contribution green and blue infrastructure can make both within the county and more specifically the study area of this report. Similar carbon assessments assess the sequestration value of council owned/publicly owned assets and the impact future changes to natural systems can make. Whilst this report does not make a specific recommendation for a particular course of action, this should be viewed as a cross cutting theme.

Pilot projects for regenerative agriculture

There is an opportunity to engage the agricultural community in order to deliver shared benefits for the AONB, local communities, local ecology and to mitigate climate change. Regenerative agriculture can be defined as farming practices which actively seek to conserve and enhance biodiversity, improve soil health and support the local economy.

During the study we have discussed the opportunity for MCC to utilise publicly owned land holdings for a pilot project to explore the benefits, challenges and opportunities for regenerative agriculture. We recommend this is explored further.

Wider enhancement opportunities

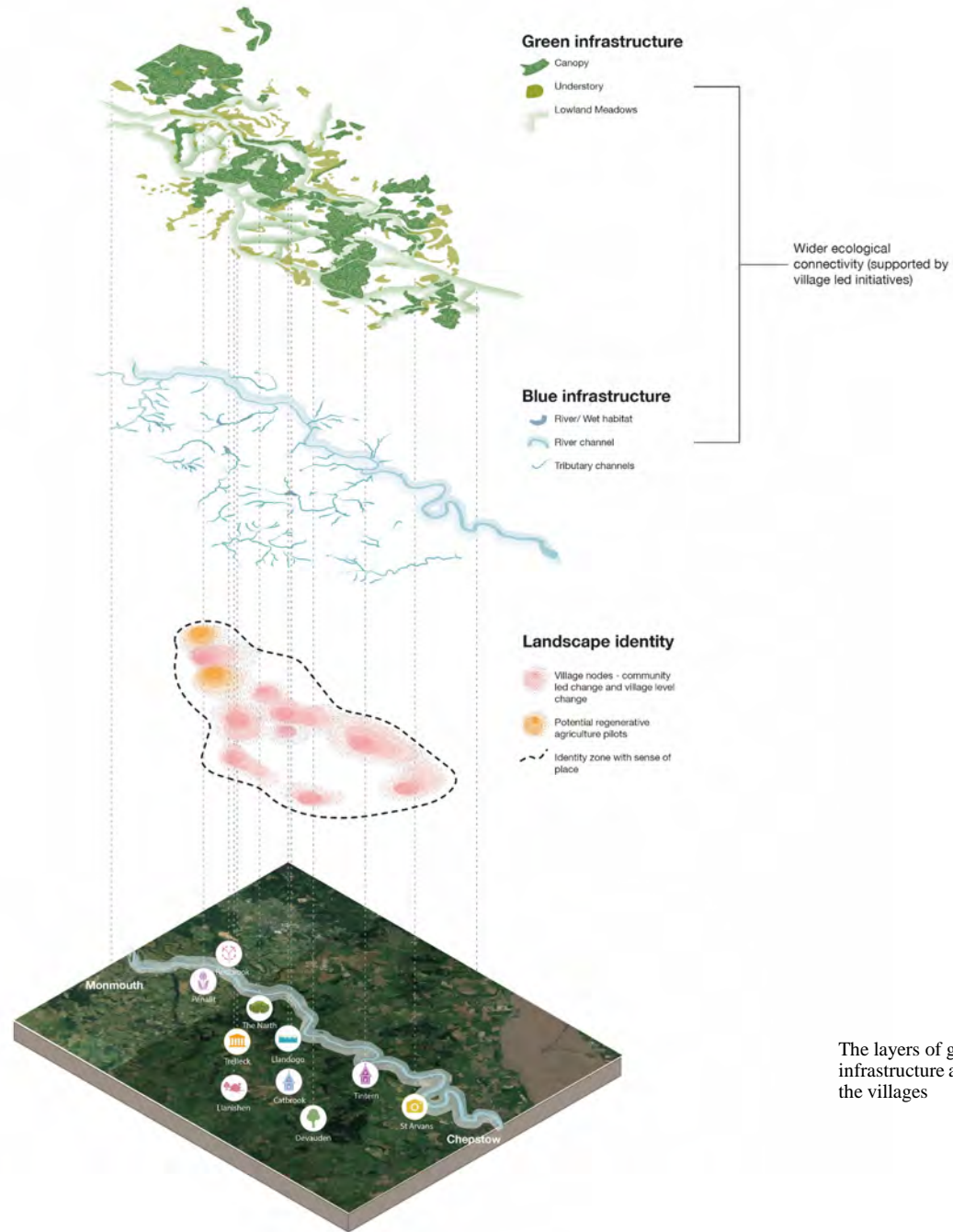
Interventions should support wider ecological connectivity through the enhancement and conservation of trees, hedgerows, verges, riparian habitat and lowland meadows for example. A local action group (Monmouthshire Meadows) is active within the area and have successfully delivered Trellech Wet Meadows Local Wildlife Site with Gwent Wildlife Trust. The potential to create additional schemes should be explored.

Village level change

At a village level, it is recommended that any improvements to localised streets and public spaces are taken forward with nature-based solutions to water management. This is often referred to as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs). Such systems use planting and landscaped features such as channels and ponds to store, filter and slowly release rainwater into streams, rivers and watercourses. These can deliver multiple benefits including the creation of low maintenance filtration systems, reducing flooding, new habitat and recreation value. These are now required by Welsh Government for new road and public realm schemes.

Community led change

In addition, community led initiatives which align with and support the overarching aims of the AONB can play an important role in placemaking and raising awareness amongst the community. Micro habitat creation such as the so-called Tiny-forests initiative or local food production schemes such as Incredible Edible can prove an invaluable source of positive change and help further shape the character of the villages.



The layers of green and blue infrastructure as they relate to the villages



Page 670



Community and village led green and blue infrastructure

Above: Native planting was designed into the Fitzpark temporary park in London. Monmouthshire has a successful track record of delivering small native perennial planting (including County Hall, Usk). This theme should be extended to each village as part of the public realm enhancements.

Above right: Incredible Edible projects encourage community food production. Already existing in Usk, these could be encouraged within the villages to encourage healthy eating, biodiversity and to reflect the aims of the AONB Management Plan.

Bottom right: Mini Forest projects (Cardiff Bay shown) are small scale community tree planting schemes.



6.3 Tourism

The views, recommendations and ideas contained within this section have been discussed with key stakeholders and are focussed on the next steps and a possible way forward. To develop an effective, future action plan for the tourism aspects of “Wye Valley Villages Plan for the Future”, there is a need to step-back and look at opportunities and challenges with a slightly broader and more strategic view.

We recommend sharp, swift, and a more joined-up overview, building on historic work already undertaken that can clearly identify strategic priorities, actions and quick tactical wins.

Key considerations of this strategy (and the impending action plan that will outline how the recommendations should be delivered) should include the overarching project governance and the approach to formulating the strategy. Our considerations are presented as a series of key questions to be responded to and agreed between stakeholders as the basis for a future Tourism strategy.

Project Governance

1. Geographic Boundaries

What are the geographic boundaries of the project / destination? More specifically is it the nine villages examined in this study? The area of the Wye Valley AONB in Wales? The Wye Valley AONB as a whole? Or another geographic boundary?

2. Leadership and delivery

Who are the organisations that will form part of the planning and delivery solution and who will lead the process? Destination marketing and destination management cannot be delivered in two separate silos which suggests the AONB partnership with MCC support. Furthermore, if the governance of tourism includes communities, does it include tourism business and employees from within those communities e.g., Humble by Nature? If it does include businesses, does it include external, or cross-border, or private organisations such as Visit Dean Wye?

3. Balancing tourism benefit and effect

What is the acceptable balance between tourism benefit and tourism impact for each individual community and component organisation? To add further, when considering this, what does sustainable tourism success really look like? This is a key question given that managing and curating future, sustainable tourism will require substantial resources, and a reversal of the erosion of public sector resources and services that have marked recent history.

4. The condition of the tourism economy

When considering the need and appetite to grow the tourism opportunity in the Wye Valley, there are two key questions to consider. Firstly, how “fragile is the tourism economy”? And secondly, what scale does the ‘tourism engine’ have to therefore be in order to be robust?

Approach to formulating a new tourism strategy

The following recommendations outline a series of steps to develop and deliver a new strategy including:

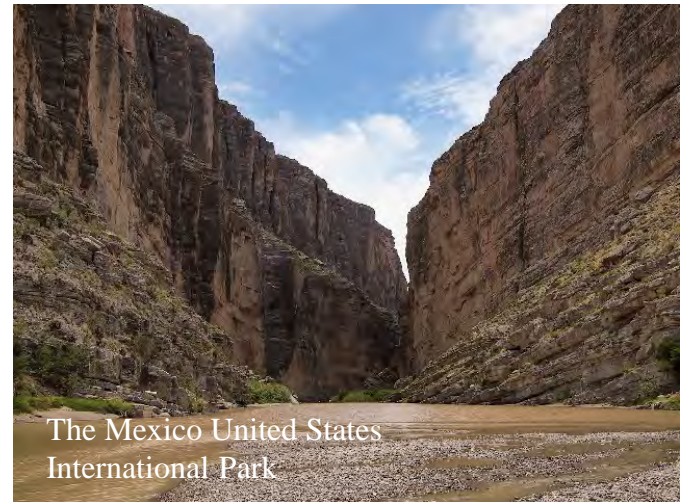
- The Swift delivery of an updated strategy and action plan (with measurable outcomes) for sustainable tourism with hard metrics and a defined business case at its heart, that can be measured and monitored so that as the strategy gets implemented, the degree of its success can be measured, and its implementation guided and shaped.
- A new strategy should build on, and update, the Wye Valley AONB Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2011-2016. Although this report did not contain detailed metrics and economics, it did provide a clear and comprehensive picture of what sustainable tourism could look like. A review of this plan is needed to determine which elements worked and those which did not. It will be essential to understand what has changed and what new opportunities and challenges have emerged.
- The new strategy should be based on hard data – linking into the ongoing research and data collection already being done for example by MCC / Visit Wales
 - A new strategy should also be cognisant of, and align with the Monmouthshire Destination Plan.

- Business cases should be quantified with either ‘hard’, economic outcomes or social value generation. For example, the number of new full and part time jobs created, the value this brings to the local economy and relative uplift against the existing situation.
- Any new strategy should be realistic and pragmatic – but should not be afraid to be ambitious and aspirational. Without an ambitious plan, that can deliver sustainable economic and social benefits, why should stakeholders and investors want to back it and provide the resources needed? This represents evolution as opposed to revolution but will require a significant and positive step-change, built-in.
- A new strategy should be divided into what is termed ‘hardware and software’.
 - **Software** – The behaviours, methodologies, and means used to market, manage and curate the visitor experience and the destination (in general terms- the destination management plan and the destination marketing plan)
 - **Hardware** - The physical and bricks & mortar facilities, amenities and infrastructure that support the delivery of the visitor experience.

- **Software** might include.
 - Brand - The development and application of a more clearly defined place brand, in terms of common, shared values; strategic messages and visual identity. The current lack of singularity, clarity, and consistency of place brand within the wider Valley, dilutes and fails to enhance a unique and compelling sense of place.
 - Messages that can be developed, unified, and amplified across all channels & platforms such as websites, social media, printed form and signage. These messages can be focused on encouraging the tourism behaviours that we want to promote. They might (for example) include:
 - ***Ditch the Car!*** *The Wye Valley is an immersive, multi-sensory experience that you can only enjoy when you get out of the car. Any visit to the Valley needs to include parking-up and getting out and into the landscape whether it be by walking, cycling, or canoeing etc.*
 - ***More to see than just a day trip!*** *don't just pass-through, stay overnight.*
 - ***Avoid the queues!*** *The Valley is just as incredible out of season and off-peak. The Valley's scenery changes with the seasons and is maybe even more beautiful & compelling and the welcome maybe even warmer, when we are not at our busiest.*

- The Borderlands Theme and Identity. The English and Welsh border represents an exciting melting pot, of differing histories, languages, ethnographies, and cultures. As long as boundaries separate places in political, socio-cultural, and economic terms, borderlands will continue to be a unique venue for tourist activities. This sense of passing from one world to another, of encompassing within a few steps two realms of experience, enchants and fascinates tourists. There is a rich opportunity to amplify this theme both in marketing and experiences across the Valley.

Right: Borderlands – comparator managed landscapes located at national boundaries.



- **Hardware** opportunities that the Wye Valley stakeholders can champion, lead, or partner on might include:
 - Signage and Wayfinding - applying a reinvigorated and renewed **place brand** and visual identity, swiftly via new signage and wayfinding within the agreed geographic boundary. This could be a quick win and early deliverable demonstrating positive change for the local communities and visitors alike.
 - Gateways – bold, physical forms on highways and footpaths, that signify arrival into or departure from this special and magical place. This could enhance and reaffirm the sense of place and create a positive sense of arrival which is currently missing. This represents another quick win and early deliverable.
 - Visitor Attractions – especially those that celebrate and promote rural life and sustainable living, as tourists have become increasingly aware of environmental impact. If attraction opportunities are left to market forces, and the mix only curated passively, this risks a race to bottom – bringing the wrong sort of visitor for the wrong sort of occasion. Attraction operators with adequate finances are scarce across the UK and Europe. That is why partnerships, soft equity (capital grant support) and joined-up thinking will be required, to proactively plan, deliver and sustain a broader range of complementary attractions and attraction operators in appropriate locations.
 - Supporting amenities – for example more serviced and or semi-serviced, accommodation and food and beverage opportunities. Celebrating the food provenance of the area, and offering the chance to really ‘meet local people’, as tourists are looking increasingly for authenticity in their experiences

- Local Tourism Hubs – pockets of more dedicated tourist activity located strategically with parking, amenities and access to the landscape or recreation especially along the river Valley. This would mean actively curating this need in appropriate locations with the supporting amenities especially in potentially underused areas like NRW woodlands with cycle trails etc nearby.
- Main Tourism Hubs There may be scope for developing larger and more integrated tourism hubs. These could accommodate and integrate new attractions and amenities and be co-located with the inter modal interchanges discussed in section 6.1 Sustainable Transport and Road Safety. These could be compact versions possibly, of the proposed PEAK - Peak District National Park resort campus near Chesterfield located at the prime gateways to the Valley such as Chepstow racecourse.

Right: PEAK is a proposed all year leisure, education, wellness and entertainment destination set in 300 acres of reclaimed parkland on the edge of the Peak District National Park and Chesterfield.



6.4 Local economy

While Monmouthshire has the highest rate of active businesses and business births as well as the third highest GVA in Wales, career opportunities and availability and quality of employment sites are limited, and the tourism industry is seasonal.

Four drivers of change may support improvements and transformation of the local economy, changing demographics, business dynamics, digital infrastructure and housing diversity. The following section included a short description of each and a list of actions.

Changing demographics: An older population is attracted to the region's high quality of life but are in need of specific services and a younger population is in need of employment opportunities and incentives to drive initiatives forward locally. Specific actions could be:

- Attract and retain young people through providing the right employment, high quality education, apprenticeships, graduate placements and startup schemes
- Explore new ways of delivering health and social care such as the use of technology for remote consultation and targeting training for the care sector to ensure a ready supply of trained staff



Left: The Glove Factory
Bradford on Avon. Digitally
enabled rural co-working

Digital Infrastructure: Good quality digital infrastructure and connectivity is central in facilitating digital businesses, education, social inclusion, and inward investment in the region. The hills and valleys of the Wye Valley make it difficult to deploy traditional approaches to digital infrastructure such as laying cables. Specific actions could be:

- Provide better broadband infrastructure such as Next Generation Access or wireless broadband coverage to reduce out commuting
- Enhance community, recreational and cultural facilities (e.g. community hubs, co-working spaces) to promote capacity building activities with local communities and businesses in order to increase social capital, create skills networks and drive initiatives forward
- Promote digital workforce skills and digital customer services as well as business digital capacity and automation
- Enhanced tourism offer through the use of products such as augmented reality at sites such as Tintern Abbey
- Continue to work with Monmouthshire Broadband/Broadband partners to deliver their current plan for 'Fibre to the Premises' internet in Tintern and Trellech

Business dynamics: There is opportunity for increasing entrepreneurship (such as the Wye Valley Producers collective) and growth in sectors such as environmental land management, local food processing and distribution, food tourism and education. Specific actions could be:

- Raise the profile of the region as a dynamic place to do business and as an investment opportunity for the private sector

Business dynamics (continued from previous page)

- Strengthen partnerships with Coleg Y Gwent to develop training and skills for the next generation to support hospitality, tourism and food promotion
- Increase the number of local suppliers securing public service contracts and more flexible approaches to the promotion of smaller-scale businesses based on indigenous resources

Invest in key growth sectors such as manufacturing, business, professional and scientific and arts, entertainment and recreation



Housing diversity: Wye Valley is a desirable and expensive place to live, but it is unaffordable for people employed locally and young people. The high cost of housing may also be discouraging for new and existing local businesses. Specific actions could be:

- Encourage construction of new houses and address the need for affordable and varied housing stock.
- Increase availability of housing sites to provide differing residential products and to enable higher rates of jobs per dwelling.
- Address the wider geographic differences in employment and housing markets in the region.



Below: The Wye Valley contains important enterprises for local produce

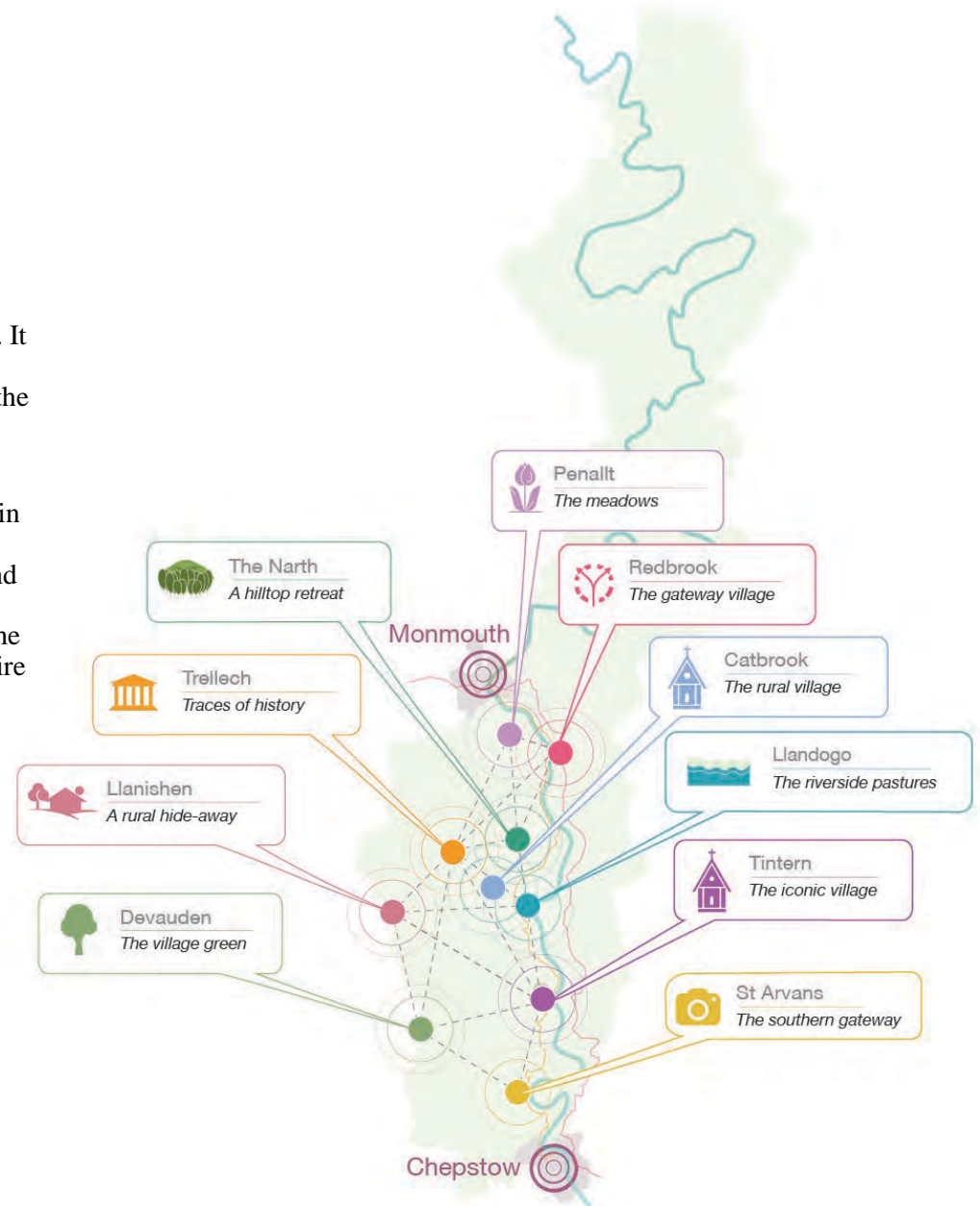
6.5 The Villages - Placemaking

The placemaking vision aims to define, enhance, and celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of the Wye Valley villages and their community. It aims to explore and unlock their distinct character, building on location conditions, history, heritage, landscape and the ethnographic narrative of the settlement and their people.

To emphasise this uniqueness, we consider these villages as a tapestry of settlements, moving away from the basic distinction between the villages in the valley and the ones high on the plateau between Wye Valley and Vale of Usk. This network of villages allows for unique identities to flourish and be reinforced, together with Monmouth and Chepstow as gateway towns. Of these, nine are explored within this study. Redbrook although part of the structure of villages and acknowledged here falls outside of Monmouthshire and therefore this study.

Using the same six key pillars as for the overarching vision, common strategies and principles for placemaking can be defined, such as interventions that improve:

- travel and movement (road safety, active travel routes),
- tourism (signage and wayfinding, amenities and services),
- landscape (SUDs, biodiversity, trees and vegetation) and
- local economy (co-working hubs, local supply chains, digital economy and businesses)



These proposed interventions are early ideas for the public and stakeholders to comment on. In some instances they fall within privately owned land or will require more design, feasibility and investigation. In such instances this will require a longer time frame to assess viability and will require more depth conversations to build consensus.

Suggestions are offered for particular uses within certain village halls. These should not be considered as the only potential uses and alternative ideas are welcomed.

The following pages contain diagrammatic plans explaining how these proposed interventions could be implemented in each village and includes a brief summary text for each.

The accompanying key provided here defines each of the proposed interventions.

Interventions key

Tourism

- Camping/ glamping
- Interpretation (signs/ information boards)
- Scenic trail
- Information point
- Hotel
- Historical interest
- Nature reserve
- Wild swimming
- Wayfinding (directions signposting)
- Lay-by for views

Landscape

- Enhanced habitat
- Nature based rainwater management
- Native perennial planting
- Mix of new tree species
- New park
- Food production
- Sports/ play

Economy

- Co-working
- Publicly accessible wifi
- Local shop
- Restaurant
- Farmer's market
- Apps and QR codes
- Energy efficient lighting
- Digital skills
- Live timetabling

Transport and movement

- Safe and more attractive footways
- 20mph zone
- Shared space design
- Car/ EV parking and charging
- Bike/ electric bike storage/ hire
- Bus/ electric bus stop
- Boat hire/ boat launch
- Gateway feature

Movement

- Existing road
- Existing trail
- Wye Valley Walk
- Proposed vehicle gateway
- Proposed shared space
- Proposed street enhancements
- Cycle path
- Proposed enhanced pedestrian access

Landscape/ open space

- Existing hedgerow/ green buffer
- Existing woodland
- Existing open green space
- Monument/ historical feature
- Proposed open space enhancements
- Viewpoint
- Local landmark building

TINTERN

'The Island'
Car free environment,
enhanced amenity,
habitat. Please note this
would require private
landowner agreement.



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Possible river connection
and mobility hub - Tintern
Parva



Village gateway



Safe pedestrian
and cycle link,
with public realm
improvements

Possible river
connection

Wye Valley Walk

Old Station Tintern



Village gateway from
Wireworks Bridge



Lower Wireworks



Angidy Trail

Possible river
connection

Tintern hub

*subject to land owner approvals



Offa's Dyke Path

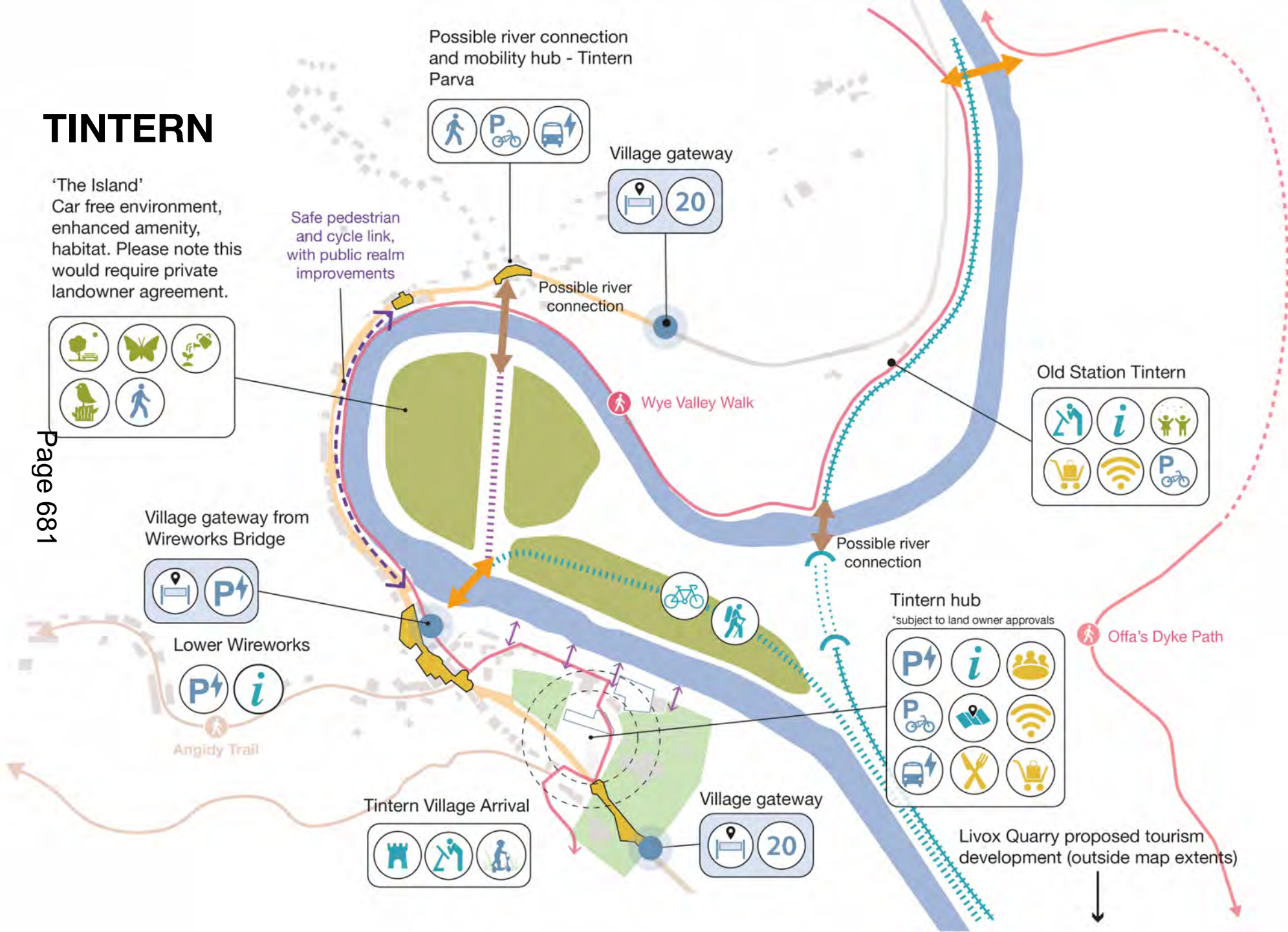
Tintern Village Arrival



Village gateway



Livox Quarry proposed tourism
development (outside map extents)



Tintern

The remains of Tintern Abbey are one of the defining features of the Wye Valley. This is where visible history (the Abbey), past industry, the picturesque landscape and village life reflect the Wye Valley in one place. This places pressure on what is a small settlement to successfully manage the complex balance between visitors and residents. The initial proposal seeks to address this and enhance the village through:

- Street design to increase the sense of place, improve biodiversity and flood resilience (via SuDS) and improve road safety.
- A new connection over the River Wye to aid the movement of people through Tintern and potentially creating new opportunities for placemaking
- The agglomeration of services and uses around the Abbey such as tourist information, intermodal interchange and local businesses
- A new transport hub to encourage greater use of sustainable transport and reduce the volume of traffic moving further along the valley
- A new mobility hub and possible new river connections to better link Tintern Parva



DEVAUDEN

Page 683

Village Gateway



St James Devauden

Memorial Hall



Village Green



Village Gateway



Village Gateway



Sustrans National Cycle Route

Veddw House Garden

Similar road safety measures proposed at Itton Village. Proposals to be captured and identified at a later stage.



Devauden

By contrast to the destination villages such as Tintern, the character of Devauden reflects its function as a community and less as a tourism destination. During the engagement process concern was raised over the volume and speed of movement. The main feature of note and opportunity is the village green which contains the interpretative feature for John Wesley . Given the importance of the Wesleyan movement and its global reach, there is an opportunity to enhance this space to serve multiple purposes for the community and visitors. The active community hall and community council can play a key role in delivering change on the ground. The initial proposals are:

Page 684

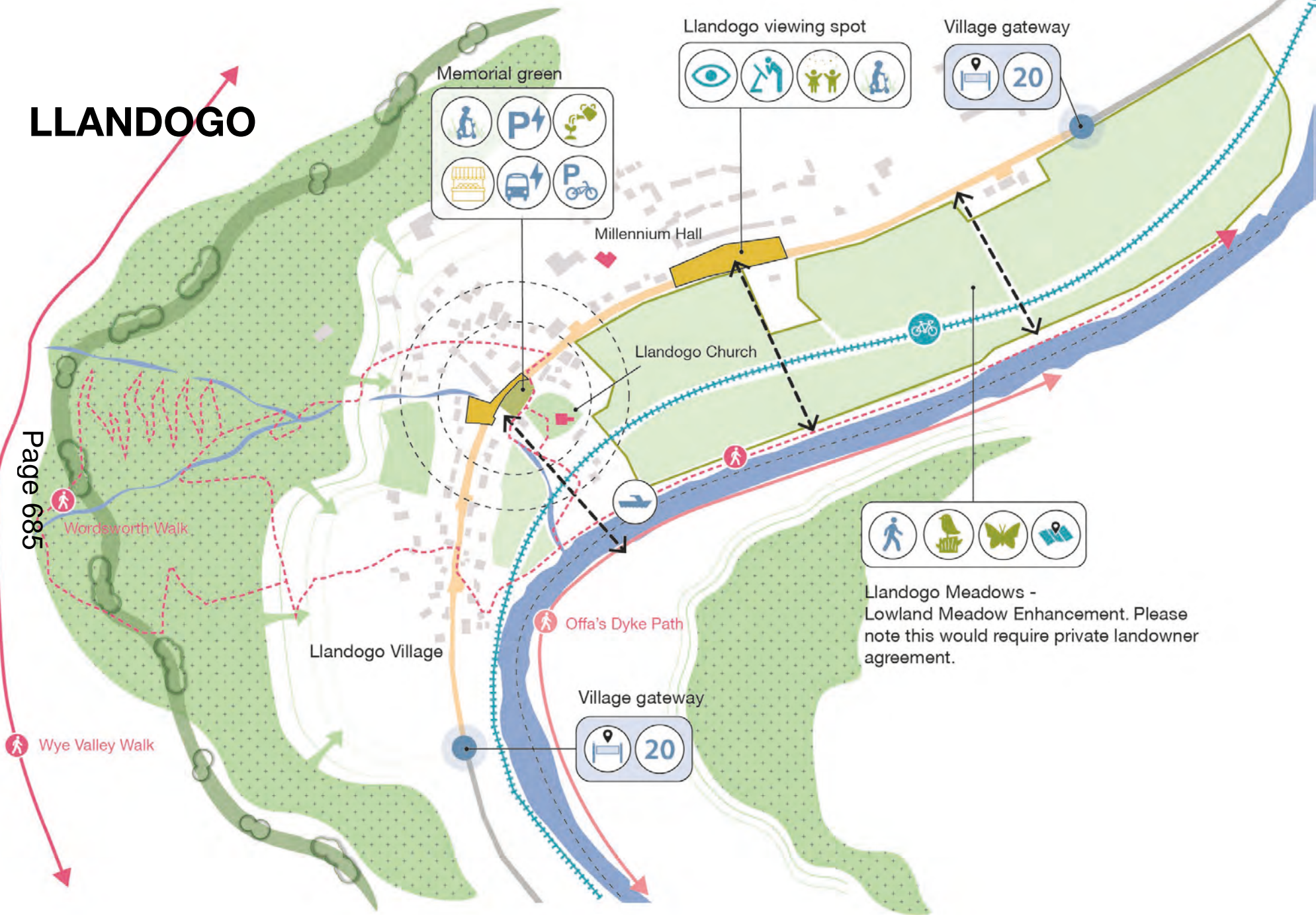
- Revised street design to increase the sense of place and improve road safety

- The transformation of the village green into a space which supports multiple uses and enhances the sense of place



LLANDOGO

Page 685



Llandogo Meadows -
Lowland Meadow Enhancement. Please
note this would require private landowner
agreement.

Llandogo

One of the riverside villages, Llandogo lacks the profile and status of nearby Tintern. The village has no single defining feature or space and although it enjoys a riverside access, it feels disconnected from the river which once supported the local trow industry. Despite this, the village has significant potential as both a pivot point for multiple walking points and as a place. The AONB are currently investing in the restoration of Wordsworth Walk and Cleddon Shoots SSSI. The initial proposals seek to reshape the village to harness the natural advantages and rediscover its history by:

- Page 686
- Street design to increase the sense of place, improve biodiversity and flood resilience (via SuDS) and improve road safety.
 - Forming a heart to the village by creating a multi-functional space within the village green
 - Enhancing the biodiversity of the lowland river meadows
 - Celebrating the maritime past by creating a new focus for river activities such as a new wharf, water-craft making and associated interpretation
 - Reconnecting the village to the river through improved access for walkers and cyclists



THE NARTH



The Narth

The village is like Devauden a community rather than a focal point for tourism. The quiet, secluded nature of the village and wooded setting are defining characteristics. Proposed change in the Narth is limited considering the residential nature of the village. However, subtle interventions could help garner greater community cohesion, increase the sense of place and cater for low impact tourism in the form of walkers/hikers. The initial proposals are to;

Page 688 Use the village hall as the location for themed events (such as local food markets) to entice walkers and hikers and to provide respite stop.

Street design to increase the sense of place, improve biodiversity and flood resilience (via SuDS) and improve road safety.



TRELLECH

Trellech Wet Meadow (existing)

Village gateway

Village gateway

Trellech Welcome Point

Trellech Primary School

Babington Centre

The Church of St Nicholas in the Parish of Trellech

Community-led Lowland Meadow Enhancement. Please note this would require private landowner agreement.

Community-led Lowland Meadow Enhancement. Please note this would require private landowner agreement.

Trellech Trail

Tump Terret

Village gateway

Village gateway

Harold's Stones

The Virtuous Well

Low impact tourism accommodation. Please note this would require private landowner agreement.

Village gateway

Trellech

The historic pattern of buildings, archaeology and surrounding open pasture of Trellech create one of the most distinct villages. Although these features have the potential to attract larger visitor numbers, Trellech retains the feel of a rural village in contrast to the destination of Tintern. Addressing the future role of Trellech within the Wye Valley needs consideration. A carefully orchestrated offer which maintains tranquillity for residents while attracting a new audience of visitors could positively support the wider offer of the Wye Valley. The initial proposition includes

Page 690

- Street design to increase the sense of place, improve biodiversity and flood resilience (via SuDS) and improve road safety
- A focal point for tourists or hub formed around the existing pub
- The continuation of habitat enhancement from Trellech water meadows to include the surrounding pasture land by encouraging participation from the community and local school
- A low impact tourism accommodation site and visitor parking/mobility hub



LLANISHEN

Scenic routes



Village green and mobility hub.
Please note this would require private landowner agreement.



