

theurbanists

Prepared by: The Urbanists

Address: **Cardiff**
Westgate House
11 Womanby Street
Cardiff, CF10 1BR

Bristol
Studio 410, Generator Building
Finzels Reach
Bristol, BS1 6BX

Email: info@theurbanists.net

Website: www.theurbanists.net

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Author: ET, SY, FV, JD & LH

Checked by: JD & LH

On behalf of:



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Introduction

This document has been prepared to align with the objectives of the Transforming Towns funding initiative, which provides crucial support for the regeneration and revitalisation of Welsh town centres. As a framework for future investment and development, this document aims to position Corwen in accessing Transforming Towns resources effectively while also serving as a tool to unlock additional funding opportunities from other sources.

This Placemaking Plan has been developed with an emphasis on addressing local economic need, which was a key determinant in the selection of towns as part of the preparation for the Placemaking Plans. Corwen's unique challenges and opportunities have been carefully considered to ensure this plan is not only a vision for the future but also a strategic guide for immediate and long-term improvements.

This plan is fully compliant with the principles and guidance outlined in the 'Placemaking Plans for Town Centres' document, published by the Design Commission for Wales (DCFW) and the Welsh Government (WG). By adhering to these standards, this Placemaking Plan ensures alignment with national strategies and objectives, fostering an integrated approach to town centre regeneration.





01

Placemaking Plans: Introduction

Introduction

Corwen is a key market town within the south portion of Denbighshire acting as a tourism destination for visitors to the county and as a service hub to its small local community. As one of the smallest towns and end point to the Llangollen to Corwen heritage railway, it plays an important strategic heritage role contributing towards the overall tourism offer for the county.

Like many towns across Wales and the UK, Corwen has faced stern challenges in recent years; increased competition from out of town retail in the wider North Wales region and a continued rise in online retailing has provided stiff competition to traditional high street purchasing. This was exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic which made an already difficult commercial environment for high street businesses worse, closing much of the high street for large periods and cutting off many businesses from loyal customers.

Corwen is characterised as a settlement providing a more limited range of medical, education, financial and retail services in comparison to other main centres within the county. It is recognised as providing a local role in the delivery of services and facilities for surrounding settlements and the open countryside.

The town has recently benefited from a new heritage train station, part funded by Welsh and UK Governments with an expectation to boost tourism in the area. To help the town continue to recover and ultimately thrive, this Placemaking Plan has been prepared. The document offers a bespoke vision for Corwen based on the shared aspirations of residents, businesses and the Council. It sets out our ambitions for the town centre in line with the Placemaking Wales Charter and explains the type of actions that shall be pursued and delivered.

- Legend:
- Project Location
 - Sub-regional Centre
 - Principal Centre
 - Local Centre
 - City
 - Town



County Importance

Corwen is located within the Cynwyd ward and serves as a centre for surrounding settlements including Carrog, Clawdd Poncen and Glyndyfrdwy.

Corwen stands as the final substantial town along the A5 route from London to Holyhead. As a result, it retains several hotels that once served as coaching inns for the mail coach and stagecoaches. Despite the A5's diminished importance in comparison to the coastal A55 route to Holyhead, a considerable amount of traffic still passes through the narrow main street of Corwen's town centre.

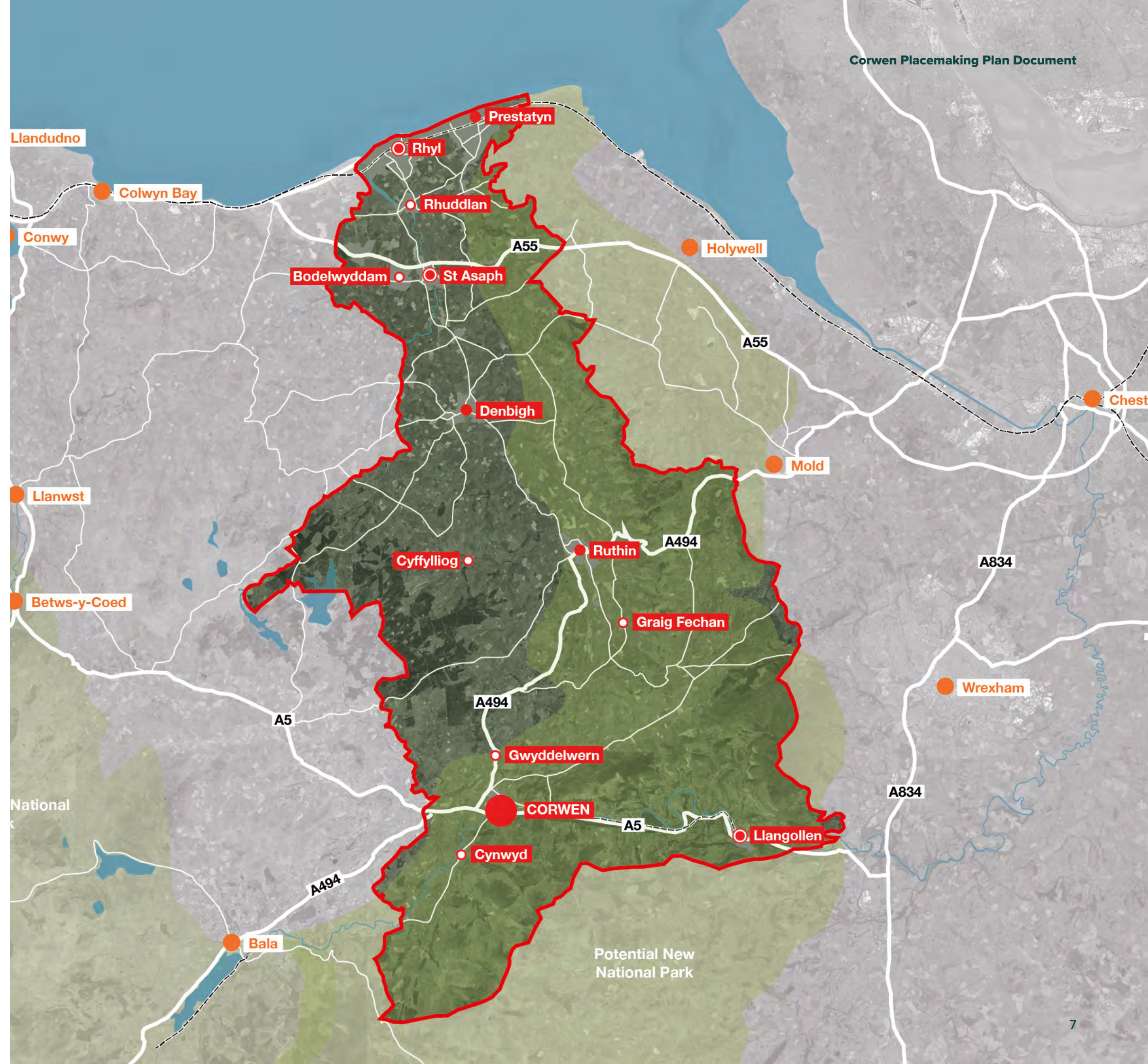
Bus services in Corwen have routes available to Wrexham via Llangollen on services 5 and T3, Barmouth via Bala and Dolgellau on service T3, and to Ruthin on service X5, with through services continuing to Denbigh. There is also a twice daily, weekday service to Llanrwst with one journey extended to/from Bala.

The town has been connected to the Llangollen Railway in the last decade. In 2014, a temporary station named Corwen East was inaugurated, followed by the unveiling of a new permanent Corwen station in June 2023. This permanent station is situated adjacent to the town's primary car park near the town centre.

As a district centre Corwen provides a range of functions and services for the surrounding settlements that are not available elsewhere in the ward.

The Denbighshire County Council's Denbighshire Adopted LDP and recent investment in the town, reinforces Corwen's role as a tourism destination and local employment hub, ensuring there is a choice of employment sites across the county.

- Legend:
- Project Location
 - Sub-regional Centre
 - Principal Centre
 - Local Centre
 - City
 - Town
 - Road
 - - - - Railway



National Policy

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and Planning Policy Wales identify placemaking as the means to maximise well-being and create sustainable places. Placemaking is a holistic approach to planning and designing development that considers development opportunities holistically in the context of the local place to ensure they are appropriate to the place and best support the community. In this way placemaking ensures the design and delivery of development that promote people’s prosperity, health, happiness, and well being in the widest sense.

Placemaking is a statutory process in Wales and underpins decision making to ensure that new development and investment build on and enhance the sense of place of our town’s and wider settlements. Plans are required to be in place in order to access TT funding.

In recognition of the important role of placemaking, the Placemaking Wales Charter has been introduced in Wales and reflects a commitment by those that practice in development, design and regeneration to support the development of high quality places.

General health reporting shows pronounced differences across Wales. Denbighshire falls within the 68-69 percentile of adults age 16 and over, reporting they are in good health highlighting potential room for improvement in this area.

Broad goals within the national plan include increasing the use of Welsh across Wales and embedding it as a living language. Historic data shows a higher number of Welsh speakers in northern Denbighshire than in the south of the county, highlighting an opportunity to increase the prominence of the welsh language in southern Denbighshire to balance the disparity.

The responsibility for Wales’ built environment, especially town centres, lies in achieving climate resilience and actively combating climate change, as emphasized in the national plan, alongside the Welsh Government’s target to make Wales net carbon zero by 2050. The focus is on creating sustainable living, working, and recreational spaces by promoting active travel and maximising carbon capture. This approach is essential for enhancing social, economic, and ecological resilience.

