

Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council

5 Year Strategy 2026-31

Draft v2.1

Contents

Executive Summary

Introduction

Delivery Responsibilities

Vision and Key Objectives

Strategic Priorities

- Placemaking and Environment
- Community and Wellbeing
- Economy and Tourism
- Governance and Organisational Excellence
- Financial Sustainability

Key Projects

Monitoring and Review









Executive Summary

Background

Cowbridge is a historic, picturesque town with a strong community spirit and a distinctive high street. This 5-year strategy for Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council sets out our priorities and measures to help the town thrive, supported by a roadmap of priorities and underlying plans. The Town Council manages key community assets, green spaces and civic events, working closely with the Vale of Glamorgan to champion local needs and deliver shared ambitions.

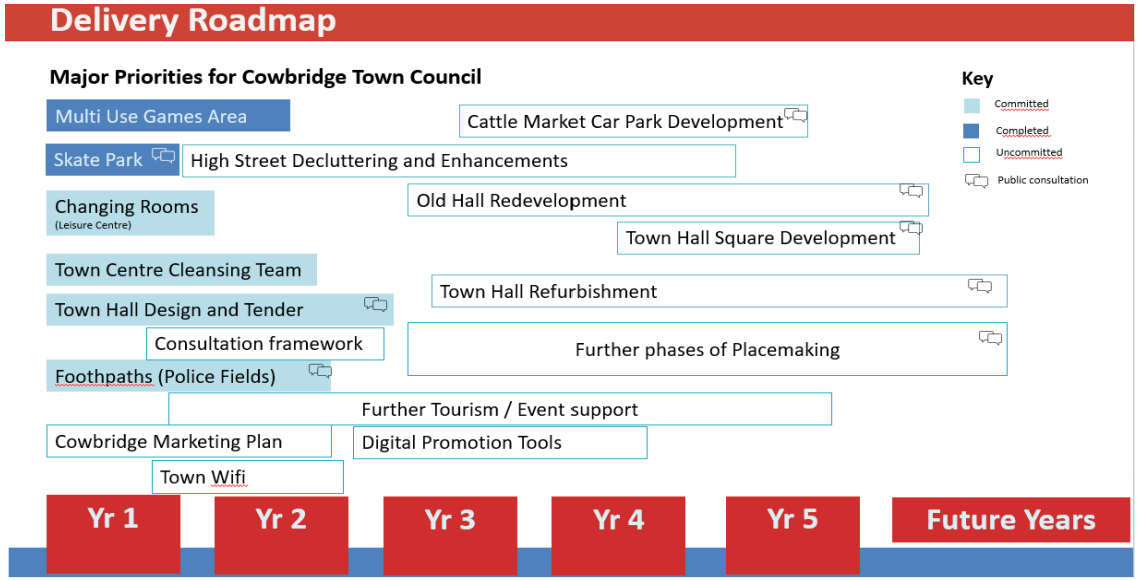
Vision

"Cowbridge will build on its heritage, embrace local enterprise and create a connected, inclusive and greener environment for all. Cowbridge will be a town where rich heritage meets a vibrant, community-driven future."

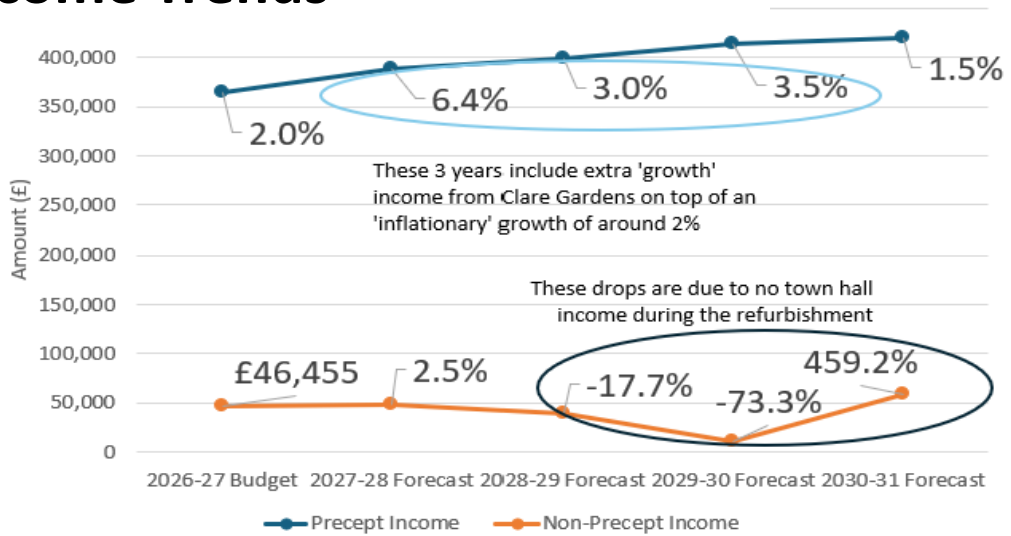
Strategic Objectives

- Sustain and enhance physical assets
- Find new opportunities for community inclusion and involvement
- Maximise footfall and translate into town prosperity
- Meet our obligations and legal responsibilities professionally and transparently
- Be financially responsible

Roadmap



Income Trends



Introduction

Our Cowbridge. Cowbridge is a historic Welsh town located in the Vale of Glamorgan – 17 miles west of Cardiff. It is known for its history, picturesque location, its unique high street and easy access to both coast and city locations. Consultation with residents and visitors in early 2026 viewed the town very positively as a welcoming, and attractive place with a strong community spirit.

