



# PORT TALBOT

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## INTRODUCTION



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The Port Talbot community area includes the electoral divisions of Bryn and Cwmavon, Baglan, Aberavon, Sandfields East, Sandfields West, Port Talbot, Margam and Taibach.

The Port Talbot community area is famous for its industrial heritage, stunning coast and countryside that surrounds it, such as Aberavon Beach and Seafront and Margam Country Park.

Port Talbot is home to some of the UK's top manufacturers, such as, Tata Steel, BOC (UK's largest provider of gas, services and related equipment for the industrial and medical market) and TWI (one of the world's leading independent research and technology organisations), along with a host of other highly technical companies.

Port Talbot has a theatre, The Princess Royal Theatre, which is a cultural venue that provides entertainment ranging from music shows to pantomimes. Located next to the Theatre is the Aberavon Shopping Centre. An outdoor market visits Port Talbot town centre on a Tuesday and Saturday.

Port Talbot town centre is currently part of a major regeneration programme called 'Vibrant and Viable Places'. The Vibrant and Viable Places Programme, the Welsh Government's £110m regeneration fund, is dedicated to regeneration programmes across a number of towns in Wales.

Port Talbot is one of the eleven Welsh towns to benefit from a share of the fund, which has an emphasis on improving housing supply and projects that provide training and employment opportunities. The initiative seeks to transform the living and working environment of the town, bringing new development and employment opportunities. This will create a more inclusive, prosperous, healthy and sustainable place to live and work.





KEY FINDINGS FROM OUR ENGAGEMENT AND  
**RESEARCH EXERCISES:**

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## SOCIAL

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Friends, family and community are key elements of social well-being for respondents from Port Talbot. Being fit and active was important, as were staying healthy and having time to spend with people.

Things that would most improve individual well-being in this area related to work-life balance, control and independence to avoid stress and improved access to activities and facilities, by lowering costs, improving public transport and establishing services nearer to where people live.





## ECONOMIC

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For survey respondents, economic well-being centred on being able to afford both basic necessities and small luxuries, maintaining a comfortable standard of living and financial security. Participants cited a number of factors that could contribute to their economic wellbeing; these included improved financial literacy, greater education opportunities for the over 25s, reduced childcare costs, affordable accommodation and increased pensions. Others expressed concern over shortcomings in the provision of public transport, as unreliable bus services and expensive taxis made it difficult for non-car owners to travel.

The latest census information (2011) shows that there was 4.7% unemployment in the Port Talbot community area and of those aged 16 and over, 32% have no qualifications, which is higher than the all Wales figure of 25.9%.

Of the 19,894 homes in the area, 13,379 (67.3%) were identified as being deprived using one or more of the following 4 dimensions of deprivation; employment, education, health/disability and household overcrowding (Census 2011).





Our biggest environmental assets include Aberavon Seafront, where we have seen considerable improvements in the bathing water quality and, with one of the longest beaches in Wales, it offers significant recreational opportunities for the local community and tourists.

The coastal belt is particularly important for a variety of habitats and species. Margam Country Park is home to 14 of the 18 UK species of bat. It is also provides a healthy and relaxing environment for the many visitors to the area.

A sustainable water supply is critical for current and future economic development and prosperity.

Air quality in Port Talbot is affected by a number of factors including the weather, topography, emission sources from both outside and inside the local area, and is particularly related to the steelworks and transport. An Air quality management area was declared in Taibach/Margam in 2000. Air quality in Port Talbot has shown significant improvements in the last 10 years, but further improvement is sought.

Another key issue for future development is flooding. A major flood scheme has been completed at Aberavon. Two areas have been identified as being in the top 10 communities at flood risk – Port Talbot and Margam. Baglan is also considered at risk. Coastal flooding is also an issue with climate change predictions suggesting sea level rise of between 0.2 and 1 metre along the South Wales coastline. Options are being explored for alternative “natural flood management” alternatives in the Ffrwd Wylt catchment.

Throughout the engagement, Port Talbot’s natural environment and countryside was consistently highlighted as one of our biggest assets, with residents valuing the positive effect the environment has on their well-being. The future sustainable use of our natural assets is essential to securing the well-being of our future generations.

In terms of things that could improve the environmental wellbeing of the area, survey respondents from Port Talbot community area placed particular emphasis on clean air and reduced industrial pollution.





The Port Talbot community area has a rich and diverse range of built and cultural heritage assets, which plays a vital role in creating a sense of place and local identity for the area. The cultural environment includes sporting community venues and grounds, such as the recently redeveloped Aberavon Leisure and Fitness Centre, the Princess Royal Theatre and a number of historic buildings and gardens, such as Margam Country Park and Castle. Port Talbot itself contains 102 listed buildings.

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council manages four libraries in the area, located in Aberavon Shopping Centre, Baglan, Sandfields and Cwmavon. There is also one community managed library, located in Taibach.

Port Talbot is the birthplace/home to a number of well-known actors, such as Sir Antony Hopkins and Michael Sheen. An unpublished poem written by Richard Burton is located in at Taibach Memorial Park.

In total there are currently 28 parks/playgrounds in the area; 21 of these have fixed play equipment and five have a multi-use games area. The Port Talbot community area has 12 green spaces which range from informal amenity areas to woodland.

For people living in Port Talbot, local history played a significant role in supporting well-being, as did cultural events including the indoor food festival and choral events. In terms of things that could improve cultural well-being in the area, education (and especially the opportunity to learn Welsh) was the most prevalent theme.

With regards to the Welsh language, only 9.4% (4,187) of residents in the Port Talbot area can speak Welsh.

Similar to the Neath community area, the number of people from black and minority ethnic groups in the Port Talbot community area is small, and is reflected in the position in the County Borough as a whole.

Information from the Census shows a decrease in the percentage of people who identified themselves as Christian, from 75% in 2001 to 59% in 2011. During the same period, there was also a noticeable increase in people declaring that they had 'no religion', from 17% to 33%.





NEATH PORT TALBOT PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD  
**WELL-BEING ASSESSMENT**

