

INVESTMENT IN CITY'S HIGH-TECH SECTOR

In his autumn statement, the chancellor of the exchequer announced a new investment zone for south-east Wales which will have Newport at its heart.

A £160m funding package from the UK and Welsh governments will support intensive economic growth in the region.

The investment zone will be based around the compound semiconductor cluster in the city and the heavy research base in neighbouring Cardiff.

Beginning this year, the funding will cover a period of between five to ten years.

Key considerations by both governments in terms of awarding the zone included the clear evidence of economic potential, innovation potential, strong knowledge anchor institutions

and recognised sector and cluster specific strengths.

Councillor Jane Mudd, leader of the council, said: *“This is great news for the semiconductor sector in Newport, the city and its residents, and the wider region.*

“We are home to the world’s first semiconductor cluster which, with the right support and recognition, has the potential to deliver significant benefits for the local and national economies.

“An investment zone should provide the support required to help the semiconductor industry become a scientific superpower. And Newport will be at the heart of that vision.

“The enterprise, capability and infrastructure to achieve this is already largely in place and the local industry is robust and well-connected. Strong partnerships are in place which will also be key to successful delivery.

“An investment zone will deliver a raft of benefits for local people: more and better highly-skilled jobs, inward investment and economic growth – all of which would translate into prosperity for our communities. There are also broader benefits for the wider UK in terms of national security.

“Delivery of an investment zone will complement the work already underway to establish a National Institute of Technology for Wales, with a focus on our existing strengths – compound semiconductors and data science – alongside our respected existing academic institutions, Cardiff University and the University of South Wales.

“We look forward to working closely with our partners including those in the industry, academia, the Welsh government and the UK government on this exciting development.”

WHAT'S ON IN NEWPORT?

What's On City of Newport is a new events portal where you can explore all the amazing events Newport has to offer - together in one place.

Browse them all, or search for what excites you most - the choice is yours.

Newport has a growing reputation as host of major events such as the marathon and we have some great regular events like the countdown to Christmas. But there is so much more going on across the city.

However, there wasn't one

place where all these events could be uploaded and viewed altogether – but now there is!

The council, working with organisations across the city, has created a new events portal for exploring all that Newport has to offer, one we can all contribute to, and we can all use.

From talks and walks, live music and

performances, to late-night shopping, community events and job fairs.

If you are hosting an event in Newport, make sure you submit details. It will then be available for all to see.

Take a look at our website and support the city.

whatsoncityofnewport.co.uk

ACTION TO TACKLE EMPTY HOMES IN NEWPORT



Across Newport, there are privately-owned properties that have been empty for many years with little, or no, action taken by owners to return them to use.

This can have a detrimental effect on neighbourhoods and returning these homes to use could provide much needed housing for those in need.

Newport City Council has a dedicated empty homes strategy and team aimed at tackling the issue using a mix of incentives and statutory measures and is keen to work with owners to provide advice about how we can help them make decisions about what to do with their empty homes.

Options for homeowners and landlords include a Welsh government loan scheme and

reduced VAT costs for the renovation of homes that have been empty for at least two years.

The council also operates a leasing scheme to house those who are in need.

Leasing Scheme Wales allows owners to receive a guaranteed income from their property, regardless of whether they are occupied, without the hassle of managing it themselves.

The council can also employ preventative and enforcement measures. It has a duty to investigate complaints and can require owners to remedy problems but would prefer to work with owners to provide advice and assistance about how they can bring their empty homes back into use where possible.

When owners fail to take responsibility, the council can undertake works to deal with nuisance or disrepair and recover the costs from the owner, sometimes through the enforced sale of the property.

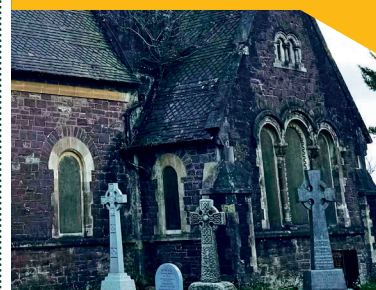
A consultation has taken place on a proposal to introduce a council tax premium on empty homes and second homes.

If it goes ahead, this will be another tool used to encourage owners not to leave their properties vacant.

