

1. Community Information

Powys People's Panel

The Panel is a group of approximately 6,500 residents of Powys who have signed up to take part in surveys, engagement projects and other opportunities to express their views on council services and issues related to living in Powys.

Members of the Panel are sent monthly emails updating them about the latest engagement activity and providing links, and easy access, to all online activity.

Anyone living in Powys can sign up to Powys People's Panel through their My Powys Account, following the steps below:

Log in to your My Powys account <https://en.powys.gov.uk/login>

(Pathway: Powys home page – top right: Log In/Register)

In the 'My Profile' section, click on 'Update my information'

Scroll down to the Powys People's Panel section

Tick the box labelled 'I would like to be included in the People's Panel'

To unsubscribe from People's Panel emails, untick this box.

Powys Climate Conference 2024

The conference is being hosted by Powys Public Services. All town and community councils in Powys have been invited.

Date: 10th October 10th

Time: 10:00 – 15:00

Venue: Strand Hall, Builth Wells.

The event's Objectives are as follows:

- Showcase local projects: Learn and celebrate local initiatives focused on climate and nature. Present Climate Research: Provide an update on the latest findings from Powys' climate research including climate impacts, carbon footprint and carbon sequestration.
- Contribute to Powys' Climate Action Plan: Engage with us in shaping the development of Powys' area-based Action Plan.
- Networking: Build relationships and collaborate across Town and Community Councils.

The invitation attached contains a QR code for registering. Should anyone wish to register in a different way, let me know and I'll arrange for that.

Primary school admissions open

Applications are open for children starting primary and junior school in September 2025.

The deadline for submission of applications is Monday 6th January 2025.

Parents and carers are encouraged to apply as possible to be sure of a place at their chosen school.

The online application is here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/1158/Applying-for-a-School-Place>

Parents and carers unable to apply online are advised to contact the Admissions team by email: admissions@powys.gov.uk

Free Maths Level 2 course

The online course offers the opportunity to gain a Level 2 Maths qualification in weeks. It is provided by Number Up, a project by StoriPowys which aims to boost numeracy confidence across the county.

The course is led by an experienced tutor who creates a supportive, stress-free environment where learners can build confidence in Maths. It will take place over a series of two-hour evening sessions.

Since September 2023, over 300 adults have participated in Number Up formal maths courses and informal numeracy-based workshops and activities, both online and in libraries across Powys.

Course Details:

Dates: Wednesdays 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th November 2024

Duration: 4 weeks

Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Cost: Free to all parents and carers living in Powys without a GCSE in Maths

Qualification: Essential Skills Level 2 Maths

To register for the Number Up course, go to: <https://forms.office.com/e/6Kz9D0EyqD>

For more information, visit: <https://www.storipowys.org.uk/number-up> or email numberup@powys.gov.uk

New energy advice service for vulnerable residents

Severn Wye Energy is launching of a new service to bring community-based energy advice and support to vulnerable people in Powys.

It is designed to reach those 'slipping through the net' of conventional fuel poverty support and will reach out to communities and groups at risk of being missed, with a focus on rural communities, refugees and asylum seekers, houseboat communities and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. Support and advice will be provided through face-to-face meetings, home visits, events and drop-ins, and classroom sessions.

The two-year project is funded by Wales and West Utilities and Cadent as part of the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) funding programme.

Severn Wye will work with new and existing partners across Powys to identify at-risk communities and groups who will most benefit from support, and will provide frontline professionals with awareness training on how to spot the signs of fuel poverty.

Support from the new service will include:

- Priority Service Registration
- Carbon monoxide advice
- Trust fund applications
- Resolving meter problems
- Liaising with suppliers and setting up repayment plans

The launch of the service is on 18th October. All working in or representing communities are invited to attend, to learn more about this and other support services offered by Severn Wye Energy and to explore how we can work together to support these communities.

Date: Friday 18th October

Venue: The Metropole Hotel & Spa, Temple Street, Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5DY

Time: 10.00 am – Midday

Refreshments will be provided.

Please book through Eventbrite, here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lansiad-cyngor-ynni-energy-advice-launch-tickets-1008280212257>

Mid Wales outbreak of Bluetongue serotype 3 (BTV-3)

Bluetongue serotype 3 (BTV-3) was identified in three sheep that were moved to Gwynedd from the east of England, where cases have been identified over September.

Bluetongue is caused by a virus that is primarily transmitted by certain species of biting midges. It affects ruminants and camelids (such as alpacas and llamas).

