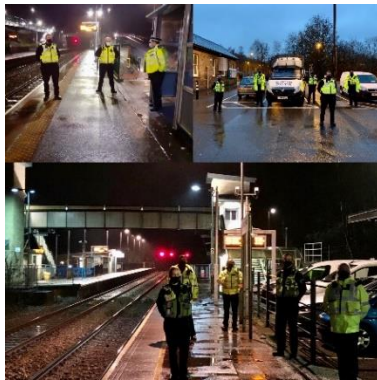
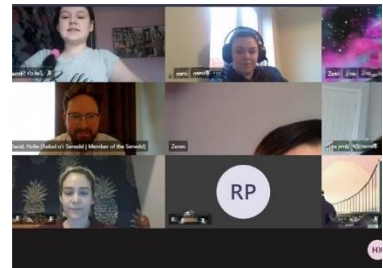
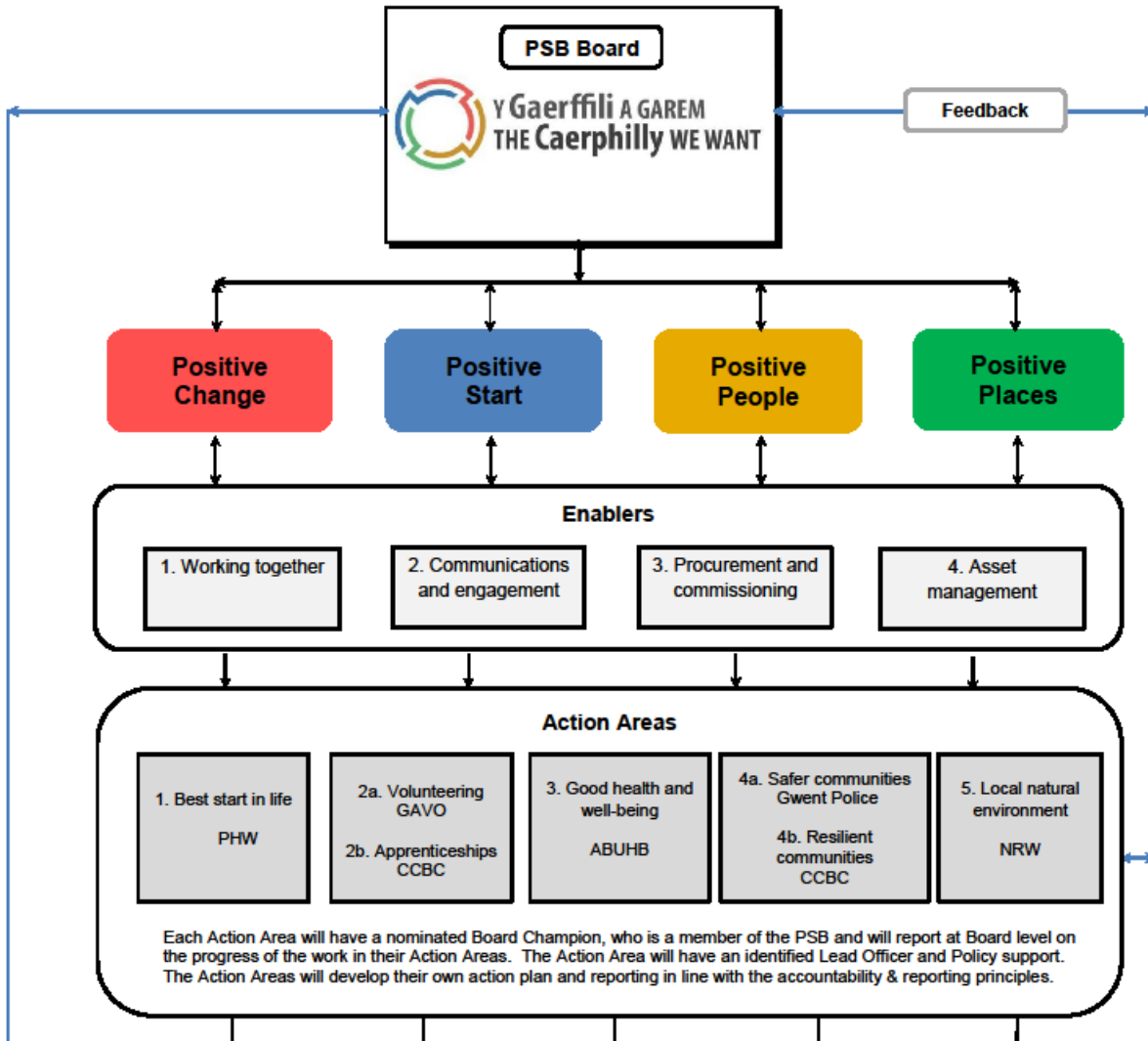


# Caerphilly Public Services Board Annual Report 2020/21



# The 'Caerphilly We Want' Well-being Plan

The Well-being Plan sets four overarching Objectives (the four Positives) – Positive Change, Positive Start, Positive People and Positive Places. This framework sets out how the work to achieve these Objectives (the Plan) was structured, managed and monitored. These are supported and underpinned by four Enablers and this is illustrated in the diagram below:



The Plan was originally made up of six Action Areas, but as we implemented the Plan, we concluded that additional needs required the addition of a new Action Area, and therefore the “Caerphilly Cares” Action Area has been included this year. This Annual Report is structured to reflect these Action Areas and Enablers as set out below - you can click on the relevant heading and go straight to the individual section of the report in detail if you choose.

## **Main Contents**

[Introduction from the Chair of the Caerphilly Public Services Board](#)

### **Action Areas**

[Action Area 1 – Best start in life](#)

[Action Area 2a – Volunteering](#)

[Action Area 2b – Job growth and employability support \(formerly titled Apprenticeships\)](#)

[Action Area 3 – Good health and well-being](#)

[Action Area 4a – Safer communities](#)

[Action Area 4b – Resilient communities](#)

[Action Area 5 – Protect and enhance the local natural environment](#)

[Action Area 6 – Caerphilly Cares](#) – a new Action Area added in 2021

### **Enablers**

[Enabler 1 – Communications and engagement](#)

[Enabler 2 – Procurement](#)

[Enabler 3 – Asset management](#)

We have also given separate updates on the following two areas which are crosscutting across several of the main Activity Areas:

[Youth services](#)

[Welsh language and culture](#)

### **And finally**

[Looking to the future](#)

[Measuring our progress](#)

[Contact us](#)

## **Introduction from the Chair of the Caerphilly Public Services Board, Councillor Philippa Marsden**

Welcome to the Annual Report from the Caerphilly Public Services Board (PSB) for 2020/21, highlighting progress made against the 'Caerphilly We Want' Well-being Plan 2018-2023. This year's report covers the period from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 as last year's report was delayed due to responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. The report provides great examples of how all partners of the Caerphilly PSB have continued to respond to the challenges that have come our way, in what has been a very difficult year for us all.

The Caerphilly Public Services Board dissolved this year, in favour of the merging with our partners to form a Gwent PSB. This followed an Audit Wales report into the effectiveness of PSBs, which recommended (amongst other things) that PSBs develop flexible models of working such as merging. The five separate PSBs in Gwent had already collaborated on a number of regional projects, for example, the provision of electric vehicle charging points and a review of public sector building assets. Merging provides a more simplified and streamlined model and closer alignment with other existing regional boards, such as the Regional Partnership Board and Safeguarding Boards.

