



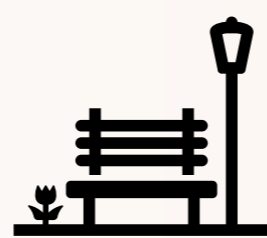
Monmouthshire County Council and Chepstow Town Council identified the need for a Town Masterplan that would provide the strategic framework which will guide future place making and changes in the town.

The Aim of the Study

To prepare a strategic regeneration framework for Chepstow which would guide future regeneration spend in the town and ensure future Chepstow is an attractive and vibrant town well placed to serve its existing and future residents and visitors.

What is Placemaking?

Welsh Government's Planning Policy Wales states that placemaking is: "a holistic approach to the planning and design of development and spaces, focused on positive outcomes. Placemaking can be summed up by the following four areas:



Public Space



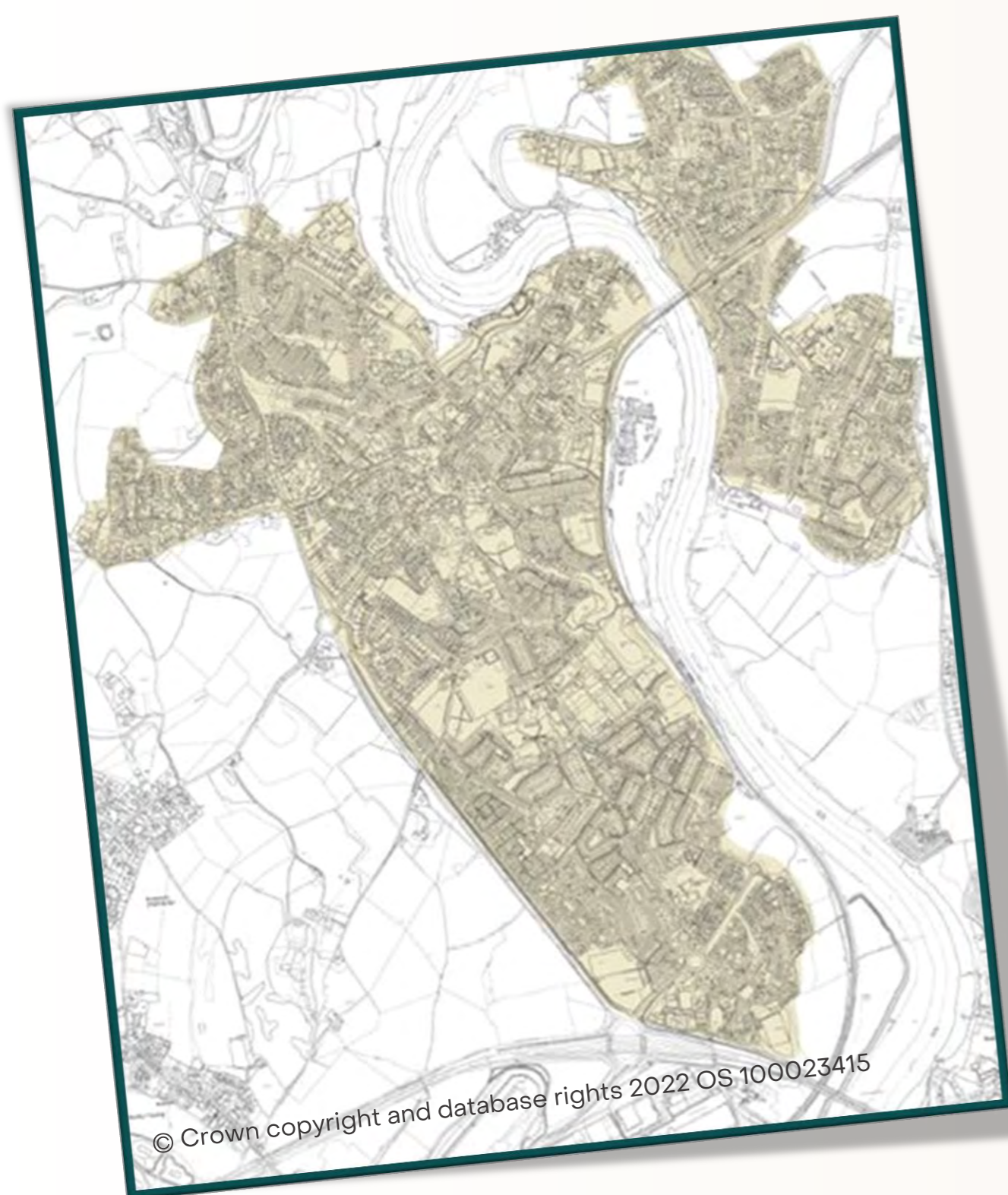
High Quality Built Form



Happiness And Well-being



Character And Identity



How Can You Help?

