

Well-being Objective 3

Enabling our communities and environment to be healthy, safe, and prosperous (Prosperous Communities)

Overview of Progress

A healthy and well-functioning economy provides the foundation for sustainable growth, improved living standards and the development of prosperous communities. The Council recognises that fair and meaningful employment, a thriving business base and well skilled labour market are the foundations of a healthy economy and are committed to driving this agenda forward. Economic recovery following a challenging Covid period continues at pace, however some challenges remain. Disposable household income remains below national averages and economic inactivity rates remain above averages.

Businesses continue to be supported through a range of interventions, including improved access to commercial space, networking opportunities, access to funding and an increased focus on ensuring businesses can take advantage of local supply chains and procurement opportunities. Wider regeneration activity has seen improvements to our town centres with the aim of increasing footfall and attracting inward investment.

Our employability schemes continue to support those furthest away from the labour market and jobs are actively being created through Council intervention to ensure that people can access opportunities to improve their lives. Training and upskilling to create a future proofed workforce continues with uplifts seen in the numbers of those qualified to level 4 and above.

The delivery of Pentre Awel continues at pace which will have far-reaching benefits for the County, some of which are already being realised through Community Benefits.

Work continues to address one of the common barriers faced by individuals looking to return to or find employment by seeking to increase the availability of childcare in the County where demand is not being met.

The Natural Environment is a core component of sustainable development. The Council declared its commitment to addressing the climate and nature emergencies and will continue working towards becoming a Net Zero Carbon Local Authority by 2030, addressing the issues that are driving a decline in our biodiversity and support nature recovery. A slight increase in Nitrogen Dioxide levels has been observed, however, this is still lower than the Wales average. The first phase of the Waste Strategy has been implemented and changes have resulted in an increase in reuse and recycling tonnage performance which has already surpassed the national target which was expected by 2025. Furthermore, the percentage of waste sent to landfill has reduced, working towards the National target of Zero Waste to landfill by 2025.

Areas of the County are susceptible to the negative effects of the climate emergency, especially flooding. The Council has implemented interventions through the Flood & Water Management Act and Shoreline Management Plan to mitigate against the effects of flooding, which is a growing concern among residents.

The County remains a key strategic stronghold for the future of the Welsh language, with the social and economic benefits of bilingualism being widely recognised. Our 'Strategy to Promote the Welsh Language in Carmarthenshire 2023-28' sets out what we will do to work towards restoring the Welsh language in the County by increasing the numbers of those who can speak Welsh, increasing the situations where people can speak Welsh, raising the status of the language, supporting communities to maintain the language and by having a positive effect on population movements.

Total Crime in Carmarthenshire has reduced by over 14% during 2023/24 which is positive. We recognise the importance of effective partnership working to sustain these low rates which is evidenced by the activity of the community safety work, Community Cohesion Team and the collaborative working required with regards to the Serious Violence Duty.

Transportation and highways play a key role in supporting and sustaining our communities, providing the vital infrastructure which connects people to one another, supports access to services and supports a thriving economy. The Council prioritises maintaining the highway network within its means, however, special provision is made during the winter time to ensure uninterrupted access to essential services.

The County is vast and mixed in terms of its rural/urban landscape, this poses challenges, which are difficult to address, especially with depleting resources. We have continued our work to enhance road infrastructure and develop transport solutions for the more rural areas of the County.

There has been a significant increase in the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on Carmarthenshire roads, with a 66% increase from 2022 to 2023. We are committed to making roads safer through partnership working, awareness, education, and training to improve road user skills and behaviour.

Sport, leisure, culture and outdoor recreation are the heartbeat of our communities. These services provide a range of health and well-being activities, facilities, and programmes to support our residents and communities to lead healthy, safe, and prosperous lives. Similarly, the promotion of our County as an attractive and commercially viable place to visit and invest in is a key economic and well-being factor. Overnight and day visitors to the County contributed £597m to the local economy supporting 6,652 full time jobs. In addition, visits to libraries and leisure centres are up significantly on the previous year. Several innovative leisure and well-being initiatives are also delivered through a variety of mechanisms to ensure people have a wide range of options and opportunities to lead active and enriched lives.



In Summary

Carmarthenshire's economy has seen improvement in recent years, following a period of uncertainty and recovery following the pandemic. There is recognition of this as we move towards a refreshed economic vision which aims to focus on the opportunities available to us and the challenges that we must overcome to realise real economic growth.

- The county continues to exhibit above average levels of economic inactivity, and employment rates remain below national averages. Unemployment rates have increased slightly but remain lower than national averages.
- There has been a decrease in business births and an increase in business deaths, however the Council is committed to providing support to businesses to ensure their sustainability and ability to diversify and upscale.
- Over the long term, Carmarthenshire's GVA (Gross Value Added) has grown relatively slowly. However, the recent picture is more positive since the pandemic, and there has been a narrowing of the gap between Wales and the UK, but there is still some way to go to reduce the gap to the level at the start of the millennium.
- Qualification levels have improved and there are now less people with no qualifications at all.
- Significant funding was secured by Economic Development, reflecting a significant achievement in external funding and private sector investment.
- Overnight and day visitors contributed a considerable amount to the local economy supporting thousands of full-time jobs.



How are we doing?

- Employment rates have improved slightly in Carmarthenshire as at end of March 2024 to 72.0% compared to 71.7% at the end March 2023, although they continue to be below the Welsh and UK averages of 73.5% and 75.4% respectively. Unemployment figures increased slightly to 3.0% in March 2024 compared to 2.9% March 2023. This is better than the Welsh and UK averages of 3.5% and 3.8% respectively. Economic Inactivity^[3] in Carmarthenshire remains high despite a slight improvement from 23.3% in March 2023 to 21.7% in March 2024, this is above the Welsh average of 20.3% and well above the UK average of 17.7%.
- 46.3% of those aged 18-64 in Carmarthenshire are qualified to Level 4 or above (December 2023), this is an improvement on the previous year of 40% and above the Welsh average of 45.0%. Developing skills and qualifications improves employability prospects, boosts career prospects and creates a well-skilled and able labour market. It also ensures that we have a workforce that is fit for the future. Those with no qualifications in Carmarthenshire reduced to 5.3% in December 2023, compared to 7% the previous year and well below the Welsh average of 7.9%. Carmarthenshire is well underway to meet Welsh Government's National Well-being Indicator Milestone - of 'the percentage of working age adults with no qualifications will be 5% or below in every local authority in Wales by 2050'.
- Business births have reduced from 820 in 2021 to 630 in 2022, and Business deaths have increased from 650 in 2021 to 700 in 2022.
- 955 Direct and Indirect Jobs were created with Regeneration assistance during 2024/25, this is a reduction on the previous year's figure of 1,466 but some delays to commencement of significant direct delivery and third party grant funded construction projects means that these will now be realised during 2024/25.
- 158 individuals were supported through Council employability schemes to earn the real living wage during 2023/24, this is a decline in number compared to 204 in the previous year. Many of the clients supported were still receiving advice and guidance at the end of the financial year as they experience multiple barriers and have complex needs. Therefore, additional support is needed before they access employment opportunities.
- Over £35m of funding was secured during 2023/24 by Economic Development via Private Sector Investment and various successful applications for external funding.
- Overnight and day visitors contribute £597m to the local economy supporting 6,652 FT jobs.

[3] Economically inactive are defined as people who are not in employment or unemployed, the above data excludes students and persons 65+, therefore could be inactive due to looking after family or long-term sick etc.

Outcome: Businesses supported, and employment provided.

- In 2023, there were around 8,000 businesses in Carmarthenshire. Over 91% of businesses were 'micro' enterprises employing fewer than nine people - a somewhat higher share of the overall business stock than in Wales or the UK.
- 3,071 business enquiries were supported with regeneration team assistance during 2023/24. This is significantly higher than the target of 1,159 and far exceeds the previous year's result of 1,237.
- 60 jobs were created through Community Benefits in our Construction projects (21st Century School programme, housing and regeneration projects) and 669 jobs created with regeneration assistance across the County.
- 2,762 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) pupil engagements through Community Benefits in our Construction Projects (21st Century School programme, housing and regeneration projects).



Markets

Support is provided to businesses in the local indoor and outdoor markets in Carmarthen and Llanelli each with 80 and 56 tenancies respectively. In Carmarthen vacancy rates have improved during the year with the number of vacant units decreasing from 8 to 3.

In Carmarthen, a considerable amount of effort was made to advertise and accommodate changes as requested by traders. A key development in the market has been the introduction of new businesses which are attracting new footfall.

In Llanelli, vacancy rates have been kept to below 10% for some considerable time. Prompt re-advertising of stalls and shops have led to filling vacancies quickly. However, owing to lowering levels of footfall, tenancy rates may increase in the future and will need to be monitored.

Town Centres

Regeneration of our town centres continues to be a key priority for the Council. In July 2021 the Carmarthenshire Economic Recovery Plan was endorsed by the Cabinet. Specific town centre plans for Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli followed in January 2022. The projects currently being progressed are all aligned with actions and proposals contained within these town centre recovery plans.

In each of the primary town centres Ammanford, Llanelli and Carmarthen, we have Task Forces and a Town Forum in place. These groups bring together the key stakeholders within the town centres on a quarterly basis to discuss projects, gain input, consideration, and support for each other to develop the town centres. Opportunities for funding is highlighted, progress on each individual stakeholder activity is provided and endorsement for potential future activity is requested. Each of the towns has its own set of key performance indicators which are monitored on an annual basis, these include number of vacant properties, levels of investment from stakeholders and footfall figures.

Delivery of Welsh Government's Transforming Towns funding (April 2022 – March 2025) and UK Government Shared Prosperity Funding (April 2023 – March 2025) is in progress. Both funds provide an opportunity to concentrate on the primary town centres and the main objectives involve increasing vibrancy, reducing the number of vacant / underutilised commercial units, and increasing the amount of footfall.

Construction progressed well during 2023/24 on the former YMCA in Llanelli. On completion there will be 4 retail units, 4 office spaces and 8x2 bedroom apartments. The commercial space will be released to the open market for tenants. The retail units will lend themselves to start up units for local people to take the next step in their business journey.

Construction on the Market Street North site in Llanelli recommenced in September 2023 with an anticipated 18-month (65 weeks) build programme. The development will provide 340sqm commercial floorspace in 5 commercial units with capacity to accommodate 17 jobs and 10 residential units.

Pendine Tourism Attractor Project

One of 13 projects creating a series of 'must see' destinations across Wales, the Pendine Tourism Attractor Project has been part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund through Welsh Government and Carmarthenshire County Council.

