



Caerphilly County Borough
2nd Replacement Local Development Plan 2020-2035

EB17: Community Facilities Evidence Paper

October 2026

Caerphilly County Borough 2nd Replacement Local Development Plan 2020-2035

Community Facilities

Background Paper

October 2026

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1. Introduction

This paper is one of a series produced as part of the evidence base for the 2nd Replacement Local Development Plan, 2020-2035 (2RLDP). Each topic paper can be read in isolation or together to gain a wider understanding of how the policies and/or allocations in the 2RLDP have been developed to address issues facing Caerphilly County Borough.

Community facilities play an integral role in the function and enhancement of settlements, both for the economy of the local area and the livelihoods of the individuals therein. Such facilities can provide major employment opportunities alongside these benefits, with hospitals and surgeries also providing specialist work for individuals both within and outside of the county borough. Educational facilities can provide excellent early and late career opportunities, alongside being centres for academic research and professional training.

Community facilities must be protected and enhanced through effective planning, with Local Development Plan (LDP) policies providing a legislative base for such protection. This background paper shall outline information regarding the current provision of community facilities within Caerphilly County Borough alongside future plans from each facility service area, which are used to inform planning policies in order to achieve these objectives.

Community facilities can be defined as follows:

- Community centres
- Youth centres
- Libraries
- Schools
- Colleges
- Hospitals
- Surgeries
- Cemeteries
- Social Services Facilities

Planning has a significant role to play in the location and function of community facilities. Housing, transport links and proximity to major population and commercial centres, among others, are all aspects of planning, which impact community facilities. A background to the policies which impact community facilities within planning are explored in the next section.

Within this background paper, frequent reference is made to certain facilities 'being surplus to local requirements'. It must be clarified that, from an asset management perspective, the assessment of surplus status extends beyond immediate local

community use and may also include the consideration of operational, strategic, regeneration, housing, financial and wider corporate requirements.

This clarification is provided to ensure consistency between the evidence base for the 2RLDP and the Council's Asset Management Strategy, Corporate Disposal Policy and Community Asset Transfer Policy, whilst recognising the important role that community facilities play in supporting local communities and wider wellbeing objectives.

2. Planning Policy Context

In order to meet statutory requirements, LDP's must adhere to relevant legislation, and be consistent with national planning policy published by Welsh Government. Such legislation, policy and associated guidance is contained within many documents that influence planning for community facilities, the most significant of which are explored below. As the local tier of the development plan, LDPs (and the policies and sites set contained therein) must be in 'general conformity' with Future Wales: 2040 (FW).

2.1. National Policies

Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 (PPW12)

PPW12 is the cornerstone of national planning policy in Wales, with community facilities forming a crucial basis for the development of local areas and the improvement of resident and visitor's lives.

Community Facilities is covered under section 4.4 of PPW12, under the Active & Social Places subheading. Section 4.4 is separated into five sub-sections, providing context and national guidelines for how local authorities should approach policy making regarding community facilities. Section 4.4.2 of PPW12 outlines that "Planning authorities should develop a strategic and long-term approach to the provision of community facilities when preparing development plans based on evidence" (Planning Policy Wales Edition 12, Section 4.4.2, page 72). This section calls for local authorities to work alongside local communities to ensure assets are delivered to enhance community benefits which support the development plan, and where the transfer of assets is required, local authorities should "consider the needs of the community and ensure that community facilities continue to address the requirements of residents in the area" (Planning Policy Wales Edition 12, Section 4.4.2, page 72).

The following three sub-headings of section 4.4 of PPW12 consider various community facilities, such as allotments and town and village greens, and how local authorities can encourage these facilities to help improve resident's wellbeing in local communities. Section 4.4.5 places an onus on local authorities to ensure that visitors to local communities are not precluded from accessing essential facilities, such as baby changing areas, in turn ensuring that community facilities are available for not only residents of the local area but any visiting parties also.

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

Future Wales 2040 is Welsh Government's national development framework, and serves as the national tier of the development hierarchy, addressing key national issues through the planning system, such as housing, climate change mitigation and the maintenance and development of sustainable communities.

Future Wales Policy 6: Town Centre First states:

“Significant new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure and public service facilities must be located within town and city centres. They should have good access by public transport to and from the whole town or city and, where appropriate, the wider region. A sequential approach must be used to inform the identification of the best location for these developments and they should be identified in Strategic and Local Development Plans” (Future Wales 2040, Policy 6, page 71).

The aim of the 'Town Centre First' initiative is, essentially, to ensure that crucial facilities are located within areas of high population density with easily accessible transport links, to ensure that all areas within a local community have equal access to such facilities.

Policy 6 acknowledges that town centres in Wales are moving away from the traditional role of retail and the town centre first initiative aims to not only provide easy and equal access to crucial facilities but to also boost footfall within town centres which may be experiencing economic and social decline.

In terms of community facilities, these fall under the 'education, health and public service' facilities outlined within Policy 6, and as such, need to be given sufficient attention regarding their location within densely populated areas with good transport links. For these specific facilities and the nature of their purpose, the access to transport links is vital as many elderly and less able individuals require consistent access to such facilities, and their location directly impacts whether they can easily access them or not. Local authorities such as Caerphilly are required to ensure that these facilities are located in a manner that supports these individuals through easy access to essential facilities.

2.2. Local Policies

Caerphilly County Borough Council Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP)

The Adopted LDP contains 'Countywide Policies' under Section B of the plan. Policy CW8 concerns the Protection of Community and Leisure Facilities, where proposals that would result in the loss of a community or leisure facility will not be permitted unless a 'comparable' replacement facility can be provided or that the facility concerned with replacement can be justified to be surplus to local area requirements.

Having a policy directly concerning the protection of vital community and leisure facilities helps the local authority to ensure that existing facilities will not be unduly replaced in areas that require them most and provides a legal protection of these services in line with national policy guidelines.

Furthermore, the Adopted LDP is separated into three further sections denoting the three key strategy areas of the county borough, the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area (HOVRA), the Northern Connections Corridor (NCC) and the Southern Connections Corridor (SCC). Each of these sections contains Policy CF1: Community Facilities, which sets out allocated sites within each strategy areas that are allocated for new community facilities, at the time of adoption in 2010.

Allocating specific sites for community facilities within each strategy area has allowed the LDP and the local authority to ensure that each area has sufficient community facility allocations for the period of the plan, and that residents and visitors of each strategy area have consistent access to vital facilities.

Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy

The purpose of the CAT Policy is to help with decision making and to set a clear process for CAT applications. The Policy aims to transfer suitable assets to community groups, staying consistent with the Council's goals and well-being plans. The Policy forms part of the disposal route and aligns with the Council's Disposal Policy, which both form an integral part of the Council's Asset Management Strategy.

The CAT Policy reflects the changing financial climate faced by the Council and the desire to empower communities. These transfers may present the third sector with opportunities to assume some control or ownership of facilities, including their maintenance and on-going costs of management. Third sector groups may be able to access external support and grant funding not available to the Council. A clear understanding of the transfer process is crucial.

Caerphilly County Borough Council outline certain criteria which pertains to an appropriate transfer, as follows:

- There is strong evidence of community need and evidence of equality of access.
- The proposal aligns with and supports Council aims and priorities.
- Is sustainable in the long-term: the applicant must be able to demonstrate they are able to manage the asset effectively.
- Has positive financial implications for the Council: a CAT can retain and enhance assets and services threatened by budget constraints with the benefit of potential economic and social enterprise which can foster additional investment.

The Council also outline potential transfer options, as follows:

- Short - or long-term leases.
- Freehold transfers will not be supported except in exceptional circumstances, which must be clearly defined and justified. The default position is to pursue leasehold transfers to maintain control and ensure community benefits. Any request for a freehold transfer must undergo a rigorous approval process and demonstrate significant, unique benefits that cannot be achieved through leasehold arrangements.
- Assignment of Trust responsibilities.

Community Asset Transfers can be highly beneficial to both the Council and third sector groups, with certain benefits including:

- Safeguarding or use of assets / facilities / services that may otherwise be lost to the local community.
- Improve health and well-being through the project delivery.
- Bringing the community together, improving resilience and cohesion.
- Promote independence and self-sufficiency.
- Enhanced capacity and recognition: a CAT can bring financial security, recognition and management capacity for community and social enterprises.
- Allows new ventures and partnerships within the community.
- It can contribute to stimulating social markets, community enterprise development and possible job opportunities.
- CATs can also improve access to funding as organisations may be able to gain access to third sector funding for building refurbishment or service development.
- Allows long-term planning, sustainability of assets and services for future generations.

The CAT Policy is underpinned by National Policies contained within documents such as the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, The Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, which seeks ensures the Welsh language has equal legal status with English and must not be treated unfavourably.

The CAT Policy also supports local policies and objectives. The Caerphilly County Borough Corporate Plan 2023-2028 sets out the direction, policies and objectives of the Council for the period 2023-2028. The CAT Policy supports the objectives of the Corporate Plan through:

- Enabling our economy to grow
- Enabling our communities to thrive
- Enabling our residents to thrive

The Council shall support the CAT policy and subsequent transfers through a dedicated CAT Officer, adopting a clear process for applications and their decision routes within a defined timeframe, among others. Full details of the CAT Policy and the application routes can be viewed on the Council's website through the following link: [Caerphilly - Caerphilly County Borough](#)

The CAT Policy will undergo regular reviews to ensure it meets community needs effectively. The Council will track the outcomes of asset transfers and gather feedback from involved community organisations through surveys, interviews and consultations to identify experiences, challenges and areas for improvements.

It must be clarified, however, that the CAT Programme represents one potential asset management outcome rather than an assumed, preferred or default route. Asset reviews may result in retention, reuse, repurposing, strategic retention, internal transfer, Community Asset Transfer or open market disposal, depending on the circumstances of the asset and the outcome of the Council's asset review and governance processes.

Whilst Community Asset Transfers may be appropriate outcomes in certain circumstances, the Council's default position is to seek the best consideration reasonably obtainable when disposing of land. Alternative disposal routes, including CAT, may be considered where a lawful basis exist and where wider public value, community benefit or wellbeing outcomes can be demonstrated and appropriately evidenced.

3. Caerphilly County Borough – Community Facilities Context

3.1. Population

Between 2011 and 2021, the population of Caerphilly County Borough decreased by 1.6%, from 178,800 to 176,000 (Office for National Statistics, 2021). The latest population estimate for Caerphilly County Borough is currently 176,130 (Office for National Statistics, 2021). This was collected in mid-2022, with an increase of just 130 people since the previous year.

The ONS predicted that Caerphilly County Borough would have a population of 177,500 in 2021, a prediction taken from an analysis of data from 2004. The decline in population can be attributed to a greater number of individuals leaving the county borough compared to those entering for permanent residence and those born within it.

Alongside many other Valleys areas, the county borough experienced a massive decline in heavy industry in the 20th century, leading to great depopulation, particularly within northern communities, such as Rhymney and Pontllytyn. Once thriving mining communities have been forced to adapt to a changing economic climate.

There have been several government initiatives since the turn of the millennium to help combat population and economic decline in such communities. These initiatives, such as The Valleys Taskforce and “Our Valleys, Our Future” aimed to improve transport connectivity, support business growth and encourage infrastructure investment, among others. These initiatives helped to address many forms of marginalisation within these areas, however there is still much work to do to ensure that these areas grow economically whilst having sufficient access to essential facilities.

3.2. Economic Change

The decline in heavy industry within the South Wales Valleys and the naturally rugged terrain of the northern valleys region has made the regeneration of economically deprived areas difficult. This difficulty is apparent across all areas of planning, particularly within housing and employment, in more peripheral areas which suffer from a greater lack of connectivity with the cities of Cardiff and Newport. The coal mining legacy of the north further exacerbates this, as the ground is simply not compatible for new development unless extensive remediation is undertaken.

Community facilities play an integral role in the function of settlements across the county borough, and they can serve as vital focal points for communities, both enhancing the local economy of the area and the livelihoods of the people who live there, despite the economic challenges that may exist. The effective planning of these facilities is crucial in ensuring certain areas are not treated unfavourably due to their economic climate.

4. Community Facilities – Current and Future Provision

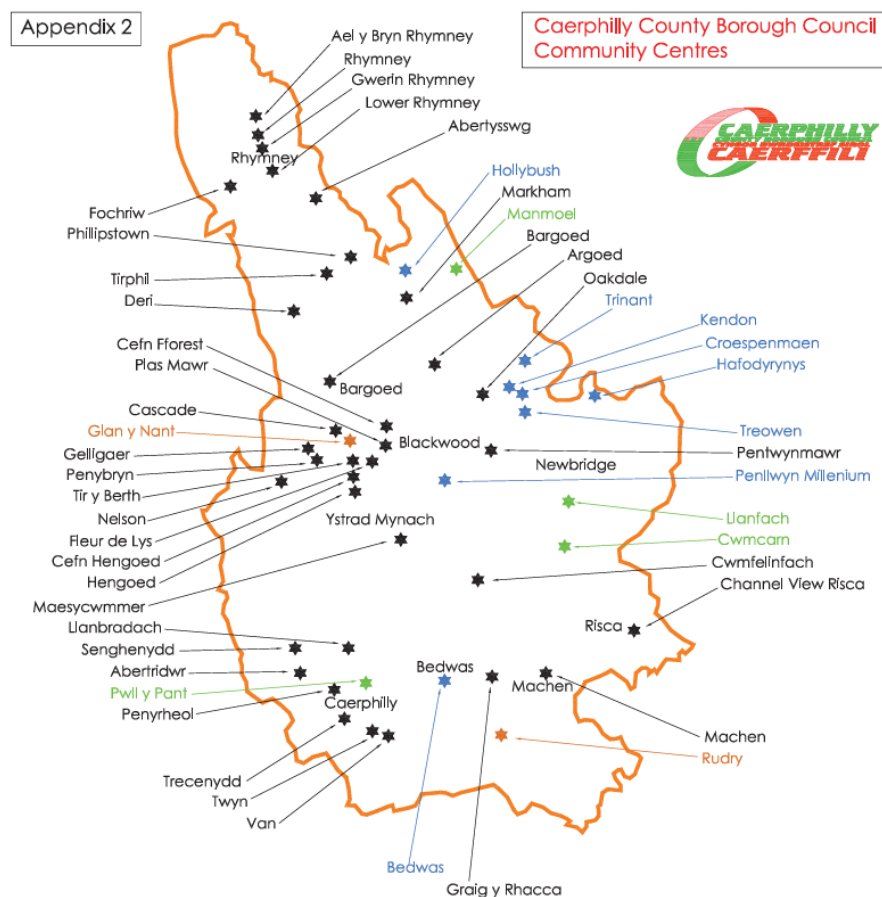
4.1. Community and Youth Centres

4.1.1. Community Centres

Current Provision

Community Centres are a vital hub for communities and provide a shared and accessible space for people to participate in social, recreational and cultural activities which actively support the local community.

As of 2025, there are 48 community centres located within Caerphilly County Borough. 36 of these are funded directly by CCBC, four are independently operated and eight are independently operated on CCBC-owned land. A map detailing the location of the community centres across the county borough is shown below:



★ <u>Community Centres</u>	Lower Rhymney	★ <u>Independently operated Community Centres</u>
Abertridwr	Machen	Pwll y Pant
Abertysswg	Maesycwmmwr	Manmoel
Ael y Bryn Rhymney	Markham	Llanfach
Argoed	Nelson	Cwmcarn
Bargoed	Oakdale	★ <u>Independently operated Community Centres on CCBC land</u>
Cascade	Pentwynmawr	Bedwas
Cefn Fforest	Penybryn	Hollybush
Cefn Hengoed	Penyrheol	Penllwyn Millenium
Channel View Risca	Phillipstown	Treowen
Cwmfelinfach	Plas Mawr	Croespenmaen
Deri	Rhymney	Kendon
Fleur de Lys	Rudry	Trinant
Fochriw	Senghenydd	Hafodyrynys
Gelligaer	Tŷr y Berth	
Glan y Nant	Tŷrphil	
Gwerin Rhymney	Trecenydd	
Graig y Rhacca	Twyn	
Hengoed	Van	
Llanbradach		

Glan Y Nant and Rudry community centres are no longer funded by CCBC, and Lower Rhymney community centre has closed down. The distribution of community centres is even, with a variety of CCBC-owned and independent centres located across the county borough. Currently, there only exist CCBC-owned centres in the very north.

In terms of attendees at community centres within the county borough, the number varies widely, however is estimated to be approximately 2,000 users per week.

Future Provision

There is currently a community centre service review pending, as of August 2025.

The Community Asset Transfer (CAT) programme seeks to transfer suitable assets, in this case, community centres, to community groups. The CCBC-owned community centres are currently being looked at under the CAT programme.

4.1.2. Youth Centres

Current Provision

Youth Centres are essential within communities and provide a safe, supportive and inclusive space for young people to socialise, develop skills, access support services and participate in recreational and educational activities.

These centres also act as an excellent catalyst for helping and supporting vulnerable school and education leavers into education, employment or training through Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Progression Framework.

There are currently four youth centres located within the county borough. Of these four youth centres, three are youth work 'hubs' that facilitate youth work on site in various forms. These three youth work hubs are at the centre of youth work in each of the three designated 'cluster' areas of the county borough:

- The North Cluster is home to The Hangar Youth Centre in Aberbargoed.
- The Central Cluster is home to the Crosskeys Youth Centre. This youth centre is currently closed as of July 2026 due to flooding issues; however, is planned to reopen as soon as possible.
- The South Cluster is home to Virginia Park Youth Centre in Caerphilly.

The north, central and south cluster areas provide a geographical split across the county borough, with the 'cluster' terminology unique to the youth centre service area.

Overall engagement numbers for each cluster area fluctuate, however they collectively serve approximately 8,000 of the county borough's 11,00 young people (aged 18 or lower).

Future Provision

Youth centres comprise the council's largest statutory education service. The service is tasked with offering youth work to all of the county's residents aged 11-25 however is currently significantly under the minimum level of sufficiency, in terms of physical assets.

The future aspirations of the youth centres service area therefore is to encourage the development of more sites for this form of statutory education, including the further development of the Virginia Park Youth Centre in Caerphilly. The service area is currently negotiating the gifting of land adjacent to Virginia Park by the landowner to facilitate this expansion.

