

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

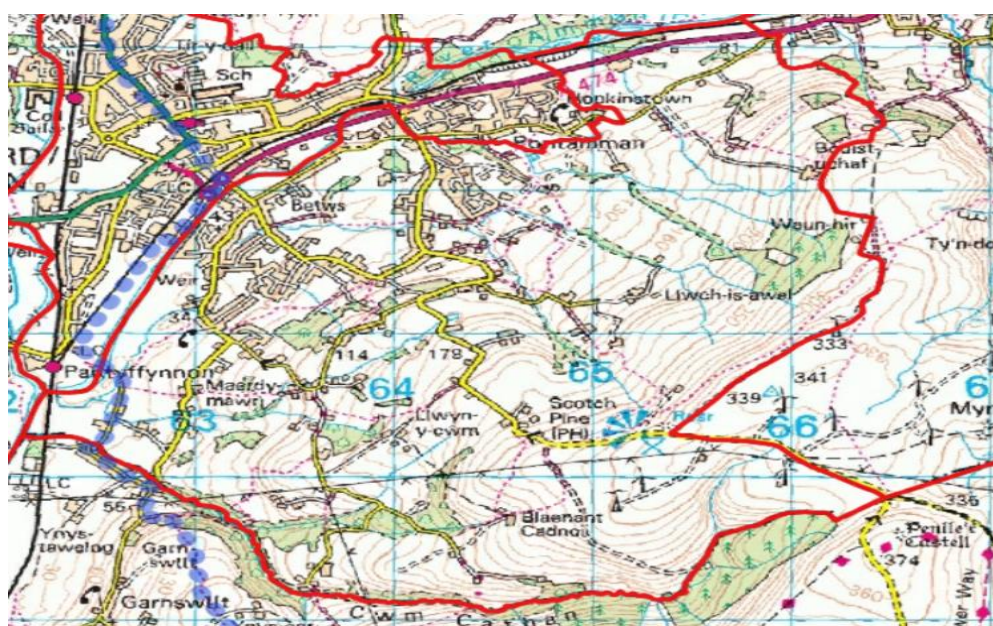
The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 places a duty on all public bodies to 'seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity' when they carry out their functions. The object of this policy is to work towards protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of Betws through a range of functions:

- Management of parks, playgrounds and open space
- Management of buildings and grounds surrounding them
- Procurement
- Raising awareness of biodiversity issues locally
- Decision making

Betws Environment and Habitat

The Betws Ward covers a large area and has a diverse rural community with a variety of landscapes within the area. It has a park bounded on one side by the river Amman, 2 playgrounds, a village green, a number of footpaths with routes that cover the local area and a variety of habitats including the agricultural areas within the community. There are church yards within the area which could enhance the local environment. The village abuts Betws Mountain which is common land. This area has a variety of scarce habitats which are used by local graziers. The edges or ffridd which is the area where the mountain meets agricultural land is another area that is a unique habitat. There is a picnic area. There are numerous large and old trees within the area one being the Old Oak which is on one of the footpaths. It is an old coal mining village with the associated underground workings which altered the water table of the area once the pumps were stopped when mining ceased. There are a few streams which flow through Nant Melin, Nant Glyncwarch, Nant Y Ffin and Nant Y Cadno. A small industrial area and many residential areas with property that has been built over time in varying styles and designs with varying garden sizes making it a vibrant and diverse village. There is the RFC and Football club which have their associated pitches. The roads and lanes some with verges and hedges are also important habitat for wildlife. It has a primary school.

Betws could improve its biodiversity by further enhancing the green areas and by involving the whole community who can help by doing 'their bit in their gardens'. The County Council can enhance the biodiversity by not cutting the verges allowing wild flowers and a variety of grasses to flourish. The Community Council can ensure that some areas within the Park are allowed to grow rather than be cut like a lawn however they need to ensure that some of the formality of the lovely Victorian style park is kept especially at the entrance but it could be allowed to become wilder the further away from the entrance you go with mown paths or a maize which encourage exploration, areas under the trees to the drip line left to grow.



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Land held in Trust by the Community Council for the People of the Village

Heol Y Felin playground and surrounding area/village green which includes Betws RFC and Car Park area.



