

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

**Reporting on Section 6 – Reporting Template for Town and Community  
Councils**

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

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

**The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report 2022**

**COYCHURCH LOWER COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Introduction and Context**

- The Community Council consists of 7 volunteers whose aim is to improve the environment and well-being of the residents of the Coychurch Lower. From May 2017 to May 2022 the community council did not have a member with the knowledge or expertise to lead on biodiversity. However, some actions were taken that encourage wildlife. Some with immediate effect and others with longer term outcomes.
- By improving the physical environment, the community council aims to raise the residents' sense of worth and well-being. During the 2 years affected by the Covid-19 pandemic the need for exercise and connecting with nature became very evident as residents struggled with lockdowns and isolation.
- 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 2021-22 was £30,000.
- 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	In 2022 – Capital Asset Transfer of the playing field from the unitary authority has provided an opportunity to review the ecology of the area and plan to improve habitats for the existing wildlife while establishing new complementary habitats in conjunction with the Local Places for Nature initiative.	Council Clerk

	In 2022 – the grass cutting regime for the village roadside verges and the play park has been changed to a low meadow cut to encourage small plant species to develop and provide food for pollinators.	Councillor
-raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance	In 2021 – A group of volunteers planted a starter wildlife garden which had been donated by the Woodland Trust in one end of the play park.  To complement this a small group of residents planted a native hedge (saplings from the Woodland Trust) along 2 boundaries of the play park.	Council Clerk  Council Clerk
-safeguard principal species and habitats	Initial discussions with the Local Places for Nature officer at the unitary authority have resulted in the border areas of the local playing field being put forward for consideration for habitat development in 2023.	Councillor
-restore & create habitats and resilient ecological networks	2020-22 – installed tiered planters, pavement planters and lamppost baskets with the two-fold objective of: 1) Increasing the availability of flora for pollinators 2) Improving the visual environment for residents	Council Clerk
-tackle negative factors	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	
-use improve and share evidence		
-support capacity and/or other organisations		
<b>Review of Section 6 duty</b>		
<i>What has worked well? What have the barriers been? What will you change?</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planters and lamppost baskets in the village have been well received and give a great deal of pleasure to the residents all year round. Different plants have been</li> </ul>		

tried over the years to find a balance between the visual effect and the benefit to pollinators.

- Most of the native hedge saplings in the play park have survived 2 winters and established themselves. Those that failed have been replaced. This will take several years to grow into a hedge and is being regularly monitored.
- Changes to the grass cutting regime. The council expected there to be kickback about this but there has been very little. This may be due to the fact that for the dry summer period the grass did not grow much anyway.
- We have formal borders throughout the village which are greatly appreciated by residents but we need to change some of the planting to incorporate more native species for pollinators. This will be ongoing as different plants are trialled.

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

- A more formal plan will be developed during 2023 for managing the biodiversity in the area in conjunction with other stakeholders – the unitary authority and Natural Resources Wales.