



CYNGOR DINAS LLANELWY
ST ASAPH CITY COUNCIL

CITY PLAN 2026-2031



Index

Section		Page
1.	Introduction and Vision	3
2.	History, Population & Amenities	14
3.	Health & Education	22
4.	Housing & Education	25
5.	Economic	29
6.	Biodiversity	33
7.	Achievements, Progress & Action Plan	37

1. Introduction & Vision

Introduction & Vision

The aim of the Council is to act as a democratic voice in a non-political manner, for the entire community of St Asaph. It will work towards securing a sustainable economic future in a safe and healthy environment for the community. It also aims to improve the biodiversity by maintaining and sympathetically improving the natural environment of the riverside recreational areas. To achieve this, we will:

- Represent the community's views;
- Enhance the historic and cultural heritage of the City;
- Preserve and develop the natural environment of the city's public areas;
- Develop and improve the biodiversity of the area;
- Promote sustainable policies which will improve the environment for the benefit of residents and visitors;
- Maintain a pleasant, clean and safe environment;
- Work in partnership with other bodies and organisations to improve the quality of life and well-being of the community and promote the city in a positive manner;
- Create a socially inclusive and caring community by supporting voluntary groups in assisting residents and visitors;
- Develop collaborative relationships with organisations that have an interest in the area to mutual benefit.

The City Council set up a working group to formulate a Council plan for the next five to ten years, and ensure that the Council's activities reflect the priorities of the residents of St Asaph. The Group members felt it was vital to ask the residents how they felt about their community before incorporating these views into the plan.

City Council

The city plan has been developed by St Asaph City Council, one of 730 community councils in Wales which work under the governance of the Welsh Local Government Association. St Asaph City Council operates under the Local Government Act 1972 and the numerous subsequent amendments. It is a member of One Voice Wales.

The City Council sets a precept which is collected by Denbighshire along with the County's Council Tax. The City Council acts as a representative for the community and considers matters including local planning and development as well as providing services, which benefit the people living in and around St Asaph. These include:

- Maintenance of bus shelters on the High Street;
- Library, west side of the Common, and Roe Plas car parks;
- Maintenance and management of the Council's land, including at Roe Plas and the Common for public amenity and recreation. This includes the provision of litter bins and seating;
- Management of Mill Race Meadow, which is currently leased for grazing;
- Provision and maintenance of the Council Meeting Room, the Football Pavilion and the Bowling Clubhouse;
- The football pitch and bowling green, which are hired to the Football Club and Bowling Club to provide sports facilities;
- Management and maintenance of land behind the Library and on the High Street;
- The War Memorial, Mary Short fountain and HM Stanley Obelisk;
- Wildlife woodcarvings along the river;
- Flagpoles at Roe Plas;
- Play areas – near the Bowling Green, MUGA/Tennis Court, Andrew Pirie (Llys Dyffryn) and Bryn Gobaith;
- Maintenance of mature trees and planting of new trees in riverside areas;
- Provision of Christmas lighting;
- Maintenance and planting of flower planters;
- Provision of seating in the centre of the city;
- Events such as the Remembrance Sunday parade and service at the War Memorial;
- Distribution of grants, which includes an annual contribution to St Asaph Library.

One Voice Wales and the Welsh Local Government Association work together to promote local democracy and encourage partnership working and sharing of best practice between local councils, and so the role of the City Council takes on an increasing relevance and importance. The Council has undertaken consultation on the plan and will continue to do so.

Context of the Plan

The purpose of the plan is to set out the ideas developed by the City Council in considering the future development of St Asaph and contributing to the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This legislation requires public bodies in Wales to consider the long-term impact of their decisions, in terms of the seven goals set out by the Act:

Goal	Description
A prosperous Wales	An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work
A resilient Wales	A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).
A healthier Wales	A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
A more equal Wales	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).
A Wales of cohesive communities	Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
A globally responsible Wales	A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

The Conwy and Denbighshire Public Service Board has developed and published an assessment of well-being for the area which can be viewed following the link below:
<https://conwyanddenbighshirelsb.org.uk/home/english-wellbeing-assessment/>
 Denbighshire County Council corporate plan can be accessed on the following link:
<https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/your-council/strategies-plans-and-policies/plans/corporate-plan/about.aspx>
 The City Council will consider short, medium and long term goals which align with these goals.

Community Engagement

Your paragraph In 2021 the Council conducted a community engagement survey to ask the residents of St Asaph about their priorities for the future of their community. The questionnaire (from Planning Aid Wales) was designed to be quick and simple to complete and asked just five questions. The City Times kindly agreed to publish the questionnaire in its August 2021 issue so the Council could be sure it was delivered to every household in St Asaph. So, what did the responses tell us?

Question 1 – What makes you happy about St Asaph?

Response	Percentage
The people – friendly/good neighbours/staff in library and shops/caring	52.5%
River views/great walks/scenery/wildlife/outdoor spaces/trees/wildflower areas	52.5%
Community Spirit	37.5%
Home/lovely place/peaceful location/small population/remains the same	27.5%
Landmarks – Cathedral/The Old palace/Church	17.5%
Amenities – City Times/Cricket/Football & Bowling/Volunteers who run clubs for youngsters/allotments/places of worship/community hub/Music Festival	17.5%
Good Services – GP/Pharmacy/near to hospital/schools/car parking	15%
Cafés/Café Culture/restaurants/shops	12.5%

Other respondents rated floral displays, Welsh speakers and lack of crime as important.

Question 2 – What makes you sad about St Asaph?

Response	Percentage
Closure of shops/decline and appearance of the High Street/ lack of banking or cash facilities	50%
Litter	25%
Traffic on the High street/pollution	15%
Risk of Flood/drainage gullies not maintained	12.5%
Lack of Youth Facilities	10%

Anti-social behaviour, vandalism, dog mess, condition of pavements and inconsiderate parking were also of note. Other respondents highlighted the lack of a community centre, poor condition of roads and pavements, lack of cycle paths and lack of NHS dentists.

Question 3 – What makes you mad about St Asaph?

Response	Percentage
Litter/Plastic Pollution	48.75%
Heavy traffic on the High Street, Upper Denbigh Road and Glascoed Road/ Pedestrian safety/ speed bumps and restrictions	25%
Vandalism and anti-social behaviour	12.5%
Dog mess	12.5%
Parking on the High Street/Double yellow lines/Penrhewl/ Mill Street	12.5%
Unoccupied shops on the High Street/struggling businesses/lack of maintenance/neglected	12.5%

Dogs off leads in open spaces and supervision of younger people were also reported.