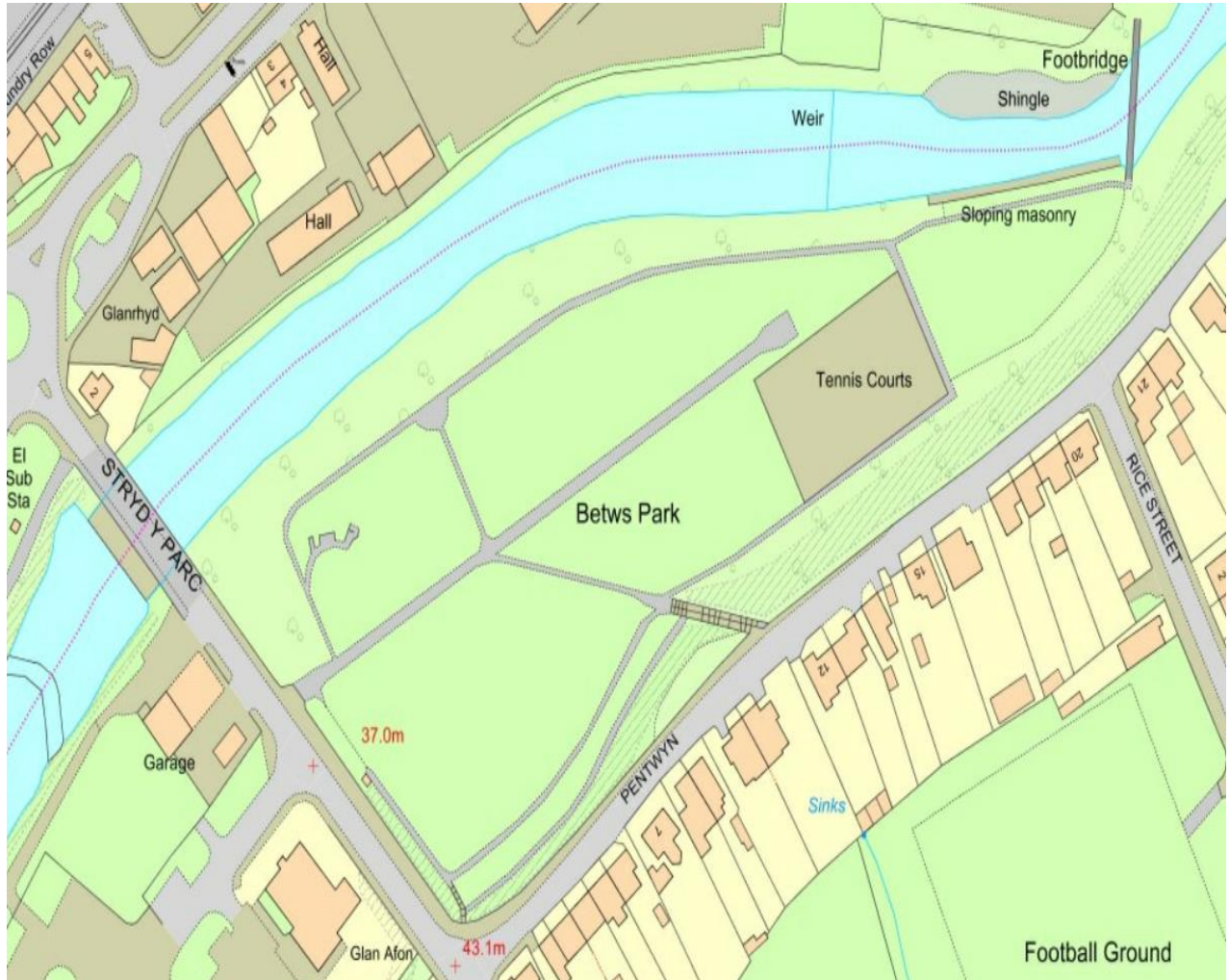
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Land leased from the Community Council

Betws RFC and Car Park area

Land leased by the Community Council from Carmarthenshire County Council

Betws Park



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Maesquarre Road Playground



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Land owned by Carmarthenshire County Council

Betws County Primary School and Betws Mountain Picnic Site

Betws Mountain Picnic Site and footpaths



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Other Land

Betws Mountain Common Land 797 hectares/1968 acres and contains several scheduled ancient monuments and other areas of archaeological interest which have been documented by CADW and Cambria Archaeology.

