

Gwent Public Services Board

# **Mid Valleys West Local Well-being Assessment**

**A Caerphilly county borough local well-being assessment**

FEBRUARY 2022

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## Mid Valleys West Local Well-being Assessment

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## 1 Executive summary

This section provides a summary of the key assets and challenges identified in this Local Well-being Assessment for Mid Valleys West.

### *Assets*

The community area benefits from a direct railway line which runs from Rhymney to Cardiff and on to Penarth. There are four trains per hour between Bargoed and Cardiff, and there is also a 'bus that meets the train' which travels from Ystrad Mynach to Blackwood. There are regular bus services from Ystrad Mynach to Nelson, Blackwood and Caerphilly, as well as local services around smaller communities.

Ystrad Mynach has a range of services including two bank branches, two national supermarkets and several independent shops. It is also the administrative heart of the county borough and includes the Council's main headquarters, Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr hospital, the Centre of Sporting Excellence and the Ystrad Mynach campus of Coleg y Cymoedd.

In the main, the community area has relatively low levels of deprivation, although Hengoed 2 features in the most deprived category across multiple domains of deprivation, and St Cattwg 1 and St Cattwg 5 feature in the second most deprived category.

There have been developments from volume housebuilders in the community area recent years, predominantly on one site, and there is market demand for new developments.

Parc Penallta encompasses one of the largest figurative earth sculptures in Wales and attracts local residents as well as visitors from further afield.

Grade I listed Llancaiach Fawr Manor is one of the most important gentry houses to have survived from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Century, and is now a living history museum which attracts visitors from all over the UK.

Residents told us that they really value the sense of community spirit in local communities, and they also enjoy being in close proximity to wide open and beautiful green spaces.

### *Challenges*

Due to the topography of the mid valleys area, it is very difficult to travel from the east to the west of the county borough by public transport, disadvantaging residents living in these areas in terms of accessing employment and services.

The majority of small areas within the community area had rates of criminal damage higher than the Wales average.

There is a significant gap in healthy life expectancy between the best and worst wards within the community area for both males and females. The all cause death rate and premature death rate is significantly higher than the Wales average in some small areas (particularly Hengoed and Maesycwmmmer).

There is some variation in house price to income ratio within the community area, with Maesycwmmmer ward having the highest ratio.

Opinion was divided amongst residents in terms of whether they felt safe in their local communities. They also told us that access to healthcare facilities was a particular issue and public transport was inadequate during the evenings. They wanted more opportunities for local employment, particularly for young people, and they felt that there was scope to encourage volunteers to take more of an active role in local communities.

## 2 Description of Mid Valleys West

The Mid Valleys West (MVW) community area includes the wards of **Hengoed, Maesycwmmmer, Nelson, St Cattwg and Ystrad Mynach**. The area is situated around the centre of the Rhymney Valley, and is comprised of the principal town of Ystrad Mynach, supported by the local centre of Nelson and several large villages, all of which have strong associations with the former mining industry.

The retail offer in **Ystrad Mynach** comprises a small range of independent shops, and two large national supermarkets (Tesco and Lidl). The town houses a number of Council offices, as well as the Ystrad Mynach campus of Coleg y Cymoedd, a further education college established in 1959 to provide training for local coal miners, which merged with the neighbouring Coleg Morgannwg to form Coleg y Cymoedd in 2013. The Centre for Sporting Excellence is located to the south of the town centre, opposite Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr (a Local General Hospital) and the Police Station.

The nearby Penallta Colliery was the last coal mine to close in the valley. Other notable buildings and structures are the Ystrad Mynach railway station, opened in 1890, the Hengoed to Maesycwmmmer viaduct, and a sculpture to commemorate the areas industrial heritage at Maesycwmmmer.

**Nelson** also has a national supermarket on its outskirts, as well as a small number of independent shops in the local centre itself.

The community area includes Parc Penallta Country Park, Gelligaer Common, and Wern Crescent Woodland Park, which protect and provide access to the community areas' landscape. The community area is also the location of **Llancaiach Fawr Manor** which dates back to the 17th Century and hosts cultural events and enhances the history and heritage of the area.





*Figure 1: Centre for Sporting Excellence, Ystrad Mynach*



*Figure 2: Llancaiach Fawr Manor, Nelson*

### 3 About Mid Valleys West

<b>Area</b>	38.9 km <sup>2</sup> – approximately 14% of the total area of Caerphilly county borough at 278km <sup>2</sup>												
<b>Population</b> 	The estimated population is 26,135 – approximately 14.4% of the total population for Caerphilly county borough at 181,731 <sup>1</sup> .												
<b>Population density</b>	The population density is 6.72 persons per hectare, with the LSOAs of Ystrad Mynach 1, Maesycwmmmer and Hengoed 3 having the highest populations. There are 6.53 people per hectare in Caerphilly county borough <sup>2</sup> .												
<b>Dwellings</b> 	The dwelling count is 11,316 – approximately 14.1% of the total number of dwellings in Caerphilly county borough at 80,149 <sup>3</sup> .												
<b>General</b>	Mid Valleys West consists of 3 Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs), containing 15 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs). By looking at smaller geographical areas, we can see any differences that can impact on well-being.												
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>LSOAs</th> <th>MSOAs</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Hengoed 1, 2 &amp; 3</td> <td>Caerphilly 008</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maesycwmmmer</td> <td>Caerphilly 012</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nelson 1, 2 &amp; 3</td> <td>Caerphilly 013</td> </tr> <tr> <td>St Cattwg 1, 2, 3, 4 &amp; 5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ystrad Mynach 1, 2 &amp; 3</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		LSOAs	MSOAs	Hengoed 1, 2 & 3	Caerphilly 008	Maesycwmmmer	Caerphilly 012	Nelson 1, 2 & 3	Caerphilly 013	St Cattwg 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5		Ystrad Mynach 1, 2 & 3	
LSOAs	MSOAs												
Hengoed 1, 2 & 3	Caerphilly 008												
Maesycwmmmer	Caerphilly 012												
Nelson 1, 2 & 3	Caerphilly 013												
St Cattwg 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5													
Ystrad Mynach 1, 2 & 3													

