

# BRIDGEND BIODIVERSITY DUTY PLAN

2022-25



## Executive Summary

Bridgend County Borough Council has a legal duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and in so doing, promote ecosystem resilience, often referred to as the Sct. 6 Duty. The Council produced the *Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan* for the period 2018-2022, setting out the actions it would take to meet this legislative requirement. Delivery of the 2018-22 Plan was reviewed, the findings of which are set out as the Bridgend *Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Progress Report, 2018-21*.

This new Plan, the Bridgend Biodiversity Duty Plan, 2022-25, sets out the actions the Council will take for the next three years. It is informed by the recommendations of the Progress Report, which highlighted both strengths on which to build, and areas for improved delivery.

The actions of this Plan are intended to embed biodiversity delivery across the whole organisation, reflecting the broad range of activities and functions that have the potential to contribute towards global, national and local efforts to reverse the decline in biodiversity. The Duty is a Council wide responsibility; therefore, the Plan has been developed with input of the staff and departments that will be responsible for its delivery.

The Sct. 6 Duty, and subsequently the actions in the Plan, relate to Council functions and activities, i.e., those which can be carried out directly by the Council. The Plan, therefore, does not include actions for partner organisations, community groups or the public, however, it does set out actions for the Council, where it can play a role in supporting partnership working, engagement and awareness raising, recognising the importance of working collaboratively to achieve real change.

The measures set out in this Plan are part of broader ambitions by the Council to deliver a healthy natural environment, supporting communities and livelihoods. Biodiversity underpins all elements of our lives, providing goods, regulating ecosystem services such as carbon, and contributing to health and cultural heritage. Delivery of the Bridgend Biodiversity Duty Plan will therefore play a vital role in contributing to the Well-being Goals for Wales, and meeting aims and objectives set within the Bridgend Corporate Plan.

Cover Images: Hedgehog, © *Alexas Fotos on Unsplash*; Rest Bay Beach; Wildflower Meadow, Kenfig NNR; 'The Keeper of the Fields', Aber Fields



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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Setting the Scene

The nature crisis is increasingly making headlines due to the alarming rate of biodiversity decline, with growing recognition that biodiversity needs to be given equal priority and urgency as that given to climate change.

Research by the Natural History Museum and RSPB in 2021, identified Wales as one of the most nature depleted countries in the world, ranked sixteenth worst of 240 countries assessed. In 2019, the State of Nature Report identified an ongoing decline in biodiversity, with 17% of assessed species considered to be at risk of extinction from Wales.

There is an urgent need for action to reverse this global decline in biodiversity, and Bridgend County Borough Council (the Council) recognises it must be part of a collective movement to achieve the change needed. This Plan sets out the actions the Council will take for biodiversity over the next three years, from adoption of the Plan until the end of 2025.

### 1.2 Background

The Environment (Wales) Act, 2016, introduced an enhanced **biodiversity and ecosystem resilience duty** (the Section 6 Duty) for all public authorities in Wales. The duty is set out in more detail in Appendix 1, but in summary, it requires that public authorities must seek to

*maintain and enhance biodiversity, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems.*

#### **Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience (BER)**

The capacity for an ecosystem to withstand pressures or demands, whilst still functioning as an ecosystem. Generally influenced by diversity, extent, condition and connectivity.

As required by the legislation, the Council published its first Plan, the **Bridgend Biodiversity and Ecosystems Resilience (BER) Forward Plan<sup>1</sup>**, setting out how it would meet this duty, for the period 2018 to 2022. The Act also requires all public authorities to report on implementation of the Plan every three years, demonstrating compliance with the Sct. 6 Duty.

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<sup>1</sup> [Bridgend CBC Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan 2018-22](#)

An independent review was carried out by Catrin Evans Consultancy, which included a series of workshops with relevant departments throughout the Council. As part of the workshops, each of the actions were reviewed, providing the opportunity for multiple departments to collectively inform progress in delivery, whilst also providing feedback on challenges in delivery, and opportunities for improved ways of working.

The outcome of the review was presented as the **Bridgend Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Progress Report, 2018-21**. The review identified many examples of positive action for biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, however it also set out a number of recommendations for improvements in delivery, to be addressed in a revised Plan.

