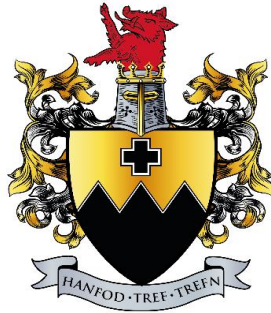


Ammanford Town Council



Reporting on Section 6

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

Report 2025

1. Introduction & Context

Overview of the Council

Ammanford Town Council serves as the first tier of local government for the community of Ammanford. It works to represent residents, maintain and enhance public spaces, support community groups and events, and act as a voice for local interests. The Council is committed to promoting a vibrant, safe, and thriving town through responsive decision-making, stewardship of community assets, and collaboration with local partners.

The Council is comprised of 15 councillors (with 2 vacancies) representing the following wards:

- Myddynfych Ward
- Iscennen Ward
- Pantyffynnon Ward
- Wern Ddu Ward

In carrying out its duties, the Council remains focused on ensuring that every ward has representation, that the community's voice is heard, and that public amenities and events are delivered to benefit all areas of the town.

Ammanford Town Council identifies itself as a Group 2 organisation under the Section 6 Biodiversity Duty. This is because the Council owns, manages, and maintains land within its own estate, including Ammanford Park, community planters, green spaces, and 6 play areas. The Council also carries out functions directly connected with land management, seasonal planting, habitat creation, and the enhancement of public open spaces.

In addition, the Council is able to influence others who manage land through partnership work with community groups, clubs, schools, and

event organisers, and by promoting sustainable environmental practices across the town. These responsibilities place the Council firmly within Group 2, with a duty to meet the minimum actions relating to both organisational sustainability and biodiversity-friendly grounds management.

As a **Group 2 organisation**, Ammanford Town Council must report on how its activities contribute to the NRAP objectives, particularly those linked to managing its own land and influencing local nature outcomes. The Council's planting schemes, park management, community events, habitat creation work, and partnership projects all demonstrate alignment with the NRAP framework.

NRAP stands for the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales, which is the national framework for protecting, restoring, and enhancing biodiversity across Wales. It sets out the priority objectives and actions that public bodies must consider when fulfilling their duties under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

NRAP provides a structured, all-Wales approach to halting and reversing the decline in biodiversity. It outlines what needs to be achieved nationally and guides how local organisations—such as Town and Community Councils—can contribute at a local level.

The NRAP sets out **six key objectives**, which public bodies should use to guide their Section 6 Duty actions:

1. **Engage and support people** to take action for nature.
2. **Safeguard species and habitats** of principal importance.
3. **Restore and create habitats** and build resilient ecological networks.

4. **Tackle environmental pressures** and negative factors affecting biodiversity.
5. **Use, improve, and share evidence** to support nature recovery.
6. **Support capacity across sectors** to deliver biodiversity action.

Accordingly, Ammanford Town Council must contribute to and report on:

- **NRAP Objectives 1, 4, and 6**, which relate to engaging people with nature, tackling pressures on biodiversity, and supporting capacity across sectors.
- **NRAP Objectives 2, 3, and 5**, specifically as they apply to the Council's own land management responsibilities, including safeguarding species and habitats, restoring and creating resilient ecological networks, and using and sharing evidence to inform local biodiversity action.

NRAP OBJECTIVE 1 - Embed biodiversity into decision making & procurement

Biodiversity committee was established in 2025 at Full Council meeting. The terms of reference were agreed, and the committee has been given responsibility for enacting the Biodiversity Action Plan and bringing biodiversity issues to full Council.

Council tendered for new contracts for the management of our green spaces to enhance biodiversity in January 2025. We retained our old contractor on a new contract for cut and collect mowing service at the park. We also sought advice from One Voice Wales regarding our green spaces, and a report was provided to give us guidance.

The Council also tendered for a new Christmas light display, we focused on selecting a company that delivered the following:

1. Eco-responsible product ranges:

- “BioPrint” and “RecyPrint” decorations use biodegradable biomaterials and recycled plastics (such as rPET from used bottles).
- These materials significantly reduce environmental impact compared to traditional aluminum-based products.