The land is mainly marshy and acid grassland, wet heathland, dry heathland, grass heath, blanket bog, purple moor grass and rush pasture which has active grazing rights on this varied upland. There are peat soils which are a declining and scarce habitat. The area is unspoilt moorland which has far reaching panoramic views in all directions. Some of the upland areas have been designated as Priority Habitats within the United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan. Heather moorland is a scarce habitat in the South. Ffridd or coedcae is a distinctive habitat on the edges of mountains and moorland. These areas are under threat, they are special and varied and are an important hidden asset for Welsh wildlife.

Public footpaths cross the common land as well as a bridleway and a public road. One of the footpaths is the 3km/1.86 miles of the 102Km/64mile Pembrey to Margam Park a long-distance footpath known as St Illtyd's Way.

The area supports a large variety wildlife (mammals, birds, reptiles, invertebrates, plants and fungi) and is an important ecological and breeding area for the Skylark, Grasshopper

Warbler, Linnet, Reed Bunting. Hen Harrier, Golden Plover, Brown Hare, Starling, Whinchat, Stonechat, Red Kites, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Kestrel.

Some of the agricultural areas have incorporated wooded areas after grants were given many years ago to the landowners, these areas of small woodland help to enhance biodiversity within the local area as it provides shelter, different habitat for wildlife and plant life.

What needs to be achieved	How this will be done	Who will do it	Who needs to be consulted/informed
To embed biodiversity into decision making and procurement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When considering planning applications and other changes within the village such as footpath diversion, effects of water run off etc. Evidence seen in documents/emails. 2. Ensure this is covered in the Annual Report and monitored regularly with this document being updated as and when changes are made/and every 3 years from 2019 as required under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. 	Community Councillors/Clerk	Carmarthenshire County Council – planning department and planning ecologist
To raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure the report is published on the Community Council website. 2. Inform members of the community of biodiversity and give examples of what can be done in their gardens and encourage them to participate. 3. Explain any management changes to the park and playgrounds and engage with the Community and gain feedback/suggestions. 4. Signs encouraging an understanding of biodiversity are part of 	Clerk/Community Councillors	Residents of Betws, Local Primary School, Businesses, Church/Chapel, Community Councillors

	<p>the new Betws Park development</p> <p>5. Engage with schools, colleges and other community groups in Betws Park project.</p>		
To safeguard principal species and habitats	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To identify and map the location of rare species such as Royal Ferns/Rare heathland and the diversity of the edges on Betws mountain which abuts farmland to ensure they are not affected by any development within the community. 2. Enter competitions such as Woodland Trust Tree of the year (2019) where the Old Oak on the Black Path was highlighted. 3. Encourage local residents to take part and identify local wildlife/plants etc 4. Promote local people getting involved with the national recording scheme such as RSPB garden bird watch or Butterfly Conservation butterfly recording weekend 5. Continue to engage with the Carmarthenshire bat project following successful visits and audits 6. Volunteers and community members take part in local and national recording events 	Community Councillors/ Clerk/ Local Residents	<p>Carmarthenshire County Council – biodiversity officer</p> <p>CADW, Cambria Archaeology, Open Spaces Society, etc</p> <p>Local residents to send in records of what they see to the local record centre – www.wwbic.org.uk/</p> <p>Carmarthenshire Bay Project</p>

<p>To restore and create habitats and resilient ecological networks</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Betws In Bloom annual competition encourage biodiversity by acknowledging those that embrace and create diverse habitats in their own gardens and encourage wildlife/bees etc 2. Encourage biodiversity within the local park, playgrounds, verges, hanging baskets. 3. Change mowing frequency to allow wild flowers and grasses to seed within the park and verges around the village, local farmers and residents to allow 'wild' areas within their gardens and on their land. 4. Workshops for schoolchildren/youth groups to make nest boxes/insect hotels/wildlife housing/plant wild flowers/learn how to identify wild plants and flowers, insects, reptiles, birds, mammals. 	<p>Community Councillors/ Clerk/Local Gardening Club/ Primary School/Secondary School Coleg Sir Gar Friends of Betws volunteers</p>	<p>Contractor who looks after the parks, playground and green spaces.</p>
<p>To tackle negative factors and reduce pollution, use nature-based solutions and address invasive species</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To use pesticides only where necessary to control the spread of invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed in Betws Park. 2. Encourage the use of more environmentally friendly power tools where practicable. 3. To recycle/reuse/etc where possible such as using old tins for plant 	<p>Community councillors/ Clerk/Contractor/ Residents</p>	<p>Contractor for park to have a management plan for invasive species</p> <p>Carmarthenshire County Council</p>