Our 5 Year Strategy. *Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council* wants Cowbridge to have happy, satisfied residents and a continual influx of excited visitors. So we have developed this Town Council strategy to support Cowbridge to thrive and grow. In this document we describe our aims and priorities reflecting local aspirations and emerging challenges, key things we want to deliver and targets to measure ourselves against. Sitting underneath this strategy are more detailed plans which can flex in-line with changes affecting the town.

Priorities. In particular we want to implement enhancements to our buildings and streets – such as the Town Hall, Old Hall and street maintenance; find more funding to help our local economy and increase footfall; and strengthen our community inclusion with more local events and initiatives. Some things Cowbridge Town Council can do, others are in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council . We also do a lot of lobbying with public bodies which often goes unnoticed but can have a big impact.

Placemaking. We were the first Town Council in Wales to jointly commission a Placemaking Plan (with the Vale of Glamorgan Council). Working with the Council, businesses and community organisations, we aim to establish Cowbridge as a trailblazer in translating the principles of the *Placemaking Wales Charter*, promoted by the Design Commission for Wales, into tangible improvements, providing the leadership to turn residents' ambitions into a clear case for change and investment.

Our responsibilities. Our principal assets and services are the Town Hall, the Limes cemetery, Holy Cross Churchyard and areas of green space including some parks and playing fields. We also organise and support civic and community events and work closely with the Vale of Glamorgan council to champion local needs directly, including the joint Placemaking Plan. Other public bodies, notably the Vale Council, are responsible for other remaining public assets and services.



Our trends. Cowbridge is an affluent, growing town – with a population growth rate of 6% from 2011 to 2021 compared to the Welsh average of 1.4%. (ONS census 2021) Clare Gardens housing development will see an additional 450 houses when completed, further increasing the population.

Estimated annual retail turnover of £45.7 m - the 2nd highest trading centre in the Vale *

But the town faces the challenge of maintaining a thriving local economy in a period of economic uncertainty.

There is a heavy car dependence - 93% of visitors arrive by car. *

Community Demographics

Population of 6,573

33% of the community are over age 65

52% with Level 4 qualifications or above

82% own their own home

* Vale of Glamorgan Retail and Leisure Study 2023.

Back to contents

Delivery Responsibilities

Focus area examples 2026

Town Council's own priorities	Shared Priorities with Partners	Areas to Influence
Placemaking and Environment		
Town Hall Refurbishment ● *Lottery Funding Bid* Limes Cemetery Management ● *Ancient churchyard wall repairs* Park maintenance (Town Council's)	Placemaking Projects eg Old Hall, Active Transport Biodiversity projects ● *Litter hotspots and aareements with non council landowners* ● *Town mobile signal and unsightly infrastructure*	Waste Management ● *Lobby to protect non council owned community land, eg village green status* Planning and land use Highways, Car Parking ● *Parking, speeding and road congestion hot spots*
Community and Wellbeing		
Community Action Plan: Volunteering, Events Directory of Local Orgs Civic events – eg Remembrance Sunday Youth Council	Community Grants, Councillor community interests May Fayre ● *Local charity fundraising*	● *Parking on Bear Fields* ● *Football pitch renewal* ● *Social Housing allocation policy consultation and info sharing*
Economy and Tourism		
Christmas Lights ● *Renewal and safety of existing fittings* Town Council Efficiency	Christmas Parade Marketing Plan including content sharing, business group social media pilots ● *Supporting Cowbridge Business Group Social Media*	Empty shop appearance Affordability of business accommodation
Governance and Organisational Excellence		
Code of Corporate Governance, transparency Progress dashboards and reporting ● *5 yr strategy*	Strengthen relationships with VOG and partners Public Consultation Plans	
Financial Sustainability		
Funding Strategy (new sources incl Town Hall) Savings focus and building up reserves		Lobby for Cowbridge priorities in county budgets



Vision and key objectives

Back to contents

Vision and Key Objectives

Vision

We have engaged with the public extensively in 2025/26 to understand what is important for Cowbridge. In particular, numerous consultation events took place around our Placemaking Plan – an initiative run by the Vale of Glamorgan Council in partnership with the Town Council to make our town, streets and public spaces nicer places for people to use and enjoy.

The vision in that plan sums up our wider aspirations for Cowbridge:

“Cowbridge will build on its heritage, embrace local enterprise and create a connected, inclusive and greener environment for all. Cowbridge will be a town where rich heritage meets a vibrant, community-driven future.”

Key Objectives

We have defined the following strategic objectives. See the strategy document for further sub-objectives and details and how we will achieve them.

- **Sustain and enhance physical assets** Placemaking and Environment
- **Find new opportunities for community inclusion and involvement** Community and Wellbeing
- **Maximise footfall and translate into town prosperity** Tourism and Economy
- **Meet our obligations and legal responsibilities professionally and transparently** Governance and Organisational Excellence
- **Be financially responsible** Financial Sustainability

Current Perception

A consultation with over 40 visitors and residents in Mar 2026 gave the following 'baseline' view of Cowbridge.

Overall, the town is viewed very positively as a **welcoming, historic, and attractive place** with strong community spirit, good accessibility, and appealing surroundings. Its heritage, safety, and friendliness are major strengths. However, challenges remain around **evening activity, youth provision, facilities, cost, and promotion**, suggesting opportunities to broaden appeal and improve vibrancy without losing its character

Key Themes

1. Accessibility and Convenience

The town is easy to access and navigate, with **free and plentiful parking**, good **transport links**, and a **central location** that connects well to the wider region. These factors make it convenient for both residents and visitors.

