

**CYNGOR CYMUNED  
GORSLAS  
COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Bio - Diversity Plan and Report**

**NOVEMBER 2022**

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## 1. Introduction

- This document has been prepared taking into account the guidance document Environment (Wales) Act 2016 published by Welsh Government dated 6th December,2017.
- The Environmental (Wales) Act 2016 places a duty on Community Councils to : -
  - a) Seek to maintain and enhance bio-diversity so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of eco-systems.
  - b) Embed consideration of bio-diversity and ecosystems into their forward planning, policies, plans, projects and day to day operations.
  - c) Publish a plan setting out what it proposes to do to maintain and enhance bio-diversity by the end of 2019 and every three years afterwards on what it has done to comply with these duties.
- In complying with these duties, the Council must have regard to : -
- The section 7 list of Habitats and Species of principle importance in Wales. See Appendix A.
- State of Natural Resources in Wales Report published by NRW. See Appendix B
- An area statement produced by NRW covering all or part of the area administered by the Council.

## 2. Bio-Diversity and Ecosystems

- Biodiversity includes the variety of life found on earth including all plants and animals.
- Biological diversity relates to different living organisms whether genetic, individual species or at the ecosystem level.
- Biodiversity underpins ecosystems which provide food, clean water, air, raw materials, energy for industry and help protect against flooding and climate change.

- Biodiversity is essential to sustain ecosystems which provide the vital services to maintain life now and for future generations.

### **3. Building in Resilience**

- The more diverse ecosystems are the more resilient they are to external influences and changes.
- The greater connectivity within and between ecosystems the better.
- The greater the extent of an ecosystem, without fragmentation, the more resilient it will be.
- The better and healthier the underpinning system the more resilient the ecosystem will be.
- Understanding that the ecosystem will change due to external influences.

### **4.0 NRW Area Statements**

- The NRW have started to bring together the evidence they have about natural resources and are working with others to identify how to analyse and share the data.
- They have also started to work with experts to identify what is special in each area, how it is looked after and why.
- NRW will work with others to identify the benefits. Ecosystem services, provided by natural resources.
- NRW will work with others to identify how each area statement can address national priorities for taking action to address challenges and opportunities.

## 5.0 Draft Plan and Report

- The following details the various functions and services delivered by the Community Council. It seeks to identify the current and future issues within each function which could contribute to maintaining, enhancing, or adding to the resilience of the ecosystems as far as they are consistent with the proper exercise of the Council's functions.