Although the Caerphilly PSB has dissolved as part of the creation of a Gwent PSB, the current Well-being Plan still has nearly two years left to run. Local Delivery Groups within each local authority area in Gwent are being set up to ensure the continued delivery of the existing Well-Being Plans, and to contribute to the well-being objectives for Gwent. The Caerphilly Board Champions from the former PSB are committed to supporting the delivery of the Action Areas in the current Well-being Plan, in order to support collaborative activity, to agree performance reports and to support the local authority scrutiny process until 2023. Performance updates will continue to be added to the Caerphilly PSB website until the end of the current Well-being Plan.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act places a duty on PSBs to produce a local Assessment of Well-being every five years. Because of the plans to merge, the five PSBs in the Gwent region have been undertaking the next assessment process in collaboration, producing a single assessment for the whole of Gwent, with local assessments for communities in each local authority area. The next Plan will be on a Gwent wide basis, with plans for the local areas included, and will be published by 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

I have been privileged to have chaired the Caerphilly PSB, working with highly skilled and dedicated people from public and voluntary services across Caerphilly county borough. I would like to thank the Board for the help and support over that period, and I look forward to continuing as the Chair of the Gwent PSB for the next 2 years, ably assisted by staff at Caerphilly CBC, who have also taken on the role of coordinating the Gwent PSB activities for the first two years.



## Action Area 1 - Best start in life

During the last 18 months we have responded to the Covid-19 pandemic which, while presenting various challenges, has also created numerous opportunities.

The Early Years Integration Transformation Programme work – developing and testing our early years antenatal to 7 years model – has taken a huge step forward in Caerphilly county borough and has been embraced as a new way of working by all partners.

During the summer of 2020, Families First and Flying Start were due to recommission all projects for delivery from April 2021. The Best Start in Life programme gave us a different perspective on what services should be commissioned and pushed us towards developing a single system delivery model. Jointly funded projects for universal language development schemes were awarded to GAVO, and community forum and peer group support funding was awarded to The Parent Network.

Families told us that they wanted a simplified system where they only had to tell their story once, with people responding to their needs, rather than offering a menu of potential solutions from different providers. The Early Years Hub has been developed with the team, who have “What Matters” conversations to help understand the needs of the families and the root causes needing to be addressed. They then coordinate the requests for support and arrange for the worker to contact the family to offer bespoke support.

In September 2021, we looked at how we can co-locate Flying Start and generic health visiting teams with local authority teams in integrated hubs across the county borough. Although this is still early in development, it is proving to be a positive way forward to improve communication, share information and skills, helping build relationships and move toward the aim of providing better support for families.

The families have responded well and although the county borough wide model is only 6 months old, already the feedback is very positive. There are many requests for support from families, with the team currently working with 920 children in early intervention, plus all the children accessing childcare or other more universally funded support.

### Feedback quotes from families

*“We have learnt so many strategies now on understanding our child’s needs and how to deal with his behaviours. The support we have received has been invaluable to making our home life much better and now there is less friction as we all use the same strategies and parenting approaches. Life is much happier, and our son is making progress in school as the school also understands his needs” – Parent of child who transitioned to school. Social Communication Needs Advisor*

*“Mum did not have a routine in place, so we worked out routine that would help her get into daily routine. After two days she rang me to say it was going well and has made her life easier, and the children were listening more and going to bed earlier” – Family Support*

*"I just want to say thank you for the support you've given me. I don't think I would be where I am today without it. I feel more like me again" – Family Support*

*"Thank you for everything you're doing you do know your helping me get one step closer to the kids and that means the world. You've given me loads to think about and take in as they grow up. When I've done the last course now, I can do that assessment and know fully where I went wrong and hopefully get them back one day" – Bespoke support in Safeguarding situation*

*"This is the best thing I've ever done. Thank you so much for offering this to me. It's made me cry, made me laugh but also made me realise I'm a good parent and I have an excellent relationship with my child" – Video Interactive Guidance*

*"X has loved receiving the nursery rhyme packs. He is singing all the time, even when he is in bed, I can hear him on the baby monitor. S loves singing and sings all the time. She has started singing more nursery rhymes since having the packs" – Early Language support*

*"I have found K and her colleagues invaluable in supporting me and my family. K has always been approachable and non-judgmental. She has earned my trust after previous experiences of people in 'authority' immediately judging and threatening my family with referrals if we did not do what they wanted us to do. This had made my wary of opening up and seeking the help I needed. K has supported me through difficult times and helped me get the help we needed without forcing it on me".*

*"The Solihull and PNP courses that are offered are fantastic in providing an opportunity to learn about how children develop and how to be a better parent. They also helped me see that I was not alone and helped me find a support network of other parents. The STEPS course is helping me change my long-entrenched thinking and to recognise the impact negative self-talk has on me and those around me."*

*"Though the face to face support and groups had to stop once the pandemic hit, K continued to support us as best as she could. I always knew that she was just a text away if I needed advice or support. The virtual party she organised for the babies' second birthdays was a great way to get us back together and re-engaged with the support that was available."*

*"The support offered by this team has been a godsend and I don't think we would be doing as well as we are without it."*



01 -Mum and baby enjoying support from BSIL project

[Return to main contents page](#)

## Action Area 2a - Volunteering

The Volunteering Action Area continues to be a key focus in our well-being agenda for the county borough, as it has significant impacts on each of the four Well-being Objectives. Positive volunteering continues to provide volunteers with benefits ranging from gaining new skills, boosting career prospects, a sense of achievement and enjoying better physical and mental health. And during the Covid-19 pandemic, volunteering opportunities have greatly increased the scope to connect people with their communities.

The Volunteering Action Plan now incorporates the Caerphilly Cares Model and linked into this, the partnership between Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) and Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO). GAVO has jointly employed a Volunteer Coordinator with the council through the Buddy Scheme initiative, looking at the recruitment of volunteers from within the CCBC staff pool and externally, to provide support for vulnerable and isolated people in the county borough.

The Volunteering Wales platform has also been key in supporting the recruitment of volunteers throughout the pandemic for PSB partners as well as Covid -19 related activities including Ffrind i Mi, Prescription Riders, The Parish Trust and Risca CV19 (CVUK).

A key priority has been to communicate the understanding of key policy changes, and GAVO has been instrumental in liaising with Welsh Government and the Wales Council for Voluntary Organisations (WCVA) on these changes, updating and communicating them to voluntary organisations when needed.

Following the merger of the PSBs in Gwent into a single regional PSB, the passion to continue the volunteering movement with the Action Area will remain at the forefront of PSB partners thoughts throughout the next year.

The following are examples of some of the initiatives that have taken place via the voluntary sector in the county borough over the last year.

### Quotes from volunteers at Taraggan Educational Gardens

*“Stephen – I am 37 years of age and have attended the Taraggan Educational Gardens for the past 7 years. I enjoy my experiences and meeting new people and interacting socially with them. I maintain the raised beds and today have planted carrots. I love it.”*

Phil is 66 years of age and has attended the project for the past 4 years. *“In January I became a pensioner, I get bored in the house, so I now attend 3 days a week. This stimulates my mind and keeps me moving.”*

*Julie is 50 years of age – Platform placement. “Amazing how my experiences have lifted my spirits personally, it has changed my life completely, as prior to this engagement I felt down and depressed. I enjoy the giving and sharing and becoming a team leader, I have also overcome my fear of bees and now manage the beehives.”*



02 - Volunteers at Tarragon Educational Gardens



03 Volunteers at Tarragon Educational Gardens



04 - Caerphilly Volunteering Team



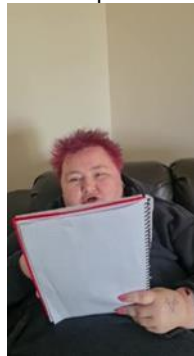
05 - St Gwladys Church Hall - Community Cupboard project helpers



06 - St Gwladys Church Hall - Community Cupboard project – clothes for sale



07 - St Gwladys Church Hall - Community Cupboard project helpers



08 - Liberty Cares Supported Living Resident



09 - Eva @ RecRock Breakout Festival



10 - Blackwood Youth (Cash4U Mural Project)/Friends of Cefn Forest Ecopark



11 - Blackwood Youth (Cash4U Mural Project)/Friends of Cefn Forest Ecopark



12- Video of the full Cefn Forest Ecopark Mural





13 - Groundwork Wales - polytunnel as it was when returning from lockdown



14 – Groundwork Wales polytunnel after restoration work



15 – Groundwork Wales – example of waste removed from river

[Return to main contents page](#)



## **Action Area 2b - Jobs growth and employability support (formerly titled Apprenticeships)**

### **Employability support**

Employment support has seen a significant resurgence, particularly in the last 6 months, as the economy has continued to reopen and participants have begun to re-engage in greater numbers. There have been ongoing challenges, including ongoing restrictions on face-to-face training and limitations on public transport. However, we have seen a return to face-to-face support for the most vulnerable customers.

