



ENVIRONMENT (WALES) ACT 2016

Section 6 BIODIVERSITY and RESILIENCE OF ECOSYSTEMS DUTY

POLICY STATEMENT & REPORT 2020/22

ACTION PLAN 2023/25

Adopted by Full Council 19/12/2022

BACKGROUND

Rhayader is a market town and community in Powys, Wales. It has a population of approx. 2,010 in 2021 (**Source:** UK Office for National Statistics (web)), and is the first town on the banks of the River Wye, 20 miles (32 km) from its source on the Plynlimon range of the Cambrian Mountains. The town is one of the principal centres of population in the historic county of Radnorshire. It is situated roughly midway between North and South Wales on the A470, 13 miles north of Builth Wells and 30 miles east of Aberystwyth on the A44 - two of Wales' most important trunk roads. The Town is a gateway to the Elan Valley where environmental land management is a high priority in the water catchment for Dŵr Cymru/Welsh Water and the Town Council works closely with the Elan Valley Trust.

Rhayader town Council (RTC) provides a range of services to its local communities, some of which have an impact on biodiversity. These include:

- Responsibility for two allotment sites & one grazing area.
- Representation on two park trusts and one community garden
- Funding: RTC gives grants to local groups and organisations in the RTC area, which may include grants to improve the biodiversity and sustainability of various sites
- Funding: RTC receives an annual grant from Bryntitly Wind farm. RTC decides every year how to allocate this grant to local community projects that benefit residents.

In 2022 the Precept was £43,000

This Plan recognises the responsibilities of Rhayader Town Council under the Environment Act (Wales) 2016 which stipulates: authorities "*must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the proper exercise of their functions and in doing so promote the resilience of ecosystems*".

The 6 objectives to maintain and enhance biodiversity are:

- 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all level
- 2: Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management.
- 3: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation
- 4: Tackle key pressures on species and habitats
- 5: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring
- 6: Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.

Rhayader town Council will raise awareness across the organisation about how each and every role can impact and influence biodiversity and introduce measures to enhance biodiversity and ecosystems in all policies, plans and projects.

Council representatives on other bodies to use influence to encourage nature friendly practice

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

- (i) Working in partnership with Powys County Council to agree wildlife friendly mowing schedule of all county owned areas around the town, including grass verges, green areas of housing estates etc.

- (ii) Introduction of wild flower border along the top of Dark lane carpark.
- (iii) A move towards native pollinator friendly plants in all Town Council flower boxes.
- (v) Initiated an idea and supported the planting of, a community orchard by Elan Links project in the Elan Village, Elan Valley.
- (vi) Town Council representatives on Waun Caple Park trust support in the Local Places for Nature initiative (promoted by Keep Wales Tidy) to host a wildlife bank at Waun Capel park.
- (vii) RTC sourced free organic compost, from a local farmer, for allotment users in order to deter the use of peat based compost.

These actions form part of a wider plan which acknowledges that under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Town Council should provide for *"a prosperous economy, a healthy and resilient environment and vibrant cohesive communities"*.

As a statutory consultee, RTC will engage with planning at early stages to ensure biodiversity is taken into account when building new homes within the community. This action is in line with the recent Planning Policy (Wales) Act 2016 which states: *"planning authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. This means that development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or population of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity"*.

The Action Plan (overleaf) is an evolving plan to be regularly reviewed and evaluated along with a commitment for this Plan to be reviewed, and, amended where appropriate by Full Council on an annual basis.

ACTION PLAN

Location	Who	Action Plan	Status
Groe Park, Cwmdauddwr	RTC Reps on park committee	Encourage a wildlife friendly mowing strategy. Introduction of wildlife areas, bug houses, bird boxes & fruit trees	Ongoing
Waun Capel Park, Rhayader	RTC reps on park committee	Continue to support the Biodiversity enhancement plan for the park which includes the dev. of the wildflower bank	Ongoing
Allotments	RTC Allotment committee	Encourage a nature friendly / 'organic' plot management. Continue to source organic peat free compost for plot holders use	Ongoing
At Entrances to town	Flower committee	Maintain flower boxes to encourage pollinators – use of native pollinator friendly plants	Ongoing
Cwmdauddwr Bridge	All	Utilise LED lighting features to minimise light pollution and energy consumption	Ongoing

Verges etc		Work with PCC to agree wildlife friendly mowing schedule on all grass areas around town.	Ongoing
Cwmdauddwr community Garden	RTC representatives on committee	Encourage and support organic/nature friendly gardening practice.	For consideration
Areas around town		Secure agreement on land to develop a community orchard	For consideration
Public toilets at Dark lane & Cwmdauddwr	Toilet committee	Investigate the feasibility of developing "Green Roofs" for pollinators	For consideration
Library Building	All	Once CATS transfers completed consider green roof? Bird, bat boxes, bug hotels & native plants for pollinators	For consideration
Grant Applications		Support & encourage grant applications from projects that enhance and support nature & the natural environment	For Consideration
Best Kept Garden		Encourage nature friendly gardening with Best Kept garden "for Wild life" Award	For consideration
Keep Wales Tidy		Continue to support KWT work on litter picking, street cleaning, cigarette butt disposal	Ongoing
Recycling at Dark lane		Source alternative recycling opportunities for Dark lane carpark	Ongoing