
Cyngor Cymuned Pontyclun Community Council

A Report of Actions relevant to Section 6 of Environment (Wales) Act 2016

Prepared Autumn 2022 being 3-year update

Section 6 of this Act requires that Pontyclun Community Council seeks to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as consistent with the proper exercise of its functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems.

This is a report on actions of the Community Council and its partners which are relevant to this requirement.

In fulfilling this requirement Pontyclun Community Council recognises that its role is to facilitate and harness the contribution of many others including:

- Pontyclun residents,
- The volunteers of Pontyclun Environment Group,
- The volunteers of Pontyclun Community Garden
- Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
- Pontyclun businesses.

Pontyclun Environment Group

The Community Council supports and work closely with the Environment Group.

This is a group of residents whose activities include:

- Coordinating the input of volunteer residents in undertaking litter picks throughout the Pontyclun Community recognising that litter free areas host biodiversity and foster community appreciation of local eco-systems
- Organising local walks with the county ecologist and other experts so that residents can better understand and appreciate the diversity of the local eco-systems
- Arranging various environmental events across Pontyclun
- Promoting environment issues and actions in the area.

Pontyclun Community Garden

The Community Council supports and work closely with the Community Garden

Pontyclun Community Garden is a group of volunteer residents who have established and maintained a community garden within the Pontyclun Park which is provided by Pontyclun Community Council.

The Community Garden includes

- Insect friendly flowers and vegetables
- Bug hotel
- Bees nest
- Composting

Working with Local Schools

The Community Councils seeks to support and work closely with local schools. For example

Refill Pontyclun

Pontyclun school children made agreements with local retailers that tap water will be provided to children bringing their own bottles. The effect is to reduce the use of plastic and reduce the littering of plastic bottles.

The Community Council formalised these arrangements through the launch of a “Refill Pontyclun” scheme. This scheme currently has 21 local businesses as members.

Pontyclun Christmas Tree

In 2019 to encourage discussion on and the reuse and recycling of plastic waste the Council decided to decorate the Community Christmas Tree with waste plastic.

Local schools were asked to create garlands or paint empty plastic bottles which were then used to decorate our community tree.

This generated significant comments locally bringing recycling issues to the fore

Working with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

The Community Council seeks to support and work closely with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

RCT Council has innovated in the development of a grass cutting and collecting machine which allows vegetation a long growing season before it is cut and collected so as to foster local eco-systems and encourage greater biodiversity.

Pontyclun Community Council worked with RCT Council to identify and reserve sites for this ‘hay cut’ regime. The sites include:

- A half-acre of land along the perimeter of Pontyclun Park which is owned by the Community Council
- 5 acres of land on the top end of the cycle path which runs from Pontyclun Railway Station to the A473
- 20 acres of land enclosed by Ffordd Cefn yr Hendy
- Land in on Cowbridge Road, Talygarn and by the motorway Talygarn Drive

Pontyclun Community Council

Pontyclun Community Council owns and maintains 5 acres of woodland at Ivor Woods. Its woodland management is intended to increase biodiversity and local eco-systems. Where safe, fallen branches and trees are left 'in-situ' or cut branches are placed in piles to encourage wildlife. Where possible, the canopy is managed to control light and encourage biodiversity.

The Community Council, as an agent of RCT Council, maintains over 20 miles of public right of ways. In managing overgrowth and clearing litter, avoiding chemical interventions, the Council fosters biodiversity and local eco-systems.

Our floral displays mainly use "Pollinator friendly" flowers in our hanging baskets. In 2023 we will be trialling using the mix of flowers we use in our hanging baskets in one of our smaller planters. We have 13 of these planters which are currently planted up with begonias, which are not Bee friendly. If the trial is successful, the new flower mix will be rolled out in future years.

The Community Council has a 'bee friendly' designation.

To encourage recycling the Council runs a Crisp packet recycling scheme in the Community with drop off locations at Café 50 and the Pontyclun Library.

With regards to its administration, paper purchased for use in the Office is PEFC certified from sustainably managed forests and controlled sources. It is also Chlorine free

The Council replaces light bulbs with LED ones when then need changing and in 2018 replaced the bulk of the lighting in Café 50 with LED lights, and also reducing the number of light bulbs by nearly 60 during the process.

The Council seeks to promote and encourage biodiversity and habitats for pollinators and insects. To do this we

1. Since 2017 we have operated a Hay cut regime in a section of our park
2. In 2019 we were asked by residents to look at installing additional fencing/gates at the park and as a result we planted new sections of hedging at the park boundary (rather than metal or wooden fencing)
3. In 2020 we started to leave the area of ground to the side of Café 50 in Pontyclun uncut (approx. 3m by 10m)
4. In 2020 we started to leave an area of ground at the Hollies uncut. (This area is approx. 10m by 20m)
5. In 2020 we signed up to the Hedgehog Heroes scheme
6. In 2022 the Council agreed to change our large flower bed in Brynsadler from using begonias to a mix of perennial pollinator friendly plants.
7. In 2023 we will be trialling using the mix of flowers we use in our hanging baskets in one of our smaller planters. We have 13 of these planters which are currently

planted up with begonias, which are not Bee friendly. If the trial is successful, the new flower mix will be rolled out in future years.

Groesfaen Gwyrdd

We supported this new volunteer led organisation in Groesfaen to set up and start activities in 2020.

Their purpose is to make Groesfaen a better place to live by taking action to improve the environment and encourage local participation.

We supported them to acquire a “Pollinator Garden” under the Local Places for Nature scheme and also to plant a number of Pollinator friendly bushes on local waste land which has now been transformed into a valuable “Community Garden”

The aim is to extend this work into another area where fruit bushes will be planted for the Community and to help wildlife.