

# Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Delivery Plan and 2019 Report

Section 6 Environment (Wales) Act 2016  
2019 - 2022

Conwy County Borough Council is committed to playing its part in protecting and enhancing biodiversity and reversing its decline. This plan, which includes the actions which will be taken across all the Council's functions, shows how we will achieve this.



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## 1. Introduction

Biodiversity is the variety of life found on earth. It includes all species of plants and animals, their abundance and genetic diversity. Nature is our planet's life support system and consequently essential for human survival. Our natural environment provides our food, water, air, building materials, medicines and landscape. It underpins our lives and livelihoods and supports the functioning and resilience of ecosystems in oceans, wetlands, lakes, rivers, mountains, forests and agricultural landscapes. Yet biodiversity loss continues as a direct result of human impacts, through habitat loss and degradation, over-exploitation, pollution, climate change and invasive non-native species.

Welsh Government has recognised all the benefits that are provided by plants, animals, microorganisms and the places where they live, and aims to reverse the decline of biodiversity in Wales with a ground breaking recent framework of legislation. Wales' legislation is set within a framework of international commitments.

Legislation in Wales recognises the role that public bodies can play in leading by example and working to protect and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment.

## 2. Why publish a Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Delivery Plan and Report?

This plan has been written in response to Conwy County Borough Council's legal duty, as set out in the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. This requires that Public Authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems. This duty is referred to in the Act as the *biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty* and is commonly referred to as the *section 6 duty* or the *biodiversity duty*.

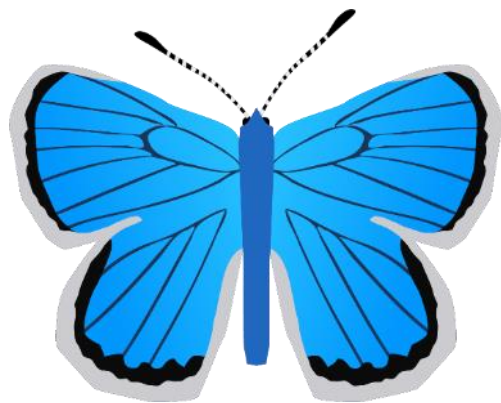
The Authority is required to prepare and publish a plan setting out what it proposes to do to comply with the duty. There is a further requirement under the Act that, before the end of 2019, and before the end of every third year after 2019, all public authorities must publish a report on what they have done to comply with the S6 duty. This plan combines the two requirements and incorporates a report on existing action as well as proposals for future action.

## 3. Conwy's Biodiversity

Conwy has a wealth of wildlife living in a wide diversity of habitats. The variety of rocks and soils, landform, aspect and elevation supports an equal variety of semi-natural habitats, from alpine scree to grasslands, woodlands, freshwater lakes, streams and rivers, tidal estuaries and coastal habitats, as well as the more modified habitats of permanent pasture and planted conifer forest.

Eight of the 14 highest mountains of Wales – those over 3000 feet - are found in Conwy while the Afon Conwy, from which the Borough Council gets its name, flows from an upland moorland plateau to the sands of Conwy Bay, just 20 miles (33km) due north. The river flows through the acid soils of the heather moorland, through the dramatic Conwy falls before reaching the flat and fertile valley floodplain north of Betws-y-Coed, and becoming tidal just north of Llanrwst. Other notable landscape features which add to the richness of Conwy's biodiversity are: the belt of limestone outcrops stretching along the coast from near the Denbighshire border at Abergele and culminating in the spectacular and wildlife rich headland of the Great Orme; the flat grazing marsh of Morfa Rhuddlan; and the rolling farmland of much of the County Borough with its permanent pasture, network of hedges and ancient valley woodlands and the rivers Elwy, Aled and Alwen.

Each of the above habitats is utilised by specific animals such as: the salmon and sea trout on the Afon Conwy; the rare silver studded blue butterfly of the Great Orme; the wood warblers and pied flycatchers of ancient oak woodland; the hen harriers which breed on high moorland, and the wintering curlew and oystercatcher which gather to feed on the mudflats of Traeth Lafan.



On the coast, in the intertidal areas and shallow waters beyond lies a parallel richness of habitats and wildlife. Close to shore lie intertidal sands and mudflats, the latter supporting significant numbers of wading birds on passage and in winter while rockier shores give home to other specialist dwellers. Below the reach of the tides lie sublittoral sands and gravels which are exploited by bristle worms and bivalve molluscs, these in turn providing food for large concentrations of diving waterfowl.