Question 4 – How would you make St Asaph better?

Response	Percentage
By-pass/ restrict traffic on High Street/ pedestrian crossing on Upper Denbigh Road	47.5%
Improve business frontages on the High Street	22.5%
More events/more social interaction between wards	15%
Community Centre	12.5%
Provide more bins	10%
Safe youth/children's facilities	10%
Improve footpaths and accessible walking routes	10%

Other improvements suggested included pedestrianising the High Street, markets, control of dogs, affordable housing, NHS services.

Question 5 – How would you spend £10,000 for the future of St Asaph?

Response	Percentage
Improve the High Street	32.5%
Community Events	22.5%
Community Centre	12.5%
Tourism Information	12.5%
Expand foot/cycle network	12.5%
Traffic controls on High Street	12.5%
Charities/Community groups/Sports Clubs	10%

Other suggestions included more bins and benches, improving footpaths and pavements, play area or fitness equipment, youth services, planting trees and wildflowers, a website for reporting concerns, dog exercise areas and a nature reserve.

What did we learn?

A number of responses asked for facilities which are already available in the city, which suggests that it is important to consider ways of improving communications with residents.

Our Partners

The City Council works with other organisations to provide facilities for the community and to maintain its land sustainably for the benefit of future generations:

Denbighshire County Council:

- The City Council contributes £12,000 annually to retain the Library service at its current level.
- Denbighshire Community Development Officers offer guidance and support regarding grant applications and community planning.
- Denbighshire Biodiversity Officers and tree Officers have advised the Council on the development of its wildflower sites.
- Denbighshire Climate Change Officers have advised the Council on community resilience planning and de-carbonisation.
- Denbighshire Clwyd River catchment Officer has advised on river management and the issues upstream, which have an effect on the river flowing through St Asaph.
- Denbighshire Business Development Officer has advised on ways to improve the High Street.
- Denbighshire City Town & Community Council Liaison Officer has supported the council in producing the plan and progressing its projects.

Natural Resources Wales:

- Flood defences for the community of St Asaph.
- Reinstatement of the City Council's trees following construction of the flood defences.
- Discussions regarding tree planting and funding to increase tree coverage.

Keep Wales Tidy:

- Litter-picking equipment.
- Local Places for Nature packs to encourage biodiversity.

Afon Elwy Environment Group:

- Litter-picking
- Works with Keep Wales Tidy for the benefit of the Council's green spaces.

City Times:

The City Times issued its last edition for the time being in December 2024.

It was delivered to every household in the city and was held in great affection by residents. The paper was produced by an independent team of volunteers.

St Asaph Floodwardens Group:

- Liaises with Natural Resources Wales and Denbighshire in the event of extreme weather events. Some of the City Councillors are members of the group.
- Keeps the St Asaph Flood Plan under review.
- supported residents during Covid by running errands and delivering prescriptions to those who were isolating.

Twinning:

- Begard
- Glasgow - due to links with St Kentigern (Mungo)

Other Community Partners:

- St Asaph Dementia Group
- Elwy Missionaria – the Cathedral and Parish Church work with the Council for major events and commemorations, such as during the Platinum Jubilee, the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation.
- The Community Fridge at the Parish Church which gives invaluable support to so many residents.
- Sports Clubs, including the Bowling Club, Cricket Club and Football Club.
- The WI who support the Council at community events, such as the Jubilee Fair and the Civic Service.

2. History, Population, Social & Culture

History

The story of St Asaph begins in 576AD when St Kentigern (Mungo) settled in St Asaph where he founded a monastery on the banks of the River Elwy before returning to his native Scotland. Asaph, son of King Sawyl Penuchel, was sent as a disciple to his distant cousin, Kentigern, at Llanelwy (St Asaph). When Kentigern returned to Strathclyde, Asaph was appointed Bishop of Llanelwy. St Asaph has always been known as a city because of the importance attached to the place over the past 2000 years. The Roman road passed through St. Asaph and the Antonine Itinerary of the second century AD placed the fort of Varis at St. Asaph. Very few Roman remains have been found to substantiate the location but, on current evidence, the fort was almost certainly at St. Asaph, providing the important lost link in the chain from Chester to Bangor. In spite of a turbulent history of destruction by Edward I, Owain Glyndwr and Cromwell and several other attempts to move it elsewhere, St. Asaph has retained its cathedral to this day.

Since the first monastic settlement 1400 years ago, the care of people in St Asaph has been of vital importance. In 1680 Bishop Barrow founded Alms Houses for eight poor widows. In 1840, a workhouse was built, which became the home of the famous explorer and journalist, H M Stanley. The building has served as an isolation hospital, a maternity hospital, Stroke Rehabilitation, Ophthalmic and Outpatients units and has now been converted to housing.