This was a major project for the Council's Regeneration section, securing £millions from several sources to create a high-quality destination that aims to encourage business investment and employment in the locality.

On the seafront of Pendine overlooking its fabulous 7-mile sandy beach, **The Caban** hotel is the perfect space in which to relax, unwind, and discover the local area. The excellent location affords the guests the luxury of being able to easily access the breath-taking beach and coastline, and the venue hosts a year-round calendar of themed events to suit all ages and all interests.

Open year round, the accommodation comprises 14 ensuite rooms ranging from twin/double, triple, family, and ground floor accessible rooms as well as an on-site restaurant with a varied menu served throughout the day.

In addition to the accommodation and licenced restaurant Caban has an accessible changing room and beach friendly wheelchair hire (via a separate fund), both available and marketed to the public as well as external public conveniences.

Opened in 2023, Caban is proving to be a very popular destination for both visitors and the residents who use the restaurant regularly to meet up and socialise.

Jobs – presently 12 permanent staff:

- ° 8 x Full Time (5 from Pendine, 2 from St Clears, 1 from Carmarthen)
- ° 4 x Part Time (2 from Pendine, 2 from St Clears)
- ° 5 x casual (2 from Pendine, 3 from Carmarthen)

Also currently recruiting so will increase to 16 permanent staff.

An additional four local people have acquired employment at the Museum of Land Speed, also located at Pendine.

Outcome: People are supported to take advantage of local opportunities whether it be through starting a business, gaining qualifications, or gaining meaningful employment.

- Through our delivery of Community Benefits over 3,595 weeks of targeted recruitment and training was delivered in 2023/24 through the Council's 21st Century Schools programme, as well as housing and regeneration projects across the County.
- We are delivering the £30 million Skills and Talent Programme and have financially supported 21 projects to date with the aim of creating a skilled future workforce. The programme's aims are to deliver at least 2,200 additional skills; support around 14,000 individuals with higher-level skills within 10 years and create at least 3,000 new apprenticeship opportunities.
- The Regional Learning and Skills Partnership have worked alongside partners to continue to update a Skills Barometer to map current provision and skills gaps both now and in the future. The programme is progressing well with the first brand new Degree Apprenticeship in User Experience being delivered by University of Wales Trinity Saint David - this compliments the level 2 - 5 apprenticeship offer being delivered through Gower College. This Framework is the first to be delivered in the whole of Wales and has been a requirement of Industry for many years.

Further activities include:

- Helped industry cluster groups grow and have created a promotional booklet to showcase their vision, benefits, and operations.
- Developed an interactive Explore Engineering website in collaboration with the private sector. They have also produced a short film series to inspire young learners and adults to consider engineering as a career choice.
- Organised several events, including "Let's Talk GenZ" workshops, a Future Skills for the Future Workforce event focused on digital skills, and a Retrofit Conference titled "Keep Contracts Local" in the construction cluster.
- Collaborated with BT to bring the BT immersive space to learners in Carmarthenshire, allowing them to explore different scenarios using cutting-edge technology.
- Participated in the Choose Your Future careers event, which aimed to provide insights into various career options and pathways for students, allowing them to learn from industry professionals and gain a better understanding of the world of work.

Llandeilo Market Hall

Llandeilo's 'Old Market' is a new development providing 1,249m² of mixed office, business including a destination cafe and event space in the heart of Llandeilo.

Steeped in history, the building has undergone just over £4 million of redevelopment work through the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns funding programme with funding also coming from the European Regional Development Fund (£1.4 million and £300,000 respectively) and the Council, to create a spectacular multi-use premises for businesses and events.



With 20 business units created, 18 are currently occupied by 17 businesses including barbers, occupational therapy, and Solar renewables, with the remaining 2 units currently under offer.

Features of the building includes full fibre broadband up to 900mb download speeds, 8 passenger/disabled lift to the first floor, one parking space per unit, two electric vehicle recharging spaces for the building, gas or electric heating with wall mounted radiators and communal WCs and kitchens on the ground and first floors.

The facility will also be a venue for festivals and events held throughout the year, local community groups to use for concerts, ceremonies etc as well as a permanent venue for local markets. To further position the town as a quality and culturally rich Welsh place to live and visit, the facility has been named 'Yr Hen Farchnad'.

Parc Gelli Werdd

Work was completed early in 2024 on the development of Parc Gelli Werdd, a development of offices and industrial units within 3 buildings providing 32,500 sqft for letting at Cross Hands, Carmarthenshire. Response levels of tenant interest in the units has been very positive, with 9 of the units and 5 of the offices are to be occupied shortly, with ongoing enquiries for the remaining 6 units and 6 offices.



The project:

- Delivers Economic Development by providing a mix of office and industrial floor space to local businesses to establish and grow and will accommodate up to 113 jobs.
- Contributes to the improvement of employment opportunities for local communities including young people in providing future jobs, thus keeping people in the area.
- Has delivered 1,390 targeted recruitment and training weeks, 255 apprentice weeks involving 9 apprentices, provided 94 opportunities for people considered disadvantaged as well as delivering of construction-based programme to the local school.
- Contributes to developing capacity in green technology skills and supply of products for delivering low carbon developments.
- Maximises ecological enhancement as part of the development in advance of the strategic site development, mitigation, compensation, and enhancement of land in Carmarthenshire. Sustainable drainage systems adopted using swales that allow controlled flows leading into a wider drainage regime.
- Maximises Social Value by incorporating inclusive design principles together with accessibility, equality and placemaking requirements and via social clauses in building contracts.
- Adopts an innovative approach and collaboration, contributing to the decarbonisation of commercial property and its long-term impacts and the identified priorities for communities in the area.

Outcome: Businesses are supported to take advantage of local supply chains and procurement opportunities.

Promotion

Our Corporate Procurement and Economic Development Units work closely to promote opportunities to Carmarthenshire businesses. Several Procurement and Business Surgeries have been delivered, offering procurement advice and guidance to potential suppliers, advice on business grants to those eligible, future tender exercises to promote them to local businesses who might be interested in tendering, and wider business support. We have held live tender workshops during 2023/24, and a getting tender ready workshop for the South West Wales Regional Contractors Framework 2024 tender in construction.

The surgeries are held at a variety of locations across Carmarthenshire accommodating the 3 main towns and 10 Towns.

Property Maintenance

As a result of our strategic procurement practices for outsourced work, 63.73% of spending was directed to companies within Carmarthenshire last year, with an additional 29.35% going to other Welsh companies.

To enhance our contract management, oversight, and overall productivity, a new job management system has been implemented within the Property Maintenance team. This technology-driven solution is expected to streamline operations and improve service delivery.

Pentre Awel

On Pentre Awel, Zone 1 Commercial regular meetings are held between Bouygues UK's commercial team and the Council to optimise the supply chain opportunities promoted for local suppliers to have the opportunity to bid for sub-contracting work. Bouygues maintain a live Procurement Plan outlining the sublet opportunities and these have been shared with the Council's Economic Development team.

Furthermore, we continue to work with Bouygues to pilot a means of collating supply chain spend and tracking main contractor and sub-contractor locations and the location of individuals employed on site.

Economic and Community Benefits are tracked during the construction phase by Bouygues to optimise the supply chain opportunities promoted for local suppliers to have the opportunity to bid for sub-contracting work.



During the year, the following headline benefits have been achieved:

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Local Supply Chain | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 72% of activity procured awarded to Welsh suppliers with 9% within the SA postcode area. Local suppliers include Shufflebottom Ltd, Owens Group, Dyfed Recycling Services and Dyfed Steels. |
| Engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 93.5 hours of engagement of local schools and 9 Community Ambassadors. |
| Jobs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 38 new entrant jobs created• 1,990 person weeks of Targeted Recruitment and Training (TR&T) for the project but falls short of the target of delivering 4,680 person weeks by late 2024. Work is ongoing by increasing employability hubs held on site to improve.• Several job vacancies were not filled due to a labour shortage in construction and other skill sets, which has resulted in 463 TR&T weeks not realised. |
| Learners | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 31 apprentices/shared apprentices• 4 graduates• 19 trainees• 13 work experience (in education)• 586 pupil interactions achieved |

WHAT HAS HAPPENED ACROSS PENTRE AWEL DURING 2023/24...



Property Design

We successfully launched the Carmarthenshire Construction Professional Services Framework (2023) for a term of four years. This provides an agile route to market for a range of professional disciplines to assist us in developing our ambitious work programmes. This framework has been crucial in allowing us a supporting avenue to additional technical expertise during the Council-wide recruitment freeze.

The tender for the new South West Wales Regional Contractors Framework 2024 (SWWRCF) will be launched and will serve as our principal route to market for all major works construction projects in Carmarthenshire. The SWWRCF will also be utilised by our neighbouring authorities in South West Wales, as well as other named institutions and participating bodies.

Outcome: People feel empowered to lead active and healthy lives through access to fit for purpose services and provision.

Ammanford Sports Facilities

November 2023 saw the official opening of a brand new 3G floodlit all-weather pitch as part of a £2m investment in sports facilities in Ammanford. Ysgol Dyffryn Aman and the wider community will also benefit from a 6-lane synthetic running track, and re-surfaced 2G Hockey all-weather pitch. The £300k+ resurfacing of the existing all-weather pitch was made possible through a combination of school, local authority, and external funding and was part of the second phase of works and investments being undertaken at the site.

Delivering a new 3G sports pitch in Ammanford is part of a wider strategy for all-weather pitch provision across the County that will benefit communities for future generations. The investment is all-important in developing the Council's 'sport for all' approach to support a broad range of participation in sports, from beginners to elite.

Outcome: Look to improve the availability and affordability of early years education and childcare settings across the County, to address one of the common barriers faced by individuals looking to return to or find employment.

Education

There are currently 42 schools providing part time education for 3-year-olds. 3 of these schools provide additional full wrap around care on site. There are also 27 pre-school settings delivering part-time education, 15 of these settings are also approved Flying Start childcare settings.

The Early Years advisory team provide regular effective training to support all staff to implement the early years nursery curriculum successfully in all schools and settings.

The Modern Education Provision (MEP) team are currently working towards addressing the gaps in 3-year-old education following the Primary Rising 4s consultation.

Childcare

Our 5th Statutory Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) summary report continues to be shared with prospective childcare providers and is also available on the [Family Information Service](#) website. There are 213 registered childcare providers offering 4,214 childcare places delivered by childminders, day nurseries, cylchoedd meithrin, Flying Start, After School Clubs and Holiday Clubs.