2. Atmosphere and Community

There is a strong sense of **welcome, friendliness, and safety**. The town is described as **vibrant, lively, and busy**, with **nice people**, polite young people, and a feeling of "going back in time." It functions well as a **meeting place** and is seen as **family-friendly** and pleasant for regular visits.

3. Heritage, Culture and Character

The town's **historic and archaeological significance** stands out strongly, with repeated references to history, the castle, and a timeless character. Cultural interest is supported by **events**, **bookshops**, **gift shops**, a pottery, and the physic garden, reinforcing its distinctive identity.

4. Leisure, Nature and Wellbeing

There is good access to **country walks**, parks, playgrounds, leisure centre classes, and the countryside. These features support wellbeing and appeal to families and older visitors alike. Speciality wellbeing shops and amenities are also a draw.

5. Food, Drink and Retail

The town offers **speciality eateries**, cafés, pubs, a farmers market, clothes shops, and a major food retailer. However, there is a sense that the **range of restaurants is limited**, with gaps in evening dining and café opening hours.

6. Evening Economy and Youth Provision

The town is described as **quiet in the evenings**, particularly on Sundays, with **limited music events** and **youth amenities**. This contributes to perceptions of an **aging community** and a quieter nightlife.

7. Facilities and Infrastructure

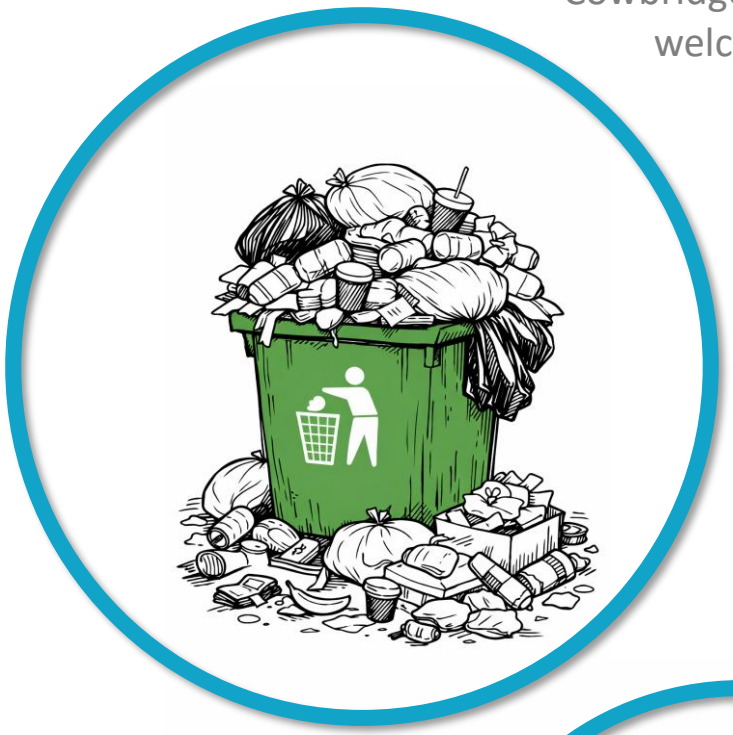
Concerns include **potholes**, the **absence of a swimming pool**, the condition of the **Town Hall building**, and **signage to attractions**. These issues affect both usability and visitor experience.

8. Cost and Promotion

The town is seen as **expensive**, and there is a feeling that local **attractions are underpromoted**, meaning its strengths may not be fully visible to visitors or new audiences.

Current Perception

"Cowbridge is warm and welcoming"



"Full of history and culture"



"The high street is struggling"

"There's not much for youngsters to do"



"The litter is unacceptable"

"The pavements are overgrown and unsafe"





"Our town hall is beautiful but in a state of disrepair"