Description

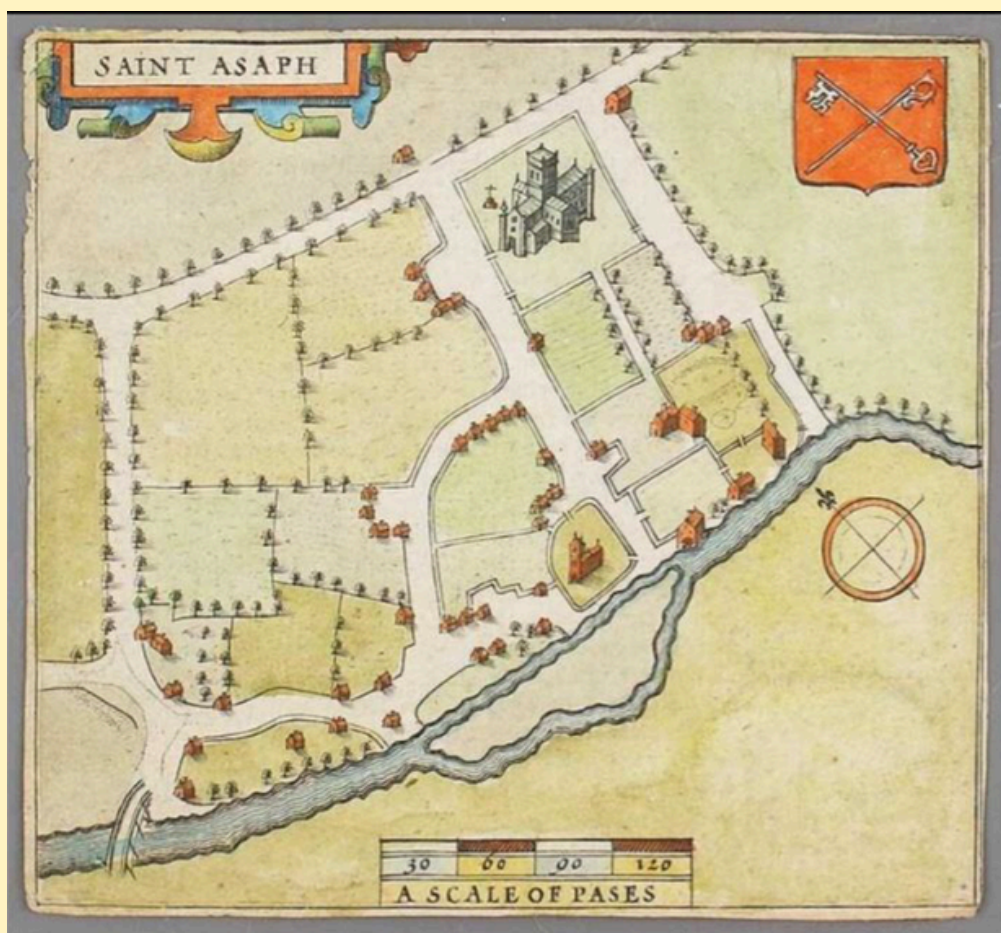
St Asaph is situated in the County off Denbighshire, approximately five miles inland from the North Wales Coast and is flanked by the rivers Elwy and Clwyd. Nestling in open countryside and with a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on its doorstep and a wealth of historic sites and ancient castles nearby, St Asaph enjoys a privileged geographic position at the gateway to the Vale of Clwyd and has a wealth of attractive open spaces, beautiful views and pleasant walks. Much of St Asaph lies within a conservation area. St Asaph received city status in 2012 and is the second smallest city in the UK. St Asaph West is ranked 783 in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, while St Asaph East is ranked at 1631 (1909 would be the least deprived).



There is a small High Street, with a number of vacant properties, which can feel highly congested with road traffic.



John Speed's 1610 map shows a small, scattered development. The Cathedral, Church, Bishop's Palace, a mill at the bottom of the High Street, and the mill race are included. The bridge over River Elwy was further north, near the present Pont Begard footbridge.



Population

When ascertaining the services and facilities required by the residents, it is important to understand the composition of the population of the community. Data taken from 2011 census shows:

Details	Number	%
Total number of residents	3478	
Male	1669	48.0
Female	1809	52.0
Age 15 & under	552	15.9
Age 16 to 64	2019	58.0
Age 65n& over	907	26.1

Ethnic Group	Number	%
White - Welsh, other UK	3360	96.6
Mixed	35	1.0
Non-white	80	2.3

Religious

The Cathedral in St Asaph dates back 1400 years and is said to be the smallest ancient Cathedral in the United Kingdom. The earliest parts of the existing building date from the 13th century when a new building was erected on the site after the original cathedral was destroyed by King Edward I in 1282. The cathedral is the home of the William Morgan bible. St Asaph currently has a Roman catholic Church, a Wesleyan Chapel, a Baptist Church and a Baptist Chapel, as well as the Parish Church of St Asaph and St Kentigern, believed to have been built in the thirteenth century.

Details	Number	%
Those who have religion	2300	68.6
Christian	1913	55.0
Other religion ***	83	2.4
No religion/religion not stated	1202	42.6

*** Other religions include Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim faith.

Welsh Language

St Asaph can proudly claim a significant contribution to the preservation of the Welsh language due to the translation of the Bible and Book of Common Prayer into Welsh in 1567 by Bishop William Morgan and William Salisbury. The first Welsh medium secondary school in Wales, Ysgol Glan Clwyd was established in St Asaph in 1972 following its launch in Rhyl some time before. In the 2021 census 20.8% of residents aged 3 and above could speak Welsh.

Music and Arts

Music and Arts have always played an important part in the life of St Asaph, with references to the enjoyment of four-part choral singing as early as 1346. A thriving Cathedral choir continues to this day. The brothers George Henry (alias George Asaf) and Felix Lloyd Powell (1915), who wrote “Pack up your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag” were both members of the Cathedral choir. William Mathias, the renowned composer who wrote an anthem for the wedding of Prince Charles and Princess Diana, lies buried in the grounds of the Cathedral.

The North Wales International Music Festival, founded by William Mathias, thrives to this day. The festival welcomes renowned artists and encourages new talent, holds master classes and has an outreach programme, taking music to the public.

Felicia Hemans (1808) the poet and author, noted for her poem “Casabianca”, adopted St Asaph as her home. Gerald Manley Hopkins (1875) was inspired by the St Asaph countryside to write many of his best works.

City Status

Of all the 22 ancient Cathedral pre-reformation diocese (c1550) in England and Wales, St Asaph is the only ancient cathedral city which was not awarded city status. In 2012, St Asaph received city status from HM Queen Elizabeth II as part of her Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

Events

Events in St Asaph are many and varied, many taking place in the cathedral or the Parish Church. Notable events include the festival staged by NWIMF. St Kentigern holds a number of fund-raising events over the year. Each year, the City Council holds a Civic Service, the Remembrance Day Parade and service – in conjunction with the Cathedral – and until recently, the popular Winter Fair. From 2024, the Cathedral has organised the winter fair and the City Council provides the grotto, which proves very popular with young residents.

In 2022, the city celebrated the Platinum Jubilee with religious services, beacon lighting, a popular history walk, afternoon tea and a fair. Later in the year, the Cathedral was a focal point for the community when it marked the sad death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

In 2023 the City Council granted the Freedom of the City to the Royal Welsh and this event was marked by the regiment’s parade through the city with bayonets fixed, Colours flying and drums beating, led by its regimental mascot LCpl Shenkin. It was a proud day for our small, but beautiful, city.

Community Hub

The original community centre was located near the current library building, but it had burned down circa 1990. The City Council owns the land behind the library, where a new community centre was to be built.

The Community Association negotiated a lease with the Council for this land and worked hard to raise funds for a new building. After a number of years, the association realised the enormity of the task and decided not to proceed further with the project.

Other options were explored such as an annexe to the library building. However, in 2018, the Parish Church launched its plans to re-order the Parish Church to provide a community space for the community. This opened in 2020 and is a popular venue for a number of local groups. The City Council hosted a free afternoon tea in the community hub as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

Other facilities are available for hire in the city – for example at the Cricket Club, Leisure Centre and the Council meeting room.

Sport & Recreation

Those seeking sporting activities are well-served in St Asaph, with numerous facilities. There is a public leisure centre, providing for exercise, swimming, indoor and outdoor games, multi-use games area and a tennis court.

St Asaph Cricket Club, dating back to 1862 provides a picturesque venue. St Asaph Bowling Club, boasting a long history back to the 1930s is located in a riverside setting. St Asaph Football Club, located at Roe Plas, is well-represented with the first team in tier 3 of the Welsh Football Association league. Other clubs include walking football, running, cycling and netball. All clubs actively encourage young players and have teams covering a wide range of ages.

The riverside areas provide open spaces, which are enjoyed by the residents and visitors, alike. There are a number of walks around the city, details of which are on the City Council website.

The Allotment Association manages the allotments behind Roe Plas, where 30 plots are currently in use.

There is plenty to do in St Asaph, with local groups including Llanelwy WI, St Asaph Brownies, Merched Y Wawr, and until recently the Rotary Club. The riverside areas provide open spaces, which are enjoyed by the residents and visitors, alike. There are a number of walks around the city, details of which are on the City Council website.

The Allotment Association manages the allotments behind Roe Plas, where 30 plots are currently in use.

There is plenty to do in St Asaph, with local groups including Llanelwy WI, St Asaph Brownies, Merched Y Wawr, and until recently the Rotary Club.

3. Health & Education

Health

There are two GP surgeries in St Asaph, with an adjoining pharmacy. St Kentigern Hospice provides palliative care and is supported by volunteers. A dental practice is located on The Roe. There are care homes and assisted living facilities in St Asaph.

St Asaph has a Dementia Group, which holds regular meetings and gives support for carers, as well as those with dementia.

Defibrillators are located outside the fire station, on the external wall of the public toilets in Lower Street, outside the Chippery on Mount Road, on the High Street wall of the Diocesan Office, outside the New Inn on Lower Denbigh Road, and outside the football pavilion at Roe Plas. The City Council received donations of £2582 from the Rotary Club for the provision of defibrillators in the city. We worked with North Wales Ambulance Service to ensure we optimised the use of this generous gift. During 2024, North Wales Ambulance Service arranged for a new defibrillator to be installed at the football pavilion, thanks to a generous donation. We continue to work with the Ambulance Service with the aim of improving the availability of defibrillators in St Asaph.

Details	Number	%
Total number of residents	3478	
Good or very good health	2730	78.5
Fair health	508	14.6
Bad or very bad health	240	6.9
Disabled under Equality Act	779	22.4
Not disabled under Equality Act	2699	77.6
Provides unpaid care	403	1.6
Provides no unpaid care	3075	88.4

Education

Education in St Asaph doubtless began in the days of monastic teaching. In the early eighteenth century education was provided for pupils in the Parish Church. By 1780 a small grammar school was established which relocated to larger premises in 1880, which later developed into Ysgol Glan Clwyd. In addition St Asaph has local authority infants and junior schools. The private junior school closed in 2026. Offices for Bangor University and Llandrillo College are located on the Business Park.

4. Housing & Transport

Housing

Dwellings	Number	Percentage
Total number of dwellings	1600	
House or bungalow	1421	88.8
Flats/maisonette	171	10.7
Caravan	8	0.5
Owned	1077	67.3
Social rented	260	16.2
Private rented or rent-free	264	16.5
1 bedroom household	155	9.7
2 bedroom household	467	29.2
3 bedroom household	579	36.2
4+ bedroom household	398	24.9

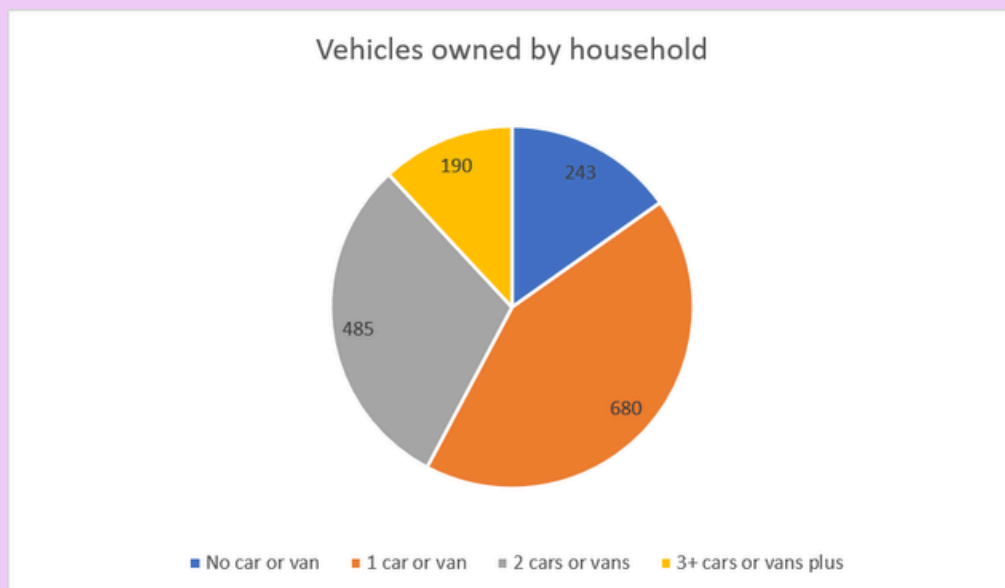
Dwellings	Number	Percentage
One person household	531	33.2
Single family household	987	61.7
Other household types	82	5.1

The 2021 census showed that 96.6% of all households did not have a second address. 99.6% of all households have central heating.

Transport

St Asaph is easily accessed being at the junction of the East/West A55 dual carriageway and the North/South A525 arterial route running through the vale of Clwyd.

The Holyhead to London railway line is easily accessed at Rhyl, a short drive from St Asaph. Airports at Liverpool and Manchester are within an hour's drive from the city.



The most recent census was taken on 21st March 2021 during the Covid-19 pandemic. At this time 25.8% of workers were working from home.

The most popular method of transport to work is by car (62.2%), followed by 6.2% on foot. St Asaph is serviced by 10 bus-stops, and the 51, 52 and 54 bus routes. The railway station was closed in 1955.