Function	Detail	Current	Future	Progress to October 2022
<b>Policies</b>	Consideration of effect on ecosystems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ad-hoc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formalise. Include in consideration of relevant policies/ operational matters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has been used as a constituent element in the Council's Five-Year Strategic Review 2021/2026</li> </ul>
<b>Parks</b>				
	Grassed Areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Available to the Public for recreation/sport.</li> <li>Contribution to Ecosystem/ Wellbeing agenda</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain access and function.</li> <li>Retain current areas/ minimise any reduction.</li> <li>Recognise contribution to Ecosystem and Wellbeing agenda.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Right of access and use of park green areas maintained.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grass Cutting Contract requires protected plants not to be cut.</li> <li>Grass cuttings in general park area to be left. Cuttings removed three times a year.</li> <li>Cutting not to take place in dry conditions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain and review current contract requirements.</li> <li>Update in relation to section 7 requirements and any area statements.</li> <li>Recognise actions contribute to ecosystem and wellbeing agenda.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New grass cutting contract awarded and contains the same safeguards.</li> <li>Three-year invasive species plan has been completed.</li> <li>More litter bins provided in the park.</li> <li>Increased signage re litter and dog fouling.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate tyres to be fitted to machines so as not to damage surface.</li> <li>• Invasive species. Three-year plan in place</li> <li>• Bins provided and areas regularly litter picked.</li> </ul>		
	Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to trees on boundaries there are specific areas retained in parks for trees.</li> <li>• Contribution to Ecosystem/Wellbeing agenda</li> <li>• Restrictions placed on any works to hedgerows.</li> <li>• Tree Risk/Health Survey on all trees in the parks currently underway.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain current areas/ minimise any reduction.</li> <li>• Retain contract requirements regarding cutting of hedgerows.</li> <li>• Re- assess position and actions which could be taken in the light of report.</li> <li>• Recognise actions contribute to ecosystem and wellbeing agenda.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following assessments, a number of trees were removed on safety grounds.</li> <li>• Part of that contract requirement was a requirement to plant two trees in the parks for every one cut down.</li> </ul>
	Children's Play Areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include grassed areas and are linked to the general parks.</li> <li>• The play equipment enhances and encourages children's engagement with the outdoors and the ecosystems within the general parks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain current areas/ minimise any reduction.</li> <li>• Recognise the contribution to the wellbeing agenda and the opportunities for developing knowledge and experience of the broader ecosystem agenda.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment of £ 106,000 completed to improve play equipment in the parks.</li> <li>• Winter Term 2022 new Gorslas C.P. School re-located to Gorslas Park providing, for the first time, green and wooded areas for the school to use and for the children before and after school.</li> <li>• Cefneithin CP School, has no grassed area, and make use of the park for</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to the wellbeing agenda as well as the broader aim of promoting engagement and understanding of Ecosystems.</li> </ul>		<p>games, daily exercise and of the wooded area to teach children about plants and wildlife.</p>
	Footpaths/ Seating/ Picnic Tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the wellbeing agenda and the broader aim of encouraging public engagement and awareness of ecosystems.</li> <li>• The paths allow access for the public and for teachers and pupils to access the grassed and woodland areas in the parks.</li> <li>• Benches and picnic tables allow the public to sit and enjoy the natural environment and wildlife.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain current areas/ minimise any reduction.</li> <li>• Recognise the contribution and opportunities for engagement and promotion of the broader aims of the wellbeing and ecosystem agenda</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current footpaths and access to them retained.</li> <li>• As part of the new school development at Gorslas Park certain footpaths in the adjoining park have been widened to increase accessibility and additional public lighting</li> </ul>
	Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gorslas Public Conveniences: Located in park.</li> <li>• It contributes to the wellbeing agenda and also the broader aims of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain and enhance play provision where possible.</li> <li>• Recognise the contribution to the wellbeing agenda and the opportunities for developing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Convenience facility retained and investment to upgrade completed.</li> <li>• Investment undertaken in the infrastructure of the Drefach Toll Bar to keep it in good condition.</li> </ul>

		<p>facilitating engagement with the natural environment through making it easy for people/families to spend time outdoors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drefach Toll House. Is located in Drefach Park and supports the cultural element of the wellbeing agenda.</li> <li>• In attracting visitors, it also indirectly promotes families and individuals to spend time in the park encouraging engagement and appreciation of the natural environment.</li> </ul>	<p>knowledge and experience of the broader ecosystem agenda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application made, but unsuccessful to develop and raise awareness of the historical background to the Toll Bar.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Based</b>				
	Public Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports wellbeing objectives.</li> <li>• Allows people to explore and understand the difference in the natural environment after dark.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain current areas/ minimise any reduction</li> <li>• Recognise the contribution to the wellbeing agenda and the opportunities for developing knowledge and experience of the broader ecosystem agenda</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has completed the programme of replacing the sodium vapour lights with LED Units reducing both consumption and light pollution.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace sodium with LED lighting units reducing energy consumption and contributing to the wider agenda of retaining ecosystems.</li> </ul>	
	Wayside Seats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow people to sit and enjoy the views, to encourage walking and exercise, or to socialise.</li> <li>• Support the wellbeing agenda and also the broader aim of encouraging engagement and appreciation of the natural environment.</li> <li>• Maintenance works include repair.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain current areas/ minimise any reduction.</li> <li>• Retain funding for repair programme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current provision retained and available to the public.</li> <li>• Funding retained and programme of preventative maintenance completed.</li> <li>• Review of the condition of seats, those owned by the Community Council as well as those by the County Council undertaken for two wards.</li> </ul>
	Bus Shelters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate the use of public transport in the area.</li> <li>• Supports the wellbeing and the broader aims of reducing harm to the ecosystem by reducing use of private vehicle emissions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain current facilities/ minimise any reduction.</li> <li>• Retain funding for repair programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current facilities retained.</li> <li>• Funding retained.</li> <li>• New asbestos survey of shelters completed to ensure they are safe for the public.</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>				