Village gateway



St Dennis' Church

Llanishen Village Hall

Village gateway



Llanishen

Like Devauden and the Narth, Llanishen is largely community focused. The village backs on to the B4293 partially screening it from passing traffic. It is fragmented in form, extending west away from the main road. Whilst the screening helps mitigate the impact of passing traffic for residents the lack of an evident 'place' for those passing through does little to discourage speeding vehicles. The initial proposal considers a more radical approach:

- Street design to increase the sense of place, improve biodiversity and flood resilience (via SuDS) and improve road safety.
- Diverting the B4293 to reduce vehicle speeds and create a new village heart (a green)
- An option to further divert the B4293 to create space for new homes set around the village green



ST ARVANS

Page 693

Village gateway



St Arvans Memorial Hall and Field



St Arvans Roundabout



Village entry space



St Arvans Church

Village gateway



Intermodal interchange at Chepstow racecourse. Please note this would require private landowner agreement.



Village gateway



Existing cycle path



Chepstow Race Course

Wye Valley Walk

Scenic Routes



Eagle's Nest

365 Steps

Lower Wyndcliffe viewpoint

Cold Bath

Lover's Leap

Giant's Cave

Piercefield Park

St Arvans

The village marks the southern gateway to the Wye Valley and is immediately north of Chepstow racecourse. It marks the connection between the B4293 and A466 linking the lower reaches of the valley with the upper area. Despite this strategic importance there is little to mark this important location whilst local residents experience the dual negative of passing traffic with little direct benefit from visitors. The initial proposals for St Arvans includes:

- Page 694.
- Street design to increase the sense of place, improve biodiversity and flood resilience (via SuDS) and improve road safety.
 - Creating a prominent feature through street design and landscape design to denote the importance of this gateway
 - The use of Chepstow racecourse as a transport hub to encourage greater use of sustainable transport and as an entry point to the strategic walking routes.



PENALLT

Potential pilot areas for regenerative agriculture. Please note this would require private landowner agreement.



Potential pilot areas for regenerative agriculture. Please note this would require private landowner agreement.



Village gateway



Pelham Hall Local Hub



The Old Baptist Chapel

Pentwyn Farm Nature Reserve

Wyeswood Common Nature Reserve

Puddingstone & Pub Trail

Village gateway



Village gateway



Humble By Nature

Redbrook Bridge

Wye Valley Walk

Penallt

The village enjoys a prominent location elevated at the head of the valley. The area is largely community focused with visitor destinations focused around Humble by Nature and Penallt Hall. Initial proposals are cognisant of these enterprises and build on these assets and the natural environment to shape a broader proposition around regenerative agriculture.

- Street design to increase the sense of place, improve biodiversity and flood resilience (via SuDS) and improve road safety.

Page 696

The deployment of regenerative agricultural pilots aligned to Humble by Nature, the existing nature reserves and village

The use of Penallt Hall as a rural enterprise hub



DRAFT

CATBROOK

Village shared space junction



Existing paths

Memorial hall



Village gateway

Reduced vehicle speed to improve walking and cycling connections to existing paths

Existing paths

Village gateway



Distillery

Village gateway



Village gateway



Catbrook recreation ground



Biodiversity improvement site.
Please note that this would require private landowner agreement

Catbrook

The village is a community rather than a focal point for tourism. As with the North the quiet, secluded character of the village is a defining feature. Accordingly, proposed change is limited. Subtle interventions could help garner greater community cohesion, increase the sense of place and cater for low impact tourism in the form of walkers/hikers. The initial proposals are to;

- Improve existing walking and cycling connections through the village
- Provide enhanced habitat
- Deliver new street design to increase the sense of place, improve biodiversity and flood resilience (via SuDS) and improve road safety.

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6.6 Governance

Leadership, ownership and identity will be decisive when it comes to delivering the vision for the “Wye Valley Villages AONB Plan for the Future”. The action and delivery plan that will support the Plan for the Future will need strong, constant and proactive management and guidance. That will ensure successful and viable development, funding and delivery of a programme of potential projects that will be defined for each vision pillar (travel & movement, landscape, local economy and tourism).

An integrated approach is essential to resolve issues and realise opportunities. The Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) is currently the main cross-border body, consisting of local authorities, government agencies and interested public, private and voluntary sector organisations, that oversees the AONB Management Plan and the AONB Unit, and advises partners on issues, initiatives and strategies relating to the AONB.

Many of the challenges and opportunities in the Wye Valley are not bound by geographical or administrative boundaries and the “increasingly complex and widespread environmental, social and political challenges transcend traditional management boundaries” as the AONB management plan states. The opportunity is to create cross border partnerships with national entities, whose strategies and plans aim to achieve similar objectives and jointly coordinate, plan, deliver and fund future projects.

During the next stage of work, we will need to define or identify a governance structure that is able to deliver the vision. Clear and strong governance and removing traditional boundaries between the public and private sector could further enhance collaboration and integration between the existing plans and projects and offer support to new or grassroots initiatives.

66999

Monmouth



Wye Valley Villages



Chepstow



7. Next steps

- Stage 3 work will include:
- Review of initial proposals with the client team.
- Public consultation and review and summarise the feedback and results.
- Develop the vision into a holistic strategic framework plan with an action plan.

Page 709

Consider the creation of a village design guide.

Roadmap and Recommendations to deliver the Plan of the Future.

The action plan will include a high-level delivery and funding strategy, identifying priorities for the short, mid and long term.

We will also include recommendations for next steps, such as a Business Plan for tourism, a Street Design Manual, road safety projects and pilot projects.



Digital public engagement using Arup Virtual Engage

Appendix 4

Public engagement summary



Wye Valley Villages Virtual Engage Summary

Oct 2021

Welcome to the Wye Valley Villages Virtual Engage



Devauden Community Council
Tirfryn Community Council
St Arvans Community Council
Trellech United Community Council

ARUP



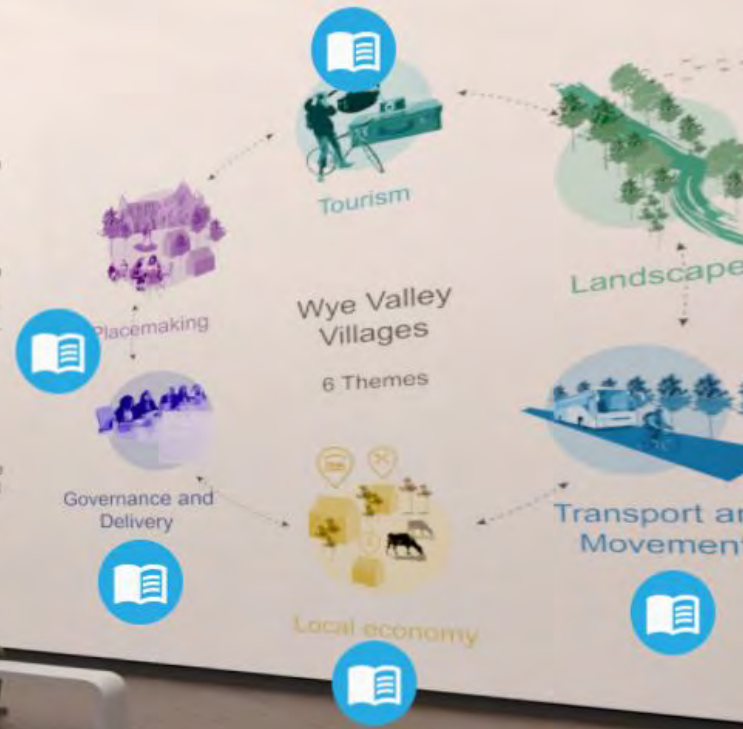
Vision

The Wye Valley is a story of people and nature that has been shaped by many hands over centuries. The immediate challenges of climate change, post-Covid recovery, mobility and sustainable development require a new perspective on the future of this outstanding landscape and its settlements.

Our vision is to ensure that short term solutions are set within the context of long term needs and challenges. It is considered over a 100 year timescale to ensure it will endure for generations to come and work with a timescale for nature. It is founded upon three simple principles:

- Conserving and enhancing the natural and man-made assets that define this unique place for existing and future generations.
- A holistic approach to governance, territory and integral drivers of change.
- Evolving to respond to changes caused by climate change and to capitalise on opportunities created by the target of net zero carbon.

We have defined six key themes that form the pillars of our vision, you can view these here.



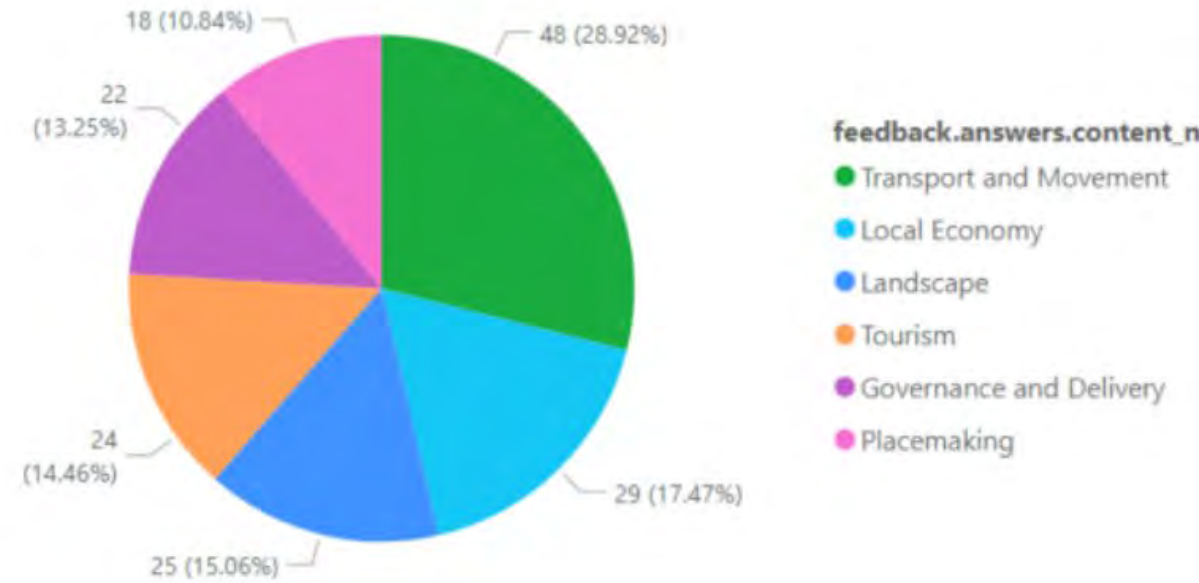
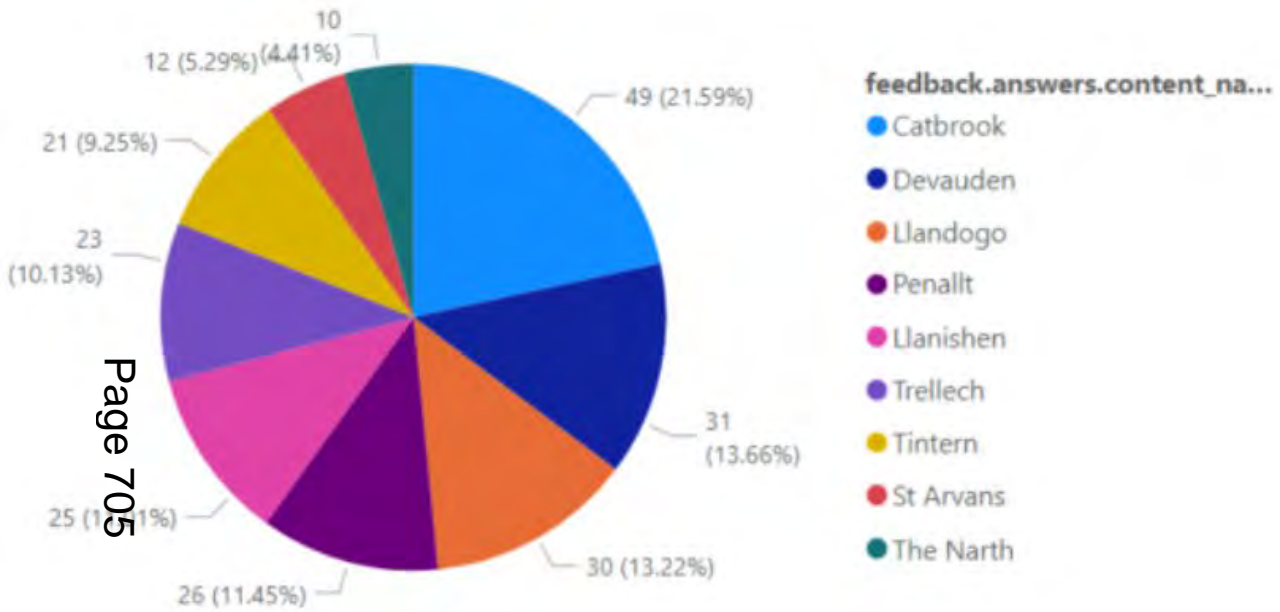


Image above :Results from virtual engage

6 week engagement

Total No of responses: Good response level - **260** (244 from VE)

Last Refreshed 16/12/2021 2:04:46 PM

Select Date Range to Filter Visuals

8/11/2021 8/11/2022

Note: User-defined privacy settings preclude the collection of certain data. Discrepancies between total figures may occur as a result.

Total Page Views

3707

Total Users

1587

Users by Hour of the Day



Top Sources of User Traffic

Facebook	39.46%
Direct	28.20%
Monmouthshire Government Website	17.12%
Twitter	7.06%

Users by Location



Users by Day of the Week

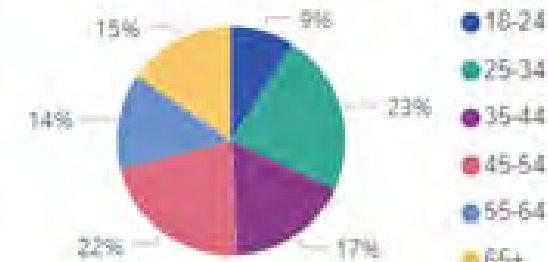


Pageviews by Date

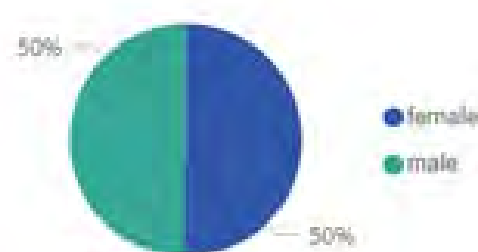


User Demographics and Systems (All Users Across Entire Consultation Period)

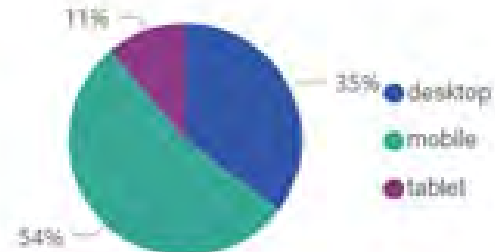
Age



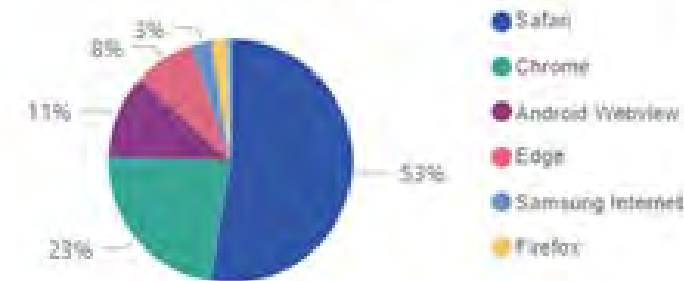
Gender



Device Category



Browser



Key messages

- General consensus and support for Road Safety (20mph, village gateways)
- General support for the concept of the network of villages
- Need to focus intervention and where to offer limited change. Limited support for intervention in some villages (Catbrook)
- Messaging around active travel is key – we need to show it is for all
- We need to do more to improve accessibility and inclusivity – maintenance, ease of access for all ages, abilities
- The River Wye needs to feature more strongly
- Final report will need to be refined – clarity of proposed intervention and language
- The ‘how’ question is prevalent. Clear messaging on delivery needed for final report

Themes - Feedback

Local Economy

What do you like?



Affordable housing



Job Opportunities



Supporting local businesses

What don't you like ?



Lack of social housing



Lack of new employment opportunities



Impact of (potential) housing on AONB

What further suggestions do you have?



Village halls as work hubs (WFH)



Support local businesses



Housing Diversity

Transport & Movement

What do you like?



Speed limits



Wye valley Greenway



Network of villages

What don't you like ?



Limited public transport



Unsafe cycling



Sharing roads with cyclists & scooters

What further suggestions do you have?



Bike racks & amenities



Link active travel & public transport



Tourists using public transport & cycle paths

Landscape

What do you like?



Regenerative agriculture



Improved Ecology



Nature based approach

What don't you like ?



Agricultural pollution (inc river)



Maintenance of routes



Lack of climate action

What further suggestions do you have?



Nature based tourism



Managing forest health



Support rewilding projects

Placemaking

What do you like?



Unique identity for each village



Speed limit



Integrated network of villages

What don't you like ?



Tourist infrastructure



Lack of consideration for pedestrians



Need more consideration for children & elderly

What further suggestions do you have?



Platform that pulls together news/events



Community supported agriculture



Repurposing historical buildings

Tourism

What do you like?



Access to river



Local Identity



Wye valley brand

What don't you like ?



Lack of focus on history



Risk of losing tranquillity of the valley



Funding & Delivery

What further suggestions do you have?



Immersive experience



Arts & cultural activities



Hop off /on buses & tours

Governance & Delivery

What do you like?



Joined up governance



Integrated approach



Network of villages

What don't you like ?