2. Lower carbon emissions:

- The BioPrint/RecyPrint manufacturing process emits up to ten times less CO₂ than aluminum production.
- This reduction helps support wider net zero and climate change mitigation goals.

3. Reduced use of aluminum:

- Elimination 80% of aluminum from some 2D motifs by using polymer-based recycled materials.
- This reduces the need for resource intensive raw material extraction.

4. Recycling of decorations:

- End-of-life lighting decorations are collected, sorted, and recycled so components can be reused, supporting circular economy practices.
- Electrical and LED components are recovered wherever possible.

5. Energy efficiency:

- All lighting uses 100% LED technology, which significantly reduces electricity consumption and operational carbon footprint.

6. Biodiversity and environmental links:

- Reduced material extraction and lower emissions relieve pressure on habitats and ecosystems.
- Use of recycled materials diverts waste from landfills and waterways, helping protect nature.
- Circular economy practices minimise waste and support sustainable resource use.
- Lower energy use contributes to climate change mitigation, a key factor in long-term biodiversity protection.

7. Opportunities for further biodiversity support:

- Adoption of wildlife friendly lighting design (reduced glare, warmer colour temperatures, dimmable systems).
- Enhanced local recycling pathways to ensure full end-of-life circularity.

Procurement Sell2Wales

Ammanford Town Council prioritising suppliers based within Wales particularly Carmarthenshire. The Council are actively supporting both environmental sustainability and Net Zero ambitions. Sourcing goods and services locally reduces transport distances, lowering carbon emissions associated with deliveries and contractor travel. This contributes directly to the Council's efforts to minimise its operational carbon footprint.

Supporting Carmarthenshire suppliers also strengthens the local circular economy, ensuring that financial investment stays within the county and encouraging more sustainable, community-based business practices. Local

suppliers are more familiar with the area's environmental needs and are often better placed to respond quickly and responsibly, reducing waste, unnecessary packaging, and resource use.

Through its procurement decisions, the Council demonstrates a commitment to environmentally responsible practice while helping build a resilient, low-carbon local economy that benefits both residents and biodiversity across Ammanford and the wider county.

Solar Lighting

As part of improving public safety and enhancing visitor experience, Ammanford Town Council introduced **solar-powered motion-detecting lights** into Ammanford Park. This project was supported through funding from the **Mynydd Y Betws Grant**, which enabled the installation of lighting in an area that previously had **no illumination**, making evening walking and running safer for the public.

From a biodiversity perspective, the use of **solar lighting** directly supports the Council's environmental commitments. Solar lights reduce the need for traditional, high-energy lighting and therefore lower the park's carbon footprint, contributing to climate resilience—a key driver for protecting local species and habitats. The lights operate on renewable energy, avoiding greenhouse-gas emissions linked to grid electricity and supporting the Council's wider Net Zero ambitions.

In addition, **motion-activated** lighting helps minimise unnecessary light pollution, which is important for nocturnal wildlife such as bats, insects, and birds. By only activating when needed, the lights help maintain natural darkness for species that rely on low-light conditions for feeding, navigation, and breeding, while still providing public safety benefits. This balance between safety and environmental sensitivity helps raise awareness of responsible, biodiversity-friendly lighting practices within the community.

Objective 1 – Raise awareness of biodiversity & its importance

Following insights from the **One Voice Wales Report** for our area, Ammanford Town Council applied for funding to launch a project focused on improving the bedding areas in Ammanford Park near the tennis courts. The initiative was promoted on the Council's social media channels and received **over 4,000 views**, demonstrating strong local interest and engagement. Working in collaboration with a local school, the project successfully combined environmental learning with tangible biodiversity enhancements in the park.