	Community Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided to support activities which support the wellbeing agenda but also activities, like gardening clubs or maintenance of grounds which support/ enhance ecosystems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain current funding / minimise any reduction.</li> <li>• Retain eligibility of any ecosystem friendly application for consideration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community grants funding retained and form simplified.</li> </ul>
	Raise Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ad hoc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members/Clerk. Seek out training/information giving opportunities.</li> <li>• Representatives on outside bodies to seek to place the issue on the agenda of those bodies for discussion.</li> <li>• Share availability for any information giving/ training sessions with other community Councils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members and staff made aware of relevant training opportunities.</li> <li>• Training budget retained.</li> <li>• Council receives and considers information on financial support for eco-friendly projects/schemes.</li> </ul>
<b>Barriers to Action</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding.</li> <li>• Staffing</li> <li>• Expertise/ Knowledge.</li> <li>• Limited legal powers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Staffing</li> <li>• Expertise/ Knowledge</li> <li>• Limited Legal Powers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding remains an issue and is likely to be reduced over the coming years.</li> <li>• Staffing: Being reviewed but depends on resources.</li> <li>• Expertise/Knowledge. With one part time staff member the position remains unchanged.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring of Plan</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Periodically by Full Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan has not formally been reviewed but the principles embedded into the Council's strategic plan and its day to day working.</li> </ul>

## 6.0 Appendix A- Section 7 Welsh Government List of Species/Habitats

### 6.1 Species

- Section 7 – list of the living organisms of principal importance for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in relation to Wales.
- Note: This interim list, which is exactly the same as the previous list under Section 42 of the NERC Act, is under review in consultation with NRW.

Ψ Wales only species; † original S74 species

Ψ Rhywogaethau Cymru'n unig; † rhywogaethau Adran 74 gwreiddiol

Mammals / Mamaliad (17 species/rhywogaeth)			Revisions/Newidiadau
<i>Arvicola terrestris</i>	Water vole†	Llygoden bengron y dŵr	
<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>	Barbastelle bat†	Ystlum du	
<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	West European hedgehog	Draenog	
<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	Brown hare†	Ysgyfarnog	
<i>Lutra</i>	Otter†	Dyfrgi	
<i>Martes</i>	Pine marten	Bele'r coed	
<i>Micromys minutus</i>	Harvest mouse	Llygoden yr yd	
<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>	Dormouse†	Pathew	
<i>Mustela putorius</i>	Polecat	Ffwlbart	
<i>Myotis bechsteinii</i>	Bechstein's bat†	Ystlum Bechstein	
<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Noctule	Ystlum mawr	
<i>Pipistrellus</i>	Common Pipistrelle†Ψ	Ystlum lleiaf	
<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Soprano Pipistrelle†	Ystlum lleiaf meinlais	
<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Brown long-eared bat	Ystlum hirglust	
<i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i>	Greater horseshoe bat†	Ystlum pedol mwyaf	
<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>	Lesser horseshoe bat†	Ystlum pedol lleiaf	

<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>	Red squirrel†	Gwiwer goch	
<b>Birds /Adar (51 species/rhywogaeth)</b>			
<i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i>	Aquatic warbler†	Telor y dŵr	
<i>Alauda arvensis subsp. arvensis/scotica</i>	Skylark†	Ehedydd	

## 6.2 Section 7 List of Habitats of Principle Importance for Maintaining Bio Diversity in Wales

- Note: This interim list, which is exactly the same as the previous list under section 42 of the NERC Act, is under review in consultation with NRW.