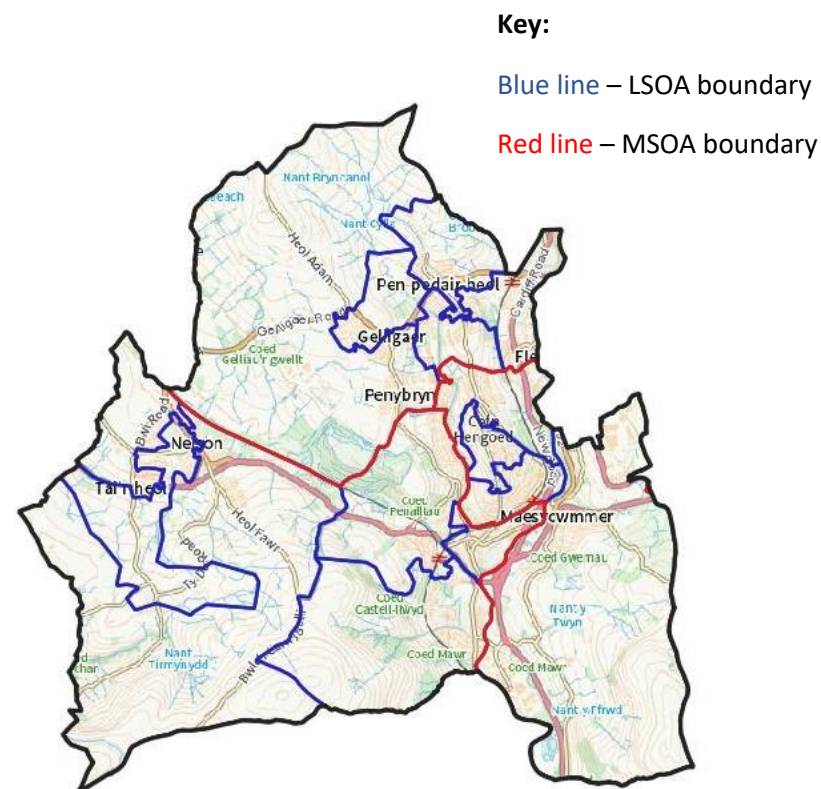


Figure 3: Map of Mid Valleys West

## 4 Social well-being

### 4.1 About the community

Overall, the estimated population of Mid Valleys West increased by approximately 838 residents, from 25,297 in the 2011 Census to 26,135 in 2020<sup>4</sup> (+3.3%), compared to an increase of 3.5% in Wales as a whole. Six of the 15 LSOAs in Mid Valleys West saw an increase in their population over this period, with the largest increase in Ystrad Mynach 1 (up 33.2% or 733 people). The remaining nine LSOAs saw a decrease in their population over the time period, with the largest decrease in Nelson 2 (down 6.8% or 109 people). Understanding how the population might change in the future can help us think about key well-being challenges and opportunities.

Unfortunately, population projections are not available below the county borough level, so these figures are included below.

The overall population in Caerphilly county borough is projected to increase by 2.0% between 2019 and 2043<sup>5</sup>, to 186,991. This is in contrast to recent trends, where the population grew by 5.4% between the 1991 and 2011 censuses.

The number of people aged 0-15 living in Caerphilly county borough is projected to decrease by 7.4% between 2019 and 2043, roughly similar to the Welsh average of 8.0%<sup>6</sup>. The largest decline is projected up to 2028 and following that the figure is projected to remain fairly consistent at around 31,000. This could mean 2,521 fewer people in this age range across the county borough by 2043.

The number of people aged 16-64 living in the county borough is projected to fall by 3.1% between 2019 and 2043 (compared with a decline of 2.1% in Wales as a whole), with a fairly steady projected decline over the time period. This could mean 3,487 fewer people in this age range across the county borough by 2043<sup>7</sup>.

The number of people aged 65 or over living in Caerphilly county borough is projected to increase by 27.2% between 2019 and 2043, slightly lower than the Welsh average of 28.7%<sup>8</sup>. For Caerphilly county borough this could mean an additional 9,653 people in this age range by 2043<sup>9</sup>. This figure is 61% higher than the combined projected decrease in the population figures for the 0-15 and 16-64 age groups by 2043<sup>10</sup>.

The number of people aged 85 or over living in Caerphilly county borough is projected to increase by 82.6% between 2019 and 2043, significantly higher than the Welsh average of 69.5%. For the county borough this could mean an additional 3,145 people in this age range by 2043<sup>11</sup>.

Without question there are many potential benefits to individual, family and community well-being from people living longer.

However, this does mean that there could be higher demand for social care and health services in the future, particularly amongst the elderly population, as the demand for health and social care services tends to increase as we get older.

An ageing population will also require appropriate housing that meets their needs, both now and in the future.

The latest data from the 2021 Census is not available, but from the 2011 Census:

<b>Welsh speakers</b>	23.7% of residents in MVW could speak at least some Welsh, slightly higher than the Caerphilly county borough average of 22.2%, but significantly lower than the Welsh average of 37.8% <sup>12</sup> .
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<b>Country of birth</b>	89.2% of residents in MVW were born in Wales, marginally higher than the county borough average of 88.6% but significantly higher than the Wales average of 72.7% <sup>13</sup> .
<b>Ethnicity</b>	98.4% of residents in MVW were of a White ethnicity, virtually identical to the county borough average of 98.3% and higher than the Wales average of 95.6% <sup>14</sup> .
<b>Religion</b>	52.9% of residents in MVW had a Christian based religious, slightly higher than the county borough average of 50.7% but lower than the Wales average of 57.5% <sup>15</sup> .

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

### 4.2 Getting around



People travel for a range of reasons both within Mid Valleys West 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 themselves. There are also travellers to the area, such as those working in the industrial estates or shops and offices, and those visiting for tourism purposes or enjoying the wonderful countryside.

The **Rhymney Valley railway line** provides direct links south through the county borough from Rhymney to Cardiff, with stations in Mid Valleys West located at Hengoed and Ystrad Mynach. From Ystrad Mynach the journey time to Cardiff is approximately 30 minutes, with four trains every hour. There are aspirations to reopen the Cwmbargoed rail line to passenger services, which could include a new station at Nelson and provide greater access north to Merthyr Tydfil.

The **South Wales Metro** is an integrated public transport network that will make it easier for people travel across the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR), transforming rail and bus services as well as cycling and walking. Transport for Wales are investing £750 million pounds to upgrade the railway lines to Aberdare, Coryton, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhymney and Treherbert, known as the Core Valleys Lines. For more information on the plans for the Metro, visit the Transport for Wales website [South Wales Metro | TfW](#).

Rail Linc 901 is the dedicated, fast and convenient service linking Ystrad Mynach station with Blackwood, Pontllanfraith and Maescwmmmer. Regular bus services operate between Ystrad Mynach and Nelson and on towards Pontypridd; from Ystrad Mynach south to Caerphilly; and from Ystrad Mynach to Blackwood. In addition, there are a number of bus routes that regularly operate around the smaller villages within Mid Valleys West.

One the main public transport issues in this community area is that it is very difficult to travel from the east to the west of the county borough, and individuals would need to take multiple buses to make this journey.

Transport and its accessibility can have a significant impact on households with low or limited incomes, and high prices can make public transport an expensive option for those who depend on it. Reducing transport costs can help to increase disposable income and help to reduce in work poverty.

