

NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL SET ITS BUDGET FOR 2020-21



Following an extensive consultation with the public and partners, Newport City Council has set its budget for 2020-21.

After the draft budget was prepared at the end of 2019, the council's final settlement figure confirmed an improved grant from Welsh Government. Councillor Jane Mudd, Leader of the Council, said:

"We were very pleased to receive a positive draft settlement from Welsh Government, which put us in a better position than we originally thought. It has provided us with a little more flexibility when listening to what our residents feel most strongly about.

"This year's consultation saw the highest number of responses received and we have tried our very best to strike a balance between addressing the areas and issues highlighted, investing in the strategic areas identified by the council and protecting the financial integrity of the authority for the future.

"As a direct result of the feedback received we have decided to retain the funding for family support delivered through our Barnardo's partnership; post 16 travel to school or college; and support for some voluntary sector organisations."

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A project is underway to restore the city centre's historic Market Arcade.

Specialist contractors have begun to work on the 19th century link between High Street and Market Street.

Work will include the restoration of the shopfronts and refurbishment of the glazed canopy.

Newport City Council secured funding from the National Heritage Lottery Fund, Cadw and Welsh Government for the project to save the arcade from further decline and give it a brighter future.

Councillor Jane Mudd, Leader of Newport City Council, said:

"This has been a complex scheme so I'm delighted that work has begun.

"This will make a huge difference to part of the city centre, benefiting not only the businesses in the arcade but those in the surrounding area.

"Importantly, we will also be helping to protect an important part of the city's heritage."

"I would like to thank all those involved, especially council officers, for working so hard to make this possible. I would also like to thank the Heritage Fund for backing our vision and, of course, lottery players who contribute to the fund as well as members of the community who have been involved in the project.

Anthony A Davies is the same firm that worked on the Newbridge Memorial Hall and heritage specialists Davies Sutton were appointed as the architects.

The arcade will remain open while the project, which is due to completed next year, is under way.

Originally called Fennell's Arcade, the arcade was created in 1869 as a key pedestrian route between the railway station and the, then new, provisions market.

In recent years, it has declined so the council worked with the multiple owners to find a solution which led to the bid being submitted to the Heritage Fund.

As part of the preparation work for the project, residents of all ages, from schoolchildren to older residents with fond memories of the arcade in better days, took part in the development phase.

People were fascinated by the history of the arcade and this project will help to preserve and enhance a piece of Newport's heritage for generations to come.



WORK BEGINS TO RESTORE ARCADE



NEW MAYOR ANNOUNCED

Councillor David Williams will become the city's 388th Mayor when he becomes Newport's first citizen in May.

Councillor Williams, who represents the Graig ward, will take on the chains of office at the council's annual general meeting on 12 May.

His wife Ruth will be by his side as Mayoress for the year.

The first Mayor is recorded as taking up office in 1314 and previous Mayors of Newport have included the Chartist leader John Frost.



GREEN WASTE COLLECTIONS ARE BACK

Garden waste collections in Newport resumed this month.

Orange-lidded bins are collected fortnightly, alternate weeks to refuse collections, and can be used for grass cuttings and prunings.

Recycling collections are made weekly by Wastesavers. The household waste recycling centre, in Docks Way, now opens until 6pm on Thursdays.

Check on collection days, opening times for the recycling centre and much more at www.newport.gov.uk/recycling

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2020-21 BUDGET

Following an extensive consultation with the public and partners, the council has set its budget.

More than £10 million investment in schools

Cabinet agreed the full additional £4.6 million allocated but not ring-fenced by Welsh Government should be given to schools on top of the almost £4.4 million allocated for education and proposed an additional £1.4million investment in recognition of the challenges of growing pupil numbers. £90,000 will be used to specialist support and help schools with their financial and HR management during this challenging period.

Council tax

Although this source of income represents less than a quarter of the authority's budget, Cabinet recognises it is a considerable outgoing for residents. The original proposed increase was reduced to 6.95 percent – with the majority of Newport households being in bands A to C, this means a rise of between £1 and £1.33 a week. It is still expected to remain one of the lowest council tax rates in Wales.

Extra £120k for youth services

The council will work with Newport Youth Council to decide how this should be spent to benefit young people in the city.

£80,000 to bring empty properties back into use

Those who carry out work to bring empty properties back into use will be offered a one-year 50 per cent reduction on Council Tax. This could support the renovation of up to 125 properties across the city.

£210,000 to make the city centre more attractive

Additional money will be used to make the city centre more attractive, safer and cleaner, with the aim of increasing its appeal as a 24/7 city centre. This will expand on the ongoing regeneration, positive impact of civil parking enforcement and fund additional cleansing.

Investment of more than £292,000 into fostering

This money will be used to boost the fees paid to foster carers to make the council more competitive compared with private sector agencies. We want to place local children with local carers and reduce more expensive out-of-council arrangements.

Discretionary rate relief

An additional £60,000 will be available to charities, voluntary bodies and community groups.

Barnardo's support for families

The council has a long-standing partnership with Barnardo's to deliver family support services for children and families at the edge of care. A £75,000 reduction in this service was proposed,

but based on the consultation feedback, this proposal will not be taken forward.

Voluntary sector grants

Proposals included reductions in grants to a number of third sector organisations. As a result of the consultation feedback, reductions relating to Mind and Newport People First will not be implemented.

Home to college transport

Original proposals included stopping home to college transport provision and the removal of post-16 travel grants to mainstream schools and colleges. As a result of consultation feedback, these proposals will not be taken forward.

Supporting future regeneration

Around £5million has been earmarked to facilitate council borrowing that could be used to support future private sector investment and regeneration projects in the city.

Creating a modern council

The council, to-date, has made limited investment in IT. Identified as a pressure for future years, Cabinet decided to invest in improved IT and staff training now. This will help the council modernise its working practices, therefore making the authority more efficient and agile, in turn providing a better service for residents.

PARTNERSHIP TO BOOST COUNCIL'S CARBON NEUTRAL AMBITION



An ambitious project to install multiple roof-mounted solar panels in council buildings across Newport has taken its first step.

The council is working in collaboration with Egni Co-op to help the authority in its aim to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030.

Following a detailed feasibility study - with support from the Welsh Government Energy Services, Sustainable Communities Wales and the Wales Co-operative Centre - a plan has been drawn up to install 6,000 solar panels across 21 sites at zero cost to the council.

Schools, a council depot and care homes have so far been identified and once installed the solar panels will generate 1,973,000 units of clean renewable electricity per year.

Work has recently been completed at Parklands and Blaen-Y-Pant Residential Care homes where 129 solar panels have been installed across both sites.

EU citizens who want to live, work or study in the UK after Britain leaves the EU need to apply to the settlement scheme.

Newport City Council now offers a document scanning service where you can get your ID documents scanned and verified in order to make an application.

The service is available between 9am and 3pm on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and between 9.30am and 3pm on a Tuesday. No appointment is required but you may need to wait for a member of staff to be available.

For more information and details of what you need to bring, visit www.newport.gov.uk/brexit or call 01633 656656.

There are also a number of services in Newport that can help you apply to the EUSS, provide you with advice or attend the scanning service with you. You can find further details on the Welsh Government website www.eusswales.com



Most of the electricity generated will be used on site reducing the council's carbon emissions by 348 tonnes per year. Some electricity will also be exported onto the grid for use in the city.

Egni Co-op is a community organisation which funds and manages PV installations in Wales. It was set up by Awel Aman Tawe (AAT), a community energy charity which has been operating for 20 years.

The solar panels in Newport have been funded by a loan from the Development Bank of Wales and Egni's ongoing co-op share offer which has raised £1.4m to date.

DOG FOULING COMPLAINTS

Dog owners are responsible for clearing up after their pets who foul public places including parks and playing fields.

Newport City Council has Dog Control Orders in place www.newport.gov.uk/dogcontrol with offenders facing a Fixed Penalty Notice on the spot fine of £75. FPNs will be issued for offences including failing to remove dog faeces and failure to keep a dog on a lead with a maximum length of 1.5 metres.

The order also covers cemeteries at Christchurch, Caerleon and St Woolos.

However, while the council's community safety wardens can respond to complaints of anti-social behaviour, noise nuisance, littering and dog fouling we also need the public to report dog fouling to help us identify offenders and take enforcement action.

The council run service can take complaints via email at incidents.wardens@newport.gov.uk, via phone on 01633 656656 from 8am to 6pm and after 6pm on 01633 656667.

The public can also request a street cleanse if there has been dog fouling by visiting our website www.newport.gov.uk/onlineservices

CHILDREN'S DESIGN COMPETITION

We are appealing to budding young artists in Newport to design a new look for children's library cards.

Youngsters aged between four and 12 can submit their designs, which should show their love for libraries and reading, to their local library by 18 April.

The winner will receive an art pack and an author visit for their school.

NEWPORT COMMITMENT LAUNCHED

Newport Commitment supports the vision that the public, private and third sectors will work together to connect children and young people to the world of work.

It also aims to open up opportunities

Homelessness, especially the difficult issue of people who are sleeping on the streets, is an increasing problem in Wales and across the UK.

Newport City Council works proactively, with partners, to alleviate homelessness and rough sleeping and this includes frontline staff engaging directly with those on the streets.

It has adopted the Gwent Homelessness Strategy that uses the skills and knowledge of key officers and is working towards Welsh Government recommendations to enable a joined up approach to tackling an extremely complex issue.

Last year, the Welsh Government agreed funding of £300,000 for a Housing First trailblazer project.

Working in partnership with the council, the scheme is operated by Pobl and aims to accommodate people who have had a history of repeat homelessness and help them into long-term housing.

Last month, Pobl's second client moved into their own home, safely off the streets.

"Thank you for caring. I wouldn't be where I am without you."

Homelessness is on the rise across the country and the council works with partners to provide a range of services for people at risk of homelessness, those who are homeless and people sleeping rough.

Working with partners, the council has a number of effective procedures aimed at preventing and alleviating homelessness across the city and rough sleeping forms part of this work.

Newport City Council, Gwent Police and specialist charities,

for the long-term unemployed.

The ultimate goal is to ensure that all young people in the city, and residents who are out of work, secure a job that enables them to reach their full potential while contributing to the economic growth of the city.

For young people, schools and economically inactive this will include access to apprenticeships, traineeships, volunteering, workplace visits, mentoring and support.

A number of leading companies

have already pledged to support the Newport Commitment as this is an opportunity to make a real difference to young people's lives and demonstrate corporate social responsibility.

Businesses interested in taking part can email newportcommitment@newport.gov.uk



HELPING HOMELESS PEOPLE



such as The Wallich, Eden Gate and Pobl, work closely together as they recognise that there are some very vulnerable people in our society who need support, practical help and focussed assistance in order to break the cycle of homelessness.

The reasons why people sleep on the streets can be complicated but the numbers are quite small in context of those who need assistance with housing issues

However, this work depends on the engagement of individuals, some of whom have multiple support needs, but that will not stop us continuing to reach out to offer help and advice.

More information about how we can help people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, can be found at www.newport.gov.uk/homelessness including details

of how to contact StreetLink which enables the public to connect people sleeping rough with local support services.

The council also has to balance the needs and safety of other residents and businesses in the city centre in relation to sites used by people who are sleeping rough. In recent months, it has undertaken cleaning-up of some sites following complaints from the public.

Newport's supporting people programme also delivers housing-related services, funded by the Welsh Government, to more than 4,000 vulnerable people.

This can help in managing accommodation or finding more suitable accommodation. Find out more about the programme at www.newport.gov.uk/supportingpeople

TIGHTENING UP TAXI DRIVER LICENCE LAWS

Newport City Council is joining other local authorities in Wales to tighten up guidelines when issuing licences for drivers of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles.

The Institute of Licensing (IOL) guidance was drawn up to protect the public from rogue operators.

The council already followed stringent rules when assessing whether a candidate was 'fit and proper' to hold a licence. The IOL guidance means local authorities have greater consistency when issuing licences

It also stops potential drivers 'shopping' between local authorities to get a licence.

PLANNING A LITTER PICK?

If you're planning a community litter pick, you can now borrow equipment from Malpas Library.

Working in partnership with Keep Wales Tidy, we have equipment that is free to use by individuals, groups and schools that are looking to do their bit in the community and improve the local environment.

When you've finished, we'll make a note of how many people were involved, the area covered and what was collected, so this can inform future events and schemes.

Pop into the library for more information or to book the kit.



NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL'S INITIATIVE IS A STEP AHEAD

Newport pupils and staff do not take off their coats before just lessons – they also take off their shoes.

The shoeless classroom is an initiative that was introduced to Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary following a visit to Finland by Caroline McLachlan, the school's chair of governors, and Councillor Gail Giles, at their own expense.

In September 2018, Mrs McLachlan and Councillor Giles, cabinet member for education and skills, visited three schools in Turku.

As well as learning about the Finnish education system, they also met with Turku's director of education.

It provided them with an interesting insight into many aspects of school life including how removing shoes in schools encourages a more relaxed learning environment.

Councillor Giles and Mrs McLachlan were also very impressed with the standard of school meals that ensured every child received the best nutrition to aid wellbeing and learning.

They provided detailed reports to the council and it was agreed that, with the support of research and studies, a shoeless policy should be introduced and school meals would be reviewed.

Given the vital role that Mrs

McLachlan has played, it was considered appropriate that Caerleon Lodge Primary School should pilot the shoeless project. Councillor Giles said:

"I am delighted that, with the support of the head teacher Julie Saville, staff and governors, Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School has developed the shoeless policy which is a great success, improving the learning environment and enjoyed by the pupils."

"I would also like to thank Head Teacher Rebecca Penn, staff and governors of Charles Williams Church in Wales Primary School, who are now developing a shoeless environment."



WINNERS SHOWS HIS BROTHERLY LOVE

At the age of just 11, Winners Sessay already knows what it's like to care for others as he plays an important role in looking after his brother Elliott, nine, who has complex needs.

Winners is one of more than 90 children and young people supported by Barnardo's Cymru Newport Young Carers, a service set up to provide them with a break from their caring responsibilities.



Winners helps out mum-of-three Stella with everything from bathing,

dressing and feeding Elliott to getting up at night to ensure his brother

is safe if he has woken and left his bedroom to go downstairs.

Elliott is unable to communicate verbally, he is autistic and has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, so managing him can be a challenge for the family from Ringland, Newport.

Although helping to look after Elliott is a responsibility, it is one he enjoys.

"It's fun playing with him and when I grow up I'll know how to look after children. I like showing my mum how responsible I am,"

Winners is one of thousands of young people whose roles were

recognised on Young Carer's Awareness Day in January.

When he finds things difficult he can talk to his Barnardo's Cymru project worker about what's worrying him and he enjoys meeting with other young carers at one of their social clubs.

Councillor Paul Cockeram, the council's cabinet member for social services, urged anyone under 25 who is helping to care for a relative or loved one to contact Barnardo's on 01633 251152, **email barnadosnewportservices@barnados.org.uk** or ring the council on 01633 656656.

HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Pupils and staff from Newport schools attended a ceremony in the Civic Centre to mark a special achievement.

All have received the highly-regarded Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme's national quality award.

Glasllwch; Mount Pleasant; Gaer; St Andrew's; Maindee; Clytha; Eveswell; Langstone; Malpas Court; Lliswerry Primary Schools; Ysgol Gymraeg Casnewydd and Fair oak Nursery School were recognised.

Newport's Mayor Councillor William Routley presented the awards at the ceremony attended by the council leader, Councillor Jane Mudd, and the cabinet member for education and skills, Councillor Gail Giles.

In order to gain the national quality award, the whole school has to embrace the seven themes including food and fitness; personal development and emotional well-being.

Councillor Mudd said:

"I would like to congratulate all the schools for this amazing achievement. It can take nine years to achieve the full award so it is a big commitment for a school and they should all be very proud."

Councillor Giles said:

"This award enables our young people to have a positive approach to health and well-being and is an excellent means of introducing them to principles that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. Well done."

Pupils from Bassaleg School helped with the organisation of the event which was held in the Civic Centre's council chamber.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recognises the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme as playing a key role in promoting the health of children and young people, and the scheme has been rolled out across Wales since 2000.



DIGITAL DESTINATION

in the heart of the city centre, Newport Library and Art Gallery.

Councillor Jane Mudd, leader of Newport City Council, said:

"We believe there is considerable interest in this type of facility coming to Newport."

"The concept of the Information Station has been extremely successful and we want that to continue in the city centre. Moving services to John Frost Square will make them even more accessible to residents as it is close to car parks and the bus station and make better use of the library and museum building."



An innovative proposal to bring coworking incubator space to the city centre is being explored by Newport City Council, subject to funding.

About 9,000 sq ft on the ground floor and first floor, presently used by council services, at the Information Station could be made available for start-up businesses in the digital, tech and creative sectors.

If a tenant is found, it is intended that council staff will move from the Queensway building to another council-owned building

NEXT STEP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST ILLEGAL PARKING

A new mobile enforcement vehicle will hit the streets of Newport next month as part of the council's ongoing effort to tackle illegal parking.

Since Civil Parking Enforcement was introduced in July last year, over 16,000 Penalty Charge Notices have been issued to motorists parking illegally across the city.

Public feedback has been very positive, but reports have shown that the areas around schools continued to be problem areas.

To help target this issue, the council is introducing a new mobile enforcement vehicle to enforce zigzags outside schools, as well as pedestrian

crossings, bus lanes, taxi ranks, clearways and no loading restrictions.

The recognisable car will be fitted with cameras on the roof and clearly display logos and 'parking enforcement vehicle' in both English and Welsh.

The new vehicle is also a hybrid, which will reduce its environmental impact.

Motorists who are caught parking illegally will be issued a Penalty Charge Notice in the post with fines at the same level – £70 (reduced by 50 per cent if paid within 7 days).

Councillor Roger Jeavons, cabinet member for city services, said:

"This bespoke mobile parking enforcement vehicle is an investment which will improve public safety and extend the council's capability to effectively tackle key enforcement priorities. Our aim is to reduce the numbers of unlawfully parked vehicles outside schools, in bus stops and on pedestrian crossings, therefore providing safer routes for walking and cycling across Newport."

A team of civil enforcement officers employed by the council patrols the city.

The officers are able to enforce all parking related restrictions on the public highway if a vehicle is parked unlawfully, including parking on yellow lines; overstaying time limits on parking bays; parking across dropped kerbs or parking more than 50cm from the edge of the kerb.

Other traffic restrictions will continue to be enforced by Gwent Police.

MORE ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS FOR CITY

Newport is set to have up to 17 additional charging points across the city thanks to funding.

Gwent local authorities have been awarded £459,000 from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) to install electric vehicle charge points in car parks in residential areas.

The new installations include three double charge points in the Riverfront car park, Hill Street car park and Maindee car park with four double charge points in Faulkner Road car park. Double charging points will also be installed in Stow Hill and Mill Parade car parks. They are expected to be operational later in the Spring.

Pay and display charges will still apply at the stated times and the cost of using the charge points will be 95p plus 25p per KWh.

The charging points were selected following a Gwent-wide feasibility study and will be available 24/7 for all residents, visitors and businesses.

Councillor Roger Jeavons, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for City Services, said:

"We are delighted to have worked in collaboration with all Gwent

local authorities to install these extra charging points and are very grateful for this funding to increase the availability of charging points in Newport and support our wider ambitions to create a healthier and greener environment.

"As a council we have introduced electric vehicles into our fleet and hope that having more charging points both in Newport and across Gwent will encourage residents to also make the move to more sustainable vehicle options."

The main aim of the scheme is to address barriers to residential electric vehicle take-up caused by having no dedicated off street parking (i.e. no drive way or garage where an electric vehicle could be charged).

The joint bid was put together by the authorities aided by the Energy Saving Trust. The project has also been supported financially by the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales who funded a feasibility study.

To find existing charge points in your area go to Zap Map website or download the app onto a compatible device.



NEWPORT IS OFFICIALLY A BEE FRIENDLY CITY

Newport is now officially the first bee friendly urban city in Wales.

Welsh Government and Friends of the Earth Wales launched the initiative to make Wales pollinator-friendly. The council was awarded this prestigious status after demonstrating a commitment to planting wild flowers in appropriate places such as roadside verges, and identifying areas suitable for planting flora and fauna to help the bee population thrive.

For example, planting within the parks, gardens and green areas owned by the council will support bee and other pollinating insects' lifestyles – and we hope that by leading the way, other organisations will join forces to promote this excellent scheme.

