

## Delivering on Nature Recovery and Climate Change

### **Why this priority is a well-being objective**

- Following Welsh Government declarations for Wales, the council has declared both a Climate Emergency in June 2019 and a Nature Emergency in November 2021.
- Using the Welsh Government Route map to net zero, Swansea Council will align with its principles, knowing what needs to be done now, by 2022-26 Low Carbon becoming the norm and by 2030 where choosing carbon zero is routine.
- Sound governance has been established within the council to act on such challenges and all activity will be driven within the parameters of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, the Environment Act (Wales) 2016, the Strategic Equality Plan and the Corporate Plan and the Swansea (PSB) Well-being Plan.
- To ensure that in addition to achieving net zero 2030 for Swansea Council, we will work with partners, organisations, schools, businesses to support Swansea as a whole county and citizens in its efforts to become net zero by 2050, aligning with the Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget (2) 2022 / 2025. Establishing both Climate and Nature Charters and a Pledge Wall to encourage active participation and help build a healthier, more prosperous and biodiverse / ecologically resilient Swansea.
- Swansea is one of the most ecologically rich and diverse counties in the UK. Its unique variety of habitats and species and wonderful range of parks, green spaces, nature reserves, beaches and landscapes needs to be maintained, enhanced and sustainably managed for the benefit of everyone now and into the future.
- Our natural environment and biodiversity is under threat and in decline due to unsustainable human activities. Habitats and species are being lost at an alarming and unsustainable rate. We need to raise awareness of the impacts of biodiversity loss and climate change at the local level and provide information, advice, and practical support and incentives to encourage others to take action and collaborate to deliver positive solutions to these challenges.

- We want everyone to have access to, understand, appreciate and benefit from Swansea's outstanding natural environment and to play their part in looking after and enhancing it, resulting in a healthier, greener and more prosperous Swansea.
- Our future survival and quality of life is dependent on healthy resilient natural environment, the multiple benefits it provides to society and on reducing our carbon emissions to net zero.
- We have a moral responsibility to look after biodiversity for its own intrinsic value.

### **The longer-term challenges this well-being objective will help address**

- A public sector target of 2030, ahead of the Welsh Government's target of 2050 for the whole of Wales, will give us our best chance of keeping global warming below 1.5°C. This is the tipping point at which the climate impacts we're already experiencing will go from bad to potentially catastrophic. We'll see natural systems cross danger points, triggering lasting changes such as extreme storms, heatwaves, mass loss of natural habitats and species.
- We are at a critical point in time for nature recovery and without urgent transformative change, many of our species and habitats will continue to decline or become extinct.
- Halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity through reducing harm and unsustainable use and moving to a situation where we are working with nature to maintain healthy resilient ecosystems that will continue to provide long-term quality of life (or ecosystem services) benefits upon which we all depend.
- Tackling climate change, which is one of the greatest challenges facing us all and we need to reduce our carbon footprint and to mitigate for and adapt to the likely risks and impacts.
- Creating high quality environmentally and low carbon responsible and sustainable green jobs that make the most of our unique natural resources, for example, through environmental tourism, sustainable land and coastal management, local food production, sustainable waste management, energy efficiency, renewable energy and carbon capture. As such we will explore and support projects such as on and off shore renewables which align to these ambitions.
- Reducing inequalities in health and well-being by maintaining and enhancing a high quality and accessible natural environment plus ensuring fair access to low carbon energy, homes, travel options, sustainably sourced food and greener job opportunities.
- Sustainably managing and enhancing the quality of our natural resources including air, water, soils and biodiversity will help increase Swansea's ecological resilience and the well-being of its inhabitants.

**The steps we will take to meet this well-being objective are:**

**Net Zero Swansea Council by 2030**

- Achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030, following the approved Swansea Council Net Zero 2030 Delivery Plan.
- Reduce the council's impact on the environment, monitoring via the Welsh Government reporting process on the 6 organisational categories.

**The 6 organisational categories**

Buildings and Energy	Fleet and Other Mobile Equipment	Land Use (Offsetting)
Waste - Operational	New Ways of Working	Supply Chain

- Replace for street lighting with LED.
- Develop a new county-wide tree planting map allowing us to plant thousands of new trees.
- Continue to review the council transport fleet to maximise opportunities for use of a green fleet in line with its green fleet strategy.

**Net Zero Swansea by 2050**

- Collectively support the wider Swansea ambition, working alongside Climate Charter signatories, PSB, citizens, schools, businesses, community groups and environmental partners to help deliver the Welsh Government ambition of Net Zero Wales by 2050.

**Net Zero Wales by 2050**

Electricity and Heat Generation	Transport	Residential Buildings
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Industry and Business	Agriculture	Waste and Circular Economy
Education and Engagement	Enriching our Natural Resources	LULUCF

- Develop a Swansea Adaptation and Mitigation Plan.
- Support delivery of the first phase of the Blue Eden Lagoon project.
- Progress the development of a council-operated solar energy farm at the city's Tir John site.
- Aim to make neighbourhood greening improvements.
- Support and enable the increase and availability of electric vehicle (EV) charging points and develop a wider EV charging strategy.
- Progress discussions on the development of a hydrogen fuelling hub.
- Work towards announcing new Active Travel routes, which develop the built and natural environment and encourages higher levels of physical activity.

