



Growing Mid Wales July Newsletter

Happy 1st birthday!

Can you believe it - it's our first birthday! Over the last 12 months we've been able to let you know about key economic developments in the region and tell you all about the Growing Mid Wales team and what we do.

We've also been able to keep you updated as the Mid Wales Growth Deal progresses and how the Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership is increasing its engagement with businesses and stakeholders, giving them a voice to influence priorities for the region.

We think that this is worth celebrating and we would like this opportunity to say **thank you**, the reader, for subscribing to our newsletter and getting in touch from time to time to share your news. Being a partnership, our vision has and always will be working together with local businesses, academic leaders, and national and local government, to create a vision for the future growth of Mid Wales, to influence and champion our future expansion.

In this edition, we report on a recent reception held at the Royal Welsh Show, a team away day and are pleased to share with you our staff structure and an overview of the Growing Mid Wales functions. We find out more from Nicola Williams, our Joint Strategic Lead Officer, in our 'Meet the Team' section.

If you're a business in the region, please complete the Regional Skill Partnership's [survey](#) - for only 5 minutes of your time you could be helping inform important plans on skills and recruitment that could benefit you, your staff and business. Read on for more information.

Helping to grow opportunity in Mid Wales,

The Growing Mid Wales team

** Don't forget that if your organisation is part of Growing Mid Wales, get in touch to share your news!*



Team Growing Mid Wales – all together!

Earlier this month, we took the time to bring all the team together for an away day at the wonderful Elan Valley. It was the first time that all of the team managed to be in the same location in-person, ever!

We took the time to reflect on our achievements as a team to date. From the early collaboration to establish the Growing Mid Wales Partnership, influencing transport and economic priorities in the region, working with our cross-border partners and regional stakeholders to ensure Mid Wales' needs and opportunities were being articulated and funding prioritised, a lot has happened in Mid Wales.

We focused in on some key recent achievements:

- **Regional Engagement:** building and maintaining strategic relationships and setting the [Vision](#) for Growing Mid Wales. Ensuring a coherent strategy that is aligned with Government policy and listening to the needs of our regional stakeholders.

- **Growth Deal:** significant progress achieved with the imminent announcement of the £110m of Government funding, reflecting a shift of focus from development to delivery.
- **Skills:** establishment and successful launch of our Regional Skills Partnership and our 3-year Skills and Employment [Plan](#). Setting the foundations for the strategic skills landscape in Mid Wales and the mechanisms to engage with the private sector.
- **Energy:** taking the Energy strategy forward to action planning with our advisory group. Setting actions to enable and support our key stakeholders to deliver transformational changes for the long-term.
- **Shared Prosperity Fund:** securing £42m of funds to Mid Wales via the Regional Investment Plan and enabling the Local Authorities to deliver for the communities, businesses, and people of Mid Wales.
- **Communications:** Reflecting on what has worked well, and what new approaches could be adopted to ensure our communications approaches reach across all sectors and audiences.

We also took time to reflect on the journey ahead of us:

- **Regional Engagement:** updating our Vision for Growing Mid Wales to reflect recent changes and progress, aligning with Government ambitions, and helping to review our governance in the region.
- **Growth Deal:** focusing on delivery of our Programmes and Projects – ensuring our partners can begin delivering impact on the ground.
- **Skills:** building on our private sector engagement and strengthening our understanding of our labour market, looking at practical tools and solutions to help the region to clearly articulate skills opportunities and gaps.
- **Energy:** enabling and supporting regional stakeholders to deliver as well as identifying key areas of potential intervention.
- **Shared Prosperity Fund:** taking stock of the delivery landscape, understand gaps, and working with colleagues to help deliver a successful year 2 and year 3 of the programme.
- **Communications:** building on our work to ensure regular, segmented communication about the work we do, and the impact it is having.

To read more about our work, and the documents and plans we have already published – please visit our [website](#).



