



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Achievements

Taking Monmouthshire Forward

We want to be a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life. We are committed to working with, and alongside, our communities to achieve this. This is the clear purpose established by our Community and Corporate Plan.

Over the following pages you can read about some of our achievements. If you'd like to find out more detail you can look at the self-assessments we conduct annually. These are available at:

www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/improvement





A Fair Place to Live



We said we would implement universal free school meals for all primary school children and extend support during school holidays.

- All primary school pupils can now have a free breakfast and a freshly cooked lunch. Take up has increased from 64% in 2022 to 75% in 2026, and we expect this to support pupils' health, wellbeing and learning.
- Our Food and Fun programmes provide free food and play activities during the summer holidays. Together with our other schemes this gave over 2,000 children the chance to have fun, make new friends and be supported in the past year.

We said we would provide opportunities to support pupils from low-income families to achieve their potential.

- We now provide free Flying Start childcare across 41 sites by working with childcare providers, including two Welsh medium settings, helping children get a strong start and supporting parents who want to return to work.

We said we would ensure people receive the financial support they're entitled to.

- Together with our partners we have helped people across the county get information and support to deal with the effects of higher costs of living.
- We have increased funding for Citizens Advice Monmouthshire by 40%. A vital service that has helped local households and families write off more than £340,000 of debt and secure over £4 million in additional income.

We said we would increase the employment of disabled people.

- In June 2024, we became a Disability Confident Employer (Level 2). Disabled applicants who meet essential job criteria are offered a guaranteed interview, helping make our recruitment fairer and more inclusive.

We said we would provide pathways to positive lifestyle and exercise choices.

- More than 1770 residents have improved their health and fitness through the National Exercise Referral Scheme since 2022. During 2024/25, 75%



of people completing the scheme told us they felt happier and healthier as a result.

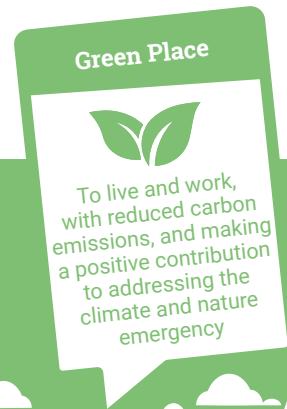
- We have made it easier to get healthier through simplified Passport to Leisure discounts helping to increase leisure centre memberships by 109% since 2022, that's an extra 5,334 people who are using our facilities.

We said we would make it easier for citizens to participate in decision-making.

- Our new Let's Talk Monmouthshire platform, launched in 2025, brings all consultations into one accessible place. It's helping to increase the number of people responding. Already 930 people have registered to receive regular updates.
- We now hold regular resident surveys to find out what people think about our services and whether their views are taken into account. In 2025 29% of residents felt their views are taken into account – a 4% rise on the previous year.

We said we would provide more opportunities for people to speak and learn Welsh.

- More staff can now offer services in Welsh thanks to training and improved recruitment. The number of Welsh speakers in the county has also grown from 18.4% to 19.7%.
- We are increasing Welsh medium school places to meet the rising demand.



A Green Place to Live



We said we would reduce our carbon emissions and increase renewable generation.

- We now have a costed plan for cutting emissions across our buildings and land.
- The amount of renewable energy we generated increased by 16% over the past three years, reaching 5,536,808,000 kWh – enough to power around 1,700 homes for a whole year.
- We've doubled the share of our vehicle fleet that uses ultra-low-emission technology since 2022, from 8% to 16%, helping us reduce pollution and run cleaner services.
- We received the highest score of any UK council for our work on waste reduction and food in the independent Council Climate Action Scorecards. A great recognition of the progress we're making together with our communities.

We said we would improve walking and cycling routes.

- Over the past four years, we've secured more than £24 million in funding for our Active Travel projects. We now have over 100 active travel routes across the county, with another 23 being developed. Usage of these routes has increased by 4.1%, helping more people choose walking and cycling, use their cars less, and build more physical activity into daily life.

We said we would expand access to electric charging infrastructure and support modal shift.

- We've mapped out what EV charging the county will need in the future and explored on street charging options.
- Once these are in place, people without driveways will be able to benefit from lower cost home style charging, making the switch to electric vehicles fairer and easier.

We said we would lead nature recovery and improve river health.