### **Nature Recovery**

- Develop and monitor the delivery of the Section 6 Corporate Biodiversity Plan and the Resilient Wales goal through annual business planning and reporting mechanisms up to 2028. We will report to Welsh Government every 3 years in line with our Biodiversity Duty.
- Contribute to the review, delivery and monitoring of the Local Nature Recovery Action Plan and a County Wide Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- Work to improve the ecosystem resilience of council owned Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserves (LNR), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and greenspaces.
- Improve awareness and understanding of climate change and our natural environment through provision of information, training, and events.

- Continue to deliver a programme of wildflower planting and management and take actions that help to control invasive non-native species.
- Engage with local communities to encourage volunteering and to support them taking action to enhance and maintain their local greenspaces and wildlife sites.
- Take action to maintain and improve the quality of our air, water and soils.

**By the end of 2023-2024 we will have:**

- Reported to Welsh Government on Swansea Council 2022-23 emissions.
- Progressed phase 2 of the public buildings retrofit programme.
- Delivered a second year of projects with our environmental partner.
- Agreed a development model and progressed with the Tir John solar farm development.
- Agree and announce progress on the Blue Eden project with our development partner.
- Built strong collaborative working relationships with climate charter signatories on the 2050 Swansea agenda.
- Begun to implement our ULEV Transition Strategy 2021-2030, with over 150 ULEV vehicles and fleet charge points.
- Continue with the LED street lighting installation programme.
- Agreed an updated tree planting and management strategy.
- Planted hundreds of new trees.
- Produced a series of Wild About your Ward Maps to support communities in identifying opportunities for enhancing local greenspaces and wildlife sites and engaging them in volunteering activities.
- Drafted Management Plans for Council owned Local Nature Reserves.
- Targeted treatment and / or removal of Invasive Non-Native Species on nature sites.
- Produced a series of Climate Change and Nature Recovery e-training modules.
- Continued amenity grassland and road verge management trials to establish as species rich wildflower meadows.
- Prepared a Local Nature Recovery Action Plan and a County Wide GI Strategy.

**How we will measure progress\***

\*Provisional pending review and data development.

- Embed a Climate Change and Nature Strategy.
- Emission reductions to be monitored annually via the Welsh Government reporting process.
- Monitor progress against 30 actions by 2030 for Swansea Council delivery plan on an annual basis.
- Report regularly on collaboration successes with Climate Charter signatories, PSB, citizens, schools, businesses, community groups and environmental partners.
- Delivery of the Section 6 Corporate Biodiversity Plan, alongside a Nature Recovery Action Plan in collaboration with the Swansea Nature Partnership and adoption of a Countywide Green Infrastructure Strategy Continue to monitor air, water and soil quality.

**The contribution this well-being objective makes to the national goals**

A prosperous Wales	A resilient Wales	A more equal Wales	A Wales of more cohesive communities	A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	A healthier Wales	A globally responsible Wales
Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Direct

**How we will maximise our contribution to the national goals through the way in which we work**

- Preventing problems from occurring or from getting worse - By halting the decline of biodiversity and maintaining and enhancing a resilient natural environment, we will maintain vital ecosystem services (for example, flood alleviation, air and water quality, carbon storage and pollination) and help to maintain people's health, well-being, and quality of life. By helping people to understand the causes of problems and how by working together, we can prevent problems occurring. By delivering net zero targets we can help avoid global warming and subsequent consequences. Adaptation activity will help us prepare for change already identified as unavoidable.
- Addressing long-term challenges - We want to reverse the loss of biodiversity, promote healthy resilient ecosystems, and strengthen green infrastructure to adapt to and mitigate for the impacts of climate change, and ensure that our natural environment and the benefits and services it provides are protected for the benefit of future generations. We want to

achieve net zero carbon.

- Working in partnership with others - We will continue to support and collaborate with others Climate Charter signatories, PSB, citizens, schools, businesses, community groups and environmental partners to co-ordinate the planning and delivery of actions and maximise use of resources.
- Avoiding conflicts between public body objectives - By raising awareness of biodiversity and climate change and ensuring that it is taken into account at the early decision-making / design stages of plans and projects, the potential for conflict will be reduced.
- Involving people - We will build capacity and achieve more by involving and supporting the local community to participate in identifying and delivering initiatives that maintain and enhance the natural environment and reduce our carbon footprint. More people will be enabled to access and enjoy their natural environment and contribute to mitigating the impacts of climate change.

**The contribution this well-being objective makes to the Public Services Board Well-being Objectives**

Early Years	People live well and age well	Working with nature	Strong communities
Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct