

Boosting Ceredigion's Economy

A Strategy for Action

2020-35



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Ceredigion's Economic Strategy

This strategy sets out how we will work together towards achieving strong, sustainable and more resilient economic growth for Ceredigion, created and shared by all.

Our Corporate Plan has identified boosting the economy as the number one priority for Ceredigion County Council, because we realise the need to tackle some of the challenges we have to provide our people and enterprises with the opportunities to grow and thrive here in Ceredigion.

We have solid foundations on which to build, and great opportunities to maximise. Whilst Covid-19, and the challenges presented by Brexit, will be challenging to overcome, we believe those foundations will help us build our future. This strategy represents our framework for action, outlining our ambition for the next 15 years, and setting out the steps we'll take to realise that ambition.

Thank you to all who have contributed to the development of this Strategy at the drafting, through to consultation stage. This will continue to be a collaborative approach, as we add detail to the framework set out, and implement plans for future sustainable growth with the people, businesses and environment of Ceredigion in our focus.



Together, we'll continue to build on Ceredigion's unique strengths and help our people, enterprises, culture and language develop and thrive.

Ellen ap Gwynn

Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn
Leader, Ceredigion County Council

This strategy identifies four priority areas where our actions will be targeted in order to make a difference –

1. **People** – inspiring people, developing skills, health and wellbeing
2. **Place** – promoting Ceredigion as a place to live, work and visit
3. **Enterprise** – supporting businesses to get started and grow
4. **Connectivity** – connecting businesses and communities

These support the National Wellbeing Goals of prosperity, resilience, healthy, equal, cohesive communities, vibrant culture and language and globally responsible



Swallow Yachts based in Cardigan have an outstanding reputation for quality craftsmanship and have shipped their boats all over the world

The story so far...

It is an exciting time for the Ceredigion economy set in one of the most beautiful and unique areas in the whole of the UK as we set our economic goals for the period to 2035.

Our size and location mean we face challenges to growing the local economy, but equally there are many opportunities for us to take full advantage of in positioning the county to adapt to both a low-carbon future and increased digitisation. In order to set out our strategy and interventions to 2035, it is important we understand the position from which we are starting.

We undertook a baseline review of evidence in the autumn of 2019 to identify where the economy is positioned nationally and to identify the key challenges in growing the local economy.

This was supplemented by public consultation in winter 2019/2020 to seek businesses, young persons and the general public's views on the issues affecting them. We have also undertaken a further assessment this year of the impact of Covid-19 on our economic baseline and during December 2020 and January 2021, we undertook a further consultation on the draft strategy, the results of which have been used to shape this strategy and help us prepare its implementation.

How are we doing?

Our research and consultation shows that there are many strengths and unique selling points for the local economy. Whilst Covid-19 clearly has had, and continues to have, a detrimental impact on our economy, the underlying foundations remain the same - new business start-ups have some of the **best survival rates** across Wales, our workforce has much **higher than average skills** and qualifications, our **economy has grown** at a faster rate than the Wales average over the last five years, and **the knowledge economy is strong** with two highly rated Universities.

But we also know that some key challenges face us in the form of **attracting new businesses**, creating **more job opportunities**, providing **opportunities for younger people** to remain in the county and reversing the trend of **lower earnings** compared to the rest of Wales. The demographics of Ceredigion are also changing – the overall population of the county, and in particular the working age population, has been decreasing over the last six years. This situation could be accentuated due to Covid-19 and Brexit should we not try to influence that outcome.

There are also some misconceptions that we need to challenge – for example, that Ceredigion is 'not connected'. In fact, the availability of Full Fibre Broadband, the fastest and most reliable broadband technology, is higher in Ceredigion than across Wales. But at the same time, further investment is needed to raise the overall proportion of premises that are able to receive these broadband speeds.

And of course not forgetting the **health and wellbeing** of Ceredigion's communities - the picturesque natural environment, safe communities and wide opportunities for recreation offer a high quality environment to live and work in.

It is against this backdrop that we have developed this strategy to **build on our strengths** as a county, **take full advantage of the opportunities** open to us and **tackle the challenges** facing us to grow the local economy over the next fifteen years up to 2035.

What does the Ceredigion economy look like? These are some highlights as at March 2020.



VALUE OF THE ECONOMY

Gross Value Added per head is £17,461 GVA per head of population in Ceredigion in 2017, compared to a national figure of £19,899 per head



DEPENDENCE ON MICRO/SMALL ENTERPRISES

The majority of businesses (99%) are either micro in size (0-9 employees) or small enterprises (10-49 employees). Just 0.5% are medium sized enterprises (50-249 employees)



LOWER EARNINGS

The average annual earnings for those who live in Ceredigion are £24,126, over £2,000 less than the £26,267 across Wales.



IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY

Although broadband and mobile connectivity is improving in the county, there are still 20% of premises unable to receive speeds of 30Mbit/s.



STRONG BUSINESS SURVIVAL RATES

97.2% of businesses survive their first year and 52.8% survive their first five years, both the best in Wales.



EXCELLENT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

78.7% of the population have NVQ Level qualifications, much higher than the Wales average 74.0%.



DEPENDENCE ON THE SERVICE SECTOR

Of the 30,900 people in employment, an estimated 74.4% (23,000) are employed in the service sectors.



HIGHER ENERGY COSTS BUT GROWTH IN RENEWABLE ENERGY

Although energy prices are higher in Ceredigion, the county has the highest percentage of its electricity consumption met by renewable electricity generation.

What are the issues we need to tackle?

Ceredigion is a confident, attractive county in which many of our people prosper and develop, where many have established thriving and successful businesses, and where many people like to visit. We have clean air, excellent levels of biodiversity and an enviable natural landscape.

We have the potential to grow further, and need to tackle a number of key underlying challenges if we are to realise our full potential.

Since the last census in 2011, the population of Ceredigion has shown a marked decline, particularly in the 16-64 age profile. In short, Ceredigion has experienced outward migration of young people, partly as a result of a decline in public sector jobs, which have always been an important part of the Ceredigion economy.

Because of this, another challenge is growing the size, diversity and resilience of the private sector in Ceredigion. We need to see more businesses starting up, and more of our micro and small businesses grow.

Furthermore, the economy of Ceredigion will need to adapt to key challenges and changes in light of the UK's decision to exit the EU.

To support a future growing population, we need to be able to continue to invest in our places, making them attractive and affordable for our people to live and work alongside growing the visitor economy sustainably.

Our vision and values

Building on our strengths, we will work collaboratively to put measures in place that seek to reverse recent trends in our economy, addressing our key challenges and to achieve a vision of an economy that delivers a sustainable future for all who choose to live and work here.

In preparing this strategic framework, we have spoken to many people who live, work and run businesses and organisations in Ceredigion. Collectively, we share a similar vision and we have many values in common. These values will drive our approach to developing and growing our economy in the next 15 years.

