

Brecon 20:20

Our Town: Our Future

Community Derived Action Plan



Brecon Town Plan

Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This is the Town Plan for Brecon. The plan is based upon evidence including the issues and objectives identified by residents and stakeholders within Brecon. It draws on material gathered, analysed and consulted upon over the last three years and addresses key concerns and issues relating to the future vitality and sustainability of the Town.
- 1.2. The purpose of entering into the Town Plan process is to bring together all stakeholders with an interest in the future of Brecon to agree an action plan for the sustainable development of the town that takes account of both aspirations and current likely future needs.
- 1.3. The plan also contains detailed policies addressing issues of importance for the Town. These policies complement those currently in force within the following statutory documents and in line with the Welsh Government's Well-being of Future Generations Act; the aim of these policies is to apply the strategic policies to Brecon's specific local circumstances: -
 - Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan:
<http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/the-authority/who-we-are/nmp/>
 - Brecon Beacons National Park Authority adopted Local Development Plan:
<http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/planning/draft-strategy-and-policy/brecon-beacons-national-park-local-development-plan/>
 - Powys County Council Vision 2025:
<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/5809/Vision-2025-Our-Corporate-Improvement-Plan-2018-2023>

2. Plan production

- 2.1. This plan has been developed through evidence gathering including a detailed programme of consultation and stakeholder participation. Results of the residents' survey are available via the Brecon Town Council website (<https://brecontowncouncil.org.uk/>)
- 2.2. Initially a group of interested parties came together to form the Brecon 20:20 steering group which worked to identify the main issues facing the town that should be included in a survey of residents.
- 2.3. The survey had a 25% response rate with 895 questionnaires completed, which compares with a national average response rate of 20%.
- 2.4. A survey report was produced in May 2019 and a stakeholder workshop was held to develop an action plan. Sections of the action plan were then discussed in detail with a wider stakeholder group relevant to each section, refining the action plan. Steering group members then completed their section of the action plan and this has been used to further refine the action plan to bring it to this final version.

3. Town Plan Purpose

3.1. Once complete the Plan will have a dual function

- It will integrate the work of Brecon Town Council (BTC) and many other organisations working towards improving the wellbeing of Brecon for now and for future generations.
- It will, when adopted by the BBNPA, become a key document in the determination of planning applications within Brecon, where appropriate.

3.2. Having an agreed Town Plan in place also provides evidence for applications for funding to help with the delivery of actions within it.

3.3. The plan is divided into eight sections. Inevitably some actions contribute to more than one area.

3.4. The sections are:

1. Streetscene
2. Parking and Traffic
3. Retail and Market
4. Community Facilities and Services
5. Housing
6. Arts and Culture
7. Greenspaces and Sport
8. Energy and Climate Change

4. Brecon Town Plan as Supplementary Planning guidance

4.1.1. Brecon lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority. This means that all planning decisions are made by the National Park Authority. The National Park Authority has an adopted Local Development Plan (LDP), which sets out planning policy and defines areas of land to meet housing and employment needs up until 2022. Brecon is identified as the Primary Key Settlement for the National Park. This Town Plan has been prepared, in part, to provide further context to that definition for the National Park Authority, to ensure that all future planning applications within Brecon, where relevant, are compliant with the community defined actions of the Town Plan.

4.1.2. To deliver this, it is proposed that Brecon Town Plan will be endorsed as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Local Development Plan. This is proposed in accordance with the Welsh Government's provisions for Place Plans as set out in Planning Policy Wales (edition 10).

4.2. What is Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 4.2.1. Supplementary Planning Guidance is prepared in order to provide greater detail on policy than can be contained within the Local Development Plan. This additional detail provides clarity on the issues that will be considered by the BBNPA in the determination of a planning application. Supplementary Planning Guidance can be place or policy specific, for example it could provide further detail regarding the implementation of a specific planning policy, or provide a development brief for future development sites.
- 4.2.2. In this instance the Town Plan provides supplementary planning guidance to Local Development Plan Brecon policy B LPI. It is intended that any planning application submitted within Brecon, will be considered against the relevant areas of the Town Plan. Only proposals that are compliant with the relevant areas of the Brecon Town Plan will be granted planning permission. Further detail regarding the policy this document supplements is set out below.

4.3. Local Development Plan Context for Brecon

- 4.3.1. As set out above Brecon is listed as the Primary Key Settlement within the Local Development Plan. It is the principal settlement within the National Park identifying Brecon as a centre of importance to Central Wales with strong economic, social and cultural links to the adjoining areas of south east and south west Wales. This is, in part, due to the strategic location of Brecon at the interchange of the A40 and A470 with links to the A465 Heads of the Valley road, which defines Brecon as a connecting hub between south and Mid Wales with the potential to capitalise on the richness and diversity of both regions.
- 4.3.2. The Local Development Plan addresses the Primary Key Settlement in some detail setting out the issues and objectives that were identified facing the town in terms of future development needs. These issues for Brecon are set out at Appendix 2 of this document.
- 4.3.3. These issues resulted in the following vision being developed for the future development of Brecon:

Brecon 15 Year Vision

Brecon will be internationally recognised as a place synonymous with inspirational activity, linked to local excellence in the creative arts and the inspiring experience of the landscape setting. The town will be known as a cultural centre contributing to the strong and vibrant tourist economy within the town.

The retail function of Brecon will continue to reflect the character of the town's individuality, National retailers and independents will exist side by side providing interest and services to visitor and resident alike. In combination, the hospitality industry will continue to grow within the town, allowing visitors to stay for extended periods with many things to see and do.

New small and medium sized enterprises will have been encouraged to become a part of the dynamic and exciting town and will capitalise on opportunities to locate within the centre. Brecon will enjoy a vibrant mix of businesses and employment types of varying degrees of scale and regional influence. Ventures relating to local food production and traditional crafts will proliferate making Brecon a centre of dynamic rural enterprise, helping build a strong local economy which will secure the strategic significance of this strong market town in the 21st Century.

The disparity in wealth and deprivation levels in some parts of the town will be counteracted through strong local action to provide a wider range of employment options and to address the standard of residential accommodation. A wide range of people will live and work within Brecon, and new housing will cater for this diverse range of people. Affordable housing and intermediate low cost homes provision will be improved and those inappropriately housed will be reduced to minimal levels.

The Settlement will become key in a wider move towards more sustainable forms of transport and will become a sustainable transport hub, with excellent connections to outlying areas and Key Settlements via public transport.

4.3.4. This vision for Brecon is in part implemented through Policy B LPI which sets out the forms of development which are considered acceptable within Brecon thus:-

B LPI Brecon Appropriate Development

Proposals for development within the Primary Key Settlement of Brecon

All proposals will be required to contribute positively to settlement character and enhance the quality of the landscape without adverse impact on the wildlife, natural beauty, cultural heritage, environmental assets or biodiversity of the settlement

All proposals for development within the Primary Key Settlement of Brecon must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the NPA how they respond to the identified issues set out at table 4.3 and how the scheme will contribute to achieving the Brecon 15 year Future Vision.

Within the Primary Key Settlement of Brecon all proposals for development or change of use of land or buildings must be located within the Settlement boundary as shown on the Proposals Map (with the exception of those developments covered by Policies, which enable development outside of limits. See E LP I below). Within the Settlement Boundary the following forms of development will be considered acceptable:

- 1. Proposals that strengthen and enhance the mix of housing types and tenure options within the town, responsive to the demographic needs of the area and region, on land identified as being within environmental limits;**
- 2. Regeneration proposals within the Town centre that strengthen and enhance the social and cultural status of the town, and are commensurate with the historic significance of the architecture and Settlement form;**
- 3. Proposals that strengthen and enhance retail provision within the town appropriate to the Settlement character and in accordance with the defined retail centre for the town as shown on the Proposals Maps (See also SP13 and Policy 42).**

4. Proposals of an appropriate scale and type relevant to Brecon's form and character that work to reduce the carbon and ecological footprint of the Town and its region.
5. Proposals that strengthen and enhance the tourism offer within Brecon in accordance with the Sustainable Tourism Strategy for the National Park including appropriate new guest accommodation and the creation of appropriate new visitor attractions / facilities.
6. Proposals to strengthen and enhance the provision of community facilities serving the Town and region.
7. Proposals that strengthen and enhance sustainable forms of access to the town and wider region in accordance with the vision to make Brecon a Sustainable Transport Hub.
8. Proposals that strengthen and enhance employment opportunities within the town utilising mixed use sites and/or live-work schemes serving the town and region.

4.3.5. This consultation draft Supplementary Planning Guidance is intended to aid in the delivery of the 15 year vision and the above policy.

4.3.6. In addition to the above, the following table sets out the cross references between the Town Plan and the detailed policy of the Local Development Plan. Where a planning application is to be considered against a policy listed below, the determination should take into consideration how the proposal has addressed the contents of the relevant chapter of the Local Development Plan.

Local Development Plan Policy	Town Plan Section
B LPI Key Settlement (criteria 5) Policy 50 Retention of Existing Community Facilities Policy 51 Development of New or Extended Community Facilities Policy 53 Planning Obligations	Community
K LPI Key Settlement (criteria 6) Policy 35 Employment Generating Development Policy 36 Enabling B Use Class Employment Use outside Settlement Boundaries and Settlement Extents Policy 37 Protection of Employment Sites and Buildings	
Policy 42 Development in Retail Centres	Retail
K LPI Key Settlement (principle requirements) Policy 1 Appropriate Development in the National Park Policy 6 Biodiversity and Development Policy 8 Trees and Development Policy 12 Light Pollution Policy 15 Listed Buildings Policy 16 Demolition of Listed Buildings Policy 17 The Setting of Listed Buildings Policy 18 Protection of Buildings of Local Importance Policy 19 Development affecting Conservation Areas Policy 21 Historic Landscapes	Environment and Street Scene
K LPI Key Settlement (criteria 7)	Parking and Traffic

¹ Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Sustainable Tourism Strategy <http://www.breconbeacons.org/the-authority/working-in-partnership/tourism-industry/sustainable-tourism-strategy>

Local Development Plan Policy	Town Plan Section
Policy 59 Impacts of Traffic Policy 60 Provision for Cycling and Walking	
K LPI Key Settlement (criteria 1) Policy 1 Appropriate Development in the National Park SP5 Housing (allocations DBR-CR-A, SALT 061) Policy 28 Affordable Housing Contributions Policy 29 Enabling Affordable Housing Exception Sites	Housing

4.4. Brecon Issues and Objectives

Brecon Issues and Objectives			
No.	Objective	LDP Strategic Objective	Issue
1	Strengthening Brecon's employment offer	Employment	The 2008 <i>Brecon Economic Development and Regeneration Framework</i> (DEandT, Hyder) highlighted that Brecon's employment offer is currently heavily reliant on the public sector. In order to ensure Brecon retains a strong position as a regional centre for employment, the DEandT study recommended diversification of the economy with support for indigenous and inward growth of new and emerging sectors, linked to local food production, the green economy and sustainable tourism. In accordance with LDP objectives to provide for a sustainable economy the National Park Authority supports the development of a mix of employment opportunities, and to resist loss of commercial enterprise within the town. The challenge for the LDP is to ensure provision responds sympathetically to the character of Brecon as gateway to the National Park. The town currently has two industrial estates located on its western periphery, large scale expansion of these areas to accommodate employment facilities has been determined to be unsustainable and incompatible with National Park purposes. The LDP therefore promotes innovative approaches to employment provision, through mix-use developments, live-work schemes and redevelopment, well integrated into the Settlement, enhancing the buzz and mix of activity within the town
2	Improving standards of living for all	Housing; Affordable Housing; Sustainable Communities	Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation data shows that St John's ward within Brecon is one of the most deprived within all of Powys, there is a strong need for better provision of affordable housing, both social rented, intermediate and low-cost affordable to buy. This coupled with the higher cost of living within rural areas ²³ places an imperative on the LDP to ensure that all new development is as resource efficient as is possible, to ensure Brecon is future proofed against the challenges of both climate change and peak oil. The LDP should encourage a mix of housing types and tenures to be developed within the town, responsive to the demographic needs of the town, and in close proximity to services and facilities. New residential development should be resource efficient ensuring that the cost of living is sustainable into the future.
3	Strengthening Brecon's cultural capital	Cultural Heritage	The town has a significant cultural presence, which contributes to its identity. The annual jazz festival, for example is internationally recognised, creating a lively buzz of activity and interest within the town. The challenge for the LDP is to encourage development within the town centre, which perpetuates the celebratory atmosphere throughout the year. Development options should focus on regenerating the town centre to an area of independent attraction.
4	Avoiding areas of flood risk within the town	Flooding	Flooding has been identified as a strategic issue for Brecon, constraining development potential in the south east of the town. Development options in the west are constrained by the proximity of the River Usk; a SSSI and SAC. Development options should therefore be focused on the north of the Town.
5	Reducing private car use	Transport, Climate Change	The accessibility of Brecon via national trunk roads contributes largely to the Strategic importance of Brecon; this is significantly contrasted with the local internal routes operating within the Settlement, which are close to capacity to accommodate any further volume of traffic. This is in part a result of the historic nature of the Settlement, with two key residential areas being accessed over the listed Usk Bridge. Development enabled through the LDP should work to address these capacity

			issues by encouraging the use of sustainable forms of transport. By locating development within walking / cycling distance of town, and promoting the development of walking / cycle routes, the LDP can help challenge the car culture that has the potential to dominate the town.
6	Respecting Brecon's sense of Place.	Landscape: Built Environment	Brecon's landscape setting is recognised for its visual and sensory quality ⁴ and historic significance ⁵ , affording the place a unique aesthetic and character. The need to develop the town to maintain its strategic role for the region has the potential to negatively impact on the town's unique character and appeal. Constraints on the development of the town have resulted in development options being focused on the north of the town. This growth will need to be sensitively designed to respond to the traditional townscape it will form the backdrop to. Development will need limit impact on the visual and sensory experiences of the town within the wider landscape and ensure they are not negatively impacted upon, especially in relation to Brecon's location within the historic landscape.

4.5 Other Relevant Strategies and Plans

4.5.1 The following tourism strategies and plans will inform and underpin this Brecon Town Plan

- Brecon Beacons Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2017 -2022 and Destination Action Plan 2017- 2022

<https://www.beacons-mpa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/Brecon-Beacons-Sustainable-Tourism-Strategy-2017-2022.pdf>

- Future Priorities Action Plan for Tourism in Wales
Priorities for the Visitor Economy 2020 -2025

https://businesswales.gov.wales/tourism/sites/tourism/files/documents/TAP_2019.pdf

- This will be the successor to the current tourism strategy Partnership for Growth - Welsh Government Strategy for Tourism 2013 -2020

- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-04/partnership-for-growth-strategy-for-tourism-2013-2020.pdf>

2. Hirsch et al *A Minimum Income Standard for Rural Households* (2010, Joseph Rowntree Foundation)

3. See CCW LANDMAP Visual and Sensory aspect area BRCKNVS633

⁴ Brecon is located within the Middle Usk Valley Historic Landscape as defined by the Register of Historic Landscapes in Wales (Cadw).

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Section I: Streetscene

Community Derived Action Plan



5. Section I: Streetscene

5.1 The Existing Situation

- 5.1.1. Brecon is a market town, established in Norman times. It has narrow streets, Georgian façades and a restored canal basin. It also has a 12th Century Cathedral, South Wales Borderers Military Museum, Brecknock Museum, specialist independent retailers and national chains, cinema and outdoor shops. The Taff trail and Usk Valley walks start here with shorter walks along the River Usk Promenade and Canal Tow Path.
- 5.1.2. Even with all this and the Brecon Beacons on its doorstep Brecon town centre like many town centres has declined. Empty shops, lack of repair to buildings and neglected streets are the result.
- 5.1.3. We must find a way to reverse this for the benefit of those who live and visit Brecon. For those that live here it is a familiar, useful and fondly regarded place which plays an important role in bringing people together and providing a social and community focal point for all ages.

- 5.1.4. The survey response showed that 60% of respondents were proud to show visitors around their town. 55% felt that the town centre cleanliness was below average. Increased cleaning schedules have been agreed and implemented by Brecon Town Council since the survey was completed.
- 5.1.5. In order of priority new shops, clean streets, building repairs and flowers and art are seen as the best ways to improve the attractiveness of the town.
- 5.1.6. Likewise in order to promote the heritage of the town respondents identified the need to refurbish and renovate some of the buildings, improved interpretation and signage and increased advertising were seen as essential too.

5.1 What does that mean for the future?

- 5.1.1 To improve the town and make it an inviting place for residents and visitors it is clear that the cleanliness, already being addressed by Brecon Town Council needs to be improved further. Everyone in the town can help by keeping their own areas clean.
- 5.1.2 Responsibility for improving the buildings within the town rests with those who own them, but there is help towards those costs, primarily from the Town Centre Property Improvement Fund, coordinated by Powys County Council (PCC).

5.2 How are we going to address the issues?

- 5.2.1 Brecon Town Council will continue to work on the cleanliness of the town.
- 5.2.2 Powys County Council will encourage landlords to renovate and repair buildings using the financial resources on offer.
- 5.2.3 Improvements to signage, plaques, interpretation and advertising will all be pursued.

TERM	AREA/No	ACTION	WHO	WHEN
Short Term	1.1	Continue to improve the cleanliness of the Town Centre streets Install more litter bins in the town	Brecon Town Council (BTC) BTC	Within 12 months of acceptance of plan
	1.2	Reach out to shop owners to take ownership of their pavement and implement a "Clean the Shop Front Campaign"	Brecon Chamber of Trade/Shop Owners/BTC/Brecon Business Improvement District (BID)	Within 12 months of acceptance of plan
	1.3	Appeal to owners of buildings to repair them. Joint letter from Brecon Town Council/Chamber of Trade and Brecon 20:20 Encourage owners to spend more on their shops and paint them regularly	BTC/Brecon 20:20/Chamber of Trade/Brecon BID/BBNPA	Within 12 months of acceptance of plan
	1.4	Identify priority buildings - 1. The empty properties in the town and 2. Identify buildings requiring repairs/painting Details of the Town Centre Property Improvement Fund and	BBNPA and Brecon 20:20 /BTC	Within 3 months Within 12 months of acceptance

		loan scheme to be provided by Powys County Council and circulated to empty property owners Encourage reduced rents from landlords	Powys County Council (PCC)/Brecon Chamber of Trade	
Medium term	1.5	Walking Tours/ Heritage Trail - circular walks and restoration schemes e.g. theatre trail and poetry trail Audit of current trails	Brecon Town Council (Visit Brecon)/ Brecon 20:20/Brecknock Society/ Brecon heritage and cultural network (digital marketing project)/Regimental Museum	2 years
	1.6	Signage/Plaques – clean and restore plaques and add to existing sites Need to find out where plaques were originally sited e.g. ask museum/facebook Signage – Powys have a small amount of money to signpost Y Gaer and other heritage attractions. Further audit and new signage required	Brecon 20:20/Plan Brecon PCC BTC/PCC Brecon Heritage and Cultural Network and Brecon BID	1 year
	1.7	Research BID and regeneration schemes and Town Centre management schemes that have worked	BTC/BBNPA/Brecon BID	Within 1 Year

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Section 2: Parking and Traffic

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6. Section 2: Parking and Traffic

6.1 The Existing Situation

- 6.1.1 It is recognised that there are parking issues in Brecon. Town Centre parking is free but is limited in terms of the number of spaces available and the amount of time allowed in those spaces, which tend to be limited to 30 minutes or 1 hour at most. The town centre parking leads to cars circling the town looking for somewhere to park.
- 6.1.2 Some years ago changes to the flow of traffic were attempted but failed. Cars were discouraged from driving up through the town via Ship Street and down through the Bulwark to the Watton via a “choke” introduced at the zebra crossing at the bottom of the Bulwark. Under this scheme it was hoped that all through traffic would follow the route around the town and not through the centre.
- 6.1.3 The failure of the “choke” scheme has led to cars, vans and lorries continuing to use the town centre as a through route as well as an access for shops and businesses.