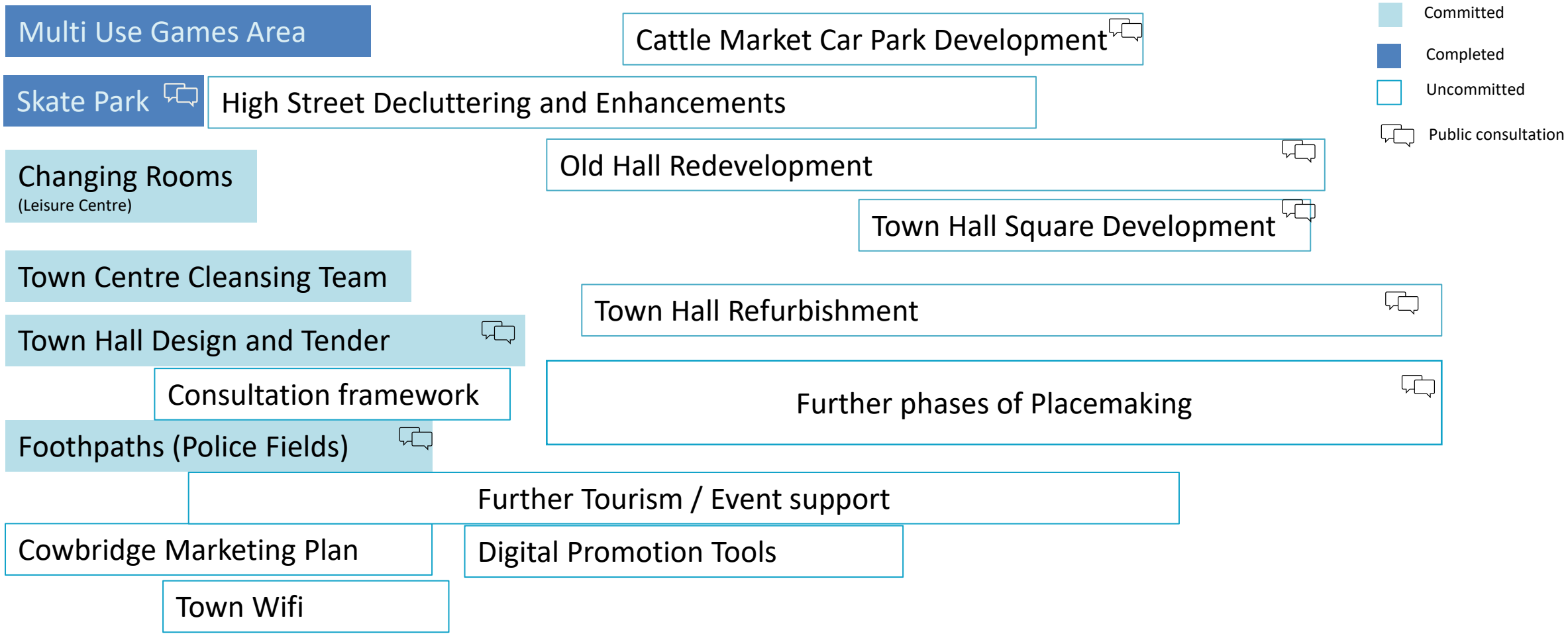


Strategic Priorities

Back to contents

Delivery Roadmap

Major Priorities for Cowbridge Town Council



Key

- Committed
- Completed
- Uncommitted
- Public consultation

Strategic Priorities — Placemaking and Environment

Context *'Placemaking Plans'* are about making towns, streets and public spaces nicer places for people to use and enjoy. In 2025 the town council worked with the Vale of Glamorgan Council to develop our first local placemaking plan. Following extensive public engagement, the aim is to make Cowbridge a vibrant, well-connected place that reflects local needs and identity. The Plan forms a framework for future investment and development categorised into short, medium and long term goals. Some projects can be implemented immediately, others are more complex and need extra funding.

Strategic Objectives

Overarching: Sustain and enhance physical assets

- Ensure that **consultation** at town level contributes to strategic planning at the regional level
- **Placemaking:**
  - Celebrating Heritage and High Street Vibrancy
  - Connecting Key Areas
  - Emphasising Green Spaces
  - Public Realm Improvements
  - Supporting Local Economy
  - Movement and Accessibility
- **Environmental:** Prioritising sustainability and biodiversity

Value to Residents and Visitors



Key Deliverables

Placemaking opportunity areas (See *'Key Projects'* for more detail)

- Town Hall environment
- Old Hall and Gardens
- Cattle Market car park
- Bear Field
- High Street

Town Hall refurbishment – progress funding sourcing and procurement activities, managed by a programme board with public representation.

Environmental Monitor and improve biodiversity through community collaboration, in particular schools

Waste management – provide cleansing and streetscape improvement priorities to the Cowbridge Cleansing Team

Supporting Plans

- VOG Draft Local Development Plan
- Cowbridge Placemaking Plan
- VOG Well-being objectives – A more resilient and greener Vale

Performance Indicators

- Number of public realm projects completed and impact on footfall and satisfaction.
- Uptake of active travel (walking, cycling) and reduction in car use.
- Positive feedback from residents and visitors through regular surveys.

Strategic Priorities — Community and Wellbeing

Context The local community predominantly interacts with the Council in terms 1) management of local assets, such as the Town Hall, parkland and the Limes Cemetery, 2) service standards outside of our remit, such as highways, planning applications - which we escalate to the relevant authority and actively seek resolution on behalf of residents 3) civic and community events.

Strategic Objectives

Overarching: Find new opportunities for community inclusion and involvement

- A more active and healthier Cowbridge
- A more equitable and connected Cowbridge
- Promote a volunteering culture
- Promote multiculturism through connections with other regions and countries

Value to Residents and Visitors



Key Deliverables

- A **Community Action Plan** – focussing on those at need. Initiatives may be run by the council (eg warm / cold space) and/or linking with local volunteer groups to promote services. Areas of focus – loneliness, unemployment, youth work and recruitment of volunteers
- A **Community Events Programme** – eg community cinema, the May Fayre , mayor charity coffee mornings, and non Council events listings, such as walking routes, events for children
- A **directory of local organisations** and voluntary groups signposted from our website focussing on wellbeing groups, art, music, walking, health and fitness, social and mental wellbeing; pilot a community walking event for families*
- A **Youth Council** / youth engagement mechanism
- A **volunteer charter** and council volunteer job description, and community citizen awards
- A **review of council members attendance** on other groups and consider where we can add more value by attendance, eg Town Twinning, school governing bodies, community and business groups. Councillors to take on areas of special interest and proactive community involvement

Supporting Plans

VOG Well-being objectives – A more active and healthier Vale; A more equitable and connected Vale.