These include:

- Building on the many positive examples of grant funded project delivery and volunteer engagement.
- Maintaining the well-established web resources, which provide excellent opportunities for people to engage with wildlife related activities.
- Having a stronger focus on establishing processes and systems that ensure a consistent approach in meeting the Sct. 6 Duty.
- Increasing the profile of biodiversity as a corporate priority.
- Building the evidence base for biodiversity, ensuring mechanisms exists to share and collect data.

This Plan, the **Bridgend Biodiversity Duty Plan, 2022-25**, sets out the actions that the Council will take to meet its Sct. 6 Duty for the following three years, building on the progress made during 2018-2021. Produced by [Catrin Evans Consultancy](#), the Plan has been developed with the involvement of key departments throughout the Council, and seeks to embed the recommendations made in the Progress Report.

### 1.3 Implementation of the Plan

Delivery of the Plan, and the Sct. 6 Duty, is the responsibility of the Council as a whole. There are a number of council activities which are of particular relevance for biodiversity, which have been addressed as targeted actions within the plan. However, it should be noted that other council activities may well meet the legislative requirements of the Sct. 6 Duty, and these should be identified, and addressed, through ongoing engagement and development of working procedures throughout implementation of this Plan.

Responsibility for advice, support and collation of reporting data for the Plan has been delegated to the Countryside Team, which sits within the Economy, Natural Resources and Sustainability Section of the Communities Directorate. Monitoring and reporting procedures are set out in Section 5.

## 2. Biodiversity of Bridgend

### 2.1 Overview

Bridgend is a diverse County Borough, with upland areas dissected by the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmore river valleys and extensive coastal landscapes. Within these areas and landscapes there are a mosaic of habitats, such as ancient woodlands and hedgerow boundaries, wet and chalky grasslands, river valleys, coastal sand dunes and saltmarsh.

There are sites of European Significance to be found, with 3 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) in the County Borough. These are the Old Sessile Oak Woods of Blackmill SAC, Dune Grassland, Slacks and Atlantic Salt Meadows of Kenfig SAC, and Cefn Cribwr Grasslands SAC, designated for its Purple Moor-grass Grasslands and Marsh Fritillary Butterfly.

The above SACs were already designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), being the best examples of the given habitat and due to their size. In total, Bridgend has 14 SSSIs, one of which is a geological SSSI at Stormy Down. The coastal habitats are prominent features of Bridgend's coastline, with Merthyr Mawr National Nature Reserve and Kenfig SAC at opposite corners of the coastal boundary. These extensive dune systems are important refuges of a habitat that previously extended from the Ogmore River to the Gower Peninsula.

In between these dune systems, there are other notable habitats, such as that found at Lock's Common. The Common provides the hinterland to Rest Bay where there are species rich grasslands, scrub, maritime heath and a large outcrop of limestone pavement, which has a very specialised ecology.



Upper Garw Valley

There are 5 Local Nature Reserves within Bridgend, providing good opportunities for people to access nature, as do flagship sites such as Bryngarw Country Park and Park Slip Nature Reserve.



Iconic species, such as Dormouse, Water Vole and Shriill Carder Bee, are found here, whilst the rare, and fragile, Fen Orchid, found only on a small number of sites in the UK, has seen a success story at Kenfig NNR as a result of recent conservation efforts.

Other green spaces also provide great opportunities for wildlife and help connect habitats. These green spaces include former coal working sites that are succumbing to natural processes. These sites are yielding a range of rare species on a local, national and potentially international basis.

## 2.2 Bridgend Nature Recovery Plan

The Nature Recovery Plan for Bridgend sets out the biodiversity, and underlying ecosystem services, for Bridgend, providing recommendations for how they can be enhanced. It is supported by the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Assessment, Technical Report. Together, the two documents are known as the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP).

The Bridgend Nature Recovery Plan identifies actions for 16 terrestrial habitats and 29 species, alongside a statement for the marine environment. This document provides an important evidence base which should be used to guide action for biodiversity in Bridgend.