The empty homes team can be contacted via email at empty.homes@newport.gov.uk or by calling **01633 656656**.

Visit newport.gov.uk/emptyhomes for more information.

CHAPEL WINDOWS ARTWORK COMPETITION



We're inviting residents, artists and creative minds of all ages to participate in our chapel windows artwork competition.

The competition will see winning artwork displayed on the temporary covers of the chapel windows at St Woolos Cemetery, while restoration work is carried out on them.

Entries are asked to draw inspiration from the things found within the cemetery itself, be that wildlife, historic objects, the landscape, anything that fires your creativity!

The artwork can be either photography or drawing-based, and the competition is open to all.

Entries must be submitted to artwork.competition@newport.gov.uk by Friday 1 March.

Please include your name, age, brief description of your art, and the inspiration behind it.

AIR QUALITY MATTERS

We will shortly be asking for your views on our latest air quality action plan.

The plan will set out the steps that both the council and local communities can take to improve air quality in our air quality management areas, or AQMAs.

The actions proposed in the plan are split into four themes. These are:

- **emissions from transport**
- **promoting active travel and green infrastructure**
- **emissions from new developments**
- **education and awareness**

From this month, schools across the city will be given diffusion tubes to help students learn about air quality.

The tubes can be used by students to monitor air quality around their school, giving them a better understanding of why monitoring is important, and what we can do to reduce emissions.

Funding for the tubes, which forms part of our community projects, has been provided by Welsh government.

We will also shortly be installing air quality sensors in six community locations around the city.

The sensors, called ECO Posts, use a coloured light system to show the current air quality in that location.

Each post will have a QR code on it which will allow residents to download a free app that provides real time and historical monitoring information.

More information about the ECO Posts can be found on our website.



YOUR LOCAL LIFEBOAT

Did you know that Newport has its very own lifeboat?

The Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA) is a registered charity and provides a lifeboat and water rescue service to the communities of Newport and wider Gwent.

Its HQ is located near Chepstow and there are six other bases across Gloucestershire and the West Midlands. It is independent of the RNLI and the largest independent lifeboat charity in the UK.

For Newport, SARA has a base within Malpas Fire Station. This is home to 15 volunteer crew, two response vehicles, Lifeboat 14, an inland rescue boat and water rescue equipment.

SARA lifeboat 14 was requested to launch 30 times last year to incidents on the River Usk and surrounding area.

The crew are unpaid and most have fulltime day jobs. They have a variety of skills including advanced first aid and professional boating qualifications.

Their diverse and transferable skill set enable them to follow rigorous standards set out by the Coastguard and other agencies. SARA is also a member of the Welsh and

national flood response team.

On average it takes a new member eight to 12 months to be fully trained in all SARA activities.

The Newport base's annual operating costs are around £20,000 which is mostly funded by public donations.

SARA also receives generous support from the Newport and Uskmouth Sailing club (NUSC) management team for allowing the use of its privately owned slipway to facilitate training and callout launches.

If you would like to know more or support SARA please contact info. newport@sara-rescue.org.uk



NEWPORT JOINS GLOBAL FIGHT TO TACKLE HIV/AIDS

Newport has joined a global network of over 300 cities committed to eradicating HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths.

The Fast Track Cities network is an international initiative which works to end new cases of HIV by 2030, have zero preventable deaths from HIV/AIDS, zero stigma and discrimination and a better quality of life for people living with HIV.

Newport has become the second city in Wales to join the network, after Cardiff and the Vale.

The network was set up in 2014 with the signing of the Paris Declaration on World AIDS Day. Cities in the network pledge to work together and share best practices on meeting the targets set out in the declaration.

The council has worked closely with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and Pride in the Port to establish a Fast Track Newport group.

Newport will become a pathfinder city, with the potential for the scheme to expand into the wider ABUHB area.

The group has the support of Newport resident Martyn Butler OBE, co-founder of the Terrence Higgins Trust.

The Newport group will initially focus on three priorities:

- **Increasing awareness of testing and numbers of people getting tested.**
- **Reducing the stigma around HIV.**
- **Reaching out to communities that have traditionally been underserved with access to HIV services.**

Councillor Jane Mudd, leader of the council, signed the Paris Declaration at a ceremony at the civic centre in November.

