

Cefn Community Council

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 - Section 6

Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report

Reporting Term: 2026 - 2027

1,000+	140+	6	14
bags of litter collected by #StayOnSide Cefn Litter Pickers since May 2025	hedgehog boxes distributed across the wider Wrexham community	swift boxes installed to support nesting opportunities	tree species identified for the National Forest for Wales application

Adopted May 2022 | Updated and Readopted May 2026

Document control

Report title	Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report
Reporting period	2026 - 2027
Prepared for	Cefn Community Council
Legislative basis	Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Part 1, Section 6
Adopted	May 2022
Updated and readopted	May 2026

Executive summary

This report sets out how Cefn Community Council is meeting its duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity and, in doing so, promote the resilience of ecosystems across its functions, land management, grant support, community engagement, procurement and partnership work.

For the 2026 - 2027 term, the Council has strengthened its environmental leadership through practical action on the ground, visible public campaigns, local food-growing and pollinator planting, wildlife shelter provision, and cross-community collaboration. The report builds on the Council's established work at Trefynant Cemetery, George Edwards Hall, Plas Kynaston Multi-Use Games Area, Cefn Bank, play parks, the Cenotaph, streetlighting and wider community green spaces.

Headline achievements and current priorities

#StayOnSide Cefn Litter Pickers, established in May 2025, have collected over 1,000 bags of litter, reducing hazards to wildlife and improving the condition of streets, verges, paths and green spaces.

Cefn Community Council has supported Wrexham Council's Hedgehog Campaign as a Hedgehog Ambassador, distributing over 140 hedgehog boxes across the wider Wrexham community and enabling collaboration with other community councils.

A wildflower and edible community garden has been developed at the rear of George Edwards Hall, supporting pollinators, insects, food-growing education and self-sustainable living.

Six swift boxes have been installed to increase nesting opportunities for a red-listed bird species that is strongly associated with buildings and suitable high nesting cavities.

The Council has applied to the National Forest for Wales project for the Plas Kynaston MUGA Forest / woodland area, supported by canopy evidence and a tree species audit.

1. Introduction and context

Cefn Community Council serves approximately 7,500 residents within the villages of Cefn Mawr, Acrefair and Penybryn, Newbridge, Plas Madoc, Rhosymedre and Cefn Bychan. The Council offices are located at the George Edwards Hall in Cefn Mawr, within the World Heritage Zone. The Council employs five members of staff: Clerk, Assistant, Groundsman, Caretaker and Community Agent.

The Community Council area comprises four electoral wards:

- Acrefair and Penybryn - 5 members
- Rhosymedre and Cefn Bychan - 1 member
- Plas Madoc - 5 members
- Cefn - 5 members

The precept requirement for 2026/2027 is set through the Council's approved budget for the year and the Council continues to report annually on its contribution to local well-being, sustainability and biodiversity duties. The Council promotes sustainability and biodiversity by embedding environmental considerations into decisions, maintenance regimes, partnerships and community initiatives wherever practicable.

2. Legislative and policy context

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 requires public authorities in Wales to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions and, in doing so, promote the resilience of ecosystems. This is not limited to nature reserves or protected sites: it applies to day-to-day decisions, procurement, land management, public engagement, planning responses and the way public bodies work with communities.

This report therefore records not only the Council's direct land-management activity, but also education, volunteer support, campaigns, data sharing, cross-council collaboration and actions that reduce pressures on wildlife habitats.

3. Cefn Community Council values

The Council's values support a practical, inclusive and forward-looking approach to biodiversity. The following CEFN acronym is used as a simple public-facing summary of those values:

C - Community-mindedness	We value working together and supporting our local community to create a better place for everyone.
E - Equality	We believe in treating everyone fairly and with respect, regardless of their background, race or beliefs.
F - Future-focused	We are committed to planning and acting in ways that will benefit our community now and for generations to come.
N - Nature-loving	We cherish our natural environment and strive to protect and enhance it for the enjoyment and well-being of all.

