

Draft Notes from the public meeting called by Newport Town Council 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Purpose of the meeting: *to inform the public of the proposed development by Wales & West Housing Association (WWHA)*

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Morgan Lewis Chairman of Newport Town Council

Cllrs Sandra Bayes and Ros McGarry took notes

Invited speakers: Gareth Thomas, Regional Development Manager for West Wales (WWHA); Gaynor Toft PCC Head of Housing and Public Protection; Cllr Michelle Bateman PCC Cabinet Member for Housing. DC/WW was also invited but did not attend. Pembrokeshire Coast National Park had explained that it was not appropriate for them to do so.

7 members of the Town Council attended; over 30 members of the public came

1. Cllr Lewis introduced the speakers
2. Gareth Thomas had brought only a paper copy of the draft plans for a proposed housing development on Pen Y Bont

He explained that he had not realised that he was coming to a public meeting, but expected a face-to-face meeting with the Town Council to follow up on a recent meeting online. Discussions between WWHA, PCC and the National Park had begun 4-5 yrs ago, initially about the land allocated for housing in PCNPA LDP2 plus the land allocated in LDP1 for employment. Gareth said that PCNPA wanted further land "to the rear" to be developed and this would be an exception site for 100% affordable housing. An outline plan for all 3 bits of land for 66 houses was submitted 3-4 years ago. *"The National Park was in the majority supportive, dependent on survey results"*

DC/WW told WWHA that there was not sewage capacity for this large development. WWHA resubmitted a scheme excluding the ex-business park land, expecting that as this has extant planning permission, if it were not developed, then that capacity could be used on another site, but was told there was still not sufficient capacity.

WWHA was told by DC/WW that there should be more capacity, but there are many illegal/bad connections into the system. Meanwhile NRW is issuing an Enforcement Notice? DC/WW had only recently confirmed that there is no capacity in the sewage system in Newport for anything but the smallest developments, and there is nothing for Newport in their Asset Management Plan for the next 5 years, so WWHA's proposals cannot go ahead for at least that time.

3. Cllr McGarry stated that the invitation to Mr Thomas to a public meeting had been clear
4. A member of the public stated that if nothing was going to be developed, there was no point in being at the meeting and left, followed by many others
5. Cllr Paul Harries spoke from the floor to explain that Newport Town Council had been working with DC/WW for years and the Town has been promised that the pumping system at Cwm is to be improved this year. The pumps had been working at only 8/13 capacity.
6. Cllr Sandra Bayes asked how the figure of 66 houses had been arrived at. Gareth Thomas said that was the number of houses that will fit on the areas of land available. The development would be phased. Gaynor Toft gave figures from the Housing Waiting List. The following had chosen to live in Newport and required the following accommodation

1 bed – 40  
1 accessible bed – 23  
2 bed – 12  
2 bed accessible – 11  
3 bed – 11  
3 bed accessible – 6  
4 bed – 5  
4 bed accessible – 2  
5 bed 1

i.e. 111 would choose to live in Newport

Cllr Bayes asked how many of these were local to Newport. Cllr Bateman said she was able to provide these figures for people from Newport and Dinas.

Gaynor Toft said the plans were all about achieving sustainable communities, with a mix of market, and affordable housing including low-cost home ownership

7. Cllr Bateman said there was a very high affordable housing need across Pembrokeshire and also pressure from Welsh Government to provide more
8. Paul Harries asked Gaynor Toft for an update on the replacement of Maes Ingli Sheltered Housing. Gaynor Toft reported that new plans were for 16 units with more adequate parking. She confirmed that the building cannot be demolished without losing the sewage capacity for the replacement. PCC Cabinet has agreed that some 2<sup>nd</sup> Home Council Tax premium can be used for Maes Ingli redevelopment

SB/20/03/2025