The service area also requires its own transportation service, with four people carriers/minibuses required to operate at maximum capacity.

In the Greater Blackwood area, there is significant demand anticipated for more assets from which the service area can develop and deliver services. The conversion of buildings to fit-for-purpose use is also an anticipated future requirement of the service area.

4.2. Libraries

The Council plans to concentrate library services in the county borough's Principal Towns – Caerphilly, Blackwood, Bargoed, Ystrad Mynach and Risca – plus Newbridge and Rhymney. This will involve a 'hub' approach whereby each location will provide a range of Council services. However, implementation of this policy remains dependent on the conclusion of an ongoing judicial process.

The CCBC Libraries department have provided some objectives which provide greater context to the direction of travel and the ongoing aspirations of the department over the next couple of years. These objectives have been taken from the Library Service Strategy 2025-2028, which can be viewed in greater detail through the following link: [Caerphilly - Caerphilly County Borough](#)

Objective 1: Improve and Develop the Library Service Availability and Offer

What we are trying to achieve:

- Bring our services together in town centre locations at Bargoed, Blackwood Caerphilly, Newbridge, Rhymney, Risca and Ystrad Mynach.
- Offer access to library services that meet the needs of resident, this includes lunchtimes, evenings and weekends.
- Develop the customer offer of the town centre libraries by integrating into a Hub model to include access to other services and support.
- Increase footfall at town centres and libraries and increase overall membership.
- Promote access to the digital library service to meet the evolving needs of the community.

Outcomes:

- We intend to have seven town centre-based facilities.
- All facilities will be open at times that meet the needs of the surrounding community.
- We will work holistically with the community and partner organisations to provide a one-stop-shop for advice and support.
- Boost the local economy by increasing footfall in town centre locations.
- Create an informed, engaged and connected community by enhancing the libraries role as a vital community resource.

Objective 2: Help Residents to Access Information, Advice and Support in a Hub Location

What we are trying to achieve:

- Provide digitally enabled shared spaces for use by the community and partners and offer support to access digital services.

- Design spaces that are safe, inclusive and welcoming to bring people and communities together.
- Provide a space that supports individual learning, digital inclusion, access to lending stock and provides free Wi-Fi and access to equipment.
- Strengthen links with partner organisations to improve the customer offer.
- Provide a range of library and community-led events that support community wellbeing and cohesion.

Outcomes:

- Improved access to services for residents who require one-to-one support.
- Provide access to a range of library resources and other services that enhance community wellbeing and enjoyment for all ages.
- Enable digital independence and self-service.
- Provide a space for discovery and an enthusiasm for life-long learning.

Objective 3: Put Community Needs at the Heart of our Town Centre Hubs, to Encourage Greater Resilience for Individuals through Support and Signposting

What we are trying to achieve:

- Recognise communities as active partners and listen to and respond to their needs.
- Prioritise prevention and improve resilience by helping to shift support towards more preventative services tackle long-standing inequalities.
- Enable people who wish to give some of their own time to support volunteer programmes.

Outcomes

- Provide further opportunity to build a community around the libraries, enabling more community participation.
- Reduce the demand for reactive services by addressing local issues.
- Enhance trust and support relationship building with the community.
- Support empowerment and an enhanced sense of community control.
- Increase participation in existing volunteer programmes such as Digital Fridays and create new opportunities.

Objective 4: Rationalise the Number of Buildings to Maximise Resources and Improve the Overall Offer

What we are trying to achieve:

- To maintain a comprehensive, efficient and sustainable library service we will need to cease council provision in the remaining locations and consider options for an alternative offer in those communities, such as expanding the community outreach programme.

- Contribute towards the council's significant saving requirement of £45 million in the next two financial years.
- Consolidate our resources and focus them on service development at fewer library locations to continuously meet the changing needs of residents.
- Review the provision of library outreach services to maintain a presence in communities.

Outcomes:

- Remove the need for single staffed libraries for greater capacity and resilience.
- Improved financial sustainability for the Council and the library service.
- Create opportunities to enhance the provision of library services in communities through a new Library Outreach Service.
- Improve the reach, usage and take-up of the Digital Services and LibraryLink.
- Provide opportunities for disposal, community asset transfer or other alternative delivery model where a suitable business case can be made.

4.3. Education

Current Provision

Education is provided in Caerphilly County Borough through a network of primary/secondary schools and colleges, with university campuses situated in proximity of the borough at Cardiff, Newport and Pontypridd. Within the county borough, there are further education facilities for the post-16 age range at Coleg Gwent, Crosskeys and Coleg Y Cymoedd, Ystrad Mynach.

