

Monmouth

Placemaking Plan

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This document has been prepared
on behalf of:

Monmouth Town Council/
Monmouthshire County
Council

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Introduction



What Placemaking Is

What Placemaking Is

Placemaking is about creating places where people want to live, work, visit and spend time in. It's a way of thinking that puts people at the heart of planning decisions, making sure that new developments and improvements to existing areas help communities thrive.

Rather than looking at individual buildings or streets in isolation, placemaking takes a broader view. It considers how different parts of a place work together – the shops, homes, parks, transport links and community facilities – and how they can better serve the people who use them every day.

Good placemaking creates areas that have their own distinct character and identity, that people are proud of and where they feel a sense of belonging. It focuses on making places that are attractive, accessible, safe and vibrant – and that support people's health, happiness and well-being.

Why Monmouth Needs a Placemaking Plan

Over the years, many places have lost their unique character as development has happened piecemeal, without considering the bigger picture. This has led to 'placelessness' – areas that could be anywhere, and that lack the special qualities that make people care about them.

Monmouth is fortunate to have a strong historic character and beautiful setting between two rivers. However, like many market towns, it faces challenges: empty shops, traffic congestion, and the need to attract and retain younger people while serving its ageing population.

A placemaking plan helps coordinate efforts across different organisations and funding streams. Rather than tackling problems one at a time, it provides a shared vision that everyone can work towards. This makes it more likely that improvements will complement each other and create lasting positive change.

Purpose and Scope of This Plan

This placemaking plan sets out a vision and framework for improving Monmouth town centre over the coming years. While the focus is on the town centre – roughly the area from Monnow Bridge in the south to St Mary's Priory Church in the north – the plan also considers how this area connects to the wider town and surrounding countryside.

The plan aims to:

- Create a shared vision for Monmouth's future that reflects what local people and businesses want to see
- Identify the key opportunities and challenges facing the town centre
- Set out practical projects and improvements that can be delivered over time
- Provide evidence to help secure funding from various sources
- Guide decision-making by councils, businesses and community groups.

The plan will help demonstrate local priorities to regional and national organisations, making it easier to access grant funding and align different services and investments.



What Placemaking Is

What This Plan Can and Cannot Do

Through extensive consultation with residents, businesses and local groups, we know there are many things you want to see improved in Monmouth. This plan can directly address some of these issues, while others need different organisations to act.

What This Plan Can Achieve:

- Improvements to town centre streets and public spaces
- Support to bring empty buildings back into use
- Better connections between historic sites and attractions
- Enhanced signage and way-finding throughout the town centre
- Backing for more events and activities to bring life to public spaces
- Support for local businesses and entrepreneurs.



These are areas where the town council, county council and local partners can make direct progress.

What Needs Wider Action

Other organisations need to lead on many of the issues raised while preparing this plan:

Transport: Bus operators and Welsh Government can improve bus services and regional transport links.

Healthcare: The local health board can address the shortage of NHS dentists and improve access to health services.

Housing and Employment: While we can support town centre businesses, broader issues around affordable housing and major employment opportunities need county-wide and regional action.

Services for Young People: Beyond town centre facilities, schools, youth services and further education providers can coordinate to improve services for young people.

How This Plan Helps with these Wider Issues:

Even where we can't directly solve problems, this plan:

- Demonstrates to other organisations what matters most to local people
- Provides evidence when applying for larger funding programmes
- Creates a foundation for partnerships with regional and national bodies
- Raises Monmouth's profile for wider investment opportunities.

This placemaking plan is not the solution to every challenge facing Monmouth, but does provide a clear starting point for coordinated action that can make a real difference to the town centre and the wider community it serves.

How this Plan is Structured

The rest of this placemaking plan is organised into four main sections:

Section 2 Understanding Monmouth Today and Place Analysis

This section provides a summary of our analysis of Monmouth town centre, based on multiple sources of information including engagement with local stakeholders and consultation with the wider community. It examines what makes Monmouth special, the challenges it faces and the opportunities available to build on its strengths.

Section 3 Your Vision for Monmouth's Future

This section sets out your vision and objectives for the future of Monmouth town centre, including delivery goals and supporting objectives. The vision was developed through extensive consultation with residents, businesses and local organisations to ensure it reflects what the community wants to see for their town.

Section 4 Making It Happen

This section starts by summarising how the community responded to our initial proposals through comprehensive public consultation, showing how this feedback directly shaped our final approach. It then sets out our comprehensive plan for achieving the vision, including a framework that shows which projects are more of a priority than others.

Section 5 Visualising Success for our Town Centre

This section focuses on measuring the effectiveness of change. It sets out how to track outputs and outcomes against each of the plan's delivery goals to ensure they are carried out successfully.

How this Plan was Produced

Stakeholder and Community Involvement

The Monmouth Placemaking Plan was developed through extensive stakeholder and community engagement, with each phase directly informing key aspects of the final plan.

A dedicated steering group made up of representatives from Monmouthshire County Council, Monmouth Town Council and key local stakeholder organisations provided strategic guidance throughout the project. Most importantly, the steering group carried out a prioritisation exercise using information including feedback from the public consultation to determine the priority projects and make sure resources would be focused on community-supported initiatives.

Stakeholder workshops were a cornerstone of the engagement approach, with each workshop having a distinct purpose in the plan's development. The first workshop, held in September 2024, gathered invaluable local insights that directly informed the development of the vision for Monmouth's future. Participants identified what they loved about the town centre and imagined its future through structured discussions, with their input shaping the aspirational final vision. The second workshop, held in February 2025, gathered feedback on the draft proposals, with stakeholder expertise informing and refining the proposed projects before the wider public consultation.

Interactive walkabouts around the town centre with stakeholders provided ground-level understanding of specific issues and opportunities, bringing the desktop analysis to life. They directly influenced the project by highlighting connectivity challenges, underused spaces and areas with potential for improvement.

Targeted meetings with specific groups ensured diverse perspectives were captured. Sessions with students from Monmouth Comprehensive School provided insights into how young people experience the town centre, informing projects designed to encourage greater engagement from this age group.



The public consultation in March 2025 provided different ways for the community to take part. In-person drop-in sessions at the Market Hall attracted 222 people over two days, with peak attendance during Saturday morning and Friday lunchtime. A static display at the Shire Hall's Old Council Chamber gave additional opportunities for feedback. Digital engagement through the Let's Talk Monmouthshire platform expanded reach significantly, with 1,240 visitors to the project page and 428 downloads of the proposals document. In total, 250 people completed the feedback survey either online or on paper. The feedback from this comprehensive public consultation was used to refine ideas and make sure they addressed community priorities and concerns. It also informed the vision, confirming community support for its direction and, crucially, informed the prioritisation of projects alongside the steering group's deliberations.

The full findings of the public consultation phase are analysed in a separate **Monmouth Consultation Report**, which you can get by emailing mccregeneration@monmouthshire.gov.uk.

Understanding Monmouth Today



Understanding Monmouth Today

To create a successful plan for Monmouth's future, we first need to understand the town as it is today. This section provides a summary of our detailed analysis of Monmouth town centre, drawing on extensive research, data analysis, and – most importantly – conversations with the people who know the town best: its residents, business owners, visitors, and community groups.

We examine what makes Monmouth unique and special, from its stunning historic architecture and riverside setting to its role as a market town serving a wide rural area. We also look honestly at the challenges facing the town centre, including some prominent vacant buildings. We look at how to make the town centre work for people of all ages, how to help people navigate around to discover its wonderful heritage assets and independent businesses, and the need to get to the basics right such as de-cluttering public areas and making them as clean and tidy as possible.

By understanding both Monmouth's strengths and the challenges it faces, we can identify the real opportunities available to build a better future for the town centre and the community it serves.

The full details of our analysis are set out in the separate **Monmouth Baseline Report**, which you can get by emailing mccregeneration@monmouthshire.gov.uk.



Where Monmouth Is

Monmouth (Welsh: Trefynwy) is a market town and community in Monmouthshire, Wales, situated where the River Monnow joins the River Wye, around two miles from the Welsh border with England.

The town occupies a strategic position between the major centres in South Wales and the South West of England and the Midlands.

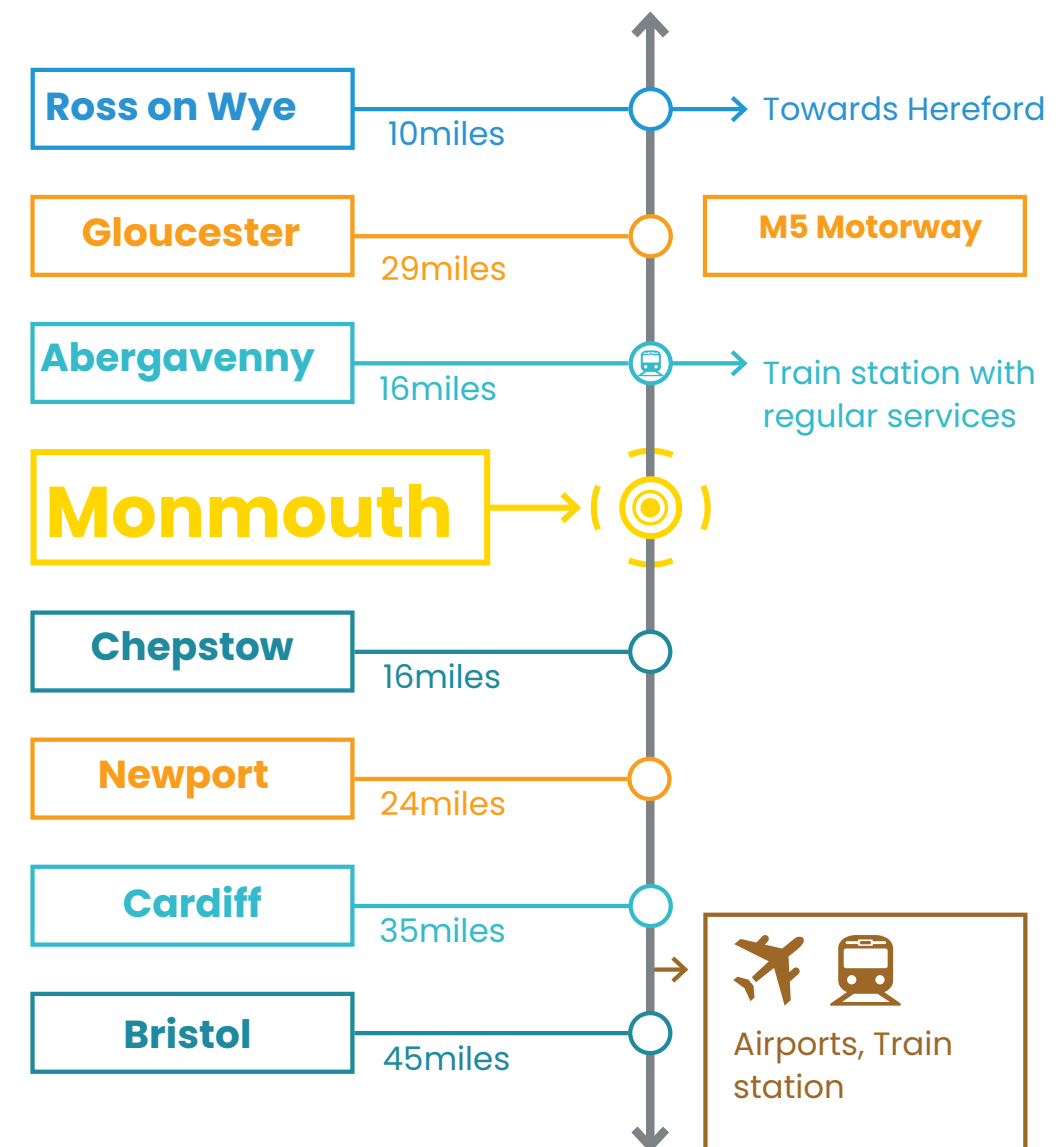
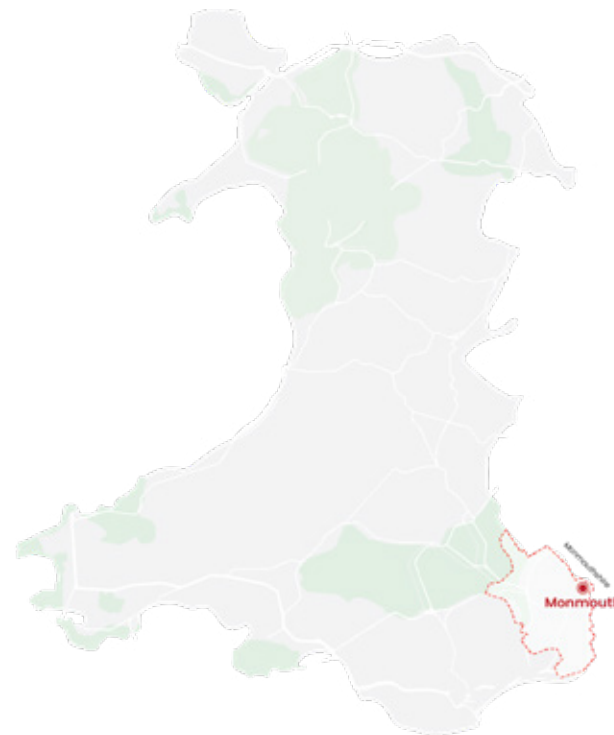
Monmouth acts as the main retail, educational, and cultural centre for an extensive rural area, including much of north-eastern and central Monmouthshire, and extending into the Forest of Dean and Herefordshire.

It also contains a number of smaller neighbourhood centres.

The town centre has a relatively large number and good range of shops and restaurants, a theatre, cinema, and museum. There is also a leisure centre offering a variety of facilities including a swimming pool, fitness suites, indoor sports halls and outdoor pitches, as well as a number of parks and open spaces run by the county council.

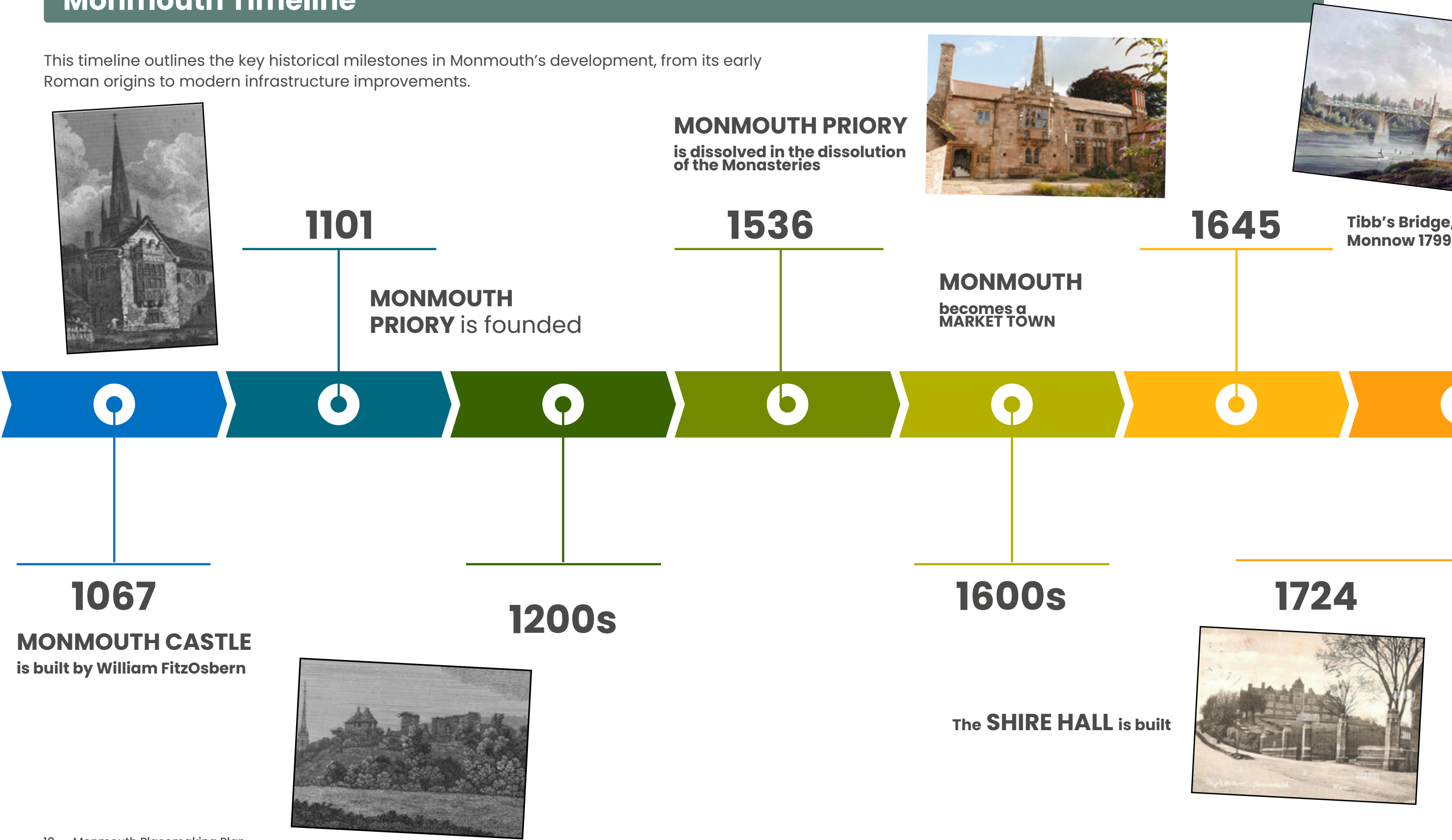
Monmouth has bus services to the South Wales towns and cities and into Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. The closest train station is Abergavenny, a 25-minute drive away, and this station offers regular services to Hereford, Newport (with connections to Bristol) Cardiff and further afield.

