

# Everyday Globalization in a Rural Small Town

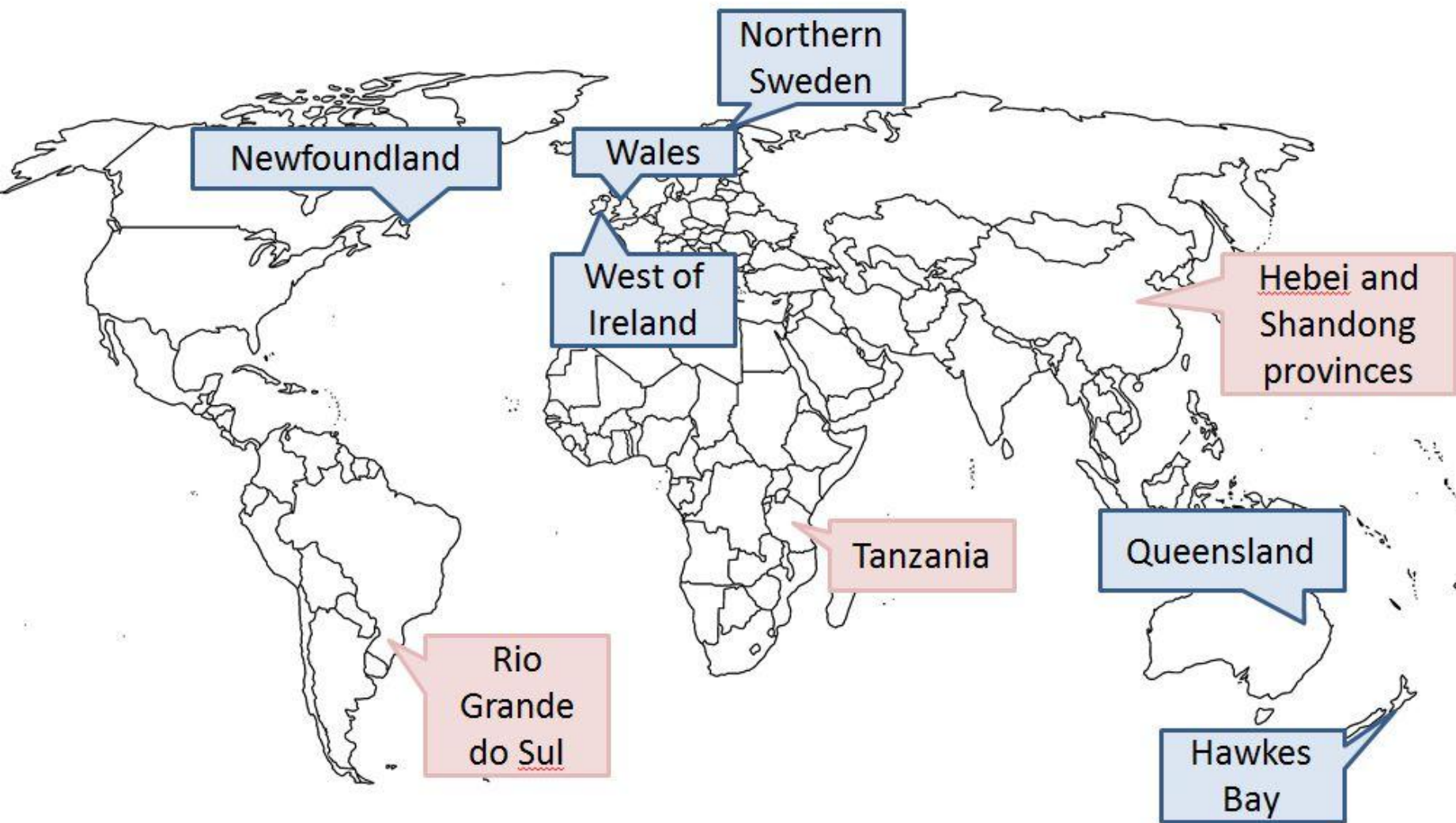


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# Background

- European Research Council Advanced Grant
- GLOBAL-RURAL
- February 2014 – January 2019
- Understanding globalization and its impacts in rural localities
- 5 work packages
  - (Re-)assembling the global countryside
  - Mapping and narrating the global countryside
  - A (counter-)topography of everyday globalization
  - Differential global engagements in emerging rural economies
  - Rural assemblages and grounding global challenges



## GLOBAL-RURAL Case Studies

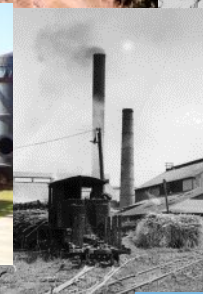
WP1

WP4

# WP 1: Re-assembling the global countryside

## Case Study 1: Closure of Moreton Sugar Mill, Nambour, QLD

- Using assemblage theory to trace interactions of global restructuring and local agency
- Local responses to the mill closure
- Impact on the locality



# WP 1: Re-assembling the global countryside

## Case Study 2: Chinese farmers in northern Queensland, c 1900

- Inter-racial relations in district as early rural cosmopolitanism
- Role of rurality in shaping attitudes
- Lessons for immigration in C21 countryside



## WP 3: A (counter-) topography of everyday globalization

- For most rural places, the impact of globalization is more subtle and mundane
- Exploring the practices and experiences of 'everyday globalization' through an in-depth ethnographical study of a single town

# Everyday globalization



# Everyday globalization



How do these processes work together to change our experience of rural places?



