

TORFAEN
COUNTY
BOROUGH



BWRDEISTREF
SIROL
TORFAEN



Torfaen Replacement Local Development Plan (2022-2037)

Cynllun Datblygu Lleol Newydd Torfaen (2022-2037)

Sustainable Settlement Assessment *Aseiad Aneddiadau Cynaliadwy*

August 2023 / Awst 2023

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Front Cover Image Credits

- *Big Pit, Blaenavon - Amgueddfa Cymru / National Museum Wales*
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Introduction

- 1.1 This paper sets out the methodology for undertaking a sustainable settlement assessment for Torfaen, its subsequent application and analysis of information to provide conclusions on settlement roles and functions. This forms a key part of the evidence base for the Replacement Torfaen Local Development Plan (RLDP) 2022-2037.

Purpose

- 1.2 The purpose of this assessment is to identify those sustainable settlements that are potentially suitable to accommodate future growth in terms of their location, role and function. This involves an assessment of the current role and function of settlements, as well as an understanding of the relationships between settlements and their potential future roles.

Aim

- 1.3 The aim is to identify the most appropriate locations to accommodate future growth in order to achieve a sustainable pattern of growth, minimise unsustainable patterns of movement and support local services and facilities.
- 1.4 This settlement assessment will enable settlements to be grouped into different types based upon their role and function and will thus help to inform the Plan's settlement hierarchy. However, it should be noted that the results of this assessment will form part of a larger evidence base and whilst it will give some indication of the relative sustainability of the settlements, it is necessarily a high level assessment and there are other criteria that will also need to be taken into consideration. For instance, any decisions on whether to allocate particular sites for development in the settlements will also depend on such issues as their impact on the physical form of the settlement, landscape setting, environmental constraints and infrastructure capacity among other considerations. This will be assessed on a more detailed basis through the Candidate Sites Assessment process.

Methodology

- 1.5 The methodology is based on the proposed approach set out in the South-East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG) 'draft Sustainable Settlement Appraisal Paper', July 2018; with the aim of establishing a common methodology for such assessments across the region. However, some elements of the methodology have been adapted to ensure that it is relevant to the characteristics of Torfaen's settlements and reflect more up-to-date national guidance in PPW11 (February 2021). If the proposed regional methodology were to be strictly adhered to, the settlement scores / weighting would be disproportionately high for Torfaen smaller settlements and skew the assessment. Therefore, the application of a more flexible scoring approach to that proposed in the regional methodology was considered necessary to take account of Torfaen's predominantly urban settlement character.
- 1.6 In order to achieve consistency with our neighbouring authorities, who are also currently preparing their RLDP's, we have also considered the varying methodologies used by Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend and Monmouthshire in similar assessments across the wider region.

Consultation

- 1.7 Whist the previous Torfaen RLDP: Preferred Strategy (2018-2033) and associated evidence, including the previous Sustainable Settlement Assessment, March 2020 for that Plan have all been withdrawn; in preparing this new Assessment, the outcomes of Stakeholder and Torfaen Member Strategic Options Workshops (held in July 2019) have been used. At those workshops, participants were consulted on and discussed both the Assessment methodology and results generally repeated in this latest Assessment; and there was general support for both.
- 1.8 However, there was a debate if the urban area of Pontypool should be considered as a single settlement? These discussions focused on if the town of Pontypool could be considered as a contiguous conurbation of individual neighbourhoods / settlements from New Inn in the south to Garndiffaith in the north or if they should be split up in various ways. The discussion recognised that the towns of Cwmbran and Pontypool both have distinct neighbourhoods, one town centre / various neighbourhood centres, and can be split into various physical and political geographies (either side of the A472 in the case of Pontypool, or by wards / Town and Community Council areas, etc. for both). However, whereas Cwmbran was unanimously accepted as one settlement, consensus could not be achieved for Pontypool. Although, it was accepted, by many stakeholders, that for the purposes of this Assessment, Pontypool could be considered as one settlement; and stakeholders also noted that the 'Candidate Sites Assessment Process' would refine this 'sustainable location' work down on a site by a site basis to address their concerns.

Context

Local - Background to Settlements within Torfaen

- 2.1 Torfaen lies in South Wales 15 miles north-east of the City of Cardiff, with Monmouthshire County to the east, the City of Newport to the south, and the County Boroughs of Caerphilly to the south-west and Blaenau Gwent to the north-west. The north-eastern flank of Torfaen is within the Bannau Brycheiniog (former Brecon Beacons) National Park. The resident population of Torfaen at the time of the 2021 Census was 92,300; making it the 5th (out of 22) smallest local authority in Wales.
- 2.2 Torfaen comprises three key towns of Blaenavon, Pontypool and Cwmbran and several smaller settlements; many of which are located on the valley floor of the Afon Lwyd river valley, which runs north to south. The County Borough covers an area of approximately 125,640ha and is a predominantly urban authority, with 98.6% of the population living in the three main towns; with a high population density of 734 people per square kilometre (2021), compared with 150 people per square kilometre for Wales. The largest town in Torfaen is Cwmbran (a former New Town) in the south; and with the surrounding area has a population of some 48,354 people (2021 Census). The second largest town is Pontypool positioned approximately centrally within Torfaen; and with the surrounding area has a population of 36,629 people (2021 Census). The smallest town is Blaenavon in the north; and has a population of 6,014 people (2021 Census).

Policy Context

Welsh Government: Future Wales: the national plan 2040, February 2021

- 2.3 Future Wales is a 20-year plan with an end date of 31st December 2040; and is the development plan for the whole of Wales. Planning decisions must be made in accordance with Future Wales unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Future Wales sets out Welsh Government land use priorities and provide a national land use framework for four regional Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) and LDPs. It concentrates on development and land use issues of national significance, indicating areas of major opportunities and change, and highlights areas that need protecting and enhancing.
- 2.4 Future Wales has 18 general policies covering issues such as transport, connectivity, heat networks, biodiversity, the need for a significant amount of new tree cover, and a detailed policy on strategic placemaking; 1 policy that specifies the content of an SDP; and 4 policies in relation to the detailed content of the South East Wales SDP. It sets out where housing, employment and infrastructure should be developed to support town centres; achieve decarbonisation and climate resilience; and improve the health and wellbeing of Wales' population in the period up to 2040. Future Wales focuses on growing existing urban areas and ensuring that homes, jobs, and services are located in the same area. It identifies four nationally significant areas for growth; including Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys (including Torfaen). The focus of housing policy remains on delivering new affordable homes. There is a requirement to prepare a green belt in south-east Wales, which should cover an area to the north of Cardiff and Newport and the eastern part of the region. Future Wales identifies 10 'pre-assessed areas' where significant onshore wind farms can be located. The 'town centre first' principle will be at the heart of urban policymaking. It highlights that Ministers will be investing

significantly to improve active travel and public transport; combined with the implementation of policies in Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (PPW11 - detailed below) which require development to be directed towards sustainable locations and designed to make it possible for everyone to make sustainable and healthy travel choices for their daily journeys.

- 2.5 The Council also has a duty (Section 62(3A) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) for the Torfaen RLDP to be in 'general conformity' with Future Wales; and the independent Inspector will consider this during the Plan's Examination.

Welsh Government: Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (PPW11), February 2021

- 2.6 PPW11 sets out the land use planning policies and overarching sustainable development goals for Wales, which contribute to the statutory well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The Well-being Act provides a clear definition of sustainable development and has established seven well-being goals which are intended to shape the work of all public bodies in Wales, these are:-
- A prosperous Wales;
 - A resilient Wales;
 - A healthier Wales;
 - A more equal Wales;
 - A Wales of cohesive communities;
 - A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language; and
 - A globally responsible Wales.
- 2.7 PPW11 states that *“Sustainable Places are the goal of the land use planning system in Wales ... all development management decisions, either through development plans policy choices or individual development management decisions should seek to contribute towards the making of sustainable places and improved well-being”* (PPW11, para 2.2). It goes on to state, as set out in Figure 4: Key Planning Principles - Achieving the Right Development in the Right Place (page 17), that the planning system can create and sustain communities to maximise its contribution to well-being *“... by creating well-designed places and cohesive rural and urban communities which can be sustained by ensuring the appropriate balance of uses and density, making places where people want to be and interact with others. Our communities need the right mix of good quality/well designed homes, jobs, services, infrastructure and facilities so that people feel content with their everyday lives.”*
- 2.8 PPW11 secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development and considers a plan-led approach to be the most effective means of securing sustainable development through the planning system. PPW11 has a strong focus on promoting placemaking, which is considered instrumental to achieving sustainable places, delivering socially inclusive development and promoting more cohesive communities. Placemaking is deemed a holistic approach that *“... draws upon an area's potential to create high quality development and public spaces that promote people's prosperity, health, happiness, and well being in the widest sense. Placemaking considers the context, function and relationships between a development site and its wider surroundings.”* (PPW11, page 14).
- 2.9 To achieve sustainable placemaking PPW11 states that development plans:-

- should identify “*areas and sites for new development ... based not only on the consideration of the needs of existing urban and rural areas but also future relationships between urban settlements and their rural hinterlands, particularly in the light of ensuring strong rural and urban communities, maintaining places which are resilient to the effects of social and economic change and are resilient in the light of the impacts of climate change.*” (PPW 11, para. 3.41);
- “*... must include a spatial strategy covering the lifetime of the plan which establishes a pattern of development improving social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being.*” (PPW11, para. 3.42);
- In their spatial strategy “*must prioritise the use of suitable and sustainable previously developed land and/or underutilised sites for all types of development.*” and when identifying sites “*should consider previously developed land and / or underutilised sites located within existing settlements in the first instance with sites on the edge of settlements considered at the next stage.*” (PPW11, para. 3.43);
- promote “*A broad balance between housing, community facilities, services and employment opportunities in both urban and rural areas ... to minimise the need for long distance commuting. Planning authorities should adopt policies to locate major generators of travel demand, such as housing, employment, retailing, leisure and recreation, and community facilities (including libraries, schools, doctor’s surgeries and hospitals), within existing urban areas or areas which are, or can be, easily reached by walking or cycling, and are well served by public transport.*” (PPW11, para. 3.50);
- “*promote viable urban and rural retail and commercial centres as the most sustainable locations to live, work, shop, socialise and conduct business;*” (PPW11, para. 4.33);
- should “*aim to ensure new development is located and designed in a way which minimises the need to travel, reduces dependency on the private car and enables sustainable access to employment, local services and community facilities.*” (PPW11, para. 4.0.3);
- must conserve “*and, where possible, enhance*” the countryside “*for the sake of its ecological, geological, physiographic, historical, archaeological, cultural and agricultural value and for its landscape and natural resources ... balanced against the economic, social and recreational needs of local communities and visitors.*” (PPW11, para. 3.38); and
- consider that “*Fostering adaptability and resilience will be a key aim for rural places in the face of the considerable challenge of maintaining the vibrancy of communities and availability of services as well as contributing to the Cohesive Communities well-being goal.*” (PPW11, para. 3.38).

2.10 PPW11 emphasises the link between the number of homes due to be provided and the expected job opportunities, as well as the location of any new development in relation to existing or planned infrastructure. This is important to minimise the need to travel, reduce private car reliance and increase opportunities for cycling, walking and the use of public transport. Development plans are deemed to “*... provide the main means for achieving integration between land use and transport planning*” (PPW11, para. 4.15).

2.11 At the same time PPW11 recognises that for most rural areas the opportunities for reducing car use and increasing walking, cycling and use of public transport are more limited than in urban areas. Due to this PPW advises that in rural areas most

new development should be located in settlements which have relatively good accessibility by non-car modes when compared to the rural area as a whole. Development in these areas should embrace the national sustainable placemaking outcomes and, where possible, offer good active travel connections to the centres of settlements to reduce the need to travel by car for local journeys. (PPW11, para. 3.35).

- 2.12 Additionally PPW11 advises *“Local service centres, or clusters of smaller settlements where a sustainable functional linkage can be demonstrated, should be designated by local authorities as the preferred locations for most new development including housing and employment provision. The approach should be supported by the service delivery plans of local service providers”* (PPW11, para. 3.40).

Llwybr Newydd: The Wales Transport Strategy (WTS), March 2021

- 2.13 The WTS sets out the Welsh Government’s transport ambitions for the next 20 years and priorities for the next 5 years. The central aim of the strategy is to reduce the impact that transport has on climate change, setting a target for 45% of all journeys within Wales to be undertaken sustainably by 2040. The overriding vision is for *“an accessible, sustainable and efficient transport system” and the priority is to “actively aim to achieve a shift away from private car use to more sustainable transport modes for the majority of journeys”*. The three main priorities in the Strategy are to:

1. Bring services to people in order to reduce the need to travel, which will mean an increase of local services;
2. Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable and efficient transport services and infrastructure; and
3. Encourage people to make the change to a more sustainable transport option by making public transport more affordable and reliable.

Additionally, the WTS notes the establishment of Regional CJs that will oversee the preparation of Regional Transport Plans to be aligned with ‘Future Wales: the national plan 2040’ and the emerging SDPs.

- 2.14 The WTS is supported by the **National Transport Delivery Plan (NTDP), 2022-2027**; which is a 5-year investment programme and sets out the specific types of transport interventions to be financed by the Welsh Government (with headline capital / revenue rather than individual project budgets) based on the priorities in the Strategy, including the delivery of projects that are already underway.

WG Roads Review, February 2023

- 2.15 In June 2021 WG paused many of their road projects across Wales to carry out a review of their support for increasing road capacity; and appointed an ‘independent panel’ to carry out the review. 59 such schemes were considered; which for Torfaen included the A4042 Southern Corridor, Pontypool to M4 and the Torfaen LDP Llanfrechfa Relief Road as an example Economic Development schemes (where WG own land). The Panel submitted its Report to the Minister in August 2022; who announced his response in February 2023. As a result, only 15 schemes will go ahead, including the A4042 Southern Corridor, Pontypool to M4 in Torfaen; but it must adhere to a new set of strict tests to be built (all the remaining schemes have been rejected or will be revised). The Llanfrechfa Relief Road will be part of a joint Welsh Government / Local Authority led review to develop guidance on delivering place based economic development enabled by transport

solutions that support the growth of a prosperous, green, and equal economy and are consistent with the future tests for road building and the Wales Transport Strategy.

Development Plans Manual Edition 3 (DPM3) (March 2020)

2.16 DPM3 (para. 5.15) on advising on “Undertaking a Settlement Assessment to Inform the Distribution of Growth” states “The LPA should undertake a settlement assessment to inform decisions regarding where development should be spatially located to achieve a sustainable pattern of growth, minimise unsustainable patterns regarding the movement of people and support local services and facilities. The LPA must identify areas of linguistic sensitivity or importance to ensure growth is suitably directed to areas where impact on the Welsh language can be positive. The assessment should not be confined to the geographical boundaries of its administrative boundary, but take account of the relationship settlements have with neighbouring areas. Examples of topics to be considered as part of the settlement assessment are highlighted in Diagram...” 1 below.

2.17 DPM3 (para 5.15) states:-

“The LPA must formulate a methodology for assessing the role and function of settlements which is clearly set out in the evidence base. It should be transparent regarding how settlements are being assessed, the key assessment components and how this has been applied in a consistent manner across the area. Where possible, the community can be involved in the process to add further detail and knowledge regarding local settlement services and facilities.”

Diagram 1: Settlement Assessment (from DPM3)



2.18 Finally, DPM3 (paras 5.16-5.18) go on to state:-

“5.16 Where housing markets and travel to work areas cross administrative boundaries, there are benefits for LPAs to work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities. The aim is to identify the most sustainable settlements for growth. LPAs should aim to achieve a balance between homes and jobs to reduce the need for commuting. This will be tested at the LDP examination.

5.17 LPAs should consider the most practicable way of presenting the results of the assessments, such as scoring system, or RAG (Red, Amber or Green) analysis. This assessment should form the basis for the settlement hierarchy, identifying which settlements are most sustainable and have capacity to deliver growth.

5.18 The evidence base should clearly communicate how the role and function of places, together with any constraints and opportunities have been assessed and influenced the spatial strategy...”

Technical Advice Note 4 (TAN4) - Retail and Commercial Development (2016)

- 2.19 TAN4 advocates a ‘*town centre first*’ approach which ensures retail and commercial centres which act as a focal point for shopping, leisure and tourism, local services and business / employment opportunities are located in areas with “*high levels of accessibility by a range of transport options make them [town centres] sustainable locations*” (TAN4, para.2.1, 2016).
- 2.20 TAN4 reiterates the important role that retail and commercial centres play in creating sustainable locations stating, “*good access to and within, retail and commercial centres is key, both to the vibrancy of those places and to ensure that everyone in society has access to the wide variety of goods and services.*” Furthermore, Development Plans should ensure access is sustainable in nature by promoting the ability to “*walk, cycle or use public transport to get to retail and commercial centres is important*” (TAN4, para.2.7, 2016).
- 2.21 TAN4 thus demonstrates the need to consider retail and commercial centres in terms of their mix of uses and their accessibility when “*guiding development to the most appropriate location*” (TAN4, para.4.1, 2016). The need to develop a hierarchy that defines high and low order centres is critical to this aim, by identifying the functional linkages between settlements and understanding how they fit into the larger than local area. Future levels of growth or decline should also be reflected in each centre’s position in the hierarchy.

Technical Advice Note 6 (TAN6) - Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)

- 2.22 TAN6 develops upon the principles outlined in PPW. About informing the location of development, TAN6 advises “*Development plans should set out the spatial vision for rural communities. This should be based on a sound understanding of the functional linkages within the area and the potential for improving the sustainability of the existing settlement pattern. Many rural communities can accommodate development, particularly to meet local needs. New development can help to generate wealth to support local services, ensuring that communities are sustainable in the long term*” (TAN6, 2.2.1, 2010). Therefore, under TAN6 an audit of rural services and facilities by individual settlement and the consideration of functional linkages within the area will be required to inform the settlement strategy for Development Plans.

Technical Advice Note 18 (TAN 8) - Transport (2007)

- 2.23 TAN18 sets out Welsh Government's aim to promote sustainable transport in Wales. The TAN focuses on achieving the Welsh Government's environmental outcomes in its Environmental Strategy by (TAN18, para.2.3, 2007):-
- Promoting resource and travel efficient settlement patterns;
 - Ensuring new development is located where there is, or will be, good access by public transport, walking and cycling thereby minimising the need for travel and fostering social inclusion;
 - Managing parking provision;
 - Ensuring that new development and major alterations to existing developments include appropriate provision for pedestrians (including those with special access and mobility requirements), cycling, public transport, and traffic management and parking / servicing;
 - Encouraging the location of development near other related uses to encourage multi-purpose trips;
 - Promoting cycling and walking;
 - Supporting the provision of high quality, inclusive public transport;
 - Supporting provision of a reliable and efficient freight network;
 - Promoting the location of warehousing and manufacturing developments to facilitate the use of rail and sea transport for freight;
 - Encouraging good quality design of streets that provide a safe public realm and a distinct sense of place; and
 - Ensuring that transport infrastructure or service improvements necessary to serve new development allow existing transport networks to continue to perform their identified functions.
- 2.24 TAN18 (para. 3.4, 2007) goes on to emphasise the need to identify residential sites in accessible areas which have good links to jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car and where public transport services have existing or planned capacity to absorb further development. Based upon this settlement policies should:
- Promote housing development at locations with good access by walking and cycling to primary and secondary schools and public transport stops, and by all modes to employment, further and higher education, services, shopping and leisure, or where such access will be provided as part of the scheme or is a firm proposal in the Regional Transport Plan;
 - Ensure that significant new housing schemes contain ancillary uses including local shops, and services and, where appropriate, local employment;
 - Include policies and standards on density, and parking to achieve higher residential densities in places with good public transport accessibility and capacity;
 - Encourage residential layouts that incorporate traffic management proposals such as home zones, calming measures and 20 mph zones and where; appropriate, layouts that allow public transport to pass through easily; and
 - Require layouts and densities, which maximise the opportunity for residents to walk and cycle to local facilities and public transport stops.
- 2.25 This reiterates the importance of sustainable transport when identifying sustainable settlements, as TAN18 advises sustainable transport is a key element of Development Plans. The theme of sustainable transport and accessibility is given

considerable weight in national guidance and places an onus on Local Authorities to prioritise it.

- 2.26 TAN18 also acknowledges the difficulties of creating sustainable locations in more rural areas. It notes *“Transport issues in rural areas will vary depending on the relative isolation from major urban centres. Long distance out-commuting from rural areas raises sustainability issues given the length of the journey and the rural location means that conventional public transport is unlikely to be viable in response. Local authorities should therefore consider whether different policy approaches are required depending on the proximity of rural areas to urban centres. For example, the development plan strategy may require a more decentralised approach to employment location in order to minimise overall private car mileage in an area without strong functional linkages to larger settlements. For a rural area close to a large urban area for example, development serving local needs may be directed to settlements to provide sufficient demand to enable public transport services to extend from the main centre.”* (TAN18, para.3.13, 2007). Therefore, it is important to understand the nature of settlements to help inform the development plan strategy to better allocate development in sustainable locations as set out in PPW and TAN18.

