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 2022-25

Name of Town or Community Council: Talybont on Usk, Powys

Introduction and Context

Talybont Community Council (Precept – approx £19 000) has nine councillors and it oversees a community of approx. 700 people with the majority living in the 4 settlements of Talybont, Pencelli ,Aber and Scethrog. It is located in Bannau Brycheiniog (BB, Brecon Beacons National Park) the main settlements mostly being located along the River Usk valley and its tributaries. There are three pubs and a village shop. Much of the land comprises traditional farms and small holdings with arable, cattle and sheep. There are pockets of mixed woodland and NRW managed conifer plantations and upland moorland towards the Beacons. There are several reservoirs in the community environs, with Talybont Reservoir wholly within the community area. The Brecon and Monmouth Canal passes through the community bringing canal boat traffic. A regular but infrequent rural bus service operates on the route between Brecon and Abergavenny, most travel being by car.

The environment is predominantly rural with some small businesses scattered through the community. Tourism is a major contributor to the local economy attractors being local natural beauty, the canal, river, wildlife and walking and biking routes. The river is part of the Upper Usk SSSI and the valley has important roosts and foraging ground for lesser horseshoe bats bringing a designation of an SAC. It also hosts an osprey nest as well as other rare plants and animals. The area is one of particular natural beauty with river valleys and good views all of which attract many visitors from the UK and abroad.

Talybont on Usk Community Council is committed at a grass roots level to protect, enhance resilience and increase biodiversity in the community. We aim to nurture our local spaces and inspire community members of all ages to love nature and encourage it both in the community and on their own patches and share our beautiful environment with visitors.

Action Report

Action carried out to:		Monitored by:
-embed biodiversity into decision making & procurement	Scrutinising planning applications to ensure where possible biodiversity is enhanced by 10% as suggested in biodiversity net gain requirements.	All

	Applying light touch methods, organic where possible, to maintaining community owned land. Our grass cutting contracts have targets for no mow areas and encourage wild flower and orchard planting on council land.	
-raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance	- Encouraging and supporting local wildlife initiatives - Running a biodiversity recording challenge for the community through the summer months - Several biodiversity tables were set up for our Community Forum in 2024 to generate community discussion, awareness and action in biodiversity A biodiversity recording challenge for the community has been set up and will run yearly to encourage awareness of our local species.	All
-safeguard principal species and habitats	- We are in the process of assessing our species and habitats with the above community challenge. - Working with NRW to inform them of local conditions and aim to work with them to protect our listed as well as lesser known habitats. - Coordinating with Canal and Rivers Trust and Usk Valley Ospreys to support.their respective nature initiatives	All
-restore & create habitats and resilient ecological networks	- Working with Talybont Energy to allocate a proportion of grants to nature projects - Continuing to maintain the Henry Vaughan Garden to encourage invertebrates and other wildlife. - Ensure a proportion of our land holding contain areas of “messy” scrub to provide cover and habitat for invertebrates and small mammals. - Encourage green infrastructure plans through the planning system.	All
-tackle negative factors: for e.g. reduce pollution, use nature based solutions, address invasive	- Alerting NRW/BBNPA when local habitat is seen to be under threat. - Scrutinising planning applications for negative impact on the environment - Encourage Powys CC to improve bus	All

species	services to reduce car use. - Reporting and removing invasive species such as Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed. - Working with the litter picking group - Supporting green energy use in the community hall. Our Forum raised the issues of negative impacts on the environment from increasing visitor numbers and the need for a better system to handle this.	
-use improve and share evidence	Reporting fully at council meetings on biodiversity matters and hear and act on where possible issues from the community. - Attending Powys and One Voice Wales seminars and training sessions and disseminate information through Council meetings, the website and social media.	All
-support capacity and/or other organisations	Supporting and working with local and government bodies in biodiversity initiatives. In the community we have - Henderson Hall Trust - Canal and Rivers Trust - Usk Valley Ospreys - Talybont Woodland Group - Llangynidr Cubs and Scouts (many of the Talybont children are members) - Talybont Energy - Our local churches For a full list see Appendix.	All

Review of s6 duty

- What has worked well?

  We as a council are beginning to embrace the ethos of helping natural habitats by giving nature the space to heal itself, but we are fortunate to have many rich habitats in the community.

  We are helping to improve local awareness of biodiversity and encourage local nature groups and the Community Forum was very useful in gathering community thoughts and ideas about biodiversity.

We worked with Talybont energy to secure a grant for batteries to store power from solar panels on the community hall roof.

We have suffered significant tree loss (broadleaf and conifer) in the past year but this has raised awareness of the issues in the community and with the relevant government bodies.

What have the barriers been?

Lack of time to get involved

Managing the balance between interfering and helping

Raising awareness and the importance of the biodiversity and climate change emergencies in the face of a difficult economic climate and uncertain world.

Finding time to apply for help from the appropriate government bodies.

Finding the balance between supporting biodiversity and keeping the playing field (our largest land holding) safe for users.

What will you change?

Address the need for better organisation due to rapidly increasing visitor numbers since Covid. Appeal to local government bodies (Powys CC/ BBNPA/NRW) for assistance (organisationally and financially) in managing this.

Have a targetted focus on raising awareness of the Biodiversity emergency in the community and inspire them to respond.

Work better with Government bodies to tackle our tree loss and seek help to decreased the flooding events we are experiencing due to climate change.

Institute an occasional Community Newsletter special edition on nature, biodiversity and climate change issues.

Reach out to other organisations with similar objectives and targets for net biodiversity gain. Arrange a programme of occasional talks from them.

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

  Annually via report to the Council Clerk