### 3. Legislative and Policy Context

#### 3.1 Environment (Wales) Act, 2016

This legislation puts in place the duty for public bodies to maintain and enhance biodiversity, promoting the resilience of ecosystems, in the exercise of their functions. This duty is frequently referred to as the Sct. 6 Duty.

Sct. 7 of the Act sets the framework for the identification of species and habitats of principal importance in Wales, which are considered to be of key significance to sustain and improve biodiversity. It is the responsibility of Welsh Ministers to publish, and keep these lists under review.



Water Vole, Sct. 7 Species. ©[Jonathan Ridley](#), [Unsplash](#)

The Sct. 6 Duty requires the Council to have regard to the Sct. 7 habitats and species, alongside the broader requirement for ecosystem resilience. For this purpose of this Plan, the general term **Biodiversity** will be used to reflect all elements of **Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience** associated with the Duty.

#### 3.2 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015, was put in place to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act lays out seven well-being goals, which public bodies must work towards achieving, and five sustainable development principles to adopt. The well-being goals and sustainable development principles, alongside how plan implementation will contribute to the goals, are set out in Appendices 2 and 3.

The Act requires public bodies in Wales to work in a way that delivers long term benefits for the well-being of people, with the natural environment seen as a key element of achieving that aim. The Resilient Wales Goal seeks to achieve ‘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’.

Recent analysis by the Well-being Commissioner, on setting well-being objectives and steps to meet requirements of the Resilient Wales Goal, highlighted an overreliance by public bodies on environmental issues such as recycling, cleanliness, fly-tipping and



reducing emissions<sup>2</sup>. This Plan will seek to ensure that biodiversity outcomes are integrated into delivery of the Well-being Goals for Bridgend.

### 3.3 Bridgend PSB Well-being Plan, 2018-23

Bridgend Public Services Board's (PSB) current Well-being Plan outlines how it wants Bridgend to look in the future, and the activities it will take forward to meet its well-being objectives, set out below.

Objective 1: Best Start in Life

Objective 2: Support Communities in Bridgend to be safe and cohesive

Objective 3: Reduce Social and Economic Inequalities

Objective 4: Healthy Choices in a Healthy Environment

Delivery of each of the 4 objectives have the potential to contribute towards the Resilient Wales Goal, whilst Objective 4, 'Healthy Choices in a Healthy Environment' is the primary means of meeting this Goal. Delivery of biodiversity outcomes is a key requirement in the priorities and steps set out to achieve this objective, which include building the evidence base for biodiversity, improving public estate and green space and awareness raising.

### 3.4 Corporate Plan 2018-23 (reviewed for 2022-23)

The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's vision, 'One Council Working Together to Improve Lives', with its own well-being objectives.

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<sup>2</sup> [The Future Generations Report, 2020.](#)

Well-being Objective 3, 'Smarter Use of Resources', identifies 'Decarbonisation and Environmental Sustainability' as a priority area, which recognises the need to **maintain and enhance the natural resources and biodiversity of Bridgend County Borough.**

Bridgend Council's Well-being Objectives



### 3.5 Local Development Plan and Planning

The Local Development Plan (LDP) guides and promotes appropriate development in the County Borough, used to inform the determination of planning applications. Biodiversity is a key consideration of the planning process, the detail of which is set out within the Supplementary Planning Guidance 19: Biodiversity and Development<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> [SPG 19: Biodiversity and Development.](#)

The vital role of the planning system in nature conservation is highlighted further within Welsh Government's *Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning*<sup>4</sup>, which sets out the principles of enhancement, or net gain, for biodiversity in the planning system.

### 3.6 A Route Map to Net Zero by 2030

Climate Change presents a real threat to biodiversity, as well as people and communities across the globe. The emerging strategy sets out measures that will be taken by the Council to achieve net zero by 2030, recognising the role that biodiversity has to play in removing carbon from the air, through the sequestration of carbon in soils, vegetation and watercourses.

