Working together to make Llanelli Town Centre better....

The Llanelli Community Partnership is working with other organisations to help improve the town centre.

Following a year long community conversation around the “Llanelli We Want”, many priorities were identified as areas of work that the Community Partnership could work in collaboration with other partners to improve and widen the impacts of the projects.

One of the priorities identified was, Improving Llanelli Town Centre. Work has begun through the Business Investment District (BID) programme that has engaged and supported the Town Centre businesses to work together to identify areas of potential improvement or new innovative ideas to attract more people to the town centre. (See page 2).

Carmarthenshire County Council have recently secured substantial funding to improve certain areas within the town centre. The Opportunity Street programme aims to tackle issues around poverty, skills and health by regenerating parts of the town and encourage and support new ways of working that improve the place.

Support your High Street Campaign is an initiative aimed at focusing activities that will attract customers to the local high street or town centre. The Welsh Government campaign aims to encourage new ideas and celebrate local good practice that will help ensure the viability of small independent shops and initiatives into the future.
A BID is a business-owned, led and funded company, with four distinctive characteristics:

It is set up by a democratic ballot of all businesses in the proposed BID area.

If the businesses vote ‘yes’ to a BID, they pay a levy based upon the current rateable value of their property. The BID, which would be owned by member businesses who fund the company, use this money to tackle the issues that businesses have identified.

BID services have to be in addition to the services provided by the council, the police and others.

A BID term is up to 5 years, at which time they can seek renewal through a further ballot.

There are currently 208 BIDs across the UK which are successfully working to improve town centres.

Following a feasibility study of 70 businesses in Llanelli, a programme of improvements is being developed which looks to...

Businesses within Llanelli town centre are considering establishing a Business Improvement District (BID), a mechanism which empowers local businesses to champion improvements for their trading environment.
Opportunity Street in Llanelli

Three properties have been bought as part of a £1.5m Opportunity Street project to further regenerate Llanelli town centre.

The vacant premises 10, 12 and 31 Stepney Street have been acquired with assistance from the Welsh Government Vibrant and Viable Places funding. Llanelli has been allocated £1 million under the programme over three financial years 2014 - 2017.

The Welsh Government highlighted that the main aim of the fund is to tackle poverty by creating jobs, encouraging skills development, improving housing, providing facilities and helping people into work.

The intention is to refurbish the properties to bring them back into use, for affordable housing units as well as commercial/service space in Llanelli Town centre.

This project will focus upon the principles of preventing poverty and helping people out of poverty. The project aims to provide solutions to the local housing need, training, earning and learning opportunities and the commercial/service space will hopefully attract new retail interests. Purchasing these properties is a direct way for the council to help with the vacant property issue because by taking control, it can bring them back into beneficial uses and help to improve Llanelli town centre.

Learning communities

Regeneration is intrinsically linked with the skills and capacities of individuals, families and communities. Regeneration interventions will support:

- a skilled and confident existing and future workforce;
- a high aspiration local culture;
- engagement with school, post 16 and adult learning opportunities;
- clear opportunities for development of social and cultural capital and strengthening equality; and
- a belief in a better future.

Healthier communities

The health and wellbeing of residents is central to the vitality of places. Regeneration activity will support:

- healthy and cohesive communities able to grow and work together;
- safe and secure localities;
- good housing which is affordable and provides tenure choice;
- a sustainable and high quality local environment;
- positive and inclusive local identities; and
- well-planned, appropriately used and good standard buildings, amenities and facilities.
Our Support Your High Street campaign was launched last year to celebrate the valuable contribution our busy high streets make to the Welsh economy, as well as the vital role they play in community life.

A key action in the Vibrant and Viable Places Regeneration Framework, the aim is to encourage people and communities to use their local high streets. The campaign will continue this year, with High Street Week taking place 19 – 26 September 2015 with a new feature - the High Street Heroes Awards.

This year’s campaign and the High Street Heroes Awards were launched on 5 June 2015 by the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty, Lesley Griffiths AM, in Pontypridd.

Voting for the High Street Heroes Awards is online via the Support Your High Street Facebook page and entries close on 10 August 2015.

People can show their support for their local high street by nominating individual businesses and services in one or more of six categories, with the opportunity to add a line to explain what they feel makes them special. It may be an owner that goes the extra mile or a library, café or ‘corner’ shop that acts as a real hub for the community.

There are six categories for High Street Favourites and people can vote in as many categories as they want for local retailers and service providers:

1. food and drink - examples: grocers, delis, butchers, bakers, fishmongers, convenience stores
2. fashion, health and beauty - examples: fashion retailers, salons, pharmacies
3. leisure, home and garden - examples: DIY and hardware, pet supplies, garden supplies, stationery and gift
4. professional and financial services - examples: solicitors, estate agents, travel agents
5. eating out on the high street - examples: cafes, tea rooms, pubs and restaurants
6. community service provider - examples: local libraries, community centres, advice and support centres.
A conversation about our town centre.....
This activity aimed to capture the opinions of the community members and organisations that are represented in the Llanelli Community Partnership

What do you like about Llanelli Town Centre?

- Friendly Community
- History
- Comfortable and familiar
- Potential
- Looking smart and attractive
- Compact and manageable
- Nice Market
- Clean
- Flowering baskets
- The seating
- Flat
- Lots under cover
- Pedestrianised area near Llanelly house
- Easily accessible
- Plenty of parking spaces
- Bilingual town
- Library is very good
- Local traders especially in market
- Value for money in shops
- Theatre Ffwrnes and Odeon Cinema
What don’t you like about Llanelli Town Centre?

- Parking charges and lack of parking
- Empty shops
- Low level crime and anti-social behaviours
- Abandoned buildings/chapels/theatre elli
- Dirty new canopies
- CCTV under threat
- Litter and cigarettes
- Lack of wheelchair access
- Lack of big brand named shops
- Lack of character/flowers
- No toilets
- Lack of cafe and small shops
- Chewing gum
- Drinking in town centre
- Lack of health information/support
- Poor external perception of town
Activities/Ideas that will improve Llanelli Town Centre

- Farmers Markets
- Free parking
- Reduced Business Rates
- Entertainment on green
- Free Wi-Fi
- More variety of named shops
- Decorate empty shop windows
- Street performers
History/culture interpretation boards

Big Screen and information

Spaces for pop up shops

Redevelop YMCA

Out door art space

Family fun events

Multi agency health advice centre

Town centre facelift/ painting

Business and community emergency plan
Conclusion

This community conversation was a platform from which to start developing some innovative and exciting new initiatives that support the work that has already started. The information will be an additional tool for the BID programme that gives the town centre businesses an insight to the community perspective.

This document will also support the Opportunity Street programme by offering Carmarthenshire County Council a number of themes and ideas that could be explored further in order to tackle poverty, develop new skills and improve health.

The Llanelli Community Partnership will continue to work in collaboration with others to develop