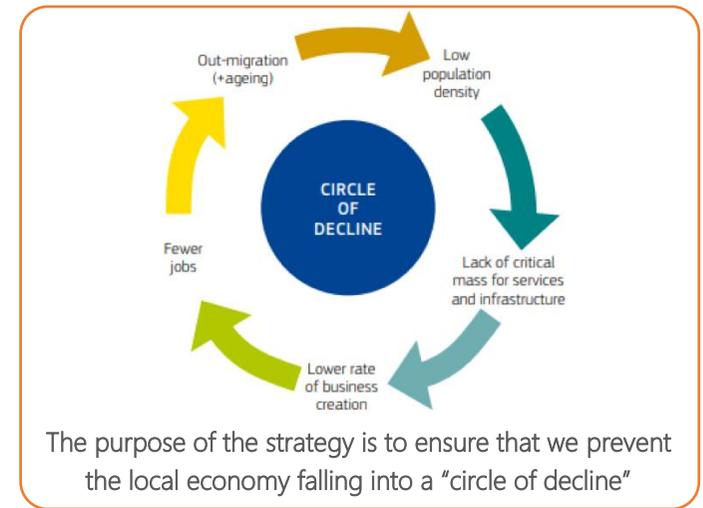
Ceredigion is and will remain a **Collaborative** county – it will grow the economy by listening to and understanding the needs of its people, whilst also caring for its environment and communities.

We are **Ambitious**. We have strong foundations - in our economy, education, environment, traditions and culture, and we can see opportunities to build on these in a way that provides innovative, realistic and exciting future prospects for those who want to be part of it.

The people and businesses of Ceredigion are **Resilient**, and will need to continue to be so to face the challenges we face in our economy, climate and communities. We need to achieve resilience across all our sectors to grow successfully and sustainably.

Ceredigion has many **Unique** qualities and it is important that we celebrate these qualities and use them to build new opportunities.

These 4 values, summarised in four key words - Collaborative, Ambitious, Resilient and Unique spell out **CARU (Love)**. Caru Ceredigion forms part of a brand identity to which we hope all who know Ceredigion can feel associated.



The future we want to see

Ceredigion will grow in **confidence** as it increasingly uses its assets – natural, physical and people – to develop and grow the economy.

More opportunities will be created by new and existing businesses for people of all ages.

More businesses will be established and businesses will grow, enjoying the positive environment for growth here in Ceredigion.

Economic growth will be achieved sustainably - whilst also continuing to play our part in dealing with the causes and impacts of climate change and helping our communities prosper throughout Ceredigion.

Enterprise-led innovation will lead to new job opportunities for skilled young people educated and trained in our schools, colleges and universities.

Young people who wish to stay in Ceredigion, as well as those who may want to return to live and work here or move here for the first time, will see Ceredigion as a place of opportunity. This will ensure our communities remain vibrant places where our culture and Welsh language can thrive.



Strategic Context and Scope

The policy context for developing the strategy

National Policies and Strategies. This strategy aims to align fully to the national policy context by promoting sustainable inclusive growth that are priorities for both the UK and Welsh Government. It closely aligns with the national policy outlined in *'Prosperity for All'* and the *Wellbeing of Future Generations Act* both in terms of our low carbon aspirations and our economic action plan.

Regional Programmes. This strategy aligns closely to the emerging priorities developing from our partnership with Powys Council and wider partners as part of Growing Mid Wales – and will help inform the emerging Regional Economic Framework to support its delivery locally.

Corporate Plan. Ceredigion County Council has previously identified the challenges facing the economy of Ceredigion as the many opportunities it has to provide a basis for resilient growth in the future. It is why it placed Boosting the Economy as its first priority in the current Corporate Plan.

Fit with other strategies

This strategy will influence many other strategies and plans produced and delivered by Ceredigion County Council. The delivery of this strategy will also be influenced by strategies developed and managed by Ceredigion County Council and other key stakeholders including Welsh Government.

Education / Skills. Our ability to generate economic growth in Ceredigion will depend on having a motivated, multi-skilled workforce to work in the enterprises that will drive that growth. The strategies and plans of Ceredigion County Council's education service, and those of Further and Higher education institutions operating in Ceredigion will be influential. We will also work with other organisations providing training, skills and access to apprentices, to ensure that the needs of employers in Ceredigion are understood and met.

Housing. *'Housing for All'* – Ceredigion's Local Housing Strategy sets out how the housing needs of all residents of Ceredigion will be met. The strategy is supported by action plans that will address the changing dynamics and needs of the population. Changing economic drivers will inform these action plans.

Planning. Economic growth can only be achieved when the supporting infrastructure for that growth is in place. That means the need to provide strategic employment sites and premises, housing and to consider how our towns are developed. The delivery of this strategy will be influenced by the Local Development Plan (LDP). The LDP, and its implementation will also be influenced by the changing needs of the Economic Strategy, in addition to the emerging National Development Framework.

Infrastructure. Our ability to grow the economy in Ceredigion will be limited without the development of the underpinning infrastructure of roads, digital connectivity and energy. Other key players involved, especially Welsh Government and Network providers in the case of energy and digital connectivity providers, have strategies and action plans in place to tackle these infrastructure needs. Our Economic Strategy will inform those supporting strategies.

Sectoral and subject strategies. Other local and national strategies tackling specific areas of interest and opportunity will directly influence our success in growing the economy here. Examples include strategies for the Food and Farming sectors, town centre regeneration strategies and plans e.g. Welsh Government's Transforming Towns programme, R&D and innovation strategies. We will identify and take advantage of all opportunities to align our needs and strategies with those at a regional and national level.



Of the 30,900 people in employment in Ceredigion, 74% are employed in the Service Sectors, 12.9% in the Tourism Industry, and 9.7% in the Production and Construction Industries.



Key Principles and Drivers



Principles that underpin the strategy

Opportunity – the strategy is driven by the opportunities that exist to grow the economy. By working in partnership, we can collectively create the conditions for **Sustainable growth**. We recognise the opportunities we have to grow the economy, but we also recognise the factors of life in Ceredigion that make it an area where people like to live – a green, clean area that already contributes to reducing the impacts of climate change.

Protecting, and enhancing our landscape, biodiversity and further reducing the damaging causes of climate change is a core principle. Linked to this, we have an obligation and need to **decarbonise** our economy. This will be another underpinning principle of the strategy. We will use every opportunity to develop ways to grow in a way that also takes carbon out of the atmosphere. We will also use the opportunity we have to help enterprises in Ceredigion to decarbonise.

We will seek to apply the principle of being **employer-led** in order to drive innovation and the skills agenda, in order to create the conditions to create **jobs of higher value** in the economy. This will be achieved in a number of ways, and is not restricted to particular sectors or types of jobs. It means creating some employment opportunities in businesses that are in higher value sectors linked to research and knowledge economy sectors in which we have competitive advantage, for example in agri-tech, bioscience, spectrum and aerospace technology. It also means enterprises in the foundational economy becoming more productive and competitive, and growing to enable the development of career pathways that lead to higher-paid job opportunities.

The strategy is about increasing **prosperity** in Ceredigion. We will be mindful of the need to ensure we strive towards promoting **shared prosperity**. This means achieving growth that contributes to increasing prosperity in communities across the three regions of Ceredigion. It also means delivering on an ambition to closing the financial prosperity gap with the Welsh and UK averages.