Monmouth is located on the edge of the Wye Valley National Landscape Area, which immediately adjoins the town and is an important centre for tourism. The town centre is also a designated Conservation Area.



Monmouth Timeline

This timeline outlines the key historical milestones in Monmouth's development, from its early Roman origins to modern infrastructure improvements.



Monmouth Timeline



River

1800s

Growth in the importance of Monmouth as a market town and administrative centre

MONMOUTH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Is founded

1902



THE NEW MONNOW BRIDGE
is opened on 15 March

2004



1857

Monmouth Troy Railway station opens (and was closed in 1964)



1960s

MODERN INFRASTRUCTURE
and new housing is developed



2018

Grand opening of new **COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL**



Current Activities, Plans and Projects

Monmouth is not starting from a blank page. The town has benefited from significant recent investment and has an impressive pipeline of committed projects that are already transforming key areas of the town centre. These initiatives, delivered through partnerships between Monmouth Town Council, Monmouthshire County Council, and various funding bodies including Welsh Government and The National Lottery Heritage Fund, demonstrate the strong foundation upon which this placemaking plan builds.

From the major transformation of the historic Shire Hall into a vibrant museum and cultural hub, to the completed improvements along the riverside by Monnow Bridge, and the approved schemes for Monnow Street and Church Street, Monmouth has momentum. The town has also embraced innovation through 'SMART towns' technology, introducing intelligent recycling bins and LoRaWAN infrastructure (a long-range wireless network), while continuing its environmental leadership as the UK's first Bee Town.

This placemaking plan recognises and builds upon these achievements, ensuring that future proposals complement and enhance the excellent work already underway. The following section outlines the key projects that form the foundation for Monmouth's ongoing regeneration, providing context for how the plan's recommendations will integrate with and amplify these existing efforts.



Current Activities, Plans and Projects

Shire Hall

Monmouthshire County Council's Shire Hall Heritage Project has been awarded £1.5 million in funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to create a vibrant museum in Shire Hall, integrating the Council's two existing sites into one sustainable space. This project will enhance visitor experience with new galleries and community areas while preserving significant collections related to local history and notable figures. The project will engage diverse audiences through inclusive consultations, exhibitions, and workshops, incorporating best practices in co-production. It plans to increase organisational capacity with new roles and volunteer opportunities and to collaborate with educational institutions for skills development and heritage conservation.



Active Travel

Monmouthshire County Council has completed the Williams Field Lane to Monnow Bridge Active Travel Route, funded by Welsh Government. This new route connects residential areas to the town centre via Wonastow Road and Drybridge Street, with links from Rockfield Road skate park. Key improvements include widened shared-use footways for cycling and walking, a new priority junction replacing the Wonastow Road mini-roundabout and improved pedestrian crossings.

Future plans include a proposed pedestrian footbridge over the River Wye to enhance connections with Wyesham and the Offa's Dyke Path.

Inglis Bridge Repairs

The Inglis Bridge, which crosses the River Monnow and links Vauxhall Fields and the suburb of Osbaston, has been closed since 2024 for safety reasons. In spring 2025, it was announced that the owners of the bridge, the Ministry of Defence, had secured funding for the essential works needed to reopen the bridge and, subject to appointing a contractor and securing environmental permissions, the work should be complete by the end of the year.



Current Activities, Plans and Projects

Riverside and Monnow Bridge

Plans to enhance the riverside by the historic Monnow Bridge and improve basic infrastructure in Monmouth have recently been completed. The project is a partnership between Monmouthshire County Council and Monmouth Town Council and is funded by the Welsh Government's Brilliant Basics scheme. The scheme supports small-scale improvements to infrastructure, designed to improve the attractiveness of towns for visitors.

The project includes tree and wildflower planting, new picnic and park benches so people can enjoy the lovely riverside spot with its view of the iconic bridge, signage and a sculpture to create a more visual separation of the green space from the car park. In addition to the improvements to the open space, new "smart" litter bins have been installed on Monnow Street and in other key locations.

A significant element of the project is the introduction of 'smart' recycling litter bins throughout the town centre to collect cans, plastic bottles and paper cups for recycling. In addition to these street recycling litter bins, five larger recycling hubs were introduced where glass bottles, cans, plastic bottles and paper cups can be recycled. The bins have been fitted with electronic bin fill sensors as part of a trial to test how technology can help reduce the frequency of overflowing litter bins. The project is part of the Motion for Rivers and Ocean Action Plan, which is raising awareness of the impact litter can have on our rivers and seas.

Agincourt Square Phone Box

The town council has commissioned an artist to obtain ideas for the design of the telephone box. The idea is to install an 'Oasis of Calm,' which would include a comfy seat and allow the user to select calming music to listen to.

Wyesham Underpass & Subway

Volunteers have carried out a painting preparation day as part of planning the new mural.

Additional CCTV Cameras

The county council, with the town council's support, will install two new CCTV cameras in the town centre, one outside WH Smith and one outside The Green Dragon.

Smart Towns

The town council are exploring how SMART towns technology can be explored as part of the placemaking plan, including how many sensors can support new projects. They are planning to host a 'Smart Towns Roadshow' for Monmouth.



New picnic area along riverside



Telephone Box in Agincourt Square

Current Activities, Plans and Projects

Vacant Property and Property Improvements

The Monmouthshire Town Centre Property Improvement Grant provides financial support for improvements to properties in a designated area of Monmouth town centre. The scheme aims to achieve an enhanced and integrated approach to physical regeneration and is funded through the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Placemaking Grant and Monmouthshire County Council.

Church Street Quarter

The town council has secured £75,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to regenerate Church Street and White Swan Court to include improved signage, archways, advertising campaigns, shop vinyls, improved lighting and additional street furniture.

As of August 2025, the project has been substantially completed. Key outputs include a new lighting canopy, new information panels and images in White Swan Court, a family activity booklet, and a dedicated website. At the time of writing, welcome signage for the entrance is being manufactured.

This scheme improves the Church Street Quarter's identity and visitor experience while supporting the independent businesses that make this area a distinctive destination.



Policy Context

Monmouth's policy context provides essential strategic direction and alignment for this placemaking plan, it establishes the framework within which local regeneration initiatives must operate and identifies key opportunities for development.

National Policy Framework

At the national level, **Future Wales – The National Plan 2040** provides the overarching development framework, although Monmouth is not designated as a National Growth Area. However, the national plan's policies on supporting rural communities and economies, urban regeneration through public sector leadership, and affordable housing delivery offer significant opportunities to address key local challenges.

The **Well-being of Future Generations Act** establishes seven well-being goals and requires public bodies to demonstrate consideration of 'five ways of working': involvement, collaboration, integration, prevention, and long-term thinking. The Act underpins the sustainable development approach that must inform all placemaking decisions.

Planning Policy Wales (2024) puts placemaking at the heart of the planning system, requiring that all development decisions to contribute towards creating sustainable places that are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly. The policy defines placemaking as a holistic approach focused on positive outcomes that promote people's prosperity, health, happiness, and well-being.

Transport policy is guided by the Wales Transport Strategy and the **Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013**, which prioritise walking, cycling and public transport through the sustainable transport hierarchy. This is particularly relevant for Monmouth given its high dependency in cars and limited public transport connections.

Welsh Government Town Centre Policy

The **Transforming Towns Programme** and associated £100m investment allocation provides direct funding opportunities for Monmouth's regeneration. Key principles include the 'Town Centre First' policy, which promotes residential development in town centres, and joining up delivery across sectors.

The **Design Commission for Wales guidance** emphasises that placemaking plans should be locally led, engage diverse stakeholders, and consider all funding opportunities beyond just public sector investment. Plans should align with broader outcomes including health and well-being, decarbonisation, and reducing inequality.



Policy Context

Regional and Local Context

At the regional level, the **Cardiff Capital Region City Deal** offers collaborative opportunities for economic development, while **Monmouthshire County Council's Community and Corporate Plan** prioritises social justice, enterprise and job creation, locally accessible services, and quality housing.

The emerging **Replacement Local Development Plan (2018-2033)** aims to deliver the council's core purpose to become a zero-carbon county. Key objectives include attracting younger people to rebalance demographics, addressing housing inequality, and responding to climate and nature emergencies through sustainable development.

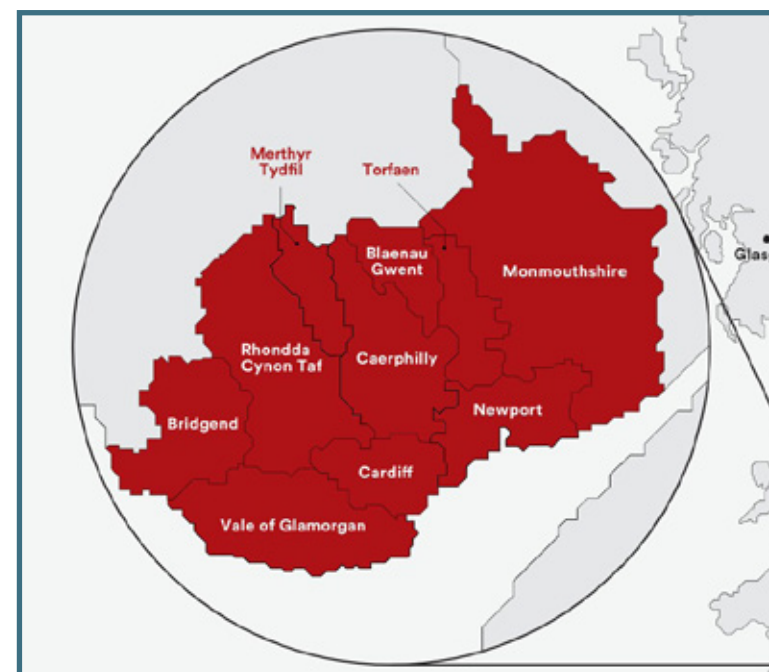
Monmouth Town Council's Annual Report 2023 demonstrates strong local commitment to environmental initiatives (including Bee Town status), active travel improvements, community support, and cultural heritage preservation, to provide a solid foundation for collaborative delivery of this placemaking plan.

This multi-layered policy framework creates both opportunities and requirements for Monmouth's regeneration, and emphasises the focus on sustainable development, community engagement, and joined-up delivery across all levels of government and stakeholder organisations.

Climate Change and Sustainability Framework

Climate change is one of the defining challenges of our time, and Monmouth's response must reflect both national policy requirements and local opportunities. The Well-being of Future Generations Act, Planning Policy Wales, Monmouthshire County Council's declaration of a climate emergency in 2019, and Monmouth Town Council's Annual Report 2023 all establish clear expectations that planning and placemaking decisions should contribute to decarbonisation and climate resilience.

This placemaking plan integrates climate considerations throughout its proposals rather than treating sustainability as a separate issue. All projects in the plan have been designed to support Monmouth's transition to a zero-carbon future whilst adapting to the impacts climate change is already having.



Policy Context

Monmouth's Climate Opportunities

The town's unique setting provides specific opportunities for climate-positive development. The Rivers Wye and Monnow offer natural drainage systems that can be enhanced through Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS), while the town's compact centre supports active travel and reduced dependency on cars. Monmouth's established role as a market town creates opportunities to support local food networks and reduce transport emissions, while the surrounding countryside provides potential for renewable energy generation and carbon sequestration.



Embedded Sustainability Measures

Rather than listing generic sustainability measures, this plan ensures climate considerations are woven into each project theme. The Monnow Street improvements incorporate extensive rain gardens and SUDS to manage increased rainfall while providing biodiversity benefits. Public realm enhancements prioritise tree planting and green infrastructure that will help moderate urban temperatures while improving air quality. Transport projects focus on active travel infrastructure and electric vehicle charging to reduce emissions from the town's current dependency on cars.

All building improvements promoted through this plan will support enhanced energy efficiency and, where appropriate, renewable energy generation. The plan's emphasis on bringing empty buildings back into productive use represents a fundamental climate-positive approach: reusing existing structures rather than requiring new construction while eliminating the emissions associated with derelict buildings.

This integrated approach ensures that Monmouth's regeneration contributes positively to both local resilience and national climate goals, creating a town that is both economically vibrant and environmentally sustainable.

Key Facts and Figures

Population

Monmouth has a population of 10,300 residents across 4,700 households. The town shows a distinctive demographic pattern with higher proportions of residents aged 10–14 and 55–74 compared to the Wales average, but significantly fewer aged 20–44. This reflects a trend in young people leaving for education or work opportunities and returning in their 40s, creating an ageing population profile typical of many market towns.

Employment

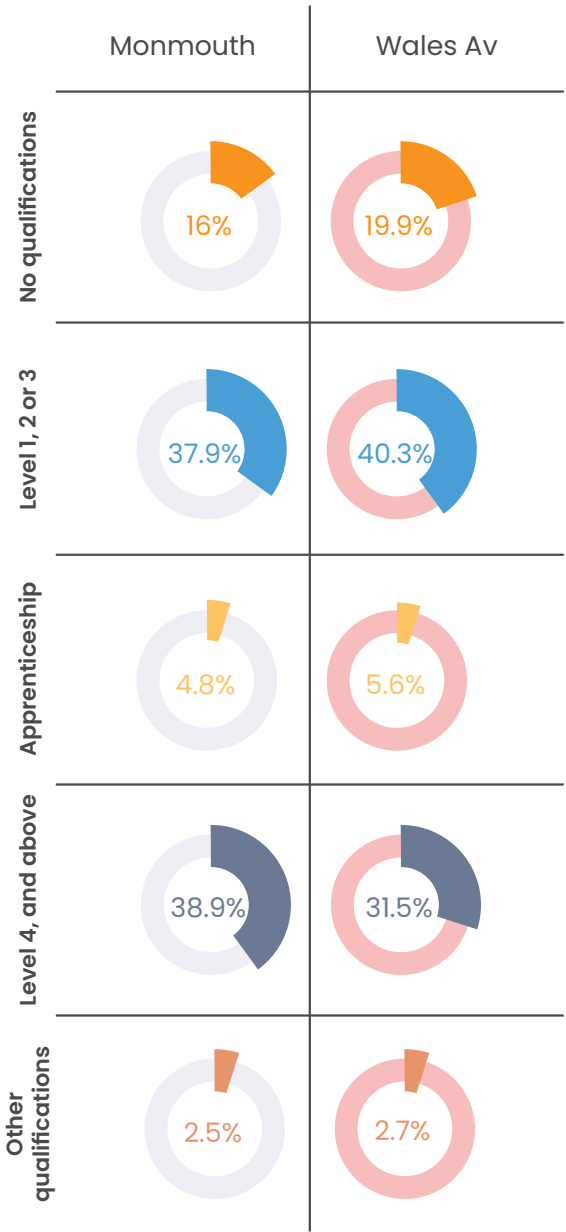
The occupational profile shows that 14.4% of working people are in managerial and professional roles, higher than the Wales average. Elementary occupations account for 11.1% (slightly above Wales average), while town centre-based sales and customer service jobs represent 7.8%, slightly below the Welsh average. This suggests a polarised employment structure with both high-skilled and lower-skilled roles.

Economic Activity

Economic activity levels mirror the Wales average, with just over half of residents in employment. However, the town demonstrates economic resilience with unemployment at 2.4% (below the Wales average of 3.1%). A distinctive pattern emerges where 74% of non-employed residents hadn’t worked in the past year (nine percentage points above the Wales average), yet only 15.7%

Economic Activity Level	Monmouth	Wales Av
Economically Active: In Employment	52.4%	53.5%
Economically Active: Unemployed	2.4%	3.1%
Economically Inactive	45.2%	43.5%
Not Employed (worked in last 1yr)	10.1%	11.5%
Not Employed (not worked in last 1yr)	74.3%	65.4%
Not Employed (never worked)	15.7%	23.1%

had never worked (seven percentage points below). This suggests a transitional community where residents move in and out of employment rather than facing long-term exclusion, likely reflecting the age profile, retirement patterns, and lifestyle choices typical of market towns.



Key Facts and Figures

Qualifications and Skills

Monmouth residents are well-qualified, with 38.9% holding Level 4 qualifications and above (7.4% above the Welsh average). Only 16% have no qualifications, which is 3.9% below the Welsh average. This high skill level reflects the town’s appeal to professional families and its proximity to good educational institutions.

Vehicle Ownership

Vehicle ownership is high, with 43.8% of households owning one vehicle (above the Wales average of 41.7%) and 29.7% owning two or more vehicles. This reflects Monmouth’s rural location and the need for private transport due to limited public transport, particularly the absence of a railway station.