The total number of each education facility currently located within the county borough is as follows:

Infant Schools	3
Junior Schools	2
Primary Schools	63
Faith Schools	1
Secondary Schools	10
3-18 Schools	1
PRU	2
Special Schools	1
Colleges	2

62% of Caerphilly residents aged 16-18 attend further education colleges outside of the county borough. At present, there are 85 learning establishments located within Caerphilly County Borough which cater to a total of 24,116 pupils, as of January 2025.

Future Provision

Building on the recent completion of significant investments at the Centre for Skills and Learning and Trinity Fields Special School, two major school developments are currently progressing at Plasyfelin Primary School and Nelson Primary School as part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.

Alongside these projects, there continues to be ongoing investment across the school estate through a range of capital and Welsh Government grant funded programmes, supporting improvements to school buildings, learning environments, maintenance works and decarbonisation measures.

However, Caerphilly's nine-year rolling Sustainable Communities for Learning programme is currently paused while the Sustainable Communities for Learning Working Group undertakes a review of primary school provision across the county borough. The purpose of this work is to ensure that future investment in primary

education is informed by a robust assessment, placing the needs of learners at the forefront of decision-making and helping to deliver the right schools in the right places. The review will also take account of wider educational, demographic, financial and strategic considerations. Recommendations arising from this review are expected to be presented in early 2027.

As the review is ongoing, it would be premature for the Education Service to comment on any potential future developments or investment priorities at this stage. The outcome of the Working Group's review will help inform future decisions regarding the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme. Any subsequent proposals would be subject to the Council's established decision-making processes and, where appropriate, consultation with relevant consultees.

Furthermore, the Early Years Service Area have outlined five key priorities as part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Action Plan Progress Report 2025. The five key priorities are as follows:

1. Taking into consideration local demographics, and the gaps identified within the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, increase the amount and flexibility of different types of Welsh medium childcare in-line with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.
2. Taking into consideration local demographics, increase the number of childcare places and types of childcare places as identified within the Gaps Analysis, taking into consideration the existing Childcare Offer and its subsequent expansions as well as the expansion of the Flying Start Programme.
3. Increase the variety of services offered by Childcare Providers across the borough.
4. Sustaining the sector – information and affordability.
5. Workforce Development.

These five priorities outline the service area's future aspirations for the improvement of services in childcare from the period 2022-2027.

4.4. Health – Hospitals, Surgeries and other Healthcare Facilities

Current Provision

NHS services within Caerphilly County Borough are delivered through a variety of practitioners under the auspices of Aneurin Bevan Health Board (ABUHB), which covers the five greater Gwent local authorities.

The ABUHB has provided the local planning authority with information regarding the current provision of healthcare centres located within Caerphilly County Borough.

Hospitals/Health Centres

Area	Hospital/Health Centre	Plans/Concerns
Rhymney	Rhymney Integrated Health and Social Care Centre	Continued health and wellbeing hub development
Ystrad Mynach	Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr	Fit for purpose
Pontllanfraith	Pontllanfraith Health Centre	Continued health and wellbeing hub development
Newbridge/Risca	Risca Health Centre	Potential for health and wellbeing development
Caerphilly East	Trethomas Health Centre	Continued health and wellbeing hub development
Caerphilly West	Denscombe Clinic	Potential for health and wellbeing development

Of the six hospitals and health centres within the county borough, Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr is considered fit for purpose, likely due to its recent construction. Rhymney, Pontllanfraith and Trethomas Health Centres are currently undergoing continued development, with Risca Health Centre and Denscombe Clinic identified as having potential for development in the future.

GP Practices

Area	GP Practice	Plans/Concerns
Rhymney	Meddygfa Cwm Rhymni	Fit for purpose
Bargoed	Bryntirion Surgery	Fit for purpose
	Pengam Health Centre	Fit for purpose
	South St. Surgery	Fit for purpose
Ystrad Mynach	Meddygfa Gelligaer	Fit for purpose
	Nelson Surgery	Fit for purpose
	Oakfield Surgery	

		Site locked, development or larger premises being explored
Pontllanfraith	Blackwood Medical Group	Fit for purpose
	Riverside Medical Centre	Fit for purpose
	Sunnybank Health Centre	Fit for purpose
Newbridge/Risca	North Celyn Practice	Fit for purpose
	Risca Surgery	Fit for purpose
	St Luke's Surgery	Fit for purpose
	Wellspring Medical Centre	Fit for purpose
Caerphilly East	Courthouse Medical Centre	Fit for purpose
	Ty Bryn Surgery	Fit for purpose
	Village Surgery	Fit for purpose
Caerphilly West	Aber Medical Centre	New potential Aber Valley Development – early stages
	Nantgarw Road Medical Centre	Fit for purpose
	Tonyfelin Medical Centre	Town centre venue, Caerphilly Metro concerns

There are currently 20 General Practitioner facilities located within the county borough, all of which are considered fit for purpose except Oakfield Surgery and Aber Medical Centre, which have both been identified for redevelopment potential in the near future. Tonyfelin Medical Centre is located in the heart of Caerphilly, however the health board have emphasised that there may be concerns regarding the practice's operation due to the advancement of the Caerphilly Metro.