- 6.1.4 The data received from PCC shows that they manage eleven car parks in the town, with a variety of staying time and hourly/daily charges. In total the car parks generate significant amounts of money for PCC. In 2018/19 this is reported to be in excess of £500,000. The net income from this service is used on other services e.g. the bus service.
- 6.1.5 The impact of the current car-parking regime is that streets close to the centre are clogged up during the day with town centre workers and visitors choosing to park for free on these side streets. In addition it is difficult for the town centre to compete with the out of town provision both in Brecon and especially from Cyfartha Park, Merthyr Tydfil.

6.2 What you told us about Parking and Traffic

- 6.2.1 The response rate from residents on parking questions was high. People were asked how important it is to park on the High Street and Bulwark. The responses ranged from 1= not important to 10= very important. 59% scored in the range 1 to 5, with 31% scoring it a 1 and therefore not important at all. Nearly 41% scored in the range 6 to 10, with 22% scoring it a 10, meaning for just over 1/5th of respondents parking in the centre of town is very important. The conclusion from this question is that opinion in the town is divided on this issue.
- 6.2.2 Residents were then asked the optimum length of time for parking in the town centre, in the George Street (adjacent to the Co-op) car park and in the bus station car park. 79% of respondents said that 30 minutes or 1 hour was adequate in the town centre. 42% would like to park for more than 2 hours in the Co-op car park and 74% were happy with more than 2 hours in the bus station car park.
- 6.2.3 When some traffic free areas were considered 53% of respondents answered that some traffic free areas would benefit the town centre, while 39% did not think there would be a benefit. While safety and the ambience of the town were seen as potential benefits there were concerns that it would lead to a loss of business in the town centre.
- 6.2.4 73% of respondents to this question felt that they were able to get around Brecon by public transport, although a number of people highlighted areas of the town not currently serviced by buses.
- 6.2.5 A high response rate on what would “encourage you to cycle” concluded that cycle lanes, paths, traffic free areas as well as the provision of bike racks/shelters are the key issue.

6.3 How are we going to address the issues?

- 6.3.1 There is a perception that Brecon has a parking problem. Residents are unable to park close to where they live, business owners are concerned that the parking policy actively discourages potential customers and for visitors and customers the difficulty with parking make visiting and shopping in Brecon difficult.
- 6.3.2 By a slight majority (53%) there is an appetite for partial pedestrianisation of the town centre for some of the time. This needs further investigation and analysis to determine the best outcome for the town as a whole. A working group will be established to take this forward.

6.3.3 Evidence will be required for any future changes required to the PCC car parking strategy in Brecon. A range of innovative solutions to this problem will be explored in a collaboration between the businesses, the community and the public sector in the town.

6.3.4 Bus services in the town need to be maintained and active travel routes developed to encourage greater use of bicycles.

TERM	AREA/No	ACTION	WHO	WHEN
Medium	2.1	A slim majority of respondents to the survey indicated that they would like partial pedestrianisation of the town. Identify stakeholders to get together to discuss options for a trial pedestrianisation of the town centre and consult with the public. Contact officers who have made Abergavenny traffic free and ask them to come and talk to the group about the experience/issues in Abergavenny. Establish stakeholder group to take this forward	Brecon 20:20, Chamber of Trade, Brecon Business Club, PCC, BTC, Brecon BID	Within 2 years of action plan adoption
	2.2	Need to gather evidence on parking practices and income generated at the various car parks in the town from PCC. Identify potential blocks to car parking. Consider restriction zones in residential areas to encourage parking in car parks. Introduce price incentives	Brecon 20:20/ BTC, Chamber of Trade/Brecon BID	Within 1 year
	2.3	Monitor success of forthcoming car payment scheme in car parks and continue to monitor income generation in each car park	PCC	Within 1 year
	2.4	Consider ways that the price incentives could be achieved to minimise or remove the cost of parking for shoppers. For example the money back scheme of the Co-op. Engage chamber of trade.	PCC, BTC, Chamber of Trade	Within 1 year
	2.5	Investigate the provision of a free bus service from car park (Brecon as capital of the Beacons) to Storey Arms (Park and Ride). Needs promotion and signage – would increase footfall.	Welsh Government transport/Visit Wales T4 Wales Brecon 20:20	Within 1 year

		Talk to Transport for Wales and BBNPA regarding experience with Beacons Bus and the feasibility of an electric bus. Designate Brecon a Transport Hub / Nodal Interchange on the Wales Way Cambrian Route linking with the Brecon and Monmouth Canal and the Taff Trail		
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Brecon 20:20

Section 3: Retail and Market Community Derived Action Plan



7. Section 3: Retail and Market

7.1 *The Existing Problem*

- 7.1.1 Brecon town centre is the cornerstone of the community and historically has been the place where things are made, bought and sold. The town also provides public services enabling people to go to work, to school and to socialise and be entertained. In a recent Federation of Small Businesses survey 92% of consumers still see the town centre as being important socially and economically.
- 7.1.2 However, like all town centres Brecon is under pressure with the introduction of technological changes and the internet. Consumers have changed how they purchase from the High Street. Over the years the introduction of three supermarkets to the town has led to a reduction of independent food and other retailers.
- 7.1.3 Local Development Policy encourages a diversity of uses in town centres as follows:-

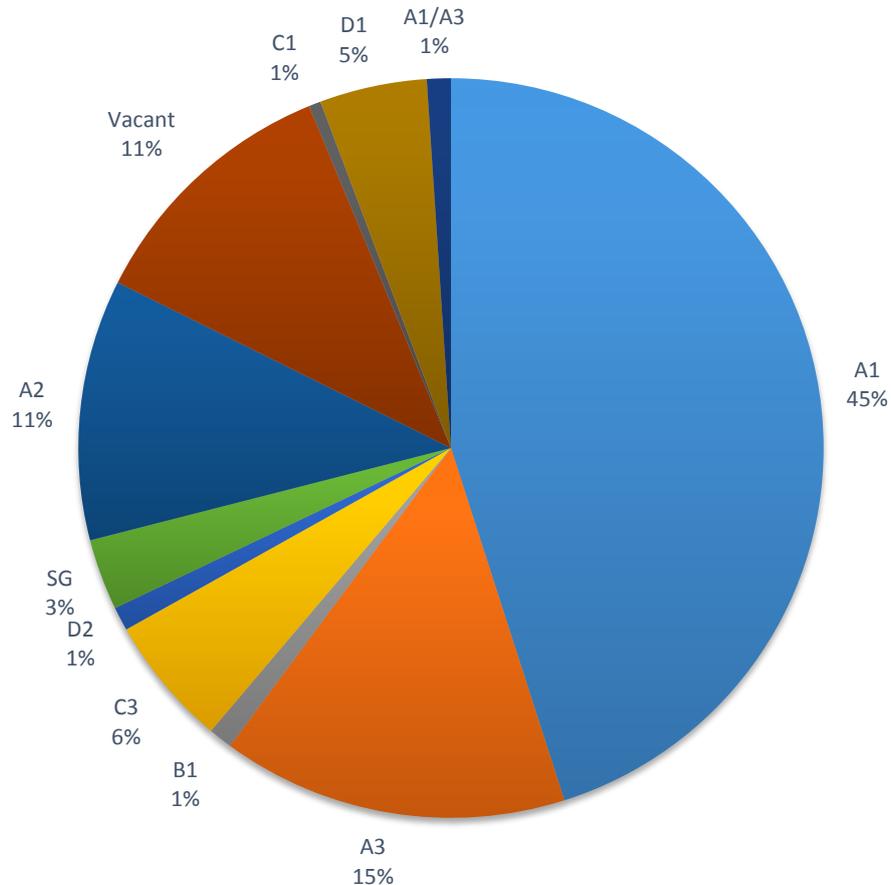
A1: Shops
A2: Financial & Professional Services
A3: Restaurants & Cafes
B1: Business
C1: Hotels
D1: Non-Residential Institutions
D2: Assembly & Leisure

The recent review carried out for LDP purposes demonstrates the recent changes in Brecon and the concerning increase in vacant properties. The vacancy level is in excess of the target level of 10% in Brecon.

Brecon Retail Centre Uses 2018/19					
Use	2019 count	2019%	2018 count	2018%	Percentage change 2018 - 2019
A1	87	45%	87	45%	No change
A2	22	11%	22	11%	No change
A3	29	15%	29	15%	No change
B1	2	1%	3	2%	1% decrease
C1	1	1%	1	0%	1% increase
C3	11	6%	11	6%	No change
D1	9	5%	9	5%	No change
D2	2	1%	2	1%	No change
D3/D1	0	0%	0	0%	No change
SG	6	3%	6	3%	No change
Vacant	22	11%	21	11%	No change
A1/A3	2	1%	2	1%	No change

The use classes by type and percentage of the total are shown overleaf.

USE CLASSES IN BRECON RETAIL CENTRE 2019



7.1.4 Brecon Indoor market has historically run a vibrant Tuesday and Friday market, a Farmers market once a month on a Saturday along with a monthly craft fair, an antique/flea market and occasional one off events. The market hall building requires significant investment and as a result the market hall, arcade and vaults have been sold by PCC. Brecon 20:20 hope that any redevelopment of the market hall is sensitive to its historic origins and the commercial redevelopment required to make the town centre a vibrant area for social and economic activities.

7.2 What you told us about Retail and Market

7.2.1 In this section residents were asked about their shopping habits. The response level to the questions in this section was high.

7.2.2 98% of respondents stated that they shopped for groceries in Brecon at least once a week. However, 72% stated that they buy groceries at an out of town retail-park and 63% also buy groceries online.

7.2.3 In terms of clothing, homewares and gifts respondents purchased these less often from shops in Brecon with the majority stating that they rarely purchased these items in Brecon. Out of town retail parks and other towns including Merthyr and Abergavenny as well as Cardiff are all used regularly by Brecon residents.

7.2.4 For those who rarely shop in Brecon 88% stated that there is not enough choice of shops, with 46% requesting more national chains and 48% looking for more independent retailers. For 25% of respondents the cost of parking is prohibitive and 10% find access to the high street difficult.

7.2.5 Respondents would like to see clothes, shoes, food and household items sold in new shops.

7.2.6 Of those people who currently shop in the market 55% buy food, 9% clothes, 14% homewares and 18% gifts. However, 38% reported that they do not shop in the market with the majority suggesting that it does not stock the items they wish to buy.

7.2.7 Analysis of comments from the survey show that the market is still valued, but that for customers to return in more numbers the environment needs to be cleaner and more vibrant and a wider range of products need to be offered for sale.

7.3 How are we going to address the issues?

7.3.1 There are too many empty retail units in Brecon. Brecon 20:20 will work with other agencies and the Brecon Business Improvement District (if supported) to examine ways of making retail easier in Brecon.

7.3.2 Encourage property owners to take care of their properties utilising funding opportunities wherever possible.

Retail Actions

TERM	AREA/ No	ACTION	WHO	WHEN
<i>Medium/ Long</i>	3.1	Develop a vision and retail brand for BRECON	Chamber of Trade / Brecon heritage and cultural network/Brecon BID (With support from BTC)/BBNPA/ PCC Brecon Beacons Sustainable Destination partnership (BBSDP)	Within 1 Year
	3.2	Promote Brecon which has a variety of independents shops, various markets, Theatres, a Cathedral, museums and family run businesses, through marketing and social media avenues and integrate with tourism and other relevant marketing campaigns		
	3.3	Focus on the quality of these independent businesses – Localised Quality Mark Scheme		
	3.4	Link into projects for example Heritage and Culture Project regarding the branding opportunities and the development of key stories / messages about Brecon and the surrounding areas. Stories linked to buildings Focus on developing high street experiences (Food, Family and Shopping)		
Short	3.5	Support for businesses and traders Promotion of relevant business schemes / initiatives – I. Business Improvement	PCC/Brecon heritage and cultural network	Within 1 Year

	3.6	District Scheme; 2. Town Centre Property Improvement Grant/Loan Scheme Consider developing a Rent Smart Landlords scheme for Business premises with the aim of reducing empty business space and the setting of realistic business rents.	(digital marketing project)/ BBNPA	Within 1 year
	3.7	Examine Merthyr experience lance.whiteley@merthyr.gov.uk (The Meanwhile project)	Brecon BID/Brecon Chamber of Trade	Within 1 year
	3.8	Establish appropriate training opportunities on social media platforms to develop businesses online presence.	Brecon BID/Chamber of Trade	Within 1 year
Medium	3.9	Development of free Wifi Develop a business case of the benefits of establishing free Wifi within the town including 5G availability. Examine Llandrindod and Cardigan case studies	BTC/Business Wales/Brecon BID/Brecon Beacons Tourism (BBT)	Within 3 years
Medium Long	3.10	Brecon Town App (i Town Concept) Develop a Town App to offer visitors and shoppers information on where to eat, where to stay, parking, what to do / events going on and businesses special offers	Brecon Town Council/ Visit Brecon Office/Brecon BID/BBT	Within 3 years
Long	3.11	Identify and research the feasibility of a Brecon Loyalty scheme (examine Totally Locally scheme in Crickhowell)	Brecon Chamber of Trade/Brecon BID	5 Years

Market Hall Actions

TERM	AREA/No	ACTION	WHO	WHEN
Short Term	3.12	Establish the future of Brecon Market Hall	New Owner	Within 1 Year
Short / Medium	3.13	Improve the Environment 1. Improve the Market Halls Signage 2. Decorate of Market Hall and Arcade 3. Improve the disability access to the market – slope for wheel chairs / pushchairs 4. Market hall Toilets Upgrade 5. Improve lighting within the market 6. Improve marketing of the various events being held in the Market Hall including an on line presence with access to social media training and integrate with the wider marketing of Brecon (see 4.8, 6.4, 6.8 and 6.9)	New Owner Via BTC Market Group Contract/Visit Brecon	Within 2 years

Short / Medium	3.14	<p>Marketing the market</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify different market opportunities 2. Consider different opening times – evenings / Sunday markets 3. Increase the choice of products - e.g. Bakery, Jewellery, Children's and men's Clothing and Shoes 4. Revamp farmers market 5. Consider dressing/decorating the market 	New Owner and Market management Group	1-3 years
Short	3.15	Provide access where appropriate to key stakeholders through a web portal to the relevant 2020 data findings to assist with grant fund applications and promoting business opportunities (report available on Brecon Town Council website)	Brecon 20 20 Steering Group / Brecon Town Council	Within 1 year

Brecon 20:20

Section 4: Community Facilities and Services

Community Derived Action Plan



8. Section 4: Community Facilities and Services

8.1 The Existing Situation

- 8.1.1 In the recent past facilities and services have been reduced by PCC including closure of the Tourist Information Centre and the Youth Club at Cradoc Road as well as changes to the services at Brecon Recycling Centre.
- 8.1.2 The number of public toilets in Brecon has reduced, with Brecon Town Council assuming responsibility for toilets at Lion Yard and Brecon Promenade. Brecon Promenade is considered to be a key facility within the community, requiring an upgrade (covered in Greenspaces)
- 8.1.3 There are many community facilities in the town, some of which require an upgrade. Information on facilities, services and events requires coordination within the town to ensure that information is comprehensive and up to date and that gaps in the provision of buildings and services can be identified.

8.1.4 General concern over museum and library facilities have occurred due to the delay in the opening and uncertainty over the future of Y Gaer.

8.1.5 The bus service is essential for the people of Brecon.

8.2 What you told us about Community Facilities

8.2.1 The community facilities section received responses from 802 respondents. The responses clearly showed that respondents view toilets and the leisure centre as the most important community facilities with both mentioned in 86.78% of the responses. 78.93% of respondents listed the theatre, closely followed by the Promenade open space at 74.44%. The youth centre and playgrounds were also ticked by more than 50% of respondents.

8.2.2 20% of respondents indicated that they would like to see improvements to public toilets in Brecon and a similar number would like to see improvements in Youth facilities. In addition respondents would like to see improvements at Brecon Promenade, including investment to upgrade the existing facilities including the playground and toilets and an improved café area.

8.2.3 Over 10% of respondents wanted to see a Tourist Information Centre close to or in the main car park. Facilities including the Leisure Centre, the Library and Theatr Brycheiniog are all seen as important facilities requiring investment and upgrade.

8.2.4 The recycling centre is seen as an important community service by 89.16% of respondents. The Library is important to 79% of people. Other important services include the provision of childcare, public transport and Arosfa.

8.2.5 Improvements to the recycling centre service are required by a large number of respondents, while a further 15% want to see improved services for the Elderly, especially Arosfa. The Youth Centre, more activities for children and improved childcare facilities are all important too, as is improvements to bus services including times, Sunday services and the cleanliness of buses.

8.3 How are we going to address the issues?

- Undertake an audit of facilities, available community spaces and services and publicise the information to local residents
- The opening of Y Gaer will provide the new library provision and museum
- Check that the revised youth provision in Brecon meets the needs of Young People and what is required in terms of childcare by residents
- Review recycling facilities and look for improvements for residents

TERM	AREA/No	ACTION	WHO	WHEN
Short Term	4.1	Analyse recycling issues and discuss them with PCC Recycling of soft plastic – investigate options with PCC	Brecon 20:20 to send letter explaining issues to PCC Brecon 20:20	Within 1 year
Medium Term	4.2	Investigate Town Centre Accommodation for community services and facilities – an audit of facilities, cost and availability required across Brecon	Brecon 20:20/Volunteer Centre/Others	Within 2 years
Short Term	4.3	Create Register/Directory of accessible buildings in Brecon for groups to use and information on venues in general	PAVO development team/Brecknock Access group Brecon 20:20 to start conversation	Within 1 year
Short term	4.4	Toilets – ensure toilets are available and clean The Theatre toilets have heavy usage due to its proximity to the coach park and canal boat trips and as a result require upgrading	BTC/PCC/Theatr Brychiniog Visit Wales – Toilets grant application	Ongoing Within 1 year
Short Term	4.5	Youth Centre – has moved to the old St. Joseph’s school site and operates two times per week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Check up on what young people want and where possible provide follow up services	Brecon 20:20/Youth Service	Within 1 year
Short Term	4.6	The Elderly – since the survey was complete Community Connectors have been appointed. The Volunteer centre acts as a central resource. Link services together and publicise	PAVO/Volunteer Centre	Already in progress/Ongoing
Medium Term	4.7	Leisure Centre – substantial increase in activities and facilities since Freedom Leisure took over. Check with Freedom Leisure for future improvements, especially to swimming pool and changing rooms	Brecon 20:20/Freedom Leisure/Powys CC	3-5 years

Short Term	4.8	Advertising facilities and activities. Sort out boards in Market Hall to more clearly advertise in groups/themes. (A volunteer already tidies the board regularly) Need centralised town information – to be used by residents and visitors. Promote FYI Brecon use and discourage flyposting.	Volunteer Bureau/Market Hall Brecon 20:20/cultural hub project/Visit Brecon	Ongoing Within 1 year
Medium Term	4.9	Childcare – survey results follow-up in terms of the level of childcare required	Brecon 20:20/BTC/PCC	1-3 years
Short Term	4.10	Community Cohesion – support events which bring community together e.g. Brecon with Bells on and Ghurka parade	BTC/Brecon 20:20/Brecon BID/Others	Ongoing

Brecon 20:20

Section 5: Housing

Community Derived Action Plan



9. Section 5: Housing

9.1 The Existing Situation

9.1.1 At the last census there were 8,250 residents within Brecon, forming 3,635 households. Data published by the Statswales predicts that *the population of the Brecon Beacons will increase by approximately 2% by 2029 (roughly 400 people) In the same period the number of households is projected to increase by 5% representing approximately 900 new households across the National Park.* This percentage is likely to increase over the coming years based on information published by the ONS (Office for National Statistics). The peaks in the numbers of births after both world wars and the longer baby boom during the 1960s is contributing to the continuing increase in the percentage of older people in the general population.

