

Gwent Public Services Board

Cwmbran well-being assessment

A Torfaen local area well-being assessment

Document reference: T03
February 2022

Contents

1	Description of the area.....	2
2	About Cwmbran	3
3	Social Well-being	4
3.1	About the community	4
3.2	Getting around	5
3.3	Access to services and crime	7
3.4	Housing, households and health	9
4	Economy	15
4.1	Work, skills and education	15
5	Environment	19
6	Culture	23
7	What people are telling us	25
8	References	27

1 Description of the area

Based around a network of distinct neighbourhoods, the Cwmbran assessment area includes Llantarnam, Llanyrafon and beyond this the villages of Llanfrechfa and Ponthir in the south-east; Fairwater, Greenmeadow and Henllys in the west; Pontnewydd in the north; Coed Eva and Two-locks in the south-west; and Croesyceiliog in the east.

Located at the southern point of the borough, Cwmbran is unique in being the only New Town in Wales. Designated as a New Town in 1949, it was designed as a distinctive, progressive and modern town offering new opportunities for its residents. The name Cwmbran comes from the Welsh for Valley of the Crow.

The landscape of Cwmbran has a different feel to that of either Blaenavon or Pontypool, with the town sitting between the visually impressive backdrop of the hills of Twmbarlwm and the Usk valley to the east. The planned landscape includes both formal green space such as Southfields and Cwmbran Boating Lake, along with more informal areas.

Cwmbran's proximity to Newport allows easy access to city amenities. Outside peak traffic times, movement between the two settlements is quick and easy.

Cwmbran Town Centre is the main retail centre serving the whole of the borough and beyond. Although compact, it has an extensive range of services from the pedestrianised retail area to leisure, theatre and arts provision. With satellite retail parks, localised shopping facilities and industrial parks, there are few requirements unserved by local provision.

With its bus and train station, the town centre acts as Torfaen's main public transport hub.

Today Cwmbran remains a popular place to live, providing a successful town centre, excellent road and transport links, a high-quality environment and varied employment opportunities.





Figure 1: Aerial photograph of Cwmbran



Figure 2: Cwmbran Shopping Centre, Cwmbran

2 About Cwmbran

Area	43.1 km² – approximately 34% of the total area of Torfaen at 126km ²
Population 	The estimated population is 49,800 approximately 53% of the total population for Torfaen at 94,000 ¹ .
Population density	The population density is 11.55 persons per hectare. Most people live in Coed Eva and Llantarnam 1. There are 7.45 people per hectare in Torfaen ² .
Dwellings 	The dwelling count is 22,719 approximately 53.3% of the total number of dwellings in Torfaen at 42,645 ³ .

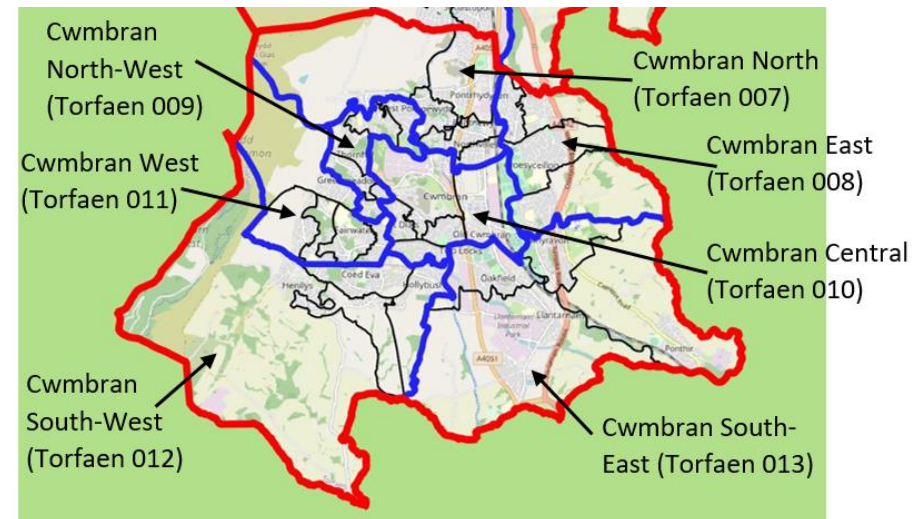


Figure 3: Map of Cwmbran showing the 7 MSOAs

General Cwmbran consists of 7 Medium Super Output Areas (MSOA), with 32 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within its boundary. By considering these smaller geographical areas, we can see how well-being differs within communities.

Cwmbran North	
LSOA	MSOA
Pontnewydd 1	Torfaen 007A
Pontnewydd 2	Torfaen 007B
Pontnewydd 3	Torfaen 007C
Pontnewydd 4	Torfaen 007D
Upper Cwmbran 2	Torfaen 007E
Cwmbran East	
LSOA	MSOA
Croesyceiliog 1	Torfaen 008A
Croesyceiliog 2	Torfaen 008B
Croesyceiliog 3	Torfaen 008C
Croesyceiliog 4	Torfaen 008D

Cwmbran North-West	
LSOA	MSOA
Greenmeadow 1	Torfaen 009A
Greenmeadow 3	Torfaen 009B
Upper Cwmbran 1	Torfaen 009C
Upper Cwmbran 3	Torfaen 009D
Upper Cwmbran 4	Torfaen 009E
Cwmbran Central	
LSOA	MSOA
Llantarnam 3	Torfaen 010A
St Dials 1	Torfaen 010B
St Dials 2	Torfaen 010C
St Dials 3	Torfaen 010D
Two Locks 1	Torfaen 010E

Cwmbran West	
LSOA	MSOA
Fairwater 1	Torfaen 011A
Fairwater 2	Torfaen 011B
Fairwater 3	Torfaen 011C
Fairwater 4	Torfaen 011D
Greenmeadow2	Torfaen 011E
Cwmbran South-West	
LSOA	MSOA
Coed Eva	Torfaen 012A
Two Locks 2	Torfaen 012B
Two Locks 3	Torfaen 012C
Two Locks 4	Torfaen 012D

Cwmbran South-East	
LSOA	MSOA
Llantarnam 1	Torfaen 013A
Llantarnam 2	Torfaen 013B
Llanyrafon South 1	Torfaen 013C
Llanyrafon South 2	Torfaen 013D

3 Social Well-being

3.1 About the community

Understanding how the population might change in the future can help us think about key well-being challenges and opportunities.

The overall estimated population of Cwmbran has increased by approximately **665** residents from 49,175 in 2001 to 49,840 in 2019 (+1.4%), compared to Wales (+8.6%). The largest net in-flow of residents has been in Llantarnam 1 (**+776**) and the largest net out-flow was from Greenmeadow 1 (-236) ⁴.

