

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Action Log (March 2022)

Ref	Project	Comment/Update	Target date
1.	Facilitate, co-ordinate, deliver and monitor the steps in the Corporate Plan Objective for Maintaining and Enhancing Swansea's Natural Resources and Biodiversity	Steps monitored by Climate Change and Nature Steering Group and Programme Board. Currently being reviewed for 22/23 Corporate Plan.	Completed Monitored every 6 weeks and reviewed annually
2.	Prepare Corporate Section 6 Biodiversity Duty Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 3 year Section 6 duty monitoring report agreed and submitted to Welsh Government Dec 2019. • Action Plan to Dec 2023 in preparation <p>Links with other relevant cross organisational policies at a strategic level being monitored by Climate Change and Nature Steering Group which includes representatives dealing with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Environment • Green Infrastructure • Local Development Plan • Sustainable Development Policy • Sustainable Transport Plan • Energy Strategy • Waste Management • Parks • Housing • Education 	Completed Dec 2022 Bi-monthly meetings

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement 	
3.	Preparation of Swansea Local Nature Recovery Action Plan	Preparation of draft plan commenced – work to be taken forward by Local Nature Partnership Officer – 2x part time officers taking up post April 2022.	March 2023
4.	Adopt Swansea Central Area Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy and Green Space Factor Tool	<p>Approved by Cabinet Feb 21.</p> <p>The Green Space Factor Tool provides practical guidance to help assess the level of green space required for developments in urban areas. The tool is now being used by applicants for planning applications in the city centre. Advice is being given regarding GI throughout the planning process, including how to meet target GSF tool scores.</p>	Completed Feb 2021
5.	Prepare a County wide GI Strategy	<p>Public Engagement on the draft strategy delayed by Covid, recommencing in March 2022</p> <p>However GI assessments and strategies are being submitted with planning applications throughout the County, for minor and major applications, in order to comply with LDP policies.</p>	March 2023
6.	Develop and adopt a Council tree policy	<p>Suite of tree policies/protocols developed over the past couple of years, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected Tree Protocol • Ash Die-back guidance • City Centre GI Strategy • Tree Planting checklist and consultation protocol 	Completed Feb 2022

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Development Plan Tree protection policy • Supplementary Planning Guidance (Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands) <p>More recently (Feb 2022) a Tree Management Strategy has been approved by Cabinet setting out protocols relating to management of trees on /affecting property land in Council ownership and setting out the Council’s duties in relation to protected trees. All above documentation is cross referenced in this document https://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/13807/17-February-2022</p> <p>Ongoing work in support this year includes mapping all sites on Council land that may be suitable for tree planting as well as mapping all trees planted in celebration of designation as a Queen’s Green Canopy Champion City.</p>	
7.	Prepare and adopt Trees and Development Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	Guidance prepared and adopted by Planning Committee https://www.swansea.gov.uk/ The SPG is referred to in consults on planning applications, including the requirement to use the Tree Replacement Standard where necessary.	Completed Oct 2021
8.	Prepare and adopt Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	SPG Adopted by Planning Committee https://www.swansea.gov.uk/biodiversityspg	Completed Feb 2021

		<p>The SPG is referred to in consults on planning applications, including the requirement to provide ecological enhancements.</p> <p>The requirement for biodiversity conservation and enhancement has also been included in the following SPG which have been adopted over the past year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gower AONB Design Guide • Placemaking Guidance for Residential Development • Placemaking Guidance for Infill and Backland Developments • Placemaking Guidance for Householder Developments <p>All available to view here: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/spg</p>	
9.	Prepare and upload Biodiversity SPG guidance notes onto Council webpages	Guidance available on Council webpages https://www.swansea.gov.uk/biodiversityspg	Completed Nov 2021
10.	Develop and deliver biodiversity training for Council staff, elected Members and PSB Members	Ongoing action for biodiversity officer and others. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and address biodiversity training needs (including specific training session for new Members post- election) • Identification of opportunities and actions within each relevant Service Area to maintain and enhance biodiversity • Identify Service Areas where advisory support could be provided by the Nature Conservation Team 	Ongoing June/July 2022