The Childcare Team have continued to support private childcare settings to remain open and have closely monitored the number of settings that have closed/re-opened following the impact of increased living costs. Providers continue to be concerned about long term sustainability. We continue to direct providers to access grants that are accessible to providers to support their sustainability. The team support providers in early identification of grants and help in submitting applications where required.

Grants and Funding

- Sustainability Grant 2023-24: Supported 83 childcare providers with a total of £43,443.10 for sustainability/hardship.
- Additional Sustainability Grant 2023-24: Opened in January 2024 for those not successful in the previous round; 25 approved applications received £18,750 in total.
- Holiday Playscheme Grant 2023-24: In July 2023, 11 holiday clubs received grants totalling £12,050 to support sustainability and registration of holiday playschemes.
- Childcare and Early Years Capital Small Grant 2022-25: Secured £470k for 2023-24; 87 applications from various childcare providers were successful.

The [Family Information Service](#) (FIS) website is reviewed and updated regularly providing families with financial support information through childcare choices, tax free childcare, universal credit, Flying Start and the Childcare Offer. Providers can access further information on external grants and subsidised mandatory and best practice training.

The team are working towards addressing the gaps to increase childcare where demand is not being met. Childminder numbers have declined nationally across Wales in recent years. Childminding promotion has been undertaken through radio promotion and local events. All potential childminders are directed to Pacey to commence Introduction to home-based childcare (IHC) and Preparing for Childminding Practice (PCP) Qualification course. Childminder qualification costs is supported through the Commercial Clients Group (CCG) Training and Support Programme and has been welcomed and for a few childminder assistants, a considered progression in becoming a childminder.

The Childcare Team in collaboration with the Regional Care Career Connector commenced delivery of the We Care Wales Introduction to Childcare within Carmarthenshire secondary schools, promoting childcare career opportunities to years 8 and 9 as they consider their chosen subjects and to years 10 and 11 who are studying Health and Social Care.

Welsh Language Offer

We continue to promote Welsh language development opportunities for the childcare workforce sector through promoting CAMAU as well as umbrella organisations language support initiatives for parents such as Clwb Cwtsh. Information is shared with providers through our website and through regular email communications. Work is currently being undertaken to collate all Welsh language support resources in one area on the [Family Information Service](#) page.

Childcare Offer

The Team promoted and publicised the Childcare Offer throughout the County. Digital promotion through the Family Information Service (FIS) and social media platforms have continued. In 2023-24 there were 1,143 Carmarthenshire Childcare Offer applications received and processed through the National Digital service. 156 Childcare providers are approved on the Childcare Offer National Digital service.



Business Networking

Stori Cymru is an example of a business that was supported through a business engagement event. As part of the Business Engagement Sir Gâr Project funded through the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund our aims are to support new and existing businesses to build and strengthen local supply chains, inter-trading, unlocking public sector contracts, supporting enterprise, and providing learning and trading opportunities for businesses.



As part of the networking session, we had asked James Owen (Stori Cymru Cyf.) to deliver a short presentation on 'the power of storytelling' to inspire local businesses at the event. There were 25+ attendees present at the event for an opportunity to connect with other Carmarthenshire businesses. During the networking, James was introduced to another local company who were looking to develop a project, for which James could deliver. The subsequent conversation resulted in them successfully working together to deliver the project.

James stated "In November 2023, I had the privilege of attending the Swansea Bay City Deal Networking event at Yr Egin, an occasion that proved successful for both me and my business. The event provided a vibrant platform for engaging with a diverse array of business owners, directors, and fellow entrepreneurs across South West Wales. Among the many enriching conversations I had, one of those stood out. I was introduced by a representative from the Council to a local company in Llanelli that needed my services. This initial contact paved the way for a successful collaboration, resulting in a successful business opportunity with more to follow.

As a small business owner in Llanelli, the chance to share the stage with large multimillion-pound companies is very humbling. I do believe my local authority does want to help local businesses to succeed and prosper."

We will support essential learning opportunities in literacy, numeracy, and digital skills for residents, supporting post-16 learners in upskilling for employment and progression. This initiative is in line with the Welsh Government's National Well-being indicator Milestone, aiming to reduce the percentage of working-age adults without qualifications to 5% or below across all local authorities in Wales by 2050.

We will maximise the community benefits stemming from the Pentre Awel development in Llanelli, which promises the creation of 1,800 well-paid jobs.

We are establishing a network to facilitate business connections, maintain a directory of local businesses, link enterprises with potential funding sources, and provide advice and information. This network will support both new and existing businesses, ensuring they have the resources and guidance needed to thrive.



In Summary

- Over the last six years we have reduced our carbon emissions by over a third. This is strong progress in the pathway to meeting our commitment to Welsh Government's ambition for net zero Welsh public sector by 2030 and in working together with local and national partners to meet the legal commitment to achieve a net zero Wales by 2050.
- Carmarthenshire has invested in low carbon energy projects, with a significant increase in energy generation compared to the previous year. Figures compare positively with national averages.
- Areas of the County are susceptible to the negative effects of the climate emergency, especially flooding. The Council has implemented interventions through the Flood & Water Management Act and Shoreline Management Plan to mitigate against the effects of flooding, which is a growing concern among residents.
- We are making a difference to many communities with our flood risk analysis and business case developments. We have a better understanding of risks in many communities through the development of our Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy. All developments must have sustainable drainage which is managing flooding for both new developments and the surrounding community.

How are we doing?

- Carmarthenshire is one of the most proactive counties in Wales in terms of investment in low carbon energy projects. This substantiates the forward-thinking approach that we adopt with regards to addressing the threats posed by the climate and nature emergencies. The most recent data for 2022 indicates that there was a total of 8,104 projects in Carmarthenshire generating 333MW of energy. This is the third highest level in Wales and an increase on 2021 figures.
- Flooding is a concern in Carmarthenshire, and according to Natural Resources Wales (2019), over 15,000 Business and Homes are at Risk from either River, Tidal or Surface Water Flooding, with over 5,400 of these are at Medium or High Risk. The increasing threat of the climate and nature emergencies places greater emphasis on the need for suitable and proportionate flood defences to protect those at greatest risk. Through the Council's Flood & Water Management Act and Shoreline Management Plan several interventions have been completed, including the installation of new defences and upgrades made to existing defences. According to the National Survey the level of concern about flooding expressed by Carmarthenshire respondents has increased from 36.2% in 2018/19 to 49.3% in 2022/23. This exceeds the Welsh average of 44.7%.
- In our 2023 residents survey, the largest proportion of respondents indicated 'neither' when asked whether the climate emergency is being addressed locally. This might suggest that people are unaware of the measures put in place. For those that did answer, slightly more people disagreed than agreed.

Outcome: Continue to work towards becoming a Net Zero Carbon Local Authority by 2030.

A breakdown of the Council's Energy Consumption

| | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2023/24 vs 2022/23 | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|--------------------|----------|---|
| | | | | | Progress | % change | Comment |
| Consumption (kWh) | 63,684,34 | 67,694,14 | 63,869,17 | 61,377,960 | Improved | -3.90% | This is a combination of Non-domestic buildings and street lighting, both of which have improved |
| Mileage (miles) | 6,679,056 | 6,773,772 | 7,272,186 | 8,420,699 | Declined | 15.80% | Whilst total fleet mileage has increased, both fuel consumption (litres) and CO2e emissions have reduced |
| Carbon Footprint (tCO2e) | 17,590 | 18,124 | 16,984 | 16,741 | Improved | -1.40% | This is a combination of Non-domestic buildings, street lighting, fleet and business mileage all of which have improved other than the business mileage |

Reducing carbon emissions of our vehicle fleet

We have been successful in gaining £431,632 of funding from the Welsh Government to procure 40 brand new electric vehicles for its front-line services. In total, 30 electric vans and 10 electric cars have been purchased to replace diesel vehicles and are delivering our services currently. Our proportion of electric fleet has increased from 1% to 8% of the fleet.

Carmarthenshire Local Area Energy Plan

Welsh Government have funded the development of Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) for every local authority in Wales. Local Area Energy Planning is a detailed, comprehensive process designed to identify the most effective pathway(s) to decarbonising the local energy system by 2050. The process is led by Local Government and developed collaboratively with defined stakeholders.

Carmarthenshire's LAEP has been finalised shaping our future and joins together collaborative working with the community and stakeholders. Our Plan aims to enable the optimisation of energy use, reduce reliance on a single source of energy, and increase the use of clean and renewable energy sources. The goal is to create more liveable and sustainable communities in Carmarthenshire by addressing issues such as energy affordability, reliability, and sustainability.

Local Places for Nature

This is a Welsh Government funded project and is delivered between the Local Nature Partnership and the Council. The project is working across Wales to restore and enhance nature in our public green spaces, delivering “nature on your doorstep” – where people live, work and access public services. Outputs achieved include:

- A total of 2,110 trees and shrubs have been planted in 2023/24 across 13 different sites across the County (2,000 hedgerow whips, 110 standards). 10 of these sites incorporated, or were dedicated to, heritage fruit trees plantings. Included within this were 5 different Council housing estate sites.
- Purchase of additional grass cutting ‘cut and collect’ machinery and trailers to enable improved grassland management by changing mowing practices on public open space, Housing land, Estate land, Schools, and Town & Community Council land where we work as contractors.
- Work with a consultancy to assess the grassland estate to identify the appropriate grassland management regime. This is linked to a proposed grassland management policy on amenity grassland in the County.



Low Carbon Heat Grant

Building upon the large number of energy projects already undertaken across the corporate estate and an earlier Welsh Government grant funded feasibility study, we have recently secured £3.9m in Welsh Government Low Carbon Heat Grant funding to replace fossil fuel boilers with air source heat pump technology at six schools.

The grant, which covers 90% of the overall £4.4m project cost, has also allowed us to enhance building insulation, and, in one case replace all existing single paned metal framed windows with modern, double-glazed, heat retaining equivalents.

Heat pump technology is currently more expensive to operate than typical gas heating systems. This informed our decision to invest in off-grid sites, which, through their reliance on oil and LPG, were already expensive to heat.

To further reduce electricity demand, solar Photovoltaics (PV) panels are also being installed at five of the six schools utilising our Net Zero capital budget and it is intended to add panels to the sixth, in conjunction with planned near future roof replacement works.

Climate Change & Nature Emergency Strategy

We are currently developing a Climate Change & Nature Emergency Strategy to recognise the wider role we have in addressing these Emergencies. Our aim is that the Strategy will complement the Council's Net Zero Plan which focusses on our own indigenous carbon emissions.

Wales Transport Strategy: Decarbonisation

We continue to work with communities and regional and national partners to develop programmes that support the decarbonisation aims set out in Wales' Transport Strategy. We have been successful in applying for funding to support several programmes this year including, public transport programmes, road improvements, active travel, electric vehicle infrastructure programmes and safe routes in the community.