Bluetongue does not affect people or food safety.

This is the first time that BTV-3 has been found in Wales. Powys County Council's Animal Health Team are urging farmers to be vigilant for the disease and to practise safe sourcing of livestock.

Bluetongue is a notifiable animal disease. If suspected, farmers in Powys must report it immediately to the Animal and Plant Health Agency. The number to call is: 0300 303 8268.

For further and updated information visit: www.gov.uk/bluetongue

Updated information and resources are also available at: <https://ruminanthw.org.uk/bluetongue-virus/>

Green Libraries Week.

National Green Libraries Week runs from 7-13 October 2024, with a focus this year sustainability.

Libraries are already a sustainable choice – borrowing and sharing is sustainable in the long term, where continued unchecked consumerism is not – and a range of items can be borrowed from the library – books of course (including e-books and audio-books) but also I-Pads, blood pressure monitors, litter picking kits and balance bikes.

Throughout the week libraries will be hosting recycling roadshows, sharing information about how to make the most of kerbside recycling boxes and how to recycle more, more easily.

Our local recycling roadshows is on **Wednesday 9th October, 10:00 – 14:00, at Brecon Library/Y Gaer**

Sustainable Powys Update

The development of the next phase of engagement with residents and communities on Sustainable Powys is ongoing. In the meantime, community councils are encouraged and welcomed to ask about, challenge and be part of the development of the process.

Cwmdu and District community council's allocated officer is Matt Perry, Chief Officer for Place. Matt can be contacted at: matthew.perry@powys.gov.uk

Mapping of the diverse range of activity undertaken throughout Powys by town and community councils and other voluntary and community groups is also ongoing. An online form for sending the county council information about such activity can be accessed here:
<https://forms.office.com/e/a2MW9bK2Un>

Sustainable Powys resources for residents are available on the Sustainable Powys dedicated pages on the public website, here: www.powys.gov.uk/sustainablepowys

For further information, contact sustainable.powys@powys.gov.uk

Update on Review of 20 MPH default speed limit

The Wales-wide Review of the new default limit concluded at the end of September, and Welsh Government is now in the process of working with local authorities across Wales to finalise the speed limits on all Welsh roads. I will keep you posted about the outcomes. Once the final speed limits are published, we can come together as communities to discuss whether the speed limits (or lack of them) on our roads are working and if not, whether we wish to act and if so in what way. Some of the actions agreed at our community discussions on speed last year but not yet started can also then be carried forward.

In the meantime, the Villages Around The Lake speed watch group is being established. Anyone is welcome to join us.

Contacting the county council

Powys county council aims to be an open, accessible and responsive council. Set out below are a range of ways to contact the council, report faults or issues with council services, and make a complaint.

Opening a My Powys Account

A My Powys account can be used for a range of activity, including:

- Keeping a record of requests and reports made by the resident, and information obtained by the resident (such as school bus routes, as discussed above)
- Enabling the resident to view and track requests and reports
- Pre-filling forms submitted by the resident with the resident's address and contact information
- Expediting phone calls made by the resident by enabling the call handler to view and track the resident's requests and reports
- Enabling the council to send residents updates about their requests and reports

Residents can open a My Powys account here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/login>

The pathway is via the 'Log in/Register' function at the top right of the county council's homepage, here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/>

All residents, with or without a My Powys account, can contact the council by any of the following means:

Contacting the council online

- Use the online live Chat function on the website's Contact Us page, here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/contact>

The pathway is via the 'Contact Us' function at the top right of the council's homepage.

- Identify the email address for the service required and contact the service direct (on the same Contact Us page, scroll down to the grid of different services at the base of the page)

Contacting the council by phone

General Enquiries: 01597 827 460

Enquiries for a specific person whom the resident can name: 01597 826 000

Contacting the council in person

Several transactions with the council can be undertaken at local libraries, Monday to Friday.

Library staff can signpost residents to the council services required and put them in touch with the appropriate council staff member/s for their enquiry.

Information about all Powys local libraries is available here:

<https://www.storipowys.org.uk/find-a-library>

Reporting an issue

Residents can report a range of service-related issues directly via the council's website, here:

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/816/Report>

Pathway: From the county council's homepage, scroll to the first row of options below the search bar. 'Report' is second on the left. The function enables the uploading of photographs, also.

Complaining and commenting about a service

Residents can submit complaints and comments about any council service directly via the 'Contact Us' page of the county council's website, here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/complaints>

Scroll down to the grid of options at the base of the page. The complaints and comments function is the first option in the second row in the grid. There is a separate function (second grid on the second row) specifically for complaints and comments about Social Services.

