

# Insight

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With thanks to Nina Ruddle, Head of Public Policy Engagement, Wrexham University

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## Wrexham: place as the civic mission

“ *Universities as anchor institutions can enable real social change* ”

At Wrexham University, we are proud to lead a civic mission that places us at the heart of North Wales' communities. Our vision is to be a modern civic institution that is both regionally anchored and globally engaged – using skills, research and partnership to drive meaningful, long-term systemic change and to enable projects to help tackle social inequalities.

Over the past seven years, our civic mission has evolved from a very small and brave leap into a bold, collaborative programme tackling some of the region's most urgent societal challenges. We've delivered over 30 strategic projects built around four civic themes: Leadership and whole systems thinking, Community Resilience, Health and Wellbeing, and Education and Social Mobility.

We co-founded the North Wales Insight Partnership (NWIP) and the North Wales Public Service Lab (NWPSL), which together bring together leaders from across public services to innovate and scale regional solutions including being at the forefront of implementing the ground-breaking Well Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. Through NWPSL, we've delivered systems leadership training, hosted cross-sector conferences, and established the Community for Community (C4C) network – a growing movement of change-makers sharing learning, driving impact, and embedding inclusive, responsive leadership.

A cornerstone of our work is the [North Wales Children's University \(NWCU\)](#), that provides extracurricular learning opportunities for children and young people across North Wales. In 2023–24, NWCU engaged 1,272 young people from 51 schools and nine community groups, delivering over 700 learning activities and logging 27,108 hours of place-based learning. This initiative has had a measurable impact on raising aspirations and strengthening the link between education and community engagement.

Wrexham University's civic mission is a small and beautiful programme of work that has flourished into a blueprint for meaningful, place-based change, we are now driving innovation in the way we measure impact using the NCIA's 12 pillars approach to understand the impact and contribution to civic society which we are currently embarking on so can share this with delegates— proving that when universities work hand-in-hand with communities and partners pushing boundaries, we don't just drive progress we transform lives.

## Find Out More

[Wrexham Rising: The Power of Partnerships - WREXHAM RISING PODCAST SESSIONS | Podcast on Spotify](#)

[University reflects on decade of impact as Future Generations Report 2025 released - Wrexham University](#)