

Cynlluniau Lle Ceredigion Place Plans

Aberystwyth & Area Place Plan

Aberystwyth and Area 2040

2019



Cyngor Sir
CEREDIGION
County Council



Overview

A major tourism consultation a couple of decades ago described Aberystwyth as ‘a *quintessentially Welsh seaside town*’ and whilst this is true, Aberystwyth and the wider area is more than that. It is obviously of great importance, as evidenced clearly by participants in the consultation to develop this Place Plan, that Aberystwyth should protect and develop its identity as a Welsh town, both the language and culture, but there are other aspects, beyond its seaside location, that also contribute to the colour of this vibrant area. The rural hinterland contributes to the local economy and the health and wellbeing of residents. The national institutions located here provide employment whilst protecting our history, language and culture. Iconic buildings such as the Old College, the National Library and much-loved churches and period shops and housing add a richness to the local architecture which residents are keen to preserve whilst at the same time being sensitively adapted to suit modern needs. Aberystwyth and the wider area is unique and it is protecting this uniqueness and quality in all aspects that will ensure future economic success.

Consultation

A well-attended workshop was held in February 2019, which gave the Steering Group its main themes for developing a Place Plan and provided the basis for further consultation via questionnaires, which were distributed widely and placed online. The online questionnaire findings endorsed the views gathered from the workshop.

Themes:

1. Local economy
2. Environment
3. Transport
4. Health and wellbeing
5. Our communities
6. Culture and heritage
7. Housing and planning

THEME 1: Local Economy
Key principles:

- Create a culture to develop more local businesses and ensure they thrive and make more of the Welsh / local retail offering and products
- Maximise the benefits of the University and National Library
- Optimise the seafront, rivers and hills but maintain the architectural character of the town
- Improve town management and develop a reputation as a clean town

STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

Support Local: prioritise and support local businesses, shops, products and social enterprises on the high street to achieve a healthy mix of local and national businesses.	Identify locations with development potential to provide opportunities for small, artisan, manufacturing units.
Night-time economy: maximise the benefits of the evening economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • control harmful impact of alcohol and noise • pubs to diversify their product
Connectivity: improve broadband and enable access to new technologies.	
Trading estates: develop in an environmentally friendly way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glanyrafon • Llanbadarn
Tourism: conservation scheme to protect and restore historic shop fronts and features including mosaics in shop doorways (replicate in new developments).	Supplementary guidance
Strengthen Welsh identity e.g. signage:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bilingual signage with priority given to Welsh language • Protect Welsh house and street names especially those of historic value.
Promote natural resources/heritage: mountains, coast, sea and wildlife to visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen Dinas, • Constitution Hill • Parc Natur Penglais
Promenade: maximise the popular Victorian seafront in keeping with this Place Plan's values i.e. protect and promote the architecture, history, language and culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore historic features such as the salt-water sea pool / côr y castell • Discourage proposals such as the zip wire
Rivers: Make the most of the Rheidol and Ystwyth by providing appropriate access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking and cycle paths and places to sit. • Developments should enable public access.