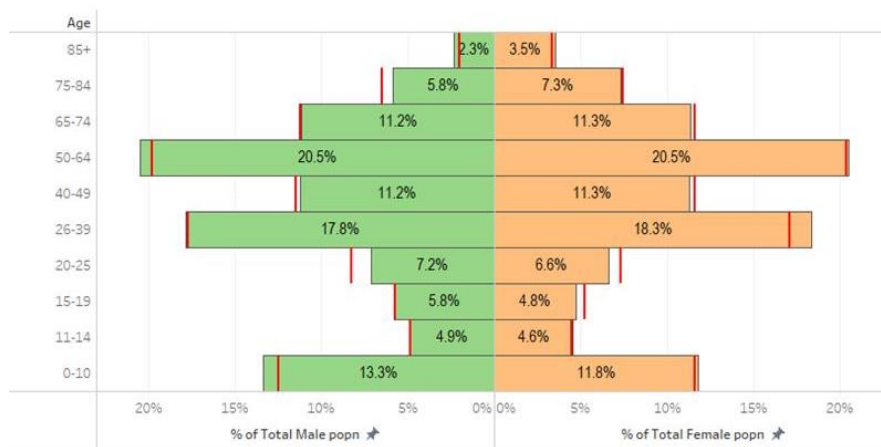


Figure 4: Mid-2019 population estimates by age for Cwmbran vs Wales,

The overall population in Torfaen is projected to increase by 5.5% between 2018 and 2043 ⁵. For Cwmbran this could mean an extra 2,599 people ⁶

The number of people aged 0-15 living in Torfaen is projected to **decrease** by **3%** between 2019 and 2043, roughly similar to the Welsh average. For Cwmbran this could mean **290 fewer** people in this age range.

The number of people aged 16-64 living in Torfaen is projected to fall by 14% by 2036 but then returning to its 2019 level by 2043.

The number of people aged 65 and over living in Torfaen is projected to **increase** by **28%** between 2019 and 2043, roughly similar to the Welsh average⁷. For Cwmbran this could mean an extra **2,900** people in this age range ⁸.

The number of people aged 85 and over living in Torfaen is projected to **increase** by **70%** between 2019 and 2043, roughly similar to the Welsh average ⁹. For Cwmbran this could mean an extra **1,020** people in this age range¹⁰.

There could be higher demand for social care and health services in the future.

An aging population will require housing that meets their needs.

The latest data from the 2021 census isn't available to use yet but from the previous census:

Welsh speakers	10.2% of residents in Cwmbran can speak Welsh, lower than the average for Wales (19%). The highest is in Cwmbran East (10.9%), The lowest is in Cwmbran South-East (8.8%) ¹¹ .
Country of birth	83.1% of Cwmbran residents were born in Wales ¹² .
Ethnicity	97.3% of Cwmbran residents are of a White ethnicity. Around 1,300 people are of non-White ethnicity ¹³ .
Religion	55.9% of residents have a Christian based religious faith. Only 1.5% of Cwmbran residents have a non-Christian faith. 35.1% of residents have no religious faith ¹⁴ .

Taking action to help support and grow the Welsh language will help preserve Welsh culture and identity for future generations.

3.2 Getting around



Travel happens for a range of reasons, both within the town and beyond; for recreation or to meet with friends and family, to attend

education or work, for the movement of goods or the delivery of services, or to access services.

Cwmbran has good road connectivity to Newport and the M4 corridor via the A4042T Trunk Road. Newport can also be accessed via the B4236. Caerleon Road.

The Town Centre is served by a bus and train station, which act as the main public transport hub. The main railway line provides good connectivity to Newport station, from where a variety of destinations can be reached, including good connections to England.

Transport and its accessibility can have a significant impact on low income households or those receiving benefits. Current prices can make public transport an expensive option for those dependent upon it. **Reducing transport costs can increase disposable income and bring people out of in work poverty.**

Walking, cycling and public transport can make an important contribution to local transport needs, whilst also helping to address issues of **congestion, pollution** and **climate change** associated with car dependency.

Safe active travel routes particularly those which provide commuting potential can help support **healthy lifestyles**.

In the future more people might choose to travel actively so that they can keep healthier into old age.



Figure 5: Five Locks canal basin

A fully navigable canal would provide many recreation, leisure, transport and heritage opportunities to future generations.

Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal runs through Cwmbran however it is only navigable from Brecon to Five Locks, Pontnewydd. The long-term ambition is to be able to travel by canal all the way to Newport.

Future generations may not travel as much for work.



Before the pandemic, just over **45%** of people living in Cwmbran also worked in the town, but the majority of people travel to access employment ¹⁶.

Covid-19 has seen more of us working from home and accessing services on-line, but there are certain types of work that can't be done remotely or digitally.



Nearly a fifth of working residents (460) are employed in manufacturing ¹⁷.

We don't know if homeworking will be a permanent arrangement or if people will begin to return to their places of work or choose to access services face-to-face or we will have a blend of all.

Broadband access



The majority of households in Cwmbran are able to access broadband with a minimum speed of 30Mb/s. Cwmbran East has the highest number of households that are unable to do so at 1.7% ¹⁵.

Being able to access broadband isn't the same as having it. Affordability and/or digital literacy can be a barrier to uptake for parts of the community.

3.3 Access to services and crime



Cwmbran is the largest settlement in Torfaen. As part of the new town design, most of the main housing areas have neighbourhood centres providing local services and shops. Cwmbran Town Centre is the main retail centre in Torfaen and a wider range of services can also be accessed there.



Prior to Covid, **vacancy rates** in the Cwmbran Town Centre were at **6.4%** ¹⁸. Monitoring in 2021 showed that vacancy rates have increased to **10%** ¹⁹. This increase is likely linked to the pandemic restrictions and the increase in on-line retailing.

In 2020 a new hospital opened on the site of Llanfrechfa Grange, on the outskirts of Cwmbran. The Grange University Hospital is a Specialist and Critical Care Centre that provides a centre of excellence in Gwent to treat our most seriously ill patients, or those with significant injuries, and is the designated trauma unit for Gwent.

Cwmbran has both a **library** and two **Adult Community Learning centres** providing advisory services and a wide range of

courses, offering very specific employment qualifications through to lifestyle sessions that improve mental health and well-being.

Torfaen Leisure Trust operate Cwmbran Stadium which offers a range of indoor and outdoor sporting facilities, as well as swimming at Fairwater Leisure Centre on the site of Cwmbran High School. Cwmbran Stadium acts as a community hub and was used as a regional Mass Covid Vaccination Centre.

There are 13 English language primary schools and a Welsh language primary school in the Cwmbran area and two secondary schools. Cwmbran town centre is home to Torfaen Learning Zone, a £24 million purpose-built campus offering post 16 education for the borough.

Crownbridge School is a Local Education Authority maintained, special day school which educates children and young people with severe learning difficulties, aged 2-19 years. A range of third sector organisations that support people with learning disabilities are also based in Cwmbran, namely Torfaen People First, Evolve and Able Radio.

Local demand will affect the provision of services and facilities in the future.

Unless people feel safe in their homes and the places they live and work, they may not have the confidence or desire to access services or participate in community life.



Burglary in Cwmbran's communities is at its highest level in Cwmbran North with a rate of **1.85 per 100** population compared to the Wales average of **1.36**. Fairwater 1 LSOA has the highest rate of **2.66** ²⁰.

Tackling the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour will support greater cohesion in Torfaen's communities.

3.4 Housing, households and health

A key consideration for the future of the town is ensuring there is the right sort of housing to support the needs of the community. We know for instance, that the number of older people living in Torfaen is projected to increase.