There are a small number of public electric vehicle charge points in Mid Valleys West, at Dynevor Terrace in Nelson and Oakfield Street car park in Ystrad Mynach<sup>16</sup>. The housing stock in Mid Valleys West is a mixture of

detached, semi-detached and terraced properties and many do not have drives or off-street parking available, so this could limit future take-up of electric vehicles as charging could be problematic. Future developments in electric charging facilities will hopefully help to solve this issue.

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 to support healthy lifestyles. In the future more people might choose to travel actively, so that they can keep healthier into old age. Future generations might use electric bikes to navigate the numerous inclining roads within the area.

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen many of us **walking and cycling more** and appreciating the value of our local greenspaces.

**Route 47 of the National Cycle Network** runs from Hengoed Viaduct through Nelson and Trelewis to the climbing centre at Taff Bargoed. For much of its length the trail runs parallel to an existing railway line on a specially built cycle path. There are large areas of landscaped land, regenerated from old industrial workings. In the opposite direction, Route 47 passes through Maesycwmmmer and down the Sirhowy Valley via Ynysddu and Risca before passing out of the county borough towards Newport.

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen many more of us working from home and accessing services online, but there are certain types of work that cannot be done remotely or digitally, such as factory work or retail. Future generations may not need to travel as much for work.

**Broadband access**



The vast majority of households in Mid Valleys West have access to broadband of at least 30Mb/s, although there are pockets where access is poorer, such as Maesycwmmmer (6.4%) and Ystrad Mynach (6.6%), although in St Cattwg 5 39.8% of households do not have access to broadband of this speed<sup>17</sup>.

Whilst broadband accessibility in Mid Valleys West is generally good, affordability of broadband is much more of an issue for those with low or limited incomes. Poor digital literacy can also be a significant barrier for certain groups within the community.

Communities of the future may be less reliant on fixed telecommunication systems and more people might use newer technologies such as 5G etc.

We do not currently know if homeworking and online access to services will be a permanent arrangement for the foreseeable future, or if people will begin to return to their places of work or choose to access services face-to-face. In reality it is probable that there will be a blend of online, remote and in-person interactions.

In the future the whole of Caerphilly county borough (including Mid Valleys West) will need to be cyber secure and digitally inclusive.



### 4.3 Access to services



**Ystrad Mynach** is the main town within Mid Valleys West, and residents will travel from surrounding areas to the town to access the services they need. It has two large national supermarkets (Tesco and Lidl), two bank branches and a range of smaller national and independent shops.

There are industrial estates at Dyffryn and Penallta which (together with the Tiryberth mixed development site and the Tredomen Business Park) provide a range of local employment activities for the area. The concentration of Caerphilly County Borough Council offices at Tredomen Business Park and Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr (Local General Hospital) and the Council’s Centre for Sporting Excellence have resulted in Ystrad Mynach becoming the administrative employment centre for the county borough.

**Nelson** is a local centre that has a large supermarket on its outskirts (The Co-op) and a number of smaller national and independent shops, plus one bank branch.

Across Mid Valleys West are the following services:

Asset type	Number
Primary school	10
Secondary school	2
Special school	1
FE college	1
Libraries	2

Leisure centres	2
Community centre	9
Banks	2
Post office	5
Country parks	2

Mid Valleys West also has a number of Post Office branches in the smaller villages, which offers alternative access to banking services where there are no bank branches.

The Mid Valleys West community area has eight English medium primary schools, two Welsh medium primary schools, two Comprehensive schools (Lewis School Pengam and Lewis Girls) and the Coleg y Cymoedd Ystrad Mynach campus. Trinity Fields School is also situated in Ystrad Mynach and provides education and specialist facilities for pupils aged 3 to 19 with a wide range of learning difficulties.

Mid Valleys West has a Town Library at Ystrad Mynach and a Village Library at Nelson.

Sue Noakes Leisure Centre is located in Ystrad Mynach adjacent to Lewis Girls Comprehensive School, and whilst there is exclusive school use during the day, it is available for community use in the evenings. It has a large sports hall and small fitness studio plus access to a 2G Astroturf multi-sport pitch and 3 rugby pitches.

The Centre for Sporting Excellence includes a FIFA 2-star 3G Football Pitch, an IRB 22 ratified 3G Rugby Pitch, 2 conference rooms, a strength and conditioning room, medical & first aid rooms, a community room and 2 grandstands. Adjacent to this is Ystrad Mynach Park, which includes a bowling green, tennis courts and two rugby pitches.

#### 4.4 Crime and community safety

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.

10 of the 15 LSOAs in Mid Valleys West had **Criminal Damage** rates higher than the Wales average of 1.14 cases per 100 population. Two LSOAs (Ystrad Mynach 2 and St Cattwg 5) had rates over twice the Wales average for Criminal Damage<sup>18</sup>.

Eight of the 15 LSOA's in Mid Valleys West had a **Violent Crime** rate above the Wales average of 2.67 cases per 100 population. Three LSOAs (St Cattwg 5, Hengoed 2 and St Cattwg 1) had rates one and a half times the Wales average for Violent Crime<sup>19</sup>.

Four of the 15 LSOA's in Mid Valleys West had an **Anti-Social Behaviour** crime rate above the Wales average of 2.55 cases per 100 population. Only one LSOA (Ystrad Mynach 2 – rate 5.9) had a rate more than double the Wales average for Anti-Social Behaviour<sup>20</sup>.

Eight of the 15 LSOA's in Mid Valleys West had a **Burglary** rate above the Wales average of 0.98 cases per 100 population. St Cattwg 5 (rate 1.92) had a Burglary rate of almost twice the Wales average for Burglary<sup>21</sup>.

Five of the 15 LSOA's in Mid Valleys West had a **Theft** rate above the Wales average of 0.53 cases per 100 population. Only one LSOA (Maesycwmmmer – rate 0.85) had a Theft rate of over one and a half times the Wales average for Theft<sup>22</sup>.

Six of the 15 LSOA's in Mid Valleys West had a **Fire Incidence** rate above the Wales average of 0.38 cases per 100 population. Two LSOAs (Ystrad Mynach 3 and St Cattwg 1) have rates over twice the Wales average, and St Cattwg 5 had a rate of 2.21, almost six times the Wales average for Fire Incidence<sup>23</sup>.

Tackling the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour will support greater cohesion in the communities of Mid Valleys West.

#### 4.5 Deprivation

The **Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)** is the Welsh Government's official measure of relative poverty. It identifies those communities (at an LSOA geography), with the highest concentrations of different types of deprivation, plus overall deprivation. WIMD ranks all LSOAs in Wales from the most (rank 1) to the least (rank 1909) deprived.

WIMD domain ranks are available for every LSOA in Wales, and the information below summarises the LSOAs which fall in the most deprived categories in Mid Valleys West, for Overall Deprivation and certain domains.