Regional Transport (and Delivery) Plans

- 2.27 In addition to the guidance in TAN18, the Transport Act 2000 (as amended by the Local Government and the Elections (Wales) Act 2021) requires the new South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) to produce and submit a Regional Transport Plan (RTP) and associated Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) to the Welsh Ministers by the start of the 2025-26 financial year; and review them every five years. The new RTP will be produced using the latest WG ‘Guidance to CJsCs on Regional Transport Plans, 2023’, and will *“be firmly focused on achieving modal shift”* and *“include disincentives for car use as well as incentives for more sustainable travel.”* It will also be aligned to the Welsh Government’s ‘Llwybr Newydd: The Wales Transport Strategy’ (WTS), the ‘National Transport Delivery Plan’ (NTDP), ‘Future Wales: the national Plan 2040’, Planning Policy Wales’ & the ‘Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan; and WG’s response to the ‘Roads Review’ recommendations & principles for future road investment.
- 2.28 Once approved by the Welsh Ministers, the new S.E. Wales RTP will replace the extant ‘South-East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan, 2015’, covering Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen; which prioritised schemes that were proposed for implementation between 2015-2020 and identified a longer-term programme identifying aspirations up to 2030.

Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

- 2.29 Active Travel’ means walking and cycling for purposeful journeys to a destination, or in combination with public transport. This includes travel to work, school and other educational facilities, travel to shops, travel to leisure facilities, travel to bus and rail stations and onward journeys. Active Travel is seen as an increasingly significant factor in providing an alternative transport solution for short journeys, reducing vehicle use and associated emissions; it contributes to people’s health, is a positive measure in responding to the Climate Emergency and tackling poverty / disadvantage, and will help our economy grow. It seeks to instil a lasting

transformation of how developments are planned to incorporate walking and cycling infrastructure from the outset as well as encouraging long-term behaviour change.

- 2.30 The Act makes provisions for the mapping of active travel routes and related facilities; and requires year on year active travel improvements to enhance opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists to make more meaningful journeys without relying on the car. It requires highways authorities in Wales to make enhancements to routes and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists in all new road schemes and to have regard to the needs of walkers and cyclists in a range of other highway authority functions. It also requires the Welsh Ministers and local authorities to promote active travel journeys in exercising their functions under this Act. The Torfaen 2021 Active Travel Network Map (ATNM) was agreed by Welsh Government in December 2022. The ATNM is a second-generation map that incorporates and replaces the routes included in the Torfaen Existing Route Map, 2016 (ERM - the number of which have risen from 23 to 64 routes) and the Torfaen Integrated Network Map, 2018 (INM - the number of which have risen from 37 to 173 routes). The ATNM sets out a 15-year plus programme of improvements to active travel routes and forms the basis of the future development of the active travel network in Torfaen. Only routes on the ATNM are eligible for consideration for future Welsh Government active travel funding; and it is expected to be updated within three years.
- 2.31 Also, from September 2023, the default speed limit in built up areas in Wales will, unless an exception is made by the Council, reduce from 30mph to 20mph to make roads safer, reduce road collisions, encourage more people to walk and cycle, to improve health & wellbeing and to safeguard the environment for future generations.
- 2.32 Therefore, the planning system has a key role to play in facilitating active travel by considering the inter-relationships of settlements, journeys within settlements and channelling growth towards sustainable areas and delivering new developments that promotes active travel journeys through good design / placemaking.

Technical Advice Note 20 (TAN20) 'Planning and the Welsh Language' 2017

- 2.33 TAN20 provides advice on incorporating the Welsh language in development plans through Sustainability Appraisals, and outlines procedures for windfall development in areas where the language is particularly significant. The TAN stresses the need to assess the potential cumulative effects of development across the plan area; specifically how the strategy and policies are likely to impact on use of the Welsh language and the sustainability of communities. The spatial distribution of new development and infrastructure can be used as a strategic means of supporting the language based on the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 2.34 PPW11 also highlights the importance of considering the likely effects of development plans on the use of the Welsh language. To achieve this it recommends "... a broad distribution and phasing of development that takes into account the ability of the area or community to accommodate development without adversely impacting use of the Welsh language" (PPW11, para 3.26) is required. The Welsh Government have a strategy to reach the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. The % of people aged 3 years or older who could speak Welsh in the 2021 Census in Torfaen was 8.2%, compared to 17.8% for Wales; and there was a decline since 2011 of 1.6% and 1.2% respectively.

3. Sustainable Settlements, Assessment Principles and Scoring Methodology

The Sustainable Settlements

- 3.1 This section sets out the methodology to be used to assess a settlement's sustainability. A total of four settlements have been subject to the assessment as detailed below; which as a starting point, are based upon the urban areas / boundaries identified within the adopted Torfaen Local Development Plan (2006-2021) Proposals Maps, December 2013.
- 3.2 Three settlements comprise the distinct 'towns' of Blaenavon, Cwmbran and the amalgamated urban area of Pontypool (which incorporates the neighbourhoods of Abersychan, Brynwarn, Cwmyrnyscoy, Garndiffaith, Griffithstown, New Inn, Penygarn, Pontnewynydd, Snatchwood, St Cadocs, Trevethin & Wainfelin as one interconnected settlement).
- 3.3 As regard 'villages', the adopted LDP identifies distinct settlement boundaries for both Ponthir and Varteg: -
- Ponthir (40ha / 1,260 pop. 2021) which has a limited active travel route and a fair level of bus services, contains some community facilities, a local primary school and some medical services; but no shops or other regular needs services and limited local employment opportunities has been considered to have sufficient sustainability credentials to be included in this Assessment;
 - The much smaller settlement of Varteg (6.4ha / est. 110 pop. 2021) which has no active travel routes but a good bus services, contains some community facilities and a Welsh medium primary school serving north Torfaen; but no shops or medical facilities and very limited local employment opportunities is not considered a sufficiently sustainable location to be considered in this Assessment.

The Three Assessment Principles

- 3.4 The SEWSPG methodology is broadly framed around three key principles, each weighted to represent its corresponding importance in National Policy, as follows:
- **Principle 1: considers the level sustainable transport and accessibility in a settlement** - on the basis that its provision reduces the need to travel by car and enables access to a wider range of amenities (40% of score);
 - **Principle 2: considers the availability of facilities and services in a settlement** - as this reflects the need for residents to travel to access amenities. It also considers whether the current provision of facilities can support the current and future local population (30% of score); and
 - **Principle 3: considers the level of employment provision / opportunities in a settlement** - as the presence of a range of employment types can be used to measure the economic sustainability of an area and reduce commuting distances (30% of score).
- 3.5 These three principles are disaggregated into a tiered scoring matrix to better understand the sustainability of each individual settlement, identify their roles & functions, and the functional relationships between them. In undertaking the

Assessment, it was recognised that these three principles were most significant to understanding each settlement: the level of sustainable travel opportunities and self-containment; the range of retail and community services; and the strength of the employment role.

- 3.6 Therefore, an audit of existing services and facilities was undertaken for the four Torfaen settlements in Spring 2023; which involved a combination of desktop survey work and site visits conducted by Planning Policy officers. The desktop study, using existing data such as the location of village halls, doctor’s surgeries, post offices, playing fields, bus stops and employment opportunities, was used to establish a baseline of facilities and services that are known to be present within the settlements. Once the baseline was established each settlement was visited and surveyed by Planning Policy officers where the presence of individual services / facilities was checked and recorded.
- 3.7 Each settlement was then assessed against a scoring system and ranked according to its overall score. The ranking provides an initial quantitative sustainability assessment which is limited to the measurable factors identified. This enables the identification of broad groupings of settlements with similar roles and functions.

The Scoring Methodology

- 3.6 The scoring methodology is based upon the three principles set out above.

Principle 1: Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

- 3.7 Principle 1 focuses on sustainable multi-modal forms of transport and accessibility on the basis that its provision reduces the need to travel by car and enables access to a wider range of amenities by sustainable transport modes. To measure Principle 1, the following factors will be assessed:-
- by using the latest Torfaen Active Travel Network Map (ATNM) to compare the coverage of existing active travel routes (Existing Route Map - ERM) within the settlement against those proposed (Integrated Network Map - INM);
 - the frequency of public transport (bus & rail) services within / in proximity to a settlement;
 - distance to a rail station; and
 - to a lesser extent (so not to place undue emphasis on private car reliance) a settlement’s proximity to a strategic highway network (There must be a clear link to the network from the settlement).

These considerations are detailed in Table 1 below; and the maximum score available per settlement is 35 points.

Table 1: Scoring System for Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

Presence of Active Travel Routes within the settlement	
Good level of routes serving majority of settlement	10 points
Fair level of routes serving less than majority of settlement	5 points
Limited Routes serving settlement	2 points
No Routes serving settlement	0 points
Bus Services within the settlement	

Good turn up and go provision, frequency of approximately every 10 minutes	10 points
Medium frequency of service between 11-30 minutes.	5 points
Low frequency of service between 31-60 minutes.	3 points
Daily frequency - more than hourly (at least one morning and one late afternoon service to a main centre).	2 points
Infrequent daily service	1 point
No service	0 points
Rail Services within the settlement	
Train station in settlement	5 points
Train station less than 3 miles away	2 points
▪ Then for above two considerations, frequency of 2x trains per hour	5 points
▪ Then for above two considerations, frequency of 1x trains per hour	3 points
Train station greater than 3 miles away	0 points
Proximity of the settlement to the strategic highway network	
Less than 3 miles	5 points
Between 3 and 5 miles	2 points
Greater than 5 miles	0 points

- 3.8 It is important that a settlement has good accessibility to services and facilities helping communities to meet many of their everyday needs. Good access to sustainable travel modes provides choice to the user and can reduce reliance on private cars for travel. Access to active travel routes and public transport also tackles an element of social exclusion enabling individuals who cannot drive or afford a car access to essential services and facilities. The presence of active travel routes within a settlement or between settlements helps to identify scope for meaningful walking and cycle journeys. Settlements that score well in this category have great potential to promote more active lifestyles.
- 3.9 Bus services represent the primary mode of public transport within Torfaen; and the scoring system recognises the five categories of bus services within the County Borough in terms of frequency. With many services being 'clockface', i.e. a timetable system under which services run at consistent intervals (departures / arrivals take place at the same time or times during the day), as opposed to a timetable that is purely driven by demand and has irregular timings. The goal is to enhance the attractiveness and versatility of public transport; as clock-face schedules are easy for passengers to memorise.
- 3.10 The scoring system also recognises distances to rail services and the strategic highway network. There are currently two railway stations located at Pontypool / New Inn and Cwmbran in Torfaen, and access to these, preferably by sustainable transport means, is important in accessing the wider region. The assessment has also taken account of access to railway stations outside of the administrative boundary if these are closer to a settlement, for example the railway stations at Abergavenny in Monmouthshire or in the City of Newport. Unfortunately, rail services in Torfaen are not 'clockface'; but Cwmbran usually has about two services per hour, and Pontypool / New Inn generally has between 1-2 services per hour.

3.11 The proximity to a strategic highway network reflects the inter-connectedness of each settlement by road. The strategic highways within Torfaen are the A4051, A4042, A4043 and A472, plus the M4 Motorway nearby. These highways help in the assessment of the links between residential areas, employment centres and other areas both within and outside the immediate boundary of the County Borough.

Principle 2: Availability of Facilities and Services

3.12 Principle 2 considers the ability of a settlement to provide for the daily needs of residents by assessing the availability of services and facilities by quantity and variety, including digital connectivity. Digital connectivity is becoming increasingly important to consider both in the context of wider settlement connectivity and the fact that there is a growing tendency for people to work from home.

3.13 The availability of facilities and services reflects the need for residents of a settlement to travel to access facilities / services and gives an indication as to whether the current provision of facilities / services can support its current and future population. In order to assess Principle 2, each settlement will be analysed in terms of its size and the range of services and facilities on offer. These will include those given in the table below:-

Table 2: Scoring System for Availability of Facilities and Services

Service / Facility	
Sub Regional Town Centre	20 points
Major District Town Centre	15 points
Minor District Town Centre	10 points
Local & Neighbourhood Centres	5 points
Pantry/Village Shop	2 points
No shops	0 points
Regular Needs	
Convenience Store	
Other non-food Shop	
Post Office	* Library = 3 points
Bank	* Leisure Centre = 3 Points
Petrol Filling Station	* Cinema / Theatre = 3 Points
Community Facilities	
Public Hall (including village hall and church hall)	* Hospital = 3 Points
Place of Worship	
Library *	Hosts more than 3 services / facilities = 3 points
Leisure Centre (with swimming pool) *	
Gym (e.g. fitness, self-defence, etc.)	Hosts 2-3 services / facilities = 2 points
Cinema / Theatre *	
Accessible Public Open Space	
Sports Ground (pitch available for different sports, e.g. football, rugby, hockey, cricket, etc.)	Hosts 1 service / facility = 1 point
Children's Play Area	
Youth Club (including scout / guide groups)	
Medical Facilities	

Hospital *	
GP Surgery	
Pharmacy	
Dentist	
Education Facilities	
Nursery School / Playgroup / Toddler Group	
Primary School	
Secondary and/or 6 th Form School / Further Education College	
Cafes, Bars, Pubs, Restaurants & Takeaways	
Public House / Social Club (licenced)	
Tea / coffee shop / café / restaurant / takeaway	
Broadband Connectivity	
High Connectivity - Ultrafast	5 points
Medium Connectivity - Superfast	3 points
Low Connectivity - Standard	1 point

- 3.14 The existence of these services within or near settlements can significantly reduce commuting distances associated with a range of important daily activities, thereby reducing the need and likelihood of travelling by private car. Furthermore, sustainable settlements or clusters of settlements should offer a reasonable range of key services and facilities, albeit there is no certainty that these local services and facilities are taken up by local residents.

Principle 3: Employment Opportunities

- 3.15 Principle 3 relates to the location of employment opportunities in or around a settlement. This will give an indication of the economic sustainability of an area, including the ability / potential to reduce the need to travel further to work. In order to assess Principle 3, as well as taking account of protected and permitted / allocated employment sites within the current settlement boundary, or in close proximity (within a 20 minute walking and cycling distance) to a settlement (as listed in policies EET1, EET2, EET3, EET4 and EET5 of the adopted LDP); with consideration also given to the presence of a range of existing employers.

Table 3: Scoring System for Employment Opportunities

Employment Opportunity within Settlement	Description	Score
Area of Protected B1-B8 Use Employment Site(s) within settlement	Over 150 Ha	20 points
	100.1 - 150 Ha	15 points
	50.1 - 100 Ha	10 points
	25.1 - 50 Ha	8 points
	0 to 25 Ha	5 points
Area of Permitted / Allocated (in Torfaen LDP) Business / Industrial Sites or Mixed-Use Sites within settlement	Under 0 Ha	0 points
	Over 50 Ha	20 points
	25.1 - 50 Ha	15 points
	5 - 25 Ha	10 points
	Up to 5 Ha	5 points
	Under 0 Ha	0 points

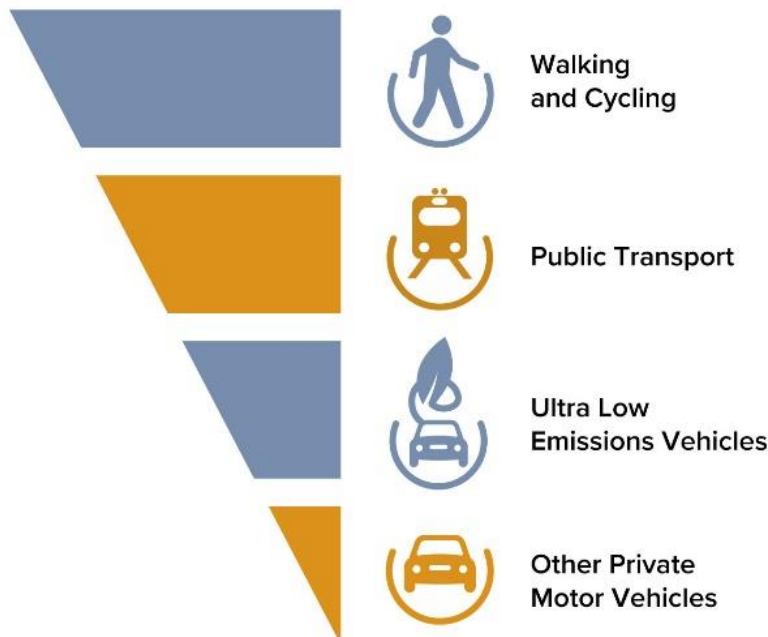
OR Proximity to Protected / Allocated Employment Site if not within the settlement (measured from settlement centre to site centre)	Score
Less than 1 mile (20 minute walking distance)	5 points
Between 1 and 3.4 miles (20 minute cycling distance)	2 points
Greater than 3.4 miles	0 points

- 3.16 Local employment opportunities provide a positive indicator of vibrant sustainable communities. Whilst it is recognised that there is no certainty that local residents will be employed in these, it is nevertheless important that these opportunities exist to promote sustainable travel patterns.
- 3.17 Whilst the above considers the current provision of services and facilities and employment opportunities within and around settlements, it is also important to recognise that enabling an appropriate level of growth in a settlement can generate wealth, support existing and facilitate the provision of new facilities / services and therefore help to sustain communities, as recognised in national planning policy.

Weighting

- 3.18 The scoring matrices set out above reflect the role key services and facilities play in meeting the resident population’s daily needs and the need to reduce travel distances to access services and facilities. Based on this, each principle is weighted to reflect their importance to the sustainability of settlements. PPW11 (para 4.1.9) confirms the Welsh Government’s commitment to reducing reliance on the private car and supporting a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport. It is Welsh Government policy to require the use of a sustainable transport hierarchy in relation to new development as shown in the diagram below.

Diagram 2: The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning



Source: Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (Feb 2021) - Figure 9 (page 48)

- 3.19 To reflect this commitment to sustainable transport and accessibility the criteria for Principle 1 - Sustainable Transport and Accessibility represents 40% of the overall score with the remaining criteria under Principles 2 and 3 having an overall score of

30% each. Thus, the maximum score that can be achieved for a settlement against the 3 principles is 100%.

Population Size

- 3.20 The Development Plan Manual (v3, 2020) recommends (Diagram 1) that the size of a settlement be taken into account in the settlement assessment. As such, once the 3 principles have been scored and weighted for each settlement, additional consideration will be given to the size of the population.

Table 4: Scoring System for Population Size

Population Size	Score
24,000+	10 Points
14,000 - 23,999	6 Points
3,001 - 13,999	3 Points
<3,000	0 Points

Note: the lowest threshold figure of a 3,000 settlement population size, has been arrived at to reflect the minimum new ‘sustainable’ Torfaen Primary School size of 315 pupils; which at a Torfaen primary school pupil generation ratio of an average of 0.23 pupils per dwelling would be supported by 1,370 dwellings ($1,370 \times 0.23 = 315$ pupils), then by multiplying the 1,370 dwellings by 2.3 (92,300 population / 40,200 households = the Torfaen average household size (2021 Census)) we arrive at a population size threshold of 3,151 people to support a local primary school. Furthermore, it is also considered that settlements over this size threshold, as borne out by the local evidence in the Assessment results Tables 6 (Principle 1 - Sustainable Transport and Accessibility), 7 (Principle 2 - Availability of Facilities and Services) and 8 (Principle 3 - Employment Opportunities) below, are more likely to support sustainable levels of local services & facilities, active travel / public transport provision, and employment opportunities in their own right.

Similarly, for the next size threshold the minimum new ‘sustainable’ Torfaen Secondary School size of 600 pupils; which at a Torfaen secondary school pupil generation ratio of an average of 0.1 pupils per dwelling would be supported by 6,000 dwellings ($6,000 \times 0.1 = 600$ pupils), then by multiplying the 6,000 dwellings by 2.3 (the Torfaen average household size (2021 Census)) we arrive at a settlement population size threshold of 13,800 people to support a local secondary school.

Finally, for the upper size thresholds, when looking at the sizes of settlements (2021 Census) in South Wales (see Table B below) there is a distinctive break at around 20,000 population (Ebbw Vale - 19,633) to around 28,000 population (Penarth - 28,394). Therefore, setting the next settlement size threshold half way between at 24,000 population in this Assessment is considered appropriate.

4. Contextual Information

- 4.1 As part of the final report in order to establish a detailed profile of the characteristics of Torfaen's four settlements and allow for further comparisons to be made between them, contextual information will also be included for each settlement. The table below identifies the information that will be collected for each settlement and provides a brief explanation of the reasons for collecting this information.