Housing stock	A lot of the housing stock is of a similar age, is non-traditional construction and energy inefficient. There are also pockets of newer housing.
Council tax band	37.9% is rated as council tax band A or B - the two lowest valued housing categories. A third of housing in Cwmbran is rated as council tax band C . A quarter of the housing in the LSOA Llanyrafon South 2 (25,4%) is rated as council tax band G or higher. ²¹ .
Tenure	Just under 30% of housing in Cwmbran is owned outright, and about 36% is owned with a mortgage or loan. A quarter of Cwmbran housing is rented from the Local Authority or Registered Social Landlord* (24.6%), considerably higher than the Wales average (16.1%) - this is highest in Upper Cwmbran 1 at 55.8% ²² . <i>*In Torfaen no housing is owned by the local authority, so this data relates to Registered Social Landlords only.</i>

The housing being built now will be a legacy left for future generations.

Demand for Housing in the South of Torfaen is higher than the rest of the borough, due to a variety of factors, such as employment opportunities, transport links, schools, and the range of amenities.

Meeting local housing demand both now and in the future will provide homes for the local workforce.

If the housing of the future was improved in terms of energy efficiency, homes would be warmer, cheaper to run and would produce less carbon emissions.



The UK climate risk assessment identifies risks to health and well-being from high temperatures. It also highlights that the level of risk to current and future homes in Wales is unknown²³.

Homes of the future will also need to be resilient to a changing climate.



The average cost of a property in the Cwmbran area (NP44 postcodes) during 2020 was **£195,597**²⁴.

Average annual incomes in Torfaen are about **£32,600**²⁵ and the house price to income ratio is about **6:1**. This means single

applicants would have to spend 6 times their salary to be able to purchase a property, which would mean most single people and lower income households are prevented from buying without assistance.

Future generations will need access to housing that is affordable.

House prices and private rents in the Cwmbran area are typically higher than in the North of the Borough. This means that there is a greater reliance on social housing for lower income households.

There is high demand for private rented accommodation in the area, and prices have been rising. There are some issues around affordability for low incomes households and those on benefits.

The Council no longer has any housing stock in the borough, Bron Afon Community Housing and Melin Homes are among a number of housing associations that operate in the Cwmbran area.

Cwmbran Well-being Assessment

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the Welsh Government's official measure of relative poverty. It identifies those communities, at a LSOA geography, with the highest concentrations of several different types of deprivation. WIMD ranks all LSOAs in Wales from most to least deprived.

Figures 6 - 12 give an overview of the degree of relative deprivation across Cwmbran, based on data from the Welsh Index of National Deprivation (WIMD) ²⁶.

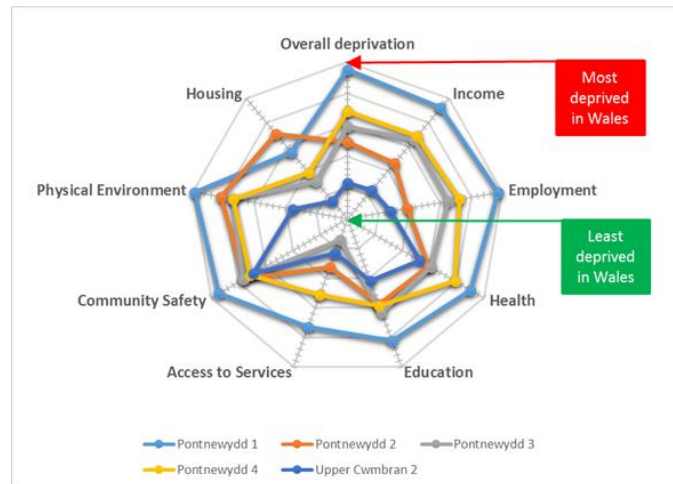


Figure 6: Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) ranks for Cwmbran North

Overall deprivation	Pontnewydd 1 and Upper Cwmbran 1 are in the 10% of most deprived LSOA in the whole of Wales. Greenmeadow 1 and 3, Upper Cwmbran 3, Llantarnam 3, St Dials 1, Two Locks 1 and Fairwater 2 are in the 10-20% most deprived LSOA in the whole of Wales.
Income deprivation	Upper Cwmbran 1 has the greatest amount of income deprivation (32%) and the least income deprived area is Llanyrafon South 2 (3%). Upper Cwmbran 1, Pontnewydd 1 and Upper Cwmbran 3 are in the 10% of most income deprived LSOAs in the whole of Wales.
Employment	Pontnewydd 1 and Llantarnam 3 are amongst the top 10% most deprived LSOAs in the whole of Wales.
Health	Pontnewydd 1 and Upper Cwmbran 1 are amongst the top 10% most deprived LSOAs in the whole of Wales.
Education	Greenmeadow 1, Upper Cwmbran 3 and 4, and Two Locks 1 are all in the 10% most deprived areas in terms of education.
Community safety	Pontnewydd1, Llantarnam 3 and St Dials 3 are all the top 10% of most deprived areas in Wales in terms of community safety.
Physical environment	Pontnewydd 1, Croesyceiliog North 1 and Llanyrafon South 2 and in the 10% most deprived LSOAs in the whole of Wales.