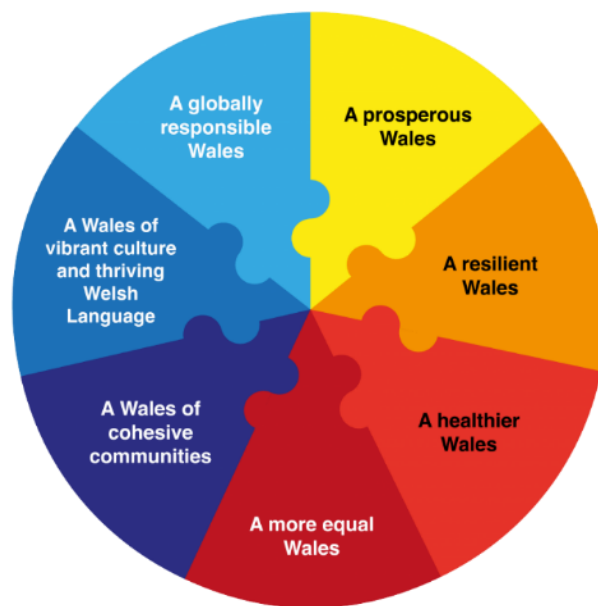
In Conwy the narrow coastal belt houses 85% of the County Borough's population, leaving the rest of the 113,000 hectares sparsely populated. Approximately 38% of the area, 4% of the population and all the highest mountains lie within the Snowdonia National Park (SNP). Yet outside SNP, priority habitats cover just 15% of the land area (this figure rises to 36% in the SNP). And these remaining areas of semi natural habitat are by no means secure. In Conwy, across Wales, and around the world, wildlife is being threatened by modern lifestyles. Threats include new developments and urbanisation in response to demands from an ever-increasing population; changing farming practices; changes brought about by climate change; declines in response to nitrogen deposition from intensive agricultural systems and other emissions; and increasing fragmentation of the remaining habitats.

Two of Conwy's main industries, namely agriculture and tourism, are closely interlinked with and dependent upon the natural environment. It is essential that biodiversity, which is a key component of that natural environment, is protected and enhanced so it can continue to underpin our lives and livelihoods.

#### 4. Legislation, strategic context and corporate priorities

##### ***Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015***

The Wellbeing of future generations (Wales) Act (2015) is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act places a duty on the public bodies listed in the Act to carry out sustainable development to achieve the seven well-being goals. In doing so, they must demonstrate new ways of working which show that they have applied the sustainable development principle.



##### **How our natural resources support the seven well-being goals (from State of Natural Resources Report)**

<i>A prosperous Wales</i>	Natural resources provide opportunities for employment and economic activity. For example, wildlife and outdoor activity tourism to Wales provides around 206,000 jobs and is estimated to be worth £6.2 billion. In 2013, over 3.5 million visitors to our coastline brought £602 million to the economy, with growth predicted at 10%. Wales' three National Parks attract 12 million visitors every year who spend £1 billion on goods and services.
<i>A resilient Wales</i>	A resilient Wales has been defined as a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).

<i>A healthier Wales</i>	Nature makes a significant contribution to the physical health and mental well-being of people in Wales. For example, trees help to absorb pollutants and improve air quality, which if poor can impact on people's health. Access to nature and greenspace has positive impacts on physical and mental health.
<i>A more equal Wales</i>	Equal access to nature and natural resources contributes to equality in Wales. At present, access is not equally distributed (for example, not everyone lives close to greenspace, and some people live in areas with better air quality than others.)
<i>A Wales of cohesive communities</i>	Involving communities in the management of their local parks and woodlands has been shown to improve community cohesion and reduce anti-social behaviour.
<i>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language</i>	Landscapes have played a significant role in the development of distinct cultural practices, such as local building techniques relying on local materials, along with locally specific art and literature.
<i>A globally responsible Wales</i>	The environment supplies all our material resources but we must ensure that as a country we use only our fair share.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act thus recognises the importance of nature and biodiversity, and working towards the well-being goals, particularly the goal of a *resilient Wales*, will help with nature recovery objectives in Wales.

### ***Environment (Wales) Act 2016***

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 has been designed to complement the goals of the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 by applying the principles of sustainable development to the management of Wales' natural resources. Biodiversity and well-functioning ecosystems provide natural solutions that build resilience, which in turn help society create jobs, support livelihoods and human well-being, adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and contribute to sustainable development. For more details of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 please see Appendix 1.

Section 6 under Part 1 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 requires that every public body in Wales must:

- Maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of its functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions
- In doing so, take account of the resilience of ecosystems.
- Prepare and publish a plan setting out what it proposes to do to comply with the Section 6 duty
- Publish a report, before the end of 2019 and before the end of every third year thereafter, on what it has done to comply with the Section 6 duty.

This Section 6 duty plan forms part of a suite of national and local plans which together drive the implementation of the principles and obligations required by the Environment Act. While it focuses on Conwy County Borough Council's obligations regarding biodiversity maintenance and enhancement, it must be read in the context of this agenda across Wales, and other Conwy plans and policies regarding the



environment, since these all affect its aspirations and successful outcomes. The principal plans and policies are listed below:

### ***The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales***

The Welsh Government published the national biodiversity strategy “The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales” in December 2015 with the ambition to ‘*reverse the decline in biodiversity, for its intrinsic value, and to ensure lasting benefits to society*’. The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales builds on the new legislative framework and sets out how Wales will deliver the commitments of the UN convention on biological diversity, the strategic plan for biodiversity 2011-2020 and the 20 associated Aichi targets which is a short term framework for action, as well as the EU biodiversity strategy to “halt the decline in our biodiversity by 2020 and then reverse that decline”.

The Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP) focuses on 6 objectives for nature recovery in Wales. Actions to reverse the decline of biodiversity are set out under each objective.

**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

The actions are allocated to specific partners including public bodies and local nature partnerships who are considered key partners for delivery. Welsh Government guidance states that public bodies should consider basing their Section 6 duty plan on the Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP).