Table 5: Contextual Information

Title	Reason
Active Travel	
Active Travel Network Map	Used to compare the coverage of existing active travel routes (Existing Route Map - ERM) within the settlement against those proposed (Integrated Network Map - INM)
Population	
Settlement area (ha)	Used to give an indication of the physical size of the settlement.
Population size	Used to give an indication of how many people live in each settlement and therefore how many people the settlement has to support.
Age Structure	Used to give an indication of the different age ranges in each settlement and if there is a concentration of one age group. This may help to indicate the types of services that are needed.
Can Speak Welsh	Used to give an indication of any Welsh Language considerations for the settlement.
Employment	
Economically active (%)	Used to show what proportion of the local community are eligible to work and what proportion are dependent.
Employed (%)	Used to show what proportion of the local population have a job.
Number & type of local jobs	Used to show the level and diversity of local employment available.
Self-Containment	Used to show the number of people who live and work in the same settlement, increasing the potential for sustainable travel.
Travel to work flows	Used to help give an indication of how many local people travel out of their home settlement to go to work. This will help to show which settlements are considered more dormitory in nature.
Existing, permitted or allocated business sites	Used to show the level of existing, permitted and allocated business sites in a settlement, given the national policy linkage between new housing and job opportunities.
Housing	
Households	Used to help give an indication of the size and type of households in each settlement.
Average house prices (£)	Used to help give an indication of the affordability of each settlement.
House price to income ratio	Used to help give an indication of the affordability of each settlement.
Affordable Housing Need	Used to help give an indication of the need for affordable housing in each settlement.

- 4.2 In order to collect this data in a consistent way it is important to define the settlements in terms of their statistical geographies. For Ponthir, 'Output Area' data (OA) from the 2021 Census have been used where this is available; OAs have

between 100-625 residents / 40-250 households. For the towns, 'Lower Layer Super Output Areas' (LSOAs have been aggregated to create functional settlement areas). LSOAs have between 1,000-3,000 residents / 400-1,200 households. Therefore, the building blocks for each settlement area are either LSOAs or OAs which are detailed in Appendix 1 along with 'Settlement Profiles' the above Table 5 contextual information for each.

Statistical Comparison of Torfaen with neighbouring Local Authorities

POPULATION

- 4.3 **Local Authority Population Size** - Table A below shows the 2021 Census population for Torfaen, SE Wales LA's and Wales; noting that Torfaen is the 5th smallest LA (out of 22) in Wales.

Table A: Local Authority Resident Population in SE Wales (2021 Census)

Resident Population	
Blaenau Gwent	66,900
Bridgend	145,500
Caerphilly	175,900
Cardiff	362,400
Merthyr Tydfil	58,800
Monmouthshire	93,000
Newport	159,600
Rhondda Cynon Taf	237,700
Torfaen	92,300
Vale of Glamorgan	131,800
South-East Wales	1,523,900
Wales	3,107,500

Source: [StatsWales](#)

- 4.4 **South East Wales Settlement Sizes** - Table B below shows that Cwmbran, Pontypool (including the Abersychan ward) and Blaenavon are the 5th, 8th and 49th largest settlements in S.E. Wales respectively, with Cwmbran being the 6th largest in Wales:-

Table B: Settlements (5,000+ population) in South-East Wales (2021 Census)

Rank	Settlement	Local Authority	Population
1	Cardiff	Cardiff	348,546
2	Newport	Newport	130,900
3	Barry	The Vale of Glamorgan	56,587
4	Bridgend	Bridgend	51,785
5	Cwmbran	Torfaen	47,091
6	Merthyr Tydfil	Merthyr Tydfil	39,537
7	Aberdare	Rhondda Cynon Taf	37,691
8	Pontypool	Torfaen	36,548
9	Caerphilly	Caerphilly	33,118
10	Pontypridd	Rhondda Cynon Taf	31,914

11	Penarth	The Vale of Glamorgan	28,394
12	Ebbw Vale	Blaenau Gwent	19,633
13	Maesteg	Bridgend	18,332
14	Tonypandy	Rhondda Cynon Taf	17,203
15	Porthcawl	Bridgend	15,798
16	Risca	Caerphilly	15,197
17	Tredegar	Blaenau Gwent	14,529
18	Church Village	Rhondda Cynon Taf	14,157
19	Pyle	Bridgend	14,080
20	Abergavenny	Monmouthshire	13,691
21	Porth	Rhondda Cynon Taf	13,357
22	Rhondda	Rhondda Cynon Taf	13,271
23	Mountain Ash	Rhondda Cynon Taf	13,005
24	Blackwood	Caerphilly	12,615
25	Chepstow	Monmouthshire	11,934
26	Sarn	Bridgend	11,868
27	Ystrad Mynach	Caerphilly	11,861
28	Tonyrefail	Rhondda Cynon Taf	11,445
29	Monmouth	Monmouthshire	10,317
30	Abertillery	Blaenau Gwent	10,252
31	Caldicot	Monmouthshire	9,813
32	Pontllanfraith	Caerphilly	9,359
33	Pencoed	Bridgend	9,113
34	Llanharan	Rhondda Cynon Taf	8,099
35	Bargoed	Caerphilly	8,030
36	Dinas Powys	The Vale of Glamorgan	7,894
37	Treorchy	Rhondda Cynon Taf	7,642
38	Newbridge	Caerphilly	7,586
39	Rogerstone	Newport	7,550
40	Beddau	Rhondda Cynon Taf	7,356
41	Caerleon	Newport	7,326
42	Rhoose	The Vale of Glamorgan	6,782
43	Bedwas	Caerphilly	6,455
44	Abercynon	Rhondda Cynon Taf	6,375
45	Oakdale	Caerphilly	6,128
46	Pontyclun	Rhondda Cynon Taf	5,794
47	Magor / Undy	Monmouthshire	5,737
48	Abertridwr	Caerphilly	5,642
49	Blaenavon	Torfaen	5,637
50	Treherbert	Rhondda Cynon Taf	5,423
51	Llantwit Major	The Vale of Glamorgan	5,346
52	Brynmawr	Blaenau Gwent	5,250
53	Abercarn	Caerphilly	5,120
54	Treharris	Merthyr Tydfil	5,043

Source: <https://www.citypopulation.de/en/uk/wales/> - ward based

Large settlements in neighbouring local authority areas include (2021 Census):-

- the City of Newport (130,900 pop.), Rogerstone (7,550 pop.) and Caerleon (7,326 pop.) in Newport;
- Caerphilly (33,118 pop.), Risca (15,197 pop.), Blackwood (12,615 pop.), Ystrad Mynach (11,861 pop.), Pontllanfraith (9,359 pop.), Bargoed (8,030 pop.), Newbridge (7,586 pop.), Bedwas (6,455 pop.), Oakdale (6,128 pop.) and Abertridwr (5,642 pop.) in Caerphilly;
- Ebbw Vale (19,633 pop.), Tredegar (14,529 pop.), Abertillery (10,252 pop.) and Brynmawr (5,250 pop.) in Blaenau Gwent; and
- Abergavenny (13,691 pop.), Chepstow (11,934 pop.), Monmouth (10,317 pop.), Caldicot (9,813 pop.), Magor / Undy (5,737 pop.) and Usk (2,313 pop.) in Monmouthshire.

Note: Rural-Urban Classification - Areas forming settlements with populations of over 10,000 are urban, as defined by ONS urban area boundaries based upon land use; the remainder are defined as rural town and fringe, village or hamlet.

- 4.5 **Local Authority Density** - Table C below shows the population density (persons per hectare) at the time of the 2021 Census for Torfaen, SE Wales LA's and Wales; noting that Torfaen is the 3rd most densely populated LA (out of 22) in Wales after the cities of Cardiff & Newport.

Table C: Local Authority Population Densities (per km²) in SE Wales (2021 Census)

Population Density (Persons/km)	
Blaenau Gwent	615
Bridgend	580
Caerphilly	634
Cardiff	2,572
Merthyr Tydfil	528
Monmouthshire	110
Newport	838
Rhondda Cynon Taf	560
Torfaen	734
Vale of Glamorgan	398
Wales	150

Source: [StatsWales](https://www.statswales.gov.wales/)

4.6 **Local Authority Migration** - From Table D below, between 2001-2020, Torfaen had the greatest average gross population inflows from its five nearby local authorities, especially the from the adjacent City of Newport.

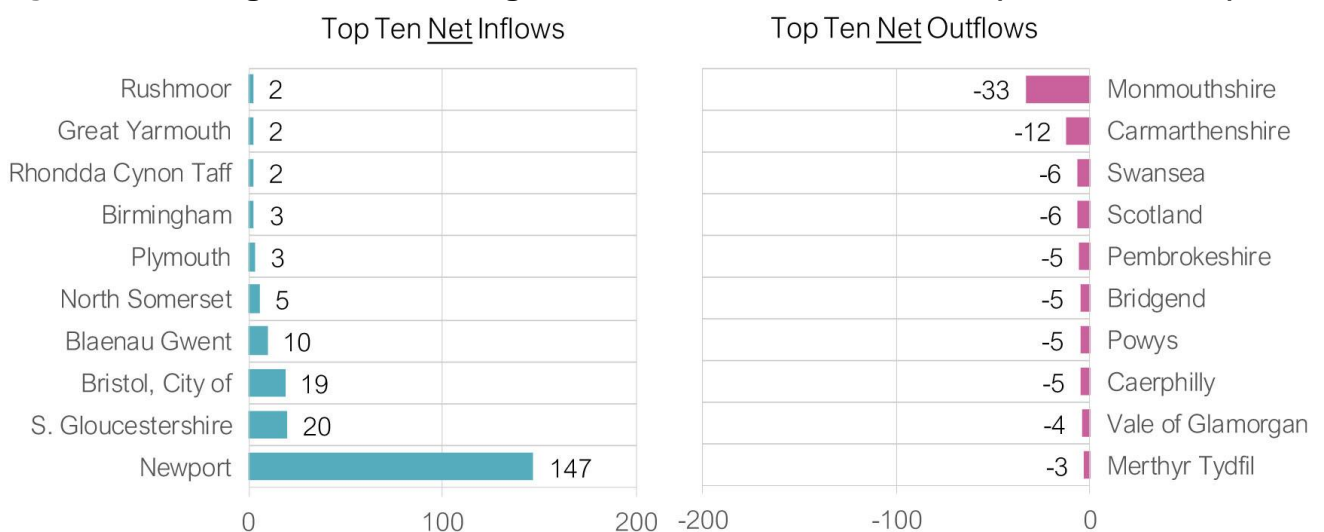
Table D: Average Annual Gross Migration In/Out-flows for Torfaen (2001/2-2019/20)

Top Ten Inflows		Top Ten Outflows	
Newport	609	Newport	462
Monmouthshire	227	Monmouthshire	261
Cardiff	194	Cardiff	193
Caerphilly	175	Caerphilly	179
Blaenau Gwent	132	Blaenau Gwent	123
Swansea	73	Swansea	79
Rhondda Cynon Taf	72	Rhondda Cynon Taf	70
Bristol	56	Bristol	37
South Gloucestershire	41	Carmarthenshire	33
The Vale of Glamorgan	29	The Vale of Glamorgan	33

Source: Edge Analytics analysis of ONS MYEs

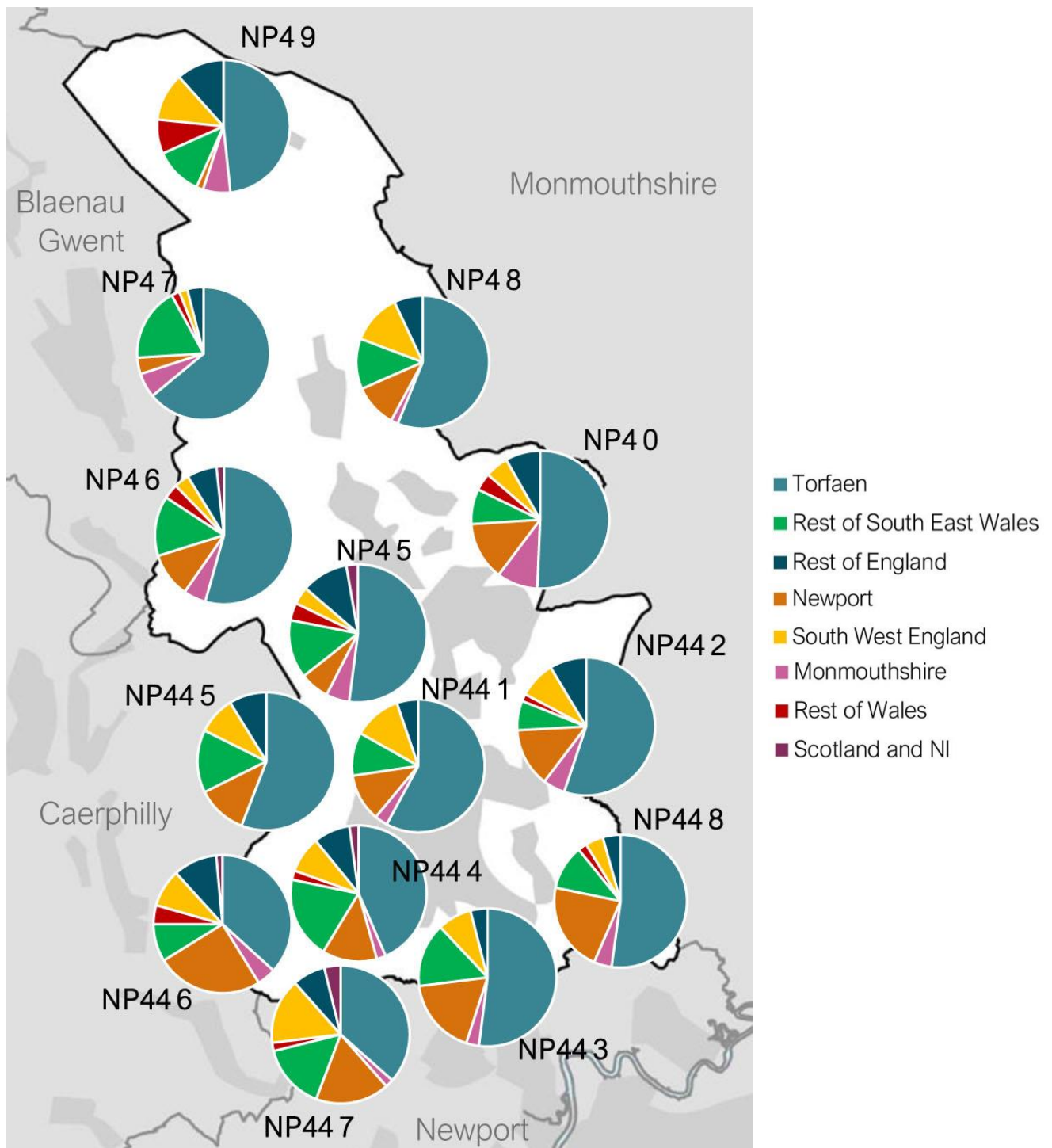
4.7 Similarly, from Figure 1A below, Torfaen had the greatest average net population inflows from Newport (+147 people p.a.), Bristol / South Gloucestershire (+39 people p.a.) and then Blaenau Gwent (+10 people p.a.); and has the highest average net outflow to Monmouthshire (-33 people p.a.) and then Carmarthenshire / Swansea (-18 people p.a.). From an analysis of Royal Mail Home Movers data (2021/22) - see Figure 1B below, most of these inflows from Newport have been to Cwmbran; being the nearest major settlement; and its relative size, house price differential and easy access the M4 / Cwmbran Train Station also being major contributing factors. It is also likely that the removal of the Severn Bridges Tolls and the above attractiveness of Cwmbran are the reason for the net inflows from Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Net outflows to Monmouthshire are likely due to its attractiveness as a 'rural' County, and Carmarthenshire / Swansea are generally considered to be retirement destinations.

Figure 1A: Average Annual Net Migration In/Out-flows for Torfaen (2001/2-2019/20)



Source: Edge Analytics analysis of ONS MYEs

Figure 1B: Origin of moves to Torfaen's post-sectors: 2021/22



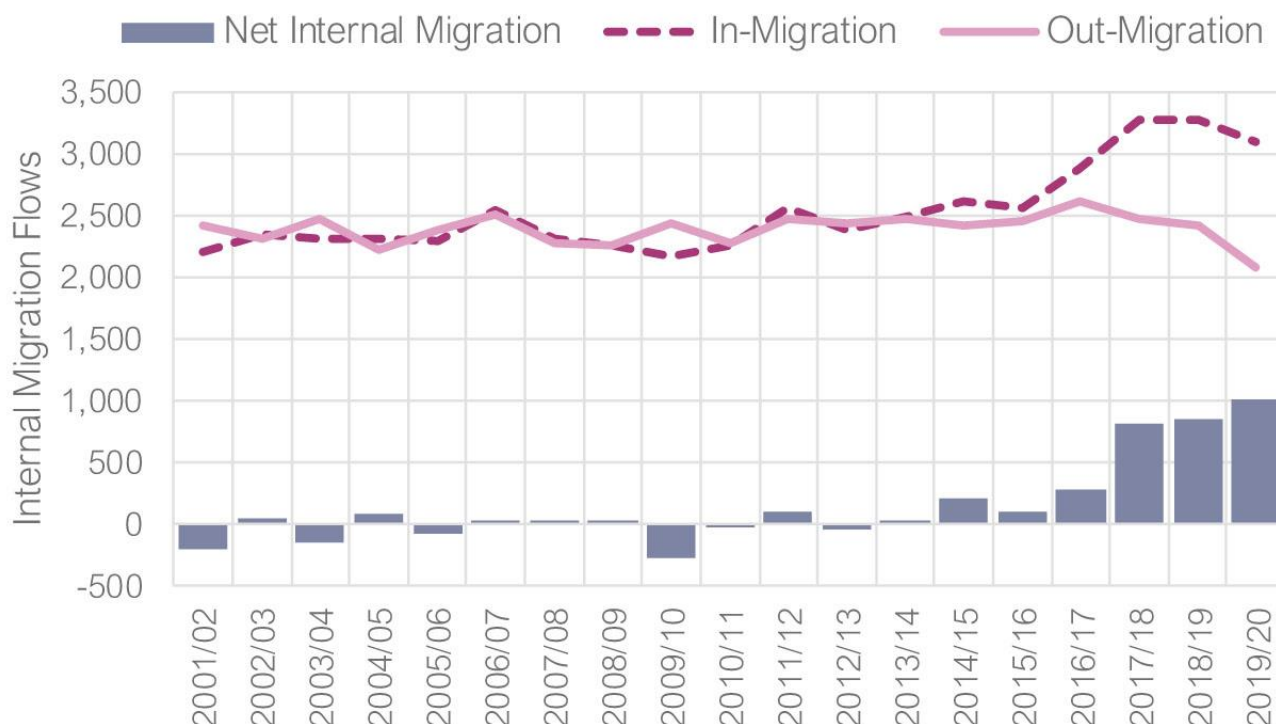
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Source: Edge Analytics analysis of Royal Mail Home Mover data

4.8 Finally, Figure 1C below shows internal migration over the last 20 years in Torfaen. Prior to 2017/18, net internal migration in Torfaen was relatively low, averaging +3 per year. The internal inflow averaged 2,405 per year and the internal outflow 2,402 per year. Since then, however, there has been a step change in net internal migration: the out-migration flow has reduced, and the in-migration flow has increased. Between 2017/18 and 2019/20, net internal migration averaged +891. The upturn in net internal migration in the latest three years generally coincides with

the removal of the Severn Bridges tolls and higher rates of housebuilding in Torfaen.

Figure 1C: Internal Migration in Torfaen (2001/2-2019/20)



Source: Edge Analytics analysis of ONS MYEs

4.9 **Age Structure** - From Table E below it can be seen that from the 2021 Census, Torfaen has a similar overall age profile to Wales, and the 'valleys authorities' of Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly. Whereas the more rural Monmouthshire, with approximately the same comparable total population (of around 93,000 people), has more older and less younger people. Contrarily, the City of Newport has more younger and less older people.

Table E: Local Authority Age Profile in sub-region and SE Wales (2021 Census)

Location	Usual Resident Population by Age				
	0 to 19	20 to 44	45 to 69	70 to 84	85 and over
Blaenau Gwent	21.4%	30.2%	33.6%	12.6%	2.2%
Caerphilly	22.7%	30.2%	32.6%	12.4%	2.2%
Monmouthshire	19.8%	24.7%	36.3%	15.7%	3.4%
Newport	24.4%	33.6%	29.8%	10.3%	2.1%
Torfaen	22.6%	30.1%	32.2%	12.5%	2.6%
South-East Wales	23.0%	32.3%	30.9%	11.5%	2.3%
Wales	22.2%	30.0%	32.2%	12.9%	2.7%

Source: [StatsWales](https://stats.wales.gov.uk/)

4.10 **Can Speak Welsh** - Table F below shows the number and % of people who can speak Welsh between the 2011 and 2021 Censuses, which has unfortunately fallen over the intercensal period.

Table F: number and percentage of people aged three years or older able to speak Welsh by Local Authority in the sub-region, 2011 to 2021 Census

Area	2011 Census		2021 Census		Change 2011-21	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Blaenau Gwent	5,280	7.8%	4,040	6.2%	-1,250	-1.6%
Caerphilly	19,250	11.2%	17,840	10.4%	-1,420	-0.7%
Monmouthshire	8,780	9.9%	7,870	8.7%	-910	-1.2%
Newport	13,000	9.3%	11,600	7.5%	-1,400	-1.8%
Torfaen	8,640	9.8%	7,360	8.2%	-1,280	-1.6%
Wales	562,020	19.0	538,300	17.8%	-23,720	-1.2%

Source: <https://www.gov.wales/welsh-language-wales-census-2021>

EMPLOYMENT

- 4.11 **Economically Active** - Table G below shows that apart from Monmouthshire, Newport, and the Vale of Glamorgan, Torfaen has a higher percentage of working age population economically active than surrounding authorities and Wales as a whole. However, Torfaen has the highest percentage of self-employed people regionally and nationally. Although the percentage unemployed is 3rd highest in the region, after Newport and Merthyr Tydfil, and is also above the Welsh average.