Speaking at the ceremony, Councillor Mudd said: *"I'm very pleased to be able to sign this declaration on behalf of the city of Newport."*

"Joining Fast Track Cities will give us the backing and resources of a global network of knowledge and experience which we can use at a local level to deliver positive outcomes for people living with HIV."

For more information about Fast Track Cities, visit fast-trackcities.org



SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2025 - HAVE YOUR SAY

Newport City Council is consulting on school admission arrangements effective from September 2025.

It is a statutory requirement of the Welsh government school admissions code that the council (as the admissions authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools in Newport) carries out an annual consultation on the school admission arrangements for the next but one academic year.

The arrangements set out the timetable for making applications for school places, and the criteria for how places are allocated. No policy changes are being proposed in this consultation.


The consultation is open until 5pm on Friday 16 February. To comment, visit newport.gov.uk/haveyoursay.



KEEPING YOUR BIKE SAFE

Cycling is a great way to keep fit while travelling from A to B, and leaving your bike in the city centre has never been safer.

Here's some of our top tips for safely storing your bike while visiting the city.

 **Use a proper bike storage facility**

Spokesafe Newport, on Skinner Street, offers a secure, accessible place to store your bike.

Spokesafe is open 24/7, meaning you can access your bike at any time from just £1 per day, with weekly and monthly subscriptions also available.

Secure bike storage is also available

at Station, Newport Live's city centre gym on Cambrian Street. Storage is free for Newport Live members, while non-members can use the facility for a small fee.


Both facilities must be pre-booked in advance.
www.spokesafe.com/newport
www.newportlive.co.uk

 **Use proper locks**

If you are locking your bike to a stand on the street, then make sure you use good quality locks. Ideally, use two, locking both wheels and the frame to the stand.

If you can, use two different types of lock, as thieves are less likely to carry multiple tools.

Always lock your bike when leaving it, no matter how short a time you plan to leave it for. A lot of bike thefts are of unlocked bikes.

 **Register your bike**

Register your frame number on a national bike registration database such as Bike Register.

The frame number is usually found underneath the bike between the pedals or where the back wheel slots in.

If your bike is ever stolen and recovered by the police, it can be traced back to you.
www.bikeregister.com

 **Mark it**

You can also mark your bike. This is another highly effective deterrent to thieves.

They know if they are caught with a marked bike, they will be arrested.



ILLEGAL TOBACCO SEIZURES

A crackdown on illicit tobacco sales in Commercial Street shops led to the seizure of 118,710 illegal cigarettes, 41.45 kg of hand rolled tobacco and 2,433 vapes.

This had an estimated retail value of £134,784.

Five shops were subject to closure orders and three men were taken into custody.

All pleaded guilty to offence under the Fraud Act. They were given community orders and ordered to carry out unpaid work by the court.

MORE CHILDCARE SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES



Even more parents are now able to access free, high-quality childcare thanks to two schemes available in the city.

Welsh government's vision for all children to have a high-quality stimulating learning and care experience in any education and care setting they attend was launched in 2019.

The first step of expanding provision was to support access to support for parents/carers of three and four-year-olds, who are in education or training, through the Childcare Offer for Wales.

The next step is the phased expansion of funded part-time, high-quality childcare through Flying Start for children aged two to three.

Welsh government is committed to delivering this provision

two-year-olds who are most in need of early intervention.

Any expansion of postcodes eligible for Flying Start is planned by analysing data, in conjunction with population figures, to identify areas of multiple deprivation. Each phase focuses on the areas which are the most disadvantaged.

Flying Start eligibility in Newport has recently been expanded to include more postcodes and, to accommodate more children, additional private childcare providers have been found across the city.

Welsh government also asked for more Welsh language opportunities and emphasised the importance of increasing Welsh language childcare places through the

Flying Start expansion programme.

Welsh medium provision is being offered to parents across Newport, supported by newly established private sector providers.

Further expansion is anticipated, with more postcodes included in the next phase which will be confirmed by Welsh government this year.

If you have received notification that you are eligible for Flying Start and you have any questions, or if you would like to find out if you are eligible, please contact flying.start@newport.gov.uk



chwarae • dysgu • tyfu
play • learn • grow
dechrau'n deg • flying start

EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS SCHEME



A new project will offer support to people who might be missing out on other schemes that can improve their employability prospects.