# Newtown: an ordinary town



# Newtown: an ordinary town



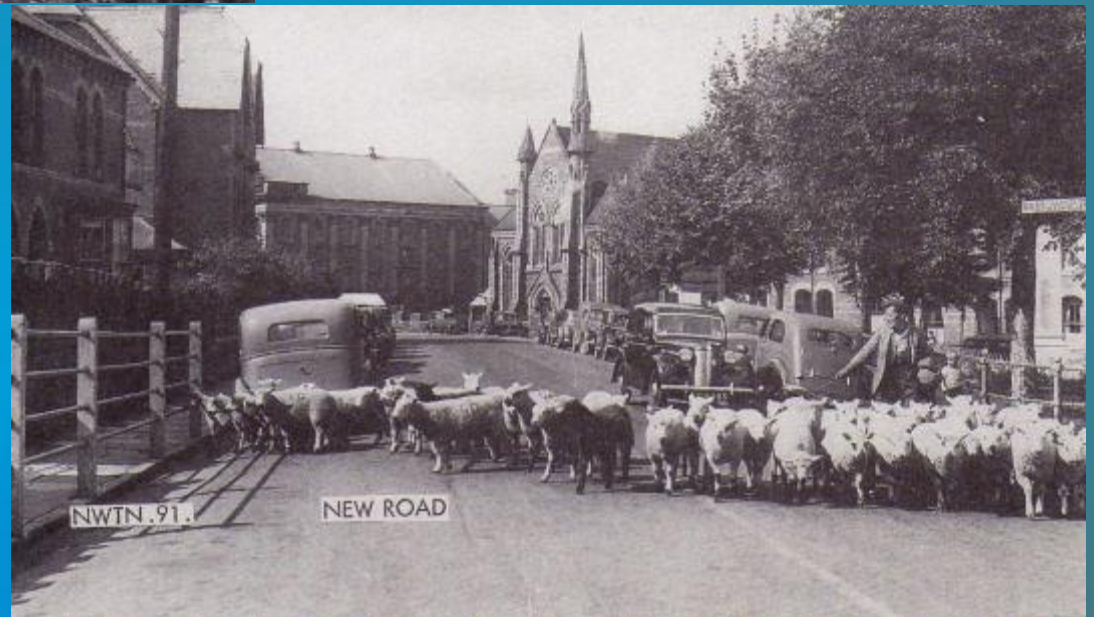
Population (2011): 11,317

# Historical basis of Newtown economy

Textile industry



Agriculture

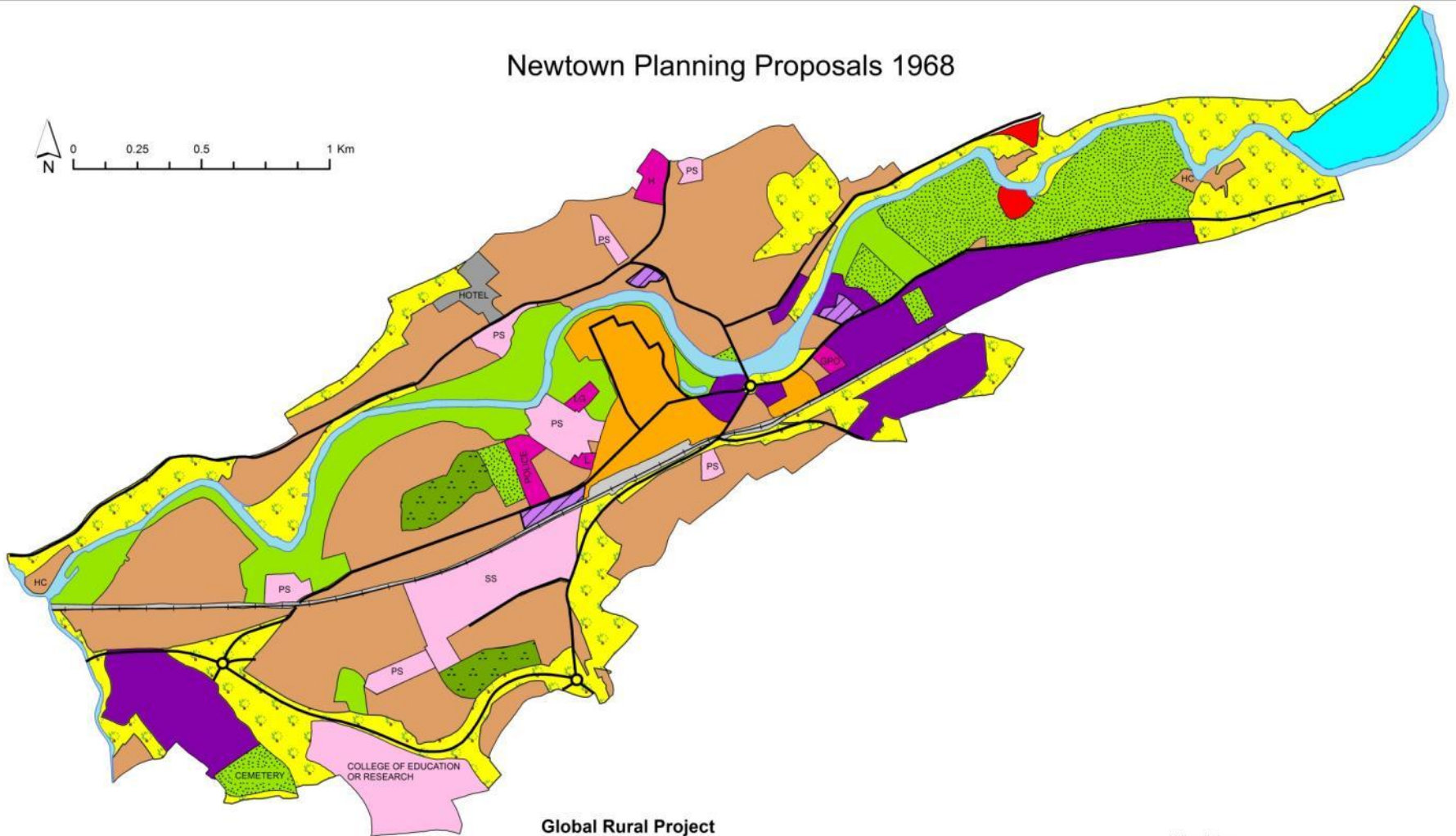
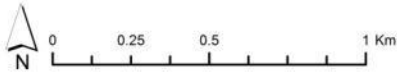


**new NEWTOWN**  
**new HOMES new JOBS new TOWN**



Promotional leaflet: prepared by Mid Wales Development Corporation 1972

# Newtown Planning Proposals 1968



## Global Rural Project

Agricultural and Residual Areas	Public Buildings	Landscaped Features	Railway	Secondary School	Railway line
Ancient Monuments	Hotel	Private Open Space	Residential	Sewage Disposal Works	Road
Commercial	Industry	Public Open Space	River	Storage	

**Abbreviations**  
 MWDC: Mid Wales Development Corporation  
 PS: Primary School  
 SS: Secondary School  
 LG: Local Government  
 GPO: General Post Office  
 HC: Holiday Caravan  
 H: Hospital  
 L: Library



Abstract: Redrawn copy of the planning proposals for Newtown, Powys, as set out in the town planning map No. 7 prepared by the MWDC in 1968.  
 Data source: Newtown Development Corporation (1968) 'Draft Planning Proposals for the Expansion of Newtown, Montgomeryshire' 1968, Newtown  
 Disclaimer: Boundary lines are not authoritative or officially endorsed  
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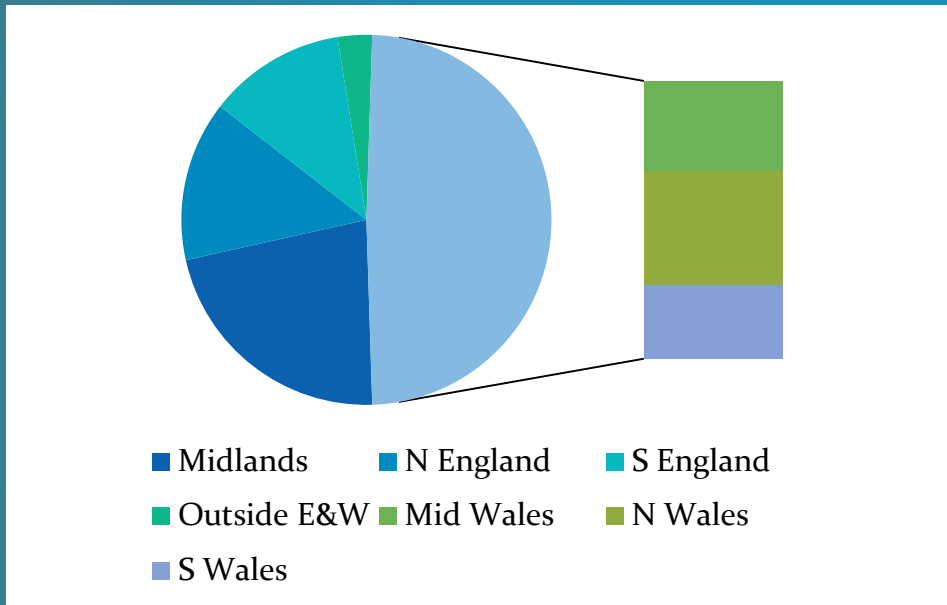
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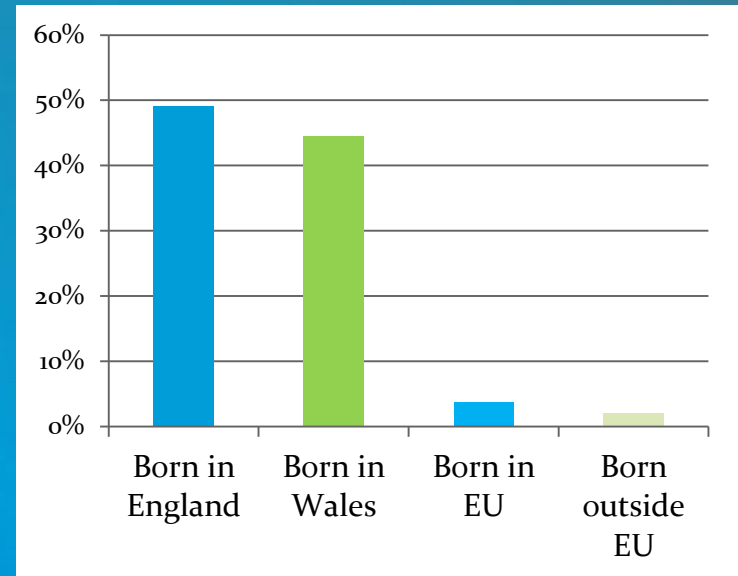
Newtown today  
(greyed out area reflects spatial extent of town in 1968)

# Population and migration

- Increase in population from 5,000 in 1960s to over 11,000 by 1990s



Origin of Migrants to Newtown 1970s-1980s



Newtown residents, 2011 Census

# Ethnic entrepreneurs



## Professionals

e.g. Greek, Polish & Egyptian dentists



## Refugees

e.g. Vietnamese 1978, Belgian musicians WW1





**Control Techniques**  
Owned by US firm  
Emerson  
Factory in Newtown 1974  
Employs around 500  
people

## **Laura Ashley**

Relocated to mid Wales  
Major employer in 1980s  
Bought by Malaysian firm  
MUI 1997  
Production moved to Asia  
Subsidiary Texplan still  
operates in Newtown



# Research questions

- What social, economic, political and cultural connections link Newtown with the wider world?
- What have been the key factors in shaping the connected geographies of Newtown over the last 50 years?
- What has been the effect of evolving global connections on the social, economic and cultural life of the town?
- Have evolving global connections contributed to the development of a 'global consciousness' among residents of the town?
- What do the dynamics and experiences of everyday globalization in Newtown tell us about how globalization is reproduced through local places?

# Topography and Countertopography

Cindi Katz (2001) 'On the grounds of globalization: a topography for feminist political engagement', *Signs*, 26, 1213-1234.

- “I want to get at the specific ways globalization works on particular grounds in order to work out a situated but at the same time scale-jumping and geography-crossing, political response to it.” (Katz 2001: 1216)
- “These outcomes can be scrutinized through means of a topography that at once expresses and enlivens the operation of globalization while bringing them to bear on material social life” (Katz 2001: 1219)

# Topography and Countertopography

- “To do a topography is to carry out a detailed examination of some part of the material world, defined at any scale from the body to the global, in order to understand its salient features and their mutual and broader relationships ... producing a critical topography makes it possible to excavate the layers of process that produce particular places and to see their intersections with material social practices at other scales of analysis” (Katz 2001: 1228)
- “threads of local globalizations can be seen in the landscape, and doing a topography brings them into sharp relief to expose their tensions, contradictions and affiliations.” (Katz 2001: 1228)

# Topography and Countertopography

- “If what I have produced here is a critical topography intent on showing certain traces of globalization on particular grounds, how can the significance of these forms and practices be made translocal and connected to other specific topographies affected by global processes in analogous ways?” (Katz 2001: 1229)
- A *counter-topography*
- Uses metaphor of contour lines to identify lines of affinity and shared experience between places
- Following connections from the bottom-up

# Research methods

- Ethnographic observation
- Interviews
- Discussion groups
- Questionnaires
- Archives and documents
- Participatory methods
  - Participant diaries
  - Map of the world
  - Bring-and-share dinner
  - Photography
  - Workshops
  - Interactive walks





# The Railway Station

*Travel  
(Holidays, business,  
group travel)*





# The Chinese Take-away

*Food  
Migration*



# The Football Club

*Sport*



# The Internet Cafe

*Social networking*

*Online shopping*

# COMPUTER GAME SPECIAL



## Cyber Café



## Tr

PS3

XBOX360

NINTENDO DS

PC CD

SEGA



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# The Charity Shop

*Global awareness and solidarity*



# The Supermarket

*Shopping*

*Food and agriculture*



# MOCHDRE INDUSTRIAL PARK

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 42 The Zest Sauce Co.                     | 79 Control Techniques Drives Ltd   |
| 43 Virgin Projects Ltd                    | 80 Virgin Projects   |
| 44  | 81 Actia (UK) Ltd  |
| 45 Selwyns Systems Ltd                    | 82 Cellipath Plc (Dist)  |
| 46 The Orthodontics Centre                | 83 Millbrook Mouldings   |
| 47 Pamargarn Products Ltd                 | 84 William O'Hanlon & Company Ltd  |
| 48  | 85 William O'Hanlon & Company Ltd  |
| 49  | Castell-Y-Dail Hostel  |
| <b>50 Constructiv Clothing</b>            | Castell-Y-Dail Smallholding  |
| 51  | British Gas Wales  |
| 52 City Electrical Factors                | Morgans of Newtown   |
| 53 City Electrical Factors                | <b>DYFED STEELS Mid Wales LTD</b> <small>TURN RIGHT<br/>TURN RIGHT<br/>LOOK LEFT</small> |
| 54 Aura Associates                        | Confederate Chemicals Ltd & Catron Ltd   |
|   | Powys Ambulance Control  |
| <b>56 Central Dairies</b>                 | Development Board For Rural Wales <small>Maintenance<br/>Depot</small>                   |
|   | Woodhouse (Removals & Storage) Ltd   |
| <b>58 MOCHDRE DAY NURSERY</b>             | G & T Evans Timber Products  |
| <b>59 MOCHDRE DAY NURSERY</b>             |  |
| <b>60 MOCHDRE DAY NURSERY</b>             |  |
| <b>61 MOCHDRE DAY NURSERY</b>             |  |
|   |  |
| <b>63 St. John Ambulance Headquarters</b> |  |
| <b>64 Nottingham Rehab Supplies</b>       |  |
| <b>65 Custor</b>                          |  |

**The Industrial Estate**  
*Business and trade*

# Business Survey

- Mochdre, Vastre and Dyffryn Industrial Estates
- Of the 48 businesses that completed surveys...
  - 31% Manufacturing; 35% Retail
  - 47% with <9 employees; 45% between 10-49 employees
  - 35% of businesses established in Newtown before 1990, 65% of businesses after 1990
  - 48% made purchases from suppliers outside of the UK
  - 33% made sales to international customers



# Business story 1: Makefast



- Manufacture yacht fittings (e.g. canopies and sunroofs)
- Safety fasteners for PPE (e.g. life jackets and harnesses)
- Relocated to Newtown in 1989
- Customers - boat and yacht building companies in USA, Europe and China
- Best selling product – flat buckle
- Portaledge used on El Capitan's Dawn Wall, Yosemite National Park



# Business story 2: Contact Attachments

- Relocated to Newtown in 1970s due to financial incentives offered by DBRW
- Manufacture of forklift truck attachments
- Customers include: BP, the UN, Chevron, Singapore Airlines, Eurostar, Honda, Glaxo-Smith Kline
- Internet sales
- Poor transport connections



Map of International Customers  
Source: Contact Attachments website

# Business story 3: G&T Evans

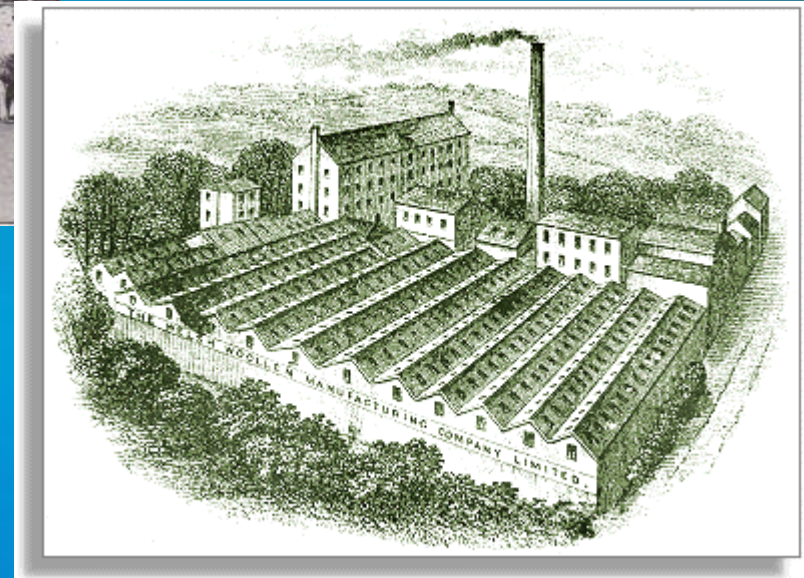
- Building and agricultural merchants since 1945
- Dulas Mill - former site of Italian POW camp
- Niche products:
  - 'Wood Wool' to Potteries
  - Financial crisis 2008, fall in demand
  - Nissen Hut to Port Lockroy research base, Antarctica