The project delivered a range of meaningful outcomes for the community:

Community Benefit and Engagement

The Pollinator Education Project brought together local school children, families, and residents through creative and environmental activities linked to the enhancement of Ammanford Park. Children helped design parts of the planting scheme and are currently working with the Council to develop **bilingual information boards**, which will be displayed around the beds to promote awareness of **native species and pollinators**. This hands-on involvement encourages a strong sense of ownership, pride, and environmental responsibility.

Volunteering Opportunities Supported

Teachers, community volunteers, and Town Council staff participated in learning sessions and park visits, helping to support activities and children's understanding of biodiversity. Future planting days will offer additional opportunities for volunteers to take part in caring for the park.

Contributions to Long-Term Sustainability and Environmental Impact

The project introduces pollinator-friendly planting and educational signage that highlights the importance of safeguarding local species. By involving pupils from Ysgol Bro Banw **Years 5 and 6**, the project helps nurture future

environmental stewards and promotes long-term community commitment to maintaining the park's wildlife habitats.

Promotion and Use of the Welsh Language

Bilingual learning has been embedded throughout. Educational materials, signage, and pupils' written work incorporate both Welsh and English, supporting language development and celebrating local culture.

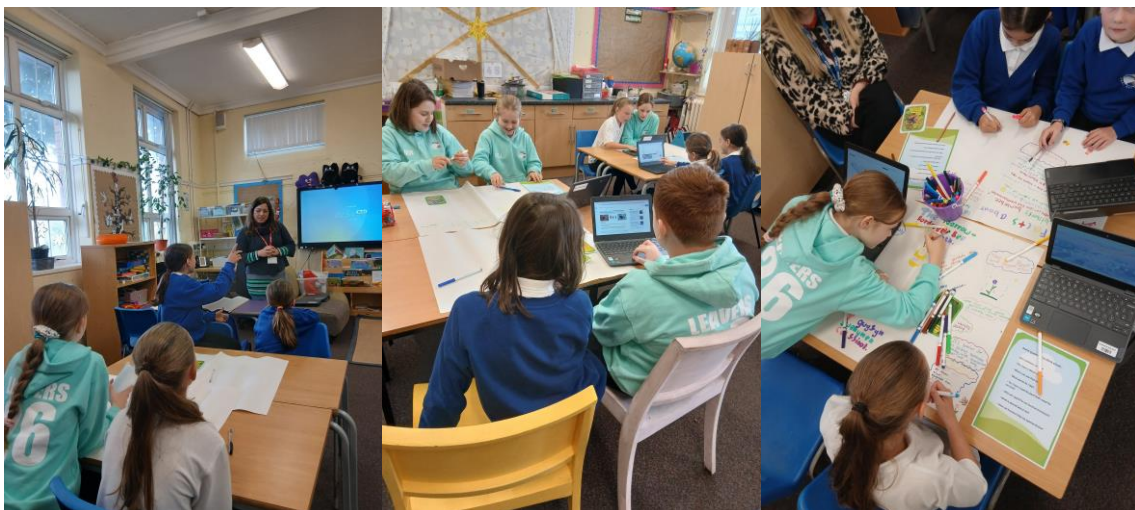
Commitment to Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

The project design ensured all activities were accessible and inclusive for children of mixed abilities and backgrounds. Sessions blended creative, research-based, and practical elements, enabling every participant to contribute meaningfully. The refurbished park spaces remain fully accessible for all users.

Wider Stakeholder Engagement

Delivered through partnership working between Ammanford Town Council, local schools, and community volunteers, the project links education, biodiversity, and public engagement. It reinforces a joined-up approach to sustainable development in Ammanford and supports wider environmental goals for the town.

Pictures of sessions





Objective 2 – Safeguard principal species & habitats

Until recently, the Council's ability to focus on biodiversity has been limited due to a lack of dedicated resource and specialist knowledge. However, Ammanford Town Council has now taken positive steps to strengthen its understanding of local species and habitats by engaging with One Voice Wales (OVW), Places for Nature, and Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

As part of this work, the Council participated in a pilot project to trial a biodiversity survey toolkit supported by OVW enabling councillors and volunteers to begin surveying plant species within our area. This has given the Council a better baseline understanding, although further work and more detailed surveying is still required.