9.1.2 *The largest increase in the projected number of households is seen in one-person households while four-person households are projected to see the biggest fall (110 households). This means that the number of people on average within a household will be 2.1 people by 2029.⁶ If we were to project this level of growth forward it would mean that by the end of this plan*

⁶National Park Household Projections 2014 based Statistics for Wales July 2017

(2030) we would need to find accommodation for at least 182 new households. With the greatest need being for 1 and 2 bedroom properties.

- 9.1.3 Through the Local Development Plan (LDP), land has been identified for approximately 297 new dwellings within Brecon, with 20% of these being required to be provided as affordable housing for local people in housing need.
- 9.1.4 At the time of writing 170 of these dwellings have been granted planning permission and are in the process of being developed.
- 9.1.5 In terms of provision for our households who cannot afford to access market dwellings the policy of the National Park is that 20% of all housing should be supplied as affordable, usually through a Housing Association. The implementation of this policy has been mixed since the adoption of the LDP. One site, Heol y Ffynnon, is to be one of the first sites developed by Powys County Council for new Council Housing since the 1980s; this will see 33 new houses and flats being made available to house those in need in Brecon. However private developers have been able to demonstrate that they cannot provide the level of affordable housing that the National Park's policy requires, and this has led to a reduction in the anticipated level of affordable housing being delivered on other housing sites.
- 9.1.6 At time of writing there were 165 people identifying as being in housing need on the Common Housing Register for Brecon. To go part way to meet this need it is very likely that the new LDP for the area (LDP2 2018-2033) will need to identify additional sites for housing.

9.2 What you told us about Housing in Brecon

- 9.2.1 This section of the questionnaire had a response rate of over 80%, reflecting the importance the people of Brecon place on this issue. When asked what they or their families future housing needs were, the highest percentage (67.57%), said that there was a need for more 2 bed or 3 bedroom properties. The next biggest response was for supported housing (29.89%).
- 9.2.2 Respondents were asked if they saw a future need access to affordable housing. 61.54% either said they saw a need or were not sure, with 6.50% more saying they saw a need. 38.45% said they did not see a need, but it should be borne in mind that 77.59% of respondents owned their property or had a mortgage on it.
- 9.2.3 Finally, respondents were asked how they felt affordable housing should be delivered. There was a clear preference for Social renting (53.38% of the total responses), when they were also asked to consider other types of affordable housing.

9.3 How are we going to address the issues?

- 9.3.1 Ensure that PCC, BBNPA and BTC work together and with the community improve the availability of houses of the required type in Brecon.

TERM	AIM	ACTION	WHO	WHEN
Short	5.1	Explore the models of housing that PCC and the BBNPA can deliver under the LDP This is felt to be necessary because the previous response to housing issues had not encompassed more innovative ways of delivering housing.	PCC/BBNPA	Next 6 months
Short	5.2	Invite new PCC co-housing officer to meet with BTC and the Bronllys Community wellbeing group. The aim is to find ways of promoting shared housing and co-op housing schemes.	BTC	Next 3 months
Short	5.3	Conduct further research to identify what groups of people need supported housing and what types of housing can be delivered. This should target the highest priority groups and make further schemes fit for purpose.	PCC/BBNPA	Next 6 months
Short	5.4	Make homelessness an issue for a Housing Advice Day in Brecon This was in response to the perceived rise in homelessness in the town	BTC	Already achieved
Short, medium and long	5.5	Re. all planning applications, BBNPA will always prioritise affordable housing, with the clear aim of ensuring that at least 30% of housing in that application is affordable. It is recognised that the percentage of affordable properties in recent developments has been too low	BBNPA	Now to at least 2024
Short, medium and long	5.6	Affordable housing mix will be in line with latest housing needs assessments. This recognises that housing needs are not static.	PCC and BBNPA	Now to at least 2024

Short/ Medium	5.7	Develop a “greenprint” or an all-encompassing plan for Brecon housing. This was identified as a shortfall in previous planning.	BBNPA/BTC and PCC	Next 18 months
Medium	5.8	Re Accessible and Flexible housing, monitor progress of Clyro village social housing project. The aim for this objective is to apply best practice learnt from this scheme to future new builds in Brecon	BTC, Disability Powys and BBNPA	18-24 months.

Brecon 20:20

Section 6: Arts and Culture

Community Derived Action Plan



10. Section 6: Arts and Culture

10.1 Existing Position

- 10.1.1 Brecon is a vibrant and active location with many positive aspects to its artistic and cultural offer and life. It has a wealth of opportunities and organisations that deliver for the community and benefits from a variety of venues and available activities. The town has a mid-scale Theatre with studio and gallery; the Guildhall Theatre, run by BTC; The Muse Arts Centre; Brecon Cathedral; The Regimental Museum of the Royal Welsh; Y Gaer - a new library, museum and art gallery complex situated in the middle of the town; and the Coliseum Cinema Brecon. In addition to these venues there is a network of village and church halls and community facilities available.
- 10.1.1 Throughout the year these various organisations are joined by other partners to deliver a year-round detailed programme of activity including Brecon Jazz and the Baroque Festival, which attract national and international visitors to the town. But

there are barriers and issues with regard to the work presented and in encouraging the communities around Brecon to engage with the offer.

10.2 What you told us about Arts and Culture

- 10.2.1 The questions on Arts and Cultural activities received 775 responses
- 10.2.2 Artistic and cultural activity is the most important kind of activity for a significantly large proportion of Brecon's residents (60%).
- 10.2.3 However a quarter of people (24%) did not consider themselves as a participant in anything considered artistic or cultural.
- 10.2.4 Many issues were cited as reasons for difficulties in engaging with artistic and cultural activities and about the artistic offer of Brecon. These were: high cost, access to transport or parking, appropriate facilities, access for those with additional needs, health issues or age related vulnerabilities, the lack of time due to work, the funding and support required for the arts organisations and the general information created and available for the opportunities presented.
- 10.2.5 Specifically in response to some of these issues respondents commented that more support/investment is needed, clearer plans on creating and disseminating information needs to happen and that Brecon needed to focus on creating a distinctiveness about itself, which could be specifically around music and arts.

10.3 How are we going to address the issues?

In creating an action plan we have concentrated on the issues that our respondents told us about and have detailed how we propose to increase activity, support communities in engaging in arts and culture and most importantly to deliver clearer, joined up messaging and promotion about the activities in the town.

This includes:

- Identifying targets around engagement and encouraging all our communities who wish to participate, identifying those who might not, and work with them to reduce the barriers to their attendance.
- Developing a coordinated marketing approach for everything that happens, that includes a clear online presence, information points and distribution to present event diaries and better promotion of activities
- Supporting transportation, facility upgrades and the entertainment/night-time economy.
- Building on Brecon's reputation for staging festivals and events and consider timing and scheduling issues.

We hope that in developing individual actions that deliver these ambitious town developments that we can drive cooperation with all interested organisations and communities to further enjoy and engage in this important aspect of Brecon life.

TERM	AREA/No	ACTION	WHO	WHEN
Medium	6.1	Examine “never” respondents` data. What is their definition of arts/culture? They may be participating in artistic and cultural activities and events, but not consider them as such.	Brecon 20:20 Steering Group to evaluate in the future when a further survey is undertaken	3-5 years
Short	6.2	Theatr Brycheiniog Box Office can examine ticket purchase data to find out certain groups using venue to tailor and target catering for particular audiences. The Theatr are trialling “kitchen takeovers” and scheduling afternoon events	Theatr Brycheiniog	Within 1 year
Medium	6.3	Integrating more with Nepalese community. Investigate textile art with the Nepalese community. Focus on publicity for annual events – the Gurkha Parade and Gurkha Durbar	Visit Brecon/Brecon 20:20/ BTC	Ongoing
Short	6.4	Online promotional links between local businesses and organisations. Better promotion and information. Event diaries to be produced 3 times a year as Pdf’s with the summer edition in print format too.	Brecon heritage and cultural network/ Visit Brecon/Brecon BID	Within 1 year First edition available January 2020
Long term	6.5	Brecon “Night-Life”/Night-Time Economy. Places to eat with entertainment?	Brecon BID/Brecon Chamber of Trade/Brecon Beacons Tourism (BBT)	5 years
Medium	6.6	Could some activities and events work better during the day or night? (People in work during day or older people may not want to go out at night). Create a new profile-raising event for the town – research gaps in the annual events calendar.	Event organisers	Medium
Short	6.7	Curated information/promotional resource to be contact point for dissemination of events/activities posters and information. The portal will be linked to Visit Brecon and other websites.	Brecon heritage and cultural network/BTC/BBNPA/BBT/Visit Brecon	Digital project complete within 1 year
Short	6.8	Coordinated marketing approach required for Brecon. Celebrity to promote Brecon brand via “walkabout” video. Need to understand what currently attracts people to events and to Brecon and use this to help define “Brecon brand”.	Brecon heritage and cultural network /BTC/BBNPA/BBT/Visit Brecon/Brecon Jazz	Digital project complete within 1 year