We want your views on the ideas that are proposed within this Plan for Chepstow. What do you believe are the priorities? Where should we start? Is there anything missing that we need to consider?

Your views are so important for us knowing what Chepstow needs, as none of these ideas are final and they remain proposals until the resources and funding become available as well as developing partnership working.

Ways to provide comment are provided on the final panel. Thank you for taking an interest in the future of Chepstow.

Chepstow Town Council and Monmouthshire County Council



Chepstow Town Council identified the need to understand the views of the local community in and around Chepstow as part of a Place Plan process during 2020 to 2021. Online community engagement activities ran between March and end of May 2021. The online engagement resulted in a vast array of responses, which are outlined below and have helped inform our ideas which are shared later on.

Traffic And Transport

- Innovative solutions to enable people to move around without using the car should be considered such as a hop on and off electric bus around town.
- Concerns about safety were expressed – at junctions for drivers and crossing roads for pedestrians – over and under the road (A48).
- Active travel – cycling and walking. Walking for visitors and local people is very important for well-being and the economy of the town but also Wales.

Tourism

- Need to attract tourists and increase the footfall in town and build on the success of the Sunday market.
- Promote the town as a gateway to Monmouthshire and Wales.
- Promotion of National Cycle Network, Coastal Path, Forest of Dean, Offa's Dyke, Wye Valley Walk etc,
- Concern around empty shops in the town/ shop front design and appearance of the retail centre.
- Dedicated route from Chepstow to Tidenham (consider pedestrian bridge).

Facilities, Community & Services

- Not enough facilities / places for teenagers to go in Chepstow.
- After school provision is lacking – sports clubs are evident but not many facilities / clubs to cater for all interests.
- Improved links to the leisure centre needed – incorporate links with the secondary school.

Strain on the existing road network is having an economic and environmental impact

Access to local green spaces and natural environment was highlighted as an asset of the town.

Due to topography, there are issues around accessibility for disabled people in the town – need accessible routes.

Not enough facilities / places for teenagers to go in Chepstow.

Built Environment & Heritage

- History of the town is positive (castle / port wall) but need more emphasis on its history.
- The river frontage is an asset which should be harnessed more.
- St Marys Church – can alternative uses be explored such as climbing walls, community spaces?

Housing, Jobs & Economy

- Smaller housing units needed for young people starting out – affordable – particularly in town centre.
- Need to improve infrastructure before building new homes.
- Pollution is a major health concern – and much discussion was linked to traffic and the impact on the environment.

Environment & Biodiversity

- Pollution is a major health concern, linked to traffic and the impact on the environment.
- Transition Chepstow is a local group facilitating local action about how the town can respond to climate change.
- Access to local green spaces and natural environment was highlighted as an asset of the town.

Green and Open Spaces and Play

- Play equipment needs updating in many play areas – consult with young people. Consider gym equipment. Audit play equipment.
- Accessible route needed to Barnett's Wood on the western edge.
- Replicate the successful Garden City project and community orchards scheme in other parts of the town

From reading through the community's comments and looking at local statistics, the following challenges and opportunities have been identified.

A Destination for Sport, the Outdoors, Festivals and the Wye Valley



A High Street that is trying to find a way forward



An historic gateway town



New housing feels separated from town



Garden Suburb Character



Neighbourhoods that are close to the town centre with good open space



A focus on neighbourhood improvements and local services



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Strengths

- Gateway into the Wye Valley from the south
- Historical walled town known for Castle and location on the River Wye
- Characterful town centre set within a conservation area
- Location next to the M48 and the Severn Bridge
- Chepstow racecourse – home to horse-racing, concerts and events
- Some distinctive independent town centre businesses
- Range of town centre events e.g. Rock in the Dell, Arts Festival and more
- Lots of passionate community and voluntary organisations
- Some strong employers in research and development, technology, etc
- There is a sense of neighbourhood in places like Bulwark
- Long distance footpaths – Wales Coastal Path, Offa's Dyke and more
- The heritage of the River Wye – boatbuilding, painters, port, ferry

Opportunities

- The Place Plan process – making the case for change and funding
- Bristol house-buyers bring new demand in the town
- Staycation tourism market due to Covid and whether this continue
- To grow distinctive clusters of businesses – arts, food, creatives, etc
- Some large town centre buildings could unlock arts and cultural facilities
- A growing arts scene – festivals, galleries, shops, events, clubs
- Connect the Castle, Museum and Riverside into a more cohesive place
- Planned investment in the leisure centre and comprehensive school
- Creation of small to medium sized workspace – start ups and innovation
- A hub for artists, makers and producers within lower Wye Valley
- Maximising walking products and their economic benefits for the town