Revised Local Development Plan

As part of the preparation of the Revised Local Development Plan we are seeking to embed a series of policies aimed at promoting the principles of sustainable development. This includes embedding requirements which supports and complements our Net Zero Plan as well as the response to the nature emergency.

Electric Vehicle Charging

We now have 54 electric vehicle (EV) charging points across Carmarthenshire at Carmarthen, Llanelli, Ammanford, Llandeilo, Burry Port, Llandovery, Cross Hands and several at other carparks, leisure centres and community centres. Having a network of EV charging points across the County has saved 710 tonnes of Co2 in 2023/24.

Project Ecology

The Rural Conservation Section's Project Ecology work has been expanded in 2023/24 focusing on supporting Housing and Communities with the ecological requirements of their projects. By the end of 2023/24, 40 officers across the Housing teams had received training in Protected Species issues relevant to their work. Project Ecologists are also contributing to the ecological aspects of the Tywi Valley Cycle Path, ensuring that legislative requirements are met.

Pentre Awel Carbon Reduction

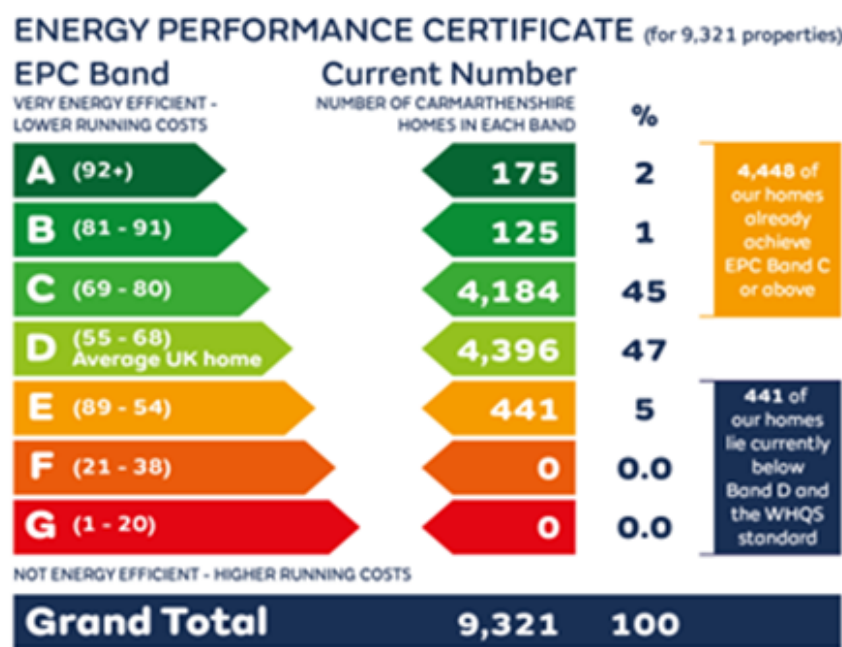
One great success so far has been the installation of solar panel powered site offices and cabins. When not powered by the sun, they convert to a hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) powered generator – this alone has reduced the carbon footprint of this part of the project by 76% in around 15 weeks on site. All the onsite CCTV systems have also been converted to solar powered.



The Pentre Awel project site has fully converted to HVO fuel. Working with local contractor Alun Griffiths, we have sourced a local HVO fuel provider, and although HVO is more expensive than white diesel, it can reduce carbon emissions by up to 90%, and has therefore been 100% adopted for Pentre Awel.

Promoting affordable warmth and decarbonising our housing stock

Our aim is to make all our homes energy efficient and achieve a minimum Band C energy performance rating as quickly as possible. Nearly 50% of our homes have already achieved this standard. Future investment in our existing homes will be based on using a Fabric First approach that improves the thermal performance of our homes and introducing non fossil fuel heating systems. This approach will promote affordable warmth for our tenants.



Our new build council homes embrace decarbonisation. Our homes are energy efficient, well insulated and have the latest innovative technologies and support the Council's Net Zero Carbon principles. They help reduce our carbon emissions by on average 70% and create affordable warmth for tenants growing the green economy and creating sustainable Communities.

Leisure Services Green Champions

Within Leisure Services a group of Green Champions have been formed who meet monthly to look at how we can reduce the carbon footprint of our facilities and share best practice. A matrix of projects has been developed. Working in conjunction with corporate colleagues we have identified projects in facilities that are the largest consumers of energy to try and redress and make our facilities more efficient and sustainable both in terms of the green agenda and from a financial perspective.

Outcome: Improve current and explore new developments to limit the effects of flooding and other environmental threats which affect our residents and service users.

Revised Local Development Plan

A Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment was undertaken to guide and inform the future distribution and location of development including housing and employment and future decision making. This defined the extent of projected flood risk incorporating climate change assumptions and forms key evidence in support of the preparation of the Revised Local Development Plan including its publication for full public consultation.

Local Flood Management Strategy 2024-2030 (LFRMS)

We have developed and consulted on our new Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS). The Strategy sets out our high level aims and objectives pertaining to managing flood risk management over the next 7 years and highlights our aim of reducing the risk of flooding to people, businesses, and communities. We will do this by modernising our approach to Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM), improving our data to support better decision making, championing sustainable drainage and nature- based solutions, while promoting community adaption, partnership working and empowering communities to become more resilient.

In parallel with our LFRMS we are also developing our flood risk management plan that will focus on our 30-communities at greatest risk of flooding. The plan will be a more tactical / operational document and will focus on the actions to reduce the flood risk in the short, medium, and long term.

Flood Schemes

We have continued to develop our flood risk management capital works programme. In 2023/24, we were again successful with our Welsh Government grant applications and 9 new Welsh Government grant funded schemes worth approximately £1 million were developed.

In total the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management capital works programme in 2023/24 included 15 Welsh Government funded schemes and 8 other schemes which, subject to successful business cases and funding bids, will bring flood risk management benefits to more than 680 homes and 145 businesses.

In 2023/24 we completed schemes at Newcastle Emlyn and Dafen (Llanelli). These schemes represent a significant investment, and they benefit 64 properties and businesses in those areas. We will continue with a minimum of 2 projects per year, subject to funding and continue to develop our pipeline of works in the communities at greatest risk.

Sustainable Drainage Systems

We are also continuing to drive and champion true sustainable drainage in the County. Applications have continued to grow in the 5-years since this legislation was enacted and now all new developments greater than 100m² in the County must be accompanied by a sustainable drainage system. The systems not only manage flood risk, with an allowance for climate change, but they also ensure multiple benefits including pollution control and biodiversity enhancement. In 2023/24, 397 new residential units and 48 commercial dwellings, covering an area of approximately 30 hectares, had sustainable drainage systems approved.

Flood Incident management and investigation

1 in 6 properties in Carmarthenshire, over 12,600 in total are at risk of flooding. With 12 named storms this Winter season, 2023/24 has been the joint most stormy period since 2015. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have recently suggested that it is the wettest Winter in 180 years. Across Carmarthenshire the flood and coastal protection business unit recorded 384 incidents, 68 (18%) of which we Category-1 internal flooding. October and the Christmas/New Year period saw the worst flooding with short duration high intensity rainfall impacting on multiple communities. We are continuing to work with these communities and partner organisations including NRW and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water to ensure that we understand the causes and risk and implement holistic robust mitigation where possible.



Flood Consultations

Holding public consultation events has become a key part of the way we manage flood risk in Carmarthenshire. We hold public events to better understand the flood risk first hand from those who have experienced it. The residents and businesses play a key part in firstly informing us of the flooding mechanism but most importantly they should be involved in the solutions and interventions going forward.

Post significant flooding in Ferryside and Llansteffan over Christmas and the New Year, 4 community events were held. Over 100 people attended these events and have helped inform us and our partner agencies about the mechanisms of flooding. Furthermore, post flooding in previous years, a community flood group has been established in Kidwelly and representatives from the group, plus the local members, routinely meet with members of the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management team to discuss the ongoing interventions and actions.

As a part of our capital works programme, we arrange community meetings to provide education and updates on our work, in addition to gleaning information. In the last year, we have delivered events in Pen y Fan (Llanelli), and Llangennech where we are developing business cases to support bids to Welsh Government for funding for capital works.

How can we do better?

We will finalise the Section 19 flood investigation report for the flooding events at Llansteffan in December and January and ensure the delivery of the corresponding action plan. This is in conjunction with the implementation of the Flood Risk Management Plan-2 (FRMP2) for the period 2024-2030. We aim to develop the capital work programme up to 2030, in line with the objectives outlined in FRMP2.

We plan to develop and execute a two-year programme aimed at enhancing flood community resilience, adaptation and engagement. In communities identified as having the highest flood risk in Flood Risk Management Plan-2, we will organize events to educate residents about their flood risk and sustainable management practices. These events will also serve to increase general awareness of flood risk management processes and the responsibilities of stakeholders.

The broader environmental goals include continuing and intensifying efforts to achieve Net Zero Carbon status for the Local Authority by 2030, this involves delivering the Carmarthenshire Local Area Energy Plan and managing the development of the Climate Change & Nature Emergency Strategy.