### 3.7 Destination Management Plan

The Destination Management Plan (DMP) for Bridgend outlines a vision to

*'Develop a thriving visitor economy in Bridgend which celebrates the unique strengths of the place, supports jobs, generates business opportunities and improves the range of amenities available for visitors and local people'.*

The DMP reflects the important role that biodiversity, and the natural environment, plays in tourism, setting the priority of *'supporting the development of tourism infrastructure by enhancing the countryside resource'.*

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<sup>4</sup> [TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning](#)

### 3.5 National Biodiversity Policies

Nationally, there are a number of documents which set out the framework for delivery to improve biodiversity and ecosystem resilience across Wales.

The **State of Natural Resources Report** (SoNaRR), produced by Natural Resources Wales, provides the most up to date account of the status of biodiversity in Wales. The **Natural Resources Policy**, provides a policy framework by the Welsh Government, priorities from which are set out locally through **Area Statements**. The **Nature Recovery Action Plan** is the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Wales.

#### [The State of Natural Resources Report](#)

SoNaRR, prepared and published by NRW, provides an evidence base for Welsh Ministers in development, and review, of the Natural Resource Policy; for NRW in preparation of Area Statements; and local planning authorities when refreshing Local Development Plans. First published in 2016, an updated document in 2020 assesses the sustainability of natural resources management in Wales, concluding that Wales is not yet meeting the long term aims set in the 2016 report.

#### [Natural Resources Policy](#)

The NRP sets out how governmental policies can deliver both economic and environmental objectives, recognising that environmental issues should no longer be considered separately. It sets out the key challenges and opportunities in Wales in relation to

our natural environment, identifying 3 national priorities:

- Delivering nature-based solutions
- Increasing renewable energy and resource efficiency
- Taking a place-based approach.

#### South Central Area Statement

Natural Resources Wales are responsible for the production of Area Statements, that specify local priorities, risks and opportunities to implement the priorities of the Natural Resources Policy. Wales has been split into seven areas and Bridgend falls within the South-Central Wales area, with Vale of Glamorgan, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Cardiff.

The themes of the South-Central Area Statement are:

- Building resilient ecosystems
- Connecting people with nature
- Working with water
- Improving our health
- Improving our air quality.

#### Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales (NRAP)

The NRAP sets out how the United Nations Environment Programme's Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, and the associated Aichi Targets<sup>5</sup>, will be addressed in Wales.

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<sup>5</sup> CBD Aichi Targets: <https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>

**Part 1: Our strategy for Nature**, sets out the Welsh Government's ambition for reversing the loss of biodiversity in Wales, and the objectives that need to be met to achieve this ambition, referred to as the NRAP Objectives.

NRAP Ambition: To reverse the decline in biodiversity, for its intrinsic value, and to ensure lasting benefits to society.

NRAP Objectives:

- Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels
- Objective 2: Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management
- Objective 3: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation
- Objective 4: Tackle key pressures on species and habitats
- Objective 5: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring
- Objective 6: Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery

Delivery of this Biodiversity Duty Plan will directly support delivery of the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales.

## 4. Actions

In accordance with the Welsh Government’s guidance on Sct. 6 delivery and reporting, the actions which form the basis of this Plan have been set within the framework of the NRAP Objectives. Whilst each action has been allocated to the most relevant NRAP Objective, the vast majority will undoubtedly deliver against multiple objectives.

These actions are for implementation throughout the duration of the 3 Year Plan, with progress against each of the measures to be reported, as appropriate, each year. An indicative Lead Department for each measure has been set out, however this is intended as a guide, and does not preclude other teams or departments from their implementation.

### 4.1 Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels

No.	Action	Measure	Lead Department
1	Demonstrate the Council's commitment to meeting its Sct 6 Duty and tackling biodiversity decline, recognising biodiversity as a corporate priority, alongside broader ambitions for climate change.	Make a public commitment on the Council's intent to deliver biodiversity action, such as signing up to the Edinburgh Declaration and declaring a Nature Emergency, supported by actions to achieve these aims.	Countryside
		Review corporate priorities, exploring opportunities to set biodiversity as a priority alongside climate action.	Countryside
		Set measurable targets within the Corporate Plan, which demonstrate a corporate approach to meeting the Sct. 6 Duty.	Countryside
2	Embed biodiversity outcomes into corporate, and departmental, strategies and policies.	Demonstrate how biodiversity outcomes have been embedded into broader strategies and policies.	All
		Report on measures that have been taken to embed biodiversity into procurement processes. This should include building biodiversity into existing processes where appropriate, and consideration of biodiversity outcomes in the next review of the Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy.	Procurement

