



# Growing Mid Wales March Newsletter

## Shared Prosperity Fund

A warm welcome to readers old and new,

We manage the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) in Mid Wales in order to deliver our Regional Investment Plan. We work closely with the local delivery teams in Ceredigion and Powys County Councils in ensuring we have a broad mix of projects that will help us to achieve the opportunities and address the challenges in the region.

This month, we want to share with you the progress to date, and shine the spotlight on several Mid Wales businesses and/or organisations that are in the process of, or planning on, delivering a project or programme with the aid of the SPF funding.

We talk to Area 43, Engineering Education Scheme Wales, and the new Powys town liaison offices about how SPF-funding is going to help businesses and individuals in the community.

Our *Meet the Team* colleague this month is Angharad Massow, our Senior Communication Officer, who is involved with all aspects of our communication activities and supports the whole team to ensure we get the right messages out to the right people at the right time.

Don't forget our Local Area Energy Planning [survey](#) is running until 31 March.

Helping to grow opportunity in Mid Wales,

***The Growing Mid Wales team***

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## The SPF funding story so far in the region

WEDI'I YRRU GAN  
**FFYNIANT  
— BRO —**

POWERED BY  
**LEVELLING  
— UP —**



## Funded by UK Government

Since Mid Wales' Regional Investment Plan was approved by the UK Government in December 2022, a total of 162\* projects have been awarded funding in the region. These projects are worth a staggering £37 million.

\*Further projects have been approved under the umbrella grant schemes such as [Cynnal y Cardi](#) in Ceredigion and [Making a Difference in Powys](#)

The Shared Prosperity Fund programme is broken down into 4 priority areas:



The range and diversity of these projects underpins Growing Mid Wales' ambition to take full advantage of the opportunities available to create and support economic and social growth.

From small grants helping to make a big difference to local businesses and communities, to projects to transform places and spaces, to training on areas such as green skills, digital and supporting our young people, the breadth of investment is impressive.

Find out more about some of these projects further on in this newsletter.

### A fair and transparent approach

To ensure transparency and fairness as to how this funding was allocated, we have held a number of open calls for proposals for project activity taking place between April 2023 and December 2024.

Local Partnerships in both Ceredigion and Powys have had responsibility for considering and approving project applications. The partnerships are made up of representatives from organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

### What comes next?

Our immediate focus is on making sure that we spend our full allocation of funding before the UK Government's deadline of March 2025. With the majority of funds already allocated to projects, we are well on our way to achieving that.

There are still opportunities for local businesses and communities to access funding through the various grant schemes running in both Powys and Ceredigion. Further information on these is shared later on in this newsletter.

At this moment in time, there has been no confirmation of future Shared Prosperity Fund beyond 2025, and therefore there are currently no additional open calls scheduled.

We are working with other regions in Wales and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) on continued Government investment post-March 2025. We know from the number of applications we have received for funding that there is still great demand and we continue to inform UK Government of this at every opportunity.

## Interview - Reverb project, Area 43

### ***Can you tell me about your project – who it supports and how?***

Reverb is Area 43's UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme which is a youth-led charity, which was established in 1996 to provide information, support and training to young people in Cardigan.

Our mission is to empower and support young people's rights to access local, high-quality, evidence-informed advice, counselling and support services to improve their life opportunities for a better future. We work in partnership with young people and others to promote the development of free, young people-centred, needs-led service.

Read Area 43's manifesto [here](#).

### ***How long has the project been running?***

We piloted our training and employability scheme, Reverb under the Community Renewal Fund, and we were successful in extending this provision through UKSPF last year. The project provides a unique opportunity for some of our more socially detached and isolated young people to access employment in a manner which ensures they overcome disadvantage. We want to inspire young people to become active community members through our projects, training, and employability skills.



### ***What have been the project's key achievements / successes so far?***

Our training and employment scheme run at Depot (Depot is based in Cardigan town centre, and it is open from 1-7 pm Monday to Saturday for 14 - 25-year-olds, and Saturday mornings for transitions

for 11 - 13-year-olds) , is for disengaged young people, furthest from the job market, enabling them to gain skills and experience within a safe, supported environment.

The programme focuses on the People and Skills element of the funding. It enables young people to gain skills and practical experience within a safe, supported environment. Making their prospects within the wider economy more accessible by empowering them to gain employment, and local businesses to address the labour shortage.

Each Reverb participant is employed for up to 18 hours a week which includes time working within the live café environment and associated skills-based training. At least four hours are dedicated to employability skills and individual support plans to address their support needs and to encourage their engagement in the programme.