The future regeneration of Corwen has the potential to realise the following ambitions set out within the national plan:

- Work towards settlements that are physically and digitally well connected places, offering good quality of life to their residents.
- Create job opportunities and enhance community services in rural areas to help attract and retain people.
- Recognise that different parts of Wales work differently to each other, and respond to their distinct underlying characteristics and challenges.
- Aim to have a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050, an increase of almost 80% on current levels.
- Establish towns as magnets for jobs and investment, while people are drawn to live and work there for the economic and social opportunities they provide.
- Develop plans that are forward thinking and have a positive attitude towards enabling economic development, investment and innovation.
- Ensure all methods of travel have low environmental impact and low emissions, with increased use of public transport and ultra-low emission vehicles replacing today’s petrol and diesel vehicles.
- Improve broadband provision which will help businesses to be more productive, resilient and innovative and improve the way of life for communities and individuals.
- Recognise and capitalise on Wales’ natural resources, including its minerals, soils and geodiversity, coast, water, forests and landscape and their potential to support a range of activities and sectors. These are assets of great value in their own right.
- Promote and deliver a competitive, sustainable de-carbonised society.

Securing a Sustainable Future: Environmental Principals, Governance and Biodiversity targets for a Greener Wales (2024)

On 30 January 2024, the Welsh Government published its White Paper consultation, ‘*Securing a Sustainable Future: Environmental Principals, Governance, and Biodiversity Targets for a Greener Wales.*’ The White Paper proposes embedding environmental principals into Welsh law, establishing a governance body to oversee compliance, and creating a strategic framework with biodiversity targets for nature recovery. These measures underscore the need for transformative, long-term action to address the climate and nature emergencies, as outlined in the Programme for Government.

The consultation, which closed on 30 April with 1,171 responses, highlighted public engagement and provided valuable feedback. An independent analysis of responses has been published, alongside a Policy Response detailing key themes and government actions in response to the input received. This proposed legislation affirms the Welsh Government’s commitment to prioritising climate and nature, maintaining environmental standards post-Brexit, and fostering ongoing collaboration with stakeholders to shape the future policy direction

Wales Technical Advice Note 15 (TAN 15); Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion (2023)

TAN 15 provides technical guidance to support Planning Policy Wales (PPW), helping to meet its requirements and promote the creation of sustainable places.

Core Principals of TAN 15:

- Aligns with Wales’ National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management, advocating a risk-based approach for new developments in flood-prone areas.

Defines ‘risk’ as encompassing both:

- The likelihood of a flooding event.
- The potential impact if such an event occurs.

The application of TAN 15 can significantly affect proposed developments like Denbigh’s.

Key points include:

- 1. Restrictions on Development:** Overnight accommodations and “highly vulnerable” uses (e.g., care homes, schools) cannot be built in flood-prone areas.
- 2. Infrastructure Requirements:** Developments need robust flood infrastructure and emergency access routes that remain functional during floods.
- 3. Planning Complexity:** Compliance with TAN15 adds the need for flood risk assessments, potentially delaying approvals and increasing costs.
- 4. Land Use Impact:** Flood risk zones may limit development potential, affecting project viability or requiring alternative uses like recreation or commercial spaces.

TAN15 also highlights opportunities to integrate flood resilience measures, such as green infrastructure and SUDS.

The **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act** is focused on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It requires all public bodies to think more about the long-term, to work better with people and communities and one another, and to work collectively to improve the wellbeing of Wales. The Act identifies seven Well-being Goals to guide action and identifies how public bodies should work.

Sustainable development is central to the Act, and is based on giving equal priority to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. Each aspect of well-being is as important as the other and it is critical that all four are improved. This approach will ensure that “the needs of the present are met without compromising those of the future”.

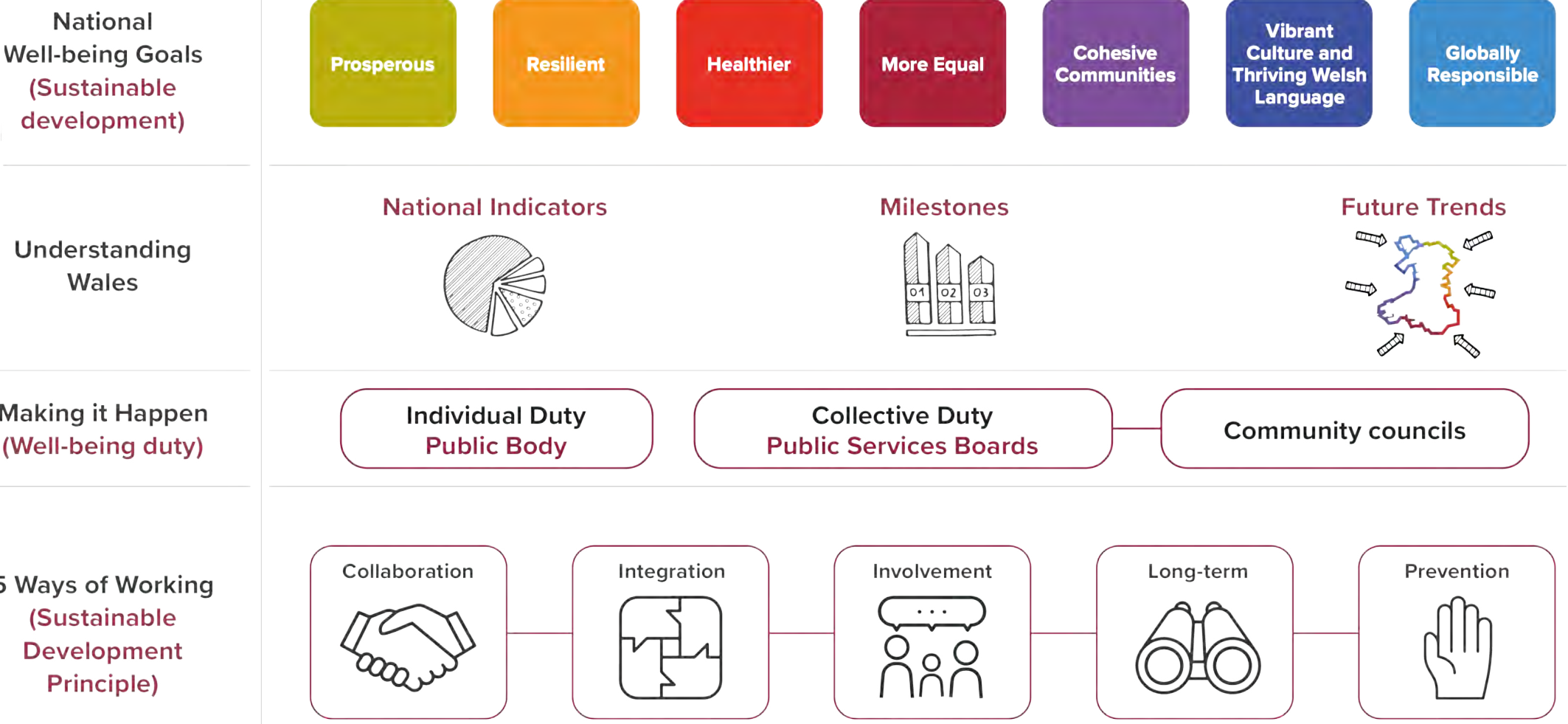
Sustainability is also at the core of the Welsh Government’s environment and climate change policies. The **Natural Resources Policy** (NRP) is the second statutory product of the Environment (Wales) Act. The focus of the NRP is the sustainable management of Wales’ natural resources, to maximise their contribution to achieving goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

The policy sets out three National Priorities:

- Delivering nature-based solutions
- Increasing renewable energy and resource efficiency
- Taking a place-based approach

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and Planning Policy Wales requires planning, investment and development to create sustainable places. Sustainable places have the right mix of homes in the right place; include local employment and services; have excellent public transport and active travel infrastructure; and, are green. National policy defines that they also require mixed-use town centres that satisfy local needs.

In recognition of the key role that town centres have in building sustainable places, the Welsh Government has introduced the ‘Town Centre First’ principal, which requires all new major commercial, retail, education, health and public service investment and proposals to be located in town centres. Further, the Welsh Government has established the **Transforming Towns funding programme**, to enable projects to redevelop and improve town centres and nearby areas.



The **Denbighshire County Council’s Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22 to 2029/30)** outlines a comprehensive approach to address climate change and enhance biodiversity across the region, whilst promoting community involvement. The strategy’s main goals include reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate impacts, and fostering environmental resilience. It emphasises sustainable practices in energy, transportation, waste management and land use, aiming to protect local wildlife and ecosystems.

The strategy document will be formally reviewed and refreshed every 3 years up until 2030 (2023/24 and 2026/27).



The Corwen Placemaking Plan has been developed in accordance with national policy and legislation and advances this agenda, setting out the pathway for investment and ensuring that Corwen’s Town Centre is a sustainable place that serves the needs of its wider community.

Regional Policy

North Wales Regeneration Plan 2018 – 2035

(2018) The strategy serves as a guiding document intended to synchronise regeneration efforts in North Wales with concurrent initiatives aimed at fostering economic growth in the area, including the North Wales Growth Vision (2016) and the North Wales Regional Economic Framework (2021). It delineates a spatial and thematic framework for prioritising investments, outlining the following regional regeneration objectives:

- Reduce inequality
- Strengthen the visitor economy
- Protect the rural economy
- Modernise town centres
- Improve housing offer

A Growth Vision for the Economy of North Wales (2016)

The North Wales Economic Ambition Board partnership crafted a vision for North Wales to evolve into: *“A confident, cohesive region with sustainable economic growth, capitalising on the success of high value economic sectors and our connection to the economies of the Northern Powerhouse and Ireland.”* This Growth Vision was built upon three fundamental principles:

- Smart – with a focus on innovation and high value economic sectors to advance economic performance
- Resilient – with a focus on retaining young people, increasing employment levels and skills to achieve inclusive growth.
- Connected – with a focus on improving transport and digital infrastructure to enhance strategic connectivity to and within the region.

