

# **Hirwaun & Penderyn Community Council Report on Section 6**

## **Environment (Wales) Act**

### **April 2026**

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 Making – We continue to run our seed bomb event for children. At these events children can make seed bombs of bee friendly flowers which they can take home with them to plant in their gardens. We also have bumble bee, and pollinator arts and crafts at this event.
- ❖ Garden Show – Up to September 2024 we ran 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. This show has now transferred to the Crafty Growers Group to take forward from 2026.
- ❖ Hirwaun & Penderyn in Bloom – We continue to run this competition which includes categories for Best Bee Friendly Front Garden, Best Bee Friendly Back Garden, Best Hanging Basket/Planter and Best Allotment Plot. Last year we added Best Business/Community Building and Best Community Children’s Group. By encouraging residents, community groups and businesses 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.
- ❖ 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. In addition to these we now have two planters at the Cadet Hut in Hirwaun. Last year we added self seeding pollinator friendly plants in the hope that the seeds will be transferred throughout the village by the wind and come again every year.

- ❖ Butterfly Garden – We continue to maintain flower beds in the area around Hirwaun Public Toilets and have planted pollinator friendly plants here. These plants provide a vital food source for our pollinators.
- ❖ Wooden planters in Penderyn – We continue to maintain our four wooden planters in Penderyn. We plant them with pollinator friendly plants which are a vital food source for pollinators.
- ❖ Daffodil bulbs in both villages – We planted additional daffodil bulbs to the grass verges 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. Our litter picking hub was recognised as the most used litter hub in Wales.
- ❖ Centenary Fields – After working with RCT and Fields in Trust, Yr Eithin, Penderyn and Y Cenfdon, 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.
- ❖ Hirwaun Trees – We worked in partnership with Groundwork Wales to plant fruit trees in Hirwaun. Apple, plum and pear trees were planted for the community to enjoy. These are in addition to our fruit trees planted in Penderyn.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ 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. We have also shared information on how to deal with a honey bee swarm, how to provide a water source for bees, and how to help butterflies in your garden.

One off additional projects carried out since our last report in 2023:

- ❖ Walking Festival – We held a local walk to raise awareness of the importance of using nature to improve your wellbeing.
- ❖ 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 and bird boxes. The competition was aimed to raise and encourage environmental awareness and to provide additional habits for our wildlife. We ran this competition twice.
- ❖ Poppy Seeds – We have planted poppy seeds at the War Memorial in Penderyn, and at Hirwaun Clock.
- ❖ Welsh Government Tree Hub – We acted as a tree hub as part of the Welsh Government My Tree Our Forest initiative. Free trees were given out to our residents to plant in their gardens.
- ❖ Residents Trip to the National Park – We worked with Bannau Brycheiniog National Park to take some of our residents for a tour of their Libanus Visitor Centre. Residents were given a tour of the facilities which included their nature area where they learned about the benefits of providing suitable nature habitats for wildlife.
- ❖ Bannau Brycheiniog National Park – We attended a Nature Recovery session at the Libanus Visitor Centre where information was given on biodiversity in the National Park, and the species and habitats of the animals who live there - some of which are in decline. The information learned here is now being used to the benefit of the wildlife in our villages.
- ❖ Our Executive Officer attended the One Voice Wales Bee Friendly session to provide an update to other councils on what we have done to achieve our Bee Friendly status. Our Community Council was the only one at this event which does not own any land, which they found particularly helpful to give the other Community Councils ideas to take forward in their areas.
- ❖ Grass Verge Working Group formed consisting of Cllrs and a local resident. They identified areas where the verges can be left to grow wild, and not have their wildflowers cut back, and areas where the glyphosate spraying can be stopped. They then liaised with RCT asking them not to mow/spray these areas. Work is continuing to take this forward.
- ❖ We have declared a Climate Emergency and will continue to lobby RCT CBC in order to safeguard our country and planet for future generations.
- ❖ We attended the Local Places for Nature showcase event at the Senedd which showed examples of the extensive work being carried out in Wales by Town and Community Councils under the Local Places for Nature programme. We had a stand at this event showcasing the work that we have done.
- ❖ Our Cllrs visited Meadow Street Community Garden in Pontypridd which is run by Pontypridd Town Council, where they had a tour of the community garden and woodland nature trails and wildlife ponds. The information learned here will go on to benefit us in our environmental initiatives.
- ❖ Our Cllrs visited Celtic Wildflowers at Penllergaer to learn more about wildflowers, improving biodiversity, along with native varieties of trees, plants and shrubs and their suitability for different habitats. The information learned here will go on to benefit us in our environmental initiatives.
- ❖ Our Cllrs attended a training session held by Butterfly Conservation Cymru. They learned about the importance of the Marsh Fritillary Butterfly which lays its eggs on the underside of the leaves of the Devils Bit Scabious plant. The Marsh Fritillary Butterfly population is under threat and our Cllrs learned about its habit and what we can do to help. The Marsh Fritillary Butterfly has made its home in Hirwaun and Penderyn.
- ❖ We attended local community events, such as school summer fetes, to encourage residents to enter our Garden Show, and giving away packets of wildflower seeds to those who stopped to chat.

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 2028.