



**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**

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 - Section 6

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report 2022

Name of Town or Community Council: *St Clears Town Council*

Introduction and Context

- All local councils in Wales have a duty to prepare and publish a Biodiversity Forward plan, setting out its proposals to comply with the requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, section 6, duty in the exercise of the Council's functions, and in doing so, to promote the resilience of ecosystems.
- What is biodiversity?
- Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth. It includes all living organisms (including humans), their genetic variation and the ecosystems on which they depend. Biodiversity is everywhere: in gardens, fields, hedgerows, mountains, rivers and in the sea. Biodiversity represents quality of life.
- The Biodiversity Forward Plan looks at how the Council manages and improves natural resources to ensure that biodiversity and sustainability are considered in all areas, becoming a natural part of the decision-making process.
 - spatial scale and place (e.g. how much land does it cover, population, precept?)
 - public service delivery (e.g. is it subject to the Well-being of Future Generations (WFG) Act?)

Action Report

Action carried out to:		Monitored by:
-embed biodiversity into decision making & procurement	Embed consideration for biodiversity and carbon footprint into procurement protocols. Assess suppliers' commitment and policies in relation to the carbon footprint of their products, services, or business management. Purchase energy from green suppliers. Reduce energy consumption and improve efficiencies of buildings. Smart controls etc. Council comments on Planning Applications in consultations published by the Local Authority including the LDP in support of biodiversity.	Commitments made in documents, reports agendas, policies and protocols. Consideration of biodiversity demonstrated in all decisions.

<p>-raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance</p>	<p>Organise awareness raising and training sessions for members and staff.</p> <p>Encourage the community as a whole to volunteer in the context of supporting and promoting biodiversity and reducing carbon footprint.</p> <p>Developing community growing space gardens with eco/biodiverse initiatives.</p> <p>Promoting community events on website and social media- wildlife walks, supporting litter picking groups, seed swap events.</p> <p>Post details of the actions we have taken to help biodiversity on our website and social media platforms.</p>	<p>Through feedback from Council members and residents.</p> <p>Numbers of people taking part in activities</p> <p>Pethau bychai'n (One Voice Wales)</p>
<p>-safeguard principal species and habitats</p>	<p>As a Town Council with relatively little direct responsibility for land, some efforts have been made to safeguard wildlife in the town.</p> <p>The Town Council voluntarily cuts back growth along the riverside walk, which forms part of the town's heritage trail. St Clears Town Heritage Trail was developed to help promote the rich history and culture of the town and to create a focal point for residents and visitors to learn more about the local environment. In the last year, a new path has been created to replace the old Peillac way that was collapsing into the river. The area surrounding the new path is being left to rewild and return to its natural habitat, resulting in an improved area for wildlife. The Town Council will consider how this can be extended to other areas where it currently maintains the grass or foliage.</p> <p>Areas will be identified where growth can go unhindered. This will be communicated to the public to explain the reduction of maintenance and to educate the community about the importance of safeguarding wildlife.</p>	<p>Records of sites or species safeguarded.</p>

	<p>Habitats – river corridor, woodland, marshy grassland, hedges, individual trees, amenity grassland.</p> <p>Species – include otters, bats, dippers & kingfishers on river</p> <p>Protected areas - Carmarthen Bay & Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which includes the Afon Taf SSSI.</p> <p>B-Lines – creating wildlife pathways throughout landscape using pollinator-friendly plants.</p>	
<p>-restore & create habitats and resilient ecological networks</p>	<p>By seeking to reduce the amount of maintenance work carried out in grassed areas, new safe spaces for habitats will be created as a result.</p> <p>Several new trees, a butterfly garden, a community garden, and a wildflower area have been created on Town Council land during the last two years. All land will be assessed for potential to plant more trees or foliage that would support critical species. The Town Council will also seek to engage with the local schools and voluntary organisations e.g. scouts, guides etc to invite them to improve habitats for birds and other wildlife on land for which the Town Council has responsibility.</p>	<p>Area of habitat increased. Improved biodiversity.</p>
<p>-tackle negative factors: for e.g. reduce pollution, use nature based solutions, address invasive species</p>	<p>Sustainable procurement policies.</p> <p>Reduce or remove the use of herbicides to only where absolutely necessary such as to control invasive non-native species such as Japanese Knotweed.</p> <p>Change of cutting regimes saves fuel. Use of machinery, travelling etc. Reducing carbon.</p> <p>Reduce growth & invasion of certain species using know practices as informed by Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority and Keep Wales Tidy. Himalayan Balsam Leaflet.pdf</p> <p>Recycling waste.</p> <p>Promote a circular economy.</p>	<p>Town Clerk through receipts and work schedules/timesheets.</p>

-use improve and share evidence	Liaising with the Biodiversity Officer at Carmarthenshire County Council and Southwest Wales Biodiversity group to ensure use of best practice and to increase knowledge of local issues.	
-support capacity and/or other organisations	<p>Community development support considering biodiversity and carbon footprint.</p> <p>Set up litter pick hub at Gate facility and support of organised litter picks, provision of loan equipment with other partners and volunteer groups.</p> <p>Considering requiring any organisations receiving grant from us to demonstrate how their project will contribute to supporting health and wellbeing, biodiversity, and effect on carbon footprint.</p>	Partnerships formed to deliver biodiversity benefit.