Table G: Economically Active / Employed / Unemployed (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)

Area	Economically Active (1)		Employees (1)		Self-Employed (1)		Model-based Unemployed (2)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Blaenau Gwent	32,700	75.3	29,400	67.8	2,200	5.1	700	2.1
Bridgend	63,900	73.5	55,400	63.7	6,400	7.3	1,300	2.1
Caerphilly	82,800	74.3	73,500	66.0	5,900	5.3	2,700	3.3
Cardiff	179,600	72.0	158,800	63.6	17,900	7.2	2,900	1.6
Merthyr Tydfil	27,100	72.9	23,000	61.7	2,800	7.4	1,000	3.8
Monmouthshire	42,500	78.9	37,500	69.6	4,500	8.3	500	1.2
Newport	71,300	76.7	62,000	66.8	5,500	5.9	3,600	5.0
Rhondda Cynon Taff	107,000	71.9	94,300	63.4	8,400	5.6	2,700	2.5
Torfaen	42,200	76.0	35,400	63.9	5,000	8.9	1,500	3.5
Vale of Glamorgan	60,900	79.7	54,500	71.4	5,800	7.5	~	0.8
Wales		75.6		64.6		8.3		3.0

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey - [website](#)

(1) numbers are for those aged 16 and over, % are for those of working age (16-64)

(2) numbers and % are for those aged 16 and over. % is a proportion of economically active

- 4.12 Similarly, Table H below shows that Torfaen has one of the lowest levels of economic inactivity on the region, akin to the Welsh average. However, probably as a corollary, of the economically inactive, Torfaen has the lowest percentage (11.3%) of people wanting a job - compared to 16.9% in Wales (and the corresponding highest % of people not wanting a job).

Table H: Economically Inactive / (Not) Wanting a Job (Jan 2022 - Dec 2022)

Area	Economically Inactive (1)		Wanting a job (2)		Not wanting a job (2)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Blaenau Gwent	10,700	24.7	1,300	12.5	9,400	87.5
Bridgend	23,100	26.5	4,400	18.9	18,700	81.1
Caerphilly	28,600	25.7	5,800	20.4	22,800	79.6
Cardiff	70,000	28.0	10,700	15.3	59,200	84.7
Merthyr Tydfil	10,100	27.1	1,300	13.3	8,700	86.7
Monmouthshire	11,400	21.1	1,600	13.9	9,800	86.1
Newport	21,600	23.3	5,200	24.2	16,400	75.8
Rhondda Cynon Taff	41,700	28.1	7,300	17.4	34,400	82.6
Torfaen	13,300	24.0	1,500	11.3	11,800	88.7
Vale of Glamorgan	15,500	20.3	1,900	12.2	13,600	87.8
Wales		24.4		16.9		83.1

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey- [website](#)

(1) numbers are for those aged 16 and over, % are for those of working age (16-64)

(2) numbers & % are for those aged 16 and over. % is a proportion of economically inactive

4.13 **Number & type of local jobs** - Table I below show the number of people employed in workplaces within each local authority broken down by the types of employment.

Table I: Workplace employment by Welsh local areas and broad industry - 2019

Industry	Blaenau Gwent	Caerphilly	Monmouthshire	Newport	Torfaen	Wales
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	-	200	2,400	200	200	44,600
Production	4,000	13,100	4,600	8,800	6,700	165,700
Construction	1,200	4,500	3,800	4,200	3,000	97,300
Wholesale, retail, transport, hotels & food	4,800	13,900	13,100	23,500	7,900	373,200
Information & communication	100	700	1,300	1,300	900	34,200
Finance & insurance activities	300	800	1,000	3,800	600	35,900
Real estate activities	300	400	900	1,200	800	19,600
Professional, scientific & technical activities; administrative & support service activities	1,200	8,400	5,600	11,900	2,800	175,400
Public administration, defence, education & health	5,200	15,300	12,000	22,300	12,100	425,300
Other service activities	1,500	2,900	2,300	3,100	1,700	72,800
All industries	18,600	60,200	47,100	80,300	36,600	1,444,100

Source: [StatsWales](#) - Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

4.14 **Sizes of Businesses** - Table J below shows that Torfaen has a higher % of small to large companies (10-250+ employees) and less micro companies (0-9 employees) than both the region and Wales.

Table J - Business Counts by Employment Size Band in SE Wales, 2022

Area	Total	Micro		Small		Medium		Large	
		0 to 9		10 to 49		50 to 249		250+	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Blaenau Gwent	1,325	1,170	88.3%	120	9.1%	25	1.9%	5	0.4%
Bridgend	4,120	3,635	88.2%	405	9.8%	70	1.7%	5	0.1%
Caerphilly	4,215	3,700	87.8%	415	9.8%	80	1.9%	20	0.5%
Cardiff	12,400	10,820	87.3%	1,285	10.4%	230	1.9%	60	0.5%
Merthyr Tydfil	1,295	1,140	88.0%	130	10.0%	20	1.5%	5	0.4%
Monmouthshire	4,575	4,190	91.6%	320	7.0%	50	1.1%	10	0.2%
Newport	4,300	3,810	88.6%	390	9.1%	80	1.9%	20	0.5%
Rhondda Cynon Taff	6,205	5,545	89.4%	540	8.7%	95	1.5%	25	0.4%
Torfaen	2,215	1,910	86.2%	245	11.1%	50	2.3%	15	0.7%
Vale of Glamorgan	4,575	4,160	90.9%	360	7.9%	45	1.0%	10	0.2%
SE Wales	45,225	40,080	88.6%	4,210	9.3%	745	1.6%	175	0.4%
Wales	108,055	96,690	89.5%	9,585	8.9%	1,455	1.3%	320	0.3%

Source: Nomis

4.15 **Self-Containment** - Table K below shows that in 2022 the proportion of Torfaen residents who work in the same local authority is the highest in the region after Cardiff and Newport (which is to be expected for these larger city settlements). About 31.8% of the Torfaen working residents commute out of the Borough for work, which is average for the region; with the exceptions of Blaenau Gwent (higher @ 49.7%) and Cardiff (lower @ 12.4%). Also, as would be expected, the larger cities of Cardiff and Newport have net inflows of workers; Torfaen and Monmouthshire each have a small circa 1k negative net inflow of workers; whilst Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly (including 1,800 employees from Torfaen) have sizable net inflows of workers of over 10k each.

Table K: Employees Place of Work / Commuting Flows in SE Wales / Torfaen 2022

Area of Residence	Total no. of working resident in area	Total no. of people working in area	Number of people living and working within the same area		Commuting Flows			
					Outflow		Inflow	Net inflow
					No.	%	No.	No.
Blaenau Gwent	32,200	22,100	16,300	50.6%	16,000	49.7%	5,900	-10,100
Cardiff	183,500	223,500	160,700	87.6%	22,800	12.4%	62,800	40,000
Caerphilly	81,900	68,700	50,100	61.2%	31,800	38.8%	18,600	-13,200
Monmouthshire	43,600	42,500	28,000	64.2%	15,600	35.8%	14,500	-1,100
Newport	69,200	73,400	48,900	70.7%	20,400	29.5%	24,500	4,100
Torfaen	41,500	40,400	28,300	68.2%	13,200	31.8%	12,000	-1,200

Source: [StatsWales](https://stats.wales.gov.uk/)

4.16 **Distance Travelled to Work** - From Table L below it can be calculated that in 2021, 73.1% of the working population of Torfaen with a fixed place of work, either worked from home or travelled less than 10km commuting distance to work; which is one of the highest in the region, when the average for South East Wales is 74.2% and Blaenau Gwent is 62.2%, Caerphilly is 69.9%; Monmouthshire is 66.0% and Newport is 76.6%. According to [Stats Wales](#) 2022 commuting data, of the 40,200 working resident of Torfaen, 28,300 (70.4%) work in the Borough, 4,300 (10.7%) in Newport, 2,100 (5.2%) in Cardiff, 1,800 (4.5%) in Caerphilly, 1,700 (4.3%) in Monmouthshire, 1,700 (4.3%) in South West England, and 300 (0.7%) elsewhere in the UK.

Table L: Distance Travelled to Work (All Usual Residents) in the SE Wales - 2021 Census

local authority	Works mainly from home		Less than 10km		10km to less than 30km		30km and over		Not in employment or works mainly offshore, in no fixed place or outside the UK	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Blaenau Gwent	4,036	6.0%	11,362	17.0%	7,465	11.2%	1,906	2.8%	42,135	63.0%
Bridgend	14,373	9.9%	23,159	15.9%	13,814	9.5%	3,821	2.6%	90,323	62.1%
Caerphilly	18,473	10.5%	27,993	15.9%	17,516	10.0%	2,523	1.4%	109,447	62.2%
Cardiff	57,855	16.0%	65,808	18.2%	12,860	3.5%	5,694	1.6%	220,092	60.7%
Merthyr Tydfil	4,663	7.9%	10,271	17.5%	4,987	8.5%	1,590	2.7%	37,325	63.4%
Monmouthshire	14,708	15.8%	9,803	10.5%	8,945	9.6%	3,662	3.9%	55,839	60.1%
Newport	20,384	12.8%	28,836	18.1%	11,825	7.4%	3,185	2.0%	95,361	59.8%
RCT	22,563	9.5%	34,078	14.3%	25,879	10.9%	4,674	2.0%	150,457	63.3%
Torfaen	9,052	9.8%	16,548	17.9%	7,662	8.3%	1,749	1.9%	57,266	62.1%
VoG	20,395	15.5%	20,255	15.4%	9,640	7.3%	2,089	1.6%	79,557	60.3%
SE Wales	186,502	12.2%	248,113	16.3%	120,593	7.9%	30,893	2.0%	937,802	61.5%

Source: [NOMIS](#)

4.17 **Mode of Travel to Work** - Table M below shows that in the 2021 Census, 67.1% of the resident population of Torfaen were travelling to work by car / van compared to the South-East Wales figure of 58.7%. Torfaen has a lower percentage of its resident working population at 2.7% (train & bus) travelling to their place of work using public transport than South-East Wales (4.0% train & bus). Similarly, 5.9% of residents walk or cycle to work, compared to 8.0% in the region. It should be noted that in terms of train usage in Torfaen the communities of Pontypool / New Inn and Cwmbran are closely served by the Marches railway line to Newport, Manchester and beyond, with no nearby trains serving Blaenavon or Ponthir.

Table M: Mode of Travel to Work - Resident Population in Employment (% of journeys) 2021 Census

Method of travel to workplace	Blaenau Gwent	Caerphilly	Monmouthshire	Newport	Torfaen	South-East Wales
Work mainly at or from home	14.0%	23.9%	34.3%	28.0%	22.3%	27.6%
Underground, metro, light rail, tram	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Train	0.5%	1.5%	0.6%	1.0%	0.5%	1.3%
Bus, minibus or coach	1.5%	2.2%	0.5%	2.8%	2.2%	2.7%
Taxi	0.5%	0.5%	0.2%	1.5%	0.9%	0.6%
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%
Driving a car or van	68.5%	59.7%	52.4%	52.0%	61.9%	53.8%
Passenger in a car or van	7.4%	5.5%	3.1%	5.6%	5.2%	4.9%
Bicycle	0.4%	0.5%	0.8%	1.3%	0.5%	1.2%
On foot	6.1%	5.2%	6.9%	6.6%	5.4%	6.8%
Other method of travel to work	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.9%	0.7%	0.8%

Source: [NOMIS](#)

4.18 **Digital Connectivity** - Table N below indicates that access to Superfast broadband (over 30Mbps) in Torfaen is slightly above the Welsh average, and apart from nearby Monmouthshire, is on a par with a high levels of Superfast broadband provision across the region. However, Torfaen has below the Wales average for access to Gigabit broadband (over 900Mbps) and Full Fibre; is mid-table in the region for Gigabit broadband access; and is the bottom in the region for access to 'Fibre to the Premises' (FTTP).

Table N: Digital Connectivity Q1 2023

Local Authority	Superfast (30+ Mbps) (% premises)	Gigabit (900+ Mbps) (% premises)	Full Fibre FTTP (% premises)	Mean Download Q1 23 (Mbps)	Mean Upload Q1 23 (Mbps)
Blaenau Gwent	98.5%	24.9%	24.9%	67.3	14.8
Bridgend	98.9%	53.8%	52.7%	82.5	21.2
Caerphilly	99.2%	47.4%	47.4%	65.1	14.3
Cardiff	98.9%	90.5%	67.8%	142.8	24.1
Merthyr Tydfil	98.9%	62.6%	62.6%	119.7	21.1
Monmouthshire	91.2%	43.7%	43.7%	66.9	14.6
Newport	98.5%	81.1%	49.0%	117.0	19.5
Rhondda Cynon Taf	98.9%	43.9%	36.2%	77.7	16.6
Torfaen	98.2%	44.1%	20.3%	85.1	13.6
Vale of Glamorgan	98.5%	83.0%	75.5%	106.2	22.7
Wales	96.8%	61.0%	46.7%	81.6	16.8

Source: <https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/councils>

- 4.19 **Highway Network** - The Council has defined the following primary and core road transport hierarchy in the Torfaen LDP, 2013: -
- **Strategic Routes:** These consist of the A4042T (Newport to Shrewsbury trunk road) and the A472 (Mid Valleys Road);
 - **County Routes:** These consist of the A4051 (Malpas Road & Cwmbran Drive), A4043 (main Pontypool to Blaenavon road), B4248 (Blaenavon to Brynmawr), B4246 (Pontypool Town Centre to Abergavenny via Abersychan, Talywain, Varteg and Blaenavon) and the B4236 (Cwmbran to Caerleon); and
 - **Local Routes:** These consist of all remaining classified roads

4.20 **Roads** - Table O below shows that Torfaen has 468.0km or 1.3% of the total road network in Wales (of 35,119.4km); also see Figure 3 below for a map of the primary transport network in Torfaen. The County Borough's principal trunk road, the A4042T, provides access to the M4 Motorway (and thus Newport, Cardiff & Bristol) to the south, Monmouthshire (Abergavenny) and ultimately Shrewsbury to the north and the A40/A449 to the east. The A465T 'Heads of the Valleys' trunk road and Blaenau Gwent CBC can be accessed to the north of Blaenavon via Brynmawr on the B4248 road. The A472 is a principal county road, which provides an east-west cross valley link from Pontypool to the A470 and Caerphilly CBC to the west and Monmouthshire CC (Usk) to the east. The A4051 'Cwmbran Drive' is a principal county road which runs north-south through Cwmbran from the A4042T at both ends. Finally, the A4043 is a principal county road which runs north to south from Blaenavon through Pontypool to the A470 'mid-valleys link road'.

Table O: Road Length by Road Class 2021/22 (km)

Location	Motorway	Trunk Road	County Road	Class B Road	Class C Road	Minor Surfaced
Blaenau Gwent	0.0	9.6	51.0	18.1	49.6	389.8
Caerphilly	0.0	4.5	96.7	64.8	152.5	859.1
Monmouthshire	22.2	101.8	58.7	150.8	465.3	839.0
Newport	25.9	8.8	50.6	49.0	147.0	461.5
Torfaen	0	14.0	26.3	17.0	84.6	326.1
Wales	134.7	1,575.6	2,773.1	3,024.8	9,854.8	17,756.6

Source: [StatsWales](https://www.statswales.gov.wales/)

4.21 **Volume of Traffic** - From Table P below, between 2011-2021 the volume (by distance) of all road traffic has marginally decreased throughout Wales and slightly increased in SE Wales. However, whilst traffic distances have decreased in all neighbouring Authorities, Torfaen has had a sizeable 8.2% increase, which will need to be considered in the new RLDP going forward. Albeit, this should be taken in context, for example, in Monmouthshire which has a similar population to Torfaen, vehicle distance is almost double, but that would be expected in a more dispersed rural authority. Also, the Torfaen distance has dropped since 2019, to 2015 levels, but updated monitoring figures are required to establish a trend.

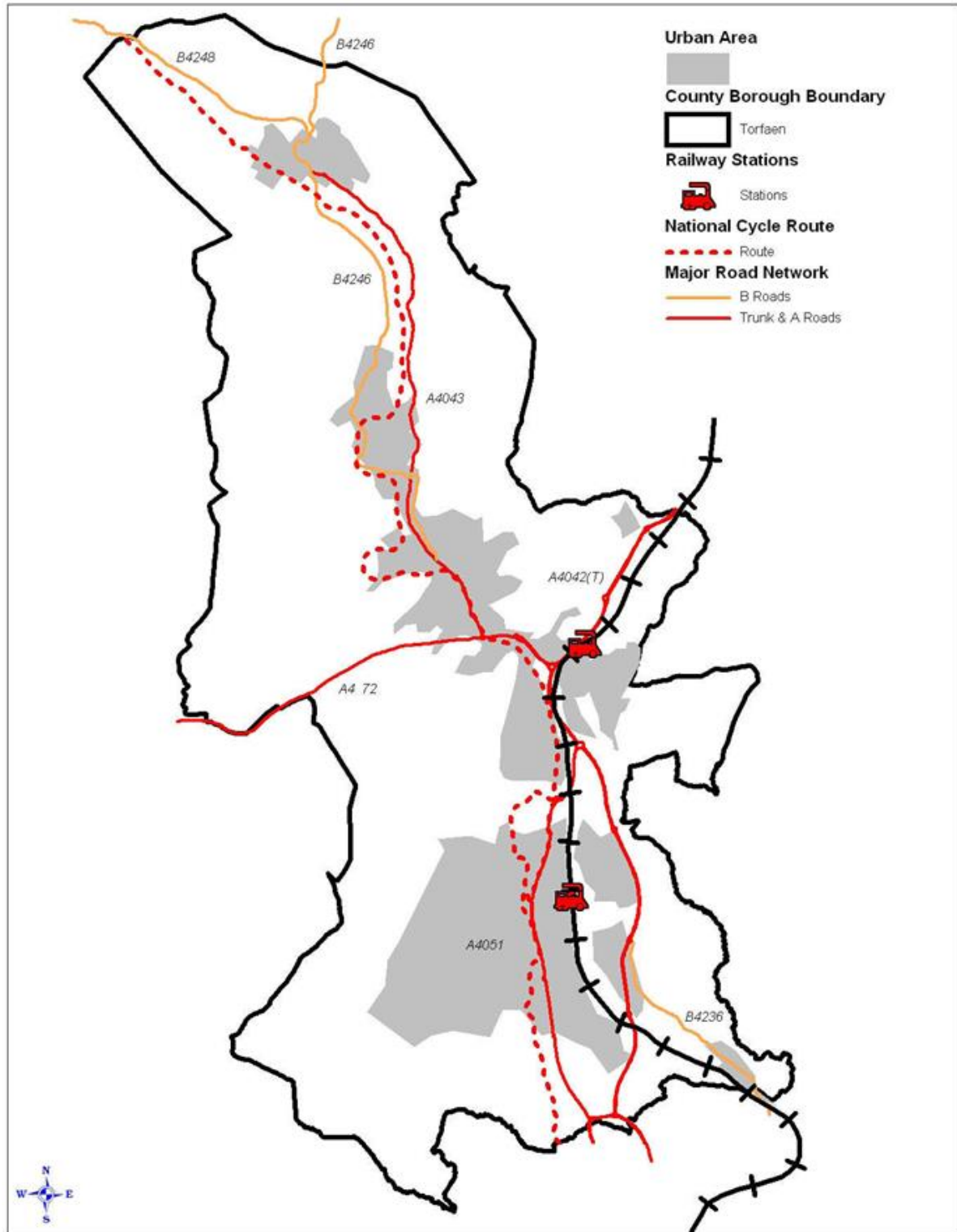
Table P: Volume of Traffic - All Roads (Billion Vehicle Kilometres) 2011 - 2021

Location	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	+/- %
Blaenau Gwent	0.390	0.396	0.432	0.422	0.428	0.370	-5.4%
Caerphilly	1.086	1.099	1.182	1.197	1.221	1.079	-0.6%
Monmouthshire	1.332	1.327	1.409	1.496	1.537	1.292	-3.1%

Newport	1.767	1.770	1.932	2.002	2.017	1.747	-1.1%
Torfaen	0.573	0.569	0.624	0.639	0.680	0.624	+8.2%
SE Wales	12.321	12.550	13.512	13.842	14.294	12.454	+1.1%
Wales	26.656	27.034	28.738	30.003	30.707	26.534	-0.5%

Source: [StatsWales](https://stats.wales.gov.uk/)

Figure 3: The Physical Transport Network in Torfaen



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HOUSING

- 4.22 **Households in the Region** - Table R below shows the estimated number of households in each Local Authority in the region and Wales.