The council is also changing the way it works to protect pollinators and their habitats such as leaving areas

to grow, less spraying and altered mowing regimes plus introducing pollinator friendly seed mixes.

Councillor Jane Mudd, leader of the council, said:

“As a council we agreed in July last year to support the motion for accreditation and we are delighted to have been recognised in this way.

“Everyone can do their bit to help – from community organisations, schools and businesses to places of worship.”

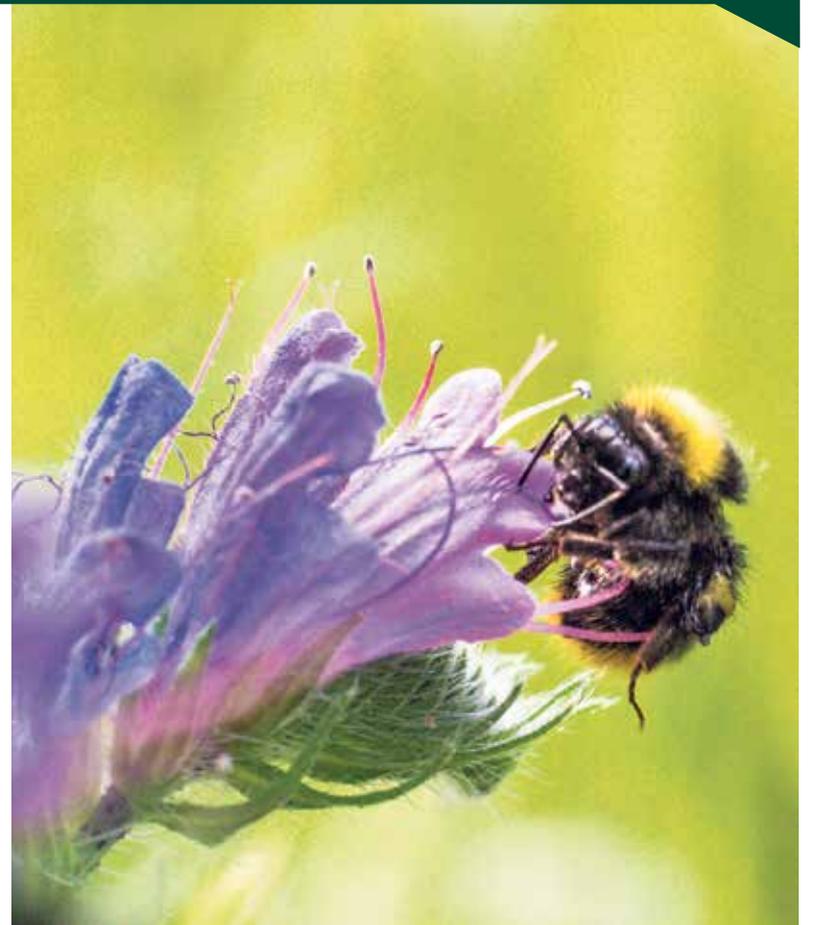
Newport's bee friendly sites include St Woolos cemetery, Bridge Street roundabout, Sorrel Drive/Allt-Yr-Yn roundabout, raised beds at the bottom of Brynglas Hill and Waterloo Road, the approach to the Harlequin roundabout, Wharf Road, Parc Seymour entrance, Penhow, nature reserves at

St Julians and Allt-Yr-Yn and Riverside Walk and Castle Bingo car park.

SHRILL CARDER BEE PROJECT

Working with Gwent Wildlife Trust and Bumblebee Conservation Trust an area of farmland is being managed for bumblebees, in particular the Shrill Carder Bee, on the Gwent Levels.

The Shrill Carder Bee is found in only six locations around Britain and the Gwent Levels in Newport is a hotspot for the species.