<b>Overall deprivation</b>	Only the Hengoed 2 LSOA (rank 123 in the whole of Wales) is in the 10% most deprived category for Overall Deprivation in MVW. St Cattwg 1 (rank 280) and St Cattwg 5 (rank 325) are in the 11-20% most deprived category in MVW.
<b>Health Domain</b>	Only the Hengoed 2 LSOA (rank 27) is in the 10% most deprived category for the Health Domain in MVW. A further three LSOAs are in the 11-20% most deprived category in MVW – St Cattwg 1 (rank 208), St Cattwg 5 (rank 314) and St Cattwg 2 (rank 368).

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<b>Community Safety Domain</b>	Two LSOAs are in the most deprived category for the Community Safety Domain in MVW – St Cattwg 5 (rank 136) and Ystrad Mynach 2 (rank 155). A further two LSOAs are in the 11-20% most deprived category in MVW – Ystrad Mynach 3 (rank 268) and St Cattwg 1 (rank 284).
<b>Income Domain</b>	Only the Hengoed 2 LSOA (rank 160) is in the 10% most deprived category for the Income Domain in MVW. Only the St Cattwg 1 LSOA (rank 310) is in the 11-20% most deprived category in MVW.
<b>Employment Domain</b>	Only the Hengoed 2 LSOA (rank 143) is in the 10% most deprived category for the Employment Domain in MVW. Only the St Cattwg 1 LSOA (rank 260) is in the 11-20% most deprived category in MVW.

A table showing the domain ranks for every LSOA in Mid Valleys West is shown on Page 12. This highlights that there are relatively few pockets of deprivation throughout Mid Valleys West, with only Hengoed 2 featuring in the 10% most deprived category for overall deprivation and across multiple domains.

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Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 - Mid Valleys West									
LSOA Name	Overall Deprivation	Income Domain	Employment Domain	Health Domain	Education Domain	Access to Services Domain	Housing Domain	Community Safety Domain	Physical Environment Domain
Hengoed 1	619	687	722	435	416	970	813	591	730
Hengoed 2	123	160	143	27	162	877	772	389	1125
Hengoed 3	677	712	518	654	721	1397	431	505	786
Maesycwmmmer	1101	1041	1047	999	1040	635	1270	840	608
Nelson 1	1134	1108	889	1008	866	1534	816	666	997
Nelson 2	544	431	567	590	467	998	649	470	1200
Nelson 3	1390	1040	1108	964	1181	1731	1739	1405	865
St. Cattwg 1	280	310	260	208	272	1143	890	284	523
St. Cattwg 2	729	853	529	368	842	1177	945	1038	857
St. Cattwg 3	1008	954	674	757	1055	1156	1472	854	869
St. Cattwg 4	1565	1548	1477	1063	1225	1641	1760	998	604
St. Cattwg 5	325	384	454	314	219	721	731	136	521
Ystrad Mynach 1	1292	1120	1106	995	1033	1214	1174	1040	1046
Ystrad Mynach 2	659	822	678	753	1011	1725	286	155	63
Ystrad Mynach 3	1576	1809	1587	1459	1724	1054	1704	268	378

WIMD Rank 1-1909
1-191: 10% most deprived
192-382: 11-20% most deprived
383-573: 21-30% most deprived
574-955: 31-50% most deprived
956-1909: 50% least deprived

#### 4.6 Health

Good health is a major aspect of well-being for all individuals in every community, but there are some challenges in Mid Valleys West in relation to employment, transport, housing, educational achievement and levels of deprivation that are likely to have an impact on health, and possibly contribute to or be caused by poor health.

Although self-reported health is generally good, the rate of premature death is higher than the average rate for Wales and 25.7% of the people living in Mid Valleys West have a limiting long-term illness.

<b>Limiting long-term illness</b>	25.7% of residents in MVW reported that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot due to their health. This figure is virtually the same as the Caerphilly county borough average (25.4%), but higher than the average (22.7%) in Wales as a whole <sup>24</sup> .
<b>All cause death rate</b>	The all-cause death rate in the MSOAs in MVW over the period 2017-19 was between 1093.6 per 100,000 population in Caerphilly 008 (St Cattwg) and 1269.8 in Caerphilly 012 (Hengoed and Maesycwmmmer), compared with the Caerphilly county borough (1103.7) and Wales (1031.2) average rates <sup>25</sup> .
<b>Premature death</b>	The rate of premature deaths (under 75) in MVW ranges between 376.1 per 100,000 population in Caerphilly 013 (Ystrad Mynach & Nelson) and 431.1 in Caerphilly 012 (Hengoed and Maesycwmmmer), which is significantly higher than the average rate for Wales (382.4) <sup>26</sup> .

<b>GP recorded chronic conditions</b>	The percentage of residents with a GP recorded chronic condition in MVW ranges from 14% in Caerphilly 013 (Ystrad Mynach & Nelson) to 16.7% in Caerphilly 008 (St Cattwg). The percentage in two of the three MSOAs in MVW is higher than the Wales average of 14.3% <sup>27</sup> .
<b>GP recorded mental health condition</b>	The percentage of residents with a GP recorded mental health condition in MVW ranges from 20.9% in Caerphilly 013 (Ystrad Mynach & Nelson) to 25.8% in Caerphilly 012 (Hengoed & Maesycwmmmer). Once again, the percentage in two of the three MSOAs in MVW is higher than the Wales average of 23.2% <sup>28</sup> .

Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy can vary considerably even within relatively small areas, especially where there are a mix of more deprived and less deprived areas. Within Mid Valleys West, for males at birth healthy life expectancy ranged from 53.9 years in the Hengoed ward to 61.0 years in the Maesycwmmmer ward, a gap of 7.1 years. The figures for three of the five wards (Hengoed, Nelson and St Cattwg) were significantly below the Wales average. For females, healthy life expectancy ranged from 54.3 years in the Hengoed ward to 62.6 years in the Ystrad Mynach ward, a gap of 8.3 years. For two of the five wards (Hengoed and St Cattwg) the figures were significantly below the Wales average<sup>29</sup>.

Tackling the leading causes of premature death and illness, delaying frailty and helping working age adults live healthier lives for longer, by preventing health-harming behaviours and promoting mental well-being, will help create a healthier Mid Valleys West.

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Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr (Enhanced Local General Hospital) is located in Mid Valleys West at Ystrad Mynach. It has a Minor Injury Unit and a Medical Assessment Unit, and provides Day Surgery, Rehabilitation and Therapy Services, Diagnostic Services, a wide variety of Specialist Outpatient Clinics, an Elderly Frail Unit for the care of older people, 164 inpatient beds, Children’s Outpatient appointments, Maternity services and Bowel Screening. The Grange University Hospital is located in Cwmbran (within the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board area) and provides Specialist, Trauma and Critical Care Services for the whole of Gwent.

25.1% of residents in Mid Valleys West said that their health was fair, bad or very bad. This figure is almost identical to the county borough average of 25.2%, but higher than the Wales average of 22.2%<sup>30</sup>.