Table Q: Households by Wales & SE Wales Local Authority (2020)

Location	Households
Blaenau Gwent	31,371
Caerphilly	77,242
Monmouthshire	40,712
Newport	66,543
Torfaen	40,813
Wales	1,378,226

Source: [StatsWales](#) -

- 4.23 **Dwellings Stock Tenure in the Region** - Tables R and S below show that with the exception of Monmouthshire the levels of owner occupied dwellings in the region are around or just below the national average for Wales. Similarly, Torfaen has the lowest level of privately rented properties (including houses in multiple occupation - HMOs) which are well below the national average for Wales; and one of the highest percentage of affordable housing in the region (with Blaenau Gwent), which are well above the national average for the region and Wales.

Table R: Dwelling Stock Estimates in Wales and SE Wales Local Authority by Tenure on 31st March 2020

	Owner Occupied		Privately Rented		Affordable		All Tenures
Blaenau Gwent	20,272	61.9%	4,721	14.4%	7,740	23.6%	32,733
Caerphilly	55,080	69.5%	9,519	12.0%	14,702	18.5%	79,301
Monmouthshire	31,987	75.5%	4,794	11.3%	5,567	13.1%	42,348
Newport	45,206	65.9%	10,122	14.8%	13,256	19.3%	68,584
Torfaen	28,238	66.8%	3,913	9.3%	10,110	23.9%	42,261
SE Wales	461,708	68.0%	102,587	15.1%	114,469	16.9%	678,764
Wales	1,002,709	69.8%	204,955	14.3%	229,903	16.0%	1,437,567

Source: [StatsWales](#)

Table S: Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) for Wales and SE Wales Local Authorities 2020/21

Local Authority	Known HMOs	Estimate of all HMOs
Blaenau Gwent	46	68
Caerphilly	233	250
Monmouthshire	68	200
Newport	410	500
Torfaen	38	60
Wales	15,247	19,587

Source: [StatsWales](#)

- 4.24 **House Price Growth in the Region** - Table T below shows that Torfaen after Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire, experienced the highest average house price increase in the region over the last 5 years at 41.1%, and was also above the Welsh average of 37.9%; but over the last year house prices only increased by 3.0% in Torfaen - which is around the average for most of the region (except for 7.4% in Monmouthshire and 14.9% in Wales):-

Table T: Average House Prices in the Region / Wales May 2018 - May 2023

Local Authority	May 2018	May 2020	May 2022	May 2023	2018/23 % Increase
Blaenau Gwent	£85,912	£92,196	£125,868	£129,372	50.6%
Caerphilly	£127,758	£139,224	£173,176	£178,834	40.0%
Monmouthshire	£249,433	£271,157	£341,995	£367,223	47.2%
Newport	£173,525	£190,548	£227,726	£234,334	35.0%
Torfaen	£136,805	£148,868	£187,422	£193,029	41.1%
Wales	£154,756	£162,701	£185,654	£213,374	37.9%

Source: HM Land Registry - [UK House Price Index](#)

- 4.25 **House Price to Income Ratio in the Region** - This is an 'affordability ratio' of what a full time employee could typically expect to spend to purchase a home in their local authority area; and is calculated by dividing the median house prices (Table U below) by the median full time gross annual residence-based earnings (Table V below) for each local authority, as follows:-

Table U: Median house price by local authority year ending December 2022

Area	Median House Price
Blaenau Gwent	£132,000
Caerphilly	£170,000
Monmouthshire	£310,000
Newport	£205,000
Torfaen	£178,000

Source: ONS - [House price Statistics for Small Areas \(HPSSAs\)](#) (Table 2a: all house types)

Table V: Median gross annual earnings by local authority 2022 (for full time employees by place of residence)

Area	Earnings
Blaenau Gwent	£25,518
Caerphilly	£25,719
Monmouthshire	£28,138
Newport	£26,400
Torfaen	£26,295

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), [Nomis](#) - (Table 8.7a Annual Pay - Gross 2022)

Note: The median is the main average used to measure earnings because the distribution of earnings is skewed, with more people earning lower salaries than higher salaries. The mean is highly influenced by values at the upper end of the distribution and may not be representative of the average earnings of a typical person. The median avoids this issue by taking the middle value of the data after sorting in ascending order and is consequently considered a better indicator of typical average earnings. With a similar argument for house prices.

Table W: Ratio of median house price to median gross annual residence-based earnings by local authority - 2022

Area	House Price to Earnings Ratio
Blaenau Gwent	5.2
Caerphilly	6.6
Monmouthshire	11.0
Newport	7.8
Torfaen	6.8

Therefore, Table W above shows that the average Torfaen employee would have to spend 6.8 times their annual gross income to purchase a house in the County Borough; with Torfaen being the median 'affordability' location in the region. For information, when someone applies for a mortgage, the lender will, in accordance with 2014 Financial Conduct Authority rules, and subject to their ability to pay, cap the loan-to-income ratio at a maximum 4.5 times their income, with the remainder being paid for by the minimum 10-15% 'deposit' if a first time buyer or the residual capital house value if it is a re-mortgage. Otherwise, two incomes will generally be required to purchase a home in Torfaen; noting that that mortgage rates improve as loan to value (LTV) increases, which also has a bearing on affordability.

5. Sustainable Settlements Assessment

Initial Ranking of Settlements based on the Three Principles

- 5.1 The Development Plans Manual (v3, 2020) recommends that LPAs should consider the most practicable way of presenting the results of the settlement assessments, for example a scoring system, or RAG (Red, Amber, and Green) analysis. The assessment will form the basis for the settlement hierarchy, identifying which settlements are most sustainable and have capacity to deliver growth.
- 5.2 For this assessment, a scoring system has been used to undertake the initial assessment of the settlements. The scores have been weighted to reflect the importance of transport services and accessibility to the sustainability of settlements. The scores achieved by each settlement against the three principles are given below, with the weighted percentage achieved by that settlement at the bottom of each table. The maximum percentage achievable for Principle 1 being 40% and for Principles 2 and 3, 30% each.

Principle 1 - Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

- 5.3 It is clear from Table 6 that there is disparity between the settlements across the County in terms of their accessibility. The top scoring settlements, Pontypool (scoring 32% out of a maximum 40%) and Cwmbran (34.3%) are both multi-modal transport hubs that benefit from some active travel routes, existing railway stations and frequent bus services. They are also well placed geographically to take advantage of the strategic road network in the County. Blaenavon scores relatively well against this principle despite lacking a train station due to its strength relating bus services and active travel to some extent. The remaining settlement of Ponthir scores less well at 13.7%, reflecting lower levels of active travel and public transport accessibility.

Table 6: Principle 1 - Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

Consideration	Settlement			
	Blaenavon	Pontypool	Cwmbran	Ponthir
Active Travel Provision	Fair	Fair	Fair	Limited
Score (max 10)	5	5	5	2
Bus Service Frequency	every 10 minutes	every 10 minutes	every 10 minutes	Every 30 minutes
Score (max 10)	10	10	10	5
Rail Services (location & frequency)	Train Station more than 3 miles	Train Station in settlement 1-2 trains / hour	Train Station in settlement 2 trains / hour	Train Station more than 3 miles
Score (max 10)	0	8	10	0
Proximity to Strategic Highway Network	Between 3 and 5 miles	Less than 3 miles	Less than 3 miles	Less than 3 miles
Score (max 5)	2	5	5	5
Total Score (max 35 points)	17	28	30	12
Weighted Score (40%)	19.4%	32.0%	34.3%	13.7%

Principle 2 - Availability of Facilities and Services

- 5.4 The extent and range of retail, community and service facilities in a settlement is a good indication of its socio-economic sustainability. All facilities and services are important to differing degrees, with significant clusters of such services having a strong bearing on the position of a settlement within the hierarchy. The availability of town, local and neighbourhood centres within settlements are therefore scored most highly, with other facilities and services only being scored if they are within a settlement but outside one of these designations. Also, with exceptions for a library, leisure centre, cinema/theatre and hospital, where only one such facility would generally be expected in a town, all other facilities are scored in relation to their total number in a settlement. For the purposes of this assessment the services and facilities have also been scored equally in view of the difficulty in developing an objective measure, when the relative importance of facilities will depend on the particular combination of circumstances in each settlement i.e. the presence of a convenience store in a settlement will score the same as the presence of a hall.
- 5.6 It is clear from Table 7, that as expected, the towns of Cwmbran and Pontypool with their town and neighbourhood centres, hospitals, libraries, leisure centres, secondary schools, several local primary schools and a range of other facilities and services score very high (29.7% and 27.3% respectively) against this principle with 30% of the overall Assessment score. This reflects the level and diversity of facilities available to serve the most populated areas of the County and reaffirms their roles as service hubs for their wider hinterlands, noting that the Gwent Police HQ, whilst not part of this analysis, is also located in Cwmbran. Blaenavon also scores reasonably well at 16.2% with its town centre offering services of a more local nature aimed at meeting the daily needs of inhabitants. However, whilst Ponthir has a primary school and good medical services, it has limited community facilities and no shops or other regular needs services within the settlement; so only scores 5.5% as a result.

Table 7: Principle 2 - Availability of Facilities and Services

Consideration	Settlement			
	Blaenavon	Pontypool	Cwmbran	Ponthir
Presence of Shops within settlement	Minor District Town Centre (TC)	Major Dis.TC Local Centres Pantry Shops	Sub-Regional TC Local Centres Pantry Shops	None
Score (max 27)	10	22	27	0
Regular Needs	3 Conv. Stores 3+ non-f. Shops 1 Post Office 0 Bank 1 Petrol Station	3+ Conv. Stores 3+ non-f. Shops 3+ Post Offices 1 Bank 3+ Petrol Stations	3+ Conv. Stores 3+ non-f. Shops 3+ Post Offices 3+ Banks 3+ Petrol Stations	0 Conv. Store 0 non-f. Shop 0 Post Office 0 Bank 0 Petrol Station
Score (max 15)	7	13	15	0
Community Facilities	3+ Public Halls 3+ P.o.Worship 1 Library (3) 0 Leisure Centre 1 Gym 1 Cin.& Theatre (3) 3 Open Spaces 3+ Sports 3 Children's Play 3+ Youth Clubs	3+ Public Hall 3+ P.o.Worship 1 Library (3) 1 Leisure C. (3) 3+ Gyms 0 Cin./Theatre 3+ Open Spaces 3+ Sports 3+ Children's Play 3+ Youth Clubs	3+ Public Hall 3+ P.o.Worship 1 Library (3) 3 Leisure C. (3) 3+ Gyms 2 Cin./Theatre (3) 3+ Open Spaces 3+ Sports 3+ Children's Play 3+ Youth Clubs	1 Public Hall 1 P.o.Worship 0 Library 0 Leisure Centre 0 Gym 0 Cin./Theatre 2 Open Spaces 2 Sports 2 Children's Play 0 Youth Club

Score (max 30)	23	27	30	8
Medical Facilities	0 Hospital 1 GP Surgery 2 Pharmacies 0 Dentist	1 Hospital (3) 3+ GP Surgeries 3+ Pharmacies 3+ Dentists	1 Hospital (3) 3+ GP Surgeries 3+ Pharmacies 3+ Dentists	0 Hospital 1 GP Surgery 1 Pharmacy 2 Dentists
Score (max 12)	3	12	12	4
Education Facilities	3+ Nursery, etc. 1 Prim. Sch. 0 Secondary/6 th Form / 0 Further Education	3+ Nursery, etc. 3+ Prim. Sch. 3+ Secondary/6 th Form / 0 Further Education	3+ Nursery, etc. 3+ Prim. Sch. 3+ Secondary/6 th Form / 1 Further Education	1 Nursery, etc. 1 Prim. Sch. 0 Secondary/6 th Form / 0 Further Education
Score (max 9)	4	9	9	2
Cafés, Bars, Pubs, Rest. & Takeaways	3+ Public House 3+ Cafés, etc.	3+ Public House 3+ Cafés, etc.	3+ Public House 3+ Cafés, etc.	2 Public House 0 Café, etc.
Score (max 6)	6	6	6	2
Broadband Connectivity (website - July 2023)	Superfast upload: 70Mb download: 16Mb	Superfast upload: 68Mb download: 18Mb	Super/Ultra-fast upload: 62/600Mb download:20/50Mb	Superfast upload: 100Mb download: 20Mb
Score (max 5)	3	3	4	3
Total Score (max 104 points)	56	92	103	19
Weighted Score (30%)	16.2%	27.3%	29.7%	5.5%

Principle 3 - Employment Opportunities

- 5.8 Local employment opportunities provide a positive indicator of a settlement's vibrancy and sustainability, especially if there is a significant range of opportunities available. Whilst there is no guarantee that these opportunities will be taken up by local residents it is important to understand the possible employment opportunities available in each settlement to gauge capacity for sustainable growth. Their availability can reduce the need for residents to travel and provide the opportunity to work closer to home.
- 5.9 The latest 2019 Annual Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) and Annual Population Survey conducted by the Office for National Statistics is the official source of employee estimates by detailed geography and broad industry and whilst these figures have been included within the settlement profiles they have not been used as part of the scoring system. The reason for this is that the data does not go down to a low enough geography for the County's smaller settlements. Instead, the scoring system has used the availability of protected and identified employment sites within settlements as well as known sources of employment for the smaller settlements. In addition, the proximity to such employment opportunities has been taken into account when scoring a settlement.
- 5.10 The settlements that score well against this principle, Cwmbran, Pontypool and Blaenavon, all provide a range of employment opportunities, with this evidenced by their higher levels of self-containment. The level of self-containment is a useful indicator of the number of people who live and work within the same settlement; this provides significant potential for sustainable travel. Opportunities to maximise the employment self-containment of these settlements could be harnessed by focussing housing and employment growth towards these settlements.

5.11 Ponthir has very limited local employment opportunities (the nearest employment site is about 1km from the centre of the village to the south east, at the Star Trading Estate in Newport) but does have access to nearby employment opportunities in the larger settlements within the County as well as neighbouring Local Authority areas via their proximity to the active travel, public transport network and road infrastructure.

Table 8: Principle 3 - Employment Opportunities

Consideration	Settlement			
	Blaenavon	Pontypool	Cwmbran	Ponthir
Area of Protected B1-B8 Use Employment Site(s) within settlement	28.3Ha	107.6Ha	189.8Ha	0Ha
Score (max 20)	8	15	20	0
Area of Permitted / Allocated Business / Industrial Sites or Mixed-Use sites within settlement	6.0Ha	7.0Ha	51.9Ha	0Ha
Score (max 20)	10	10	20	0
OR Proximity to Protected / Allocated Employment Site if not within settlement	N/A	N/A	N/A	Less than 1 mile
Score (max 5)	0	0	0	5
Total Score (max 40 points)	18	25	40	5
Weighted Score (30%)	13.5%	18.8%	30%	3.8%

6. The Settlement Hierarchy - Ranking of Settlements based on their Weighted Scores against the Three Principles and Settlement Size

- 6.1 The settlements have been divided into 3 tiers depending on their weighted score against each of the 3 principles. The tiers have been colour coded by dividing each of the three principles weighted scores equally into three; with Tier 1 green as they achieve the highest (>2/3rd) scores; the middle (1/3rd to 2/3rd) Tier 2 scores as amber; and Tier 3 with the lowest (<1/3) scores as red.
- 6.2 Using this combination of scoring and colour coding the table below provides an initial hierarchy of the settlements included in this assessment.

Table 9a: Initial Hierarchy of Settlements based on their weighted scores against the Three Principles

Settlement	Principle 1: Transport Services & Accessibility (40%)		Principle 2: Community Services & Facilities (30%)		Principle 3: Employment Opportunity (30%)		Total	
	Score %	Tier	Score %	Tier	Score %	Tier	Score %	Tier
Cwmbran	34.3%	Tier 1	29.7%	Tier 1	30%	Tier 1	94.0%	Tier 1
Pontypool	32.0%	Tier 1	27.3%	Tier 1	18.8%	Tier 2	78.1%	Tier 1
Blaenavon	19.4%	Tier 2	16.2%	Tier 2	13.5%	Tier 2	49.1%	Tier 2
Ponthir	13.7%	Tier 2	5.5%	Tier 3	3.8%	Tier 3	23.0%	Tier 3

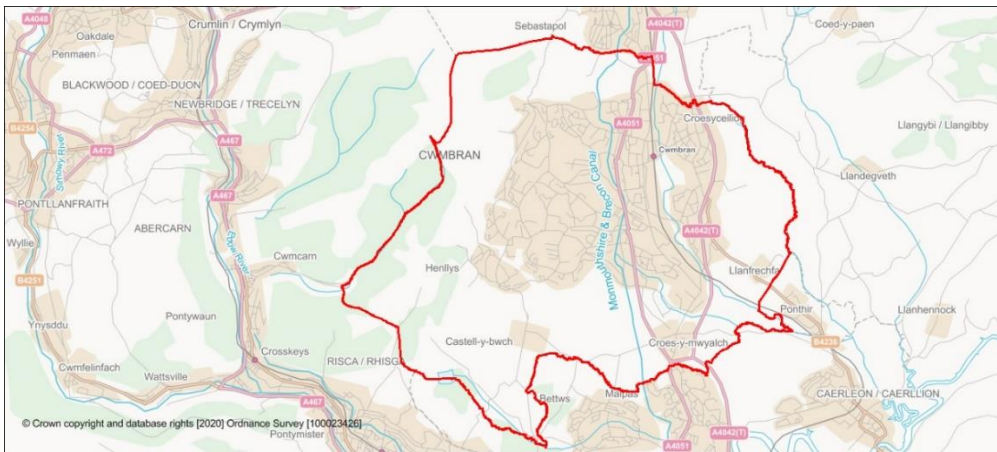
Table 9b: Overall Hierarchy of Settlements (2021 Census) Population Size

Settlement	Overall Settlement Assessment		
	Population (2021 Census)	Score	Tier
Cwmbran	48,354	10	Tier 1
Pontypool	36,629	10	Tier 1
Blaenavon	6,014	6	Tier 2
Ponthir	1,260	0	Tier 3

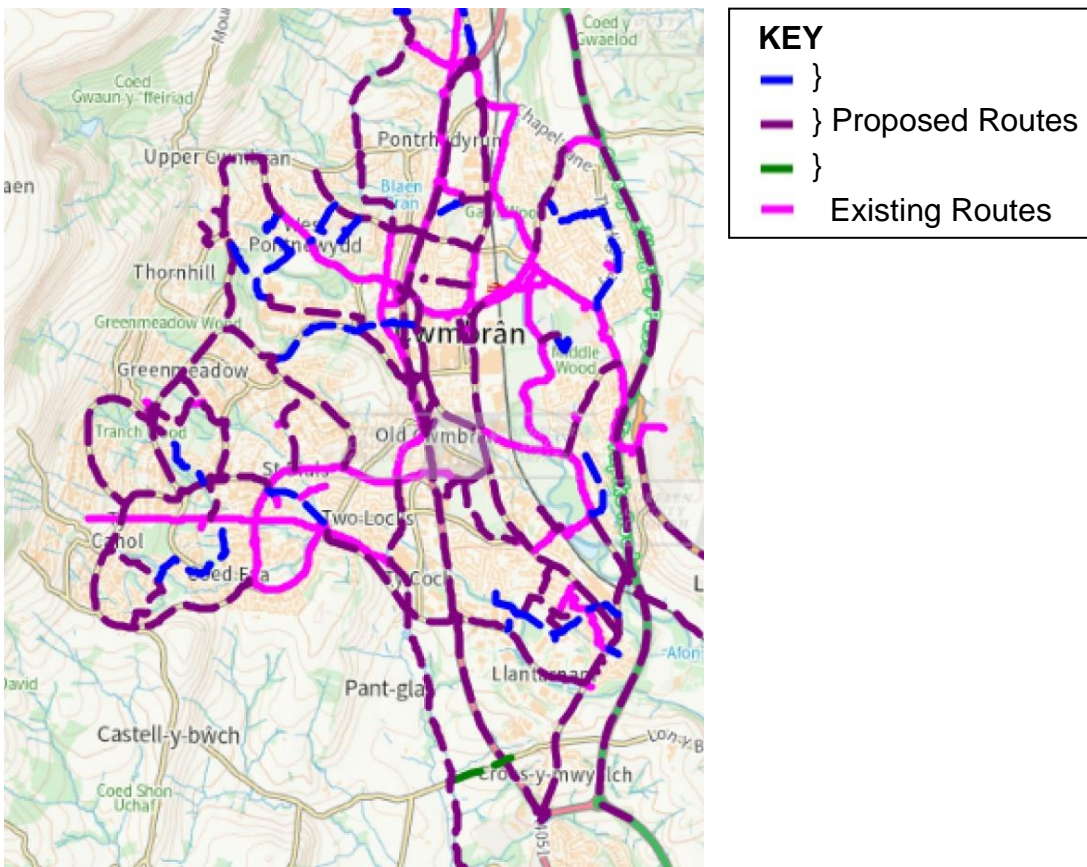
- 6.3 Therefore, the following final hierarchy of settlements within the County Borough has been identified:-
- Tier 1: Primary Settlements:** Cwmbran and Pontypool;
- Tier 2: Main Settlement:** Blaenavon; and
- Tier 3: Minor Settlement:** Ponthir.
- 6.4 This assessment has evidenced a clear hierarchy that can be used to identify which settlements are most sustainable and should thus accommodate growth.

