

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

Name of Town or Community Council: Abergavenny Town Council

Introduction and Context

- A short description of the Council, its functions and context in relation to
 - how it could help biodiversity (through functions with regard to land management, grant funding, education activities, for e.g.)
 - 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?)

The Abergavenny area comprises of 6 wards, with 17 Councillors, representing an electorate of 8335, and wider population of 13,500 residents. It's precept going in to 2023/24 will be just over £500,000.

The Council has no land assets, but manages green spaces in partnership with MCC and various volunteer groups. We employ a Town Team, who are currently being given horticultural training to assist in the maintenance of the urban planting schemes.

The Council has a statutory duty to contribute to the unitary authority's Wellbeing Plan. This is facilitated through a Strategy and Action Plan which has specific reference to the seven priorities of the Act. The Council has also adopted a Climate Emergency Policy with specific reference to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and this is embedded in the Strategy and Action Plan.

Action Report

Action carried out to:		Monitored by:
-embed biodiversity into decision making & procurement	Included in the Strategy and Action Plan for ATC. Prioritising the planting of native species and pollinator friendly plants. Encouraging tree planting.	Environment Committee of ATC
-raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance	Collaboration with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friends of Castle Meadows• Friends of Linda Vista Gardens• Friends of Bailey Park• Laurie Jones Community Orchard• Local Primary Schools	Environment Committee of ATC

-safeguard principal species and habitats	Collaboration with MCC and the Green Infrastructure Plan.	MCC Ecologist
-restore & create habitats and resilient ecological networks	Actively seeking support from Local Places For Nature to improve a number of habitats and protect an SAC and several SSSI areas (Gavenny Corridor, River Usk, Caste Meadows)	ATC Environment Committee, MCC, and Friends of Castle Meadows
-tackle negative factors: for e.g. reduce pollution, use nature based solutions, address invasive species	Adopting measures for Water Conservation for urban planting. Using Peat Free Compost for planting. Invasive species programme managed by MCC and supported by the Town Team and volunteers.	MCC ATC Environment Committee Friends of Castle Meadows
-use improve and share evidence	Engaging in Citizen Science FIT programme, to monitor areas that have been re-wilded. Using Smart Town Technology to measure soil moisture in planters to conserve water and provide optimum growing conditions.	MCC Green Infrastructure Team. ATC Environment Committee.
-support capacity and/or other organisations	Cooperation agreements in place to actively support projects being undertaken by MCC, ATC and voluntary groups.	ATC Environment Committee

Review of s6 duty

- What has worked well? What have the barriers been? What will you change?

We have seen significant improvements in replanted areas in terms of enhancing biodiversity. We have seen increased volunteer hours and community engagement. Having a Strategy and Action Plan to work towards, and to evolve to meet changing circumstances and new projects and challenges.

Restrictions from Covid and lock downs caused delays to our timetable of improvements. Increased costs of materials and labour. Getting the message out to explain the interventions that are being made to increase biodiversity.

We have regular meetings with stakeholders, and are beginning to look at more effective use of social media, to inform the community of the work that is being undertaken.

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

The Strategy and Action Plan is reviewed monthly as part of ATC's Environment Committee's agenda. A precis of the progress in delivering our biodiversity targets is included in our Annual Report.