### ***Conwy Corporate Plan 2017-2022***

The Vision in the Corporate Plan is *Conwy- a progressive County creating opportunity*. To deliver this vision, the Cabinet will strive for Conwy to be a *prosperous, connected fair and sustainable County where wellbeing, equality, concern for the environment and our culture underpin decision-making and improve lives*. The Corporate plan lists eight of citizen outcomes including *People in Conwy are healthy and active* and *People in Conwy value and look after the environment*. The need to work sustainably is also recognised as a cross-cutting theme: *Across all areas of work we will ensure that we aim to meet the needs of the present without compromising future generations. We will endeavour to make the best decisions we can in the light of the financial*



*restraints we face.* These, and the other citizen outcomes, are aligned to the well-being of future generations well-being goals listed above.

The Corporate Plan is supported by a large number of more detailed plans and this Section 6 duty plan once adopted will be one of these supporting plans, contributing in particular to the cross-cutting theme of working sustainably and the citizen outcomes of people living healthy lives and valuing and looking after the environment.

### ***Conwy County Borough Council Environmental Policy (reviewed 2018)***

This policy document details the actions which the Council will undertake to ensure that it is working sustainably. It lists a number of environmental commitments, some of which relate directly to delivery of the Section 6 duty:

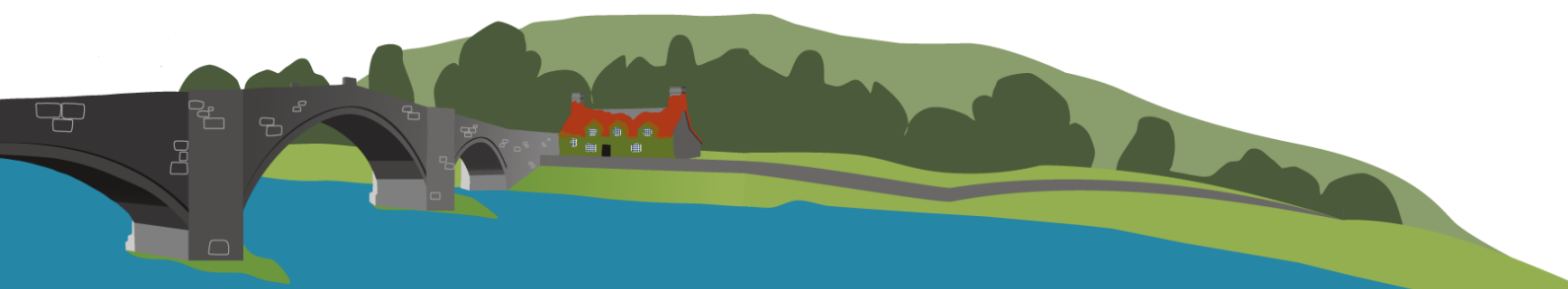
- Identify and comply with all relevant environmental legislation;
- Conserve and enhance the County's biodiversity and habitats;
- Minimise pollution of air, water and land from the Council's own activities and seek to minimise pollution from other sources;
- Continuously raise awareness and understanding of environmental issues amongst staff, Members, suppliers, partners and the wider community, promoting the benefits of being more environmentally responsible and behaving more sustainably;
- Continuously improve our environmental performance, implementing objectives and targets to measure this.

### ***Conwy Country Borough Council Impacts on Biodiversity: Review and Improvement Plan***

In 2011 the Council undertook a biodiversity improvement project to review which council activities could be having impacts on biodiversity, what steps could be taken to improve performance in this area, and what opportunities existed to undertake positive action. The project was undertaken in consultation with representatives of all council services. The outcome was a biodiversity review and improvement plan (BRIP) which was agreed by the project board and the identified actions allotted to the relevant service areas to implement.

The outcomes and actions from the BRIP address the requirements of the Section 6 duty with which the Council now has to comply. They have however been reviewed and updated for this plan in the context of new and updated plans and policy developments and new Council structures and ways of working. The actions have additionally been cross referenced with the objectives from the NRAP.

It is recognised that some of the aspirational recommendations of the BRIP may require additional resources and cannot be progressed until appropriate funding is secured.





## Section 6 Duty Action Plan

**Note:** while lead officers have been identified for the actions, all but the most senior officers are reliant on managerial support to deliver the actions allocated to them.

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
Corporate Issues, Policies and Plans (NRAP Objective 6)					
P1	Ensure that biodiversity conservation is embedded as a core component of Conwy's <i>Environmental Policy</i>	ERF	Business Improvement Manager, ERF	2019 Report	Achieved
P2	Ensure biodiversity impacts and opportunities are considered when developing or reviewing policies,	All, led by CIDT	Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager	2019 Report	Achieved; the need for consideration of biodiversity is referenced in the CAMMS project management system and referred to in project training.

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
	strategies, plans or programmes and in project management.			Future Action	All strategic plans and policies are presented to Members for approval. As part of the approval process, officers must complete a report template which requires the author to evidence the links to the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Corporate Plan. Therefore all key strategies must state how they support the sustainability principle which covers environmental impact. An integrated impact assessment has also been developed which includes consideration of the well-being goals. Biodiversity is not however referenced as a separate issue and whether this should be the case merits further consideration.
			Strategic Planning Policy Manager	2019 Report	The Local Development Plan (LDP) includes policies and guidance to ensure that biodiversity is considered in development management decisions where relevant.
				Future action	The review of the LDP and <i>Supplementary Planning Guidance on Biodiversity</i> will explain the requirement for delivering biodiversity enhancements in development in accordance with Planning Policy Wales and give guidance on delivery mechanisms.
P3	Biodiversity conservation is incorporated into existing plans, policies and programmes.	ERF	Business Improvement Manager, ERF	2019 Report	Biodiversity is referred to in Conwy's Environmental Policy and Environmental Report

