

Reporting on Section 6

Community and Town Councils

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report 2025

Name of Community or Town Council:	Cyngor Cymuned Gorslas Community Council
Group:	2

Introduction and Context

Gorslas Community Council (Cyngor Cymuned Gorslas) comprises 15 councillors serving 5,085 residents across three wards. With an annual budget of approximately £135,000 — funded through the precept and VAT recovery—the Council employs one part-time Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer and contracts several service providers.

Facilities and Assets

The Council manages extensive community infrastructure, including:

- Three recreational parks totalling 5 hectares, each featuring children's play areas and serving approximately 18,000 visitors annually
- Playing fields at Drefach and Cefneithin parks
- 70 public benches throughout the community
- 139 streetlights
- 13 bus shelters
- Public conveniences at Gorslas
- The Toll House at Drefach
- Play equipment across all three parks
- A Multi-Use Games Area at Cefneithin Park

Community Engagement

Beyond maintaining physical amenities, the Council actively supports community life by:

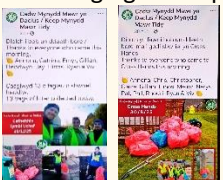
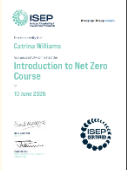
- Providing small grants to local groups
- Facilitating events such as Christmas and other seasonal celebrations
- Nominating councillors to serve on local primary school governing bodies
- Responding to planning applications within its jurisdiction
- Contributing to consultations from national, local government, and statutory bodies on legislative and policy matters

The parks at Gorslas, Cefneithin, and Drefach serve as focal points for community recreation and gathering.

Action Report 2023 - 2025

NRAP Objective	Action carried out to...	Monitored by:
1	- embed biodiversity into decision making & procurement	• Clerk Awareness: Clerk has been briefed on the council's duties under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Biodiversity is now a standing consideration in all relevant agenda items and project planning. • Policy Integration: Biodiversity principles have been incorporated into our procurement policy, asset management plans, and community engagement strategies.

		• Training and Resources: Councillors and staff have access to guidance from One Voice Wales, the Local Nature Partnerships Cymru toolkit, and Natural Resources Wales publications to support informed decision-making. • Community Engagement: We have promoted biodiversity awareness through bilingual website updates, social media posts. • Partnership Working: We engage with local schools, to share knowledge and co-develop initiatives that enhance local biodiversity.	
	- raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance	• Public Communications: We have published bilingual website updates, social media posts, that promote biodiversity-friendly practices, including pollinator planting, tree preservation, and seasonal mowing. • Community Events: We have supported and promoted local biodiversity initiatives such as litter picks, in partnership with environmental groups.	Council members + Clerk
2	- safeguard principal species and habitats	• Site Management Practices: Council-managed green spaces, verges, and play areas are maintained with biodiversity in mind. Seasonal mowing regimes are used to encourage wildflower growth and support pollinators.  • Habitat Preservation: Hedgerows, mature trees, and grassland areas are retained and enhanced where possible. Deadwood and leaf litter are left in appropriate areas to support invertebrates and small mammals. • Species Monitoring: We have begun informal monitoring of pollinators, birds, and amphibians in council-managed areas. • Planning Responses: The council considers biodiversity impacts when responding to planning consultations, advocating for the protection of priority habitats and species.	Council members + Clerk
3	- restore & create habitats and resilient ecological networks	• Hedgerow Management: Existing hedgerows are maintained with biodiversity in mind. 	Council members + Clerk
4	- tackle negative factors: for e.g. reduce pollution, use nature-based solutions, address invasive species	• Litter Management: Regular litter picks are organised by local volunteers, reducing plastic and waste pollution in green spaces and waterways. 	Council members + Clerk

		• Nature-Based Drainage: We support natural drainage features such as swales and permeable surfaces in council projects, helping reduce runoff and improve water quality. • Invasive Species Monitoring: We have begun informal monitoring of invasive plant species (e.g. Japanese knotweed) and report sightings to ground maintenance contactor.	
5	- use improve and share evidence	• Knowledge Sharing: We share biodiversity-related updates and findings through bilingual website posts, council minutes, and community newsletters.	Council members + Clerk
6	- support capacity and/or other organisations	• Partnership Working: We maintain active links with local schools to support shared biodiversity goals. • Grant Support and Promotion: We promote relevant funding opportunities (e.g. Local Places for Nature, Keep Wales Tidy) through our website and community networks, encouraging local applications.  • In-Kind Support: The council has provided venues, publicity, and volunteer coordination for biodiversity-related events such as tree planting, litter picks. • Knowledge Sharing: We share biodiversity resources, guidance, and best practice with local organisations through bilingual communications and council meetings. • Capacity Building: Clerk has attended biodiversity webinars and training sessions, and we encourage local groups to do the same through signposting and support. 	Council members + Clerk