Future Provision

The ABUHB have provided future aspirations for their service area to develop and improve the local healthcare service of the county borough. The ABUHB covers the area of Gwent as opposed to solely looking at Caerphilly, so the future aspirations of the service area cover Caerphilly and the other four neighbouring county boroughs of the greater Gwent area.

In terms of specific areas within Caerphilly, Pontllanfraith, Risca and Trethomas are deemed as high-priority areas for investment to improve local facilities. In terms of ABUHB and CCBC partnership potentials, Ystrad Mynach is identified as Priority 1, with Caerphilly, Bargoed, Risca, Pontllanfraith and Rhymney comprising other priority areas, in descending order.

The ABUHB have separated the county borough into three main geographical 'estate' areas, comprising Caerphilly East (Blackwood, Pontllanfraith and Risca), Caerphilly North (Rhymney, Bargoed and Ystrad Mynach, and Caerphilly South (Caerphilly

Town). These three estate areas have been further separated into priority timelines, from 2025 to 2026, with Aber Valley and Pontllanfraith comprising the highest priority regions for this timeframe. From 2026 to 2030, Ystrad Mynach is identified as the highest priority region. These priority timelines provide further insight into the future aspirations of the ABUHB and the improvement of their services therein. These aspirations are to be conducted both in conjunction with CCBC and the ABUHB, and also through the ABUHB alone.

4.5. Cemeteries

Current Provision

Within Caerphilly County Borough, the council manages 11 cemeteries, listed below. There currently exists one crematorium within the county borough (Sirhowy Valley Crematorium, Pontllanfraith), with the closest additional facilities being located at Thornhill (Cardiff), Glyntaff (Pontypridd), Greater Gwent (Cwmbran) and Llwydcoed (Aberdare).

Cemeteries currently under operation within the county borough:

- Abercarn
- Risca Old
- Dan Y Graig, Risca
- Bedwas
- Penyrheol
- Gwaun Gledyr, Caerphilly
- Llanfabon, Nelson
- Brithdir
- Rhymney
- Bedwelty
- Gelligaer

Future Provision

There is an identified lack of cemetery capacity located within the east of the county borough, with limited future provision identified for potential expansion, despite the necessity for such.

As of August 2025, there are several operations underway to expand several cemeteries within the county borough. There is currently an extension of the cemetery at Rhymney underway, with ground and site investigations being undertaken. In Bedwelty, the land required for the extension of the cemetery has been acquired, comprising of two fields located across the road from the current cemetery. Investigations to determine the condition of the ground are currently underway. The extension of the cemetery at Brithdir is underway following the acquisition of land required at the rear of the existing cemetery to accommodate the necessary expansion. There are, however, issues with drainage on the site which may make the development unviable due to unforeseen remediation costs. The capacity of the current cemetery at Brithdir will be limited without the desired expansion.

In terms of capacity in cemeteries across the county borough, the current provision is acceptable aside from Abercarn, which is nearing capacity and cannot currently accommodate expansion. There exists land adjacent to the Abercarn cemetery, however, which could provide opportunities for the expansion of the cemetery in the future.

4.6. Social Services Facilities

Current Provision

Social Services has a statutory responsibility to provide social work assessment services for both children and adults which determine whether they require support and/or intervention from the local authority.

Should an assessment determine that there is a statutory need for the local authority to meet for children and/or adults, a care and support plan is established which will outline how that statutory need will be met and support provided.

The services in place to support those needs for both adults and children form a crucial part of the network in Caerphilly that are either commissioned or provided by Council services to respond to the support requirements of those who need them. The services can be found borough wide.

The current support services that are reliant on buildings are as follows:

Commissioned Services – (Adult)

- 19 large residential and nursing care homes for older people
- 20 small residential homes
- Approx. 85 ordinary dwelling properties that provide supported living
- A day service base that offers indoor activities and the opportunity to access community-based activities
- 2 extra care facilities

CCBC In-house services – (Adult)

- 6 large residential care homes for older people.
- 4 properties providing respite care/support
- 8 ordinary dwelling properties providing supported living
- Daytime activity support –
 - ❖ Islwyn Coffee Shop – Springfield
 - ❖ 4 business units at Woodfieldside, Pontllanfraith providing vocational opportunities
 - ❖ Markham day service
 - ❖ Links day service, Wyllie
 - ❖ Brooklands day service
 - ❖ Windy Ridge gardening/conservation project

Commissioned Services – (Children)

- 2 residential care homes
- 5 properties providing support for 16+ young people leaving care.

