



# Bangor City Council

## **Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6.** **(Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report 2021.**

**Adopted by Bangor City Council in May 2021.  
(This report is an extension of the 2019 Report).**

## **Introduction and Context**

Bangor City Council (BCC) serves a City which has eight Wards and boasts a population of over 18,000 people (as of 2019). This permanent number of residents is supplemented by some 12,000 students, giving Bangor one of the highest ratios of students to permanent residents in the United Kingdom. This demographic spread gives the City unique benefits and unique challenges.

Bangor has a long history that dates back to post Roman period. St Deiniol's Cathedral was founded in 525AD and there has been a permanent occupation ever since. Geographically, Bangor sits in a valley between two ridges that run North East to South West and this valley is buffered at the North East end by the sea. This geographical location gives the City a diverse biodiverse ecosystem. The coastal area is suffering from coastal erosion and work will commence in the coming years to improve the flood defences.

The recent onset and restriction caused by the Covid 19 pandemic have created challenges and restricted the City Council's ability to progress its policies.

Outside the City Centre, there are large amounts of pastureland and unmanaged fields, several owned by the City Council. Biodiversity could be improved in these green areas with an improved and more managed policy of promoting diverse and varied species of plant and wildlife, and the encouragement of foragers or pollinators.

It is acknowledged that the City Council should prepare a detailed strategy to improve biodiversity both within the City and the surrounding area. Such a strategy should be prepared within the underlying principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

BCC provides a range of services to the local community which has an impact on biodiversity, such as: - Management of BCC-owned Green Spaces, Planting/Maintaining Planters and Hanging Baskets, Tree Planting and Management, Footpath Maintenance, Pier Management.

BCC is responsible for the following Biodiversity Areas: -

1. Penrhyn Arms Woods. Maintain the woodland as a local habitat of diverse trees, plants and shrub species with public access. Maintenance includes responding to H&S concerns, storm damage and careful intervention to promote and sustain biodiversity.

2. Ashley Jones Fields. This is a large open field, surrounded by trees, frequently used by local residents. Additional Sakura trees have been planted at this location to increase biodiversity. The field is managed in a manner which encouraged wildflowers and pollinators and only regular walkways are cut regularly.

3. Dargie Fields. This area of land is located in the centre of a residential and student area of the City and is left relatively unmanaged to encourage wildflowers and flora.

4. Play Areas. The parks and play areas of Bangor are owned by Cyngor Gwynedd and, as such, these areas are maintained to that authority's schedule. It is felt that by encouraging greater BCC involvement in this maintenance, the City Council could increase the management schedule to the benefit of both the biodiversity and the aesthetic appearance of these parks. Each park could become a local place of nature for the community.

5. Buildings. BCC owns and maintains a number of buildings in the City, including the City Centre Clock, Penrhyn Hall, the Pier workshop etc.

# Action Report

<u>Intentions / Aims</u>	<u>Actions and Plans</u>	<u>Monitoring Process</u>
<p><b>Embed biodiversity into decision-making and procurement</b></p>	<p>Take biodiversity into consideration when planning planting projects.</p> <p>Consider planning applications from the biodiversity perspective.</p> <p>Participate in flood and associated discussions related to climate change and adaptation.</p> <p>Integrate the duty across BCC policies and procedures.</p> <p>A basic pollinator survey has been conducted by BCC as a rough guide to local species and habitats.</p>	<p>Scrutiny of minutes and agendas, follow-up procedures as part of best practice.</p>
<p><b>Raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance</b></p>	<p>Cllrs to take an active role in biodiversity within their Wards and when liaising with local organizations.</p> <p>Cllrs as school governors promote biodiversity at every opportunity.</p> <p>BCC grant awards to recognize local groups involved in increasing biodiversity.</p> <p>Installed picnic and standard benches in the parks and paths for residents to enjoy and engage with biodiversity.</p> <p>Environmental factors and projects to be at the centre of BCC's proposed Community Place Plan and Bangor City's Masterplan.</p>	<p>Encourage Cllrs and others to report events, meetings and plans across BCC, the community, and CG.</p>

<p><b>Safeguard principle species and habitats</b></p>	<p>To be mindful of the natural species and habitats on its land, specifically Menai Woods. To be aware of species that live and feed on or around BCC buildings.</p> <p>Establish bug hotel habitats and hibernacula, at various locations within the BCC area.</p> <p>Participate in the green space management of CG land.</p>	<p>Encourage officers and Cllrs and others to report events, meetings and plans across BCC, the community, and CCBC.</p>
<p><b>Tackle negative factors i.e. reduce pollution, use nature-based solutions, address invasive species.</b></p>	<p>Tree surveys are undertaken quarterly at Menai Woods to ensure trees under BCC ownership are healthy.</p> <p>Monitor litter and refuse left at BCC sites.</p> <p>Litter pick days are organized by Cllrs and volunteers, such as the Clean Bangor Day.</p>	<p>Encourage Cllrs and others to report events, meetings and plans across BCC, the community and CG.</p>
<p><b>Use improve and share evidence.</b></p>	<p>Worked with the Biodiversity Officer from Cyngor Gwynedd and other agencies to ensure the use of best practices and to increase knowledge of local issues and projects/schemes.</p> <p>Taken advice from the Treborth and Bangor University where appropriate.</p>	<p>Records submitted to CG Ecologist.</p> <p>Use of Expert Advice (e.g. CG, BU representatives).</p> <p>Keep Wales Tidy and OVW Officers .</p>

# Review of S6 Duty

## **What has worked well?**

The City Council is liaising with Cyngor Gwynedd and other agencies to improve the management of green spaces in the City, and it will be looking at steps to improve biodiversity in the City over the next few years.

## **What have been the barriers?**

The Covid restrictions have been a barrier also the lack of internal expertise to identify changes needed or best practices.

## **What will you change?**

Liaise with local specialist organizations like Treborth to obtain the best advice on improving biodiversity.

## **How and when will the Section 6 duty be monitored and the Section 6 plan reviewed?**

The Section 6 Plan will be reviewed in line with the Council's annual policy reviews and reports and suggestions for alterations brought before Council.