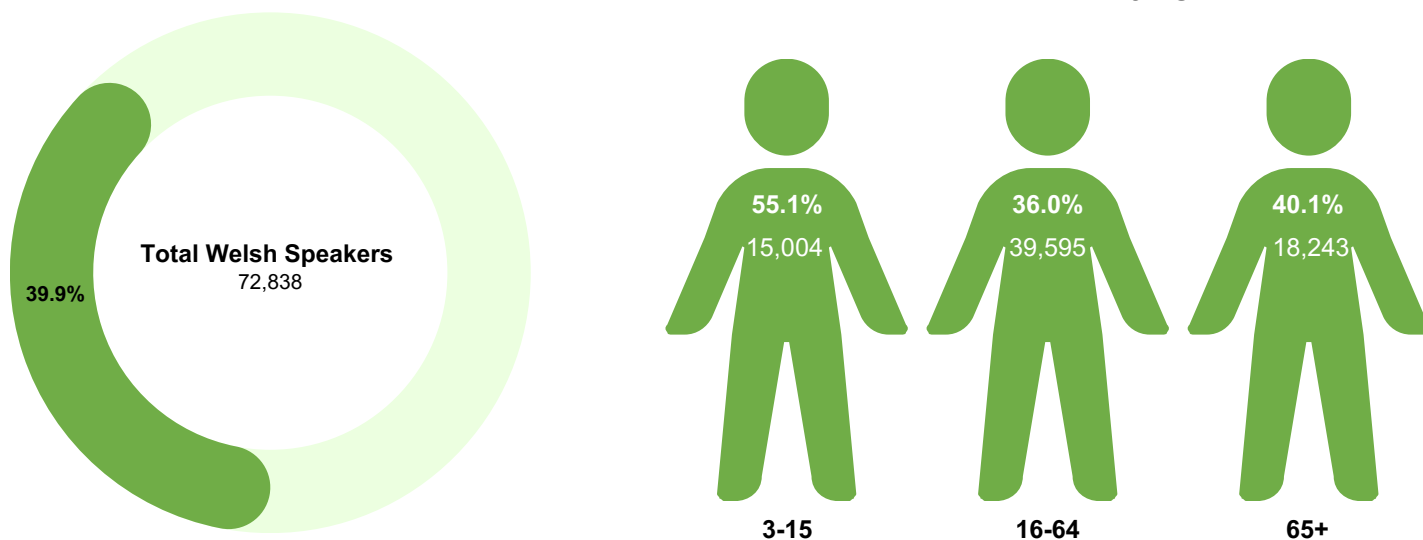
In Summary

- Welsh language and culture make Carmarthenshire unique. Our Welsh speaking communities are resilient; however, there has been a significant decline in the number of speakers across the County. These Results have further increased the importance of promoting and normalising the use of the Welsh language.
- As Carmarthenshire experiences the highest percentage loss of Welsh speakers of all the counties of Wales for the second decade running, firm and confident action as outlined in the 'Carmarthenshire Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2023-2028' must be taken to stop this declining trend.

How are we doing?

- The Census data for 2021 indicates that Carmarthenshire is home to 72,838 Welsh speakers, 39.9% of the population.

Welsh Speakers by age



- In our 2023 residents survey, most respondents agree that it is important to promote and protect the Welsh language.
- 242 members of staff attending various levels of Welsh Learning courses between September 2022 and June 2023 (Academic Year), this is higher than the previous year of 227.



Outcome: Increase in the number of Welsh speakers.

- Our 'Strategy to promote the Welsh Language in Carmarthenshire 2023-28' sets out what needs to be done to work towards restoring the Welsh language in the County by increasing the numbers of those who can speak Welsh, increasing the situations where people can speak Welsh, raising the status of the language, supporting communities to maintain the language and by having a positive effect on population movements.
- We want to see an increase in the proportion of Carmarthenshire residents who can speak Welsh and use their Welsh consistently. We want to see the Welsh language as a working and operating norm in the County's public institutions and increasingly prevalent in the County's businesses. We want our young people to see a future for themselves in the County in sustainable and prosperous Welsh communities, economically, culturally, and socially. We want everyone to be proud of the Welsh language in Carmarthenshire.
- The Education and Children's Services Department is committed to increasing the use of the Welsh language in its daily administration. They have set a vision in terms of supporting and encouraging our staff to move along the language continuum. As part of this work, we have worked closely with Bangor University, through the ARFer project, to provide support and interventions through a digital platform.
- We have promoted our Welsh Language services through a specific campaign, held by the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office. "Defnyddia dy Gymraeg" was a campaign across the whole of Wales, to encourage Welsh speakers and learners to use their language skills when accessing services.
- We have published a 'Grants and the Welsh language' policy to support and encourage any organisations who access grants through the Council to embed and promote the language in their projects.
- We have continued to work closely with the Carmarthenshire Welsh Language Strategic Forum, looking at key areas such as Housing, Planning and the Regeneration of our communities.
- We have worked closely with Pentre Awel to assess the potential impact of the development on the Language and have created a detailed action plan to promote and embed the Welsh language in all aspects of the planning and delivery - in our recruitment, services and the academic and research opportunities.
- We have seen a slight increase in the number of complaints received in relation to lack of Welsh medium services and two investigations have been held into our compliance, following feedback from our residents.
- We have worked closely with businesses across the County, through the Arfor 2 programme, to support the use of the Language. Businesses have also been asked to encourage their staff to learn Welsh through the National Centre for learning Welsh. 38 local businesses have registered for the Beginners Work Welsh. The businesses will be working towards the Welsh Language Commissioner's 'Cynnig Cymraeg' framework and many have received grant funding to increase bilingual provision in their services.

Outcome: Increased confidence and use of Welsh as a thriving language.

We are continuing to implement the Welsh Language Standards across the Council with regular dialogue with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office. During the year we have undertaken targeted messaging with Council services on identifying and recording linguistic choice of service users, further to feedback from an investigation held by the Commissioner's Office. Messages about the Standards are conveyed to staff through presentations by the Policy and Involvement Team and through the communication streams maintained by Marketing and Media.

Welsh Language County Strategic Forum

The Welsh Language County Strategic Forum, which includes representation from the County's language promotion organisations and public bodies has also continued with its role of developing a programme of promoting the Welsh language in the County. During the year, the second Welsh Language Promotion Strategy has been published and detailed action plans are being prepared to support each Objective. The vision for the Strategy is:

"To make Welsh the main language of the County. Our aim is to restore Welsh to a language spoken and used by the majority of our inhabitants consistently, and in all aspects of life".

Museum Masterpieces

During 2023/24, the Masterpiece Tour partnership between the National Gallery, London, Carmarthenshire Museum and two other regional venues, showcased paintings by Rembrandt and Verrocchio in Abergwili resulting in record museum visitor attendances. The masterpiece exhibitions were curated thematically, from inspiring new commissions of Welsh poetry and art to Carmarthenshire's rich history and stories of healing and protection.

Over 17,000 people visited the museum, which was an 18% increase on the previous year and an 81% increase compared with the last operational year prior to closure during the pandemic. We asked over 1,000 visitors about their experience and almost 80% of respondents said that they felt visiting the museum had increased their sense of well-being, and 98% rated their experience as 'excellent' or 'good'. The museum received its first VAQAS (Visit Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme) award since 2014.

Theatres Welsh language programming

Theatrau Sir Gâr's produced its first ever, full in-house production and this done through the medium of Welsh in May 2023. The production aimed to provide an entertaining, mainstream theatre experience to help support Welsh language audience development, and to support early and mid-career creatives and inject much needed new blood into the Welsh theatre sector.

It opened with two performances at Y Ffwrnes, Llanelli, then toured to 9 other venues across Wales before closing with a performance at Y Lyric, Carmarthen (12 performances in total). The production attracted 717 audiences, averaging 60 attendances per venue. The skills and learning from this project have been invaluable, including new partnerships forged with Canolfan Dysgu Cymraeg, new press and media contacts, and an increased confidence and knowledge of working bilingually and embedding access and inclusion.

Sibrwd (Welsh to English translation) was available at every performance, and 3 (BSL) British Sign Language interpreted performances were scheduled. The production also provided two placement opportunities to early career deaf or disabled creatives through the Connect and Flourish Project with Taking Flight.

A 5-star review was achieved by Buzz magazine stating "It's a Welsh-language play that skilfully integrates English captioning, embraces humour and satire, and offers an alternative to the "Wales is full of sad, working-class people in sad, working-class hovels" narratives that have been thrust upon us repeatedly..."

Actif Anywhere

Adding to the existing 'Actif Anywhere' platform, which provides health and fitness sessions online in an OnDemand and Livestreamed basis, Actif were recognised for extending this concept to create an equivalent school's platform. This has created the only bilingual platform in Wales, which is being rolled out across Carmarthenshire, with plans to extend Wales-wide, and was shortlisted at a national awards ceremony in recognition.

Tourism Ambassador Scheme

With a combined reach of over 5million, the [Discover Carmarthenshire](#) Facebook and website accounts are two of the most popular channels for both residents and those seeking to visit the County. Tourism business roadshows and newsletters to the business sector actively promote the take up of schemes such as Helo Blod, with officers including it in their visitor information services to event organisers. A new Tourism Ambassador scheme has a specific Welsh language module which was launched last year as part of activities to support the National Urdd Eisteddfod. Our role in acting as the first point of call for the Welsh film requests has built up an excellent relationship with the Welsh medium production sector, making it easier for them to film in the county and thus increase awareness of the County and what it has to offer.



Encouraging all schools in Carmarthenshire to compete in the Urdd Eisteddfod 2023

The Urdd Eisteddfod, one of Europe's biggest youth festivals, came to Carmarthenshire in May 2023 and to celebrate this, the Council set a challenge for every school in the County to compete in the Eisteddfod.

We led a partnership to support the schools to compete, particularly the schools that are not used to competing in the Eisteddfod. Promotional materials explained that there were all sorts of competitions available; from singing, narrating, and acting on stage, to dancing, arts and crafts and even hair and beauty. There were competitions open to all and some open only to Welsh learners. Organisations which supported the project included Menter Iaith Gorllewin Sir Gâr, Menter Dinefwr, Menter Cwm Gwendraeth Elli, Yr Egin, Yr Atom, the Council and Coleg Sir Gâr.

Whilst this was the eighth time that the Urdd Eisteddfod visited Carmarthenshire, it was the first time that Llandovery hosted the festival. The Eisteddfod attracts in the region of 100,000 visitors a year and historically contributes up to £6 million to the local economy of the host county, with the hospitality industry benefitting hugely.

How can we do better?

We will continue to collaborate with departments, providing advice and support on the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards. In line with this, we will prepare a new Welsh Language Skills Strategy, which is designed to ensure our workforce possesses the necessary skills to deliver services in Welsh to our residents.

In partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh, we will continue to encourage and support our staff in either learning or enhancing their Welsh language skills. We will work closely with the Welsh Government, to deliver key strategic projects to empower our communities and develop the use of the Welsh language in our workplace.

We are in the process of developing an assessment framework for our businesses. This framework will assist them in establishing a baseline of evidence regarding the development of the language. It is envisioned to evolve into an information hub, providing businesses with access to a wealth of Welsh language learning resources, including videos, templates, and more.

In Summary

- Total crime in Carmarthenshire reduced during 2023/24. Effective partnership working will support in sustaining these low rates.
- The residents survey for 2023 indicated that most respondents like living in Carmarthenshire.
- Most people agreed that they feel safe in their community. However, there was some disparity within local community areas, for example Llanelli exhibited an overall negative score.