Travel to Work

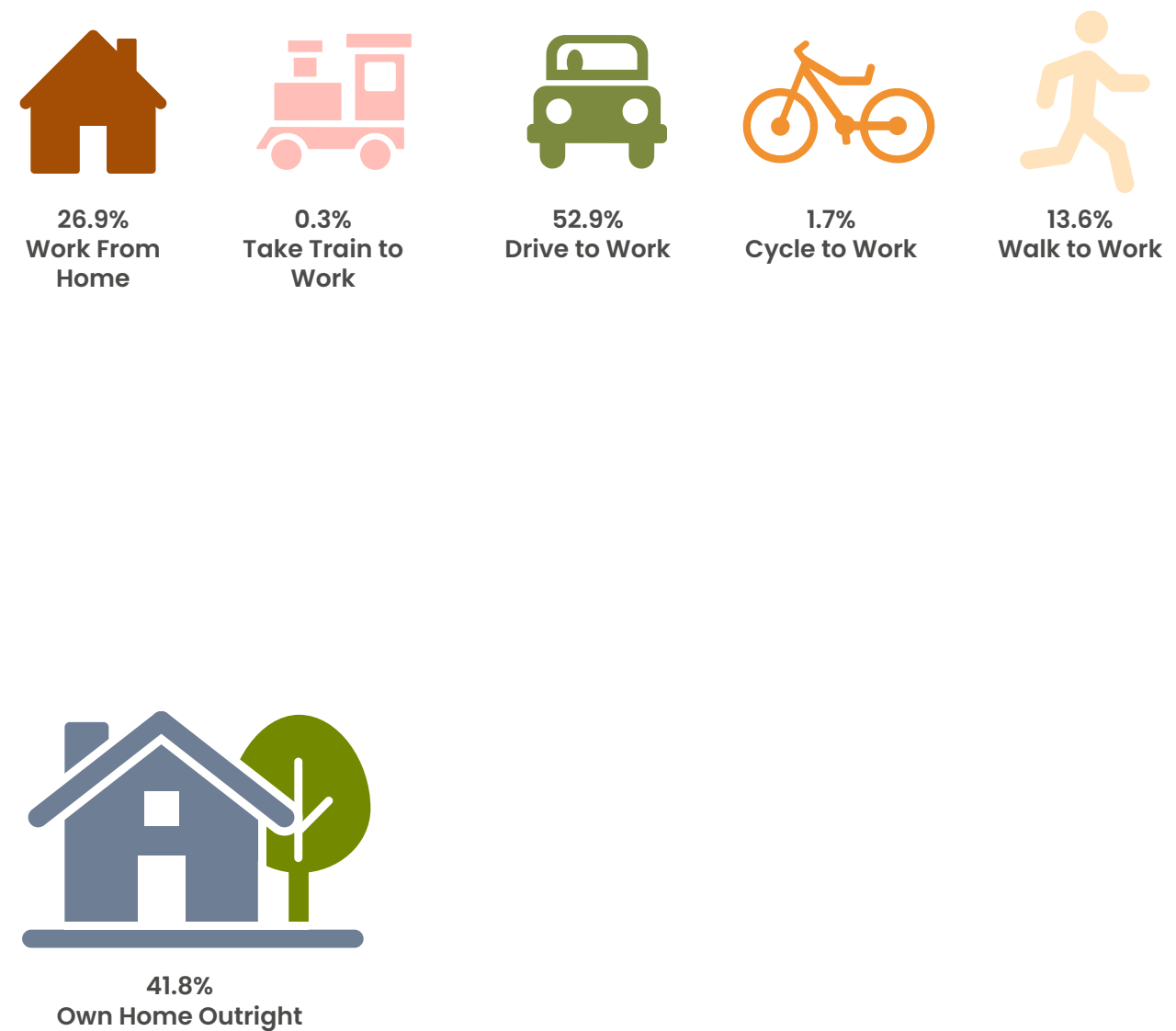
Monmouth shows distinctive commuting patterns with 12.3% travelling over 30km to work (double the Wales average of 5.9%), while 30.1% travel less than 10km. Notably, 26.9% work from home and 13.6% walk to work (almost double the Wales average), indicating both a willingness to commute and very local employment opportunities.

Crime

Monmouth is among the top 10 safest small towns in Gwent. The main crime categories in the 12 months from October 2022 were violent crime, anti-social behaviour, public order offences, and shoplifting, with relatively low incident levels. Overall crime peaked in spring 2023, with violent crime peaking in June, anti-social behaviour in March–April, and shoplifting in February.

Housing

The housing market is polarised, with 41.8% owning homes outright (above the Wales average) and house prices varying significantly across wards. Four wards are among the county’s most expensive and two are among the least expensive, particularly Overmonnow. Housing stock is skewed towards 1-bedroom (10.9%) and 4+ bedroom properties (28.8%), with fewer 3-bedroom homes than the Wales average.



Town Centre Analysis

Shopping Hinterland

Monmouth serves a significant rural catchment area, extending from Raglan to Coleford, with approximately 26,000 residents across 11,000 households. The area has a mean household income of £42,072, slightly below the county average but above the Wales average. However, nearly a quarter of households fall below 60% of the UK median income, indicating some economic challenges within the catchment area.

Business Mix and Diversity

The town centre has a varied retail and service offer, with hairdressing and beauty services leading (24 units), followed by cafés and restaurants (16 units), and fashion retailers (14 units). The long-term trend shows a decline in non-food shopping outlets and growth in service and leisure uses (food and drink and other services). In 2024, leisure uses represented 18% of occupied units. The town maintains a slightly higher proportion of multiple retailers (36%) compared to independents (64%) than the Wales average, with key anchors including Waitrose, M&S Food, and national brands concentrated along Monnow Street.

Vacancy Challenges

Vacancy rates have fluctuated significantly over two decades, peaking at 18.6% in 2023 before improving to 10% in 2024. Notable clusters of vacant properties exist around Agincourt Square, Church Street, and White Swan Court, with prominent empty buildings including the fire-damaged former Peacocks store and several former bank buildings. These vacancies contribute to reduced vibrancy in key areas and highlight the need for targeted regeneration efforts.



Town Centre Analysis

Property Market Dynamics

Despite vacancy challenges, Monmouth town centre has demonstrated stable rents and outperformed similar-sized towns in the region. Monnow Street remains highly sought-after, with strong demand for properties around 100 square metres. Smaller, ready-to-occupy units attract small businesses and start-ups, while larger properties, particularly former banks, present significant challenges and need substantial investment before they can be re-let. There is currently no established demand for office space in the town centre.

Footfall and Shopping Patterns

Pedestrian flows show the highest activity between 11am and 2pm, with peak areas being the Oldway Centre, Church Street, Waitrose, and Priory Street. The 2022 household survey revealed that 55% of residents shop weekly, with Waitrose being the most popular destination (16%) for main food shopping. However, significant non-food shopping occurs outside the county, with residents travelling to Hereford and Bristol, which represents both a challenge and an opportunity for the town centre.

The full details of our analysis are set out in the separate **Monmouth Baseline Report** which you can get emailing mccregeneration@monmouthshire.gov.uk.



Place Analysis



Place Analysis

The place analysis examined Monmouth's character areas, built context, transport and movement patterns, local amenities and facilities, heritage assets, green and blue infrastructure, flood risk, town gateways, parking provision and at-risk buildings and spaces to understand what makes the town special and identify where improvements are most needed.

What follows is a summary of the key findings.

Character and Context

Monmouth is strategically positioned where the Rivers Monnow and Wye meet. It is a historic market town within a wider rural hinterland of 26,000 people. The town centre, bounded by St Mary's Priory Church to the north and Monnow Bridge to the south, evolved from pre-Roman origins around a 500-metre stretch of Monnow Street that served as a gated market street for livestock trading.

Six distinctive character areas have been identified, each with unique qualities and challenges. Church Street offers an intimate pedestrianised environment with independent shops and the Savoy Theatre. The Castle Hill area contains significant heritage assets but feels disconnected from the main town centre with poor pedestrian access. Monnow Street serves as the vibrant commercial heart but is dominated by traffic and lacks quality public realm. The southern gateway around Monnow Bridge provides an attractive entrance but needs better infrastructure and wayfinding. The school quarter and leisure centre areas contribute to community life but require stronger connections to the town centre.

Built Environment and Heritage

The town centre sits within a Conservation Area that is exceptionally rich in listed buildings and historic assets. Key landmarks include:

- Monmouth Castle (birthplace of Henry V)
- The medieval Monnow Bridge
- The Grade I listed Shire Hall
- Slaughterhouse Arches
- St Mary's Priory Church.



This concentration of heritage assets within walking distance of each other and the town centre creates unique opportunities, though many suffer from poor wayfinding, limited interpretation, and inadequate connectivity. The town is nestled in a valley between the two rivers and surrounded by rolling countryside. Its topography is relatively flat, with a gentle rise towards the north.



Place Analysis

Movement and Infrastructure

Transport analysis reveals a complex picture. The A40 trunk road provides excellent strategic connectivity to major centres within an hour's drive, but creates significant barriers, particularly as it severs the town from the River Wye. The town benefits from substantial parking with 877 spaces within 400 metres of the centre, although connections between eastern car parks and Monnow Street are poor. Town centre parking capacity can be stretched on match days for local sports clubs, creating extra pressure on available spaces. Bus services operate from a central but poor-quality bus station. Active travel infrastructure is developing, with committed schemes including the Williams Field Lane to Monnow Bridge route and a proposed active travel bridge over the River Wye.

Community Assets and Services



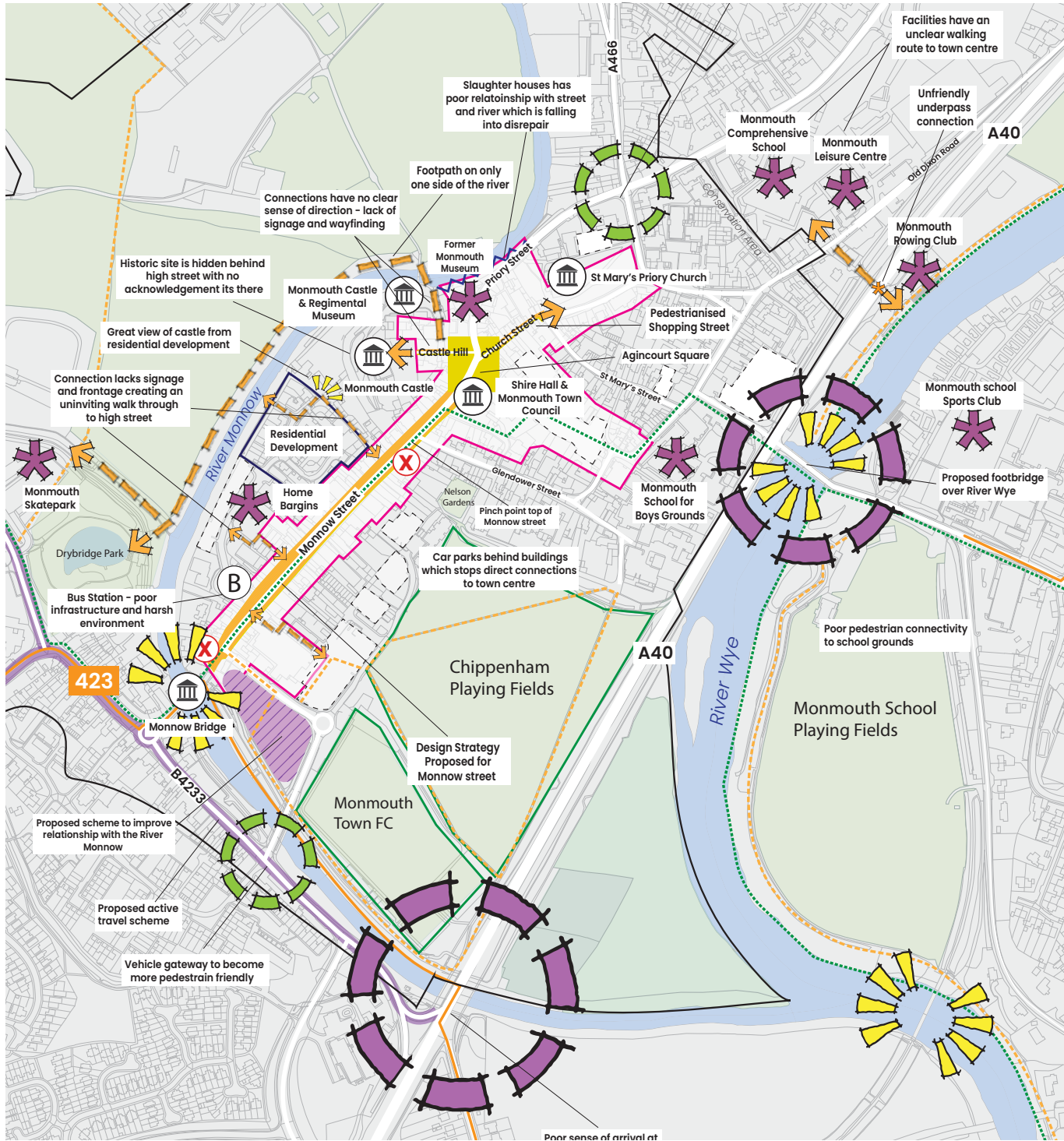
Monmouth benefits from strong community infrastructure that reflects its role as a service centre for the wider rural area. Educational facilities include both state and private schools, making it popular with families. The recently refurbished leisure centre provides comprehensive facilities, cultural venues like the Savoy Theatre and cinema serve both residents and visitors, and the Victorian Rolls Hall houses the community hub and library. Health and social care facilities include the Monnow Vale Health and Social Care Centre, and there are plans for a new health and well-being centre close to the town centre. Green and blue infrastructure includes Chippenham Playing Fields, Vauxhall Fields, allotments, riverside areas, and direct connections to the Wye Valley National Landscape, although integration with the town centre could be improved.

Digital Infrastructure

Monmouth's digital infrastructure presents a mixed picture of innovation and limitations. While the town was a digital pioneer – becoming the world's first 'Wikipedia town' in 2012 through Monmouthpedia and Wales' first WiFi town – much of this early infrastructure has deteriorated with limited public Wi-Fi now available beyond private businesses. Full-fibre broadband coverage remains patchy, with Openreach providing limited coverage in the town centre (though there is some availability on St Mary's Street), while alternative provider Ogi covers most residential areas but not the commercial core. Businesses on key streets like Monnow Street rely on super-fast broadband of up to 80 Mbps, which can fluctuate with usage. Mobile coverage is reasonable with 4G from all major networks and 5G from EE and Vodafone. Emerging SMART towns technology includes LoRaWAN networks that support smart recycling bins, and show potential for future Internet of Things application despite current limitations in public accessibility.

A full place analysis is available in the **Monmouth Baseline Report** which you can get by emailing mccregeneration@monmouthshire.gov.uk.

Issues and Opportunities



Leisure centre



Chippenham fields



Issues and Opportunities

Castle



Car dominated Monnow Street



Church Street



Slaughter House Arches, in need of revitalisation



Monnow Bridge gateway from south



Poor gateway to castle, no arrival / signage



Underpass under A40, unwelcoming and dark



Poor connection to playing fields



Poor bus station



Poor arrival public toilets, lack of gateway



The Priory, boost connection and footfall



Shire Hall



SWOT Analysis: Location

Strengths

- Strategic road connections A40, M4, M5
- Airports, mainline trains within an hour's drive
- Cities of Bristol, Cardiff, Gloucester, and Newport all within an hour's driver)
- Close to the Midlands – excellent road connectivity
- Close to countryside and nationally significant environments including Wye Valley and Forest of Dean

Weaknesses

- Disconnect from River Wye due to A40
- When A40 'not working' there's heavy congestion through the centre
- No train station, a public transport shortfall
- Not enough employment to serve the population resulting in the need to commute to work
- No train station means high levels of commuting by car

Opportunities

- Tap into tourists to the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean through facilities for canoeists, cyclists and walkers
- Improve public transport and active travel to help reduce pressure on the A40

Threats

- Increasing congestion on A40 puts people off visiting town
- Frequent and heavy delays on the M4 around Newport make commuting times to Bristol, Newport and Cardiff unpredictable

SWOT Analysis: People and Communities

Strengths

- A rural hinterland with a population of 26,000 (Raglan, Coleford, Skenfrith, Llangarron, Llangwm and Trellech)
- Both state and private schools make it a popular choice for families, unusual for a town of its size

Weaknesses

- Town's population of 10,300 declined by 200 people 2011-2022
- Small town population size – similar to Caldicot in the south of the county
- Older than average population, many young people move away from the town when they leave school

Opportunities

- Growth in people moving into the area in their 40s and when they retire

Threats

- Not a national growth area for Wales (National Plan)

SWOT Analysis: Skills and Economy

Strengths

- Unemployment below average
- Higher skills and more qualified population reflected in more managerial and professional occupations

Weaknesses

- Slightly less economically active than average (reflecting numbers of retirees)
- Town centre-based jobs such as in sales and customer service slightly below average
- Double the Wales average commute over 30km (12.3%)

Opportunities

- 27% work mainly from home
- 14% walk to work: double the Wales average

Threats

- Higher vehicle ownership leads to higher mobility and access to out-of-town activities
- High levels of commuting, puts pressure on the road network and has a negative impact on climate emergency

SWOT Analysis: Community

Strengths

- Higher than average 4 and 1-bed homes
- Residents rate their health as very good to good
- Monmouth is among the top 10 safest small towns in Gwent for recorded crime
- Emergency services, including police, fire, and ambulance available to ensure public safety

Weaknesses

- Inequality: parts of Overmonnow ranked as most deprived in the county

Opportunities

Threats

- High house prices: 4 wards among the 10 most expensive in the county

SWOT Analysis: Shopping and Leisure

Strengths

- Waitrose most popular for main food shopping across rural hinterland
- Monnow Street: is the key shopping and leisure destination, a third of visits for top-up food shopping followed by meeting family and friends for a coffee and shopping for non-food items
- Local leisure facilities are well-used by locals: Savoy Theatre and cinema, and Monmouth Leisure Centre

Weaknesses

- Top-up shopping, out-of-centre Co-op on Rockfield Road has the largest share
- A significant portion of comparison goods shopping is done outside the county (Hereford and Bristol Cribbs Causeway) or online
- Larger cultural activities often draw residents to Cardiff, Hereford, and Bristol

Opportunities

- Changing consumer preferences mean the town could cater for more leisure and shopping experiences

Threats

- Out of town spending because residents have good mobility and work in nearby towns and cities

SWOT Analysis: Activity

Strengths

- Proactive town council undertaking and supporting activities and events, environmental stewardship, wellbeing, and cultural and heritage enhancements
- Range and activity of community groups, particularly around town centre regeneration and environmental themes
- Numerous recreational facilities, including sports centres, parks, and community centres, which support a vibrant and active community life

Weaknesses

Opportunities

- Building long-term sustainability, skills and activity around community organisations and volunteering