		Integrate with Visit Wales campaigns for The Wales Way Cambrian Route and other relevant campaigns e.g. BBNPA/BBT day to stay. Explore Churches/Cymru Cysegredig		
Medium	6.9	Interactive information board in a central position in town. E.g. Outside Lloyds Bank for communication on events/places to eat/things to do Would the B and R be interested in engaging in other media in the town as above?	Brecon BID/Visit Brecon Brecon 20:20/B&R With support from BTC	
Short	6.10	Investigate the possibility of having transport to events e.g. theatre by dial-a-ride or someone else Is an electric mini-bus an option?	Brecon 20:20/Theatr Brycheiniog	Within 12 months
Short/Medium	6.11	Pilgrimage walks being developed by the Cathedral, other walks already developed: the Regimental museum suite of walks, World War I Memorial Walk and the Poetry Trail, which can be shared and offer special experiences for visitors. Opportunities to further develop walking routes within and around the town.	Visit Brecon/ Brecon Cathedral/BTC/ BBNPA/BBT	Within 1 Year 3-5 Years

Brecon 20:20

Section 7: Greenspaces and Sport

Community Derived Action Plan



11. Section 7: Greenspaces and Sport

11.1 Existing situation

11.1.1 Brecon benefits from a significant number of different greenspaces distributed around the Town. The Usk river corridor stretches from east of the Brecon Rugby Club fields, through the town to beyond the Promenade to the west. The Honddu river corridor forms a wooded and accessible greenspace leading to the centre of the Town from the north. The residential areas of Uplands, Llanfaes, Watton and Pendre all have one or more accessible parks. Accessible and attractive greenspaces can add significantly to quality of life, health and wellbeing.

11.1.2 The Brecon 20:20 Survey included a dedicated section on greenspaces and the responses can be summarised as follows:

- These spaces are hugely valued by residents, with almost 2/3rds visiting a greenspace at least weekly
- A wide range of activities are enjoyed at greenspaces, from walking and exercising dogs, to ball games, picnics or simply to enjoy the views and connection to nature

- All residents enjoy the spaces, including all ages and they are often used for family activities
 - Satisfaction with the quality of the greenspaces was generally quite high, though there is significant scope for improvement
 - A wide range of potential improvements were suggested and many would need careful consideration and effective community engagement to develop the potential of Brecon's greenspaces
- 11.1.3 A significant number of sports clubs are active in Brecon, offering a wide range of organised activities. This includes rugby and football (across a range of age groups) running, cycling, attending the gym, bowls, swimming, golf and cricket. Almost a third of survey responses indicated participation in some form of sporting activity. As well as organised sports, the greenspaces were often used for individual activities (primarily running and cycling) and informal games and sports undertaken by children and families.
- 11.1.4 Barriers to participation included the cost of activities, access to facilities and classes (transport and time constraints) and the quality of facilities available.

11.2 What you told us

Greenspaces

- Greenspaces are valued and resulted in a high number of responses to the survey questions
- Of the ten greenspaces named in the survey, half were rated 6 or more out of 10 for their quality, with the other half scoring 4.5 – 6. This indicates that while satisfactory, there is a clear desire and scope for a range of improvements
- The greenspaces are well used and often visited. 20% visited at least daily, with around 60% visiting at least once per week, rising to around 80% visiting at least once per month
- A wide range of activities were enjoyed while visiting greenspaces. They are versatile and useful spaces where many different activities can be undertaken
- When asked for the improvements or changes that residents would like to see a wide range of suggestions were presented, though there were many recurring points raised.
- Increased provision of litterbins, increased frequency of bin emptying and reducing the amount of litter and rubbish had the most responses
- Issues with dogs raised a number of points regarding dog fouling, lack of enforcement for dog fouling, increased provision of dog waste bins and a desire to see more dog-free areas
- The general condition and need to maintain existing features including benches, paths, fences and play equipment was highlighted as was the desire for improvements and an increase in these facilities
- The infrequent grass cutting was of concern, though this must be balanced against a desire to see more long grass and wildflower areas along with other wildlife improvements and more tree planting
- Greater provision of signage, information and accessibility to toilets
- Many felt that the Promenade needs significant investment and reinvention including the boat house and surrounding areas.

Sports

- Sporting activities are important to a significant number of residents and access to the support available through organised clubs is essential.
- Sport participation, particularly through a club structure covers all age groups. There is demand for improved quality of facilities, with other sporting facility provision in the Valleys highlighted as being better than the local offering.

11.3 What we are proposing to do?

Greenspaces

The community consultation and action planning process has created a number of specific ideas for improving the quality of Brecon's greenspaces (playgrounds and other outdoor areas accessible to the public). Effective management of these sites is essential with significant community engagement required and the integration of different features and facilities to resolve conflicts. The specific actions can be broadly summarised as:

- Set up Friends of/management groups for key greenspaces
- Prepare new management plans for the greenspaces
- Improve access around the sites, including benches, signage and information
- Create a better balance between areas of short amenity grassland and longer grass/wildlife areas
- Plan and undertake tree planting in appropriate areas of greenspaces
- Consider how best to address issues of litter and dog fouling
- Engage with a range of potential event providers to determine suitable activities and facilitate appropriate use of greenspaces for events.
- Consider opportunities for future management to be undertaken by communities through land asset transfer

Sports

While there is a very active and valued number of sports clubs and informal activities in Brecon, the initial costs and maintenance costs of improved facilities are potentially prohibitive. Multi-use facilities, where a number of clubs can benefit are likely to be the only way such improvements could be financially possible. Sports clubs should be encouraged to work together to determine whether collective fund raising, partnership grant applications and shared facilities would result in new facilities becoming achievable. There is limited provision of some sports facilities (such as indoor tennis courts) across mid Wales and so improved facilities have the potential to draw in additional users and potentially host competitions and events that would result in wider economic benefits to Brecon. The specific actions can be broadly summarised as:

- Improving condition of existing pitches and athletics track
- Consider and develop facilities including pavilion, shelters and equipment storage
- Provision of new facilities including 4G pitch and indoor tennis
- Explore the potential for more multi-use facilities and better working between sports clubs

TERM	AREA/No	ACTION	WHO	WHEN
Green-spaces				
Ongoing	7.1	<p>Improve frequency of grass cutting at greenspaces.</p> <p>Further consultation required with residents/playground users on a site by site basis and integrated into site management plans</p>	<p>BTC have increased cuts at Llanfaes, Beacons Park and Prom/bandstand.</p> <p>Brecon 20:20/BTC/PCC</p>	<p>BTC have this underway.</p> <p>Within two years</p>
Short	7.2	<p>Improve provision of seating at greenspaces – repair, replacement and provision of covered seating. Undertake review and integrate into site management plans</p>	PCC and BTC	<p>Review can be done quickly. Funding for installation may take more time</p>
Short	7.3	<p>Improve the disability access around the promenade with improvements to existing paths – provision of passing bays and seating areas and integrate into site management plans.</p>	PCC – Access groups	<p>Ideally before end of March 2020 if funds allow</p>
Medium	7.4	<p>Consider options for improving access to water recreation at the Prom including: Swimming and Canoeing Provision of changing facilities</p>	PCC – Sports Clubs/groups	<p>Consider building a stakeholder group to take this forward Within 3 years</p>
Medium	7.5	<p>Improve provision of skateboarding facilities. Determine best location for new facilities. Investigate BMX options. Consultation required locally. Fundraising options to be determined.</p>	PCC and BTC	<p>Begin discussions early on understanding that planning and fund raising will take some time Within 3 years</p>
Medium	7.6	<p>Increase provision for cycling at green spaces including access points, paths and bike racks. Should be linked to Active Travel Plan – engage with PCC</p>	PCC , BTC, Cycling Clubs	<p>Within 3 Years</p>
Short	7.7	<p>Improve provision of picnic areas and BBQ sites as part of site management plans.</p>	PCC and BTC	<p>For summer 2020</p>
Short	7.8	<p>Events: Provide free parking on grass areas for events at the Promenade and promote this offering to encourage more events to take place.</p>	PCC	<p>Have standing arrangements in place for Spring 2020</p>
Short	7.9	<p>As part of site management planning, engage widely with users and dog owners to tackle dog fouling issues including:</p>	BTC, PCC (enforcement)	<p>Immediately as funds allow</p>

		Increase provision of dog waste dispensers at the Promenade and other greenspaces. Undertake enforcement action on dog fouling Carefully consider both dog free and dedicated dog exercise areas.		
Short	7.10	Develop a “Friends of Brecon Promenade Group”. This group will further explore the type of enhancements sought by residents and prepare a plan for the Promenade area in conjunction with PCC. Use this pilot to further encourage establishment of other community groups to advise and assist greenspace management.	Brecon 20:20, Plan Brecon, Promenade Users, PCC	Within 1 Year
Short	7.11	Review provision of play equipment at Uplands Playing Fields and play site opposite Bowing Green. Begin discussions early on understanding the planning and fundraising will take some time	PCC and BTC	1-3 years
Medium	7.12	Undertake feasibility for constructing new footpath/cycling bridge across the river Usk. Should be linked to Active Travel Plan – engage with PCC initially and then draw in other stakeholders	PCC, NRW, BBNPA, BTC, residents, landowners	3-5 years
Short	7.13	Improve pedestrian and cycle access to the Ffrwdgrech Industrial Estate. Should be linked to Active Travel Plan – engage with PCC	PCC, landowners	Within 3 years
Medium	7.14	Undertake a feasibility study for improvements to Island Fields (including paths) A lead group must be determined who can find the necessary funding to take forward and consider asset transfer of this site.	PCC, PLAN Brecon, residents, neighbouring landowners (WPD, Brecon Corries FC, Allotments)	3-5 years
Short	7.15	Increase provision of free events at greenspaces	PCC, BTC, other groups and organisations	Programme ready for Spring/summer 2020
Short	7.16	Improve condition of canal towpath Brecon-Brynich	CRT, PLAN Brecon	Through Liaison with CRT – as funds allow