The vision developed by Ambition North Wales and its partners, shaped the North Wales Growth Deal, signed in 2020. Welsh Government and UK Government are jointly investing £240 million into the Growth Deal over 15 years. The aim of the Growth Deal is to build a more vibrant, sustainable and resilient economy in North Wales, building on it's strengths to boost productivity while tackling long-term challenges and economic barriers to delivering inclusive growth. Three high growth sectors have been targeted by Ambition North Wales to drive productivity in the region:

- Low carbon energy;
- High value manufacturing; and,
- Agri-food and tourism.

Corwen with its rich tourism opportunities tied to it's strong character and heritage is well placed to contribute towards these goals.

Commercial land and property market failure and digital infrastructure are identified as key barriers to growth and are also targets for investments.

View from the South of The Workhouse



North Wales Regional Economic Framework (2021)

The North Wales Regional Economic Framework (REF), developed by Welsh Government, provides a framework that captures how the public, private and third sectors will deliver on their priorities. The REF links directly with the structure of the Growth Deal and the aim is for the achievement of priorities to boost productivity and accelerate sustainable economic and inclusive prosperity. Three core themes for the region are defined within the REF :

1. Social and community wellbeing;
2. Low carbon economy; and ,
3. The experience economy.

The REF recognises the region's strengths in low carbon energy, tourism, and food and drink sectors, whilst also identifying pockets of deprivation, poor connectivity and longer commutes, with residents of North Wales having the longest commute anywhere in Wales.

Based on an analysis of key issues and opportunities in the region and stakeholder feedback, ten priorities for the region are identified offering areas of focus for Denbigh's Placemaking Plan:

1. Skills & Workforce;
2. Investment in magnets, hubs, supply chains, R&D, innovation & entrepreneurship;
3. Balanced support for indigenous & inward investors;
4. Language, culture, place & heritage;
5. Foundation Economy & a vibrant Micro/SME base;
6. Empowering communities for the benefit of our future generations;
7. Connectivity (transport & digital);
8. Leverage benefits of the public sector;
9. Low carbon energy; and,
10. Food & Drink Industry.

Town centres are identified within the framework as a key component of the Social and Community Wellbeing Economy. The role of town centres to support smaller businesses to be more competitive, act as focal centres for remote working and amenities, and establishing community hubs are emphasised.



Social and Community Wellbeing Economy Diagram

Local Policy

Net Zero Strategic Plan Wales, Welsh Government (2021)

The Welsh Government has set an ambitious goal to achieve net zero emissions by 2030, contributing to the collective 2030 target for the Welsh Public Sector. This net zero target places the organisation on a robust decarbonisation path, requiring significant organisational transformation. The Strategic Plan consolidates evidence and outlines priority decarbonisation initiatives, establishing a framework to identify carbon reduction opportunities and track progress toward net zero.

In 2020-21, the Welsh Government reduced its carbon footprint by 18% compared to 2019-20, partly due to COVID-19 impacts but also through proactive efforts to lessen environmental impact. Progress has been made in enhancing energy efficiency, increasing renewable energy generation, optimising operations, and engaging suppliers. The Strategic Plan now aims to expand these efforts further to meet the 2030 target. Decarbonisation targets are divided into two categories: measurable reductions in operational emissions and qualitative targets for supply chain and land use practices.

DCC’s Climate and Nature Strategy (July 2024)

Denbighshire County Council has set a target to become a Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council by 2030, building on progress made through its *Corporate Plan* priority for the Environment and current *A Greener Denbighshire theme* (2022-2027). The Council’s Net Carbon Zero Footprint goals encompass reducing emissions from buildings, waste, fleet vehicles, staff commuting, street lighting, and business travel.

Guided by the Denbighshire Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22 to 2029/30), the Council takes a comprehensive approach to climate action and biodiversity enhancement, involving the community in promoting sustainable practices across areas such as

- energy
- transport
- waste management
- land use

This strategy aims to cut greenhouse gas emissions, increase resilience to climate impacts, and support local ecosystems.

The strategy document will be formally reviewed and refreshed every 3 years up until 2030 (2023/24 and 2026/27).

Denbighshire Local Area Energy Plan (2024)

On behalf of the Welsh Government, Ambition North Wales managed a contract with consultants developing the Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) for Denbighshire, and the other north Wales counties. The LAEP was authored by The Carbon Trust and Arup, following an internationally recognised method, and was based on modelling, insights from data, and stakeholder plans and ideas, including through workshops. The plans will fall under the ownership of each local authority in Wales. They are aimed at being a guidance tool in how best to work towards a fully decarbonised energy system by 2050.

Tailored to local needs while aligning with regional and national objectives, the LAEP focuses on sustainable energy transitions, enhancing community resilience, and fostering economic vibrancy. It seeks to strengthen planning, build partnerships, and secure funding for sustainable development.

Supporting the *Corporate Plan* theme *A Greener Denbighshire*, the LAEP contributes to emission reductions and aligns with the Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22-2029/30). The plan also advances *A Prosperous Denbighshire* by boosting economic growth and expanding the green economy. Its vision is to achieve substantial local economic, social, ecological, and wellbeing benefits from the shift to a net-zero economy, ultimately positioning Denbighshire as a net exporter of low-carbon electricity through regional cooperation.

The LAEP proposals provide opportunity for:

- Decarbonisation of energy supply and delivery in Denbighshire
- New non-temporary/non-seasonal jobs
- Better energy efficiency in homes that can increase quality of life and health and reduce energy requirements
- Reduced air pollution and increased energy resiliency

Regeneration Summary

Corwen Town Regeneration Summary captures significant capital projects that are planned for the town over the next 5 years as well as recently completed projects. The range of projects captured includes significant regeneration projects within the town and the surrounding area and are delivered by Denbighshire County Council, partner organisations and the local community.

The regeneration summary has 3 main goals:

- List significant capital projects that are planned including projects that have emerged from various consultations over recent years;
- List of significant capital projects that have been completed in recent years; and,
- Start of the process to develop a strategic regeneration plan for the town (Placemaking Plan).

The summary includes completed, development, pipeline and idea projects.

The summary categorises Corwen as a small town with a strong Welsh culture, with significant Welsh cultural landmarks. The summary also identifies that the local economy is characterised by tourism, manufacturing and farming.

The Corwen Town Regeneration Summary is a position statement to help list in one document the significant regeneration projects that are planned and those that have recently been completed.

It is a record of the status of those projects at a point in time and is intended as a guide rather than a definitive document and will be reviewed and updated annually.

These projects can be accessed via the Regeneration part of the Denbighshire County Council website.

Denbighshire’s Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033 sets out key aspirations and areas of growth within the county. The Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) is the basis for planning and development decisions in Denbighshire.

The policy highlights Corwen as a ‘local centre’ which means it is a settlement with a local role in delivery of services and facilities for surrounding settlements and the open countryside. Within the retail hierarchy Corwen is identified as a ‘local centre’ meaning it is the preferred location for new retail, leisure , office, social and other town centre uses, seeking to maintain and enhance the viability and vibrancy of the County’s local centres.

The Housing Land Prospectus (2016) highlights 5.7ha of land for residential development within Corwen highlighting an increased pressure on the services of the town in the future to sustain future residents.

Placemaking goals that are present within the Denbighshire Adopted LDP’s objectives include:

- Protecting, enhancing and sustainably developing Denbighshire’s natural resources including green and blue infrastructure, renewable energy and mineral resources;
- Protecting and enhancing Denbighshire’s natural, built and historic environment;
- Supporting the provision, operation and development of infrastructure and services;
- Enabling the regeneration and renewal of Denbighshire’s built environment and public realm to contribute to vital, viable and attractive town centres with employment premises that meet the requirements of modern businesses; and,
- Supporting development that promotes well-being, community cohesion and resilience including measures to address the effects of flood risk and climate change.

Placemaking Plans

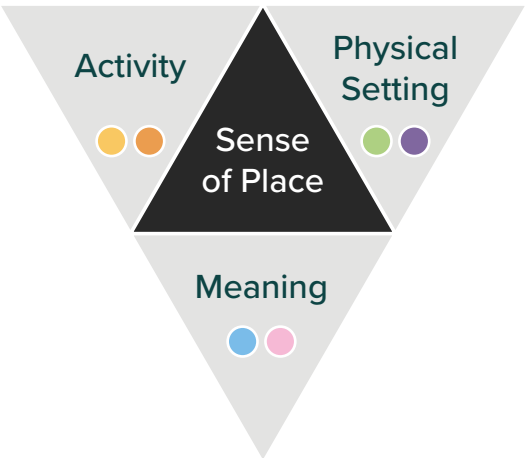
Placemaking plans are the means to ensure placemaking is used as a statutory process. The plans are particularly important to satisfy the Welsh Government’s ‘town centre first’ principle to address the decline in our traditional high streets. They provide the means to set an agreed place vision for town centres that is supported by stakeholders and can be used to deliver investment that enhances diversity and resilience and increases vitality.

The Placemaking Wales Charter

In 2020 Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales, in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership, developed the Wales Placemaking Charter.

The Charter provides advice for placemaking practice that can be applied to the preparation of the plans; building on the focus of placemaking in policy and practice in Wales, aiming to provide an overview of the wide range of considerations. This also promotes the creation of vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive communities across Wales by focusing on the quality and design of the places where people live, work, and play.

To help shape practice, the Charter introduces six placemaking principles: People and Community; Movement; Public Realm; Location; Mix of Uses; and Identity. The Placemaking Plan has been prepared in accordance with these principles. The principles are set out below and have been used to structure this document.



The diagram above shows how the placemaking principles, identified in the *Wales Placemaking Guide (2020)* document, collectively contributes towards the creation of a better sense of place and high-quality environment for all.