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
P4	Investigate whether biodiversity actions can be included in the service plan template	CIDT ERF	Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager  Business Improvement Manager, ERF	Future Action	This would result in them being included in the service performance review, which would assist in monitoring.
P5	Consider incorporating biodiversity objectives into the next review of the Corporate Plan	CIDT	Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager	Future Action	Biodiversity contributes to corporate plan outcomes <i>4 People in Conwy are healthy and active</i> and <i>6 People in Conwy value and look after the environment</i> but is not specifically referred to in the policy text. The explanatory text in the technical document mentions wildlife and accessing the countryside for health, but unfortunately these details have not found their way into the summary booklet.
P6	Encourage the Conwy and Denbighshire Public Service Board to incorporate biodiversity conservation into the Wellbeing plan.	All, led by CIDT	Public Service Board Development Officer		Biodiversity conservation has been identified as one of the areas for action within the community green pledges.
				Future Action	Encourage recognition of biodiversity as a key component of achieving the environmental resilience goal.
P7	Maintain the synergy between biodiversity and other environmental projects such as Green Dragon EMS and any other initiatives.	ERF	Business Improvement Manager, ERF	Future Action	The Green Programme Board could be tasked with ensuring that synergies are optimised

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
		Green Programme Board	Ecologist		
P8	Review procedures to ensure that planning applications which may require measures to ensure biodiversity conservation are always identified.	ERF  RHS	Ecologist  Development and Building Control Manager	Future Action	Review current procedures in the light of the recently completed <i>Planning and Natural Environment Project</i> carried out for planning managers and NRW; ensure roll-out of any agreed checklists and procedures; deliver training to planning officers as necessary
P9	Ensure that Local Development Plan policy NTE/3 to conserve and enhance biodiversity is taken into account appropriately where relevant.	RHS	Development and Building Control Manager	2019 Report	Planning conditions are imposed as required, e.g. to control timing of works to prevent impacts on nesting birds and to ensure that impacts are mitigated.
				Future Action	Review current procedures in the light of the recently completed <i>Planning and Natural Environment Project</i> carried out for planning managers and NRW; ensure roll-out of any agreed checklists and procedures; deliver training to planning officers as necessary

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
P10	Investigate adding biodiversity as a consideration on the committee report template, and provide supporting guidance.	Legal & Democratic Services	Head of Democratic Services	Future Action	Biodiversity conservation is not specifically targeted as a priority for action in the delivery of the Well-being Act goals as incorporated into the 2017-2022 Corporate Plan. Therefore, although committee report templates formerly required consideration of biodiversity, these now take a broader approach referring to Corporate Plan priorities with the consequence that biodiversity requirements could be overlooked.
P11	Ensure that work on future development plans incorporates current guidance and data regarding biodiversity priorities as these change with time	CIDT	Strategic Planning Policy Manager	2019 Report	Guidance has been captured through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) process for the LDP and in Topic Papers prepared for the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) 2018-33. There is also a capture all policy (DP/6) in the LDP which relates to existing and newly formed national and local guidance i.e. developments would need to take account of it in any case.
				Future Action	The replacement LDP will include similar policies and incorporate reference to current legislation and guidance.

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
P12	Consider developing a Local Development Plan policy to promote consideration of habitat connectivity networks in development control.	CIDT	Strategic Planning Policy Manager	2019 Report	The adopted LDP5 Biodiversity SPG states that: "Siting open space and landscaping so that planting within such areas forms a wildlife corridor between areas of habitat adjacent to the site." The Natural Environment chapter also mentions 'habitat connectivity'.
				Future Action	There will be further potential for improvement through the production of a Green Infrastructure Assessment and stronger links to other related plans and strategies including the Active Travel Plan and further supplementary planning guidance
P13	Review procurement policies which could have biodiversity implications elsewhere	All	TBA	Future Action	The explanatory notes with the Act make it clear that it applies to biodiversity in a global sense and requires public authorities to consider the effect of decisions taken, or activities carried out, within Wales insofar as those decisions or activities may have implications in relation to biodiversity outwith Wales.
Site Management and Species Protection (NRAP Objectives 2 & 4 )					



Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
S1	Ensure that management of CCBC land promotes habitat connectivity and contributes to Welsh and local priorities	ERF  Leisure Services (Eirias Park)	Open Spaces Manager  Principal Leisure Manager	2019 Report	Management of Countryside Sites and Nature Reserves is in accordance with approved management plans which aim to achieve favourable conservation status for all semi natural habitats especially Environment (Wales) Act Section 7 habitats.  The management regime of other open spaces, such as reduced mowing, has been changed resulting in biodiversity benefits
				Future Action	Management of other Open Spaces land is under review and will be managed to benefit biodiversity wherever possible.  Targeted, specific projects to improve biodiversity outcomes on CCBC land will be implemented as funding allows.  The ability of 'surplus lands' to deliver positive biodiversity outcomes will be examined and proposals brought forward where appropriate.
S2	Ensure standard procedures to incorporate appropriate consideration of biodiversity during the early stages of proposed schemes affecting land are available to all staff.	ERF  IT	Ecologist  Communications Officer, ERF  IT Infrastructure & Solutions Manager	2019 Report	All guidance documents of working instructions/procedures have been written and are available to staff on the intranet.  A requirement for further training has been identified, particularly within ERF & Regulatory Services so a training programme needs to be agreed and delivered.