5. Economic

The Business Park, established in the 1980's, now provides employment for 2700 people in over 70 premises and still offers room for expansion. Notable employers based on the business park include North Wales Police, North Wales Ambulance Service, Glyndŵr University OptIC Technology Centre, Qioptiq and TRB Ltd. Other manufacturers include Goodfish, based on Glascoed Road.

Retail

The city centre boasts the following:

Category	Services/Goods offered
Hair & Beauty	Hairdressers, barbers, beauticians
Other Services	Cleaning & Ironing Service, Dog grooming, Vets, IT Services, Public Relations
Food & Drink	Cafés, Restaurants including Takeaways, Public Houses, Members' Club
Retail	Betting Shop, Picture Framers, Newsagents, Charity Shop, Hardware, Delicatessen, Butchers, Vintage Shop, Florists, Building Supplies & Hardware, Pottery, Gifts, Farm Supplies, Caravan Sales, Blinds, small supermarket
Health & Social Care	Care Homes, Sheltered Housing, Physiotherapist, Dentists, GP Surgeries, Pharmacy, Chiropractor, Therapist, Diet Consultant, Fitness
Building & Property	Builders, Groundworks & Building Supplies
Professional Services	Solicitors, Financial Consultants, Estate Agents, Accountants, Auctioneers, Property Consultants, Surveyors.
Motoring	Car servicing/Repairs, Petrol Filling Station, Tyres & Batteries, Motor Cycles, Car Sales
Other	

Hospitality	Hotels
Plants	Nurseries & Tree Nursery
Other	Places of Worship, Library, Fire station, Livestock Market, Political Party, Telecoms

The city centre is small, with the High Street located on a steep hill. This, combined with the narrow pavements, does not make the city centre accessible for all.

In the region of 500,000 people visit Tweedmill each year, many brought by touring coaches, bringing people from all over the country.

There are four hairdressers, two barber shops and a beauty salon in the city centre.

Retailers include a picture framer, blind supplier, a florist, pottery and gift shop. There are many professional services available, including financial, estate agents, surveyors, accountants and solicitors. Hanover House on The Roe provides office accommodation for a number of businesses, including IT, public relations, builders and therapists. A popular angling supplies shop has re-located to another town.

There are no banks remaining in St Asaph and only one cash machine, although there are sub post offices in Heol Esgob and Chester Street.

There are no banks in St Asaph, although there are two sub-post offices. The former HSBC is now a residential property, and the former Nat West lies empty. In addition there are another three empty shops on the High Street. Thirty years ago, there was a thriving High Street, but this did not recover after an extended period of closure to enable repairs to sewers to take place. Sadly, a number of shops did not re-open, especially once a small supermarket from a national chain opened.

Cattle Market

In 1643 the first fair and market day in St Asaph was recorded and a thriving cattle market continues to this day.

Tourism & Hospitality

St Asaph welcomes over 800,000 visitors a year. Attractions include the Cathedral, Tweedmill, the riverside areas and events. Most people visit predominantly for shopping, dining and recreational activities. Therefore, most have short stays of less than a day and the requirement for overnight accommodation is minimal.

St Asaph caters for such visitors with restaurants, cafés, public houses, hotels and guest houses to suit all tastes and purses.

The City Council worked with Cadwyn Clwyd to install blue plaques on a number of buildings to provide information about the building, or the notable people who lived there. There is also an ibeacon trail, and history points QR codes around the city.

Employment

Details	Number	%
All resident aged 16 plus	2926	
Economically Active - in employment	1548	52.9
Economically Active - unemployed	61	2.1
Not in employment - worked in last twelve months	6	10.5
Not in employment - not worked in last twelve months	42	68.2
Not in employment - never worked	13	21.3
Economically inactive	466	44.9

6. Environmental

St Asaph City Council provides services to its local community which have an impact on biodiversity. We promote sustainability and biodiversity practices whenever possible. Most of our land has open access to Members of the Public and we attempt to manage all areas as sympathetically as possible to the biodiversity whilst allowing total freedom to Members of the Public. All three areas are bounded by River Elwy.

Mill Race Meadow

- Left to grow naturally and grazed by a large flock of sheep so that no pesticides or herbicides are ever used.
- One third of an acre has been set aside for use as a Community Orchard and some twenty fruit trees of different heritage varieties were planted. Jubilee Copse was added in 2021-22, and includes a number of deciduous broadleaf trees.
- This area has a large amount of gorse growing along the riverside which is left to grow naturally and only occasionally is this cut back to prevent over-intensification.
- A section of this land has been set aside as an allotment area for some thirty plot holders.

Roe Plas

- Fifty per cent of this area is set aside as a football facility and this grassed area is cut as necessary by personnel from the Football Club.
- The remaining area is a mixture of open grassland and woodland.
- The grassed area is trimmed to a height of 65mm six times a year and the woodland is tended to ensure safety of Members of the Public.
- We have about six mature black poplars in this area, and fourteen Sakura cherry trees were planted in 2020 alongside the footpath to the river.
- Millennium Wood was planted in 1999 to celebrate the new Millennium.
- Approximately 100 whips have been planted on the small bund near the car park and along the hedge line adjoining Mill Race Meadow.

The Common

- The Common is almost entirely grassland with small areas of woodland.
- The grassland is again cut to a height of approximately 65mm six times a year to enable Members of the Public to enjoy the space.
- The Wildflower Garden receives three cuts per annum, with the arisings collected and disposed of.

What do we do?

- Maintain footpaths and kissing gates on these three sites and provide litter bins.
- We leave the woodland wild and do hedge layering.
- Sections of the flood bank have been seeded with wildflower mixes, which include clover, yarrow and meddick. We have developed a bee and butterfly garden.
- We frequently plant new trees at various locations across these three areas.
- Most of the hedgerows are planted with trees which bear berries. These attract large numbers of Winter migratory birds.
- Each year our contractors trim any Himalayan Balsam along the riverbank and dispose of the arisings.
- Some areas of dead wood are left for wildlife.
- We encourage other organisations such as the WI, local schools and Rotary club to participate in our endeavours.
- In 2020, approximately 64 Sakura cherry trees, gifted by the Japanese Consul were planted on four sites across the city.
- We have noticeboards strategically sited to give information on flora and fauna in this area.