The pandemic has further highlighted the barriers to employment faced by specific demographics, most notably those with disabilities or work limiting health conditions. However, changing working conditions such as increased home working has also led to a greater potential for better accessibility and flexibility across many sectors. As such, the employment support programmes have placed a greater focus on supporting participants with a disability or work limiting health condition into employment. This led to the introduction of disability champions within the teams, together with additional emphasis on identifying accessible opportunities with employers as part of the ongoing business liaison process.

Engagement remained predominantly via remote means, including social media and the development of an employment podcast. Whilst these methods have continued to yield success, it is nevertheless apparent that there remains a hard-to-reach section of our local communities who can only be engaged through more intensive community activity. Through the summer months, the teams were able to return slowly to more face-to-face methods of engagement and attendance at specific events. Engagement plans moving forward are now expected to include further increased levels of in person work within communities.

Within the reporting period, employment support programmes based within the county borough have supported hundreds of people into employment and training.

### **Business liaison**

Business liaison remains an integral part of the success of this Action Area, including the development of several key relationships and pathways, as employers continued to expand following the restrictions of the previous year. The pandemic presented key challenges for employers in certain sectors, such as labour shortages within the hospitality sector. We are working to address these via innovative solutions, such as developing enhanced pathway training or encouraging employers to consider options for shared employee transport where poor public transport options due to unsociable hours present a clear barrier.

The pandemic has led to a noticeable shift in job seekers' expectations towards positions which offer greater flexibility around the demands of family life. Business liaison staff have worked hard to balance this with the needs of employers. For example, teams have worked with Transcend Packaging to trial varying shift patterns to align more effectively with family

schedules, resulting in us supporting them to fill several shifts. A digital case study showing some of the work with Transcend Packaging can be viewed on the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-obXn6Bv3Sk>

Staff across PSB member organisations, including CCBC and Coleg y Cymoedd, have been working with employers to develop specific training pathways for local jobseekers, enabling them to develop the skills to meet recruitment needs. Over the last 6 months, pathways have been developed for the contact centre and hospitality sectors, resulting in significant successes in participants progressing into employment. Business liaison teams have also been working closely with the Council's Procurement Team, to build employment support and social value considerations into procurement forward work plans, linking the work of both teams to produce the best possible outcomes for contractors, CCBC and local job seekers.

## Workforce growth

Alongside the work outlined above to grow local jobs, PSB partners have been working to develop additional career entry routes, such as paid placements and apprenticeships. Not only do these opportunities provide individuals with access to careers at varying entry levels, but they enable employers to plan for the future needs of their organisation by growing their workforce internally. Within CCBC, the Caerphilly Academy remains a key part of this process, providing a co-ordinated gateway for placements, aided by a dedicated mentor who is able to support individuals on placement to maximise the success of each opportunity. The Academy is preparing to support 9 apprentices within the authority and is planning the rollout of paid placements in the coming months.

Another major focus of the PSB has been the ongoing rollout of the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) Kickstart scheme, which provides 6-month paid employment placements for young people. A variety of organisations have committed to hosting placements, including CCBC, which will host 10 placements. The authority has also committed £500k to develop internal apprenticeships, in line with workforce development needs.



16 - Community Regeneration Employment Support Teams



17 - Community Regeneration engagement event



18 – Transcend Packaging case study

[Return to main contents page](#)

## **Action Area 3 – Good health and well-being**

People in the most deprived areas of Wales live more years in poor health compared with those who live in the least deprived areas. In Caerphilly county borough between 2010 and 2014, the healthy life expectancy was more than 13 years longer for males living in the least deprived areas, compared to those living in areas with higher levels of deprivation, and over 14 years longer for females. These inequalities are having a profound effect, with more of the adult population living in poor health, which has a direct impact upon their quality of life. The pandemic has highlighted the impact these inequalities are having on our population's health and again emphasised the need for healthy lifestyles.

We know that preventing ill health across the population is generally more effective at reducing health inequalities than clinical interventions. A key enabler for all health interventions is a whole system approach to improve the populations' health and well-being. A whole systems approach aligns services and resources and encourages delivery based on shared outcomes, which are developed with services and residents.

Our collaborative approach, with an emphasis on prevention and public health, will help address the current future health, social and economic challenges for residents in Caerphilly county borough. We are incorporating integrated approaches that create the conditions that make it easier for people to adopt healthier lifestyles. The development of integrated community-based services will lead to improved well-being for the citizens of the county borough and help reduce the demand for costly secondary care health services.

The pandemic has accelerated the way in which all partners work collaboratively to meet the needs of the local population. The well-being of our workforce is also an area of particular focus, and the ongoing demands of responding to the pandemic is continuing to have an effect, so the ways in which we can continue to support them is a high priority.

The impact of lockdowns and social distancing requirements has meant that services have been unable to operate in the usual way and routine services have a workload backlog that needs recovering. We are planning to start to improve the position, with additional investment being made and initiatives undertaken in key areas. Additional services have been commissioned to provide extra capacity in direct response to the pandemic. The additional services provide an opportunity to focus on a well-being centred economy which is regenerative, collaborative, and recognises that real well-being depends on creating a world where all can prosper and flourish.

Pre-pandemic it was acknowledged that the demand for healthcare is growing because of many factors, such as an ageing population and patients living longer with more complex needs, which intensifies the challenges faced by services. These facts and the impact of Covid-19 in the medium and longer term will require the NHS, social care providers, the local authority and our third sector partners to work more collaboratively on a local footing.

Our Neighbourhood Care Network and Integrated Well-being Network provide the ideal opportunities to achieve this.

The examples below show some of the highlights from the last year:

- The MELO project was launched in January 2021. MELO is a Gwent-wide website to support residents, and their loved ones, to improve their well-being. [Here](#) is a link to the website. In addition, a Gwent wide workforce training programme, which offers free training at different skill levels, will be rolled out. The training will be offered at three different levels based on need, and aims to increase the workforces' confidence and competence to have everyday conversations about mental health and well-being.
- We are currently working collaboratively with the Caerphilly 50+ Forum and discussing progress in developing Age Friendly Communities in Wales. We are working with the Older People's Commissioner for Wales to develop further links across the county borough.
- The Integrated Well-being Networks (IWN) delivered the Nature/Green well-being pilot with surgeries and providers over a 12-week period. This is now being evaluated in conjunction with the Valleys Regional Park, with the results anticipated by the end of October. We also delivered a webinar through Public Health Wales and have been in discussions with Welsh Government on the pilot.
- We are assessing the CWTSH creative well-being network, which provides the facility for virtual activities to help people in the county borough to combat loneliness. Additionally, we are looking at the possibilities for using a similar approach to socially prescribe creative activities.
- The uptake of the Covid-19 vaccine, and the work and training around vaccine hesitancy, suggests success and collaborative working.
- Bargoed was recognised as a dementia friendly community, and following its success we have begun work on making Risca a dementia friendly community.
- GPs can now use "Attend Anywhere" - a secure NHS video call service for patients with pre-arranged appointment times, allowing them to have face-to-face consultations with patients. This facility complements the ability to carry out telephone triage appointments, where patients do not have the ability to communicate via electronic means.

