

STRIDE TREGLOWN

# PENARTH PLACEMAKING PLAN

JUNE 2025

FOR  
**CYNGOR BRO MORGANNWG**  
**VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL**  
AND  
**CYNGOR TREF PENARTH**  
**PENARTH TOWN COUNCIL**

This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg



# FOREWORD

During my time as Town Mayor, the topic of 'Placemaking' was an important one; placemaking as both a strategy and a process plays a key part in the long-term, sustainable development of the town. Placemaking and partnership are also the drivers of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Corporate Plan, and I, along with my fellow Penarth Town Councillors, have been pleased to be able to contribute towards the creation of this plan.

We are grateful to the Vale of Glamorgan Council and, in particular, to their Creative Communities Team, who led the process from preparation to consultation to publication. I cannot praise their efforts in engaging with the people of Penarth in the creation of this plan any higher. Likewise, without the efforts of the local community, such plans run the risk of not addressing core needs within a given place, and so similar praise should also be reserved for those residents, community groups, and visitors who may have helped contribute towards the development of this document.

I am pleased to see a plan which both reflects the current needs of the town and serves as a future vision of Penarth. It is my hope that this plan is able to deliver on its intended purpose by bringing sustainable investment and improvement to the town so that it can continue to be enjoyed by its community for generations.

It is important to note that this plan is not the end of the process with regards to placemaking and Penarth. In fact, as a 'living document,' it is just the beginning; my fellow Town Councillors and I look forward to seeing how this plan informs local development, how it inspires and involves the community further, and how it adapts over time to new and changing issues and needs that may face our town.

## **Cllr. Gwenda Roberts**

*Penarth Town Mayor 2024-2025*



I am delighted to introduce Penarth's Placemaking Plan, and to echo and support Cllr Roberts comments regarding the importance of placemaking in Penarth's sustainable development. The collaborative efforts of the Vale of Glamorgan Council, the Town Council, and local residents have created a forward-looking, adaptable plan that reflects the town's current and future needs and supports the Vale of Glamorgan Council's 'Vale 2030' programme of work to deliver our vision of Strong Communities with a Bright Future.

## **Cllr. Bronwen Brooks**

*Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member  
for Sustainable Places,  
Vale of Glamorgan Council*





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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## What is 'placemaking'?

Placemaking covers a range of activities that allows good places to flourish. Placemaking can involve new development, improvements to existing buildings and spaces, cultural activities, installations and events, or any number of small interventions that contribute to a town as a place to live, work and spend time.

Placemaking ensures that each new project or intervention contributes positively to creating or enhancing environments in which people, communities, businesses, and nature can thrive. It places people at the heart of the process and results in places that are vibrant, have a clear identity and where people can develop a sense of belonging.

The concept of placemaking has developed in response to a feeling of 'placelessness' within the built environment, whereby new development lacks a distinct identity, character, sense of community or collective ownership.

Placemaking has grown in importance in Wales as the links with health and wellbeing and Wales' Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) have been more explicitly explored and understood.

### APPROACH TO PLACEMAKING

Design Commission for Wales defines 'placemaking' as involving working collaboratively across sectors and disciplines to comprehensively consider the future development of distinctive and vibrant places. The Placemaking Guide 2020 seeks to support and elaborate on the policy set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW) where placemaking is the central theme.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act sets out seven guiding principles as a common purpose for public bodies across Wales. It aims to improve social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being without compromising future generations.



*Seven goals of the Wellbeing of Future of Generations Act*

#### People and community

The local community are involved in the development of proposals. The needs, aspirations, health and well-being of all people are considered at the outset. Proposals are shaped to help to meet these needs as well as create, integrate, protect and/or enhance a sense of community and promote equality.

#### Location

Places grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing, employment, leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.

#### Movement

Walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised to provide a choice of transport modes and avoid dependence on private vehicles. Well designed and safe active travel routes connect to the wider active travel and public transport network, and public transport stations and stops are positively integrated.

#### Mix of uses

Places have a range of purposes which provide opportunities for community development, local business growth and access to jobs, services and facilities via walking, cycling or public transport. Development density and a mix of uses and tenures helps to support a diverse community and vibrant public realm.

#### Public realm

Streets and public spaces are well defined, welcoming, safe and inclusive with a distinct identity. They are designed to be robust and adaptable with landscape, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage well integrated. They are well connected to existing places and promote opportunities for social interaction and a range of activities for all people.

#### Identity

The positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are valued and respected. The unique features and opportunities of a location, including heritage, culture, language, built and natural physical attributes, are identified and responded to.



## How will the plan be used?

### Vision and objectives

The vision for the placemaking plan was developed following an extensive period of public and stakeholder engagement. From this feedback five core objectives have been set out for the plan:

- A Vibrant Town Centre and Seafront
- A Sustainable Penarth
- A Welcoming Public Realm
- A Safe and Accessible Town Centre
- An Inclusive Penarth.

### Purpose of the plan

- *It identifies a series of key projects and interventions.* Each of these projects align with at least one of the five core objectives for the placemaking plan.
- *It will be used to co-ordinate interventions in the town centre.* By bringing together a whole series of ongoing and future projects in a single, coherent plan, it will ensure that these projects, and new ones that arise, are implemented in co-ordination with each other.
- *It is not a prescriptive plan.* The plan will need to adapt to changing circumstances over time, and take advantages of opportunities that arise.
- *There is no specific funding in place for most of the plan.* Instead, the plan will form a framework for focusing future council spending, as well as attracting funding from the wider public sector (such as Welsh Government, UK Government or other governmental organisations), and attracting third and private sector investment.

### Proposed interventions

The public and stakeholder engagement provided a wealth of project ideas and issues to be tackled, and from this a set of projects and interventions was developed.

These broadly fell into one of six themes:

- A Sustainable future for Streets and Open Spaces
- Public and sustainable transport
- Economic Vibrancy and Visitor Economy
- Traffic Management
- Health and Wellbeing Provision
- Connectivity Between Town Centre and Seafront

### Timescale

This plan organises the projects into short, medium and long term projects, and range from immediately implementable 'quick wins' to significant projects that will require extensive collaboration with a range of stakeholders and outside funding.

Next steps and delivery are covered in Section 5.



## 2 CONTEXT

### Penarth History: The Garden by the Sea

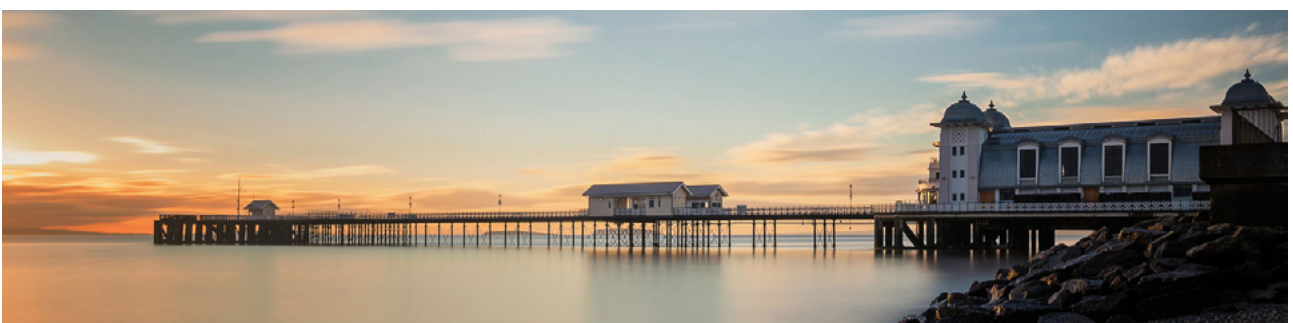
*Penarth's history dates back nearly 1,000 years, with its earliest reference involving a Norman knight named Osbert, who granted land to St. Augustine's Abbey in Bristol. The town underwent significant changes during the Industrial Revolution in the mid-19th century, driven by the coal industry. The construction of Penarth Docks in 1865 and the arrival of the railway in 1878 spurred rapid development. Penarth became a popular seaside destination, with its esplanade, gardens, and pier attracting visitors. The town also played a role during both World Wars, with its docks being crucial for military logistics.*

#### PENARTH PIER & PAVILION

Today, Penarth is renowned for its Victorian and Edwardian architecture. A key feature of the town is Penarth Pier and Pavilion, both fine examples of Art Deco design. They were originally completed in 1895 and refurbished in 1929. The pier quickly became a popular attraction, especially for pleasure steamers operating in the Bristol Channel. In 1931 a fire destroyed much of the wooden theatre on the pier, leading to significant rebuilding and restoration efforts over the years.

During the Second World War, the pier was closed to the public and requisitioned by the army for military use. It also suffered structural damage from a collision with the SS Port Royal in 1947, which took two years to repair.

Today, the pier and pavilion house an art gallery, auditorium, cinema, and café bar.





## VICTORIAN TOWN CENTRE

Penarth's Victorian town centre reflects the town's rapid development during the 19th century, driven by the coal industry and the arrival of the railway. The town's dramatic transformation began with the construction of Penarth Docks in 1865, which facilitated the export of coal from the South Wales Valleys. This industrial boom attracted workers and led to the town's rapid expansion.

The arrival of the railway in 1878 further accelerated the town's growth, making it more accessible to visitors and new residents. This brought with it Penarth's iconic Victorian buildings, including terraced houses, shops, and public houses, all characterized by ornate facades, large bay windows, and decorative brickwork. The town's centre shifted toward Windsor Road, which is now its main retail area. The wealthy shipping and dock owners built grand villas along the cliff tops, while workers lived in terraced housing near the port.

Due to the town's historic and cultural significance, many of its buildings have been preserved and are part of the designated Conservation Area, which covers a large area of the town, including the town centre.

## ST AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH

The church was designed by the Gothic Revival architect William Butterfield and was built between 1865 and 1866, replacing an earlier church that had stood on the site since the 13th century. It is Penarth's only Grade I listed building.



## KEY REFERENCES

- *Penarth Conservation Area Appraisal*



## THE KYMIN

The Kymin, also known as Kymin House, is a two-story building set in around 4 acres of grounds, featuring a mix of land, wooded areas, and steeply sloping terrain. It offers stunning views of the Bristol Channel, Penarth Pier, and its surrounding gardens.







Windsor Road

Penarth Station

Esplanade

19th century Penarth saw the construction of the docks which became a major catalyst for development, supporting dock workers and the coal mining industry of the time. The arrival of the railway further shaped the town's layout and making it more accessible boosting its popularity as a seaside resort.



# Penarth Today

## LIVING IN PENARTH

Penarth is known as an prosperous town, with its connections to Cardiff and its rich history as a port contributing to its prominence. Its geographical location as a coastal town, with easy access to both the countryside and the city, makes it an ideal place to live and thrive.

The town's physical character is reflected in its well-preserved Victorian and Edwardian architecture, visible in houses, schools, churches, and the public library. As a coastal town, Penarth is also linked to the Wales Coast Path, offering access to 870 miles of scenic footpaths for walking and hiking. The former Cardiff Bay Development Corporation envisaged a direct walking link from the Esplanade to the Barrage. Although outside the scope of this plan, a local trust is continuing to investigate completing a Penarth Headland Link.

Penarth's urban centre reflects its historic ties to the docks. Over time, the town has expanded southward, while the town centre remains in the north. This growth pattern has created some challenges in relation to traffic management at peak travel times and for residents needing to access town centre facilities and shops via pedestrian or public transport routes.

Penarth's proximity to the beach makes sea swimming a popular activity, with members of the Dawnstalkers Sea Swim Club regularly gathering along the seafront.