Flora and Fauna

- We have identified five different species of winter migratory birds which roost along the Roe Plas and Elwy meadow.
- At least one otter holt has been identified on the riverbank.
- Native bluebells and other spring flowering bulbs have been planted in several different areas.
- We have several badger setts.
- Along the riverbank there are herons, dippers, kingfishers and goosanders.
- The river is populated by salmon, sea trout, brown trout, rainbow trout, lamprey, eels, minnows and bullheads.

Wildflowers

We have created wildflower areas on the west side of the Common, opposite the Doctors' surgeries and at Jubilee Copse. This is the third year for the wildflower garden opposite the surgeries. Yellow rattle has been sown in the wildflower garden.

Trees

As for other responsible landowners, the Council has had an inspection of its mature trees conducted and remedial work has been completed. The black poplars at Roe Plas are a source of pride and are the only ones in the United Kingdom of the St Asaph variety. In 2020 we were delighted to receive a gift of 64 Sakura heritage cherry trees from the Japanese Consul. The trees were planted on four sites – by the Trim Trail, in the Wildflower Garden, at Roe Plas and on the avenue across the Common. Sadly, some of the trees have been vandalised and we have had new tree guards constructed on the Common avenue to protect the trees. In 2025, we received a further gift of 10 sakura cherry trees to replace those lost, and to extend the avenue on the Common.



7. Achievements, Progress & Action Plan

Achievements to Date

A number of projects have been instigated by the City Council in recent years:

- Working with NRW re: construction of the flood defences and re-instatement of the City Council's land.
- Setting up a Flood Working Party to discuss and lobby for measures to address flooding issues and improve flood defences.
- Planting Jubilee Copse.
- Wildflower garden.
- Removing the dog waste bins around the city as this waste can be disposed of in the standard litter bins, in order to save costs and avoid duplicating services.
- Installed composting facilities for use by our contractors and volunteers.
- We have undertaken a governance & finance review to ensure the City Council's policies and procedures will future-proof the Council and protect public money.
- Set up Council e-mails for councillors to ensure the Council can meet its legal obligations as regards Freedom of Information and Data Protection Act 2018, thus achieving greater transparency.
- A weekend of events to mark the Platinum Jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II.
- Operation London Bridge – to follow the protocols to mark the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the proclamation of the new King.
- Improvements to Christmas lighting and extending the scheme.
- Commissioned our new city flag, which was designed by the Right Reverend Gregory Cameron.
- Offering the freedom of the city of St Asaph to the Royal Welsh, with the first freedom march on 8th July 2023.
- Removing the remaining trim trail items as the equipment had reached the end of its lifespan. This amenity land has been identified for seating and as a green space for all to enjoy.
- The City Council has contributed £10,000 towards the installation of brown tourism signs at junction 27 of the A55. The signs are now in place.
- Fibre broadband was installed at the Council meeting room, as part of a UK Government funded scheme.
- Taken responsibility for two defibrillators installed by St Asaph Rotary Club. We have installed a further four devices since 2023, with another one planned for 2026.
- Had bespoke flood shutters made for the football pavilion, which can be installed as required. This protects the building from further flooding.

Issues and Priorities

Priorities identified by the Community are as follows:

- A. Improve the High Street
- B. Address issues with litter
- C. Traffic on the High Street and Upper Denbigh Road and resulting pedestrian safety concerns and pollution
- D. Need a by-pass
- E. Flood risk
- F. Youth Facilities
- G. Vandalism and anti-social behaviour
- H. Dog mess
- I. Parking issues
- J. More events
- K. Community Centre
- L. Improve footpaths and accessible walking routes
- M. Affordable housing
- N. NHS Services
- O. Tourism Information
- P. Fitness equipment
- Q. Planting trees and wildflowers
- R. Nature reserve
- S. Keep open spaces
- T. Pedestrianise the High Street
- U. Dog control
- V. Dog run
- W. Footpath New Inn to football field

The working group identified the following:

- i. New boundary signs
- ii. Narrow High Street
- iii. Farmers' market
- iv. Hybrid meeting equipment
- v. Civic regalia
- vi. Speed indicator signs
- vii. Improve pavements – impossible for those with disabilities/dementia to navigate
- viii. Pedestrian walkway/cycle path to avoid the High Street
- ix. Parking by Roe Plas/football pitch
- x. How to get residents to evacuation centre from West ward in an emergency
- xi. Empty buildings on the High Street
- xii. Football pavilion at risk of flood
- xiii. Inclusive play area
- xiv. Improvements to MUGA and Tennis Court
- xv. Work to keep the public toilets open

Limitations

A SWOT analysis conducted by Denbighshire in 2018 showed the following results:

Strengths

- Excellent connectivity along the North Wales Coast via A55 trunk road;
- Small High Street;
- Historic environment: St Asaph High Street.

Weaknesses

- Can feel traffic dominant, with large HGVs passing through narrow roads;
- High percentage of vacant units.

Opportunities

- Fill vacant units with much needed retail;
- Make the city feel more pedestrianised and accessible;
- Increase footfall in peak months.

Threats

- Size of city cannot accommodate much more development;
- Can be regarded as a place to pass through;
- Tweedmill shopping centre outside the city.

Items to Focus on for St Asaph identified by Denbighshire

- Protect and promote “small city” identity to attract more visitors;
- Improve accessibility for residents; and
- Make the high street more pedestrian focused.

Progressing the Plan

The City Plan Working Group has met with the following partners to explore what can be done for the benefit of and to improve St Asaph and its environment:

a) Community Development Officer, and City, Town & Community Council Liaison Officer, Denbighshire County Council

Discussed:

- Place Plans
- Availability of grant funding
- Having a city plan will support grant applications – especially if the project is in the plan.
- Plans for Lower Street play area, including ideas for replacement when existing equipment is no longer viable.
- Plans for landscaping on Council property.
- Potential Grant funding sources for various projects.
- She will contact Denbighshire Officers who can advise on the plan.

b) Streetscene Officers Denbighshire County Council –

Discussed:

- Litter bins following removal of the City Council's red dog waste bins. Relocation of some bins to provide better service.
- Streetscene have replaced some grit bins and a litter bin, which were at the end of their useful life.
- Grant funding opportunities.
- Play areas – especially the Trim trail and MUGA.
- Street cleaning – especially issues with pollution.
- Weed spraying on the High Street.
- Some communities have set up Business Improvement Districts, whereby local businesses contribute to a fund to pay for additional services, including additional deep cleaning of the streets.
- Street cleaning to prevent debris reaching the gullies.
- Priority areas for sweeping & weed clearance e.g. outside the Cathedral.
- Head of Service will offer support and advice re: play areas.
- Footpath maintenance.
- Fly-tipping – the City Council has no powers to enforce.