### OUTCOMES STAR

“ I’ve really enjoyed the Barista placement at Depot. I have been coming in to socialise with my mates for a while, but I’ve really seen a different side to the support that the staff give young people since doing this placement. I now have the confidence to challenge my mates when they get a bit loud in the space ”

We also teach our team life skills, like laundry, budgeting, cooking, shopping and cleaning. Area 43 is a member of the Ceredigion Poverty Sub-Group, Food Poverty Groups, Fareshare and Neighbourly schemes. We work in partnership with food banks and food growers to tackle food poverty across Ceredigion. So, we can provide subsidised and free food and drinks to all young people accessing our services.



Since the beginning of July 2023, under UKSPF, we’ve employed 18 young people as Reverb Baristas (we’re aiming for 56 by the end of December). All Reverb participants embark on Food Safety,

Hygiene and Food Allergens qualifications as part of the programme. Of this cohort, 15 have already completed those qualifications.

Eight young people have completed all or part of a 3-month placement. One has entered employment; we employed them as a Youth Support worker; and three have entered further education. Two are receiving additional support and training from Futureworks and Cyfle Cymru. One intends to use their skills to work whilst travelling, and the other two are seeking employment.

As part of the Levelling Up Funding for our Supported Employment Placements, representatives from the UK Government visited Depot as an exemplary model for this type of employment support.

## Interview - Introduction 2 Engineering and Manufacturing project

### ***Can you tell me about your project – who it supports and how?***

The Introduction 2 Engineering and Manufacturing project is being delivered by the Engineering Education Scheme Wales (EESW) to offer secondary schools in Ceredigion the opportunity to have a series of workshops delivered in their classrooms. The free sessions are aimed at Key Stage 3 pupils, with the intention of helping to increase the talent skills pipeline of young people to meet future employability in the region.

The workshops are designed to be delivered to up to 30 pupils at a time, so that all schools can participate and fit the delivery within their school timetable. Activities are hands-on, and require young people to develop new skills, such as teamwork, communication, coding and IT, experimental, problem-solving, creative and innovative thinking.



***How long has the project been running?***

Some of the workshops were originally developed by EESW as part of its STEM Cymru project, which was European Social Fund (ESF) funded up until 2023. The project is currently funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and driven by the Levelling Up campaign. It is administered by Ceredigion County Council which allows EESW to continue some of the good work and support schools whilst meeting the cross-curricular aims of the new Curriculum for Wales. It offers young people an activity which allows them to consider studying Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects at GCSE and post-16, and gives an insight into career options within the Engineering sector.

*"Activities delivered within the sessions included presentations that focussed on how modern technology can be applied to support the journey towards net zero – for example how design and computer coding can be applied to the manufacture of wind turbines."* - EESW's external evaluators



***What have been your key achievements / successes so far?***

Pupils at Ysgol Henry Richard, Tregaron will be undertaking workshops later in March, where they will learn to code and control a buggy. They will understand basic coding principles, and will have considered parameters such as timing, distance and loops.



***Have you encountered any issues / challenges?***

EESW are reaching out to schools to book in sessions following the school's Easter holidays from April 2024. EESW understands the difficulties that schools face in being able to bring students outside the classroom, and therefore the sessions can be adapted to be delivered as part of the timetabled classes, or even as STEM clubs or after-school activity. Activities are also designed to be inclusive, so that they can be tailored to a range of needs of individuals within a classroom setting.

To book one of the workshops, schools should complete a booking form or can contact EESW on [info@stemcymru.org.uk](mailto:info@stemcymru.org.uk) for more information.

**Funded by UK Government** **EESW Cymru** **Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council**

**Introduction 2 Engineering & Manufacturing Workshops for Secondary Schools in Ceredigion**

**Speed Challenge**  
EESW Speed Challenge is a fantastic two-hour activity where pupils get to experience the exciting world of CO2 powered model racing cars. Pupils work in teams to build and race their cars on our purpose-built floor track to see which team has produced the fastest CO2 powered car.

**BBC micro:bit Workshop**  
In this BBC micro:bit workshop, pupils are guided through a series of challenges where they will create code to move a micro:bit robot through a series of tasks. Pupils program a transmitter and receiver to introduce remote control, adjusting their code throughout to improve their robot's performance.

**Wind Turbine Workshop**  
Working in small teams, pupils use our redesigned kits to build their own wind turbine and measure the energy generated. Pupils learn how they work, how they are engineered and constructed, and are tasked to create and record the most efficient wind turbine.

