



A Thriving Vibrant Playful City

Wrexham's

Regeneration Plan

**The Pride in Place Programme -
Wrexham Plan for Neighbourhoods
October 2025**



Funded by
UK Government
Wedi ei ariannu gan
Llywodraeth y DU



PURPOSE

This is Wrexham City Board's 10-year vision for Wrexham submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. It follows the structure of the UK Government guidance and is formed around a high-level vision and initial 4-year Investment Plan. This is our business case to secure the investment available from the UK Government. As such, it sets out the 'strategic case for change', which identifies the challenges that Wrexham faces and the opportunities to address them, using the funding available.

The development of this Plan recognises the importance of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions and to work towards achieving the seven national Well-being Goals. Our approach embraces the Act's five Ways of Working - long-term thinking, prevention, integration, collaboration, and involvement - ensuring that our regeneration efforts contribute to creating a more prosperous, resilient, healthier, and more equal Wales with cohesive communities, vibrant culture, and global responsibility.

The Wrexham City Board has worked at pace since its formation in April 2024, originally around preparing the Long-Term Plan for Towns, to develop a submission document, which will be submitted to UK Government for assessment and approval. It is possible that the UK Government may seek clarifications or amendments to this version of the Plan but once approved, it will then become the Regeneration Plan for Wrexham.

This document has been approved by the Wrexham City Board and Wrexham County Borough Council, October 2025



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1. WELCOME TO WREXHAM

WELCOME TO WREXHAM



✓ WALES'
NEWEST CITY

✓ 135,000
POPULATION

✓ "CAPITAL OF
NORTH WALES"

Situated on the Wales-England border, Wrexham has always been a meeting place and a crossroads, where people have come to trade and engage in cultural and social activities, over hundreds of years. The once town is now a city and the main commercial and industrial centre of North Wales. It is a confident, diverse and thriving place – not afraid to celebrate its many assets and proud of its Welshness.

Wrexham's strategic importance is underscored by its proximity to major urban populations. The Mersey Dee area, encompassing North East Wales, West Cheshire, and the Wirral, has a population of close to one million.

The city is a centre for manufacturing, retail and education and is also the location for a range of local government, health, further and higher education institutions. The city's football heritage and the profile of Wrexham AFC have put Wrexham firmly on the national and international map, a phenomenon that has not only spurred a tourism boom in a place few travellers used to visit but is simultaneously helping to revitalise all things "Wrexham".

The success and vibrancy of Wrexham are deeply interwoven with the well-being of the entire County Borough. As the principal service centre, Wrexham provides essential education, entertainment, and services that

are vital to the whole 135,000 population. This mutual dependence ensures that a thriving Wrexham contributes to the prosperity of the entire County Borough, enhancing the strength of other communities and assets. The city's vitality also supports and is supported by the rich industrial and cultural economy of the surrounding areas, creating a robust and interconnected community and raising the profile of attractions such as the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal World Heritage Site.

WREXHAM'S REGIONAL LOCATION



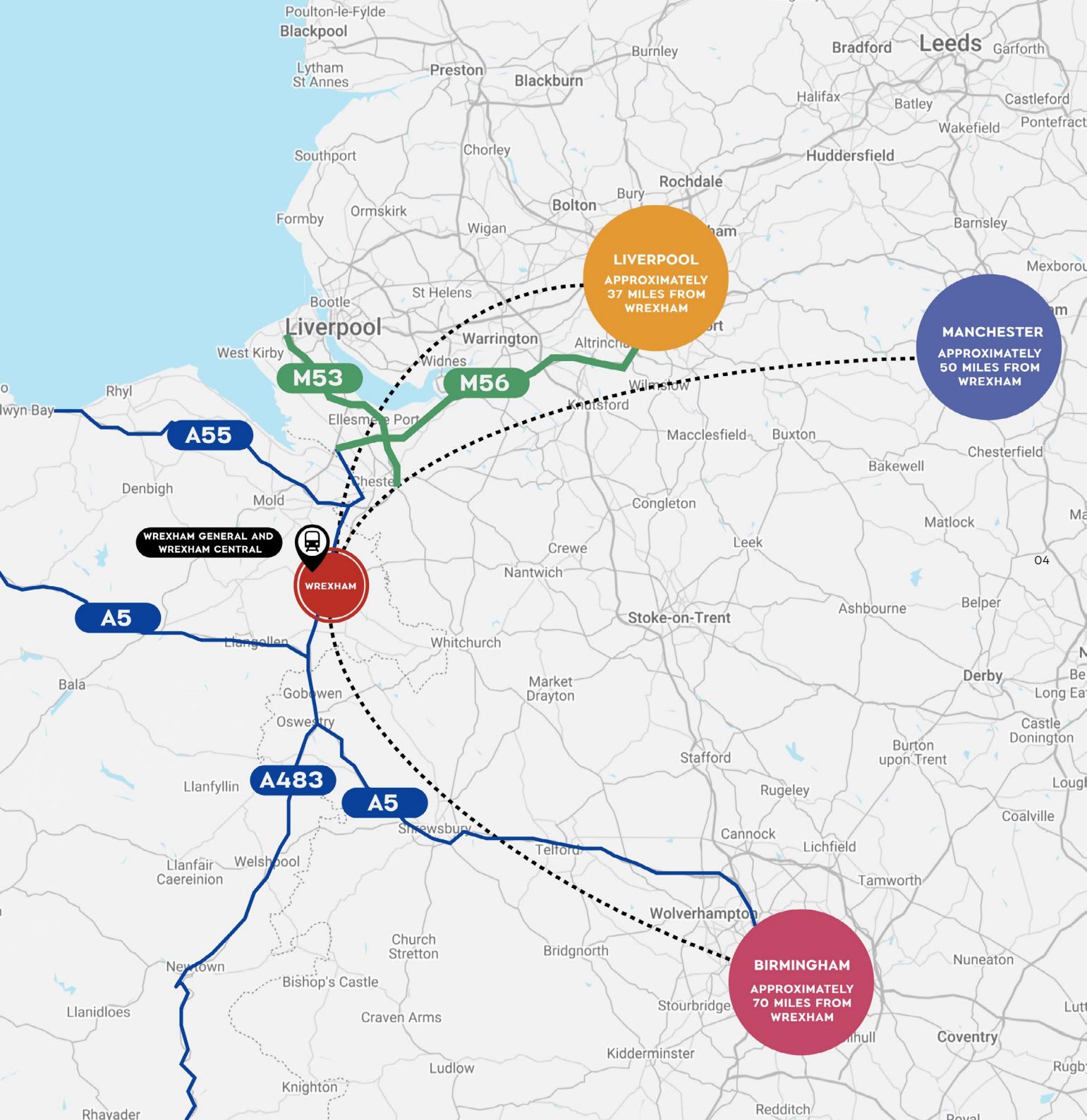
Wrexham is approximately 34 miles from Liverpool, 50 miles from Manchester, and 70 miles from Birmingham.

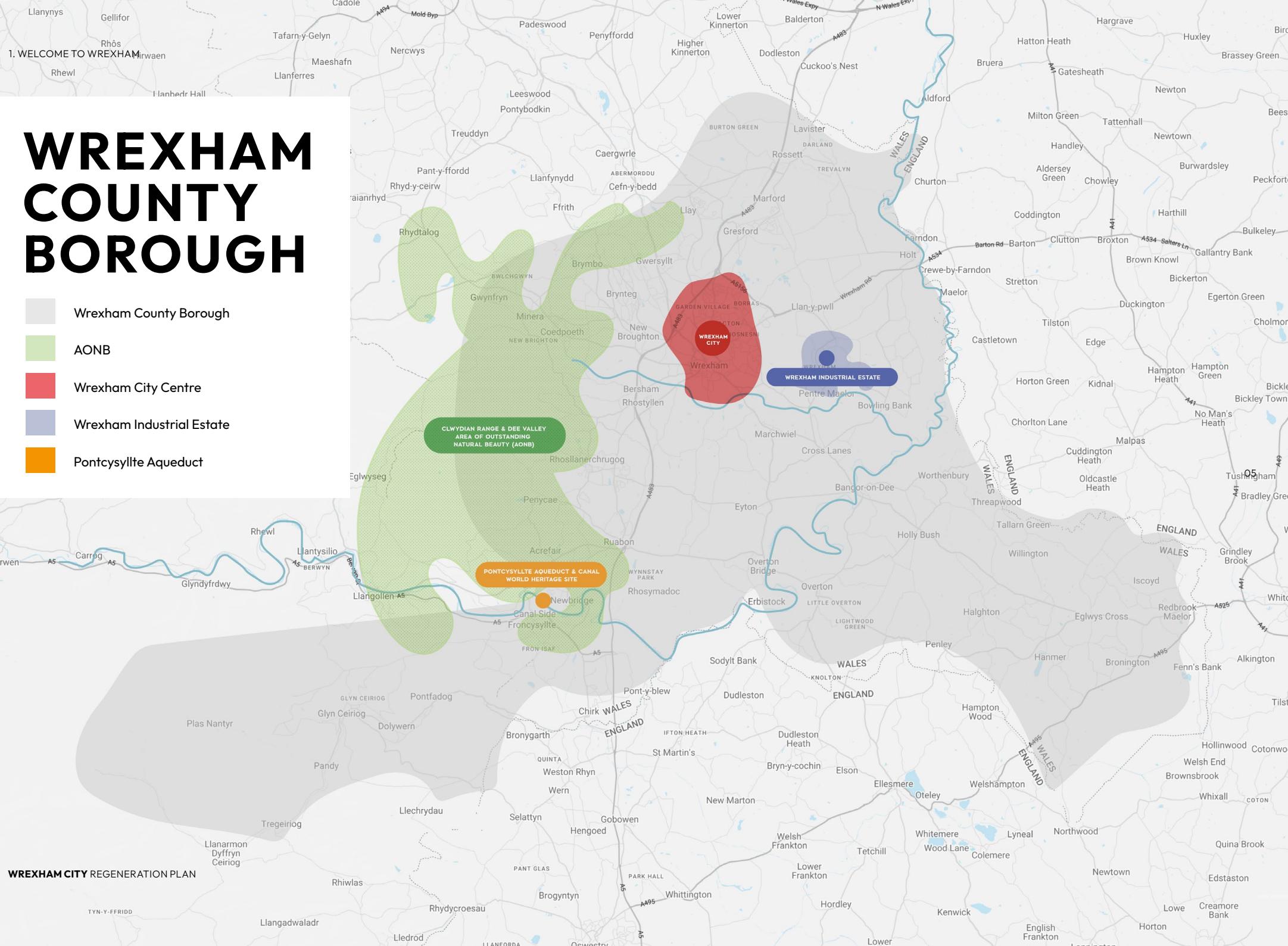


Wrexham General and Wrexham Central railway stations, providing direct rail connections to cities like Chester, Shrewsbury, and further afield to Birmingham and Cardiff.



Major roads, including the A483, which links Wrexham to the M53 and M56 motorways, and the A5, which provides a direct route to Shrewsbury and onward connections to the West Midlands. The A55 connection to the port at Holyhead, and the Eryri National Park.





2. SPATIAL TARGETING

SPATIAL TARGETING

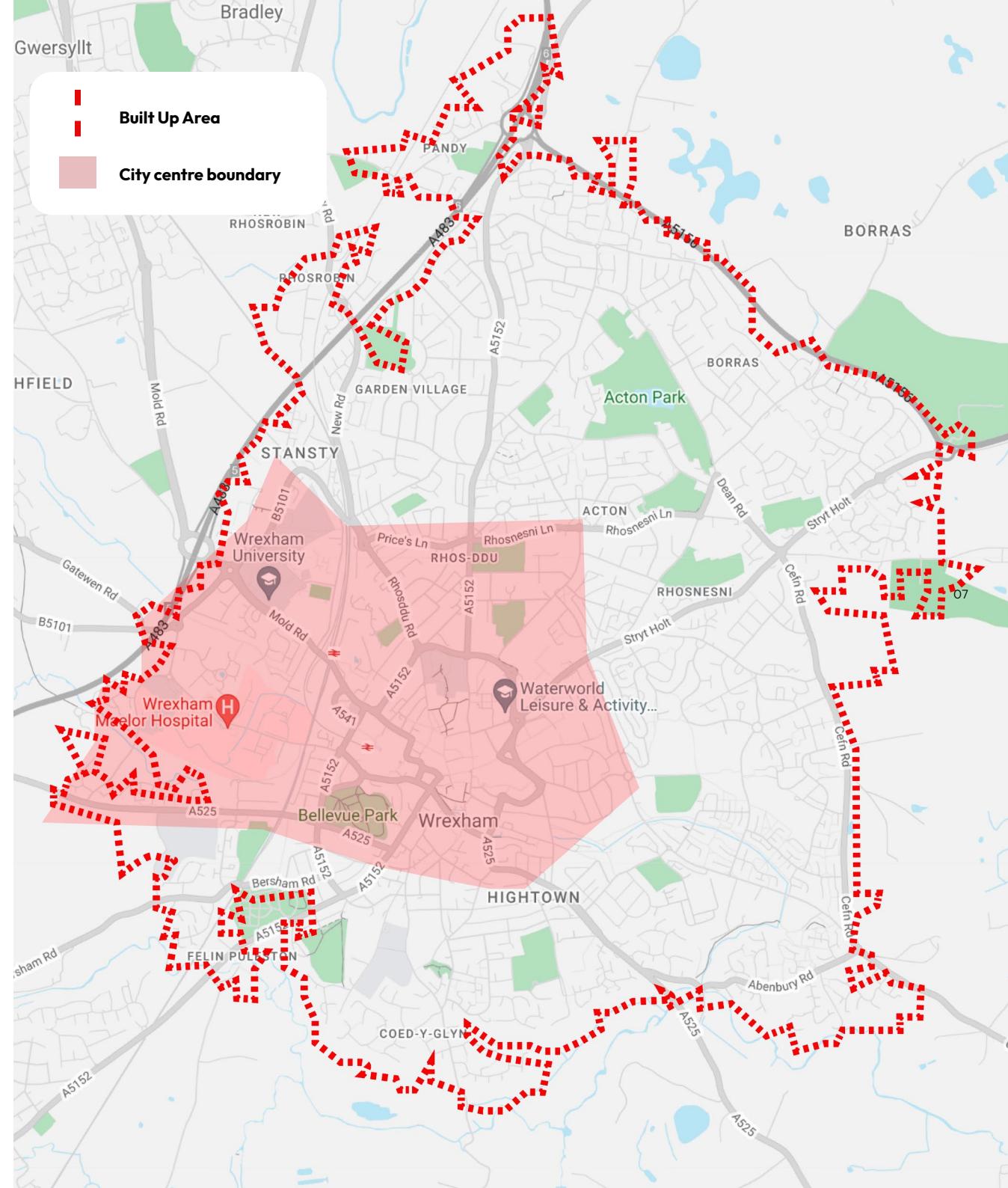
Wrexham's urban fabric is shaped by a patchwork of neighbourhoods, each with its own history, social profile, and community infrastructure. These diverse areas converge on the city centre, forming the social and economic heart of Wales's newest city.