WALES PLACEMAKING GUIDE PRINCIPLES					
PHYSICAL SETTING		ACTIVITY		MEANING	
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 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.	Location Places should grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing, employment and leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.	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.	People and Community The local community is 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 creating, integrating, protecting and/or enhancing a sense of community and to promote equality.	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.



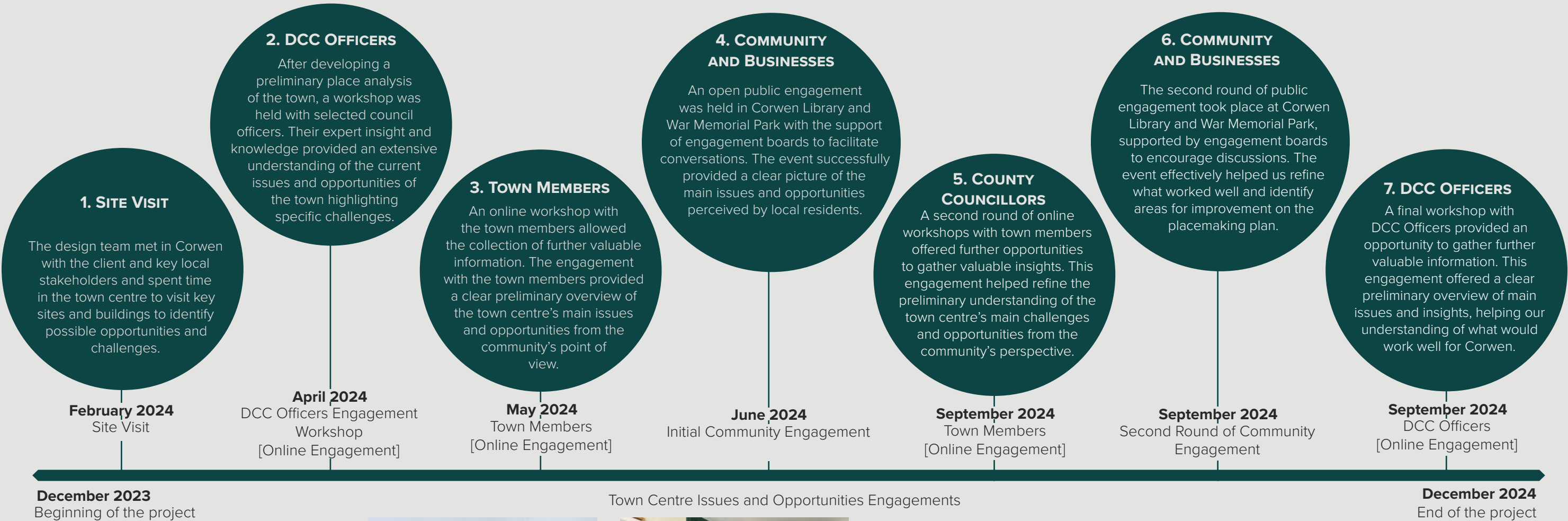
Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement is essential for the development of successful Placemaking Plans. It is critical to fully understand and deliver on the Community and Identity placemaking principles of the Placemaking Charter, and is also essential to ensure shared ownership and enable all stakeholders involved in shaping the character and vitality of towns to work together to deliver investments.

The Corwen Town Centre Placemaking Plan has been underpinned by key stakeholder engagements with a wide range of professional and local stakeholders. This has included the Denbighshire County Council Officers,

Local Members, the Town Council, local business owners and the community. Engagement was undertaken through a variety of forms, including online and in-person workshops and time spent in the town centre.

The initial engagement was undertaken from April through to June 2024, and further engagement followed in September 2024 which iteratively informed the preparation of the Placemaking Plan. An overview of the engagement process is illustrated below. Further information regarding the feedback collected during the engagement is provided later in the document.



Socio-Economic Snapshot

Demographic



Corwen generally has an older demographic with only **30.7%** of the population being under **29 years old**.

The annual population has **decreased by 34% over 10 years** with the number of **20-29 year olds** decreasing the most.

Education

13.7% of people aged over 5 years old are a **full-time student** and **19.7%** of people aged over 16 years old **have no qualifications**.



Employment Statistics

70.5% of people aged 16 years and over are economically active.



19.3% travel less than 10km to work.

32.7% travel 10km and over to work.

30.7% of people **work mainly from home**.



17.3% of people **work mainly at an offshore installation, in no fixed place or outside the UK**.



[Data is based on Corwen, Llanellidan and Efenechdyd]

Health and Wellbeing



47% of people in Denbighshire have very good health. **6.5%** are in bad to very bad health.

Deprivation

62.6% of households are deprived, surpassing the **54.1%** Welsh average.



Source - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/?msa=E02003481>





02

Corwen Today: Place Analysis

Corwen's History and Culture

Corwen, known as the “Crossroads of North Wales,” boasts a rich and varied history that reflects its strategic location and cultural significance. This small town has seen a diverse array of visitors and inhabitants, ranging from Roman occupiers and sixth-century saints to invading and defending armies, cattle drovers, and Victorian coach passengers. Its position along the busy A5 road, connecting London to Holyhead, has cemented Corwen's reputation as a pivotal junction in the region.

The name “Corwen” translates to “the white church,” a nod to its origins in a religious community centered around the Breton saints Mael and Sulien, who settled in the area in the 6th century. The parish church, dedicated to these saints, dates back to the 13th century and features fascinating medieval artefacts and architecture.

Corwen is perhaps most renowned for its association with the great Owain Glyndŵr, the last Welsh Prince of Wales. Glyndŵr led a significant revolt against English rule in the early 15th century, and his legacy permeates the town. A striking statue of him stands in the town centre, symbolising his influence and providing a strong sense of identity for Corwen.

The town gradually grew from about thirty houses built around the church to a thriving market town with coaching inns. The infrastructure development with the new Telford road being built in the 1820s and the trains coming to the town in the 1860s brought more people to and through Corwen much faster and with a safer journey.

The Corwen Workhouse, completed in 1840 for the Corwen Poor Law Union, represents a pivotal chapter in the town's social history. Established under legislation from the 1830s aimed at managing Britain's burgeoning poor relief costs, this workhouse housed up to 150 people from seven parishes. Its cruciform design separated men and boys from women and girls, reflecting the era's social norms and institutional practices. It is now the only cruciform workhouse building left in Wales.

The arrival of the railway in the 19th century marked a period of significant growth for Corwen. As a burgeoning market town and transportation hub, the railway connected Corwen to larger towns and cities, spurring economic development and fostering greater connectivity.

The 20th century witnessed a decline in Corwen's industrial activities, but concerted efforts have been made to preserve its historical heritage. The Corwen Museum, operated by the local community, showcases the town's rich history. Additionally, the reinstatement of the Llangollen Railway to Corwen stands as a notable heritage project, highlighting the town's commitment to maintaining its historical legacy.

One of Corwen's cultural highlights was hosting the first Urdd Eisteddfod in 1929, an event that took place over two days in the Corwen Pavilion. This

iconic building, which was dismantled in 2010 due to safety concerns, was once one of the largest flat-floored public halls in North Wales and served as a popular venue for large events.

Overall, Corwen's history is a tapestry of religious significance, political rebellion, social reform, and cultural pride. Its enduring landmarks and community-driven heritage projects continue to celebrate and preserve the town's storied past.

A strong sense of community persists in Corwen. The Corwen Museum is entirely run by volunteers, and local residents have largely established and own initiatives like Corwen Hydro. This project harnesses the Nant y Pigyn and Nant Cawrddu streams to produce 55 kilowatt hours of electricity, enough to power 40 homes annually, providing the community with more affordable electricity.

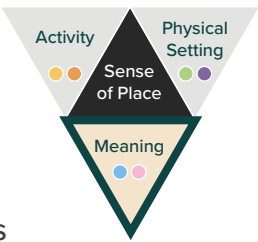




Town Centre Analysis

Place Analysis

To understand the issues and opportunities a physical place analysis was undertaken of the town centre. The analysis considered each of the Placemaking Wales Charter principles, reflecting on each of the key aspects of what contributes to a sense of place; namely activity, physical setting and meaning.



Meaning

People and Community

- People and Sense of Community - Despite the dominance of vehicles within key public spaces and a number of vacant properties, the town centre has several local services that are an important part of Corwen's community. Cultural events were once held in the Corwen Pavilion which had a strong community influence which has since been demolished.
- Health and Wellbeing - The town has poor active travel routes to its neighbouring towns resulting in a reliance on non-green modes of transport, which can indirectly negatively impact the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors to the town. It has some good quality sports facilities but better pedestrian links to these are necessary.
- Accessibility - Corwen boasts relatively good accessibility, featuring well-maintained road and pavement surfaces along with accessible public transportation options and primarily flat topography. However, the wide road areas have resulted in narrow pavements, posing challenges for wheelchair users and pedestrians with pushchairs.
- Facilities for Young People - There are several recreational facilities for young people, including playing fields for numerous sports and a park however, desire and opportunities for further enhancement of provision exists.

Corwen Workhouse is now the only crucifix workhouse left in Wales and a heritage visitor attraction.

Identity

- Culture and Heritage - Corwen has a strong Welsh heritage and is the home of the first Eisteddfod. There are also historical links to Owain Glyndwr, serving as the site of his parliament, hence the statue of him in the town square. There are also a number of heritage information boards around the town to explain the historical significance of parts of the town.
- Architectural Character - There are many listed buildings within Corwen's town centre, such as St Mael and St Sulien's Church, The Owain Glyndwr Hotel and the Corwen Workhouse, which is one of the last remaining workhouses in Wales. The old police station is also a notable building of character in Corwen and has now been renovated into a self-catering accommodation. Opportunities to improve the settings of these buildings and facilitate their enjoyment exist within Corwen.
- Surrounding Landscape - The town is surrounded by the landscape of the Dee Valley and the Berwyn Mountains, of which the meandering River Dee that runs through Corwen contributes to the town's natural character.
- Key Community Spaces - There are several community spaces in Corwen's town centre, such as Corwen Community Centre, Amgueddfa Corwen Museum and the St Mael and St Sulien's Church. The main public square in the town centre is one of the primary destinations for social interaction. Underutilised space within and around the town centre could work harder to support community cohesion and stewardship.



