

Reporting on Section 6

Community and Town Councils

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6 The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report 2025

Name of Community or Town Council: Hay Town Council (HTC)

Group: 2

Introduction and Context

Hay on Wye is a small market town with a population of approximately 2000, located on the Powys/Hereford border, within the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Powys County Council area.

Our precept for 2024/2025 was £95,402.00.

HTC has 11 councillors and employs a full-time clerk, plus a cleaner on a self-employed basis, other contractors are brought in as and when required for specialist work.

HTC owns and manages: - Old Railway Footpath, Bailey Walk with River Wye SSSI, Black Lion Green, The Meadows green space, Gypsy Castle playground, area of land at Warren Close, canoe landing/launching area on the River Wye at The Gliss, Wyeford Road plus an unofficial parking area on this site.

HTC leases and/or licences a number of other sites and buildings in the town:- Council office and pavilion, recreation facilities at Brecon Road, Oxford Road & Clock Tower public toilets (all from Powys County Council), land at rear of Welsh Water Sewage Pumping Station, Wyeford Road.

HTC has 3 sub-committees Estates, Finance & Premises

Hay on Wye is internationally famous as the World's first "book town" established in 1961 by entrepreneur Richard Booth. From this grew Hay Festival, founded in 1988 by Peter Florence and his parents. The festival has grown exponentially over the years with a 10 day event in early summer attracting 250k people, with a smaller 4 day winter festival as well as satellite festivals around the world, so much so that the organisers have rebranded as Hay Festival Global.

Throughout the year Hay on Wye attracts over 1m tourists, while good for local business it puts considerable strain on Hay's infrastructure and the natural environment.

This report sets out how Hay Town Council has complied with its duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems in the exercise of its functions.

Action Report 2023 - 2025			
NRAP Objective	Action carried out to...		Monitored by:
1	-embed biodiversity into decision making & procurement	HTC is exploring ways of being more responsible in its procurement process, such as purchasing toilet paper made from recycled material, environmentally friendly cleaning products. Changed the bi-annual grass cutting tender from 20 regular cuts per season to a max of 14 on an as required basis, with the possibility of reducing again in future years. This approach allows grassland areas to flower for longer periods, supporting pollinators and improving habitat diversity. In 2022 we conducted an Ash Dieback survey and associated works (funded from the precept) this has now been changed to a Duty of Care tree survey under the Occupiers Liability Act 1957 & 1984 to ensure safety of the public using our land while maintaining appropriate tree management on Council land.	Clerk & Chairs of Estates & Premises
	-raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance	HTC encourages volunteering in the community through it's support of Hay Community Woodland Group, (CWG) Hay Repair Café, Hay Navigators, Hay Youth Club etc. HTC worked with Hay CWG to create a nature trail of wildlife sculptures made by a local artist chainsaw carver. The trail aims to increase public engagement with local wildlife and biodiversity.	Clerk, Chair of Estates & groups mentioned
2	-safeguard principal species and habitats	HTC & Hay CWG planted daffodils at bare grass locations around town to encourage early season pollinators. In a new cemetery we placed owl, bird & bat boxes in existing trees to provide additional nesting and roosting opportunities for wildlife.	Clerk & Hay CWG
3	-restore & create habitats and resilient ecological networks	Working with Hay CWG & Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNP) we produced The Warren Nature Recovery Action Plan. Local Allotment Group leased approx. 1 acre of land to set up a new growing area. Applied for tree preservation orders for seven horse chestnut trees planted to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria.	Clerk, Hay CWG, Chair of Estates

4	-tackle negative factors: for e.g. reduce pollution, use nature based solutions, address invasive species	Installed four dog waste bins along the Old Railway Footpath, currently collecting approx. 3.5 tonnes annually, These bins are emptied by volunteers from Hay CWG, reducing pollution and disturbance within sensitive habitats. The Council purchased two “Tree Poppers” to assist with the manual removal of invasive Snowberry & saplings with Ash Dieback.	Clerk, Hay CWG
5	-use improve and share evidence	HTC seeks advice from experts at Brecon Beacons National Park plus use the LERC Wales app to record and share biodiversity evidence. Part of the Council’s land is leased to a local wildlife photographer who gives us an annual report of siting’s and observations.	Chair of Estates, Hay CWG
6	-support capacity and/or other organisations	HTC work closely with BBNPA (ecologists & planners), as well as Hay Community Woodland Group, to support biodiversity projects and build local capacity.	Clerk, Chair of Estates

Review of S6 duty actions for 2023-2025	
What has worked well?	The Warren Nature Recovery Action Plan funded by BBNPA Sustainable Development Fund. Wildlife carving trail funded by grants and donations from local businesses & individuals. Volunteer involvement in emptying dog waste bins, which has been crucial to the success of this initiative.
What have the barriers been?	Limited of funding for some work such as Ash Dieback. Initial resistance from some councillors regarding biodiversity-related expenditure, although awareness and support have improved over the reporting period.
What will you change?	Encourage councillors to do the OVW Biodiversity Training and other relevant programmes. Increase engagement with outside groups more and get expert advice when required.
How and when will the s6 duty be monitored and the s6 plan reviewed?	Monitoring is an ongoing process, with a formal review of the Section 6 duty and associated actions undertaken annually.


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Group	Description of organisation relative to biodiversity. Organisations:	Minimum Actions	Examples	NRAP objectives for Action Reporting (see template Annex 1)
1	- that own or occupy an office building only and - whose functions are not directly connected to biodiversity and/or land management.	Actions related to buildings management, procurement, sustainability, awareness raising, training, or in partnership with other organisations	Commissions, DVLA	NRAP objectives 1, 4, 6
2	- that own, occupy or manage land their own buildings and grounds, - whose functions are connected with biodiversity and/or land management, or - that can influence those who own or manage land.	As per Group 1 above PLUS grounds management, cascading funding criteria, providing education and training	Public Health Wales, Universities, Sport Wales	NRAP objectives 1,4,6 as above NRAP objectives 2, 3, 5 relating to own grounds
3	that own or manage land beyond their own grounds, whether their functions are connected with biodiversity and/or land management or not.	As per Groups 1 and 2 above PLUS land management to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and promote the resilience of ecosystems.	Dŵr Cymru, Local Authorities, NRW, Welsh Government	All NRAP objectives

The **Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales (NRAP)** sets out six objectives for reversing the decline of biodiversity which should be used to help develop and guide actions to comply with the section 6 duty:

The **6 objectives** to maintain and enhance biodiversity are:

- Objective 1:** Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels
- Objective 2:** Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management
- Objective 3:** Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation
- Objective 4:** Tackle key pressures on species and habitats
- Objective 5:** Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring
- Objective 6:** Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery

This is Hay Town Council's first Section 6 report and reflects the majority of biodiversity and ecosystem resilience work undertaken by the Council up to 16 December 2025. The Council recognises that this is an ongoing duty and is committed to building on this work through continued partnership working, monitoring, and annual review.