

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6
The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

COYCHURCH LOWER COMMUNITY COUNCIL
BIODIVERSITY REPORT 2025

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg / This document is also available in Welsh

COYCHURCH LOWER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Introduction and Context

- The Community Council consists of 6 members whose aim is to improve the environment and well-being of the residents of the Coychurch Lower. From May 2022 to May 2025 the community council did not have a member with the knowledge or expertise to lead on biodiversity. However, with assistance from Bridgend County Borough Council's Local Places for Nature team actions have been taken that encourage wildlife. Some with immediate effect and others with longer term outcomes.
- By improving the physical environment, and accessibility to nature the community council aims to raise the residents' sense of worth and well-being.
- Coychurch Lower ward is situated to the south and south east of Bridgend and encompasses the village of Coychurch, the hamlets of Waterton and Brocastle, two industrial estates, and an out-of-town retail park.
- The area covered by the ward is 6.81 sq Km and the population density is 200 per sq Km. Population in the 2011 census was 1365 and is now approximately 1500. A high proportion of residents are retired or elderly and there is a small but increasing proportion of young families.
- The precept in 2024-25 was £49,620.
- The Ewenny River passes through the south of the ward (east to west) and a tributary stream runs through Coychurch village (north to south) to join it.
- The ward contains two green spaces – the play park and the playing field.

Action Report		
Action carried out to:		Monitored by:
-embed biodiversity into decision making & procurement	<p>In 2025 – the Capital Asset Transfer of the playing field from the unitary authority is ongoing but it provided an opportunity to review the ecology of the area, plan to improve habitats for the existing wildlife and develop new habitats with the Local Places for Nature initiative.</p> <p>From 2022-2025 – the grass cutting regime for the village roadside verges and the play park has been continued using a low meadow cut standard to encourage small plant species to develop and provide food for pollinators.</p> <p>As trustee of the Williams Memorial Hall the council is undertaking the refurbishment of the property to put it onto a more sustainable footing. During the procurement process, contractors are asked about the actions they take to reduce their impact on the environment and their approach to disposing of waste, etc.</p>	<p>Council Clerk</p> <p>Councillor</p>
-raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance	<p>We continue to monitor the wildlife garden and the native hedge which were planted in the play park in 2021-22. The hedge is becoming established and only a few plants have had to be replaced. In general members of the public respect the area and there have been little damage.</p> <p>In 2024 council discussed the idea of planting bee friendly shrubs rather than the twice yearly planting of annuals. This was implemented in 2025.</p>	<p>Council Clerk</p> <p>Council Clerk</p>
-safeguard principal species and habitats	<p>An ecological survey of the playing field was undertaken in 2023 and actions identified to improve habitats for existing species and develop new habitats to extend the variety of species in the area. The findings were incorporated into the Local Places for Nature project ground plan. The landscaping and planting was completed in 2024.</p>	Councillor

<p>-restore & create habitats and resilient ecological networks</p>	<p>2023-24 – groundworks were completed in the playing field as part of the LPfN project. Bird and Bat boxes were installed, an insect “hotel” created, native trees, small orchard, shrubs and wildflowers planted throughout the project area:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increasing the availability of flora for pollinators 2) Improving the visual environment for residents <p>2025 - The existing village beds were re-planted with lavender to encourage pollinators and were seen to be visited by a large number of various bees.</p>	<p>Council Clerk</p>
<p>-tackle negative factors</p>	<p>The Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam in the ward is found on the banks of the river and along the dual carriageway which runs across the ward from east to west. These are addressed by the unitary authority and Natural Resources Wales</p>	<p>BCBC</p>
<p>-use improve and share evidence</p>	<p>A further ecological survey will be undertaken in 2026 to determine any changes / improvement and the results will be published for residents.</p>	<p>Council Clerk</p>
<p>-support capacity and/or other organisations</p>	<p>During this period volunteer activity has been minimal (play park litter removal and inspections) but going into the next 3 years it is hoped to establish a “Friends of the Community Field” group to be more involved in the development of the LPfN site and the management of the area.</p>	<p>Councillors</p>

Review of Section 6 duty

What has worked well? What have the barriers been? What will you change?

- Planters and lamppost baskets in the village continue to be well received and the planters give a great deal of pleasure to the residents all year round as well as providing pollinators with food sources. We are however looking at changing the plants used to include more native species in 2027.
- The native hedge in the playpark continues to establish itself well and is regularly monitored.
- The change to the mowing regime is now well established and residents have come to understand the need for this.
- The change in the formal borders throughout the village to lavender planting has been well received though some plants have needed to be replaced as they had

been trampled. A polite sign is being considered for residents to keep their dogs off the beds.

How and when will the s6 duty be monitored and the s6 plan reviewed?

- A formal maintenance plan has been developed for the Local Places for Nature project which will be implemented by the community council in April 2026. This will be monitored by the Council Clerk throughout 2026.
- The Community Council will review its current actions to improve biodiversity and consider further steps in June 2026.