Cross border thinking



Not quantifying success of proposals



River pollution – wider reach needed

What further suggestions do you have?



Retain Welsh identity, language & culture



Influencing sat nav routing to enhance status of quiet lanes



Dedicated village agents

Villages - Feedback

Trellech (23)

What do you like?



Meadow enhancement
(6)



Gateways
(5)



Road safety
(4)

What don't you like ?



Existing road safety measures
(5)



Lack of clarity on 'shared spaces'
(2)



Meadow enhancement
(2)

What further suggestions do you have?



Road safety measures
(9)



Recreational activities & cafes
(4)



Pedestrian access
(5)

Catbrook (49)

What do you like?



Speed limit
(23)



Gateways
(7)



New paths
(6)

What don't you like ?



New paths
(37)



Catbrook meadows
(17)



Shared space
(11)

What further suggestions do you have?



More land for village hall activities
(3)



Enhance recreation ground
(2)



No interventions needed
(4)

Tintern (23)

What do you like?



Access to river
(13)



Cycle lanes
(5)



Pedestrian access
(5)

What don't you like ?



Gateways
(2)



The island
(3)



River crossing
(existing bridge)
(2)

What further suggestions do you have?



Additional parking
(2)



Refurbish old abbey hotel
(2)



Clean the river
(welsh water)
(2)

Devauden (31)

What do you like?



Speed limit
(13)



Cycle lanes
(7)



Village green
(4)

What don't you like ?



Village green
(15)



Speed limit
(4)



Farmers market
(1)

What further suggestions do you have?



More traffic measures
(9)



Pedestrian crossing
(4)



Improve existing footpaths
(4)

St Arvans (12)

What do you like?



Speed limits
(7)



Village
Gateway
(4)



Increased
value of local
hubs (3)

What don't you like ?



Hotel (wye
valley walk
route)
(4)



Terminology in
the report
(2)



Traffic calming
measures
(2)

What further suggestions do you have?



Traffic
calming
measures
(3)



Parking
provision
(2)



Expand
existing local
shop
(2)

Llandogo (30)

What do you like?



Speed limit
(6)



Access to river
(7)



Pedestrian
paths
(4)

What don't you like ?



Memorial green
(11)



Tourism
(3)



Viewing point
(3)

What further suggestions do you have?



Improve play
area
(3)



Improve
existing
footpaths
(2)



Safe pedestrian
access
(4)

The Narth (8)

What do you like?



Speed limit
(4)



Overall scheme
(2)



Narth as a
hilltop retreat
(1)

What don't you like ?



Noise from
motor bikes
(1)

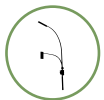


Signage & road
markings
(2)



Large proposed
houses
(1)

What further suggestions do you have?



No more
street lighting
(4)



Parking
provision
(2)



Expand
existing local
shop
(2)

Penallt (26)

What do you like?



Redbrook
bridge
(7)



Connecting Penallt
& Redbrook
communities (3)



Value of
local hubs
(3)

What don't you like ?



Redbrook
bridge
maintenance
(14)



Safe pedestrian
access
(2)



River pollution
(4)

What further suggestions do you have?



Redbrook
bridge
maintenance
(13)



Community
connectivity
between MCC
& GCC (2)



Community
orchard &
allotments
(2)

Llanishen (25)

What do you like?



Speed limit
(12)



Community hub
(2)



Pavement
improvements (2)

What don't you like ?



Location of
village green
(11)



A new village
green
(2)



unsafe
pedestrian
crossings (2)

What further suggestions do you have?



Better parks
and play
areas
(3)



Safe pedestrian
access
(3)



More traffic
calming
measures
(3)

Next steps

- Feedback meeting with community councils Oct 14th
- Arup to edit and update final report
- Issue Draft to client team w/e Oct 29th Oct
- Final report w/e 19th Nov



Devauden Community Council

St Arvans Community Council



ARUP

wye valley dyffryn gwy
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Ardal o Harddwch Natural Eithriadol



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Wye Valley AONB Villages - Plan for the future

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our communities and natural environment face significant and imminent change from the climate emergency and post-Covid recovery. These are radically changing the way we think about our communities and environment. We need to change our day-to-day life and leave behind many of the accepted approaches we have become used to such as our over reliance on car use. Remote working, online shopping and the internet are radically changing the way we live, access services and seek information.

Against this backdrop of major change, the natural beauty, local resources and human history of the Wye Valley has attracted residents, businesses and visitors for centuries. Each of these are intrinsically linked meaning that a careful balance is key to success or indeed failure. Where an imbalance occurs it becomes obvious. Local concerns over river pollution, speeding cars through the villages or the impact of large numbers of visitors to Tintern during peak times demonstrate how this delicate balance can shift the wrong way. To compound these challenges is the complex geography of the area as the convergence of multiple local authorities and the Wales-England border. Gaining consensus and consistency in policy, financing and governance is challenging.

Despite these challenges the area benefits from notable advantages. Beyond the obvious quality of the landscape, active and engaged community council's and residents are providing energy and ambition. Many independent local businesses have become part of the fabric each marketing the area to broad audiences and providing local jobs. The borderland location should become a point of celebration rather than a source of inertia. Success will mean embracing innovation, fronting up to contentious issues such as traffic, developing

new partnerships, accepting trial and error and building on the existing natural assets. It will require investment in a way that delivers far wider benefits to our health, our environment, our local communities and our local economies.

The question for the Wye Valley, its communities, businesses and visitors is how can this balance be struck and what does it look like?

The "Wye Valley AONB Villages Plan for the Future" sets a vision for change through short, medium and long-term projects aimed primarily at the villages that are located within Monmouthshire. At the heart of the study is a response to the community's concern over road safety. The plan provides a strategy for reducing vehicle speeds and increasing the use of sustainable transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. Importantly road safety is not considered in isolation. In recognition of the fact that within the Wye Valley tourism, landscape, local economy, governance, placemaking and transport all impact one other, the plan proposes measures for all of these six themes.

This has led to the creation of a **six-point plan for change** which responds to the six key themes identified with an emphasis on delivery. Phasing has been a key issue and the plan provides clear proposals for immediate changes to the villages such as gateway signage through to longer term aspirations for sustainable transport and tourism.

1 Ensure safe and sustainable transport

by delivering coordinated changes to the streets across the villages to make them slower for traffic, more attractive and safer for pedestrians and cyclists. To reduce car dependency 'Sustainable transport' including buses, walking and cycling should be improved by grouping bus stops, cycle hire and storage, tourist attractions and new public spaces at key locations such as Tintern as 'mobility hubs'. Bus services should be improved particularly during high season for both local people and tourists. Extending the Wye Valley Greenway could have a catalytic effect on walking, cycling and tourism if it were to be extended to the north and should be assessed for viability.

2 Conserve and enhance the landscape

by working with other local authorities, agencies and land owners across the length of the River Wye to improve the health of the river as part of a 'whole catchment study'. To encourage community participation a 'Green Village' initiative is proposed to deliver small scale projects such as community food growing and habitat creation. A pilot should be delivered to test new farming practices that deliver wider benefits to nature such as less pesticide use and habitat management.

3 Enable sustainable tourism

by updating the tourism strategy for the area around a business case which will provide a basis for measuring impact. The unique border location should be celebrated as a place where visitors can move between countries with just a few steps. A simple and effective brand should be developed along the lines of Iceland's Golden Circle or Scotlands North Coast 500. Delivering better tourism 'infrastructure' such as improved signage and wayfinding, bold village gateways and more opportunities to meet local people, eat local food and experience the authenticity of the valley should be considered.

4 Retain and improve the network of unique villages

by recognising the distinct history and character of each of the villages and reflecting this in the proposed changes. Tintern for example has a much greater need to support tourism than a village such as The Narth which is much more attuned to local community life.

5 Support the local economy

by working to delivering of high speed internet access with partners. It is recommended that a 'local circular economy' approach is adopted to support local business and to attract specific Welsh Government funding. This approach encourages local producers and supply chains to work closely with each other to retain money within the area for the people who live there rather than export to other areas. To allow people to work locally and attract new entrepreneurs new premises that allow 'co-working' or shared office space should be delivered. To ensure that local people can continue to live in the area, the Wye Valley Local Housing Needs Requirements should be updated to deliver affordable housing.

6 Provide joined-up governance

by establishing a delivery group between key partners such as the local community council's, Monmouthshire County Council and the Wye Valley AONB. Cross border working with adjacent Local Authorities such as Forest of Dean District Council will be essential in sharing ideas and pooling resources. Both recommendations will be critical in making the plan a reality.



Appendix 4

<p>Name of the Officer Mark Hand</p> <p>Phone no: 07773478579 E-mail: markhand@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal:</p> <p>The Wye Valley Villages Future Plan sets the future direction for the development of various initiatives within the communities that make up the Wye Valley area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB). It has been developed jointly with the community councils and AONB office.</p>
<p>Name of Service: Placemaking, Highways and Flooding</p>	<p>Date Future Generations Evaluation : 01/07/2022</p>

Page 723

1. **Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	<p>The Wye Valleys Villages projects aim to improve wellbeing for all sections of the community and for all types of protected characteristics.</p> <p>Consultation on the plan was open to all but undoubtedly the priorities for some age groups will vary compared to others. However the plan is intended to support the valley as a sustainable community into the future irrespective of age.</p> <p>The proposed 20mph zones improve road safety and while benefitting everyone, will particularly benefit children and older people who are more susceptible to serious injury in the event of a collision.</p>		Active travel is not a feasible transport alternative for everyone. Public transport improvements are also featured.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Disability	<p>The Wye Valleys Villages projects aim to improve wellbeing for all sections of the community and for all types of protected characteristics.</p> <p>Where appropriate, supporting disabled groups is embedded into the plan e.g. access to AT routes, public transport etc.</p> <p>The proposed 20mph zones improve road safety and while benefitting everyone, will particularly benefit some people with disabilities who are more susceptible to serious injury in the event of a collision or for whom current traffic speeds pose a greater risk e.g. those with limited sight.</p>		Active travel is not a feasible transport alternative for everyone. Public transport improvements are also featured.
Gender reassignment	The Wye Valleys Villages projects aim to improve wellbeing for all sections of the community and for all types of protected characteristics.	None	
Marriage or civil partnership	The Wye Valleys Villages projects aim to improve wellbeing for all sections of the community and for all types of protected characteristics.	None	
Pregnancy or maternity	The Wye Valleys Villages projects aim to improve wellbeing for all sections of the community and for all types of protected characteristics.		Active travel is not a feasible transport alternative for everyone. Public transport improvements are also featured.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Race	The Wye Valleys Villages projects aim to improve wellbeing for all sections of the community and for all types of protected characteristics.	None	
Religion or Belief	The Wye Valleys Villages projects aim to improve wellbeing for all sections of the community and for all types of protected characteristics.	None	
Sex	<p>The Wye Valleys Villages projects aim to improve wellbeing for all sections of the community and for all types of protected characteristics.</p> <p>Retail and hospitality businesses provide a significant number of valued job opportunities. Supporting tourism and encouraging visitor and local residents to shop locally and buy goods and services locally supports the retention of those jobs. Data suggests the majority of these jobs are done by females.</p>	None	
Sexual Orientation	None	None	

2 The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions. This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice	<p>The Social Justice strategy focuses on three main areas: tackling loneliness and isolation; tackling poverty and promoting equitable economic prosperity; and giving children the best start in life.</p> <p>The WVV Improvement Plan seeks to support delivery of affordable housing in rural communities. The Plan also seeks to support tourism, a sector that provides a significant number of valued job opportunities. Supporting people to visit the Wye Valley and to shop locally and buy goods and services locally supports the retention of jobs..</p>	None	n/a

3 Policy making and the Welsh language.



<p>How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:</p>	<p>Describe the positive impacts of this proposal</p>	<p>Describe the negative impacts of this proposal</p>	<p>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts</p>
<p>Policy Making</p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p>	<p>Embedded into any projects through the Welsh language policy. The new gateway village signs will display community names bilingually where applicable. The village gateway signs seek to create a unified theme throughout the valley while celebrating the distinctiveness of each settlement/community.</p>	<p>No negative impact</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>Operational</p> <p>Recruitment & Training of workforce</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>Service delivery</p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p> <p>Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>No impact</p>	<p>No impact</p>	<p>-</p>




4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	The plan prompts more opportunities for working locally through co-working places thereby encouraging people who are able to, to work more locally and reduce the need to travel	
A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	The plan includes the development of a more sustainable farming model trial and to promote natural flood mitigation measures. It promotes public transport and active travel to be developed as a real alternative to using the car.	
A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	Promotes active travel as an alternative to car travel	
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	Overall the plan is seeking to support the wellbeing and prosperity of the various communities with the Wye Valley acknowledging that the priorities vary between individual villages.	The village gateway signs seek to create a unified theme throughout the valley while celebrating the distinctiveness of each settlement/community.
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	The plan is centred around employment, travel, diversity within the communities of the Wye Valley in Monmouthshire	
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Where it coincides with the community's priorities tourism is promoted through, amongst	

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	other things, walking and cycling routes. This offers increased opportunity to showcase Wales and its heritage, culture and language.	
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	The plan promotes opportunities for local people to work and create employment locally for the working population of the valley.	

5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	The plan looks at short term goals that meet the more immediate needs of the local communities but also looks further ahead at what a longer term future to sustain the Wye Valley would look like.	
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	The plan has been an interesting project bringing together a group of local councils with the county council plus the Wye Valley AONB. As such it has been unusual. It has also consulted widely on what a future plan might include and what the priorities might be longer term	Proposals for natural flood prevention measures, improved farming practices and addressing river pollution all align with work to address the phosphate pollution issue facing the River Wye, and the Council rivers and oceans motion. Work on these areas will align with related work by other colleagues and other agencies. (This inter-relationship was also highlighted by Place Scrutiny Committee on 30 th June 2022)

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>Local councils, stakeholders and public consultation has generated feedback. There has not always been a consensus on how things should develop in the future and the delivery group will look to review and guide the plan into the future</p>	
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The immediate demand was for improvements to road safety but the local councils agreed to allow the plan to look much wider and will come back together to deliver on a much wider agenda that touches various aspects of life in the valley.</p>	<p>Proposals for natural flood prevention measures, improved farming practices and addressing river pollution all align with work to address the phosphate pollution issue facing the River Wye, and the Council rivers and oceans motion. Work on these areas will align with related work by other colleagues and other agencies. (This inter-relationship was also highlighted by Place Scrutiny Committee on 30th June 2022)</p>
 <p>Integration</p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>The plan is ambitious. It has been contentious and will continue to be so as and when certain aspects are promoted because there was not a consensus on some aspects (e.g. promoting tourism throughout the area). There is also the challenge of finding funding to deliver on some parts of the project so it will be necessary to promote support in preference possibly to other plans given that there are finite funding opportunities.</p>	

6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	n/a	n/a	
Corporate Parenting	n/a	n/a	

7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

The plan has been developed through extensive meetings, options development and consultation to arrive at a plan presented for all authorities and organisations involved to adopt.

SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

The Plan evidences effective collaboration and joint working with stakeholders and the communities they represent. It seeks to ensure a unified placemaking theme for the Wye Valley while respecting the distinct identity of the individual communities, enhancing tourism and exposure to Welsh culture in the birthplace of British tourism, and addressing identified road safety concerns.

9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Seek all authorities and Wye Valley AONB to formally adopt the plan	July- September '22	Officers and local councils
Establish a delivery group selected from the member authorities and Wye Valley AONB	September '22	MCC officers

Ensure workstreams align with other projects to tackle flooding, improve agricultural practices and address phosphate pollution.	September '22	MCC officers and other agencies e.g. NRW, DCWW and farmers
--	---------------	--

10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Initial draft	June 2021	
2	Final version for Scrutiny Committee	20/06/2022	Updated to reflect content of Plan
3	Final version for Cabinet	01/07/2022	Updated to reflect discussion at Scrutiny Committee on 30 th June 2022, reviewed by Mark Hand as new responsible Head of Service.

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SUBJECT:	RE-OPENING CHEPSTOW HIGH STREET TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	27th July 2022
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	CHEPSTOW

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to invite Cabinet to decide whether or not to revoke the Experimental Order that closes Chepstow High Street to traffic except for blue badge holders accessing the parking bays on Bank Street and except for deliveries to businesses between 4pm and 10am. Revoking the Order would re-open the High Street to all vehicular traffic as per the pre-pandemic arrangements.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet supports the unanimous request of the locally elected County Councillors for Chepstow and the Transforming Chepstow Masterplan Steering Group and revokes the Experimental Order that closes Chepstow High Street, thereby re-opening Chepstow High Street to vehicular traffic.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 On 27th May 2020, Cabinet received a report on 'Unlocking our Town Centres.' This included reference to a bid to Welsh Government for funding low cost, high impact, experimental measures in town centres to enable social distancing, support local businesses, and encourage active travel (walking and cycling) in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Measures suggested by Welsh Government included: footway widening by using carriageway width; road closures with modal filters for cyclists; temporary parking removal or restrictions; decluttering of footways e.g. by consolidating signs. The measures were initially focused on nine settlements: Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow, Gilwern, Magor, Monmouth, Raglan, Tintern and Usk. Approximately £650,000 Welsh Government grant was awarded.
- 3.2 The Council undertook public engagement in May/June 2020 to seek views of residents and businesses and received 1483 responses. This engagement was used to help shape proposals, which included the closure of Chepstow High Street to through traffic in order to allow for social distancing and queuing outside shops, and to support outdoor trading. Guidance for businesses was developed alongside posters and a campaign encouraging people to shop locally. Measures were further informed by a series of meetings with locally elected representatives and business representatives in May and June 2020, feedback from the Disability Advice Project via Adults Select Committee on 16th June 2020, and a multidisciplinary team of officers.