Weaknesses

- Proximity to Bristol does result in leakage of activity specifically shopping and leisure related activities
- Traffic volume on the A48 and its resultant impact on the local highway network, environmental quality and economic performance of the town
- The topography of the town centre does create challenges for destination management and accessibility
- The town centre performance follows UK trends in shopping but is compounded by its physical challenges, its traffic amongst other things
- Pockets of deprivation that are associated with health, education and income and some neighbourhoods have a poor environmental quality
- Travel to work has a long reach and no strong clusters of quality employment
- The housing market has drawn in buyers from Bristol which has increased demand and prices

Threats

- Housing growth and strain on infrastructure
- Perceived encroachment on rural edge with housing
- Waiting for big solutions to the town traffic and not looking for practical solutions
- Future of the High Street – needs to agree a purpose and direction
- Sense that the community hospital is losing bed space and a wide range of care



Our Vision for Chepstow



“Chepstow is a great place for local people, businesses and visitors. The town centre is an accessible and distinctive place for local enterprise, arts, culture and public spaces. And the town's neighbourhoods are well-connected, with the right range of services to support residents' well-being”

Our Aims & Objectives



Aim: To develop Chepstow town centre as a destination for the local community and visitors that is built on its heritage, walled town and riverside character and successful local businesses and attractions.

- Develop and co-deliver a town centre identity and experience that is supported through place marketing, local business support and on-street activity.
- Develop a partner led approach to tackling underused space and buildings that meets town centre user needs and builds a distinctive experience.
- Manage space within the High Street area through a town centre partnership so that it hosts frequent events, festivals, markets and more.
- Manage how people arrive in the town centre and help them explore and find their way around.
- Ensure that the town centre is accessible to all, with infrastructure ensuring people can travel to and from safely with the right facilities to encourage visits, dwell and loyalty.
- Enhance the arrival and linkages between the town centre, the Castle and Riverside area, its Drill Hall, develop amenity improvements and co-host event/activity programme.
- Develop, create and manage green space within the town centre for dwell, play, biodiversity and other activities.
- Support community assets through a partnership led approach that forms part of the Chepstow experience, and help their long term viability and their role in the community.



Aim: To develop the quality and range of community infrastructure across Chepstow's neighbourhoods that supports local well-being and improved life chances and sense of belonging

- Improve the quality of the setting of Bulwark neighbourhood shops and its linkages within the community through a co-ordinated design that addresses the main road, frontages and immediate spaces.
- Support and enable community organisations with buildings, venues and spaces by signposting them to funding and aligning training and support that improves skills and people based outcomes.
- Support a local partner-led approach to improve under-used outdoor spaces within the community that help local biodiversity, enhanced greening of public spaces, education, social prescribing and opportunities for community growing.
- Develop and create cycle-friendly/walkable neighbourhoods that ensure access to amenity and services, by foot and bike, that also link into the town centre through the wider active travel network and into various long distance footpaths

Presenting the key projects for the town, then visualising the key proposals for each area in further detail, the key project areas are as follows:





1 Thomas Street Bus Station

This project offers a great opportunity to completely repurpose the existing bus station space and public realm. A review will need to be undertaken of the existing bus services with a view to reduce the number of bays required. This will release currently underused land for re purposing into quality public realm. Introduction of meaningful green infrastructure will help to soften the currently hard environment and create the backdrop for a supplementary and complementary use e.g. coffee kiosk with south facing seating / rest area.

- ❑ Creation of an improved public transport arrival gateway
- ❑ Reduce dominance of large areas of 'dead' paving by reduction of bus bays but not impacting on bus services
- ❑ Creation of new quality public realm with integrated green infrastructure
- ❑ Activation of space though the introduction of a 'service' use e.g. coffee kiosk
- ❑ Improve setting of the church
- ❑ Opportunity to relocate disabled parking from Moor Street to Thomas Street, helping to reduce Moor Street congestion