Review of s6 duty

What has worked well?

The creation of the wildflower and community garden areas at the Welfare field has been a success, especially as it has proved attractive to the public in addition to helping biodiversity.

The creation of a pollinator friendly area near the glass recycling area of the main car park has also been successful but is slightly hidden out of the way.

What have the barriers been?

The Global COVID-19 Pandemic affected the ability to carry out key projects.

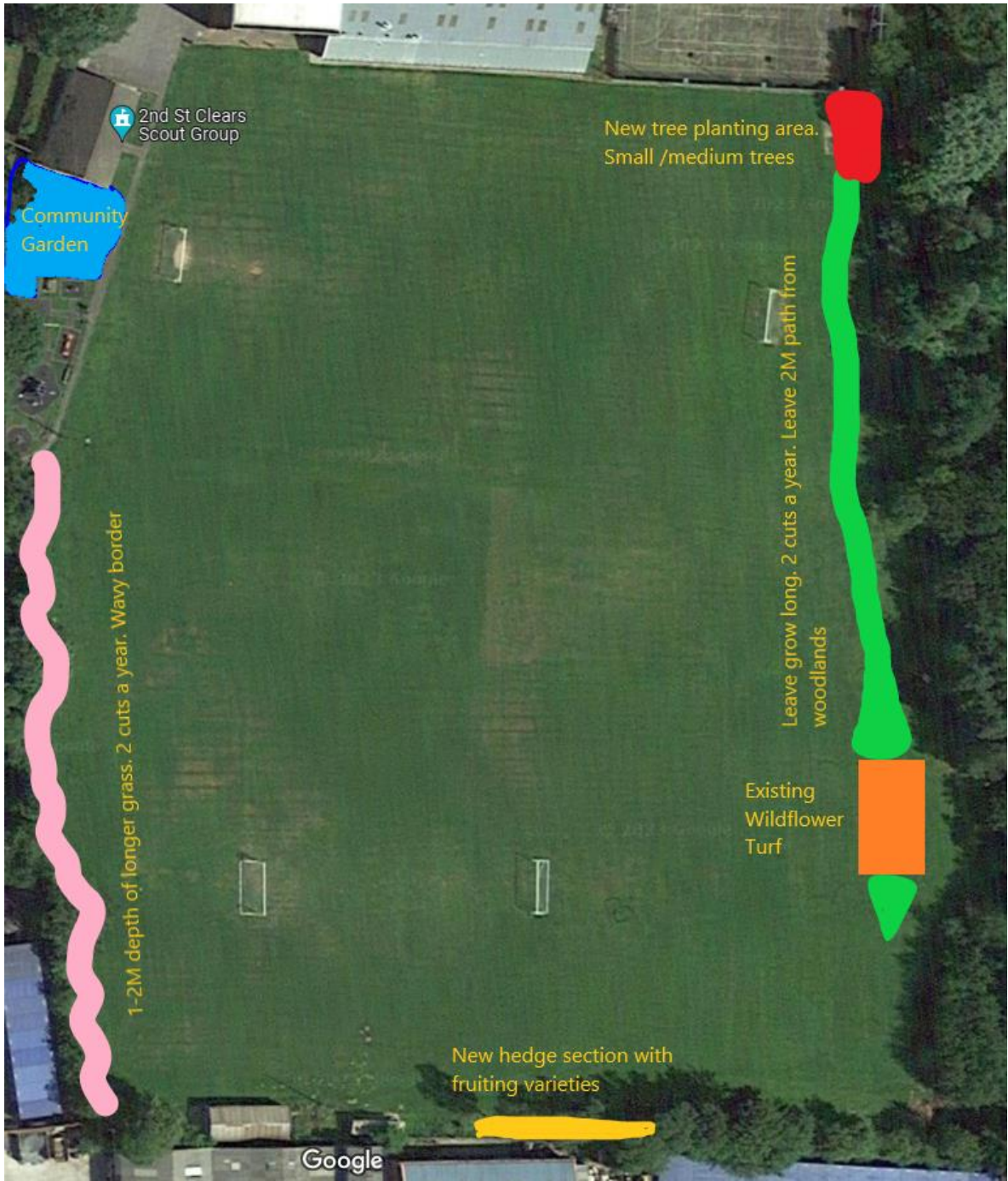
What will you change?