Threats

SWOT Analysis: Movement and Infrastructure

Strengths

- Significant quantity of parking within walking distance of the town centre
- Bus station in the town centre
- Daytime bus links to nearby towns and cities: Abergavenny, Ross on Wye, Hereford, Chepstow, Newport
- Compact and walkable town centre with good access to adjoining parks and leisure facilities
- Many people walk to work: twice the Wales average
- Recent investment and application of SMART towns technology, LoRaWAN gateways and smart bins

Weaknesses

- Pinch point at Monnow Street and/ Agincourt Square
- High-traffic environment on Monnow Street
- No train station
- Infrequent bus service and no long-distance coach services
- A40 makes town centre easy to bypass
- Poor signage, information and way-marking with national trails
- No fast fibre broadband in most of the town centre

Opportunities

- A number of already designed and adopted improvement schemes are ready to be implemented such as the Monnow Street, active travel improvements including a new bridge over the River Wye
- Ambitions for further investment in and application of SMART towns technology

Threats

- Higher than average levels of car ownership and longer than average commuting distances make other towns and cities accessible

SWOT Analysis: Public Realm

Strengths

- High-quality and attractive historic centre
- Car parks easy to see from the south
- Visible and attractive Monnow River environment
- Historic elements such as castle, regimental museum, town hall, Priory, Shire Hall, Monnow Bridge, Slaughterhouse Arches

Weaknesses

- Poor southern gateway dominated by petrol station
- Blestium Street offers poor visitor arrival experience
- River frontage not fully appreciated or exploited: large area of River Monnow blighted by Home Bargains car park
- Poor links from northern Blestium Street car parks to centre
- Some historic features are tucked away with poor wayfinding such as the Slaughterhouse Arches, castle and regimental museum, Nelson's Garden
- Cattle market car park market is generally of a poor quality and small in size
- Bus station offers poor visitor arrival experience
- Monnow Street has conflicts between vehicle, pedestrian and cycle use and other uses such as poor quality of public realm and poor surface water management, clutter
- A number of historic buildings at risk of further physical decay

Opportunities

- A number of already designed and adopted improvement schemes are ready to be implemented such as the Monnow Street, Church Street signage and lighting, and the river-front area adjacent to Blestium Street
- New and direct pedestrian links from Monnow Street to car parks
- Improvements to southern gateway: to include gateway of Cinderhill Street and new town access road bridge
- Exploit and enhance river frontage, river-front scheme and to the edge of Home Bargains car park with potential for circuit from Monnow Bridge through to the Slaughterhouse Arches
- Additional footbridge crossing point, from skate park car park to bus station linking to the Slaughterhouse Arches: open up river-front access for arts, crafts, workshops, stalls
- Creation of a gateway at Priory Street, Dixon Road and Monk Street
- Better and integrated way-marking of historic assets

Threats

- Out-of-town spending because residents have good mobility and work in nearby towns and cities

SWOT Analysis: Mix of Uses

Strengths

- Diverse and varied offer
- Hairdressing, health and beauty one of the largest indicating a strong presence and demand for personal care services
- Cafes, restaurants and fast food outlets reflect a vibrant food and drink sector and show the importance of day and evening dining options
- Fashion and general clothing shops show the town centre is hlights a traditional shopping destination
- Range of non-retail uses include the town council offices, Shire Hall and museum, a library, educational establishments, a doctor's surgery, churches, chapels, private sector offices, and residential dwellings
- Strong brands and anchor retailers: Waitrose, M&S Food, White Stuff, Fat Face and Joules

Weaknesses

- Declining shopping role shown by the long-term decrease in comparison outlets and an increase in service and leisure outlets

Opportunities

- Multiple retailers continue to be attracted to Monnow Street near Waitrose and M & S Food

Threats

- Varied retail offer remains strong compared with other towns but also more vulnerable to national trends

SWOT Analysis: Property Vacancy

Strengths

- Following a peak of 18% in 2023 rates dropped to 10% in 2024
- The town centre has maintained stable rents, outperforming other similar-sized towns in the region where the level of rents have declined

Weaknesses

- Fluctuating vacancy rates reflecting unstable economic cycles over 20 years
- Cluster of empty properties around Agincourt Square, Church Street and White Swan Court
- Prominent empty properties on Monnow Street including the fire-damaged former Peacocks store and former banks
- Little or no demand for office space

Opportunities

- Develop good-quality 100sqm units with low fit out costs that are attractive to small businesses and start-ups willing to take a risk

Threats

- Larger properties, especially former banks requiring significant refit or remodelling present challenges for re-letting without significant investment and support

SWOT Analysis: Identity

Strengths

- Historic shopping market town
- Featured in The Times' list of top ten places to live in the UK
- Historical landmarks such as Monmouth Castle, the birthplace of Henry V, and the medieval Monnow Bridge, the only remaining fortified river bridge in Britain, act as draws for tourism.
- Historical connections to Henry Rolls, Chartist Trials, Nelson, Charles Rolls and Rockfield Studio
- Natural environment and outdoor activity including the town's location on the River Monnow and River Wye and its proximity to the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which is a major draw for nature enthusiasts and walkers

Weaknesses

Opportunities

- Growth of the town's green and sustainability credentials
- Current revision of the Monmouthshire Destination Marketing Strategy

Threats

- Long term decline of well-known events such as Monmouth Festival, although new events and festivals are starting to become part of the town-centre scene

Challenges and Opportunities

Through a mix of local and strategic conversations, analysis of useful data and other information about Monmouth we can identify its key challenges and opportunities for the community, local businesses and other groups and organisations.

Fully integrate footbridge into the active travel route around Monmouth. Link into existing paths to north of the river as well as the opportunity to create a path along the southern bank of the river. Opportunity to fully link footways along the river and into town.

Fully integrate castle and grounds into the town centre. Address issues finding the castle and improvements along Castle Hill to Agincourt Square. Highway surface treatments are creating a pedestrian focused space here.

Committed project to improve Monnow Street.

The bus station is an opportunity to create a sense of arrival and links to active travel.

Previously developed proposal for riverside public space at Blestium Street.

Key arrival point at edge of town. Opportunity for signage and way finding. Links into already established active travel improvements on Rockfield Road.

Slaughterhouse Arches. Opportunity for active riverfront. Restore arches and bring activity to this area. Improve footways and address access concerns.

Opportunity for junction improvements. Key link to school. Opportunity to link to arches to provide active travel link along river and to pedestrian bridge.

Key arrival point. Opportunity to integrate this area creating an arrival at the back of Shire Hall. Opportunity to integrate Beaufort Square, wayfinding, signage and arrival art. Opportunity for markets and pop-up events to activate the square and promote links to castle.

Key opportunity to link into pedestrian footbridge project over the River Wye. Links to Rowing Club and to the south and east of the town centre. Opportunity for a water gateway here which will link with footbridge and create arrival for boats. 'Town on Two Rivers' theme.

Opportunity to link to Church Street and White Swan Court. Opportunity for signage, street animation events, pop-up shops and other activities to encourage footfall here.

Opportunity to reimagine these carpark as arrival spaces. Opportunity for signage and way-finding into town and Chippenham Fields. Opportunity to link to Nelson Gardens and via planned works to 20-22 Monnow Street and Hebron Chapel to create routes through to town.



What Stakeholders Told Us

Local stakeholders – including business owners, community groups, schools, and resident representatives – provided crucial insights that shaped the direction of this placemaking plan. Through dedicated workshops and walkabouts, they identified what makes Monmouth special and where improvements are most needed.

Monmouth's Unique Assets

Stakeholders consistently highlighted Monmouth's exceptional heritage cluster, with the Castle, Shire Hall, Slaughterhouse Arches, and St Mary's Priory creating a concentration of historic assets within walking distance that few towns can match. The town's location between two rivers was seen as a defining characteristic, though one that's currently underexploited.

The strong sense of community emerged as a fundamental strength, with active participation from local organisations, churches and sports clubs. Events like the annual youth rugby tournament were identified as presenting "massive opportunities" to draw more people into the town centre.



Critical Challenges

Connectivity and Wayfinding: Poor signage to key attractions like the castle and inadequate connections between different areas of the town centre were identified as major barriers. Stakeholders noted that visitors often struggle to find heritage sites or understand how different areas connect.

Fragmented Markets: The split market arrangement between different locations was seen as undermining Monmouth's potential as a market town, with calls for consolidation to create a more vibrant, bustling atmosphere with "at least 25 to 30 stalls."

Youth Appeal: Stakeholders expressed concern about the lack of facilities and attractions for younger people, contributing to an outflow of young residents. This was seen as threatening the town's long-term sustainability.

Public Realm Issues: Building maintenance problems, particularly above ground level on Monnow Street, and inadequate spaces for sitting or dwelling were highlighted as detracting from the town's appeal.

What Stakeholders Told Us

Key Opportunities

Stakeholders identified the **Slaughterhouse Arches** as having exceptional potential to become a unique destination, while the **Shire Hall** was seen as a catalyst that could drive footfall to the upper town and support market activity in Agincourt Square.

The **underutilised river-front** along both the Wye and Monnow was highlighted as offering significant opportunities for enhancement, with suggestions for everything from water-sports facilities to better pedestrian connections.

Transport connectivity improvements, particularly addressing the challenging bus journey times and exploring better regional connections, were seen as essential to support the town's role as a service centre for the wider rural area.

These stakeholder insights directly informed the plan's vision and five delivery themes and helped identify which projects would best be able to address Monmouth's challenges while building on its unique strengths.



Your Vision for Monmouth's Future



Your Vision for Monmouth's Future

This section sets out an ambitious but achievable vision for what Monmouth town centre could become: more vibrant, colourful, and welcoming – a place where rich heritage shapes everyday life and where residents and visitors alike enjoy its lively atmosphere and strong sense of community. Rather than being developed in isolation, this vision has emerged directly from extensive consultation with local people – from informal conversations in the street to formal workshops with community groups and businesses.

The vision reflects the shared hopes and aspirations we heard repeatedly during our engagement, centred around five key themes: making a better welcome to the town; celebrating our history and rivers; creating a lively town centre; building community spirit; and ensuring Monmouth is future-ready and well-managed.

This isn't about imposing change from outside but about capturing and coordinating the energy and ideas that already exist within the community, creating a common direction that everyone can work towards.



Monmouth has become more vibrant, colourful, and welcoming – a town where rich heritage shapes everyday life and where residents and visitors alike enjoy its lively atmosphere and strong sense of community. Celebrated as the “Jewel of the Wye Valley,” the town proudly showcases its historic charm, blending heritage with modern-day attractions. Historic sites host cultural festivals and artisan markets, reinforcing Monmouth’s unique identity, while green, welcoming streets offer thriving retail, diverse eating out, and entertainment. Weekly events, cycling routes, and a revitalised riverside create a dynamic, connected, and sustainable community, making Monmouth a leading destination for culture, leisure, and exploring the natural beauty of its surroundings.

Your Delivery Goals

To realise this vision, we have identified five key goals that emerged from extensive community consultation

1

Creating a Lively Town Centre

Monmouth's streets and squares will be welcoming, inclusive places where people want to spend time, with thriving businesses and regular activities.

2

Celebrating our History and Rivers

Monmouth will showcase its unique heritage and riverside identity, with well-connected historic landmarks and improved access to both rivers.

3

Building Community Spirit

Monmouth will have a strong sense of community, with residents actively shaping the town's future and inclusive spaces for all ages.

4

Making a Better Welcome

Monmouth will be easier and more pleasant to arrive in, with attractive gateways and intuitive wayfinding that reflect the town's character.

5

Future-Ready and Well-Managed

Monmouth will be equipped for future generations through smart sustainable approaches and coordinated management.

Your Supporting Objectives

Supporting objectives explain how the plan’s vision—guided by its overarching Goals—is delivered in practice:

Goal 1: Creating a Lively Town Centre

Make Monnow Street, Church Street, and Agincourt Square more welcoming places where people want to spend time, while tackling vacancy and supporting new businesses.

Supporting Objectives:

- 1.1 Gateway Enhancement: To create attractive, well-signposted gateways that clearly announce arrival in Monmouth and reflect the town’s character.
- 1.2 Wayfinding and Navigation: To ensure visitors can easily and intuitively navigate from arrival points to key destinations in the town centre.
- 1.3 Universal Accessibility: To make the town centre welcoming and accessible for people of all ages and abilities.
- 1.4 Maintenance Standards: To establish and maintain high standards of cleanliness, upkeep and enforcement across all public spaces.

Goal 2: Celebrating Our History and Rivers

Prioritise improvements in Monmouth’s historic heart and embrace the town’s identity as a ‘Town on Two Rivers’ by improving access to heritage assets and waterways.

Supporting Objectives:

- 2.1 Heritage Connectivity: To create clear, attractive, pedestrian and cycle links between Monmouth’s key historic landmarks.
- 2.2 Riverside Access: To improve public access to and enjoyment of the Rivers Wye and Monnow as community assets.
- 2.3 Heritage Interpretation: To bring Monmouth’s history to life through engaging storytelling and interpretation.
- 2.4 Historic Asset Activation: To ensure heritage buildings and sites are actively used and contribute to the town’s vibrancy.

Your Supporting Objectives

Goal 3: Building Community Spirit

Strengthen Monmouth's community life by enabling more people to shape the town centre's future and creating inclusive spaces for all.

Supporting Objectives:

- 3.1 Community Programming: To support regular community-led events, festivals and activities that celebrate local identity.
- 3.2 Inclusive Gathering Spaces: To provide welcoming spaces where people of all ages can meet, socialise and feel they belong.
- 3.3 Youth Engagement: To create opportunities and spaces that specifically appeal to young people and families.
- 3.4 Community Ownership: To enable residents and community groups to actively participate in shaping and managing town centre initiatives.

Goal 4: Making a Better Welcome

Make it easier and more pleasant for people to arrive in Monmouth — whether by car, bus, bike or on foot — by improving the look and feel of key arrival points.

Supporting Objectives:

- 4.1 Flexible Event Spaces: To create attractive, adaptable public spaces that can accommodate markets, performances and community events.
- 4.2 Vacancy Reduction: To achieve a vibrant town centre with minimal long-term vacancy through targeted support and intervention.
- 4.3 Business Diversity: To attract and retain a diverse mix of independent businesses, services and community uses.
- 4.4 Evening Economy: To establish Monmouth as an attractive evening destination with quality dining, entertainment and cultural offerings.

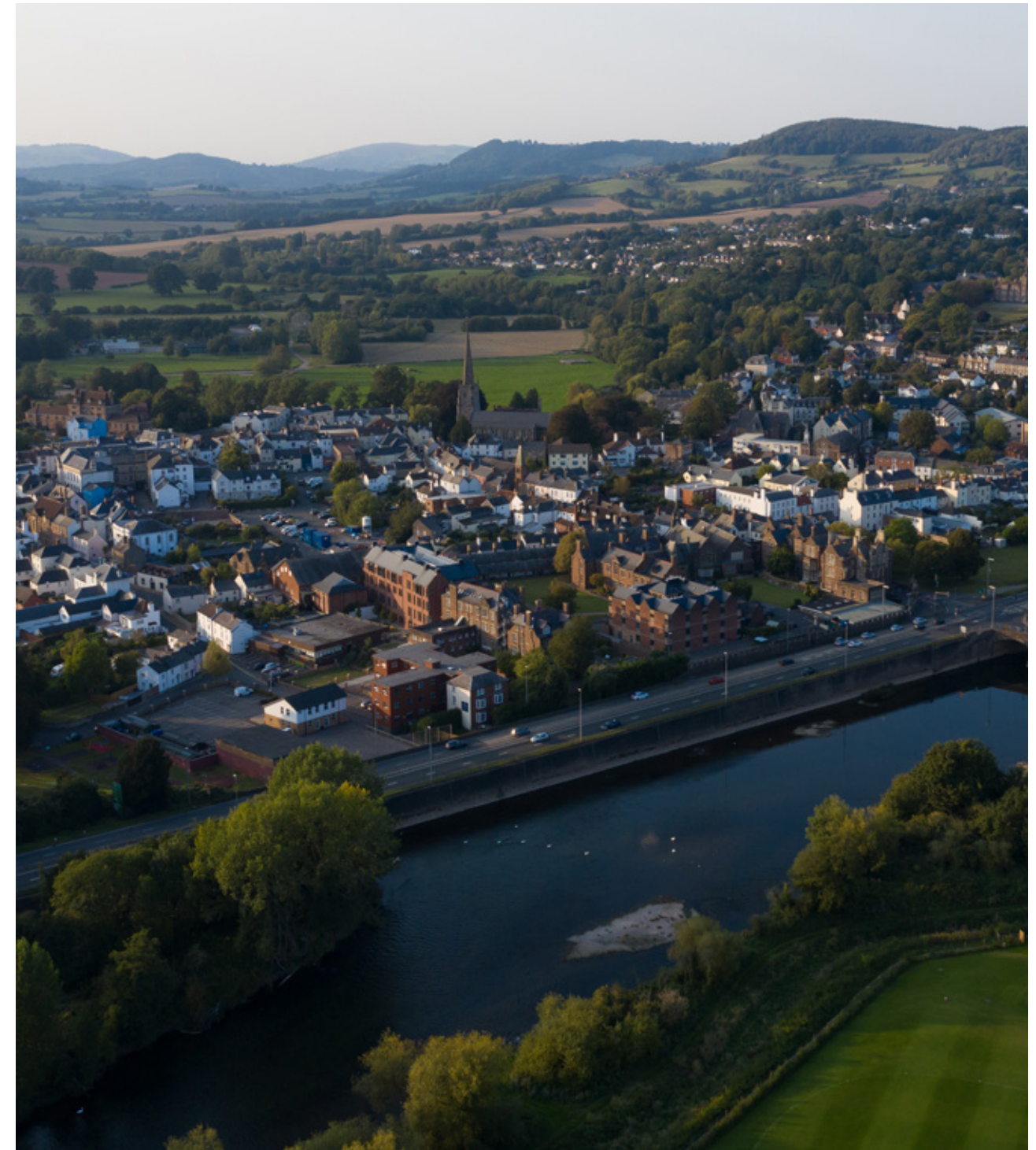
Your Supporting Objectives

Goal 5: Future-Ready and Well-Managed

Equip Monmouth to thrive for future generations through smart, sustainable technologies, coordinated town centre management, and green infrastructure that enhances everyday life.