Covering the urban area are four community councils—Acton, Offa, Rhosddu, and Caia Park. These councils represent the principal urban communities and play a role in local governance and civic identity. Beyond these formal administrative areas, other areas such as Garden Village, and Hightown contribute significantly to the character and daily life of the city. Although they do not have their own community councils, they are vital to the city's sense of place and social vibrancy.

Together, these neighbourhoods provide the socio-economic context for our Plan as they cover the Built-Up Area (BUA) and form a socially diverse and spatially complex urban landscape, reflecting Wrexham's evolution from an industrial market town to a confident, connected, and culturally distinctive city.

Since its formation, the Board has adopted a **'city centre first' approach**—prioritising investment in Wrexham's core because it is here that all the neighbourhood areas converge.

To ensure that communities across the city can continue to engage confidently with the delivery of the vision over the next ten years, our Plan area aligns with the BUA, while investment priorities will initially focus on the city centre (as indicated by the shaded area). As further evidence of need and opportunity emerges, particularly around infrastructure to support wider regeneration goals.



3. VISION FOR THE FUTURE

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

To make Wrexham the most vibrant playful, and thriving City for everyone who is lucky enough to live here:

- Filled with talent that inspires young people
- Where people are safe and feel they belong
- Have plenty opportunity for secure and inspiring work
- And enjoy a City created for play no matter your age
- Where people thrive through their whole lives

Welcome to Wrexham, where a rich Welsh identity and a fierce community spirit defines us. Our vision is for Wrexham to be a vibrant, thriving and playful city. We aim to enhance our infrastructure, enrich our culture, and create exciting experiences that reshape perceptions and instil greater pride in our residents and visitors.

A renewed positive attitude towards our city centre will act as a catalyst for regeneration, driving economic growth across the entire County Borough. With the world's eye on us due to our football club's triumphs, new city status, and bid to become a City of Culture, we have an unstoppable ambition that will drive our vision forward.

We are the proud "capital of North Wales", uniquely positioned to attract more investment, improve

transport, expand economic opportunities, promote good health, and foster creativity, ensuring the growth of the city benefits everyone.

Our city boasts an unparalleled community spirit, deeply rooted in its rich history, industrial heritage, and vibrant, multicultural population, with proud military connections. Our cultural landscape features world-class visitor attractions and a celebrated tradition of poets, singers, and storytellers that will captivate and inspire more visitors from around the globe.

As an educational hub with esteemed schools, a university, and a college, Wrexham will be a city of aspiration where young people choose to learn, live, and prosper. We will nurture the minds of tomorrow, ensuring that Wrexham becomes a place where everyone can thrive.



WHERE WE WANT TO BE

In 2025, Wrexham is confidently stepping into its future as Wales's newest city—ambitious, inclusive, and on the move. Major investments are already reshaping the city centre: historic markets revitalised, cultural landmarks reimagined, the Wrexham Gateway underway, and a new transport hub on the horizon. Together, these are laying the foundations for a more connected, dynamic and welcoming place.

Momentum is growing. The city's bid to become UK City of Culture 2029 reflects a wave of civic pride and cultural energy. Wrexham AFC's global profile, Wrexham University's innovation leadership, and creative regeneration across the city are fuelling renewed confidence and visibility. The forthcoming Network North Wales will bring metro-style public transport to the region—joining up communities, tackling social exclusion and unlocking economic opportunity across Wrexham and beyond.

But we know real change must reach beyond the city centre. Some neighbourhoods continue to face deep-rooted inequality in health, income, education and opportunity. That means tackling inequality head-on and investing in the improvements that benefit communities across the city. Starting with the centre of the city is where Plan for Neighbourhoods funding will help us make the most difference.

We want to move quickly—getting to delivery, building momentum and demonstrating impact early. Through the Plan for Neighbourhoods, we will amplify existing regeneration, unlock further funding, and build capacity in communities to drive change from within. This funding will help us deliver long-term legacy that remain long after any single programme ends.

At the heart of this vision is a safe, playful and bustling city centre—a civic heart that reflects Wrexham's identity and welcomes everyone. Our City of Culture 2029 ambition will serve as a powerful lever to drive inclusive regeneration, boost visitor numbers, and raise aspirations citywide.

Above all, we are investing in the next generation—creating better spaces, opportunities and support for young people, so they grow up believing they can stay, thrive, and shape the future of this city.

How We'll Get There

Our approach follows a clear logic: by focusing investment on Wrexham's city centre — the heart of the County Borough — we will create a ripple effect that benefits communities across the whole area.

By making the city centre safer, more attractive, and more welcoming, we will change perceptions, increase footfall, and encourage people to spend more time there.

This renewed activity will help existing businesses to thrive, attract new enterprises and investment, and generate more job opportunities — building a stronger, more diverse local economy.

A safer and more appealing city centre will also draw in young people. Through a flagship **Youth Zone** facility, we will ensure the next generation feel proud of their city and have opportunities to stay, learn, and build their futures here.

By celebrating Wrexham's distinctive **culture and heritage** — including through our **City of Culture 2029** ambition — we will strengthen civic pride, community cohesion, and how Wrexham is perceived by visitors and investors alike.

These collective improvements will showcase Wrexham's potential, unlocking further private and public investment and extending regeneration from the city centre into neighbourhoods across the County Borough.

Together, these actions will create a **virtuous cycle**: a safer, more vibrant city centre attracts young people, visitors, and investment; this generates new opportunities for residents; that, in turn, builds community pride — attracting even more people to live, work, and invest in Wrexham.



Make the money work for our city



Build momentum, energy and participation



Get to action



Leave a legacy

4. STRATEGIC CASE FOR CHANGE

STRATEGIC CASE FOR CHANGE

Over the past twenty years, Wrexham County Borough's economy has transformed from one dominated by heavy and traditional industries to a major hub for manufacturing, technology, and services. Similarly, Wrexham's city and centre needs to undergo its own transformation as it faces many challenges like those experienced by towns throughout the UK.

These challenges have resulted in the County Borough being designated as one of the 100 priority areas in the UK to receive Government investment. Many of the socio-economic issues that underline the need to invest are concentrated in Wrexham's urban centre. The central message of our Plan is that the city's prosperity depends on the overall success of the County Borough. For the County Borough to prosper, it is essential that Wrexham city centre thrives.



One of Wales' national growth areas & forecast to grow in population over the next few decades. This requires new homes, jobs, infrastructure and community facilities to support economic growth & raise standards of living.



Some communities are amongst the most deprived in Wales across all indices measured. There are concentrations of deprivation located within the city including the 9th most deprived small area in Wales, a situation driven by low income, low rates of employment and low health outcomes.

5/22

The 5th least prosperous in Wales out of 22 local authorities and 344th least prosperous in the UK out of 379 local authorities. This means that Wrexham is in the least prosperous 10% of local authorities in the UK.



While demonstrating an improving position, the UK Competitiveness Index 2023 places Wrexham in the lowest third of UK local authorities ranked 259 out of 362.

THE CITY'S POPULATION

POPULATION DECLINE

1.7%

Decline in the town's population between 2011 - 2022

MULTICULTURAL POPULATION

15%

Of the population were born outside the UK (7% Wales)

11%

Of the population's main language is neither Welsh or English (3% Wales)

LESS SKILLED & QUALIFIED

17%

No qualifications (14% Wales)

11%

Level 4 qualification & above (32% Wales)

AVERAGE LEVELS OF HEALTH



General health and disability broadly similar to Wales



Concentration of lack of good health to the east

HIGH EMPLOYMENT, LOW PRODUCTIVITY

71%

Majority of people are in employment (69% Wales)

£41K

Gross Value Added (GVA per job in 2020: Low productivity (£50K in Wales)

24%

Nearly a quarter of people have never worked (23% Wales)

HIGH CRIME & SAFETY

165

/1000 population (78/1000 population)

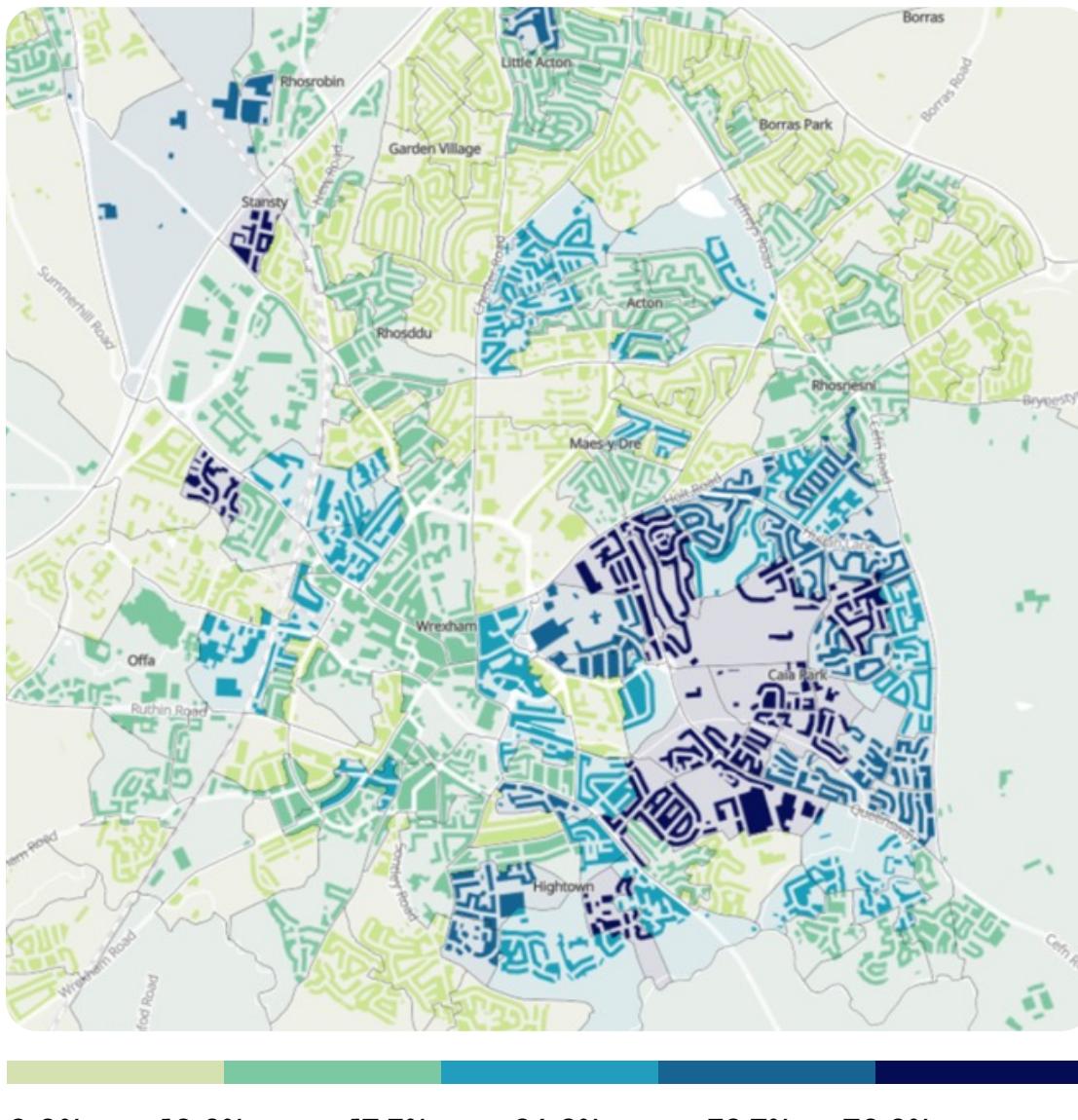
Nearly double the crime rate than Wales average

Key demographic and socio-economic trends between 2011 and 2022 show that Wrexham experienced a 1.7% population decline. With 15% of our residents being born outside the UK and 11% primarily speaking languages other than English or Welsh, we are one of the most multicultural areas in Wales. Educational attainment is relatively low, with 23% of the population having no qualifications and only 28% holding Level 4 qualifications or higher. Health levels are average, but we have a concentration of poorer health in the eastern part of the city. Employment is high at 71%, but productivity is low, with Gross Value Added (GVA) per job significantly below the Welsh average. Additionally, Wrexham has a notably high crime and ASB rate, nearly double the national average.

DEPRIVATION

The 2021 Census classifies households by four dimensions of deprivation: employment, education, health and disability, and household overcrowding. In the figures, lighter colours (from yellow) indicate the least deprived areas and darker colours (to dark blue) indicate the most deprived. Whilst there are pockets of higher deprivation located around the city, the greatest concentrations are found to the east within the communities of Caia Park including Queensway 1 the 9th most deprived community in Wales and the most educationally deprived small area in Wales (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019). Deprivation can have a long-term impact of poverty on individuals and communities and acutely young people. Wrexham CBC is currently developing a new Anti-Poverty Strategy, which will draw on the latest data to inform targeted, evidence-based approaches to tackling poverty across the County Borough.

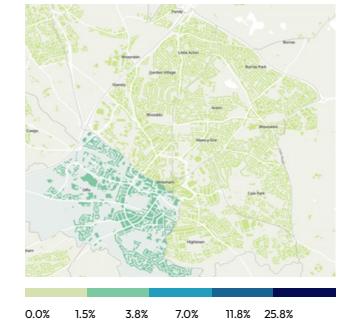
The city's socio-economic picture varies widely, with certain neighbourhoods showing clear areas of need and defining characteristics.