- We've been working closely with Dŵr Cymru to find practical ways to improve the health of our rivers.
- Phosphate-stripping plants are now being installed in Llanfoist and Monmouth, helping boost water quality in the Wye and the Usk and support healthier, more resilient river ecosystems.



- We are active partners within the Wye Nutrient Management Board and Usk Catchment Partnership seeking to improve water quality in our Rivers.

We said we would work with partners to promote natural flood alleviation.

- We're working with partner organisations on projects that use natural flood management methods – like storing more water in the soil and slowing how fast it reaches rivers – to reduce flood risk, help protect homes and communities from heavier rainfall, and create more resilient landscapes for the future.

We said we would promote community access to land for growing food.

- Since 2022 we've helped to improve, create or bring back to life more than 130 allotment plots across six sites in Monmouthshire, supported by the Welsh Government's Allotment Support Grant.
- This means more residents have access to welcoming spaces to grow food, enjoy nature and connect with their community.

We said we would promote sustainable local agriculture and increase the use of local food in schools and social care.

- Through the Welsh Veg in Schools scheme, we've been working with local farmers to bring more locally grown food into schools.
- So far, pupils have enjoyed over 200,000 portions of Welsh organic vegetables – providing fresh, healthy meals while supporting local growers.



Where there are vibrant town centres, where businesses can grow and develop

Thriving & Ambitious Place



We said we would develop placemaking plans and attract investment to keep town centres vibrant.

- We've worked with residents, businesses and community and town councils to coproduce placemaking plans for Monmouth, Abergavenny and Magor with Undy, and are currently progressing a Caldicot Placemaking Plan.
- Our town centre vacancy rate is currently 10.4% – better than the UK average of 13.7%, but still higher than we'd like.
- Since 2022, we've secured £2.4 million from the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Placemaking Grant to support town centre regeneration. Thanks to this funding, we've improved or brought back into use almost 30 buildings in our town centres.
- We've also secured a further £2.2 million from the UK Government Pride in Place Impact Fund and the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Placemaking Grant for projects in 2026/27.

We said we would support the amenities and events that attract people to our towns.

- We've secured £2.8 million of investment – including £1.5 million from the National Heritage Lottery Fund – to transform Monmouth's Shire Hall into an inspiring community museum and lively learning hub, improving the county's cultural offer for residents and visitors.
- We have adopted a Culture Strategy to protect, support and grow culture across the county in a coordinated, inclusive way that benefits communities, wellbeing, and the local economy.
- Our Heritage Strategy is helping us care for and improve historic sites across the county. We've added more information for visitors, along with learning activities and events.
- We've supported and promoted arts and music festivals, theatre shows, local sport, and outdoor activities. This brings more people into our towns and villages, supporting wellbeing and the local economy.



We said we would continue to support tourism and enhance the experience of visitors

- We've developed a new strategy to guide the future of tourism in Monmouthshire, helping the sector grow in a way that benefits our communities.
- Over the past three years, more than a hundred new tourism jobs have been created.
- Employment in the sector has risen by 2% since 2022, from 3,356 to 3,422 people, contributing to a wider economic impact of £352 million.

We said we would help residents of all ages gain skills for work or start a business.

- We've launched a new programme bringing hands-on STEM learning into schools. Pupils now get to explore robotics, coding and 3D printing, supported by fully trained teachers ready to inspire a new generation of techies.
- We've also strengthened links with major employers to help young people find clear routes into future careers.
- We've secured support through the Local Growth Fund to progress plans for a new Monmouthshire Skills Centre, transforming an underused site into a modern learning hub that will help residents gain the skills local employers need and strengthen the county's long-term economic growth.
- Over the past three years, we've supported nearly 2,500 people to learn new skills and helped over 300 people into work. This is opening-up new opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to thrive in work.



Where there are vibrant town centres, where businesses can grow and develop

Thriving & Ambitious Place



We said we would provide more support for people who wish to start their own business

- We've supported just over 300 new and existing businesses to grow and succeed over the past three years.
- We're proud that 60.3% of start-ups in Monmouthshire are still going strong after three years, much higher than the UK rate of 52.9% and the Wales rate of 50%. This shows the strength, resilience and creativity of our local business community.

We said we would develop and fund a modern, accessible, integrated transport system.