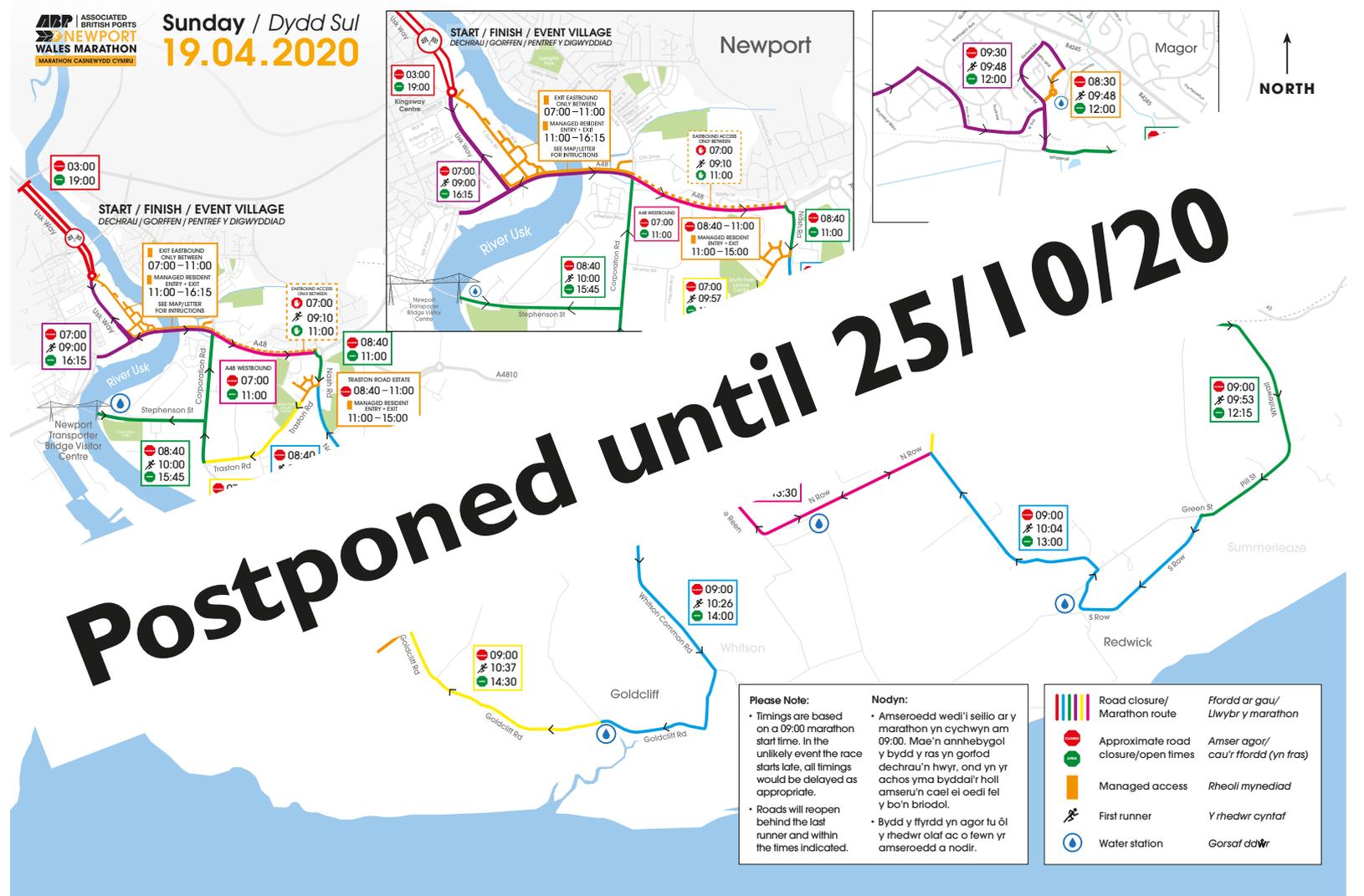
MARATHON

On Sunday 19 April the ABP Newport Wales Marathon and 10K will once again welcome thousands of runners and tens of thousands of spectators to the streets of Newport and surrounding countryside – stretching as far east as Magor in Monmouthshire.

It will be necessary to implement a series of road closures along the route, details of which can be found on the accompanying map, which will also be sent out to all affected residents and businesses.

First staged in 2018 and now back for a third edition, the event has been a major success – showcasing the city and wider region, attracting tourism, generating significant economic impact into the local economy and raising money for several charities and good causes.

The popular race is a firm favourite on the Welsh running calendar, boasting one of the flattest



marathon courses in Europe. The event is delivered by Run 4

Wales and has been made possible by the support of Associated British

Ports, Newport City Council and the Welsh Government. More

information can be found at www.newportwalesmarathon.co.uk