3	Support further development of a shared, and collaborative, approach to biodiversity across the PSB, exploring opportunities for integration of BER outcomes into broader policies, strategies and activities.	Establish a process to ensure that key outcomes from Partner Biodiversity Duty Plans, and relevant biodiversity information, are considered as part of the well-being planning and assessment process.  Report on actions taken to support, or encourage, embedding of biodiversity outcomes into PSB partner strategies and policies.	Partnership Services  CHEX (PSB Support)
4	Ensure biodiversity is fully considered in the committee decision making process, either as part of the WFG Act Implications assessment, or as a stand-alone requirement.	The process for review of biodiversity as part of the decision-making process is reported, providing examples of positive outcomes for biodiversity as appropriate.	Countryside
5	Support awareness raising and capacity building through integration of biodiversity into corporate / member training and maintaining an ongoing process of engagement and awareness raising as opportunities arise.	Demonstration of how biodiversity is built into corporate e-learning module for new staff.  Report on delivery of training / engagement with elected members  Report on internal awareness raising or biodiversity training undertaken, responding to opportunities as they arise or where a new requirement is identified.	Countryside  Countryside  All / Countryside
6	Undertake an audit of services and their potential to impact on, and contribute to, biodiversity and ecosystem resilience. Working collaboratively, establish working procedures to ensure a consistent approach to protection and enhancement of biodiversity.	A record is made of all services engaged across the Council, and the resulting measures put in place to protect and enhance biodiversity.	Countryside
7	Further embed biodiversity procedures and measures into day-to-day activities, ensuring a consistent approach is taken in implementation of the Sct. 6 Duty.	Evidence is provided of biodiversity procedures being followed across service areas, with an emphasis on early engagement on ecological advice.	All

8	Put measures in place to ensure a consistent approach to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in management of Council assets.	Biodiversity protection and enhancement measures, and policies, embedded in the 2022-2030 Asset Management Plan are reported.  Biodiversity protection and enhancement procedures in management or disposal of Council assets are consistently implemented and reported.	Corporate Landlord  Corporate Landlord / All
9	Opportunities to protect and enhance biodiversity are embedded into the SABs (SuDS Advisory Board) process.	Ecological input is included in design and implementation of SuDS assessed through the SABs process.	H&GS
10	Ensure that biodiversity requirements are embedded into planning, design and implementation of new schemes and projects, through early engagement on ecological issues.	Biodiversity protection and enhancement measures in delivery of new schemes are consistently implemented and reported.	All

#### 4.2 Objective 2: Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management

No.	Action	Measure	Lead Department
11	Opportunities to protect and enhance biodiversity through the planning process are consistently applied.	A review of the Biodiversity SPG for the replacement LDP is undertaken, reflecting any new legislation or policies, outlining measures to safeguard and enhance biodiversity through the planning process.  A review of planning policies is undertaken, to ensure opportunities for enhancement and ecosystem resilience are fully addressed, alongside protection measures.  Planning decision report content fully reflects ecological observations provided, with a monitoring system established on adoption of the ecological observations.	Planning / Countryside  Planning / Countryside  Planning / Countryside

12	Ensure that measures are consistently taken to protect and enhance biodiversity in management of land / assets under Council ownership or control. This includes (but is not limited to) management of property, greenspace and countryside sites, highways (including PROW) and drainage, structures, education and social services assets, etc.	<p>An internal review of the Highways and Parks Strategy is carried out, to include a review of the mowing regime and further measures to be implemented.</p> <p>Measures to manage and enhance biodiversity through maintenance of greenspace and highways are implemented and reported.</p> <p>An increase in land being managed to promote biodiversity and ecosystem resilience is demonstrated, to include exploration of the feasibility of removal of arisings.</p>	<p>Countryside / H&amp;GS</p> <p>H&amp;GS / All (as relevant)</p> <p>H&amp;GS / All / Countryside</p>
13	Review and implement Local Nature Reserve Management Plans, ensuring that the budget and resources remains in place for their delivery.	All LNR Management Plans have been reviewed or are up to date, to include setting out monitoring requirements. Progress against implementation is reported.	Countryside