# Business networks

- Behind the ordinary facades of the industrial estate are a complex set of international networks and supply chains
- Newtown residents enmeshed in the global economy through their everyday work
- More-than-human mobility of materials, components & products and human mobility of managers, sales reps, migrant workers
- Affinities through networks but vulnerabilities to distant events
- Re-territorialization of traditional industries

# Wool Industry



Cambrian Woollen  
Mill 1875

# Global Wool Industry

- British Wool Marketing Board – 2<sup>nd</sup> largest UK depot in Newtown
- Handled over 5,500 tonnes of wool during 2013/14 season
- Over 30% of UK wool exported to China:



British Wool Exports	2014/15	2013	2011	2005	2003
Europe	55%	61%	65%	63%	86%
China	31%	22%	17%	10%	3%
Far East	7%	9%	10%	18%	3%
America	3%	3%	3%	2%	4%
Australasia	2%	3%	3%	4%	1%
Africa	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%



- Tracing upstream and downstream connections
- International Campaign for Wool – environmental credentials



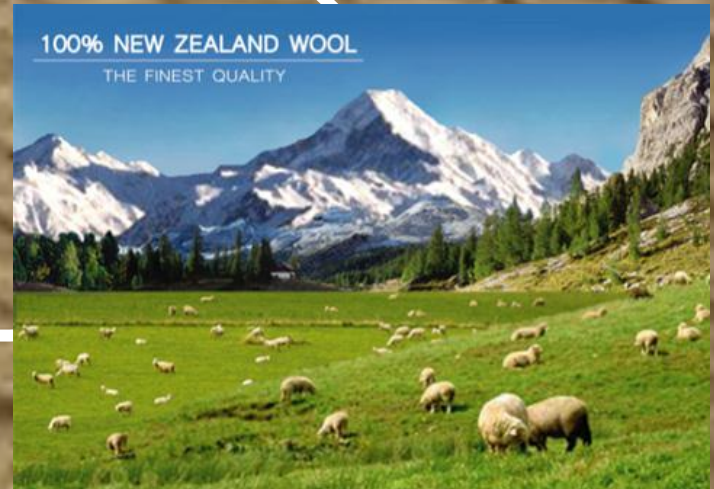
Newtown



China



Australia



New Zealand

# Outward and Inward Connections

**The Supermarket**  
*Shopping*  
*Food and agriculture*





# Outward connections

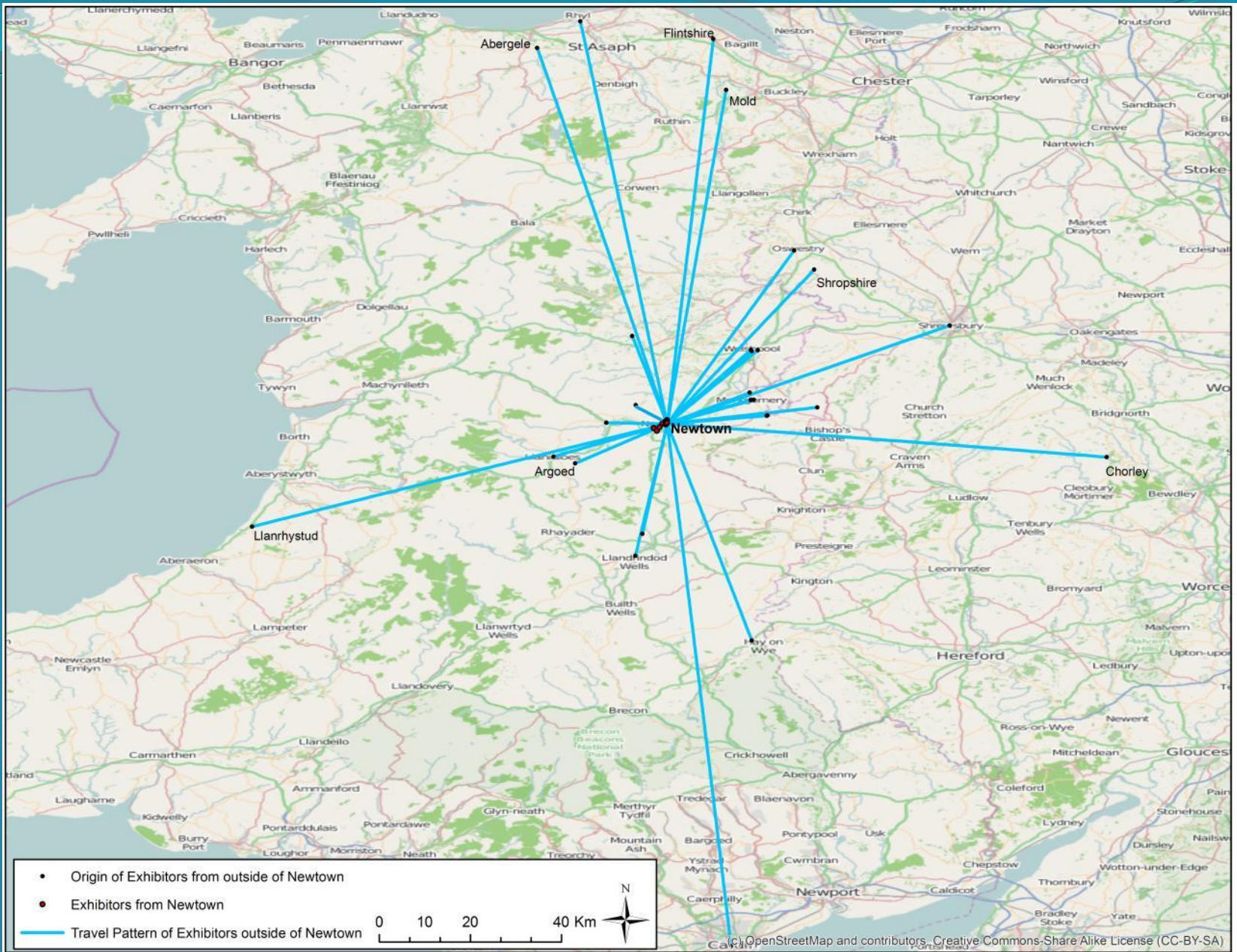
- Global commodity chains
- Globalization of agriculture
- Influence of supermarkets
- Tesco corporate network



# Inward connections

- Changing eating habits
- Changing shopping habits
- Closure of local shops
- Ethical shopping?
  - Fair trade
  - Local produce
    - Market hall
    - Food festival







- Former cattle market
- Nearest cattle market now at Welshpool (16 miles)
- Altered relationship between farmers and town
- Time-Space Expansion





## The Global Countryside

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Nov  
19

### China, milk and the return of the urban dairy?

Posted by [mwoodsaber1](#)

Posted by Michael Woods, 19th November 2014