Cwmbran

LSOA Codes					
W01001492	W01001499	W01001505	W01001521	W01001533	W01001539
W01001493	W01001500	W01001506	W01001522	W01001534	
W01001494	W01001501	W01001507	W01001526	W01001535	
W01001495	W01001502	W01001508	W01001527	W01001536	OA Code
W01001497	W01001503	W01001519	W01001528	W01001537	W00007880
W01001498	W01001504	W01001520	W01001532	W01001538	



Torfaen Active Travel Network Map, 2021 - When comparing the existing active travel routes against the proposed routes, Cwmbran has a 'Fair' (less than 50%) provision.

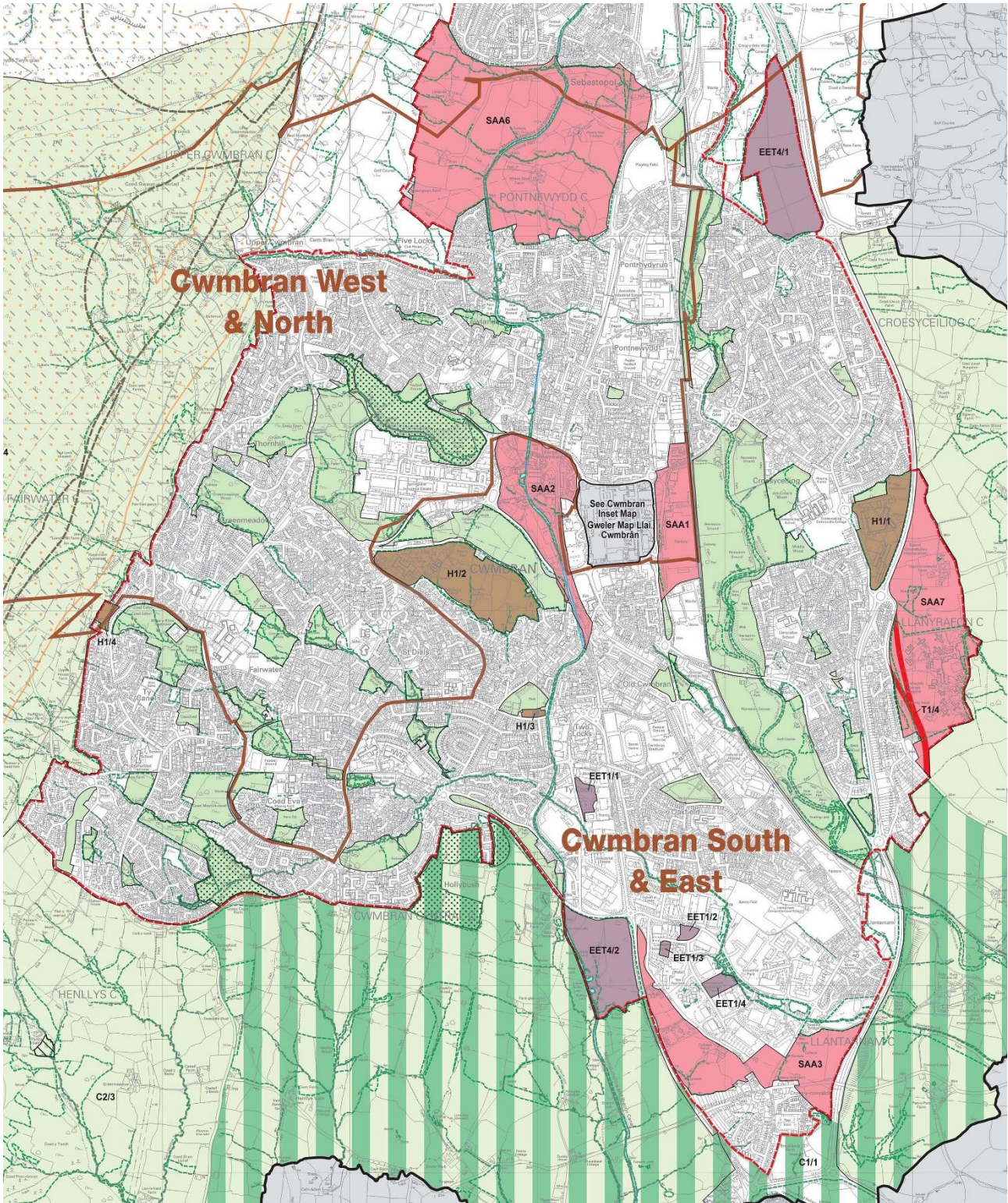


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POPULATION

Settlement Area - The settlement of Cwmbran, as defined by the current Torfaen LDP Urban Boundary covers an area of **1,764ha** (shown hatched red in the map below - noting that as Cwmbran and Pontypool share a contiguous Urban Boundary, the South Sebastopol SAA5 site and land to its east has been used to define the northern extent of Cwmbran).

Extract from Torfaen LDP Proposals Map



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Table C1: Torfaen / Cwmbran - Population Size and Age Structure (2021 Census)

Settlement	Age										Total
	0-14		15-29		30-44		45-64		65+		
	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.
Cwmbran	8,426	17.4	8,133	16.8	9,341	19.3	12,568	26.0	9,855	20.4	48,353
Torfaen	16,065	17.4	15,427	16.7	17,191	18.6	24,433	26.5	19,145	20.8	92,261

Table C2: Cwmbran - Can speak Welsh (2021 Census)

Location	Can speak Welsh	%
Cwmbran	3,750	8.0%
Torfaen	7,360	8.2%

EMPLOYMENT

Table C3: Cwmbran - Economically Active / Employed (2021 Census)

Location	Economically active	Economically active %	Employed	Employed %
Cwmbran	22,845	58.0%	21,609	54.9%
Torfaen	42,917	57.1%	40,642	54.1%

Table C4: Cwmbran - Occupations of Local Residents (2021 Census)

	No.	%	Torfaen
All Usual Residents aged 16 +	21,608	-	40,654
1. Managers, directors and senior officials	2,153	10.0%	9.7%
2. Professional occupations	3,292	15.2%	15.1%
3. Associate professional and technical occupations	2,673	12.4%	12.2%
4. Administrative and secretarial occupations	2,316	10.7%	10.3%
5. Skilled trades occupations	2,370	11.0%	11.8%
6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations	2,408	11.1%	11.6%
7. Sales and customer service occupations	1,976	9.1%	8.5%
8. Process, plant and machine operatives	2,070	9.9%	9.6%
9. Elementary occupations	2,350	10.9%	11.2%

Table C5: Cwmbran - Industrial Classification of Local Residents (2021 Census) - includes Ponthir

	No.	%	Torfaen
All Usual Residents aged 16+ employment	21,195	52.6%	40,261
A. Agriculture, forestry and fishing	52	0.2%	0.3%
B. Mining and quarrying	15	0.1%	0.1%
C. Manufacturing	2,520	11.4%	14.7%
D. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	167	0.8%	0.8%
E. Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	221	1.0%	0.9%
F. Construction	2,003	9.0%	8.9%
G. Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	3,563	16.1%	16.0%
H. Transport and storage	917	4.1%	4.1%
I. Accommodation and food service activities	846	3.8%	4.6%
J. Information and communication	550	2.5%	1.9%
K. Financial and insurance activities	737	3.3%	3.0%
L. Real estate activities	413	1.9%	2.1%
M. Professional, scientific and technical activities	836	3.8%	3.2%
N. Administrative and support service activities	916	4.1%	4.0%
O. Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	2,411	10.9%	9.8%
P. Education	1,814	8.2%	9.0%
Q. Human health and social work activities	3,377	15.2%	13.8%
R, S, T, U. Other	837	3.8%	4.0%

Table C6: Levels of Self-Containment / Commuting to Work Distance (2021 Census)

Settlement	Works mainly from home		Less than 5km		5km to less than 10km		10km to less than 20km		20km and over		works mainly offshore, in no fixed place or outside the UK	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Blaenavon	410	16.2	363	14.4	491	19.4	555	22.0	333	13.1	373	14.8
Cwmbran	5,183	24.0	6,368	29.5	2,964	13.7	2,129	9.8	1,938	9.0	3,036	14.0
Ponthir	258	45.3	97	17.0	75	13.2	28	4.9	63	11.1	49	8.6
Pontypool	3,203	20.1	3,701	23.2	2,495	15.6	2,777	17.4	1,595	10.0	2,182	13.7
Torfaen	9,052	22.3	10,529	25.9	6,025	14.8	5,489	13.5	3,929	9.6	5,640	13.9

Table C7: Area of B1-B8 Use Employment Site(s) within Cwmbran, March 2020

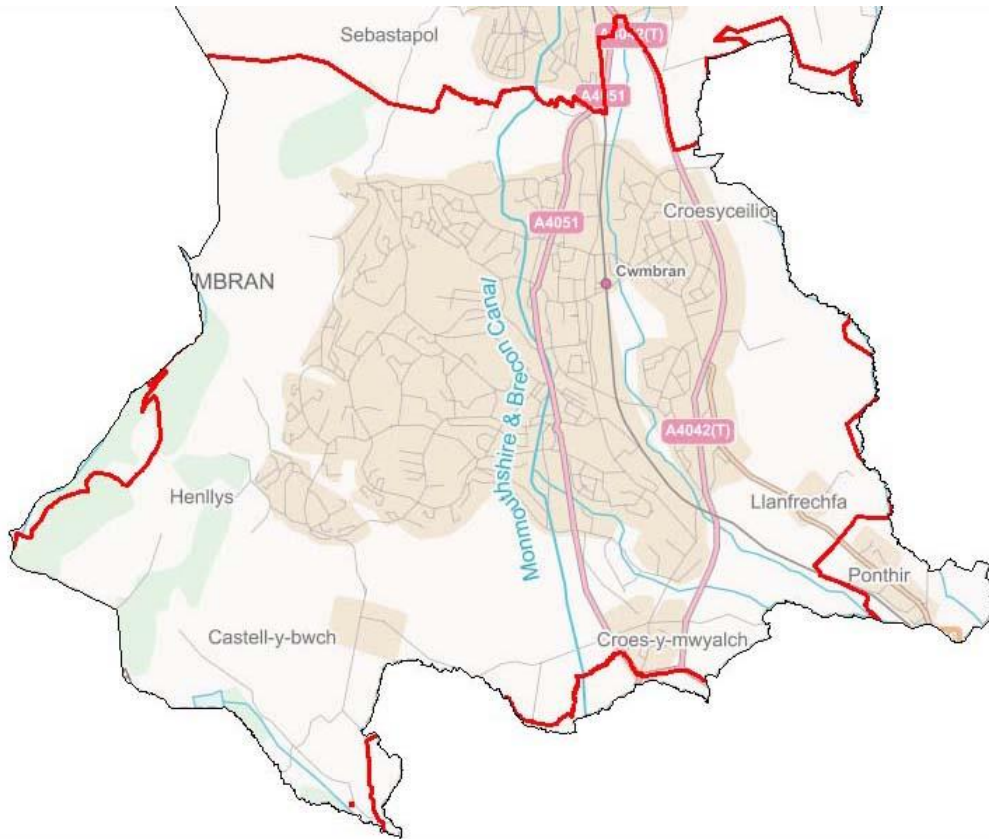
Name of Employment Site	Site Area (Ha)
Ardep	0.65
Avondale Industrial Estate	15.33
Burtons	4.74
Chapel Lane	2.57
Court Road Industrial Estate	11.53
Eastern Strip * 13.99Ha total less 2.7Ha in Table C8 (SAA1) below	11.29 *
Forgehammer Industrial Estate	2.98
Forgeside Industrial Estate	1.02
Grange Industrial Estate	2.72
Hill Street	2.98
Knauf Insulation	12.44
Llantarnam Industrial Estate * 67.35Ha total less 9.4Ha in Table C8 (EET1/4 & SAA3) below	57.95 *
Oldbury Road	6.42
Somerset Industrial Estate	7.09
Springvale	24.07
Station Road, Afon Terrace	4.03
Two Locks	0.26
Ty Coch, Ty Coch Way	21.76
TOTAL	189.83Ha

Table C8: Area of Permitted / Allocated (in Torfaen LDP) Business / Industrial Sites or Mixed-Use Sites within Cwmbran, April 2022

LDP Policy	Name of Employment Site	Remaining Ha
EET1/4	Llantarnam Park C	1.4
SAA1	Eastern Strip Central Strategic Action Area	2.7
SAA3	Llantarnam Strategic Action Area	8.0
SAA7	Llanfrechfa Grange Strategic Action Area	4.8
EET4/1	Craig Y Felin, Cwmbran	21.0
EET4/2	Former Ty Coch Tip, Cwmbran	14.0
Total		51.9Ha

HOUSING

Housing data is generally provided at postcode geographies; therefore, for Cwmbran the **NP44** postcodes have been used.



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Table C9: Households (2021 Census)

Location	Households
Cwmbran	21,004
Torfaen	40,230

Table C10: Average 2022 house prices in Cwmbran (HM Land Registry)

Location	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flat/Maisonette	Average
Cwmbran	£356,828	£210,476	£168,579	£101,157	£216,300
Torfaen	£354,283	£202,314	£156,569	£98,853	£205,109

Note: the **NP44** postcodes were used for Cwmbran.

Source: <https://landregistry.data.gov.uk/app/standard-reports>

House price to income ratio - is calculated as the ratio of the average house price for the settlement against the median annual salary for Torfaen.

- To find the median salary for Torfaen, we used [ONS data](#) from 2022 which can be found here (Table 8.7a Annual Pay - Gross 2022) = **£26,295**
- The Average House Price for Cwmbran was taken from Table C10 above.

Table C11: House Price to Income Ratio for Cwmbran in 2022

Location	Average House Price	Median Gross Annual Salary (Torfaen)	House Price to Income Ratio
Cwmbran	£216,300	£26,295	x 8.23
Torfaen	£205,109	£26,295	x 7.80

Table C12: Social Rented Affordable Housing Need in Cwmbran by current location of the applicant (Torfaen Homeseeker Register) - July 2023

Location	No of Bedrooms				Total
	1	2	3	4+	
Cwmbran	808	271	197	36	1,312
Rest of Torfaen	638	270	227	25	1,160
Outside Torfaen	233	81	60	10	384
Unknown	58	3	0	1	62
Grand Total	1,737	625	484	72	2,918

Note: the **NP44** postcodes were used for Cwmbran.

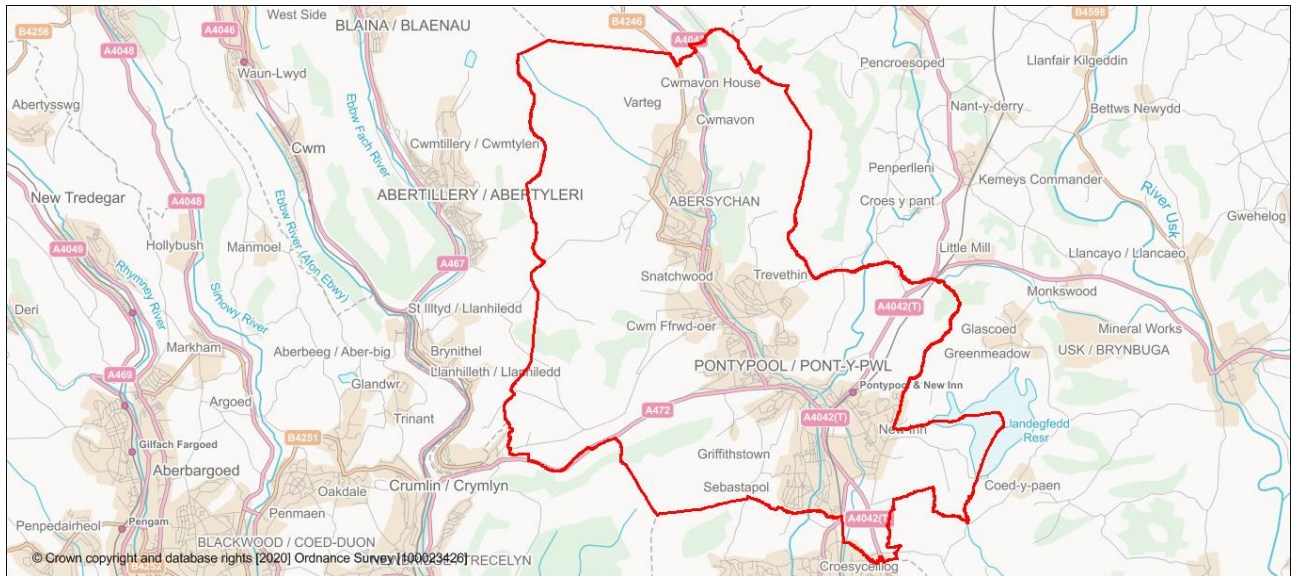
Table C13: Social Rented Affordable Housing Need in Cwmbran by applicant's area(s) of preference (Torfaen Homeseeker Register) - July 2023

Location	No of Bedrooms				Total	% of Register (2,918 applicants)	Only Cwmbran (2,084 - 555)
	1	2	3	4+			
Cwmbran	1,253	451	330	50	2,084	71.4%	1,529
Rest of Torfaen	814	314	226	35	1,389	-	-
Grand Total	2,067	765	556	85	3,473	-	-

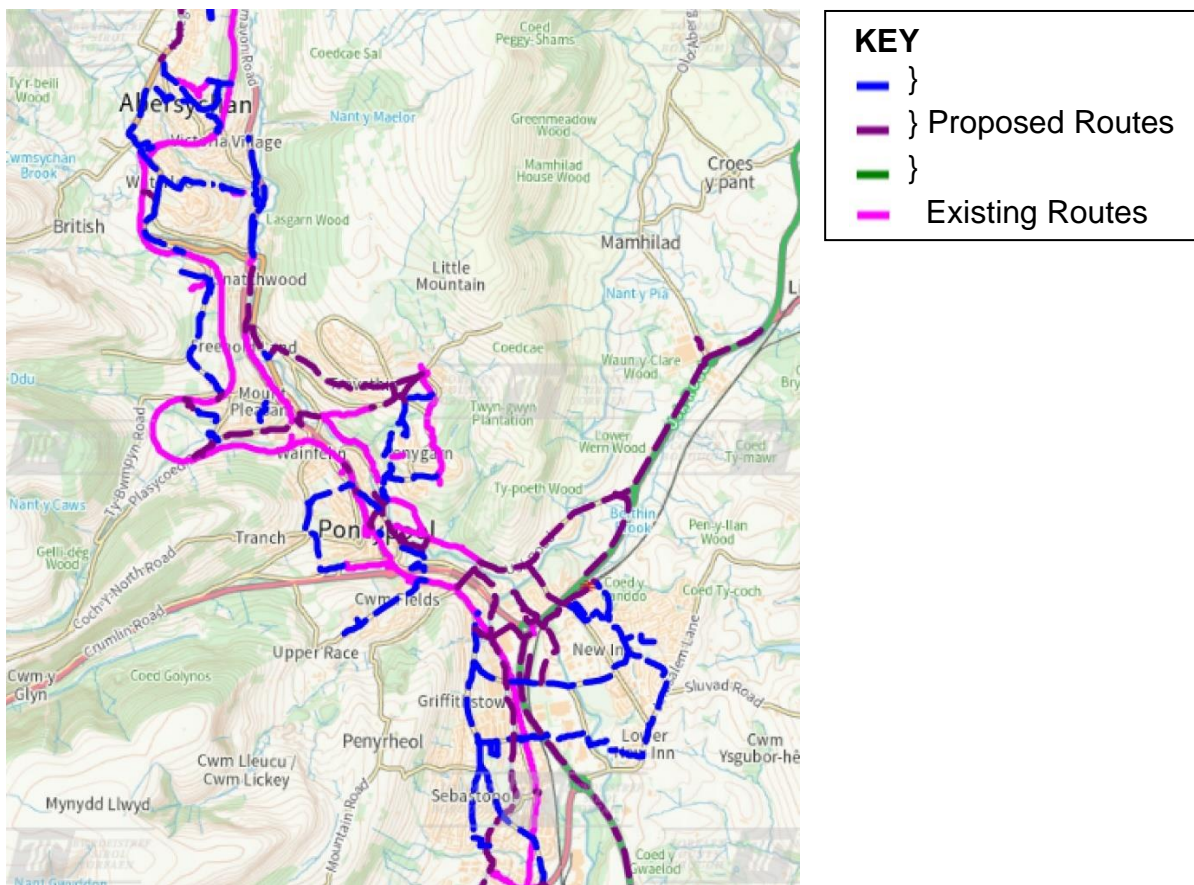
Note: because applicants can choose more than one settlement area, the overall figures are higher than the number of applicants on the register; i.e. 3,473 - 2,918 = 555 applicants have chosen more than one settlement area.

Pontypool

Pontypool LSOA Codes					
W01001482	W01001486	W01001511	W01001515	W01001523	W01001530
W01001483	W01001491	W01001512	W01001516	W01001524	W01001531
W01001484	W01001496	W01001513	W01001517	W01001525	W01001540
W01001485	W01001510	W01001514	W01001518	W01001529	W01001541



Torfaen Active Travel Network Map, 2021 - When comparing the existing active travel routes against the proposed routes, Pontypool has a 'Fair' (less than 50%) provision.

