

Biodiversity Report 2024

Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council

This report is compiled in accordance with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 - Section 6 and The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Action Plan 2024.

Written by Erika Davies, Deputy Clerk



Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council (ALCC) provides a range of services to its local community, some of which have an impact on biodiversity. These include:

- Association with 6 allotment sites
- Town in Bloom project with community involvement
- Funding - ALCC gives grants to local groups and organisations in the area to improve the biodiversity and sustainability of various sites.
- Solar Farm Grants - ALCC receives annual funding from Lightsource BP, a solar farm company based in the locality. Each year, ALCC decides how to allocate the grant to local community projects which among other things, can be used to deliver environmental improvements.
- Meeting the well-being goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Well-being Plan for Gwent 2023 - 2028
- Monitoring the plans for Wind Farms in the area and any impact they have on Biodiversity
- Employing a local landscaping company to undertake work at Abertillery War Memorial

We promote sustainability and biodiversity by pursuing sustainability goals and sustainable practices wherever possible.

We serve approximately 17,000 residents. The budget for 23/24 was £376,451. £289,000 of this was funded through the precept.

What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity is all the different kinds of life you'll find in one area—the variety of animals, plants, fungi, and even microorganisms like bacteria that make up our natural world. These species and organisms work together in ecosystems, like an intricate web, to maintain balance and support life. Biodiversity supports everything in nature that we need to survive: food, clean water, medicine, and shelter.

– [/www.worldwildlife.org](http://www.worldwildlife.org)



Image Credit: Cllr. Julie Holt

'Green' grants paid in 23/24
£15,200
ALCC Funding

NRAP Objective: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels.

The aim of ALCC is to embed sustainability and support for biodiversity throughout the Council's working practices. This includes noting environmental emphasis on tender and grant applications. Reducing energy use, reducing single use plastic, reducing paper use and encouraging recycling. This is monitored by Community Councillors, Officers and by the criteria applied to the grant application form.

NRAP Objective: Increasing knowledge and knowledge transfer. Raising awareness of biodiversity and its importance.

ALCC will invite local environment and nature focused groups to attend Party in the Park 2025.

In house training will be made available to all Councillors that wish to learn more about biodiversity, through One Voice Wales.

ALCC will actively share social media content relating to local environmental projects.

ALCC will ask applicants/recipients of Council funding to address biodiversity in their projects.

ALCC are working with TAFY to deliver our Town in Bloom project. This includes working with the local comprehensive school developing a sensory garden and delivering hanging baskets and plants for them to use around the school as part of their gardening club.

This is monitored by Community Councillors, Officers and the relevant Committees.

NRAP Objective: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring habitats and creating habitat creation.

Planning is a standing item on the PlaCE Committee. It reviews each application and gives consideration to the green infrastructure and its impact on the environment. This could be ensuring the proposed development does not disturb or have a detrimental effect on wildlife; minimal disruption to the current landscape; increase habitats for wildlife through planting of flowers or the addition of bird and bat boxes.

The ALCC Town in Bloom project was added as a project under the well-being remit and added to the Council budget in 2021. The current provider of this service is TAFY, a Social Enterprise offering volunteering, transitional employment, training, and skills for young people in Blaenau Gwent. Tubs are placed throughout the ALCC area and over 3,500 plants have been planted since June. There are also over 80 hanging baskets in Abertillery town centre. All of the plants used are pollinator-friendly.

A huge part of the Town in Bloom project is community involvement. ALCC currently has 34 tubs which are cared for by local community groups and individuals wanting to encourage biodiversity in the area. There is a budget of £3000 allocated for this project.

This is monitored by Community Councillors, Officers and the PlaCE Committee.

NRAP Objective: Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management.

The Abertillery and Llanhilleth community is blessed to have several areas of outstanding natural beauty on its doorstep. ALCC is also very lucky to have many community groups who are interested in maintaining these areas and learning about the wildlife and habitat that live there.

Cwmtillery Lakes has received funding from ALCC and is working with the community to provide fishing opportunities to local residents. It has been recognised as a local nature reserve and winner of the Community Green Flag Award.

Another area which has also received the Community Green Flag Award is Aberbeeg Park and Woodland well-being area. Ebbw Fach Community Group has transformed the site and were the recipients of a £15,000 Solar Farm grant in 2023.

ALCC is proud to be associated with 6 allotments sites. Grant funding is given to these sites to maintain the area and provide paint and gardening tools.

This is monitored by Community Councillors and Officers.



NRAP Objective: Tackle key pressures on species and habitats

ALCC is proud to be working with local community groups to support maintaining small areas of land, paths, and gardens. Litter picking is an important part of this and the local comprehensive school get involved, along with volunteers to remove litter, other pollutants and returning these spaces to nature.



Image Credit: BGCBC Facebook

ALCC is not a waste or highway authority and does not have direct responsibility for these matters. However, Members are very active in caring for the community landscape and take pride in restoring areas. Any areas of concern are reported to Blaenau Gwent Borough Council.

This is monitored by Community Councillors and Officers.

NRAP Objective: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring.

All Members of ALCC were asked to contribute towards this report and to get involved with biodiversity.

It is important to highlight the importance of biodiversity and how we can contribute and act accordingly.

ALCC will look at having a biodiversity-specific page on the website that will publish this report, showcase all the community work that is being undertaken, and publish details of Council funding that has helped community projects.

Evidence of solar farm grant funding will be shared on the ALCC website and through social media channels.

ALCC will look at setting up a biodiversity working group.

Recipients of the Green Flag Community Award and any other environmental awards will be shared on the ALCC website and social media channels.

This will be monitored by Community Councillors and Officers.

“The money we had off you was amazing. Our Summer House is being installed next week. We used some of the money we had off you to buy plants and flags for our garden, which really made the garden look special. You have helped us so much to getting our Green Flag Award. Thank you for your support.” - Pat Tovey - Ebbw Fach Community Group