Supporting Objectives:

- 5.1 Smart Technology Integration: To implement digital solutions that enhance visitor experience, business support and operational efficiency.
- 5.2 Environmental Resilience: To future-proof the town centre against climate change through green infrastructure and sustainable practices.
- 5.3 Digital Connectivity: To ensure excellent digital infrastructure supports businesses, residents and visitors.
- 5.4 Coordinated Management: To establish effective partnerships and systems for ongoing town centre management and improvement.



Your Plan for Monmouth

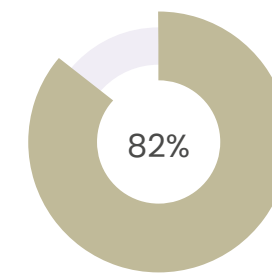


Your Plan for Monmouth

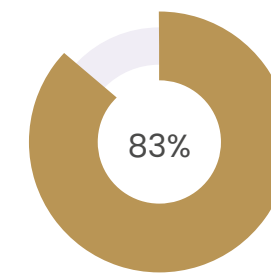
A clear vision is just the starting point: this section focuses on how we turn that vision into action. . It begins by summarising how the community responded to our initial proposals through the March 2025 consultation, showing how this feedback directly shaped our final approach. It then outlines the overarching strategy for Monmouth town centre, breaking it down into key themes and practical projects that will have the biggest impact. It also recognises that we're not starting from scratch – existing projects already in the pipeline or previously approved form part of this coordinated approach. This section focuses on what needs to be done to transform Monmouth, while the following section addresses how it will be delivered.

Community Response to the Draft Plan

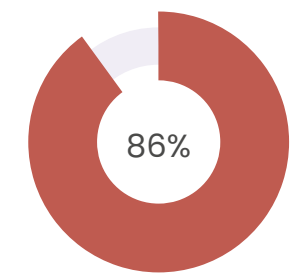
Before setting out our delivery approach, it's important to explain how the community responded to our initial proposals. The comprehensive public consultation in March 2025 was crucial in validating our vision, identifying which projects had the strongest community support, and refining how they should be implemented. This feedback, from 250 residents, visitors, and stakeholders, directly shaped the prioritisation and design of the projects outlined in this section.



Improvements to Church Street



Market Consolidation



Heritage and Culture Focus

Strong Community Support

Heritage and Culture Focus: The community strongly endorsed the plan's heritage-focused approach, with **86%** supporting "Celebrating Our History and Rivers" and **84%** backing the Slaughterhouse Arches proposals. Many saw this as a potential game changer that could become a major new attraction for the town.

Church Street Improvements: The independent quarter enhancement received overwhelming support (**82%** agreement), with respondents praising the area's potential to become a distinctive heritage shopping area. However, building maintenance and enforcement emerged as essential prerequisites.

Market Consolidation: Strong consensus emerged for bringing Monmouth's fragmented markets together in Agincourt Square (**83%** support), with many noting the current split arrangement lacks impact and calling for a unified market venue with higher quality local produce.

Your Plan for Monmouth

Clear Priorities Emerged

Vacant Properties as Top Priority: An overwhelming **55%** of respondents identified addressing vacant properties as their most important priority, followed by the Slaughterhouse Arches (**41%**) and Church Street improvements (**30%**). This confirmed stakeholder insights about the impact of empty buildings on the town's appeal.

Practical Infrastructure Needs: There was strong support for bus station improvements (**73%** agreement) and enhanced public facilities, particularly better toilet facilities at Blestium Street (**80%** support for improvements).

Community Concerns and Refinements

Traffic and Accessibility: Mixed views on gateway proposals revealed significant concerns about traffic flow and accessibility. Only **55%** supported Cinderhill Street improvements and **48%** supported Dixon Road changes, with many citing worries that road narrowings would affect emergency vehicles, school traffic, and disabled access.

Better Basics: Consistent themes emerged about addressing fundamentals first – road repairs, street cleaning, weed removal, and building maintenance – before pursuing new projects. Many emphasised the importance of getting the basics right.

The full findings of the public consultation phase are analysed in a separate **Monmouth Consultation Report** which you can get by emailing mccregeneration@monmouthshire.gov.uk.



Your Plan for Monmouth

How This Shaped Our Final Approach

The consultation feedback directly informed the delivery strategy and project prioritisation that follows. Key changes included:

Youth and Intergenerational Focus: Recognition that young people's needs received the poorest rating in current provision led to strengthening intergenerational elements across multiple projects, from market activities to community spaces. Enhanced focus on family-friendly facilities and activities ensures the town centre works for all generations.

Project Prioritisation: Community support was an important factor in determining which projects should take priority. The clear community preference for addressing vacant properties and strong support for heritage projects provided crucial guidance for sequencing interventions.

Enhanced Place Management Focus: The emphasis on addressing fundamentals first – street cleaning, weed removal, and building maintenance – led to a stronger focus on place management activities and easy wins that deliver immediate visible improvements.

Core Town Centre Emphasis: Community feedback reinforced the importance of focusing resources on the heart of Monmouth – Monnow Street, Church Street, and Agincourt Square – rather than dispersing efforts across multiple gateway locations.

Gateway Refinements: Traffic concerns led to more careful consideration of road narrowing proposals, with greater emphasis on pedestrian safety improvements rather than significant highway changes in the final project designs.

Phased Implementation: Strong support for the Slaughterhouse Arches combined with recognition of practical challenges resulted in a realistic phased approach starting with essential repairs before enhancing visitor facilities.

Enhanced Accessibility Focus: Concerns about current accessibility challenges informed strengthened accessibility requirements across all public realm proposals.

Spatial Priorities

Monnow Street and Blestium Street

Monnow Street and Blestium Street are at the core of Monmouth's regeneration efforts with previous studies and consultations having produced a series of approved schemes. The Monnow Street Reimagined Project has the potential to transform this key commercial area into a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly space, featuring wider footways, landscaping, and areas for outdoor seating. The design incorporates sustainable elements such as rain gardens and tree planting, improving the street's overall appearance while promoting active travel and sustainability. Blestium Street and the riverside area proposals create a strong civic space, improved accessibility to and from the River Monnow and improved landscaping. These improvements include reducing traffic dominance, increasing pedestrian accessibility, and creating new seating areas and events and performance spaces alongside the river.

Town Gateways

Monmouth's key gateways, particularly at the edge of town, are vital in creating the right first impressions. There is a clear opportunity to enhance these entrances with improved signage, wayfinding, landscaping and potentially artworks that define the character and heritage of the town. This should be linked with existing and proposed active travel improvements, including the new footbridge over the River Wye. This bridge enhances connectivity with the town's outer neighbourhoods and improves links to Offa's Dyke Path, making the town a strong hub for active travel and tourism. The plan will also explore options to improve existing footbridges and create pathways along the River Monnow, connecting the town to Rockfield and other key locations.

Castle Hill and Church Street Area

Monmouth's heritage and cultural cluster – which includes the castle, regimental museum, Shire Hall, market hall, Savoy Theatre, St. Mary's Priory, and Slaughterhouse Arches—forms an exceptional group of attractions within the town centre. The Blake Theatre is also found just off Glendower Street, adding to the arts and cultural scene. Despite these assets being within minutes of each other, they currently lack a strong sense of connectivity. The placemaking plan seeks to improve wayfinding, interpretation, and activity programming in this area, helping to bring these spaces to life and create a cohesive cultural experience. The Church Street area, with its charming, pedestrianised street and courtyards, offers great potential to enhance the independent shopping experience and its social spaces.

Major museum investments and a new visitor offer at the Shire Hall have the potential to act as a catalyst for change in this area. They will encourage more footfall and create greater opportunities for regular markets and activities in Agincourt Square, boosting the energy and vibrancy of the area – providing a reason to be drawn up through Monnow Street. The interpretation of the new museum will also encourage visitors to explore the town centre's heritage, rivers and stories.

Town Centre Arrival

Whether arriving by bus or car, walking or wheeling, Monmouth's main arrival points need to be welcoming and user-friendly. Improvements to the bus station and car parks will focus on maximising their use through better quality spaces, clear signage, and direct, intuitive links to Monnow Street and the town's wider heritage and cultural cluster at the top of the town centre. As the Monnow and Wye rivers are central to Monmouth's identity, there are also opportunities to improve the waterborne gateways for visitors arriving by canoe and other craft, further integrating the town with its natural surroundings.

Prioritisation Framework

The following section details the proposed placemaking projects by theme. Some are illustrated with more developed plans and drawings, others with the use of precedent images to give examples of what physical implementation could look like.

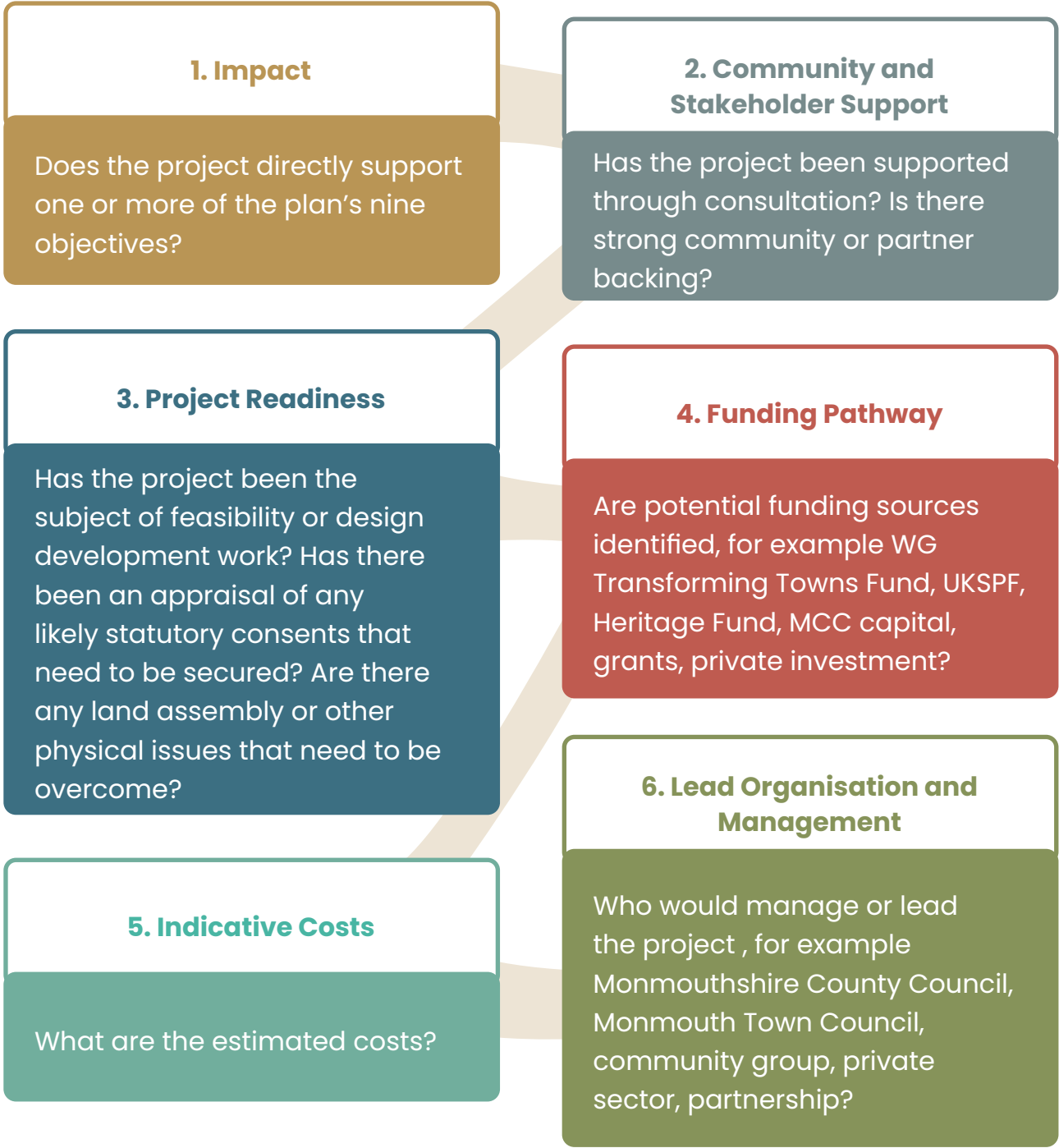
The Prioritisation Process

The placemaking plan has also applied a prioritisation process that has helped the local steering group consider what the initial focus should be, accepting that some larger projects will take time to develop and implement. The main aim of this process has been to assess and organise projects and proposals in the placemaking plan in a consistent way that ensures they align with Monmouth’s vision, goals and objectives, while also considering feasibility, impact and deliverability.

Before projects were assessed they were defined by their type, as shown below:

Project Type	Definition
Strategic and Enabling	Studies, partnerships, governance, or marketing strategies.
Operational and Programme	Events, wayfinding, pop-ups, enterprise support, digital platforms.
Capital Infrastructure	Public realm, buildings, streetscape, or mobility improvements.

The following process was then applied:



Strategic and Enabling Projects

Goal	Project and Priority	Activity	Costs
Celebrating Our History and Rivers	Market Hall Mixed-Use Development	Develop market hall as sustainable mixed-use venue with arts and culture hub, café, and multi-generational community spaces, including youth-friendly facilities with shelter and Wi-Fi	£
	Comprehensive Wayfinding Strategy amd Heritage Trail Strategy	Install a unified wayfinding system connecting car parks, attractions and key destinations, integrated with heritage trail development and interpretation boards, using for exploring the improved Shire Hall as the central heritage hub and starting point for exploring the town	£
	Slaughterhouse Arches Feasibility Study	Conduct a feasibility study for future development options alongside essential repairs to determine viable approaches to create accessible riverside destination	£
Creating a Lively Town Centre	Enforcement Protocols for Building Maintenance	Develop systems to address persistent maintenance issues and deteriorating building conditions	£
	Flexible Workspace Development	Encourage workspaces that support new businesses, start-ups and social enterprises	£

High Priority

Medium Priority

Low Priority

£

<£100k

££

£100k to £1m

£££

>£1m

Strategic and Enabling Projects

Goal	Project and Priority	Activity	Costs
Building Community Spirit	Indoor Community Spaces Creation	Explore opportunities within developments like the market hall for multi-generational community facilities	£
	Community Spaces and Organisation Support Programme	Support community groups in bringing empty spaces back into use for local services while creating sheltered community spaces that include youth-friendly facilities, ensuring all spaces serve both organized community activities and informal gathering	£
Future-Ready and Well-Managed	Regular Public Space Maintenance Standards	Establish ongoing maintenance schedules and quality standards for sustained improvements	£

High Priority

Medium Priority

Low Priority

£ <£100k

££ £100k to £1m

£££ >£1m

Operational and Programme Projects

Goal	Project and Priority	Activity	Costs
Making a Better Welcome	Annual Deep Clean Programme	Thorough cleaning and refresh of public facilities, planters, walkways, street furniture and signage	£
	Visual Environment Improvement Programme	Comprehensive decluttering of unnecessary street furniture and coordinated town-wide signage audit to promote heritage routes and facilities while reducing visual clutter	£
Creating a Lively Town Centre	Coordinated Shop Frontage Improvements	Provide grants and design guidance to enhance the visual appeal of key shopping areas	£ £
	Strategic Vacant Property Improvements	Target prominent empty buildings on Church Street, Agincourt Square and Monnow Street, particularly former banks and strategic locations	£ £
	Pop-up Shop Programme	Promote temporary uses in empty shops to test ideas and build business confidence	£ £
Building Community Spirit	Agincourt Square Markets and Events Programming	Establish regular consolidated traditional-style market in Agincourt Square with supporting infrastructure (power, seating, event facilities) and coordinate with larger signature heritage, arts, culture and environmental events throughout the year	£
	Community-Led Activity Support	Support community groups in developing regular programming rather than one-off events	£

High Priority

Medium Priority

Low Priority

£

<£100k

££

£100k to £1m

£££

>£1m

Capital Infrastructure Projects

Goal	Project and Priority	Activity	Costs
<div>Making a Better Welcome</div>	Blestium Street Public Realm Scheme	Improve arrival experience at southern entrance with enhanced public realm and facilities (approved scheme)	£ £ £
	Bus Station Improvements	Redesign station with upgraded shelters, real-time information, pedestrian and cycle priority, landscaping and public art	£ £
	Glendower Street and Shire Hall Arrival Space	Improve pedestrian environment and wayfinding connecting Glendower Street area to heritage attractions	£
	Cinderhill Street Gateway Enhancement	Create welcoming entrance from A40 with improved roundabout design, pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, landscaping and welcome signage	£ £ £
	Dixton Road Gateway	Enhance northern entrance with road narrowing, landscaping, pedestrian priority crossings and gateway signage	£ £
<div>Celebrating Our History and Rivers</div>	Shire Hall Museum and Cultural Centre	Transform historic building into new museum with Admiral Lord Nelson collection, galleries, learning spaces and community areas	£ £ £
	Slaughterhouse Arches	Undertake structural repairs, conservation work and address immediate safety and maintenance issues at Grade II* listed arches	£ £ £