2 High Street Area

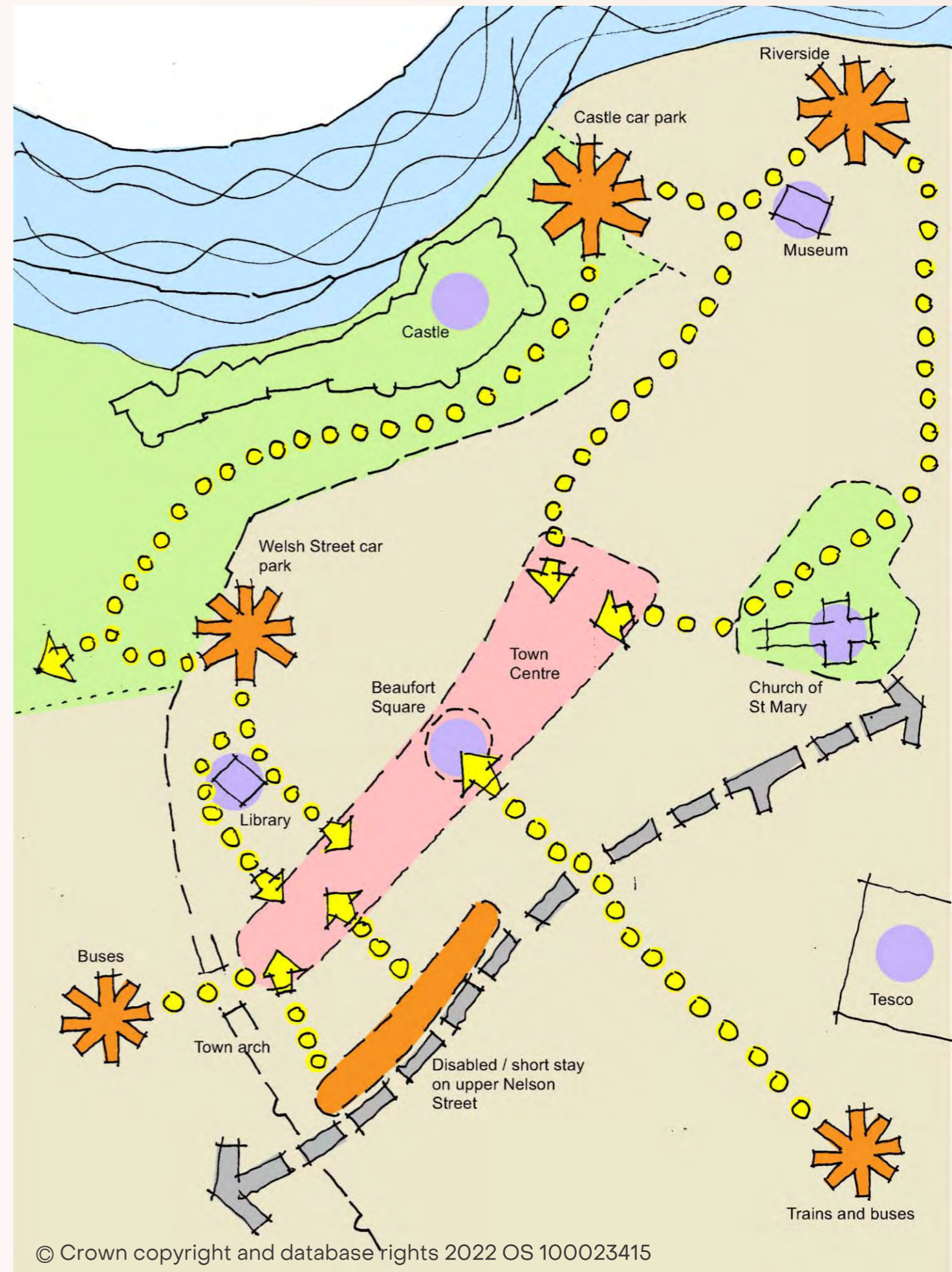
A menu of activities to activate, animate and repurpose the Chepstow High Street experience that includes:

Place

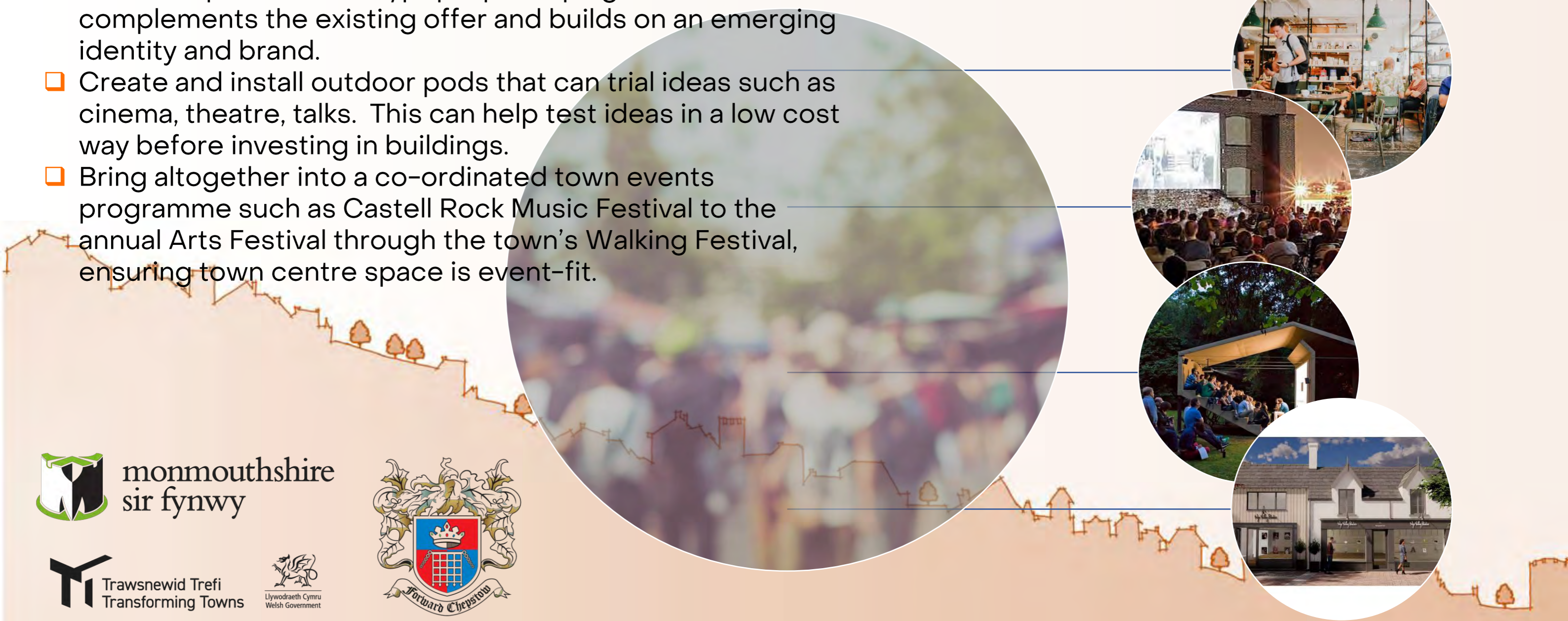
- ❑ To work with the existing public realm and introduce planting, signage/promotion and re-enforce events/activities space that complements the business offering.
- ❑ To provide a Building Grants initiative that is a flexible pot for grant funding to deliver improvements to town centre buildings that will facilitate interventions such as Commercial Property Improvement Grants, Town Centre Meanwhile Uses, and Shop Frontage Enveloping Schemes.
- ❑ To co-ordinate frontages and the immediate spaces to create the right draw and experience through a design code and manual for businesses.
- ❑ To develop the Welsh Street link public realm with the existing town centre scheme to deliver improved pedestrian link between The Dell green space and playground, Welsh Street car park, Chepstow library/Community Hub and the town centre.
- ❑ Explore the creation of short term parking on Upper Nelson Street with an improved link to the High Street, alongside former Herbert Lewis store.

Activity

- ❑ To develop a meanwhile/pop-up campaign that complements the existing offer and builds on an emerging identity and brand.
- ❑ Create and install outdoor pods that can trial ideas such as cinema, theatre, talks. This can help test ideas in a low cost way before investing in buildings.
- ❑ Bring altogether into a co-ordinated town events programme such as Castell Rock Music Festival to the annual Arts Festival through the town's Walking Festival, ensuring town centre space is event-fit.



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The Town Centre

Place Management

Local organisations are already directing activity and resources to help support the town centre but these would have greater impact if there it was more integrated. Some building blocks for place management include:

- ❑ A town centre partnership that has a focus on how the town centre works together, both operationally and about events and activities.
- ❑ Street animation. To explore simple ways of animating the town centre streets, building on street bunting and floral displays. This could include training on business signage and A boards, use of flags, social space adaptation, amongst other items.
- ❑ A digital platform. A town website with supporting social media campaigns that also links into physical identity within the town e.g. signage, event signage, etc.
- ❑ Events and Activities. Adding to the current programme of town events, there is a need to explore a meanwhile or pop up scheme that would focus on empty properties, trialling ideas, products, events that act as a springboards for micro-businesses and start-ups.