Another important underlying principle is the need to protect and enhance our **cultural uniqueness** and identity, and help to boost the resilience and growth of the **Welsh language**. We will build on work undertaken as part of the Arfor project to fully identify the opportunities to realise opportunities to help the Welsh language thrive through positive economic development action. Fundamentally, this will be achieved by ensuring that those who speak Welsh have the confidence, skills and opportunities to develop businesses, work in jobs of higher value, and see Ceredigion as a thriving, energising place to live and work.

These principles remain relevant now as the economy adjusts to the challenges set by Covid and Brexit.

This strategy represents a **framework** for action. We have identified a number of actions listed later in the document, shaped by the data, ideas and knowledge gained through the planning, engagement and consultation phases of developing this strategy. We will continue to work collaboratively with our stakeholders as we develop and deliver detailed actions to help achieve the ambitions set out. We will be **flexible** in our approach to respond to new opportunities and ideas that will come from having a continuous engagement approach with the people who have worked with us on developing this strategy, as well as others we will meet who have a stake in the future of Ceredigion.

There are about 285 businesses in the Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities sector in Ceredigion, which includes scientific research and development. This sector is growing and combined with our strong knowledge economy, creates the conditions for higher paid jobs and economic growth.



The agriculture, forestry and fishing industries account for about 4.5% of the enterprises in the Ceredigion economy



Ridiculously Rich's handmade cakes are one of the success stories of the entrepreneurship of the local economy and are distributed all over the UK

What you told us...

The strategy was drafted following extensive engagement with key stakeholders. We consulted on the draft strategy, which largely received very positive support from respondents, who felt that the right priorities and actions had been identified. A report of the consultation responses is available. A number of observations, suggestions and ideas were presented, and many of these have been incorporated in the Strategy, where there was evidence of wide support for them.

The main themes from our research and consultation are listed below. They have been used to shape the Economic Strategy to help set our priorities to grow the Ceredigion economy over the next fifteen years. They can be grouped into the following four priorities:

People

- Decrease in working age population (16-64) and increase in 65+ population
- Increase in outward commuting over last five years
- High educational attainment levels
- Bastion of Welsh language and culture
- Strong Third Sector and volunteering rates
- Focus on skilled job opportunities for young people
- More effective use of the skills and experience of older people to achieve inclusive growth
- Ensure skills training is focused on employment needs and opportunities for all

Places

- Challenges of rurality – deprivation, access to services, higher energy costs and affordable housing
- Focus on issues around housing affordability, particularly for local young people, to enable economic growth
- High quality of life and safe place to live
- Picturesque and scientifically important natural environment
- Thriving, needs-led employment sites
- Towns as thriving living, working and recreational spaces
- Build on the opportunities that exist post Covid for people to successfully live and work in Ceredigion

Ceredigion's Economic Strategy 2020-2035



Enterprise

- Over-dependence on micro and small sized enterprises, and the lack of medium sized enterprises - the so called 'missing middle'
- Lower earnings compared to Wales as a whole
- Dependency on public sector employment and the service sector in general
- Attracting new enterprises and promoting Ceredigion as a place to do business, to visit, and to enjoy
- Creating opportunities to retain young people in the county and retain their skills in the workforce
- Attracting additional and higher paid jobs
- Support for new and existing businesses
- Strong knowledge sector in the county
- Decreasing student numbers but high satisfaction rates
- Good survival rates for new enterprises
- Work with the Agricultural industry to build on its traditional position as a driver of the economy in Ceredigion, by taking advantage of the research and development expertise available on the doorstep
- Refresh our approach to developing and promoting the visitor economy that builds on our cultural and natural assets strengths.

Connectivity

- Broadband and mobile connectivity improving
- But further investment and development needed in digital infrastructure to support enterprises and consumer access to services
- Development of physical transport infrastructure – road, rail and public transport
- Above average commuting times for employees
- Perception that Ceredigion is not 'connected'
- Capitalise on opportunities in the growing renewable energy sector

Our Focus is on...

People Places Enterprise and
Connectivity



About Ceredigion

Some key facts about our county...



People

Population: 72,992
Population aged 65 or over: 24.9%
Population with a disability: 10.0%
Average age: 46.1
Welsh speakers: 47.3%



Places

Size of the county: 1,900 km²
Special Areas of Conservation: 14
Households: 31,500
Density: 0.4 persons per hectare



Enterprise

No. of active enterprises: 2,810
New enterprise survival rate: 97.2%
Largest industry: Education (15.4%)
Employment rate: 66.1%



Connectivity

Access to car/van: 86.1%
Average distance to work: 21.3km
Ultrafast Broadband availability: 20%



Supporting our Key Sectors

Ceredigion has been traditionally an economy based on **public sector** jobs. Key Higher Education establishments in Aberystwyth and Lampeter have been important employers and drivers of the economy as well as other key institutions such as the National Library and the Local Authority.

In terms of **private sector** jobs, Agriculture has been a backbone of the rural economy and the communities of Ceredigion. It remains an important sector and we will work with the agricultural industry alongside other support organisations, to play our part in helping the industry develop and adapt to change. We own a number of agricultural holdings, and we want to see that network of holdings playing an increasingly important part in adapting to new opportunities and challenges, alongside our excellent research and innovation capability in the agri-tech sector. We also have a thriving visitor economy sector, which now employs over 7000 people in the county, when considering those involved in tourism, accommodation and food service activities. We will continue to work with the sector in their efforts to innovate, drive up quality and increase value by taking advantage of our core strengths in this sector.

The 4,000 people who work in **wholesale and retail trade** help to make up the 74% of the working population employed in the service sectors. Some areas of employment in this sector (including retail) will continue to face challenges, whilst others offer growing opportunities. Notably, 1,600 people are employed in professional, scientific and technical activities, taking advantage of knowledge, skills and new as well as traditional strengths. Key sectors that have emerged and are growing in importance include Environmental and Plant science, Aerospace, Biomedical science and Agri-Tech. Key locations include Aberystwyth and Aberporth.

Whilst Ceredigion has a small **manufacturing** sector, it has a significant presence of food manufacturing businesses in

strategic sites in Aberystwyth and the Aeron Valley, whilst a growing number of small, innovative food manufacturing businesses also exist.

The **Foundation Economy**, including retail, agriculture, foodservice, construction and care sectors are also key drivers of the economy, as is a thriving **Third Sector**.

Ceredigion is home to a **vibrant arts and culture economy**, employing over 400 people. As well as the National Library of Wales and the Arts Centre in Aberystwyth there are key centres in the mid and south region, and plans for further growth of the sector with plans such as the Old College in Aberystwyth set to make a real contribution to growing the sector.

What we will do

We will work with our key partners to help grow employment opportunities in Ceredigion.

This will be achieved largely through growth in the number of businesses in Ceredigion, and also a growth in the number of people employed by our businesses. We may also see some growth as a result of public sector initiatives – particularly spinning out of the investments in Research and Development facilities in key sectors, providing opportunities for advanced manufacturing and other research and development-based opportunities.

Tourism will continue to play a key part in growing our economy. Investments in key facilities, including the harbours and other high quality facilities, events and food-tourism establishments will drive up visitor spend and address seasonality.