Cwmbran Well-being Assessment

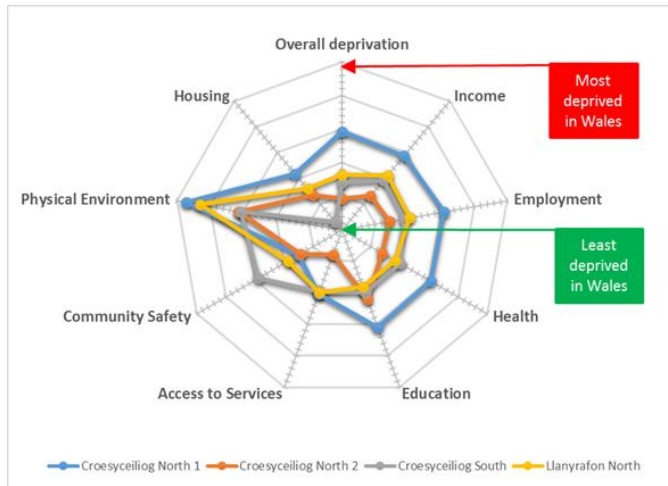


Figure 7: WIMD ranks for Cwmbran East

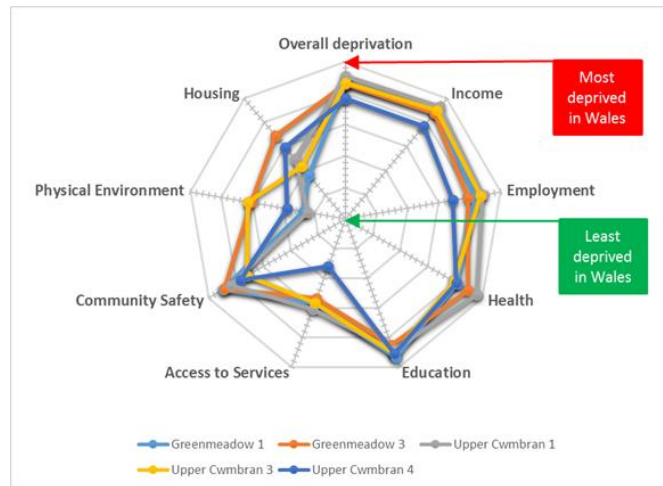


Figure 8: WIMD ranks for Cwmbran North-West

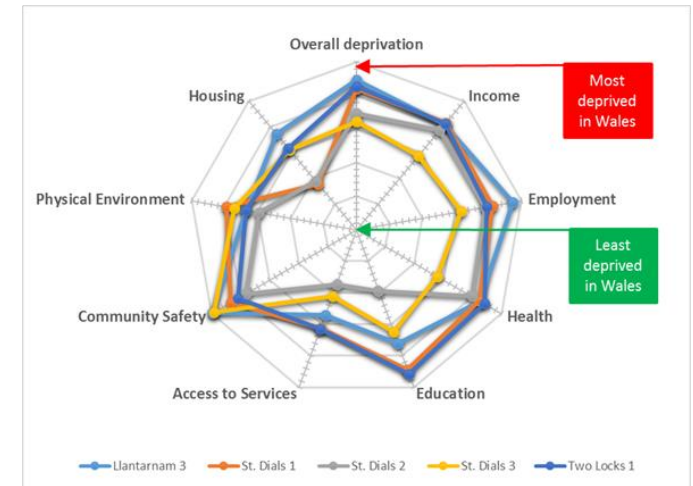


Figure 9: WIMD ranks for Cwmbran Central

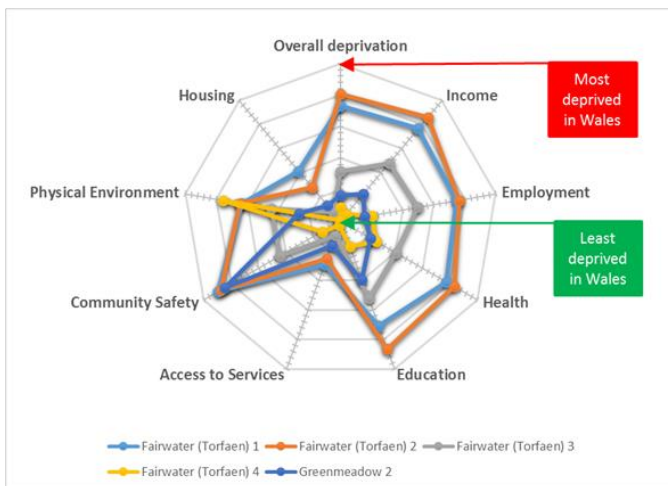


Figure 10: WIMD ranks for Cwmbran West

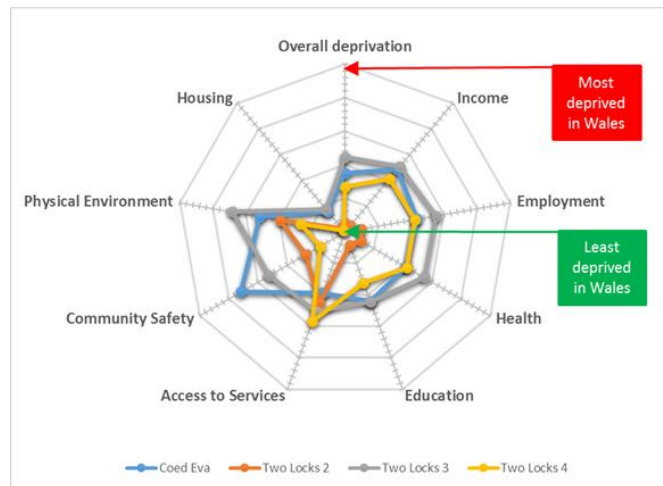


Figure 11: WIMD ranks for Cwmbran South West

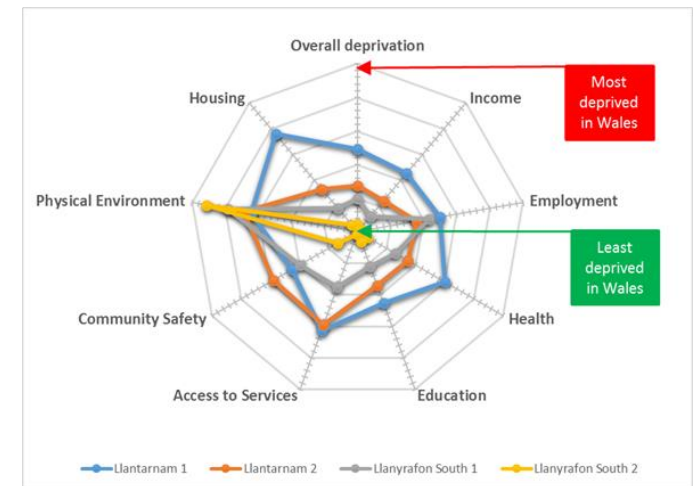


Figure 7: WIMD ranks for Cwmbran South-East

Having a job can be a route out of deprivation, but where pay is low, working hours limited or both, this may not be the case. The data suggests that some people living in Cwmbran's communities are experiencing in-work poverty.

A **quarter** of working age people in **Pontnewydd 1** are in receipt of **employment related benefits** ²⁷.

Employability programmes can support those in insecure or low paid work to progress in employment.

Free school meals and foodbanks are indicators that economic inequality exists in our communities.

Foodbank parcels	<p>9752 food parcels were given to Torfaen residents by Eastern Valley Foodbank between January 2018 and June 2021²⁸. This equates to 232 parcels per month on average.</p> <p>Cwmbran residents received 4388 of these parcels. Cwmbran Central residents were the highest users of the service with 1109 parcels; an average of 26 parcels per month.</p>
-------------------------	---

Eastern Valley Foodbank isn't the only foodbank that residents in the Cwmbran area are able to access, so the data only provides a partial picture.

Tasty not Wasty in Llanyrafon is a 'Fare Share' scheme, where those in the community needing support can access redistributed food from supermarkets that would otherwise go to waste.

Providing healthy school meals to the most disadvantaged young people in our communities can help improve overall health, support a child's ability to learn, and can influence food choices away from school.



26.9% of children resident in Cwmbran that attend Torfaen schools are eligible for free school meals ²⁹.

Allotments can provide an affordable source of good quality food, essential for a healthy diet. The physical activity involved in keeping an allotment can also have wider health benefits. Not every resident has a suitable garden or space to grow fruit and vegetables.

In the Cwmbran area there are 21 Council owned allotment sites, managed by Cwmbran South Allotment Association. As of October 2021, there are no vacant allotment plots in the Cwmbran area and a waiting list of over 150 ³⁰.

Communities of the future need access to suitable areas to grow food locally. Informal community growing spaces, such as orchards, can also make a contribution.

Creating environments that make the healthy choice, the easiest choice and improving feelings of safety and

cohesion will help support people's mental and physical well-being.