Source: ONS 2021

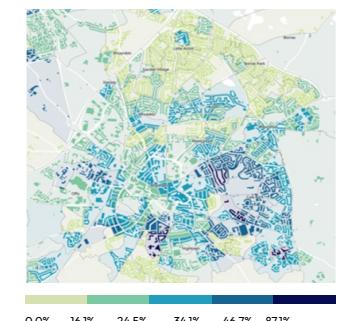
Ethnic Origin:

England and Wales
Other Ethnic Group



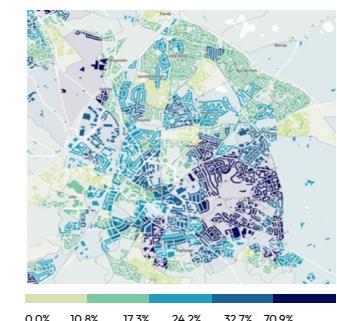
Not in employment

England and Wales
Not in employment:
Never worked



No qualifications:

England and Wales
No Qualifications



YOUNG PEOPLE

Nearly 8,000¹ children in Wrexham live in poverty. Specifically, 7,853 children, or 26.7 per cent of the County Borough's youth, are affected. The hardest hit areas include Queensway in Caia Park, Cefn Mawr, and Plas Madoc near Acrefair. Families in poverty often struggle with heating, hygiene, and sufficient food, impacting children's physical and mental well-being. Poor educational outcomes, substandard housing, and family breakdowns are also significant issues, exacerbated by the ongoing cost of living crisis. An Audit Wales report from 2021-22 shows that over five per cent of Wrexham's population relies on food banks, ranking it eighth highest in Wales

In 2023 "The Big Conversation"² engaged over 10% of the 18 – 21 year olds living in Wrexham who overwhelmingly said that their opinions had not been asked for previously. It exposed a greater understanding of the socio-economic challenges, mental health, and educational disengagement among the youth of Wrexham, and seeks to enhance their lives through targeted interventions and community engagement.

There is a need for a collaborative effort among all stakeholders in Wrexham to create a supportive environment that allows young people to thrive and contribute meaningfully to their community. This include young people not engaged in education employment or training (NEETS). Opportunities highlighted in the report focus on:



Social Isolation and Mental Health

Many young people experience increased loneliness and anxiety, feeling disconnected even when among peers.



Educational Disengagement

There's a noted decline in interest in formal education, with a third of young people losing interest post-pandemic.



Economic and Social Challenges

The pandemic and economic strains have exacerbated feelings of alienation and financial insecurity among youth.



Tailored Engagement Strategies

Using insights from the conversations to develop personas and targeted interventions to re-engage young people effectively.



Community and Belonging

Enhancing young people's sense of community through shared interests and support networks.



Professional and Financial Support

Programs to address employability skills, mental health support, and economic challenges, providing young people with the resources they need to achieve their aspirations.

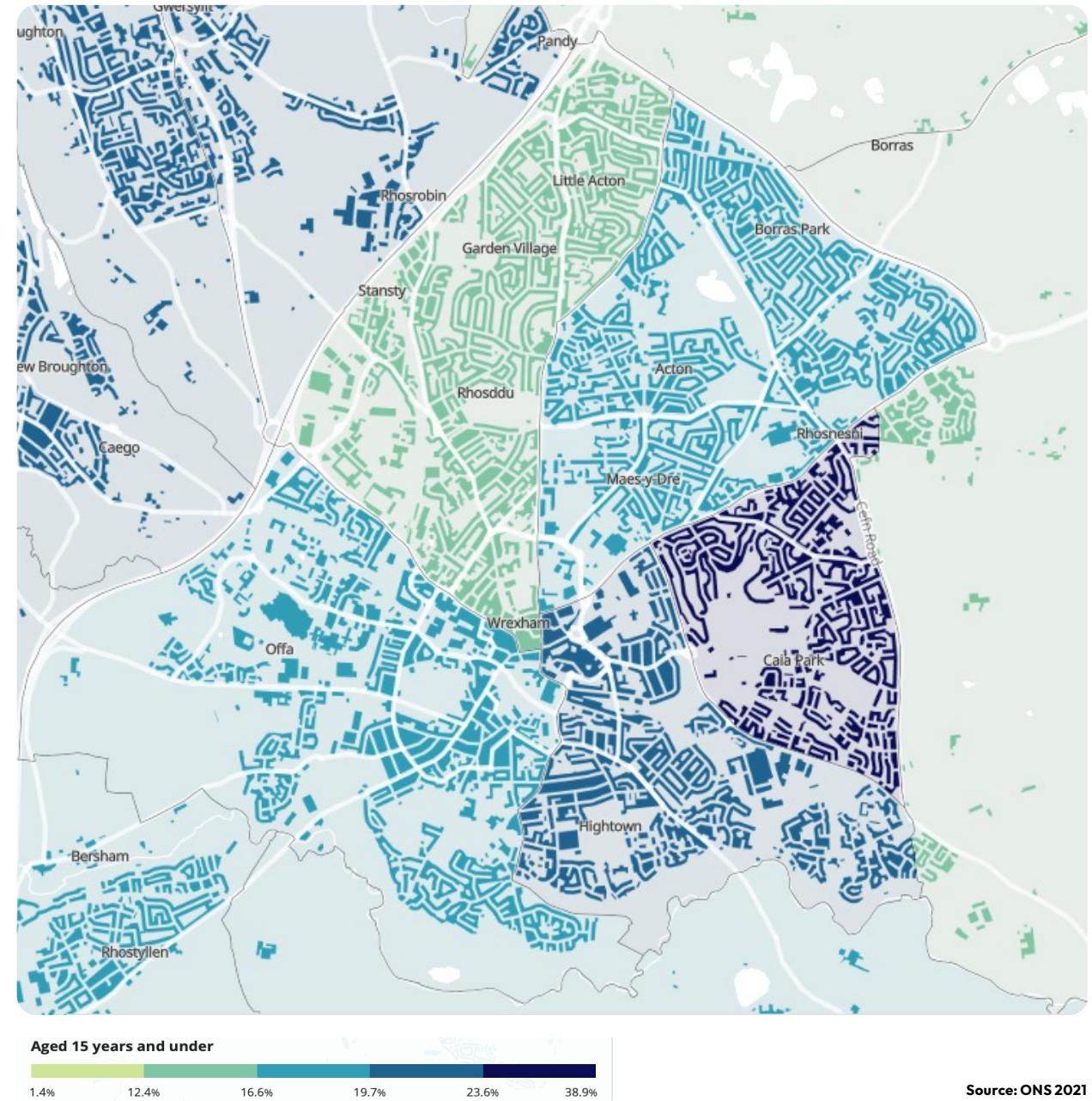
¹Childhood Poverty in Wrexham, Safeguarding, Wellbeing & Communities Scrutiny Committee June

Wrexham Council, 2024

²WeMindTheGap findings and response to the Big Conversation 2023

Wrexham's urban area is marginally younger than the County Borough as a whole, with young people aged 15 and under forming a significant proportion of the population. This younger demographic is particularly concentrated in neighbourhoods to the south and east of the city centre, including Hightown and Caia Park, where children and young people make up between 20% and 26% of residents.

This youthful population underscores the importance of investment in services, spaces, and opportunities for young people in and close to the city centre.



THE CITY CENTRE

The City Centre Placemaking Plan³ confirmed how the city centre faces numerous challenges, some relate to the prevailing general decline experienced by most town and city centres throughout the UK, and others are specific to Wrexham.

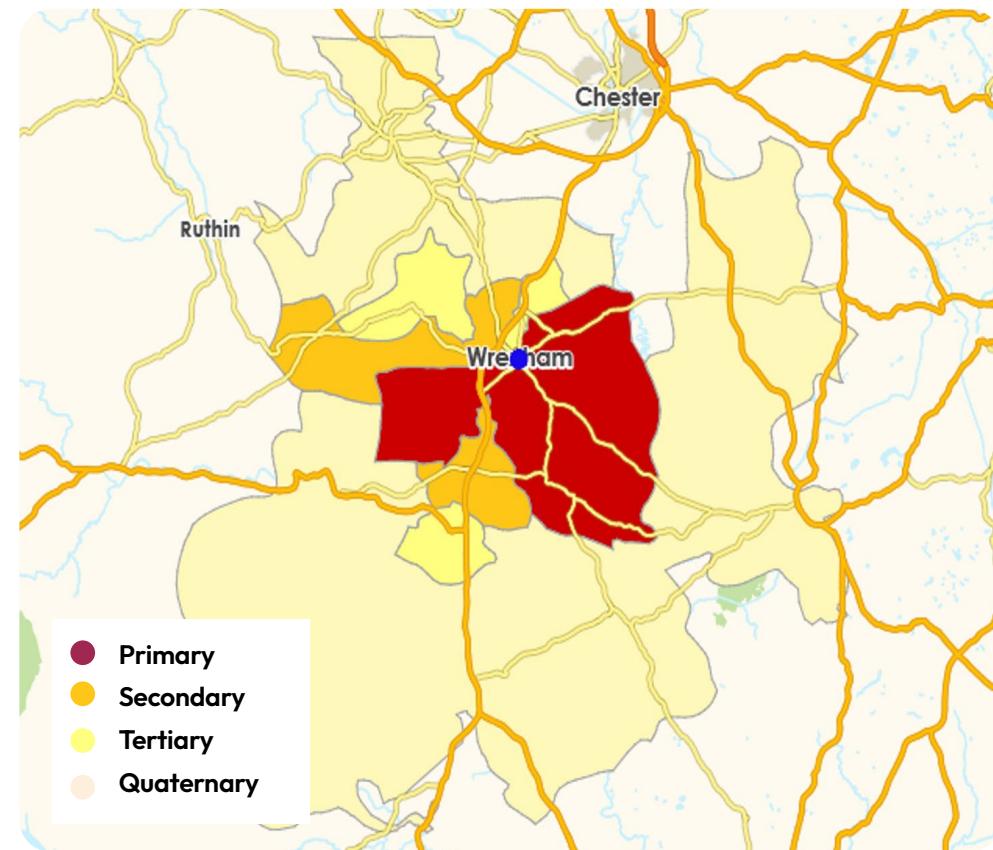
The analysis of Wrexham's population, spending and travel patterns demonstrates that car owning prosperous households living in suburban and rural neighbourhoods and villages outside the city are working, shopping and spending most of their leisure time elsewhere – known as the Live-Work-Spend-Do Disconnect. Although £101m is spent annually by residents in Wrexham city centre, with

an additional £6m spent by workers and £6m by tourists (totalling £113m) there is significant leakage of spend from the local population. Those living in Wrexham spend more (£137m) in Cheshire Oaks, Broughton and Oswestry, which are all out of county. They also spend £72m online. Out of town shopping/leisure destinations are also having an impact, £41m is spent in Plas Coch, which acts to intercept visitors before they reach the centre of the city. Wrexham's numerous out of town retail parks are favoured due to their convenience and are often the default choice of many time-poor households.

Centre	Expenditure Flow (£)	Market Share
Wrexham	£101M	23%
Cheshire Oaks- McArthur Glen Outlet Centre	£52M	12%
Owestry	£45M	10%
Wrexham Plas Coch Retail Park	£41M	9%
Chester Broughton	£40M	9%
Online	£71M	16%

Retail catchments	% of spend in the centre (weighted)
Primary	53%
Secondary	24%
Tertiary	16%
Quaternary	8%

Source: CACI 2021



17

Consequently, Wrexham's central businesses have become more reliant on a population drawn from less prosperous urban neighbourhoods, where the primary catchment includes one of the largest and most deprived neighbourhoods in Wrexham.

With 53% of spend drawn from this catchment, the centre is primarily sustained by an inner circle of less prosperous households within a convenient 10-20 minute walk of the city centre.

³City Centre Placemaking Plan Wrexham CBC, 2023

However, the decline of the city centre relates to more a complex picture of connected issues and perceptions, including:



Transport and parking issues make retail parks and other towns more favoured due to their convenience



Lack of attractiveness including negative external perceptions (e.g. safety, ASB, street drinking)



A 'value-led offer' lacks appeal to prosperous households



Leisure and cultural offers are relatively small & undeveloped



Office and employment base of the centre in decline



Property market failure with a lack of owner/investor confidence



Residential development hasn't realised the desired regeneration benefits



Navigation and wayfinding are poor with pedestrian and cycling routes obstructed, counter-intuitive, unattractive



Value and potential of built heritage not fully realised or celebrated

Despite the ongoing challenges facing Wrexham city centre, there are encouraging signs of progress. Significant investment has been made through the Welsh Governments Transforming Towns programme, and commercial vacancy rates have shown a steady downward trend, now standing at 14.8%—just above the Welsh average of 13.2% (Source: LDC, 2025).

A further positive development is that city centre businesses have voted in favour of establishing a Business Improvement District (BID), signalling a strong appetite for collective action and investment. A recent survey of over 40 local businesses highlighted key priorities and challenges, reinforcing the case for targeted support and partnership-led regeneration.

✓ Businesses rate safety and security, marketing and promotion, and events as top priorities for **improving the centre**.

✓ There is a strong **desire for increased events** to attract more visitors and improve the local economy.

✓ Current **marketing efforts** are seen as **inadequate**, with many businesses rating them poorly.

✓ **Accessibility is also crucial**, particularly car parking availability, maintenance, and public transport services.

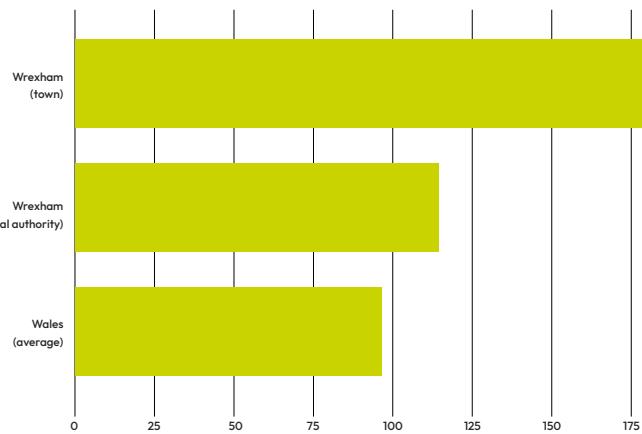
✓ Additionally, businesses emphasise the importance of **visible uniformed presence** and security measures like CCTV to enhance perceptions of safety.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Available data and engagement activity undertaken by the Wrexham City Board indicates that safety is recognised as an issue of greater concern in Wrexham than many other parts of Wales. In 2019, more than half of the town was among the top 20% most deprived in Wales in terms of 'community safety'. In 2023 the recorded crime rate was higher than the Wales average both across Wrexham County Borough and more significantly in the city centre area. Crime and anti social behaviour rates are higher in city centre areas as they attract large volumes of people due to a high number of retail premises, are the principal locations for the night time economy, whilst having a lower residential population.