The Town Centre

8 The Dell Park

Castle Dell is owned privately by the Denny family and has been leased by the council from the family since 1946. The play area at Castle Dell Chepstow has been in situ for many years and whilst the equipment is maintained to the relevant standards by the Council it is dated, has limited play value and is not fully inclusive. The site is close to the town centre, next to the Bank Street car park, giving good access to the play area and the wider open space. The Friends of Dell Park Chepstow (FDPC) was set up a few years ago by a group of interested parents with a view to upgrading the play area and has been working for the last three years with a landscape architect to redesign the site. The proposed adaptations and improvements to The Dell Park include:

- ❑ Enhancement of existing play provision
- ❑ Interpretation of town wall
- ❑ Improved access to the lower level of the Dell
- ❑ Introduction of enhanced biodiversity and pollination opportunities
- ❑ Activity on Wye Valley Walk and key town route





4 Chepstow Castle/Tourist Information/Museum Public Realm

This area of the town is a key arrival point and gateway for many of the visiting tourists. There is a real opportunity, to create a real sense of arrival here. There is also an opportunity to far better integrate the neighbouring uses into a unified space. Specific activities include:

- ❑ Reduce traffic speed
- ❑ Widen footways
- ❑ Create places for pub seating
- ❑ Rationalise castle car park access
- ❑ Improve pedestrian link between castle and museum



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5 The Riverfront

The riverfront area needs to re-enforce itself as destination within the town and part of the lower Chepstow trail of heritage and natural assets. On arrival there needs to be a clear sequence of movement from the old Wye Bridge to the river-bank and band stand area.

- ❑ To make the space more coherent for the Wales Coastal Path southern gateway and the amenity area of the Riverfront area
- ❑ Incorporate features that connect the north and south gateways to create a sense of connectivity along the path
- ❑ Install artistic features which people will post on social media, providing effective marketing for the path

6 The Drill Hall

The Drill Hall Chepstow is a community and arts venue which, since it was leased by Chepstow Town Council in 2008, and handed to a volunteer management committee, has rapidly become a major focus in Chepstow's artistic and community life. Key areas of focus to sustain this building are:

- ❑ To ensure the Drill Hall remains as a welcoming and accessible community-led cultural facility.
- ❑ To develop the Drill Hall's potential as a centre for community education in the arts, culture and heritage of the area.
- ❑ To build the capacity of the Drill Hall to accommodate new community activities, in order to promote health & wellbeing.
- ❑ To realise new community and social enterprise opportunities that help to sustain the Drill Hall in the long-term.

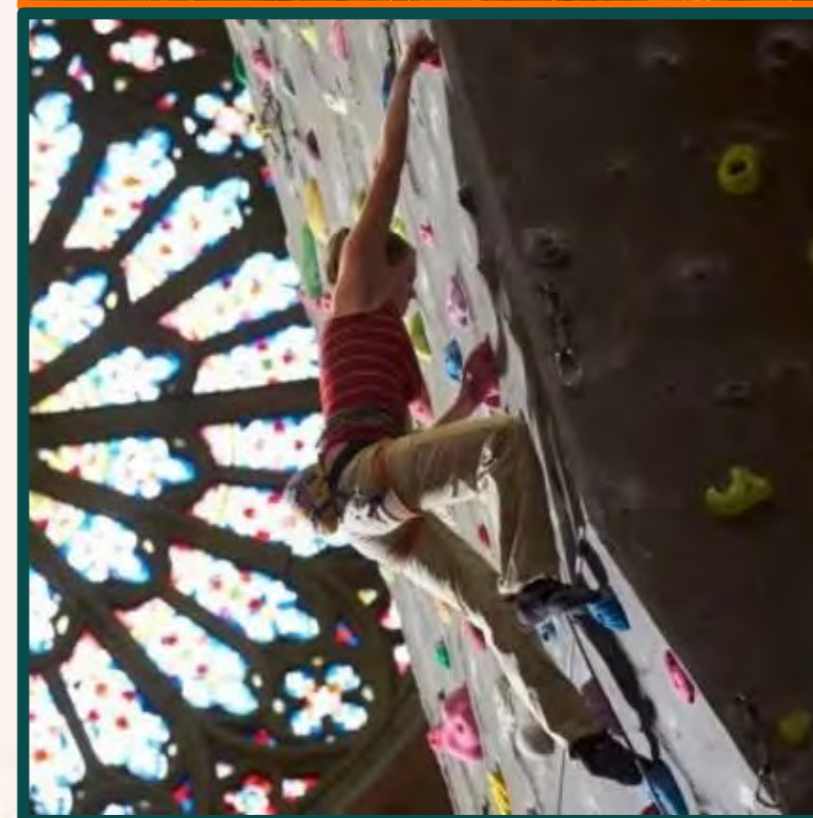
3 Upper Church Street/Bridge Street

- ❑ Rationalise carriageway
- ❑ Reduce junction geometry to increase pedestrian space and slow vehicle speeds
- ❑ Enhance pedestrian priorities using crossovers at side junctions
- ❑ Improve setting of Alms houses