Limiting long-term illnesses	Within Cwmbran communities, the levels of limiting long-term illness range from a lower rate of 20.3 per 100 population in Cwmbran South-West to a higher rate of 28.2 in Cwmbran North-West. 3 of the 7 communities are higher than both the average Torfaen rate (24.2) and the average Wales rate (22.7). At the smaller geography LSOA areas within these communities, the rates range between 16.6 in Two Locks 2 and 32.4 in Pontnewydd 1 ³² .
All cause death rate	Within the 7 communities of Cwmbran, the levels of all cause deaths range from a lower rate of 859.2 per 100k population in Cwmbran South-West, to a higher rate of 1,346.4 in Cwmbran North-West. 5 of these communities are higher than the average Torfaen and Wales rates of 1078.7 and 1048.3 respectively ³³ .
Premature death	The rate of premature death (under 75) in Cwmbran communities ranges from 313.0 per 100,000 in Cwmbran South-West to 512.6 in Cwmbran Central. The average rate for Wales is 382.4 per 100,000 . Llantarnam 3 has the highest rate at 657.7 per 100,000 ³⁴

There are a range of social, economic, environmental and cultural factors that can influence health. Much of the ill health, inequality and poor life circumstances experienced by parts of our communities is preventable or its impact can be reduced.

A pre-Covid survey of Cwmbran residents³¹ told us that.....

Physical health	68.4% of respondents rate their physical health as very/fairly good. About 12% rate it as very/fairly poor.
Mental and emotional health	73.1% of respondents rate their mental and emotional health as very/fairly good. About 7% of residents rate it as very/fairly poor.

Although self-reported health is good, 28.2% of the people living in Cwmbran North-West have a limiting long-term illness and the rate of premature death in Llantarnam 3 is significantly higher than the average rate for Wales.

Improving healthy life expectancy, by preventing entirely, delaying or better managing the impact of chronic ill health, will mean that future generations are able to live fuller lives for longer.

4 Economy

4.1 Work, skills and education

Having a good education can play a crucial role in enabling young people to maximise the opportunities available to them and to achieve their potential.

The WIMD data tells us that Greenmeadow 1, Upper Cwmbran 3 and 4, and Two Locks 1 are all in the 10% most deprived areas in terms of education. There are also communities in Cwmbran that have a high concentration of several different types of deprivation. The data tells us the social-economic factors could be contributing to attainment gaps between communities.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful experiences in childhood that can directly hurt a child, such as abuse or neglect, or affect them through the environment in which they live, such as growing up in a house with domestic violence or with individuals with alcohol and other substance use problems ³⁵

Information on Adverse Childhood Experiences is not available at a local level for Cwmbran. However, it is known that those living in areas of deprivation are at greater risk of experiencing multiple ACEs ³⁶.

Future generations will get the best start in life through experiencing healthy family behaviour, especially in the first 1000 days and breaking the cycle of adverse childhood experiences.

As part of the 21st Century Schools programme modifications have been made to one primary school (Nant Celyn) and one secondary school (CHS, formerly Fairwater High), two new replacement English Medium primary schools have been built (Blenheim and Llantarnam), a new replacement Welsh Medium school (Panteg) has been built, a new replacement secondary school has been built, a community café has been added at the special school (Crownbridge) and work has started to build a further new replacement primary school (Maendy), extend the special school (Crownbridge) and refurbish a further primary school (YGC). Investment has also been made in new post-16 provision in Cwmbran. Improving learning facilities and supporting modern teaching methods will benefit pupils and communities, now and in the future.

Cwmbran residents aged 25 to 64 with no qualifications range from 14.1% in Cwmbran South-East to 29.7% in Cwmbran North-West, compared to the Welsh average of 19.4%. Pontnewydd 1 is the LSOA with the highest rate of 34.9% ³⁷.

Repeat school absenteeism	Repeat absenteeism of school pupils in Cwmbran ranges from 3.3% in Cwmbran South-East to 9.1% in Cwmbran North-West, compared to the Wales average of 5.4%. Greenmeadow 1 LSOA has the highest level in Cwmbran with 11.1%. The lowest is Two Locks 2 with 1.5% ³⁸ .
Pupils not entering higher	Pupils that do not enter higher education aged 18-19 in Cwmbran's communities range from 81% in Cwmbran North-West to 59% in


education aged 18-19	Cwmbran South-East. At the smaller LSOA geography, this ranges from the highest of 89% in Upper Cwmbran 4 to the lowest of 49% in Llanyrafon South 2 ³⁹ .
-----------------------------	---

Cwmbran residents aged 18 to 19 that enter higher education range from 18.6% in Cwmbran North-West to 40.7% in Cwmbran South-East, compared to the Wales average of 29.9%. Upper Cwmbran 4 is the LSOA with the lowest rate of 10.7% ⁴⁰.

A survey of 1058 year 11 pupils (aged 16) leaving school across Torfaen in 2018, shows that 35% go to 6th form, 49% go to college, 8.6% go into work-based training and 4% go into work. A follow-up survey undertaken a year later in 2019 shows that for the same cohort those continuing in full-time education at school dropped by 21% and those full-time at college dropped by 91% ⁴¹.

For some young people, their financial circumstances and the cost and availability of transport can be barriers to entering and staying in higher education.

Cwmbran has a **diverse economy**, from high-tech businesses at the cutting edge of innovation, global trade and high skilled employment to those providing the everyday services that our residents and businesses rely on, such as energy, healthcare and childcare. The core employment base is manufacturing, retail and healthcare.

Employment	There are approximately 23,664 economically active residents in Cwmbran, of these:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18,989 are employees • 2,041 are self-employed • 1,654 are unemployed ⁴² 		
Skills		No.	%
	No Qualifications	10,901	27.8
	Highest - Level 2	6,516	16.6
	Highest - Level 3+	12,621	32.1 ⁴³
Industry of employment	<p>The largest industries of employment in Cwmbran is manufacturing - 17.1% of all jobs and wholesale and retail trade - 17.0% of jobs. This is more than the Wales average at 10.9% and 15.7% respectively. There are approximate 4216 jobs in manufacturing and 4179 jobs in wholesale and retail trade in Cwmbran.</p> <p>Of the manufacturing jobs 46.3% of them are classified as high tech ⁴⁴.</p>		

Improving life opportunities for all people, allowing them to fulfil their potential will help support a prosperous economy. Having work can also have a positive impact on a person's physical and mental health.

Apprenticeships and adult skills programmes can support those in our communities that are furthest from the job market to gain good employment.

For **future generations** to thrive, Cwmbran's economy will need to create and sustain secure employment for our residents.

Creating more high skilled employment is also important. Targeting employability and skills programmes at the **sectors of the future** will provide opportunities for future generations.

Torfaen along with 9 other local authority areas is part of the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) which over a 10-year period seeks to deliver a set of targets in the region including 25,000 new jobs by 2036, the leveraging of £4bn of private sector investment and securing economic growth. 8 priority sectors have been identified as important for the region over the next 10 – 20 years⁴⁵:

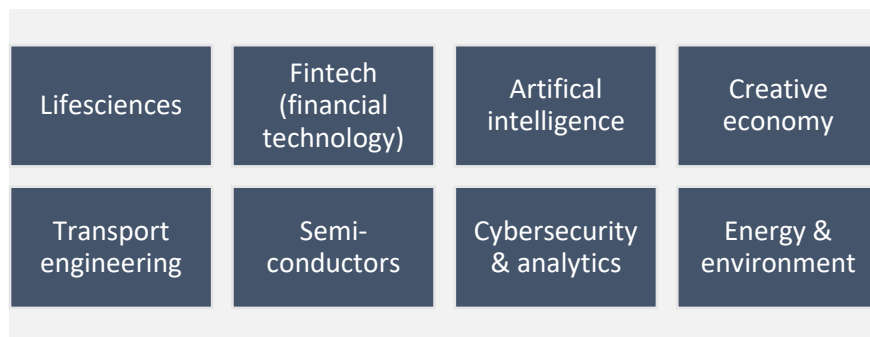


Figure 13: Cardiff City Region priority sectors

Broadly Cwmbran's core employment base of manufacturing is well-placed to work in some of these priority sectors, but there may also be opportunities for new businesses.