### 4.7 Housing and households

A key consideration for the future of Mid Valleys West is ensuring there is the right sort of housing to support the needs of the community.

If the housing of the future is improved in terms of energy efficiency, homes would be warmer, cheaper to run and would produce less carbon emissions. Homes of the future will need to be resilient to a changing climate. The housing being built now will be a legacy left for future generations.

<b>Housing stock</b>	48.3% of properties in MVW are semi-detached houses compared with a county borough average of 39.2% and a Wales average of 31%. Just over a quarter of properties were in the terraced category, compared with a county borough average of 36.1% and a Wales average of 27.8%.
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<b>Council tax band</b>	46.6% of housing in MVW is rated as Council Tax band A or B (the lowest valued housing categories) compared with a figure of 52.6% in the county borough as a whole.
<b>Tenure</b>	73% of housing in MVW is owned outright or with a mortgage, compared with a figure of 69.3% in the county borough as a whole and 67.4% in Wales. 14.9% is rented from the local authority or a housing association, compared with 18.7% in the county borough as a whole and 16.4% in Wales.

In WIMD 2019, seven of the 15 LSOAs in Mid Valleys West had percentages higher than the Wales average (5.5%) of people living in overcrowded households, with Hengoed 3 (8.1%) and Hengoed 2 (7.7%) having the highest percentages<sup>31</sup>.

Three of the 15 LSOAs in Mid Valleys West had percentages higher than the Wales average (19.7%) for the likelihood of poor quality housing – these were Ystrad Mynach 2 (26.3%), Nelson 1 (21.1%) and Ystrad Mynach 1 (20.1%)<sup>32</sup>.

Three of the 15 LSOAs in Mid Valleys West had percentages higher than the Wales average (18%) for the likelihood housing containing serious hazards – these were Ystrad Mynach 2 (23.6%), Nelson 1 (19%) and Ystrad Mynach 1 (18.5%)<sup>33</sup>.

Five of the 15 LSOAs in Mid Valleys West had percentages higher than the Wales average (3.2%) for the likelihood of housing being in disrepair, with the top three being Ystrad Mynach 2 (4.9%), Nelson 1 (3.8%) and St Cattwg 2 (3.5%)<sup>34</sup>.



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## Mid Valleys West Local Well-being Assessment

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The **Welsh Housing Quality Standard** is a set of standards that all Council and Housing Association homes in Wales must meet. The standard states that all homes should be in a good state of repair, safe and secure, adequately heated, up to date in kitchens and bathrooms, well managed, in attractive and safe environments and suitable for specific households. As the Council has retained its housing stock, it is responsible for bringing the stock up to this standard.

Around £260 million has been spent across the county borough in recent years to achieve this standard. Internal works have included new kitchens, bathrooms, heating and electrical rewiring. External works have included new doors, windows, guttering/downpipes and reroofing properties. An environmental improvement programme has also been delivered as part of WHQS, which looks at areas outside the curtilage of council homes.



There is some variation in the median increase in prices paid for houses in different wards in Mid Valleys West between March 2019 and March 2021. In Maesycwmmmer ward the median price has increased by 15.8% to £183,000, and in St Cattwg ward the median price increased by 14.3% to £132,000. Conversely, the median price in Hengoed ward increased by just 3% to £137,500<sup>35</sup>.

The average annual income in Caerphilly county borough is £29,289<sup>36</sup>, which means that the house price to income ratio is over 6:1 in Maesycwmmmer ward, and 4.5:1 in St Cattwg ward (the ward with the lowest median price in March 2021). This means that a single person would have to spend over 6 times their salary to be able to purchase a property in the Maesycwmmmer ward, which is likely to mean that many single people are prevented from buying a property without assistance, such as help from family or shared ownership.

Defining housing need is complex and several factors will have an influence on the overall levels of demand.

There has been development from volume housebuilders within this area in recent years, with 900 units being built on large sites (over 10 dwellings) over the past 15 years, although this has been predominately on one development site. There is market demand for new development in this area.

The 2018 Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) shows an additional requirement for the development of 1 bed, 2 bed, 3 bed and 4 bed general needs social housing and a small requirement for low-cost home ownership. The highest requirement in terms of social housing is 1 bed general needs.

## 5 Economic well-being

### 5.1 Education

Childhood experiences can determine long-term development and overall life achievements.

For Mid Valleys West, the WIMD 2019 Education domain shows the following:

<b>Education Domain</b>	One LSOA in MVW is in the 10% most deprived category for the Education domain – Hengoed 2 (rank 162 within Wales). In addition, two LSOAs are in the 11-20% most deprived category – St Cattwg 5 (rank 219) and St Cattwg 1 (rank 272).
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Hengoed 2 also has a high concentration of several different domains of deprivation – overall deprivation plus Income, Employment, Health and Education. This tells us that a range of socio-economic factors could be contributing to educational attainment gaps between individuals and communities.

Ensuring all children receive a good quality education and raising the aspirations of future generations of young people will support their long-term economic well-being.

The data shows that the proportion of Key Stage 4 leavers entering Higher Education ranges between 12.3% in St Cattwg 5 to 52.3% in Ystrad Mynach 3. It also shows that the proportion of adults aged 25 to 64 years with no qualifications ranges from 7% in Ystrad Mynach 3 to 40.2% in Hengoed 2<sup>37</sup>.

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

Current and future generations of young people need to be supported and encouraged to prevent them becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

#### Repeat school absenteeism

Repeat absenteeism of school pupils in MVW ranges from 2.1% in Ystrad Mynach 3 to 11.1% in St Cattwg 1<sup>38</sup>. (This indicator measures the percentage of primary and secondary pupils missing more than 15% of school sessions, and is based on a three-year average)

### 5.2 Work and skills

Improving local skills through workforce planning, training, apprenticeships and volunteering opportunities will help future generations find decent, rewarding work and avoid in-work poverty.

#### Economic activity/inactivity




There were 18,556 residents aged 16-74 years in MVW at the time of the 2011 Census<sup>39</sup>. Of these, 12,045 were economically active:

- 51.6% were employees (49.5% in Wales)
- 6.7% were self-employed (8.6% in Wales)
- 4.7% were unemployed (4.3% in Wales).