Performance Indicators

- Footfall trends around community locations and to community events
- Increase in community listings
- Increase in volunteers
- Increase in community grant awards

* Based on the Dutch tradition called 'Avondvierdaagse'

Strategic Priorities — Economy and Tourism

Context Cowbridge High Street has undergone a marked transition over the years. Originally a traditional market-town supporting the rural economy with saddlers, ironmongers, and general merchants, the town re-emerged as a popular destination for up market fashion shops, delicatessens and hospitality services. In more recent years there has been a further specialism developing as a lifestyle, health and beauty centre. Tourists are attracted to its picturesque location, unique high street, historical and cultural atmosphere and easy access to both coast and city locations. New housing developments have brought additional local customers but the high street like most towns is seeing more shops unoccupied as the trading environment has become challenging over recent years**. The current vacancy rate for Cowbridge shops is 9.2%** which is higher than Llantwit Major, Barry High Street and Penarth but lower than the Welsh average of 17.2%. This is an area of considerable concern to traders, the public and the Town Council. High rents and rates are evident in Cowbridge.

Strategic Objectives

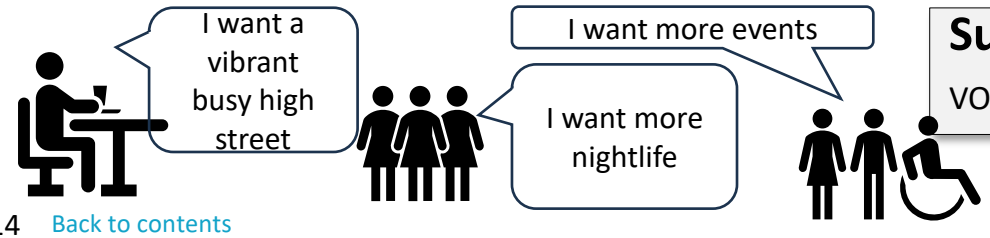
Overarching: Maximise footfall and translate into town prosperity

- Strengthen our appeal as a visitor and investment destination
- Encourage visitors to stay longer and explore further
- Strengthen collaboration between local businesses
- Support events and visits throughout the year
- Improve the visitor welcome
- Protect the qualities that attract visitors

Key Deliverables

- Promote Cowbridge as a tourist destination with a vibrant evening economy
- Work with the VOG tourism team to link visits to Cowbridge with accommodation, attractions and experience; reusing their digital content, sharing stats and event content
- Support joint promotions and shared initiatives by facilitating a discussion with traders on where we can help
- Events calendar - working with the Community Group and others to add more events over a longer events season
- Work with others to improve visitor information, signage, accessibility and essential facilities
- Influence where we can the decisions which negatively impact on trade, eg facilitate a debate between traders, landlords and agents around high rents
- Maximise the Town hall as an event venue (see Town Hall Refurbishment)
- Development of the Old Hall as a cultural and artistic hub (see Placemaking)
- Improve the appearance of empty shops

Value to Residents and Visitors



Supporting Documents

VOG tourism Retail and Leisure Study 2023

Performance Indicators

- Footfall trends – general and events
- Shop occupancy rates

Strategic Priorities Governance and Organisational Excellence

Context The Council meets every month along with the Finance & Governance, Staffing, Leisure & Amenities and Town Hall Committees. There are also working groups for short term projects. The administration and running of our services is supported by a small team who work out of our Town Hall office.

The Council and Committees ensure we meet our legal obligations, spend public money wisely and lead and monitor our activities and services to ensure we act in the best interests of our residents. We want Cowbridge to thrive and our Governance is there to keep us on track and in check.

Strategic Objectives

Overarching: Meet our obligations and legal responsibilities professionally and transparently

- Strengthen our local and regional partnerships to make Cowbridge stand out and thrive
- Deliver high quality, efficient local services
- Strengthen the Council's presence and voice with the local community

Key Deliverables

- Adopt a code of corporate governance in line with Welsh Government, Vale of Glamorgan Council, and Society of Local Council Clerks guidance
- Improve public access to council papers and decisions
- Introduce a consultation framework and engagement plan
- Strengthen relationships and meeting attendance with the Vale of Glamorgan Council so Cowbridge gets the best possible services and new development opportunities
- Build key performance dashboards and secure digital tooling to improve efficiency
- Produce a regular bulletin / newsletter of progress

Value to Residents and Visitors



Supporting Plans

Council Publication Scheme

Performance Indicators

- No. of papers published publicly per annum
- Increased resident satisfaction levels (pulse surveys)
- Record of interactions with key partners and key outcomes
- Time savings from use of AI

Context

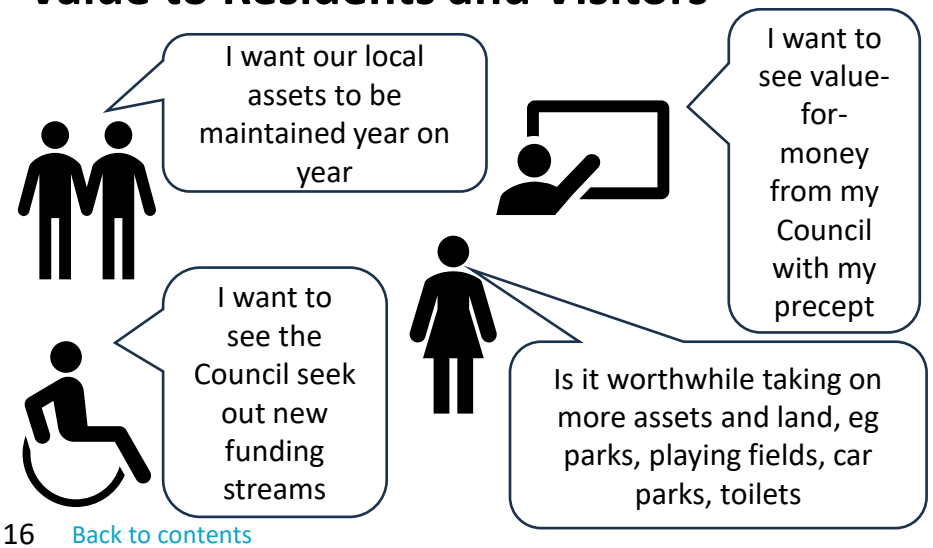
Financial Sustainability is a key priority for the Council. This is the ability of the Council to maintain its operations, meet its obligations and achieve its long-term strategic objectives. It includes financial resilience that allows the Council to manage unexpected shocks and continue regardless of economic volatility. It is important that the Council develops a strategic approach to financial sustainability in the longer term to secure value-for-money in the use of resources. An example is extra money from VOG being made to support a cleansing team from Plastic Packaging Tax (2022). As manufacturers make environmental improvements that tax may reduce which could affect our services.