[Return to main contents page](#)

## Action Area 4a – Safer communities

Over the last year the Safer Caerphilly partners have worked together to maintain existing projects and develop new initiatives to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour within the Caerphilly county borough area. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, partners have excelled in adapting to new ways of working in a rapidly changing environment, whilst ensuring that our communities continue to be supported throughout these unprecedented times.

In addition to existing services and partnership processes, work has been enhanced through a number of new developments, which include the following projects:

- The Police have formed a new Problem-solving Team, which will focus on reducing the crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) demand drivers and will also concentrate on crime prevention and engagement within the communities. They will work closely with the Police Neighbourhood Teams, the Partnership Hub and the Council's Community Safety Team.
- We have successfully bid for £300,000 to fund our Safer Streets project in the Rhymney area. The project is underway – we have purchased CCTV column equipment which should be installed by the end of October. We have also carried out home surveys and subsequently invested in appropriate security measures, such as door and window locks and doorbell CCTV units. Foot patrols are taking place jointly with the local Neighbourhood Police Team and Community Safety Wardens, and additional engagement activities are being planned for the latter part of Autumn with other key agencies in the affected areas.
- A public consultation was carried out to renew and vary the Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) across the county borough that relate to ASB and drinking alcohol in public places.
- The Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership has carried out a 6-week consultation on the continuation, variation and introduction of new PSPOs. The consultation was carried out via Microsoft Forms online and publicised across the county borough using social media, leaflets and posters. A proposal report is being written and will be submitted to the Council's Scrutiny Committee followed by Cabinet for approval, before being implemented.
- 'Prevent' training continues to be delivered to frontline staff, including a number of specific sessions for school staff. The regional Contest Board and Prevent Training and Delivery Group continue to meet regularly to ensure all statutory duties are met. The Prevent Group also continues to oversee the regional Prevent action plan and works with partners to ensure implementation of key objectives. The Caerphilly Protective Security and Preparedness Group is now well established, and continues to meet regularly and work on the development of a risk assessment for public accessible locations within the county borough.





19 - Safer Caerphilly Community Partners at train station



20 – Council Community Safety Officers at GP Surgery



21 – Police Community Safety Officers and Council Community Safety Wardens working in partnership – out and about



22 – Community Safety Partners and the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner– at Blackwood event space

[Return to main contents page](#)

## **Action Area 4b - Resilient communities**

The place in which we live has a huge part to play in individual personal perceptions of well-being. Having attractive, well-used and connected communities with easy access to the natural environment, affordable and sustainable housing, local job opportunities and low crime levels, will help to support community resilience.

### **Housing**

The Council is working with Pobl to redevelop the former Civic Offices in Pontllanfraith to provide much needed local homes for local people. Referred to as Chartist Gardens, the scheme is proposed to be an exemplar garden suburb development incorporating sound placemaking features (including best practice for sustainable drainage systems), integrated and well-designed open space and formal children's play, comprehensive landscaping, active travel and high-quality housing within a parkland setting. The development will provide up to 125 new homes with a mixed tenure. The Council are also working with Pobl and United Welsh to redevelop the former Windsor Colliery site in Abertridwr, whilst Caerphilly Homes are currently in the process of identifying publicly owned land for future housing development throughout the county borough, and a number of sites are in the process of being assessed to determine their suitability.

### **Town centres**

Town centres throughout the UK are facing a series of significant challenges to their economic viability post Covid-19. The pandemic saw an overnight change in how people used town centres. Shoppers' spending and travel habits changed, and whilst demand for public services increased, many people took advantage of online platforms to access these. Most town centres were already having to adapt to a significant period of change before the pandemic, as they have done in the past, reflecting societal changes over decades. But rarely has such drastic change happened in a short period of time, as restrictions were imposed on movement and business operations nationwide.

Our business community had to adapt fast, and local and national government support had to be rolled out quickly and tailored accordingly. Welsh Government and Council officers administered over £61m of grant support in the county borough, to help businesses survive the crisis. Besides the many challenges faced, the restrictions also created opportunities for many businesses that adapted their operating model to reflect changing habits, and as restrictions eased, businesses that adapted quickly have benefitted from increased footfall, as people choose to stay local for shopping, work and leisure.

### **High street modifications – new parklets**

A series of modifications have been made to many of our town centres to help businesses during the Covid -19 restrictions (including the introduction of parklets), to help businesses trade outdoors. Parklets are outside seating areas for cafes etc. to enable outdoor hospitality to resume in light of the pandemic. In addition, business grants have provided much needed financial support to help transition to the new way of working. The Council is also working with

several property owners to bring town centre premises back into beneficial use, with Welsh Government funding support.

The focus now is to provide support and action to enable our towns to recover, whilst continuing to support the Well-being Objectives set out in the Well-being Plan 2018-2023. An economic recovery framework has been prepared to deliver on this strategic objective.

### **Visit Caerphilly and the Valleys Regional Park**

Work continues with partners to develop the three regionally significant Valleys Regional Parks: Discovery Gateways at Caerphilly Castle, Cwmcarn Forest and Parc Penallta. The aim of the Valleys Regional Park is to unlock and maximise the potential of the natural and associated cultural heritage of the Valleys, to generate social, economic and environmental benefits.

Following significant investment from Natural Resource Wales (NRW), Cwmcarn reopened the Forest Drive in June 2021, after it closed in 2014 to allow for the felling of 150,000 trees affected by the disease Phytophthora Ramorum. The Drive incorporates seven car parks to allow visitors to take in the panoramic views of the surrounding countryside, three new adventure playgrounds for children to enjoy, together with sensory tunnels, a woodland sculpture trail and several all-ability trails.

In addition to the significant investment at Cwmcarn, the Council is working with Cadw on a £5m Caerphilly Castle Investment Programme, which will transform the castle into a world-class heritage attraction. The plans include improved visitor facilities in a new reception building at the entrance, refurbishment of the current shop, and access improvements to paths throughout the castle, to ensure visitors of all abilities can enjoy the site. Central to the project is a £1million overhaul of site interpretation, including new state-of-the-art digital techniques, presenting the stories of the people who built and lived in Caerphilly Castle. The plans also include proposals to re-dress the Great Hall, the largest of its period in the country, to recreate the ambience and grandeur of its medieval heyday.

Carved from a former coal tip the third of the areas' Discovery Gateways is Parc Penallta, which is well known for being home to one of the largest figurative earth sculptures in the country - Sultan the Pit Pony. Sultan attracts visitors from far afield, whilst the High Point Observatory in the park provides panoramic views across the South Wales valleys. To add to the offer at Parc Penallta, the Council are in the process of exploring the possibility of providing a long-awaited new education hub, to complement the existing facilities in the park.

This investment in the Valleys Regional Park Discovery Gateways is crucial in ensuring these sites have the capacity to provide safe and welcoming spaces, that can be enjoyed by the local community, as well as visitors from further afield.