- 3.3 On 19th June 2020, the First Minister confirmed that non-essential retail would be able to re-open on Monday 22nd June 2020. This announcement unexpectedly increased the urgency with which measures needed to be implemented so that social distancing and outdoor trading could be supported. Subsequent decisions lifted the five-mile travel restriction from 6th July 2020, allowed self-catering accommodation to open on 11th July 2020, and allowed food and drink to be served outdoors only and hairdressers to open from 13th July 2020. To respond to this, a programme of interventions was implemented with speed largely using emergency powers under highway legislation to implement traffic orders quickly. All of the measures were temporary trial measures and, unusually (but because of the emergency circumstances), were implemented without further prior consultation or engagement, but were then subsequently adjusted in response to feedback and monitoring of their effectiveness or to respond to any unforeseen issues.
- 3.4 An Emergency Traffic Order was put in place in June 2020 to close Chepstow High Street to traffic except for blue badge holders accessing the parking bays on Bank Street and except for deliveries to businesses between 4pm and 10am. The purpose of the Order was to enable social distancing and outdoor trading during the covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.5 However, in order to retain access to three disabled person parking bays on Bank Street, it was necessary to allow blue badge holders to drive up High Street at any time to access those spaces. This has meant that High Street is neither fully open nor fully closed, hindering the desired achievement of a fully people-friendly environment. Moreover, blue badge holders have reported being verbally abused by other members of the public, not realising that access is permitted or not realising that the car contains a blue badge holder. There are also frequent reports of vehicles using High Street that should not be (i.e. not blue badge holders).
- 3.6 Other changes included the provisional of additional disabled person parking bays in Welsh Street car park, provision of planters and parklets on High Street, and provision of a raised platform at Beaufort Square to create a civilised space. Although this was designed to fully accord with Welsh Government design guidance, some people reported feeling unsafe crossing the road so a zebra crossing has since been added to respond to that feedback.
- 3.7 The measures were kept under review throughout the pandemic including via meetings with County Councillors for Chepstow, representatives of Chepstow Town Council and business representatives; regular Business Resilience Forum meetings; Cabinet Member briefings and Select Committee.
- 3.8 As the health-based restrictions surrounding the pandemic eased, the focus shifted to the long-term regenerations of our town centres. As per the intent of the Welsh Government funding, discussions focused on to what extent any of the trial changes might work as permanent alterations, either as they are or with alterations, to support future high streets. High Street businesses have been affected throughout the UK by a number of factors, such as:

- the 2008 economic downturn when spending reduced (and more recently in 2022 with the emerging cost of living crisis);
- out of town retail diverting spend away from town centres (although very little of this exists in Monmouthshire, Chepstow High Street is affected by its proximity to Cribbs Causeway and Newport Retail Park, Spytty, as well as its proximity to larger retail centres such as Cardiff and Bristol city centres);
- the growth in internet shopping, accelerated by the pandemic;
- business rates and property rent (both significant issues in Monmouthshire)

Although the future remains uncertain, high streets are generally becoming leisure destinations for eating, drinking, leisure experiences and boutique/gift shopping rather than going home with bags full of physical items.

3.9 In September 2021, the then Cabinet approved an Experimental Order which maintained the closure of Chepstow High Street (or allowed for amendments) as a trial for up to 18 months. This was to enable time to explore and consult on options for potential permanent changes to Chepstow's town centre, with the intention of making the High Street more people-friendly, less car-dominated and better suited to the changing role of our high streets. A link to this report is provided below. Although Cabinet's decision delegated Authority to the Chief Officer to make alterations in liaison with the relevant Cabinet Member(s), it is considered that revoking the Order goes beyond an 'alteration' and consequently a Cabinet decision is needed.

3.10 In March 2022, a first stage of consultation was undertaken to seek views on the long-term future of the High Street. The results are summarised at Appendix 1. The survey showed a clear majority preference for the High Street to be re-opened to vehicular traffic. Highlights from the consultation are:

- Approximately 1925 people responded;
- 61% were aged 36 to 65 and 63% were female;
- 56% lived in Chepstow and 40% lived in surrounding villages (postcode data was not collected);
- 58% normally travel into town by car, 39% walk, 2% take the bus and 1% normally cycle;
- Most visits to the town centre were for non-food retail (46%) followed by leisure purposes (including café and restaurant visits) (31%);
- 30% of respondents visit the town centre twice a week and 28% once a week;
- The preferred alternative location to shop for 50% of respondents was Cribbs Causeway with the reasons given being retail choice, free parking, no bridge tolls, availability of other leisure activities e.g. cinema and restaurants;
- In terms of desired improvements, respondents would like an improved town centre offering an improved shopping experience, more events and generally being more shopper-focused. However, 59% said that they are not willing to put up with congestion and delays on A48 to achieve a more pleasant shopping environment;
- 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they want a high street that is convenient to drop into for less than an hour. However, 80% also agreed or strongly agreed that they would like a high street where they can spend a few hours shopping, eating and drinking;

- 77% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the High Street closure to traffic has had an unacceptable impact on traffic congestion on the A48. Only 43% want a high street that is people focused rather than car focused;
- Respondents were asked to rank a number of options by preference for the future of the High Street. 49% identified re-opening the High Street to traffic as their first preference. 1105 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this option while 552 strongly disagreed. 1192 respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with keeping the current arrangements.

- 3.11 One of the clear messages was the view that the High Street closure has impacted on traffic flow on the A48, with the view that the High Street created a useful release valve for free-flowing traffic. The data suggests that the contribution that High Street makes in terms of traffic flow is low, and anecdotal evidence is that when, prior to High Street's closure, there is severe congestion on the A48, the High Street was also at standstill. However, the strength of feeling is clear and locally elected members request that High Street be re-opened to address local concerns.
- 3.12 Officers had intended that a second, more detailed consultation would be undertaken in July/August 2022 to seek opinion on detailed, drawn-up options. These were likely to have been:
- Re-opening High Street to vehicular traffic as per pre-pandemic arrangements;
 - Re-opening High Street to one-way vehicular traffic (up-hill), which would also facilitate public transport proposals;
 - Re-opening High Street to vehicular traffic on a part-time basis, for example allowing traffic through at peak commuting times and closing it to traffic during the middle of the day; or
 - Complete closure and pedestrianisation (included as an option for consideration but knowing it would be unlikely to be popular).
- 3.13 Based on a number of factors including the response to the initial consultation, discussions with local businesses, and a desire to avoid the consultation on the emerging Transforming Chepstow Masterplan becoming unhelpfully dominated by this single issue, the Steering Group for the Transforming Chepstow Masterplan (formerly known as the Chepstow Placemaking Plan), including all Chepstow's County Councillors and nominated Town Councillors, unanimously requested that the High Street be re-opened to traffic. The Cabinet Member for Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods, Councillor Paul Griffiths, has indicated his support for this action.
- 3.14 At its first meeting on 30th June 2022, the Place Scrutiny Committee set out its forthcoming work priorities. These included scrutiny of the continued closure of Chepstow High Street, due to concerns about its impact on traffic flows and businesses. The next Scrutiny Committee meeting is on 15th September 2022. In the context of the reasons for including this topic on its workplan, it would be a perverse outcome if scrutiny activity delayed the very outcome being sought. The Chair of that Committee, Councillor Lisa Dymock, has since been briefed on this proposed Cabinet report and has confirmed in writing that she no longer wishes for the matter to be scrutinised by that Committee, to expedite matters.

- 3.15 It is disappointing that it has not been possible at this time to achieve any consensus among the public for an option which would limit traffic flows through the historic High Street of Chepstow. The Council maintains its objective of working with the community of Chepstow to shape a shared vision for the town which will match of the ambitions of residents, balancing the needs of pedestrians, vehicle users, traders, visitors and residents.
- 3.16 Consequently, Cabinet is invited to revoke the Experimental Order insofar as it relates to Chepstow, which will have the effect of re-opening Chepstow High Street to vehicular traffic as desired by the locally elected representatives for Chepstow and the majority of responses to the first consultation. It is worth noting that a separate Order is in place until Christmas 2022 for Sunday closures for the market to take place. This Order is not affected by the proposed revocation of the Experimental Order, nor would any future application for part-time closures for markets or events be affected by this decision.
- 3.17 The planters and parklets will need to be removed. Where possible, they will be re-used elsewhere.

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 4.1 A Wellbeing of Future Generations Equalities Impact Appraisal is attached at Appendix 2. There are no corporate parenting or safeguarding concerns, nor issues in relation to our economic impact duty. Amendments were needed to the trial closure to provide mitigation in relation to impacts on protected characteristics, specifically access to disabled person parking bays. Re-opening the street does not adversely affect that access.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 5.1 Table One below therefore provides an options appraisal of the proposal:

Options	Benefits	Risks	Comments/Mitigation
Re-open High Street to vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds to public consultation and the wishes of locally elected representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missed opportunity to consult on and trial regeneration and placemaking to future-proof the town centre; • Re-opening the High Street to traffic will not alleviate A48 congestion; • Re-opening the High Street to traffic will not address the wider issues facing high street businesses e.g. internet shopping etc. 	Different approaches could be considered in the future, following wider discussion with businesses and the local community
Continue with the trial road closure while consulting on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to consult on and trial regeneration and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This topic dominates the consultation on the 	

alternative designed-up options for the future of the high street	placemaking to future-proof the town centre;	Transforming Chepstow Masterplan; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The local community feels like it isn't being listened to having responded to the first consultation 	
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6. REASONS:

6.1 Based on a number of factors including the response to the initial consultation, discussions with local businesses, and a desire to avoid the consultation on the emerging Transforming Chepstow Masterplan becoming unhelpfully dominated by this single issue, the Steering Group for the Transforming Chepstow Masterplan (formerly known as the Chepstow Placemaking Plan), including all Chepstow's County Councillors and nominated Town Councillors, unanimously requested that the High Street be re-opened to traffic. The Cabinet Member for Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods, Councillor Paul Griffiths, has indicated his support for this action. It is therefore recommended that Cabinet agrees to revoke the Experimental Traffic Order insofar as it relates to the trial closure of Chepstow High Street, which will have the effect of re-opening the High Street to vehicular traffic as per pre-pandemic arrangements.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 All resource implications will be met by existing budgets and teams. Where possible, planters and parklets will be re-used locally.

8. CONSULTEES:

Cabinet
 Senior Leadership Team
 Communities and Place DMT
 Monitoring Officer
 S151 Officer
 Colleagues in Highways Management, Highways Ops and MonLife regarding potential re-location and re-use of the planters and parklets.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

The previous Cabinet approved experimental traffic orders to retain the trial measures for up to 18 months in September 2021: the report can be viewed [here](#).

The Economy and Development Select Committee met on two occasions to consider the re-opening towns trial measures:

- The report for 21st July 2020 can be viewed [here](#)
- The report for 26th July 2021 can be viewed [here](#)

10. AUTHOR:

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Appendix 1: Results of the initial consultation (March 2022) on Chepstow High Street Closure

Appendix 2: Wellbeing of Future Generations Assessment

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Appendix 1: Chepstow High Street Survey 2022 Findings.

1. Introduction

1.1 In February 2022, Monmouthshire County Council launched a public consultation to gather views on how people visiting Chepstow currently use and would like to use Chepstow High Street and the surrounding shopping area.

1.2 The results of this survey will be one piece of evidence that will inform the decision on the future of traffic in the High Street. Evidence is also being gathered through the Chepstow Transport Study Active Travel Study, Chepstow Placemaking Plan as well as through incidental feed back from residents contacting MCC through the Contact Centre, through their local Councillors or directly to MCC officers.

1.3 Respondents were informed that:

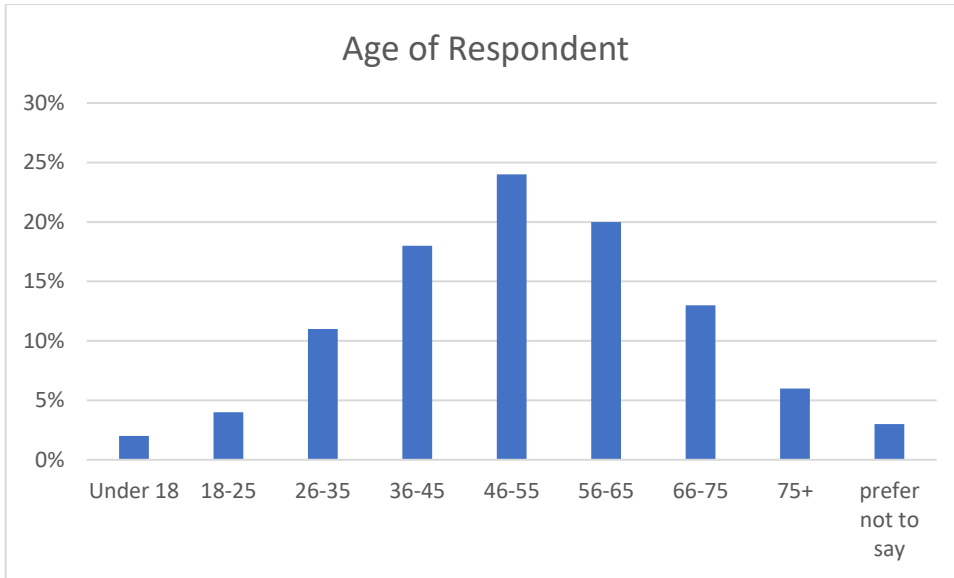
“High Street in Chepstow has been closed to vehicles since March 2020 other than for access to the disabled parking bays on Bank Street and for deliveries between 4pm and 10am. This change was made to enable shoppers to socially distance, to support outdoor trading and to support walking and cycling. We have received both positive and negative feedback on the closure and are now considering longer term options as part of the Chepstow Placemaking Plan and Active Travel proposals. No decision has been taken on the future of High Street. There are potentially many options including fully opening up High Street to 2-way traffic 24/7, 2-way traffic at restricted times, one-way traffic, restricted access or full pedestrianisation. Each option will have advantages and disadvantages which need to be fully considered. Options will require traffic modelling to assess the impact of any changes on the wider road network and this will be undertaken by traffic consultants Arup as part of their study focusing on Active Travel across Chepstow. Monmouthshire County Council and Chepstow Town Council have commissioned the preparation of a plan to look at regeneration improvements across the town not just the town centre. The results of this survey will form part of the options appraisal and design development for the High Street”

1.4 The survey was available online and publicised widely using social media and through the local press. Details of the survey were sent to the Head of Humanities at the High School following a survey undertaken by Year 11 Geography students to capture views of shoppers on the closure of the High Street. Copies of the questionnaire were also available from the Chepstow Hub, Tourist Information Centre and Town Council offices. Copies were also available during Chris Jones Consultant community engagement day on 12 March 2022.

1.5 Members of the Chepstow Placemaking Plan Steering Group (comprising Town and County Councillors) had an opportunity to comment on the questions prior to the survey going live. The survey was live from 16th February until 15th March 2022.

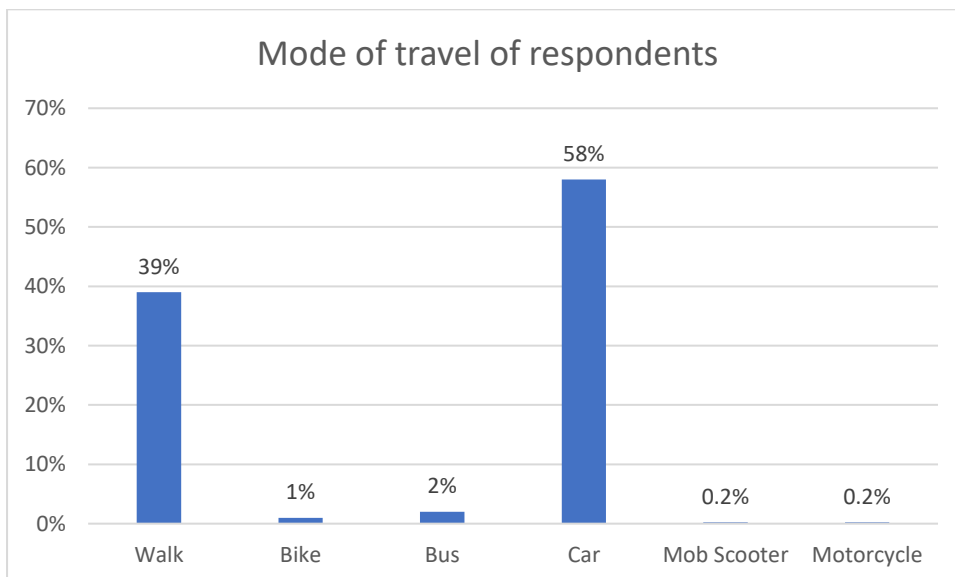
2. Profile of respondents

2.1 People aged between 36 and 65 made up 61% of respondents. Thirty-seven respondents were aged under 18.

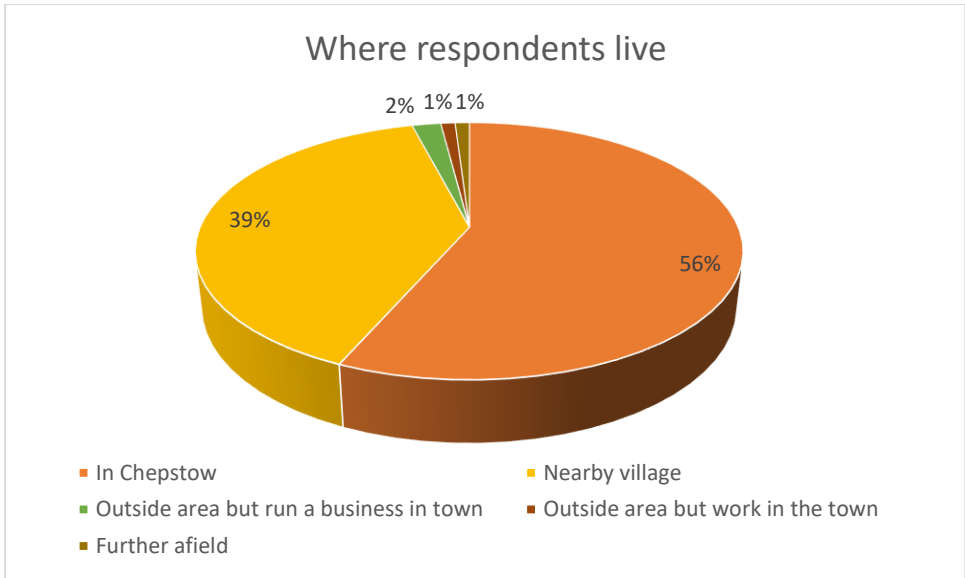


2.2 The gender split of respondents was 63% female, 33% male, 1% non-binary and 3% preferred not to say. A number of respondents chose not to answer this question or provided unhelpful responses so for analysis purposes the total number of respondents to this question was 1925.

