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Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations
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"Ariennir y prosiect hwn gan Lywodraeth y DU drwy Gronfa Ffyniant Gylfredin y DU, a gefnogir gan Gyngor Sir Powys".

Powys

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Tyfu
Canolbarth Cymru
Growing
Mid Wales

**Community
Conversations**

WELSHPOOL AREA



What matters most to people in Welshpool?

Welshpool and the surrounding areas are places where people value the natural environment, local shops and amenities, and a strong sense of community.

People also want to see Welshpool remain a place where everyone can access the services, activities and opportunities they need. Concerns were raised about public transport, the future of local services, opportunities for young people, the cost of living and the strength of the town centre.

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

58 people from across the Welshpool area shared their views in a Powys-wide survey

People told us they love:

- Access to nature
- A strong sense of community
- Local shops and amenities

The biggest concerns were:

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- Public transport links
- Local services, including education, health and social care

People also highlighted gaps in local amenities, health and social care, public and community transport, youth activities and sports and leisure facilities.

Focus groups were held at:

Welshpool Community Fair | 4 December 2025 | COWSHACC | 45 attendees
COWSHACC | 20 January & 16 March 2026 | 28 participants

Five priorities for the future

1 Better communication and connection

One of the clearest messages from the conversations was that Welshpool has lots going on - but many people aren't aware of what's on offer.

There are many community groups, services, activities and volunteering opportunities, but information is spread across different places and does not always reach the people who could benefit.

People also highlighted the importance of reaching people directly through schools, colleges, cafés, community meetings and other places where people already spend time

Community opportunities

Communities could:

- create a shared source of local information
- coordinate what's on across different organisations
- develop a regular community newsletter
- make better use of existing websites and digital platforms
- continue providing printed information
- make sure people who are digitally excluded are not left behind

2 Making volunteering easier

Rather than relying only on traditional volunteer fairs, people suggested taking volunteering opportunities directly into the community

Volunteers are at the heart of many community activities, but organisations are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit and support them. People said volunteering has changed since COVID-19 and that new approaches are needed.



Community opportunities

Communities could:

- promote volunteering through schools and colleges
- create flexible opportunities that fit around work and family life
- provide better support and training for volunteers
- showcase opportunities in cafés and community spaces
- create opportunities for young people to try volunteering
- recognise and value the contribution volunteers make

3 Keeping Welshpool and rural communities connected

Public and community transport was one of the strongest concerns in the survey. People living outside Welshpool can find it particularly difficult to access services, activities and community life.

Transport is not only about getting from one place to another. For many people, it determines whether they can access health services, shops, activities and opportunities to connect with others

Community opportunities



Communities could:

- map existing transport services and gaps
- gather local evidence about transport needs
- explore ways to recruit and support volunteer drivers
- work together to strengthen community transport
- improve information about the transport that is already available

4 Supporting a stronger town centre and local community

People are concerned about the future of Welshpool's high street and local amenities, including vacant shops, the loss of parking and declining footfall.

There were also ideas for making better use of the canal side and strengthening links between Powis Castle and the town centre

Community opportunities

Communities could:

- support local shops and businesses
- better understand how residents and visitors travel around Welshpool
- find ways to increase town-centre footfall
- strengthen links between local attractions and the town centre
- explore improvements to the canal side
- work together through partnerships to support town-centre activity

5 Supporting people, young people and community wellbeing

People want Welshpool to be a community where everyone can take part.

The availability of carers was identified as a particular concern. Without the right support, people can become isolated and less able to take part in community life

People highlighted the needs of older residents, people needing care and support, children with disabilities and their families.

There were concerns about young people leaving the area because of limited opportunities, employment and education.



Community opportunities

Communities could:

- develop more opportunities for young people
- strengthen intergenerational activities
- support people who are at risk of isolation
- connect people with existing health and wellbeing support

What happened next?

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

The project supported an increased print run and distribution of the local **Health & Wellbeing Directory**.

Looking ahead

The Community Conversations showed that Welshpool and the surrounding areas have strong community assets and many people already working hard to support others. The challenge is making sure 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, Welshpool 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