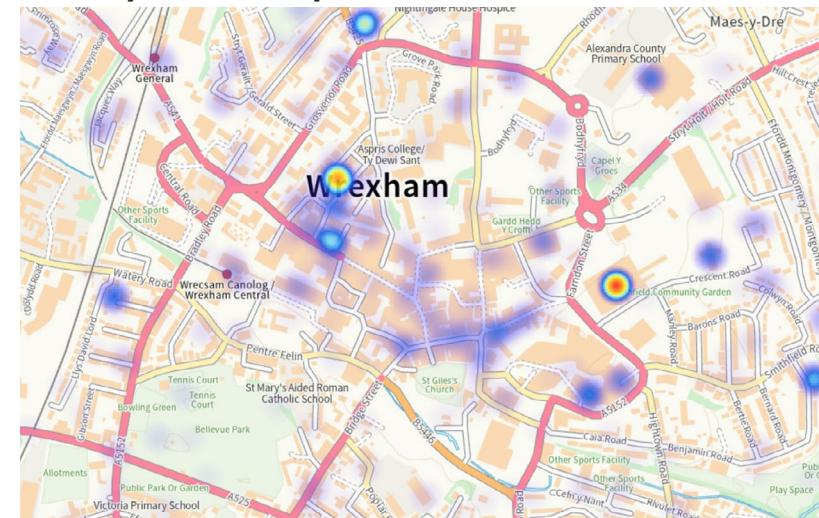
Data commissioned by the Wrexham City Board from North Wales Police indicates that crime has declined in all categories across Wrexham's city centre "beat area" over the past three years. Despite this improvement, the city centre remains a hotspot for both crime and anti-social behaviour. The most frequent issues are violence without injury (2,101 incidents), theft and handling (1,675 incidents), and anti-social behaviour (1,443 incidents). Within the city centre, the bus station and Crescent Road area are the main hotspots for anti-social behaviour, while crime is most prevalent around the Town Hill/Abbot Street end of High Street, a focal point for Wrexham's night-time economy.

Recorded crime rate per 1,000 population, 2023



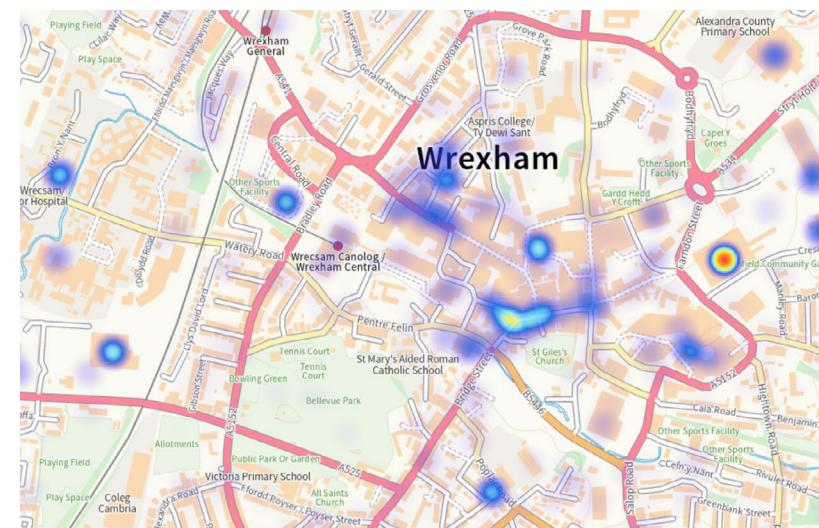
Source: DLUHC, LTPFT Data Pack data.police.uk, 2023

ASB city centre hotspot



19

Crime hotspot for city centre



Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour is a priority for the Wrexham Community Safety Partnership. Various high-profile and collaborative measures have been adopted in recent years to positively address safety concerns in the city centre, such as utilising Safer Streets Funding to employ night-time street marshals. The Marshals supported the night time economy by providing a uniformed street presence and reassurance to members of the public in key areas of Wrexham Town Centre.

During the day a similar role was undertaken by the City Centre wardens. Additionally, a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was created for the city centre targeting ASB and misuse of substances. However, funding for the marshals and town centre wardens was discontinued reducing support in the night time economy and enforcement resources for the PSPO.

Currently, two city centre wardens provide a high-visibility presence to reassure visitors and help enforce the current Public Space Protection Order (PSPO). The potential exists to increase the number of officers to provide more flexibility around city centre events, and to extend the roles to provide more first responder and ambassadorial support.

Street Pastors support police officers and PCSOs on Saturday evenings, offering advice and assistance to intoxicated and vulnerable individuals, and directing them to the Safe Space at Hafan y Dref on St Giles Way. Previously, this service operated on both Friday and Saturday evenings, highlighting the need to reinstate weekend coverage. Also of importance to people is the safe management of late-night transportation. Taxi queues can often become sources of anti-social behaviour and sometimes this can escalate into more serious incidents, necessitating appropriate marshalling.

Broader concerns include the need to upgrade and expand CCTV systems to maintain high quality coverage. Areas of focus for improvement include the city's main gateways, such as Mold Road, and around the football stadium and train station. This area is undergoing significant regeneration and is expected to see increased visitor activity and crowds.

To address traffic-related ASB, automatic rise-and-fall bollards have been installed on York Street and High Street, and 'No Entry' signs are now in place on 11 roads that previously allowed access to the city centre. With aspirations to grow a safer evening and night-time economy, the ability to re-prioritise pedestrian-use of some public spaces has become increasingly important.

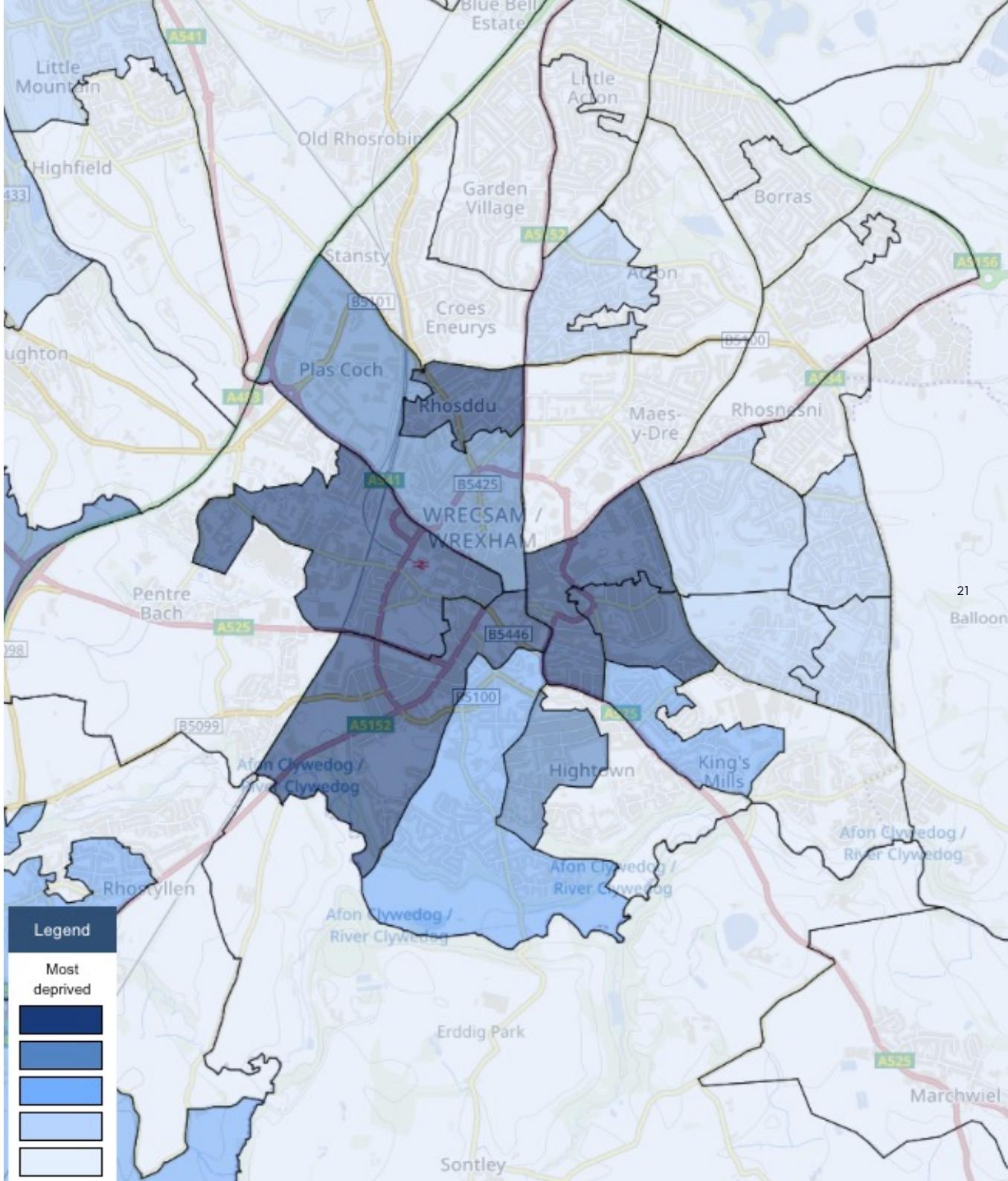
Despite the decrease in the total number of crime and anti-social behaviour incidents over the past three years, the public engagement undertaken by the Wrexham City Board indicates that positively influencing perceptions of safety is very important to stakeholders. Negative perceptions could deter people visiting the city centre. It is crucial that national and international visitors can leave Wrexham with a positive impression based on their feelings of wellbeing whilst they are here.

HOUSING

The map illustrates a concentrated pattern of housing deprivation within Wrexham's urban area, with the darkest shaded areas indicating the highest levels of deprivation according to housing domain indicators such as overcrowding and likelihood of poor housing quality.

The data shows the most deprived areas for housing are found in and around the centre of the city, particularly inner neighbourhoods such as Caia Park and Offa. These areas are likely to experience higher rates of overcrowding, based on the bedroom standard. Poor quality housing, including older or poorly maintained properties, higher likelihood of damp, structural hazards, and inadequate heating or insulation.

This spatial pattern reflects historic concentrations of social housing, ageing housing stock, and socio-economic inequalities that persist across Wrexham's communities. Addressing housing deprivation will be key to improving health, safety, and quality of life for residents, and reducing wider inequalities across the city.



TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY

Wrexham is the largest city in North Wales and Wrexham General railway station therefore serves as an important hub for movements in and out of the city by rail. The railway station provides good access to the wider area, with direct services to the North Wales coast, key destinations across North-West England and the Midlands, as well as the Wirral via the Borderlands Line.

Wrexham, part of the North Wales transport region, along with Flintshire, has a high dependency on car travel, with 84% of journeys made by car. 50% of journeys are less than 5km in distance, many of those will be walkable/"cyclable".

Despite the area having the highest proportion of the population with access to hourly public transport during peak morning hours (73%), this figure drops significantly during evenings, weekends, and Sundays. Only

40% of residents have access to frequent services (four per hour or more) during peak morning periods, dropping to minimal availability in the evenings and none on Sundays. Wrexham General Rail Station is the third most used station in North Wales, indicating significant rail traffic. However, business and industrial areas, such as the Wrexham Industrial Estate, lack adequate public transport and active travel options from the city centre, being primarily designed for vehicle use. The pedestrian and cycling infrastructure between the centre and the industrial estate is also underdeveloped.

To enhance Wrexham's transport network, there is a need to improve the frequency and hours of public transport services and make driving less appealing to promote sustainability. The Welsh Government, Transport for Wales (TfW), and Wrexham County Borough Council have recognised Wrexham's potential within the North Wales Metro

Programme to facilitate active travel. Investing in active travel and public transport is crucial for transforming Wrexham city centre, making it more accessible, connected, and sustainable. This supports the city centre as a vibrant hub for living, learning, working, and leisure.

SOME OF THE ISSUES AFFECTING THE CITY CENTRE INCLUDE:



1. Rail and highway severance issues causing physical barriers to movement.



2. Impermeable and inadequate network for walking and cycling, whilst also limited wayfinding and confusing signage does not support journeys on-foot or by cycle.



