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**ENVIRONMENT (WALES) ACT 2016**

**Section 6 BIODIVERSITY and RESILIENCE OF ECOSYSTEMS DUTY**

**POLICY STATEMENT & ACTION PLAN 2022/23**

**Adopted by Full Council 15th February 2023**

**BACKGROUND**

Llanfoist Fawr Community Council consists of three villages, one of which (Govilon) sits within the boundary of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The remainder (Llanfoist and Llanellen) are semi-rural communities within the boundary of Monmouthshire County Council. The community has a total population of nearly 3,700 and covers an area of some 18 square miles.

The Monmouthshire to Brecon Canal also runs through Llanellen, Llanfoist and Govilon respectively possessing its own unique and biodiverse systems. This Plan, therefore, has not been developed in isolation rather its focus has been to complement existing Local Biodiversity Action Plans held by Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and Monmouthshire County Council. In addition, the Plan recognises its responsibilities 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".*

With a view to developing existing biodiversity within this unique landscape, the Community Council has sought to establish and maintain areas of grassland and meadows to continue to attract wildlife and actively promote natural habitats for local species. These actions form part of a wider plan which acknowledges that under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Community Council should provide for *"a prosperous economy, a healthy and resilient environment and vibrant cohesive communities".*

**RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**

(i) The Community Council is currently widely consulting with residents to establish preferences for uses of a parcel of land to the north of King George V Playing Fields in Govilon. Consultation is in collaboration with the Trustee of the former Govilon Village Hall Charity. Biodiversity considerations will inform this consultation process.

(ii) Partnership with Brecon Beacons National Park Authority to provide a community fruit garden at King George V Recreation Ground, Govilon. This project started in October 2021 and comprises four large raised beds planted with 32 mixed fruit bushes. The raised beds were constructed, filled with topsoil and planted by a number of community groups with a view to a community harvest in 2022.

(iii) Tree planting to offset the unavoidable felling of diseased trees with TPO’s. Beech and Rowan trees planted in summer of 2021

(iv) An extensive tree survey across all LFCC tree stock to establish tree health and safety carried out in December 2022. Recommended work arising from the survey will be commissioned during 2023.

(v) Ongoing landscaping and pollinator development to land adjacent to Salisbury Community Hall.

(vi) Planting of a community orchard on adjoining land to Salisbury Community Hall which was completed in October 2020.

(vii) Participation in the Local Places for Nature initiative (promoted by Keep Wales Tidy) to host a wildlife garden at Owain Glyndwr Playing Field in Llanellen. This project comprised of a raised bed, trellis work, bird and insect habitat boxes and was set up with the help of members of the Llanellen community.

(viii) Refurbishment of the Salisbury Community Hall in Govilon using sustainable native larch timber cladding and the introduction of bat boxes and sparrow ledges - completed in February 2020.

(ix) Collaboration with The Big Climate Fightback (Abergavenny) and the Long Forest Project (a hedgerow regeneration programme promoted by Keep Wales Tidy) to host a community participation event to plant selected trees and a 100 metres of mixed hedgerow in the grounds of the King George V Playing Fields, Govilon.

As a statutory consultee, active discussions have also taken place with developers at the early planning 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 organic 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**

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| **Ward** | **Green Asset** | **Action Plan** | **Status** |
| Govilon | King George V Field | Community fruit garden. Raised beds and planting completed. Harvest expected 2022+ | Ongoing |
| Govilon | King George V Field | Dedicated Dog Walk Area to protect existing environment | Complete |
| Govilon | King George V Field | Plant native trees | Complete |
| Govilon | King George V Field | Plant 100+ metres of hawthorn hedgerow. Will provide habitat and food source for wildlife. | Complete |
| Govilon | King George V Field | Retain recently felled large Beech tree stump to provide insect habitat | Complete |
| Govilon | Memorial Garden | Maintain flower boxes to encourage pollinators | Ongoing |
| Govilon | Salisbury Hall | Installation of bat boxes and sparrow shelves to Hall structure. | Complete |
| Govilon | Salisbury Hall | Small Community Orchard. Trees planted, harvest due 2022+ | Ongoing |
| Govilon | Salisbury Hall | Fence off banking to Cwm Shenkin brook to protect habitat. Keep uncut to encourage pollinators | Complete |
| Govilon | Christmas Lighting | Utilise LED lighting features to minimise light pollution and energy consumption | Complete |
| Llanfoist | Centenary Field | Dedicated Dog Walk Area to protect existing environment | Complete |
| Llanfoist | Old School Meadow | Plant fruit trees.  | Complete |
| Llanfoist | Old School Meadow | Maintain Pond area | Complete |
| Llanfoist | Old School Meadow | Allow meadow grass to grow for pollination. | For consideration |
| Llanfoist | Christmas Lighting | Utilise LED lighting features to minimise light pollution and energy consumption | Complete |
| Llanellen | Owain Glyndwr Field | Plant a Community Orchard | For consideration |
| Llanellen | Owain Glyndwr Field | Plant native trees | For consideration |
| Llanellen | Owain Glyndwr Field | Dedicated Dog Walk Area to protect existing environment | For consideration |
| Llanellen | Owain Glyndwr Field | Local Places for Nature – Wildlife Garden project | Complete |
| Llanellen | Owain Glyndwr Field | Install raised beds containing fruit & vegetables - to be planted and managed by a local community Facebook group  | Target 2023 |