



Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

Report: March 2023

BROUGHTON AND BRETTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Introduction and Context:

Broughton and Bretton Community Council is the second largest Community/Town Council in Flintshire, based on the number of properties. The Community Council covers two electoral wards of Broughton North East and Broughton South and has a population of approximately 5,974 (*source: 2011 UK Census*) The 2023-24 precept is £131,373.

The Community Council has a Service Level Agreement with Hawarden Community Council (HCC) for administrative and maintenance purposes. Across the three councils, the team are responsible for the administrative and financial services, maintenance of 1,100 street light columns, 13 play areas and additional open spaces together with community buildings and car parks.

In summary:

- The Council office is situated at The Lodge on the Gladstone Playing fields in Hawarden and is shared with HCC. There is also a council depot and surrounding woodland area. The Council meets in the Council Chamber at Brookes Avenue Community Centre in the centre of Broughton alongside which is a large playing field that consists of football pitches, a skate park and a large play area.
- The area consists of mainly mixed density residential property and has some open spaces included within them, mature trees and a woodland area and grass verges together with a number of retail outlets, a high street and business parks. There is also a Country Park located off Broughton Hall Road.

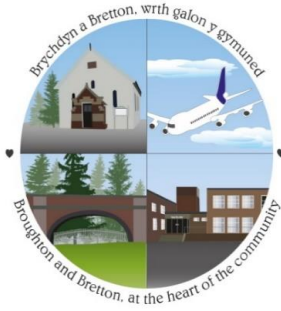


- There is one large primary/junior school within the Community but no secondary school.
- The Community contains Broughton Retail Park and the Airbus factory.
- There are two community centres, one in Brookes Avenue, Broughton and the other being the War Memorial Institute on Main Road.
- The Council is also responsible for litter collection, maintenance of planters, small spaces and Woodland areas, particularly the Country Park, a large community allotment site (ran by an allotment society) and the installation of Festive lighting.

Action Report:

This next section will outline how the Community Council can assist bio-diversity (through functions with regard to land management, grant funding and education opportunities etc).

Principle:	Action:	Monitored by:
Embed biodiversity into decision making and procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of commitments to biodiversity and climate change have been reflected in this Action Plan. • The Council will take biodiversity into consideration when considering planning applications and other associated matters, such as footpath diversion orders. • For complex committee reports an “Environmental Impact” session could be added to the report. 	Commitments made in documents. Planning Application responses. Committee Reports
Raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage local schools to produce an annual “Eco Quiz”. This encourages knowledge and awareness of environmental and 	Feedback through council members (as Governors) and residents.



	<p>sustainability matters amongst local children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When promoting grants, include and encourage organisations to add some element of biodiversity, where appropriate • Encourage the community to volunteer in the context of nature/open spaces • Post details of actions we are promoting have taken on social media platforms 	<p>Numbers of people taking part.</p> <p>Grant Application Conditions and decision-making process.</p> <p>Collection of grass cuttings to encourage small animals and insects to settle? (soil health)</p>
<p>Safeguard principal species and habitats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to the management of protected sites and species including local wildlife sites/sites of importance for nature conservation • Careful use of herbicides • Retention and reinstatement of “bat boxes” in Gladstone woodland area alongside the Council depot. • Grass around trees is left longer • Management and maintenance of Broughton Country Park (separate management plan to be completed) 	<p>Records of any sites or species safeguarded</p> <p>Annual risk assessment data</p>
<p>Restore and create habitats and resilient ecological networks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage native pollinator friendly flowers on open spaces and allotments • Work in partnership with Flintshire County Council’s Biodiversity Officers 	<p>Records of sites Allotment records Data collection</p> <p>Meetings and consultation responses</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local community woodland at allotment site (tree and shrub planting) • Recent tree planting and monitoring to increase tree canopy in association with the County Council (plan already agreed) • The late HRH Tree Canopy with an additional seven trees to be planted, 5 in the country park and 2 in Bretton, both with a commemorative plaque. 	
Use improve and share evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Biodiversity Officer at Flintshire County Council 	Data collection Expert advice
Support capacity and/or other organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in close contact with Flintshire County Council's (FCC) Arboricultural Officer in supporting TPOs and ensuring council-maintained trees are documented and inspected regularly (three year plan) • Require any organisation receiving a grant from us to demonstrate, where appropriate, how this will contribute to supporting biodiversity as part of their project 	<p>Outcome of planning Tree register/surveys</p> <p>Maintenance Team visual inspections and recommendations for actions</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>Grant application receipt of finance letter and confirmation</p>
Review of s6 Duty		



What has worked well?

The creation of wildflower and plant areas, enhanced tree canopy and the management of the Country Park has been successful across the community as it can enhance biodiversity and generate cost savings with reduced costs for mowing.

What have the barriers been?

The Council can only recommend and encourage residents and land owners in the community to embrace biodiversity. The Country Park is a key factor in this action plan and the management plan need to be finalised to ensure that the maximum benefit to biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems is maintained and/or enhanced.

What will you change?

Working more closely with the County Council's biodiversity team and seek advice wherever necessary.

The maintenance team will continue to review open spaces, trees and wildflower spaces.

Promote biodiversity more proactively on the Council's website and other social media platforms.

How and when will the s6 duty be monitored and the s6 plan reviewed?

The duty will be monitored by the Council Members and the Clerk and Financial Officer reporting back to Council through periodic updates.

The s6 plan will be developed and reviewed in response to such reporting. Subject to Council approval this plan will be updated on an annual basis and reviewed every three years *(to comply with the duty of subsection (1) of the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty; Environment (Wales) Act 2016.*

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) The council is asked to consider and approve the contents of this report;
- (ii) Contribute any ideas or information to add to/encourage to the wider climate and biodiversity action that it can take;
- (iii) Consider the appointment of a Climate Change/Biodiversity Champion; and



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| (iv) Acknowledge that there is a Climate and Nature Emergency for the community of Broughton and Bretton. |
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SUMMARY AND GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BIODIVERSITY “OUR LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM”

There are three components to biodiversity that contribute to our “biosphere”:

Atmosphere: plants absorb carbon dioxide (the main climate-altering gas) and produce oxygen instead.

Soil health: dead leaves and plants add nutrients to the soil. Insects and animal burrow, helping the soil to breathe.

Water cycle (hydrological cycle): trees and other plants slow the flow of rainwater to rivers, acting as a natural flood control.

Wales’ Well-being Goals: (there are seven, but number two states....)

A resilient Wales “A nation which **maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with health functioning ecosystems** that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).

What are Ecosystem Services?

- Evidence tells us that ecosystems that are resilient are better able to deliver these services.
- Resilient ecosystems are diverse, connected, large enough and in good condition to be able to adapt to disturbance.



Examples include:

Carbon storage and sequestration

Soil quality and erosion control

Biodiversity

Coastal protection

Water quality

Flood regulation

Irrigation

Fisheries

Pollination Pest control

Climate regulation

Scenic beauty

Aquaculture

In addition to the actions outlined above specifically targeted at the biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty, the Community Council is working towards wider targets for Climate Change including:

Provision of Water meters

LED replacements on street lighting

Recycling receptacles, particularly at Gladstone Playing Fields

Paperless office (subject to legislation changes)

Local Electricity Bill commitments (local energy to local people)

Solar panels on Council buildings

Electric vehicles and charger points

Sharron Jones

Penny Brett-Roberts

Clerk and Financial Officer

Chairman of the Council



APPENDIX

20 actions parish and town councils can take on the climate and nature emergency

Friends of the Earth, Mike Childs, 24 June 2021

Parish and town councils may not be as powerful as local authorities but they can be a force for change in addressing the climate and nature emergency.

[This guide complements Friends of the Earth's template Local Climate Action Plan.]

Action at the local level is essential to meeting the UK's legally binding climate target to reach *Net Zero by 2050*. More than half of the emissions cuts needed rely on people and businesses taking up low-carbon solutions – decisions that are made at a local and individual level.

In this guide we identify actions that parish and town councils can take on climate change and nature. Its purpose is to support those of the 10,000 local councils across England and 750 community councils in Wales who want to do their bit in addressing the climate and nature emergency.

The blue text indicates how the Community Council can contribute or is contributing.

Be a force for good

1. Encourage the formation of Climate Action groups

Communities across the country are coming together to take climate action in response to the climate and nature emergency. Climate Action groups will encourage and support you to take local political action, build positive community solutions, and join together to demand national action. Parish, town and community councils should encourage and support the formation of these groups. Friends of the Earth will provide resources, training and advice to Climate Action groups (see takeclimateaction.uk).



<https://groups.friendsoftheearth.uk/near-you/local-authority/flintshire?postcode=ch53dn#energy>

This link shows the current position in Flintshire in relation to the following Energy, Homes, Transport, Nature and Health.