The SPF (Shared Prosperity Fund) employment and skills scheme will work with individuals to give them the tools they need to help them into sustainable employment, further learning or a new challenge.

The scheme is open to those who are unemployed or in work, if they meet certain criteria.

It is being funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and delivered by Newport City Council.

If you are interested, email SPF34@newport.gov.uk or call **07581018052**

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025.

POWERED BY
LEVELLING UP

The fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills.



Newport
Adult Community Learning
Dysgu Cymunedol i Oedolion
Casnewydd

New programme now available

with a variety of courses for adults aged 16+

Including - essential skills, sign language & digital courses

Find out more and enrol today

✉ community.learning@newport.gov.uk

🌐 www.newport.gov.uk/communitylearning



NEWPORT
CITY COUNCIL
CYNGOR DINAS
CASNEWYDD

LEARN A NEW SKILL IN 2024

Newport's adult community learning programme provides opportunities for local people to gain skills and qualifications in a number of different subjects.

Courses on offer include essential skills in literacy and numeracy, languages including British Sign Language, first aid and food safety.

There are also a range of computer and digital courses and specialist qualifications such as an introduction to becoming a teaching assistant.

Our introduction to carbon literacy courses can also help you understand your carbon footprint and show you the steps you can take to reduce your impact on the planet.

Full details and dates are available at newport.gov.uk/communitylearning

NEWPORT BUDGET PROPOSALS



Newport City Council is considering how it will deliver key services in the face of the ongoing financial challenge.

At its January meeting, cabinet considered a wide range of proposals with the aim of achieving a budget as close to balanced as possible.

A public consultation on how the council will spend its budget for 2024/25 and where savings can be made will run from 11 January until 9 February.

Councillor Jane Mudd, leader of the council, said: "The last few years have been challenging for all and the year ahead looks to be following a similar path. Our main aim, as always, is to ensure the most fundamental of services are maintained for residents and that we can support those that need an extra helping hand.

"However, the cost of providing services continues to rise in the

same way that everyone's cost of living has gone up. And at the same time, more people are accessing services, increasing demand.

"The public's response to last year's budget proposals was excellent and as a result we invested in some of the areas our residents felt were most important including schools and social care.

"Please make sure you have your say again this year and help us make the most appropriate decision for our city and residents."

The council provides over 800 services for 151,000 people living in more than 65,000 households.

With the impact of Covid-19 and now the cost-of-living crisis on individuals, businesses, the economy, employment, and health, we are seeing the demand for support-based services continue to rise.



HAVE YOUR SAY

For more information about the council's budget, how we spend our money and the budget setting process, visit newport.gov.uk/budget

Submissions can be made via newport.gov.uk/haveyoursay, email changing.services@newport.gov.uk or write to Freepost POLICY AND PARTNERSHIP TEAM, Newport City Council, Civic Centre, Newport NP20 4UR.

COUNCIL TAX – FACTS AND FIGURES



The money raised through council tax accounts for **less than one quarter** of the council's budget.



More than three-quarters of the council's budget is funded by a grant from the Welsh government.



For every **1%** we raise council tax, around **£650,000** is raised.



The **majority of Newport households** fall in the bands **A to C**.



Newport has had **one of the lowest council tax levels** in Wales for many years.

FOSTER WITH US

Fostering is about small things and moments that can make a huge difference in a child's life, like their first dinner at a table, a family holiday trip or someone who listen to them for the first time.

You don't need to be a superhero to foster, but if you've got patience, empathy and perseverance that will go a long way to help young people feel safe, secure and supported.

With a local team to support you, everyone can bring something to a table.

Become a foster carer and provide better futures for a child near you. Find out more at foster.wales@newport.gov.uk



VOTER ID

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

You will now need to show **photo ID** at polling stations to vote in some elections



DON'T FORGET YOUR PHOTO ID

HAVE YOUR SAY!

VOTE



YOUR VOTE MATTERS
DON'T LOSE IT

VOTE

VOTER ID

In Wales you are now legally required to show photo identification (ID) when voting at a polling station for the Police and Crime Commissioner and UK parliamentary elections, including general elections.

