

St Davids City Council

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Plan

Section 6 Plan under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

Date Approved by Council: 18 May 2026

Date due for review: May 2027



1. Introduction and Purpose

This plan is published in accordance with Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, which requires public authorities to prepare and publish a plan setting out what they propose to do to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems.

This plan formalises and continues the Council's existing biodiversity work. St Davids City Council has been actively delivering biodiversity initiatives for many years, most notably becoming Wales' first Bee Friendly City in 2018. The commitments set out in this plan reflect the Council's established practices and ongoing activities, providing a formal framework to meet statutory requirements whilst continuing the good work already underway.

Adoption of this plan does not introduce new burdens on the Council. Rather, it documents and supports the continuation of biodiversity actions that councillors, staff, partners and the community have already been delivering successfully. This plan was approved in principle at the Council meeting of 13 April 2026 (Minute 256) and adopted at the Annual Meeting of 18 May 2026. It is recognised that the plan will continue to be developed and strengthened, pending substantive input from biodiversity experts including Dr Sarah Beynon (Dr Beynon's Bug Farm) and Eco Dewi. Any significant additions or amendments arising from that expert input will be brought back to a future Council meeting for consideration and adoption.

2. Legal Framework

2.1 Why this plan is required

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 requires public authorities to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems. Public authorities must prepare and publish a plan setting out how they will do this, and report on actions taken every three years.

The Council's previous Environmental Policy predated this legislation. This plan replaces that policy and ensures the Council meets its current statutory duties whilst continuing its established biodiversity activities.

2.2 Evidence base

In preparing this plan, the Council has had regard to:

- The Section 7 list of habitats and species of principal importance for Wales.

- The State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) published by Natural Resources Wales.
- The South West Wales Area Statement.
- The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales.

3. Our Track Record

St Davids City Council has a strong track record of biodiversity action. This plan builds on and continues these established activities:

3.1 Wales' first Bee Friendly City

St Davids achieved Bee Friendly City status in 2018 – the first city in Wales to do so. The Council has successfully renewed this status annually, demonstrating sustained commitment to pollinator conservation across the four Bee Friendly themes: Food, Five Star Accommodation, Freedom from pesticides, and Fun (community involvement).

3.2 Established partnerships

The Council has built strong working relationships with:

- Dr Beynon's Bug Farm - providing technical expertise and coordinating the Bee Friendly Group.
- EcoDewi - delivering community engagement and environmental education.
- Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.
- Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership.
- Local schools, businesses, the Women's Institute, and community groups.

3.3 Ongoing initiatives

The Council already delivers a range of biodiversity activities including:

- Pesticide-free operations across all Council land, using environmentally friendly alternatives.
- Wildflower reseeded of disturbed areas.
- St Davids Pollinator Trail maintenance and development.
- Community planting initiatives at Cross Square and in partnership with local groups.
- Educational programmes with local schools.
- YPD Anti-Litter Campaigns.
- Biodiversity considerations in planning application responses.

3.4 Plastic Free St Davids: The Council previously supported Plastic Free initiatives as part of its environmental commitment. This is recorded here as a past action and a foundation for future work, rather than a current ongoing programme.

4. Plan Objectives

4.1 Primary objective

To continue maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and promoting ecosystem resilience in St Davids, building on the Council's established work and sustaining our status as Wales' first Bee Friendly City.

4.2 Alignment with Nature Recovery Action Plan

The Council's existing activities already contribute to the six objectives of the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales. This plan commits to continuing these contributions:

1. **Engage and support participation** - continue community engagement through partnerships, events, and education.
2. **Safeguard species and habitats** - continue considering biodiversity in planning responses and land management.
3. **Increase resilience** - continue habitat creation and wildflower planting.
4. **Tackle key pressures** - continue pesticide-free operations and litter campaigns.
5. **Improve evidence** - continue monitoring and documenting activities.
6. **Governance and support** - continue partnership working and support for local delivery.

4.3 Bee Friendly City themes

The Council will continue delivering against the four Bee Friendly themes:

1. **Food:** Providing pollinator-friendly food sources through wildflower planting.
2. **Five Star Accommodation:** Creating and maintaining habitats for pollinators.
3. **Freedom:** Maintaining pesticide-free operations.
4. **Fun:** Engaging the community in biodiversity initiatives.

4.4 River Alun: The River Alun, which flows through the St Davids area, represents a significant local environmental feature. Its management, water quality, and any contamination issues are recognised as relevant to the biodiversity and ecosystem resilience of the city. The Council notes this as an area to be considered in future development of this plan.