Local knowledge shared by residents has highlighted the presence of important species within Ammanford, including owls nesting in nearby trees and hedgehogs frequently sighted within Ammanford Park. These community observations are valuable and will help shape future monitoring and habitat protection efforts.

Over the coming months, the Council will place greater emphasis on identifying and safeguarding species and habitats of principal importance. This will include developing wildlife-friendly practices, improve monitoring, and work towards recognised environmental standards such as Green Flag Awards and Bee Friendly accreditation. These initiatives will help ensure that Ammanford's green spaces continue to support biodiversity and provide safe, thriving habitats for local wildlife.

Objective 3 – Restore & Create Habitats and Resilient Ecological Networks

As noted under Objective 2, Ammanford Town Council has historically had limited resources dedicated to biodiversity. Despite this, the Council has begun taking meaningful steps to restore habitats and strengthen ecological networks through new partnerships and community involvement.

The Council has engaged with Keep Wales Tidy and has been awarded 15 fruit trees, which will be planted across suitable locations to support pollinators, provide seasonal food sources for wildlife, and contribute to the creation of connected green corridors throughout the town. This marks an important first step in enhancing local habitats and increasing biodiversity value within our public spaces.

In addition, the Council has strengthened relationships with the Ammanford Lions Litter Picking Group, acknowledging the crucial role that clean, well-maintained environments play in supporting healthy ecosystems. Removing litter not only improves the appearance of our green spaces but also protects wildlife from hazards and helps maintain the ecological integrity of our parks and pathways.

Looking ahead, the Council's ambition over the coming months is to establish Ammanford as a recognised Litter Picking Hub. This initiative will encourage greater community participation by providing a regular meeting point at the Cricket Club Café, where volunteers can gather for refreshments—such as tea and coffee—after each litter picking session. This approach aims to integrate environmental action with community wellbeing, creating a welcoming, social, and sustainable model for ongoing habitat stewardship.

Through these developing partnerships and community-led initiatives, Ammanford Town Council is taking important steps toward restoring habitats, improving ecological networks, and strengthening the town's overall environmental resilience.

Objective 4 – Tackle Negative Factors

To address pressures on local biodiversity, Ammanford Town Council is taking steps to reduce pollution, promote nature-based solutions, and begin tackling invasive species within council-managed areas. Although resources have been limited, staff and councillors have actively engaged in training and capacity-building to strengthen the Council's environmental response.

Council staff have attended a series of biodiversity-focused **webinars provided by One Voice Wales and Places for Nature**, helping to build understanding of best practice around habitat protection, nature-based interventions, and environmental management. In addition, officers have participated in wider sustainability events, including the **Well-Being Economy Conference** and the **Green Economy Conference** held in November 2025. These sessions have provided valuable insight into how local actions fit within broader climate, biodiversity, and community wellbeing goals.

Going forward, the Council will encourage more councillors and staff to attend relevant webinars, conferences, and training opportunities to ensure knowledge continues to grow across the organisation. The Council also plans to **nominate a dedicated Biodiversity Champion** who will help lead future planning, oversee biodiversity considerations in Council decisions, and support ongoing monitoring of environmental actions.

These steps will enable Ammanford Town Council to tackle negative factors more effectively, strengthen its contribution to nature recovery, and ensure long-term resilience for the species and habitats within the town.

Objective 5 – Use, Improve & Share Evidence

Ammanford Town Council is at the beginning of its biodiversity journey, and during 2025 it began to establish clearer, more structured ways of gathering and using evidence to inform its decisions. Regular communication already took place with One Voice Wales biodiversity officers, who provided guidance on any changes proposed for Ammanford Park and offered professional advice whenever needed. (please see report attached) This ongoing support ensured that Council actions remained aligned with best practice and national biodiversity priorities.

To continue building internal knowledge, new biodiversity and climate training opportunities were consistently shared with councillors and officers, encouraging wider participation in professional development. As understanding grew, the Council became better equipped to evaluate local biodiversity data, interpret the effectiveness of planting schemes, and make evidence-based improvements to habitats across the town.

Residents were also encouraged to participate in training sessions, workshops, and volunteering events, helping to build community knowledge and create a shared understanding of the importance of protecting local species and green spaces. This collaborative approach ensured that evidence was not only gathered and used by the Council but also shared across the community to inspire long-term support for nature recovery.

Although the Council is still at the early stages, it remained committed to strengthening its evidence base, improving how information was collected and reviewed, and ensuring that learning was shared openly to support the conservation and enhancement of Ammanford's natural environment.

Objective 6 – Support Capacity and/or Other Organisations

Ammanford Town Council continues to maintain strong and supportive working relationships with key organisations involved in biodiversity and environmental improvement, including **One Voice Wales (Un Llais Cymru)**, the **Local Nature Partnership (LNP)**, and **Natural Resources Wales (NRW) officers**. These partnerships provide vital expertise, guidance, and capacity-building support, helping the Council strengthen its contribution to nature recovery.

In 2023, Ammanford Town Council set out a series of environmental objectives to guide its approach to climate change, biodiversity, and sustainable development. These objectives were designed to be reviewed in 2026 and form the foundation of the Council's commitment to responsible and environmentally conscious decision-making. The core principle stated that the Council would *consider the impact its activities have on both climate change and biodiversity issues and, where practicable and within available resources, introduce measures that mitigate negative outcomes or support positive environmental benefits*.

The overarching aims of the 2023 Environmental Policy were to:

- **Preserve and enhance the natural environment** within the Ammanford area.
- **Support residents' enjoyment** of local green spaces and natural surroundings.
- **Promote sustainable development**, ensuring that present-day decisions do not compromise the well-being of future generations.
- **Highlight the value of the environment** in contributing to community well-being and quality of life.

In support of these aims, the Council committed to:

- Complying with all relevant environmental legislation and statutory biodiversity duties.
- Minimising resource consumption across all Council operations, making use of renewable resources and electronic communication where possible.
- Avoiding unnecessary waste through strategic purchasing and responsible procurement.
- Recycling and reusing materials wherever possible and ensuring all waste is disposed of safely and responsibly.
- Conserving and enhancing both the built and natural environment to support the well-being of residents and visitors.
- Actively promoting local biodiversity in all Council activities.
- Supporting local initiatives aimed at tackling climate change and biodiversity loss.
- Reducing unnecessary travel and encouraging active travel options such as walking and cycling.
- Sourcing goods and services locally, where possible and appropriate, to reduce carbon emissions from transport and support the local economy.

Next Steps – Developing a New Plan for 2026 Onwards

As the 2023–2026 period ends, the Council will now develop a **new Environmental and Biodiversity Plan**, supported by an **Action Plan** that sets out how each objective will be delivered and monitored.

The new plan will:

- Reflect the progress made since 2023, including improved biodiversity awareness, new partnerships, and ongoing community projects.
- Strengthen commitments under the **Section 6 Biodiversity Duty** and the **Well-being of Future Generations Act**.
- Include measurable actions, timelines, and responsibilities for councillors, staff, and partners.
- Ensure that biodiversity, climate, and sustainability considerations are fully embedded in decision-making across all Council services.
- Expand opportunities for community involvement, volunteering, education, and environmental stewardship.

This forward-looking plan will help ensure that Ammanford Town Council continues to build on its early foundations, delivering meaningful environmental improvements and supporting a greener, more resilient future for the town.

To ensure transparency and wider learning, this report will be published on both the **Ammanford Town Council website** and the **Wales Biodiversity Partnership website**, allowing other organisations and communities to learn from our developing approach.

By continuing to engage with partner organisations, the Council strengthens local capacity, improves access to expert knowledge, and supports a collaborative approach to biodiversity across Carmarthenshire.

Photograph involving children from Ysgol Bro Banw Years 5 & 6 project to introduce Native and Pollinators back in Ammanford Park Tennis Court plant beds.