Penarth also boasts good access to green spaces within its central urban areas. Alexandra Park, located between the town centre and the Esplanade, is a charming Edwardian public park that offers scenic routes to the sea front with panoramic views overlooking the Bristol Channel. Cosmeston Lakes Country Park, situated at the southern edge of the town, is a popular destination for residents of Penarth, Cardiff, and the wider Vale.

A prominent topic of discussion during our public

## KEY REFERENCES

- *2021 Census*
- *Age Friendly Vale Strategy*
- *Penarth Town Council Place Plan*
- *Penarth Neighbourhood Action Plan*

and stakeholder engagement activities was the Kymin House and Gardens. This Victorian property is located on a prominent route into the town centre, and although it is not listed, it sits in attractive grounds with views over the Bristol Channel. It has been vacant for the last five years. While the Kymin has been a cherished community asset, its future use has long been a subject of debate. This Placemaking Plan will make recommendations for the future use of the Kymin, based on community need and financial sustainability.

However, like most towns, the demographics and character of the town is varied and most residents do not live in the historic Conservation Area. The Placemaking Plan will need to enhance and protect the unique selling points of Penarth, while ensuring that it addresses the needs of the wider town.

## Neighbourhoods and Accessibility

Penarth's neighborhoods are shaped by dramatic changes in elevation due to developments on reclaimed land, former quarries and docklands. For example, Cogan, located on a lower plane than the town centre, is prone to flooding. Similarly, Penarth Heights and Penarth Marina, extensions of Cogan, are physically separated from Paget Road by steep embankments.

These changes in elevation can pose challenges for residents reliant on mobility aids, as the inclines associated with walking between neighbourhoods and into the town centre may be perceived as a barrier. Similarly, walking distances from the neighbourhoods of Lower Penarth to the south of the town centre, can be off-putting to residents accessing town centre facilities.

Anticipated development includes Upper Cosmeston Farm in Lower Penarth, with consented plans for 576 homes.







## WORKING IN PENARTH

Penarth plays a significant role in the economic prosperity of the Vale of Glamorgan and the Cardiff Capital Region. The Local Development Plan (2011–2026) allocated 492 hectares of employment land to support a diverse economy across the Vale, however no new employment land allocations are identified within Penarth in the plan and there are limited available sites for development of employment space within Penarth more generally.

Cardiff is one of the principal commuting destinations for many people in employment in Penarth. The town is well served by Penarth, Dingle Road and Cogan Stations for rail commuters and the cycle route over the Cardiff Bay Barrage also provides a direct quiet route into Cardiff Bay and the city centre.

As with most town centres, retail businesses face challenges due to the growth in popularity of online shopping. However, Penarth has a successful mix of independent shops and hospitality businesses and the service sector has shown growth.

Recently, flexible business hubs like Milkshed have been developed to provide space for local enterprises. These hubs offer rentable spaces with short-term tenancies of up to 18 months, making them ideal for start-ups and small businesses seeking an affordable and flexible base.

Availability of parking within the town centre was frequently highlighted during our engagement activities. Local businesses have advocated for increased on-street parking options to better serve both their needs and those of their customers.

### KEY REFERENCES

- *VoG Local Development Plan*
- *VoG Tourism and Leisure Development SPG*
- *Visit the Vale*
- *Vale 2030 - 2025-2030 Corporate Plan*

## VISITING PENARTH

One of Penarth's defining attributes is its location at the intersection of city, coast, and countryside. Residents benefit from convenient access to Cardiff Bay, Cardiff City Centre, the Welsh Coast, and the Vale of Glamorgan. This strategic location also ensures that Penarth is easily accessible to visitors from outside the town.

The town is well-connected by rail, cycling routes, and private transport. The opening of Penarth Railway Station in 1878 played a significant role in establishing its reputation as a seaside destination, enabling Cardiff residents to frequent the Esplanade, pier, and beach for leisure.

Today, Penarth hosts several popular annual events that draw visitors from Cardiff and across the Vale of Glamorgan. These include cultural events, such as the Summer Festival, Penarth Book Festival as well as sporting competitions like the Cosmeston Relays, the CF64 Trail Race and the Vale Ultra Coastal Trail race. Penarth's Rugby and Football clubs are prominent in local leagues, with high membership numbers both in and around Penarth.

One of Penarth's most notable attractions is the Penarth Pier Pavilion, located on the Esplanade. This area showcases a blend of Victorian terraces and Art Deco architecture, complemented by a variety of restaurants with outdoor seating and stunning views of the Bristol Channel.

Cosmeston Lakes Country Park has experienced a surge in popularity since the COVID-19 pandemic, attracting visitors from across the Vale. It offers a tranquil environment for family gatherings, children's play, and outdoor exploration. Additionally, Cosmeston is recognized as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and holds historical significance as the site of a 600-year-old medieval village.

The Placemaking Plan will seek to build on the town's existing success as a visitor location. Currently, the town is seen as a location for day trips, and there is potential to expand the offer to more overnight visitors - potentially as part of a trip to Cardiff.









Welcome to  
PENARTH  
HEIGHTS



## 3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

### Engagement

The success of the Placemaking Plan lies with the local community. These are the people and businesses who know the details of the town – how it functions, what is good about it, and how it could be improved.

#### Initial Engagement

Vale of Glamorgan Council undertook a significant amount of public and stakeholder engagement prior to the development of the placemaking plan.

A series of in-person engagement events were held over 2023 and 2024. These included a presence at existing events, dedicated sessions with stakeholder groups and drop-in sessions at key locations.

Utilising the VoGC's Participate Vale platform, the Penarth Placemaking Survey was conducted from 23rd August 2024 to 25th October 2024. This was advertised through posters, leaflet drops, drop-in sessions, and social media channels. Throughout this period, a total of 110 responses were received, which included paper copies and digital submissions via the Participate Vale platform.

While the comments received addressed a diverse array of topics, the majority focused on one or more of the following key themes:

- Infrastructure and Maintenance
- Community Engagement and Events
- Transport and Accessibility
- Safety and Security
- Sustainable Development and Environmental Concerns

This engagement has provided a rich source of background information on how people who live and work in the town perceive it. The council has worked hard to reach out to a wide range of people from different backgrounds and ages across the town; however, care must be taken not to overrepresent the

views of specific demographics and to be aware of addressing the needs of the whole town.

This engagement has allowed general themes and issues to be captured across a wide cross-section of the town. It also enabled more targeted engagement to be undertaken with specific groups and individuals through a series of small focus groups and one-on-one interviews.

#### Focused Engagement

Following the initial round of engagement events and online engagement identifying the main themes and issues to be explored, a number of internal (council) and external stakeholders were identified for further targeted stakeholder engagement.

The goal of these sessions was to explore more detail on the specific issues with groups who have a special interest in the town, and people with specific knowledge to be drawn upon.

Secondary goals of this process included:

- Develop understanding of the local context.
- Begin to communicate the goals of the project.
- Identify and activate useful contacts.
- Begin to mobilise support.

These external stakeholder sessions took the form of on-site walkarounds and semi-structured interviews with prompts to ensure key subjects were addressed, while allowing the participants to lead the conversation towards the issues that they felt were most important.

In addition to engagement with a wide range of local stakeholders, collaboration with Penarth Town Council has been vital in the creation of this Placemaking Plan.



## What are we seeking to achieve?

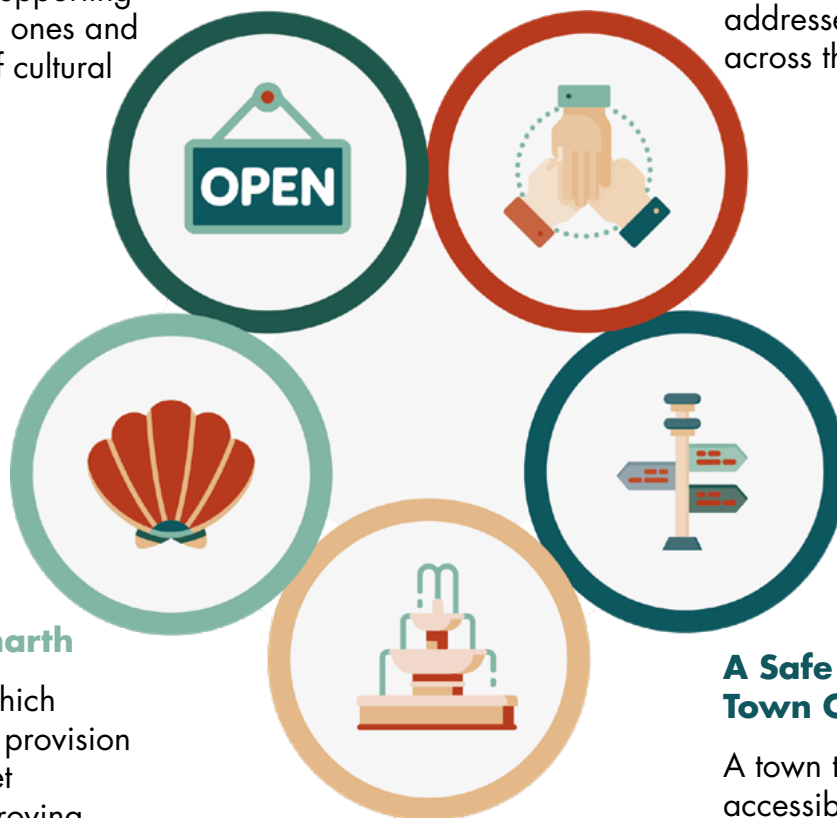
Penarth is a successful town. We aim to build on this success and protect its unique characteristics, while ensuring that it works for the entire community of Penarth. The goals of the Placemaking Plan can be summarised in five core objectives:

### A Vibrant Town Centre and Seafront

A town enabling the creation of new businesses, supporting the needs of existing ones and a rich programme of cultural activities.

### An Inclusive Penarth

A placemaking plan which looks beyond just the historic core of the town and addresses the needs of people across the community.



### A Sustainable Penarth

A sustainable town which enables active travel, provision for the transition to net zero carbon and improving biodiversity.

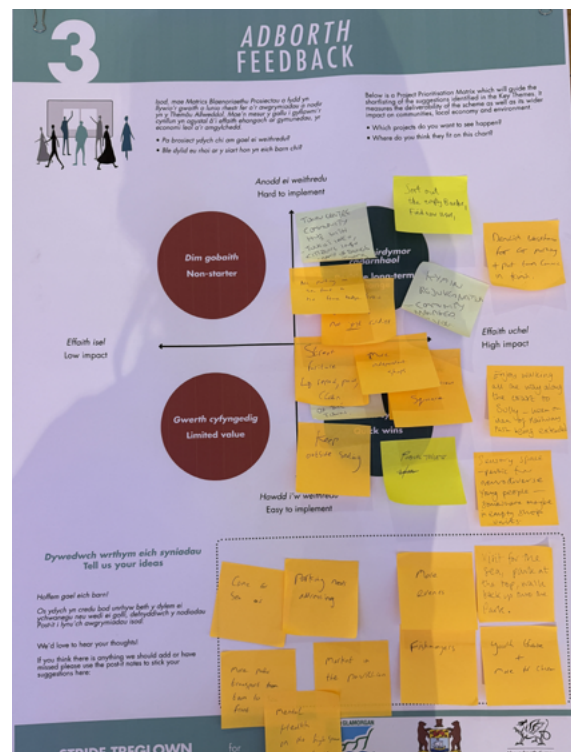
### A Safe and Accessible Town Centre

A town that is safe and accessible for all ages and abilities to walk, wheel and cycle around.

### A Welcoming Public Realm

An attractive and welcoming town which has space for events and activity, spaces for respite and spaces for social activity for all ages.







# Themes and findings

## Engagement Sentiment

The feedback identified during the wider public engagement and focused stakeholder engagement was grouped into six overarching themes. Within these, a number of common subjects arose through the engagement process, which are summarised here.