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
				Future Action	Ensure that guidance which was formerly available through the Conwy intranet site has not been lost through the new web structure. The guidance needs to be checked, revised if necessary and its availability reviewed with the web team
S3	Develop and document operational procedures for work on trees, hedges and scrub with respect to protected species, important hedgerows and Tree Protection Orders (TPOs).	ERF	Open Spaces Manager	2019 Report	There is an embargo on routine works on trees, hedges or scrub during bird nesting season (March to August) in ERF is in place, but need to check if this is documented.  Biodiversity Guidelines for contractors have been written and published & are to be given to contractors.
S4	Develop and document operational procedures for works on wet ditches, ponds, rivers and streams with respect to protected species.	ERF	Flood Risk and Infrastructure Manager Ecologist	2019 Report	Ecological advice is routinely sought prior to project development.  Biodiversity Guidelines for contractors have been written and published & are to be given to contractors.

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
S5	Develop and document operational procedures for work on roofs, on derelict buildings, building exteriors, bridges, culverts, retaining walls and trees and hedges with respect to bat roosts and nesting birds.	ERF	Consultancy Manager  Flood Risk and Infrastructure Manager  Open Spaces Manager  Facilities Manager	2019 Report	Training courses about Birds and Bats in Buildings have been delivered in past years to relevant staff.  Biodiversity Guidelines for contractors have been written and published & are to be given to contractors.
S6	Adopt best practice to prevent the spread of invasive species on the local authority estate.	ERF	Open Spaces Manager	2019 Report	New EA guidelines for Japanese Knotweed control were circulated to relevant staff some years ago. No instances of poor practice have been reported.  Biodiversity Guidelines for contractors have been written and published & are to be given to contractors.
S7	Develop and document operational procedures with respect to work which may impact on CCBC managed Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).	ERF	Open Spaces Manager	2019 Report	All responsible staff are aware of requirements
S8	Develop and document operational procedures with respect to work which may impact on third party Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).	ERF	Consultancy Manager	2019 Report	All responsible staff are aware of requirements and designations are checked as a matter of course.

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
			Flood Risk and Infrastructure Manager Open Spaces Manager		
S9	Implement operational procedures regarding species protection in application of enforcement powers relating to hedges and trees.	ERF	Open Spaces Manager	2019 Report	Procedure in place: pre-notice letters to the public on trees and hedges include a wildlife warning and a Roadside Trees and Hedges leaflet which explains wildlife requirements.
S10	Ensure that potentially polluting procedures are carried out to best practice standards	ERF	Open Spaces Manager Business Improvement Manager, ERF	2019 Report	Road gritters are calibrated and Safecoat grit minimizes salt runoff.  Departmental operating procedures and incident reporting mechanisms are in place
S11	Reduce the risk of secondary poisoning as a result of pest control operations.	RHS	Public Protection Manager Ecologist	2019 Report	Advice was given some years ago on not using sticky traps or pesticides that could put bats at risk where roosts are suspected.
				Future Action	Need to review current practice.

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
S12	Ensure that biodiversity enhancement opportunities arising from new Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) schemes are maximized	ERF	Flood Risk and Infrastructure Manager Ecologist	Future Action	Mandatory SuDS schemes from January 2019 onwards may bring new opportunities for habitat creation. (As of 2019 only one scheme has been through the SuDS approval process)
S13	Ensure that staff receive appropriate training and are aware of where to access further guidance	ERF All	Ecologist All ERF Managers	2019 Report	Generally staff awareness is good due to training delivered in past years, low staff turn over and good management
				Future Action	Requests for further advice/training must be seen as a positive, and the training delivered as required. See also immediately below.
S14	Deliver advice and/or training to third parties as appropriate	ERF	Ecologist	Future Action	A training conference on biodiversity enhancement through development is programmed for planners, planning agents and architects for March 2010, in conjunction with other NE Wales Local Authorities. CCBC staff from RHS & ERF will also attend.
Habitat Improvement on the CCBC Estate (NRAP Objective 3)					
E1	Increase by 10% the area of Council-controlled land that is managed with the objective of improving biodiversity.	ERF Estates & Asset Management SCE	Open Spaces Manager	2019 Report	22 Countryside sites, 10 road verges and 10% of grassed areas maintained by Open Spaces are managed for biodiversity.  40 Biodiversity Areas in public parks have been established as meadow habitat.

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
		CDS		Future Action	Future review of grass cutting policy is likely to lead to more grassland being managed for biodiversity.
E2	Identify and target funding opportunities to implement habitat creation and enhancement measures at key sites within the Authority's land holdings.	ERF	Ecologist  Local Nature Partnership Co-ordinator	2019 Report	A desk study of CCBC land holdings' current biodiversity value, potential for improvement and connectivity to existing habitat is complete.
				Future Action	Larger habitat restoration and creation projects are likely to require external funding.
E3	Reapply for Bee Friendly Status and implement the actions required.	ERF	Open Spaces Manager  Local Nature Partnership Co-ordinator	2019 Report	Conwy was the first local authority in Wales to gain Bee Friendly status in January 2017 but subsequent staff sickness meant the accreditation was not initially re-applied for. However during 2019 a successful reapplication was made and the accreditation regained.
				Future Action	Reapply for bee friendly accreditation annually and ensure the actions are implemented.



Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
E4	Incorporate biodiversity conservation objectives into Green Flag management Plans as appropriate	ERF	Open Spaces Manager	2019 Report	Conservation objectives and actions are included in all nine Green Flag management Plans.
				Future Action	Continue to ensure that conservation objectives and actions are included in Green Flag management Plans whenever appropriate.
E5	Promote adoption of voluntary actions by staff to support wildlife at CCBC offices and sites.	All	Ecologist	Future Action	Low cost enhancements are likely to be possible at many sites. Small amount of funding available to support these actions.  Any available funding for larger scale enhancements work should be taken advantage of.
E6	Utilise opportunities to carry out enhancements as part of site based projects	All, led by ERF	Ecologist Flood Risk and Infrastructure Manager Project Managers	2019 Report	This has become the norm for most <i>Flood Risk and Infrastructure</i> projects, a notable example being the incorporation of nesting ledges for dippers and wagtails when bridge or culvert work is being undertaken
				Future Action	Low cost enhancements are likely to be possible at many sites. Opportunities should always be explored when site-based projects are undertaken
E7	Develop a protocol to identify and manage veteran trees of the future in CCBC open spaces.	ERF	Open Spaces Manager	Future Action	A management plan for veteran and mature trees was under development some years ago. Progress on this needs to be reviewed.

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
E8	Ensure that actions taken in relation to ash dieback avoid biodiversity impacts as far as possible.	ERF	Open Spaces Manager Ecologist	Future Action	There is as yet no strategic plan in place to guide CCBC's response to ash dieback.
Use and Development of Biodiversity Data (NRAP Objective 5)					
D1	Utilise data held by Cofnod – North Wales Environmental Information Service to inform CCBC regulatory and operational activities	ERF	Ecologist	2019 Report	Service Level Agreement with Cofnod is in place and working successfully
D2	Continue to facilitate ecological survey data submitted in support of planning applications and projects to be uploaded to Cofnod.	ERF	Ecologist	2019 Report	Most historical data has been mobilised.
				Future Action	Some historical data remains to be uploaded. New reports need to be passed to Cofnod as they are received.
D3	Incorporate a requirement for ecological consultants, commissioned by CCBC to conduct ecological surveys, to submit the resulting data to Cofnod.	ERF	Consultancy Manager Flood Risk and Infrastructure Manager	Future Action	Need to check if this is being actioned
D4	Consider conducting/commission further survey on CCBC land	ERF	Ecologist	2019 Report	Desk study of phase 1 habitat survey data and aerial photographs has been completed.

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
	prioritised for biodiversity improvement, where beneficial.		Local Nature Partnership Co-ordinator	Future Action	Field survey work on targeted sites may be beneficial but is subject to resources being available.
D5	Commission further survey work where required, to supplement Cofnod search data.	ERF	Ecologist Project Managers	2019 Report	<p>The Cofnod dataset is best used with care by an experienced ecologist. A lack of data does not mean that there are no protected species present, i.e. a false negative result could lead to disturbance or damage to a protected species.</p> <p>A precautionary approach based on the habitat triggers ecological assessment and survey where required, regardless of the Cofnod dataset.</p>
Awareness, Education and Advice (NRAP Objective 1)					
A1	Develop and document operational procedures regarding advising applicants of species protection issues in discharging regulatory duties.	RHS	Principal Building Control Officer  Development and Building Control Manager  Ecologist	Future Action	<p>While procedures were in place and information had been produced some years ago, procedural and staff changes (agile working and a move to electronic communication) mean that current practice should be reviewed and revised if necessary.</p> <p>The practice of netting vegetation should be discouraged in any information produced</p>

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
A2	Develop an online biodiversity information centre via the Authority's intranet and internet website to provide guidance on and engage the wider community in CCBC measures to conserve Conwy's biodiversity.	ERF	Ecologist Communications Officer, ERF IT Infrastructure & Solutions Manager	Future Action	All guidance documents of working instructions/procedures were formerly available through the Conwy intranet site but may have been lost through the new web structure. They need to be checked, revised if necessary and their availability reviewed with the web team
A3	Ensure that public information activities take due account of biodiversity matters	RHS All	Public Protection Manager	2019 Report	Information about control of nuisance gulls includes information about their protected status
				Future Action	If the project management system is followed, the need for biodiversity information should be identified as projects are undertaken.
A4	Explore ways of keeping biodiversity as a high profile matter across CCBC sites and departments	ERF	Ecologist Communications Officer, ERF	Future Action	The BIP review in 2011 succeeded in raising the profile of biodiversity within the authority. Much good practice has now been implemented as standard but this needs to be maintained against a backdrop of raised profiles of other environmental issues such as climate change and carbon reduction.
A5	Support CCBC departments in their implementation of biodiversity improvement actions.	ERF	Ecologist Local Nature Partnership Co-ordinator	2019 Report	CCBC departments are increasingly aware of the support available from the Biodiversity team and preliminary guidance is often sought, as well as assistance in interpreting the results of ecological surveys.