There were 6,511 economically inactive residents in MVW:

- 15.9% were retired (16.1% in Wales)
- 4% were looking after their home or family (3.8% in Wales)
- 8.3% were long term sick or disabled (6.3% in Wales)

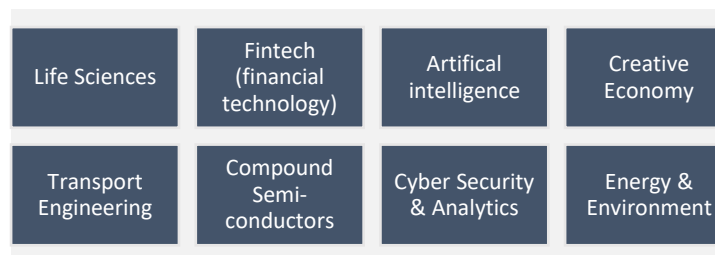
## Mid Valleys West Local Well-being Assessment

<b>Skills</b> 	<p>The highest level of qualifications for residents of MVW in the 2011 Census is shown below<sup>40</sup>.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">MVW</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Wales</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No qualifications</td> <td style="text-align: center;">29.5%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">25.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Level 1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">13.8%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">13.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Level 2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">16.4%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">15.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Level 3+</td> <td style="text-align: center;">32.9%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">36.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apprenticeship</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3.8%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3.9%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		MVW	Wales	No qualifications	29.5%	25.9%	Level 1	13.8%	13.3%	Level 2	16.4%	15.7%	Level 3+	32.9%	36.8%	Apprenticeship	3.8%	3.9%
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Apprenticeship	3.8%	3.9%																	
<b>Industry of employment</b>	<p>In the 2011 Census the largest industry of employment in MVW was Wholesale and Retail Trade: Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles on 14.5% (15.6% in Wales). This was followed by Manufacturing on 14.3% (10.5% in Wales) and Human Health and Social Work Activities on 12.3% (14.5% in Wales)<sup>41</sup>.</p>																		
<b>Main employment sites</b>	<p>There are industrial estates at Dyffryn (Ystrad Mynach) and Penallta (Penybryn), which together with the Tiryberth and Ty Du (Nelson) mixed development sites and the Tredomen Business Park, providing a range of local employment activities for the area.</p>																		

The Covid-19 pandemic is likely to have had a significant impact on the pattern of employment locally, with the biggest impacts in the Retail, Hospitality, Tourism and (to an extent) Construction sectors.

The most successful localities will be able to offer a range of quality jobs in different sectors, and the foundational economy is also of growing importance (the foundational economy provides the everyday services that our residents and businesses rely on, such as energy, food and healthcare, and has an important part to play in contributing to the long-term resilience of the local economy). Having good quality, well paid employment will have a positive impact on a person's health and well-being.

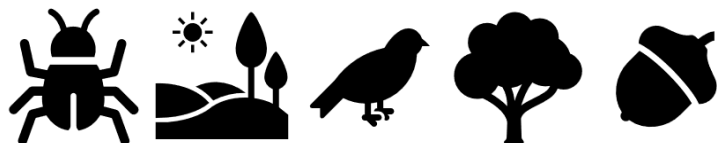
Caerphilly county borough, along with nine other local authority areas in South East Wales is part of the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) City Deal, which over a 10-year period seeks to deliver a set of targets in the region including 25,000 new jobs by 2036, the leveraging of £4bn of private sector investment and securing economic growth. Eight priority sectors have been identified as important for the region going forward<sup>42</sup>:



*Figure 4: Cardiff City Region priority sectors*

One of the key challenges for the whole of the county borough will be to ensure that the public, private and community sectors link in with the CCR City Deal where appropriate, so the area benefits as much as possible from the investment and economic growth that will take place in the years to come.

## 6 Environmental well-being



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

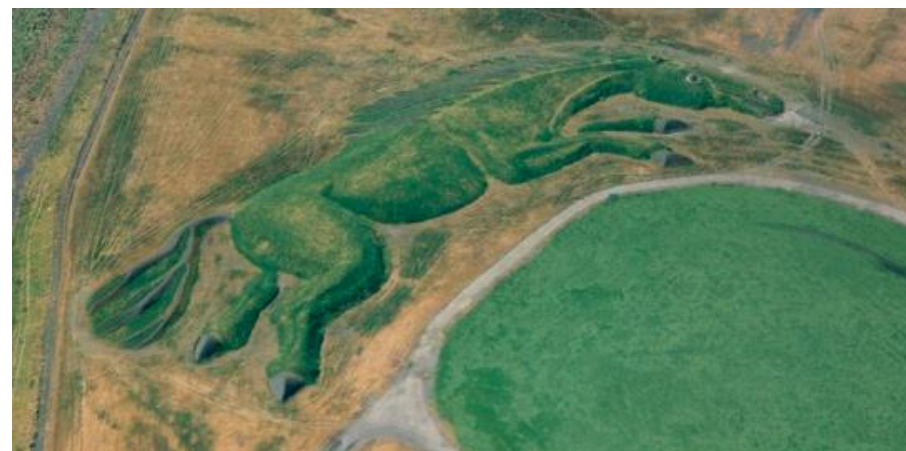
The former mining and iron industries and the associated heavy industrial sites have had a big impact on the landscape of Caerphilly county borough. Coal mines were located throughout the county borough, with the Upper Rhymney Valley alone having forty coal mines by the beginning of the 20th Century. These industries have contributed to the legacy of poor health within the county borough. By the end of the 20th Century, following the closure of all the pits, many of the remnants of those industries were reclaimed or removed and landscaped to remove the visible evidence of the county borough's industrial past. This past industrial legacy illustrates the importance of both maintaining and enhancing the natural heritage of the county borough, in order to improve quality of life and create a healthier environment for local people. However, it should also be noted that many of the remaining derelict and contaminated sites contain the most ecologically important landscapes within the county borough.

The greening of the South Wales valleys has been transformative – where pit heads and mine workings once stood, country parks and forestry now offer a green and healthy environment that attracts thousands of residents and tourists every year. The landscape is maintained, conserved and improved by farmers, enterprises and groups, supporting linked ecological

systems, rich biodiversity, mitigation against climate change and providing the food on our plates.

The natural living environment in particular helps in lifting peoples' mental well-being, as well as providing a free green gym for improving peoples' physical health. This results in positive consequences in terms of increasing healthy lifespans, reducing the incidence of chronic disease, including cardiovascular disease, some cancers, type 2 Diabetes and osteoporosis.

The Valleys Regional Park champions the iconic landscape and people of the South Wales Valleys, working with partners to maximise the environment and social benefits for local communities and future generations. The whole of the Caerphilly county borough is part of the Valleys Regional Park<sup>43</sup>.



*Figure 5: Sultan the Pit Pony, Parc Penallta*

Carved from a former coal tip, **Parc Penallta** is well known as the 'place with the horse'. As one of the largest figurative earth sculptures in the country, 'Sultan the Pit Pony' attracts visitors from far afield who come to

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## Mid Valleys West Local Well-being Assessment

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see and admire it. Visitors can climb to the High Point Observatory be rewarded with panoramic views across the South Wales valleys. It's hard to imagine that this beautiful, tranquil and diverse country park was a black coal tip only 30 years ago.