Strategic Objectives

Overarching: Be financially responsible

- Generate additional income streams (internal and external)
- Consider asset transfers from county council and other organisations which deliver income and/or positive value to residents within our means.

Value to Residents and Visitors



Key Deliverables

- Prepare a 5-year medium-term financial forecast and review this annually
- Introduce a Funding Strategy over the 5-year period to identify funding sources and timelines to allow growth, development and innovation, including specialist help in sourcing grants and developing funding bids
- Draft a 5-years Saving Plan to show how any funding gap can be addressed, eg a parades cost review
- Robust and regular checks-and-balances of spending to ensure that public money is spent efficiently and effectively
- Build up reserves to allow the Council to absorb shocks and unexpected spending, ensuring financial stability
- Business Case for Town Hall refurbishment

Supporting Plans

- 5 Year Financial Forecast
- Annual Budget
- Monthly Accounts

Performance Indicators

- Spend against budget
- Annual financial viability check
- Town Hall lettings indicators
- Grant / bids approval rate

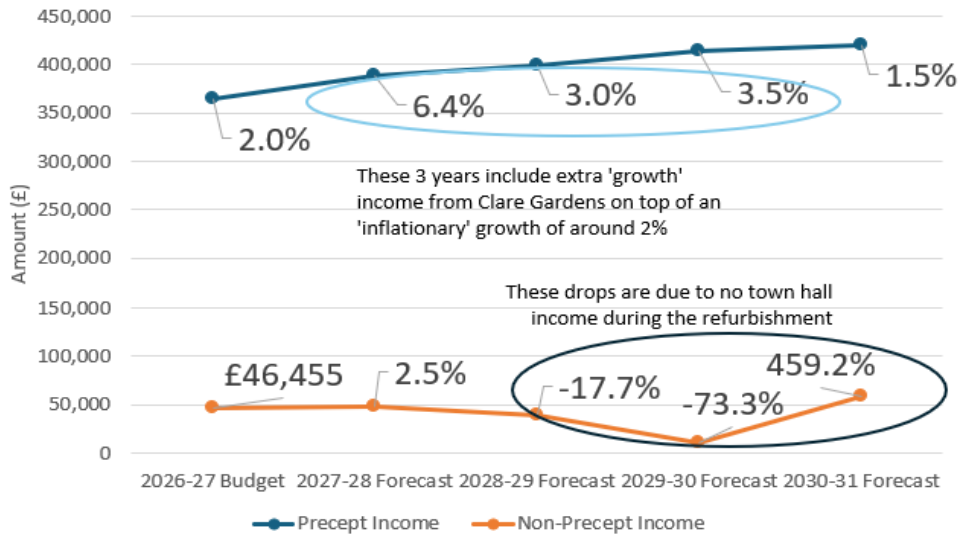
Five Year Financial Forecasts

Year	2026-27 Budget	2027-28 Forecast	2028-29 Forecast	2029-30 Forecast	2030-31 Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£
Income	410,830	435,474	438,715	423,935	478,159
Expenditure					
Administration	241,516	269,818	273,174	279,509	285,987
Leisure & Amenities	40,770	37,511	38,261	39,026	39,807
Town Hall	67,700	79,018	41,033	-	55,343
Civic	17,800	18,245	18,634	19,032	19,438
Events	36,031	35,907	36,625	37,357	38,105
Placemaking	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total Expenditure	408,817	450,498	417,728	384,925	448,679
Net income/ (Expenditure)	2,013	(15,023)	20,987	39,010	29,480
Loan Costs	-	1,289	2,578	28,848	28,848
Net income/ (Expenditure) loan costs	2,013	(16,312)	18,409	10,162	632

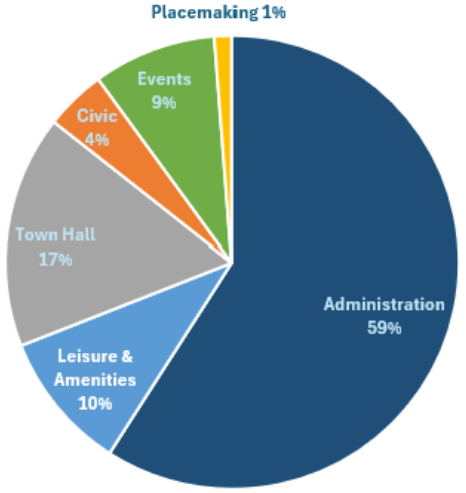
Variances of Note

- **Income**: Precept growth is as a result of additional properties from Clare Garden village, phased over the next 3 years plus an inflationary increase of 2% pa. Non-precept Income: Adjustments have been made for periods when the town hall is out of service and the final year assumes the refurbished town hall is fully operational and charges are increased by 10% and bookings increase by 10%.
- **Administration expenditure** costs include an increased community grant budget doubled to £20k. Specialist resources have been included to source additional grants but their cost is assumed to be covered within the grant income received. Additional IT costs are included to meet GDPR requirements
- **Placemaking** costs assumed to double in year 2. **To note**: Placemaking developments will be funded from a variety of funding streams, eg grant applications and money allocated to us via the local authority such as s.106 money from housing developments, Transforming Towns budget, private investment and plastic tax income (Welsh Govt).
- **Loan costs** reflect the estimated borrowing required to meet the terms of the Heritage Lottery fund for the town hall refurbishment.

