

Hirwaun & Penderyn Community Council Report on Section 6

Environment (Wales) Act

February 2023

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduced an enhanced biodiversity duty which requires that public authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and in so doing, promote the resilience of ecosystems in the exercise of their functions. Town and Community Councils are a public authority for the purposes of Section 6 and as such, we are required to comply with this duty.

The following report details our plan of actions which we propose to take to maintain and enhance biodiversity in our area.

While we do not own or maintain any parks, sports grounds or open spaces, we currently undertake the following projects/initiatives to improve the environment within Hirwaun and Penderyn:

- ❖ Bee Friendly – We have maintained our Bee Friendly status since 2018 and continue to build on what we have already achieved to improve the habitat and food sources for pollinators in our villages.
- ❖ Seed bomb event – We continue to run our seed bomb event for kids. At these events children can make seed bombs of bee friendly flowers which they can take home with them. We also have bumble bee, and pollinator arts and crafts for the children, and a local bee keeper gave a talk on the importance of bees – bringing a hive with him for the children to see.
- ❖ Garden Show – Each year we run our annual Garden Show where local gardeners can exhibit their home-grown vegetables and flowers. By encouraging local gardeners to grow and exhibit their produce this improves the local environment by providing food for pollinators.
- ❖ Hirwaun & Penderyn in Bloom – We continue to run this competition and have added a Bee Friendly back garden category in addition to our bee friendly front gardens. By encouraging residents to grow bee and pollinator friendly plants and flowers this will improve biodiversity in our area.
- ❖ Flower baskets/planters in both villages – We continue to provide flower baskets and planters, ensuring that the flowers in them are pollinator friendly. Our baskets and planters are a haven for Hoverflies.
- ❖ Daffodil bulbs in both villages – We planted additional daffodil bulbs in both villages, improving the environment for local residents. We also provided free daffodil bulb for residents to plant at home, or on grass verges not maintained by the public authority.
- ❖ Litter Picking Hub – We are a Litter Picking Hub where we encourage residents to book out our litter picking kits to carry out their own litter picks locally to improve and benefit our environment.

- ❖ Centenary Fields – After working with RCT and Fields in Trust, Yr Eithin, Penderyn and Y Cenfrdon, Hirwaun continue to be designated as Centenary Fields. By having this protection these open spaces are protected for generations to come.
- ❖ Tree Charter – We are a Charter Branch for The Woodland Trust's Tree Charter initiative. We continue to raise awareness of the importance of planting trees in our villages.
- ❖ Penderyn Trees – We worked in partnership with Groundwork Wales to plant fruit trees in Penderyn. Apple, plum and pear trees were planted for the community to enjoy. These are in addition to the three cherry blossom trees and one copper birch trees previously planted in Hirwaun. We planted these to improve the look of the village and enhance the environment.
- ❖ Community Litter Picks – We have carried out a series of community litter picks to encourage residents to get out and improve our villages. We will continue to carry out these litter picks on an ad hoc basis.
- ❖ Community Planting Sessions - We have carried out a series of community planting/weeding sessions to encourage residents to get out and improve our villages. We will continue to carry out these out on an ad hoc basis.
- ❖ Welcome Sign Planters – We added planters to the Welcome signs for Hirwaun and Penderyn to provide year round plants to these areas, providing a food source for pollinators.
- ❖ Primary Schools – We continue to work closely with both primary schools to encourage wildlife into our villages, and to raise awareness with the children on the importance of giving nature a helping hand. This could be via competitions, the donations of wildlife habits boxes, wildflower seeds or daffodil bulbs, or via the children carrying out planting/weeding in the village.
- ❖ Tree Hub – We working in partnership with Coed Cadw and Welsh Government to act as a Tree Hub to give away free trees to residents as part of the My Tree Our Forest Initiative aimed to cultivate the National Forest for Wales and to fight climate change.
- ❖ Influencing others through grant funding for example e.g., grants to community groups and initiatives – We are open to grant applications from local groups to receive funds to improve the local environment.
- ❖ Influencing others through sharing environmental information on our Facebook page – We share all of our projects and initiatives on our Facebook page (and website). This raises awareness for residents as to what we are doing and encourages them to get involved.

One off additional projects carried out since our last report in 2019:

- ❖ Butterfly Mural competition – We ran a competition for the children in our villages where the winning entries would form part of a butterfly mural to be placed on Hirwaun Public Toilets. This competition was aimed at raising the children's awareness of the importance of butterflies and other pollinators in our environment.
- ❖ Butterfly Garden – In addition to our Butterfly Mural, we added flower beds to the area around Hirwaun Public Toilets and planted pollinator friendly plants. These plants provide a vital food source for our pollinators.

- ❖ Seed Bombs at Home – During lockdown we provided ready made seed bombs for residents to collect and plant at home in their gardens with a view to raising awareness of the importance of wildflowers and their benefits to pollinators, and also providing a vital food source to these pollinators.
- ❖ Virtual Garden Show – During lockdown we encouraged residents to continue with their gardening efforts by holding a Virtual Garden Show where entries could be made and viewed via Facebook.
- ❖ Penderyn Planters – We installed four wooden planters in Penderyn as a community project where we worked in partnership with Groundwork Wales and local residents to build and install the planters, and to plant them with pollinator friendly plants. This project raised awareness in our community on the importance of working together to improve our environment.
- ❖ Garden Bird Welcome Packs – We worked in partnership with Keep Wales Tidy to provide residents with free Garden Bird Welcome Packs. These packs included a build your own birdbox kit along with a make your own pinecone feeder and a bird identification guide.
- ❖ Tree Charter Tree Collage Competition – We ran a children's competition to celebrate Tree Charter Day. We asked children to collect leaves from as many trees as possible to make into a collage. Prizes included a den building kits and tree identification guides which were aimed to encourage children to get outdoors and enjoy nature.
- ❖ Lets Have Fun in '21 – We launched a kids springtime challenge encouraging children to get outdoors in nature.
- ❖ Springtime Acts of Kindness – We donated plants to the local supported living complex to improve their garden area, both for the residents and for pollinators.
- ❖ Wellbeing Nature Walk – We worked in partnership with Groundwork Wales to hold a Wellbeing Nature Walk to raise awareness of the importance of using nature to improve your wellbeing.
- ❖ Bug Hotel Making -We worked in partnership with Groundwork Wales to hold a children's event to make bug hotels which could be taken home to provide vital habitats for our pollinators.
- ❖ Wildlife Habitats Competition – Residents were encouraged to tell us via our Facebook page what they were doing to protect nature, improve habitats and increase biodiversity in our villages. Prizes included bee hotels, hedgehog houses, bird boxes, frog and toad abodes and bat boxes. The competition was aimed to raise and encourage environmental awareness and to provide additional habitats for our wildlife. Any unallocated prizes were sent to the primary schools to add to their wildlife areas.

Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council will be responsible for ensuring that we continue with these in the future. We will also continue to add in extra environmental projects and initiatives where possible.

This plan will be reviewed every 3 years. Next plan due to be published February 2026.