The foundational economy such as agri-food, construction and retail will remain important, and we will seek to broaden and strengthen that part of our economy by continually finding new ways of encouraging new and innovative activity that will help our people, businesses and places develop and thrive.

We anticipate that the third sector (community and co-operative enterprises will also play a key role in future growth by ensuring that the growth has a broad base and is inclusive.

The future could be...

Ceredigion will capitalise on the strengths of its core sectors in the foundational economy and advanced research / science-based industries, to generate high-value, employer-led opportunities for its increasingly skilled workforce. Ceredigion will also remain an attractive place to live, work and visit, with interesting places and a thriving culture and Welsh language that will keep its distinctiveness and appeal as a great place to be. Sustainable development will be at the core of our approach, by focusing on protecting our ecology and biodiversity whilst delivering our economic growth ambitions, and capitalising on opportunities to develop our green assets and increase people’s ability to access and enjoy them.



Food Centre Wales based in Llandysul is a dedicated food technology centre offering advice, technical services and training to business start-ups, SME’s and existing food manufacturers



Priority 1: People

Live, work and grow in Ceredigion

Our ambition for the future

Ceredigion is a place where life satisfaction can be achieved, and where professional ambitions can be realised whilst enjoying real quality life experiences.

Our ambition is to see young people who wish to stay and develop a career in Ceredigion realise the opportunities to do so.

We want the County to capitalise on the experience, skills and knowledge of people who have left Ceredigion and now want to return to live, create a new business and / or work here. Likewise, we wish to capture the wealth of experience and knowledge in the population of people over 65 as a means to drive economic growth.

Ceredigion can become an even more attractive destination for visitors to the area, and to people who want to move here to study, live and work. We also want to capitalise on the skills and ambitions of all who live in and move to Ceredigion to study and work. Simply put, we want Ceredigion to be a place for inclusive growth.

Our ambition is to reverse population decline in the young and working-age population, and we want to see the people of Ceredigion able to confidently express their uniqueness in communities with strong identities, culture and language.

“Our ambition is to see young people who wish to stay and develop a career in Ceredigion realise the opportunities to do so”

Where are we now?

There is a perception among some that there are few professional opportunities for young people to follow a rewarding career in Ceredigion, and that the only option is to move from the area to study, live and work. Whilst some will move to realise their study and career aspirations, there are real opportunities for those who wish to stay.

Employers in Ceredigion require people with the right skills to fill vacancies with long-term career opportunities.

Ceredigion is also seen by many as a great place to start a business, whilst also enjoying the numerous benefits living in Ceredigion holds.

To achieve our ambitions, we must ensure that more people of all ages are aware of the real opportunities to develop here. In addition, we will need to ensure that we can provide the training for people of all ages so that employers can drive the economic growth of Ceredigion through their employees.

We also need to ensure that people’s need for housing, connectivity, social opportunities are met.

Collectively, we can be confident that Ceredigion can inspire people and that we can be aspirational.

What is inclusive growth?



For Ceredigion, this means realising the potential of all who live, work in and visit Ceredigion. As we grow, all people in Ceredigion should be able to have the chance to share the benefits.



Ceredigion offers a high quality of life to both residents and visitors alike



Ceredigion’s working population has much higher than average qualifications – over 78% have NVQ Level 2 qualifications and over 60% have NVQ Level 3 qualifications, both higher than the national average.



Priority 1: People

Live, work and grow in Ceredigion

What we need to do?

We have an excellent education system that delivers excellent results for learners. We will work with education providers in Ceredigion to build stronger relationships with employers, so that education and training services are firmly aligned with the needs of those employers.

To tackle the perception of a lack of opportunity in Ceredigion, we will work to raise awareness about the range of rewarding career pathways available in Ceredigion, supported by appropriate training for people of all ages.

We will explore ways, working with our partners, to ensure that our enterprises know they can access a pool of people with the right skills to enable growth. Young people living and studying in Ceredigion will know the breadth and scope of those opportunities, and know how to take advantage of them.

We will also work with our partners to help realise the potential of all people living and working in Ceredigion. People with skills and experience gained elsewhere will see Ceredigion as a place where those skills can be put to good use. Ceredigion will be seen as a great place to start and grow a business, with a formal and informal network of support that helps people and enterprises succeed.

We will build on the work carried out through Arfor and other initiatives aimed at understanding how we can develop the economy in a way that helps to boost the numbers of Welsh speakers in Ceredigion.

This will be about retaining young people (born here or moved to study here) to stay in Ceredigion, attracting others back to the county, and providing others with the opportunity to learn and be confident in using the language.

Who needs to be involved?

We will work in partnership with a range of people and organisations at a local, regional and national level.

Ceredigion Education Service and Further and Higher Education bodies in Ceredigion will be core partners in achieving our ambitions.

Other services in Ceredigion County Council will also be involved, including the Council's People and Organisation Service and Cered.

The Welsh Government, its relevant departments and funded bodies will be key partners.

Private and third sector education and training providers will also be key partners as will other relevant public sector funded bodies such as Careers Wales.

We will work closely with the emerging Regional Learning and Skills Partnership for Mid Wales.

Importantly, this will be an employer-led skills agenda, so our employers will be involved in shaping and delivering it.

We will also work with individuals who can help mentor, inspire, coach and otherwise support our people to fully realise their potential.

Case Study: Osian and Catrin, CRWST Café and Bakery, Cardigan.

Osian and Catrin had a dream of owning a café and bakery. They made the move back to the west and became inspired to bake artisan bread and cakes to sell at the weekly local market in Cardigan along with supplying six local shops. In 2018 CRWST in Cardigan opened its doors, serving brunch, bread, bakes, and coffee.

The success of their products soon led to establishing a separate location for the bakery. Being an entrepreneur however is never easy! Covid-19 brought its own challenges with Osian and Catrin having to adapt their business model - moving online, providing door-to-door deliveries and creating 'bake at home' kits.

"We are so pleased we took this chance and followed our dreams. The key to the success of our business is our passion for producing the best food, to continue being innovative in developing our business and the ongoing support from local people and tourists."