**Spheros Workshop**  
Our latest workshop introduces pupils to the exciting world of Spheros. Working in groups, pupils apply new skills to create and refine programmes and coding, plus navigate through progressive challenges which include data collection and problem-solving skills. Let your pupils be amazed by the motion and control which makes up coding Spheros.

**Website:**  
[STEMCymru.org.uk](http://STEMCymru.org.uk)  
Contact:  
[info@stemcymru.org.uk](mailto:info@stemcymru.org.uk)  
or call 01656 669381 to book

**Follow us on our socials**  
@EESWSTEMCymru  
Fully funded workshops for secondary schools in Ceredigion

**THE PROJECT IS FUNDED BY THE UK GOVERNMENT, DRIVEN BY LEVELLING UP**  
**POWERED BY LEVELLING UP**

## Case Study - Liaison officers will support towns' regeneration

Five town centre liaison officers, paid for by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (Levelling Up), are now in post and supporting economic development across Powys.

Each has been assigned to towns in either northwest, northeast, central, southwest or southeast Powys and have been tasked with advising and helping town councils, businesses, charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups with the planning, delivery and monitoring of economic development projects.

The TCLOs are:

- Bobby Gough - Newtown, Llanidloes and Machynlleth. Contact: [regeneration@powys.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@powys.gov.uk).
- Philip Jones - Welshpool, Llanfair Caereinion, Llanfyllin and Montgomery. Contact: [regeneration@powys.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@powys.gov.uk).
- Richard Morgan - Llandrindod Wells, Knighton, Presteigne and Rhayader. Contact: [regeneration@powys.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@powys.gov.uk).
- Rhys Howells - Ystradgynlais, Brecon, Builth Wells and Llanwrtyd Wells. Contact: [regeneration@powys.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@powys.gov.uk).
- Ayden Davies - Crickhowell, Hay-on-Wye and Talgarth. Contact: [regeneration@powys.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@powys.gov.uk).



One of the sources of funding they can signpost organisations to is the Transforming Towns Placemaking Grant, funded by Welsh Government.

This can be used to cover the capital cost of creating more town centre homes, commercial property and shop frontage improvements, green and digital infrastructure, small scale public spaces and outdoor trading improvements, strategic property purchases, support for market traders, walkers and cyclists, pop-up projects, and providing more recreation facilities and toilets.

The Transforming Towns programme is providing £7 million for regeneration projects in Powys and Ceredigion over three years.

For the full story, visit: [Liaison officers will support towns' regeneration - Powys County Council](#)

## ABOUT

### Powys' town centre liaison officers.....



*"I have noticed is how vital it is to have a Town Council, as local opinions tend to have a firsthand view of what is needed and what the town view as important in the community."*

- Ayden Davies

*"Moving to Powys four years ago from a large city it is refreshing to see how the local communities and small towns I'm supporting really do care and work together to make a better place to live for everyone."*

- Bobby Gough



*"I hope to support the towns by working alongside them as they identify the local needs. The local community know what they need and I hope to be a conduit for resolving any queries they may have in terms of grants and support."*

- Philip Jones

*"My four towns are vastly different with a wide variety of needs and aspirations. I hope to be able to support my towns in beginning the placemaking process and help to build a brighter future for them and their residents."*

- Richard Morgan



*"My biggest goal is to leave the towns with the blueprint, tools and relationships necessary to action the town centre investment plans for the betterment of the local community."*

- Rhys Howells

## Case Study - Bid to make Powys a top cultural tourism destination

A project which aims to put Powys on the map, by celebrating its culture and heritage, is now underway.

Welsh consultancy company Anian has been tasked with breathing new life into the county's cultural tourism offer and instilling a new sense of pride in its residents, after Powys County Council's Economic Development and Regeneration Team was successful in securing a £30,000 grant for the work from the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (Levelling Up).

It will research the county's outstanding cultural assets and stories - from its medieval history to modern-day festivals - to prioritise ideas. A three-year action plan will then be launched, outlining opportunities for new visitor experiences and marketing campaigns.

You can have your say by completing this [short online survey](#).

For more information on the Powys Cultural Tourism Study, email: [tourism@powys.gov.uk](mailto:tourism@powys.gov.uk)

for the full story, visit: [Bid to make Powys a top cultural tourism destination - Powys County Council](#)

## Current opportunities with the Shared Prosperity Fund across Mid Wales

Both Ceredigion and Powys County Councils are also operating grant schemes to support businesses to start up, to sustain, grow and innovate. These schemes are summarised here:

### Ceredigion County Council



Cyngor Sir  
**CEREDIGION**  
County Council

### Cynnal y Cardi Supporting Local Business Fund

- Aimed at businesses to start, sustain, grow and innovate, applications for the Cynnal y Cardi Fund opened on 1st February but due to high demand, no further applications are being accepted at this current time.
- 29 Community projects and 52 Business projects have been approved so far under the scheme.