#### 4.3 Objective 3: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation

No.	Action	Measure	Lead Department
14	Positively engage with key partners, such as town and community councils, and other landowners, to increase extent, and connectivity, of land being managed for biodiversity.	Positive examples of landowners / partners engaged in delivery of biodiversity creation / enhancement are reported.	Countryside / All
15	As opportunities arise, seek additional funding for biodiversity project delivery through external grant funding mechanisms, where possible, working collaboratively and / or regionally to maximise potential benefit.	<p>Sufficient staff capacity exists to develop and take forward partnership and externally funded projects to support delivery of the Sct. 6 Plan.</p> <p>Grant application and project delivery activities and outcomes are reported.</p> <p>Resources permitting, establish funding mechanisms that enable community focused action for biodiversity.</p>	<p>Countryside</p> <p>All</p> <p>Countryside</p>

16	Take a consistent approach to management of trees and woodland in Bridgend, implementing the Tree Management and LDP SPG07 (Trees and Development) Policies, alongside emerging / corporate policies or plans, such as the Ash Dieback Action Plan.	Status, and implementation, of relevant policies to support ecologically sustainable management / planting of trees and woodland is reported.	All
17	Green Infrastructure mapping and evidence is used to inform broader action for biodiversity, supporting ecosystem resilience and connectivity.	The Green Infrastructure Assessment has been carried out and kept under review, with ecological input, as part of the evidence base for the Replacement LDP.  Green Infrastructure evidence and mapping is utilised to inform positive action for biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.  Finalise and utilise habitat connectivity report to inform action for improved connectivity and ecosystem resilience.	Planning  Countryside / All  Countryside

#### 4.4 Objective 4: Tackle key pressures on species and habitats

No.	Action	Measure	Lead Department
18	Take a consistent approach to INNS through implementation of the emerging Invasive Species Management Policy. This should include tackling existing INNS, alongside avoidance of INNS in landscaping schemes.	Status, and implementation, of the Invasive Species Management Policy is reported.  A dedicated Officer to oversee INNS management is in place.	H&GS  Countryside
19	Take action to address climate change through implementation of the Decarbonisation Strategy, ensuring that climate change action is not carried out to the detriment of existing biodiversity.	Progress in implementation of the Decarbonisation Strategy is reported.  Opportunities to utilise nature-based solutions in decarbonisation is reported, to include recognition of the role of soil and wetland carbon stores, as well as woodland and trees.	Natural Resources  Natural Resources



20	Embed biodiverse and native nature-based solutions into Regeneration Projects on urban design and delivery of landscaping / green infrastructure initiatives.	Green infrastructure initiatives, designed with ecological input, are reported.	Strategic Regeneration / All (as relevant)
21	Support efforts to utilise and increase use of conservation grazing as a tool for biodiversity enhancement and ecosystem resilience.	Positive examples of supporting / working collaboratively to enable conservation grazing are reported.  A task and finish group is set up, to address issues impacting on conservation grazing, and to encourage responsible dog ownership and use of the countryside.	Countryside  Countryside

#### 4.5 Objective 5: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring

No.	Action	Measure	Lead Department
22	Establish a system that ensures biodiversity data is accessible and able to inform delivery of Council activities and biodiversity action.	A system for collation, and sharing, of biodiversity data within the Countryside team, and to SEWBReC, is established.  Ensure that Record Centre Searches (SEWBReC) are carried out where advised by Countryside.	Countryside  All
23	Build the evidence base for biodiversity by carrying out targeted habitat and species surveys or monitoring, as deemed appropriate.	The Local Nature Partnership is supported in carrying out, or facilitating, ecological surveys to build the evidence base for Bridgend.  Through partnership working, making use of funding opportunities, or where required to inform council activities, ecological surveys and monitoring are carried out and fed into a data recording system.  Establish a system to keep SINC data under review.	Countryside  Countryside / All  Countryside