Plans to create a lifescience innovation campus next to the new Specialist and Critical Care hospital in Cwmbran would add to the regional lifescience offer and create highly skilled employment opportunities locally.

Jobs associated with the everyday services required by our communities are known as the foundational economy, with the right nurturing these can provide long-term local wealth and jobs.

Future jobs will be linked to the transition to a **zero carbon** Wales, for example those related to decarbonising Torfaen's homes. Future generations will need the right skills to benefit from these jobs.

2021 has seen the impact on business of energy supply chain issues and increases to the cost of wholesale gas. **In addition to being energy efficient, both current and future businesses in Torfaen need secure supplies of energy.**

A **changing climate** and **advances in technology** may result in demand for new types of products and services. This will present both challenges and opportunities for the businesses of the future.

Main employment sites	8 industrial estates including Avondale, Court Road and Springvale. Other major employment areas are Llantarnam Park, the town centre and the new Critical Care Centre.
------------------------------	---

In recent years key employment sites in Cwmbran have been under pressure from retail and housing. Proximity to the M4 and City Coastal Zone has also made the area attractive for investment.

Future generations will have to balance land use pressures. By improving management of green infrastructure, future generations can experience the social, economic and environmental benefits it can provide.

Retail is an important part of the employment base in Cwmbran. Monitoring in 2021 showed that retail vacancy rates in the town centre had increased to **10%**⁴⁷.

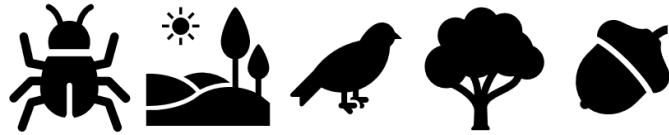


The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment identifies that there may be opportunities for businesses from increased demand for adaptation-related goods and services and from an increase in tourism and outdoor activity. Water scarcity, flooding of premises and disruptions to supply chains and distribution networks were all identified as risks for businesses⁴⁶.

We are not sure what the long-term impact of the pandemic will be on our towns and on employment, it may impact on the way we use our town centres and on long-term demand for office accommodation.

We don't have any information about the number of people in Cwmbran that were furloughed, had their working hours reduced or lost or changed employment as a result of Covid-19.

5 Environment



Our air, land, water, wildlife, plants, and soils provide our most **basic needs**, including food, timber, fuel and space for recreation, they also provide less visible services including water management, supporting pollinating insects, and carbon storage.

This part of the assessments tells us about the condition and resilience of Cwmbran's natural resources and identifies long-term management challenges.

If Cwmbran is to protect and improve its biodiversity for future generations then land use pressures will need to be carefully balanced.

Notable features	Open standing water, species rich neutral grassland, marshy grassland, ancient woodland, orchards, rivers, canal and river corridors', wet woodland, lowland bog, urban trees and hedgerows.
Notable species	Brown-banded carder bee, otter, lesser horseshoe bat, toad, song thrush, European eel, white-letter hairstreak, brown trout.

Key nature conservation designations

Churchwood and Springvales Ponds Local Nature Reserve (LNR) , Henllys Open Space LNR, Llwynceilyn LNR, Henllys Bog - Site of Special Scientific Interest.
Several Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), notably the strategic ecological corridors of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, the cycleway network and the Afon Lwyd corridor.

The landscape of Cwmbran and its communities has a different feel to that of either Blaenavon and Pontypool. The urban streetscape of much of Cwmbran new town is characterised by rows of mature and semi-mature trees. These along with sustainably managed grassland road verges provide ecological connectivity.

Cwmbran's development as a 'New Town' was planned to incorporate both formal and informal areas of open green space and includes networks of woodlands, urban trees, parks, gardens, road verges, allotments, cemeteries, and amenity areas.

In the south, the recreational areas of Southfields Park and Cwmbran Boating Lake are part of the floodplain alongside the Afon Llwyd, and includes wildflower seeded grassland and wetland vegetation around the boating lake edges. To the south of Cwmbran, the river floodplain provides a good opportunity to protect and encourage wet alder woodland once common to riverside areas ⁴⁸.

The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal and the Afon Lwyd river corridor are the principal linear **ecological corridors** connecting urban Cwmbran to the surrounding countryside. In addition, a network of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) made an important contribution to Cwmbran's green infrastructure.

Maintaining, enhancing and restoring floodplain is important to reduce the risk of flooding and for improving water quality ⁴⁹.

Another important area of green space is centred on the open grassland and woodland habitat around Greenmeadow Community Farm. The farm's grassland habitats and orchard connect with Springvale and Churchwood Local Nature Reserve providing a key **urban pollinator resource**, within the centre of Cwmbran.

Urban development has resulted in a loss of semi-improved grassland in the Cwmbran area. Semi-improved grassland is important for **pollinators**.

Outside the urban area the landscape becomes more agricultural, comprising mainly of improved grassland, remnant hedgerows and small to medium sized copses. Where land has avoided the impact of farming practices a few sections of rich grasslands occur, many alongside the Monmouthshire and Brecon canal corridor.

**Water
quality**



Under the Water Framework Directive, Dowlais Brook a tributary of Afon Lwyd is classified as being of **moderate** ecological status⁵⁰.

Reasons for this classification include sewage discharge, probable pollution from trading and industrial estates and barriers to fish migration. The lower Afon Lwyd is classified as being of good ecological status⁵¹

An indication of the Afon Lwyd's improved water quality is the presence of brown trout and important species like otter ⁵².

Algal blooms can occur during the warmer times of the year on the non-navigational parts of the canal. This can be a sign of elevated nutrient levels in the water.

Woodland and other habitats such as gardens, trees and urban greenspace play an important role in managing water run-off, intercepting rainfall and helping to preventing soil erosion - which could make flooding worse.

Cwmbran has seen a gradual **loss of its urban trees**. Mean tree canopy cover in the urban area was estimated at **23.9%** in 2013 ⁵³.

The right trees planted now will have the potential to provide future generations with shading and thermal comfort in the urban environment.

Poor condition, lack of management, fragmentation and development close to woodland habitats are issues in the Cwmbran area. In recent years a significant number of Larch trees have also been removed in Upper Cwmbran as part of managing the fungus-like pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum* or **Larch die-back**. This has had a noticeable effect on the landscape. A new fungal disease called **Ash die-back** (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) is widespread, threatening the future of some of Cwmbran's trees.

Climate change brings an increased threat to our native plants and animals from new and emerging pests and diseases, and from invasive non-native species⁵⁴.