As with any place, the community does not speak with a single voice and has many different perspectives and needs. In some cases, different priorities are in direct competition with each other. For example, a desire for improved cycle infrastructure or new street planting may compete for highway space with retained (or additional) street parking.

In this situation, proposals in this placemaking plan seek to find a balance between the competing interests of different stakeholders. This will also need to reflect current and emerging planning policy and wider council policy objectives.

## Positive Penarth

In general, the sentiment expressed throughout the engagement process was positive: people see Penarth as a good place to live, with access to green spaces, the sea and regional public transport connections seen as strengths of the town. The Pier and Esplanade, and Cosmeston Country Park were also seen as particular assets.

## ‘Could do better’

Many of the areas where respondents felt the town could be improved related to streets, roads and public spaces, specifically the maintenance of pavements and highways, a perceived lack of public transport for shorter journeys within the town (as opposed to access to Cardiff), and congestion and parking. A lack of community spaces was also raised, although it is likely this is specific to some areas - provision for community spaces is good in the town centre.

“*Penarth is successful... but needs to avoid complacency.*”

### 1. A Sustainable Future for Streets and Open Spaces

- Enhancing green spaces and trees.
- Enabling sustainable practices.
- Infrastructure issues.

### 2. Public and sustainable Transport

- Improved connectivity.
- Safety and accessibility.

### 3. Economic Vibrancy and Visitor Economy

- Retail and business support.
- Cultural and community events.

### 4. Traffic Management

- Congestion, parking and deliveries.
- Safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists.

### 5. Health and Wellbeing Provision

- Access to healthcare services.
- Provision of community spaces.

### 6. Connectivity Between Town Centre and Seafront

- Transport links.
- Enhancing the sea front.





### Engagement Themes

- **Green Spaces and Trees:** Respondents were concerned about the maintenance of green infrastructure. Some, particularly those living within the historic streets surrounding the town centre, are concerned about the loss of historic street trees. These respondents are in favour of 'like-for-like' replacement trees for street trees rather than new planting in surrounding areas of the town.
- **Sustainable Practices:** Suggestions include extending nature corridors, enhancing EV charging points, and increasing local food-growing initiatives.
- **Infrastructure Issues:** Particular problems noted include street litter, pavement damage, and the need for more/segregated bins and water refill stations.

# 1. A Sustainable Future for Streets and Open Spaces





### Engagement Themes

- **Improved Connectivity:** Public transport out of Penarth by train is seen as good, but public bus services within the town are perceived as lacking. Residents reference the need for better integration of bus and rail services, including a local electric shuttle bus, and highlight the need for greater reliability of both bus and train services.
- **Safety and Accessibility:** Concerns have been raised about safety on public transport and the need for better services to key locations, such as hospitals and local supermarkets in the town and the Cardiff Bay area.

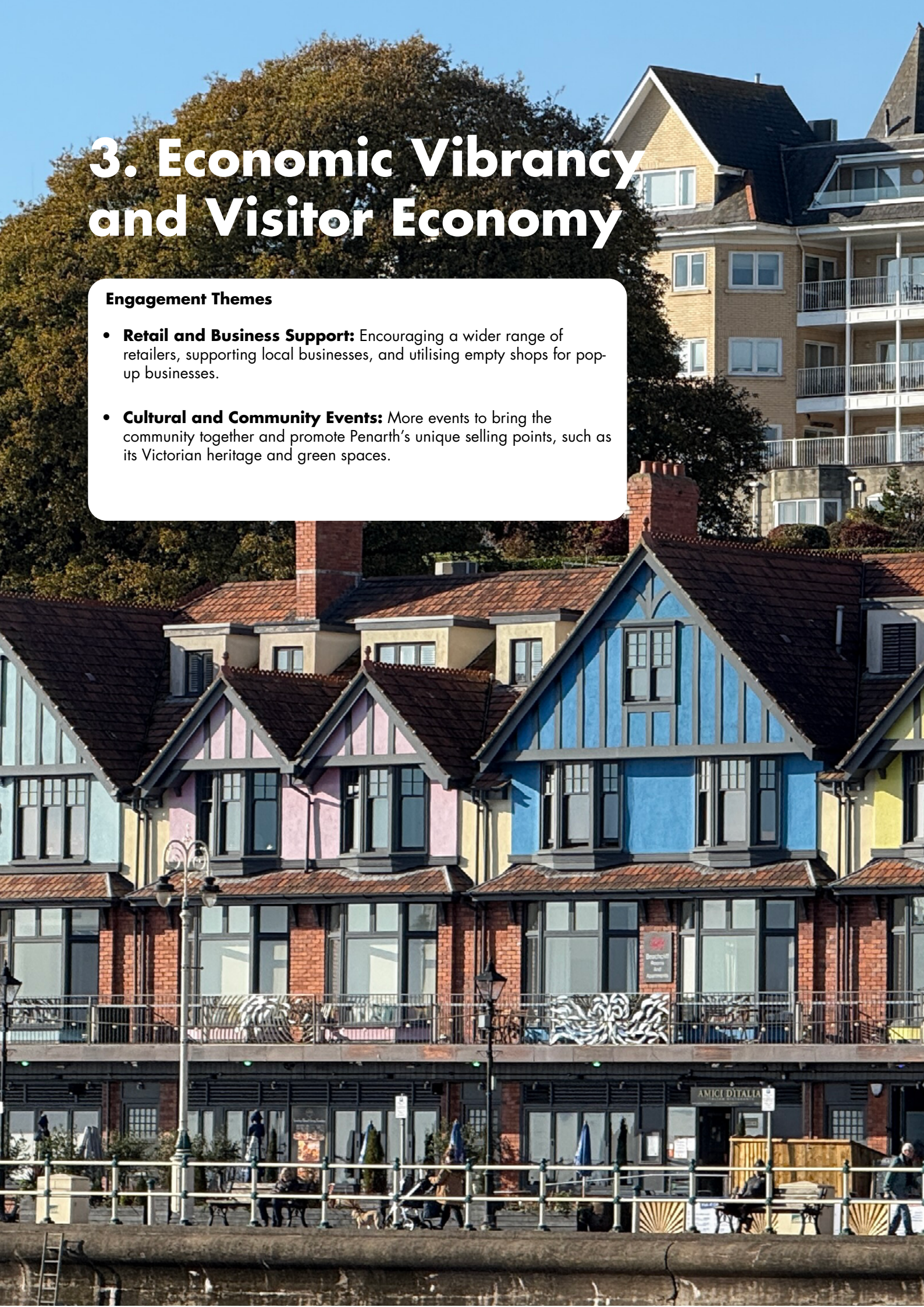
## 2. Public and Sustainable Transport



# 3. Economic Vibrancy and Visitor Economy

## Engagement Themes

- **Retail and Business Support:** Encouraging a wider range of retailers, supporting local businesses, and utilising empty shops for pop-up businesses.
- **Cultural and Community Events:** More events to bring the community together and promote Penarth's unique selling points, such as its Victorian heritage and green spaces.





# 4. Traffic Management

## Engagement Themes

- **Congestion and Parking:** Issues highlighted include concerns about traffic congestion during work and school rush hours (ingress and egress to the town), perceived parking shortages, and the need for more pedestrian-friendly areas.
- **Safety Measures:** Suggestions include new pedestrian crossings, better traffic flow management, and safer routes for cyclists and pedestrians.





# 5. Health and Wellbeing Provision

## Engagement Themes

- **Healthcare Services:** Access to GP surgeries and better health facilities, including mental health support and community health initiatives has been noted by multiple respondents.
- **Community Spaces:** Desire for more community events and better use of existing venues for health and wellbeing activities.
- **Sports clubs:** (eg. Old Pens, Penarth Athletic Club) provide useful spaces for use by the wider community, but need investment in these spaces and their sports facilities.





# 6. Connectivity between Town Centre and Seafront

## Engagement Themes

- **Transport Links:** Improved transport options to connect the town centre with the sea front, including shuttle services and better signage.
- **Enhancing the seafront:** Ideas for making the sea front more vibrant with stalls, food/drink options, and better use of public spaces like the Kymin.
- **Highway infrastructure:** issues identified with the condition of the pavements, particularly in the town centre.





## Focusing interventions

The Placemaking Plan will necessarily need to prioritise where interventions are made. Using the contextual analysis and engagement the following areas have been identified for particular attention. However, this does not preclude projects or interventions outside these areas.

### Town Centre

The Town Centre will naturally be a key focus of the Placemaking Plan. Interventions in this area could include:

- New public space for events.
- Banking hub.
- Additional planting and street trees.
- Active travel improvements.
- Digital communication boards
- Business incubator spaces.
- Permanent solution for parklets.
- History trail.
- Improvements to station.
- Find a long-term home for Bentyg Penarth.

### Esplanade

The Pier and Esplanade are a defining feature of Penarth and the Placemaking Plan could include:

- Permanent solution for outside hospitality spaces.
- Improved cultural offer at Pier.
- Establish long term use for Kymin.
- Improved signage from seafront to town centre.

### Cosmeston Lakes and Country Park

The country park and lakes are an important resource for Penarth and also attract many visitors from further afield. Interventions could include:

- Improved active travel route connecting to Railway Walk and on to Sully.
- Seek to develop the visitor offer at Cosmeston through the development of catering facilities within the visitor centre and beyond.

### Lower Penarth

Consideration should also be given to outlying areas of Penarth, including Lower Penarth. Opportunities in this area could include working with the sports clubs to make better use of their facilities for the benefit of the clubs and the wider community. There are also opportunities to work with STAR residents association to identify projects in this area.