2. Support Local Plan policies that help to tackle climate change and boost nature

Use your role as a consultee to the local planning authority to seek strong policies in the Local Plan requiring the highest possible standards of energy efficiency for new housing and other buildings. Sites allocated for new housing should also be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport and avoid loss of local nature sites and green spaces.

[During the planning consultation process.](#)

3. Promote practical action by local people

People can often be at a loss about what they can practically do to reduce their own carbon footprint or support nature. An impartial local guide that provides information on accredited local businesses can be invaluable and help keep money in the local economy. The guide could include information on local accredited energy assessors and renewable energy installers for solar panels, batteries, EV charging points and heat pumps, eco-friendly retailers, green builders and landscape companies, etc. It can also encourage sustainable transport options.

[Templates to be added to Website, Facebook and social media platforms.](#)

4. Bring together groups of people for bulk purchases

The costs of installing solar PV, or other renewable technologies such as heat pumps, should be much lower if done in bulk, street by street, or area by area. A town or parish council can bring together local homeowners and businesses to develop such a scheme – it's a widely used model in the Netherlands and places such as Suffolk and Frome in the UK. Bulk purchases of energy audits or energy insulation is also possible. Transition Streets is an example of this approach.



Information to be added to Website, Facebook and social media platforms.
Three councils in Service Level Agreement can work together.

5. Develop and promote lift-sharing scheme

By convening local businesses and car-sharing schemes, such as the social enterprise Liftshare, it's possible to help local people reduce the carbon pollution from car use, save money and foster new friendships. An analysis by Liftshare suggested that 92% of people commuting to work in over 200 locations lived close enough to be able to share a car to work.

Lift-sharing may often be a solution for people when public transport, cycling or walking to work isn't. Car-sharing schemes for non-commuting journeys should also be promoted.

Promotion and information on Website, Facebook and social media platforms.

6. Use your voice

Decisions on infrastructure projects are largely made by local authorities, Local Economic Partnerships, or by national government. But too many of these decisions will increase carbon emissions and / or harm nature. Use your voice when possible to oppose high-carbon developments, promoting sustainable alternatives instead. Press local authorities and MPs to demand national changes to bus services regulations, so all areas can regulate buses as London does, and urban profit-making routes can cross-fund loss making rural routes.

Already doing - solar farm at Bretton and Warren Hall Park are more recent examples.

Demonstrate leadership through your own practical actions

7. Save energy

Ensure any council buildings are as energy efficient as possible and any street lighting uses well-directed LED lighting. Getting an energy audit is the first step. Loans for projects in England that have a payback of less than five years are available through Salix funding. Projects with longer term paybacks should still be carried out.



Councils are already in the middle of a full LED replacement programme. Solar panels could be considered on council buildings? Energy audit to be undertaken initially.

8. Produce green energy

Install renewable energy generation, like heat pumps and solar PV, at council buildings. Heat pumps benefit from a government grant that will partially cover the cost. Several energy companies provide a smart export tariff, which pays for any electricity generated that isn't used by the building, including offering top prices if the solar PV is used in conjunction with a battery. Funds can also be raised through Salix loans or through crowdfunding. Buildings using renewable energy should also be used as a showcase to help local people see these technologies first-hand, particularly fewer familiar technologies such as heat pumps. An electronic display showing how much energy has been generated and how much money and CO2 emissions saved is one way of demonstrating the benefits.

Smart meter installed in office. Energy audit might highlight additional areas to be improved.

9. Reduce pesticide use and other harmful activities

It's possible to reduce activities that harm wildlife, from using peat-free compost to shunning pesticides and ensuring light pollution is controlled. Glastonbury Town Council has stopped using glyphosate weed killer and instead uses a hot foam system. These steps alone are not enough to protect and restore nature but they're an important first step. To encourage others, promote the actions you're taking, for example use signage on council-owned land where you use peat-free compost.

Maintenance team stopped using glyphosate approximately four years ago, pesticides are no longer used and the maintenance team use only herbicides.

Manage land for nature

Parish, town and community councils can have responsibility for allotments, bridleways, burial grounds, commons and open spaces, and village greens. All of these can be managed to enhance nature, particularly through changing mowing regimes. Friends of the Earth and Buglife have produced a guide to developing an action plan for helping pollinators such as bees.



Buglife's B-lines project aims to support the development of a network of wildlife friendly corridors. Friends of the Earth is piloting a crowd-funded postcode gardener project to help people green the streets where they live.

Broughton allotment site.