c) North Wales Ambulance Service Representative –

Discussed:

- Optimum provision of defibrillators in St Asaph.
- Locations for two defibrillators progressed in 2023 (funding received from St Asaph Rotary Club for two devices).
- How to change over the devices from Rotary Club to City Council.
- Ongoing checks and maintenance.
- Training requirements for managing defibrillators.

d) Youth Services Officer, Denbighshire County Council

Discussed:

- Results of his consultation with young people on their wishes for leisure/play facilities.
- Offer of support for future funding applications, where young people would benefit.

e) Climate Change Officer, Denbighshire County Council

Discussed:

- Community resilience planning.
- The effect on the community of major weather events.
- The City Council's Environment Policy and climate action report, which showed good progress.
- Climate risk and building standards. The Local Development Plan and building regulations could be used to address this.
- The effectiveness of the Floodwardens Group, which is highly respected and provides invaluable community support.
- The importance of good communication during major events.
- The need for a proactive strategy, rather than reacting to flood events.

f) Clwyd River Catchment Officer, Denbighshire County Council

- Nature based solutions to slow the flow of the river before it reaches St Asaph.
- Working with farmers to improve water quality and drainage. Combined sowing is one solution.
- Measures to avoid soil washing into the river and the benefits of more ponds.
- Inadequacy of Victorian drains to cope with surface water in heavy rain.
- Benefits of tree planting in urban landscapes to improve flood resistance and for cooling.
- Measures for residents to improve drainage on their properties.
- Flood strategy and the need to keep a view of the whole area, thus ensuring that improvements in some places are not to the detriment of others.

g) Highways Officer Denbighshire County Council –

Discussed:

- Items for traffic officer – Volume of traffic & pollution; narrow pavements, illegal parking, Pedestrian crossings Upper Denbigh Road, car-sharing car parks.
- Condition of bollards and railings.
- Gullies and flooding. Measures to divert water before reaching the gullies. Work required at Cwttir Lane. Also issues by Oriel House Hotel.
- Floodwardens – the group is very effective in St Asaph and importance of liaison with Denbighshire and/or NRW was highlighted.
- Weed growth on pavements – DCC suggested another meeting with Streetscene.
- Unadopted road – funding used for another community this year. Ways of raising the importance of this road to the community were discussed. Write to GP Surgeries, Health Board and Pharmacy. Could this be raised with residents so they also highlight the importance of the road.
- By-pass – it would be reasonable for the City Council to ask for this to be looked at again, especially in view of the increase in traffic. West route is still feasible and was the favoured route.

h) Traffic Officer Denbighshire County Council –

Discussed:

- Unadopted road – how to get improvements funded for eventual adoption by DCC. Ownership issues.
- Car-sharing – parking issues and enforcement.
- Street gullies – keeping them clear and priorities. Progress report requested re: work to gullies where more long-term solutions are required.
- By-pass – national transport policy has moved away from building new roads due to environmental impact and cost.

Note – we have kept this in the plan in case Wales Government policy on road-building changes, especially with new administrations.

- Heavy volume of traffic on the High street and resulting pollution.
- Narrow pavements and steep hill. Pedestrian safety. Traffic calming measures, pedestrian crossings and alternative routes for footpaths were discussed.
- Condition of bollards and railings – including request for permission for City Council to have them painted.

i) Economic & Business Development Officer Denbighshire County Council

Discussed:

- Deterioration of the High Street due to empty shops, volume of traffic and narrow pavements.
- Condition of commercial buildings on the High Street and options for renovation.
- The role of enforcement and availability of funding for business premises.
- The High Street will not return to the way it was.
- Denbighshire Economic Strategy.
- The lack of a business forum.
- Feasibility studies.
- Overview of the city plan.
- Window vinyls and test trading for empty units.
- Drinks and ice cream kiosks.
- Access to cash.
- Accessibility of the High Street.

j) Tourism Officer

Discussed:

- Footpaths, in particular the importance of the riverside walks.
- Destination management and signposting of amenities.
- Tourism Groups.
- Promotion of St Asaph.
- Parking – availability and charges.
- Markets.

k) Footpaths Officers

Discussed:

- Footpath maintenance and inspection;
- Public right of way and limitations;
- Promotional opportunities;
- Applications for permissive footpaths.

l) Sustainable Leisure Officer, Denbighshire County Council, and Clwyd Catchment Area Officer

Discussed:

- Aim to promote footpaths in St Asaph, which are appropriate for those with restricted mobility as they offer shorter routes.
- Community Miles Scheme, including proposed routes.
- Grant funding for the scheme.
- Potential future routes.

m) Officer from Gwynt y Môr, Grant Funding Provider

Discussed:

- Projects, including eligibility for Gwynt y Môr funding;
- Details of the scheme, including support for applications.

Next Steps and Action Plan

- Continuing to work with North Wales Ambulance Service to improve provision of defibrillators in the city.
- Working with DCC (Denbighshire) and other grant providers to obtain funding to improve the land behind the library.
- New arrangements for waste collections, using a new service provider.
- Continuing to seek ways to make the most of St Asaph's City Status.
- Working with DCC to promote our footpaths and explore ways of linking paths with neighbouring communities.
- Working with DCC to keep the public toilets open.
- Working with DCC for provision of CCTV in the city centre.
- Working with DCC to ensure speed indicator sign is re-installed on Upper Denbigh Road.
- Work with Cadwyn Clwyd
- Wildlife Trust
- Clwydian range AONB
- DCC Highways
- DCC Traffic
- DCC Tourism
- DCC Youth Services
- DCC Community Development
- DCC Climate Change
- DCC Clwyd River Catchment
- DCC Streetscene
- DCC Economic & Business Development
- DCC Footpaths Officers
- DCC Sustainable Leisure
- DCC CT&CC Liaison

Please note

Some action points are “ongoing”, for instance maintaining council assets, or bearing certain issues in mind when considering the council's response to planning applications.

Some issues are the responsibility of Denbighshire County Council, or Wales Government, however the city council can continue to raise the issue and ensure the interests of St Asaph and its residents are represented.