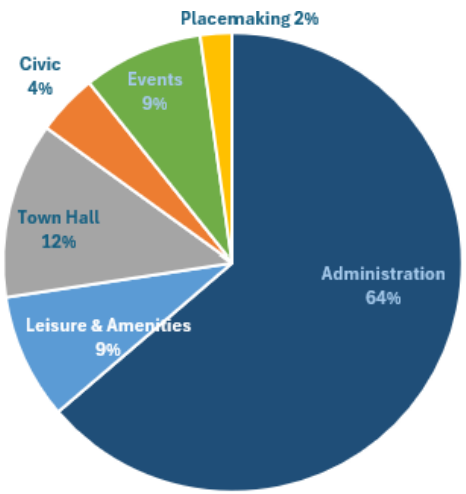
Income Trends: Precept v Non Precept



Expenditure by Service Area



2026-27



2030-31

Strategic Risks

Risks	Mitigation
If the Cowbridge population significantly increases **then** services provided by the Council could become overstretched and the Vision undeliverable	Considered allocation of Clare Gardens extra income
If local and regional councillors are replaced in 2027 council elections **then** the strategy vision may be rejected locally and not implemented and similarly the County Council's priorities may change	Ensure public consensus and publish strategy before end 2026-27. Note in standing orders a 2 year review cycle to match Placemaking cycle of review
If alternative funding sources are not found **then** the Council assets may fall into disrepair and become unsafe, especially the Town Hall.	Proactive lobbying and grant applications
If local community and trader representatives are unable to contribute to the Vision **then** the tourism and commerce opportunities may not be delivered in full	Council representation on Business (traders) Group and traders attendance on Placemaking Group.
If the dependencies between projects aren't managed **then** the deliverables may not match the vision – eg the Town Hall redesign needs to match the strategic priorities around tourism and community	Dependency log managed for major projects
If events make use of older Cowbridge properties / street furniture, (eg Christmas lights / reindeer parade), **then** these may become structurally and operationally unsuitable due to building age and the need for heritage and/or landlord permissions resulting in reputational damage	Proactive building solutions and contingency plans put in place
See Council Risk Log for scoring and detailed mitigations	



Key Projects

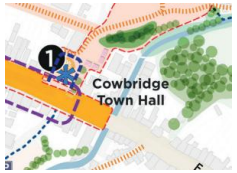
Back to contents

Key Projects Placemaking (1 of 2)

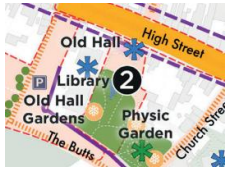
Context *'Placemaking Plans'* are about making towns, streets and public spaces nicer places for people to use and enjoy. In 2025 the town council worked with the Vale of Glamorgan Council to develop our first local placemaking plan. The Plan forms a framework for future investment and development categorised into short, medium and long term goals. Some projects can be implemented immediately, others are more complex and need extra funding. See the Cowbridge Placemaking Plan for further details. Projects are continually assessed and prioritised by the Placemaking Programme Board as funding opportunities arise. The Council is represented on the Board.



Opportunities



Town Hall Square – see also Town Hall Refurbishment.
The Town Hall Square area includes projects to enhance Cowbridge's central civic space. Key proposals include flexible exhibition spaces within the Town Hall, improved external lighting, upgraded seating and street furniture, and creation of an outdoor civic space for community events. Supporting initiatives cover bike hire, bus stop enhancements, ATM access, signage improvements, and junction reconfigurations. The public toilet refurbishment is already complete. Some projects are eligible for Transforming Towns funding.



Old Hall and Old Hall Gardens - The Old Hall and Old Hall Gardens area includes projects focused on heritage-led regeneration of this historic asset. Key proposals include raising the profile of Old Hall through increased events and community partnerships, creating gallery/exhibition space in underused rooms, and developing a shared outdoor space in collaboration with the library for markets and community events. Supporting projects address improved signage and wayfinding from High Street, enhancing the rear setting with seating, and structural works including a potential building extension and removing an external wall.

Key Projects

Placemaking (2 of 2)





Town Wide Projects - This area includes cross-cutting projects that support connectivity and cohesion. Key initiatives include appointing town centre champions, integrating walking/cycling routes, and developing a cohesive signage and wayfinding strategy. Active travel features prominently with the Police Fields walking/cycling route and sustainable mobility networks. Economic vitality projects focus on encouraging evening activity and diversifying town centre facilities. Longer-term aspirations include opening up the River Thaw, junction improvements at Aberthin Road, and a 3G/4G pitch proposal. Supporting infrastructure includes public Wi-Fi installation.