Habitats	Cynefin	Priority Habitats	Cynefin sy'n Flaenoriaeth
<b>Terrestrial, coastal &amp; freshwater</b>	<b>Daearol, arfordirol a dŵr croyw</b>		
Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland	Coedwig lydanddail, gymysg ac ywen	Traditional orchards	Perllannau traddodiadol
		Wood pasture & parkland	Porfa goediog a pharcdir
		Upland oak woodland	Coedwig dderi yn yr ucheldir
		Lowland beech and yew woodland	Coedwig ffawydd ac ywen ar dir isel
		Upland mixed ash woodland	Coedwig ynn gymysg ar dir uchel
		Wet woodland	Coedwig wlyb
		Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	Coedwig gollddail gymysg ar dir isel
Boundary and linear features	Nodweddion llinellol a therfynau	Hedgerows	Gwrychoedd
Arable and horticultural	Tir âr a garddwriaethol	Arable field margins	Ymylon caeau yd
Improved grassland	Glaswelltir wedi ei wella	Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	Tir pori corslyd ar forfa arfordirol a gorlifdir

Neutral grassland	Glaswelltir niwtral	Lowland meadows	Gweirgloddiau yr iseldir
Calcareous grassland	Glaswelltir calchaid	Lowland calcareous grassland	Glaswelltir calchaid yr iseldir
		Upland calcareous grassland	Glaswelltir calchaid tir uchel

## 7.00 Appendix B Summary State of Natural Resources Wales Report NRW

- The report sets out the state of Wales’s Natural Resources and links the resilience of Welsh natural resources to the well-being of the people of Wales.
- It assesses the extent to which natural resources in Wales are being sustainably managed and recommends a pro-active approach to building resilience.
- It demonstrates how natural resources support the 7 goals of well-being.
- It details the following criteria to help determine if natural resources are being used and managed in a sustainable manner: -
  - i) If natural resources are being used faster than they can be replenished.
  - ii) The Health and resilience of the ecosystem is being compromised and targets not met.
  - iii) The benefits from ecosystems are not being optimised.
  - iv) The contribution to well-being of ecosystem services is not meeting our basic needs or is declining.
  - v) It includes a risk register to help identify key risks and opportunities which natural resources provide to meeting the well-being objectives.
- The report identifies the following policy areas as ones appropriate for action.

	Declining natural resources	Resilience of ecosystems	Optimising benefits	Minimising negative impacts
<b>Green infrastructure in and around urban areas</b>		Contribute to connectivity within and between ecosystems	Multi-benefits of urban green-spaces such as water filtration, accessible places for health and recreation, connecting habitats, and supporting opportunities for community cohesion	Tackling health inequalities and air quality
<b>Increasing woodland cover, and bringing more of our existing woodlands into appropriate management</b>	Will address woodland resource	Contribute to diversity and connectivity of woodlands	Multiple benefits of woodland, including health and recreation benefits, fibre and fuel, and wider catchment management opportunities	

<b>Coastal zone management and managed realignment</b>	Addressing coastal squeeze	Supporting coastal habitat	Supporting coastal communities, for example through providing opportunities for tourism and employment	Future proofing from coastal flooding / sea level rises
<b>Maintaining, enhancing and restoring floodplains and hydrological systems</b>	Water availability	Capacity of catchments to deal with high and low flows; supporting water quality	Supporting recreation and economic activity	Flood risk Social cohesion, equity/local economy
<b>Better soil management</b>	Investment in soils for future productivity	Soils underpin everything	Preventing erosion, supporting other habitats and benefits	Erosion, costs of water treatment etc
<b>Utilisation of our uplands to deliver multiple benefits</b>	Restoring peatland, safeguarding carbon stores	Wider resilience of upland and lowland habitats and species that depend on them	Making better use of Wales natural assets	Tackling climate change; reducing flood risk