## Providing opportunities for new companies to start up and thrive

Whitebeam Court is a joint venture partnership between the Council and Welsh Government, and is the latest phase of an ambitious sustainable mixed-use development for Ty Du, near Nelson. A major scheme to undertake the enabling highways infrastructure works, including installation of services and estate roads, was successfully completed in 2019. It has prepared the 18ha landmark site for future residential and commercial development, which will include circa 200 homes (including provision for affordable homes) with a total of 2.85ha allocated for employment use.

The development is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Welsh Government and part funded by the Council. The first phase of the employment area has created a managed business park, offering five self-contained terraces of employment units that are available individually or combined. The units are of high quality, with low maintenance, set within a landscaped environment. The development has been designed to use traditional forms similar to barns and natural colours, so they harmonise with the surrounding landscape.

On site works are also now underway on an exciting new business development at the Lawns Industrial Estate in Rhymney, located just 2 miles south of the A465 Heads of the Valleys road, with excellent links to the M4 and just an hour's drive from the M50. The site (which currently hosts a number of existing units) has three new buildings of 15 individual units. Units will be available to lease from the Council and will consist of eight 50m<sup>2</sup> units, four 75m<sup>2</sup> units and three 98m<sup>2</sup> units. It is anticipated that the units will be available for occupation by the end of 2021.

Welsh construction and civil engineering company EnCon Construction Ltd have been commissioned to extend the current land in Rhymney into high quality, light industrial factory units, as part of the investment in infrastructure in the South East Wales region. This project has been made possible with funding from the Council and the European Regional Development Fund through Welsh Government, providing a much welcomed boost to the local economy and the prospects of employment for local people.



23 New adventure play area at Cwmcarn Forest



24 - Brand new glamping lodges at Cwmcarn Forest



25 - Whitebeam Court, Ty Du, Nelson



26 - High street modifications – new parklet



27 - High street modifications – new parklet



28 - Refurbished Cwmcam Forest Drive – reopened in 2021

[Return to main contents page](#)



## **Action Area 5 – Protect and enhance the local natural environment**

As well as providing us with a wonderful and varied landscape, our natural environment helps to keep us happy, healthy and supports our economy. However, much of the biodiversity and ecosystems within our natural environment are in decline. There is a need to find more sustainable ways to manage, protect and enhance these natural assets so that we, and future generations, can continue to enjoy the important benefits provided. That is the aim of the 'Protect and Enhance the Local Natural Environment' Action Area.

### **Cwmcarn Forest Drive**

Cwmcarn Forest Drive is a popular visitor destination located within South East Wales. Steeped in history, with stunning views of the surrounding countryside and overlooking the Severn estuary, Cwmcarn Forest Drive is a place that is treasured by local people and tourists alike. Unfortunately, in 2014 the Forest Drive was closed to public vehicles to enable the extensive felling of infected larch trees, the largest operation of its kind in Wales. Now that the felling works are complete, and following extensive community engagement, Natural Resources Wales (NRW), have since reopened the Drive to the public.

NRW commissioned an accessibility audit in order to inform the development of features within Cwmcarn Forest Drive. In addition, a focus group (made up of local people with family/friends with additional needs) was brought together to help inform the development of the Forest Drive areas. As a result, various accessible features have been implemented, including accessible paths and picnic tables, accessible toilets at four of the sites, accessible play furniture, and accessible play surfacing. Additionally, NRW have included dementia friendly braille signage for all toilets on site. NRW are endeavouring to ensure that the Forest Drive is a place that will be treasured by generations to come and enables local people to enjoy the countryside on their doorstep once more.

### **Climate Ready Gwent**

Climate Ready Gwent is a collaborative approach to develop a shared vision for the region in relation to climate change adaptation/decarbonisation. This vision relates not just to delivering existing services, but also how a more joined-up public sector can actually deliver differently, by working together to shape a more sustainable future for Gwent.

2020-21 has been a year of expansion for Climate Ready Gwent. The network has taken advantage of the new ways of working which have emerged as a response to lockdown restrictions, by accelerating opportunities to train and collaborate on a virtual platform, adapting delivery to 100% online and producing digital content which can be re-used and accessed in a flexible way. This way of working fits the stakeholders and partners we are targeting and the ethos of the Climate Ready Gwent identity.

Climate Ready Gwent has grown in confidence as a network. Whilst our reach out to staff across the public sector has expanded significantly, we have also been able to deepen our understanding as a core network as to how Climate Ready Gwent can fit and act in what is already a very crowded collaborative space (particularly from the perspective of carbon

mitigation). The core network has begun to collaborate in a closer way, with the co-development of a place-based Gwent Carbon Literacy course as a good example.

Consulting the network themselves, to allow them to influence the Carbon Ready Gwent agenda and providing a platform for individual projects to reach out for regional guidance and support, has also contributed to strengthening the core network and its direction. As trust and understanding has grown amongst the core network, we have also been more adept at co-delivering projects at pace with network members more familiar with the skills and understanding of the wider group. This has helped us re-purpose underspent local budgets rapidly and to great effect this year.

Climate Ready Gwent has also raised its profile beyond Gwent, gaining interest from national and international organisations, which we hope will support the network in the future to further our technical understanding, particularly around climate adaptation. There have been a number of key achievements as follows:

- The five local authorities in Gwent have been awarded a share of £422,000 by the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) to install a total of 65 fast charge points across up to 34 sites in the region.
- A report has been considered by G10 (the group of Leaders and Chief Executives of the five local authorities plus the Chairs and/or Chief Officers of the five other major public services in Gwent). The report sets out the key issues, opportunities and benefits to public bodies in creating a low carbon and sustainable 'pathway' for public sector fleets in Gwent. A regional implementation plan is being developed to take this work forward. The Council have used the results of the fleet review to develop their own implementation programme, and have created an 'Invest to Save' Fleet Review post to take this work forward.
- To ensure that the Gwent area has a complete overview of hydrogen opportunities a regional study was completed, building on work undertaken by Monmouthshire County Council. This explored the potential for hydrogen powered vehicles and infrastructure across the region, with a focus on PSB fleets.

## **Linking Our Landscapes**

Linking Our Landscapes is about identifying local opportunities for our protected sites, natural and built environments, to contribute towards the resilience of wider priority habitat networks in the region. These opportunities for improving ecosystem resilience should support ecological connectivity between sites, across boundaries and at a landscape scale. Collaborative activity in Gwent continues to focus on adding value to local delivery. Various delivery partners have been able to contribute towards the regional vision, integrate activity and deliver specific outputs together through a number of different workstreams as follows:

- delivery partners have worked closely together to reach a consensus around what can be done collectively to address the 'nature emergency' in Gwent. This included looking

at Gwent as a collection of distinctive and interconnected geographical landscapes, and from this a series of Landscape Profiles were produced.

- The five local authorities in Gwent were awarded £1.3 million of Welsh Government funding to develop a **Resilient Greater Gwent (RGG)** regional project. The project is being led by Blaenau Gwent on behalf of the other local authorities and partners. The project aims are to enhance biodiversity and ecological networks across the region, by tackling the five main drivers of biodiversity loss, placing biodiversity at the heart of decision-making and connecting people with nature. One of the main outcomes is that the Greater Gwent State of Nature report is being produced, following focused data analysis from sources including the Landscape Profiles. The report will form part of the Area Statement evidence base and aims to produce a usable analysis of species and habitats that tell stories and can direct conservation action in South East Wales. The report provides an evidence base to inform the Gwent Nature Recovery Action Plan (2021-30) that will be produced to identify collaborative action across the region.