Priority 1: People

Live, work and grow in Ceredigion – proposed early interventions

What we want to achieve?	What will be done?	How will we measure progress?	Who will be involved?	By when will it be achieved?
Building stronger links between future employees and employers.	Develop an employer-led career experience programme, providing opportunities for employers and their future employees to build relationships.	Number of employers involved Number of pupils and students participating Raised awareness of opportunities and skills requirements	Businesses / Employers in Ceredigion Ceredigion CC Schools, Colleges and Universities Skills providers	Launch in 2021 Fully operational by 2023
Employer-led skilled and innovative workforce	Support the development and operation of the new Regional Skills Partnership for Mid Wales Investigate the establishment of a 'Ceredigion talent bank'	Number of students with relevant qualifications Evidence of improved availability of appropriate skilled workforce for employers	Businesses / Employers in Ceredigion Ceredigion CC Schools, Colleges and Universities Skills providers	Improvements achieved annually from 2021 2022 2021/22
Creating an entrepreneurial focused culture.	Promote Entrepreneurship as a real and potentially rewarding career choice for young people and as second / later life career choice	Number of business start-ups Provision of entrepreneurship programmes Participants in programmes	Ceredigion CC Schools, Colleges and Universities Skills providers Welsh Government / Business Wales Third Sector organisations	Improvements seen from 2021
Promoting Ceredigion as a positive place to live, study, work and grow	Introduce a proactive communications campaign in partnership with relevant partners to promote consistent messages about opportunities and activity in Ceredigion. Bring forward proposals to help address key challenges such as affordable housing for young people.	Positive media stories achieved locally and nationally. Evidence of initiatives introduced to improve housing affordability	Ceredigion CC Schools, Colleges and Universities Skills providers Welsh Government / Business Wales Third Sector organisations Housing Associations	Programme launched in 2021
Positively promote opportunities for all to benefit from economic growth	Build on the lessons of Arfor and other relevant research and programmes to create opportunities for Welsh speakers through economic growth. Work to promote the benefits of employing an inclusive workforce.	Action plan based on evaluation of Arfor Communications plan to promote inclusivity	Ceredigion Welsh Government Partner Local Authorities Ceredigion Disability Forum members	2021 onwards 2021 onwards



Priority 2: Place

Distinctive Ceredigion

Our ambition for the future

We want Ceredigion to continue to be a place where people want to live, work and visit. In future, we will need to understand the changing needs of its residents, workers, visitors, as well as the challenges represented by climate change to adapt in a changing World in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit

As part of our vision, Ceredigion will have:

- Housing that meets the needs of its changing demographic including solutions to enable local people to access affordable housing
- Strategic employment sites and other work spaces that meet the needs of future employment
- Landscape and green spaces that contribute to the well-being of people and the planet
- Towns that provide thriving living, working and social spaces
- Natural and physical assets that residents and visitors can access and enjoy



Living in Ceredigion offers a wide variety of recreational activities

Where are we now?

People and enterprises from Ceredigion have historically made their mark on the world stage, culturally and through research expertise and the export of products.

People living in Ceredigion score their life satisfaction at 7.8 out of 10, and 85% being satisfied or very satisfied with the environment in which they live. People acknowledge that they live in a great part of the world. There are over 2.7m visitors to Ceredigion annually which also demonstrates the attractiveness of the county.

However, there are challenges, and we must continue to develop our places to meet the needs of future generations of residents and visitors. Our key current challenges include:

- The need to provide affordable and accessible housing that meets the needs of a changing demographic and workforce.
- Redefining the purpose of our key centres in light of changes to retail habits and the resulting impact on high streets.
- The provision of facilities that provide attractive entertainment all year around for residents and visitors.
- Protecting and enhancing our natural, green assets to enable people to access and enjoy them, as well as contributing to the fight against climate change.

Case Study: Cardigan

Cardigan over recent years has seen the rejuvenation of the town due to the development of a number of initiatives aimed at regenerating the town and its surrounding area. Significantly, these are initiatives that have been led by local individuals, organisations and partnerships.

Developments such as the transfer of local assets to community ownership; the emergence of new enterprises; the growth of the social enterprise sector and regeneration of historical buildings including the Guildhall and Cardigan Castle utilising different methods of funding have all led to local success and increased vibrancy within the town.

Cardigan became the first town in Ceredigion to launch its own town app and Wi-Fi scheme, demonstrating that by utilising the analytics, local businesses can get to know their customers and adapt to meet changing customer needs and habits to support their businesses and the local economy.

Cardigan continues to look to the future as it strives to meet the challenges and grasp those future opportunities!



Aberystwyth Farmers' Market is held on North Parade on the 1st and 3rd Saturday monthly



Priority 2: Place

Distinctive Ceredigion – proposed early interventions

What we want to achieve?	What will be done?	How will we measure progress?	Who will be involved?	By when will it be achieved?
Build on the place plans to identify and deliver opportunities to improve living, working and recreational spaces in town across the three regions.	Review, update and develop plans masterplans setting out a vision for towns in each area of Ceredigion.	Published updated masterplans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community / Town councils. Local stakeholder groups Business community Residents of Ceredigion Welsh Government and other strategic and funding partners Relevant delivery partners in the public, private and third sectors in Ceredigion 	2022
	Bring forward development plans for the Harbour in Aberystwyth and other strategic sites, including the former Arriva bus depot.	Evidence of plans being brought forward and impact in value of investments and jobs created / enterprises started		2023
	Bring forward development plans for a Marina at the Harbour in Aberaeron.	Evidence of plans being brought forward and impact in value of investments and jobs created / enterprises started		2022
	Develop plans and work in partnership to develop a School of artisan food, supporting the development of the mid region (Teifi Valley) as a centre of excellence for foodservice.	Evidence of plans being brought forward and impact in value of investments and jobs created / enterprises started		2022
	Work with partners to identify opportunities to develop facilities that provide entertainment for residents and visitors year-round.	Evidence of plans being brought forward and impact in value of investments and jobs created / enterprises started		2023 and on-going
	Work with partners to identify sources of funding and to attract support for activity that help deliver the place plans.	Evidence of investment levels attracted to Ceredigion		Ongoing from 2021
	Work with partners to grow the impact of the arts and culture sector as an economic driver and provider of excellent leisure activity.	Evidence of growth in employment, activity and economic value		Ongoing from 2021
Maximise opportunities for increasing provision of affordable homes	Develop an Affordable Housing Strategy that encompasses the utilisation of funding opportunities offered through the Welsh Government's Affordable Housing Review	Number of affordable home completions, Funding opportunities secured	Local Authority, Registered Social Landlords, Private developers, Individuals	2023

What we want to achieve?

What will be done?

How will we measure progress?

Who will be involved?

By when will it be achieved?

Ensure Ceredigion has effective strategic sites for employment.		<p>Work with partners to bring forward plans for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Science / Enterprise Hub (Aberystwyth Innovation Campus), with a focus on spin-out companies in bioscience, agri-tech and radio spectrum 	Evidence of plans being brought forward and impact in value of investments and jobs created / enterprises started	Aberystwyth University Trinity St David's University Welsh Government Private sector investment partners	2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in key employment sites including, Parc Teifi, Llandysul Enterprise Park, Horeb Food park, Parc Aberporth, Aeron Valley Enterprise Park 	Evidence of investments and resulting impact on enterprises formed and jobs created		2021 and on-going
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic harbour investments in Aberystwyth, Aberaeron and Cardigan. 	Evidence of plans being brought forward and impact in value of investments and jobs created / enterprises started		2023 onwards
Develop and enhance Ceredigion's green assets		Continue to attract funding to invest in, and enhance the Public Rights of Way network to enable more people to access the network and thus improve general wellbeing.	Evidence of plans being brought forward and impact in accessibility of land and increase in usage	Welsh Government Local Access forum partners Natural Resources Wales	On-going activity
		Attract funding to invest in Ceredigion's Green infrastructure in urban and rural areas, in order to improve biodiversity and highlight / increase contribution to mitigate the impacts of climate change.	Evidence of plans being brought forward and impact in impact against Ceredigion CC climate goals.		
Improved perception of Ceredigion as a vibrant place to live, work and visit.		Launch and operate a proactive marketing and communications programme to promote Ceredigion as a place to live, work and play (Under the Caru Ceredigion and Discover Ceredigion brands)	Evidence of proactive campaign in place	Public Services Board partners	Launch in 2021 and on-going
Make Ceredigion a vibrant place for events		Develop and implement an events strategy to attract suitable major events to Ceredigion.	Number of events taking place		2021 and ongoing



Priority 3: Enterprise

Real Opportunities

Our ambition for the future

Simply, we want to see Ceredigion as a great place to start up in business and to grow a business.