Short	7.17	Improve condition of footpaths in Priory Groves	PCC	Discuss with PCC –as funds allow
Medium	7.18	Pendre Playing Fields (behind Cathedral) – local community consultation required and management plan developed.	PCC, local community, Brecon Cathedral	3-5 years
Medium	7.19	Maendu Well site will be drained and developed alongside housing development at the site.	PCC, BTC	Within 3 Years
Short	7.20	Investigate areas for wildflower meadows and increasing biodiversity in our greenspaces as part of integrated management plan.	Brecon 20:20, BTC, PCC and BBNPA	Within 1 Year
Short	7.21	Dog Fouling at Penlan Fields has been identified as an issue. Consider ways of tackling this	Brecon High School, Brecon 20:20 /PCC	Within 1 Year
Short	7.22	Establish if dog fouling is an issue at other greenspaces	Brecon 20:20 BTC have installed dog poo bag dispensers and more dog poo bins and the situation has improved. Maintain current activities and increase where necessary	Within 1 Year Ongoing
Sports				
Medium	7.23	Pavilion at Athletics Track requires upgrading and athletics track requires maintenance.	PCC, Freedom Leisure, Brecon Athletics Club	Within 3 Years
Long	7.24	The provision of a 4G rugby/football pitch in the town is required. However the maintenance costs, quoted @ £25k per annum are prohibitive. Requirements are mainly around the training provision in the town, especially in the winter with rugby and football requiring additional facilities.	PCC and sports clubs	A lead group must be determined who can find the necessary funding to take forward
Short	7.25	Gather evidence for the requirements for training facilities in the town by talking to sport clubs. The requirements can be included in the development plan for the town and planning obligations included in plans. Shared	Brecon 20:20, Sports clubs, BBNPA, Neath Port Talbot College (NPTC)	Within 1 Year

		ownership models for effective ongoing maintenance should be explored.		
Medium	7.26	Investigate the feasibility of improving the pitches at Brecon High School. The current maintenance is inadequate for sporting activities. Consider possibility of adding another astroturf pitch for training and upgrading the changing rooms.	PCC, Brecon High School, Sports clubs	Within 3 years
Medium	7.27	A business plan has been created for a 4 court indoor tennis facility, which could possibly be located at the site of the current tennis courts at Brecon High School/Leisure Centre. Incorporating other clubs requiring facilities such as karate and other martial arts could prove beneficial in obtaining finance.	Brecon Tennis Club, PCC, Freedom Leisure	Within 3 years
Medium	7.28	Storage facilities for sports clubs and transition zones (including shelters and café facilities) would be beneficial at training venues. This should be investigated at each facility	Sports Clubs, PCC, Facility Owners	Within 3 years
Short	7.29	Brecon Swimming Pool – structural survey recently completed. Powys County Council committed to upgrade the changing rooms/swimming pool.	PCC and Freedom Leisure	Within 1 Year

Brecon 20:20

Section 8: Energy and Climate Change

Community Derived Action Plan



12. Section 8: Energy and Climate Change

12.1 Existing situation

The worlds' scientific and international communities are now very clear on the significant and lasting impact a changing climate will have across our planet. As warming due to man-made carbon emissions increases, the need to eliminate emissions from our society becomes ever more urgent. This will require significant changes to the way citizens live, businesses operate and how government organisations implement policy and deliver services. Making these changes will require understanding, effort and difficult choices for all of us. However, the science is clear, we must rise to these challenges and accept that the costs of inaction are far greater.

Our town and its residents face similar challenges to communities across Wales, Europe and other developed nations. However, as with any community there are

some factors that pose more significant challenges but also a number of opportunities that can help us adapt:

12.2 Challenges

- A lack of railway and poor public transport results in high dependency on private cars. Access to key services is also further than most urban areas. Transport is a significant proportion of our carbon emissions in Wales and will be a priority for action.
- Our electricity grid has not been developed over the last 50 years to cope with significant increases in electricity demand and increased energy generation from renewable sources. Current grid constraints limit the renewables that could be deployed and can slow the adoption of Electric Vehicle charge points and the shift from gas to electricity for heating.
- Large numbers of older housing stock are not built to modern, energy efficient standards. Policy and legislative measures designed to preserve the character of towns and individual buildings can further limit energy saving measures and potential for solar panels.
- Most domestic properties and businesses in Brecon will use mains gas for heating. Some buildings may not be suitable for some electric heating systems and many households may find installing new technologies unaffordable.

Opportunities:

- The rivers Usk and Honddu are both potential sources of hydro power. Necessary environmental constraints may limit or increase costs of any such installations, but the potential is nevertheless there.
- Numerous buildings are suitable for solar panel installation, including a significant number of publically owned buildings.
- Green spaces in and immediately around the town may be suitable for tree and orchard planting, diverse food production or habitat improvements.
- A number of well established community organisations and networks can be utilised to coordinate and deliver community led action on climate change.
- The presence of an electricity grid sub-station in the centre of the town may offer greater opportunity than communities located many miles from a substation.

12.3 What you told us

Our residents survey did not contain specific questions relating to climate change or energy. However, a number of comments were received and the need to integrate specific climate change measures has since been raised through the consultation process. Recent scientific updates and the work of various activists has raised awareness of climate change significantly since the survey was produced.

- More tree planting and biodiversity measures in greenspaces.
- Improvements to walking and cycling routes.

- Improved public transport.

Action on climate change could also address the following issues that were raised:

- Increased energy efficiency or energy generation can reduce the cost of service provision, particularly the operating costs of community centres, the leisure centre and schools. This is also true of many businesses and could increase operating margins resulting in more shops remaining open.
- Car shares, car clubs and other solutions can result in reduced car ownership, which may have a positive impact on some of the issues raised regarding parking. Improved walking and cycling infrastructure could also reduce parking pressures.

12.4 What are we proposing to do

The methods of reducing and mitigating carbon emissions are clear and well understood and can be summarised as:

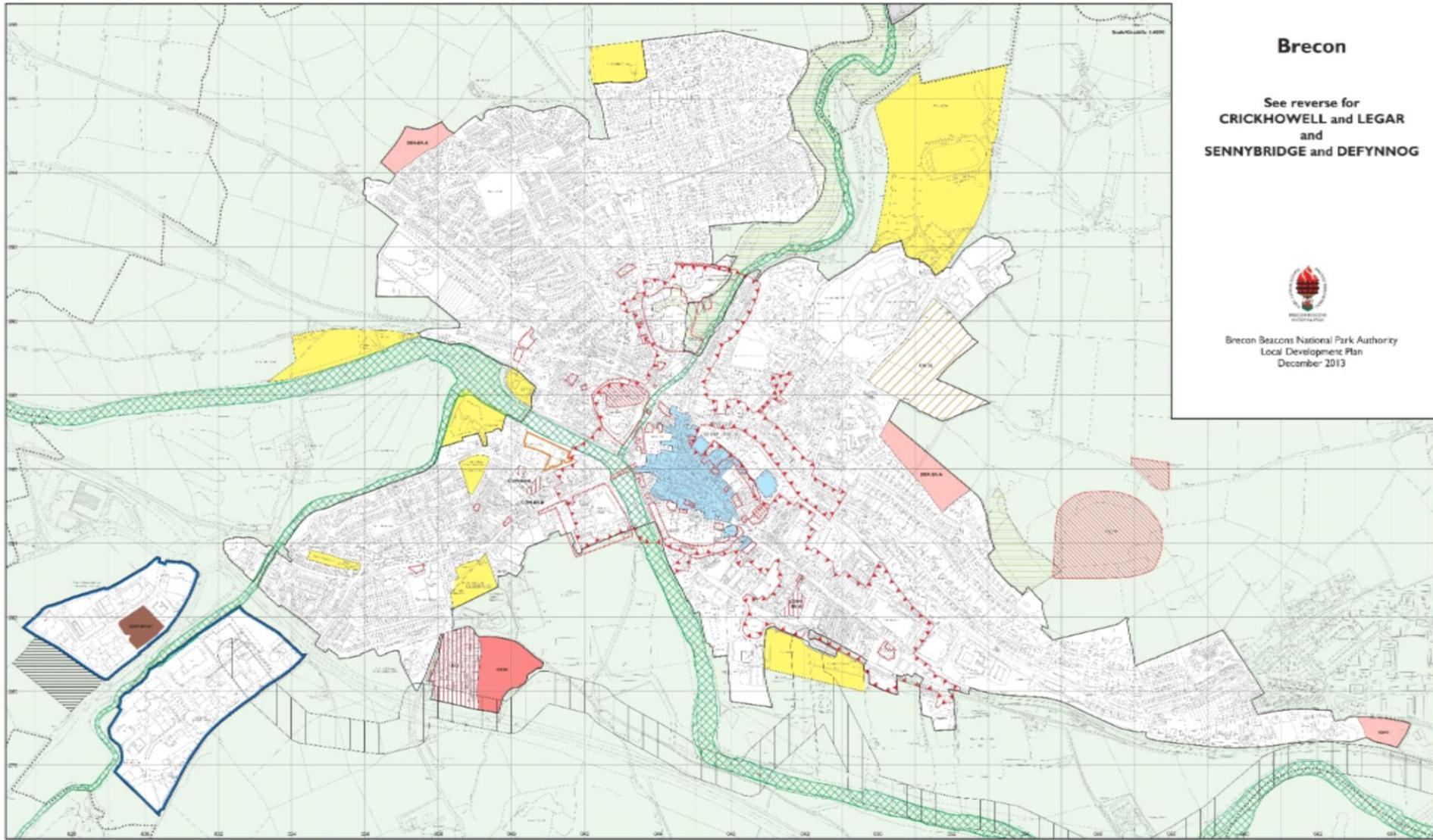
- Reduce energy consumption
- Increase use of energy from renewable resources
- Reduce consumption of imported goods, high embedded carbon goods (e.g. plastics) and reduced packaging.
- Increase capacity of the land to store carbon through tree planting, soil management and other means.