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
				Future Action	Continue to provide a support service to all departments.
A6	Raise awareness of biodiversity within the community.	ERF		2019 Report	A Wildlife Events Programme was delivered by Open Spaces (formerly Countryside Service) for many years but was scaled down in 2019 due to workload pressures.
				Future Action	Resume a Wildlife Events Programme or similar once the BPO post is revived, subject to resources being available.
A7	Deliver educational events on CCBC managed nature reserves, particularly on the Great Orme	ERF	Country Park Warden  Countryside Warden  Local Nature Partnership Co-ordinator	2019 Report	A programme of educational visits for schools which focus on biodiversity was delivered by Open Spaces (formerly Countryside Service) for many years but will be scaled down from 2020 due to a reduction in staff numbers. Educational visits will continue to be offered to local schools and colleges.
				Future Action	Review the provision of educational visits to CCBC managed nature reserves, and extend the provision of these if resources are available.
A8	Continue to educate the boating and allied communities about how to avoid impacting vulnerable marine and coastal species	ERF	Harbour Master	2019 Report	The <i>Marine Code</i> has been adapted for use in Conwy and is distributed to users by the Harbour Master's team
				Future Action	Respond to issues as they arise

Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
A9	Provide 9 month long placement opportunities for sandwich year students from environmental courses to contribute to nature reserve management and gain skills and experience.	ERF	Country Park Warden	2019 Report	Four placement opportunities are offered annually
			Countryside Warden	Future Action	Continuation of the placement programme
Working with the Community (NRAP Objectives 2,3 & 4)					
C1	Facilitate volunteering on nature reserves to all members of the community when possible.	ERF	Country Park Warden  Countryside Warden  Local Nature Partnership Co-ordinator	2019 Report	<p>The authority recognises that many people voluntarily contribute their time and skills to facilitate the good management of nature reserves and other sites. However the use of volunteers on reserves to undertake practical work requires a lot of staff time and has been scaled down in 2019 due to other pressures on staff.</p> <p>A number of Friends of groups assist in site management on various sites and contribute to biodiversity conservation through this work, e.g. <i>Friends of Happy Valley and Haulfre Gardens, Friends of West Shore etc.</i></p>
				Future Action	Both organised groups and individuals are likely to continue wanting to contribute to reserve management but resources to enable active involvement are limited. Opportunities will be created when resources allow.



Ref	Action	Department	Lead Officer(s)	Status	Notes
C2	Work in partnership where possible to deliver biodiversity gains through specific projects	ERF	Ecologist  Local Nature Partnership Co-ordinator	2019 Report	One example is the seal project at Angel Bay, in which a number of agencies and voluntary groups, including CCBC, are involved.  A number of Friends of groups assist in site management and other beneficial activities.
				Future Action	Continue to involve and support Friends groups and other organisations wherever possible and as resources allow.

CCBC Conwy County Borough Council

CDS Community Development Service

CIDT Corporate Improvement and Development Team

ERF Environment, Roads and Facilities

RHS Regulatory and Housing Services

SCE Social Care and Education

## Appendix 1

### Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 has been designed to complement the goals of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 by applying the principles of sustainable development to the management of Wales' natural resources. Biodiversity and well-functioning ecosystems provide natural solutions that build resilience, which in turn help society create jobs, support livelihoods and human well-being, adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and contribute to sustainable development.

The Act puts the ecosystem approach into statute through a set of Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) principles. There are 3 main constituents to Part 1 of the Environment Act:

1. The State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR)- A report produced by Natural Resources Wales that gives an assessment of natural resources and how well Wales is doing to manage them in a sustainable way
2. Natural Resources Policy - A policy produced by Welsh Government that sets out the priorities, risks and opportunities for managing natural resources sustainably. The policy takes into account the findings of the State of Natural Resources report
3. Area Statements –A local evidence base produced by Natural Resources Wales which helps to implement the priorities, risks and opportunities identified in the National Policy and how NRW intends to address these (not yet published in October 2018).

Section 6 under Part 1 of the Act requires that

- (1) A public authority must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.
- (2) In complying with subsection (1), a public authority must take account of the resilience of ecosystems, in particular the following aspects—
  - a) diversity between and within ecosystems;
  - b) the connections between and within ecosystems;
  - c) the scale of ecosystems;
  - d) the condition of ecosystems (including their structure and functioning);
  - e) the adaptability of ecosystems.
- (3) Subsection (1) does not apply to—
  - a) the exercise of a function by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, or
  - b) the exercise of a judicial function of a court or tribunal.
- (4) In complying with subsection (1)—
  - a) the Welsh Ministers, the First Minister for Wales, the Counsel General to the Welsh Government, a Minister of the Crown and a government department must have regard to the United Nations Environmental Programme Convention on Biological Diversity of 1992, and
  - b) any other public authority must have regard to any guidance given to it by the Welsh Ministers.

- (5) In complying with subsection (1), a public authority other than a Minister of the Crown or government department must have regard to—
- a) the list published under section 7;
  - b) the state of natural resources report published under section 8;
  - c) any area statement published under section 11 for an area that includes all or part of an area in relation to which the authority exercises functions.
- (6) A public authority other than a Minister of the Crown or government department must prepare and publish a plan setting out what it proposes to do to comply with subsection (1).
- (7) A public authority must, before the end of 2019 and before the end of every third year after 2019, publish a report on what it has done to comply with subsection (1).
- (8) A public authority that has published a plan under subsection (6)—
- (a) must review the plan in the light of each report that it publishes under subsection (7), and
  - (b) may revise the plan at any time.