- We've developed a new Local Transport Strategy and helped shape the regional transport plan aiming to make it easier for people to use public transport in the years ahead.
- Since 2022, we've also secured over £35 million for travel projects across Monmouthshire. This includes Active Travel, better roads, improved bus infrastructure, and more community road safety training - all aimed at making travel safer, easier and more accessible for everyone.

We said we would maintain and improve key highways infrastructure including roads, pavements and bridges

- It's estimated that clearing the backlog of road repairs in Monmouthshire would cost more than £80 million. Like many councils, we simply don't have the funding to do everything we'd like.
- Even so, in our latest budget we've committed an extra £2 million of capital investment, spread over three years, to fix potholes and improve the condition of roads across the county. This is in addition to £5 million we'd already committed. It's a practical step to help make everyday journeys safer and smoother for residents.
- In 2026/27 we will invest over £10 million of capital expenditure in our infrastructure. This will enable us to complete the construction of a new active travel bridge between Abergavenny and Llanfoist, repairs to Chain Bridge, safer roads in Undy, and better bus and rail links in Chepstow.





A Safe Place to Live



We said we would increase the supply of good quality affordable housing.

- We want young people to have more of a chance to stay, live and build their futures here in Monmouthshire. Our new Replacement Local Development Plan sets out a clear direction for the county's future. If approved by Welsh Government, it will help unlock the development of 2,130 new homes with 50% of those being affordable housing for people in housing need.
- In the meantime, we're already making progress. Since 2022, 224 affordable homes have been granted planning permission, helping more people access safe, secure and affordable housing.

We said we would work with partners to develop homes for social rent and bring more empty properties back into use.

- We've introduced Council Tax premiums to encourage owners and landlords to bring empty homes back into use.
- This has already helped reduce the number of long-term empty properties from 541 to 447.
- We're also working closely with local landlords to increase the supply of temporary and affordable accommodation, helping more people find a safe place to live.

We said we would adopt Rapid Rehousing to prevent homelessness and reduce reliance on B&B.

- Since launching our rapid rehousing approach in April 2023, we've been able to help more people stay in their homes or find suitable alternatives.
- On average, 61% of households at risk of homelessness have been supported to remain where they are or move into safer, more stable accommodation each year.

We said we would reduce the use of B&B accommodation by acquiring more properties for temporary housing.

- We've begun running our own temporary accommodation, which is helping us meet rising demand and provide better support to people who need it.



- Since 2022, this has led to an 89% reduction in the number of households whose temporary housing is provided in B&B. We are no longer placing families and young people in B&B and are working towards ending its routine use, instead offering more suitable self-contained or shared accommodation, with support to secure a permanent home.

We said we would ensure that new homes built in Monmouthshire have the highest energy efficiency standards.

- We've developed and approved a new Replacement Local Development Plan. If it is signed off by Welsh Government, it will ensure that future housing in the county produces net-zero emissions; helping cut carbon, save energy, and lower household bills.

We said we would improve community safety and tackle anti-social behaviour and serious violence.

- We've been working with young people to tackle concerns about knife crime and anti-social behaviour, bringing police and charities into our youth centres.
- In Caldicot in 2024 following targeted interventions anti-social behaviour reduced.
- We secured Home Office funding to expand the Safer Summer Streets initiative in our town centres in 2025.



Where people feel part of a community and are valued

A Connected Place Where People Care



We said we would work with partners to enable people to stay in their own homes and communities

- Our adult reablement service supports more than 300 people every year, helping them regain confidence and independence. Thanks to this support, 56.4% of people no longer need ongoing social care, a real boost to their wellbeing and day-to-day lives.
- We've made it easier for people to get the care they need at home. As a result, unmet care hours have fallen from 804 to just 132. We now provide 98.2% of the long-term domiciliary care people rely on.

We said we would provide early help and preventative services that reduce the likelihood of children and families needing long-term support

- Our early help service ensures families get support as soon as they need it. On average 50 families are supported each year and every family using the service has reported positive outcomes.

We said we would invest in the provision of high-quality placements for vulnerable children and young people.

- We've opened two new residential homes and one supported accommodation site for young people aged 16+, with another on the way.
- These in-house placements help children and young people stay in, or return to Monmouthshire, surrounded by their communities and support networks.
- We've improved the support and financial package for Monmouthshire foster carers. This means more children who need foster care are now placed with our own foster carers, rather than with independent agencies.