The 2020/21 annual update incorporates action which has taken place by partners working together to tackle the 'nature emergency' in Gwent. It includes a summary of work completed to date from NRW's South East Area Statement, as well as project updates from the Resilient Greater Gwent partnership programme. The full report will be available on the NRW website in early 2022 and highlights of delivery in 2020/21 are provided under the headings below:

- **Improved resilience** of our ecosystems across Gwent
- **Increased understanding** of the need to safeguard and enhance core habitat networks and support ecological connectivity on and between our 'best sites' across Gwent
- **Increased capacity** of organisations and individuals, ensuring that they have the tools, skills and guidance necessary to safeguard and enhance our core habitat networks across Gwent

### **Gwent Green Grid Partnership**

The Gwent Green Grid Partnership is a new ground-breaking project that aims to improve and develop green infrastructure – a term used to describe the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect villages, towns and cities – as well as provide green job opportunities within the area. Green infrastructure has a crucial role to play in addressing nature, climate change and health emergencies.

Monmouthshire County Council, working with Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Newport and Torfaen councils as well as NRW, Forest Research and the Severn Wye Energy Agency, leads the partnership. The organisations will work together to ensure that the areas' natural resources are healthy, resilient to pressures and threats and thereby better able to provide vital health and well-being benefits for current and future generations.

The Gwent Green Grid Partnership will bring to life the Gwent PSBs commitment to implementing the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and the Environment (Wales)

Act through improved collaboration with partners, involving local citizens and delivering across all seven well-being goals.

The project will deliver a range of well-being benefits for local communities and plans to make improvements to green spaces, urban and country parks, cycleways and public rights of way. It will facilitate better woodland management and creation, and take action to protect and enhance vital habitats for pollinators. The partnership will also explore better management of natural spaces to provide opportunities which deliver preventative health focused activity.

Linking Our Landscapes pages on NRW's website can be accessed [here](#)

[Return to main contents page](#)

## **Action Area 6 – Caerphilly Cares (a new Action Area added in 2021)**

The Covid-19 pandemic saw residents present themselves to the Council for support, often for the very first time. It became apparent that these individuals often required multiple interventions and support from a number of different Council departments. The Caerphilly Cares team – a team of established Council staff - offer a new centralised coordination and response triage service for those county borough residents in need of support for issues such as food poverty, debt or rent arrears, isolation or loneliness.

Caerphilly Cares aims to offer the residents a single point of contact with the team, who will assist in getting to the root cause of their issue, so that they will only need to explain their situation once. The team then links up with existing services, both within the Council and with partners, including the voluntary sector and local community groups, supporting that individual through their journey with those various services from beginning to end.

The initiative is about understanding the variety of needs that an individual may encounter, and focusing on early intervention to help that individual get the support they need in a holistic, sensitive way. It is a long-term model for offering holistic support to Caerphilly county borough residents, but the Caerphilly Cares teams' initial focus will be on supporting residents in the following areas:

- Financial support – debt support, welfare benefits and maximising income
- Tackling food poverty
- Supporting individuals into employment support programmes
- Tackling isolation and loneliness
- Practical support for individuals requiring support linked to Covid-19 (such as those in receipt of buddy scheme support)
- Early intervention - such as mental health support and social prescribing
- Building on partnerships with community groups

Within the first 6 months of delivery the team received more than 400 phone calls, made 300 referrals and supported over 500 residents in meeting their individual needs.

The period has been extremely demanding, but hugely rewarding for both staff and residents of the county borough. As the demands on the service grow, our current work on the Participatory Budget will indicate the way forward for us as a local authority, and enable us to provide relevant support for our residents, both remotely and within our Community Hubs. We continue to engage with existing and new groups within our communities, and have made great progress throughout the pandemic in relation to the challenges faced.

[Return to main contents page](#)



## Enabler 1 – Communications and engagement

For Communications and engagement, the focus of the work has been on two areas:

- The development of the new regional Gwent PSB
- The local Assessment of Well-being

As set out in the introduction to this report, a new Gwent PSB formed in September 2021 and a lot of engagement took place within the respective member organisations, but particularly with the Councillors who represent the communities across the county borough, to explain the new arrangement and especially, how the local work under the Action Areas described in this report will continue for the duration of ‘The Caerphilly We Want’ Well-being Plan, that continues until 2023. The existing Caerphilly PSB website will remain and will continue to host the annual report and regular updates on the areas of activity being undertaken as part of the current Well-being Plan. The former Caerphilly PSB will keep a close eye to make sure its commitments are followed through.

Alongside this we have developed a new Gwent PSB website for the region so that openness, transparency and engagement can continue. The new Gwent PSB has its own Facebook and Twitter pages and if you would like to keep up to date with what is going on, please follow them on these links:

[Link to Gwent PSB Twitter page](#)

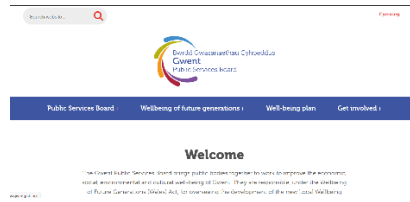
[Link to Gwent PSB Facebook page](#)

One of the biggest pieces of work started this year is the new local Assessment of Well-being, which is a requirement of the Future Generations legislation. Partners have been working over the summer months to gather as many community views as possible on how people feel about the well-being of their communities – now and in the future. This important piece of work takes place once every five years, and the views of communities will be combined with data that tells the PSB how well-being is being secured in communities, and what they will need to work on together for the next Well-being Plan. This new Well-being Plan will run from 2023-2028 and will be a key tool for all the public bodies in the region to plan their services.

The local Assessment of Well-being will be published on the Gwent PSB website in May 2022, and the new PSB is keen to maintain an open dialogue with communities on the matters that affect and concern them. Please use the contact details on the [Gwent PSB website](#) if you have any comments to offer. The Gwent PSB would be very happy to hear from you.



29 – the new Gwent PSB logo



30 – the new Gwent PSB website



31 – Caerphilly PSB website

[Return to main contents page](#)

## **Enabler 2 – Procurement**

The Procurement Delivery Group has continued to be actively involved on a Gwent regional basis with the progressive procurement project. Working with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) and Welsh Government, the intention of the programme is to reset the economy of Welsh places, and advance the cause of social, economic, and environmental justice for the people of Wales. Framed as Community Wealth Building, the project strives to represent local well-being priorities for local anchor institutions in Gwent.

Community wealth building is a people-centred approach to local economic development. It reorganises local economies to be fairer, and seeks to stop wealth flowing out of our communities, towns and cities. Instead, it places control of this wealth into the hands of local people, communities, businesses and organisations. The five principles of community wealth building are: plural ownership of the economy; making financial power work for local places; fair employment and just labour markets; progressive procurement of goods and services; and socially productive use of land and property. In light of Covid-19, the work also includes a specific focus on supporting local businesses which are at risk or vulnerable due to the pandemic, and supporting the growth of local employment opportunities.

The areas of focus agreed by the Gwent region are: Food Procurement; Construction and Decarbonisation; Procurement Policy; and a Manufacturing Deep-Dive. A series of working groups have been established for each area of focus, to develop and implement delivery plans associated with the principles of community wealth building. The working groups commenced in late 2020 and have progressed throughout 2021.

[Return to main contents page](#)

## **Enabler 3 – Asset management**

Collectively the PSB partners have a huge number of assets with opportunities for shared use and collaboration. The potential benefits include reduced costs, increased utilisation and efficiency, reduced energy usage, a reduced collective carbon footprint, better co-operation and understanding between the partners and an enhanced service to the public.

### **Ty Penallta and Agile Working Hubs**

All Council corporate office accommodation has been reviewed and a declutter exercise rolled out in preparation for when staff return to the office and new agile working practices are introduced. The Council's corporate reviews are underway, which will inform the future use of the office accommodation and agile working requirements.