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of on and offline training packages including further development of web pages • Development and implementation of a Comms Strategy for biodiversity • Ecological advice and support provided for Development Management Section on planning and SUDs applications ranging from advice on the installation of bird and bat boxes to carbon literacy training • Other specific training delivered includes grassland management of parks/verges; cut and collect; right tree in right place; nature emergency 	
11.	Develop, promote and deliver a programme of public environmental events and activities	Annual programme of events published on line to improve awareness and understanding of our natural environment	Completed May annually
12.	Appoint new Section 6 Duty Biodiversity Officer	Permanent appointment made to 0.5 Post	Completed June 2021
13.	Appoint new Planning Ecologist	<p>Additional Planning Ecologist now in permanent full time post to complement previous 0.8 post on the structure. Nature Conservation Team now have capacity to respond to planning application consults within the 14/21 day deadlines.</p> <p>Planning Ecologist has weekly open session with Planning Officers for the officers to raise any</p>	Completed June 2021

		<p>biodiversity queries when needed. Queries being used to determine further training requirements.</p> <p>Planning Ecologists also provide services and advice to Council Highways, Parks, Drainage and Housing teams as well as local councillors, external developers, ecologists and planning applicants. Fee-earning works has been undertaken for Highways team – surveys to inform Active Travel routes.</p> <p>Planning ecologists attend Local Nature Partnership meetings, Association of Local Government Ecologist (ALGE) meetings and Welsh Govt Biodiversity & Planning Forum meetings.</p>	
14.	Facilitate and support the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) meetings and projects	Meetings held quarterly on an ongoing basis. Covered by temporary appointment to LNP post during 21/22. Permanent appointment now made commencing April 2022 (2 x part time posts)	Completed Feb 2022
15.	Co-ordinate and deliver the Local Places for Nature Grant programme (2020-2023)	<p><u>2020/21</u> Successfully bid for and delivered capital projects worth over £190k, including tree planting in various parks and other sites, green infrastructure enhancements e.g. green roofs and walls, establishment of a new tree nursery; as well as local events, habitat management and flood alleviation works</p> <p><u>2021/22</u> Successfully bid for projects worth over £240k, including request for additional £53k to cover</p>	To be completed by March 2023

		<p>increased costs. These projects to be delivered by end of financial year include the City Centre Pop up Park; green wall at Pier Street; green bin shelters; and tree planting.</p> <p><u>2022/23</u> Bid worth further £377k submitted Feb 2022 including revenue costs. Includes proposals to restore existing and create new natural capital assets within Swansea focussing on urban and peri-urban areas. The aim is to facilitate, support and deliver an increase in biodiversity and ecological resilience across Swansea by increasing the diversity, extent condition, connectivity and adaptability of Swansea's natural assets and contributing to the enhancement of Swansea's Nature Network.</p>	
16.	Co-ordinate and deliver the NRW grant programmes	<p>NRW grant programme coordinated by AONB team and split between AONB, Countryside Access and Nature Conservation Teams. Claim for 21/22 schemes currently submitted to NRW</p> <p>Full year funding not allocated until Oct 2021 which caused issues with project delivery and a revised programme of works which has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat Restoration (Killay Marsh, Mumbles Hill, Port Eynon and Pwlldu) – mainly scrub removal £10k • Production of interpretative panels (Penclawdd, Port Eynon, Horton) £6k • Improved public access within Council Local Nature Reserves £3k 	Completed March annually

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystem resilience mapping project £9k • Cultural Heritage interpretation Mumbles Hill £5k • Access improvements to Public Rights of Way Network and Coastal Path £22.5k • Gower Landscape and Sensitivity and Capacity Study for caravan and camping £8k • Fixed point photo monitoring survey of AONB £4.5k • Hedgerow management £3k • Interpretative panels and environmental events £2k • Practical works with Cadw - £2k 	
17.	Co-ordinate and deliver the ENRAW Green Infrastructure grant programmes	<p>Grant finally awarded in full Nov 2021. Part time Coed Cymru Officer recruited Dec 2021.</p> <p>Currently recruiting to 3 temporary posts to deliver programme :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x Community Green Space Officers to work with local communities to develop and delivery green infrastructure improvements • Natural Environment Volunteer Co-ordinator to develop and support opportunities for environmental volunteering • Interviews arranged for mid- March 	Until March 2023
18.	Plan, support and deliver new tree / woodland/hedgerow/orchard planting initiatives	No. of trees planted on Council land is a Corporate Performance Indicator Measured annually. During 20/21 a total of 230 heavy standard trees and 2800 whips were planted on Council land.	Ongoing Monitored end of March annually