	<p>pots, have a compost in your garden, use recycled paper, ensure printer ink cartridges are recycled. Collect leaves to make compost.</p> <p>4. Creation of two large compost areas to enable volunteers to create compost, and use it on new raised beds as part of community gardening.</p> <p>5. Reducing the use of plastic, including plastic composting bags, and reducing waste sent to landfill.</p>		
To use, improve and share evidence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Managing Green Spaces workshop at The National Botanical Garden of Wales (NBGoW) – attended and information shared. 2. Work with experts from the local area 3. Encourage volunteers to help achieve projects 4. Obtain grants/funding to assist in achieving changes where required 5. Continue to engage with Carmarthenshire bat project to audit the habits within and around the park. 	Community Councillors/ Contractor/ Residents/ Schools and Youth groups	<p>Carmarthenshire County Council and other stakeholders</p> <p>Carmarthenshire Bat Project</p> <p>National</p>
To support capacity and/or other organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and its 7 Well Being Goals for Wales: 		<p>Welsh Government</p> <p>Natural Resources Wales</p>

	<p>a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, a healthier Wales, a more equal Wales, a Wales of cohesive communities, a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, a globally responsible Wales. This is covered in the Nature Recovery Plan for Wales Setting the course for 2020 and beyond.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. To consider and work with Carmarthenshire County Council forward plan for Environment (Wales) Act 2016. 3. To consider the section 7 list of habitats and species of principal importance for Wales. 4. To consider the State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) 		<p>Carmarthenshire County Council</p> <p>Other stakeholders</p>
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<p>Measures of Success: Identify key outcomes using narrative and metrics where possible</p>	<p>Improvements from the 'as is' starting point to the where we want 'to be' point by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing bat, bird and mammal boxes • Adding nesting features for House Martins/Swallows/Swifts for their nest building • Consider the potential presence of bats and nesting and roosting birds and hibernating mammals when carrying out any maintenance/building • Have more biodiversity in hanging baskets/flower beds to encourage
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	<p>bees and pollinating insects (Bee Friendly practices)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the use of single use and other plastics • Reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides find alternatives • Make your own compost, go peat free, collect autumn leaves to make leaf mulch for your garden
Review points and identify barriers to action, improvements to forward plan, identify enablers:	Forward plan: engage with Betws Primary School, Amman Valley School A-level students, the local community and seek funding in order to achieve some aspects.
How and when will the S6 duty be monitored and when will it be reviewed:	As changes are made to the biodiversity within the area, as and when planning applications impact the biodiversity of the area. The report will be updated when changes are made, annually and every 3 years from 2019.
Update - 2020	Butterfly Garden installed within Betws Park during the Coronavirus Pandemic Lockdown period led by Cllr Phillips after successfully gaining the grant from the Welsh Governments Local Places for Nature scheme.
Update - 2021	Diseased Ash trees suffering from Ash Die Back felled within Betws Park, Heol Y Felin Green and Maesquarre Playground – as per recommendations from the Tree Survey company and CCC Arboriculturist.
	Volunteer group 'Friends of Betws Park' regularly meet at the park and tidy up picking up litter, weeding etc
Update - 2022	Betws Primary school children plant 2 trees one in Betws Park and one in Heol Y Felin Green to commemorate the Queens Platinum Jubilee. The children also placed hand painted stones which were cemented in place to create a decorative feature.
	Cllr A Williams engages with the local College and Betws Primary School - bug hotel project is made within the park.
	Betws Park Nature Project funding received from the Welsh Governments Local Places for Nature scheme and the National Heritage Lottery – local tradesman engaged

	to save reduce carbon emission for contractors who live further away.
	Betws Park Nature Project – where possible local companies used to source native trees, shrubs, flowers, bulbs and seeds.
	Betws Park Nature Project – a meadow has been created along with raised beds for foraging, orchard using locally sourced fruit trees and bushes, native trees used to replace and stabilise Pentwyn Road bank as many of the ash trees felled were on this bank.
	Bat Survey conducted as part of a Local Bat Project.
Update - June 2022	Act of Kindness Garden implemented by local outdoor artist within Betws Park – where mottos/pictures are painted onto stones which are left in the park for others to pick up and take home if they wish.
Update - Oct 2022	Main document updated to reflect the development of the lottery funded nature-park in Parc Betws