We said we would support effective discharge from hospital

- We've expanded our specialist integrated service so that frailer people can get the acute help they need in their own home. By doing so, the number of hospital bed days used by medically fit Monmouthshire residents has fallen from a peak of 3,392 in November 2024 to 1,179.
- Since 2022, more than 1,000 homes have received assistive technology giving piece of mind, helping

people stay independent for longer. The upshot is a reduction in demand for domiciliary care, with some older residents no longer needing to move into care homes away from their family and community.

We said we would provide a high-quality residential care facility for people with dementia

- We've opened Severn View Park, a 32-bed specialist dementia care home in the heart of a new community near Caldicot. The home, designed to provide vital care and support in a homely, loving environment, has already won a national architecture award for redefining what care-home living can feel like.

We said we would support carers and promote healthy, active lives to reduce loneliness and isolation.

- We've improved the information and support available to carers helping them stay supported and connected in fulfilling their vital role. The number registered with our team has grown by 6% over the past year with more than 1,000 people now accessing help.

We said we would promote healthier lives and increased physical activity through our sports and leisure facilities.

- Despite financial pressures, we've invested £1.3 million in leisure centres since 2022, improving gyms, play areas and swimming pools across the county.
- That's a new outdoor gym in Chepstow, a multi-use games area in Caldicot, and upgrades to our swimming pools in Chepstow and Abergavenny. These improvements are helping more people stay active, healthy and connected.

We said we would make improvements at Caldicot Leisure Centre

- Although major refurbishment bids were unsuccessful, we've continued upgrading Caldicot Leisure centre with new LED floodlights, a multi-use sports area, a new cycling studio and a brand new 3G pitch.
- Future proposals would seek to improve the fitness facilities at Caldicot leisure centre and the construction of a new skatepark.



A Learning Place



We said we would improve attendance, reduce exclusions and strengthen inclusion.

- Our education welfare service is supporting vulnerable pupils back into school, working closely with families to provide tailored help.
- Primary school attendance has steadily improved, reaching 94.1% in summer 2024/25, up from 93.6% the year before. Secondary attendance is still below pre-pandemic levels, but it has risen from 88.2% in 2023/24 to 90.1% by summer 2024/25. These are consistently amongst the best attendance levels in Wales.

We said we would ensure that our education provision meets the needs vulnerable groups and those with additional learning needs

- Two newly refurbished Pupil Referral Units - one in the north and one in the south of the county - now offer a wider range of learning opportunities and support for children and young people unable to attend mainstream school. We're helping them stay engaged in education improving their confidence and choices for the next stage in their young lives.

We said we would improve outcomes for children eligible for free school meals

- Our learners who are eligible for free school meals have performed well in the last three years. Their performance in the capped 9 (a measure of attainment across a range of qualifications including literacy, numeracy and science) has been higher or in line with similar learners across Wales.
- Since 2022, schools have made real progress in tackling the impact of poverty, using approaches tailored to their communities. Working closely with external agencies and local charities, many

updated their policies to ease financial pressure on families including uniform recycling and low-cost school trips.

We said we would modernise our school estate to be fit for the future.

- We've opened the new net-zero King Henry VIII School in Abergavenny. An investment of £70 million has created a state-of-the-art campus providing education for children and young people aged 3–19, including dedicated provision for 71 pupils with complex needs.

We said we would increase Welsh medium primary school provision

- We opened Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy in September 2024, sharing a site with Overmonnow Primary School in Monmouth. The school can accommodate up to 60 pupils and already has 24 children on roll, including 15 in nursery. It's continuing to grow as more families choose Welsh-medium education in the county.

We said we would support all learners to achieve their potential

- Across Monmouthshire, 15 and 16 year olds, are amongst the highest performers in their GCSEs and equivalent qualifications. The average grade for English, and numeracy examinations was higher than a C grade and over 25% of learners achieved 5 GCSEs grades A*-A.
- We've secured funding for the Inspire Outreach programme which supports young people who have low school attendance, working with them to overcome these challenges, with the aim of returning to full-time education and fulfilling their potential.

We conduct an annual self assessment of our performance. If you'd like to get involved in that process, please register on our **Let's Talk Monmouthshire** platform and details will be shared as soon as they're available. In the meantime, if you'd like to share your opinions and take part in conversations about the policies and strategies that affect you, the latest online and face-to-face consultations, engagement events can be found at: www.letstalkmonmouthshire.co.uk

LET'S TALK
MONMOUTHSHIRE
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