Ty Penallta has become a key site for collaboration, being used as a vaccination centre at the start of 2021. The site provided facilities to enable the Health Board to efficiently roll out their vaccination programme. This collaboration brought benefits to the local community and beyond.

The Council secured funding from Welsh Government's Valleys Taskforce programme to create two co-working hubs in the county borough. One hub is located at Ty Penallta and one at the Winding House in New Tredegar.

At Ty Penallta, a café style working environment has been created to support the new ways of working when staff are able to return to the office environment. The space will support agile working, with the provision of flexible working space with access to desk space and Wi-Fi. This ties in with the preparation of the co-working hub within the Glass Restaurant area, which will be available to employees of public sector partner organisations. The opening date of the hub is yet to be finalised but is likely to coincide with the opening of the new café facilities. When it is open, the hub will be available between 09:00 – 17:00 Monday to Friday.

The hub based in the Winding House, New Tredegar is open to the general public. The cost of hire is £10 per desk per day, but this will initially be waived for residents of the Upper Rhymney Valley. The hub offers ample parking, a dedicated high-speed internet connection and a range of refreshments from the in-house café. The hub was launched during October 2021 and is open from 9.30 – 17.30 Tuesday – Saturday.

A safeguarding hub is being created at Foxes Lane with Council, Police and Health Board staff able to access the facilities. The hub has been operational since January 2021, with Police staff already working from the building (in line with Covid-19 restrictions). The use is evolving and hub development is on-going, with other agencies due to participate. Also, assistance has been given to enable the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust (WAST) to expand

and increase their presence in the county borough, with space made available at the Tredomen Campus.

WAST currently has a crew rest room based in the Tredomen Business Centre. They would like to expand their operations in the vicinity of Ystrad Mynach/Nelson and wish to increase their welfare provision for additional crews. WAST is currently in the process of transferring their operations from Suite 1 to Suite 3 in Tredomen Business Centre – a move that will double the space available to their crews. Some alterations to the space are required and quotes for this work are in the process of being obtained, with work commissioned as soon as possible after.

The former Woolworths building located on High Street, Bargoed has been redeveloped to facilitate the relocation and development of a collaborative, multi-agency service. The building has been brought back into beneficial use and now supports the MyST project. MyST is a highly intensive, wraparound Community Adolescent Mental Health (CAMH) service which provides an alternative care package for looked after young people who would otherwise be in residential care, tier 4 psychiatric care, secure care or specialist residential schools. The recently completed Bargoed MyST project has benefited from the Integrated Care Funding, a Welsh Government initiative. This fund is making a significant contribution to the delivery of Welsh Government's 'A Healthier Wales'. The building provides:

- Appropriately located, accessible, spacious office and therapeutic base for the new Multi-disciplinary Resource Hub team and other professionals associated with the delivery of the service in the county borough
- Premises that are family friendly, accessible and enable the delivery of therapeutic support and related activities for children and young people accessing the service
- Premises that have adequate space and facilities for relevant training to be delivered within a pleasant environment that facilitates learning, on an on-going basis, which is an essential aspect of service delivery

The development of the Bargoed project has enabled MyST to move forward in the development of a regional service. The development of the second scheme in the county borough has facilitated the ability to provide exemplar facilities to host the Locality Teams and provide the onsite induction, run core fundamentals programme, continue with supervision and development of the leads in each Locality Team and be a vital resource for all the services.

There are also now great opportunities to share office space with Gwent Police. However, we will probably require a joint Memorandum of Understanding on sharing and partners using agile desks in Police station buildings will need to be security vetted. Details of the projects that Gwent Police have been busy working on are as follows:

- Refurbishing Rhymney Police Station and forming agile workstations
- Refurbishing office space in Blackwood Police Station and forming agile workstations
- Refurbishing office space in Risca and forming agile workstations
- Refurbishing Ystrad Mynach office space and Custody suite
- Refurbishments at Bedwas and Bargoed Police Stations have been completed

- Rolling out an Energy Conservation/Carbon Reduction Scheme with LED Lighting
- Rolling out electric vehicle charging points
- Refurbishment at New Tredegar
- Victim Support Teams and partners are relocating from Blackwood to Pontypool to ease an accommodation issue

## Fleet Reviews and Electric Vehicles

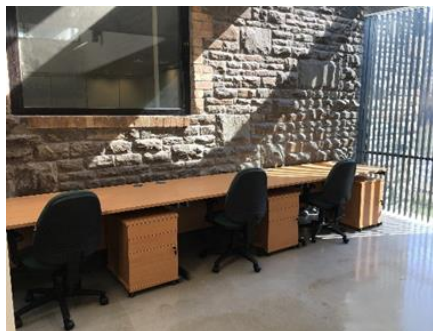
Following the Gwent-wide work to review the fleets of each of the 5 local authorities and PSB partners (led by Caerphilly County Borough Council) the Council has appointed a Fleet Review Officer to undertake a review of all its vehicles, and to develop a strategy to reduce vehicle numbers and to transition the remaining ones to ultra-low emission vehicles by 2030. The work includes undertaking specific reviews with each service area to understand the challenges and to agree the way forward.

The first electric vehicles (EVs) – Meals on Wheels vans and cleaners’ vans – are operational. In parallel with this, the necessary infrastructure is being put in place, with the first two charging hubs at Penallta House and the Tir y Berth depot planned to be operational by early in 2022. This will provide the infrastructure to allow the first tranche of 100 electric vehicles to be delivered later in the year.

The Council is also leading on a Cardiff Capital Region Challenge project looking at how we can support residents who do not have off-street parking to move to electric vehicles. Electric vehicle charging points for use by residents have now been installed at 11 car parks across the county borough. The 17 charge points were funded by the Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) with match funding from the Council. The usage data shows a consistent increase in the number of residents starting to use these to charge their electric vehicles.



32 - Co-working hubs



33 - Co-working hubs



34 - Co-working hubs

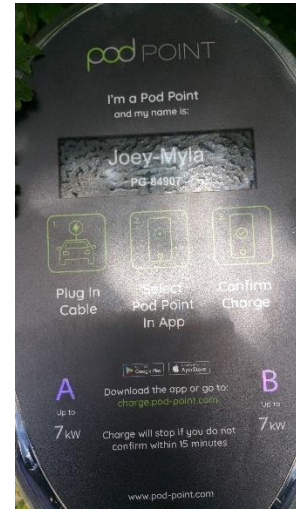




35 – Electric vehicle at charging point



36 – Pod point charger



37 – Pod point charger

[Return to main contents page](#)

## **Youth services**

Youth services, like many other services, have been especially busy over the last year, thinking of more and more innovative ways of interacting and helping young people and their families. The paragraphs below set out a flavour of what has gone on:

### **Senedd sessions**

5 young people engaged in 2 online educational sessions about the Welsh Parliament. The 'Senedd, Elections and Me' sessions included information about the powers of the Senedd, the work of Members of the Senedd and how to have a voice in the day-to-day work of the Senedd. The information that the young people gained from the workshops is very relevant to the theme of Ethical, Informed Citizens. All young people enjoyed the informative sessions and gained valuable knowledge. Young people were also joined in a Q&A session by Hefin David (Member of the Senedd for Caerphilly) and young people were able to engage in the Q&A session.

### **RecRock Sessions**

RecRock is a music project for young people funded by Cash4U. The project is an online music festival, where participants are mentored by professional musicians to prepare them to film their performance in a music studio, ready for broadcast in an online stream. Performers can perform their own songs or cover material, whether they're already an experienced performer, or someone who is really interested in music but more reserved. It is an opportunity for young people to show off their creative side and experience other areas of the performance world such as technical (sound, lighting, camera, social media, design etc.), or drama (hosting the event). One young person has just started on the project and is already thoroughly enjoying being creative with music and song-writing.

