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Powys

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"This project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, supported by Powys County Council".

**Community
Conversations**

NEWTOWN AREA



What matters most to people in Newtown?

Newtown and the surrounding area have many strengths. There are many community organisations, volunteers and local services working to support people of all ages. The challenge is often helping people find them, access them and work together more effectively.

People also shared concerns about the future. The cost of living, access to health and care, education, public transport, local amenities and community connections were all important issues.

This report brings together what local people told us through the Shaping the Future of Powys Communities survey, community events and follow-up focus groups. It highlights the priorities identified by local people and opportunities for communities, organisations and partners to work together.

At a glance

101 people from across the Newtown area shared their views in a Powys-wide survey

People told us they love:

- Access to nature
- A strong sense of community
- Local events and activities

The biggest concerns were:

- Public transport
- Local shops and amenities
- Access to local services

Looking ahead, people were particularly concerned about:

- Community connection and cohesion
- Affordable housing and unemployment
- Access to health and social care
- The cost of living
- Local amenities
- Council services and engagement

Focus groups were held at:

Newtown Community Fair | 27 November 2025 | 23 Social | 53 attendees

Plas Dolerw & Newtown Job Centre | 13 January & 4 February 2026 | 39 participants

Six priorities for the future

1 Better communication and information sharing

People want better ways to find out what is happening locally and felt there is too much reliance on social media, meaning some people miss information about activities, services and support. There was strong support for a mix of printed, online and face-to-face communication

Better communication could help more people access support, take part in activities and feel connected to their community

Community opportunities

Communities could:

- build on existing newsletters and trusted local information sources
- use a mix of printed, digital and face-to-face communication
- create simple ways to find local activities, services and support
- encourage community groups to share information in one place
- make sure information reaches people who are not online or may be isolated
- include useful information about transport and access
- strengthen links between community organisations and surrounding villages

2 Bringing people together across generations

People highlighted the importance of stronger connections across generations. Older people can feel isolated or undervalued, while young people identified a lack of accessible and affordable places to meet and take part in activities.



Community opportunities

Communities could:

- create shared activities and informal opportunities for different generations to connect
- develop mentoring, skills-sharing and intergenerational volunteering
- support older people to take on meaningful community roles
- involve young people in planning and decision-making
- use existing events, schools and community organisations to develop shared projects

There was interest in shared activities and volunteering to bring people together, reduce isolation and strengthen community connections

3 Creating more inclusive community spaces and opportunities

Newtown has a strong network of community buildings, venues and organisations. People felt some spaces and activities are not accessible or inclusive enough. Particular concerns were raised about the under-representation of disabled, neurodivergent and LGBTQ+ people, people with additional learning needs, and young people who need free or affordable places to meet.

Community opportunities

Communities could:

- identify and address barriers to taking part
- improve accessibility and inclusion across community spaces and activities
- involve underrepresented groups in planning and decision-making
- explore free or affordable spaces for young people
- work together to make better use of existing community buildings and assets

4 Supporting volunteers and community organisations

Volunteering was also seen as a pathway to skills, learning and employment

Newtown relies heavily on volunteers, but capacity is under pressure. People highlighted difficulties recruiting and retaining volunteers and trustees, and wanted clearer opportunities, better support and more inclusive ways to get involved.

Community opportunities



Communities could:

- promote clear and accessible volunteering opportunities
- provide support and training
- encourage younger people to get involved
- link volunteering with skills, learning and employment
- improve coordination and sharing of resources between organisations

5 Supporting young people

Young people were identified as an important priority. Newtown has some youth provision, but cost, transport, anxiety and limited capacity can make it difficult to take part.

People also wanted young people to have a stronger voice in decisions about their community and its future



Community opportunities

Communities could:

- include the voice of young people in decision-making
- build on existing youth activities and create more youth-led opportunities
- strengthen links with schools and colleges
- create free, accessible and inclusive places to meet
- reduce barriers such as cost and transport
- expand volunteering opportunities for young people

6 Supporting the town centre and local economy

At the same time, people saw opportunities to connect community activity with economic regeneration and making better use of local spaces

People were concerned about the future of local shops, businesses and town centre spaces. They felt parking, accessibility and underused buildings can affect footfall and the vitality of the town centre.

Community opportunities



Communities could:

- make better use of underused town centre spaces
- link community events and activities with local businesses
- promote local shops, services and activities
- identify and address barriers to accessing the town centre
- encourage partnerships between community organisations and businesses
- use local spaces for community, cultural and creative activities
- work together to increase footfall and strengthen Newtown as a local centre

What happened next?

Following the Community Conversations, local people agreed to focus on **communication**. A small financial resource was made available through PAVO, funded by the UK Government's Social Prosperity Fund.

The agreed action was to build on the existing **Open Events** printed newsletter, led by **Open Newtown**. The distribution of the newsletter, that brings together information from local third sector organisations and highlight activities for people of all ages, was widened to surrounding areas.

Looking ahead

The community conversations showed that Newtown and the surrounding areas have many strengths. There are active community organisations, valued local services, green spaces, events and strong community spirit. The challenge is ensuring people know what is available, can access it and have opportunities to get involved.

The priorities identified through this work provide a clear starting point for community organisations, town and community councils, volunteers and public services to work together. By building on local strengths and addressing shared challenges collectively, Newtown can continue to develop as a connected, resilient and thriving community.

This project was funded by the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Find out more about the project and read the full report: pavo.org.uk/news/community-conversations-what-you-told-us/

If you'd like more detailed information about the contents of this report, please get in touch at info@pavo.org.uk