You will not need to show photo ID to vote at Senedd elections or local council elections.

Acceptable forms of ID include passport, driving licence (including provisional), blue badge and some concessionary travel cards.



You will only need to show one form of photo ID, but it needs to be the original version and not a photocopy.

The name on your ID must be the same name you used to register to vote.

It can be expired as long as the photograph still looks like you do now.

If you don't have an acceptable form of photo ID, you can apply for a free voter ID document – a voter authority certificate.

To find out more, go to electoralcommission.org.uk/voterid, or the helpline on **0800 328 0280**.

You can also get advice from the council's election team on **01633 210744**.

Expired ID is ok as long as the photo still looks like you. If you don't have an accepted form of Voter ID, you can apply for a FREE VOTER AUTHORITY CERTIFICATE at electoralcommission.org.uk/voter-id

FREE VOTER ID HELPLINE: **0800 328 0280**

NEWPORT ID HELPLINE: **01633 210744**

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

DON'T LOSE IT



WASTE AND RECYCLING

GARDEN WASTE

Garden waste collections have paused for the winter.

They will resume in late February.

When collections restart, they will be collected on a three-weekly cycle.

This move will bring them in line with household waste collections.

You will be able to view your next collection date on our website.

WORKPLACE RECYCLING

From 6 April 2024, it will become law for all businesses, charities, and public sector organisations to sort their waste for recycling.

The new requirements will involve segregation and separate collection of the different waste types:

- Food waste (if you produce more than 5kg per week)
- Paper and card (which can be combined together)

- Glass
- Metals, plastics and food and drink cartons (which can be combined all together)

The new regulations also include:

- Obligation to collect unsold textiles and small waste electrical and electronic equipment separately, if applicable
- A ban on disposal of food waste to sewer.

To find out how your workplace will be affected visit:
gov.wales/workplacerecycling.



Household
Furniture

Garden
Furniture

Electricals

Bric-a-Brac



Are you having a clear-out this New Year?

Donate your old and unwanted items to us!

Drop off anytime during opening hours
No need to book! Don't Dump It – Donate It!
Mon - Sun, 9am - 4pm

Wastesavers™

wastesavers.co.uk

Tip Shop
HWRC, Docks Way,
Maesglas, NP20 2NS

PARKS AND PLAY IMPROVEMENT CONSULTATIONS

Our play area improvements project has been moving forward.

Back in October, we officially opened the renovated play area at Ruperra Street in Pillgwenlly. This was the first play area to be fully renovated under the project.

As we were going to print with this edition of the paper, renovation work to the play areas at Penny Crescent, Darwin Drive and Tone Close was nearing completion.

Meanwhile, work on the play area at Humber Close is underway.

The project is part of a £2.5m investment the council is making into parks and green spaces across the city.

Local residents have been consulted on each renovation, to ensure that the new play areas meet the needs of the local community.

To find out more and see any current or upcoming consultations, visit our website.
newport.gov.uk/en/Leisure-Tourism/Countryside--Parks/Play-Areas/Parks-and-play-improvement.aspx



HAVE YOUR SAY ON HMO SCHEME

Newport City Council is reviewing its House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Additional Licensing scheme to see if it should be extended.

HMOs include house and flat shares, student homes, bedsits and some buildings converted into self-contained flats.

The scheme would require a property in the private rented sector being licenced if there are three or more unrelated people forming more than two households in the same building.

HMOs make a valuable contribution to Newport's housing stock as they provide accommodation for a wide range of groups including young professionals, students, migrants and people on low incomes.

The aim of the additional HMO licensing scheme is to ensure they meet legal standards and are properly managed, to provide greater protection to the health, safety and welfare of the occupants living in these properties and local communities.

Find out more and have your say at newport.gov.uk/haveyoursay by 6 February 2024.



FREE ENERGY EFFICIENCY UPGRADES

Is your home poorly insulated or energy inefficient?

You could be eligible for FREE energy efficiency upgrades including insulation, heat pumps and solar panels through our ECO4 Flex scheme.

The upgrades could lower your energy costs as well as your carbon footprint.

The scheme is open to households with an energy rating of E or below.

See our website for more information and how to apply.
newport.gov.uk/ecoflexscheme