4. Council estate and areas of influence

The following assets, sites and operational areas are located within or directly connected to the Community Council boundary and influence the Council's biodiversity work:

Site / function	Biodiversity relevance and Council role
Trefynant Cemetery	Located at Abernant, Acrefair, owned and maintained by the Community Council, with records dating back to the 1800s. Tree works are managed with seasonal sensitivity and no major cutting takes place until after the bird nesting season unless health and safety requires intervention.
George Edwards Hall and Council building	Owned and maintained by the Community Council on Well Street, Cefn Mawr. The hall has been at the centre of the village for over 100 years. Energy-efficiency works include replacement windows and doors and conversion of over 90% of lighting to LED.
George Edwards Hall wildflower and edible garden	The rear of the hall now includes a wildflower and edible community garden encouraging honeysuckle, hops and wild garlic, alongside strawberries, white strawberries, Himalayan strawberries, rhubarb, Jerusalem artichoke, white currants and yellow raspberries. This supports pollinators, insects, community food-growing and low-food-mile learning.
Plas Kynaston Multi-Use Games Area and MUGA Forest	Located on Plas Kynaston Lane, Cefn Mawr, with sports provision, play space, parking, trees and grassland. The Council has applied to National Forest for Wales for the Plas Kynaston MUGA Forest / woodland area, supported by natural canopy coverage evidence and an identified tree species list.
Play parks	Eleven play parks are owned by Wrexham County Borough Council, with maintenance and repair funded by the Community Council via a service level agreement.

Site / function	Biodiversity relevance and Council role
The Cenotaph	Located on Plas Kynaston Lane. The obelisk sits on the edge of a green space with views over the Dee Valley. A wildflower meadow has been planted at the site to support insects.
Cefn Bank	The green space to the rear of the Crane Street public car park has been transformed with Our Picturesque Landscapes into a picnic area and viewpoint, with a traditionally built dry stone wall and planting improvements.
Schools and youth provision	The area includes Ysgol Rhosymedre, Ysgol Cefn, Ysgol Acrefair and Ysgol Min-y-Ddol. Youth provision is supported in Cefn Mawr and Plas Madoc, creating opportunities for biodiversity learning and anti-litter education.
Ty Mawr Country Park	A major country park beside the River Dee, with animals, picnic areas, play park, BMX track, football field and cafe. The park supports wildflower meadows and low-chemical land management.
The Rock / Coed Richard	A reclaimed quarry area bordering Acrefair, Cefn and Rhosymedre, now rich in wildflower and bird species. The Council has supported Wildlife Trust walks and meadow creation.
Dog bag dispensers and campaigns	Biodegradable dog waste bags are provided at nine locations and supported by No Dog Fouling and Put It in the Bin campaigns, including digital videos to raise awareness and change behaviour.
Streetlighting	The Council owns and maintains over 500 streetlights, upgraded to LED to reduce energy use, maintenance costs and environmental impact.
Plas Madoc Leisure Centre	A community-owned trust facility that serves residents and visitors and contributes to community well-being.

5. Scientific and ecological rationale

The following ecological principles explain why the Council's actions support biodiversity and ecosystem resilience:

Principle	Ecological benefit
Pollinator planting and edible landscapes	A varied mix of flowering, fruiting and edible plants provides nectar, pollen, fruits, seeds, shelter and structure across the seasons. This benefits bees, hoverflies, moths, butterflies and other insects, while also supporting birds and small mammals that depend on insects and berries.
Native trees, hedgerows and canopy cover	Tree canopy moderates temperature, intercepts rainfall, stores carbon, improves soil stability and creates layered habitat from roots and leaf litter to bark, blossom, fruit and canopy. Native broadleaf trees and hedgerow species are particularly valuable where they connect fragmented habitats.