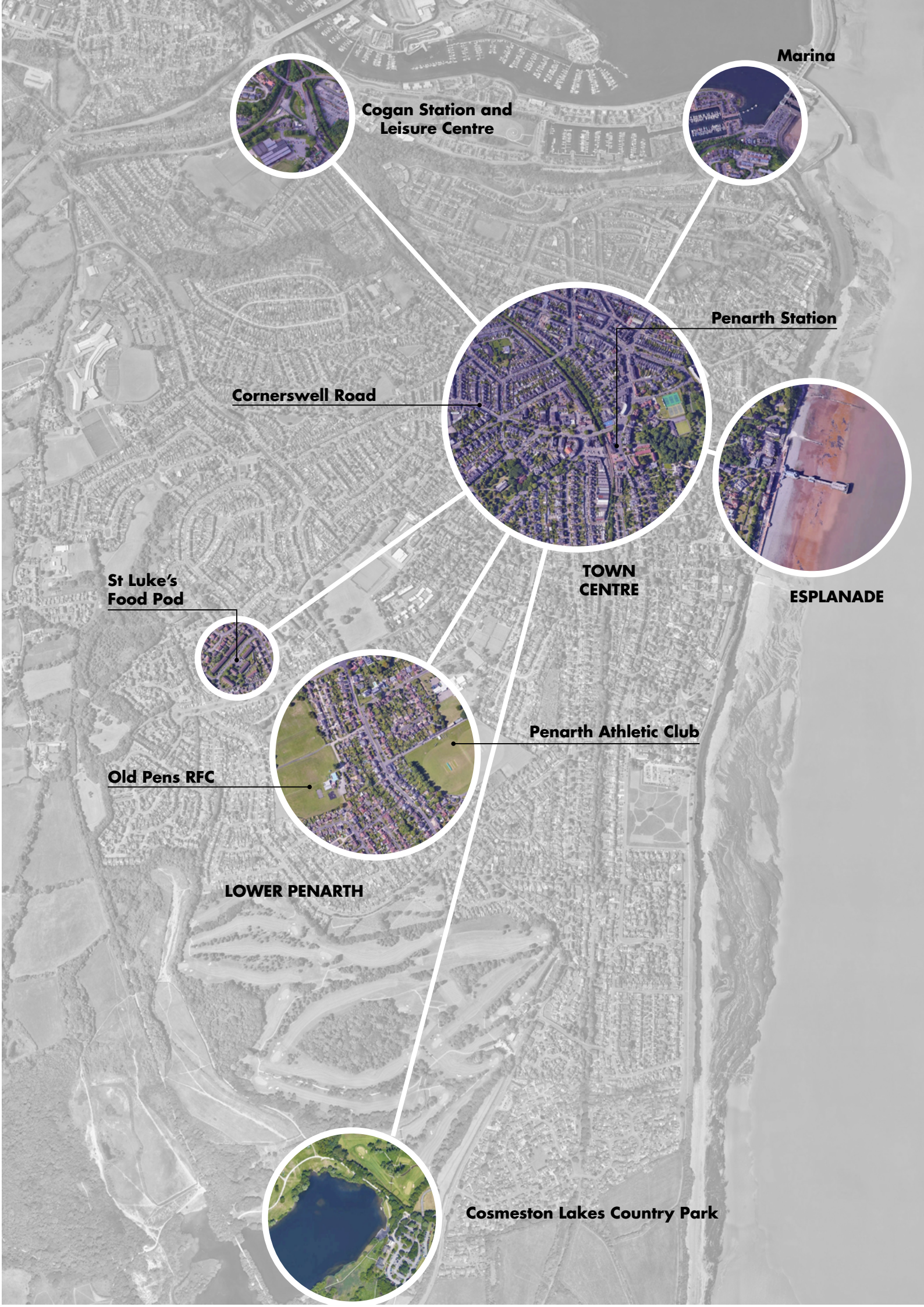
### Cogan Station and Leisure Centre

Consideration should be given to co-ordinating potential improvements to Cogan Station (working with TfW), and the proposed health hub (proposed location of Health Hub to be confirmed by the Health Board).

### Marina

While the Old Custom House is a successful destination restaurant, the entrance to the marina area does not make best use of the waterside location. We recognise that the current condition of the Marine Buildings may potentially impact finding a sustainable long-term use.





**Marina**

**Cogan Station and  
Leisure Centre**

**Penarth Station**

**Cornerswell Road**

**TOWN  
CENTRE**

**ESPLANADE**

**St Luke's  
Food Pod**

**Penarth Athletic Club**

**Old Pens RFC**

**LOWER PENARTH**

**Cosmeston Lakes Country Park**



## 4 INTERVENTIONS

### Overview

Through discussions with the Vale of Glamorgan, key stakeholder groups, and the local community, several common themes have emerged in the proposed actionable projects. Some of these initiatives involve grassroots interventions that could be led and maintained by the community, fostering a greater sense of ownership over the public realm, while others require broader stakeholder buy-in from private investors and the local council.

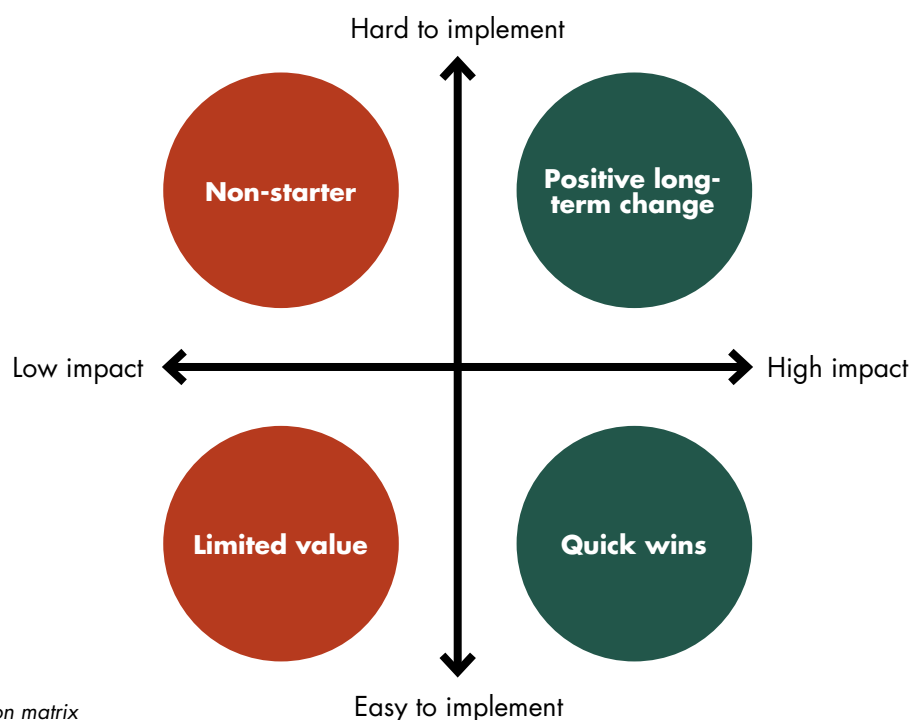
Penarth is widely recognised as an affluent and 'successful' town, demonstrated by:

- A vibrant high street featuring a diverse mix of retail, services, and food offerings from both chain stores and independent businesses.
- A strong provision of access to green spaces.
- Low crime rates and homelessness.
- A steady influx of tourists from across the Vale and beyond.

However, despite the town's many successes, there are still localised challenges in improving accessibility to key amenities and ensuring greater inclusion of all community groups.

Each brief outlines key objectives, opportunities, timescales, next steps, and potential leadership to drive these projects forward. Projects have been identified based on their potential to achieve positive long term change, and consideration of how easy they are to implement.

These initiatives vary in scale and complexity. While some will be council-led, others will require active involvement from the community and local businesses, with funding sourced through grants and private investment. The selected projects have been categorised into short-term, medium-term, and long-term delivery timeframes to ensure structured and strategic implementation.



*Project prioritisation matrix*



### SHORT-TERM INTERVENTIONS (1-2 YEARS)

These 'quick win' interventions focus on cost-effective solutions deliverable in the near term, often requiring minimal funding. These initiatives should be community-led with support from the council, ensuring immediate, visible benefits to build public trust and momentum.

### MEDIUM-TERM INTERVENTIONS (2-7 YEARS)

These projects take longer to implement and typically require greater stakeholder involvement and should be delivered in partnership with the council. Local residents should play an active role in the planning and decision-making process. These projects typically require funding from multiple sources and involve more complex coordination than short-term interventions.

### LONG-TERM INTERVENTIONS (7+ YEARS)

A long-term projects involving major infrastructure or policy changes, requiring phased implementation due to their scale, complexity, and funding needs. These initiatives must align with long-term council policies and consider environmental, social, and economic factors, including climate resilience and future urban growth.

The identification of these projects provides a high-level framework outlining key objectives, stakeholders, and delivery strategies. Each project will require further development of detailed briefs to define scope, feasibility, and key partnerships. Collaboration with local stakeholders, including community groups, project leaders, and private sector partners, will be essential. A detailed feasibility study will also need to be conducted to assess site capacity, funding sources, and external factors that may impact deliverability.



#### GATHER



#### SHORTLIST



#### DEVELOP





#### IMPLEMENT



# Project briefs

50
PENARTH PLACEMAKING PLAN
INTERVENTIONS: MEDIUM-TERM
51

## 1 A home for Benthgy Penarth

*Promote a circular economy and reduce waste by adopting a 'borrowing' culture.*

**Objective**

Benthgy Penarth, as part of the 'Library of Things' initiative, fosters a culture of borrowing to support a sustainable and circular economy. By providing affordable access to a wide range of items, it helps reduce waste and promotes more conscious consumption. Establishing a visible and accessible presence within the town centre will further embed sustainability into the community and encourage greater participation.

**Key Opportunities**

- A visible and accessible new home in the town centre for Benthgy.

**2**

- Benthgy aims to promote waste reduction, borrowing, and repair culture. There is opportunity for them to offer repair workshops, creative reuse sessions, and sustainability consultations from a town centre premises.
- Collaborate with local businesses and organisations to expand borrowing and sharing initiatives.

**Delivery and next steps**


- Work with Benthgy and landlords to find a permanent town centre space, potentially in one of the vacant former bank premises.
- Help promote the initiative through local events, marketing and council communications.

**3**

**Precedent: RE:MAKE NEWPORT**



Re:Make Newport is Wales' first permanent community repair and reuse space. They are a volunteer led community space, in collaboration between Repair Café Wales and Benthgy Cymru who offer an extensive 'library of things', free repairs of household items and also a variety of skill share workshops.

The initiative not only addresses environmental concerns but also fosters social cohesion by bringing together diverse community members to collaborate to engage with one another. The space



is easily accessible to the public, located in the heart of Newport.

## Improve the Pier's cultural offering

*There are many great things happening at the Pier but its not shouted about enough.*

**Objective**

Penarth Pier is a key historical and cultural asset that plays an important role in the town's tourism. It incorporates the Penarth Pavilion, an Art Deco landmark, has the potential to be enlivened with more activity to enhance the visitor experience and contribute to the local economy. Strategic improvements to its use, accessibility, and connectivity can bolster its role as a vibrant community and tourism hub.

**Key Opportunities**

- Expand the cinema offering to include current blockbuster films and themed experiences such as singalong events.
- Maximise the use of the pavilion for weddings, corporate events, and community gatherings.
- Establish partnerships with the Library and local organisations to create a visitor and heritage information centre.
- Strengthen partnerships with businesses along the Esplanade, introducing incentives to encourage pre-event dining and local spending.

**Next Steps**

- Engage with local businesses and community stakeholders to identify partnership opportunities.
- Develop a promotional strategy to better market events and activities.
- Explore funding options to support necessary infrastructure improvements.
- Pilot enhanced programming at the Pavilion and assess its impact on visitor numbers and local business activity.

**Timescale**

An interim intervention could include improvements to the promotion of events in the Pavilion whilst working towards establishing partnerships for cinema screenings, event hire and business collaborations.

**4**

- Strengthen event marketing, particularly within the town centre—the primary arrival point for visitors—to increase awareness and footfall.

Sample page from intervention briefs to indicate general structure

## KEY

- 1 Intervention
- 2 Placemaking themes
- 3 Project brief
- 4 Case study



# SHORT-TERM

- 1-2 YEARS
- 'QUICK-WINS'
- COST EFFECTIVE
- COMMUNITY-LED WITH COUNCIL SUPPORT
- IMMEDIATE VISIBLE BENEFITS



# Cosmeston Lakes and Café



*Investment in Cosmeston Lakes café to increase revenue to maintain Cosmeston Lakes Country Park. There is also potential to bring leisure activities to the lakes.*

## Objective

Developing the café and visitor centre at Cosmeston Lakes Country Park along with exploring opportunities for outdoor leisure events and activities could generate additional revenue, which could then be reinvested into the ongoing maintenance of Cosmeston Lakes Country Park, ensuring its long-term financial sustainability.

The existing Cosmeston Lakes café can be developed to create a facility that will support a sustainable future for an attraction of the park's significance, both locally and regionally.

## Key Opportunities

Exploring possible sustainable outdoor leisure uses for the Country Park to provide enhanced facilities and attract more visitors

- Developing the café, to provide enhanced catering choices and facilities for visitors.
- Repurposing underutilised spaces in the visitor centre for exhibitions, additional café space, or other uses that can generate further activity and interest.

## Delivery and Next Steps

- Explore options associated with the catering offer at the site to enhance facilities for the benefit of visitors.



## Precedent: National Trust

A strong precedent for high-quality café provision in similar locations can be found in the wide range of National Trust cafés across Wales and the UK. These cafés often serve as destinations in their own right, located outside the paid entrance, which attracts many visitors who do not enter the associated historic buildings, parks, or gardens.