We will see new businesses starting across a range of sectors, but particularly focused on our core strengths of food manufacturing, agriculture, agri-tech, tourism, environmental science, aerospace, spectrum and other science-based research and development industries. The foundational economy will also play an important part of growth in Ceredigion, with key opportunities particularly in construction and care.

Our ambition is also to see an increase in the number and proportion of our businesses that are mid-sized (employing over 50 people).

To achieve this, we will need to develop a true partnership approach involving public sector, businesses, third sector organisations and academia, to ensure that the conditions for developing a thriving business community are in place.

“ ...we want to see Ceredigion as a great place to start up in business and to grow a business ”

Where are we now?

Ceredigion is home to a solid base of successful businesses. The vast majority are small and micro businesses.

Whilst business survival rates are among the highest in Wales, the business birth rate is not currently high enough to provide the engine for growth required by the economy of Ceredigion. Lack of succession in some cases, leads to viable, thriving businesses ceasing to trade, contributing to higher business death rates.

There are positive signs – we have a number of ambitious, young business people who have established new, thriving businesses recently, particularly in the food industry. Investments in Aberystwyth University are also showing great promise in being able to attract new businesses based on their scientific research and development capability.

We also have a thriving third sector that provides the base for communities of people to take action and address specific needs, for example in care, training and employment support.



There are currently 2,810 active enterprises in Ceredigion, with the vast majority being micro enterprises employing up to 9 people. Only 0.5% are medium sized employing between 50 and 249 people, but we want to increase this number over the next fifteen years to provide new and higher paid employment opportunities

The largest employment sectors in Ceredigion are:





Priority 3: Enterprise

Real Opportunities

What we need to do?

It must be the ambition that we create jobs that drive higher personal prosperity and opportunity that grows our economy sustainably and addresses our productivity challenge.

To do so, we'll need to work in strong collaborative partnerships to create the right conditions and offer the right support for these opportunities to be created. It will only be through a strong local team approach across institutions such as Ceredigion County Council, Welsh Government, higher and further education, the third sector – and the number of existing support providers.

Whilst the main drive of growth will be expected to come from the private sector – there will be significant opportunity in the third sector also. We will welcome new business and growth enterprises across a range of sectors – building on the strengths of our existing industry and assets and utilising our talented people effectively but we will specifically focus on opportunities to support our core industries in the foundation economy (agriculture, food, tourism, construction etc.) to develop, diversify. We will also seek to exploit opportunities to create more jobs in the knowledge economy, taking advantage of our Universities, Research and Development expertise and rich network of professional expertise through a range of support organisations based in Ceredigion.

As a Council, we will also look to use our assets, resources and networks to strengthen the offer and support to enable enterprise growth and ensure they thrive here. Ceredigion, as a result, will be seen as a great place to be in business.

We will create opportunities for all people who want to contribute to the growth of new and existing enterprises to do so, to take advantage of the wealth of knowledge and experience that exists in Ceredigion.

Who needs to be involved?

Both new and existing businesses in Ceredigion will need to be at the centre of our work to support our economic growth. We will work closely with the private sector in Ceredigion to understand their issues and needs, and work to address them where possible in partnership with other key organisations and sectors, including:

- Welsh Government
- Growing Mid Wales Partnership
- Further and Higher Education establishments
- Skills and training providers
- Business representative bodies
- Private and public funders
- Third sector organisations



The Aberystwyth Farmers' Market in Aberystwyth

Did you know?

Ceredigion has one of the highest populations in Wales who work from home – approximately 17.3% of the county's working age population are homeworkers, which equates to about 6,200 people. This provides great opportunities to live and work in the county.

Case Study: Ridiculously Rich by Alana is one of Ceredigion's success stories and is now a well-known name in the food and drink sector, both here and further afield. Its roots are very much based in West Wales with a purpose built bakery located in Aberystwyth, where the products are produced. Following Alana's early success in selling products nationwide and winning "The Apprentice", her portfolio has expanded considerably and her passion is greater than ever.

Ridiculously Rich has by now almost 50 franchises taking cakes to events all across the UK and stocking in local independent retailers. It has created 'Grab & Go' Bars and its innovative fully branded Self-Serve Retail Units are based in convenience stores and petrol forecourts. The business continues to evolve with a strong online presence and monthly subscriptions as new additions. In 2020 Alana has also opened her first shop in Aberystwyth overlooking Cardigan Bay.

Alana also wants to give others an opportunity to run their own business with a chance to start their very own Ridiculously Rich franchise through her Ambassador & Cakepreneur schemes.



Priority 3: Enterprise

Real Opportunities - proposed early interventions

What we want to achieve?	What will be done?	How will we measure progress?	Who will be involved?	By when will it be achieved?
Support the creation of new businesses and helping existing businesses grow in Ceredigion (create more mid-size businesses)	Aim to achieve 300 new businesses opening every year in Ceredigion.	Annual count of registered businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government • Growing Mid Wales Partnership • Further and Higher Education establishments • Skills and training providers • Business representative bodies • Private and public funders • Third sector organisations 	Annually from 2021
	Tailor and enhance the business support & finance offer (including business mentoring and direct advice and support) for new and existing businesses working with the appropriate range of support organisations including Welsh Government and its agencies (e.g. Business Wales & Development Bank).	Evidence of existence of targeted business support programmes available in Ceredigion		2021
	Creatively use the County Council's assets and skills to support business startup and growth (e.g Food Centre Wales, Council Farms and other Council land and buildings)	Report on use of Ceredigion CC owned assets for the purpose of promoting new businesses.		2022
	Investigate the establishment of an Enterprise Hub in Ceredigion in partnership with Higher Education and Welsh Government.	Report on progress on development of the initiative		2025
Raise the awareness of Ceredigion as a great place to establish and grow businesses	Establish a Business Awards programme for Ceredigion.	Evidence of awards programme established and promoted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business representative bodies • Private and public funders • Third sector organisations 	2021
	Launch and operate a proactive marketing and communications programme to promote Ceredigion's business activity (Under the Caru Ceredigion brand)	Evidence of proactive campaign		2021