Principle	Ecological benefit
Litter removal	Removing litter reduces the risk of wildlife entanglement, ingestion of plastics, injury from glass and cans, blocked drains, contamination of watercourses and spread of waste into hedgerows, grasslands and rivers. Repeated monitoring also helps identify sources and hotspots.
Dog fouling reduction	Dog fouling can add excess nutrients to grassland, create health risks and reduce the community's willingness to use green spaces. Clear campaigns, bag provision and public education support cleaner habitats and more welcoming community spaces.
Hedgehog support	Hedgehogs need connected gardens and safe shelter to forage, breed and hibernate. Hedgehog boxes, hedgehog highways and reduced garden hazards help address habitat fragmentation and improve access to food, water and cover.
Bird and swift boxes	Bird boxes provide artificial nesting opportunities where natural holes are limited. Swift boxes are especially important because swifts often depend on high cavities in buildings and suitable nest sites can be lost through renovation or modern construction.
Low-chemical management	Avoiding pesticides and using natural maintenance approaches protects soil organisms, pollinators, aquatic habitats and the wider food web.

6. Key biodiversity initiatives for 2026 - 2027

#StayOnSide Cefn Litter Pickers

The #StayOnSide Cefn Litter Pickers were established in May 2025 and have collected over 1,000 bags of litter from the community. This has created visible improvements to streets, verges, footpaths, play areas and green spaces, while reducing the amount of plastic, cans, glass and general waste that can harm wildlife. The group also supports civic pride, volunteering, anti-social behaviour reduction and practical environmental education.

Hedgehog Ambassador work

Cefn Community Council has supported Wrexham Council's Hedgehog Campaign by becoming a Hedgehog Ambassador. The Council has distributed over 140 hedgehog boxes to the wider Wrexham community, helping households and community groups provide shelter and nesting opportunities. This work has enabled cross-collaboration with community councils and local partners across Wrexham.

George Edwards Hall wildflower and edible garden

At the rear of George Edwards Hall, the Council has created a wildlife-friendly garden encouraging honeysuckle, hops and wild garlic, alongside strawberries, white strawberries, Himalayan strawberries, rhubarb, Jerusalem artichoke, white currants and yellow raspberries. The garden supports insects, pollinators, food-growing skills, biodiversity awareness and self-sustainable living.

Bird boxes and swift boxes

The Council has purchased locally made wooden bird boxes from Cefn and is identifying suitable locations for installation. Six swift boxes have also been installed to encourage swifts into the community. Siting decisions will consider orientation, height, safety, disturbance risk and maintenance outside the nesting season.

No Dog Fouling and Put It in the Bin campaigns

The Council has led No Dog Fouling and Put It in the Bin campaigns, including digital online videos. These campaigns support behaviour change, cleaner streets and green spaces, better water quality and reduced risks to wildlife and public health.

National Forest for Wales application

The Council has applied for the National Forest for Wales project at the Plas Kynaston MUGA Forest / woodland area. The application is supported by natural canopy coverage evidence, including 25 m² survey references, and by a professional tree species list identified by Mr Paul Moss, Tree Expert, Derwen College.