2.3 When asked how you NORMALLY travel to the town, the majority – 58% - travelled to the town by car. The next largest group were people who walked at 39% of respondents. Several respondents ticked multiple answers when asked to specify their NORMAL mode of transport; these answers have not been included in the analysis of this question. Therefore, for analysis purposes the total number of respondents to this question was 1865.

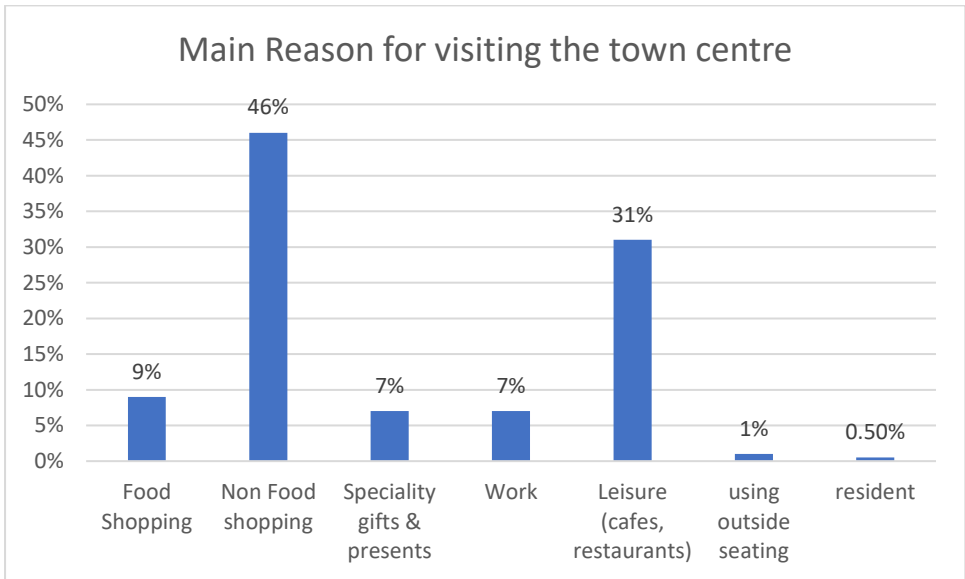


2.4 In terms of where respondents live, the majority at 56% live in Chepstow with nearly 40% living in surrounding villages. The survey did not ask for respondents' postcodes nor whether respondents lived in Wales or England.



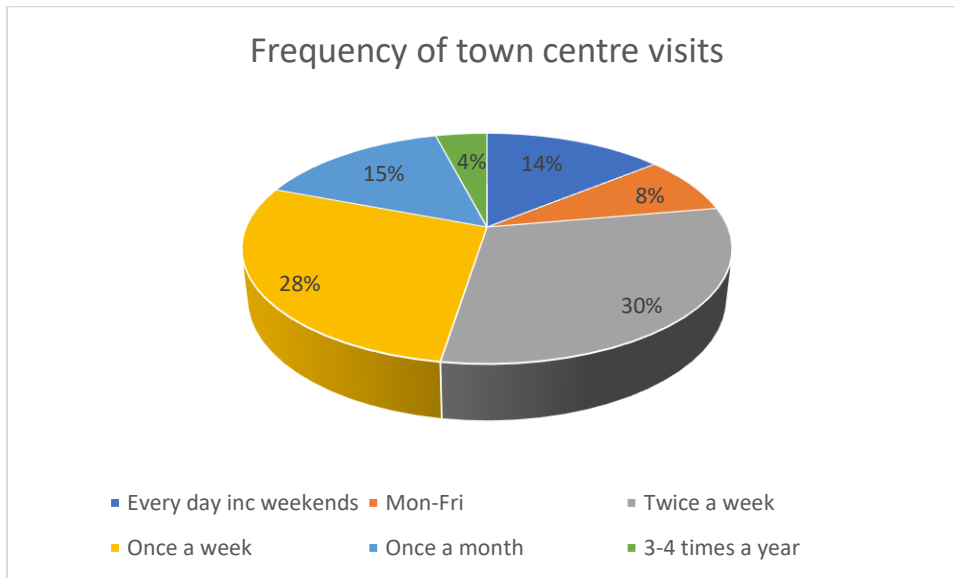
3. Shopping Patterns

- 3.1 A number of questions sought to gather information on current shopping habits, why people visit Chepstow, how often and if not where do they shop.
- 3.2 Respondents were asked for their MAIN reason for High Street and surrounding streets. A number of respondents ticked multiple boxes rather than indicating their main reason so these multiple answers have not been included in the analysis of this question. For analysis purposes the total number of respondents for this question is 1822.
- 3.3 The main reason for visiting the town centre is non food shopping. This includes visits to the bank, building society, chemist, hairdresser, nail bar, solicitors and Sunday market.

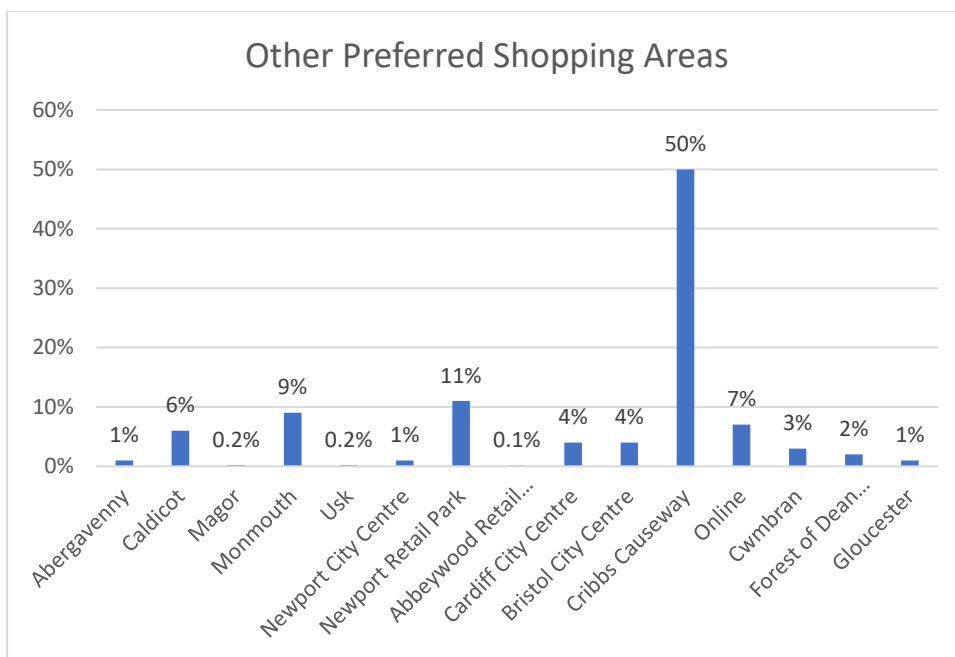


- 3.4 Twice a week and once a week are the most frequent intervals for visiting the town accounting for nearly two-thirds. A significant minority visit every day, 263 (14%)

respondents. Working in the town (128 respondents) does not account for all of these daily visitors.



3.5 Respondents were asked to indicate where they shop if they prefer to shop elsewhere. A list of nearby shopping areas was offered and the most popular by a significant margin was Bristol Cribbs Causeway due to retail choice, free parking, no bridge tolls, availability of other leisure activities eg cinema, restaurants in the nearby area.



3.6 The reasons why people shopped elsewhere fall into three main categories – inability to purchase the goods in Chepstow (eg clothes, electrical items, shoes, menswear), traffic issues/congestion and resulting increased time to get into and around Chepstow and offer of free parking at many of the alternative shopping areas.

3.7 A selection of the reasons give to why the respondents prefer to shop elsewhere are listed below:

- *There are no large stores in Chepstow, selling the type of products I prefer to physically see before I buy. I know I could buy things on line, but like to see them.*
- *Chepstow High Street is dying by degrees. This started a while back. The electrical shop closed, then the Herbert Lewis department store and now it's a shadow of its former self. No amount of pedestrianisation is going to change this. And the steep street is certainly not friendly to older or disabled shoppers.*
- *Very limited choice in Chepstow. If it was more like Monmouth I'd shop in Chepstow*
- *In Monmouth there are a wider selection of shops and less empty shops.*
- *Fat Face and Molton Brown in Mall. (cribbs Causeway)*
- *Free parking (Newport retail park)*
- *Lack of shops in Chepstow and poor opening hours at the weekend.*
- *Free car parking and range of shops plus cinema and restaurants (Cribbs Causeway)*
- *No reasonably priced adult or children's clothing shops in Chepstow apart from Peacocks which doesn't have much range.*
- *I usually shop online, or where there's free parking like at Cribbs Causeway. I go to Chepstow for the hairdresser and for Boots and Superdrug. Also for Zumba in the Palmer Centre. I would use Chepstow more if the parking was cheaper and more convenient.*
- *There is nowhere in Chepstow now to buy shoes, clothes or any household or electrical goods anymore*
- *Car parking charges are too high, no variety of shops and don't like the general feel of Chepstow high street now*
- *Range of shops available is limited compared to spytty or cribbs. If I want more unique items then I'll shop in Chepstow. There are no childrens clothes shops or a shoe shop for school shoes. Chepstow is great for food and drink though.*
- *There's very little in Chepstow High Street to attract you in plus car park charges mean I always stay for Max 30 minutes during the day when I do visit*
- *Chepstow is usually full of traffic so sometimes it's quicker for me to go to Cribbs than travel to town. There isn't a wide enough selection of shops, pretty poor choice.*

We don't need this many hairdressers/barbers/estate agents. Chepstow town is boring and lacks anything that would attract people

- *Difficulty accessing the high Street, limited parking, no parent and child parking, the cost to park.*
- *There isn't much option for children, men and foot wear so have to shop elsewhere*
- *Lack of choice in Chepstow, also since closure of the road I have been abused nearly everytime I drive up to access the disabled bays even with my badge on show.*
- *Chepstow you have to pay to park. On a hill, one way system or pedestrianisation. Not very friendly at all. Street not very appealing. Hate the baricades at the arch, makes the rest of the shops look out of business. Lots of empty shops too. Too many charity shops and coffed shops sadly.*
- *I really cant be bothered with chepstow any more! Worked in town for 20 years. It's not at all attractive any more. Traffic, high street is rubbish, no atmosphere. Take a look at monmouth! I travel 10 miles more for the pleasure.*
- *Chepstow is good now that it is pedestrian friendly without the traffic.*
- *Chepstow is mainly coffee shops, hair salons, charity shops and estate agents. There is very little choice for a well rounded shopping day. Prices are often higher than city counterparts or online shopping. Public transport is sporadic and inefficient at peak times. When new shops have opened they appear to not last long due to rent rates being very high. Banks have closed it makes more sense to visit an area that can accommodate all aspects from finance to leisure*
- *Chepstow is great for gift buying and luxury items (independent stores and market), also a great array of salons, cafes, pubs and restaurants. There is not enough choice for clothes or food stores.*
- *Chepstow is fantastic for independent shops but if I need clothing and baby then I need to shop at spytty as it has the variety of shops Chepstow doesn't have.*
- *Usually do food shopping at Aldi in Caldicot due to preferring Aldi over Lidl and Tesco. If I'm looking for only the essential groceries I Usually visit the Spar in Sedbury as its quicker for me to drive to from the Brunel Quarter development than the one in Chepstow and easy to park.*
- *For clothes shopping I'll always use Cribbs Causeway due to choice. Chepstow town centre & surroundings are great for the butchers, card factory, restaurants, bakery and barbers. It has everything you'd hope for from a Town Centre.*
- *Because there's shops worth going to for my age range (25) no one my age wants to visit 5 charity shops. If there were more exciting brands on the high street in Chepstow I would 100% visit more often. Chepstow high street currently is a waste of time*
- *The high street is dead, footfall is minimal and no businesses will open new stores as things stand, the traffic situation in and around Chepstow worsens by the day, it is*

ridiculous building more houses when the roads cannot cope, the high street being closed has added to the traffic and makes it unsafe to be near chepstow There are too many people buying who work in Bristol and have no intention to shop locally, it is so sad to see the demise of Chepstow, lived and worked in town for many, many years, it was a hub, now a ghost town.

- *Current street layout makes using the main car park awkward, especially the half hour free carpark. And there isn't anywhere else in Chepstow.*
- *Most decent shops have closed parking is expensive for quick shop .you shutting the high street has made it impossible to do anything in town quickly,you que to get to car parks queue to get out again sit in traffic all the time .*
- *Because Chepstow is a nightmare to navigate now it's traffic free and I certainly don't feel safe walking up and down the supposedly traffic free street. I find it very unnerving as you have to watch out for the odd van or car that still seem able to travel up and down. I appreciate it's open for disabled motorists but that doesn't stop pedestrians having to keep a look out for them, and that's without having to dodge the 'white van man'*
- *Monmouth is easy, you get free parking, is accessible via on street parking, thriving on the high st, everything Chepstow now isn't. I believe the road closure has and continues to damage Chepstow very badly. MCC have not, and are not, listening to the residents of Chepstow. The closure is awful and has made traffic congestion worse than ever. The road closure has had the exact opposite effect to cutting pollution and improving quality of life. And now you are prolonging it even further with a new order. Very poor outcome for Chepstow.*
- *The only shopping I would do in Chepstow is food occasionally at M&S, bits from wilko, maybe something from boots. We've used the o2 shop but that's it. There isn't anything else. For clothes/home wares shopping we'd go to cribbs because of the variety available - Chepstow is never really going to be able to compare with that?*
- *Because since the High Street has been closed to vehicles it can take ages to turn into town and back out after shopping- there are often long queues to get off or onto the main road because this traffic has nowhere else it can go. When the High St was open you could use that as an alternative. I'm surprised there haven't been more accidents as people pull out in desperation after long waits. It's also causing a lot of pollution with people sitting with engines running. We nip down to Marks and Spencer at quiet times and sometimes go as far as Wilkinsons. As we no longer drive up or down the High Street we don't notice if there are any new shops opening, or general activity. Last time we walked down it all looked dead as the proverbial dodo. As we are getting on a bit we don't much enjoy strolling up and down to no purpose. Very depressing, but not surprising as the Council appear to think that the perfect antidote to 2 years of covid restrictions is to ensure that access to High Street shops is made as difficult as possible.*
- *Cardiff St David's and Bristol Cribbs Causeway have far superior shopping choices. I like Chepstow Town centre for simple, quick shopping and for some of the local, independent shops. I also like that the town centre road has been mostly pedestrianised, but the public transport links really need to be improved to help*

people who cannot walk to town (better cycle infrastructure - like secure locking places - would be welcomed too).

- *Due to very high parking tariffs especially if you only want to get something quick. Free 1/2 hour spaces never available as no way near enough. High st being closed is a real set back as don't want to use M&S any more as sometimes stuck in long queue to get back onto A48 as cant go down through the town back home to Tutshill.*
- *I travel by bus (to Cribbs Causeway), and all shops are available with a variety of prices not just posh over priced shops, Chepstow is untidy, and not very inviting to be honest, streets are full of rubbish, dog mess, spit and weeds*
- *I used to come into Town from Thornwell every day. Car park charges have increased to such an extent coupled with the choice of shops having reduced that it is a depressing experience, and the town is far from a vibrant place to visit. Whoever passed the plan to restrict the traffic in the main street cannot really be from this planet. The idea that pedestrians can use the road especially during the Pandemic is STUPID as traffic still has access and speeds up the hill coupled with cyclists racing down the street with no consideration at all for anyone.*
- *Better quality restaurants and settings. More variety of shops. We also visit lydney more frequently as parks, flower displays and childrens play areas are better maintained. Chepstow could do with investing more in its own parks and streets.*
- *Due to high street shut. Lack of shops. Paying for parking when other Mon. towns free. Q1 should be what changes would make you shop in Chepstow more....*
- *I prefer to drive further if I can park for free. I hate paying for parking & would only do it for a premium shopping day (ie Cabots Circus full day).*
- *I used to come into Chepstow often to go to Natwest. Now the bank has gone, there is no need for me to go in, so I might as well go somewhere where there are more shops. It takes 20 mins to get to Thornbury for example, and it's free to park.*
- *Free parking in Caldicot and other towns. Shops more appealing in other towns. Traffic is horrendous in Chepstow and MCC seem intent on running Chepstow into the ground with little regard for its residents. Expensive tree pots and badly designed restructuring is killing Chepstow, its just a commuter route now.*
- *I've lived in Chepstow for my life. The town has generally and over a period of time gone downhill. I don't fancy buying secondhand items, I own a house so don't need to visit the estate agents and I don't fancy sitting outside at an angle on pointless benches. I think that you could have made the road a one way system up to the arch, turn right and then pop back out onto the road by Costa. You could then have extended the pavement size on both sides of the road. Chepstow is a failure against the other market towns within the county. It's a affluent area with poor looking and un-inviting shops. You also have to ask yourself who would be brave enough to open a shop in Chepstow, from what I understand from a couple of shop owners, high rates are charged and for what? I love the town but it needs a complete shake up. Planners, councillors, decision makers need to get with the program.*