Typically set in attractive surroundings, often within outbuildings on the grounds of the main attraction, these cafés are well-designed and offer a high standard of food and beverages.



Source: National Trust



# Community Growing Spaces and Allotments



*Engagement feedback has identified a demand for community growing spaces and areas for food cultivation.*

## Objective

There are several spaces dedicated to community growing in the town, including allotments and gardens. Sub-communities under Gwyrddio Penarth Greening, and communities such as Penarth Growing Community (PGC), focus on creating and maintaining wildlife habitats and growing edible produce. Aside from Cosmeston Orchard, most growing spaces and community gardens are concentrated in the northern part of the town.

However, the town's allotments all have waiting lists, indicating unmet demand for available spaces.

## Key Opportunities

- Feedback from the St Luke's Food Pod / STAR residents group engagement sessions highlighted a desire for a new community

garden in this area. This could include shared growing spaces, as well as areas for socialising or hosting events. It will be important to collaborate with potential end-users to establish a clear brief for any proposals and create a sustainable management process for the space.

- There is also an opportunity for new allotments. Existing allotment provision (both publicly and privately operated) is oversubscribed, demonstrating unmet demand. This could involve a mix of private plots and community growing spaces. Since available land in the town is limited, a suitable location on the town's edge would need to be identified. A private operator could be engaged to fund and manage the allotments (see case study below).

## Next Steps

- Work with STAR (and other interested groups) to develop ideas for a potential community garden.
- Identify potential demand and suitable locations where allotments could be established.

## Precedent: Roots

*Roots Allotments is a company that establishes new allotments in areas with existing unmet demand. While their allotments are typically more expensive than traditional ones and offer smaller plots, they provide additional benefits such as access to shared tools, workshops, talks, courses for growers, and services like watering the plots when owners are away.*

*These allotments are not intended to replace traditional ones but serve as an alternative that is more accessible to a wider range of people. This includes new or younger growers whose lifestyles may make managing a traditional allotment challenging, or those concerned about the upfront costs of tools. Additionally, by offering these alternative allotments, the demand for traditional allotments can be reduced, helping to alleviate long waiting lists.*



Source: Roots



# Tree Planting



*Generally, central Penarth benefits from many mature street trees, but some have been lost over time, and some areas have far fewer.*

## Objective

There is an opportunity for new street tree planting outside the Victorian core of Penarth. Potential intervention areas include (but are not limited to) Lavernock Road, Dinas Road, and St Peter's Road/St Luke's Road in Lower Penarth, as well as the area north of Plassey Street in the northern part of the town.

Currently, there is a noticeable difference in the provision of street trees between the town centre and the outlying areas developed in the 20th century. The Vale of Glamorgan's Tree Strategy aims to plant a minimum of 1,500 trees across the council estate annually.

## Key Opportunities

- Planting of street trees in Penarth Conservation Area to replace those lost over time.
- Increasing the number of street trees and expanding tree cover in the outer areas of Penarth.

## Next Steps

- The recent *Vale of Glamorgan Tree Strategy (2024)* provides a framework for future tree planting and maintenance.
- Invite proposals for new street tree locations.
- Work with local residents and the community to identify key focus areas for new street tree planting.
- Explore the potential for a partnership with a new *Friends of Penarth's Streets* group.

## Precedent: Sheffield Street Tree Partnership

Following a period of contentious decisions on the maintenance of the city's trees, Sheffield Street Tree Partnership initiative launched in 2019 to rebuild trust, increase the city's urban tree cover and improve its green infrastructure. This partnership involves the City of Sheffield, local residents, and environmental organisations working together to enhance the city's streets and neighbourhoods with more trees.

The partnership encourages local residents to participate by suggesting tree planting locations and engaging in care and maintenance activities. The project also involves educational programmes to raise awareness about the importance of trees.





# The Kymin



*The building has been empty for several years and the beautiful grounds which need to be maintained going forward.*

## Background

The building has been unused for several years. The vacant building is currently structurally sound with the council undertaking an ongoing schedule of maintenance. However, a long-term solution for the future use of the building needs to be found in order to secure a sustainable future for the building. The surrounding Kymin grounds serve as an attractive public park, and The Friends of the Kymin make a significant contribution to its upkeep. However, some structures require maintenance. There has been public interest in repurposing the Kymin as a community meeting space. However, unless a specific use or funding source can be secured, this option has been discounted for the following reasons:

- There is already significant indoor community space in central Penarth.
- Without external funding, this use is unlikely to be financially viable or capable of supporting the ongoing renovation and maintenance of the building. Therefore, consideration should be given to the potential marketing of the building.

## Objective

To identify a sustainable long-term use that secures the future of the Kymin and its grounds.

## Recommendations

Given its attractive setting and location, the Kymin building may be well-suited for use as a café or restaurant with sea views, outdoor seating, and potentially upper-level accommodation. This would ensure continued public access while contributing to Penarth's visitor economy. Other financially viable uses may also be appropriate, though preference should be given to options that retain a public-facing element. The disposal of the building could generate funds for maintenance and possible improvements to the Kymin grounds, which would remain in Council ownership as public open space. Potential improvements include repair of existing structures, accessibility improvements, improved landscaping, and potential for new public uses, such as an open-air performance space.

## Next Steps

- Commence process for the marketing and disposal of the building and, if possible, grassed area in front by virtue of a long lease. Use of the building should be determined by the market, with solutions that retain access by the public being favoured.
- Continue to nurture the positive relationship between the Friends of the Kymin and the council to ensure a sustainable future for the grounds and support Bentyg in their aspiration to find a permanent home for their services.

## Precedent: The Pig on the Beach

*The Pig on the Beach is a restaurant with rooms located in Studland Bay, Dorset. Set in a coastal location, it offers a relaxed dining experience centred around locally sourced, seasonal ingredients. The menu showcases produce from nearby farms and its own garden, with a strong focus on sustainability. The restaurant provides a cosy atmosphere, stunning sea views, and an attractive setting, offering a farm-to-table dining experience. It serves as the perfect coastal getaway for those seeking both comfort and quality.*





# Alleyway Improvements



*One 'quick win' would be to tidy up and improve a number of the alleyways in residential areas.*

## Objective

Many residential alleyways provide useful pedestrian links and shortcuts. However, several are in poor condition, suffering from litter, graffiti, and overgrown vegetation, creating an environment that people are reluctant to use, particularly after dark.

## Key Opportunities

- Short-term and ongoing clean-ups, including litter picking and vegetation removal.
- Street art projects to enhance the appearance of alleyways.

- Improve lighting for increased safety.

## Timescale

Short-term improvements can begin immediately in collaboration with local stakeholders.

## Next Steps

- Work with local residents and community groups to organise regular clean-up initiatives with council support.
- Establish a long-term maintenance regime for work that cannot be undertaken by volunteers.
- Identify where long-term improvements, such as new lighting, are needed to enhance safety.



## Precedent: Fire Station Alley

The alleyway between Hazel Road and St Paul's Avenue, located next to Penarth Fire Station, was selected for a Placemaking Plan pilot project aimed at enhancing this key pedestrian route.

Historically, the alley has been blighted by litter, overgrown vegetation, and a general lack of maintenance. While it serves as a shortcut for those near St Peter's Road, many people avoid using it due to safety concerns.

As part of the pilot project, there has been an organised clean up in the alley and, in collaboration with local schools, introduction of street art to brighten and revitalise the space.





# Heritage Trail



*A heritage trail telling the stories of the place and people of Penarth.*

## Objective

For several years, Penarth Civic Society has been working to establish a heritage trail that tells the story of the town and its people. The trail aims to connect a series of locations that guide visitors around Penarth and showcase its rich history.

The trail will explore Penarth's social history, notable residents, architectural heritage, and even its prehistoric past, including the famous dinosaur footprints. It will serve as both an educational resource for residents and an engaging way for visitors to explore the town.

In conjunction with improved wayfinding and signage, the heritage trail could also strengthen the link between the town centre and the seafront.

## Key Opportunities

- The heritage trail has the potential to enhance the visitor experience and celebrate Penarth's unique history.

- A series of interpretation boards with accompanying online resources could provide in-depth historical context for those seeking more information.

## Next Steps

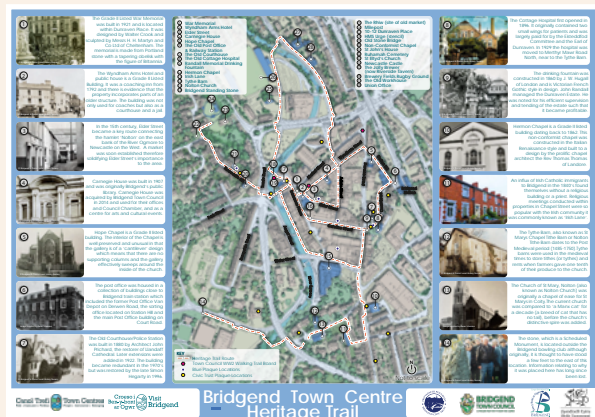
- In conjunction with heritage consultants, collaborate with Penarth Civic Society to develop heritage trail using a range of appropriate media.
- Support Penarth Civic Society in preparing a Heritage Lottery Fund bid to fund the trail.

## Key Stakeholders:

- Penarth Civic Society
- Penarth Town Council
- Vale of Glamorgan Council / Visit the Vale

## Precedent: Bridgend Heritage Trail

The Bridgend Heritage Trail is a self-guided tour that highlights the town's rich history, showcasing key landmarks, notable residents, and important cultural sites. Visitors can explore the town's heritage through information boards featuring historical details, photographs, and maps. The trail offers a unique opportunity to discover Bridgend's past, with some boards including QR codes for additional online information.





# A Vibrant Street Scene



*Enhancements to the town centre street scene to develop outdoor eating and linger spaces have the potential to enliven streets and provide additional outside space for businesses.*

## Background

Covered structures, branded as 'Parklets', were installed by the council during the COVID-19 pandemic using Welsh Government funding. Now that the particular situation created by the pandemic has passed, a longer-term strategy is required that will create a vibrant street scene, meeting the needs of businesses, residents and visitors.

Some of the existing covered structures are well used but others are not. Some businesses expressed a desire for a 'Parklet' during the pandemic, but their locations were not suitable for the covered structures due to highways constraints. New businesses have also opened since the original 'Parklets' were installed.

Planners, particularly from a conservation perspective, are concerned that the current covered 'Parklet' structures fail to preserve the character

of the conservation area and are adding visual clutter. In addition, the structures were only intended as a temporary intervention to meet the conditions of the pandemic, and they are now showing considerable signs of wear and tear.

## Objectives

- Any new Street Scene strategy will need to consider the potential for outdoor eating and socialising across the town centre, rather than focusing on the existing 'Parklet' locations in isolation.
- While high-quality, well designed, and integrated public realm interventions could be appropriate, any changes must support placemaking goals and enhance or maintain the area's historic character.
- As part of the removal of the existing 'Parklet' structures, the council will need to work with affected businesses to mitigate the removal of the temporary covered spaces through investigating the potential for well-designed permanent pavement build-outs that will contribute to the ongoing development of a vibrant street scene.

## Recommendations:

- Removal of all current covered 'Parklet' structures

## Precedent: Clifton Village

Like Penarth's parklets, Princess Victoria Street in Clifton Village, Bristol, implemented a pandemic-era scheme to reallocate parking spaces as outdoor seating for hospitality businesses. Beginning in August 2021, part of the street was closed to vehicles daily between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. and some parking was removed, allowing outdoor seating and encouraging a more welcoming, pedestrian-focused environment.

Following an 18-month trial period the scheme was made permanent with improved (but still temporary) street furniture. In 2025, a permanent landscaping scheme was delivered once funding became available.