<p>Dogs: offer responsible dog owners somewhere for dogs when beaches closed</p>	
<p>THEME 2: Environment</p>	
<p>Key principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the marine environment: reduce waste and ensure the beach is clean • Protect green community spaces and enhance biodiversity • Reduce waste (circular economy) and encourage recycling • Promote organic and sustainable management systems • Make Aberystwyth a carbon neutral environment with local energy generation and consumption 	
<p>STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE</p>	
<p>Green spaces: protect, enhance and increase biodiversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance existing accessible green community spaces in Aberystwyth, Llanbadarn and Waunfawr, former Sea Cadet hall in Trefechan • Protect trees and woodlands and plant more trees • Implement street tree planting programme and replace felled trees and avenues. • Include new trees in planning applications where possible • Map verges and corridors suitable for wildflower planting (e.g. Plas Crug Avenue, Penparcau Road, Penglais Road,) and minimise verge cutting to encourage biodiversity.
<p>Growing spaces:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify locations for community growing spaces and allotments. • Encourage green roofs and/or solar panels • Encourage pride of place e.g. private gardens
<p>Waste management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find solutions to the littering caused by seagulls / vermin and irresponsible residents. • Develop a strategy to reduce packaging and increase recycling facilities. • Reduce use of chemicals in park management, shops, businesses and farming.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean waterways, drains, and ditches regularly.
Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable renewable energy initiatives • Implement sea and river flood defence schemes, upland tree planting and avoid building on flood plains. • Implement strategy to reduce CO2 emissions to net zero by/before 2030
THEME 3: Transport	
Key Principles	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve public transport, parking and green transport 	
STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE	
Cycling: Provide more cycle friendly areas and paths and connect with walking routes - but provide separation where possible to ensure safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heol Pen-y-Bont • Ystwyth Trail level alternative route to Felin y Môr hill around the harbour • Link from Penparcau to Tanybwlech Ystwyth Trail section
De-trunk/ pedestrianisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • De-trunk Alexandra Road, Great Darkgate Street (and Penparcau Road) • pedestrianize main street
Public transport: Link bus services to rail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the old oil depot site in terms of improvement and reconfiguration potential

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorten train track by approx. 15 yds to provide pedestrian and bike access across from Matalan car park to the front of Lidl and to enhance the rail gateway (SINCE NOTING THIS POTENTIAL THE LAND IS BEING BUILT ON) • Prioritise Aberystwyth-Carmarthen rail line. • Improve train / bus information and city links (Cardiff / Bangor / Birmingham / London). • Introduce Park & Ride from Llanfarian and Bow Street with links to the town centre, the Industrial Estate, Parc y Llyn, Bronglais Hospital, Doctors' surgeries and Park Avenue • Provide better and more frequent transport links between Aberystwyth and the neighbouring villages of Llanbadarn and Penparcau, between the town and main institutions, and to outlying villages such as Bow Street and Penrhyncoch.
Green transport/energy: Implement a green transport policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • electrified car/bike charge points in car parks (M&S and CCC) using solar panels and battery storage • Electric charging points to be included in planning applications.
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider residents' parking where appropriate

THEME 4: Health and Wellbeing

Key Principles:

Wellbeing activities and accessible health services for all

STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

Bronglais: maintain hospital services, mental health services, dentists etc.	Hywel Dda
Disability access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dropped kerbs, tactile paving, pedestrianisation • reduce barriers e.g. street/pavement clutter, dangerous crossings (see pedestrian safety below) • accessible information e.g. transport
Public toilets:	maintain current provision

Leisure and sport: develop Aberystwyth as a centre for elite sports for all ages	Work with schools/University to provide/utilise leisure /sporting facilities.
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THEME 5: Our communities

Key principles:

- Maintain Aberystwyth's reputation as a clean and safe place to live and socialise
- Encourage community cohesion through events and activities
- A caring community: support the less fortunate and welcome diversity
- Encourage collaboration between communities, businesses and social enterprises
- Improve local democracy and engage with all ages
- Invest in the two secondary schools
- Share school, college and University resources and improve town and gown relations
- Engage with people where they are
- Encourage civic pride and involve people in achieving a clean town; employ a warden

STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

community spaces for all	All playgrounds, parks and woodlands
Community Centre and Town Hall	North Road clinic and park
Housing and retail developments should build communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designs should meet community needs with accessibility a priority: • locations suitable for 'last time' and 'first time' buyers should be earmarked to achieve balance of tenure and maintain civic pride
Pedestrian safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • town centre pedestrianisation • more 20 mph zones e.g. North Road • Improve pedestrian crossings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mill Street roundabout/Alexandra Rd ○ Llanbadarn Rd junction with Penglais Rd ○ Western Vaults corner