24	The Local Nature Partnership is in place to provide expertise and knowledge to inform biodiversity action and advice.	Secretariat Support is provided to ensure the Local Nature Partnership can function as an advisory, expert and delivery group.	Countryside
25	Continue alignment with Area Statements, and support NRW in ongoing development or amendment.	Report on where plans and strategies have aligned with Area Statements, to include the Well-being Plan and Local Development Plan.  Where relevant, support is provided to NRW in review of Area Statements.	All  Countryside

#### 4.6 Objective 6: Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery

No.	Action	Measure	Lead Department
26	Support the Biodiversity Champion to act as an advocate for biodiversity, through regular engagement and information sharing.	Regular meetings between the Biodiversity Champion (BC) and Countryside team are held.  Examples of support, advocacy and involvement of Biodiversity Champion in delivery of biodiversity activities and initiatives is reported.	BC / Countryside  BC
27	Biodiversity is appropriately represented at corporate and cross-departmental meetings and discussions.	Input into corporate or senior management meetings is reported, either through direct involvement or by provision of supporting information.	Countryside
28	Review budget and staff capacity to deliver the requirements of the Sct 6 Duty, with a view to increasing current capacity for ecological advice and project delivery.	Staff capacity is reviewed and subsequent decision is reported.  Budget requirements for delivery of the Sct. 6 Duty is considered as part of broader budget reviews.	Natural Resources  Natural Resources

29	Support the delivery of biodiversity action through PSB activity and collaborative working.	<p>Collaborative projects, which include positive action for biodiversity, are implemented by existing working groups, linking in to PSB activity where appropriate.</p> <p>Report on actions taken to support development, and delivery, of individual partner Biodiversity Duty Plans</p>	<p>All</p> <p>Countryside / Partnership Services</p>
30	Enable community focused action, knowledge and engagement through support and facilitation of networks and partnerships such as the Local Nature Partnership and Bridgend Green Network.	<p>The Local Nature Partnership is active and supported by the Council. Report on meetings supported and delivery of projects / activities.</p> <p>Ongoing support is provided for Community and volunteer focused partnerships, such as the Bridgend Green Network, recognising that ongoing funding / resources will be required to provide this function. Report on meetings supported and delivery of projects / activities.</p>	<p>Countryside</p> <p>Countryside</p>
31	Promote community action through provision of BER web-based material, training and awareness raising activities.	<p>Web based biodiversity resources are maintained and updated as appropriate. If funding becomes available, this may include production of ward maps, or landscape style maps, on what to explore, what can be seen and opportunities to enhance biodiversity.</p> <p>A programme of community focused training / engagement activities for biodiversity are delivered and reported.</p>	<p>Countryside</p> <p>Countryside</p>
32	Ensure the Sct. 6 Duty is monitored and reviewed.	<p>Through alignment with the Corporate Plan, a system to monitor and review progress against the Sct. 6 Duty is in place and being implemented, to include political and corporate scrutiny and oversight.</p> <p>A methodology to embed reporting on biodiversity outcomes into service delivery reporting is established.</p>	<p>Countryside</p> <p>Countryside</p>

## 5 Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring of the Plan will be carried out on an annual basis, with a full review scheduled for the end of 2025. The review will inform production of an Implementation Report, to be published and reported to Welsh Government. N.B. Relevant progress against delivery, which falls between the production of the Implementation Report 2018-21 and adoption of the 2022-25 Plan, will be included in monitoring activities and reporting of the new Plan.

The collation of all monitoring data and information, and production of the Implementation Report, will be carried out by the Countryside Team. Implementation of the Plan is reliant on input from departments across the organisation, and therefore the process will be facilitated by the development of a monitoring system, tying in to existing departmental reporting mechanisms, and aligning with Corporate Plan requirements, as much as possible. Training will be provided by the Countryside Team, where needed, to support delivery of the Plan and associated Sct. 6 Duty.

Progress against implementation of the Plan will be reported to Scrutiny Committee Three, and Cabinet as required. Additional oversight and support will be provided by the Biodiversity Champion.



## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty (Extracts from Environment (Wales) Act, 2016)

- (1) A public authority must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.
- (2) In complying with subsection (1), a public authority must take account of the resilience of ecosystems, in particular the following aspects—
  - a) diversity between and within ecosystems;
  - b) the connections between and within ecosystems;
  - c) the scale of ecosystems;
  - d) the condition of ecosystems (including their structure and functioning);
  - e) the adaptability of ecosystems.
- (4) In complying with subsection (1)—
  - a) the Welsh Ministers, the First Minister for Wales, the Counsel General to the Welsh Government, a Minister of the Crown and a government department must have regard to the United Nations Environmental Programme Convention on Biological Diversity of 1992, and
  - b) any other public authority must have regard to any guidance given to it by the Welsh Ministers.
- (5) In complying with subsection (1), a public authority other than a Minister of the Crown or government department must have regard to—
  - a) the list published under section 7;
  - b) the state of natural resources report published under section 8;
  - c) any area statement published under section 11 for an area that includes all or part of an area in relation to which the authority exercises functions.
- (6) A public authority other than a Minister of the Crown or government department must prepare and publish a plan setting out what it proposes to do to comply with subsection (1).
- (7) A public authority must, before the end of 2019 and before the end of every third year after 2019, publish a report on what it has done to comply with subsection (1).
- (8) A public authority that has published a plan under subsection (6)—
  - a) must review the plan in the light of each report that it publishes under subsection (7), and
  - b) may revise the plan at any time.

Appendix 2: Well-being Goals

WFG Well-being Goals	Well-being Goals Description	Biodiversity Duty Plan Delivery
<b>A prosperous Wales</b>	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.	Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience is an integral part of Bridgend County Borough's economic prosperity, supporting tourism, local livelihoods and providing vital ecosystem services.
<b>A resilient Wales</b>	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).	Delivery of all actions within the Biodiversity Duty Plan will directly contribute towards the Resilient Wales goal, by protecting, and enhancing the biodiversity and resilience of Bridgend's ecosystems. This will include protection through the planning process, management of Council assets, delivery of partnership and community focused projects to manage valuable habitats and public engagement in activities that people can carry out themselves.
<b>A healthier Wales</b>	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.	Involvement in volunteer activities and improved access to Bridgend's green spaces will support delivery of the healthier Wales goal. In addition, habitat enhancement work all contribute towards a healthier natural environment, improving air quality, reducing flooding and supporting efforts to address climate change.

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).	Volunteering and engagement activities will provide opportunities for all people to experience and benefit from biodiversity and the natural environment, whilst increasing information on local sites will increase accessibility for a greater range of people.
A Wales of cohesive communities	Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.	Volunteer activities and support for community groups will support and bring people together in achieving common goals to improve their local environment. Integration of green infrastructure and biodiversity features into urban design will provide attractive places to visit and live, whilst providing broader ecosystem benefits.
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.	Delivery of awareness raising and engagement activities will provide the opportunity to provide bilingual services, further promoting the Welsh language. Involvement in local volunteering and projects will provide opportunities to share, and learn, about local cultures and heritage, with natural heritage often closely entwined with broader cultural and social heritage.
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 Council's commitment to local biodiversity initiatives, particularly in terms of protection of local sites and habitat enhancement activities all contribute towards global ambitions to address biodiversity decline. In addition, awareness raising and engagement activities will provide the opportunity to increase understanding on the role that people have in contributing towards global well-being.

### Appendix 3: Sustainable Development Principles

The Well-being and Future Generations Act puts in place a ‘sustainable development principle’ which tells organisations how to go about meeting their duty under the Act.

In this Act, any reference to a public body doing something “in accordance with the sustainable development principle” means that the body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Public bodies need to make sure that when making their decisions they take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future.

There are 5 things that public bodies need to think about to show that they have applied the sustainable development principle. Following these ways of working will help organisations work together better, avoid repeating past mistakes and tackle some of the long-term challenges we are facing.

Collaboration	Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.
Integration	Considering how the public body’s well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
Involvement	The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.
Long-term	The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the long-term needs.
Prevention	How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.