Owain Glyndwr statue in town centre



Workhouse with mountain landscape



View from town centre to St Mael and St Sulien's Church



Corwen Community Centre



The Old Bank Building



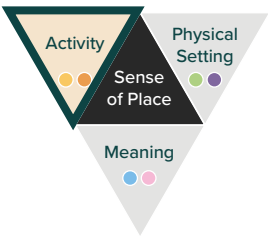
Surface treatments of public spaces



- Legend:
- Development Boundary
 - Conservation Boundary
 - Town Centre Boundary
 - Buildings
 - Car Parking
 - Greenspaces
 - Woodland
 - River
 - Train Station
 - Railway
 - Bus Station
 - Bus Stop
 - Key Statues
 - Heritage Information Boards
 - Listed Building
 - Building with Architectural Character
 - Underused Sites
 - Poor Public Space
 - Playing Fields
 - Cricket Pitch
 - Nursery
 - Health Centre
 - Community Centre
 - Museum
 - Place of Worship
 - Library
 - Shops
 - Cafe
 - Restaurant
 - Accommodation

Coed Pen-y-Pigyn Viewpoint

Town Centre Analysis



Activity

Movement

- **Vehicle Movement** - Corwen is primarily accessed via the A5 road and the main vehicular movement running east to west. This road connects Corwen to nearby towns such as Llangollen and Ruthin and provides a route towards further larger towns such as Wrexham to the east. The vehicular movement through the town currently contributes to a less welcoming environment within the centre for the community and visitors.
- **Parking** - There is a public car park behind the town centre to the North, which is also acts as a gateway to the town from the Llangollen Railway facility. There is some on-street parking within The Square itself, although there are a limited number of spaces. The extent of parking combined with the road infrastructure dominates the public realm of the centre.
- **Public Transport** - As there isn't a public railway line, the main public transport in Corwen is by bus service. This connects Corwen to surrounding areas with the bus station being situated in the large car park to the North of the town centre and to the East and West of the centre.
- **Rail** - Historically, Corwen was served by a railway station on the Ruabon to Barmouth line, operated by the Great Western Railway. However, it closed in the 1960s during the Beeching cuts. Recent grants have reinstated this as the heritage Llangollen Railway, which terminates just outside Corwen town centre providing a significant heritage asset and draw for the town.
- **Pedestrian Movement** - Although pavements are narrow in areas and the town is heavily car-dominated, there is a network of pedestrian-friendly links, of which some lead to walking trails in and around Corwen. Most amenities, including shops, cafés and public services are located within walking distance of each other.
- **Active Travel Movement / Cycling Infrastructure** - No formal cyclist trails are recognised within Corwen and the presence of the A5 road and historic street patterns inhibit cycle links within the town. The nearby Berwyn Mountains provide scenic mountain biking trails.
- **Gateways** - Primary gateway spaces in the town are dominated by cars and pedestrian paths on the periphery of Corwen are poor.

Mix of Uses

- **Town Centre** - The town centre is located at The Square and includes several businesses for the community such as a bakery, pharmacy, post office and a cafés. It is also home to outdoor recreational facilities to the north, including Corwen Cricket, Football Club, and a playground. It has a number of hotels and bed and breakfasts for visitors to the area. The central area of the town centre is dominated by vehicle movement and parking, however the public space in front of local shops does offer some seating and public facilities.
- **Public Spaces** - Corwen contains a number of key public spaces with the primary spaces being situated at the central point of the town where shops and cafés are located. It also has a large green space to the north-east with a picnic area which has potential to facilitate a broader range of activities.
- **Vacant Units** - There are several vacant buildings in the town centre, of which some maintenance is required and poor frontages are on display. Vacancy rates in Corwen have been significantly high for some time, with Corwen and Denbigh having the highest vacancy rates among all town centres in Denbighshire.
- **Tourism** - Being set in the Dee Valley and having heritage assets such as the Llangollen Railway, one of the last working houses in Wales, and holding the first national Eisteddfod, gives the town a significant tourism role with potential to enhance further. Being near the Berwyn Mountains and having nature trails with positive long distance views surrounding the town provides leisure opportunities for walking and mountain biking.
- **Residential** - The town features a variety of small residential areas, including traditional Welsh cottages and Victorian terraces along the streetscape which adds to the town's overall character. Wider strategies have identified future opportunities to provide more homes within Corwen, increasing the demand and potential on its existing retail and recreational offer.

Vacancy rates in Corwen were at 24.4% in 2019 but rose to 26.7% in 2024.



Existing wayfinding signage within the town



Heritage railway and gateway primary gateway to the town



Road dominated town centre area with narrow pavements



Attractive terraces along Bridge Street



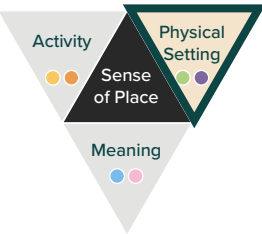
Cluttered primary public space at the heart of the town



Main bus stop in Corwen public car park



Town Centre Analysis



Physical Setting

Location

- Facilities - There are basic facilities within the town including shops, a bakery, cafes, a post office and a pharmacy. There are also public toilets at the bus station and a number of hotels/accommodation units.
- Leisure - The leisure facilities in the town are primarily to the North of the town centre. This includes a football pitch, cricket club, a tennis court and playground. There is also a museum and nature walking trails that can be used for leisure.
- Connectivity - The connectivity surrounding Corwen is primarily car-based. Pedestrian and cycle movement is limited along the roads due to the poor quality of and the narrow pavement spaces. Wider network of public rights of way exist around the town within Cynwyd Forest and along the River Dee.
- Topography - The town sits on the edge of the Coed Pen-y-pigyn and a flat plain of land adjacent to the River Dee. This results in a topographical change from north to south, especially on the path to the nature trails which becomes relatively steep over a short distance. An advantage of this topographical change is the Pen-y-Pigyn viewpoints to the south of the town which looks over the town and surrounding landscape.
- Green Infrastructure - Corwen has limited green infrastructure within the town centre itself but does benefit from close proximity to a wide range of green spaces adjacent to the town. There are a number of planters around the town centre itself.

Corwen lies within an area of outstanding natural beauty and is a potential addition to the proposed new National Park in North East Wales.

Public Realm

- Public Spaces - Corwen's town centre serves as a focal point for community activity and social interaction, with a mix of uses and seating areas. The space is currently limited by road infrastructure with a proportion of this area given to parking.
- Green Spaces - There is a large green space to the North-East of the town centre, which could be improved for public use. There is also a picnic space along this area, although its current surroundings are poor due to it being located next to a large parking area. There is also a large public open space to the north which is used for sport and recreation facilities. There are a number of walking trails surrounding the area, although the current pedestrian and cycle links between them could be improved.
- Local Centre Gateway - Gateways into the centre are poorly defined and not welcoming. They are mainly characterised by vehicle movement and the gateway from the railway station leads into a large utilitarian car park, creating a poor sense of arrival.
- Streets - There is limited green infrastructure within the streetscape and several poor quality buildings which are detrimental to the town's overall sense of place.
- Riverfront and Nature Trails - The River Dee runs through Corwen, giving it a scenic landscape and contributing to it being an area of outstanding natural beauty. Additionally, nature trails in the surrounding countryside allow public access to explore the area's landscape. Opportunities to enhance connections and way finding to existing trails and natural assets could be improved to raise awareness of them for visitors.
- Public Art - Opportunities to introduce public art to build on the town's character and enhance the quality of the town exist within Corwen.



Public toilets adjacent to the bus stop in Corwen car park



Topography change on Hill Street



Large green space beside railway



Owain Glyndwr Hotel within the town's central space



Narrow historic streets



Coed Pen-y-Pigyn Nature Trail



- Legend:
- Development Boundary
 - Conservation Boundary
 - Town Centre Boundary
 - Buildings
 - Car Parking
 - Greenspaces
 - Woodland
 - River
 - Train Station
 - Railway
 - Bus Station
 - Bus Stop
 - Poor Building State
 - Car Dominance in Public Space
 - Poor Public Space
 - Connection to Green Space
 - > Steep Pedestrian Link
 - Poor/Inactive Frontages
 - Playing Fields
 - Cricket Pitch
 - Park
 - Museum
 - Place of Worship
 - Shops
 - Cafe
 - Restaurant
 - Accommodation

Town Centre Analysis

This spider graph displays in two-dimensions Corwen’s performance against the 6 placemaking principles stipulated in the Placemaking Wales Charter. This graph provides a useful summary identifying areas where the town is under performing which guided the development of proposals and options. Scores are based on information collated and conclusions drawn from the town centre analysis. The following provides criteria sets which have been adopted to assess Corwen:

Identity

1

Has a distinct identity

2

Strong sense of heritage and culture

3

Safe and welcoming

4

Strong use of iconography / storytelling

Movement

1

Active Travel well accommodated

2

Permeable routes that reflect desire lines

3

Safe and convenient public transport

4

Prioritise people over vehicles

People and Community

1

Opportunities for community cohesion

2

Strong use of Welsh language

3

Promotes community pride

4

Good access to community facilities

Public Realm

1

High quality buildings and streetscape

2

Strong legibility and wayfinding

3

Provides inclusive spaces for all

4

Well integrated green infrastructure

Mix of Uses

1

Provision for a diverse audience

2

Vibrant town centre

3

Diverse multifunctional green spaces

4

Strong day and night time economy

Location

1

Well connected and supports wider context

2

Connections to nature at different scales

3

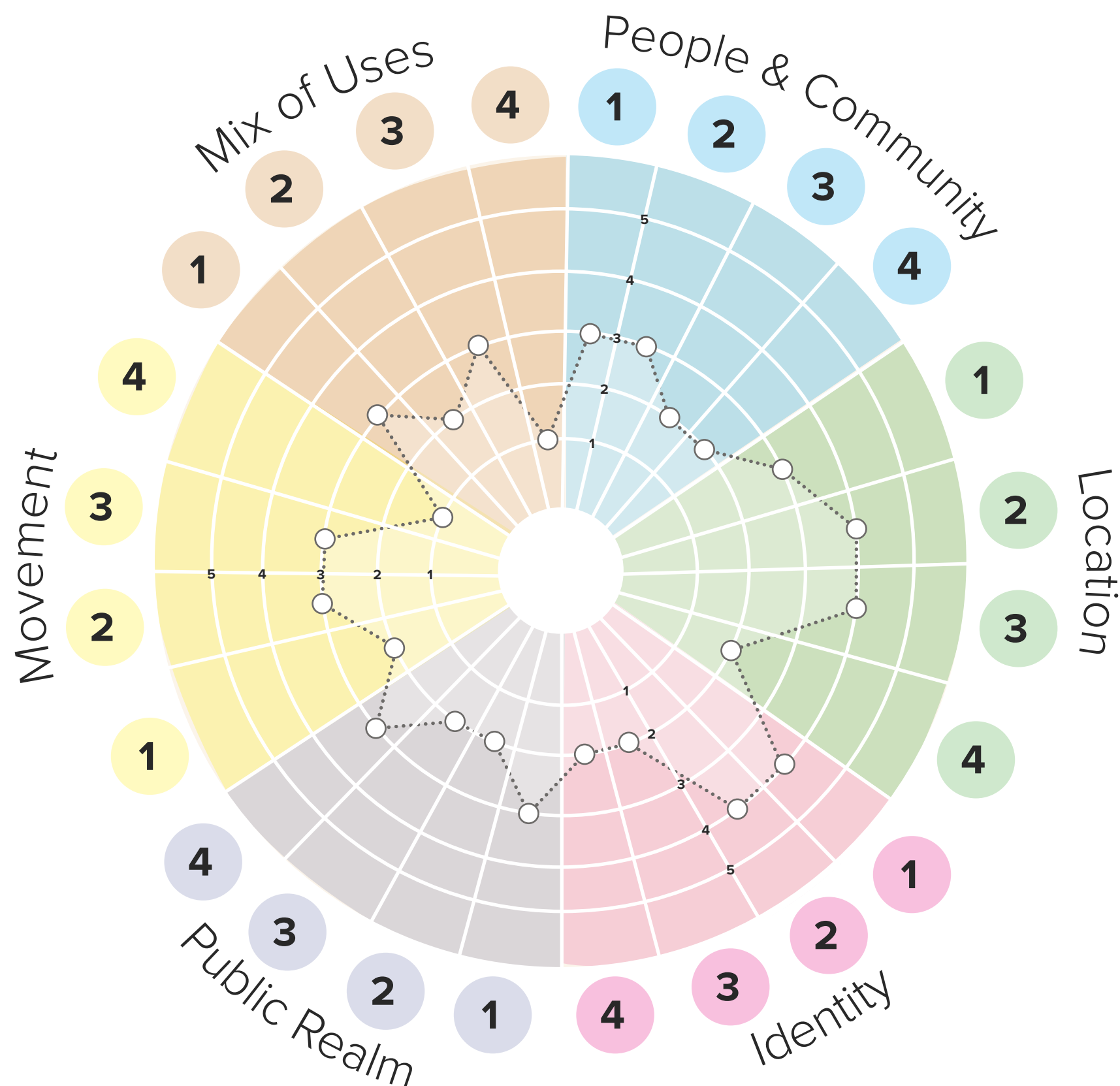
Appropriate scale and density

4

Land is used efficiently

Baseline scores:	
1	Significantly underperforms against the principles set out within Placemaking Guide
2	Underperforms against the principles set out within Placemaking Guide
3	Meets the principles set out within Placemaking Guide
4	Exceeds the principles set out within Placemaking Guide
5	Significantly exceeds the principles set out within Placemaking Guide

Based on our observations, we have undertaken a qualitative and subjective review of Corwen’s placemaking qualities. This is necessary as it addresses the human-centric and experiential aspects that cannot be fully captured by quantitative metrics alone. Placemaking involves creating spaces that resonate with people’s identities, emotions, and cultural contexts, making subjective evaluation necessary for assessing factors like visual appeal, sense of belonging, and community engagement.



Placemaking Principle	Key Observations	Score
Identity		12
1. Has a distinct identity	Corwen boasts a distinctive architectural identity showcased by its numerous listed buildings, including the St Mael and St Sulien’s Church, the Owain Glyndwr Hotel and the Corwen Workhouse. There is an opportunity to enhance these heritage assets.	4
2. Strong sense of heritage and culture	Deeply rooted in its historical connections to Owain Glyndwr and its distinction as holding the first Eisteddfod, there is a strong sense of heritage in the town. The several heritage information boards scattered throughout the town serve as valuable resource, offering visitors’ insights into the cultural significance.	4
3. Safe and welcoming	Gateways are poorly defined and not welcoming. They are characterised by vehicle movement which leaves narrow pavement spaces for pedestrians.	2
4. Strong use of iconography / storytelling	There are many notable buildings of character which have plaques with information of the buildings historic use. The quality of these assets could be improved.	2
People and Community		10
1. Opportunities for community cohesion	Corwen has important community spaces like the St Mael and St Sulien’s Church and Corwen Community centre, however it suffers from high vacancy numbers.	3
2. Strong use of Welsh language	Many signs and public notices within Corwen are bilingual, cultural events are held within the town which showcase the Welsh language.	3
3. Promotes community pride	There are buildings with architectural significance that need maintaining and contribute towards the vacancy rate of 26.7% across the town.	2
4. Good access to community facilities	Access to community facilities for pedestrians is poor with a high priority on car usage.	2
Mix of Uses		9
1. Provision for a diverse audience	There is a positive blend of independent establishments, with a diverse range of offerings beyond the town centre. Enhanced recreational facilities are necessary.	3
2. Vibrant town centre	Little choice of food and beverage options and shops exist within the town providing a limited offer.	2
3. Diverse multifunctional green spaces	Large green space areas surround the town but opportunities exist to improve the offer surrounding amenities and active travel links to them.	3
4. Strong day and night time economy	Limited food and beverage as well as recreational use options exist to support a strong day and night economy.	1
Movement		9
1. Active travel well accommodated	Active travel infrastructure throughout the town is limited and restricted, existing public rights of way surround the town and intersect the town to the North/South.	2
2. Permeable routes that reflect desire lines	There is a mixture of both direct and indirect routes through the town, opportunities to improve links from the station into the centre exist.	3
3. Safe and convenient public transport	Corwen benefits from an historic railway linking to Llangollen and a bus route through the town.	3
4. Prioritise people over vehicles	Pedestrian movement through the town conflicts with current extent of vehicle infrastructure, parking makes up a large portion of the town square.	1
Public Realm		10
1. High quality buildings and streetscape	Strong architectural character creates a visually interesting and attractive street scene, however is hindered by the extent of vehicle infrastructure in the public realm.	3
2. Strong legibility and wayfinding	Scale and series of landmark structures and public art aids legibility, wayfinding could be enhanced between key locations within the town.	2
3. Provides inclusive spaces for all	Areas of public realm can be hostile to certain groups such as very young or old, there is limited pedestrian infrastructure within the town centre.	2
4. Well integrated green infrastructure	Green space is easily accessible within short distance of the town, there are opportunities for vertical greening to be integrated within the historic core.	3
Location		13
1. Well connected and supports wider context	The connectivity around Corwen is heavily car-dependent. Active travel movement is restricted due to narrow pavement space and limited infrastructure.	3
2. Connections to nature at different scales	The surrounding landscape offers a wide range of green spaces located in close proximity to the town centre.	4
3. Appropriate scale and density	The architecture and built form achieves a low density which is appropriate for the scale of the town centre.	4
4. Land is use efficiently	Land could be used more efficiently, areas surrounding the railway station have the potential to provide new recreational and commercial opportunities.	2





03

Place Ambitions and Strategy

Vision and Core Ambitions

Following the completion of the place analysis, a series of core place ambitions have been prepared to provide a future vision for the town and frame the type of investment and projects that will be pursued. The ambitions respond to the place analysis and the stakeholders’ key feedback. The core ambitions are presented below by each of the Placemaking Charter Principles.

Vision

To recapture the identity of Corwen as a market town and establish it as a welcoming and attractive destination for visitors. Corwen will feature a vibrant High Street, inviting public spaces, and strong community spirit. Supporting local businesses and celebrating its heritage and natural assets, Corwen will become the desirable start and end point for visitors interested in the areas history and culture. A safe and attractive environment alongside a diverse and cultural offer will encourage and attract both the local community and visitors to celebrate and enjoy Corwen with its unique rich and historic identity and strong access to nature.

PHYSICAL SETTING

AN ATTRACTIVE
TOURIST DESTINATION

... leveraging Corwen’s unique geographical setting to attract visitors and support local businesses, establishing it as a vibrant hub in the region.

LOCATION

A WELCOMING AND
ENGAGING PUBLIC REALM

... where well-maintained, accessible spaces reflect Corwen’s heritage, fostering social interactions and community pride.