10. Increase tree cover

Friends of the Earth is campaigning for the UK to double tree cover. The Forestry Commission and others have suggested that even urban areas should aim for at least 20% tree cover. Parish, town and community councils should aim to double tree cover and, if necessary, go beyond this to reach the 20% minimum. Much of this will involve encouraging and supporting landowners to take part in tree planting. The Tree Charter, developed by the Woodland Trust, provides excellent guidance on how to increase tree cover. The National Association of Local Councils website provides case studies where it has been used.

[Flintshire County Council has not recently identified any areas in the community of Broughton and Bretton. The Community Council has recently agreed to install 7 additional trees as part of the late H.M. Queen Elizabeth's Tree Canopy scheme.](#)

11. Buy green

Buying local can support the local economy and buying green can help protect the planet, rewarding businesses committed to a better future. Buying green electricity helps develop new renewable energy and ensures the council isn't supporting dirty energy financially. Friends of the Earth has identified Ecotricity and Good Energy as the greenest energy companies. Buying green can also extend to any food provided at events, including providing mainly plant-based food and less but better meat and dairy.

[The Community Council can strive to do this where practical. The street lighting energy contract is currently tied in for a further two years.](#)



12. Use green transport

Employees and councillors should be encouraged to walk, cycle or use public transport or car-share. The council should provide bikes or electric bikes for staff as they carry out any work-related trips. It should also provide zero-interest loans for buying bikes. Where a car or van is needed it should be electric only.

The Community Council can promote this but needs to recognise individual needs of members of staff and councillors. It is not cost-effective for the Community Council to provide bikes but this could be looked into if council members wish? Electronic council vehicles have been considered during the purchase of rent fleet but the initial outlay is costly.

13. Minimise waste going to landfill or incineration

In your own operations, ensure all your waste is recycled or composted, but also consider setting-up community recycling facilities for hard-to-recycle items when the local authority hasn't done so, for example in partnership with Terracycle. Bisley Parish Council has set up a community composting scheme. The best approach for waste minimisation is reuse (e.g. reusable cups) or avoiding unnecessary purchases.

The Community Council has considered installing recycling receptacles on its grounds but the County Council would have to empty them. Non-domestic rates are paid so this should be achievable via the County Council.

The Community Council can encourage community composting scheme at the allotments if not already in place.

14. Ensure money is invested wisely

Across the UK, local authorities are investing tens of millions of pounds each into fossil fuel companies, despite having declared a climate emergency. Although town council investments will be tiny in comparison, the council should still ensure any council funds are invested safely in low-risk sustainable banks or investment funds.

The Clerk and Financial Officer can pursue this if members wish to?



Use your powers wisely

15. Ensure you know the climate change or nature implications of decisions before you make them

It isn't credible to accept the need for rapid action on climate change and nature and then make decisions without knowing whether they'll be harmful or helpful. Requiring every decision to be well informed is common sense as well as good practice. This should extend to demanding that the planning authority provides you with this kind of information when consulting you.

[Revised community council report template, as listed on page 2 above.](#)

16. Designate sites within the Neighbourhood Plan for trees, renewable energy and nature restoration

In practice, the development of 90% of Neighbourhood Plans (Place Plans in Wales) is led by town and parish councils working hand in hand with their communities. The Neighbourhood Planning (Place Plans) process is far from perfect and very time consuming, but it offers the community the opportunity to show it means business on protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations.

[Place Plan not yet considered.](#)

17. Use the Neighbourhood Plan to require new homes to be energy efficient, nature friendly, and located close to public transport and amenities.

Given the climate and nature emergency, it's unfortunate that the government doesn't require all new homes to be as sustainable as possible.

Neighbourhood Plans (Place Plans) will identify sites for future housing and should push for these to be zero-carbon (eg Passivhaus standard) and nature friendly, even though the local planning authority may seek to override this aim. Homes should also be fitted with renewable energy. Homes need to be located close to amenities and public transport to avoid car dependency.

[As above.](#)



18. Designate safe walking and cycle routes in the Neighbourhood Plan

Identify safe walking and cycling routes and where necessary work in partnership with district and county councils to deliver them. The Propensity to Cycle tool identifies the huge potential for increasing cycling in all areas of the country, particularly with good quality infrastructure, such as segregated cycleways and cycle parking, and with the use of E-bikes.

Place Plan not yet developed.

19. Use differential car-parking charges to support low-carbon vehicles

Any car parks run by the council should offer low cost or free car-parking to electric vehicles and dedicated spaces with electric charging points.

None currently held by the council.