### Cynnal y Cardi Events Programme Fund

A new funding opportunity has been launched to support the Council's commitment to attract more international or national events to Ceredigion.

The focus of Cynnal y Cardi's Events Programme Fund will be on:

- Attracting visitors to the County. Applications must demonstrate how the event will have a County-wide benefit, as well as possible wider regional and national benefits.
- Support the growth of linked businesses (indirect business benefits) and development of higher-value job creation.
- Development and promotion of local year-round events and experiences which encourage people to visit and explore the local area. Applications must demonstrate how the event will make a difference to individuals, communities and the local economy.
- Support for local arts, cultural heritage and creative activities.
- Events must support ambitions around climate change or the transition to a green economy through sustainability and waste reduction

The minimum grant available is £30,000 with the maximum grant available being £100,000. Each grant award will be subject to meeting grant criteria. As to ensure project eligibility, interested applicants must read the guidance notes carefully and send a short brief, outlining their idea (bullet

point format) and a breakdown of expenditure to [ce.cynnalycardi@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:ce.cynnalycardi@ceredigion.gov.uk) before starting on the application form. More information can be found [here](#).

## Powys County Council



## Growth Grant

### Second round of applications now open

- Aimed at businesses to start, sustain, grow and innovate
- Grants of between £1,000 - £25,000
- Each grant award will be based on 50% of eligible project costs or a maximum of £5,000 per job created and/or £5,000 per job safeguarded, whichever is the lesser. (At least one new job must be created and/or one full time equivalent job safeguarded, to access the grant)
- Funding can be used to help fund capital schemes and one-off revenue projects but cannot be used to cover usual running costs
- The grant is open until funds are fully allocated
- For more information visit the Powys County Council website: [Powys Business Growth Grant](#) or email: [economicdevelopment@powys.gov.uk](mailto:economicdevelopment@powys.gov.uk)

## Expressions of interest wanted from the county's arts organisations

A funding programme that has been created to support arts and creative organisations in Powys is now inviting expressions of interest for project ideas.

Powys County Council's Arts Service was successful in securing £675,000 from the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

Now arts organisations across the county are being asked to submit expressions of interest with their project ideas by Tuesday, March 26.

More information [here](#).

## Multiply - Funding allocated to 14 projects to increase adult numeracy across Mid Wales

Following a recent call for applications for projects seeking to improve adult numeracy skills, 14\* projects across the Mid Wales region have been approved.

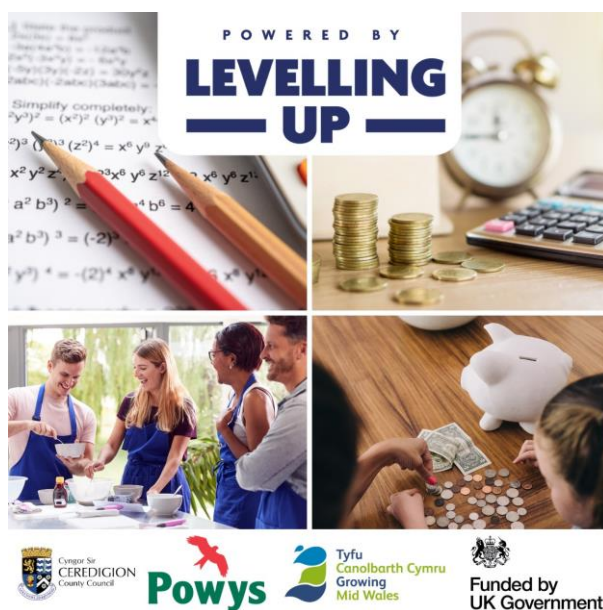
Through the UK Government's Multiply programme which forms part of the Shared Prosperity Fund, an allocation of just under £2 million of funding is being given to deliver a variety of projects.

The types of projects that have secured funding, include:

- Supporting people to be more confident with numbers
- Running courses to help people use numeracy to manage their money.
- Working with employers to provide courses covering specific numeracy skills that are needed in the workplace.
- Provision via community organisations aimed at supporting the hardest to reach learners.

Read the full article on the regional Multiply projects [here](#).

\* There are currently 23 Multiply projects up and running across Mid Wales as 9 projects were already approved before the last open call for Multiply.