7. Action report - how the Council assists biodiversity

Action conducted to	Council action / delivery	Monitoring and evidence
Embed biodiversity into decision making and procurement	Continue to consider the climate and nature emergency in Council reports, maintenance decisions, procurement and project planning. Maintain LED lighting in streetlights and Council buildings and reinvest savings where practicable into community and environmental improvements. Consider biodiversity impacts in planning consultation responses and service level agreements.	Evidence within Council minutes, reports and decisions. Monitor energy reductions, maintenance savings, procurement decisions, planning comments and environmental considerations recorded in reports.
Raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance	Continue nature walks, Wildlife Trust activity, school engagement, bird box giveaways, litter-picking promotion, youth provision activity, digital videos, No Dog Fouling and Put It in the Bin campaigns. Promote the CEFN values as a public-facing environmental message.	Monitor attendance, school participation, social media reach, campaign outputs, community feedback, litter-picking records and youth engagement reports.
Safeguard principal species and habitats	Work with partner organisations to protect birds, hedgehogs, pollinators, wildflower areas, trees, hedgerows and river-linked habitats. Avoid major tree cutting during nesting season unless safety requires it. Support hedgehogs through boxes, highways advice and cross-council collaboration. Install and monitor bird boxes and swift boxes.	Record species observations where available, monitor box installation sites, log hedgehog box distribution, record partner feedback, and review planning responses and maintenance regimes.
Restore and create habitats and resilient ecological networks	Maintain and expand wildflower meadows, edible planting, tree planting, hedgerow and canopy work. Progress the Plas Kynaston MUGA Forest / National Forest for Wales application. Identify opportunities to connect sites through planting, footpath links and community stewardship.	Track new habitat areas, planted species, tree health, canopy evidence, National Forest application progress, volunteer activity and maintenance requirements.
Tackle negative factors such as pollution, litter, dog fouling and invasive pressure	Maintain biodegradable dog bag dispensers, run No Dog Fouling and Put It in the Bin campaigns, support the #StayOnSide Cefn Litter Pickers, report fly-tipping, avoid pesticides on Council-owned land, recycle at Council buildings and reduce unnecessary waste.	Record dispenser refills, campaign outputs, litter bags collected, routes, fly-tipping referrals, waste types and Keep Wales Tidy data where applicable.
Use, improve and share evidence	Share litter data with Keep Wales Tidy and Wrexham County Borough Council. Maintain records of hedgehog box distribution, bird and swift boxes, tree species, wildflower areas, digital campaign reach, volunteer outings and fly-tipping reports.	Use databases, apps, Council reports and partner correspondence to evidence outputs. Review data quarterly and annually as part of Section 6 monitoring.

Action conducted to	Council action / delivery	Monitoring and evidence
Support capacity and other organisations	Facilitate community members who want to litter pick, support local schools, work with Derwen College, provide grants to local organisations, support youth provision and collaborate with Wrexham Council and other community councils through the Hedgehog Campaign.	Monitor volunteer numbers, group growth, equipment use, partnership activity, grants awarded, community council collaboration and educational outputs.

8. National Forest for Wales - Plas Kynaston MUGA Forest

Cefn Community Council has applied to the National Forest for Wales for the Plas Kynaston MUGA Forest / woodland area. The project supports the National Forest aim of creating a connected, high-quality woodland network that is accessible and valued by communities. The application is supported by existing canopy evidence, including 25 m² natural canopy coverage references, and a tree species audit undertaken by Mr Paul Moss, Tree Expert, Derwen College.

The Council's approach is to recognise and enhance the existing woodland character of the site, protect existing trees, increase species diversity, improve community access and support education, volunteering and biodiversity monitoring. The tree species below provide a professional project record. Scientific names should be checked against final nursery orders and cultivar records where applicable.

No.	Common name	Scientific / Latin name	Notes
1	Green Beech / Common Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Green-leaved beech. Confirm cultivar if a named variety is intended.
2	Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>	Native broadleaf tree.
3	Silver Birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	Native broadleaf tree.
4	Plum Tree	<i>Prunus domestica</i>	Fruit tree; cultivar may be recorded separately if known.
5	Hazel / Hazelnut	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Usually grown as a shrub or small tree; valuable nuts and catkins.
6	Pear	<i>Pyrus communis</i>	Fruit tree; cultivar may be recorded separately if known.
7	Medlar	<i>Mespilus germanica</i>	Traditional horticultural name; some modern taxonomies list this as <i>Crataegus germanica</i> .
8	Damson	<i>Prunus insititia</i>	Often treated as a close relative/subspecies of <i>Prunus domestica</i> .
9	Apple / Crab Apple	<i>Malus</i> sp.	Original list referred to apple; apple is normally <i>Malus</i> . Confirm species/cultivar if known.
10	Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Native small tree/hedgerow species with blossom and berries.
11	Whitebeam	<i>Sorbus aria</i>	Widely used name; some modern taxonomies use <i>Aria edulis</i> .
12	Common Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Native shrub/small tree, valued for wildlife.
13	Oriental Prunus / Ornamental Cherry	<i>Prunus serrulata</i>	Likely ornamental cherry. Confirm exact species/cultivar if known.
14	Walnut / Common Walnut	<i>Juglans regia</i>	Fruiting deciduous tree.