3. Poor public transport infrastructure and bus interchange facilities at Wrexham General railway station.



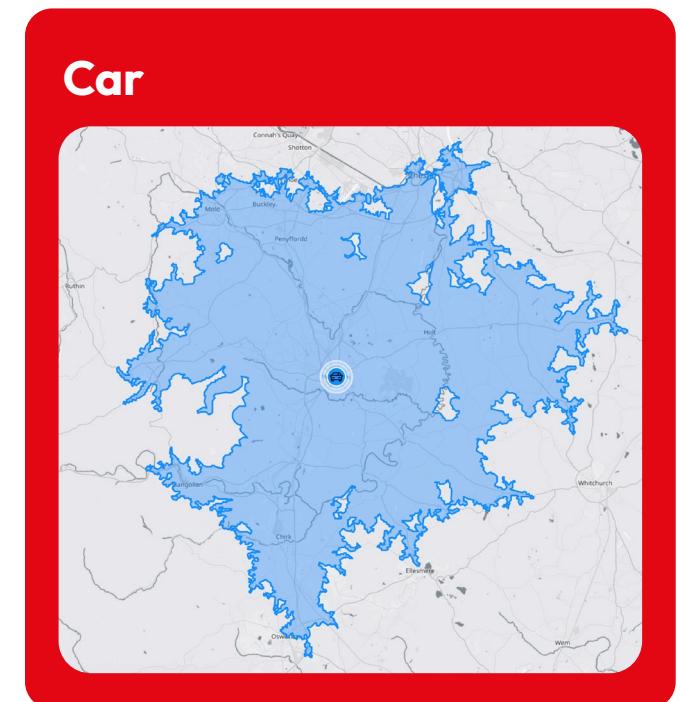
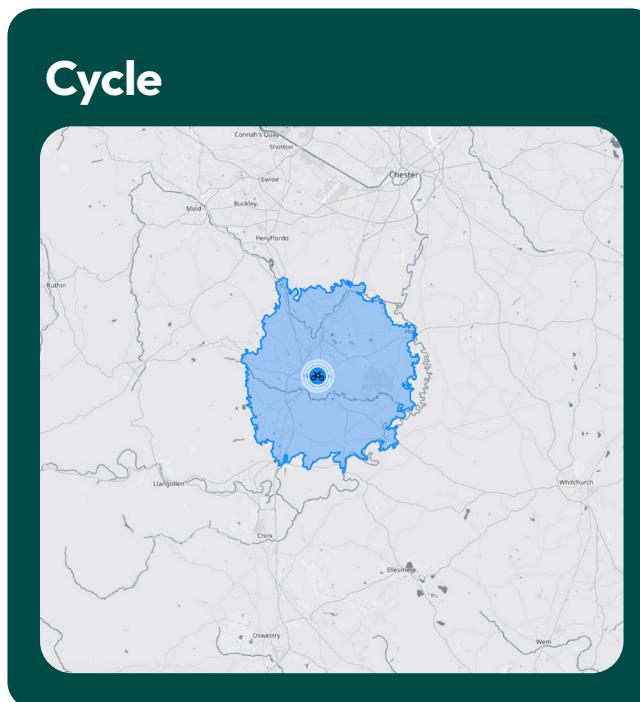
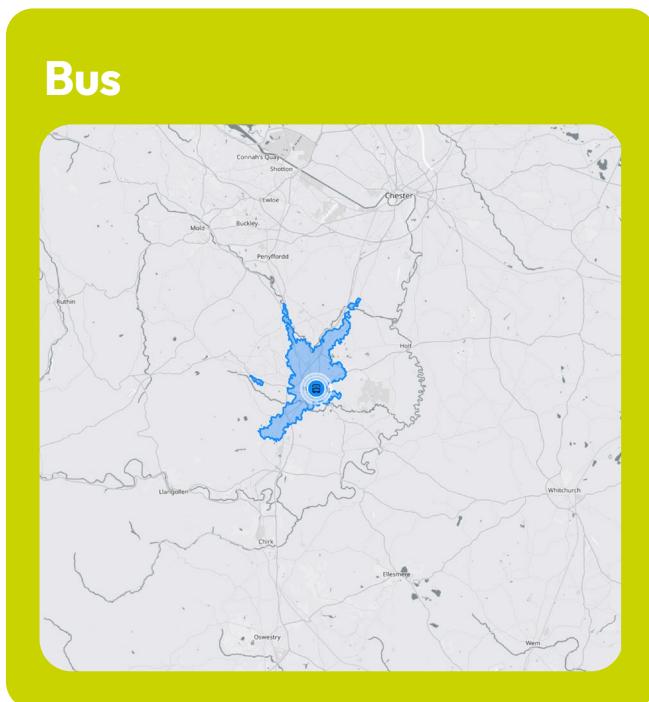
4. The road network is subject to congestion and delays, particularly at peak periods along the A541 Mold Road corridor. This is exacerbated by a high dependence on the private car in Wrexham.



5. Wrexham has some of the most deprived communities of Wales and therefore a car dependent area increases social inequalities.

Figure: 30 minute travel distances from Wrexham city centre

Source: TravelTime.com



Transport in Wrexham – Recent Developments

The Welsh Government has recently unveiled major plans to overhaul public transport in North Wales through the Network North Wales initiative. This ambitious programme aims to deliver a 21st-century, metro-style transport system designed to better connect communities with centres of employment, reduce economic inequality, and support regional growth.

Key Announcements:

- Redesign of Wrexham's bus network: A new, regulated bus system is being planned as part of Wrexham and the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone. It will improve links to the city centre and key employment hubs such as Wrexham Industrial Estate
- Increased rail services: From May 2026, rail frequency between Wrexham and Chester will double, with future plans to establish a direct metro-style link to Liverpool, offering up to four trains per hour within the next decade.
- Affordable fares for young people: A new bus fare deal launching in September will cap single fares at £1 for 16 to 21-year-olds, improving access to work and training for younger residents.

These measures directly respond to longstanding transport challenges in the area, including cases where poor public transport has limited access to jobs, particularly for those living in more isolated communities surrounding the city. The goal is to make public transport a core economic and social enabler across Wrexham and the wider region.

OPPORTUNITIES

Despite many challenges, Wrexham is not short of exciting investments and celebrates significant new opportunities that lay the foundations for delivering our Vision. Our football club's recent successes have boosted confidence and sparked global interest in all things Wrexham. Additionally, the recently awarded City Status and the Community and Cultural Trust's efforts towards becoming the City of Culture 2029 provide platforms to address many economic challenges, both in the city centre and the wider County Borough.

The successful hosting of the National Eisteddfod of Wales in 2025 – the largest cultural festival in Europe – demonstrated Wrexham's capacity to deliver world-class cultural events and significantly enhanced the city's profile as a vibrant cultural destination, building momentum for our City of Culture 2029 aspirations.

The recently prepared City Centre Placemaking Plan looks through the lens of people who live, work and visit the city centre as well as the businesses and institutions that are based here and the investors that the city wishes to attract. The Plan identifies current and proposed investments, identifies fresh ideas to capture the benefits of City Status and the ambitions of Wrexham 2029.



EXAMPLES OF INVESTMENTS

- **Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone** - up to £160 million for up to 10 years, and a range of powers including tax reliefs
- Ministry of Justice & Civil Service job relocation – **over 300 roles**
- Wrexham Museum - **Football Museum for Wales** (opening in 2026)
- **Wrexham Gateway** – Wrexham General improvements to rail, bus and car travel connectivity, new hotel and conference facilities, office space, new Kop stand
- A541 Mold Road corridor and Regent Street **Active Travel Enhancements**
- **High Street public realm improvements** - address issues of dangerous driving, anti-social behaviour and help to establish the area as the go-to cultural heart of the City
- **General & Butcher Markets** - refurbished as part of the Wrexham Townscape Heritage Scheme
- **Chapter Court regeneration** - a “new cultural, shopping and leisure experience”
- **Hightown Barracks** - home of new Reserve company of the 3rd Battalion The Royal Welsh.
- Coleg Cambria Yale's new **Healthcare and Therapies Centre of Excellence**.
- **Kellanova's investment** of £75m in its cereal factory to turn the site into Europe's largest cereal plant.
- **Wrexham University Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre (EEOC)** - a specialist centre for industry engagement, research, and innovation.

EXAMPLES OF EVENTS



Focus Wales



National Eisteddfod 2025



Festival of the Communities



Wrexham Feast



Playday - city centre beach



Wrexham in Bloom



Women's Tour of Britain



Christmas Market

AND MANY, MANY MORE

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR CHANGE

We have not made a standing start identifying community priorities. Wrexham already benefits from a rich culture of community engagement, and our approach has been to connect, amplify and optimise the efforts already underway. Throughout the development of this Plan, we have actively worked alongside local organisations, institutions, and individuals who are embedded in the daily lives of our communities. Further details can be found in our engagement report **Doing Things Differently - Wrexham City Board's Engagement Journey (So Far!), December 2024**.

Foundations and Early Insights

Our starting point was to draw on existing knowledge and insight. The City Centre Placemaking Plan engagement began in autumn 2021 and ran through summer 2023. This involved online consultations, stakeholder workshops, and public drop-in events, engaging over 200 individuals and producing more than 580 comments. Parallel engagement activities – including the City of Culture bid in 2022, the business-led consultation on the proposed city centre BID, and “The Big Conversation” with over 400 young adults – have all played a vital role in shaping our priorities.

Creative and Inclusive Conversations

In May 2024, we launched a call through our Board networks for ‘hero projects’ – big, bold ideas from community groups and local organisations. The response was tremendous: over 45 proposals were received, providing an invaluable sense of the city’s creative ambition and potential.

Our first major city-wide engagement, *Just One Thing*, launched in July 2024 with support from Wrexham’s Children’s University. This simple question – “If you could change just one thing about Wrexham city centre, what would it be?” – generated over 3,600 unique insights from more than 1,500 contributors across 35 school and community groups.

Insights were analysed by Wrexham University and revealed five key themes: regeneration, safety, transport, wellbeing, and education. Critically, over 90% of participants were under 18, giving a powerful platform to younger voices.

Get more street lights because it's scary in the dark

My idea is to add more activities to the streets, such as, dance workshops, signing, and more museums

[We need] more associations like CAMHS to help teens, we need places they can feel safe to talk, where they can feel loved and supported and not alone."

Maintain pavements for wheelchairs, they are not flat and difficult to get onto."

Make a health and safety team to help homeless people and people in need

[We need a] children's Board – because children do not get any input so if you have ideas you can say them loud and proud.



26

Deepening the Dialogue (August–October 2025)

As the draft Plan took shape, we undertook targeted engagement to validate our vision, refine priorities, and test early proposals:

- **August 2025:** We convened a ‘Super Group’ workshop bringing together Senedd yr Ifanc (Wrexham’s Youth Parliament), AVOW (the County Voluntary Council for Wrexham) Future Generations Big Event, and a multicultural engagement event hosted by the North East Wales Community Cohesion Team. Partner activities during the National Eisteddfod also helped us crowdsource feedback from diverse audiences.
- **October 2025:** We secured formal endorsement from Wrexham’s high schools and young people for the Plan, ensuring their support was integral ahead of submission. We also held final youth-specific engagement events, building on our commitment to empowering under-25s – a key theme from our earlier work.

Building on this, The WrexFactor in October 2024 invited people from all walks of life to take part in a ‘community hackathon’. Hosted at the STōK Cae Ras, the event brought together 128 people to generate bold ideas for Wrexham’s future. With support from Cwmpas and a panel of community figures, 16 ‘hero projects’ were pitched – including new transport innovations, youth zones, festivals, green networks and more. These ideas demonstrated not only ambition but a shared belief in Wrexham’s potential to lead with creativity and inclusiveness.

Government Polling

This comprehensive local engagement has been **complemented by independent polling** commissioned by MHCLG and conducted by Zencity between April and May 2025. The survey of 164 Wrexham residents offered valuable external validation of our community-led findings, though it is important to note that respondents under the age of 18 were not included.

The results showed clear alignment with local concerns identified through our own engagement. Anti-social behaviour was highlighted by 48% of respondents as the area most in need of improvement, followed by street cleanliness (36%)—both directly reinforcing our focus on public realm and safety. Transport also emerged as a priority, with accessibility and service levels for public transport rated poorly in comparison to other Plan for Neighbourhoods locations.

The exclusion of young people from the polling further validates our decision to **prioritise under-18 voices**, particularly through the Just One Thing initiative, where over 90% of contributors were young people. Their involvement has helped ensure that perspectives often missing from conventional datasets are embedded at the heart of our evidence base.

Aligning Community Priorities to the Plan for Neighbourhoods

Objectives

The consultation findings have directly shaped the City Board's priorities, ensuring they reflect the needs and aspirations of the communities we've engaged, particularly in areas such as safety, transport, public spaces, youth engagement, and cultural investment. These insights provide a strong evidence base and a clear direction, enabling the City Board to focus on five core investment priorities. This ensures that the Board's strategy remains grounded in real community concerns and is responsive to the issues that matter most to local people.



1. Youth Engagement & Infrastructure – A top priority across all findings, highlighting the need for more youth-friendly spaces, transport solutions, and engagement opportunities.
2. Public Realm & Safety – A key concern, with calls for better-managed public spaces, crime reduction, and a more welcoming environment.
3. Transport & Connectivity – A major theme, with numerous proposals for active travel, better public transport, and enhanced mobility.
4. Cultural & Economic Growth – A shared priority, with a focus on heritage, festivals, independent businesses, and high-quality investment.

1. Thriving Places

Our communities consistently told us they want a city that is vibrant, safe, well-connected, and full of opportunity. Across multiple engagement activities—including Just One Thing, The WrexFactor, and our City Centre Placemaking Plan—themes of regeneration, transport, and public space improvements emerged as top priorities.

- Hero project proposals and youth ideas highlighted the need for better parks, green spaces, creative and cultural venues, and more activities in the city centre.
- There was strong support for revitalising the High Street, tackling vacant properties, and improving the quality and safety of public spaces.
- Transport was a recurring theme—from affordable buses to walkable streets and better connections to employment.

These priorities reflect a clear ambition to create safe, accessible, and enjoyable neighbourhoods where people want to live, work and spend time—fully aligned with the Thriving Places objective.

2. Stronger Communities

Engagement has consistently reinforced the importance of connection, inclusion, and shared pride. Our communities value opportunities to come together, celebrate identity, and support one another—especially across generations, cultures, and neighbourhoods.

- The Plan was shaped through over 3,600 insights from local people, with a particular focus on young voices: over 90% of Just One Thing contributors were under 18.
- Events like The WrexFactor and multicultural workshops created space for collaborative problem-solving, building social capital and trust.
- Targeted engagement with young people, ethnic minority groups, and those not usually involved in civic discussions helped broaden participation and reflect the diversity of our city.

This work speaks directly to the Stronger Communities objective—building cohesion, encouraging belonging, and enabling communities to shape their future together.

3. Taking Back Control

Our process has prioritised local leadership and empowerment at every stage. We have actively involved schools, grassroots organisations, cultural partners, and businesses in shaping the Plan.

- The 'call for hero projects' and community hackathon approach gave residents a chance to pitch their own ideas for change.
- Engagement through schools, youth forums, and community events ensured that those most affected by long-term change—particularly young people—had meaningful input.

Through this, we are responding directly to the Taking Back Control objective—putting local people at the heart of decisions and giving them the tools and confidence to influence the future of their places.

5. PRIORITY PROJECTS & INTERVENTIONS

PRIORITY PROJECTS & INTERVENTIONS

PRIORITIES

The new Plan for Neighbourhoods brings together multiple regeneration efforts into a more coherent and compelling city-wide agenda. By delivering on shared priorities over the next ten years, the Wrexham City Board aims to leave a substantial and lasting legacy for the city.



Support young people through programmes and improving infrastructure



Make the city centre feel more safe and more welcoming to residents and visitors



Make key public spaces more attractive and engaging



Preserve, develop and celebrate Wrexham's heritage



Strengthen cultural infrastructure and activity and support ambitions to become UK City of Culture



Make it easier for everyone to get into and around Wrexham by walking, wheeling and/or public transport



Support voluntary and community organisations working to deliver social action



Help independent businesses start up and grow in Wrexham city centre



Encourage high-quality investment



1 YOUNG PEOPLE IN WREXHAM

Wrexham's future generations act as the primary lens through which the City Board frames its actions and investment decisions. It creates an inclusive and vibrant Wrexham that inspires young people to learn, live, and thrive—by fostering a supportive environment where they feel represented, valued, and welcome. This includes empowering young people to lead positive, fulfilling lives through access to inspiring spaces, high-quality youth work delivered by exceptional professionals, and a wealth of economic, social, and cultural opportunities. It also means investing in efficient and accessible transport systems that enable young people to move easily across the County Borough.