How are we doing?

| Business Survey Statement | Average Index Score (AIS) | | Comments |
|---|---------------------------|------|--|
| | 2022 | 2023 | |
| I like living in Carmarthenshire | 1.32 | 1.16 | Scores were highest for the Tywi and Teifi community areas and lowest in Llanelli. It is also interesting to note that scores were lowest amongst the younger age group. |
| I feel that I can live the life I want to live without the fear of judgement or prejudice | 0.71 | 0.49 | The score has decreased slightly from the previous year. Agreement to this statement was lower amongst members of the LGBTQ+ community and respondents who have disabilities. It is positive for Carmarthenshire as a place and its people that overall residents feel that they can be themselves. This is an integral part of feeling a sense of belonging and is one of the main contributors to overall happiness. |
| I feel safe in my community | 0.78 | 0.55 | Carmarthenshire has one of the lowest crime rates of all the counties in Wales and a positive score to this statement reflects this. However, there is disparity within local community areas, with Llanelli exhibiting an overall negative score of -0.08 which represents a significant of disagreement, but it should be noted that this survey took place during the situation at the Stradey Park Hotel, and local residents took the opportunity to share their views through this consultation. |

- 99.13% of food establishments in Carmarthenshire met food hygiene standards during 2023/24.
- Unfortunately, only 49% of high-risk Trading Standard businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection during 2023/24 were inspected. The reason for this is that during the second half of the year, there was an increase in reactive high-risk criminal investigations and high-profile proactive work to tackle the sale of illicit vapes and the underage sale of vapes which required resources to be redirected from routine inspections. All outstanding premises were prioritised in the first quarter of 2024-25.

Outcome: Sustain low crime rates whilst continuing effective partnership working to address increasing rates evident in some areas of the county.

No Cold Calling Zones

Trading Standards (in partnership with Dyfed Powys Police) implement No Cold Calling Zones throughout the County that prohibit cold calling in areas with high proportions of elderly or vulnerable persons and/or a history of distraction burglary. To date, 56 zones have been established in streets/housing complexes and one No Cold Calling Village (Cilycwm). Zones reduce incidents of doorstep crime and distraction burglary, thereby protecting vulnerable persons and enabling them to feel more confident and safer in their homes.

Our zones are subject to ongoing monitoring and periodic reviews, with joint crime prevention visits undertaken by Trading Standards, Housing Officers, and Local Neighbourhood Policing Teams. The most recent review indicated that two-thirds of residents feel safer in their own homes following the implementation of a zone.

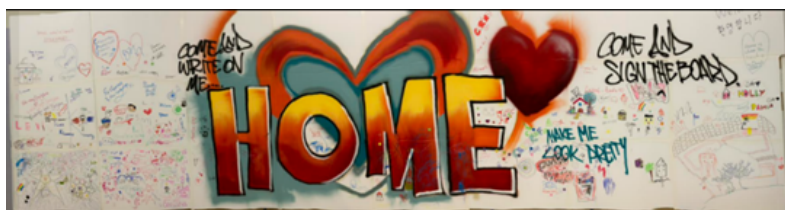
Community Cohesion Team

The Mid and South West Wales Community Cohesion team are one of 8 regions funded by Welsh Government to achieve a consistent approach to cohesion across the country. The Cohesion Team works across Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and Powys and supported several campaigns as well as training and capacity building projects during 2023-24:

- In June 2023, the team worked with Aberystwyth University on a public workshop during Welsh Refugee Week, around trauma informed practice and how we can support our younger refugees sensitively.
- In October 2023, to raise Hate Crime Awareness, the team shared social media posts and coordinated hate crime training in schools for pupils and school governors.
- For Holocaust Memorial Day in January 2024 the team shared social media awareness messages and buildings were lit purple to raise awareness.
- Social media campaigns were held in February 2024 to raise awareness of LGBT History.
- Cohesion in our Communities sessions showcasing good practice with other community groups such as cost of living advice sessions, Welsh pronouns, and a multicultural food around the world event.
- Organised and coordinated a Wales wide webinar as part of Victim Supports, Countering Hateful Extremism Wales meeting.
- Coordinated training for Elected members, front line staff and schools around refugees and asylum seekers and Hate Crime Awareness.
- The cohesion team have continued working to support refugees and Asylum seekers regarding tension monitoring, support and training, including work relating to specific community tensions.
- The Community Cohesion team raise awareness of Hate Crime and how to report it, ensuring people understand what constitutes a hate crime and working with organisations like Victim Support to develop campaigns, training, and projects.

The Community Cohesion Regional team ran a Small Grants fund to encourage community groups and organisations to apply for funding. There were 2 successful projects in Carmarthenshire, these were:

1. **Foothold Cymru**, which coordinated an event in Llanelli strengthening community bonds among young people and their families from diverse backgrounds.



The purpose of the event was to unite communities. At the heart of the event was a collaborative project, a 5-meter-long graffiti wall was created by local artist 'Jenks', that captured the essence of "home". It promoted the idea that our shared values transcend our differences and celebrated 'there is more that unites us than divides us'

2. **Llanelli Multicultural Drop** extended the provision of the drop-in group run by the Llanelli Multicultural Network (LMCN) to support people from diverse minority ethnic communities and to promote the benefits of a multicultural society that everybody can feel proud of, celebrate, and share their cultural heritage.

Serious Violence Duty

The Serious Violence Duty was introduced by the UK Government in 2023 to tackle serious violent offending. The duty essentially places a responsibility on all regions to establish strong collaborative partnerships to better understand serious violent offending, what the drivers are and what plans we have to intervene and prevent this offending. The Dyfed Powys region now has its own needs assessment and accompanying strategy.

There is a significant amount of good work being done, especially in specific crime types that affect our region, such as domestic abuse offending and serious violence against women and girls. The budget for the Serious Violence Duty is not a significant one but will be utilised during 2024-25 in terms of being future orientated and legacy making.

There is a focus on establishing strong 'working together' principles that involves all contributing agencies who play pivotal and important roles in driving down serious violent offending. By working closely together, being creative in how we tackle this type of offending and by challenging harmful cultural norms we will make a difference to how our communities feel about public safety and our collective ambition to support victims and tackle criminal behaviour.

Social Value

Actif provides a range of options to engage adults and young people in positive activity habits that research recognises impacts upon physical and mental health, mental well-being, individual development, and social and community development (which includes reduced cost of crime and social capital benefits, e.g. improved networks, trust, and reciprocity). Termed 'Social Value', Actif's leisure centre database is integrated with a research centre that estimates a social value of over £4m resulting from people's participation in activity at centres, of which over £1m is attributable to social and community development.

Public Spaces Protection Order in Llanelli

In January 2024, the Council introduced a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in an area of Llanelli Town Centre to address alcohol and drug-related crime and disorder. The Order will remain in place for three years and will be reviewed regularly during that period.

The introduction of the new PSPO follows a review of the previous Order with the Police, an analysis of drug and alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour in the area, engagement with key stakeholders and a public consultation exercise. The review found that the previous Order had been effective in reducing alcohol-related anti-social behaviour. As a result of the review, the geographical area covered by the Order was extended.

Transforming Tyisha

Tyisha has historically had the highest crime rate in Llanelli with most calls in relation to anti-social behaviour and violence, along with high levels of drug and alcohol misuse. Several interventions have been developed by the Transforming Places Team, in partnership with the Police, to improve the state of crime in Tyisha.

In partnership with the Police, an Environmental Visual Audit was conducted to help us to design out crime on our housing developments and look at measures such as fencing, layout, and additional security to improve community safety.

The fencing project is now complete with 90% satisfaction. The remaining 10% would have liked the fencing a little higher, though this was avoided to ensure good amenity for the area.

Complex Case Enforcement

The community informed the Community Wardens of ongoing incidents in relation to block of flats within Clos Sant Paul. The intelligence provided suggested drug dealing and anti-social behaviour linked to a single flat within the block.

An extensive investigation took place in collaboration with Dyfed Powys Police with evidence gathered allowing for the eviction of a problematic tenant. The property was retained as a 'sensitive let' ensuring a guarantee of respite was provided to the block's tenants following this period of disruption.

Through, listening and working with the community, the ward now has 3 neighbourhood watch groups and an active resident's group. Through the interventions by the team and Police, crime rates have improved by 34% since 2021.

In collaboration with the Public Services Board (PSB), we are committed to enhancing community engagement and best practices in recruitment from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities. This includes working with relevant external groups to boost representation and provide clear guidance for these communities on the Council's website.

We will audit and refine our direct communication methods with hard-to-reach residents to ensure inclusivity.

We plan to include any emerging recommendations from the national standards audit and the HMIP inspection of youth justice into a comprehensive action plan. This plan will undergo monitoring by the Youth Justice Management Board.

Our ongoing goal is to review and potentially implement safer routes and traffic calming measures throughout Carmarthenshire's towns and villages. As we anticipate the results of the Welsh Government's proposed 20mph speed limit pilot study, we will consider these findings before the Welsh Government makes a final decision on the widespread adoption of the 20mph initiative across Wales.

In Summary

- There was a significant increase in library and leisure centre visits.
- A number of initiatives and large-scale developments provide access to opportunities which meet the varying needs of residents and visitors.
- These initiatives have contributed to the well-being of residents and visitors by promoting health, reducing environmental impact, saving costs, fostering social interactions, and improving urban infrastructure, leading to a higher overall quality of life.

How are we doing?

- Overnight and day visitors contribute £597m to the local economy supporting 6,652 full-time jobs.
- There were over 660,000 visits to our libraries during 2023/24 (in person and online), this is a 28% increase on the previous year. This was achieved through various events in our libraries all over the County such as Clip Corner in Carmarthen Library offering access to thousands of radio and TV programmes from the archives of BBC, S4C & ITV Wales, Santa visits, wreath and bauble making, chess club and film shows, together with World Book Day visits, Mother's Day and Easter Craft sessions and watercolour painting sessions. Our digital visits continue to remain high with customers benefitting from our range of digital eBooks, audiobooks, newspapers, magazines, and training apps.
- The number of visitors to our leisure centres during 2023/24 reached 1.6m for the first time, this is 21% up on the previous year and higher than to pre-Covid levels. This has also been mirrored in the uptake of memberships and learn to swim in association with good growth in community-based activity. Investment has been ongoing into the facility infrastructure and the development of class programmes in rural sites has seen significant growth of membership at those locations notably St Clears and Llandovery. Membership has also grown in Carmarthen, Amman Valley, and Llanelli Leisure Centres. The new pitches at Amman Valley have also seen an uplift in regular bookings and footfall. Focus on retention and loyalty has helped to see retention improve plus using refer a friend across the year has been a great driver.



Outcome: People feel empowered to lead active and healthy lives through access to fit for purpose services and provision.