High Priority

Medium Priority

Low Priority

£

<£100k

££

£100k to £1m

£££

>£1m

Capital Infrastructure Projects

Goal	Project and Priority	Activity	Costs
Celebrating Our History and Rivers	River Wye Gateway	Create welcoming riverside arrival point with enhanced connections to town centre	£ £
	Historic Castle Quarter Enhancement	Improve access, signage and wayfinding to Monmouth Castle from Agincourt Square, with enhanced pedestrian routes and information	£
	Integrated Digital Heritage and Visitor App	Develop comprehensive app combining augmented reality heritage experiences with practical visitor information (businesses, events, parking, transport)	£ £
Creating a Lively Town Centre	Monnow Street Reimagined	Transform Monnow Street into a people-focused environment with wider pavements, outdoor seating areas, improved planting and enhanced public realm (approved scheme)	£ £ £
	Church Street Independent Quarter Enhancement	Build on approved welcome arches and lighting with coordinated signage, decluttering, and support for independent businesses	£
	Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements	Create new pedestrian routes connecting eastern car parks to Monnow Street, particularly accessing upper Monnow Street areas	£ £

High Priority

Medium Priority

Low Priority

£

<£100k

££

£100k to £1m

£££

>£1m

Capital Infrastructure Projects

Goal	Project and Priority	Activity	Costs
Building Community Spirit	Intergenerational Activity Spaces	Develop spaces and programming that will bring together different age groups	£
	Intergenerational Smart Public Realm	Smart benches and digital information boards that enhance intergenerational public realm improvements, creating comfortable spaces with charging points, Wi-Fi access and interactive features that appeal to all ages	£
Future-Ready and Well-Managed	IoT Infrastructure for Operational Efficiency	Expand existing LoRaWAN network for Internet of Things applications including real-time monitoring of waste management, parking availability, air quality, street planting health and infrastructure performance to enable proactive maintenance	£
	Digital Visitor Experience Enhancement	High-quality digital signage at key locations (Monnow Street, Agincourt Square, car parks) directing visitors to attractions like Monnow Bridge, castle, museums, and Nelson Garden while reducing visual clutter from traditional signage	£
	Business and Place Management Data Systems	Wi-Fi-enabled footfall counters, town-wide public Wi-Fi infrastructure and data analytics to support businesses with visitor behaviour insights, enabling targeted marketing, informed event planning and business attraction strategies	£

High Priority

Medium Priority

Low Priority

£

<£100k

££

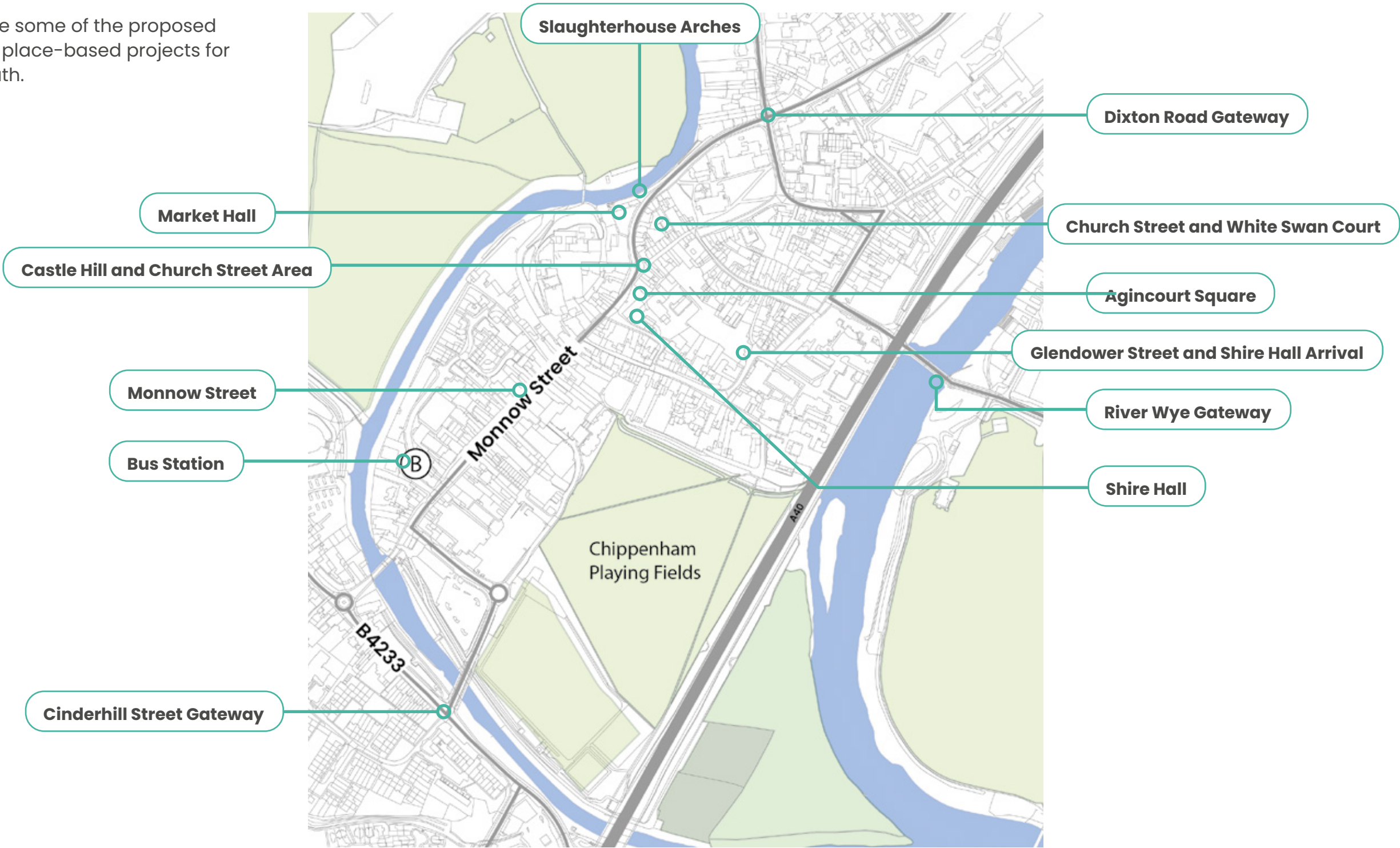
£100k to £1m

£££

>£1m

Proposed Place-Based Projects

These are some of the proposed physical place-based projects for Monmouth.



Previously Developed Projects

Monmouth's regeneration efforts are already well underway, with several transformational projects having been developed through extensive community consultation, detailed design work, and formal approval processes. These schemes represent significant investment and demonstrate the town's commitment to positive change, with many having already secured funding and approval from Monmouthshire County Council's Cabinet.

The most prominent of these is the comprehensive reimagining of Monnow Street, which has progressed through detailed public consultation and design development to create a people-focused environment that will transform the heart of the town centre. Alongside this flagship project, improvements to Blestium Street, Church Street enhancements, and the ongoing transformation of the Shire Hall represent a coordinated approach to regeneration that has been shaped by community input and professional expertise.

These committed projects form the cornerstone of Monmouth's transformation and provide a solid foundation upon which this placemaking plan builds. Rather than duplicating this work, the plan recognises these schemes as essential delivery priorities and explores how additional complementary projects can enhance their impact and extend regeneration benefits throughout the wider town centre.



Monnow Street Re-imagined

Objective:

Transform Monmouth's main commercial street into attractive, green and people-friendly spaces that support a thriving retail and leisure offer, while creating stronger connections to the riverside.

This comprehensive public realm project will reimagine Monnow Street as a vibrant, pedestrian-focused corridor that balances the needs of all street users while prioritising people over vehicles. The approved scheme represents a fundamental shift from the current car-dominated environment to a welcoming space that encourages dwelling, shopping, and social interaction.

Key Features:

- **Pedestrian Priority Design:** The street will be transformed with dedicated crossing points and wider footways (varying between 2m and 6m) to create a more comfortable walking environment that encourages visitors to spend time in the area.
- **Sustainable Infrastructure:** Rain gardens and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) will be integrated throughout the design, managing surface water runoff whilst adding green infrastructure that enhances the street's visual appeal.
- **Balanced Access:** Although it prioritises pedestrians, the design maintains essential vehicle access with a central carriageway designed to highway standards, allowing two HGVs to pass comfortably, plus six strategically located loading bays to support local businesses.
- **Enhanced Amenities:** Secure cycle stands, quality street furniture including seats and benches, and appropriate waste facilities will be installed to support both residents and visitors.



- **Flexible Spaces:** Areas for outdoor seating will accommodate both public use and trading opportunities for hospitality businesses, creating a continental-style café culture along the street.
- **Parking Provision:** 32 car parking spaces will be retained, including disabled and short-stay spaces, ensuring accessibility while reducing the overall dominance of vehicles.

The project incorporates sustainable design principles with extensive tree planting and landscaping that will soften the urban environment and contribute to biodiversity and air quality improvements. This transformation is expected to significantly boost footfall, support local businesses, and create a destination that residents and visitors alike will want to spend time in.

Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements

Objective:

Enhance movement and accessibility throughout Monmouth's town centre by creating new connections and improving existing routes between key destinations.

This project addresses one of Monmouth's key challenges; the poor connectivity between different areas of the town centre, particularly between the main shopping area and important facilities such as car parks, green spaces, and community amenities. The improvements will create a more legible and accessible town centre that encourages exploration and longer visits.

Key Features:

- **New East-West Connections:** Strategic property development opportunities, including sites at 20-22 Monnow Street and Hebron Hall, will be used to create new pedestrian routes that break down the barriers between different areas of the town centre.
- **Enhanced Alleyways:** Existing passages such as Howells Place will be upgraded with improved lighting, better surfacing, and enhanced safety features to make them more attractive and usable routes.
- **Chippenham Fields Access:** Direct improvements to routes leading to Chippenham Fields will better connect this important recreational space to the town centre, encouraging informal recreation and supporting the area's role in community events and activities.



- **Car Park Integration:** New direct, legible routes from the various car parks to Monnow Street will address the current poor connectivity that discourages visitors from parking in certain locations.
- **Wayfinding Improvements:** Clear signage and visual cues will help visitors navigate between different areas of the town centre more easily.

These connectivity improvements are essential for maximising the benefits of other investments in the town centre. By making it easier for people to move between the main shopping area, car parks, green spaces, and cultural attractions, the project will help create a more cohesive town centre experience that encourages longer visits and supports local businesses.

Blestium Street Public Realm Scheme

Objective:

Transform the southern gateway experience while creating stronger connections to the River Monnow through enhanced public realm and new riverside amenities.

This scheme will address one of Monmouth's most significant arrival experiences, transforming what is currently a car-dominated space into an attractive gateway that properly celebrates the town's riverside location. The project will create a new civic heart for southern Monmouth that connects the historic Monnow Bridge with the wider town centre.

Key Features:

- **Pedestrian-Focused Design:** The carriageway will be reduced in width while maintaining necessary vehicle access, redistributing space to create generous pedestrian areas that prioritise people over traffic.
- **Riverside Animation:** A new riverside public space will be created featuring café and toilet facilities, providing essential amenities while revitalising this currently underutilised waterfront location.
- **Performance and Event Space:** New seating areas and dedicated performance spaces along the riverside will support community events, markets, and cultural activities, bringing life and vibrancy to this gateway location.
- **Monnow Bridge Integration:** Enhanced connections to the historic Monnow Bridge area will better integrate this iconic landmark with the wider town centre, encouraging visitors to explore further.
- **Improved Connectivity:** Stronger pedestrian links between the area's car parks and the town centre will address current wayfinding and accessibility issues that discourage visitors from using these facilities.
- **River Connection:** Enhanced viewing areas and activity spaces will better



connect visitors with the River Monnow, celebrating this important natural asset that defines Monmouth's character.

The scheme represents a significant opportunity to create a memorable first impression for visitors arriving from the south, while providing new community facilities that will benefit both residents and tourists. By reducing traffic dominance and creating quality public spaces, the project will establish Blestium Street as a destination in its own right rather than simply a route through the town.

Proposed Place-Based Projects

Objective:

Create a vibrant heritage quarter that better connects and promotes Monmouth's exceptional cluster of historic buildings and cultural venues, making it a compelling destination for residents and visitors.

Castle Hill and Church Street Area

- Create coherent identity that links key heritage assets
- Better integrate Monmouth Castle improving signage and access from Agincourt Square
- Build on the planned improvements to Church Street and White Swan Court – including welcome arches, signage and lighting – with initiatives to boost footfall and support independent businesses
- Support more regular markets and cultural events in Agincourt Square to activate this historic space
- Establish a distinctive heritage quarter around Agincourt Square, including the Shire Hall, Church Street, the Castle and Slaughterhouse Arches, with improved signage and routes from arrival points
- Take a phased approach to the Slaughterhouse Arches, starting with repairs and maintenance before exploring options for an accessible riverside space for community use

Castle Hill Integration

Historic castle quarter enhancement:

- Improve visibility and access from Agincourt Square through better signage and wayfinding
- Address navigation issues by defining clearer routes from the town centre
- Enhance Castle Hill as a pedestrian-focused space through surface treatments
- Install interpretation boards highlighting the castle's history and its connection to Henry V
- Improve pedestrian conditions with lighting and surfacing
- Create a welcoming entrance that encourages public access



Coherent Identity, signage and wayfinding



More cultural festivals and markets

Proposed Place-Based Projects

Objective:

Create a vibrant heritage quarter that better connects and promotes Monmouth's exceptional cluster of historic buildings and cultural venues, making it a compelling destination for residents and visitors.

Market Hall

Develop and support sustainable long-term mix of uses, including proposed cafe and arts and culture hub (subject to planning and licensing), as well as exploring potential temporary uses. Ensure that a lively and well-used market hall generates and attracts activity and helps draw footfall to the heritage quarter.

Shire Hall

Plans to transform the historic Shire Hall include a new museum and cultural centre, integrating Monmouth Museum's collections, including the Admiral Lord Nelson collection. The redevelopment will feature new galleries, learning spaces, and community areas to enhance visitor engagement and economic activity. With funding now secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund the project will create a sustainable cultural hub in Monmouth's town centre, that attracts more visitors and preserves local history.

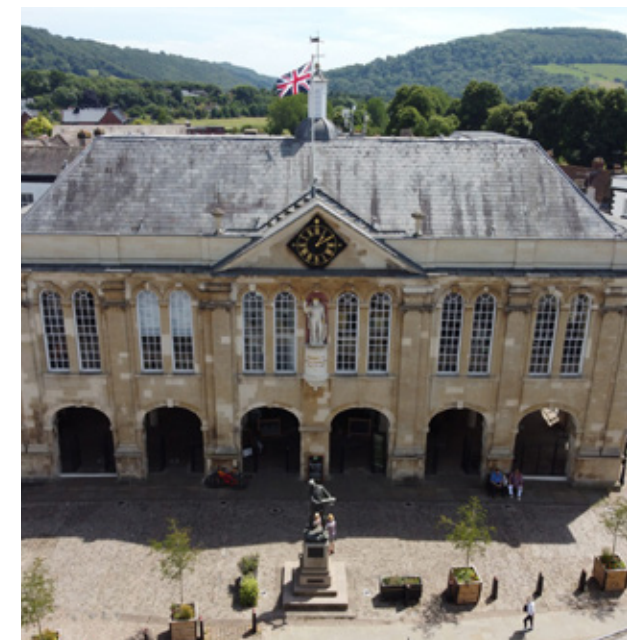
Agincourt Square Animation Activities

Central civic space activity plan:

- Establish a regular programme of markets and cultural events
- Install infrastructure to support events, such as power and water
- Strengthen links with Shire Hall's visitor experience
- Improve pedestrian connectivity between Monnow Street and the upper town
- Create adaptable spaces for activities
- Add street furniture to encourage lingering
- Explore temporary road closures for larger events



Develop a heritage quarter



Shire Hall museum and cultural centre

Proposed Place-Based Projects

Objective:

Create a vibrant heritage quarter that better connects and promotes Monmouth's exceptional cluster of historic buildings and cultural venues, making it a compelling destination for residents and visitors.

Church Street and White Swan Court Enhancement

Independent retail quarter:

- Build on approved welcome arches and recent lighting improvements
 - Rationalise street furniture and signage that creates a cluttered entrance from Agincourt Square
 - Install a coordinated signage system to increase visibility from Monnow Street
 - Create opportunities for pop-up shops and temporary retail
 - Enhance evening atmosphere
- Support independent businesses via public realm improvements
 - Develop flexible spaces for markets and events
 - Install digital infrastructure to support SMART towns initiatives

through new street lighting



Rationalise street furniture



Enhance atmosphere through lighting



Create space for markets and events

Cinderhill Street Gateway

Objective:

Create welcoming and distinctive entrances to Monmouth that give a strong first impression, guide people to the town centre, and reflect the town's character as the historic 'Jewel of the Wye Valley'.

