

**Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 - Section 6**

**The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Action Plan 2023**

**Pontypool Community Council**

**Introduction and Context**

- Pontypool Community Council has been in existence since 1985. It is one of the largest Community/Town Councils in Wales with a population exceeding 47,000 and a budget in excess of £700,000 per annum.
- The Council is made up of 21 elected members that represent the community on a ward basis. These members make decisions on a range of services and activities which support the local community and liaise with Torfaen County Borough Council when other issues of concern or interest arise.
- In order for the Community Council to run smoothly and efficiently, a small, dedicated team of 10 members of staff under the direction of the Clerk Mrs Lisa McMail, work tirelessly to provide the necessary administration, organisation and fulfill the Council's statutory commitments.
- Pontypool Community Council's vision statement:

*"To proactively engage with local residents to identify their priorities and aspirations, ensuring the work of the Council and its partners makes a positive difference, empowering our community."*

**Action Report**

<b>Action carried out in relation to:</b>	<b>Action:</b>	<b>Monitored by:</b>
<b>NRAP Objective:</b> <i>embed biodiversity into decision making &amp; procurement.</i>	The Community Council has created an Environmental Working Group with the aim to embed sustainability and support for biodiversity into the Council's working practices. This is inclusive of but not limited to: procurement, reducing office energy use, phasing out the use of single use plastic, reducing water and paper use, encouraging recycling.  A sustainability and biodiversity agenda item will be added to all Council meeting agendas to ensure sustainability and biodiversity are considered in all Council decision making.	Community Councillors and Office Staff.

<p><b>NRAP Objective:</b> <i>raise awareness of biodiversity &amp; its importance.</i></p>	<p>The Community Council hosts an annual Environmental Quiz for the local primary schools.</p> <p>In conjunction with Greenmeadow Community farm, the Community Council organises and funds the annual attendance of Forest Schools for primary school age children.</p> <p>In 2023, the Council aims to expand this programme to include a forest school family weekend.</p> <p>The Community Council is exploring the possibility of supporting/organising events during Great Big Green Week 2023.</p> <p>The Community Council will invite local environment and nature focused groups to attend Party in the Park 2023.</p> <p>The Community Council will take a proactive approach in sharing social media content from local and national groups to raise awareness and promote opportunities to engage with nature.</p> <p>Eco-Literacy training will be made available to all Councillors and office staff that wish to attend.</p> <p>Environmental Grants are available to local schools to support green initiatives.</p>	<p>Community Councillors and Office Staff</p>
<p><b>NRAP Objective:</b> <i>safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management</i></p>	<p>The Community Council leases a small parcel of land in the Pontypool area and this has been identified as having diverse habitats as listed in the Section 7 biodiversity list of the Environment Act (Wales) 2016.</p> <p>In conjunction with TCBC and other partners the Community Council will support the development and implementation of a management plan for the site to protect and enhance its biodiversity.</p> <p>The Community Council will fund 2 Pontypool residents to attend the Gwent Beekeepers' beginner beekeeping course.</p>	<p>Community Councillors and Office Staff</p>

<p><b>NRAP Objective:</b> <i>increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring habitats and creating habitats.</i></p>	<p>In conjunction with TCBC, the Community Council will explore opportunities to support the development of the Pontypool Community Orchard into a public asset.</p> <p>The Community Council will engage with local partners to provide opportunities to build your own bird / bat boxes and bug hotels or will provide wild flowers / pollinator / butterfly packs / bat boxes / bird boxes / bug hotels as giveaway prizes.</p> <p>The Community Council is in the process of building relationships with local nature &amp; environment groups with the aspiration to support new and develop existing community projects and has set aside capital to do so.</p> <p>Pontypool Community Council intends to become a Litterhub in 2023. The Community Council will engage with Torfaen Spring Clean to help improve local habitats.</p>	<p>Community Councillors and Office Staff</p>
<p><b>NRAP Objective:</b> <i>tackle key pressures on species and habitats.</i></p>	<p>The Community Council has created an Environmental Working Group with the aim to embed sustainability and support for biodiversity into the Council's working practices. This is inclusive of but not limited to: reducing office energy use, phasing out the use of single use plastic, reducing water and paper use and encouraging recycling.</p> <p>The Community Council is in the process of building relationships with local groups that manage green spaces. Through these relationships the Community Council will support groups to manage these spaces in a way which safeguards species and habitats.</p>	<p>Community Councillors and Office Staff</p>
<p><b>NRAP Objective:</b> <i>use, improve and share evidence.</i></p>	<p>An Environment and Biodiversity page will be added to the PCC's website to share details of projects and events.</p> <p>A sustainability and biodiversity agenda item will be added to all Council meeting agendas to facilitate the sharing of information between Councillors.</p> <p>Sustainability and biodiversity will be added as an agenda item to the agenda of all staff meetings. This will ensure new sustainable ways of working are embedded smoothly and give an opportunity to ask questions and</p>	<p>Community Councillors and Office Staff</p>

	<p>provide feedback.</p> <p>In partnership with the Pontypool Youth Council and Keep Wales Tidy, the Community Council is exploring testing the water quality of the Afon Lwyd.</p>	
<p><b>NRAP Objective:</b> <i>support capacity for biodiversity and support its delivery.</i></p>	<p>The Community Council has added a sustainability &amp; biodiversity requirement to all grant application forms.</p> <p>The Community Council is in the process of building relationships with local nature &amp; environment groups with the aspiration to support new and develop existing community projects and has set aside capital to do so.</p>	<p>Community Councillors and Office Staff</p>

### Review of s6 duty

To ensure Pontypool Community Council achieves progress against the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystem plan 2023:

- The Biodiversity and Sustainability Champions (nominated Councillor and office staff member) will meet monthly to review progress against the Plan.
- On a monthly basis the Chair of the Environment Working Group will report to the Full Council on progress against the Plan.
- The Environment Working Group will meet to review progress against the Plan every two months.
- The plan will be formally reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the objectives remain cost-effective, impactful and achievable.