- Development of a Street Scene Strategy to create a vision for the town centre, incorporating outdoor eating spaces, additional street planting, 'linger', and seating areas with the aim of enhancing the town centre environment for the benefit of businesses, residents and visitors.

### Next Steps

- Liaise with businesses hosting existing covered 'Parklet' structures to explain the implications of the Recommendations listed above. Ensure that any changes that are implemented are timed in a way to minimise the seasonal impact on businesses in 2025/26.
- Work with these businesses to develop schemes appropriate to their locations that

will best mitigate the removal of the covered 'Parklets'.

- In tandem with the above, develop a wider Street Scene Strategy document, to include guidance for businesses that will communicate and establish the new processes for the development of street scene enhancements, in response to business and community needs.

### Covered 'parklet' replacement

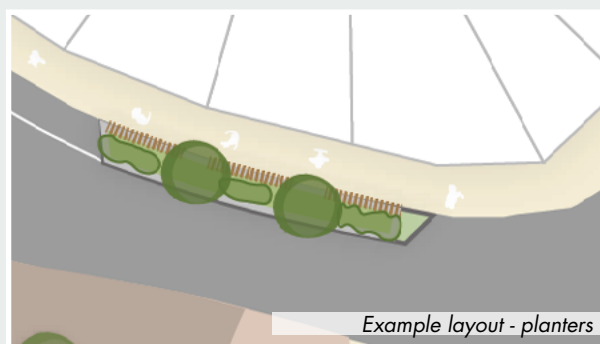
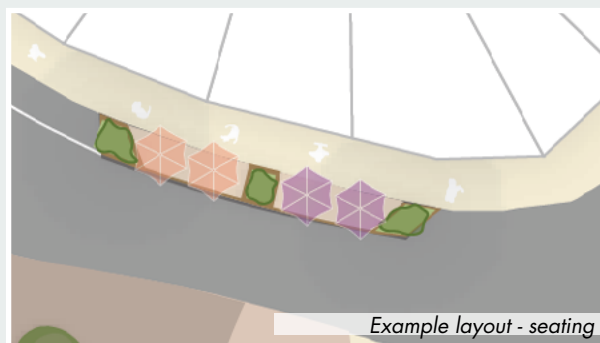
The existing 'Parklets' will need to be superseded with longer-term replacements in the form of pavement build outs that will potentially accommodate hospitality seating. Covered areas are no longer required as there is no ongoing need to support businesses through mitigation measures relating to the reduction of usable indoor space

Replacement can therefore be as simple as a pavement build-out abutted by above ground planters to provide some enclosure, making the street more attractive and providing a defined area which avoids cluttering the footway.

Any street scene design will depend on the constraints of specific locations, such as underground utilities and highways considerations.

Work could also be undertaken to identify other opportunities to bring the street scape to life, working with traders on shopfront improvements and displays. De-cluttering and new signage strategies should also be considered.

Where possible re-use existing 'Parklet' structures for community benefit, e.g. within local School sites.









# MEDIUM-TERM

- **2-7 YEARS**
- **LONGER TO IMPLEMENT**
- **GREATER STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**
- **TO BE DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COUNCIL**
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REQUIRED**
- **FUNDING REQUIRED FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES**



# Reduce the impact of traffic on the town centre



*Make pedestrians the priority in the town centre and enhance the retail experience for everyone.*

## Objective

Windsor Road is the town's main high street, offering a good mix of retail, independent businesses, and essential services. However, heavy traffic and on-street parking create barriers for pedestrians, particularly those with mobility challenges, as well as cyclists.

To create a safer, more accessible, and vibrant high street, there is a need to improve pedestrian and cyclist connectivity, manage vehicle flow more effectively, and enhance the public realm to better support local businesses and community life.

## Key Opportunities

- Introduce safer crossing points and better cycling infrastructure to facilitate movement across Windsor Road.
- Widen pavements to accommodate outdoor dining, seating, and greenery, creating a more inviting and dynamic streetscape.
- Rationalise vehicle movement (such as a one-way system) to free up space for other uses and reduce congestion while maintaining access for deliveries and parking.

- Re-evaluate on-street parking time restrictions to ensure the parking periods meets the needs of a range of potential visitors.
- Engage with business owners, residents, and visitors to ensure proposed changes align with their needs.

## Next Steps

- Work with the local council to assess current vehicle flows, parking demand, and potential rerouting options.
- Develop initial design proposals for pavement widening, pedestrian crossings, and cycling improvements.
- Engage with local businesses and the community to gather feedback and refine design proposals.
- Where appropriate, test temporary solutions, such as outdoor seating areas and pop-up pedestrian areas, to evaluate their impact before permanent implementation.
- Identify funding sources and create a phased approach for delivery in collaboration with local authorities and stakeholders.



# Greener streets



*Introduce more flowering and fruiting trees to create a more vibrant townscape.*

## Objective

Penarth town centre and outlying areas would benefit from increased planting, in order to improve the feel of the streets and public realm.

Integrating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) into on-street planting, can help mitigate surface water flooding, creating a more sustainable and attractive environment.

## Key Opportunities

- Increase tree canopy cover to offer natural shading and cooling, improving comfort during warmer months and reduce the urban heat island effect.

- Integrate sustainable urban drainage systems along wider roads to manage surface water flooding, improve water quality, and enhance urban ecology.
- Plant more fruiting and flowering trees to enhance the character of street networks, support biodiversity, and provide seasonal interest.

## Next Steps

- Conduct feasibility studies to identify optimal locations for tree planting and SuDS integration.
- Develop phased implementation strategies to ensure long-term maintenance and management is cost-effective.

## Precedent: Greener Grangetown, Cardiff

*Greener Grangetown is a successful example of the retrofitting of SuDS features into a densely populated urban streetscape.*

*The project sought to enhance environmental sustainability and improve the quality of life for local residents by transforming Grangetown into a more climate-resilient neighbourhood. This was achieved through the incorporation of green infrastructure, including green roofs, trees, rain gardens, and permeable surfaces.*



Credit: GreenBlue Urban



# Walking and cycling improvements



*Promote a more active lifestyle where walking and cycling is the preferred way to travel.*

## Objective:

Penarth has the potential to become a highly walkable and cycle-friendly town by prioritising safe, accessible, and well-connected infrastructure.

Enabling cycling requires dedicated cycle lanes separated from traffic or a network of low-traffic streets, integrated with key routes linking nearby towns and cities. Furthermore, secure cycle parking, lockers, and shower facilities are essential to enable a wide range of trips to be made by bike.

For pedestrians, maintaining and improving damaged pavements—particularly those affected by tree roots—will ensure accessibility for wheelchair users, prams, and those with mobility challenges. Additionally, strategically placed crossings that clearly prioritise pedestrians over vehicles will create safer, more inclusive walking routes for people of all ages.

## Key Opportunities

- Implement the routes in the Vale of Glamorgan Council Active Travel network map.
- Improve pedestrian crossings and footways in the town centre.
- Extend or connect the Railway Walk to Cosmeston Lakes and Country Park.
- Improve safe bike storage at Penarth Station.

## Next Steps

- Interim interventions could include fixing existing pavements and installing creative wayfinding signage.
- Co-ordination with other placemaking plan projects (such as changes to traffic movements in the town centre, improvements to the stations, wayfinding improvements) to ensure that active travel improvements are integrated from the outset.

## Precedent: Bristol to Bath Cycle Path

*The immensely popular Bristol and Bath Railway Path offers a largely tranquil walking and cycling route between the two cities. Spanning 13 miles, the path is completely traffic-free and almost entirely flat, as it follows a disused railway line. A variety of cafés and pubs are dotted along the route, providing opportunities for regular refreshment breaks.*





# Improve signage and wayfinding



*Develop a cohesive signage and wayfinding strategy for locals and visitors alike*

## Objective

Signage serves as essential visual markers within the townscape, guiding residents and visitors to key destinations via the safest and most appropriate routes. However, it is perceived that some of the existing signage around the town contributes to visual clutter. A strategic approach is needed to improve clarity, functionality, and the overall aesthetic of wayfinding elements.

## Key opportunities

- Pedestrian and cycle signage can include journey times to destination and promote safer routes away from traffic noise and pollution.
- Signage can be creative and colourful but will need to be cohesive throughout town to remain easily recognisable and legible.

- Integrate with the Heritage Trail to indicate upcoming historical landmarks and guide visitors around town.

## Next Steps

- Develop a wayfinding strategy for cohesive signage across town that integrates creative and functional solutions.
- Engage with local stakeholders, including community groups and businesses, to ensure the signage strategy aligns with user needs.
- Implement phased upgrades, starting with priority routes and key nodes in the town centre.
- Ensure co-ordination with Heritage trail.



Barry Wayfinding Strategy for Vale of Glamorgan Council. Credit: CityID



# Expansion of school streets



*Promote independence for young people by expanding school streets programme*

## Objective

As well as cycling, walking and wayfinding improvements, the expansion of school streets is a priority for the Welsh Government in order to improve rates of travel to school by foot and bike, and to improve safety and air quality around schools.

School streets schemes typically involve the closure of the street outside schools at the start and end of the school day to prevent drop off by car immediately outside the school, which encourages travel to school by sustainable means, whilst also creating a safer environment for pupils, parents and school staff'

This can also help to develop children's autonomy to navigate their journey between home or from nearby transport stops.

## Key Opportunities

- Following the successful example of Dryden Road (Fairfield Primary School), where feasible and practicable, roll out the creation of school streets across the remainder of Penarth's schools.
- Co-ordination with wider active travel and wayfinding improvements to enable more trips to be made to school by foot, bike or scooter.

## Next Steps

- Vale of Glamorgan Council to investigate taking on power for enforcement of moving traffic offences to allow the Council to enforce school streets.
- Schools, parents and Vale of Glamorgan Council to collaborate in the design of a tailored School Street strategy.

## Precedent: Dryden Road Penarth

*Improvements to Dryden Road have had a highly positive impact on parents, carers, and pupils during school pick-up and drop-off times.*

*The local community was actively involved throughout the process, with a series of public engagement sessions and workshops held to identify key issues and gather input on potential solutions.*





# Banking Hub



*A location for in-person banking for customers of all banks.*

## Objective

Across the country, an average of 54 banks have closed each month since January 2024, making it increasingly difficult for those who rely on in-person banking services to access their branches.

Establishing a banking hub in the town centre presents a key opportunity to provide a convenient, single-location service for non-digital banking users. An example of this is the trial of the use of a OneBanx kiosk within Principality Building Society in Cowbridge.

This provides in-person banking access for users of all the banks participating in Open Banking.

## Key Opportunities

- Provide OneBanx services within existing bank / building society premises, or;
- Potential to co-locate with other uses such as at a council services hub (eg at the library).

## Next Steps

- Engage with high street banks and local authorities to explore interest.
- Explore complementary uses, such as financial literacy workshops or business support services, to maximise community benefit.

# Repurpose banks



*A new life for the old bank buildings*

## Objective

To revitalise the town centre (particularly around the Windsor Road roundabout) by working in partnership with landlords to try to find new occupants for vacant bank buildings.

## Key Opportunities

- Introduce a mix of uses that support a lively and attractive town centre including a balance of residential, retail, hospitality, office, and creative spaces to cater to different community needs.
- Provide flexibility for landlords and new tenants to change the use of ancillary spaces at the rear and upper levels of premises, while maintaining active uses for ground floor shopfront spaces.

## Timescale

There is potential to utilise the existing buildings for meanwhile uses as a 'quick win', such as a temporary home for Benthg Penarth and other local organisations, or be used as a temporary maker's or events space whilst working towards finding long-term tenants.