With its mix of woodlands, ponds and grasslands Parc Penallta is home to a wide variety of wildlife. There are several species of orchids in early summer, many types of dragonflies and damselflies, and acres of flowering meadows which are alive with butterflies, bees and other insects throughout the summer. Flocks of goldfinch can be seen feeding on alder cones and seed heads throughout the autumn and there is a good chance of seeing both green woodpecker and bullfinch at any time of year. In winter, flocks of starling drop in to roost in the reed beds around **Nelson Bog**. **Penallta Marsh** wildlife area is a small example of rhos pasture, rich in both wildflowers and insects (rhos pastures are a mixed habitat dominated by species-rich purple moor-grass and rush pastures. This type of habitat has been badly affected by changing farming practices and the rhos pastures in South Wales make up a significant component of the world's resource).

Penallta Park is one of the three areas within Caerphilly county borough that is one of the 12 Valleys Regional Park 'Discovery Gateways'. They are launchpads into the landscape and heritage that make up the valleys story and are places where people can get out and about, have fun, explore the landscape and find out more about nature.

As much a country park as an urban one, **Nelson Wern Park** combines the facilities of both in a unique and delightful public green space. Originally part of a stone quarry with railway sidings, work started in 2000 to develop a new park for Nelson. Now there is something for every age as this green space becomes an established and valued part of the local community.

For younger children there is a well-designed and attractive children's playground overlooked by the amphitheatre. Older children can burn off

their energy on the BMX track and skate ramps, whilst the youth shelter draws in youngsters from the local community. Finally there's a football pitch, home to Nelson Cavaliers.



*Figure 6: Nelson Wern Park*

'The Wern' is managed with nature in mind. The woods have been designated a Site of importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and are teeming with wildlife. There are wildflower meadows and a boardwalk through the wet woods, with numerable species such as orchids, dragonflies, butterflies and birds.

**Ystrad Mynach Park** covers approximately 11 hectares of open green space with rugby and football pitches, tennis courts, a bowling green and a children's playground, all set amongst some fine parkland trees. Set against a backdrop of native woodland and wildflower meadows it's been recognised for high quality management, winning a Green Flag Award. Located within the park is an unusual glacial landform called a drumlin, a leftover from the last Ice Age.

**Gelligaer and Merthyr Common** is an upland landscape divided between the county boroughs of Merthyr Tydfil and Caerphilly. Predominantly comprising the ridges of Cefn Merthyr, Cefn Gelligaer, Cefn y Brithdir and an area north of the Heads of the Valleys road.

The Common is a living and working landscape which is steeped in history. It is designated as a Cadw Historic Landscape due to evidence of continued land use and activity from prehistory to the recent past. It is a landscape that links the communities who live around it and is a vital green lung of the valleys. At 3,000ha this great expanse of land plays its part in the water and carbon cycles, which shape and support our everyday lives locally, nationally and internationally.

While the Common may be rooted in centuries of history, it is just as relevant to many of our 21st Century challenges – rural economic sustainability, food quality and security, physical and mental well-being, flood management, biodiversity and climate change.

In 2021, in a partnership supported by the Integrated Well-being Networks and Aneurin Bevan UHB Neighbourhood Care Networks (NCNs) and the Valleys Regional Park, a novel 'Nature Prescribing' pilot was undertaken, which will provide an additional way forward for supporting community health and well-being by connecting residents to activities in the surrounding natural environment.



## 7 Cultural well-being

Culture is broad and all-encompassing, covering shared beliefs, customs, characteristics and identity and defined by everything including language, tradition, heritage, social norms, and involvement in dance, music and arts and other recreational activities. Culture is also influenced by people moving into an area and increasing cultural diversity, leading to a growth in the culture of the area.

The ability to speak the Welsh language is seen as a big part of the culture of Wales by many people. The proportion of people able to at least speak Welsh in Mid Valleys West ranges from 16.8% in Hengoed 1 to 29.9% in St Cattwg 4. Only five of the 15 LSOAs in Mid Valleys West had a figure below the county borough average (22.2%) and the figure in all LSOAs is significantly below the Wales average (37.8%)<sup>44</sup>.

Younger age groups are more likely to more likely to be able to speak Welsh, demonstrating the influence of Welsh language education in the area.

<b>Key attractions</b>	<b>Llancaiach Fawr Manor</b> is a Tudor manor house near the village of Nelson, located just to the north of the site of the former Llancaiach Colliery. The semi-fortified house was built on the site of an earlier medieval structure, either on top of the previous dwelling or possibly incorporated within the eastern end of that building. It is a Grade I listed building and is now best known as the home of Colonel Edward Prichard (died 1655), who hosted a visit by King Charles I of England in 1645. The Manor is considered to be one of the most important gentry houses to have survived from the 16 <sup>th</sup> and 17 <sup>th</sup> century period. It is now open to visitors as a living history museum.
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**Gelligaer Roman Fort** is located on the hilltop between the Taff and Rhymney. It commanded an extensive view of the countryside, which in Roman times would have been heavily wooded. It is an Auxiliary Fort that was first excavated towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Flavian pottery suggests an early construction date for the original roman timber fort at Gelligaer, which was replaced in stone around the turn of the second century, at the same time a bathhouse was built within an annexe attached to the fort's south-eastern defences. Antonine pottery dated c.170AD confirms a continuation of occupancy into these times.

The county borough is blessed with a large number of community arts organisations that are vital in raising the profile of the arts, for drawing in visitors and additional income into the county borough and providing an essential social element for local communities through opportunities for people to develop their skills or perform. There are nearly 100 arts groups that meet to rehearse, develop, make and showcase their work within the county borough. There are also a considerable number of community arts activities which go under the radar, such as one-off projects in schools, youth clubs, older persons groups, summer schemes, adult education and community centres.

*Visual Arts* - the visual arts have nearly 20 groups within the county borough covering photography, sculpture, painting, film, printmaking and crafts.

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*Public art* - many towns and villages in the county borough have imaginative pieces of public artwork, including sculptures, mosaics, and murals. Caerphilly County Borough Council works with local schools, communities, artists and arts-based organisations to develop and produce artwork that enriches and reflects the history and culture of local communities.

Examples of public art in Mid Valleys West include the 'Wheel of Drams' in Maesycwmmmer, a number of pieces of public art at Parc Penallta including Sultan the Pit Pony, the High Point Observatory 'Breaking the Mold' and 'Coal Cutters Dream', and Siloh Square in Ystrad Mynach.



*Figure 7: Wheel of Drams, Maesycwmmmer*

Over recent years a significant amount of investment has focused on public artwork within the county borough, with around £1.7 million invested in such projects. Funding for these schemes has come from the Council, and a range of external organisations, including European funding.

Engaging the local community in the significance of their local heritage is important in ensuring a sense of place and increasing community pride and well-being.

Mid Valleys West is home to a wide range of clubs and societies, including scouts & guides, churches & chapels, jazz bands, mother & toddler groups, youth centres, historical societies, choirs, boys & girls clubs, allotment groups and older persons' groups.