Main entrance from A40 and Premier Inn:

- Redesign the roundabout with narrower carriageways to create dedicated pedestrian footways and cycleways
- Incorporate green infrastructure through tree planting and landscaping to create a more attractive and welcoming entrance
- Install welcome signage, possible artwork and wayfinding to provide clear directions to key destinations including the town centre and bus station
- Implement 'shared space' crossings and raised tables at main junctions to prioritise pedestrian safety while maintaining traffic flow

Connect to active travel routes

Pedestrian crossings improved

Welcome signage

Attractive landscaping

Rationalised road space

Raised table crossing



Pedestrian build outs to promote safe crossing and increased visibility



Integrated signage, information boards and maps give clear directions



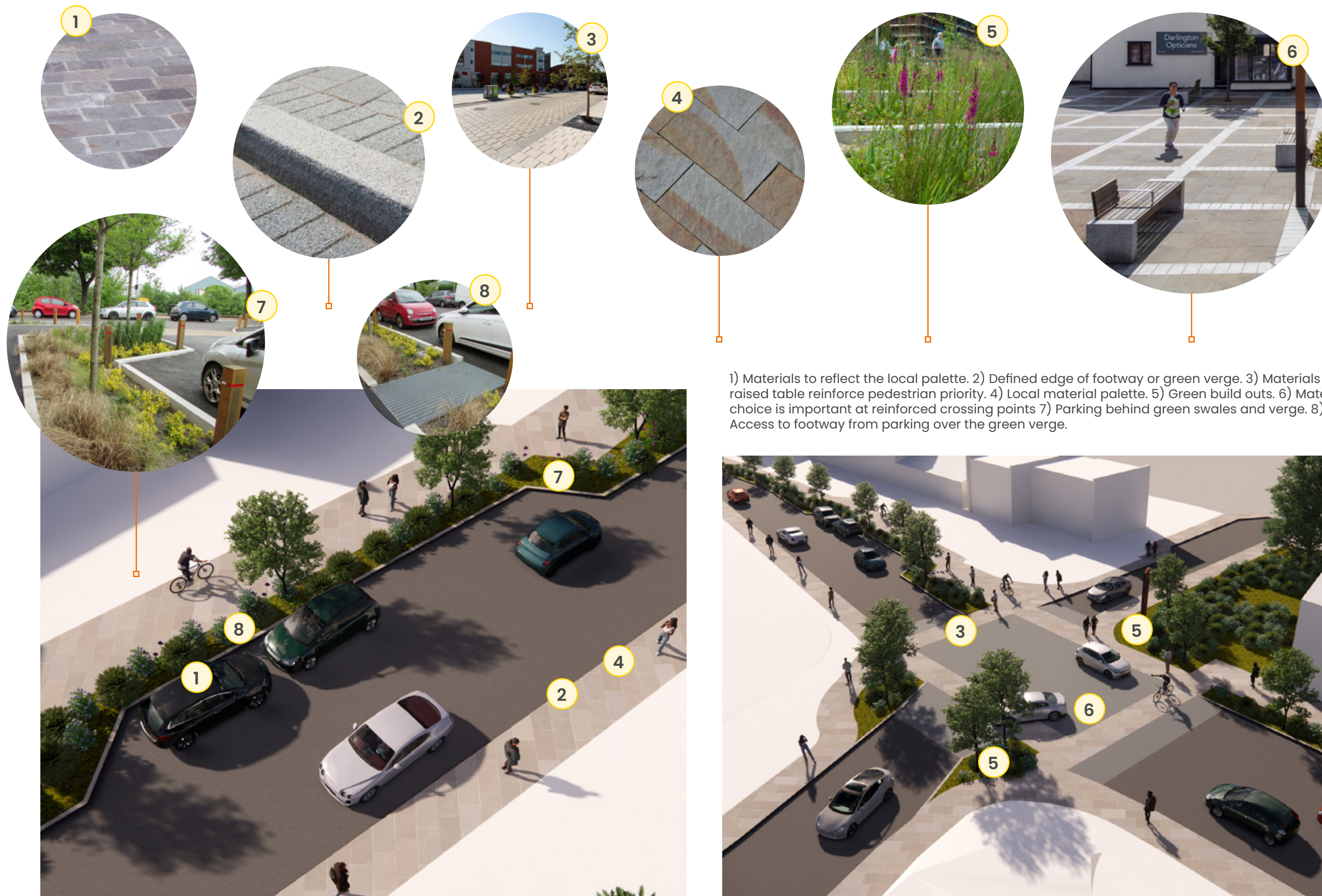
Build outs 'green-up' the street around parking bays



Cycling and walking promoted as priority transport methods



- 1 Gateway signage from A40
- 2 Roundabout redesigned with a narrower carriageway to create space for a pedestrian footway and cycleway
- 3 Dedicated footways will improve pedestrian and cyclist safety
- 4 Green infrastructure - trees and planting - will make the area more attractive and welcoming
- 5 Narrower roads will free up additional space for planting street trees
- 6 On-street parking for businesses retained
- 7 A welcome sign and wayfinding signage will guide visitors to key areas, such as the town centre and bus station
- 8 Raised table junction leads to slower vehicle speeds
- 9 Copenhagen-style continuous crossings improve safety at main junctions
- 10 Different surface materials indicate crossings and raised tables



1) Materials to reflect the local palette. 2) Defined edge of footway or green verge. 3) Materials at raised table reinforce pedestrian priority. 4) Local material palette. 5) Green build outs. 6) Material choice is important at reinforced crossing points 7) Parking behind green swales and verge. 8) Access to footway from parking over the green verge.



Artist view of the new public realm and gateway from Cinderhill Street looking north-west at the bridge

The Bus Station

Objective:

An enhanced bus station for Monmouth incorporating new signage, landscaping and stands providing an attractive and welcoming station in Monmouth for people arriving by public transport

This project focuses on redesigning the bus station, in response to consultation with bus operators and other stakeholders. The redesign prioritises pedestrian and cyclist-friendly spaces, green infrastructure, and public art while maintaining efficient operations and space for buses.

- Create dedicated paths for cyclists and pedestrians to enable combined active travel journeys
- Incorporate public art along waiting area walls, linking to the town council's living streets initiative

Pedestrian and cycle friendly

Connect to active travel routes

New bus shelters and signage

Enhanced arrival

Public art and welcome signage

- Introduce green infrastructure and landscaping to create a more welcoming arrival space
- Reduce road space to create wider footways while retaining room for buses to turn



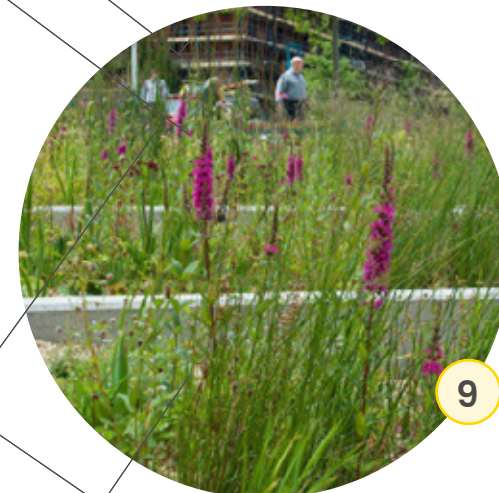
Integrated live timetables



Welcome signage



Bus shelters with integrated seating, signage, bins and green roofs or solar panels



- 1 Redesign of the bus station stages
- 2 Copenhagen-style crossings to promote pedestrian and cycle movement
- 3 Green infrastructure incorporated into public space
- 4 Public art to enhance the area included along wall for waiting passengers
- 5 Welcome signage
- 6 Road space narrowed but still allows buses to turn
- 7 Wider footways and dedicated cycling paths promote active travel
- 8 Upgraded bus shelters with clear, well-lit, and user-friendly information displays, including bus timestables
- 9 Landscaping will soften the station's appearance and create a more inviting space
- 10 More dropped kerbs allow several buses to load and unload at once



New crossings over the road highlight cycle and pedestrian priority

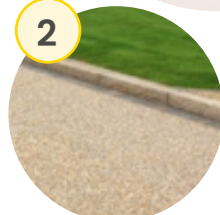


New crossing material highlights continuous crossings



Automated, live bus tracking

Seating incorporated within the space





Welcome signage



A new mural or street artwork could be included along the wall leading to the bus station to make the area more attractive and vibrant. This could contribute to the community part of the Living Streets community art project.

Opportunity to create something community-focused that celebrates Monmouth.

Opportunity to involve local artists or incorporate stories from residents.



Artist view of the new bus station from the Monnow Street junction

Slaughterhouse Arches

Objective:

A new life for the Arches. This living museum will animate the space and draw people to the ‘castle core’, linking to the castle, Shire Hall and historic northern area of the town.

This project focuses around the re-imagination and renewal of the Slaughterhouse Arches, which will create a new destination for Monmouth.

Phased development approach:

- Phase 1: Undertake essential structural repairs and conservation work to protect the grade 2* listed structure, addressing immediate sewage leaks, safety concerns and vegetation issues
- Once initial repairs are complete, explore funding opportunities to gradually transform the Arches into a unique riverside destination through a phased approach that includes:

First phase

- Safe, accessible paths with lighting and seating
- Improved links with adjacent Tibbs Bridge and circular route with Inglis Bridge
- Interpretation of the site’s heritage
- Public and community artwork development

Second phase

- Develop community and commercial spaces for events and activities
- Connections to riverside walks and Tibbs Bridge
- New ways for people to enjoy the River Monnow setting

New public realm

Boardwalk over water

Made fully accessible

Lighting to promote safety

Living museum created



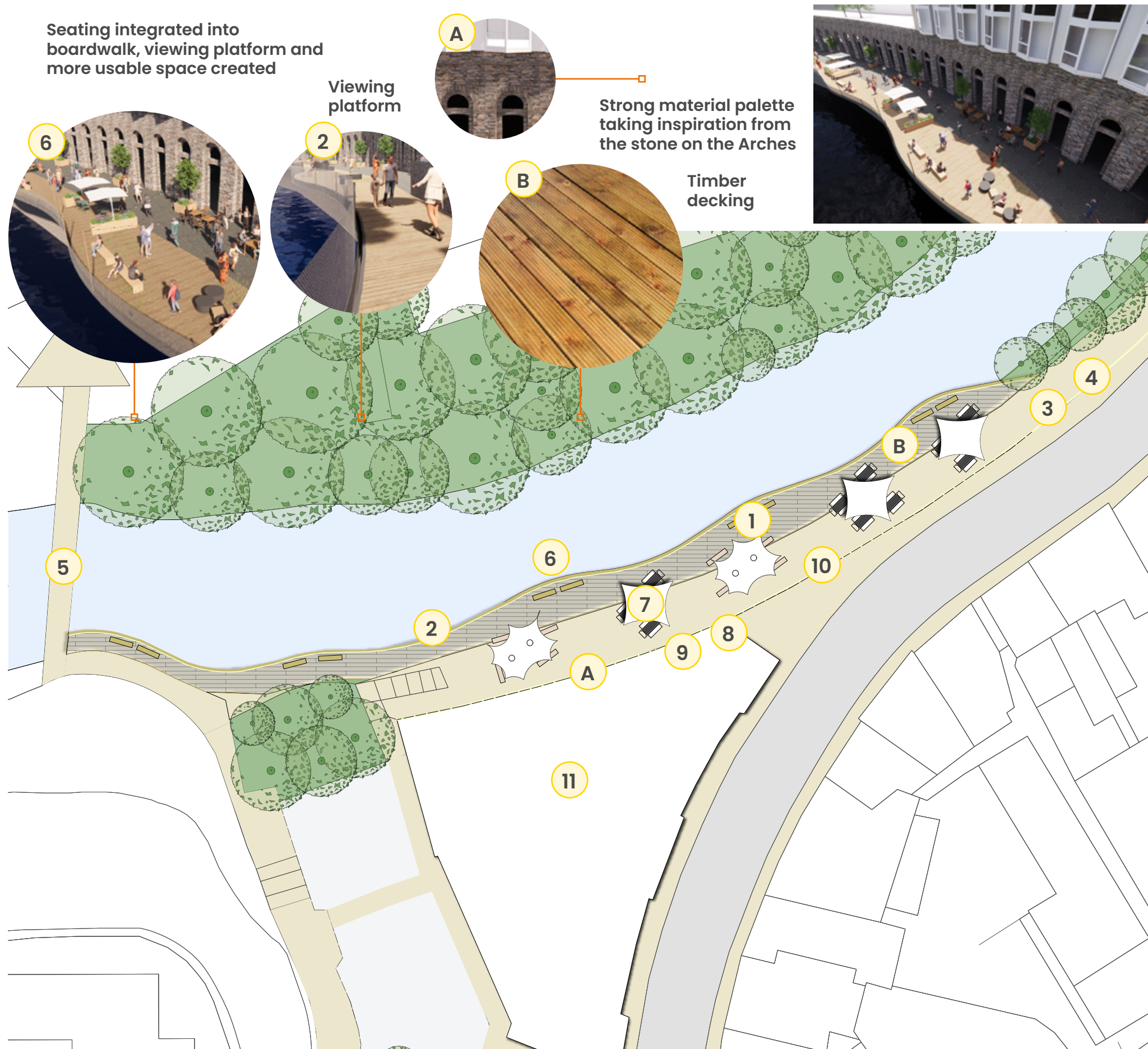
Opportunity for small scale pop-ups and meanwhile events



Opportunity to display local talent for example through pop-up music shows



Strong and secure lighting, appropriate to the place, creates a safer environment at all times of the day



- 1 Timber decking to extend over the River Monnow, providing additional usable space
- 2 A new viewing platform overlooking the river, featuring a cantilevered footpath connecting to Tibbs Bridge
- 3 Accessible paths to ensure inclusive design and better pedestrian links throughout the area
- 4 Accessible ramp to the Arches
- 5 Enhanced connections to Tibbs Bridge
- 6 Outdoor seating to make the space more functional, and encourage people to dwell
- 7 Space for chairs and picnic benches and pop up community events
- 8 Restoration of the slaughterhouses for new community, historic and leisure uses
- 9 Potential for a living museum
- 10 Incorporation of appropriate lighting to ensure safety and usability both day and night
- 11 Old Market Hall (street level)



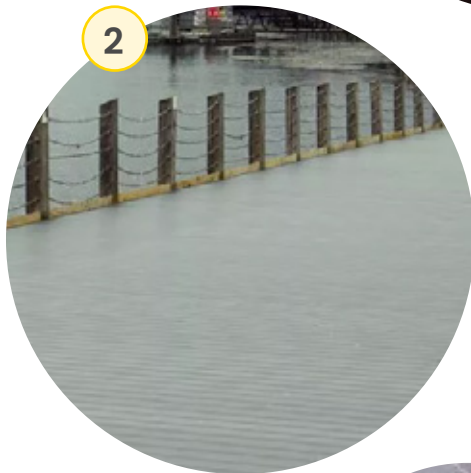
Renovating the Slaughterhouse Arches could turn it into a key feature in the town for community and visitor activities. The new boardwalk expands the space allowing for seating and improved lighting. The upgrades would make this space usable for events like community BBQs, picnics, craft fairs, or food based events. The lighting would create an inviting atmosphere for evening events and improve safety, while the boardwalk would provide a key link to Tibbs Bridge and active travel links. Shown here are some artistic impressions of a typical event day, and a non event day.

Strategic lighting

1



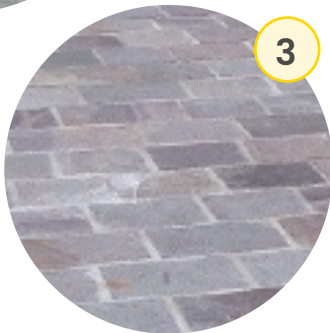
2



Timber boardwalk to expand and provide usable space

Natural stone materials

3



Artist view of the Slaughterhouse Arches at night (top) and on a non-event day (bottom)



Interim phase of works for the Slaughterhouse Arches.

If the initial phase of renovating the Slaughterhouse Arches cannot be implemented immediately, some environmental improvements could be made in relation to access, public realm, managed vegetation clearance, and the initial internal refurbishment of the Arches.

This interim phase could also focus on connecting active travel routes and would promote links across the river via boardwalks extending from the steps beneath the Slaughterhouse Arches. While simpler in scope, this interim solution would provide tangible benefits to the community while building momentum for the full-scale project and creating a safe and accessible pathway that links to Tibbs Bridge and other active travel networks.

The boardwalk would enhance connectivity for walkers, cyclists, and local residents while providing a scenic route along the river. This key infrastructure element of the wider project would immediately improve accessibility, demonstrate progress and show the potential for the full scheme.

Simple signage and wayfinding elements could highlight the boardwalk as part of a broader network, promoting its role in encouraging sustainable travel choices.

High quality
public realm
materials



Railings
allow views
over the
river



Materials
reinforce
active travel
route and
movement



Artist view of the Slaughterhouse Arches interim phase

Dixton Road Gateway

Objective:

Create welcoming and distinctive entrances to Monmouth that give a strong first impression, guide people to the town centre, and reflect the town's character as the historic 'Jewel of the Wye Valley'.

At the Dixton Rd junction, there is a real opportunity to welcome people coming to the town from the north and to create an attractive, green and impressive gateway here.

- Narrow the road while maintaining the required highway standards, incorporating street trees, planting and potential rain gardens
- Prioritise pedestrian and cyclist movement through wider

pedestrian and cycle crossings and raised table junctions with appropriate surface treatments

- Install strategic gateway planting between footways, carriageway and private boundaries
- Include gateway signage and lighting that reinforces arrival into the historic town centre

Making road junction simpler

Reduced size of corners

Pedestrian and cycle friendly

New attractive landscaped gateway

New planting and SUDs incorporated



Crossing material prioritises pedestrians at raised table junctions



Crossing geometry rationalised, pedestrians protected from cars via build outs



Material palate changes to reinforce road hierarchy



Street tree of planted 'pockets'



- 1 Material palette changes to reinforce road hierarchy
- 2 Material changes help to slow cars
- 3 Copenhagen-style crossings allow continuous movement for pedestrians
- 4 Raised table brings road level with the footway
- 5 Green build-outs add to the character of area
- 6 Opportunity for planting in the areas between private boundaries and the road
- 7 Existing properties, boundaries and access retained



1 Natural planted verge, opportunity for street trees within the space

2 Pedestrian focus at junction, continuous Copenhagen-style crossing points



3 Different surface material reinforces pedestrian priority at junctions





Artist view looking north at the Dixon Road junction with Monk Street

Other Gateway and Arrival Projects

Objective:

Create welcoming and distinctive entrances to Monmouth that give a strong first impression, guide people to the town centre, and reflect the town's character as the historic 'Jewel of the Wye Valley'.