9. Review of Section 6 duty

What has worked well?

- #StayOnSide Cefn Litter Pickers: The group has become a visible, positive and measurable environmental project. Collecting over 1,000 bags of litter since May 2025 has directly improved community spaces and reduced risks to wildlife.
- Hedgehog Ambassador partnership: The Council has demonstrated leadership beyond its own boundary by supporting Wrexham Council's campaign, distributing over 140 hedgehog boxes and collaborating with other community councils.
- Wildflower and edible garden: The George Edwards Hall garden combines biodiversity, food sustainability and learning through pollinator plants, fruiting crops and edible perennial species.
- Green spaces and meadows: Wildlife walks, wildflower meadow installations and green-space improvements have been well received, especially around Plas Kynaston MUGA and Coed Richard.
- Gardening competitions and Derwen College partnership: The Garden in Bloom competition and collaboration with Derwen College have continued to encourage horticultural skills, inclusive learning and greener public spaces.
- Youth engagement: The #StayOnSide programme has linked anti-social behaviour reduction with environmental pride, litter prevention and community responsibility.
- Tree planting and National Forest work: The Council has replanted trees at Plas Kynaston MUGA and progressed a National Forest for Wales application supported by a professional species schedule.
- Digital campaigns: No Dog Fouling and Put It in the Bin videos have helped communicate environmental messages quickly and accessibly.

What have the barriers been?

- Limited land ownership restricts opportunities for new biodiverse spaces and requires negotiation with the principal authority and other landowners.
- Budgetary pressures can limit new projects and increase reliance on external grant funding, donations and partnership support.
- Demand for allotment or growing space remains high, but suitable land is difficult to identify because of ownership, planning and access constraints.
- The growth of litter-picking and wildlife campaigns increases the need for storage, insurance, risk assessments, equipment replacement, volunteer support and safe disposal routes.
- Climate change, invasive species, habitat fragmentation and biodiversity decline require long-term monitoring rather than one-off interventions.
- Digital exclusion means some residents may not see online campaigns, requiring newsletters, posters, face-to-face engagement and community events.

What will the Council change or strengthen in 2026 - 2027?

- Strengthen collaboration with Wrexham CBC biodiversity, climate and local places for nature officers.
- Develop #StayOnSide Cefn Litter Pickers as a sustainable volunteer project with regular reporting, hotspot mapping and educational outputs.
- Expand Hedgehog Ambassador activity through further community council collaboration, hedgehog highways advice, safe shelter promotion and data capture.
- Monitor the George Edwards Hall wildflower and edible garden as a demonstration space for pollinators, self-sustainable living and community food growing.
- Complete siting, installation and monitoring of bird boxes and swift boxes using species-appropriate guidance.
- Progress National Forest for Wales work at Plas Kynaston MUGA Forest and use the species list to guide future planting, management and interpretation.

- Expand digital and non-digital campaigns around dog fouling, litter, recycling, fly-tipping and wildlife-friendly gardens.
- Introduce citizen science where practical, such as tree mapping, bird counts, pollinator observations and community reporting.

10. Monitoring and review framework

The Section 6 duty will be monitored through ongoing collaboration between Council members, the Clerk, staff, volunteers and relevant community stakeholders. Progress will be reviewed as part of strategic planning, with dedicated agenda items at quarterly Council meetings where appropriate.