		Through 21/22 up to 1000 trees and over 5600 whips are planned to be planted across all Council land by various services and departments.	
19.	Deliver new wildflower meadow planting and management initiatives	<p>Extent of wildflower planting is an annual Performance Indicator</p> <p>On the ground the Council's wildflower planting programme has now extended to around 40,000sq.m (about 6 football pitches) of wildflowers across approximately 190 sites. IN support of this new grant funded cut and collect machinery has been trialled to help better manage grass cutting and help boost wildflowers and pollinators by maintaining species-rich vegetation. Plans are being prepared for extending this method of cutting next season using lessons learned and further public and stakeholder engagement.</p>	Ongoing. Monitored end of March annually
20.	Undertake a preliminary biodiversity audit of Council owned land and where possible manage our corporate assets for the benefit of biodiversity and natural resources	<p>Initial work in hand to undertake a desktop audit of all More Homes sites as a pilot project for wider roll out – the planning ecologist reviews preliminary ecological reports where surveys have been undertaken and advises on what surveys need to be undertaken.</p> <p>Planning Ecologist and Nature Conservation Team Leader co-wrote paper in Jan 2022 which summarised the results of a questionnaire sent to all ALGE Wales members regarding their SINC's. Reported to Welsh Govt Biodiversity & Planning</p>	March 2023

		Forum to call on WG for support to enhance the protection of SINCs, e.g. in updates to Planning Policy Wales (PPW), producing guidance on designating SINCs, consistency on allowing mapped/non-mapped SINCs in Local Development Plans. .	
21.	Promote and support community biodiversity projects /initiatives, green projects for well-being , facilitate environmental voluntary groups, etc	<p>Despite the impact of the pandemic, considerable support for, and collaboration with, community groups and other partners has been maintained and increased over the past year. This includes support for the Swansea Local Nature Partnership, Clyne Community Volunteers, Rosehill Quarry, various Friends of Parks Groups, the Environment Centre, etc.</p> <p>The recent award of ENRAW GI grant will enable greater engagement with local communities to encourage volunteering and to support them taking action to enhance and maintain and enjoy their local greenspaces and wildlife sites</p>	Ongoing annually through grants and volunteer work
22.	Develop a set of 'Wild about your Ward ' maps and packs	<p>To be delivered through ENRAW GI grant by Community and Nature Project officers once in post. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping existing Green Infrastructure assets and ecosystem service provision, and identifying areas, which provide the best opportunities for improvement and, where appropriate, maximise match funding opportunities afforded by Member's community fund 	March 2023

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving access to and maintaining the quality of our parks and greenspaces. Mapping of ecosystem services 	
23.	Deliver and provide support for school biodiversity awareness activities and practical initiatives and opportunities for schoolchildren to access and learn about their natural environment	<p>Funding from the ENRAW GI grant will enable this support to continue</p> <p>All school governing bodies to identify an environmental link e.g. premises committee or schools eco-committee, etc – task for Communities and Nature Project Officers once in post</p>	<p>March 2023</p> <p>Sept 2022</p>
24.	Investigate and secure grant funding for tackling biodiversity and climate emergencies	Action for Biodiversity Officer. Amount of funding secured and schemes delivered to be reported annually	March annually
25.	Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) funding of GI projects	<p>GI Projects undertaken: Completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coastal Office High Street - green roof Potter's Wheel - green roof <p>Being delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dragon Hotel - green walls <p>Green roof bin shelters around the city centre</p>	Completed March 2022
26.	City Centre GI improvements	Wind St: Public realm improvements include additional tree planting and large planting beds along whole length of street with a mixture of trees shrubs and pollinator attracting herbaceous species	March 2022
27.	External Environment Enhancement on Council owned Housing land	Enhancements to greenspace as part of an environmental works programme to meet the Council's commitment to the Welsh Housing Quality	Ongoing until March 2024

		<p>Standard and to address deficiencies in access to natural greenspace</p> <p>Swift bricks have been installed and will continue to be installed on all new More Homes houses. Planning ecologist involved in plans for future More Homes sites in order to further conserve and enhance biodiversity on the sites.</p>	
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Note: Grey shaded = completed project or part of ongoing business as usual