

St Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council

Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Section 6 Duty

Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Report 2025

Prepared for Council Review — January 2026

To be published on www.stnicholasbonvilston-cc.wales

1. About the Authority

St Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council serves the villages of St Nicholas and Bonvilston, together with the northern and eastern parts of Dyffryn and the surrounding rural landscape. The Council's direct landholding is limited to a small area in St Nicholas; most public spaces are owned or managed by the Vale of Glamorgan Council or private landowners.

Within this context, the Council supports the management of small public spaces, provides community grants, comments on planning applications, and advocates for sustainable development and environmental protection. As a Group 3 public authority, our biodiversity responsibilities focus on embedding nature-positive decision-making, supporting local habitats, and enabling community participation in environmental stewardship.

Our work aligns with:

- The Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act
- The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales [6]

We continue to embed the five ways of working across all decisions; long-term thinking, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement.

2. How We Have Embedded the Section 6 Duty

2.1 Governance

Biodiversity is a standing consideration in planning responses, grant decisions, and public space management.

The Biodiversity Action Plan (2023–2028) provides a structured framework for delivery [2].

Councillors receive periodic briefings on hedgerows, pollinators, sustainable drainage, and ecological networks.

2.2 Operational Practice

Reduced-mowing regimes and rewilding trials incorporated into routine grounds maintenance [2].

Procurement prioritises native species, peat-free materials and low-impact landscaping.

Biodiversity considerations are included in correspondence with the Vale of Glamorgan Council on highways, lighting, and development matters [2].

2.3 Community Involvement

Residents participate in planting days, orchard maintenance, and wildlife monitoring [2].

The Council website provides guidance on native planting, sustainable building, and local wildlife [1].

3. Action Report – what the council has done

3.1 Maintaining and Enhancing Biodiversity

Created pollinator habitats through bulb planting and rewilding strips [2].

Supported hedgerow restoration and orchard creation [3][4].

Submitted planning comments where developments posed risks to protected species or ecological networks [3].

3.2 Promoting Resilient Ecosystems

Advocated for Active Travel routes that maintain and enhance green corridors [2].

Encouraged sustainable drainage and low-impact construction in planning responses [3].

Supported community-led monitoring to build long-term ecological understanding [5].

3.3 Supporting the Resilience Attributes

Council actions contribute to:

- **Diversity:** varied planting and habitat creation.
- **Connectivity:** protection of hedgerows and green corridors.
- **Condition:** reduced mowing and habitat restoration.
- **Adaptability:** community education and long-term planning.

4. Review of 2019 Commitments

This table contains two columns and six rows, including the heading row.

2019 Commitment	2025 Status
Improve community engagement in biodiversity	Achieved with regular events, grants, school partnerships [2]
Enhance public green spaces	Achieved through orchard creation, bulb planting, rewilding [2][3]
Strengthen planning responses	Achieved by detailed objections and guidance [3]
Develop monitoring partnerships	Achieved through collaboration with SWBRC [5]
Reduce environmental pressures	Partially achieved with limited progress on lighting and noise [4]

5. Contribution to the Well-being Goals

The Council's biodiversity work contributes to:

- **A Resilient Wales** through habitat creation, species protection, ecological networks.
- **A Healthier Wales** with improved green spaces and Active Travel advocacy [2].
- **A Wales of Cohesive Communities** through community planting, orchard projects, volunteering [3].
- **A Globally Responsible Wales** by sustainable procurement and climate-aware planning responses [3].

6. Key Actions Delivered (2019–2025)

6.1 Governance & Policy

- Updated Community Council Charter to prioritise biodiversity and environmental stewardship [2].
- Adopted the Biodiversity Action Plan 2023–2028 [2].
- Launched a new Council website offering accessible biodiversity resources [1].

6.2 Planning & Development Advocacy

- Submitted objections to developments threatening biodiversity, including:
 - Bonvilston Village Green (potential newt habitat disturbance) [3]
 - Loss of hedgerows, orchard land, and green corridors [3]
- Published Sustainable Building Guidance and Native Planting Guides [3].
- Promoted community-friendly landscaping using indigenous species [1].

6.3 Active Travel & Infrastructure

- Secured inclusion in the Active Travel Wales Mapping [2].
- Supported improvements to Bonvilston footways; speed limit corrections underway [2].
- Co-hosted a rural biodiversity workshop at the Active Travel Cymru Conference (2024) [3].

6.4 Management of Public Spaces

- Planted over 2,000 bulbs (native daffodil, crocus, bluebell) [2].
- Trialled rewilding strips with reduced mowing and pollinator habitats [2].
- Created a Community Orchard in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council and local volunteers [3][4].

6.5 Engagement, Education & Monitoring

- Partnered with SWBRC for wildlife monitoring and species mapping [5].
- Held Eco Walks & Talks with schools and residents [2].
- Awarded five microgrants to support biodiversity study, mapping, and education [3].

7. Evaluation Against Nature Recovery Action Plan Objectives

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Objective	Progress Evaluation
Engage Participation	Improved community involvement through events, resources, and school partnerships [2]
Safeguard Species & Habitats	Raised objections to damaging developments; supported habitat protection [3]
Restore & Create Habitat	Bulb planting, hedgerow restoration, rewilding, orchard creation [2][4]
Tackle Pressures	Advocated for quieter road surfaces, reduced light pollution, low-impact development [2]
Evidence & Monitoring	Species mapping and surveys with SWBRC; funded local observation projects [5]
Governance Framework	Revised BAP, policies and website provide governance foundation [1][2]

8. Challenges & Community Concerns

- **Road Noise (A48/A4226):** Resurfacing delays continue; noise levels exceed Welsh Government targets [4].
- **Light Pollution:** Increased LED installation with uncertain impacts on bats and nocturnal pollinators [2].
- **High-density Development:** Ongoing pressure on hedgerows, orchards, and green corridors [3].

9. Future Work & Recommendations (2025–2028)

- Complete the December 2025 review of the Biodiversity Action Plan [2].
- Launch the Resident Biodiversity Stewards Scheme [1].
- Expand citizen science and youth monitoring schemes with schools and wildlife partners [5].
- Strengthen collaboration with the Vale of Glamorgan Council on lighting, noise, and ecological corridors [4].
- Continue Active Travel advocacy to safeguard ecological corridors [2].
- Publish annual short-form biodiversity updates to improve transparency [1].

10. Publication & Access

Following approval at the January 2026 Council meeting, this report will be:

- Published on the Community Council website [1]
- Shared via social media and email bulletins
- Reformatted into a visual summary for schools and residents

11. References

1. **Community Council Website**
<https://www.stnicholasbonvilston-cc.wales>
2. **Minutes of Community Council Meeting — June 27, 2025**
https://www.stnicholasbonvilston-cc.wales/uploads/1/3/0/0/130011206/agenda_meeting_june_27_2025.pdf

3. **Meeting Agenda & Supporting Documents — April 29, 2025**
https://www.stnicholasbonvilston-cc.wales/uploads/1/3/0/0/130011206/agenda_april_29_2025.pdf
4. **Vale of Glamorgan Council — Community Liaison Committee Minutes — January 30, 2025**
https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Community%20Liaison/2025/25-01-30/Minutes.pdf
5. **South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRcC)**
<https://www.sewbrec.org.uk>
6. **Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales — Welsh Government**
<https://www.gov.wales/nature-recovery-action-plan>