CCBC In-house Services – (Children)

- 2 x 4 bed residential homes
- 4 x 2 bed residential homes with another 2 planned for the near future
- 1 property for young people 16+ who are leaving care
- 5 properties that are registered as houses of multiple occupation to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

All the above-mentioned facilities provide statutory support and/or care to a wide range of children, young people and adults across the county borough – this all contributes to the health and well-being of the county-borough's residents.

5. Protection of Existing Facilities

The role of community facilities is explicitly recognised in national planning policy in terms of the contribution made to the maintenance and creation of socially and economically sustainable places. Whilst the potential to deliver and manage new facilities may be constrained, at least through traditional means by public sector organisations, this places an increased level of emphasis on the retention of existing ones.

As such, a policy is required that embeds this notion within the local policy framework, at least insofar as the ability to retain such facilities has been afforded sufficient time and focus as to constitute a genuine consideration. At the same time, however, it is necessary that this approach recognises that the traditional modes of service delivery are changing (reference is made earlier in this document to the Council's community asset transfer process, for instance) and allows for some degree of flexibility of interpretation in terms of assessing proposals against such a policy. Therefore, the following policy is proposed for inclusion:

CF2: Protection and Enhancement of Community and Social Facilities

Proposals for new community facilities or proposals which seek to retain, enhance or maintain existing community facilities will be supported. This includes the provision of multi-use community facilities, including the co-location of healthcare, schools, libraries and leisure facilities.

Proposals which would adversely affect or result in the loss of existing or proposed social and community facilities will not be permitted, except where:

- A A replacement facility of equivalent community benefit is provided within the community at a sustainable, easily accessible, alternative location; or**
- B It can be demonstrated that the existing facility is no longer required for the current use, or any other social and community uses; or**
- C It is no longer economically viable, feasible or practicable to retain the building or site for alternative community uses; and**
- D All reasonable efforts have been made to retain the facility, including evidence to confirm that the property or site has been actively and proactively marketed for a minimum 6-month period with reasonable commercial terms, and that there is no realistic interest in its retention for the current use or an alternative community use.**

6. Conclusion

To help accommodate the housing requirements identified within the 2RLDP and ensure that any potential candidate housing sites are acceptable in terms of the status of community facilities in and around the sites and within designated settlements, the identification of the current and future provision of these community facilities within the county borough is essential.

This background paper aims to provide context to the provision of community facilities within the county borough, and how these facilities may experience change over the course of the 2RLDP plan period.

Community centres are currently undergoing review to be incorporated into the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Programme, which seeks to transfer suitable assets from council-ownership to the ownership of community groups.

Youth centres are currently not represented under the education asset programme; however, improvements are planned for the acquisition of land at Virginia Park and the improvement of dedicated transport services to aid the improvement of the service area.

Education services are currently undergoing review to assess the future priorities of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Working Group, with recommendations from this review expected to be completed in early 2027.

The ABUHB have identified key priority areas for the premovement of their services within the county borough. The health board are seeking to work both alone and in conjunction with CCBC to acquire investment for the improvement of existing facilities and to construct new ones.

Cemeteries are experiencing limited future provision for the improvement of their service area, with limited land available for cemetery expansion, particularly in the east of the borough. Some cemetery expansions are underway, however, through land acquisitions at Rhymney, Bedwelty and Brithdir, despite land constraints limiting the progress of the latter.

Policy CF1 of the 2RLDP seeks, where possible, to give effect to the priorities of the Council, and partner organisations that are responsible for the delivery of such facilities, in land use terms. The following sites are therefore proposed for allocation, for the uses specified:

CF1: Community and Social Facilities

The following locations are identified for community and social facilities:

	Site	Settlement	Facility
CF1.1	Land north of Carno Street	Rhymney	Education
CF1.2	Land at Heolddu	Bargoed	Education /Leisure
CF1.3	Land at Oakfield Street	Ystrad Mynach	Health/ Education/ Leisure
CF1.4	Former Pontllanfraith School	Blackwood	Health/ Police
CF1.5	Land at Pantysgawen Farm	Oakdale and Croespenmaen	Health
CF1.6	Land at Abertridwr Park	Abertridwr	Health/Leisure

In addition, the importance of existing facilities is recognised as having a vital role to play in terms of the creation of sustainable communities and a means of assessing development proposals that could have a potential impact in this regard, as proposed by Policy CF2 above, is therefore required.