River Wye Gateway

Waterfront entrance linking town centre with River Wye:

- Develop a dedicated landing area for canoeists and waterborne visitors with mooring points, seating and interpretive signage
- Create seamless connections between the water, the proposed pedestrian and cycle bridge and town centre attractions
- Install clear wayfinding signage to help visitors navigate from the river to the town centre
- Design the area to serve as both a functional arrival point and an attractive riverside space that celebrates Monmouth's connection to the river



Other Gateway and Arrival Projects

Glendower Street and Shire Hall Arrival Space

Northern quarter arrival:

- Create a welcoming arrival space behind the Shire Hall suitable for markets and events
- Integrate Beaufort Arms Court into the arrival experience
- Improve connections to the castle and museum quarter
- Install clear wayfinding signage to key heritage attractions
- Enhance the pedestrian environment with appropriate lighting and surface treatments
- Create opportunities for flexible event spaces

Comprehensive Wayfinding Strategy

Connecting arrival points to destinations:

- Install consistent wayfinding totems at all car parks showing walking times and key attractions
- Create a unified design approach that reflects Monmouth's character
- Include digital integration opportunities linking to SMART towns initiatives
- Provide clear orientation maps and directional information
- Include information about local heritage and attractions



Proposed Place Management and Thematic Projects

Objectives:

Visible Improvements

Create immediate, noticeable improvements to the town centre's appearance and maintenance standards, addressing key concerns raised by residents and visitors



Objectives:

Vacant Property and Enterprise

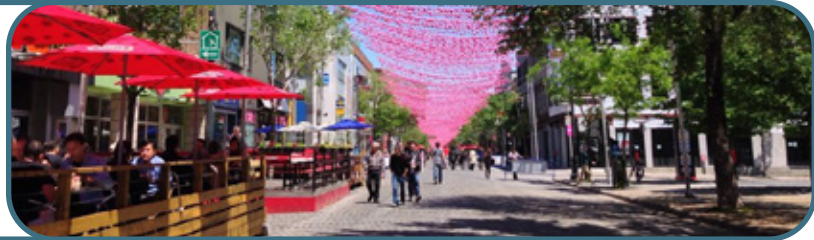
Transform empty and underused buildings into thriving spaces that support new businesses, creative ventures and community activities, helping to build a more diverse and resilient town centre economy



Objectives:

Future-Ready and Well-Managed

Equip Monmouth so it can thrive for future generations using smart, sustainable technologies and coordinated management systems that enhance everyday life while building resilience for the future



Objectives:

Heritage and Interpretation

Use both traditional and digital methods to bring Monmouth's rich history to life, encouraging people to explore more of the town centre



Objectives:

Activity and Events

Transform Monmouth's streets and spaces into vibrant places that host a variety of activities and events throughout the year



Place Management Activities

Visible Improvements

- Implement a comprehensive programme to remove unnecessary street furniture, outdated signage and visual clutter focussing on Church Street and Monnow Street.
- Carry out a town-wide signage audit and improvements linked with the promotion of the town's heritage, key pedestrian routes and essential facilities. Explore and consult on the Monmouth town tag-line as part of new gateway signs and wider branding and marketing to encapsulate the town's character in a memorable way.
- Establish a targeted building improvement programme for prominent properties on Monnow Street and Church Street, including frontage grants and enforcement action on long-neglected buildings.
- Undertake an annual 'deep clean' and refresh of public facilities including toilets, planters, walkways, street furniture and existing signage.
- Create a coordinated approach to shop frontage improvements through grants and design guidance to enhance the visual appeal of key shopping areas.
- Develop enforcement protocols for persistent maintenance issues, working with property owners to address deteriorating building conditions.
- Establish regular maintenance schedules and standards for public spaces to ensure sustained improvements.



Place Management Activities

Vacant Property and Enterprise Support

- Target prominent vacant properties on Church Street, Agincourt Square and Monnow Street for improvement, particularly where they can create better pedestrian connections to car parks. Those that have strategic benefit include former banks and long-term vacant and dilapidated buildings.
- Encourage flexible workspaces that can support new businesses, start-ups and social enterprises.
- Explore opportunities within major developments like the market hall to create indoor community spaces that serve multiple generations.
- Promote county council's programme of temporary 'pop-up' uses in empty shops to test new ideas and build confidence.
- Signpost business support, training and funding support to help new enterprises succeed.
- Work with community organisations to bring empty spaces back into use for services that benefit local people.



Place Management Activities

Future-Ready And Well-Managed

- Implement smart digital solutions that enhance the visitor experience through high-quality digital signage at key locations, helping people navigate to attractions and facilities while reducing visual clutter from traditional signage.
- Explore how SMART towns technology such as smart benches and digital information boards can enhance intergenerational public realm improvements and support maintenance efforts through sensors monitoring waste bins, lighting and infrastructure.
- Establish a comprehensive digital infrastructure including town-wide public Wi-Fi and footfall monitoring systems to support businesses and gather insights on how people use the town centre.
- Develop an integrated mobile app that promotes local businesses, provides interactive heritage trails, and offers real-time information about events, parking availability and transport links.
- Extend and make use of the existing Internet of Things (IoT) network using LoRaWAN technology to monitor waste management, parking spaces, air quality, and infrastructure performance, enabling proactive maintenance and improved efficiency.



Place Management Activities

Heritage and Interpretation

- Create a new heritage trail that builds on existing routes to connect key attractions.
- Install clear wayfinding signs and interpretation boards at historic sites.
- Develop an augmented reality (AR) app that reveals historical scenes and stories at key locations.
- Use the improved Shire Hall as the starting point for exploring the town's heritage.
- Coordinate the various heritage trails and interpretation to create a cohesive visitor experience.



Place Management Activities

Activities and Events

- Create designated spaces for busking, storytelling and informal performances that appeal to all ages, particularly around Riverside, Monnow Street and Agincourt Square.
- Develop intergenerational activity spaces that bring together different age groups through teenage markets, street markets, live music, family-friendly events and informal gathering spots.
- Consolidate and expand existing markets into a more regular traditional-style market in Agincourt Square, including youth-focused elements such as food trucks, craft stalls run by young entrepreneurs, and music performances.
- Create indoor community and cultural spaces, including exploring youth-friendly spaces that have shelter, wi-fi and lighting and shared community spaces within developments like the Market Hall.
- Develop the programme of larger signature events that celebrate the town's heritage, arts, culture and its rivers, ensuring programming includes activities that appeal to young people and families.
- Install power supplies and other infrastructure needed to support events in key spaces, including equipment for music events and technology-enabled activities.
- Support community groups to develop regular, everyday activities rather than just special events, creating ongoing reasons for young people to spend time in the town centre.



Visualising Success for Our Town Centre



What Success Looks Like

When enabling and delivering change in a place like Monmouth, it's vital to understand what success looks like. You need to be clear about the outcomes you are working towards and the process you need to follow to get there.

Why this is important

- **Clear direction:** Visualising success provides motivation and helps everyone rally around a common purpose
- **Building trust:** It strengthens relationships between partners and the community
- **Accountability:** It demonstrates to funding organisations that you are achieving your outputs and outcomes, showing a return on their investment
- **Progress tracking:** It provides a framework to monitor how well projects are working

The difference between outputs and outcomes

- **Outputs** are the direct results of your activities such as the number of new benches installed, metres of footpath improved
- **Outcomes** are the longer-term changes these activities create such as increased footfall, improved community well-being or a more vibrant town centre

The following pages have some examples of outputs and outcomes that can be considered when collecting and assessing the impact of projects and activities.

Creating a Lively Town Centre

What we want to achieve

Monmouth's streets and squares will be welcoming, inclusive places where people want to spend time, and that have thriving businesses and regular activities.

Outputs	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of vacant properties brought back into use• Number of new businesses and creative ventures supported• Number of flexible event spaces created in streets and squares• Number of markets, performances and community events hosted• Area of streetscape improvements (decluttering, lighting, surfaces)• Number of youth-friendly spaces and intergenerational activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced vacancy rates and improved building use• Greater diversity of independent businesses and services• Increased footfall and dwell time in key streets• Enhanced evening economy and cultural offerings• Stronger sense of vibrancy and community life• Better provision for young people and families

What Success Looks Like

Celebrating Our History and Rivers

What we want to achieve

Monmouth will showcase its unique heritage and riverside identity, through well-connected historic landmarks and improved access to both rivers.

Outputs

- Number of heritage interpretation points and digital storytelling features installed
- Length of improved pedestrian routes between castle, Shire Hall and key landmarks
- Number of heritage buildings and sites brought into active use
- Area of enhanced riverside access and connections
- Number of heritage trails and guided experiences created
- Visitor satisfaction scores for heritage attractions

Outcomes

- Improved connectivity between Monmouth’s historic landmarks
- Enhanced visibility and accessibility of castle and heritage quarter
- Greater visitor engagement with Monmouth’s history
- Stronger identity as ‘Town on Two Rivers’
- Increased heritage tourism and cultural economy
- Enhanced pride in local history and place identity

Building Community Spirit

What we want to achieve

Monmouth will have a strong sense of community, with residents actively shaping the town’s future and inclusive spaces for all ages.

Outputs

- Number of community-led events, festivals and creative projects delivered
- Number of accessible seating areas and informal gathering spaces created
- Number of community groups actively involved in town centre management
- Number of intergenerational programmes and youth engagement activities
- Volunteer hours contributed to town centre initiatives
- Community satisfaction and sense of belonging scores

Outcomes

- Stronger community ownership and civic pride
- Increased participation in town centre activities across all age groups
- Enhanced social cohesion and intergenerational connections
- Greater community resilience and self-organisation
- Improved wellbeing through social interaction and cultural activities
- More inclusive and welcoming public spaces for all residents

What Success Look Like

Making a Better Welcome

What we want to achieve

Monmouth will be easier and more pleasant to arrive in, with attractive gateways and intuitive wayfinding that reflect the town's character.

Outputs

- Number of gateway enhancement schemes completed (Cinderhill Street, Dixon Road, bus station)
- Number of wayfinding totems and directional signs installed at car parks and arrival points
- Cleaning and maintenance standards achieved across public spaces
- Number of accessibility improvements implemented
- Visitor satisfaction scores for arrival experience
- Walking times and ease of navigation from arrival points to key destinations

Outcomes

- Improved first impressions and sense of arrival in Monmouth
- Enhanced visitor orientation and navigation throughout town centre
- Increased accessibility for people of all ages and abilities
- Better connectivity between arrival points and key attractions
- Higher visitor satisfaction and likelihood to return
- Stronger town identity and gateway experience

Future Ready and Well Managed

What we want to achieve

Monmouth will be equipped for future generations through smart, sustainable approaches and coordinated management.

Outputs

- Number of smart technology systems and digital information points installed
- Number of businesses supported through digital tools and initiatives
- Area of green infrastructure and sustainable drainage implemented
- Number of coordinated town centre management initiatives
- Energy efficiency and environmental improvements achieved
- Number of community groups involved in place management activities

Outcomes

- Enhanced operational efficiency and coordinated town centre management
- Improved environmental performance and climate resilience
- Greater digital connectivity and business competitiveness
- Increased community engagement in town centre stewardship
- Better resource management and maintenance standards
- Stronger long-term sustainability and future adaptability

Delivery Approach



Ways of Working

The Well-being of Future Generations Act and Monmouth

The Well-being of Future Generations Act is the key piece of Welsh legislation that guides how we plan for Monmouth's future. It requires us to think about sustainable development – how will we meet today's needs without harming future generations' ability to meet theirs.

The Seven National Well-being Goals

This Act sets out seven national well-being goals that shape our planning for Monmouth. Our placemaking plan must contribute to achieving these goals while addressing the town's specific needs and opportunities.



The Five Ways of Working

The Act also sets out five ways of working that we must consider to show that we're working in accordance with the principle of sustainable development:

- **Long-term thinking** Balancing what Monmouth needs now with what it will need in the future. Our proposals look beyond immediate fixes to create lasting positive change for the town centre that will benefit generations to come.
- **Integration** Bringing together social, economic and environmental considerations. For Monmouth, this means connecting our historic heritage with modern sustainability goals, linking the town centre with surrounding neighbourhoods, and ensuring new developments complement existing assets while meeting the needs of all age groups.
- **Involvement** Listening to residents, businesses, visitors and stakeholders. This placemaking plan has been shaped by extensive consultation with Monmouth's community, including dedicated efforts to understand what young people want from their town centre and what will encourage them to stay in or return to Monmouth as they build their careers and families.
- **Collaboration** Working in partnership across sectors. Monmouth's regeneration requires cooperation between the county council, town council, local businesses, community groups and residents, schools, and importantly, young people who will inherit and shape the town's future.
- **Prevention** Investing in solutions that stop problems before they start. Rather than just responding to town centre challenges like vacant properties or poor connectivity, we're creating proactive strategies to strengthen Monmouth's resilience and appeal.

Ways of Working

Development and Delivery

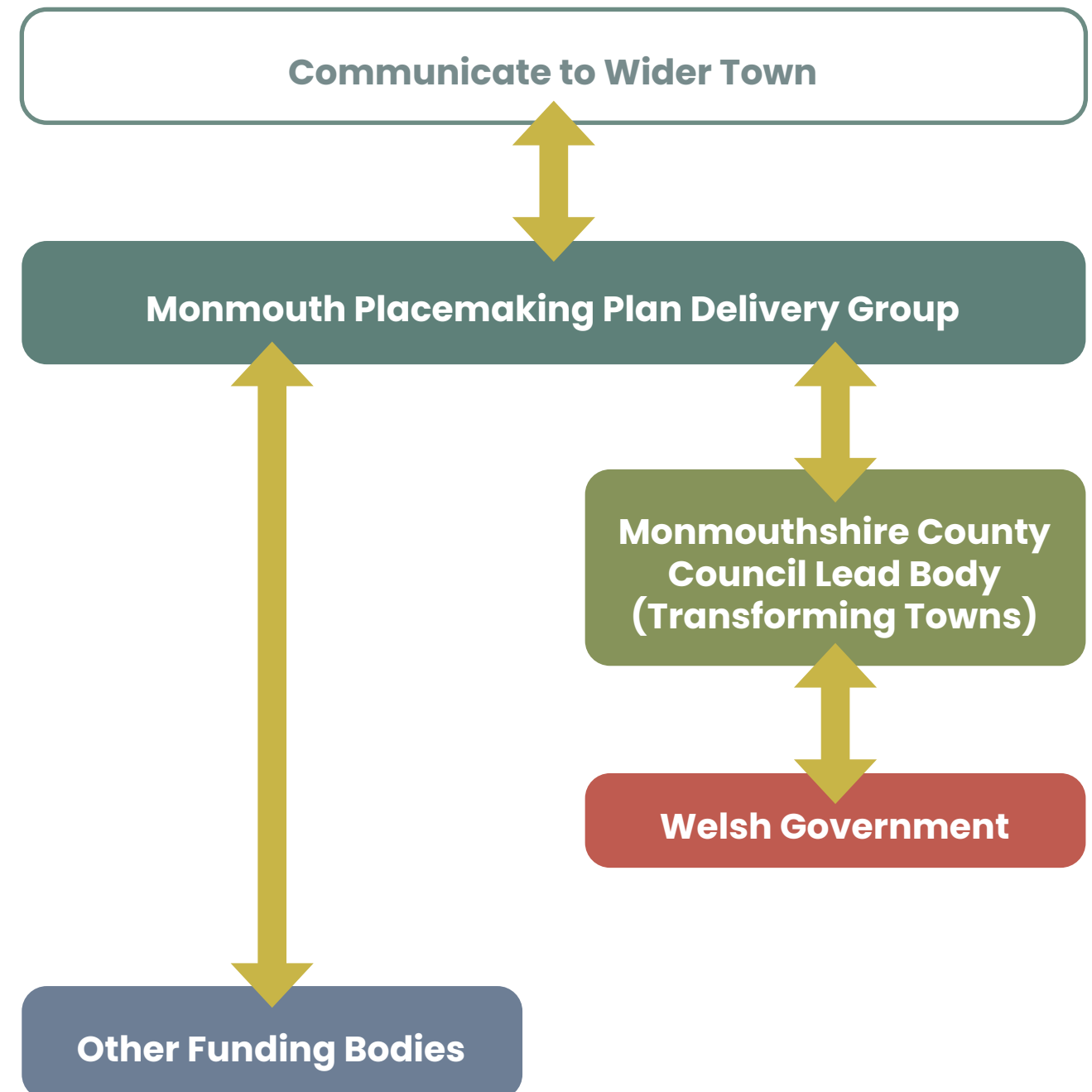
Delivery of this placemaking plan is dependent on a partnership approach where strategic and local organisations bring their individual objectives into a collective set of proposals that benefit each other and, importantly, benefit Monmouth town centre and its immediate neighbourhoods. The opportunities described within this plan each need a different mix of partners, resources and time if they are to be achieved.

The Placemaking Plan Delivery Group needs to build on the foundations of the Plan-making Steering Group, with a review of its membership and a consideration of the skillset need to develop and deliver each project. Monmouthshire County Council will retain its position as lead body for Welsh Government's Transforming Towns programme, and as a conduit for funding, monitoring and reporting.

The key success factors for delivering placemaking projects include:

- Understanding individual strengths including knowledge, expertise and physical assets and how these can be aligned.
- Communication and co-ordination at both a strategic and implementation level.
- Working to a common design code that ensures consistency in built environment and public space and meets respective climate change and sustainability targets.
- Connecting local residents with various pathways to learning, health and well-being, physical activity and employment.
- Presenting a unified identity and story for a place like Monmouth town centre, while respecting each individual organisation's identity.

The delivery group also needs to consider how it will communicate with stakeholder organisations and the local community, maintaining this communication so people know when and where progress is being made.





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