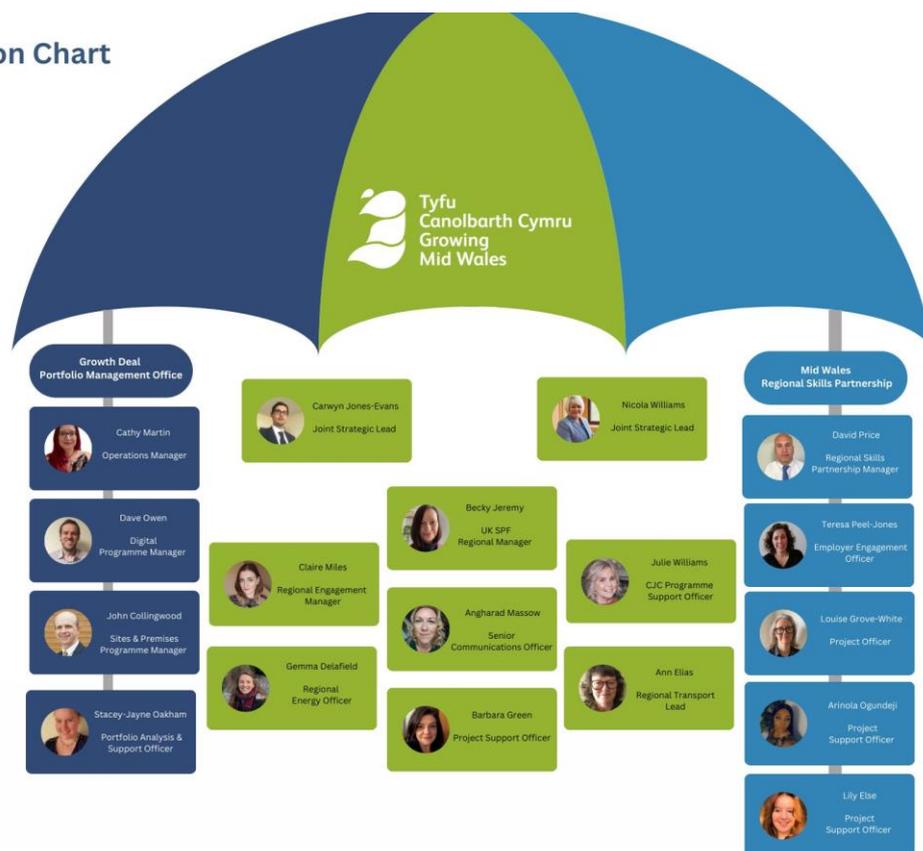
1 - Team Growing Mid Wales

Growing Mid Wales Structure Chart and Overview

At last we now also have a Growing Mid Wales organisation chart – setting out who is who in the team and the role of various groups and boards related to us.

You can find the chart on our [website](#).

Organisation Chart



Growing opportunities in Mid Wales

On Monday, 24th of July at the Royal Welsh Show, Growing Mid Wales partners attended a reception to reflect on the progress that has been achieved to date and to look ahead at the next stages of development across all the region's work.

The event heard of the progress being made since the Growing Mid Wales partnership was formed back in 2015, which included:

- The programmes and projects being supported across different funding streams - from EU funds, UK Government funding and the Mid Wales Growth Deal
- Skills requirements and opportunities in Mid Wales

There was a particular focus on the Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP), with an update into the region's skills landscape and the current RSP 3-year Employment and Skills plan explored. Businesses and partners were able to discuss how the Plan can help leverage change in the region and what the future looks like for skills in different sectors. The Plan is available on the Growing Mid Wales website, www.growingmid.wales/midwaleskillspartnership.

Councillor Bryan Davies, Leader of Ceredigion County Council and Councillor James Gibson-Watt, Leader of Powys County Council, jointly said: "This has been a fantastic opportunity to engage with our partners and the region's businesses to gain an insight into what they're currently experiencing around upskilling, training, and recruitment. It is vital that we have these chances to talk and listen to each other to ensure that we have the right priorities in place to drive investment that meets the requirements of both the employers and the workforce."

It has also been fantastic to share with our partners the work that has been underway in the region across a number of funding streams. We are seeing the fruits of a few years' labour beginning to emerge now. It is imperative we continue to work alongside each other to deliver some real change to our region."



New Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership Manager



2 - Dai (David) Price , Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership Manager

This month, Dai (David) Price joined the team as our new Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP) Manager. Dai joins us from Bristol City Council and has a lot of experience in work, skills and community development within local government

We wish Aggie Caesar-Homden all the very best in her new role as Service Manager, Economic Development and Regeneration for Powys County Council. Aggie was instrumental in managing the Regional Skills Partnership since its establishment.

