Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 - Section 6

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

Report 2019

Name of Town or Community Council: Mumbles Community Council

Introduction and Context

- Mumbles or Mwmbwls, is a seaside community in South Wales, variously described as 'The Jewel in Swansea's Crown' or 'the 'Gateway to Gower'. In the Sunday Time's: 2018 Best Places to Live in the UK Report, Mumbles was listed as the best place to live in Wales.

- Mumbles covers an area of 11.4km^2, its population is 16,600, making the population density 1,459/Km^2

- Mumbles Community Council covers the electoral wards of Oystermouth, Newton, West Cross, and Mayals. It's unitary authority is Swansea Council. Our precept for the last couple of years has been around £540,000.

- Currently the only property MCC own is the Ostreme Centre, where we acquired the lease in September this year. We are hopeful for Community Asset Transfers from Swansea Council of:

    - Underhill Park
    - The Bowls Green & Associated Buildings
    - Three tennis courts at Langland
    - Land adjacent to the Castle and castle allotments.

- Mumbles Community Council has just become subject to the Well-being of Future Generations Act due to an increase in precept following the May 2017 elections

The local environment and wildlife are important to Mumbles Community Council and we are constantly striving to make positive and sustainable changes within our community. We have the potential and capacity to lead by example and work together with local governing bodies, as well as NGOs, to improve the state of our biodiversity and encourage the community to join us.

This year, we hope to acquire more land within our wards to implement tailored sustainable mowing practices, regenerate and enhance neglected green spaces with wildflower gardens and educate and mitigate on plastic and air pollution.

Action Report

Action carried out to:		Monitored by:
-embed biodiversity into decision making & procurement	• Declared a local Climate Emergency and commitment to developing greener initiatives locally (see below projects)	Commitment made in documents

	• Taken biodiversity considerations into planning applications, consultations with our Environmental Engagement Officer if needed • Mumbles Community Council are committed to setting an example by reducing plastic within our office. Signed a resolution of commitment with Surfers Against Sewage	Meeting minutes on our website Commitment and resolution letter on our website
-raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance	• Appointed an Environmental Engagement Officer to raise awareness and encourage the community to engage, use, volunteer and learn about their local environment/wildlife • Developing an Environmental section on our website to host details of our actions and environmental projects in the area • Created a YouTube channel and various social pages media (Facebook and Instagram) dedicated to wildlife communication, our new local plastic pollution and plastic free campaign and environmental engagement • 'Nature during lockdown' special in our Summer Newsletter written by our Environmental Engagement Officer to encourage the community conscious mindset • As part of our orchard restoration project with The Orchard Project, we are undertaking a training programme with them, that will equip our volunteers with conservation management skills and traditional orchard restoration techniques with local experts • Create a small 'environmental well-being' video campaign to promote exploration of the natural world, reconnecting with nature and looking after our local wild spaces and biodiversity during lockdown	Our Environmental Engagement Officer and the video engagements
-safeguard principal species and habitats	• Managing a small neglected green space to ensure protection of species and biodiversity enhancement with Keep Wales Tidy	

	• In the process/waiting for grant status by National Lottery Heritage Fund for a small Nature Reserve in a neglected green space in Mumbles	
-restore & create habitats and resilient ecological networks	• Applied for a grant with the National Lottery Heritage fund to secure a local Nature Reserve and community allotment in a small neglected site (awaiting to hear back). Working in collaboration with Swansea Council's Biodiversity Department, local ecological consultants (Deborah Sazer) and The Wildlife Trusts of South and West Wales (Paul Thornton) • Collaborated with Keep Wales Tidy to install a wildlife garden of pollinator friendly flowers, bug hotels, bird boxes and bird feeders in a small neglected green space • Collaborating with Plantlife to implement a sustainable mowing approach to roadside verges within our wards, to encourage wildflowers and provide habitats for pollinators, small mammals and reptiles. Working with Swansea Council to propose pilot study and campaign • Working with The Orchard Project to restore a traditional orchard	
-tackle negative factors: for e.g. reduce pollution, use nature based solutions, address invasive species	• Developing a e-cargo bike delivery project, to encourage a reduction in car use and provide zero emission delivery services in the heart of our community • Collaborating with Surfers Against Sewage to reduce plastic pollution within our community and strive for a plastic free status. Our Environmental Engagement Officer manages local campaigns, beach cleans, plastic pollution education and video/social media content	
-use improve and share evidence	• Working with Air Quality officer in Swansea Council to monitor air pollution rates within our wards • Working with Swansea Council and Hubbub to replace and implement new recycling bins and a local campaign in increase knowledge of these issues (as part of our plastic free status project)	

	• Provide data on plastic free status' and mitigation techniques to Surfers Against Sewage	
-support capacity and/or other organisations	• Working towards launching an Environmental website to recognise the local independent businesses that are reducing their plastic and implementing greener practices in their workplace. Section on environmental website dedicated to local, independent traders • Created an online accessible YouTube series to promote local residents that are striving towards wildlife friendly gardens and sustainable swaps • Currently we have collaborated with and are continuing to collaborate with, to promote environmental education and biodiversity protection: Keep Wales Tidy, Plantlife, Surfers Against Sewage, Swansea Council and The Orchard Project	

Review of s6 duty

- What has worked well?

Our plastic free community campaign has received positive feedback by the local community and we have numerous traders that have pledged to reduce single-use plastic within their workplace. Our Environmental Engagement Officer has established various groups of dedicated volunteers and established a great following and support online for her projects. We have created long-term relationships with local charities and organisations that support and enhance our environmental projects and thus far, our environmental initiatives, actions, campaigns and educational content are generating interest and contributing to a greener Mumbles.

- What have the barriers been?

COVID-19 has impacted face-to-face and practical environmental engagement, so our Environmental Engagement Officer used online platforms instead. This has meant that progress has been slow for both the organisations we are working with, and for us as a community council.

- What will you change?

We will continue to focus on developing connections and educating on social platforms, as well as outdoor education where permitted. We will continue to promote environmental education and campaigns, to contribute towards a local system-change for the use of plastics, and a mindset-change for how the Mumbles community use and view the natural world.

- How and when will the s6 duty be monitored and the s6 plan reviewed?

The duty and objectives will be monitored by the Environmental and Well-being committee and our Environmental Engagement Officer will report back to the council on success, or otherwise, of the actions on a monthly basis.

The s6 plan will be reviewed in light of this report and any other corresponding evidence that is to be made available to the community council. There is no specific date for the plan to be reviewed at this time. However, we aim to review within six months.