To deliver these priorities,

- Educate and inspire communities to act on climate change
- Encourage and support action from public bodies
- Encourage and support networked approaches for residents, businesses and service providers to work together to tackle climate related issues.
- Reduce energy demand through efficiency and behaviour change, in particular high energy uses and carbon intensive fuels
- Increase provision of renewable energy generation
- Reduce private vehicle use through improved public transport, walking and cycling
- Improve Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure
- Undertake habitat improvements including tree planting

TERM	AREA/No	ACTION	WHO	WHEN
Short	8.1	Engage with existing community groups to raise awareness of climate change and inspire actions	The Green Valleys CIC (TGV)	Ongoing
Short	8.2	Engage with public bodies to promote climate action opportunities and benefits	TGV	Ongoing
Short	8.3	Undertake an assessment of renewable energy opportunities in Brecon	TGV, BTC, BBNPA	By mid-2020
Short	8.4	Assess potential renewable energy opportunities for financial and technical feasibility	TGV, Land/building owners, BBNPA	By end 2020
Short	8.5	Develop local energy supply models to increase financial viability of renewables	TGV, businesses and domestic consumers	By mid-2020
Short	8.6	Develop appropriate organisation to develop new renewable installations, including cooperative models	TGV	By end of 2020
Short	8.7	Undertake an assessment of potential tree planting locations in and around Brecon, including orchard trees	PLAN Brecon, PCC	By mid-2020
Short	8.8	Determine potential location for Electric Vehicle charge points in Brecon	TGV, PCC	By mid-2020
Short	8.9	Develop method to engage with local businesses to advise and guide energy efficiency improvements	TGV	By mid-2020
Short	8.10	Support Housing Associations and residents groups in improving domestic energy efficiency	TGV, Housing Associations	By end of 2020
Short	8.11	Assess opportunities for increased cycle route provision and new cycle parking	PCC –as part of active travel plan	By end of 2020
Short	8.12	Ensure new housing developments are built to high energy efficiency standards and include appropriate provision for EV charging	BTC, BBNPA	Ongoing

Appendix I



Proposals Map Key - Mynegai I'r Cynigion

	National Park Boundary Ffin Parc Cenedlaethol		Existing Industrial Estates Ystadau diwydiannol presennol y CDU
	Outside National Park Tu allan i'r Parc Cenedlaethol		Existing Community Use Defnydd cymunedol ar hyn o bryd
	Primary Key Settlement Boundary (Level 1) Ffin trefedigaeth sylfaenol allweddol (Lefel 1)		Community Council Boundary Ffin cyngor cymunedol
	Key Settlement Boundary (Level 2) Ffin trefedigaeth allweddol (Lefel 2)		National Nature Reserve Gwarchodfa Natur Cenedlaethol
	Settlement Boundary (Level 3) Ffin trefedigaeth (Lefel 3)		Ancient Woodland Coetir hynafol
	Level 4 Settlement Extent Maint Aneddiadau Lefel 4 y CDU		Site of Interest for Nature Conservation Safle o ddiddordeb ar gyfer cadwraeth natur
	Countryside (outside defined settlements) (Level 5) Cefn gwlad (to allan i drefedigaethau diffiniedig) (Lefel 5)		Site of Special Scientific Interest Safle o ddiddordeb gwyddonol arbennig
	Housing allocations - first five year Dyraniadau tai y CDU – y pum mlynedd cyntaf		Special Area of Conservation Ardal o gadwraeth arbennig
	Housing allocations - rest of LDP period Dyraniadau tai y CDU – gweddill cyfnod y CDU		Scheduled Ancient Monument Heneb cofrestredig
	Housing commitments (with extant planning consent) Ymrwymadau'r CDU		Area of Archaeological Evaluation Ardal werthusiad archeolegol
	School Sites (proposed for residential development) Safleoedd Ysgol y CDU		Conservation Area Ardal Gadwraeth
	Brecon Gypsy and Traveller Site Safle Sipsiwn a Theidwyr Aberhonddu y CDU		Blaenavon World Heritage Site Blaenafon Safle trefnadaeth y byd
	Affordable Housing Sub-market Area Ardaloedd is-farchnad Tai Fforddiadwy		Historic Park or Garden Parc neu ardd hanesyddol
	Allocated Brownfield sites in the Open Countryside Ffin Datblygu Safleoedd Tir Llwyd a Ddyranwyd y CDU		Quarry Planning Permission Caniatâ cynllunio chwarel
	Employment Allocation Dosraniad cyflogaeth		Quarry Planning Permission Buffer Zone Cylchfa ragod chwarel a chaniatâd
	Mixed Use Allocation Dosraniad defnydd cymysg		Notifiable Installation Gosodiadau nodiadwy
	Retail Centres Canolfannau Manwerthu'r CDU		A and Trunk Roads Cefnfordd ac Ffordd A
			Limestone Calchfaen
			Sand and Gravel Tywod a Gro
			Sandstone Thywodfaen

Appendix 2

Brecon Issues and Objectives			
No.	Objective	LDP Strategic Objective	Issue
1	Strengthening Brecon's employment offer	Employment	The 2008 <i>Brecon Economic Development and Regeneration Framework</i> (DEandT, Hyder) highlighted that Brecon's employment offer is currently heavily reliant on the public sector. In order to ensure Brecon retains a strong position as a regional centre for employment, the DEandT study recommended diversification of the economy with support for indigenous and inward growth of new and emerging sectors, linked to local food production, the green economy and sustainable tourism. In accordance with LDP objectives to provide for a sustainable economy the National Park Authority supports the development of a mix of employment opportunities, and to resist loss of commercial enterprise within the town. The challenge for the LDP is to ensure provision responds sympathetically to the character of Brecon as gateway to the National Park. The town currently has two industrial estates located on its western periphery, large scale expansion of these areas to accommodate employment facilities has been determined to be unsustainable and incompatible with National Park purposes. The LDP therefore promotes innovative approaches to employment provision, through mix-use developments, live-work schemes and redevelopment, well integrated into the Settlement, enhancing the buzz and mix of activity within the town
2	Improving standards of living for all	Housing; Affordable Housing; Sustainable Communities	Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation data shows that St John's ward within Brecon is one of the most deprived within all of Powys, there is a strong need for better provision of affordable housing, both social rented, intermediate and low-cost affordable to buy. This coupled with the higher cost of living within rural areas ⁷ places an imperative on the LDP to ensure that all new development is as resource efficient as is possible, to ensure Brecon is future proofed against the challenges of both climate change and peak oil. The LDP should encourage a mix of housing types and tenures to be developed within the town, responsive to the demographic needs of the town, and in close proximity to services and facilities. New residential development should be resource efficient ensuring that the cost of living is sustainable into the future.
3	Strengthening Brecon's cultural capital	Cultural Heritage	The town has a significant cultural presence which contributes to its identity. The annual jazz festival, for example is internationally recognised, creating a lively buzz of activity and interest within the town. The challenge for the LDP is to encourage development within the town centre, which perpetuates the celebratory atmosphere throughout the year. Development options should focus on regenerating the town centre to an area of independent attraction.
4	Avoiding areas of flood risk within the town	Flooding	Flooding has been identified as a strategic issue for Brecon, constraining development potential in the south east of the town. Development options in the west are constrained by the proximity of the River Usk; a SSSI and SAC. Development options should therefore be focused on the north of the Town.
5	Reducing private car use	Transport, Climate Change	The accessibility of Brecon via national trunk roads contributes largely to the Strategic importance of Brecon; this is significantly contrasted with the local internal routes operating within the Settlement which are close to capacity to accommodate any further volume of traffic. This is in part a result of the historic nature of the Settlement, with two key residential areas being accessed over the listed Usk Bridge. Development enabled through the LDP should work to address these capacity issues by encouraging the use of sustainable forms of transport. By locating development within walking / cycling distance of town, and promoting the development of walking / cycle routes, the LDP can help challenge the car culture that has the potential to dominate the town.
6	Respecting Brecon's sense of Place.	Landscape:	Brecon's landscape setting is recognised for its visual and sensory quality ⁸ and historic significance ⁹ , affording the place a unique aesthetic and character. The need to develop the town to maintain its strategic role for the region has the potential to negatively impact on the town's unique character and

⁷ Hirsch et al *A Minimum Income Standard for Rural Households* (2010, Joseph Rowntree Foundation)

⁸ See CCW LANDMAP Visual and Sensory aspect area BRCKNVS633

⁹ Brecon is located within the Middle Usk Valley Historic Landscape as defined by the Register of Historic Landscapes in Wales (Cadw).

*Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Supplementary Planning Guidance
Brecon Town Plan*

		Built Environment	appeal. Constraints on the development of the town have resulted in development options being focused on the north of the town. This growth will need to be sensitively designed to respond to the traditional townscape it will form the backdrop to. Development will need to limit impact on the visual and sensory experiences of the town within the wider landscape and ensure they are not negatively impacted upon, especially in relation to Brecon's location within the historic landscape.
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