We want Wrexham to be a place where:

30



Young people have a real say in how decisions impacting them are made



Youth-oriented social and cultural events are regularly held



Young people can travel easily and affordably to work, learn, live and play



Safe, inclusive and inspiring spaces are available for young people.



Education and career opportunities are accessible and plentiful

02

WREXHAM CITY CENTRE



To transform the city centre into a vibrant hub where people want to live, shop, and socialise by ensuring it is welcoming and inclusive. The successful revitalisation of the centre will positively impact the entire County Borough, fostering a sense of pride among residents. This includes improving its appearance, supporting those in need, and encouraging a pleasant, inviting atmosphere. Enhancements will include dedicated indoor and outdoor event spaces, improved transport, movement, and regeneration of our buildings. Celebrating the Welsh language and heritage and creating a welcoming environment for young people are also key priorities. The goal is to materially change the way the city centre looks, works and is managed so eliminating any negative perceptions and making the centre a source of community pride.

We want the city centre to be a place where:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	It is playful, attractive, and bustling with activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public spaces are beautifully maintained and inviting
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Residents and visitors feel safe and always welcomed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cultural events and festivals celebrating all things Wrexham are frequent
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local businesses thrive, providing diverse services and experiences day and night	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Accessible transportation connects the centre with the entire County Borough, providing services throughout the day and night.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Residents want to live in mixed, affordable residential areas supported by social & community facilities		

03.

TOURISM, HERITAGE, AND CULTURE IN WREXHAM

To establish Wrexham as a friendly and vibrant global tourist destination that highlights its rich Welsh heritage, multiculturalism, respect for its military community and veterans, and community pride. This involves promoting world-class heritage and cultural attractions throughout the city and Borough. The ambition is to achieve recognition as the next UK City of Culture, showcasing Wrexham's unique cultural identity and inviting the world to experience its playful and welcoming atmosphere.

We want Wrexham to be a place where:



Tourists from around the world feel warmly welcomed



Our communities and multiculturalism are celebrated and supported



Heritage and cultural attractions are well-preserved and promoted



The city's Welshness is proudly showcased to all visitors



Events and festivals highlight the rich cultural tapestry of Wrexham



Community pride is evident in every aspect of city life.

04

INVESTMENT IN WREXHAM

To leverage the Plan for Neighbourhoods monies and other investments to drive sustainable growth and economic prosperity for Wrexham. This will involve building on recent successes and using these achievements as a springboard toward greater opportunities, including the pursuit of becoming the UK City of Culture. By capitalising on the new Investment Zone and stimulating investment clusters that support innovative and thriving businesses, we aim to create a dynamic economic environment. The City Board is exploring whether a community-led investment fund could help secure funding beyond Plan for Neighbourhoods whilst ensuring local leadership continues beyond the programme's lifetime - though this approach requires further development and community engagement to test its viability and design. This will benefit all residents and significantly enhance the city's infrastructure and amenities.

We want Wrexham to be a place where:



The pursuit of City of Culture and Investment Zone drives significant economic growth and development



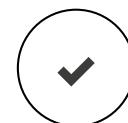
Local businesses receive the support they need to thrive and grow



Investment clusters foster innovation and business expansion



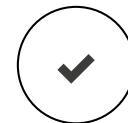
Economic opportunities are plentiful and accessible to all residents



Infrastructure projects are strategically developed for long-term benefits



The city's economic development is environmentally sustainable.



A community-led fund is explored to secure additional funding and sustain local leadership beyond programme funding

05.

INCLUSION IN WREXHAM



To ensure that all communities within Wrexham, regardless of where people live, their age, gender, condition or impairment, or background, feel included and benefit from the city's economic and cultural development. This involves addressing socio-economic challenges and creating inclusive opportunities that enhance community well-being and social cohesion. Wrexham's vibrant voluntary and community sector - from social care providers to environmental groups - plays a vital role in sustaining and strengthening communities across the city.

We want Wrexham to be a place where:



Economic growth benefits all residents, reducing inequality



Education and employment opportunities are accessible to everyone



Social inclusion programs support vulnerable and marginalised groups



Diverse cultural backgrounds are celebrated and integrated into community life



Community well-being and cohesion are prioritised in all initiatives



The city's development is inclusive, ensuring no one is left behind.

6. INTERVENTIONS - THE FIRST FOUR YEARS

INTERVENTIONS - THE FIRST FOUR YEARS

The City Board has identified the following interventions for the first four year investment period. There is a strong evidence directing the Board to combine an ambitious “hero project” with a long term legacy for the city along with high- impact and visible short term interventions. While we are focusing on ‘on-menu’ pre-approved Government interventions, future iterations of our Plan will likely identify ‘off-menu’ interventions that reflect our broader Vision and ongoing community engagement will continue to shape and refine these interventions.

Transport and connectivity are vital to the successful regeneration of Wrexham’s city centre. Our goal is to ensure residents, workers, and especially young people can access the city safely, affordably, and conveniently. This includes improving access for walking, wheeling, and public

transport. The City Board, alongside the Wrexham Leadership Alliance, has championed transport investment, helping to influence significant changes now underway. The Welsh Government’s Network North Wales initiative will deliver a metro-style public transport system, including a redesigned bus network and affordable fares for young people. Additional funding through the Investment Zone presents further opportunities.

While transport remains a key theme, due to the scale of planned national investment, it will not be a core intervention area in the first four-year period of the Plan for Neighbourhoods. Instead, local efforts will align with these wider improvements to ensure Wrexham benefits fully.

1. YOUNG PEOPLE – A CITY BUILT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Insights from Wrexham's extensive programme of community engagement have made it clear that youth engagement and infrastructure are seen as top priorities for the city's future. Young people have repeatedly called for youth-friendly spaces, better transport connectivity, and more opportunities to engage, participate, and belong. These findings have not only shaped the direction of the Plan for Neighbourhoods but have also helped define a shared city-wide vision.

A recurring theme throughout engagement has been playfulness—not only as a value, but as a unifying element that links the Plan with wider ambitions such as the City of Culture 2029 bid, the Wrexham Placemaking Plan, and the city's broader approach to inclusive regeneration.

In response, the Wrexham City Board has committed to leading the development of a strategic youth initiative that:

- Integrates existing provision and ideas
- Aligns key public, private and third sector stakeholders
- Unlocks new investment
- Ensures long-term sustainability and impact

One of the most promising opportunities emerging from this work is the potential creation of a **Youth Zone** in Wrexham city centre. This has gained interest and momentum across the City Board and youth service partners. A visit to *The Hive* Youth Zone in Birkenhead was followed by two dedicated workshops asking: *What would the best possible youth facility for Wrexham look like? Who should lead it? What governance and delivery models would work best?*

Key messages from these discussions included:

- Wrexham already has strong youth services, but there is clear potential to build on this foundation.
- The greatest impact can be achieved by focusing on out-of-school activity.
- A Youth Zone should complement and not duplicate existing statutory and Third Sector provision.

In partnership with national youth charity OnSide, and with support from Wrexham CBC's regeneration, education, and youth teams, the City Board is now developing an Outline Business Case and assessing site options. OnSide brings experience from its network of 15 Youth Zones across the UK and is working closely with local stakeholders to shape a model tailored to Wrexham.

The vision is for a centrally located, inclusive, and accessible facility a welcoming space for young people from across the County Borough to gather, connect, learn, and thrive. This aligns with the ambitions of the Wrexham City Centre Placemaking Plan, which identifies such provision as essential to the city's cultural regeneration and future identity. It also aligns with active travel and transport investment positioning as close as possible with the bus and train stations.

A Youth Zone, alongside a broader youth offer, will provide safe and inspiring environments where young people feel ownership and pride, fostering a stronger sense of community connection, creativity and opportunity.

Improving transport accessibility is essential to ensuring that young people can fully engage with the opportunities available to them. Our goal is to make Wrexham's city centre safe, convenient, and universally accessible—enabling young people to reach it easily, whether by walking, wheeling, or using efficient and affordable public transport.

The Welsh Government's Network North Wales initiative represents a major overhaul of regional public transport. Designed to better connect communities with centres of employment, reduce economic inequality, and support inclusive growth, the programme includes a significant focus on young people. In particular, the £1 bus fare cap for 16 to 21-year-olds, introduced in September 2025, is expected to improve access to work, training, and social opportunities for young people across the region.

In parallel, young people in Wrexham have consistently called for more meaningful opportunities to participate in decision-making about the city's future. In response, the City Board is working with Senedd yr Ifanc and other organisations to develop a sustainable forum for youth engagement—ensuring that the voices of younger residents are heard, respected, and embedded in shaping the city's long-term development.

Interventions

Pre-approved interventions - Cohesion

- investment in capacity building and infrastructure for youth

Wrexham's ambition is to deliver a long-term legacy project for young people through the development of a flagship 'Youth Zone' facility in the city centre. This new youth-focused infrastructure will provide a high-quality, inclusive space for young people from across the County Borough to enjoy, learn, and thrive.

The operational model will follow national best practice and is likely to take the form of a dedicated 'Wrexham Youth Zone Charity', with representation from the Local Authority, local businesses, and a range of community organisations on its board.

In addition to the new central facility, funding will also be directed towards improving wider youth provision across Wrexham—recognising the potential of the Youth Zone to act as a catalyst for long-term enhancement of youth services city-wide.

The Youth Zone would seek to develop its wider community and daytime offer. This could include targeted support for young carers, strategic partnerships with youth justice, or a focus on early years during the daytime. The opportunity of this important new asset is for the wider community, encouraging inclusion and inter-generational engagement.

We also plan to invest in strengthening youth engagement infrastructure, including the development of a youth forum, and support for social action projects—ensuring that young people are not only beneficiaries, but active participants in shaping the city's future.

Potential Investments

Youth Zone Development - A flagship, city-centre Youth Zone providing a high-quality, inclusive space for young people across Wrexham. Delivered via a new charitable model with cross-sector governance.

Wider Youth Provision Investment - Additional funding to strengthen and expand youth facilities and services across the County Borough, using the Youth Zone as a catalyst for wider impact.

Youth Engagement & Social Action - Support for youth-led forums and social action initiatives, ensuring young people are active participants in shaping Wrexham's future.

2. CITY CENTRE SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION

Enhancing the safety and security of Wrexham's city centre is a pivotal step towards creating a more welcoming vibrant destination for both residents and visitors. It provides the foundations for community pride and economic growth.

A safer city centre transforms negative perceptions, fostering a sense of pride among the community. By addressing safety concerns, we will create an environment where people feel more secure and eager to spend time. This positive atmosphere encourages social interactions and community connection, making Wrexham a more attractive destination.

Effective safety measures strengthen the management of Wrexham's evening and night-time economy. A secure environment supports the growth and management of major events, drawing large crowds and increasing footfall in the city centre. This includes the City of Culture ambitions and the significant number of football fans who visit, boosting local businesses and contributing to the city's vibrancy.

We are committed to ensuring that Wrexham's city centre is safe for our vulnerable residents and young people. Enhanced safety measures will provide peace of mind for families and individuals, allowing them to enjoy the city, day and night, without fear. A safer and well-managed city centre is also crucial for attracting and retaining businesses. When businesses are confident in the safety and management of their environment, they are more likely to invest and thrive. This, in turn, creates job opportunities and stimulates economic growth, further enhancing the city's appeal.

Interventions

Pre-approved interventions - Safety and Security

- Design and oversight of the built and landscaped environment to 'design out' crime and encourage positive behaviour
- Policing interventions to target crime prevention in specific locations, in particular town centres
- Interventions to tackle anti-social behaviour, crime and minimise reoffending
- Co-location of crime reduction services
- Improved town centre management

Wrexham is committed to implementing a series of targeted safety measures that focus on crime prevention through environmental design, visible policing and enforcement, and strategies to reduce anti-social behaviour and reoffending. These interventions are intended to enhance public confidence, improve perceptions of safety, and support a thriving day and night-time economy.

Potential Investments

City Centre Wardens - In partnership with Wrexham CBC and the Wrexham City Centre BID, there is an opportunity with additional funding to expand the existing city centre warden scheme. Additional support could increase both the number and frequency of patrols—during the day and at night—enhancing visibility, deterrence, and public reassurance. Additional investment would also enable greater flexibility, including support during major city centre events, and allow wardens to adopt ambassadorial roles—providing directions, engaging with the public, and supporting visitors.

Best Bar None Accreditation Scheme - Support will be provided to implement a Best Bar None scheme across the city centre. This nationally recognised programme promotes excellence in venue safety, customer service, and responsible alcohol management. The scheme will help raise standards in licensed premises and reinforce the city's reputation as a safe and welcoming place for all.

Hafan y Dref – Night-Time Welfare Centre - Hafan y Dref is a vital service within Wrexham's Night-Time Economy, providing support to vulnerable individuals affected by alcohol, drugs, or other welfare concerns. Operated on Saturday nights, it offers first aid, emotional support, and a safe space—helping reduce pressure on emergency services. The service is currently funded through to 2026 by Wrexham CBC, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Welsh Ambulance Service, and BCUHB. Additional investment could help expand the service's operating capacity, particularly during periods of increased demand such as major city events and provide support towards future sustainability beyond the current funding period.

3. CITY CENTRE PLACEMAKING



The regeneration of Wrexham's city centre—its retail and leisure streets, cultural venues, and heritage assets—is central to our long-term vision. A vibrant and successful city centre will create a positive ripple effect across the entire County Borough, fostering civic pride, improving quality of life, and strengthening Wrexham's identity as a destination of choice.

To achieve this, we must make the city centre more welcoming, attractive, and inclusive. Enhancing both the look and functionality of public spaces will help create a playful, safe, and engaging environment that appeals to residents, visitors, and especially young people. This includes the revitalisation of vacant or poor-quality buildings, transforming them into vibrant spaces for living, working, and socialising—including affordable homes, creative venues, and flexible commercial units.

Wrexham's ambition to be recognised as the next UK City of Culture drives our commitment to investing in the city's infrastructure—improving transport and movement, digital connectivity, cultural venues, and public spaces. These improvements will help establish Wrexham as a culturally rich and inclusive city centre, where everyone feels they belong.

Wrexham has also led the way in Wales in the use of smart towns technology and data to inform and improve place management. The adoption of real-time insights has strengthened decision-making and allowed for more responsive approaches to the changing needs of the high street.

Supporting local businesses is equally vital. By helping existing businesses to grow and attracting new, high-quality enterprises, we can build a more diverse and dynamic city centre economy. Working in close partnership with the newly established city centre BID will be key to enhancing business support and day-to-day place management, ensuring that improvements are both strategic and locally responsive.