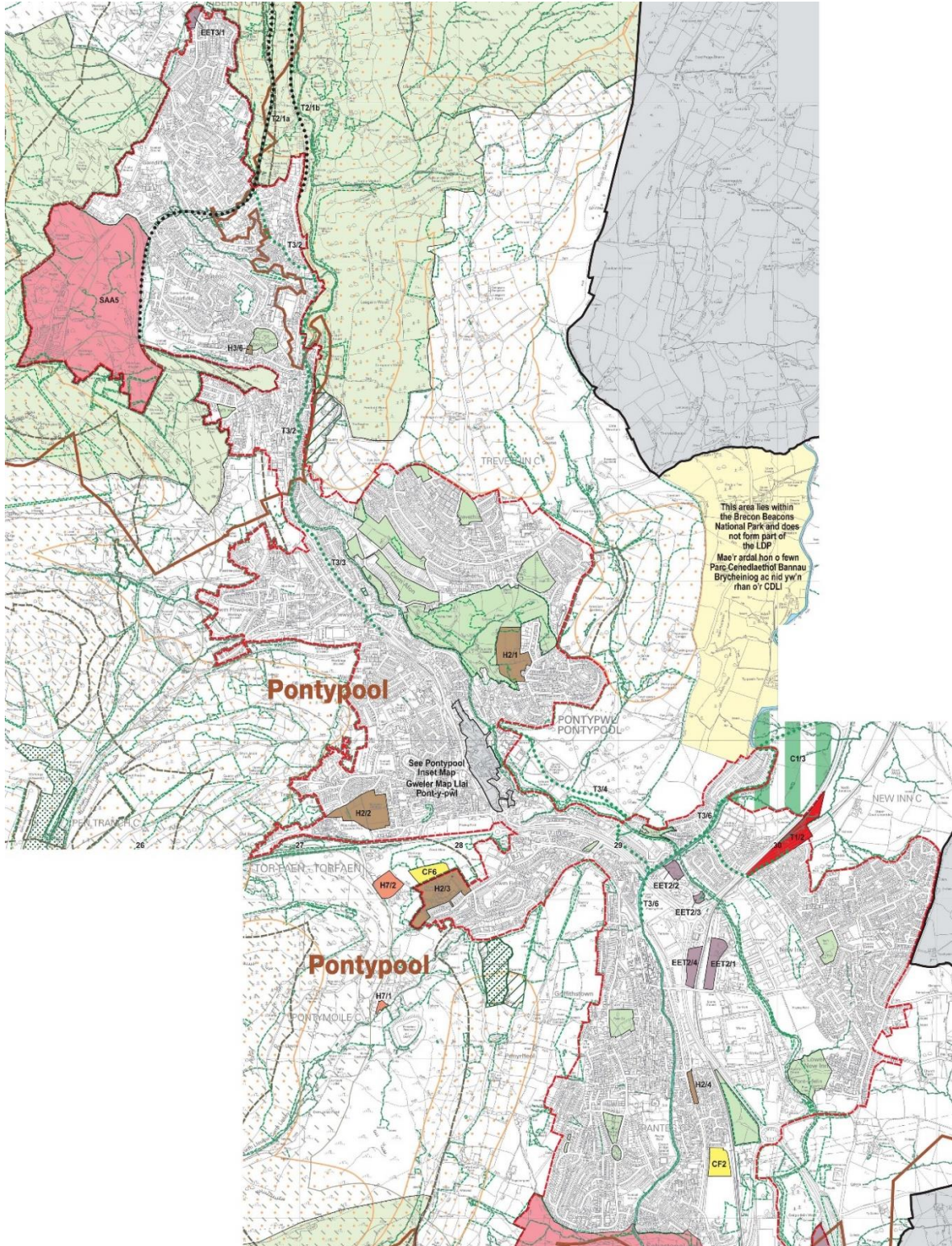


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POPULATION

Settlement Area - The settlement of Pontypool, as defined by the current Torfaen LDP Urban Boundary covers an area of **1,174ha** (shown hatched red in the map below - noting that as Pontypool and Cwmbran share a contiguous Urban Boundary, land to the north of the South Sebastopol SAA5 site has been used to define the southern boundary of Pontypool).

Extract from Torfaen LDP Proposals Map



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Table PI1: Torfaen / Pontypool - Population Size and Age Structure (2021 Census)

Settlement	Age										Total
	0-14		15-29		30-44		45-64		65+		
	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.
Pontypool	6,365	17.4	6,069	16.6	6,545	17.9	9,927	27.1	7,717	21.1	36,623
Torfaen	16,065	17.4	15,427	16.7	17,191	18.6	24,433	26.5	19,145	20.8	92,261

Table PI2: Pontypool - Can speak Welsh (2021 Census)

Population	Can speak Welsh	%
Pontypool	2,968	8.4%
Torfaen	7,360	8.2%

EMPLOYMENT

Table PI3: Pontypool - Economically Active / Employed (2021 Census)

Population	Economically active	Economically active %	Employed	Employed %
Pontypool	16,809	56.4%	15,943	53.5%
Torfaen	43,820	66.3%	35,109	53.1%

Table PI4: Pontypool - Occupations of Local Residents (2021 Census)

	No.	%	Torfaen
All Usual Residents aged 16 +	15,945	-	40,654
1. Managers, directors and senior officials	1,512	9.5%	9.7%
2. Professional occupations	2,354	14.8%	15.1%
3. Associate professional and technical occupations	1,948	12.2%	12.2%
4. Administrative and secretarial occupations	1,564	9.8%	10.3%
5. Skilled trades occupations	1,997	12.5%	11.8%
6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations	1,910	12.0%	11.6%
7. Sales and customer service occupations	1,252	7.9%	8.5%
8. Process, plant and machine operatives	1,533	9.6%	9.6%
9. Elementary occupations	1,875	11.8%	11.2%

Table PI5: Pontypool - Industrial Classification of Local Residents (2021 Census)

	No.	%	Torfaen
All Usual Residents aged 16+ in employment	15,954	39.6%	40,261
A. Agriculture, forestry and fishing	54	0.3%	0.3%
B. Mining and quarrying	2	0.0%	0.1%
C. Manufacturing	1,865	11.7%	14.7%
D. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	115	0.7%	0.8%
E. Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	182	1.1%	0.9%
F. Construction	1,543	9.7%	8.9%

G. Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	2,345	14.7%	16.0%
H. Transport and storage	662	4.1%	4.1%
I. Accommodation and food service activities	598	3.7%	4.6%
J. Information and communication	340	2.1%	1.9%
K. Financial and insurance activities	404	2.5%	3.0%
L. Real estate activities	381	2.4%	2.1%
M. Professional, scientific and technical activities	542	3.4%	3.2%
N. Administrative and support service activities	596	3.7%	4.0%
O. Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	1,633	10.2%	9.8%
P. Education	1,340	8.4%	9.0%
Q. Human health and social work activities	2,775	75.4%	13.8%
R, S, T, U. Other	577	3.6%	4.0%

Table PI6: Levels of Self-Containment / Commuting to Work Distance (2021 Census)

Settlement	Works mainly from home		Less than 5km		5km to less than 10km		10km to less than 20km		20km and over		works mainly offshore, in no fixed place or outside the UK	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Blaenavon	410	16.2	363	14.4	491	19.4	555	22.0	333	13.1	373	14.8
Cwmbran	5,183	24.0	6,368	29.5	2,964	13.7	2,129	9.8	1,938	9.0	3,036	14.0
Ponther	258	45.3	97	17.0	75	13.2	28	4.9	63	11.1	49	8.6
Pontypool	3,203	20.1	3,701	23.2	2,495	15.6	2,777	17.4	1,595	10.0	2,182	13.7
Torfaen	9,052	22.3	10,529	25.9	6,025	14.8	5,489	13.5	3,929	9.6	5,640	13.9

Table PI7: Area of B1-B8 Use Employment Site(s) within Pontypool, March 2020

Name of Employment Site	Site Area (Ha)
Abersychan Industrial estate	0.81
Cwmavon Brewery	0.75
Limekiln Road	0.13
Lower Mill * 4.35Ha total less 1.7Ha in Table P8 (EET2/2&3) below	2.65 *
Mamhilad Business Park * 4.2Ha total less 2.0Ha in Table P8 (EET2/5) below	2.20 *
Mamhilad Park	21.50
Panteg	1.34
Polo Grounds	19.85
Pontnewynydd	7.77
Pontyfelin	27.15
Skew Fields	5.28
South Pontypool Industrial Estate * 8.83Ha total less 1.2Ha in Table P8 (EET2/1) below	7.63 *

House price to income ratio - is calculated as the ratio of the average house price for the settlement against the median annual salary for Torfaen.

- To find the median salary for Torfaen, we used [ONS data](#) from 2022 which can be found here (Table 8.7a Annual Pay - Gross 2022) = **£26,295**
- The Average House Price for Pontypool was taken from Table PI10 above.

Table PI11: House Price to Income Ratio for Pontypool in 2022

Location	Average House Price	Median Gross Annual Salary (Torfaen)	House Price to Income Ratio
Pontypool	£197,644	£26,295	x 7.52
Torfaen	£205,109	£26,295	x 7.80

Table PI12: Social Rented Affordable Housing Need in Pontypool by current location of the applicant (Torfaen Homeseeker Register) - July 2023

Location	No of Bedrooms				Total
	1	2	3	4+	
Pontypool	560	221	186	22	989
Rest of Torfaen	886	320	238	39	1483
Outside Torfaen	233	81	60	10	384
Unknown	58	3	0	1	62
Grand Total	1,737	625	484	72	2,918

Note: the NP4 0, 5, 6, 7 & 8 postcodes were used for Pontypool.

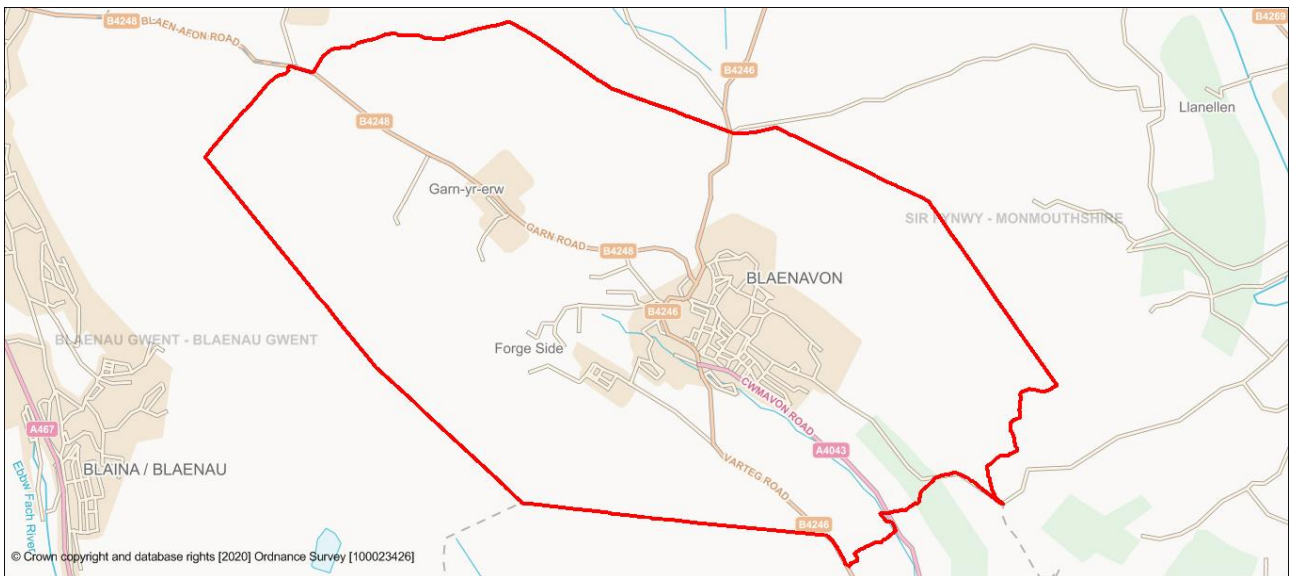
Table PI13: Social Rented Affordable Housing Need in Pontypool by applicant's area(s) of preference (Torfaen Homeseeker Register) - July 2023

Location	No of Bedrooms				Total	% of Register (2,918 applicants)	Only Pontypool (1,334 - 692)
	1	2	3	4+			
Pontypool	783	307	212	32	1,334	45.7%	642
Rest of Torfaen	1,359	490	372	55	2,276	-	-
Grand Total	2,142	797	584	87	3,610	-	-

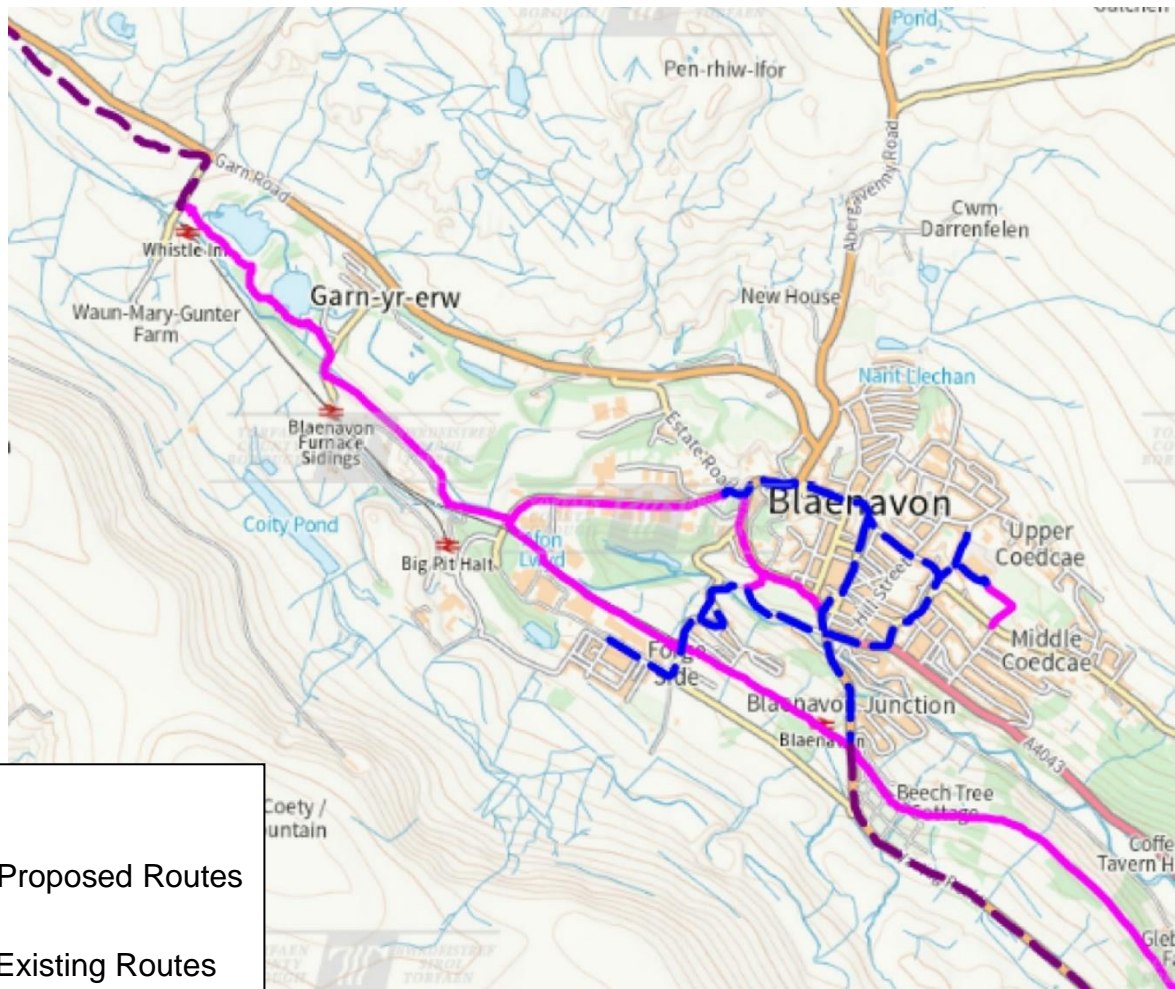
Note: because applicants can choose more than one settlement area, the overall figures are higher than the number of applicants on the register; i.e. 3,610 - 2,918 = 692 applicants have chosen more than one settlement area.

Blaenavon

Blaenavon LSOA Codes			
W01001487	W01001488	W01001489	W01001490



Torfaen Active Travel Network Map, 2021 - When comparing the existing active travel routes against the proposed routes, Blaenavon has a 'Fair' (less than 50%) provision.

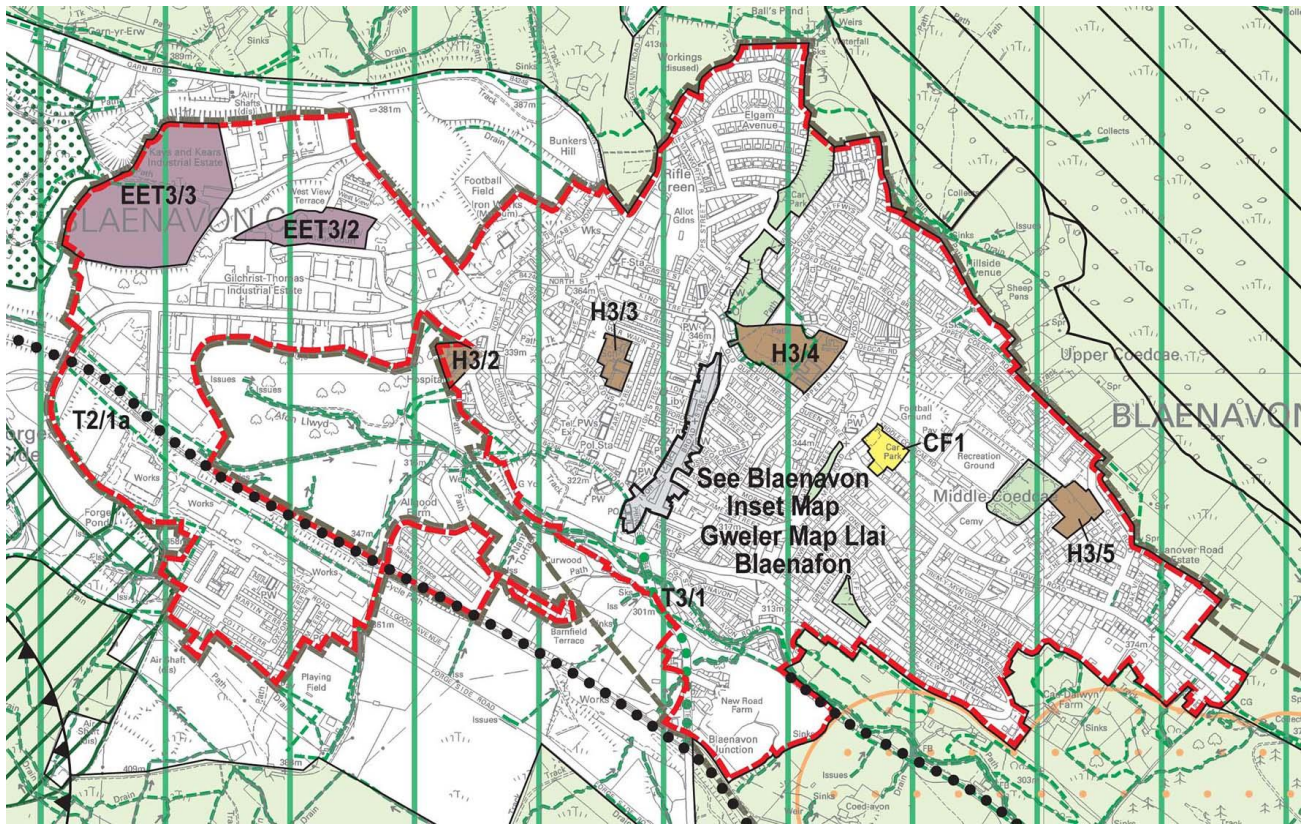


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POPULATION

Settlement Area - The settlement of Blaenavon, as defined by the current Torfaen LDP Urban Boundary (shown hatched red in the map below), covers an area of **171.8ha**.