## Next Steps

- Engage with landlords, developers, and businesses to bring new tenants into empty premises.
- Ensure any redevelopment proposals enhance the pedestrian experience and contribute positively to the streetscape.
- Explore incentives to attract independent businesses, start-ups, and creative enterprises to the area.



# Council services hub



*Create a central hub for information and easy access to council services.*

## Objective

Establish a centralised hub where residents can easily access information on council services, including financial, housing, and social support, all in one accessible location.

Co-locating this hub within Penarth Library would provide a convenient, accessible space while also promoting local events and opportunities.

## Key Opportunity

- Subject to available funding, collaboration within the council to provide a dedicated service desk offering personal consultations on housing, finance, and other essential services.
- Partner with local organisations to promote events, classes, and volunteer opportunities, fostering greater community involvement and activation across the town.

## Next Steps

- Assess feasibility, funding, and resource allocation.
- Identify key local organisations for collaboration and establish a framework for ongoing event and service promotion.
- Explore transport partnerships to provide cost-effective, accessible travel options for residents.





# Makers market and business hub



## *Establish a maker's market for small, start-up businesses*

### Objective

To create a vibrant Maker's Market in Penarth that supports independent businesses, start-ups, and the creative community. The market could not only serve as a retail space for unique products but also provide affordable units and business incubator spaces for local entrepreneurs to offer services such as workshops, arts spaces or creative classes.

### Key Opportunities

- Encourage entrepreneurship and strengthen the town's identity as a centre for independent businesses and the creative industries.
- Offer a mix of indoor and outdoor areas, including stalls, studios, and workshop spaces to suit different business needs and provide opportunities for local creatives to host classes, exhibitions, and interactive sessions, fostering a strong community spirit.

- Create business incubator units that provide small spaces for new businesses to operate from before finding larger or permanent premises.

### Timescale

The Royal Mail depot has the potential to be repurposed into a central and accessible hub for small businesses and visitors. However, this opportunity depends on Royal Mail's future operational needs and whether the site becomes available for redevelopment.

### Next Steps

- Engage with landowners and potential operators to find a suitable site.
- Explore funding opportunities and partnerships to support infrastructure development and long-term viability.
- Potential to implement phased development, starting with temporary pop-up stalls before establishing a permanent market space.

## *Precedent: Craft & Design Centre, Manchester*

Housed in a former fish market, the Craft & Design Centre in Manchester is a vibrant creative hub dedicated to contemporary craft and design. Situated in the heart of the city, it provides a platform for both established and emerging artists and makers to showcase their work.

The Centre hosts an array of exhibitions, workshops, and events, showcasing innovative craft practices across diverse media, including ceramics, textiles, glass, wood, and metal.

Beyond exhibition space, it serves as an educational hub, offering opportunities for visitors to learn new skills and explore the craftsmanship behind handcrafted objects. Through its initiatives, the Centre aims to inspire, educate, and engage the public while supporting the growth of Manchester's creative industries.



Credit: David Dixon



Credit: Dave Croker



# A home for Benthyg Penarth



Credit: Benthyg

*Promote a circular economy and reduce waste by adopting a 'borrowing' culture.*

## Objective

Benthyg Penarth, as part of the 'Library of Things' initiative, fosters a culture of borrowing to support a sustainable and circular economy. By providing affordable access to a wide range of items, it helps reduce waste and promotes more conscious consumption. Establishing a visible and accessible presence within the town centre will further embed sustainability into the community and encourage greater participation.

## Key Opportunities

- A visible and accessible new home in the town centre for Benthyg.

- Benthyg aims to promote waste reduction, borrowing, and repair culture. There is opportunity for them to offer repair workshops, creative reuse sessions, and sustainability consultations from a town centre premises.
- Collaborate with local businesses and organisations to expand borrowing and sharing initiatives.
- Potential for Penarth's Repair Cafe to be co-located with Benthyg.

## Delivery and next steps

- Work with Benthyg and landlords to find a permanent town centre space, potentially in one of the vacant former bank premises.
- Help promote the initiative through local events, marketing and council communications.

## Precedent: RE:MAKE NEWPORT

Re:Make Newport is Wales' first permanent community repair and reuse space. They are a volunteer led community space, in collaboration between Repair Café Wales and Benthyg Cymru who offer an extensive 'library of things', free repairs of household items and also a variety of skill share workshops.

The initiative not only addresses environmental concerns but also fosters social cohesion by bringing together diverse community members to collaborate to engage with one another. The space

is easily accessible to the public, located in the heart of Newport.



Credit: Re:Make



# Improve the Pier's cultural offering



## *Activities at the Pier need shouting about*

### Objective

Penarth Pier is a key historical and cultural asset that plays an important role in the town's tourism. It incorporates the Penarth Pavilion, an Art Deco landmark, has the potential to be enlivened with more activity to enhance the visitor experience and contribute to the local economy. Strategic improvements to its use, accessibility, and connectivity can bolster its role as a vibrant community and tourism hub.

### Key Opportunities

- Expand the cinema offering to include current blockbuster films and themed experiences such as singalong events.
- Maximise the use of the pavilion for weddings, corporate events, and community gatherings.
- Establish partnerships with the Library and local organisations to create a visitor and heritage information centre.
- Strengthen partnerships with businesses along the Esplanade, introducing incentives to encourage pre-event dining and local spending.
- Strengthen event marketing, particularly within

the town centre—the primary arrival point for visitors—to increase awareness and footfall.

### Timescale

An interim intervention could include improvements to the promotion of events in the Pavilion whilst working towards establishing partnerships for cinema screenings, event hire and business collaborations.

### Next Steps

- Engage with local businesses and community stakeholders to identify partnership opportunities.
- Develop a promotional strategy to better market events and activities.
- Explore funding options to support necessary infrastructure improvements.
- Pilot enhanced programming at the Pavilion and assess its impact on visitor numbers and local business activity.



# Enable greater investment in Penarth's sports clubs



## *More than just a sports club*

### Objective

Penarth is home to a number of successful sports clubs, such as Old Pens and Penarth Athletic Club, which play a vital role in supporting competitive sport in the town. These clubs (and others) already open up their spaces to other uses, but there is potential to expand this role as important hubs of the community, in parts of the town that lack other community spaces and venues, benefiting the town and providing vital income for the clubs.

These clubs have recently gone through the process of a community asset transfer, which will enable them to more easily access funding from external sources to invest in their facilities. In the past, clubs have missed out on funding due to having an insufficient length of lease or ownership of their grounds, and removing these barriers will allow investment in the long-term future of the clubs and their facilities.

### Key Opportunities

- Opportunity to increase the utilisation of sports club facilities, providing community benefits and additional income streams to support core club ambitions.

- Opportunity to bring in additional investment into the sporting facilities, such as pitches, gyms, and changing facilities.
- Increase outreach to underrepresented groups, including young families and individuals with disabilities.

### Delivery and Next Steps

- Speed up the process of Community Asset Transfers to enable organisations to bid for funding to improve their facilities.
- Support Penarth's sports clubs and community organisations in expanding the range of uses and activities they offer on-site where it benefits the wider community.
- Help clubs and community groups identify funding sources and overcome challenges.
- Develop an outreach and marketing strategy to promote the expanded offerings to the wider community.

### Key Stakeholders

- Sports clubs, including: Old Pens; Penarth Athletic Club.



# External Events Space



## *A space in the town centre for events and markets*

### Objective

There is currently no central public/civic space in the town centre. There is an opportunity to create a space that can be used (either a permanent public space, or one that can be closed for events) for events such as weekly markets, seasonal or cultural events.

### Key Opportunities

- Several potential locations for an events space were considered - the preferred location is Station Approach car park.
- Parking could be retained within an enhanced landscape design, with provision for temporary events (e.g. power).
- On event days parking would be suspended to create a pedestrian plaza area.
- Consideration will need to be given to how

access to the Station Approach Industrial Estate is maintained during events. This could be via managed access or a clear route through the space, or via the southern access point onto Station Road.

### Key Stakeholders

- Business Forum/town centre traders
- Penarth Town Council
- Transport for Wales
- Network Rail
- Station Approach Industrial Estate

## *Precedent: Castle Square Caernarfon*

In 2009, Gwynedd County Council redesigned Castle Square to create a high-quality, uncluttered civic space at the heart of Caernarfon. The design prioritises simplicity, using premium materials alongside carefully placed street trees and furniture to enhance the public realm.

The square has become a vibrant, multi-functional space, where cafés and restaurants extend into the public area, and a twice-weekly market brings additional footfall. It also serves as a drop-off point for coaches and buses, supporting tourism.



Credit: DCfW



## Events Space

### Station Approach

Due to the size and flexibility of the space, its proximity to a range of existing businesses, and the wider benefits of renovating this key entrance into the town, the recommended location for an event space is the Station Approach car park.

On a day-to-day basis, this space would be retained as parking to serve the town centre and station, but it could also be used for events such as a regular market, seasonal events, or cultural activities.

The design would allow for flexible areas of hardstanding in high-quality materials, new trees and planting, seating, and external power and potable water points for events. Combined with the potential renovation of the station building, this would transform this key space in the town centre.



*Station approach day-to-day as parking. For illustrative purposes only.*



*Station approach on market day. For illustrative purposes only.*



*Artist's impression of Station Approach on market day*



# Marina Public Realm



Cardiff Barrage car park



Old Custom House restaurant

## Enhancing a key gateway into Penarth

### Objective

Cardiff Bay Barrage provides a key route into Penarth on foot and by bike, and is an important amenity used by residents and tourists. The Old Custom House is a successful destination restaurant that attracts people from across the region.

However, the public realm is dominated by featureless tarmac car parking and road infrastructure.

There is an opportunity to enhance the public realm around this area and create welcoming entrance into Penarth. The derelict Marine Buildings also provides an opportunity - the buildings have been derelict for several decades. However, the condition of the buildings is so poor it has so far made redevelopment economically unviable.

### Key Opportunities

- Improved public realm around Paget Road Roundabout and Cardiff Bay car park, including both improved hard landscape and new soft landscaping planting and trees.

- Improved active travel wayfinding signage.
- Opportunity for redevelopment of the derelict (Grade II Listed) Marine Buildings, or the site.

While finding a use for the existing listed buildings should be prioritised, if this is shown not to be possible, then consideration should be given to other potential uses of the site. Early engagement with Cadw is essential for any proposals.

- Opportunity for completion of the Headland Link project. This could provide a redefined gateway through to the Esplanade, bringing economic opportunities, improved active travel and visitor enhancement

### Key Stakeholders

- Cardiff Council: The local authority boundary runs through the Penarth end of the Barrage and engagement will be required.
- Cadw.



Umpalumpa  
Sweet Shop

NORTHERN STAR  
MARKET



Farm  
Range



CORNISH  
PASTIES  
SOLD HERE  
The true taste of Cornwall



# LONG-TERM

- **7+ YEARS**
- **INVOLVES MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE OR POLICY CHANGE AND MUST ALIGN WITH LONG-TERM COUNCIL POLICIES**
- **CONSIDER ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS INCLUDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND FUTURE GROWTH**



# Cogan Interchange



*Transport for Wales have an ambition for Cogan Station to become a multi-modal transport interchange.*

## Objective

Transport for Wales aims to transform Cogan Station into a multi-modal transport interchange. Currently, the station lacks a platform serving the Penarth branch line, requiring travelers to and from Penarth to travel into Cardiff Central to change. A multi-modal transport interchange presents an opportunity to enhance connectivity and promote transit-oriented development.

## Key Opportunities

- A new platform would allow for seamless interchange between the Barry and Penarth lines, improving transport connectivity in the area.
- New station buildings and entrances would enhance the user experience, making the interchange more accessible and attractive.

## Integration of Sustainable Transport Modes:

- Improved bus stops and waiting areas.
- Enhanced cycling provisions, including secure cycle storage and connections to existing cycle routes.