Together, these efforts will strengthen Wrexham's reputation as a place full of character, creativity, and opportunity—for residents, communities, and visitors alike. Enhanced job opportunities boost employment which can also contribute to improved health and wellbeing in the local population.

Interventions

Pre-approved interventions - Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage:

- Funding for improvements to town centres, neighbourhoods, and high streets, including capital spend and running costs
- Creating and improving green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments in the local area, along with incorporating natural features into wider public spaces

- Investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities

Pre-approved interventions - Work, productivity and skills

- Developing and expanding existing local business support and networks for smaller businesses and social enterprises

Potential Investments:

Numerous potential interventions have been identified, each with the capability to be developed individually or in combination to help achieve our Vision. The following examples illustrate some of these possibilities, though they are not exhaustive and additional ideas are being explored:

- Public realm improvements extending from the successful delivery of High Street
- Wrexham Gateway: public realm improvements around the station forecourt
- Memorial Hall redevelopment
- Regent Street Gateway – corridor/sites
- Bridge Street
- Former Hippodrome Site
- Expand and improve the Shopmobility service
- Entrepreneurial business grants and support
- This is Wrexham Key Fund
- Property investor events
- Business diversification events
- City-wide smart towns rollout
- Collection and sharing of high-quality local performance data e.g. footfall, spend patterns
- Improved digital infrastructure to facilitate holding large events

4. CULTURE AS A CATALYST



The development of Wrexham's cultural infrastructure and creative economy is a strategic priority for the Wrexham City Board and a central pillar of the city's wider placemaking agenda. Culture is not an add-on—it is a powerful driver of economic renewal, community cohesion, and civic pride, helping to position Wrexham as a vibrant, inclusive, and distinctive city for residents, living healthy and fulfilling lives, and visitors alike.

Wrexham stands at a pivotal moment in its cultural development. The establishment of the Wrexham Community & Culture Trust (WCCT) in 2024 marks a transformational step towards building a sustainable and coordinated cultural network. Formed with the support of Wrexham CBC, WCCT is an independent charity dedicated to developing and strengthening Wrexham's creative and cultural infrastructure for the long term.

The Trust's creation reflects the City Board's recognition that cultural regeneration is essential to the city's future success—creating new opportunities for growth, community participation, and identity building. The Wrexham BID will also play an important role, working alongside WCCT to promote events, animate the city centre, and encourage local spending, ensuring that cultural investment translates into tangible benefits for businesses and communities.

WCCT's work also underpins Wrexham's high-profile aspiration to become the UK's next City of Culture. This is a major statement of intent—one that aligns with the global spotlight already shining on Wrexham through the success of Wrexham AFC. Together, they present a unique opportunity to leverage cultural investment for broader economic and social benefit, raising Wrexham's national and international profile while strengthening its local foundations.

WCCT is already delivering a wide-ranging programme of cultural activity that demonstrates both community appetite and delivery capacity:

- **Cultural Commissions Programme:** Supporting diverse communities and art forms across the county borough, from musical heritage projects to multicultural festivals and Welsh-language storytelling.
- **Wrexham Public Art Trail – Phase 2:** Building on the success of Phase 1 with new commissions exploring musical heritage, cultural diversity, Welsh identity, and local icons across key city centre locations.
- **Creative Engagement Workshops:** Delivered as part of the Wrecsam2029 City of Culture bid, ensuring community voices shape the cultural vision across four key pillars: Heritage, Sport, Food & Drink, and Arts & Music.
- **Development of Wrexham's 10-Year Cultural Strategy (2027-2037):** Establishing a bold, inclusive roadmap that positions culture at the heart of Wrexham's long-term economic and social transformation.

This coordinated and ambitious cultural activity illustrates WCCT's effectiveness as a place-based delivery vehicle—and the growing potential to embed culture as a tool for inclusive regeneration and long-term legacy.

The City Board will continue to champion culture as a core driver of change, ensuring it is fully integrated with the city's regeneration priorities—from placemaking and tourism to skills, youth engagement, and social enterprise.

Interventions

Pre-approved Interventions - Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage:

- 'Funding for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative initiatives'
- 'Enhanced support for arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities, projects and facilities and historic institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer'.

Pre-approved interventions - Work, productivity and skills

- Funding to support the development, improvement, and promotion of the visitor economy, such as local attractions, historical trails, cultural tours, campaigns and other related tourism products.

Potential Investments

Building on current momentum potential investments would focus on continuing and expanding the successful approaches already being tested through the WCCT's programme:

Expansion of Current Cultural Programming

- Continued support for cultural commissions programme, enabling more community-led projects across diverse art forms and communities
- Further development of the Wrexham Public Art Trail with additional phases exploring different aspects of Wrexham's cultural identity
- Extended programme of test events and cultural activities that build on successful models already being delivered
- Ongoing support for creative engagement workshops that ensure community voices continue to shape Wrexham's cultural development

Cultural Strategy Implementation

- Enable WCCT to implement key recommendations from the 10-Year Cultural Strategy once completed later this year
- Support for the cultural programming and activities identified through the strategy development process

Building Cultural Capacity and Reach

- Enhanced support for existing successful programmes to reach wider audiences and engage more communities
- Programming that specifically engages young people and provides creative opportunities and skills development
- Activities that celebrate Wrexham's cultural diversity and promote Welsh language cultural heritage e.g. Multi-Cultural Hub (MCH)
- Events and festivals that raise Wrexham's cultural profile and support aspirations for future cultural recognition.

7. ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER PROGRAMMES & INVESTMENTS

The Plan for Neighbourhoods is not being developed in isolation. It builds on and adds value to a wide range of existing and emerging programmes that share similar objectives around regeneration, inclusive growth, community resilience, and long-term placemaking. Strategic alignment with these initiatives is key to ensuring coherence, avoiding duplication, and maximising impact across the Wrexham area.

7. ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER PROGRAMMES AND INVESTMENTS

Wrexham's Placemaking Plan & Transforming Towns Programme

Wrexham County Borough Council has adopted a City Centre Placemaking Plan, developed through extensive stakeholder engagement and public consultation. This forms part of the Welsh Government's national requirement for all local authorities to produce placemaking plans that outline how they will plan, prioritise, and deliver improvements in their town and city centres.

The purpose of the plan is to put the future needs of the city centre at the heart of local policy, decision-making, and investment. It promotes better design and development, while encouraging more vibrant and sustainable social, cultural, and economic activity in the city centre.

The Wrexham City Centre Placemaking Plan has played a key role in unlocking Transforming Towns funding from the Welsh Government, enabling the council to pursue strategic investment and revitalisation efforts. It has also provided much of the evidence base for the strategic case for change within this Plan for Neighbourhoods, ensuring strong alignment between local and national priorities.

There is clear potential for closer collaboration between Welsh and UK Government programmes on projects that offer shared benefits for Wrexham. Through its role on the City Board, the council will continue to seek opportunities to align priorities and explore co-investment in projects that support the regeneration of the city centre.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

The Wrexham UK Shared Prosperity Fund supports projects that aim to deliver meaningful outcomes for communities across the County Borough. It is a key mechanism for advancing the UK Government's mission priorities, particularly in the following three areas:

- Communities and Place
- Support for Local Business
- People and Skills

Many UKSPF-funded projects already align with this Plan's focus on city centre regeneration. These include:

- **Xplore! Science Discovery Centre's new immersive planetarium**, located in the heart of the city centre
- **Support for the Wrexham Community & Culture Trust** and its cultural programming in connection with the City of Culture bid
- **Continued investment in Wrexham's pioneering Smart Towns** work, using data and technology to inform better place management
- **This Is Wrexham's Key Fund**, providing growth and performance support for viable hotels, restaurants, and visitor attractions

Our Plan seeks to build on the momentum and impact of these initiatives by supporting their continuation and expansion through targeted interventions identified within our interventions.

City Centre BID

The Wrexham Business Improvement District (BID) is a significant new vehicle for city centre regeneration. With an estimated budget of £2.2 million over five years, the BID will be business-led and focused on delivering targeted improvements in areas such as safety, marketing, events, accessibility, and business support.

There is strong alignment between the BID's priorities and the objectives of the Plan for Neighbourhoods. Both aims to improve the vitality, safety, and appeal of Wrexham city centre through coordinated investment, better public spaces, stronger partnerships, and support for local businesses.

The BID will also play a critical role in strengthening place management and providing a voice for city centre businesses—ensuring they have influence over how the city centre evolves. As a formal partner, the BID has the potential to help co-design and co-deliver interventions within the Plan and act as a match funder or delivery partner for relevant projects, maximising impact and ensuring long-term sustainability.

The City Board and the BID will work collaboratively to align funding and governance efforts, helping to deliver a unified, business-informed strategy for Wrexham's growth and renewal.

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Wrexham AFC & Football Foundation

Wrexham AFC is playing a pivotal role in the city's regeneration—its success on the pitch is matched by a growing commitment to strategic investment in infrastructure, tourism, and community development. The global profile brought by the Welcome to Wrexham series has boosted visitor numbers and civic pride, making the club a powerful catalyst for change.

At the centre of this ambition is the redevelopment of the STōK Cae Ras stadium, including a new 7,750-seat Kop stand and facilities that meet UEFA standards. This is a key part of the Wrexham Gateway project and aligns directly with the City Board's vision for a vibrant, connected, and welcoming city centre.

The club has invested in the region via the purchase of The Rock which is the training base and home stadium for the Wrexham AFC Women's team playing in the Adran Premier League.

Through the Wrexham AFC Foundation, the club is delivering targeted community programmes such as Future Dragons, which supports skills, leadership, and aspiration in young people, and Future Pitch Regeneration, which improves grassroots sports facilities across the city. These initiatives support the City Board's priorities around young people, health and wellbeing, and stronger communities.

Wrexham AFC's commercial expansion—such as its new city centre store and interest in redeveloping the former Hippodrome site with Wrexham CBC—further supports the City Board's goals of city centre revitalisation, cultural investment, and long-term, place-based regeneration.

Together, the club and its Foundation are key partners in delivering the outcomes of the Plan for Neighbourhoods—creating inclusive growth, supporting future generations, and enhancing Wrexham's reputation as a confident and connected city.

Investment Zone

The Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone, backed by both UK and Welsh Governments, is a major long-term programme designed to enhance the region's advanced manufacturing sector. It aims to attract up to £1 billion in private investment and create around 6,000 new jobs over the next decade.

This significant programme aligns strongly with the ambitions of the Plan for Neighbourhoods, particularly in supporting improved transport and infrastructure, enhancing skills provision, and strengthening local partnerships with key stakeholders such as Wrexham University.

Strategic Focus Areas

- **Advanced Manufacturing**

The Investment Zone prioritises growth in high-value sectors such as aerospace and automotive, building on the region's existing industrial base and globally recognised employers like Airbus and JCB. This aligns with the Plan for Neighbourhoods' focus on economic inclusion—ensuring Wrexham residents can benefit from new job opportunities.

- **Innovation and Skills**

Investment will support the development of specialist learning facilities and innovation programmes in partnership with Wrexham University and organisations such as AMRC Cymru. This complements the Plan's focus on young people and future generations by strengthening pathways to high-quality careers and supporting lifelong learning.

- **Infrastructure and Transport**

Funding is being allocated to improve transport connectivity, including sustainable travel options that will improve access to major employment sites like Wrexham Industrial Estate. These improvements support the Plan's goal of creating a connected and accessible city centre for all.

- **Sustainable Growth**

The programme emphasises environmentally sustainable economic development, aligning with broader regeneration principles in the Plan for Neighbourhoods, including green infrastructure, walkability, and carbon reduction.

Together, the Investment Zone and Plan for Neighbourhoods offer complementary strategies for growth—combining targeted regeneration with inclusive economic development to ensure local people benefit from long-term investment in Wrexham.

Western Gateway Partnership

Wrexham County Borough Council, in conjunction with the Welsh Government, Wrexham University, and Transport for Wales, has established a partnership to deliver a regeneration programme called the Wrexham Gateway. The programme aims to harness economic development, social, and transportation opportunities around Wrexham General Rail Station, the Wrexham Racecourse Football Ground, and integrated transport opportunities. A significant portion of a £25 million Welsh Government grant will fund the Racecourse Ground's new Kop Stand, enabling the return of international football to the stadium and hosting regional and national events. On the eastern side, the partnership is progressing with detailed design and consultation for implementing the overall masterplan. The North Wales Economic Ambition Board has agreed in principle c£4 million support.

Ministry of Justice and Civil Service Jobs

In 2023, the UK Government announced the relocation of 300 roles from London to Wrexham by 2027, building on a previous announcement from the Ministry of Justice for the relocation of 50 staff by 2027.

8. MATCH FUNDING AND LEVERAGED INVESTMENT

8. MATCH FUNDING AND LEVERAGED INVESTMENT

The Wrexham City Board is committed to maximising the impact of Plan for Neighbourhoods funding by attracting significant additional investment from private, public, and philanthropic sources. Our strategy focuses on creating innovative funding mechanisms, developing strategic co-investment opportunities, and leveraging Wrexham's enhanced profile to secure long-term sustainable investment.

Strategic approach to investment leverage

Building on Wrexham's significantly enhanced national and international profile, we aim to attract investment that might not have previously been considered. Our approach focuses on pump-priming projects and strategic investments that reduce dependency on public funding whilst creating conditions for sustained private sector engagement and co-investment.

Existing commitments and co-funding opportunities

Business Improvement District co-investment

The newly established City Centre Business Improvement District (2025-2030) represents a committed £2.2 million investment over five years from local businesses. There is significant mutual opportunity for co-investment, with the BID potentially match funding Plan for Neighbourhoods projects whilst the City Board could also contribute to BID priority projects. This reciprocal approach, particularly for interventions focused on safety, marketing, accessibility, and business support, could effectively double the impact of targeted investments in these areas.

The Youth Zone proposal builds on a proven model successfully delivered in over 15 locations nationwide. Each has attracted substantial private sector investment, typically securing around 50% in additional 'major donor' contributions towards both the creation and ongoing operation of the facility. Our safety, placemaking, and cultural interventions will similarly be designed to align with and leverage existing and future funding commitments from a range of public and private partners.

Welsh Government alignment

Strong potential exists for match funding through Welsh Government programmes, particularly the Transforming Towns programme which has already demonstrated successful alignment with Wrexham's regeneration priorities. The existing City Centre Placemaking Plan provides the strategic framework for accessing these co-investment opportunities.