PUBLIC REALM

A CONNECTED AND
ACCESSIBLE TOWN

...through sustainable and efficient transportation options that link Corwen with surrounding areas, promoting ease of movement for residents and visitors alike.

MOVEMENT

VITY

MEANING

**A DIVERSE AND
THRIVING LOCAL
ECONOMY**

...featuring a blend of residential, commercial, and cultural spaces that create a dynamic and vibrant community.

MIX OF USES

**A COMMUNITY WITH A
STRONG HEART**

...where volunteer-driven initiatives and an inclusive environment ensure all residents feel valued, engaged, and connected.

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

**A CELEBRATION OF
WELSH CULTURE AND
HERITAGE**

...preserving and promoting Corwen's unique identity through cultural events, local storytelling, and the appreciation of its historical and natural assets.

IDENTITY

Place Strategy and Intervention List

Western Opportunities

○	Relevant initiatives under development	■	People and Community
■	Supported core place ambition(s):	■	Mix of Uses
■	Movement	■	Public Realm
■	Location	■	Identity

1.
- Identify a series of investment opportunities to improve poor quality façades along Bridge St and The Square, creating a more attractive and cohesive streetscape, and improving the quality and character of historic buildings, such as the Owain Glyndwr Hotel.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.



Example of Street Greening



Example of Pedestrian Priority Surface and Paved Junction Treatment



Example of Digital Wayfinding



Example of Enhanced Active Travel Links



Example of Sheltered Outdoor Space



Example of Mural Showing Place Identity

- Legend:
- Placemaking Boundary
 - Conservation Boundary
 - Town Centre Boundary
 - Buildings
 - Key Buildings
 - Car Parking
 - Green Spaces
 - Woodland
 - River
 - Heritage Train Station
 - Heritage Railway
 - Bus Station
 - Bus Stop
 - Key Viewpoint
 - Road
 - Proposed One-Way Route
 - Improved Pedestrian Links to Town
 - Active Travel Route
 - Heritage/Nature Trail Route
 - Frontage Improvements
 - Mural/Public Art Feature
 - Opportunity to Enhance Heritage Building
 - Residential Opportunity
 - Potential Mixed-Use Opportunity
 - Underutilised Land
 - Existing Project under Development
 - Pavement Widening
 - Public Realm Improvements
 - Car Park Public Realm Improvements and Rationalisation
 - Potential Housing Opportunity
 - Gateway Improvements
 - Meanwhile Use Space
 - Public Space Use
 - Improved Wayfinding / Information Point
 - Large Open Market/Event Space



Place Strategy and Intervention List

Eastern Opportunities

○

Relevant initiatives under development

■

Supported core place ambition(s):

■

Movement

■

Location

■

People and Community

■

Mix of Uses

■

Public Realm

■

Identity

- ■

■

■

9.
- Explore the potential to consolidate the Community Centre and Corwen Museum into a single, enhanced cultural and social hub

■

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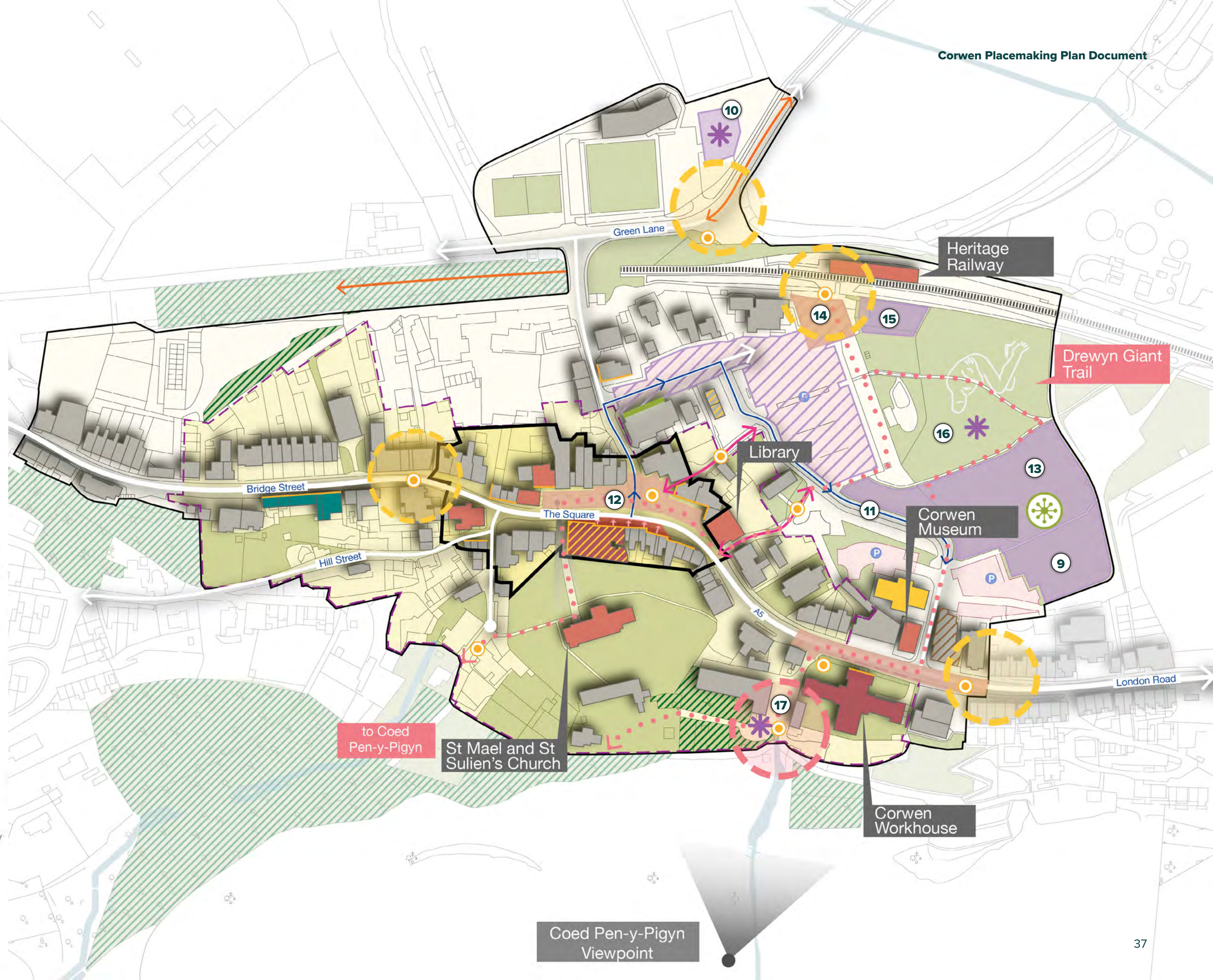
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■

17.



- Legend:
- Placemaking Boundary
 - Conservation Boundary
 - Town Centre Boundary
 - Buildings
 - Key Buildings
 - Car Parking
 - Green Spaces
 - Woodland
 - River
 - Heritage Train Station
 - Heritage Railway
 - Bus Station
 - Bus Stop
 - Key Viewpoint
 - Road
 - Proposed One-Way Route
 - Improved Pedestrian Links to Town
 - Active Travel Route
 - Heritage/Nature Trail Route
 - Frontage Improvements
 - Mural/Public Art Feature
 - Opportunity to Enhance Heritage Building
 - Residential Opportunity
 - Potential Mixed-Use Opportunity
 - Underutilised Land
 - Existing Project under Development
 - Pavement Widening
 - Public Realm Improvements
 - Car Park Public Realm Improvements and Rationalisation
 - Potential Housing Opportunity
 - Gateway Improvements
 - Meanwhile Use Space
 - Public Space Use
 - Improved Wayfinding / Information Point
 - Large Open Market/Event Space



Place Strategy and Intervention List

Wider Opportunities

○

Relevant initiatives under development

■

Supported core place ambition(s):

■

Movement

■

Location

■

People and Community

■

Mix of Uses

■

Public Realm

■

Identity

- ■

■
18. Explore opportunities to enhance and expand cycle and active travel routes to neighbouring villages, encouraging sustainable transportation. Consider opportunities for a new cycle route along Green Lane and B5437 better linking Corwen centre, Corwen Leisure Centre and Clawdd Poncen. Such improvements would provide safer, more accessible routes for cyclists and pedestrians, promoting healthy travel choices and reducing carbon emissions while connecting key local destinations.

This intervention supports the Clawdd Poncen pilot project by connecting the Clawdd Poncen community to the Corwen-to-Ruthin active travel route, and providing access to Corwen Leisure Centre. It also contributes to the vision of a circular active travel route between Corwen Railway Station and Clawdd Poncen, benefitting both residents and visitors.

- ■

■
19. Explore potential cycle/bike hire facilities for locals and visitors, located at the gateway from the heritage railway. This initiative would encourage sustainable travel, allowing visitors to explore more of the area’s scenic routes and attractions while supporting local tourism and reducing reliance on vehicles.

- ■

■
20. Deliver an improved route to River Dee underpass which could link seamlessly to other recreational paths, or via the extent of disused railway north of Corwen Station, making it easier for locals and visitors to access the riverfront.

- ■

■
21. Explore establishing a designated water recreation launch area along the River Dee creating a convenient setting-off point for activities like kayaking, canoeing and paddle boarding, adding a new recreational dimension to the area.

- ■

■
22. Explore delivering a train shed with multi-uses to build upon the investment brought forward with the heritage railway. The train shed has the potential to serve as a versatile space with dedicated areas for working, training and education. Potential uses include a running shed, machine workshop, and visitor facilities. It would support train restoration, feature a small museum and historical insight, whilst offering community spaces like a café and event area for gatherings and exhibitions.