The station's redevelopment could serve as a catalyst for further investment in the surrounding area, including the potential for new housing in a well-connected location.

## Next Steps

This is a long-term project requiring significant government funding. Collaboration with Transport for Wales will ensure that the vision aligns with the broader Council objectives and the town's placemaking strategies. The timeframe and costs will depend on the future planning and strategy adopted by Transport for Wales.

## Key Stakeholders

- Transport for Wales
- Network Rail
- Vale of Glamorgan Council

## Precedent: Caerphilly Interchange

In 2024, planning consent was granted to redevelop Caerphilly Station into a modern multimodal transport hub. The new station building will facilitate seamless connections between the local bus network and enhanced rail services, improving accessibility and convenience for commuters.

The redevelopment includes provisions for a bike hub, along with upgraded cycling and walking infrastructure to promote active travel. Additionally, improvements to the Core Valleys Lines will increase rail service frequency, while the interchange will feature extra bays and layover spaces for buses, enhancing public transport connectivity in the region.



Credit: Grimshaw



# Penarth Station



*Opportunity to enhance this key gateway into the town.*

## Objective

The existing station and surrounding public realm does not currently provide a welcoming entrance into Penarth. The station building is small and dated, the station approach is cluttered and unattractive, and there is scope to increase the frequency of trains serving Penarth.

## Key Opportunities

There are several opportunities to improve the station and its surroundings. Transport for Wales has proposed the creation of a new platform at Penarth Station to improve train frequency. While the current proposal suggests access from the north side of Stanwell Road, a more comprehensive approach could provide a more suitable platform location by:

- Creating a new station entrance and plaza to the east, offering an alternative route from the station to the town centre and seafront.
- Improving integration with other transport modes such as bus services or active travel improvements via Plymouth Road.

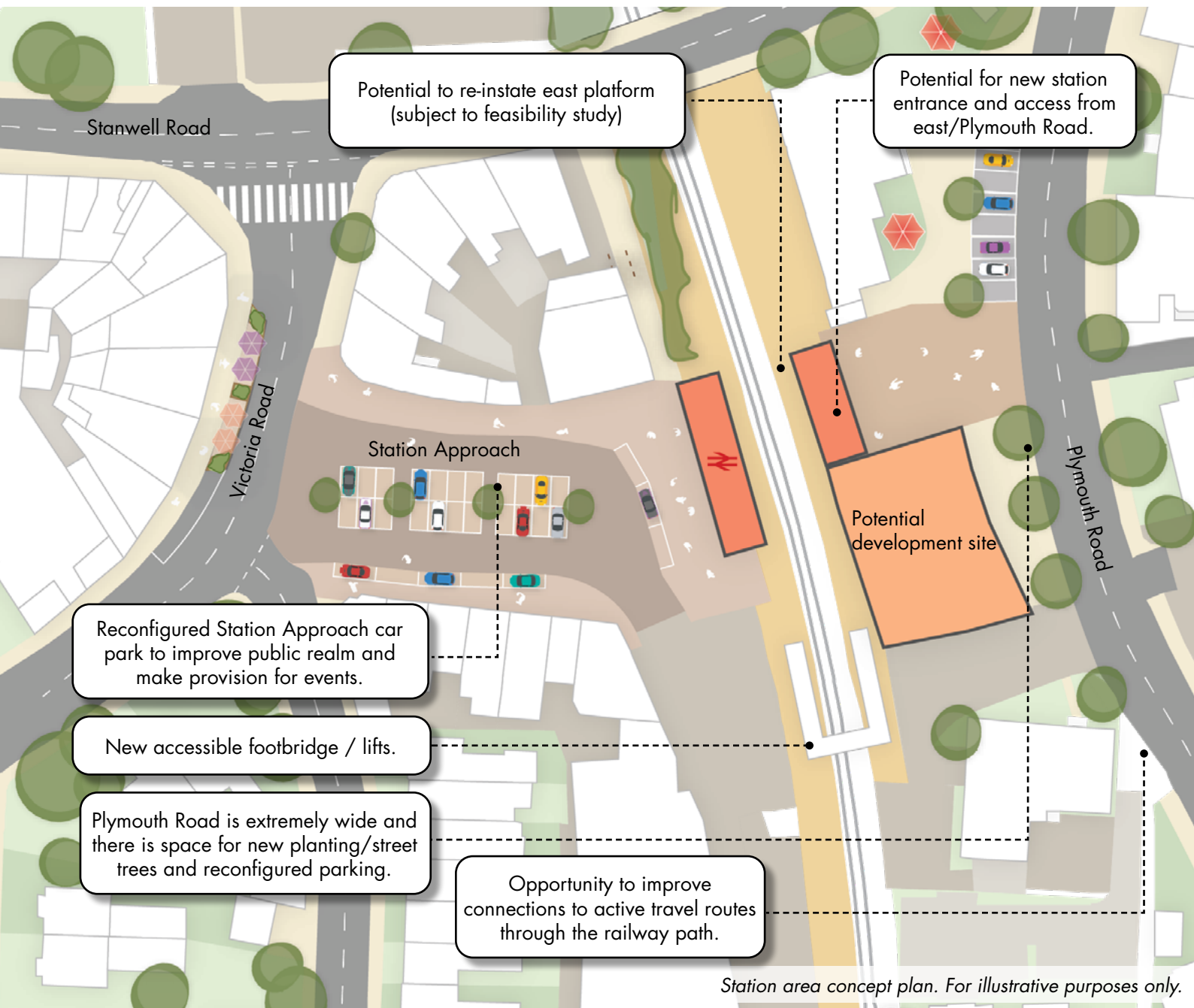
- The existing station building is outdated and in need of renovation.
- The station lacks secure cycle storage to enable more trips to the station by bike.
- Improve the arrival experience into Penarth by rail while allowing flexible use of the space for events, retaining parking for everyday use. Enhancements could include:
  - A welcoming plaza and civic space in the heart of the town.
  - New street trees and planting to enhance the town centre environment.
  - A multi-functional space that can be used for events and outdoor markets while maintaining parking availability when not in use for events.

## Key Stakeholders

- This is a long-term project that will require collaboration with multiple key stakeholders and significant funding:
  - Town centre traders
  - Transport for Wales
  - Network Rail
  - Bus operators
  - Landowners









# Health Hub



*Cardiff and Vale University Health Board plan to develop a new health hub for Penarth.*

## Objective

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board has proposed the creation of a Wellbeing Hub by co-locating GP surgeries with the existing leisure centre at Cogan.

However, this proposal has encountered obstacles due to site conditions. Public engagement feedback suggests that local residents would prefer a more central location in Penarth.

While co-location with the leisure centre may offer some benefits, there is an opportunity to revisit and reconsider the proposed location of the Wellbeing Hub in line with the placemaking principles of this plan.

## Key Opportunities

- Collaborate with the Health Board to review potential sites for a Wellbeing Hub within or around the town centre.

## Next Steps

- Work with the Health Board to assess and identify a more central location for healthcare services if a viable location can be identified.
- Engage with the Health Board and landowners to select and acquire an appropriate site.

## Key Stakeholders

- Cardiff and Vale University Health Board
- Existing GP surgeries



## 5 DELIVERY & NEXT STEPS

### NEXT STEPS

To prioritise projects for advancement and assess alignment with the placemaking plan as more detailed proposals are developed, the following tables provide a set of criteria for evaluating the delivery of the projects and interventions outlined in the Project Briefs section. While not all projects will meet every criterion, these serve as a guide to maximise alignment with the overarching objectives.

These criteria can also be used to assess the compatibility of new placemaking projects that do not form part of this plan but may arise in the future.

As with the project briefs, the criteria can be further refined to suit individual projects, helping to establish a baseline and measure their impact at a defined point post-completion or through regular assessments.

Ongoing collaboration with Penarth Town Council and other local stakeholders will be essential for the success of this Placemaking Plan, building on existing relationships and those arising from the creation of the plan.


### EVALUATION: DOES THE PROJECT...?

A welcoming public realm			
	1.	Improve the overall arrival experience of visitors?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2.	Encourage people to stay in the area longer?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3.	Improve navigation for people across the town?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	4.	Promote the heritage and culture of the town?	<input type="checkbox"/>


A Vibrant Town Centre and Seafront			
	5.	Contribute to the variety of businesses and their service or retail offerings?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	6.	Attract more footfall into the town centre/seafront?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	7.	Support the creation of new businesses?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	8.	Address a gap in the market?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9.	Encourage visitors to stay overnight?	<input type="checkbox"/>




### An Inclusive Penarth

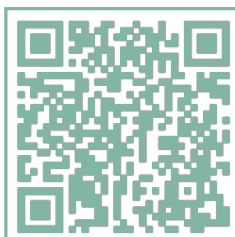
	10.	Provide or enable better access to community activities for different needs and age groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	11.	Increase awareness of current events and promote participation?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	12.	Does it contribute to or preserve the community uses?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	13.	Does it provide facilities for community use?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	14.	Enhance the health and well-being offering of the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	15.	Facilitate collaboration between local businesses, community groups and schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>

### A sustainable Penarth

	16.	Improve service, or access to, public transport?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	17.	Reduce the need for car use, ownership or parking?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	18.	Contribute to biodiversity enhancement?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	19.	Reduce congestion and air pollution?	<input type="checkbox"/>

### A safe and accessible town centre

	20.	Enhance safety of pedestrians and cyclists?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	21.	Reduce the impact of traffic in the town centre?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	22.	Improve infrastructure for sustainable modes of transport e.g. walking, cycling, bus, train etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	23.	Decrease the travel time of pedestrians and cyclists?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	24.	Improve navigation for young people and elderly?	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Placemaking Penarth**  
Participate Vale

This placemaking plan has been developed in collaboration with the community, council, and local stakeholders, with a shared responsibility to ensure the successful delivery of these interventions.

If you have a proposal that has not been included, we welcome your input—please get in touch using the link below. Likewise, if you are an investor, local business, community group, or resident interested in contributing to the future of Penarth, we would love to hear from you.



## FUNDING

Delivery of this placemaking plan will vary between projects. Some will require the direct involvement of the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Penarth Town Council, while others will be led by public sector partners, the private sector, or local community groups and organisations.

There is no single dedicated source of funding for the delivery of this placemaking plan. Instead, projects will be funded through a range of opportunities, including:

- Welsh Government funding such as the Transforming Towns Fund, or the Active Travel Fund.
- UK Government funding, such as the Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Vale of Glamorgan Council funding.
- Other public sector partners.
- Private sector investment
- Heritage Lottery Fund.
- Section 106 funds from new developments.

This list is not extensive and the plan will provide a basis for bidding for new funding opportunities as they arise. Vale of Glamorgan Council will collaborate with potential project partners to help access available funding.

## VALE 2030

The VoGC's Corporate Plan 2020 – 2030, *Strong Communities with a Bright Future*, sets out an ambitious programme of work the Council will take to deliver on its vision by:

- Creating a great place to live, work and visit.
- Respecting and celebrating the environment.
- Giving everyone a good start in life.
- Supporting and protecting those who need us.
- Being the best Council we can be.

The strategy highlights that by working with communities and partners to deliver on these five objectives, the Vale of Glamorgan will have stronger communities with a brighter future. VoGC is confident that by collaborating with communities and partners to achieve these objectives, it will foster strong communities with a brighter future.

VoGC is committed to working with the community and partners as a team to deliver the commitments in the Corporate Plan, making everyone proud of the people and places that are the very heart of the Vale of Glamorgan.





## STRIDE TREGLOWN

FOR



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



Creu Lleoedd Cymru  
Placemaking Wales

Llofnodydd y Siarter Charter Signatory