Taking part in cultural activities can be a good way of bringing all parts of the community together and building community cohesion. This has been particularly important since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, and whilst meeting with others has been problematic for a significant period of time, the bonds forged within our communities has meant that vulnerable individuals have been supported through this difficult period.

Volunteering provides the opportunity to meet new people, to gain confidence and learn new skills for future employment and to have fun in an informal setting. Without volunteers giving up their time for the benefit of their local communities, none of the clubs and societies listed above would be able to exist.

The many churches and chapels in Mid Valleys West are also home to volunteering efforts, particularly providing lunch clubs and food distribution to those in need. There are a number of foodbanks in the Mid Valleys West who provide free or very cheap food to those in need or on low incomes – these include St John the Baptist Church in Nelson, Holy Trinity Church in Ystrad Mynach and The Youth Centre in Cefn Hengoed.

The mental and physical benefits that exercise can provide are well documented. Through the hard work of members of the community, there are many sporting clubs and teams in Mid Valleys West including football, rugby, cricket, bowling, basketball and netball. If future generations are to

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realise the health benefits of being active then barriers to participation need to be addressed, particularly amongst young women, who typically drop out of sporting activities as teenagers. A varied range of childhood experiences can help to seed a lifelong interest in sports and cultural activities.

Predominantly, the natural landscape of the Mid Valleys West is superimposed by features that relate to the major industrial change that occurred in the South Wales area in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. There are a number of examples of planned industrial heritage, and these provide the rich industrial heritage of the area, which is increasingly becoming recognised as a unique attribute of both the county borough and the wider South Wales Valleys.

A key issue in respect of the area's industrial heritage is its protection and, more importantly, the beneficial re-use of its buildings. Bringing these buildings back into use will help to ensure their continued retention.

Within Mid Valleys West there are a total of 38 **Listed Buildings** – this term refers to a building or other structure officially designated as being of special architectural, historical, or cultural significance:

- Hengoed – 2 x Grade II and 1 x Grade II\* (Hengoed/Maesycwmmmer Viaduct)
- Maesycwmmmer – 3 x Grade II\* - (Hengoed/Maesycwmmmer Viaduct, Tabor United Reformed Church and The Woollen Mill)
- Nelson – 6 x Grade II and 1 x Grade I (Llancaiach Fawr Manor)
- St Cattwg – 9 x Grade II
- Ystrad Mynach – 12 x Grade II and 4 x Grade II\* (Penallta Colliery Bath House, Penallta Colliery Engine Hall & Fan House, Penallta Colliery No 1 & No 2 Headframe)



*Figure 8: Penallta Colliery Engine Hall & Fan House, Ystrad Mynach*

There are seven **Scheduled Ancient Monuments** in Mid Valleys West – these are sites of archaeological importance with specific legal protection against damage or development. There are four in Gelligaer, two in Maesycwmmmer and one in Nelson.



*Figure 9: Gelligaer Roman Site*

There are three **Conservation Areas** within Mid Valleys West – Gelligaer, Hengoed/Maesycwmmmer and Tredomen (Ystrad Mynach). The term Conservation Area almost always applies to an area (usually urban or the core of a village) of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which is considered worthy of preservation or enhancement.



## 8 What our residents have told us

The views of communities on how resources are used to meet their needs are vital, to help inform the way in which programmes and projects are delivered within and alongside public, private and voluntary sector organisations. People are involved throughout the process of assessing the well-being of our community areas, Caerphilly county borough and Gwent, right through to setting the objectives which will be included in the Well-being Plan. A group of engagement and communications professionals from across the Public Services Board member organisations developed a consistent involvement process to gather community views to support the Assessment process.

Due to the obvious difficulties in being able to engage with people face-to-face due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the primary engagement tool was an online survey. Paper copies were also made available in public places such as libraries and doctors' surgeries. In addition, two workshop sessions were arranged for each of the five community areas in Caerphilly county borough, enabling people to contribute their views through group discussions. Social media was used to advertise the survey and workshops and stakeholder groups were enlisted to encourage communities and groups to participate.

We have been able to analyse the views of residents within the community areas through postcode and other analysis, so that differing perceptions within an area can be understood and compared with the data in this Local Well-being Assessment.

Within Mid Valleys West, a sense of community spirit was very evident, where neighbours are friendly and look out for each other. Similarly, respondents felt happy that they lived in proximity to wide open, clean and beautiful green spaces with reasonable local amenities within walking distance. They also said that green space is one of the most valued aspects

of their community and that it should be maintained so that people have to opportunity to enjoy the green space on offer, whenever they please.

Opinion was divided on whether respondents felt safe or not, with those in less populous areas feeling safe in their neighbourhood, whereas others would not wish to venture out at night.

Access to health facilities was a problem for a number of respondents, as they felt that the public transport system was inadequate. Respondents said that having access to transport is very important to their community. While some respondents praised the quality of transport that is being provided to their local area, when asked how their community could be improved, other respondents told us that they would like public transport to become more regular across their local area, especially during the evening time.

Opportunities for employment, particularly for younger people, were also of concern, even though the recent movement to work from home meant that more people did not yet feel the real impact of finding work further afield, in Cardiff for example.

Many respondents felt that some facilities (including leisure) could be improved, for example, developing play areas for younger children and increasing activities and clubs for young people. Many also thought that there was scope to encourage people to volunteer in their communities, taking a more active role in making them a better place to live.

Road safety was an issue for some respondents, and it was suggested that measures should be taken to reduce traffic accidents and congestion. Keeping the streets and local neighbourhoods clean and litter free was also a priority. There was some support to make sure that older people were properly catered for, and help be given to ensure that they could remain active and independent, and living at home for as long as possible.

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- <sup>31</sup> WIMD 2019 Housing Domain Indicator Data, StatsWales
- <sup>32</sup> WIMD 2019 Housing Domain Indicator Data, StatsWales
- <sup>33</sup> WIMD 2019 Housing Domain Indicator Data, StatsWales
- <sup>34</sup> WIMD 2019 Housing Domain Indicator Data, StatsWales
- <sup>35</sup> Median house prices by ward: HPSSA Dataset 37, Office for National Statistics
- <sup>36</sup> Gross Salary of Full Time Workers - Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2021, Nomis
- <sup>37</sup> WIMD 2019 Education Domain Indicator Data, StatsWales
- <sup>38</sup> WIMD 2019 Education Domain Indicator Data, StatsWales
- <sup>39</sup> 2011 Census Table KS601EW, Office for National Statistics
- <sup>40</sup> 2011 Census Table KS501EW, Office for National Statistics
- <sup>41</sup> 2011 Census Table KS605EW, Office for National Statistics
- <sup>42</sup> [Cardiff Capital Region Industrial and Economic Plan](#)
- <sup>43</sup> <https://valleysregionalpark.wales/>
- <sup>44</sup> 2011 Census Table KS207WA, Office for National Statistics