

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 – Section 6 Biodiversity

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty – Report 2019 (produced May 2020)

Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council

Introduction:

Nantyglo and Blaina is located in the uplands of North Gwent and is home to approximately 9,000 residents. Since the late 18th century the area was heavily industrialised with ironmaking and coal mining. The last coal mine (Beynon’s Pit) closed in 1976 and there have since been a number of land reclamation schemes. It must be noted that the area still has some areas of contaminated land as a result of the past heavy industries.

At the current time, Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council does not have direct responsibility for any green spaces but are actively supporting the local biodiversity through a number of initiatives (detailed below).

Action carried out to:		Monitored by:
Embed biodiversity into decision making & procurement	NBTC try to consider biodiversity at all levels during decision making and procurement by using local companies and natural or recycles materials where appropriate. NBTC has begun to incorporate many biodiversity actions into its annual programme of events such as Nantyglo and Blaina in Bloom which incorporates a number of categories supporting biodiversity. other examples are the ongoing purchase and siting of larger planters which are to be sited at various appropriate positions within the locality together with the application for a ‘butterfly garden pack’ from Keep Wales Tidy, which will be planted alongside the main A467 road parallel to Nantyglo & Blaina. Additionally, the Town Council has offered to assist local primary schools with their planting projects by way of supplying seeds and planters (this would aid children’s awareness of the environment & biodiversity within their local area). NBTC’s annual awards evening also includes an Environment category.	Appropriate Committee (i.e. Planning & Highways Committee; Finance & General Purposes Committee; Events Committee) Council Budget & Expenditure.

Raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance	Through the annual Nantyglo and Blaina in Bloom the Council has begun to see an increase in the community's interest and participation in biodiversity, particularly from groups such as sheltered housing complexes together with the use and maintenance of unused areas for increased biodiversity. NBTC has facilitated local litter picks and have equipment which can be loaned to community groups for this purpose.	Events Committee
Safeguard principal species and habitats	NBTC have queried and raised concerns over possible destruction of hedgerows and other natural habitats including the possible impact and endangerment to wildlife such as bats and reptiles with regards to local planning applications. Such monitoring is ongoing.	Planning & Highways Committee
Restore & create habitats and resilient ecological networks	NBTC has applied for the 'Butterfly Garden Kit' from Keep Wales Tidy. It is the Council's intent to plant to roadside verges of the main A467 main road which runs parallel with Nantyglo and Blaina.	Events Committee
Tackle negative factors e.g. reduce pollution, use nature based solutions, address invasive species	The Council no longer considers any requests for events etc that could have an adverse impact upon the biodiversity of the area e.g. balloon races and plastic duck races in the local river.	All Committees (as detailed above)
Use, improve and share evidence	As progress is made evidence will be reported through the Council website, social media and at appropriate local events.	Town Council website and social media as appropriate
Support capacity and/or other organisations	The Council is aiming to build upon our initial plans as previously stated in this report and also look to identify additional areas for increased planting of native and/or appropriate plants/trees. Additionally the Council hope to build upon these plans by working collaboratively with other local organisations such as youth groups, schools, residential homes and allotment groups.	Planning & Highways Committee and Events Committee.

Key outcomes:

What has worked well? What have the barriers been? What will you change?

- The continuing and steady success of Nantyglo and Blaina In Bloom. The competition appears to have slowly increased in popularity among some sectors of the community although there is a need to gain interest from other sectors such as allotment groups and younger groups (school children and youth groups). The Town Council will actively look to increase the advertising for this event to attract a more diverse range and number of participants.
- Work with local residents, landowners, local groups and organisations and Blaenau Gwent CBC to:
 - Raise awareness of what biodiversity means across the Nantyglo and Blaina area:
 - Identify areas of potential improvement of biodiversity across the Nantyglo and Blaina area.
 1. Collaborate with other organisations such as Blaenau Gwent CBC Biodiversity team in order to plan and co-ordinate an effective approach.
 2. Identify suitable land for further planting of appropriate plants/trees.
 3. Increase communication and collaboration with more local groups and organisations e.g. schools, scouts and residential homes to increase planting for biodiversity.
 4. Increase wildflowers native to the area through effective and appropriate planting.
 5. Increase the number of planters at appropriate locations throughout the area.
- How and when will the s.6 duty be monitored and the s.6 plan reviewed?
 1. The key outcomes will be reviewed annual and amended accordingly as part of the Planning & Highways Committee remit.
 2. The Environment Act section 6 duty will be monitored annually as part of the Planning & Highways Committee remit.