7 St Mary's Priory Church

St Mary's Priory Church has come to a cross-roads where it needs to maintain its place of worship within the community, safeguards its historical value but also open itself up to more community and town wide activities and events. The Church has developed a Vision which is about looking to using the internal space in a number of ways that respects its core purpose, yet also attracts new audiences and leads to it being seen as accessible and inclusive to all. Ideas include:

- ❑ Activities to include provision for baby and toddler groups, school holiday activities, soft play activities and support groups for young parents.
- ❑ For young people, areas of the church could be provided for weekly youth clubs including table tennis, pool, music such as safe discos.
- ❑ For older people activities such as dementia Café, day centre, concerts, theatre, cinema, use by societies and clubs and arts exhibitions.
- ❑ The celebration and promotion of the Arts could include Festivals – Music and Performing arts, Literature – Poet/Artist in residence, Exhibition space, etc
- ❑ Some proposals that could be trialled or semi permanent include temporary climbing wall and a temporary skate park.





9 Bulwark Neighbourhood Shops

- ❑ Improve shopper experience.
- ❑ Enhance frontages of shops and buildings.
- ❑ More public space to sit out, dwell and use.
- ❑ Make the road into a street.
- ❑ Better pedestrian crossings.
- ❑ Links into nearby neighbourhoods.
- ❑ More trees and planting.
- ❑ Scheme to co-ordinate with relocated Aldi store proposal



10 Bulwark Community Centre

- ❑ Enhance existing community assets such as the community centre would aid demand, viability, future sustainability and social cohesion in the area.
- ❑ To integrate assets such as Bulwark Community Centre and Pembroke Road Primary School into the local community.





11 Thornwell Primary School

- Repurpose former caretaker's lodge.
- Enhance how school engages with Thornwell Road.
- Streetscene improvements and introduce green infrastructure.
- Connect into Active Travel Network.