One of the most remarkable features of agri-food globalization has been the transformation of dairying into a global foot-loose industry. Remarkable because milk is the archetypal perishable good: it can be preserved by converting it into cheese, or butter or yoghurt, but fresh milk spoils quickly and needs to be consumed soon after production. As such, it was a principle of old-style agricultural geography that dairy farming happened in districts relatively close to urban areas, with actual dairies often located in towns and cities so that fresh bottled milk could be delivered to customers daily. Advances in preservation technologies disrupted this relationship, allowing fresh milk to be stored for longer and transported over longer distances. As proximity to the market decreased in significance as a locational factor, dairy farming has become a foot-loose industry, clustering in regions where production costs are most cost-effective. In Australia this process was accelerated by the deregulation of the domestic milk market in 2000, which removed production quotas previously

1

# Lines of affinity?

- Opposition to construction of Tesco supermarket in 2006
- Parallels with anti-supermarket protests in other towns



Torrington,  
Devon

Maleny,  
Australia



Sherborne,  
Dorset



- Other local campaigns
  - Opposition to McDonalds'
  - Objections to town-twinning with Les Herbiers in 1998 due to beef export ban
  - Protests against windfarms and electricity pylons



# Next steps

## WP3: Research Plan

MONTH	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16

### Entry Point: Newtown Development Plan (1969)

- > Disassembly / Reassembly
- > Town Plan
- > Base maps: 1969, 1975, 2014
- > Projected development
- > Virtual and Imaginative geographies
- > Methods: Archival, discourse, mapping
- > Leads: MW and AO

### Site: Housing Estate

- > Policy remit / discourse / imaginaries -outcomes
- > Physical construction
- > People - lived histories, migration, generations, health and wellbeing
- > Social and material change
- > Methods: Interviews and oral histories, focus groups, photography, participatory mapping...
- > Leads: All

### Sites of Consumption: Supermarket, Restaurant, Charity Shop

- > Materiality- food and clothing, supply chains, economics
- > Ethics, global consciousness
- > Food security, local food and agriculture (e.g. Cwm Harry initiative)
- > Migration and food cultures
- > Methods: interviews, ethnography, 'follow-the-thing', food memories, bring and share dinner, mapping...
- > Leads: All