### **Partnership working with Gwent Police Targeted Outreach Project**

Gwent Police experienced a number of issues with people not following the rules regarding the Covid-19 lockdowns. There was a particular concern regarding young people not adhering to rules, and therefore the Police contacted the Youth Service to ask for their support in engaging with young people in a positive way to ensure they were all clear on the rules. Gwent Police and the Targeted Outreach senior youth worker patrolled localities, to inform individuals and groups about Covid-19 and lockdown rules. They were also able to check on their welfare and offer additional support if required.

Targeted Outreach project youth workers were out in all weathers to ensure young people could get the support they may need. They contacted and supported a lot of young people through some difficult times and issues such as Covid-19, family issues, school/college, sexual health, drug and alcohol, and anti-social behaviour.

The Youth Service worked in partnership with the Council's catering service to help provide free school meals. Staff were in contact with vulnerable families to guide them through the

application process, as well as helping to deliver meals to families within the county borough. The Youth Service also helped the Council's Community Regeneration Team to provide food bank parcels to vulnerable families, who were in critical need of support to receive essential food items.

The team also worked with the Learning Pathway Centre (LPC) in Bargoed on a number of projects – digging the beds, planting seasonal vegetables, harvesting and preparing the beds for next season's growth at the allotments; collecting donations for homeless charities and helping assemble food hampers; and working in partnership with Ystrad Mynach College, taking two groups weekly to the LPC to train at Level 1 in hairdressing and construction.

### **Partnership Working - Hub project (Legacy) - Aneurin Bevan Health Board Child and Adolescent Psychology**

Youth workers deal with a large number of families and young people to help support their well-being. Many families and young people struggle with complex issues and are sometimes in need of intensive support to help them resolve these or improve their situation. Youth support workers have worked closely with a Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) therapist in what has proved to be an extremely successful partnership.

One example is where they worked with a young person with long-standing compound mental health issues, providing them and their mother with weekly support sessions via Zoom for the past year. They were able to explore their relationship and recognise behaviours that were acting as barriers in their relationship. The ability to recognise and change these behaviours has helped improve family relations. They were subsequently able to access additional mental health services, which has all helped the young person transition between services when they turned 18.

The therapist has also provided Hub workers with support for their own mental wellbeing, enabling them to work more effectively and safely.

### **Schools**

The Hub has worked in partnership with both Bryn Awel Primary School and Bedwas High School over the past year to support pupils, and more recently to work with Graig-y-Rhacca Primary School. They identified pupils most in need of support and offered them a choice of weekly calls, Zoom sessions or hard copy resources during lockdown. They also addressed issues such as lack of technology, difficulty with home schooling, and encouraged young people to attend the school hubs. The team continues to keep in contact the schools to monitor progress.

### **Art Project – libraries**

Young people can tune into online sessions to create a piece of art/craft work each week. The project is also looking to create an online gallery of these pieces of work to be showcased on

social media channels. The Youth Service hopes to work longer-term with the Library service to create physical displays as well as possibly other spaces, such as empty shop units.



38 - Siren emergency services board game developed by young people and emergency services



39 - Work activity packs and make your own first aid kit



Caerphilly Youth Forum  
Instagram Photos · Jul 17, 2020 · 0

40 - Dial 55 poster on Youth Forum social media and link Welsh Ambulance not 999 calls



41 - Gwent Police and youth workers tweet advising young people



42 – Youth workers out in all sorts of weather!



43 -Youth Service workers delivering meals

[Return to main contents page](#)

## Welsh language and culture

The PSB continues to be very keen to support and promote the use of Welsh within the county borough area. Menter Iaith Sir Caerffili has been a key partner in developing 'The Caerphilly We Want' Well-being Plan 2018-2023 and the Well-being Assessment, by facilitating the voice of Welsh speakers in their development. Menter Iaith also assists with the PSB's communications and engagement work, supports volunteering through the medium of Welsh, as well as supporting Welsh learners.

Third Sector Welsh language organisations assist PSB members in delivering the actions in the Council's 5-year Welsh Language Strategy, which aims to improve services for families, children, communities, in the workplace and help improve infrastructure. By working with the voluntary sector, the PSB is assured that it has the best expertise and capacity to assist with the important task of making Welsh an everyday part of the culture of the area.

Menter Iaith coordinates the Welsh Language Forum for the county borough, which includes a range of third sector organisations, statutory partners and educational organisations. The Forum plays a key role in delivering the Welsh Language Strategy, and during the past year its members have collaborated successfully to the process of developing a new Strategy for 2022-2027. This Strategy will ensure that all partner organisations plan and agree targets, which will ensure that opportunities to use the Welsh language on a community level (for all ages) continue to develop and that there is a thriving Welsh language and culture across the county borough.

Menter Iaith has responded to the challenges of Covid-19 during the past year and has adapted its services to ensure that Welsh speakers and learners were able to access support and opportunities through the medium of Welsh. A clear link between well-being and access to Welsh medium services was highlighted by the pandemic, and Menter Iaith has responded by providing a range of digital opportunities in addition to outdoor activities when appropriate and safe. These included weekly discussion sessions, workshops and activities for children and young people, Ffiliffest On-line (our annual Welsh language and cultural festival), walking activities, volunteering opportunities and support for vulnerable Welsh speakers across our communities.

Menter Iaith has also recently updated its language profile for the county borough, which highlights the latest research in community use of the Welsh language. If we are to support the thousands of Welsh speakers to use the language as part of their daily lives, it is imperative that opportunities and accessible services of a high standard are available to them. By providing sufficient opportunities, we can demonstrate that it is possible to participate in community life through the medium of Welsh, and that using the Welsh language as a skill enables you to make a valuable contribution to your local community's development.

Menter Iaith has an important role in developing new Welsh-medium services for local Welsh speakers. By developing new Welsh-medium services, we are creating a local demand for



Welsh-speaking workers and volunteers and enabling Welsh speakers to use their skills locally and see a significant value in those skills.



44 - Ffiliffest 2021 poster

[Return to main contents page](#)



## Looking to the future

'The Caerphilly We Want' Well-being Plan 2018-2023 is now well over halfway through its delivery schedule. We hope that our annual reports have demonstrated that public services (working with communities, individuals and the voluntary sector) have helped us make significant inroads into the plan's objectives. We have all had to adapt significantly due to the Covid-19 pandemic and incorporated new objectives to meet these extra challenges.

The Future Generations legislation is designed to bring about generational changes in well-being and therefore the PSB are always mindful of much longer horizons than five years. As we have already highlighted, we are already working on the new Well-being Plan with our partners in Gwent and this will be published in May 2023. However, our focus will always be on the well-being of local communities and we will continue to assess needs and respond, as partners, within the Caerphilly county borough area. We will therefore continue to report on the progress made against 'The Caerphilly We Want' Well-being Plan until 2023.

## Measuring our progress

Progress against our four Well-being Objectives (Positive Change, Positive Start, Positive People and Positive Places) is supported by the activity under the Action Areas and Enablers discussed above.

A six-monthly report is provided to the PSB on the progress of each of the Action Areas and these are scrutinised by local Councillors who hold the PSB to account. If you would like to look at any of these performance reports you can find them on the [Caerphilly PSB website](#).

## Contact us

If you have any comments to make regarding the contents of this annual report, or in relation to the Caerphilly or Gwent PSBs more generally, please contact us as follows:

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E-mail: [caerphillywewant@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:caerphillywewant@caerphilly.gov.uk) Tel: 01495 235108



[Return to main contents page](#)