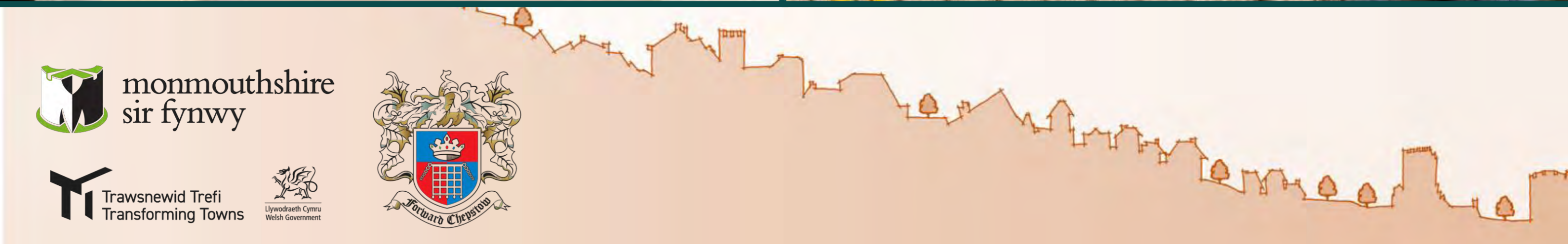
13 Play Provision

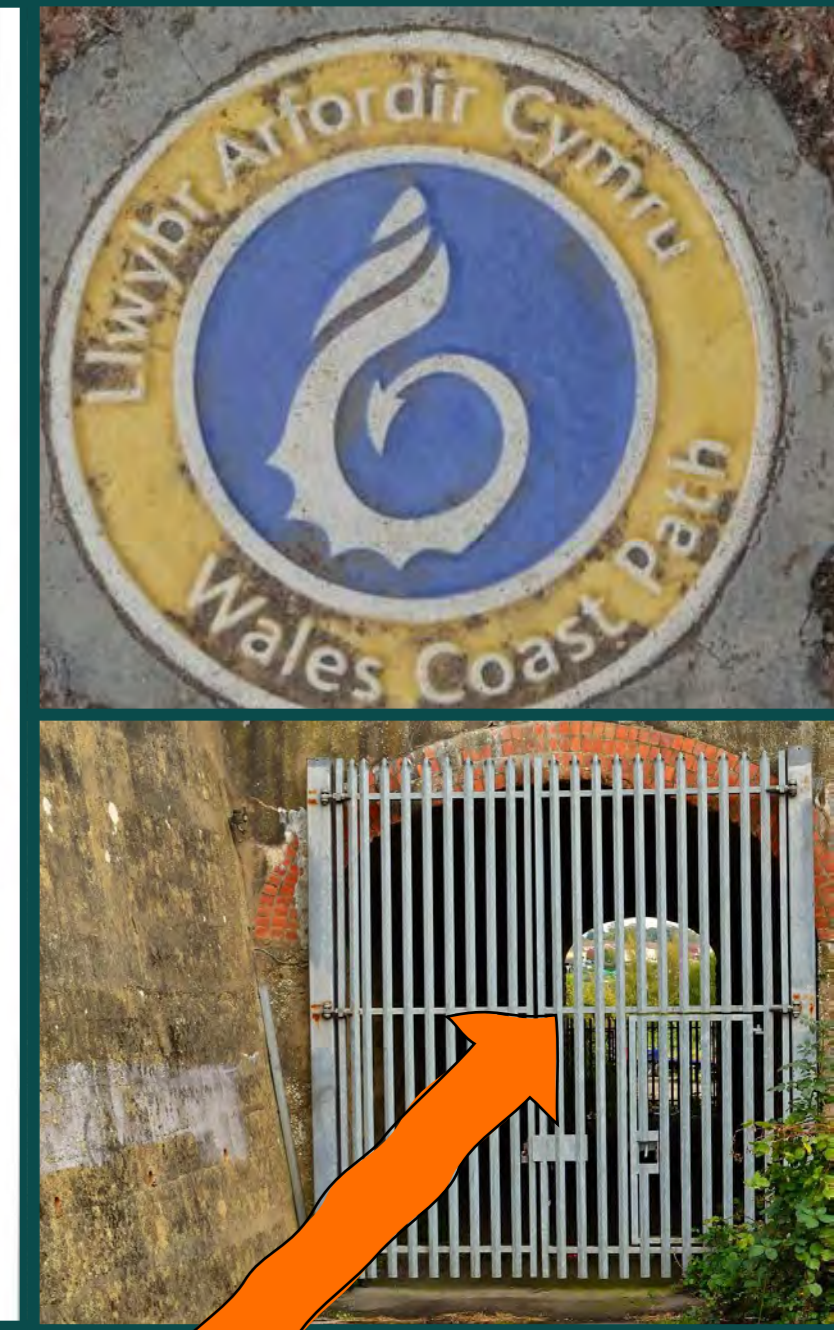
- To re-provision play sites within Bulwark and Thornwell that continues to provide a community resource yet maximising the natural capital of the spaces
- To retain play spaces and green spaces but with enhanced biodiversity value



12 Active Travel Links

- Active travel improvements that support increased mobility, healthy lifestyles and journeys to work, learning, leisure, shopping and more
- To address known hotspots for pedestrians and cyclists such as crossings, accessibility and to present a continuous series of routes
- The Active Travel Links support the 5 min neighbourhood and links into the larger 15 minute walkshed





14 Play and Sensory Garden

- ❑ Improve existing play provision
- ❑ Support Community Group with sensory garden improvements
- ❑ Ensure whole space works for well-being, play, football and informal recreational use

15 Links to Coastal Path

- ❑ To reopen link from Hardwick Avenue through railway tunnel onto Brunel Quarter along Riverside to lower Chepstow
- ❑ To consider how the Wales Coastal Path benefits the town centre economy in terms of route, signage, interpretation

Kingsmark and Western Edge



17 Welsh Street Linkages

- ❑ Improve safety of children in accessing school
- ❑ Create new gateways into school and leisure centre
- ❑ Introduce green infrastructure
- ❑ Promote pedestrians above vehicles

16 Active Travel And Community Nature Space

- ❑ To link the north-western edge of Chepstow community within the town centre and other destinations through the Danes and onto Welsh Street
- ❑ To make additional investment in the Danes open space and play area through local spaces for nature measures
- ❑ To improve existing routes to meet Active Travel standards



Have Your Say:

Thank you for taking the time to view these proposals for Chepstow

You can feedback your comments in a number of ways:

- ❑ Come along to our face to face events on the 8th and 11th October in the town centre and Bulwark
- ❑ View the proposals in Chepstow library from the 12th to the 30th October
- ❑ Viewing the proposals and completing our on-line survey at www.monmouthshire.gov.uk
- ❑ Posting your completed survey at Chepstow Town Council (the Gatehouse) or at Chepstow library by the 30th October
- ❑ If you have a specific comment that cannot be included in the survey, please email us mccregeneration@monmouthshire.gov.uk or phone Sadie Beer on 07929726220



You can access the survey via either the following link to the website, or by scanning this QR code which will take you to the site:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/chepstowtownsurvey>

Do you agree with our vision?

Do you agree with the proposals

Is there anything missing?

Do you want to get involved?

Next steps...

After the consultation period has finished we will:

- ❑ Read and analyse your comments
- ❑ Share the consultation responses with you
- ❑ Refine proposals and the plan
- ❑ Publish the Plan once formally adopted

Have Your Say

