

Risca Town Council

Biodiversity Statement

The Town Council recognises the importance of biodiversity. Biodiversity is recognised as underpinning human health and can contribute to physical and mental wellbeing.

The widespread reduction in species across the UK coupled with the impact of climate change threatens a major environmental disaster.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduces a new duty on public authorities in Wales to maintain and enhance biodiversity and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems in the exercise of their functions. The Town Council as a public authority will comply with this duty in relation to the scope of its activities. The Town Council owns no land or buildings and its decisions and actions will only indirectly influence ecosystems.

The Town Council has identified four specific areas where it will take proactive action:

1 Financial Assistance

The Town Council provides grants to local organisations for a variety of purposes. Depending on the nature of the proposal it may be appropriate to ask the applicant to incorporate biodiversity considerations, or impose conditions on the grant. Given that the maximum grant available under the financial assistance scheme is £1000 any conditions should be proportionate.

2 Floral Decorations

The Town Council funds the hanging baskets and planters in the Town Centre which enhance the street scene between May and September. The plants are and will continue to be sourced from suppliers in South Wales. The type of plants used will be reviewed to ensure they are pollinator friendly.

The Town Council works closely with the Caerffili in Bloom group which involves various community groups and local businesses. The group undertakes additional planting and enhancement to the town. They will be encouraged to review their contribution to biodiversity.

3 Sustainable Procurement

Due to the scope of the Town Council's activities expenditure on goods and services is very limited. Where it is practical to do so and consistent with achieving value for money the Town Council will use local suppliers (defined as within South Wales), will look to use products made from sustainable resources or that use recycled materials. In addition, the Town Council has made a commitment to plastic free alternatives and supports Plastic Free Caerphilly. The Town Council will adopt arrangements to ensure packaging and end of life equipment is recycled.

4 Awareness Raising

The Town Councillors have well established networks with local community groups, schools, and businesses and use social media to impart information. They can raise awareness about the serious challenge of tackling biodiversity, which is as important as climate change, plastic pollution, and carbon neutral, issues which are all inter linked.

If the scope of the Council's functions changes in the future the biodiversity statement will be reviewed.

Approved by Risca Town Council

Dated: 21 Oct 2019

Reviewed for 16 May 2022 AGM