### Scoping Interviews

- > Key organisations
- > Leads: LJ and MW

### Site: Industrial Estates (macro)

- > Development policy - outcomes
- > Change over time - business growth, closures etc.
- > Supply chain linkages
- > Methods: secondary data, archival, business survey follow-on interviews, mapping
- > Leads: LJ and JH

### Site: Businesses (micro)

- > Individual business stories
- > Workers - commuting, skills, work biographies etc.
- > Methods: Interviews
- > Leads: JH and LJ

### Sites of Leisure and Amenity: Football Stadium, Theatre Hafren, Gregynog Festival

- > Football team, stadium, supporters, transfers, fixtures...
- > Leisure centre - development plan
- > Theatre - professional and amateur
- > Local festivals - Gregynog (June 2015 and June 2016)
- > Guitar shop - local music scene, cultural influences, material goods
- > Methods: interviews, ethnography, participant observation, soundscapes, archival, mapping...
- > Leads: All

### Site: Ladywell House

- > History of Ladywell area of Newtown
- > Development policy / service sector jobs
- > Organisations: county council, town council, NRW...
- > Methods: archives and stakeholder interviews
- > Leads: MW

### Sites: Railway Station and Waterways (Mobilities theme)

- > Railway: past and present movements of goods and people...
- > Tourism and travel, social networks, town bypass
- > Methods: Interviews, participant, postcards, mapping
- > Leads: MW
- > River and canal: trade and industrial development, floods, non-human actors (plants and animals, invasive species)
- > Methods: Interviews, participant, walking, mapping
- > Leads: LJ

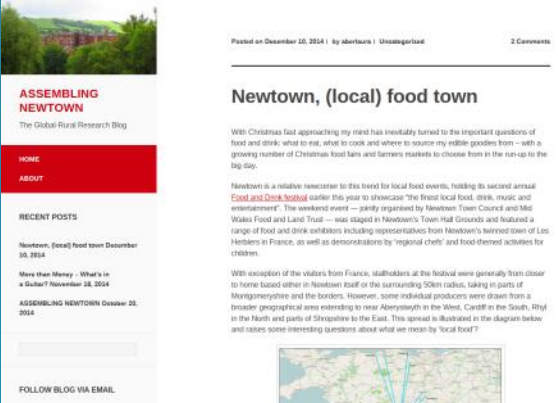




- Assembling Newtown blog:  
<https://everydayglobalization.wordpress.com/>

- Global Countryside blog:  
<https://globalruralproject.wordpress.com/>

- Twitter:  
[@globalrural](https://twitter.com/globalrural)



Posted on December 10, 2014 | by [aberrant](#) | Uncategorized | 2 Comments

## ASSEMBLING NEWTOWN

The Global Rural Research Blog

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**Newtown, (local) food town** December 10, 2014

More than Money: What's in a Gula? November 18, 2014

ASSEMBLING NEWTOWN October 25, 2014


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### Newtown, (local) food town

With Christmas fast approaching my head has inevitably turned to the important questions of food and drink: what to eat, what to cook and where to source my edible goodies from – with a growing number of Christmas food fairs and farmers markets to choose from in the run-up to the big day.


Newtown is a relative newcomer to the trend for local food events, holding its second annual [Food and Drink Festival](#) earlier this year to showcase “the finest local food, drink, music and entertainment”. The weekend event – jointly organised by Newtown Town Council and Mid Wales Food and Land Trust – was staged in Newtown’s Town Hall Grounds and featured a range of food and drink exhibitors including representatives from Newtown’s beloved town of Les Hurlers in France, as well as demonstrations by ‘regional chefs’ and food-themed activities for children.

With exception of the visitors from France, stallholders at the festival were generally from closer to home based either in Newtown itself or the surrounding 50km radius, taking in parts of Montgomeryshire and the borders. However, some individual producers were drawn from a broader geographical area extending to near Aberystwyth in the West, Cardiff in the South, Oyl in the North and parts of Shropshire to the East. This spread is illustrated in the diagram below and raises some interesting questions about what we mean by ‘local food’?



## The Global Countryside

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**China, milk and the return of the urban dairy?**

Posted by [Michael Masuku](#), 24th November 2014

One of the most remarkable features of agri-food globalisation has been the transformation of dairying into a global fast-food industry. Reasonable because milk is the archetypal perishable good: it can be preserved by converting it into cheese, or butter or yogurt, but fresh milk spoils quickly and needs to consumed soon after production. As such, it was a principle of old style agriculture geography that dairy farming happened in districts relatively close to urban areas, with actual dairies often located in towns and cities so that fresh bottled milk could be delivered to customers daily. Advances in preservation technologies disrupted this relationship, allowing fresh milk to be stored for longer and transported over longer distances, as proximity to the market decreased in significance as a locational factor. Dairy farming has become a fast-food industry, thriving in regions where production costs are most cost-effective. In Australia this process was accelerated by the deregulation of the domestic milk market in 2000, which removed production quotas previously