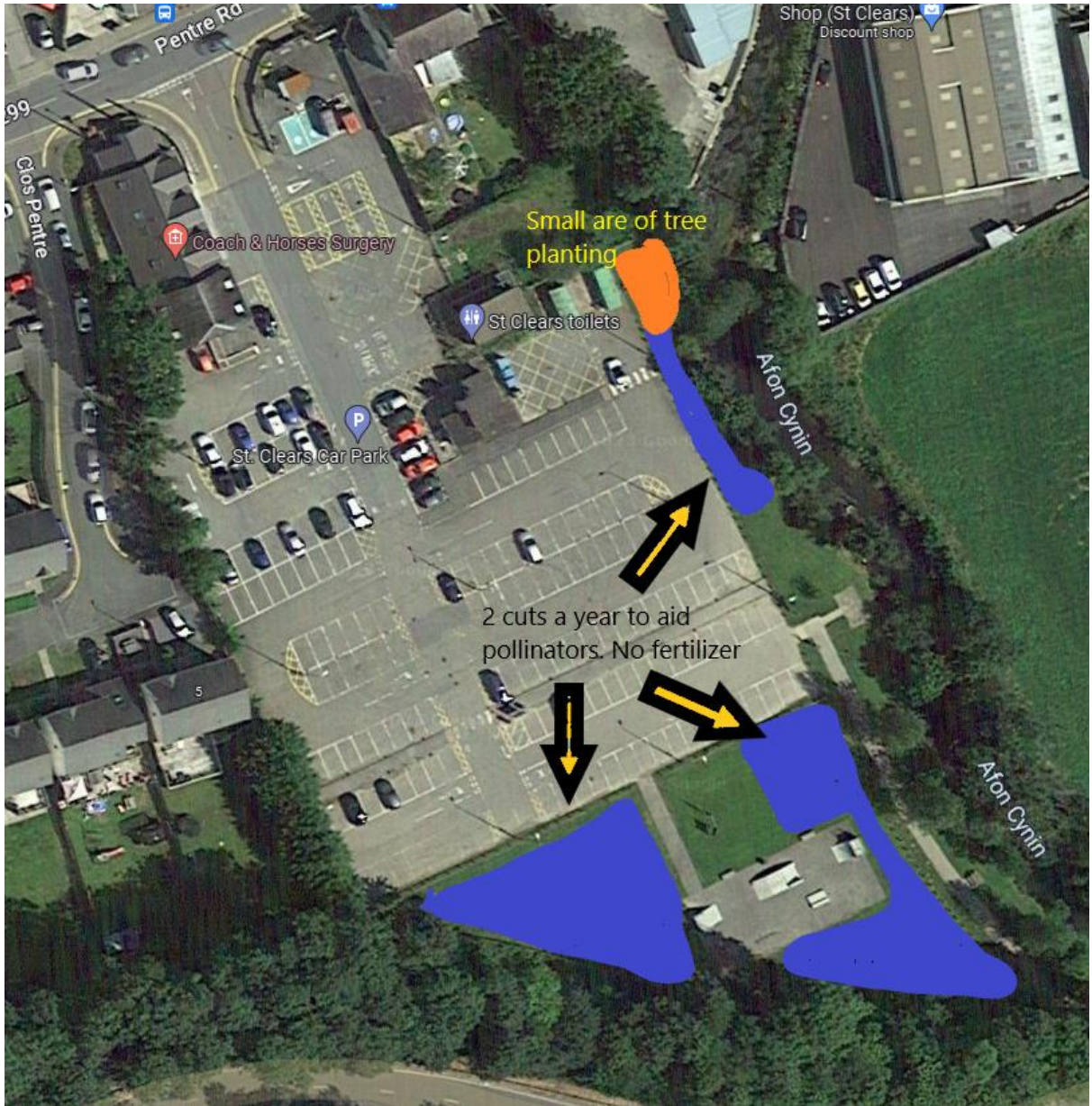
Work with the Local Biodiversity Officer to seek advice, more benchmarking, attending seminars etc. More interaction and public information. Continue to seek suitable solutions to support the council initiatives.

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

The s6 duty will be monitored through the council's Environment Committee that will report back to full council on the success or otherwise of the actions taken through the usual management and statutory council reporting protocols.

The s6 plan will be reviewed in light of this report and any other evidence or information that is made available to the council.







Responsibility to reduce impact of any works / development on the watercourses, including run-off into surface water drain which have potential to discharge silt into the rivers (see photo). This has a direct impact on the habitat and aquatic species, such as fish.

See also <https://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Bee-Friendly> - encouraging communities to get involved

file:///C:/Users/Home/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/MDQYHZ9S/38169_bee%20friendly%20scheme_a5%20action%20guide_e_web.pdf

– see page 4 for examples e.g.: reducing cutting, use of pesticides