West Wales Walking for Well-being

West Wales Walking for Well-being created six vibrant walking groups, each attracting a healthy number of participants weekly. These groups are designed to promote physical and mental health through regular walking activities. To ensure the success of the programme, volunteers are trained to become walk leaders. The leaders receive comprehensive support from the Actif Adult Officers, who provide a robust support package. This package includes leadership training, resources on safety and route planning, and ongoing assistance to maintain high standards of group management and engagement. The collaborative effort between the trained volunteers and the Actif Adult Officers creates a supportive and enjoyable environment for all walkers, fostering a sense of community and well-being. The initiative not only encourages regular physical activity but also helps participants build social connections, contributing to their overall quality of life.

Community Cycling

Actif's community cycling initiative provides town and community councils the chance to enhance local cycling prospects through access to e-bikes and hybrid bikes. In 2023-2024, Llanarthne and Pontyberem benefited from this program, receiving the bikes for a 10-week period. During this time, they organised several led rides and bike hire sessions, encouraging residents to explore cycling as a healthy and sustainable mode of transportation.

The initiative aims to make cycling more accessible and enjoyable, promoting physical activity and reduce carbon footprints. By offering both e-bikes and hybrid bikes, the programme caters to a wide range of participants, from those seeking an easier ride to those looking for a more traditional cycling experience.

Road Cycling Routes

Walking and cycling are key "brilliant basics" of our off-season proposition to those seeking a UK short break. As a legacy of the hosting of the Tour of Britain events, tourism development officers created six "icon" road cycling routes visiting all areas of the County and promoted them extensively using created digital videos, advertising partnerships with industry leading magazine such as Bike Radar and supported via specific vibrant web sections of the Discover Carmarthenshire website. These are also promoted to residents through the wider promotion of the Discover Carmarthenshire website. New web sections have been created in Spring 2024 for Mountain Biking and traffic free cycling with the former being promoted through a partnership with top selling magazine MB Monthly.

Walking Routes

A portfolio of 21 mapped walking routes has been created covering all areas of the County with supporting videos, photos, and text. Promotional activities were delivered to increase visibility against competition such as the Cotswolds and Peak District.

Sporting Events

Several cycling events were provided marketing support including Gritfest, Battle on the Beach and Daffodil Ride, with logistical and event management guidance provided to five events including Llanelli 10k and Triathlon.

Museum of Land Speed

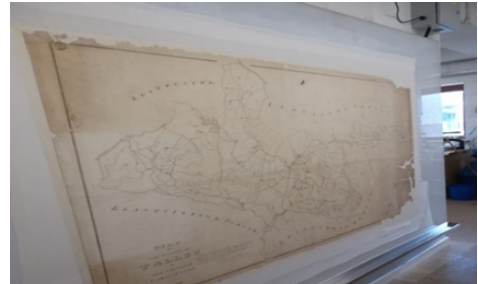
The Museum of Land Speed (opened in May 2023) and welcomed over 13,000 visitors in its first year. It tells the iconic story of Pendine Sands and its long association with land speed record breaking attempts reaching as far back to the 1920s with Parry Thomas in 'Babs' and Malcolm Campbell in Bluebird, up to modern days record breaking attempts by Idris Elba, Zef Eisenberg, and Guy Martin. Entering the venue via a retail space the stories are told through a number of interactive displays including a video cave where visitors can experience the thrill of riding in Babs at high speed along Pendine Sands.

A dedicated area tells the story of the Ministry of Defence's history in Pendine and there is a flexible exhibition space which can be used for various purposes, for example, automotive design students can showcase their designs. Upstairs a 40-seater conference room (for public and corporate hire) has commanding views down the 7-mile beach.

Talyllychau Tithe Map project

Following the reopening of the Carmarthenshire Archives last year, a magnificent Tithe map and a linked written apportionment (award) for the parish of Talyllychau was deposited with the archive service. Dating from 1839, these documents are extremely valuable sources of information about the parish of Talyllychau in the 19th century.

Unfortunately, the documents were in a very poor condition and were in urgent need of repair. Thanks to a generous grant of £3,450 from the Welsh Government, the archives staff were able to send the documents away for professional conservation treatment, and also create an enjoyable learning experience for the children of Ysgol Gynradd Talyllychau.



Over the course of 5 bilingual sessions, 29 children from Ysgol Talyllychau took part in an exciting creative experience both at the archives and at the school. These sessions were developed and led by local artist, Seren Stacey and the staff at Carmarthenshire Archives. The aim of the initiative was to promote a greater understanding of both the children's Cynefin, and the role and relevance of the Carmarthenshire Library and Archives.

This engaging experience culminated in the creation of 2 wonderful artworks which were unveiled in the archive search room by Cllr. Gareth John, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture & Tourism.

How can we do better?

We are committed to developing a diverse and inclusive sports environment with our 'sport for all' approach, ensuring everyone from beginners to elite athletes can participate. Our support extends to all Community Sports Clubs, aiding them in becoming self-sustaining entities.

We are conducting a feasibility study for a new skateboard park and enhancing the BMX Pump track at Pembrey to further enrich our community's sporting facilities.

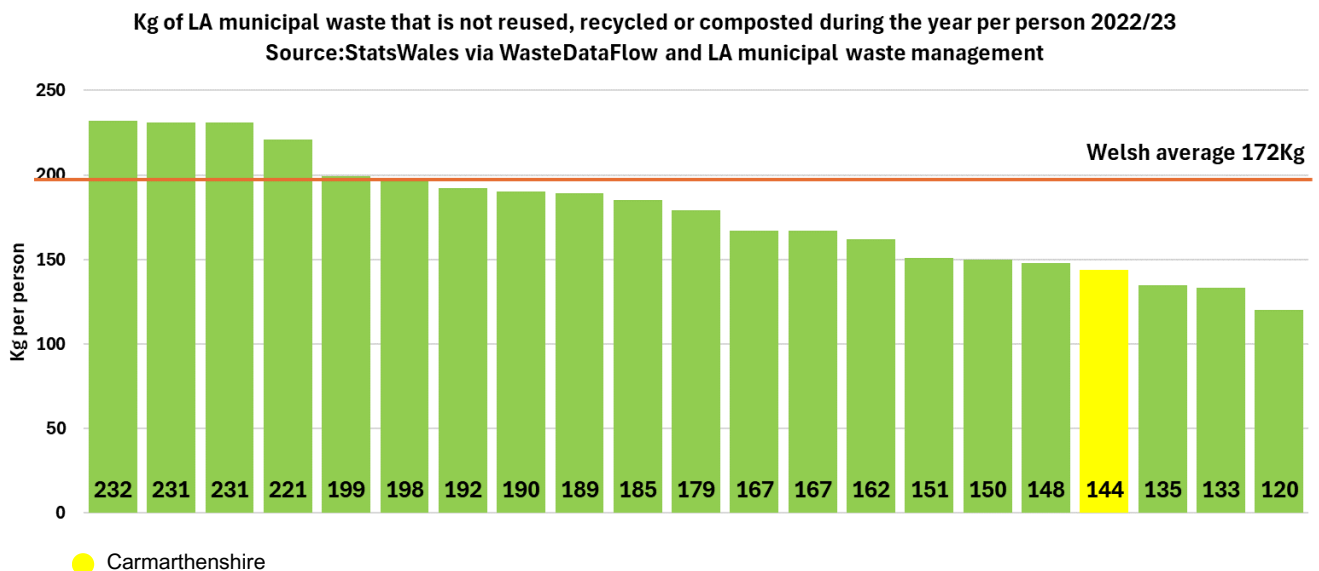
We are revitalizing our Cycling Strategy to evaluate our progress and establish new objectives for the coming five years. This includes the construction of a cycle and pedestrian path connecting Carmarthen to Llandeilo, which will not only benefit local residents but also boost tourism and the economy in the surrounding towns and villages throughout the County.

In Summary

- The first phase of the Waste Strategy was implemented in January 2023 these changes have resulted in an increase in reuse and recycling tonnage performance, surpassing the National Target which was expected by 2025.
- The average municipal waste per person not recycled has reduced.
- The percentage of waste sent to landfill has reduced, working towards the National target of Zero Waste to landfill by 2025.
- The Council has implemented a new kerbside collection system, increased kerbside glass collection, and engaged in comprehensive community outreach to promote recycling and sustainability.
- The expansion of our Eto reuse projects also directly supports this priority by promoting resource efficiency, recovery, repair, and a circular economy within the County.
- The Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS) surveys show a slight decrease in street cleanliness and an increase in litter levels.
- The Council has improved the average number of days taken to clear fly-tipping incidents, despite an increase in the number of incidents.

How are we doing?

- Our recycling figure for 2023/24 has improved to 70.49%, already exceeding the National Target of 70% due by the end of March 2025. The most recently published comparative figures for 2022/23 show the average recycling rates across Wales was 65.71% at which point we were below the Welsh average at 65.25%.
- The % of waste sent to landfill has reduced further during 2023/24 and is now down to 2.01%, this is well underway to meeting the National target of Zero Waste to landfill by 2025.
- Our 2023 residents survey received almost 4,000 respondents, although the majority tend to agree that their local environment is pleasant and well looked after there is a relatively high proportion which disagree. Some comments highlighted issues in relation to street cleansing, waste, litter, and verge/hedgerow maintenance are possible contributing factors.
- The average municipal waste per person not recycled has reduced further to 121Kg at the end of 2023/24, compared to 144Kg in 2022/23. The most recently published comparative figures for 2022/23 show that Carmarthenshire were better than the Welsh average and had the 4th best figures in Wales. The 2023/24 comparative data will not be published until January 2025.



- Our bi-monthly Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS) surveys conducted during 2023/24 to check the cleanliness of our streets, show a decrease in cleanliness at 71.5%, compared to 72.7% the previous year, with an increase in the levels of litter found in the streets.
- The average number of days taken to clear fly tipping incidents has improved to 2.3 days during 2023/24 despite a 5% increase in the number of incidents from 1,615 to 1,701.

Outcome: On track to meet the national recycling targets.