- *Parking is easy (in Cribbs Causeway) plus the town doesn't have what is needed. It's a pleasure to walk through the mall where there is a flow of people shopping. Chepstow you've managed to shut off apart from the market Sunday. I've seen the town when it was thriving, you could buy everything needed. I was raised in Bank St in 1947. The council took good parking to put a statue fisherman in place; why? No longer can people park closer to the high street. You've turned our town in to a tourist town. It's not suitable for residents anymore. I worked in the high street for several years and the street was always very busy. Now Barclays is closed... how much more is going? Plus you've closed our archway which is as solid as a rock since 1067 ish yet you say it's crumbling which isn't true and you say it to get your way and to close it. That is nonsense you need to open it. You're playing around with our town and not doing what's best for the people of Chepstow! No wonder shops are closing, it's dead. Get that Archway open please and quit shutting things down. Allow traffic to travel through again, it's part of the main attraction. This may be a tourist town now but before it was taken over by people who came to Chepstow, not people of the town originally, we had a lovely thriving town. We won't have that again if you keep the arch shut. You are isolating the high street.*
- *I'm no longer as young as I used to be!! I use the 65 bus service from Devauden to Chepstow & I don't mind the walk down the High Street where I can make purchases from the shops in the High Street & then go onto Tesco's - but the walk back up to the Bus station is a killer if I've done my weekly shop - I have to do it in stages! So it would be nice if more buses went to Tesco's & to the bus station. That is one of the reasons I shop more in Monmouth - the accessibility is much easier. And it would be nice if there was a Sunday bus service as I would love to visit Chepstow Market.*
- *Free parking, less traffic. Would love to use Chepstow more but parking fees and the traffic to get in make it unappealing which is a shame as there are some lovely shops and cafes I would like to be able to support more. Whilst you are looking at sustainable travel -how do we get heavy shopping back home?*
- *There's nothing in Chepstow worth parking and paying for. The ridiculous closure of the high street has caused mayhem for surrounding roads. I am in Chepstow most days for the school run but choose not to do any form of shopping there. Its costs to park and for what?... One clothes store, 10 million charity shops and a bank that's barely open. Like most, I now choose to do my shopping online or visit large retail parks. Chepstow needs something to encourage people back, what that is I don't know but its certainly not the place I remember growing up. The high street closure was the last straw for many.*
- *Chepstow high street is predominantly made up of low end chains and independent stores. It is a wonderful place to walk around and browse, and is becoming a nice place to stop and eat now it has been pedestrianised. I go to Bristol, or shop online when I know what I need and don't want to walk around searching for it.*
- *Access is now a REAL pain in teh bum so often just carry on to Bristol or Cardiff*
- *Chepstow is now lacking in a department store which was very useful. I go to Cribbs for items I would have purchased from Herbert Lewis.*

- *I live in Cardiff, run a company in Chepstow but when lease ends (June) I am moving out as frankly staff hate traffic issues since high street has closed, so that 5 people who will not be spending in town due to terrible management of traffic*
- *Limited choice, limited parking. I dislike visiting now the High Street is closed, as I don't like turning from Hardwicke Hill into Chepstow at the top, as the road is always congested around the bus station, and exiting back out is hazardous. Before, I would always drive down to the traffic lights to rejoin the A48. The poor state of the playground is also off putting, as I have a young child. It's just become much more of a hassle to visit now. I know it's a small thing, but the bridal shop moving from High Street has also reduced the appeal of visiting-their window was always a joy, and I always made a point of walking past it.*
- *Better shops where I live (Monmouth) and access in Chepstow is a nightmare now arch has closed, moving office to Monmouth when lease runs out in September partly due to the traffic problem in town*
- *I tend to shop online for most things. I love the market because there's lots of small business and I like supporting small businesses.*
- *The road situation is ridiculous. When there's an accident or traffic on the A48, there is no way to get from the bottom of town by Tesco up to the other side of Chepstow without going an hour out of your way. This means that all of the roads get blocked up and no traffic can move at all. What happens if there's a fire and the fire engines can't get to the emergency because of the blockages? A simple solution is to reopen the high street arch for traffic, it takes pressure off the A48 meaning less time idling and less emissions (compared to steadily moving traffic), and it gives you an option when the A48 is out of use (as it's the only option currently and accidents are happening all too frequently). I also think that driving through town might encourage more people to park up and visit, they'll spot a shop they want to go to, out of sight out of mind otherwise. As it is, the traffic puts people off coming into town (unless they are able bodied and can walk in, not an option for many of the residents of Chepstow) as they don't want to risk being stuck in traffic for hours and hours. Traffic situation is out of hand and it seems to be that some people think the emissions from the A48 don't reach the high street, which is absolutely ridiculous. It makes more difference having massive queues of cars for long periods of time compared to having cars moving steadily. I'm a young person (24 years old) and I feel very passionately about this issue, I feel that Chepstow is really suffering. Towns like Monmouth and Abergavenny that do not have major traffic flow problems are thriving and I wish Chepstow was able to do the same.*

4. Future of High Street

- 4.1 Respondents were asked for their views on how they use and would like to use the High Street area by rating eleven statements. The results are shown in the table below.
- 4.2 There are several challenges posed by these results. Respondents would like an improved town centre offering an improved shopping experience, more events and generally being more shopper focused but are not willing to put up with congestion and delays on A48 to achieve a more pleasant shopping environment (59%). The

closure of High Street has not increased walking and cycling by those taking part in the survey.

- 4.3 Nearly half of respondents (47%) do not share the view that the planters and parklets improve the appearance of the town centre compared to 37% who agreed or strongly agreed. There were no strong views on the level of cycle parking or outside seating.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I want a High Street that is convenient to drop into for shopping and other activities (usually for less than 1 hour)	48%	32%	13%	6%	1%
I want a High Street where I can spend a few hours in the shops and places to eat	44%	36%	14%	5%	1%
I want a High Street that is people focused rather than car focused	29%	14%	24%	18%	15%
Restricting traffic in High Street has an unacceptable impact on congestion on the A48	55%	12%	11%	10%	12%
I want a High Street that can be flexible and be used to accommodate events, markets and festivals	39%	36%	16%	6%	3%
I walk and cycle more in the town centre now that traffic is restricted	16%	10%	16%	22%	35%
I am willing to put up with some delay when using the A48 as it creates a more pleasant town centre	17%	13%	11%	20%	39%

High Street is more shopper friendly now it has less vehicular traffic	20%	15%	11%	24%	30%
There is plenty of public seating	10%	37%	35%	14%	4%
The planters and parklets improve the appearance of the High Street	13%	24%	17%	21%	26%
I would like more cycle parking	5%	14%	50%	16%	15%
I would like more outdoor places to sit for food and drink	13%	25%	32%	19%	9%

5. High Street Traffic Options

5.1 Section 3 asked respondents to order different options for traffic in High Street with the one they agree with most at the top, and the statement they most strongly disagree with at the bottom. These options are listed below by their level of support.

High Street should return to pre Covid arrangements with two way traffic 24/7 (49% consider this their top priority).

High Street should be reopened to two-way traffic but with time restrictions e.g. before 10am and after 4pm. (39% 2nd priority)

High Street should be one way downhill which would allow improvements to the physical environment yet still allow some traffic through. (44% 3rd priority)

High Street should be one way uphill which would allow improvements to the physical environment yet still allow some traffic through. (46% 4th priority)

High Street should remain as it is, with no access except to the disabled parking bays or for deliveries between 4pm and 10am. (52% 5th priority)

High Street should be pedestrianised only allowing pedestrians and cyclists access, with disabled parking relocated (57% priority)

	Strongly Agree					Strongly Disagree
Return to pre covid arrangements	947	168	91	87	94	552
As it currently is	245	293	90	119	1003	189
Time restricted traffic	284	763	331	279	255	27
Pedestrianised, disabled spaces relocated	268	217	70	61	218	1105
Up Hill traffic	99	208	498	887	202	45
Downhill traffic	96	290	859	506	167	21

6. What needs to change?

- 6.1 When asked what would encourage you to you to do more of your shopping/visits in the town centre, the overwhelming response was a better range of shops split 95% wanting a better range of general shops, 5% more speciality shops.
- 6.2 3% wanted improved pedestrian access, 4% more events, 1% late night shopping, 3% felt that nothing would make them visit more often as their shopping habits have changed where 2% specifically stated in the other box that free parking (1 hour or 2 hour) would encourage them back into the town centre.

7 Other comments

- 7.1 Respondents had the opportunity for additional comments in each of the sections of the questionnaire. 12% offered comments relating to the introduction of free parking, 1% commented on the planters, 12% offered examples of congestion on A48 and 3% raised the need for a bypass.

Selection of comments relating to free parking

- *Free parking on weekends*
- *To encourage small individual shops and restaurants into town. Have free parking for up to two hours and reduce other parking, as Abergavenny, Usk and other local towns.*
- *Free car parking always encourages people to come into a town, look how busier it is those few Saturdays before Christmas when there is free parking.*
- *Also look how busy Cwmbran always seems in comparison as they have free car parks.*
- *There is no need for high street to be closed to traffic now restrictions have been lifted. Driving to work and back is awful, always congested around Moor Street and onto the A48. I'm sure even one way traffic through the high street would ease this a bit. Free parking , at least for 2 hours would make it more likely for people to shop in town. Small businesses/retail in town won't be able to carry on at this rate. I live in*

- Chepstow and the high street is deserted unless it's a Sunday market day and there's free car spaces. It used to be a vibrant busy town and it's so sad to see now.*
- *Free parking for 2 hours. Move the disabled parking to areas off the High Street but still within easy distance. Stop traffic completely between 10 - 4.*
 - *Easy, free parking. Pedestrian crossing mid town e.g. near boots. Better signage to shops and arcade at bottom of town. Often missed by visitors.*
 - *Free parking for a number of days per week - like in Abergavenny*
 - *Increase free parking spaces with a time limit of 1 to 2 hrs free or make the first 1-2 hours cheaper*
 - *No traffic between 10am and 3pm then allow 2 way traffic outside these times. Close High St to traffic for markets and events*
 - *Free parking for at least 2 hours, far lower business rates to encourage more shops to open. I can drive to Caldicot and Thornbury and park for free*
 - *I run a food business in Chepstow town centre and the footfall we see on a daily basis is pitiful. The only customers who use my shop for lunch are people who also work in town. We get no trades people popping in and nobody doing office lunch runs. There is nowhere for these people to park for free and it's not convenient for them to spend money in Chepstow. There needs to be 30 minutes - 1 hour free parking in all car parks before a fee is charged or better yet make it completely free. I don't see how my and many other businesses will survive the year if something isn't done to bring people into the town.*

Selection of comments relating to planting

- *Have plenty of flowers in the planters, seating outside especially during Spring /Summer, it makes the town more appealing. About 4 years ago, the High Street was cleaned of rubbish EVERY day, why not now???*
- *Work being carried out in the town needs to be completed, Chepstow looks like an advert for a Scaffolding company, Peacocks need to be told that the signage on the front is unacceptable, the weed boxes (planters) require filling with flowers and not dull herbs with no colour, shop owners or occupiers should be made to be responsible for the look of the frontage of their property's, poor paintwork ect should not be acceptable*
- *I think the herb planters are a wonderful idea, I've used them frequently and feel they are a wonderful bonus to our insect and wildlife populations. Well done. I think having the markets weekly also encourages visitors, so keep this up. Finally just need the Herbert Lewis building filled to encourage more people to the area.*
- *Chepstow looks drab and uninviting to locals and tourists very expensive planter boxes full of weeds not flowers and parklets which are totally out of place in the high street. No one walks on road only pavements total waste of time and money. and the alterations down at Superdrug is there a crossing place or not there?*
- *Planters are full of weeds not flowers plantlets look more like bus shelters no one uses them a very expensive eyesore. people can't be dropped off by car anymore to do a quick shop or drop stuff off to the charity shops we have to find a parking spot and drag black bags to latter.*
- *I preferred the look of the old planters in the high street and the town as it was a more coherent and vibrant look and suited the town better. I appreciate the planting in the new containers/seating area was designed to be more pollinator friendly and/or of practical use with herbs etc but the flowering period on a lot of them was short,*

resulting in a fairly drab display. I also think that aesthetically the containers and seating areas looked cheap and out of keeping with the rest of the high street.

Selection of comments relating to A48

- *Traffic lights on A48 junction near M&S.*
- *Local people are fed up with queuing traffic on the A48 & congestion in Chepstow this discourages people from stopping in the high street!!!*
- *Traffic congestion is worst during rush hour, when very few shops are open. It is great having the high street pedestrianised during shopping hours (e.g. 10 am - 4 pm), but it would be really beneficial if traffic can use it outside those hours. This would help significantly with traffic build up that often occurs trying to get onto the A48 from the top of the high street. Traffic can be so bad it backs up along Welsh street and up to the leisure centre. Opening the high street at peak times would help alleviate that. If there is an accident in Chepstow nowadays, everything backs up very badly, as there is nowhere else for traffic to go. Opening the high street would also help in those situations.*
- *I walk in from Sedbury, the A48 is an awful road to walk along and the steps down to the bridge are impossible for people with disabilities. I would much prefer to walk to town than drive but the fumes on A48 are very bad, really bad for school children. A pedestrian bridge from Mabey would be amazing.*
- *There are consequences from closing the high street to vehicles. Traffic coming down Welsh Street now has to access the A48 via Moor street. Is the disabled parking in Moor Street really necessary? Cars parked there effectively turn the street into a single lane preventing two-way traffic flow. Also turning right from Moor street onto the A48 is nearly impossible when the A48 is busy, resulting in traffic tailing back down and blocking Moor street. I was also under the impression that cycles (being vehicles) were banned from cycling down the high street - cyclists appear to completely ignore this.*
- *allow traffic at peak times/on race days because town becomes gridlocked-getting onto the a48 at the top of town is a nightmare-having acces to the traffic lights by st marys church allows for more controlled access to the a48*
- *The air quality is poor not heeled by sitting traffic on the A48 / Welsh Street/Moor Street caused by not allowing the traffic to pass through t town and bottle necking because of the restrictions*
- *When there is a crash on bulwark corner on A48 there is no way through the high street to allow local traffic to continue moving.*
- *Regarding questions 8 and 11, I don't accept that congestion on the A48 has got worse because of the closure of the High St. Congestion on the A48 has always been bad, and new housing developments in Tutshill and beyond have more of an impact on the level of traffic heading through Chepstow. The High St is not really an alternative to the A48 as a thoroughfare.*
- *There should be an option to open the high street to traffic in the event of an accident causing severe delays on the A48*
- *It needs to have flexibility so when the A48 is gridlocked or struggling the high st can be opened like a flood gate, or a one way system set up to help the traffic problem, the traffic needs addressing and MCC need to take responsibility as they are allowing so many new builds but ignoring the traffic nightmare!*
- *I haven't lived here very long and have only previously been to Chepstow once before when the high st was open. I think there is lots of opportunity to make it a*

really lovely area - demolish the Barclays building and put a bandstand in to open the space up.

- You do need to work with Gloucestershire council to improve the A48, the bottlenecks through Chepstow will only get worse and every time there is an accident or breakdown it's chaos. I only drive through when I'm going out of the area so improving cycling, buses etc wouldn't really work for me on most occasions. With the requirements for more housing the traffic will only get worse and needs significant investment and I can't see opening the high st would make any significant change
- A semi pedestrianised high street, with proper well thought out planting and seating, would be such a great asset to the Town. Chepstow is a tourist town, it attracts people from all over the country. How nice if they, as well as the locals could enjoy quality time in a traffic free clean air zone. People who want the high street reopened just want to use it mainly as a rat run, when the A48 is congested, all that will do is move the problem to the high street and all surrounding routes. People seem to have short memories. When the high street was open to traffic, if there were problems on the A48, within 20 minutes the whole of Chepstow would be gridlocked. High street, the old bridge, the one way system round the lower town, Welsh street, and Moor street. Vehicles bumper to bumper, hardly moving, spewing out toxic fumes. Do we really want to go back to that situation. Lets move forward, and take Chepstow into the twenty first century, and not back to the past.
- It's clear Chepstow has huge traffic problems. A bypass is the only real answer, especially with all the new housing going up everywhere. As that is some way off, I think the suggestion of a motorway exit/entrance between caldicot and Rogiet would help Chepstow greatly. All traffic from that area would use that to access the motorway and therefore keep them from the Larkfield roundabout. It would also, I'm sure, encourage people from the Chepstow area to use public transport, and travel more by train.
- A second exit/entrance point for Bulwark, possibly at the Mathern road Flyover onto the link road. You could then stop the right turns into and out of the Bulwark corner/A48, freeing up Hardwick hill.
- For Chepstow residents the more important thing is how we can move around in Chepstow, it is not just about encouraging visitors etc., The A48 can be a nightmare and by forcing extra traffic coming down Welsh Street to turn up the B4293 to join the A48 to go towards Lydney serious congestion results, which also hinders the bus station traffic. If you want to go to lower Chepstow (i.e Castle Car Park area) you have to go out onto the A48 and then turn back into the town to access Middle and Bridge Streets - this means a lot of the time we just don't go.
- Why close the ONLY alternate to the A48 and make ALL traffic go up Hardwicke Hill just so the people can sit about drinking coffee pretending the High Street is a throbbing cultural hub when in reality it's been turned into a wasteland. A few tubs and chairs don't make a riveaire.
- Closing the high street to traffic is complete nonsense. When there is an accident on Hardwick Hill the backlog towards tutshill and lydney is dreadful. On a day to day basis we need access to the high Street for vehicles for those of us living over the old Wye bridge as its a ridiculous detour going on the A48. The pavements in the high street are already very wide and provide ample space for social distancing, something which is becoming part of our past now anyway. Move forward Chepstow with the times. Only Marmalade House bothered with outdoor seating, there is no need to stop traffic in the high street. The planters look like thThe current solution looks a bit half-arsed and it could be made to look better when a permanent solution is implemented.