Also, a big thank you to Louise Grove-White for holding the fort as interim RSP Manager.

Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership Business Cluster Group

The Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership's Business Cluster Group met for the second time at Hafan yr Afon in Newtown to discuss Digital skills and barriers in the region. Guest Speakers included Kevin Harrington from [Antur Cymru Enterprise](#) and Sion Meredith from the Welsh Government's [Flexible Skills Programme](#). It was great to see familiar faces and new businesses joining the cluster group. Our next meeting will be held in October.

To join the group and help provide input on the Skills areas that matter to you, contact: midwalesrsp@powys.gov.uk



Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership Skills Survey

The RSP are interested in what you have to say about the challenges you face as a business and, in particular, around the recruitment of skills now and in the future.

We report back to Welsh Government on the skills landscape for Mid Wales – by answering these few questions we can gather data which will inform and influence change in the right places.

Help us inform Welsh Government what skills provision we need for the economy and the people across Mid Wales to thrive.

Complete the survey [here](#)



Meet the Team

Nicola Williams

Joint Strategic Lead, Growing Mid Wales

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

I joined Powys County Council in 2003 after working for 18 years in a large Private Sector Utility Company – Dŵr Cymru. The majority of my career within the Council has been in Internal Audit. However, in 2018 I took a change in direction and commenced work in Programme Management leading on some large programmes of change within the Council including the Council's Transformation Delivery Programme.

Later in 2020, I was seconded to establish the Mid Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) which enabled me to commence working in collaboration with Ceredigion County Council. In July last year my role was broadened to include leading on the Mid Wales Growth Deal and more recently the Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership (RSP).

So as you can see I have been about a while!

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

Although employed by Powys County Council, I have a regional role leading on the CJC work and the RSP team, and I share the Joint Strategic Lead for Growing Mid Wales (GMW) with Carwyn Jones-Evans in Ceredigion where we lead on all aspects of the work in GMW. Carwyn also supports me with the work on leading the RSP team and the CJC.

I like to think we make a good team!

- **What are your current priorities?**

As I am writing this on the Friday before the Royal Welsh Show week, my current priority is to make sure that we have a successful Growing Mid Wales / Regional Skills Partnership event at the show on Monday (24th July). I am looking forward to seeing the team, engaging with Members and businesses across the region to celebrate the successes of GMW and raising awareness of the RSP. Fingers crossed it goes well!

My overall strategic priorities are:

Making sure I provide effective and robust leadership and guidance to the team to enable us all to deliver the work ahead across the region. The next 12 months are going to be really exciting especially for the Growth deal as we move to drawing down the funding to commence delivery of some of the projects. Watch this space!

Also, to ensure there is successful collaboration between the two Local Authorities and wider stakeholders across the region. This is going to be critical to ensure we work as one team in the region to deliver the outcomes for the Mid Wales economy.



3 - Growing Mid Wales reception, the Royal Welsh Show 2023

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

During the last few years, I have seen that there is a growing appetite and passion for collaborative working across the Mid Wales region. This is enabled through the work of the CJC and GMW under the Leadership of the two Leaders – Councillor James Gibson Watt and Councillor Bryan Davies and I am proud to be part of the team that is delivering the work on their behalf.

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

I have nearly 40 years of experience in working in the Private and Public Sector (see I told you I have been around a while!) and at the age of 22 became one of the youngest Managers within Dŵr Cymru.

In addition, I am extremely proud of all the work that has taken place across the Mid Wales region which has enabled us to get to where we are today.

In my personal life I am passionate about spending time with my family. I have two children aged 23 and 19 and they still want to come on holiday with Mum and Dad (so long as we are paying!)



4 - Nicola and family.

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

Amazing – Every single member of the GMW team is committed to ‘making a difference’ to the economy of Mid Wales in whatever their role may be. My favourite time of the week is when we all get together on a teams call on Monday morning to share our work plans for the week ahead and on what we've been up to. They really are an **amazing** team that I am extremely fortunate to work with.

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

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.