Extract from Torfaen LDP Proposals Map



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Table B1: Torfaen / Blaenavon - Population Size and Age Structure (2021 Census)

Settlement	Age										Total
	0-14		15-29		30-44		45-64		65+		
	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	
Blaenavon	1,118	18.5	1,072	17.8	1,135	18.8	1,530	25.4	1,172	19.4	6,027
Torfaen	16,065	17.4	15,427	16.7	17,191	18.6	24,433	26.5	19,145	20.8	92,261

Table B2: Blaenavon - Can speak Welsh (2021 Census)

Location	Can speak Welsh	%
Blaenavon	539	9.3%
Torfaen	7,360	8.2%

EMPLOYMENT

Table B3: Blaenavon - Economically Active / Employed (2021 Census)

Location	Economically active	Economically active %	Employed	Employed %
Blaenavon	2,677	55.6%	2,520	52.3%
Torfaen	43,820	66.3%	35,109	53.1%

Table B4: Blaenavon - Occupations of Local Residents (2021 Census)

	No.	%	Torfaen
All Usual Residents aged 16 +	2,528	-	40,654
1. Managers, directors and senior officials	192	7.6%	9.7%
2. Professional occupations	318	12.6%	15.1%
3. Associate professional and technical occupations	261	10.3%	12.2%
4. Administrative and secretarial occupations	238	9.4%	10.3%
5. Skilled trades occupations	384	15.2%	11.8%
6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations	337	13.3%	11.6%
7. Sales and customer service occupations	199	7.9%	8.5%
8. Process, plant and machine operatives	288	11.4%	9.6%
9. Elementary occupations	311	12.3%	11.2%

Table B5: Blaenavon - Industrial Classification of Local Residents (2021 Census)

	No.	%	Torfaen
All Usual Residents aged 16+ in employment	2,525	6.3%	40,261
A. Agriculture, forestry and fishing	4	0.2%	0.3%
B. Mining and quarrying	1	0.0%	0.0%
C. Manufacturing	334	13.2%	11.6%
D. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	18	0.7%	0.7%
E. Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	42	1.7%	1.1%
F. Construction	265	10.5%	9.5%
G. Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	341	13.5%	15.4%
H. Transport and storage	94	3.7%	4.1%
I. Accommodation and food service activities	114	4.5%	3.8%
J. Information and communication	33	1.3%	2.3%
K. Financial and insurance activities	38	1.5%	2.9%
L. Real estate activities	63	2.5%	2.1%
M. Professional, scientific and technical activities	71	2.8%	3.6%
N. Administrative and support service activities	106	4.2%	4.0%
O. Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	237	9.4%	10.5%
P. Education	176	7.0%	8.2%
Q. Human health and social work activities	514	20.4%	16.4%
R, S, T, U. Other	74	2.9%	3.7%

Table B6: Levels of Self-Containment / Commuting to Work Distance (2021 Census)

Settlement	Works mainly from home		Less than 5km		5km to less than 10km		10km to less than 20km		20km and over		works mainly offshore, in no fixed place or outside the UK	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Blaenavon	410	16.2	363	14.4	491	19.4	555	22.0	333	13.1	373	14.8
Cwmbran	5,183	24.0	6,368	29.5	2,964	13.7	2,129	9.8	1,938	9.0	3,036	14.0
Ponther	258	45.3	97	17.0	75	13.2	28	4.9	63	11.1	49	8.6
Pontypool	3,203	20.1	3,701	23.2	2,495	15.6	2,777	17.4	1,595	10.0	2,182	13.7
Torfaen	9,052	22.3	10,529	25.9	6,025	14.8	5,489	13.5	3,929	9.6	5,640	13.9

Table B7: Area of B1-B8 Use Employment Site(s) within Blaenavon, March 2020

Name of Employment Site	Site Area (Ha)
Forgeside (Doncaster's)	8.46
Gilchrist Thomas Industrial Estate	17.45
Kays and Kears * 8.36Ha total less 6.0Ha in Table B8 (EET3/3) below	2.36 *
Total	28.27Ha

Table B8: Area of Permitted / Allocated (in Torfaen LDP) Business / Industrial Sites or Mixed-Use Sites within Blaenavon, April 2022

LDP Policy	Name of Employment Site	Remaining Ha
EET3/3	Kays and Kears, Blaenavon	6.0
Total		6.0Ha

HOUSING

Table B9: Households (2021 Census)

Location	Households
Blaenavon	2,681
Torfaen	40,230

Table B10: Average 2022 house prices in Blaenavon (HM Land Registry)

Location	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flat/ Maisonette	Average
Blaenavon	£260,314	£158,000	£129,873	£74,750	£149,468
Torfaen	£354,283	£202,314	£156,569	£98,853	£205,109

Source: <https://landregistry.data.gov.uk/app/standard-reports>

Note: the **NP4 9** postcode was used for Blaenavon - see map below:-



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House price to income ratio - is calculated as the ratio of the average house price for the settlement against the median annual salary for Torfaen.

- To find the median salary for Torfaen, we used [ONS data](#) from 2022 which can be found here (Table 8.7a Annual Pay - Gross 2022) = **£26,295**
- The Average House Price for Blaenavon was taken from Table B10 above.

Table B11: House Price to Income Ratio for Blaenavon in 2022

Location	Average House Price	Median Gross Annual Salary (Torfaen)	House Price to Income Ratio
Blaenavon	£149,468	£26,295	x 5.68
Torfaen	£205,109	£26,295	x 7.80

Table B12: Social Rented Affordable Housing Need in Blaenavon by current location of the applicant (Torfaen Homeseeker Register) - July 2023

Location	No of Bedrooms				Total
	1	2	3	4+	
Blaenavon	75	47	40	3	165
Rest of Torfaen	1,371	494	384	58	2,307
Outside Torfaen	233	81	60	10	384
Unknown	58	3	0	1	62
Grand Total	1,737	625	484	72	2,918

Note: the NP4 9 postcode was used for Blaenavon.

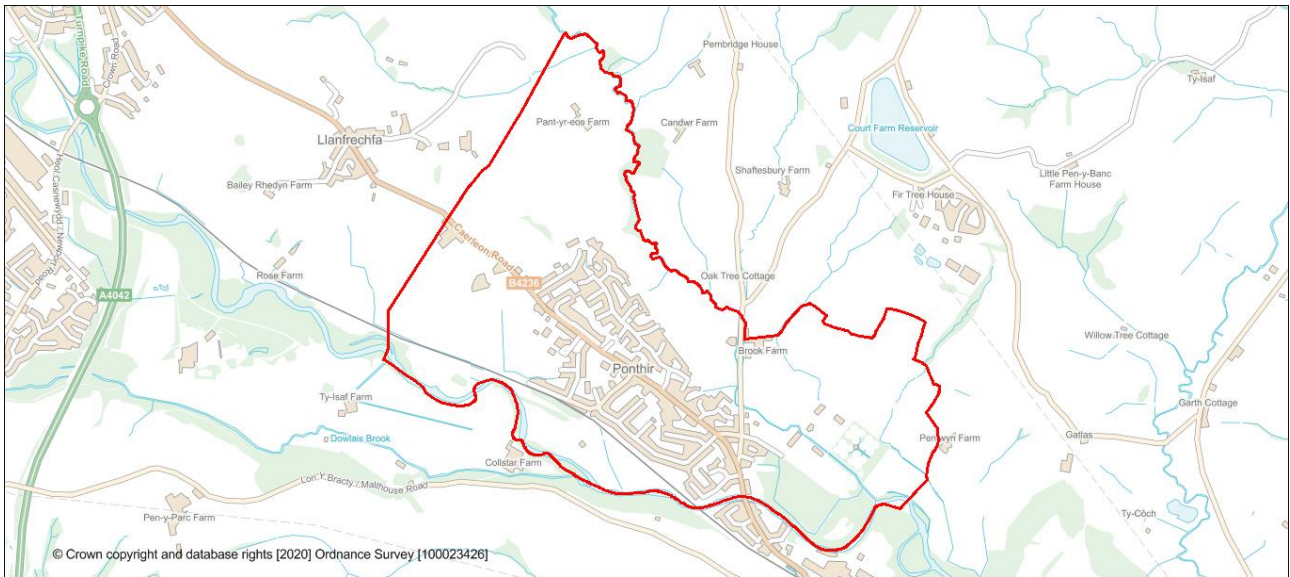
Table B13: Social Rented Affordable Housing Need in Blaenavon by applicant's area(s) of preference (Torfaen Homeseeker Register) - July 2023

Location	No of Bedrooms				Total	% of Register (2,918 applicants)	Only Blaenavon (245 - 173)
	1	2	3	4+			
Blaenavon	139	55	45	6	245	8.4%	72
Rest of Torfaen	1,692	614	471	69	2,846	-	-
Grand Total	1,831	669	516	75	3,091	-	-

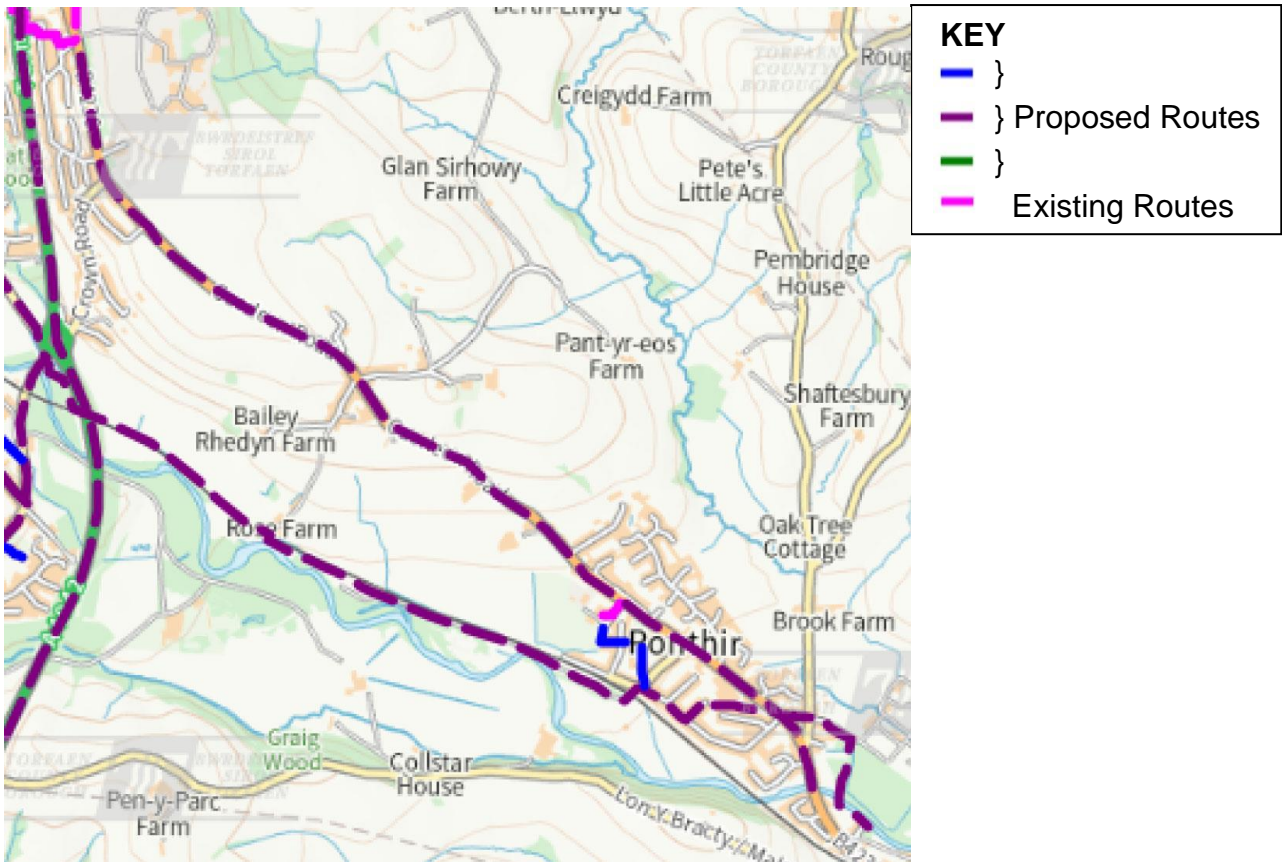
Note: because applicants can choose more than one settlement area, the overall figures are higher than the number of applicants on the register; i.e. 3,091 - 2,918 = 173 applicants have chosen more than one settlement area.

Ponthir

Ponthir OA Codes			
W00007879	W00007881	W00007882	W00007883



Torfaen Active Travel Network Map, 2021 - When comparing the existing active travel routes against the proposed routes, Ponthir has a 'limited' (only 1 short route) provision.

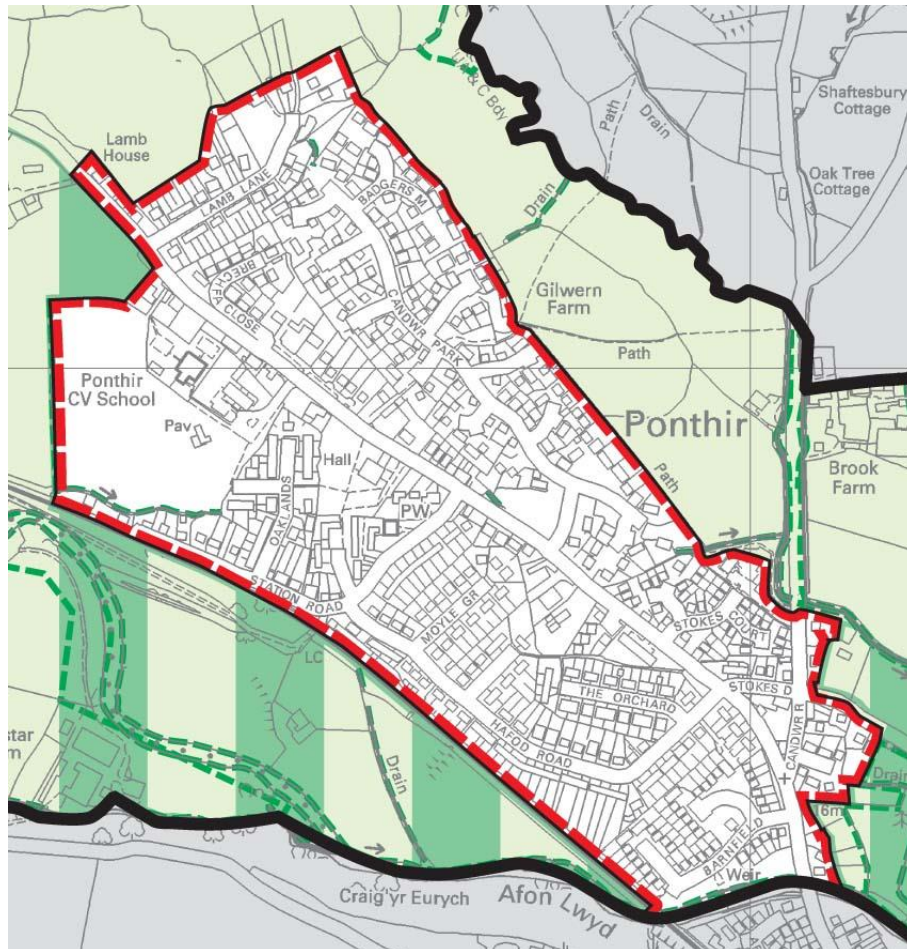


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POPULATION

Settlement Area - The settlement of Ponthir, as defined by the current Torfaen LDP Urban Boundary (shown hatched red in the map below), covers an area of **39.87ha**.

Extract from Torfaen LDP Proposals Map



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Table Pr1: Torfaen / Ponthir - Population Size and Age Structure (2021 Census)

Settlement	Age										Total pop.
	0-14		15-29		30-44		45-64		65+		
	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	pop.	%	
Blaenavon	1,118	18.5	1,072	17.8	1,135	18.8	1,530	25.4	1,172	19.4	6,027
Cwmbran	8,426	17.4	8,133	16.8	9,341	19.3	12,568	26.0	9,855	20.4	48,353
Ponthir	156	12.4	153	12.2	170	13.5	408	32.4	371	29.5	1,258
Pontypool	6,365	17.4	6,069	16.6	6,545	17.9	9,927	27.1	7,717	21.1	36,623
Torfaen	16,065	17.4	15,427	16.7	17,191	18.6	24,433	26.5	19,145	20.8	92,261

Note: Ponthir has a noticeably different age structure than all of the other Torfaen settlements; as it has a smaller % of its population aged below 44 and a greater % over 45.

Table Pr2: Ponthir - Can speak Welsh (2021 Census)

Location	Can speak Welsh	%
Ponthir	103	8.3%
Torfaen	7,360	8.2%

EMPLOYMENT

Table Pr3: Ponthir - Economically Active / Employed (2021 Census)

Location	Economically active	Economically active %	Employed	Employed %
Ponthir	586	53.5%	570	52.1%
Torfaen	43,820	66.3%	35,109	53.1%

Table Pr4: Ponthir - Occupations of Local Residents (2021 Census)

	No.	%	Torfaen
All Usual Residents aged 16 +	573	-	40,654
1. Managers, directors and senior officials	94	16.4%	9.7%
2. Professional occupations	166	29.0%	15.1%
3. Associate professional and technical occupations	98	17.1%	12.2%
4. Administrative and secretarial occupations	56	9.8%	10.3%
5. Skilled trades occupations	37	6.5%	11.8%
6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations	43	7.5%	11.6%
7. Sales and customer service occupations	34	5.9%	8.5%
8. Process, plant and machine operatives	24	4.2%	9.6%
9. Elementary occupations	21	3.7%	11.2%

Table Pr5: Ponthir - Industrial Classification of Local Residents (2011 Census) - This data is not yet available for the 2021 Census at AO level.

	No.	%	Torfaen
All Usual Residents aged 16+ in employment	665	-	40,261
A. Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1	0.2%	0.3%
B. Mining and quarrying	0	0.0%	0.1%
C. Manufacturing	77	11.6%	14.7%
D. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	4	0.6%	0.8%
E. Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	6	0.9%	0.9%
F. Construction	34	5.1%	8.9%
G. Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	76	11.4%	16.0%
H. Transport and storage	13	2.0%	4.1%
I. Accommodation and food service activities	32	4.8%	4.6%
J. Information and communication	19	2.9%	1.9%
K. Financial and insurance activities	31	4.7%	3.0%
L. Real estate activities	14	2.1%	2.1%
M. Professional, scientific and technical activities	38	5.7%	3.2%
N. Administrative and support service activities	17	2.6%	4.0%

O. Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	89	13.4%	9.8%
P. Education	100	15.0%	9.0%
Q. Human health and social work activities	90	13.5%	13.8%
R, S, T, U. Other	24	3.6%	4.0%

Table Pr6: Levels of Self-Containment / Commuting to Work Distance (2021 Census)

Settlement	Works mainly from home		Less than 5km		5km to less than 10km		10km to less than 20km		20km and over		works mainly offshore, in no fixed place or outside the UK	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Blaenavon	410	16.2	363	14.4	491	19.4	555	22.0	333	13.1	373	14.8
Cwmbran	5,183	24.0	6,368	29.5	2,964	13.7	2,129	9.8	1,938	9.0	3,036	14.0
Ponthir	258	45.3	97	17.0	75	13.2	28	4.9	63	11.1	49	8.6
Pontypool	3,203	20.1	3,701	23.2	2,495	15.6	2,777	17.4	1,595	10.0	2,182	13.7
Torfaen	9,052	22.3	10,529	25.9	6,025	14.8	5,489	13.5	3,929	9.6	5,640	13.9

Existing, Permitted or Allocated Business, Industrial or Mixed-Use Sites - There are no existing, permitted or allocated business, industrial or mixed-use sites in Ponthir. It does have limited local employment opportunities and access to employment opportunities in the much larger nearby settlements of Cwmbran and Newport. The nearest employment site is about 1km from the centre of the village to the south east, at the Star Trading Estate in Newport.

HOUSING

Table Pr7: Households (2021 Census)

Location	Households
Ponthir	557
Torfaen	40,230

Table Pr8: Average 2022 house prices in Ponthir (HM Land Registry)

Location	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flat/Maisonette	Average
Ponthir	£421,000	£251,667	£254,250	£161,000	£325,618
Torfaen	£354,283	£202,314	£156,569	£98,853	£205,109

Source: <https://landregistry.data.gov.uk/app/standard-reports>

Note: the **NP18 1** postcode was used for Ponthir - see map below:-



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House price to income ratio - is calculated as the ratio of the average house price for the settlement against the median annual salary for Torfaen.

- To find the median salary for Torfaen, we used [ONS data](#) from 2022 which can be found here (Table 8.7a Annual Pay - Gross 2022) = **£26,295**
- The Average House Price for Ponthir was taken from Table Pr8 above.

Table Pr9: House Price to Income Ratio for Ponthir in 2022

Location	Average House Price	Median Gross Annual Salary (Torfaen)	House Price to Income Ratio
Ponthir	£325,618	£26,295	x 12.38
Torfaen	£205,109	£26,295	x 7.80

Table Pr10: Social Rented Affordable Housing Need in Ponthir by current location of the applicant (Torfaen Homeseeker Register) - July 2023

Location	No of Bedrooms				Total
	1	2	3	4+	
Ponthir	3	2	1	0	6
Rest of Torfaen	1,443	539	423	61	2,466
Outside Torfaen	233	81	60	10	384
Unknown	58	3	0	1	62
Grand Total	1,737	625	484	72	2,918

Note: the NP18 1 postcode was used for Ponthir.

Table Pr11: Social Rented Affordable Housing Need in Ponthir by applicant's area(s) of preference (Torfaen Homeseeker Register) - July 2023

Location	No of Bedrooms				Total	% of Register (2,918 applicants)	Only Ponthir (146 - 146)
	1	2	3	4+			
Ponthir	88	34	21	3	146	5.0%	0
Rest of Torfaen	1,719	622	485	72	2,898	-	-
Grand Total	1,807	656	506	75	3,064	-	-

Note: because applicants can choose more than one settlement area, the overall figures are higher than the number of applicants on the register; i.e. 3,064 - 2,918 = 146 applicants have chosen more than one settlement area.