Complaining formally in this way ensures that the complaint is logged and can be tracked by the resident making the complaint.

All of the functions outlined above can be performed via a resident's My Powys account, and 'as a guest' for anyone without an account.

2. Council Information

Powys County Council annual corporate-self assessment

The corporate self-assessment for April 2023 to March 2024 is available to view online. Cabinet approved the corporate-self assessment on Tuesday 30 July, following a detailed review by the council's Governance and Audit Committee. The document includes evidence gathered from a variety of sources and sets out how the council:

- exercises its functions;
- uses resources economically, efficiently and effectively;
- and is underpinned by effective governance.

It indicates how the council is delivering at a strategic level and how processes are reviewed to ensure they are working correctly. The report is informed by external evidence, such as the recommendations of audit reports and other regulatory inspections. The findings of the corporate self-assessment inform a series of improvement actions which are detailed within the report, to be delivered over the next 12 months.

The council is required to develop and publish a self-assessment report once in every financial period. Undertaking the annual corporate self-assessment exercise and keeping council performance under review also ensures that the Council continues to meet its duties under Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

To read the full report, visit the council's website at: www.powys.gov.uk

And search 'Annual Corporate Self-Assessment Report'.

Residents are encouraged to feed back their thoughts about the corporate self-assessment and the council's performance in general, by e-mailing: business_intelligence@powys.gov.uk

Cabinet and Full Council meetings

Cabinet met on 17th September and 30th September.

Cabinet meetings are open to the public and are live-streamed and also recorded, both for public view. The links to the live-streaming and the webcasts, the Minutes, and all documents discussed, are available on the PCC website.

The pathway to access this is:

PCC homepage > My Council (top menu bar) > Committee Meeting Information (select 'Cabinet and Committee Meetings') > Calendar of Meetings > The relevant date and meeting in the calendar grid

Items discussed on 17th September included:

- The Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan Scorecard, which reviews the council's performance against the objectives in the Plan, for Quarter 1.
- A report on the activity of the Corporate Safeguarding Board

The page can be accessed via the pathway above, or via this link:

<https://powys.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MIId=8086>

The item discussed on 30th September was the proposed revision to the Home to School Transport policy, following the public consultation on the proposals which took place in August and September.

The page can be accessed via the pathway above, or via this link:

<https://powys.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=8945>

Full Council met on 3rd October, 2024.

Full Council meetings are open to the public and are live-streamed and also recorded, both for public view. The links to the live-streaming and the webcasts, and to all documents discussed, are available on the PCC website.

The pathway to access this is:

PCC homepage > My Council (top menu bar) > Committee Meeting Information (select 'Cabinet and Committee Meetings') > Calendar of Meetings > The relevant date and meeting in the calendar grid

The page for 3rd October is available here:

<https://powys.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=149&MId=8390>

Questions from the public were invited for the meeting on 3rd October, and those discussed on 3rd October are as follows:

- A question relating to the council's approach to supporting renewable energy provision for council tenancies.
- A question relating to the potential link between the closing of sixth forms in Powys and the council's problems with attracting, recruiting and retaining staff.

Other council business considered and decided included:

- Budget virements requested by the Adult Social Care service and recommended, to be approved by Full Council
- Amendments to Sections 9, 18 and 20 of the council's Constitution, recommended by the Democratic Services Committee
- Two proposed Motions, as follows:
 - To request the UK government to pause the policy linking Winter Fuel Payment to Pension Credit entitlement and to reconsider introducing a fairer threshold for determining eligibility.
 - To resolve that PCC engages actively with local MPs and MSs to encourage Welsh and UK Governments to work cross-party to improve support for unpaid carers, to make caring a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010; and to provide emergency funding for respite care for persons needing care and support cared for by unpaid carers, to provide those unpaid carers themselves with respite from caring.

The first Motion was passed, with amendments discussed and agreed by councillors on the day.

The second Motion was passed without amendment.

Questions are invited from the public for all Full Council meetings. Questions must relate to the county and the services the council provides, and if accepted by the Chair of Council they will be added to the agenda in the order in which they were received. A total of four valid questions will be considered at each meeting, again in the order that they were received. Where the council receives more than four valid questions for a given meeting, the remaining questions are held over until the next full council meeting.

More information on public participation at council meetings is available here:

<https://powys.moderngov.co.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD672&ID=672&RPID=9845814>

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5th October 2024