### **Explanatory notes**

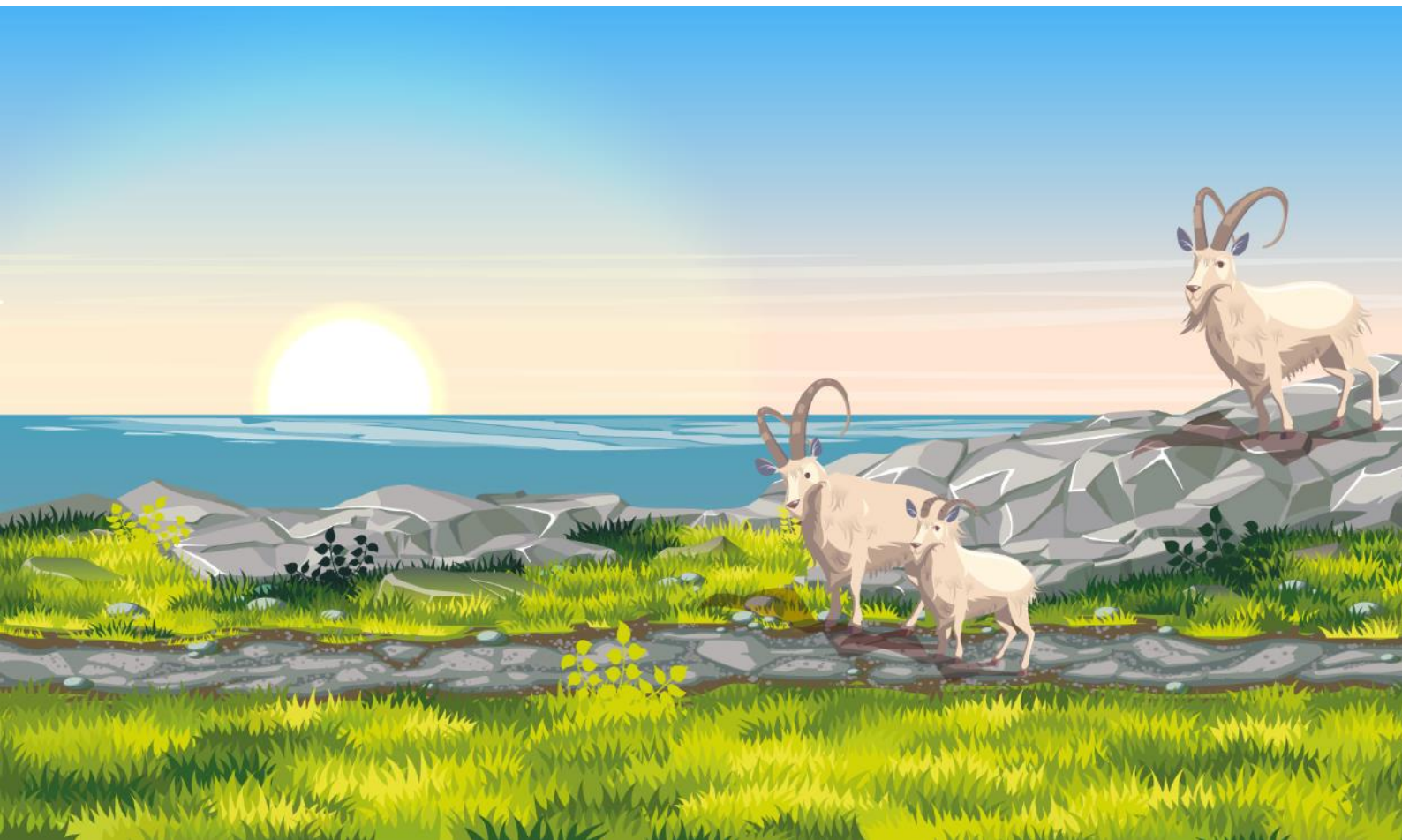
**Biodiversity** means the diversity of living organisms, whether at the genetic, species or ecosystem level.

**Ecosystems** comprise communities of plants and animals, together with the non-living physical characteristics of their environment (e.g. geology, soil and climate) interlinked together as an ecological system through nutrient flows and energy cycles.

### **Ecosystem resilience is dependent on:**

- Diversity of species and habitats within and between ecosystems
- Size and extent of the ecosystem. The greater the extent of an ecosystem the more able it will be able to cope with disturbance, e.g. the larger the area of habitat is, the larger the populations of species it can support, so they will be more genetically diverse and are less likely to become extinct.
- Condition of the ecosystem. If an ecosystem is in poor condition it will be stressed and have a reduced capacity to resist, recover or adapt to new disturbances or to deliver ecosystem services.
- Connection and linkages between and within ecosystems. This usually applies to movement of organisms – from foraging for food to dispersal of seeds and genes, as well as movement in response to climate change. Good connectivity allows ecosystems to recover from disturbance more easily. Connectivity can be reduced through habitat loss, fragmentation and barriers to movement.
- Adaptability to change (e.g. climate change) is a vital part of resilience since it allows ecosystems to adapt to change, such as climate change. All the other

aspects of resilience form the basis which allows successful adaptation to take place.



## References

1. Priority Habitats of Wales, a technical guide, edited by PS Jones, DP Stevens, TH Blackstock, CR Burrows & EA Howe published by Countryside Council for Wales 2003
2. [Wellbeing of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)
3. [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#)
4. [The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales](#)
5. Conwy Corporate Plan 2017-2022
6. Conwy County Borough Council Environmental Policy 2017  
<https://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Council/Strategies-Plans-and-Policies/Corporate-Plan/assets/documents/Environmental-Policy.pdf>