THEME 6: Culture and Heritage

Key principles:

- Safeguard Aberystwyth as a vibrant Welsh seaside town of cultural and historic importance to Wales, and the world, and as a sustainable, diverse and ethical town

- Celebrate and utilise the Welshness of Aberystwyth, its Welsh community and culture – the cultural capital of Wales
- Celebrate Aberystwyth’s important link to the language’s history (e.g. first Welsh school and first welsh language protest)
- Maintain and develop Welsh and bilingual education - preserve and grow Welsh schools and Pantycelyn
- Celebrate the language as a boost to the economy
- Keep the Welsh language alive and present in our society and contribute to the Welsh Government’s Cymraeg 2050 Strategy by working towards increasing numbers of speakers
- Celebrate the multi-cultural diversity of Aberystwyth
- Celebrate and engage with the national establishments: Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, Merched y Wawr, Llyfrgell Genedlaethol, Arad Goch, Cyngor Llyfrau, UCAC, FUW, National Broadcasting Archive

STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

Welsh language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Welsh language risk-assessment for housing and other developments should be a requirement of planning. • Bilingual or Welsh signage (and Welsh place names) should be enforced and linguistic standards maintained.
Street art: in keeping with the local identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tabernacl war memorial to be restored and relocated to the old Town Hall • Develop ‘street art’ strategy
Culture: provide community spaces for cultural and historic events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve signed paths and bus links to the Arts Centre and National Library. • Audit and enable suitable locations for events
Historic sites: protect	protect sites from inappropriate developments and deterioration e.g. Pendinas ancient site; Constitution Hill; Sea front
Interpretation of key places and developments in our Welsh history as a key part of the area’s tourism strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit sites and develop strategy • plaques to identify cultural sites and personalities

<p>Heritage: Celebrate through bespoke events for tourists and locals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • walking tours • Local entertainment.
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THEME 7: Housing and Planning

Key principles:

- Prevent overdevelopment, protect the environment and wildlife
- Improve housing stock by providing affordable and quality housing for all ages to buy and rent.
- Housing should contribute to community cohesion and wellbeing and all developments should increase residents' sense of place and pride through design and locally sourced materials
- Planning policy should encourage quality architecture
- Build eco housing to combat climate change

Strategy for the Future

<p>Planning Policy – conservation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect Aberystwyth's historic architecture and buildings • use locally relevant building materials
<p>Planning control – maintenance and enforcement:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • upkeep of buildings and shabby properties should be dealt with • upper storeys of town centre buildings improved
<p>Housing options: to meet the needs of the community and be innovative:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality, affordable, eco-friendly, downsized '<i>last time buyer</i>' homes, for older people (would release family homes). • Affordable '<i>first time buyer</i>' homes for young people. • Social housing for young families • Flats above shops as homes • Utilise existing properties e.g. adapt town houses as shared freehold flats

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES (as noted by CCC)	
Waunfawr and Llanbadarn	– green spaces should be protected
Arriva Depot:	Affordable housing ‘last time buyer’ and ‘first time buyer’ for older and younger people to buy (away from the road). Level ground close to amenities
Old Brewery site:	small artisan units and residential units
Former sea scouts:	Keep as a green space with seating and bee friendly planting, however any building development should be designed and use building materials that are in keeping with the historic architecture of Trefechan bridge and the old mill
Former oil depot:	possible reconfiguration of bus and train station
Former tax office (Plas crug):	Ideal location for ‘last time’ and ‘first time’ buyers if the refurbishment is of a high quality. The location of the former Northgate St crown buildings would also be convenient for both young and older people.
Catholic church and North Road Clinic area	Should not be developed as housing. The Town Council would wish to develop the clinic as a civic/community centre with adjacent green space. The neighbouring much loved and historic Catholic church of architectural value and should be preserved for community use.
Bryn Derw, Stanley Rd:	Ideal for ‘last time’ (older people) and ‘first time’ buyers