5. Continuing Commitments

The following commitments reflect the Council's established practices. This plan formalises these ongoing activities to meet statutory requirements.

5.1 Planning applications

The Council will continue to:

- a. Consider potential biodiversity impacts when commenting on planning applications.
- b. Support site and building designs that benefit biodiversity.
- c. Advocate for protection of sensitive habitats from inappropriate development.
- d. Consider Biodiversity Net Gain requirements and opportunities.
- e. Include biodiversity considerations within any neighbourhood planning activities.
- f. Encourage all councillors to build their knowledge of biodiversity mitigation requirements in the planning process, including through training opportunities with specialist officers such as the Pembrokeshire County Council Biodiversity Officer.

5.2 Land and property management

The Council will continue to:

- a. Maintain pesticide-free operations across all Council land, using environmentally friendly alternatives such as high-concentrate vinegar solutions for weed management.
- b. Reseed disturbed areas with wildflower seed rather than rye grass where safe and practical.
- c. Monitor wildflower reseeded activities.
- d. Specify biodiversity-friendly practices in grounds maintenance contracts.
- e. Source sustainable materials when procuring Council supplies.
- f. Consider biodiversity implications in building management decisions.

5.3 Community engagement and partnerships

The Council will continue to:

- a. Maintain active Bee Friendly partnerships with Dr Beynon's Bug Farm, EcoDewi, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority, and local community groups.
- b. Support the St Davids Pollinator Trail.
- c. Support community planting initiatives.
- d. Support educational programmes in partnership with local schools.
- e. Support YPD Anti-Litter Campaigns.
- f. Maintain dedicated environment pages on the Council website.
- g. Provide wildlife protection guidance and codes of conduct online.
- h. Engage residents and visitors on the Biodiversity Plan through City Council community engagement events and public consultations.

5.4 Bee Friendly status

The Council will continue to:

- a. Coordinate with Dr Beynon's Bug Farm and community partners for annual Bee Friendly status renewals.
- b. Compile evidence of activities across all four Bee Friendly themes.
- c. Submit renewal documentation to Welsh Government annually.
- d. Report Bee Friendly status to Council through appointed councillor representatives.

6. Promoting Ecosystem Resilience

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 requires public authorities to promote the resilience of ecosystems. The Council's existing activities already contribute to the five attributes of ecosystem resilience:

- **Diversity** - native species and wildflower planting supports a range of habitats and species.
- **Connectivity** - the Pollinator Trail and community planting help link habitats across the city.

- **Scale** - partnership working with PCNPA and neighbouring areas extends impact beyond the city boundary.
- **Condition** - pesticide-free operations and ecologically sensitive land management protect ecosystem health.
- **Adaptability** - diverse habitats and monitoring help ecosystems adapt to change over time.

7. Monitoring and Reporting

7.1 Statutory reporting

In accordance with Section 6(7) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, the Council published its Section 6 Compliance Report for 2022–2025 in December 2025. The next report is due by the end of December 2028. This plan will be reviewed following publication of each report.

7.2 Ongoing monitoring

The Council will continue its established monitoring activities:

- a. Annual Bee Friendly renewal (October) - evidence compilation and submission to Welsh Government.
- b. Bi-annual Council updates (March and September) - progress summary to Full Council.
- c. Community project documentation with photographic evidence.
- d. As-required reporting - significant developments or partnership opportunities brought to Council attention.

7.3 Key performance indicators

- Maintenance of Wales' first Bee Friendly City status.
- Area of wildflower meadows established and maintained.
- Community engagement metrics (events, partnerships, volunteer participation).
- Pesticide-free operations confirmation.
- Planning application responses incorporating biodiversity considerations.

8. Future Opportunities

While this plan focuses on continuing established activities, the Council may explore additional opportunities as they arise, such as:

- Alignment with Local Nature Recovery Strategy opportunities.
- Biodiversity corridor mapping with neighbouring authorities.
- Biodiversity credit opportunities for Council land enhancement.
- Plastic burning: The Council notes the environmental impact of plastic burning as a local pressure on biodiversity and air quality, and recognises this as an issue to be considered in future development of this plan.

Any significant new commitments would be brought to Council for consideration.

9. Adoption and Review

This plan may be reviewed and updated annually, without waiting for the three-year statutory review cycle, should the Council resolve to do so.

This plan may be submitted to Welsh Government at: Adran.Section6@gov.wales