



Llandrindod Wells Town Council

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2nd January, 2026

Dear Clerk, Chair & Members

Cross Border Health Care

We write further to our email to you dated 18th August 2025 with regard to cross-border health funding and issues relating to Powys residents Healthcare.

Firstly, can we thank all councils who have written to the First Minister to support Llandrindod Wells Town Council and lobby for better and more equitable healthcare for the Powys residents and to revisit the funding formula. Your support is crucial.

You will find a response from Welsh Government received recently which was presented to our Council at its recent meeting attached.

The Council felt that this response did not address the issue at hand and Llandrindod Wells Town Council is now writing to your council to seek your support with the following:

It would appear that residents in Powys are facing a ticking time bomb with regards to NHS provisions from both the Welsh government and NHS England services.

Have any of your residents expressed concerns in your locality regarding access to GP's, A&E departments, or ambulance waiting times?

Would you agree that we need a wider variety of healthcare services in our local area, including potentially our own, Mid Wales A&E department?

Llandrindod Wells Town Council are looking to open up a dialogue between neighbouring town and community councils to take proactive action, as well as creating a united force to put greater pressure on the Welsh government for assistance in the matter and create more sustainable healthcare services in Powys.

Powys Pressure

We are aware of the pressure on the Powys Teaching Health Board (PHTB) and the increased cost of NHS services across our region, and so we would like to open up a conversation between our councils to see what we can do, collectively, to help improve the provision of our healthcare and social care services in Powys.

Living in Powys, we find ourselves in a tricky predicament, due to various factors:

Key Characteristics:

- **Sparsity:** Powys has the lowest population density of all local authorities in Wales, at just 26 persons per square kilometre. The population is widely dispersed, with many residents living in rural hamlets and isolated dwellings. A sparse population spread across a large rural land mass makes it challenging to ensure equality of access to services.
- **Ageing Population:** The area has an older population compared to the Welsh and UK averages. Residents aged 65 and over make up around 27% of the population, compared to the Welsh average of 21%.
- **Demographic Trends:** The working-age population is smaller in Powys and is projected to decline, as young people often leave the county for urban areas due to education and employment opportunities. Meanwhile, the number of people over 65 and 75 is expected to rise faster than in the rest of Wales.

Debt problems and outsourcing

Were you aware that the PHTB are in a considerable debt which is negatively affecting the care that some Powys residents receive?

- Powys Teaching Health Board (PTHB) has a general issue with significant financial deficits and overspends, which impacts its ability to pay for services from English hospitals like Hereford County Hospital (Part of the Wye Valley NHS Trust). PTHB has reported a cumulative deficit of £34.7 million over three years and faced a projected deficit of over £28 million for the 2025/2026 financial year, leading to a Welsh Government intervention.
- To manage its budget, PTHB approved a controversial policy in March 2025 to align waiting times for planned care (like operations and outpatient appointments) with the slower NHS Wales standards, rather than the faster NHS England standards. This was seen by critics as a form of "demand management and invoice avoidance" to delay payments to English hospitals.

A recent BBC News article (3rd August 2025) stated that:

“Almost 40% of Powys Teaching Health Board's (PTHB) budget is spent on services outside its own borders - it does not have its own district general hospital”

(<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cp89337gm7ro#:~:text=With%20shorter%20waiting%20times%20in,children%20and%20those%20with%20cancer.&text=Ms%20Wallace%20used%20to%20enjoy,the%20list%20should%20be%20honoured.>)

Extra NHS funding from the Welsh Government

The Senedd allocated an extra £120 million to cut waiting times for Welsh patients waiting for treatment in England, but unfortunately, it appears that Powys residents will not benefit from this extra funding. Perhaps due to the debt that has been accrued by having to rely on services over the border.

(<https://www.russellgeorge.com/news/no-additional-welsh-government-funding-powys-patients-waiting-health-treatment-england>)

Prevention is better than cure

For the 2024/25 financial year, Powys County Council's social care budget was over a third of its total, with Adult Services at £93.2 million and Children's Services at £32.2 million.

The NHS Powys budget for the same period is significantly larger, with a total spending of £446 million in the previous year and a forecasted deficit for 2025/26, indicating a much larger overall expenditure on health services compared to social care.

Finding a solution

The PTHB are working hard to find a way through these difficult times, to create 'A Healthy, Caring, Powys'.

<https://pthb.nhs.wales/about-us/key-documents/strategies-and-plans/powys-teaching-health-board-integrated-plan-2024-2029/11/>

Community well-being events and opportunities for members of the public to 'Have their Say' are hopefully gaining some ground on the issue.

But if we, as town and community councils, dedicate some time to this then collectively we can really make a difference to the lives of our residents at this crucial time.

If we put our hearts and minds together, perhaps we can find the compromises needed to come up with a practical solution to this difficult situation? This is an opportunity to work together on a shared goal, putting partisan politics aside for the benefit of all.

By creating healthier communities through preventative measures and community action – and by treating patients closer to home – perhaps we can start to turn back the tide on this ever increasing problem of insufficient local services and burgeoning debt?

Invitation to collaborate

Llandrindod Wells Town Council would like to invite other local town and community councils in our area to form a coalition and hold meetings to find a way forwards on this vital issue, with the first meeting to be held in early Spring 2026 to give us time to receive a response from Councils. This will hopefully be the first of many meetings, with the opportunities for other town and community councils to host future meetings.

Together we could help to create a greater sense of security and resilience: both by lessening the chronic health burden on our communities through preventative measures – and without having to waste valuable time and resources on long journeys to Bronglais or Hereford Hospital, or relying on the dwindling air ambulance services.

Perhaps collectively, we can assist the PHTB in helping to provide our residents with the care that they deserve?

Register your interest!

If you are interested in being part of this collaboration please contact our Clerk, Jane Johnston via email – clerk@llandrindodtowncouncil.co.uk. We look forward to working with you!

Kind Regards

Jane Johnston

Jane Johnston, PSLCC, CiLCA (Wales)
Town Clerk & RFO
Llandrindod Wells Town Council