Recycling

- Our recycling figure for 2023/24 increased to 70.49%, already exceeding the national target of 70% due by end of March 2025. This success is credited to a new kerbside collection system with features like weekly collections for dry mixed recycling and food waste, and separate collections for glass and black bags. This system aligns with the Council's vision for implementing a modern waste service that is compliant with Welsh Government's Blueprint collection methodology. The garden waste subscription service is also contributing to the overall recycling figures, with over 12,500 customers and over 5,500 tonnes of garden waste collected at kerbside during the season.
- Kerbside glass collection was initially implemented to 95% of households during the waste service change in January 2023. During 2023/24 we increased our provision by a further 1,000 properties with a further increase planned during 2024/25. To provide a cost-effective service in line with the expanded kerbside service we have carried out a rationalisation of our glass bring sites, with remaining bring sites at strategic locations around the County whilst further expansion of the kerbside service is implemented.
- A comprehensive community engagement schedule was put in place during 2023/24 to promote recycling and achieve our aspirations of increased recycling capture. We have:
 - o Delivered five presentations to members and partners.
 - o Supported 20 community led events to promote recycling, reuse, and sustainability.
 - o Engaged directly with 10,000 households through either a telephone call, letter, email or face to face engagement via a community recycling advisor to support kerbside recycling compliance. Further direct support was provided to 1,889 households who required it, via one-to-one support.
 - o Employed six waste wardens to strengthen the education and enforcement procedure in place, increase full compliance and reduce recycling contamination.
 - o Developed a four-stage education and enforcement process to encourage residents to participate fully in the recycling scheme.
- This year the service faced significant challenge in preparing and developing a solution to the new Workplace Recycling Regulations which came into effect in April 2024. As a service we worked with relevant organisations such as Wrap Cymru, Natural Resources Wales and CWM Environmental designing a local service to ensure all businesses and council buildings were prepared for the new legislation. This involved offering direct support and advice to schools, businesses and third sector organisations. Developing and sharing best practice to achieve effective recycling systems across the commercial sector, aligning with Wales's broader waste management goals.

Circular Economy

The Council is promoting a Circular Economy through several initiatives through our collaborative “Eto” project:

- Canolfan Eto Nantycaws:
 - o A reuse workshop and shop that receives donated items from our recycling centres and repair and upcycle them for resale.
 - o Education centre.
 - o Paint reuse facility where unused paint is recycled/re-blended for resale.
 - o Our reuse shop in Nantycaws – Canolfan Eto is now online for purchase of goods.
- Eto in the Community is a scheme aimed at strengthening community support and taking Eto into communities.
- In March 2024, we organised an event (hosted by Sero), for local groups and volunteers and Town and Community Councils to share ideas and opportunities for community project growth with a focus on collaboration and growth.
- Through Shared Prosperity Funding we have provided £5,000 funding to four projects in the Ten Town areas of: Kidwelly, Llanybydder, Newcastle Emlyn and Llandeilo for innovative and sustainable project ideas to promote circular economy activity in their areas.
- In partnership with CWM Environmental we have organised school and community group visits to ‘Canolfan Eto’ to share ideas on repair, reuse, and recycling and how we as a Council prioritise effective resource management and how individuals can maximise their impact in this area too.

Is anyone better off?

Circular Economy in practice

We have partnered with local recycling company Nappicycle to launch a trial project to surface our roads with recycled nappies. The first project diverted 4 tonnes of nappies which is approximately 80,000 nappies from landfills. The recycled nappy fibres are just as effective as conventional materials and with no additional cost. This project is a prime example of local circular economy in action.



To enhance the recycling initiative awareness among residents, we aim to deliver a community engagement programme that will reach 5% of households. Our goal is to maintain our performance with regards to the Welsh Government's statutory recycling performance target of 70% in the 2024/2025 financial year.

To educate school children on the importance of repair, reuse, and recycling initiatives, we will develop an educational resource pack and an electronic booking system for scheduling 'Eto' site visits.

We plan to undertake a review to expand glass kerbside collection provisions to more households not currently served by this collection. By 2026, we will plan and initiate the next phase of the wider waste service change, adopting the Welsh Government blueprint for the kerbside sort of recycled material and enhancing the recyclable materials collected at kerbside.

We will enable communities to proactively implement sustainable projects, developing a wider circular economy strategy through existing community networks and facilitate further infrastructure development to support circular economy aspirations. In partnership with CWM Environmental, we will create a detailed action plan to increase Eto's reach, focusing on expanding provisions for reuse, repair, and upcycled items accessible across communities in the County. Lastly, we will enhance public engagement to gather resident opinions on wider waste services and future developments, considering their opinions and recommendations for service improvement.

In Summary

- The Council prioritises maintaining the highway network, especially during Winter, to ensure uninterrupted access to essential services. However, the road surface condition deteriorated in 2023/24, with a significant increase in reported defects.
- We have continued to work through major strategic challenges such as the national 20mph campaign, development of regional transport planning and the trajectory towards net zero carbon aspirations.
- We have been proactive in delivering change and have successfully brought in grant funding to support service delivery. However, we face challenges with reducing capital and revenue budgets combined with rising public expectation, supply chain pressures and deteriorating asset condition which is leading to a difficult operating environment for Highway and Transportation services.

How are we doing?

- No road condition surveys were completed during 2023/24 but were completed during the early part of 2024/25, these will be reported in the 2024/25 Annual Report. Therefore, the following results are based on the 2022/23 surveys, results for each of the road categories improved from the previous year:
 - **3.1%** of our **A** Class were in poor condition (3.6%)
 - **2.4%** of our **B** Class were in poor condition (2.8%)
 - **10.1%** of our **C** Class were in poor condition (11.7%)
- Our 2023 residents survey received almost 4,000 respondents, whilst many agreed that they can access the services that they need, a similar number of respondents indicated 'neither', with a further significant number of respondents disagreeing with this statement. This has resulted in a shift from overall agreement of a score[1] of 0.05 to overall disagreement with a score of -0.05 when comparing this year's results with last year's. Location based trends align with those seen for the next statement on access to good public transport, with the lowest scores evident in the Tywi and Gwendraeth areas.
- With regards to the statement 'there are good transportation links around me', the residents survey score declined from -0.41 to -0.45. Further analysis indicates that scores were lowest from respondents living in the Tywi (-0.94) and Gwendraeth (-0.66) community areas. This is to be expected given these areas include some of the County's most rural wards.

Outcome: Look to improve access to services through enhanced transportation networks and infrastructure.

We are actively investing in enhancing public transportation and infrastructure across the county. Initiatives include:

Connecting Communities

Phil Bennett Bridge: Funded by the Welsh Government Active Travel Fund and supported by Transport for Wales, this new bridge connects our communities and enhances accessibility delivering direct access to the Parc Trostre retail hub, enriching the area's overall connectivity.

Addressing Rural Transport Needs

Bws Bach y Wlad Bus Service: We have developed an initiative to bridge the gap in public transport accessibility for residents in North Carmarthenshire's rural areas. It directly responds to the discontinued Bwcabus service, ensuring residents can connect to economic opportunities and fostering regional growth and development.

Enhancing Road Infrastructure

A484 Sandy Road Improvements (Phase 1): This completed project has yielded several benefits for Llanelli. The redesigned Sandy Road roundabout and its approaches promote a shift towards active travel options like cycling and walking. This improves air quality, reduced traffic congestion, improves public transport journey reliability and overall road safety

A, B & C Road Maintenance:

While improvements have been made to A, B, and C class roads this year, the Council acknowledges the need for further funding to address the condition of unclassified and rural roads. Through the Welsh Government Resilient Roads fund, we secured £1.08m of funding to carry out major repair works across the County. This funding supported us on several significant Emergencies, including 5 collapsed road embankments, a failed retaining wall and 2 collapsed culverts.

Upgrading Carmarthen Bus Station

Renovation works worth £1.125 million funded by the Welsh Government Local Transport Fund grant, the Carmarthen Bus Station Improvement Scheme represents the Council's commitment to supporting a high-quality public transport service.

Maintenance

We prioritise maintaining the highway network throughout the year, particularly during Winter, to ensure residents have uninterrupted access to essential services and vulnerable residents receive care and support. Strategic routes are treated with salt as part of their Winter maintenance plan to maintain the flow of vital services and supplies.

Road surface condition continued to deteriorate in 2023/24. The number of customers reported surface defects and potholes increased by 175%, with a significant increase during the very wet winter period, making up 35% of all reported highway defects. Reductions in preventative maintenance programmes leave our roads vulnerable to rapid deterioration, increasingly as weather extremes become more frequent.

Implementing 20mph Speed Limits

The Welsh Government's legislative change in lowering speed limits on restricted roads from 30mph to 20mph presented a significant workload for the Council. A dedicated project board ensured smooth implementation. Stakeholders, including community and town councils, were consulted through online briefings and a public webpage. Nearly 4,000 public notices were placed, and over 170 work packages were issued to modify existing signage and implement new 20mph and 30mph speed limit signs.

Tywi Valley Path Development

Work continues on the Tywi Valley Path, a challenging project co-funded by the Welsh Government and the UK Government's £16.7 million levelling-up funding.

Training to promote Road Safety and to encourage Safe Active Travel to Adults

We have delivered our Biker-down! training to 77 adults together with our training partners. The course aims to reduce the number of motorcyclists killed and seriously injured in road accidents and is delivered by Operational Firefighters / the Fire Bike Team from Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service. The course comprises of three modules which are Managing an Accident Scene; First Aid; and The Science of Being Seen.



The course gives participants a better understanding of what to do if they come across a road traffic collision and how to manage it safely.

We have delivered Dragon Rider training to 44 adults together with our training partners. Our training consists of a classroom-based session at designated Fire and Rescue stations in Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford as well as outdoors sessions, using a variety of roads throughout the County and neighbouring counties to meet the motorcycle training needs of our individual riders, based on the advanced Police rider manual, Roadcraft.



Training to promote Road Safety and to encourage Safe Active Travel to School Children

We have delivered kerb craft initiatives to 1,064 pupils where we teach children from age 5-7 how to be safer pedestrians by taking them on the real roadside and showing them how correct decision-making and behaviour can really help them to stay safe.

We have also delivered cycling courses [Level 1 to Level 3] to 1,195 primary aged pupils to promote road safety training and campaigns to encourage safe active travel.



Carmarthen Bus Station Service User Perspective

We engaged with all users of Carmarthen Bus Station following the completion of the re-development works in December 2023. From the results, we found that 62% of respondents believed the changes had promoted a safer station. The new look bus station had a rating of 7 out of 10 on average. The improvement that had the most satisfactory aspect for the users were the new shelters.



How can we do better?

We will foster economic growth through the development and delivery of infrastructure programmes. This includes co-developing the Regional Transport Plan, which aims to create a sustainable, low-carbon transport system that not only supports economic growth and investment but also enhances rural accessibility. This plan is in alignment with the Wales Transport Strategy.

We are collaborating with regional and national partners to develop the South West Wales METRO, which will offer an integrated transport system that promotes carbon reduction, economic activity, and social inclusion across the region.

To address the increasing deterioration of our highway network, we are reviewing the Highway Capital Investment Programme. We are also investing in infrastructure that will facilitate the transition to electric vehicles for Fleet Services.

A key initiative is the review of School Transport, where we are considering the risks associated with franchising.

We will be piloting Transport Surgeries to foster better engagement with the public.

We are developing a robust car parking strategy that aligns with our economic goals and sustainable transportation objectives.