Livestock Market - The Livestock Market area includes projects aimed at transforming the former market site and Police Fields into a better-connected, greener gateway to the town. Key proposals include improving parking efficiency through bay marking and resurfacing, enhancing pedestrian routing from The Butts to Police Field with safer surfaces and dropped kerbs, and creating outdoor spill-out space for community groups like CADS and the Scout Club. Environmental improvements focus on natural planting and biodiversity enhancements to the Police Fields edges, including pollinator-friendly landscaping. Longer-term ambitions include a full car park overhaul with EV charging, upgrading public realm along The Butts with wider footways and tree planting, and exploring mixed-use development. Most projects require master planning and a significant funding pipeline.



Bear Field - The Bear Field area includes projects focused on maximising this community green space. Key proposals include reinforced boundary planting, improved access from North Road, natural play areas, and new footways connecting North Road to the Leisure Centre. The skatepark/MUGA consolidation is already completed with potential for additional shelter installation. Supporting initiatives address improved cycle parking, better lighting and seating, wayfinding signage, and integrating Bear Field into a wider connected network of green spaces. Longer-term considerations include testing Eagle Lane closure and reviewing ramps/fencing. Youth provision is a Town Council short-term priority.



High Street - The High Street area includes projects to enhance this core commercial spine. Key proposals include public art installations, coordinating with businesses to de-clutter and freshen shop fronts, and introducing temporary seating and planting to test appetite for dwell space. A concept design study and improved wayfinding strategy are identified as high priorities. Gateway/arrival points at Eastgate and Westgate would enhance a sense of arrival. Longer-term ambitions include carriageway narrowing for wider pavements, safe crossing points, and a parking consolidation strategy.

Key Projects

Town Hall Refurbishment





Background

Cowbridge Town Hall is a Grade II* listed landmark at the heart of the town. Built in 1806 as a prison and adapted in 1830, it now houses the Town Council, Museum and key community facilities. The main hall, lesser hall and council chamber host a wide range of groups and events each week. The Museum occupies two rows of 1576 House of Correction cells and holds full Welsh Government Accreditation, awarded in 2015 and renewed in 2024.

Current Condition

In 2023–24, the Town Council commissioned a full conservation condition report, which identified significant deterioration to the building's fabric. Essential repairs total over £300k, with £100k classed as urgent. Beyond that there is also a need to upgrade heating and electrical systems, replace internal doors and improve accessibility. As a listed building, ongoing deterioration poses a risk to its long-term integrity.

A 2025 user survey showed strong public support for restoring the Town Hall and improving its accessibility, welcome and functionality. In response, the Council developed a sensitive **conservation and renovation plan** to protect the building's heritage while enhancing its community use. This addresses more than just the repairs with an improved internal design giving better accessibility and facilities fit for a modern-day venue but retaining its historical integrity.

Progress

An Expression of Interest (EOI) has been made to the **National Lottery Heritage Fund** and was successful. We now need to submit further applications to obtain the full funding. The next application is for fees to work up the full design, followed by an application to do the actual works. The total scheme could cost in the region of £3.5million, with the Council contributing up to 10% through borrowing. Ongoing discussions are underway with CADW and the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Conservation Officer.



Monitoring and Review

Back to contents

Monitoring and Review

We will monitor our progress against this strategy through a variety of mechanisms. We receive progress reports to our committees and the Town Council. There will be additional Programme Boards for key projects which may be led by us (eg Town Hall Refurbishment) or the Vale of Glamorgan Council (Placemaking). We have to meet the requirements of the National Audit Office and we review our policies every 3 years and produce an Annual Report. We will introduce more surveys and workshops with the public and improve our measurement of the implementation and outcomes of our actions.

Performance Dashboard

Delivery Responsibilities

● Focus area examples 2026

Town Council's own priorities	Shared Priorities with Partners	Areas to Influence
Placemaking and Environment		
Town Hall Refurbishment ● *Lottery Funding Bid*	Placemaking Projects eg Old Hall, Active Transport	Waste Management ● *Lobby to protect non council owned community land, eg village green status*
Limes Cemetery Management ● *Ancient churchyard wall repairs*	Biodiversity projects	Planning and land use
Park maintenance (Town Council s)	● *Litter hotspots and aareements with non council landowners* ● *Town mobile signal and unsightly infrastructure*	Highways, Car Parking ● *Parking, speeding and road congestion hot spots*
Community and Wellbeing		
Community Action Plan: Volunteering Events Plan	Community Grants, Councillor community interests	● *Parking on Bear Fields*
Directory of Local Orgs	May Fayre	● *Football pitch renewal*
Civic events – eg Remembrance Sunday	● *Local charity fundraising*	● *Social Housing allocation policy consultation and info sharing*
Youth Council		
Economy and Tourism		
Christmas Lights ● *Renewal and safety of existing fittings*	Christmas Parade	Empty shop appearance
Town Council Efficiency	Marketing Plan including content sharing, business group social media pilots ● *Supporting Cowbridge Business Group Social Media*	Affordability of business accommodation
Governance and Organisational Excellence		
Code of Corporate Governance, transparency	Strengthen relationships with VOG and partners	
Progress dashboards and reporting ● *5 yr strategy*	Public Consultation Plans	
Financial Sustainability		
Funding Strategy (new sources incl Town Hall)		Lobby for Cowbridge priorities in county budgets
Savings focus and building up reserves		

Governance

- Full Council
- Committees
- Placemaking Programme Board
- Town Hall Refurbishment Board

Metrics

- Cost, Time, Quality
- Community Value
- Over/underspend
- Attendance and Take Up
- Footfall
- Occupancy rates
- Satisfaction and pulse surveys
- Grants / bids success

END