Theme	Indicator	Source of evidence	Review frequency
Litter and waste	Bags collected, hotspots, fly-tipping reports, unusual items, volunteer outings	Litter app/database, volunteer records, WCBC/Keep Wales Tidy reports	Monthly / quarterly
Hedgehog campaign	Boxes distributed, highways promoted, councils engaged, resident feedback	Distribution records, partner correspondence, photos, reports	Quarterly / annually
Wildflower and edible garden	Species present, seasonal growth, pollinator observations, community use	Photos, planting records, volunteer notes, citizen science	Seasonal
Bird and swift boxes	Number installed, location, suitability, observations, maintenance checks	Installation log, photographs, inspection records	Seasonal / annually
Trees and National Forest	Species list, canopy evidence, tree condition, application progress	Tree audit, maps, NRW/National Forest correspondence	Quarterly / annually
Campaigns and education	Digital reach, school/youth engagement, posters, feedback	Social media insights, event records, youth reports	Quarterly

11. 2026 - 2027 biodiversity action plan

Priority	Action	Lead / partners	Expected output	Evidence
Litter prevention	Maintain and grow #StayOnSide Cefn Litter Pickers and target repeat hotspots.	CCC, volunteers, WCBC, Keep Wales Tidy	Cleaner streets, verges, paths and habitats.	Bag totals, routes, reports, photos.
Hedgehog conservation	Continue Ambassador role and promote hedgehog boxes, highways and safe gardens.	CCC, Wrexham Council, community councils	More wildlife-friendly gardens and stronger cross-council collaboration.	Distribution records, partner feedback.
Pollinator and food garden	Maintain the George Edwards Hall wildflower and edible garden.	CCC staff, volunteers, Derwen College where applicable	More flowering/fruited plants and community learning.	Planting records, photos, observations.
Bird and swift nesting	Install and monitor local wooden bird boxes and six swift boxes.	CCC, local suppliers, volunteers	Additional nesting opportunities and public awareness.	Location map, inspection log.
National Forest	Progress Plas Kynaston MUGA Forest application and manage tree species record.	CCC, Derwen College, National Forest Liaison Officer	Improved woodland recognition, management and connectivity.	Application evidence, species list.
Dog fouling and litter campaigns	Continue No Dog Fouling and Put It in the Bin campaigns, including digital videos.	CCC, WCBC, schools/youth provision	Behaviour change and cleaner public spaces.	Campaign content, engagement metrics.
Evidence and reporting	Create a quarterly biodiversity dashboard for Council review.	Clerk, staff, volunteers	Better monitoring and transparency.	Quarterly report, annual Section 6 review.

12. Evidence base and references

The report has been strengthened with an evidence base to support the Council's practical actions and scientific rationale. The following sources inform the report and should be reviewed when detailed project specifications are prepared:

Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Section 6: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/3/section/6>

Biodiversity Wales - Section 6 guidance: <https://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en/legislation-guidance/section-6/>

Welsh Government - Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty summary: <https://www.gov.wales/section-6-biodiversity-and-resilience-ecosystems-duty-summary-report-2022-html>

Wrexham Council - Hedgehog Conservation Project: <https://news.wrexham.gov.uk/can-you-help-to-protect-hedgehogs/>

British Hedgehog Preservation Society - Hedgehog Homes: <https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/hedgehog-homes/>

British Hedgehog Preservation Society - Gardening with Hedgehogs: <https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/gardening-with-hedgehogs/>

RSPB - Create a high home for swifts: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/create-a-high-home-for-swifts>

RSPB - Swift conservation and Swift Mapper: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-we-do/protecting-species-and-habitats/swift-conservation-take-part-in-swift-mapper>

RHS - Plants for Pollinators: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/research/plants-for-pollinators>

Keep Wales Tidy - litter data and evidence: <https://keepwalestidy.cymru/litter-data/>

Woodland Trust - UK native trees and wildlife value: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/native-trees/>

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew - Plants of the World Online: <https://powo.science.kew.org/>

Royal Horticultural Society - plant information and cultivar checking: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants>

13. Closing statement

Cefn Community Council will continue to make biodiversity part of everyday community life: through clean streets, wildlife-friendly gardens, locally supported food-growing, inclusive education, tree and woodland stewardship, and practical partnerships across Wrexham. The 2026 - 2027 report demonstrates that biodiversity is not a stand-alone duty but a shared community value, expressed through the Council's CEFN principles: Community-mindedness, Equality, Future-focused decision making and Nature-loving stewardship.

Adopted May 2022

Updated and Readopted May 2026