## Meet the Team

Angharad Massow - Growing Mid Wales Senior Communication Officer



- **When did you start with the team?**

I took on this role in June 2022 as a secondment from the Communications Team in Ceredigion County Council where I had been working since 2017.

- **Can you tell us more about your role?**

I'm involved with all things comms-related! This includes internal communications with both the GMW staff and colleagues across both local authorities and all the external communication with our stakeholders via social media, our website, creation of videos and media publications - and of course this monthly newsletter!

I provide support to all the GMW managers in planning ahead on how to let stakeholders know when key developments are going to happen or have happened and also signpost people to important Information, or promote an upcoming event or survey.

There's a lot of groundwork before material is ready for the public eye; content planning, design, signoff's, accessibility-checked and translation. All of this is happening concurrently for several different items, so organisation is key!

What I love about my role is that I get to know all my team members really well and what developments they're working on because communication involves everyone.

**What are your current priorities?**

The Growing Mid Wales Website is getting a makeover, so I'm excited to be part of this refresh. We want to make sure that it's simple to navigate around the site and include a few new features that we didn't have previously.

- **What developments have you seen over the years?**

The Growing Mid Wales teams have grown since I started which means that each team is really making strides to create change and opportunities across the economic and skills landscapes in Mid Wales.

When I first started with the team, the Final Deal Agreement of the Mid Wales Growth Deal had been signed a few months before by the Welsh Government, UK Government and the region's local authorities, Ceredigion County Council and Powys County Council. Now, the first allocation of funding has arrived in the region and there's a lot of work behind the scenes with all the project sponsors progressing their business cases. I'm looking forward to when the funding can kick-start these projects and share the exciting news with everyone.

It's been great to also be part of raising awareness of the Mid Wales' share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and reflecting on how many businesses and organisations have benefitted from this funding already – Its very rewarding knowing you are part of the process when you see how funding can directly benefit the community and the people around you.

- **What's been your biggest achievement?**

That's tricky as a lot of my work is behind the scenes or behind the camera or social media page. It is very much a combined effort between myself and which manager/team I may be supporting at the time – it's all about team effort.

If I had to pick one though, I would say it's these monthly newsletters which was my baby from the beginning – we've seen our mailing list grow since it's conception 19 months ago and it's the best way to be able to share news and developments from not only across the Growing Mid Wales teams but also with our stakeholders, so it showcases partnership working.

Outside of work, my personal achievement is qualifying as an aerial hoop instructor in my 40's! I teach aerial hoop in the evenings at my local gym in Lampeter to people of various ages and fitness levels. I absolutely love seeing my students get fitter and stronger while having lots of fun – I'm an advocate for exercise, strength and conditioning for life. It's also a good stress-buster!



- **One word that sums up the Growing Mid Wales Team:**

**Proactive** – Every member of our team is playing an important part of trying to drive change and bringing new opportunities to Mid Wales, be that in skills, investment, enterprise, and more funding – and to do this we all have to be proactive. ‘Nothing changes if nothing changes.’

## Other GMW News

### [Successful decarbonisation event empowers businesses to pave the way to a sustainable future](#)

Growing Mid Wales, in partnership with Powys and Ceredigion County Councils, hosted a decarbonisation event on Monday 11 March at Bargoed Farm, bringing together industry leaders, experts, and businesses committed to exploring ways to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and energy costs.

The event *Sustainable business solutions in Mid Wales: Minimising emissions and costs* featured insightful panel discussions, interactive workshops, and presentations from Business Wales, the Regional Skills Partnership and the energy networks. Attendees had the opportunity to gain valuable knowledge and practical strategies to decarbonise their operations and contribute to a more sustainable future.

Read more information on the event [here](#).







## Keep up to Date

Need to catch up on what's been discussed in our meetings? Here's a reminder of where you can find the minutes for the following meetings:

- All minutes relating to the Growing Mid Wales Board are hosted on Powys County Council [website](#).
- Papers relating to the Growing Mid Wales Partnership can be found on our [website](#).

Keep up to date with Growing Mid Wales news, developments on activity and organisations we support by following our Twitter and Linked In pages:

<https://twitter.com/growingmidwales>

[www.linkedin.com/company/growing-mid-wales](http://www.linkedin.com/company/growing-mid-wales)

We're eager to reach out to as many organisations and businesses across Mid Wales as possible. You can make this possible by following, liking and sharing our pages.

Disclaimer: As a Growing Mid Wales Stakeholder you receive these emails so that we can share news and information with you on a regular basis. You can inform us if you no longer wish to receive these emails by emailing [growingmidwales@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:growingmidwales@ceredigion.gov.uk).