Non-native invasive species such as **Water fern**, **Himalayan balsam**, **Japanese knotweed** and garden escapes including **Montbretia** are also a problem in Cwmbran especially along the canal and river corridors, and urban woodlands. These invasive non-native plant species can out-compete native flora and some can cause serious structural damage to property and built infrastructure.

Cwmbran is home to three Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). These are areas that are accessible to the public and important locally for wildlife

Churchwood and Springvale Ponds LNR contain ancient woodland and a series of ponds and wetlands. **Henllys Open Space LNR** is made up of a range of habitats, including grassland

and broadleaf woodland and supports a wealth of wildlife, such as the marbled white and meadow brown butterfly. **Llwynhelyn Fields LNR** sits above the communities of Hollybush and Coed Eva, adjacent to the new cemetery and is the largest example of flower rich meadows in Torfaen.

Henllys Bog is also recognised as an important habitat. This small valley mire is surrounded by woodland.



The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment identifies that more action is needed in Wales to restore degraded carbon stores, particularly peatlands ⁵⁵.

Mynydd Maen is an area of peatland above Cwmbran. Peatland and its associated bog forming vegetation, takes thousands of years to form. The mossy vegetation on the surface of the bog prevents oxygen reaching the wet, decomposed vegetation beneath the surface, locking away carbon.

When bogs degrade the carbon they store is released back into the atmosphere. Their ability to hold water is also impacted meaning that water from the uplands can reach the river more quickly adding to water levels further down the valley.

During 2019 some restoration work has been undertaken to help safeguard this precious resource. Mynydd Maen Amalgamated Commoners Association were trained to undertake much of the work.

If future generations are to benefit from the important carbon storage and water management benefits of Cwmbran's peatland, then appropriate management is needed to protect and enhance this important asset.

Renewable energy potential	Studies have shown the potential for generating more energy from ground mounted solar, roof-top photo voltaics and wind. There is also some potential for district heating schemes ⁵⁶ .
-----------------------------------	--

There are significant opportunities for **ground mounted solar** installations similar to the Council 3MW development currently underway in Ty Coch. Given the change in landscape from valley towards rolling hills, further similar schemes will be fully assessed for their visual impact. There are numerous **roof top photo voltaic** installations on both public and privately owned buildings and potential for many more. The upland area to the west of Cwmbran has been identified by Welsh Government as being suitable for **wind turbines**, part of their pre-assessment work found that the potential landscape impact would be acceptable. Cwmbran also boasts an installed Combined Heat and Power plant at The Power Station and the potential for **district heat network** schemes associated with strategic development sites has been identified.

As part of joint work to improve well-being in Torfaen, a shared Green Infrastructure Strategy has been developed which outlines

principles, priorities and opportunities for strengthening the resilience and connectivity of Torfaen's green infrastructure network. It sets out how this resource can be used to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits, including helping to tackle climate change ⁵⁷. Key priorities for Cwmbran include:

- Promoting wildlife conservation and community engagement.
- Improving the management of water resources.
- Increasing renewable energy generation.
- Improving pollination resources.
- Access improvements to the Rights of Way network to improve connectivity.
- Tree management and planting in polluted areas.
- Maintaining and sustainably managing public parks and gardens.
- Managing grassland areas to support pollinating insects.

Taking a joined-up approach to managing green space, collaborating widely with partners, sharing learning and resources, will help us create resilient and well connected natural resources that future generations will rely on.

6 Culture

Key attractions	Congress Theatre, Greenmeadow Community Farm, Cwmbran Boating Lake, Cwmbran Active Living Centre
Key heritage designations	Historic Park & Garden and Conservation Area at Llantarnam

Cwmbran provides access to various arts and cultural events and activities throughout the year. Venues include Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre, The Congress Theatre, the Vue Cinema and a number of pubs hosting live music.

The Big Event is Cwmbran's annual summer event that draws together local communities and a wider audience, attracted to the mix of carnival, music, theatre performances and sport.

Sports and cultural activities are a good way of bringing diverse groups of people together.

Torfaen Leisure Trust provide a wide range of sport and leisure activities at Cwmbran Stadium and Fairwater Leisure Centre. Efforts are made to ensure activities are inclusive. A partnership with Gwent Dragons recently birthed the Torfaen Swifts Walking Rugby Team.

Private sector gyms, swimming pools and a snooker hall are also available, and Cwmbran is home to numerous sports teams including boxing clubs and several football teams that cater for all ages.

New purpose-built facilities in Croesyceiliog are set to be the home of Wales' first Padel Tennis club. The sport is a cross between tennis and squash and is popular in Spain and many Latin American countries.

There are plenty of opportunities to enjoy walking and cycling in the Cwmbran area, which has an added benefit of improving health by getting people more active. The Afon Lwyd Trail is the main off road cycle route through Torfaen, running from Cwmbran to the Blaenavon World Heritage Site.

A key heritage feature in Cwmbran is the canal. Originally constructed to transport goods and raw materials, it is now an important ecological corridor and active travel route.

Above Cwmbran on the side of Mynydd Maen, Blaen Bran Community Woodland provides the community with recreational space to enjoy nature. The woodland is maintained by the Blaen Bran Community Woodland Trust. Access to smaller woodland areas is available in numerous areas of the town.

Supporting people to live healthy lives, where they can achieve their educational potential and become part of a healthy workforce will contribute to wider economic well-being.

Pre Covid, what Cwmbran residents tell us.....

Sport and leisure



83.9% of respondents said sport and leisure was very/fairly important to them.
40.0% of respondents participate in sport and leisure activities on a weekly basis ⁵⁸.

Arts and culture



50.6% of respondents said that arts and cultural activities were very/fairly important to them.
18.4% of respondents participate in arts and cultural activities on a monthly basis.
25.3% said they never participate in arts or cultural activities.

Some people living in Cwmbran are experiencing several different types of deprivation, this means that affordability is likely a barrier to getting involved with sports and other cultural activities.

If future generations are to realise the health benefits of being active and participating in cultural activities then barriers to participation need to be addressed.

Pre-covid, a survey of residents tells us that not everyone who enjoys sport and leisure activities participates in them regularly.

The survey also tells us that not everyone who identified that arts and cultural activities were important to them, participated in them on a regular basis.

7 What people are telling us

Alongside looking at the data, we have involved our communities to get a better understanding of people's experiences and appreciate how we can all work together to improve well-being, focusing on the strengths of our people and places. This section tells us what people living in Torfaen think about well-being in their community.

During late summer 2021 residents across Gwent were asked to complete a well-being questionnaire. A total of 127 responses were received from people living in Torfaen. Our communities were asked 4 questions:

What is special about your community?

What things are important to you and your family?

What would you like your community to look like in the future?

How can your community work with us to make that happen?

Figure 14 is a summary of the key themes that people thought were special about Torfaen's communities and what they thought would make them a better place.