What we want to achieve?	What will be done?	How will we measure progress?	Who will be involved?	By when will it be achieved?
<p>Strengthen / Capitalise on key opportunities for our key sectors – Food / Farming, Agri-Tech, Tourism, Aerospace / Spectrum technology, Bioscience</p> 	<p>Continue to develop Food Centre Wales and develop the Horeb Food Park, and work with other key partners to help grow the food sector in line with national, regional and local strategies to develop opportunities for good quality, sustainable food production.</p> <p>Deliver key tourism infrastructure investments (e.g. Harbours), and continue to work in partnership with the tourism industry to jointly promote the Ceredigion tourism offer.</p> <p>Work with Aberystwyth University and Trinity St Davids University to support investments in key applied research and technology activities.</p>	<p>Report on activity and its impact on relative strength of the food industry in Ceredigion</p> <p>Report on activity and annual statistics reported through STEAM reports showing impact on visitor numbers and spend.</p> <p>Report on activity and impact in terms of businesses started and jobs created.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government • Growing Mid Wales Partnership • Further and Higher Education establishments • Skills and training providers • Business representative bodies • Private and public funders • Third sector organisations 	<p>2023</p> <p>2023</p> <p>2022</p>
<p>Tackle structural weaknesses / market failure where they exist in our Foundational Economy (specifically Construction and Care sectors)</p> 	<p>Investigate the establishment of arms-length businesses and other creative solutions to tackle capacity issues in the construction and care sectors.</p> <p>Continue to explore and develop innovative solutions to support Ceredigion businesses win more public sector and other supply chain, contracts in Ceredigion.</p>	<p>Feasibility study developed</p> <p>Measure of increase in the amount of business won by Ceredigion-based businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Services Board partners • Welsh Government 	<p>2023</p> <p>2022</p>
<p>Ensure Ceredigion has the infrastructure (both direct and supporting) to support growth opportunities.</p> 	<p>Work with private and public partners to deliver the sites and premises infrastructure required to support growth in key employment sites across Ceredigion</p>	<p>Report on availability of relevant sites and premises available to support the establishment and growth of businesses in Ceredigion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government • Growing Mid Wales Partnership 	<p>2021 and on-going</p>
<p>Develop and maintain a strong collaborative approach to economic growth.</p> 	<p>Establish a key account management system so that key businesses have identified, relevant contact points within Ceredigion County council to help address their requirements</p> <p>Investigate the feasibility and usefulness of establishing business / sectoral forums.</p>	<p>List of key accounts in place, with evidence of communication with all key businesses.</p> <p>Report written on the feasibility of setting up business fora, including evidence of demand from businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses in Ceredigion • Welsh Government and other business support organisations 	<p>2021 and ongoing</p>



Priority 4: Connectivity

Connecting Ceredigion

Our Ambition for the Future

Digital, Transport and Energy connectivity

Digital connectivity - In simple terms, our ambition is to ensure that residents and businesses in Ceredigion are not at a disadvantage because of a lack of digital connectivity. It is widely acknowledged that digital connectivity is now considered an essential part of home and business life, and is a fourth utility. It is not therefore about catching up – but ensuring we have parity of access and opportunity to towns and communities across the UK. That means an ambition to deliver services that equate to full fibre equivalent to levels well above the current 80% reach.

We want businesses to take full advantage of technology to support their growth, developing new approaches with connectivity through new technology, such as ‘The Internet of Things’, ensuring that businesses in Ceredigion are at the forefront of developments and driving rural economic growth, rather than waiting to catch up. We will work with national programmes and develop our own solutions to help businesses exploit and make use of new connectivity/technologies.

Transport connectivity - To drive economic growth and attract new investment we need to improve connectivity both to and within Ceredigion. We will build on our existing linkages to deliver the transport network required to help grow the economy and raise productivity.

Reliable, resilient, sustainable and connected transport networks are fundamentally important to economic growth and communities in Ceredigion. Enhanced transport connectivity will play a critical role in supporting economic flows, improving accessibility, attracting investment and enabling development.

Ceredigion’s Economic Strategy 2020-2035

Energy Connectivity - Affordable connectivity to a decarbonised energy network is a vital part of our future economic growth. Energy is everything, without it we cannot heat our homes, move around, or have employment. The UK decarbonisation agenda means this energy has to come from **renewable sources** in the future. The county and region are well placed to contribute to meeting this need, but poor existing grid infrastructure hampers this.

Where are we now?

Transport, digital and energy connectivity are three key challenges.

Poor digital connectivity in terms of poor broadband and patchy and unreliable mobile signal continues to marginalise rural communities, particularly those living in hard-to-reach areas; causing frustration; hindering rural businesses and preventing people from engaging with online services. We must recognise that in order to attract new businesses or slow our declining population, we need better connectivity.

The size, remoteness and dispersed pattern of settlements in Ceredigion presents challenges in both the transport of goods and people. The network of Trunk Road and County roads and the rail corridors in the region cover a vast area constrained by the geography of the county. Roads are single carriageway, causing poor journey time reliability and resilience of the network, long journey times and poor reliability.

Whilst Ceredigion is currently a net exporter of electricity, poor grid infrastructure makes new significant energy connections prohibitively expensive, a potential constraint.

Case Study: 4G Router pilot

The need for good digital connectivity has been critical during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, it became clear that poor connectivity was causing significant problems for those in Ceredigion directly responding to the outbreak and who needed to effectively work from home.

As a result, a pilot was established exploring the use of alternative technology in improving broadband speeds over fixed cable methods.

4G routers were trialled in locations around Ceredigion. In areas where a 4G signal could be received, and allowed people to continue with their duties and maintain contact with customers, suppliers and members of the community.

“I have seen a massive improvement. I can now receive around 25mbps compared to the maximum of 3mbps previously. Access to increased broadband speeds has had a big impact on my ability to work from home.” (Endaf Griffiths, Wavehill)



The Rheidol Power Station is the largest hydropower project in Wales producing **85 GWh electricity** which is enough to power **20,000 homes**





Priority 4: Connectivity

Connecting Ceredigion

What we will do?

The resilience of the transport network is vitally important to the economy. Investment is needed to address fundamental transport issues that constrain movement around the County and across our borders into other counties. The Marches and Mid-Wales Freight Strategy, for example, highlights a number of issues for business that will require a combination of interventions that support and improve the network, making the Mid Wales region better connected. The promotion of sustainable travel modes and decarbonisation of transport are also significant ambitions for the Ceredigion to ensure we are able to address the climate change emergency.

Our aim is for an integrated and affordable transport system that facilitates economic growth, ensures access for all to services and opportunities, sustains and improves the quality of communities, and supports the transition to a low carbon future.

20% of premises in the county can receive **Full Fibre Broadband** higher than the Wales average, but...



But...there are still **19%** unable to receive standard 30Mbit/s broadband speeds

We will also work with partners to ensure that Ceredigion’s drive for economic growth is not held back by limitations in the supply of energy. We will investigate the possibilities of using renewable sources of electricity, within a localised distribution network to fuel future economic growth.

Limitations in digital connectivity will also not be allowed to dampen economic growth potential in Ceredigion. High speed broadband connection is already widely possible in Ceredigion, but we will work to ensure that all communities and businesses in Ceredigion have access to the required speeds of connection to enable people to live, work and grow businesses in Ceredigion.

Who needs to be involved?

We will work with partners at all levels of government, dependent on the devolved nature of policy to ensure that the need for investment, and its impact, are clearly communicated.

We will work with communities across Ceredigion to identify and support the delivery of opportunities for community-led action in energy and digital connectivity.