- *If the pedestrianisation option is to stay then the A48 junction needs a redesign to allow right turning traffic to join the A48 more easily and/or allow left turning traffic to flow more freely while others are waiting to turn right. The option to open up the high street to traffic needs to be retained and utilised when there is an accident or roadworks on the A48 to ease the congestion during these exceptional times.*
- *A pedestrianised high street would be lovely if we lived in the Mediterranean and the A48 wasn't the most congested A road on South Wales .. just open it!*
- *The traffic on the A48 and the journey time to travel from say Welsh street to the tutshill direction is appalling. Travelling through the arch via the high street is incredibly efficient and conducive to a more optimal traffic management system.*
- *Restricted access is understandable and obviously ultimately desirable but we need it to be available for relief when traffic flow is at its busiest or when accidents and blockages occur on the A48. Having stationary traffic sitting for miles through Chepstow further polluting the area completely defeats common sense for me. However I totally emphasis with your predicament . Good luck*
- *Hardwick Terrace (B4293) should be widened slightly to allow two lanes at the point just before it meets the A48 to improve traffic flow. Vehicles turning left onto the A48 get stuck behind vehicles turning right.*
- *Making parking within Chepstow free would encourage more people to frequent the High Street. The closure to the High Street has no correlation to congestion on the A48. The several thousand houses in Gloucestershire and the congestion caused by traffic waiting to turn right into Greggs and Subway 50M from the St Lawrence roundabout are far more to blame.*

Selection of general comments

- *Strengthen links between Chepstows strongest asset...The castle...by providing tuk tuk vehicle as a shuttle between castle and town.(tuk tuks are used on a campsite in Kilgetty, Pembs). Can also get electric...or some horse and carriage to bring day trippers to the town, or take them to the castle from the town, after eating and shopping.*
- *The traffic that comes from the a48 round the corner past Henry's bar comes round too fast and is dangerous, could a speed camera be put up please?*
- *There is a lack of quality retailers and hospitality venues in Chepstow Hight street to warrant closing the high street. The negative impact on the traffic during peak hours and emergencies when the a48 outweighs any positive impact that closing the High street has. Given Chepstow's unique hilly nature it is unrealistic to think that cycling or walking routes offer a realistic alternative to 90% of the population of the ageing town*
- *The variety and quality of shops are really poor. The high street looks scruffy with the planters, they don't actually enhance the high street it makes it look odd. I agree high street should be closed for weekly markets. I only use chepstow for the corner shop to return Hermes parcels, post office, which I use the 30min parking bays. Quayside salon by the river which they have free parking. When I need to go into town I dread the traffic and driving around for spaces is stressful. It's so off putting*
- *Weekly Sunday market is fantastic for town. More events to bring people in. Shutting the high street to traffic has caused traffic chaos at commute times. This is putting people off driving to visit Chepstow they can travel to caldicot easier, there is free parking and more choice of shops now that Aldi, Asda are drawing more customers.*

- The Dell play park is not fit for purpose, if there were upgrades made more families would visit bringing more footfall into the high street*
- *The present situation with the closure of the High St makes it less of a pleasure than pre-covid, it is a ghost town with only the handful of coffee shops benefitting from it.*
 - *Delivery vehicles are still using the High St, the access for disabled vehicles is problematic and confusing as it is not truly pedestrianised which makes it dangerous with the planters and seating causing obstructions.*
 - *The town is dying in front of our eyes, reverse this nonsensical situation and allow the traffic back through the town bringing the passing trade with it and avoiding the almost daily traffic chaos.*
 - *Heaven forbid there is an accident where emergency vehicles cannot get through the jams, this happened years ago when a one way system was introduced. Consider the adverse publicity when a delay will contribute to serious injury, or worse, due to the emergency services get caught in the Council made traffic jams!*
 - *I used to shop in Chepstow centre every couple of days, now I do so perhaps once a month.*
 - *I find it much harder to shop in town now the High St is closed, mainly because it's much harder to drive to & from the car parks. Firstly the traffic is worse so it's harder to get there in the first place, and if you can't find a space in one, you can't just drive straight to the other one, you've got to go fight your way through the traffic all the way round the A48 and down to Welsh St, or vice versa, sometimes round the bottom of town too, and it's just not worth the hassle.*
 - *It used to be you could come down the A48, easy turn left, check the car park by the church and if there's nothing there, just swing up the High St and into the Welsh St car park. A minute's easy drive and no bad junctions. Now you have to queue through the junctions at Tesco, try to get across that awful (often scary) junction by the party shop and fight your way down past the inevitable parked cars making it a single track road down the hill by the bus station.*
 - *Even once you find a space, you get charged over the odds to park or wait ages and fight the obnoxious queue jumpers for one of the free 30min spaces.*
 - *All this means it's no longer feasible to go into town for a short time, such as over a lunch break, due to the hassle in getting parked, and it's not worth going in for a longer period because of the parking costs.*
 - *It's sadly just not worth nipping into Chepstow to pick up a fresh lunch, a magazine, a coffee, a greetings card or similar with the access arrangements as they are.*
 - *If there was free parking for stays up to 90 or 120mins and a better car access experience (such as we had when High St was open), I would go into town to get a coffee and browse the shops like I used to. But I'm not prepared to suffer the ridiculous driving arrangements and parking fees just for a walk around town to pick up one or two items with things as they are now.*
 - *Free parking for 1st hour will encourage visitors, current parking charges are off-putting. Currently the town centre is very difficult to navigate e.g. drive from Welsh Street to Bridge Street as A48 traffic is awful. I don't even know if I can cycle through town - it's confusing. The pedestrianised High Street is pleasant and an enjoyable place to visit (if you can get there) but it has added to severe traffic problems on A48. Perhaps if a bypass goes ahead (clearly needed), then with less traffic on the A48 a pedestrianised High Street will be a great thing. Particularly if combined with revised parking charges which encourage visitors.*
 - *Get rid of the Barclays Bank building it is out of place and would open up the high street. Use incentive to attract a better range of shops to chepstow high street. Have a range of shops . Artisan grocer butcher baker deli. Do not allow M&S cafe to*

encourage use of local cafes. More space for local cafes to have outside seating at front. More free parking for locals, free busses on Saturdays for locals (to encourage usage rather than cars) you could do this once a month or more-for all (not just oaps) the cost is prohibitive for family's living in surrounding villages and town. More footpaths into town.

- At present the high street is neither fish nor foul. Pedestrianisation is a joke when on every visit I see cars parked and or moving about. Those cars are no doubt there because their passengers cannot access the town on foot. As a result of the bleak outlook the High Street is generally not a pleasant place to visit and businesses are not getting the custom they need. I was initially in favour of pedestrianisation but have sadly changed my mind. My initial high minded view that people should walk not drive have been overturned. Let the cars back in, provide access to all, including the disabled and the lazy, so the High Street has a chance to be revitalised NOW not in months and months time. However the high street must be able to be closed for special events including the Sunday Market. Parking and business support are important factors which need to be taken on board.
- If the Barclays building remains unoccupied (judging by HLewis it may) then knock it down and pave the area and encourage outdoor eating areas and bars (seating outside where Barclays was). The building is an concrete eyesore and occupies a central location.
- If I had a magic wand I would probably relocate the Barclays Bank building and turn the area into a parking and plaza area with seating. I would allow cars access through the high street, with access to short stay FREE parking. I would invest in parks as everyone in Chepstow gets in their cars to travel to parks in Bristol, Lydney, anywhere else. A good play park with a coffee shop or even an ice cream stand would increase visitors to the town and locals to meet up. Local businesses can't stay in business if rents are too high. Money was wasted on the zebra crossing debacle - this money needs to be directed towards modernisation of our town to make it a place that play want to visit or want to stay,

Selection of comment in support of pedestrianisation

- We are a family with two young children. We don't want to encourage driving but to have an hour's free parking in one of the car park once or twice a week would be good. The car parks are great, no distance from the High Street and easy to walk from. They also encourage people to visit shops other than those on the High Street. We like the fact that there is no pollution or congestion on the High Street - it is a safer and more relaxing space which we now visit more. Perhaps a permanent covered area would be good for people to rest or sit or for live music or a pop-up store? Perhaps a small outside museum or some kind of monthly art installation? The main problem for the High Street is national government in terms of business rates, the way in which internet companies are taxed and the expansion of out of town shopping. How about putting a gym in a High Street store? Or some other kind of shared leisure space? Certainly don't open it up again. The only legitimate argument I have heard along those lines is perhaps having it open at certain times to traffic but in my six years of using it most days, the only people who drove up and stopped were the elderly and men in white vans going to Greggs. So long as there is adequate disabled parking then I don't see what the issue is with it being how it is right now. The four of us prefer it now.

- *The Chepstow high street cannot compete for the type of shops that are in the Bristol Cribbs shopping centre. The Chepstow high street would be better trying to appeal to shoppers for leisure activities and therefore try to attract more small independent shops, regular markets and coffee bars etc. If the high street was opened up for traffic again, that would completely destroy the attraction of Chepstow for leisure shopping. Free parking would encourage more people to come to Chepstow.*
- *The closure of the High Street to traffic makes a much more appealing environment to visit. Whilst any impact on congestion to surrounding roads is unfortunate, Abergavenny shows just what can be achieved when bold decisions are made to make high streets people-focused.*
- *The high street looks deserted since cars have gone. Limited closing (11-3) would be acceptable but during peak traffic times the impact on the A48 is unacceptable.*
- *Please keep the high street pedestrian only. Creates a huge benefit to the town and a much more pleasant environment. Great to have one place without cars!*
- *People who think that opening a one way medieval gateway will alleviate the traffic on A48 are deluded. We need a proper solution to Chepstow's traffic issue. Also those who rant about not being able to park outside the shops to "pop in" are so frustrating too.*
- *Closing to vehicles really has made the high street a much more pleasant and healthier place to be. There is plenty of parking nearby anyway, and it is nice to be part of a town that is putting healthy living, pedestrians and cycling first.*
- *Don't reopen to cars as it will just become a ratrun for those who have no intention of using its facilities, despite what they protest. Sheer volume of individual cars trying to get to Bristol etc. is the reason for A48 congestion. Not because the high st is closed. Reopening would make little difference & turn it into a car park belching fumes waiting for the traffic lights, further ruining the town. High streets all over the UK are suffering in the same way with high rents & reduced footfall, even Oxford St in London. Chepstow must think progressively and include Bulwark etc into how the 'town' works - cheap, regular buses etc*



Name of the Officer Mark Hand

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Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal

Reopening Chepstow's High Street to vehicular traffic

An Emergency Traffic Order was put in place in June 2020 to close Chepstow High Street to traffic except for blue badge holders accessing the parking bays on Bank Street and except for deliveries to businesses between 4pm and 10am. The purpose of the Order was to enable social distancing and outdoor trading during the covid-19 pandemic. In September 2021, the then Cabinet approved an Experimental Order which maintained this closure (or allowed for amendments) as a trial for up to 18 months. This was to enable time to explore and consult on options for potential permanent changes to Chepstow's town centre, with the intention of making the High Street more people-friendly, less car-dominated and better suited to the changing role of our high streets.

In March 2022, a first stage of consultation was undertaken to seek views on the long-term future of the High Street. The results showed a clear majority preference for the High Street to be re-opened to vehicular traffic. Based on a number of factors including this consultation response, the newly elected County Councillors for Chepstow and the post-election Steering Group for the Transforming Chepstow Masterplan (formerly known as the Chepstow Placemaking Plan) unanimously requested that the High Street be re-opened to traffic. This request is supported by the Cabinet Member for Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods.

Cabinet is now invited to decide whether or not to revoke the Experimental Order relating to Chepstow High Street. Revoking the Order would re-open the High Street to vehicular traffic as per the pre-covid arrangements

Name of Service area: Placemaking, Highways and Flooding	Date 11 th July 2022
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1. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	There is a potential perception that some older pedestrians and motorists might have found the trial confusing because the High Street was neither fully open to traffic nor fully closed to traffic. Re-opening the High Street to vehicles as per the pre-pandemic arrangements will return to a tradition pavement and carriageway arrangement.	Parklets and planters provided additional street seating allowing people with limited mobility to rest and people with no outdoor space at home a safe outdoor space to meet family and friends. These will have to be removed.	Where possible, planters and parklets will be relocated locally.
Disability	Some blue badge holders reported issues with being abused by others when legitimately driving up High Street to access the disabled person parking bays on Bank Street, because some people didn't realise they were allowed to do so.	Parklets and planters provided additional street seating allowing people with limited mobility to rest and people with no outdoor space at home a safe outdoor space to meet family and friends. These will have to be removed.	The net increase in disabled person parking bays provided as part of the trial measures will be retained. This amounted to 10 additional bays in Chepstow.
Gender reassignment	No impact	No impact	-

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Marriage or civil partnership	No impact	No impact	-
Pregnancy or maternity	No impact	Parklets and planters provided additional street seating allowing expectant or new parents to rest and feed children. These parklets will have to be removed.	-
Race	No impact	No impact	-
Religion or Belief	No impact	No impact	-
Sex	No impact	No impact	While it is not considered that the trial closure (or re-opening High Street to vehicles) has a disproportionate impact on females, it is noted that 63% of respondents to the first consultation were female, and of all respondents, 1105 agreed or strongly agreed that High Street should re-open to vehicles while 552 strongly disagreed.
Sexual Orientation	No impact	No impact	-

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice	<p>The Social Justice strategy focuses on three main areas: tackling loneliness and isolation; tackling poverty and promoting equitable economic prosperity; and giving children the best start in life.</p> <p>Supporting our High Streets will enable everyone to access a range of shops and services locally.</p> <p>Retail and hospitality businesses provide a significant number of valued job opportunities. Supporting people to shop locally and buy goods and services locally supports the retention of those jobs.</p>	None	

3. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	The trial closure sought to create a safe and attractive environment for shoppers to return to our High Streets to support local businesses and enhance the prosperity and vitality in a town	

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	centre. Feedback from businesses suggests the closure is not supported and the benefits have not been realised. Unfortunately, the impacts of the pandemic and associated increase in on-line shopping, together with a reduction in traffic levels prior to lockdown rules being removed, potentially mean other wider issues are being conflated with the High Street closure.	
A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	The proposals sought to create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists and to encourage active travel instead of car use. Re-opening the High Street to vehicles does not support these objectives.	The planters and parklets will be re-used locally if possible.
A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	The proposals sought to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists as well as support businesses. Active travel is being promoted and supported by government as a way to engender a healthier lifestyle. Re-opening the High Street to vehicles does not support these objectives.	
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	The trial closure sought to create a safe and attractive environment for shoppers to return to our High Streets to support local businesses and enhance the prosperity and vitality in a town centre. Feedback from the initial consultation suggests the trial has not been welcomed: one positive of the decision to re-open the High	The Transforming Chepstow Masterplan (previously known as Chepstow Placemaking Plan) and the WG Transforming Towns grants offer opportunities for regeneration of the town centre.




Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>Street to vehicles is that the majority opinion will have been listened to.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the impacts of the pandemic and associated increase in on-line shopping, together with a reduction in traffic levels prior to lockdown rules being removed, potentially mean other wider issues are being conflated with the High Street closure.</p>	
<p>A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>The project is about the economic health of our High Streets but the physical health of our communities is paramount. Measures encourage active travel will not be supported by re-opening the High Street to vehicles. However, businesses consider that it will support them.</p>	
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p>Monmouthshire is a county of historic market towns blessed with high quality independent traders and tourism attractions. As such, it is important that our towns and villages are attractive to visitors and tourism. Supporting the vitality of the high street is important in achieving this objective. Opponents to re-opening the High Street to vehicles will argue that the move will be detrimental to the town centre's vitality and future. Supporters of the proposal will argue it makes the town centre</p>	



Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	more accessible by re-opening a n important through-route.	
<p>A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p>Monmouthshire has a greater proliferance of small businesses than any other county in Wales. It was hoped that the trial would create an environment to support those seeking to invest or expand in retail thereby adding to the prosperity of our towns.</p>	

4 Policy making and the Welsh language.

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
Policy Making Effects on the use of the Welsh language, Promoting Welsh language Treating the Welsh language no less favourably	n/a	n/a	-
Operational Recruitment & Training of workforce	n/a	n/a	-
Service delivery Use of Welsh language in service delivery Promoting use of the language	n/a.	n/a	-

5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>The trial closure has not been popular with the majority and re-opening the High Street to vehicles responds to the majority view arising from the first consultation.</p>	<p>There may be future opportunities to explore alternatives but at this time, changes are not supported by the local community or businesses.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>The trial closure has not been popular with the majority and re-opening the High Street to vehicles responds to the majority view arising from the first consultation.</p>	
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>The trial measures were drafted in collaboration with County Councillors, Town and Community Councils and business representatives sitting on the Business Resilience Forum. A community survey received nearly 1500 responses which have helped shape the measures proposed. A further survey helped inform active travel proposals to support town centres. However, the first consultation considering longer term changes has shown that the trial closure has not been popular with the majority and re-opening the High Street to vehicles responds to the majority view arising from the first consultation.</p>	<p>The Transforming Chepstow Masterplan offers an opportunity for the community to help shape the town's future.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p data-bbox="152 531 293 560">Prevention</p> <p data-bbox="344 293 506 592">Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p data-bbox="544 256 1328 632">The trial closure has not been popular with the majority and re-opening the High Street to vehicles responds to the majority view arising from the first consultation. However well-intentioned, changes to support Chepstow town centre will only work if the community supports them. In the light of the consultation responses, the significant majority want the High Street to re-open to vehicles with many saying the trial closure deterred them from using the town centre.</p>	
 <p data-bbox="152 911 293 940">Integration</p> <p data-bbox="344 668 517 932">Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p data-bbox="544 668 1267 868">The Council and Town Council are co-producing a Placemaking Plan and are seeking to engage with local businesses and the local community to understand and act upon their feedback where appropriate and possible.</p>	

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6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	Not applicable		
Corporate Parenting	Not applicable		

7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

The trial measures were drafted in collaboration with County Councillors, Town and Community Councils and business representatives sitting on the Business Resillience Forum. A community survey received nearly 1500 responses which have helped shape the measures proposed. A further survey helped inform active travel proposals to support town centres. However, the first consultation considering longer term changes has shown that the trial closure has not been popular with the majority and re-opening the High Street to vehicles responds to the majority view arising from the first consultation.

8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

The trial closure has not been popular with the majority of respondents and re-opening the High Street to vehicles responds to the results of the first consultation. Some respondents say this change will encourage them back into the town centre, which in turn will support local businesses. The proposal will not promote active travel over the use of private vehicles. It will however enable proposals for buses to stop on High Street again as part of a separate project, albeit that other options such as one way traffic or part time closures could have achieve this objective too.

9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Implement Cabinet's decision to re-open the High Street to vehicles by revoking the Experimental Order	Asap after the decision is made	Mark Hand

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10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Cabinet	11 th July 2022	