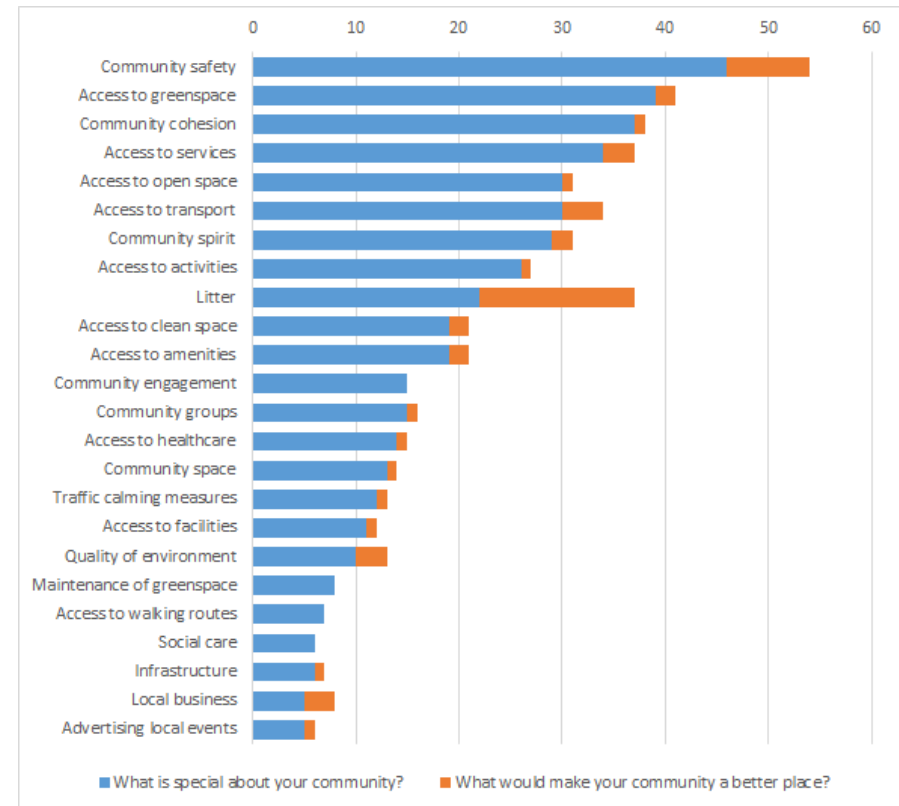


Figure 14: What residents in Torfaen say is special and what would make their communities better

Cwmbran Well-being Assessment

Q1 What is special about your community?	Q2 What would make it a better place?	Q3 What things are important to you and your family?	Q4 What would you like your community to look like in the future?	Q5 How can your community work with us to make that happen?
Access to open space (30)	Community safety (20)	Community safety (48)	Community safety (20)	Community engagement (11)
Community cohesion (24)	Litter (15)	Access to services (15)	Community spirit (16)	Community cohesion (4)
Community spirit (15)	Traffic calming measures (10)	Access to activities (14)	Access to clean space (14)	Community groups / Community spirit / Volunteering (3)

Figure 15: The top three responses for Torfaen

Figure 15 shows the top responses to the survey questions from people living in Torfaen.

Residents living in Cwmbran and its communities told us that they value their community and how during the pandemic, communities pulled together and became more caring and helpful towards each other. Residents also highlighted the importance of being able to feel safe within their local communities.

8 References

- ¹ ONS mid-2019 population estimates.
- ² ONS mid-2019 population estimates.
- ³ Torfaen Council Tax Register. March 2021
- ⁴ ONS mid-2019 population estimates
- ⁵ Mid-2018 population projections, Welsh Government
- ⁶ ONS MYE 2019
- ⁷ Mid-2018 based population projections, Welsh Govt
- ⁸ ONS MYE 2019
- ⁹ Mid-2018 based population projections, Welsh Govt
- ¹⁰ ONS MYE 2019
- ¹¹ ONS (2011). Census. Table KS207WA
- ¹² ONS (2011). Census. Table KS204EW
- ¹³ ONS (2011). Census. Table KS201EW
- ¹⁴ ONS (2011). Census. Table KS209EW
- ¹⁵ WIMD 2019 Indicator Data, Welsh Govt
- ¹⁶ ONS (2011). Census. Table WU03UK_MSOA
- ¹⁷ ONS (2011). Census. Table KS605EW
- ¹⁸ 2018 Torfaen County Borough Council Survey.
- ¹⁹ 2021 Torfaen County Borough Council Survey.
- ²⁰ WIMD 2019 Indicator Data, Welsh Govt
- ²¹ Valuation Office Agency. 31 March 2021.
- ²² ONS (2011). Census. Table KS402EW.
- ²³ UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017: Evidence Report. Summary for Wales.
- ²⁴ Land Registry. 2020.
- ²⁵ ONS (2020). Nomis.
- ²⁶ Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019). Welsh Government.
- ²⁷ Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019). Welsh Government
- ²⁸ Eastern Valley Foodbank, 2021.
- ²⁹ Torfaen County Borough Council. 2020.
- ³⁰ Cwmbran South Allotment Association. October 2021.
- ³¹ Torfaen Residents' Survey (2017). Torfaen County Borough Council
- ³² WIMD 2019 Indicator Data, Welsh Govt
- ³³ All Deaths: Death Rates (Age-Standardised) per 100K pop - 3 Yr avg, 2015-17. Healthmapswales.wales.nhs.uk
- ³⁴ Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019). Welsh Government
- ³⁵ Public Health Wales NHS Trust -Welsh Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. Adverse Childhood Experiences and their impact on healthharming behaviours in the Welsh adult population – 2015.
- ³⁶ Public Health Wales NHS Trust -Welsh Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. Adverse Childhood Experiences and their impact on healthharming behaviours in the Welsh adult population – 2015.
- ³⁷ Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019). Welsh Government.
- ³⁸ Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019). Welsh Government.
- ³⁹ Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019). Welsh Government.
- ⁴⁰ Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019). Welsh Government.
- ⁴¹ Pupil Destinations, Careers Wales, 2018-2020
- ⁴² ONS (2011) Census. Table KS601EW
- ⁴³ ONS (2011) Census. Table KS501EW
- ⁴⁴ ONS (2011) Census. Table WP605EW
- ⁴⁵ [Cardiff Capital Region Industrial and Economic Plan](#)
- ⁴⁶ UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017, Synthesis report: priorities for the next five years. Committee on Climate Change.
- ⁴⁷ 2021 Torfaen County Borough Council Survey.
- ⁴⁸ DTZ 2009. Cwmbran Regeneration Strategy Baseline Report. Torfaen County Borough Council
- ⁴⁹ South East Wales Area Statement, 2019. NRW.
- ⁵⁰ Afon Lwyd Strategic River Restoration Plan. JBA Consulting. NRW 2020.
- ⁵¹ Afon Lwyd Strategic River Restoration Plan. JBA Consulting. NRW 2020.

Cwmbran Well-being Assessment

⁵² DTZ 2009. Cwmbran Regeneration Strategy Baseline Report. Torfaen County Borough Council.

⁵³ Town Tree Cover in Torfaen County Borough, 2016. NRW.

⁵⁴ UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017, Synthesis report: priorities for the next five years. Committee on Climate Change.

⁵⁵ UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017: Evidence Report. Summary for Wales.

⁵⁶ Torfaen County Borough Council. Renewable and low carbon energy assessment. Non-technical summary. Carbon Trust. 2020

⁵⁷ Torfaen Public Services Board, Green Infrastructure Strategy. Chris Blandford Associates. 2020.

⁵⁸ Torfaen Residents' Survey (2017). Torfaen County Borough Council