- ■

■
23. Develop a sustainable plan to preserve and repurpose The Workhouse as a key heritage and educational asset. This unique asset could serve as a recreated Victorian workhouse experience, combined with versatile spaces for community use, education, and cultural activities. Potential uses include a museum, immersive historical exhibits, affordable office spaces, and a community garden. It would attract visitors from across North Wales while providing local employment, learning opportunities, and a vibrant cultural venue for events and exhibitions.



Example of River Activity



Example of Cycle Hire space



Example of Multi-use Train Shed



Example of Active Travel Routes



Town Centre Analysis

Post Implementation of Proposals

This spider graph displays in two-dimensions Corwen’s performance against the 6 placemaking principles stipulated in the Placemaking Wales Charter. This graph provides a useful summary to show how the implementation of proposals will improve each aspect of the town, in comparison to the previous scores.

Identity

- 1 Has a distinct identity
- 2 Strong sense of heritage and culture
- 3 Safe and welcoming
- 4 Strong use of iconography / storytelling

Movement

- 1 Active Travel well accommodated
- 2 Permeable routes that reflect desire lines
- 3 Safe and convenient public transport
- 4 Prioritise people over vehicles

People and Community

- 1 Opportunities for community cohesion
- 2 Strong use of Welsh language
- 3 Promotes community pride
- 4 Good access to community facilities

Public Realm

- 1 High quality buildings and streetscape
- 2 Strong legibility and wayfinding
- 3 Provides inclusive spaces for all
- 4 Well integrated green infrastructure

Mix of Uses

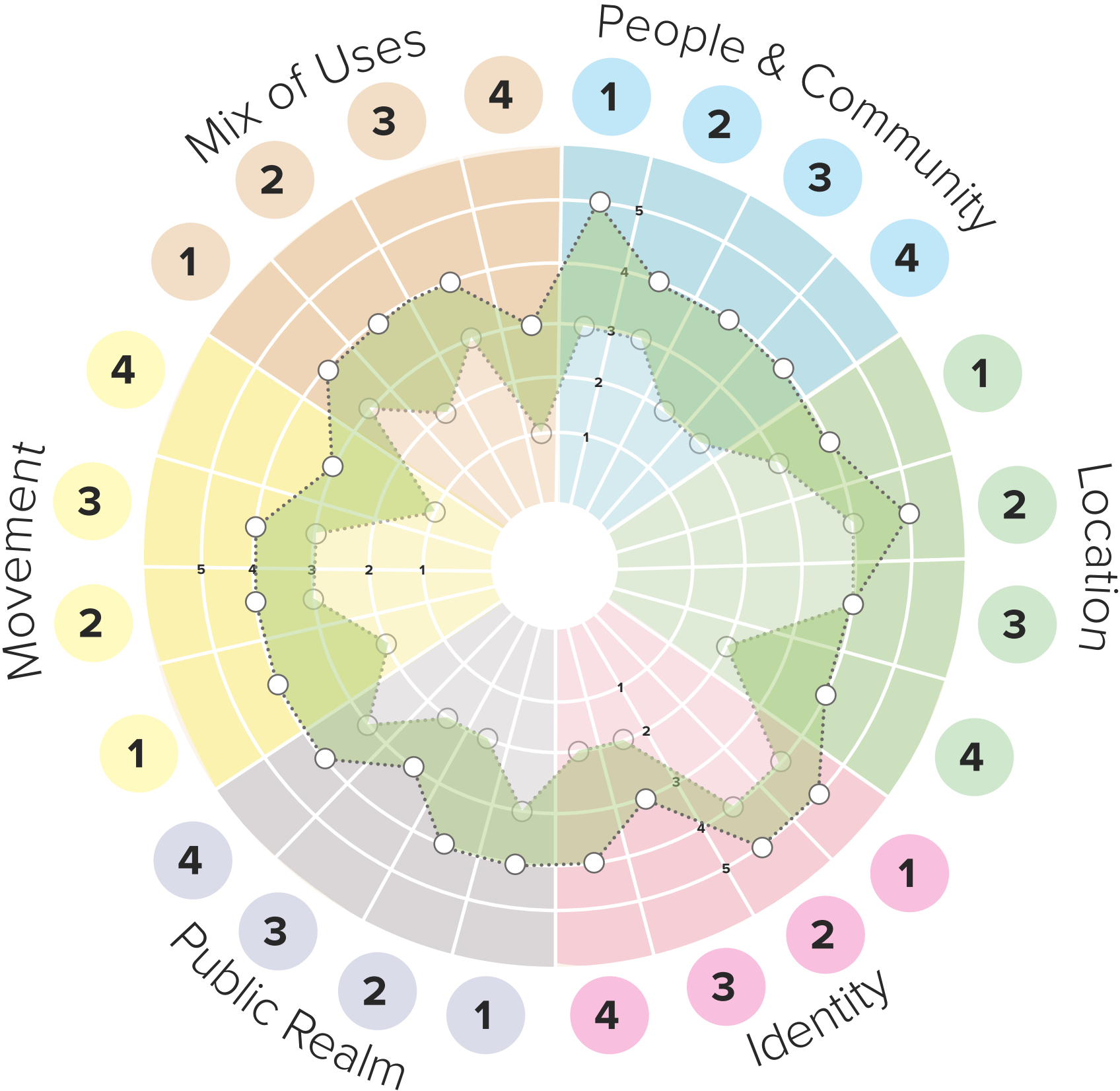
- 1 Provision for a diverse audience
- 2 Vibrant town centre
- 3 Diverse multifunctional green spaces
- 4 Strong day and night time economy

Location

- 1 Well connected and supports wider context
- 2 Connections to nature at different scales
- 3 Appropriate scale and density
- 4 Land is used efficiently

Baseline scores:	
1	Significantly underperforms against the principles set out within Placemaking Guide
2	Underperforms against the principles set out within Placemaking Guide
3	Meets the principles set out within Placemaking Guide
4	Exceeds the principles set out within Placemaking Guide
5	Significantly exceeds the principles set out within Placemaking Guide

A qualitative and subjective review of Corwen’s placemaking qualities is necessary as it addresses the human-centric and experiential aspects that cannot be fully captured by quantitative metrics alone. Placemaking involves creating spaces that resonate with people’s identities, emotions, and cultural contexts, making subjective evaluation necessary for assessing factors like visual appeal, sense of belonging, and community engagement.



Placemaking Principle	Key Observations	Score
Identity		17
1. Has a distinct identity	Enhanced character through cohesive streetscape and façade improvements along Bridge St and The Square, with increased vibrancy with murals and public art installations celebrating Welsh culture.	5
2. Strong sense of heritage and culture	The Owain Glyndwr Hotel and historic buildings are revitalised, reinforcing cultural pride. Increasing the levels of wayfinding and heritage boards at Corwen Station and across town to connect visitors to Corwen’s unique history.	5
3. Safe and welcoming	Enhanced gateways and public realm safety through street greening, improved signage, and wider pavements where possible.	3
4. Strong use of iconography / storytelling	Murals and public art installations convey Welsh language and stories. Heritage trails and digital boards enrich storytelling about Corwen’s past and culture.	4
People and Community		17
1. Opportunities for community cohesion	New recreational spaces and community hubs foster community gathering and social connections, whilst enhancing accessibility to existing uses, like the library.	5
2. Strong use of Welsh language	Corwen will strengthen its bilingual presence through new digital information boards and signage that celebrate the Welsh language and heritage with art murals.	4
3. Promotes community pride	Restoration of historic buildings and façade improvements reinforce local pride in Corwen’s heritage.	4
4. Good access to community facilities	Expanded, multifunctional Community Centre and accessible library and museum offer improved services.	4
Mix of Uses		15
1. Provision for a diverse audience	New outdoor recreational areas, such as a skate park and play areas, appeal to varied age groups.	4
2. Vibrant town centre	Enhanced streetscape and active travel routes increase footfall and support town centre vitality.	4
3. Diverse multifunctional green spaces	Greening initiatives and landscaping along key routes provide diverse green spaces for recreation, with improved links to existing green assets.	4
4. Strong day and night time economy	Vibrant public spaces and improved lighting support extended hours for businesses and social spaces.	3
Movement		15
1. Active Travel well accommodated	New bike hire facilities and extended active travel routes support sustainable transport options.	4
2. Permeable routes that reflect desire lines	Strategic landscaping and reorganisation of key routes improve pedestrian flow and connectivity.	4
3. Safe and convenient public transport	Improved facilities at bus stop and heritage railway enhance current offer.	4
4. Prioritise people over vehicles	Pedestrian-friendly road designs to reduce vehicle speeds foster a people-centric environment.	3
Public Realm		15
1. High quality buildings and streetscape	Enhanced façades and new street greening uplift Corwen’s visual appeal and character.	4
2. Strong legibility and wayfinding	Comprehensive signage, wayfinding boards, and heritage information aid navigation for visitors and locals.	4
3. Provides inclusive spaces for all	Accessible recreational spaces, community hubs, and improved pedestrian links ensure inclusivity.	3
4. Well integrated green infrastructure	Greening and landscaping along main streets, gateways, and recreational areas provide natural integration throughout.	4
Location		17
1. Well connected and supports wider context	Improved active travel links connect Corwen with surrounding areas and facilities.	4
2. Connections to nature at different scales	New green spaces, trails, and river access points provide connections to nature at multiple scales.	5
3. Appropriate scale and density	Land use balancing new homes, businesses, and community spaces matches Corwen’s context and needs.	4
4. Land is used efficiently	Multi-use spaces, such as a new train shed and Community Centre, has the potential to enhance the utility of Corwen’s land for various purposes and making better use of large green spaces, such as the Giant Drewyn Field.	4

theurbanists

Cardiff

Westgate House, 11 Womanby
Street Cardiff, CF10 1BR

Email

info@theurbanists.net

www.theurbanists.net

Bristol

Studio 410, Generator Building
Finzels Reach
Bristol, BS1 6BX

Phone

029 2023 6133