Project	Sector	Update	Timescale
Parking Roe Plas by football field	Community/ Amenities	- FC obtained grants to resurface - Marked spaces optimises number of vehicles - Mill Race Meadow used as overflow	Completed July 2025
Hybrid Meeting Equipment	Community/ Amenities	Meeting owl purchased	Completed 2021
Antisocial Behaviour/Vandalism	Community/ Safety	- Youth Club held at library - Council liaises with PCSO & other Police officers - Community CCTV scheme membership to be explored. PCSO advising on camera locations	£70,000 cost for cameras - grants explored
More Events	Community/ Social	- Jubilee events programme - Freedom of the City - Work with St Kentigern - Keep open spaces available for community events	Ongoing
Seating opposite Doctors'	Community/ Amenities	New benches installed	Completed 2022
Football Pavilion risk of flood	Community/ Amenities	- Flood shutters purchased - Installed during flood alerts	Completed 2025

Project	Sector	Update	Timescale
MUGA/Tennis Court renewal	Community/ Amenities	- Steering Group required - Specification required	31/12/2030
Parking area behind library	Community/ Amenities	Estimated cost £30,000	Consider by 31/12/2031
Improved Acoustics Meeting Room	Community/ Amenities	- Grant funding explored - Cost £3000	31/12/2028
Noticeboard	Community/ Amenities	- Roe Plas noticeboard installed 2024 - New noticeboard at Salisburys explored	31/12/2027
Evacuation Centre West Ward	Community	- Denbighshire will decide on the day - Other venues available if needed	Complete 2026
Flood Mitigation Scheme	Community	- New flood defence constructed 2017 - Improvements made 2021 - Working Group established in 2020 - Floodwardens Group in St Asaph. Denbighshire meets with group - Studies in progress Ashly Court & Tan y Bryn	County Cllrs monitor & liaise with Denbighshire & NRW
Lack of Community Centre	Community/ Amenities	- Community Hub in Parish Church - Cricket Club - Leisure Centre - Commercial options	Existing options suffice
Dog Control	Community/ safety	- Residents encouraged to report issues - Included in Police report at council meetings	Councillors continue to monitor and discuss with Police

Project	Sector	Update	Timescale
Play Areas	Community/ Amenities	- Inclusive play equipment required - Include with renewals	Plan for renewals by: Lower St 2033 Bryn Gobaith 2034 Andrew Pirie 2038
Bus shelter Murals	Housing & Transport	- Estimated cost £2500 - One bus shelter complete 2024	31/12/2030
Storm drains not cleared	Housing & Transport	Discussed with Denbighshire Highways	County Cllrs continue to monitor & liaise
Parking issues	Housing & Transport	- Discussed with Denbighshire Highways - May be a traffic calming measure	Continue to monitor and liaise with Denbighshire
Traffic & pollution	Housing & Transport	Discussed with Denbighshire Highways	Continue to monitor and liaise with Denbighshire
Speed indicator signs	Housing & Transport	- Lack of funding - Old sign removed for development during Wales Govt 20mph programme	County Cllr continues to follow up
Pedestrian walkway/ cycle path to avoid High Street	Housing & Transport	- Discussed with Denbighshire Highways - Include with feasibility study	Continue to explore options.
Local Development Plan	Housing & Transport	- Impact of new housing on local infrastructure - City Council responses to planning applications	Ongoing

Project	Sector	Update	Timescale
Affordable Housing	Housing & Transport	City Council responses to planning applications	Ongoing
By-pass	Housing & Transport	- Road-building schemes not Wales Govt policy - Environmental concerns	Continue to monitor. Wales Govt policy may change with new administrations
Footbridge New Inn to football pitch	Housing & Transport	Recommended for large community grant schemes	Continue to explore options
Unadopted road to GP Surgeries	Housing & Transport	Discussed with Denbighshire Highways. They can apply for Wales Govt funding	Continue to liaise with Denbighshire
Pedestrian crossing Upper Denbigh Road	Housing & Transport	20mph has slowed traffic outside schools - Road layout not conducive to crossing (minimum distance from junction) - Community CCTV could assist with driver behaviour - Speed indicator sign may assist with driver behaviour	County Cllrs continue to liaise with Denbighshire
Boundary Signs	Economic	- Permissions - Design	31/12/2030

Project	Sector	Update	Timescale
City Council Signage	Economic	• Roe Plas sign in progress • Common signs to be ordered • all other signs complete	31/12/2027
Wildlife sculptures	Economic	• Woodpecker in progress • Existing sculptures being restored	31/12/2031
Farmers' Market	Economic	• Jones Peckover has car boot sale • Cathedral holding more events & fairs • St Kentigern holds events/fairs	Provided by Jones Peckover, the Cathedral and St Kentigern
Street Furniture painting High Street	Economic	• Discussed with Denbighshire Highways	Bollards painted June 2025
Christmas Lighting	Economic	• Topography of city centre an issue - especially Lower Denbigh Rd & Chester St • Limitations for lighting columns • Consider noise & light nuisance for residents • Additional tree for Upper Denbigh Road • New lighting for High St in 2022	31/12/2030

Project	Sector	Update	Timescale
Public Toilet Improvements	Economic	- Community Asset Transfer due in 2026/2027 - Structural survey required	31/12/2030
Community Miles Scheme	Economic	- Met with partners 2025 - Footpath route determined - Grant application in progress	31/12/2028
Narrow pavements	Economic	- Discussed with Denbighshire Highways - Feasibility study to be explored	Continue to explore opportunities to improve
Narrow High Street	Economic	- Medieval High Street - Discussed with Denbighshire Highways	Continue to explore opportunities to improve
High Street not visually appealing	Economic	- Empty properties and those in need of maintenance being identified - Explore with Denbighshire	Continue to explore opportunities to improve
Tree by Elwy Bridge needs work	Environmental	Tree surgeon report & work	Complete 2025
Litter Management	Environmental	- Dog waste bins discontinued - General litter bins can be used for disposal	Completed 2023

Project	Sector	Update	Timescale
Litter bin wildflower garden	Environmental	Bins installed	Completed 2022 & 2025
Keeping & improving open spaces	Environmental	- Council maintains land and budgets for costs - Environment & Assets Committee oversees maintenance	Ongoing
Planting more trees	Environmental	- Denbighshire has tree nursery - City Council has planted trees 2020 - 2026 - Maintenance costs to be considered	Environment & Assets Committee reviews tree management

Credits

2011 & 2021 census figures

St Asaph City Council - bid for city status 2012

Photography Steve Morris and Rosalind Williams

Photographs donated by a resident