Future funding strategies

Private sector capital investment opportunities

The creation of a Youth Zone represents the most significant immediate opportunity for private sector match funding, using OnSide's tried-and-tested model which typically involves multi-million-pound private sector capital investment combined with long-term revenue contributions from local businesses and philanthropic sources. This model creates sustainable youth provision that extends well beyond the initial Plan for Neighbourhoods investment period.

Maximises funding opportunities through local philanthropy plus OnSide expertise in development and operation and Onside Network support (inc national funding)

- Private sector capital investment (c£4m)
- Private sector long-term revenue attracted into Wrexham County Borough for key community service (at least £700K per year).

Cultural investment leverage

The prospective UK City of Culture bid provides a compelling investment narrative for attracting co-funding from businesses, foundations, and individual investors. Cultural programmes offer strong opportunities for corporate sponsorship, philanthropic investment, and heritage grant funding, potentially leveraging significant additional resources to support wider regeneration objectives in partnership with the Wrexham Community and Cultural Trust.

Innovative funding mechanisms

The Board is exploring the creation of a community-led fund - The Wrexham Fund - designed as an independent charitable community benefit society. This mechanism would enable fundraising for additional money to complement Plan for Neighbourhoods funding whilst creating a long-term legacy organisation. The fund structure is being developed through participative processes with potential to unlock diverse funding streams including philanthropic investment, social investment, community shares, and diaspora engagement.

Diaspora and philanthropic mobilisation

The Board will explore innovative strategies for mobilising Wrexham's diaspora communities and broader philanthropic networks, leveraging emotional connections and expertise to provide both financial investment and valuable support for regeneration efforts.

Investment multiplier targets

The Board's approach aims to create significant investment multipliers, using Plan for Neighbourhoods funding as seed capital to unlock much larger pools of investment.

Key mechanisms include using public investment to de-risk private sector involvement, creating demonstration projects that attract follow-on investment, and developing innovative financial instruments that blend public, private, and philanthropic capital.

Early market testing suggests strong appetite from local businesses and investors to contribute to Wrexham's transformation, with the enhanced profile created by recent successes providing unprecedented opportunities to secure co-investment that might not have previously been accessible.

9. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

9. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Our Commitment to You

The Wrexham City Board exists to serve the people of Wrexham: what matters to you is what matters to us.

In engaging with our communities, we know we are not starting from scratch. Wrexham already has brilliant community groups, passionate and dedicated residents doing amazing work all across the city. We're here to connect, support and amplify what's already happening, whilst ensuring everyone has a real say in shaping our future.

How our engagement works

We want to make decisions with not for the people of Wrexham. You should be able to tell us what you want to, when you want to, and how you want to. To make this happen, we:

1. Will ask you what matters to you: with quick and easy ways to let us know what would make Wrexham a better place. As a part of this we will join the meetings of existing groups across Wrexham, whenever it makes sense to talk about our shared priorities together.
2. Invite you to come up with new ideas with us: in fun and creative ways that help turn your priorities into practical proposals.
3. Work on solutions together: bringing people together to produce detailed and deliverable plans, sharing responsibility, and pooling our collective knowledge, expertise and experience.

Our engagement won't be a one-off but a 'continuous conversation' approach - insights at all three levels supporting our work at all times.

Building something that lasts

We don't just want to do engagement – we want to build an 'engagement system' which can support the Wrexham City Board, and everyone else working to make Wrexham a better place, for many years to come.

We're striving to do this by:

- **Asking the big questions:** focusing on those questions which matter not only to the Wrexham City Board, but to the whole of Wrexham.
- **Connecting people:** convening conversations and encouraging collaboration between lots of different people and organisations.
- **Building capacity:** providing local organisations with the skills and resources they need to most effectively understand and represent their community's interests.
- **Sharing knowledge:** with our new Wrexham Knowledge Base, which will make research and insights relating to Wrexham accessible to everyone from one easy to search online portal.
- **Learning from the best:** working with local and national experts who can inspire and challenge us to constantly improve how we work.

Our approach is designed to reach everyone across Wrexham's communities, including those who are often marginalised or under-represented in traditional consultations, through targeted engagement, flexible formats, and partnership with organisations who have existing trust and relationships. We will continue to monitor equalities data to ensure the Board engages with people representative of all across Wrexham's communities.

What we have done in preparing this plan

In the preparation of this Regeneration Plan, over 2,000 people have supported the process, including through:

- The hosting of an exploratory meeting between engagement leads and experts from across the public and third sector in Wrexham, exploring the potential for an engagement community of practice, delivered in partnership with Wrexham University.
- The commissioning and development of an open access, online Wrexham Insights Repository, on course to be live by 2026.
- The provision of small discretionary grants to support local networks to undertake engagement exercises with their members, in support of the Wrexham City Board's work.
- The delivery of 'Just One Thing', a large scale public engagement exercise (involving over 1,500 people) open to all, but with a specific focus on children and young people, delivered in partnership with the North Wales Children's University.
- The delivery of 'The WrexFactor', a 'social hackathon' open to the general public (and involving over 100 people) with a focus on developing ideas which could be taken forward by the Wrexham City Board, delivered in partnership with Cwmpas.
- The hosting of a young people's 'super group' - a workshop connecting multiple networks and fora representing the interests of children and young people in Wrexham, delivered in partnership with Wrexham's Voluntary Services Council and Youth Parliament.
- Participation in the meetings of the North East Wales 'Multi-Cultural Hub' - a forum bringing together over 20 organisations representing Wrexham's diverse communities.
- The delivery of a workshop series with key partners, to co-design proposals for a Wrexham Youth Zone, a centrepiece of the Wrexham City Board's investment plan.

How You Can Stay Involved

To get involved and support our work you can:

- **Tell us what matters to you:** through the drop-in sessions, surveys and community events and other activities we will run continuously throughout the next 10 years.
- **Get involved in your local community groups:** who we will continue to work with, rather than duplicating effort and creating new barriers to participation.
- **Speak to your Board members:** who are there to gather and represent your views at every meeting, as outlined in Section 10: Governance.

How We Feed Back to You

We are committed to transparency and showing you exactly how your input shapes our decisions. Throughout, we will be sure to give you clear and honest feedback about how your support is impacting upon our plans and decision making:

- **Board minutes and decisions are published online**, ensuring you can see how community insights inform our choices
- **Output reports from major engagement activities are made public**, demonstrating what we heard and how we've responded
- **Clear feedback loops** showing how your participation in specific activities has influenced plans and investments
- **Regular updates** on the progress of initiatives you've helped to shape
- **Honest communication** about constraints, challenges and trade-offs in decision-making.

This isn't just consultation - it's about building Wrexham's long-term capacity for residents to shape their future together.

Aligning with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act

The approach to engagement taken aligns strongly with the 5 ways of working of the Act, namely through:

- **Involvement:** going beyond consultation to the genuine co-production of plans with community members and representatives.
- **Integration:** supporting the alignment of engagement activities between multiple agencies, and the sharing of insights across them.
- **Collaboration:** with delivery in partnership wherever mutual benefit is delivered.
- **Long-term:** with an investment in 'engagement infrastructure' with the potential to sustain beyond the lifespan of the Wrexham City Board.
- **Prevention:** with asset-based engagement focused on ideation and positive investment.

Furthermore, Public Services Board representation on the Wrexham City Board (as detailed in Section 10: Governance) supports a direct alignment of plans and activities between the two bodies.

10. GOVERNANCE

10: GOVERNANCE

Governance Structure

The detailed governance structure for the Plan for Neighbourhoods programme is outlined in an Operating Agreement between the Wrexham City Board (acting as the Neighbourhood Board) and Wrexham County Borough Council as the accountable body.

The Wrexham City Board has established a Governance Taskforce that is currently developing and refining the governance structures to ensure they meet the requirements of the Plan for Neighbourhoods programme whilst building upon the successful arrangements established under the previous Long-Term Plan for Towns programme.

Partnership Structure

The Plan for Neighbourhoods programme operates through a partnership between:

- **The Wrexham City Board** (Neighbourhood Board): responsible for co-producing the Regeneration Plan, including the 10-year vision and investment plans, and delivering in the interests of local people to improve the physical and social infrastructure of the community
- **Wrexham County Borough Council** (accountable body): supporting the City Board to develop and deliver the plan whilst ensuring compliance with legal, financial, and procedural standards
- **The local community:** engaging on priorities and holding both the City Board and Council to account.

Neighbourhood Board Structure and Roles

Chair The Wrexham City Board is led by an independent Chair, Rachel Clacher CBE, Co-founder of Moneypenny and Co-founder and Trustee of WeMindTheGap. As required by UK Government guidance, the Chair is a businessperson and community leader who provides strategic leadership and ensures the Board remains community-led and embedded within the local area.

Board Members Board members attend meetings and contribute their experience and knowledge drawn from across the local community, including representatives from:

- Elected representatives (local MP, Member of the Senedd, and senior Wrexham County Borough Council councillors)
- Local businesses and social enterprises
- Community groups and voluntary organisations
- Faith and community leaders
- Armed forces
- Cultural, arts, heritage and sporting organisations
- Public agencies and anchor institutions

All Board members undertake their role on a voluntary basis. All members have equal voting rights on Board decisions.

Supporting Observers The City Board invites officers from Wrexham County Borough Council and other public sector bodies, along with expert advisors, to meetings to support decision-making. Supporting observers do not have voting rights but provide essential technical expertise and ensure coordination with wider public sector activities.

Working Groups

The Wrexham City Board convenes working groups to gather specialist input and expertise on specific priorities and projects. These groups bring together relevant stakeholders, practitioners, and community representatives to inform the Board's decision-making and support the development of deliverable proposals. Working groups operate flexibly to meet the needs of different projects and may include technical experts, service providers, community organisations, and those with lived experience relevant to the project in question.

Relationship with Accountable Body

Wrexham County Borough Council serves as the accountable body for the Wrexham City Board. The Council is responsible for applying its governance processes to the operations and decisions of the City Board, ensuring activities align with legal, financial, and procedural standards.

The Council's robust frameworks for decision-making, financial management, and oversight provide the necessary structure and support to facilitate effective and transparent operations. This accountability relationship ensures public trust and that initiatives are sustainable, well-managed, and in the best interests of the Wrexham community.

Governance and Transparency Requirements

Compliance with Nolan Principles

The Wrexham City Board and all Board members operate in accordance with the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles) as defined by the Committee on Standards in Public Life:

1. **Selflessness** - Acting solely in terms of the public interest
2. **Integrity** - Avoiding inappropriate obligations and declaring interests and relationships
3. **Objectivity** - Acting impartially, fairly and on merit using the best evidence
4. **Accountability** - Being accountable to the public and submitting to necessary scrutiny
5. **Openness** - Acting transparently with information only withheld for clear, lawful reasons
6. **Honesty** - Being truthful in all dealings
7. **Leadership** - Exhibiting these principles and challenging poor behaviour

The Board has agreed Terms of Reference, Declaration of Interests procedures, and a Code of Conduct based on these principles.

Managing Public Money Standards

The programme is managed in line with Managing Public Money principles, ensuring:

- **Regularity:** All expenditure is in accordance with legislation and within the powers granted
- **Propriety:** Standards of conduct, behaviour and corporate governance are maintained
- **Value for Money:** Resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively
- **Feasibility:** Proposals are deliverable and achieve intended outcomes

Transparency and Accountability Measures

The City Board operates transparently to ensure the local community can hold it to account:

- **Meeting Schedule:** The Board meets regularly
- **Published Information:** Board membership, governance arrangements, meeting papers, minutes and decision logs are published on the City Board's website: [URL to be inserted when launched]
- **Conflicts of Interest:** All declared conflicts are published within meeting minutes
- **Decision-Making Process:** Clear documented processes outlining voting rights and procedures

Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest

All Board members sign up to a code of conduct based on the Nolan Principles. Clear processes manage conflicts of interest (commercial, actual, and potential) in decision-making.

Members must declare financial and non-financial interests before Board consideration of decisions. The Council maintains declaration of interests records.

Route to Market and Investment Appraisal Process

Project Development and Appraisal Framework

The City Board's investment process balances speed of delivery with proper stewardship of public funds through established project development and appraisal procedures.

Projects are developed using recognised business case frameworks, building on the Council's experience of delivering similar funding programmes. The City Board establishes working groups as required to focus on developing and appraising investment proposals.

Wrexham County Borough Council officers provide advice and support to ensure that propriety, regularity, value for money and deliverability considerations are properly balanced. A project selection framework, jointly agreed between the City Board and the accountable body, ensures transparent and fair evaluation of all proposals.

Decision-Making and Approval Process

Investment decisions are made by the City Board in accordance with its established governance procedures and the jointly agreed project selection framework.

As accountable body, Wrexham County Borough Council awards programme funding on behalf of the City Board to delivery organisations, with appropriate terms and conditions to ensure performance management and compliance with programme requirements.

This governance framework ensures the Plan for Neighbourhoods programme delivers maximum benefit for the Wrexham community whilst maintaining the highest standards of public accountability and financial stewardship.

11. ASSURANCE

11: ASSURANCE

Wrexham County Borough Council, as the accountable body, operates a comprehensive assurance framework to ensure proper stewardship of Plan for Neighbourhoods funding in accordance with Welsh local government statutory duties and Managing Public Money requirements.

Financial Controls and Monitoring: The Council's Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) provides first-line assurance through established financial management systems, including segregation of duties in payment authorisation, regular budget monitoring, and quarterly reconciliation of grant expenditure against approved allocations.

Fraud Risk Management: The Accountable Body and Wrexham City Board are aware of the Cabinet Office Grants Functional Standards that relate to the management of Fraud Risk, and will apply the guidance to the delivery of the Plan for Neighbourhoods. The Accountable Body is already familiar with the assurance process in place for Levelling Up and Shared Prosperity Funds, which is supported by its Financial Regulations that sit within the Council Constitution.

Compliance Monitoring: Ongoing assurance activities include monitoring adherence to procurement regulations, subsidy control law, equalities duties, and environmental requirements. Grant agreements specify reporting obligations, audit rights, and clawback provisions for non-compliance.

Reporting and Audit: The Chief Finance Officer provides MHCLG with an annual Statement of Grant Usage detailing expenditure controls and an annual Assurance Letter identifying any administration concerns. Internal audit reviews sample projects annually, with external audit examining the overall programme as part of the Council's statutory accounts process.

12. DELIVERY TIMELINE

DELIVERY TIMELINE