We will also work with private and third sector partners that can bring forward solutions and help deliver our objectives in this area.

Did YOU Know?

Ceredigion’s residents have the third highest commuting distances across Wales – the average distance travelled to work is 21.3km, higher than the national average of 16.7km





Priority 4: Connectivity

Connecting Ceredigion - proposed early interventions

What we want to achieve?	What will be done?	How will we measure progress?	Who will be involved?	By when will it be achieved?
Improvement to Road network	Seek support and funding for investment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve connectivity of the county addressing cross-border strategic routes. • Improvement measures to the Trunk and County road network including pinch point programme and linkages to key markets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A44 Aberystwyth to Llangurig. ○ The West Wales Strategic Coastal Corridor linking North and South West Wales. • Ensuring the resilience to the County Road network to support the strategic network 	Emerging strategies and programmes for road improvement locally and regionally.	Welsh Government Neighbouring Authorities	Ongoing from 2021
Improvements to Public Transport provision in Ceredigion	Seek support and investment funding to: Improve strategic rail corridors:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements line speed enhancements on the Cambrian Line; encouraging lightweight freight being carried on passenger services on Cambrian Main Line; and the development of strategic Aberystwyth transport hub • Service connectivity interventions such as a full hourly service on the Cambrian Line to Birmingham International and connectivity to HS2; reinstatement of direct London service 	Evidence of strategies and provision being in place	Welsh Government and transport partners	Ongoing from 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TrawsCymru strategic route development and long distance bus strategic hubs / interchanges with integrated responsive transport. • Support Bwcabus development • Protection of the Aberystwyth to Carmarthen railway line corridor • Ensure provision supports the tourism requirements/initiatives 			
Behaviour change	<p>Active travel packages of support to encourage walking and cycling, and development of infrastructure.</p> <p>Dissemination of information using digital information networks & education to seek behavioural change</p>	Evidence of growing information network and uptake of services	Welsh Government	Ongoing from 2021
Decarbonisation of Transport	Develop a strategic approach to provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, feasibility work on hydrogen potential and taking forward key towns to pilot a decarbonisation plan.	Decarbonisation plan in place	All transport partners	2021
Integration of Transport	Introduce Rural connectivity measures such as smart highways, road and rail hubs and integrated ticketing and integrated responsive transport.	Investigation of feasibility and linked plan in place	All transport partners	2022
Enhanced Electricity Grid Network	Investigate public purchase of significant Grid capacity for onward sale to individual developments (both generation and use)	Availability of grid capacity on the county for supply / take up of renewable energy	Welsh Government Energy Service. Distribution Network Operators & National Grid. Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy / Ofgem	2022
Decarbonising Energy Network	Publicity campaign to convey the need and local benefits of decarbonising energy network	Success of planning applications for developments relating to RE installations	Welsh Government Developers	2025

What we want to achieve?	What will be done?	How will we measure progress?	Who will be involved?	By when will it be achieved?
Explore Hydrogen Economy Potential	Investigate conversion of renewable electricity generation into hydrogen gas, thereby reducing need for investment in Grid Connectivity.	Clarity on H ₂ feasibility in the county and region.	Powys County Council Developers	2021
Develop a strategic approach to Digital	Develop a Ceredigion Digital Strategy	Production of the strategy		2020
Improve connectivity in Ceredigion	<p>Measures to extend the coverage of Superfast and Ultrafast Broadband in the region focusing on fibre to the premises.</p> <p>Programme of measures to extend good, reliable 4G coverage across the region.</p> <p>Influencing and lobbying for policy changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove order caps for on demand fibre products <p>Guarantee a minimum mobile phone network speed of 10mbs on basis of 50% signal strength during peak periods.</p> <p>Enable Gigabit capable infrastructure, focusing on priority areas and where opportunities for economic growth lie. Promote and make use of Government funding and highlight commercial opportunities for alternative network providers.</p>	Broadband Penetration/coverage data	UK & Welsh Government; Providers, Communities	To 2025
Improve digital exploitation levels in Ceredigion	<p>Work with support providers to add value, extend the reach and scope of their support.</p> <p>Drive the implementation of digital connectivity within businesses by increasing participation/skills and the uptake of advancing technology through supporting/utilising national programmes.</p>	Take-up data and provider information	Welsh Government, Digital Communities Wales, Farming Connect etc.	Continuous



How will we deliver and resource Ceredigion's Economic Strategy?

People and Partnerships

Delivering the strategy will require focused action by Ceredigion County Council across a number of service areas, working with partners in the Public, Private and Third sectors nationally, regionally and locally.

The Welsh and UK Governments will be key partners, as will other Local Authorities where the identified actions contribute to regional economic growth.

The Growth and Enterprise Team within Ceredigion County Council is structured and resourced to carry out three strategic functions that are central to delivering the strategy:

- **Growth and Major Development team** – one team is focused on building strategic partnerships to attract key investments and put in place the building blocks for delivery.
- **Asset development and management** – this function within the team will ensure the physical assets we own and manage (including our green assets in Ceredigion) are developed and managed to effectively deliver the strategic outcomes set out in this framework strategy.
- **Project management and delivery.** A dedicated team to manage and deliver projects, working with multiple partners in the community, in the private sector, regionally and nationally, and aligned to the needs of funders.

- A fourth team will be focused on **managing and developing Food Centre Wales** for the benefit of the Welsh Food economy, with clear benefits also delivered for the Ceredigion economy as a result.

We have set out in this document some of the actions we'll aim to deliver in the first stage, subject to funding and further planning of the detailed approach. This is not an exhaustive list of actions required to help grow the economy. To support the delivery of the ambition, in some cases, we will bring forward more detailed strategies and action plans, for example an Asset Strategy, Use of Space Strategy and a Digital Action Plan.

Projects will be brought forward in consultation with external and internal partners to achieve the most cost effective, efficient delivery of services and projects.

Measuring Progress

Progress will be measured by monitoring performance indicators using:

- Internal monitoring and reviewing the success of the strategy against annual performance indicators and long term impact on the economic data for Ceredigion.
- Ongoing external engagement.

Reviewing the Strategy

We will continually review the Strategy and update it with new interventions as we identify them, and the latest version will be available from our website.



Swallow Yachts based in Cardigan



Fishing boats at work in Aberystwyth marina

Supporting documents

Ceredigion's Economic Strategy has been developed using the following supporting documents:

- "Economic Baseline Report" (February 2020)
- "Consultation on a new Economic Strategy Feedback Report" (February 2020)
- Economic Impact Update Report (October 2020)
- Responses to the Consultation (February 2021)

Copies of these documents are available from Ceredigion County Council

Similarly, if you would like a **Plain Text Version** or an **Easy Read Version** of this document please contact Ceredigion County Council:

 01545 570881

 Ceredigion County Council
Canolfan Rheidol
Rhodfa Padarn
Llanbadarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 3UE
 www.ceredigion.gov.uk

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"Circle of decline" diagram - The European Network for Rural Development

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Image by Ridiculously Rich by Alana

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Janet Baxter Photography

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Photos from top: New Quay harbour, Ystwyth Trail cycle path, New Quay beach and harbour