Review of S6 duty actions for 2023-2025	
What has worked well?	• Embedding Biodiversity in Decision-Making Biodiversity is now a standing consideration in council meetings, procurement, and planning responses, ensuring it is integrated across all functions. • Support for Local Groups: The council has provided practical support, publicity, and recognition for community-led biodiversity initiatives, helping build local capacity. 
What have the barriers been?	• Limited Resources and Capacity As a small council, we face constraints in staffing, budget, and technical expertise, which can limit the scale and pace of biodiversity initiatives. • Community Engagement Gaps Despite strong interest from some residents, sustained engagement across all demographics. • Invasive Species Management Addressing invasive plants like Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed requires specialist intervention and coordination with external agencies, which can be slow or resource intensive. • Balancing Competing Priorities Biodiversity goals must be balanced with other statutory duties, infrastructure needs, and community expectations, which can lead to trade-offs in decision-making. • Navigating Policy Complexity Interpreting and applying biodiversity-related legislation, guidance, and funding criteria requires time and expertise, especially as national frameworks evolve.
What will you change?	• Tree Planting: we intend to plant native trees in public spaces and along footpaths to improve canopy cover and habitat diversity. • Green Infrastructure: Tree planting, hedgerow restoration, and wildflower areas are used to stabilise soil, absorb pollutants, and provide habitat for native species. • Benchmarking: We will review biodiversity reports from other Welsh community councils to identify best practice and improve our own reporting standards. • Formalise Biodiversity Planning: We will develop a structured Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Action Plan with measurable objectives, aligned to the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales and tailored to Gorslas.



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

- **Enhance Community Engagement:** We will expand bilingual outreach through seasonal biodiversity campaigns, interpretive signage, and school-led initiatives to reach a wider cross-section of the community.
- **Strengthen Partnerships:** We will formalise collaboration with local schools, environmental groups, neighbouring councils and OVW to co-develop biodiversity projects and share resources.
- **Address Invasive Species Proactively:** We will work with Carmarthenshire County Council and NRW to map and manage invasive species and explore community-led monitoring and reporting mechanisms.
- **Embed Biodiversity in Procurement and Planning**
We will update procurement and planning response templates to include biodiversity impact assessments and nature-based solutions as standard practice.
- **Monitor and Report Progress:** We will publish annual biodiversity updates on our website and include biodiversity outcomes in council minutes to ensure transparency and accountability.
- **Habitats:** create natural habitats where possible – bat boxes, hedgehog homes, bird boxes, etc

- **Publish a biodiversity report every three years** (e.g. 2025, 2028, 2031).
- **Demonstrate how biodiversity is being maintained and enhanced** in the exercise of their functions.
- **Review and update their biodiversity plan** as needed to reflect progress, new evidence, and changing priorities.
- The council will formally review its biodiversity plan **annually in October**, aligning with the council's policy review calendar and budget planning cycle.
- A full review will be undertaken **every three years**, ahead of the statutory reporting deadline.

Monitoring Methods

- **Council Minutes:** Biodiversity actions and decisions are recorded in council minutes and reviewed quarterly.
- **Annual Biodiversity Update:** A summary of biodiversity progress will be published on the council's bilingual website each autumn.
- **Partnership Feedback:** Input from Carmarthenshire Nature Partnership, NRW, and local schools will inform ongoing evaluation.

Plan Updates: The biodiversity plan will be updated to reflect:

- New evidence or ecological data.
- Changes in legislation or national guidance (e.g. Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales).
- Feedback from community engagement and partner organisations.
- Outcomes of habitat restoration and biodiversity projects.



Group	Description of organisation relative to biodiversity. Organisations:	Minimum Actions	Examples	NRAP objectives for Action Reporting (see template Annex 1)
1	- that own or occupy an office building only and - whose functions are not directly connected to biodiversity and/or land management.	Actions related to buildings management, procurement, sustainability, awareness raising, training, or in partnership with other organisations	Commissions, DVLA	NRAP objectives 1, 4, 6
2	- that own, occupy or manage land their own buildings and grounds, - whose functions are connected with biodiversity and/or land management, or - that can influence those who own or manage land.	As per Group 1 above PLUS grounds management, cascading funding criteria, providing education and training	Public Health Wales, Universities, Sport Wales	NRAP objectives 1,4,6 as above NRAP objectives 2, 3, 5 relating to own grounds
3	that own or manage land beyond their own grounds, whether their functions are connected with biodiversity and/or land management or not.	As per Groups 1 and 2 above PLUS land management to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and promote the resilience of ecosystems.	Dŵr Cymru, Local Authorities, NRW, Welsh Government	All NRAP objectives

The **Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales (NRAP)** sets out six objectives for reversing the decline of biodiversity which should be used to help develop and guide actions to comply with the section 6 duty:

The **6 objectives** to maintain and enhance biodiversity are:

- 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

Un Llais Cymru



One Voice Wales