

Welsh Government's Environment (Wales) Act 2016 – Section 6 Duty: Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems

Report for 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2025

1. Introduction

This report outlines a range of actions taken by Welsh Government to fulfil the section 6 biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty during the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2025. It summarises actions across government, outcomes delivered, and alignment with the Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP)¹ objectives.

1.1 The section 6 biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 places a duty (the section 6 duty) on public authorities to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems throughout all of their functions. The duty includes the requirement for public authorities to publish a report every three years on actions they have taken that contribute to complying with it and this is the Welsh Government's Section 6 duty report for the period 2023–2025.

We exercise the duty within the organisation itself through estate management, and externally through the functions devolved to Wales, which include the environment, agriculture, planning and transport.

The Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales identifies six objectives to address drivers of biodiversity loss and support recovery, and these should guide actions taken to comply with the section 6 duty. They are:

Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels.

¹ [Nature recovery action plan | GOV.WALES](#)

Objective 2: Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management.

Objective 3: Maintain 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.

Green space management is key to reversing the decline in biodiversity, but the section 6 duty extends beyond actions that directly target biodiversity and encompasses any activity that supports it. Measures such as recycling, reducing energy use, and promoting sustainable travel not only contribute to Wales's net zero target, but also help meet NRAP objective 4 by tackling key pressures on species and habitats through reduced resource consumption and pollution. Any action that is anyway beneficial to biodiversity contributes to meeting the duty.

1.1 Headline achievements

- Nature Networks Fund: over £21 million awarded to 68 projects strengthening protected land and marine sites and ecological connectivity which is key to ecosystem resilience.
- Agriculture: continuity from Glastir through Rural Investment Schemes and Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) Preparatory Schemes, including Habitat Wales Scheme, Growing for the Environment, Small Grants – Environment, Organic Conversion and Organic Support. These support biodiversity through habitat management and promote sustainable land management.
- Control of Agricultural Pollution: implementation of the Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021 supported by

enforcement funding for NRW and £69m committed to farm infrastructure grants which include improving slurry storage.

- 30by30: publication of a framework for Wales, targeted investment in Marine Protected Areas, and establishment of pathways including Naturfa sites and Designated Landscapes delivery which will contribute to creating and improving the condition of existing habitats.
- Forestry: enhanced woodland creation and restoration, National Forest for Wales expansion, application of new felling licence environmental powers and grant schemes that protect priority habitat.
- Water: invested £56 million to improve water quality in Wales since 2022 which in turn benefits biodiversity by reducing pollution.
- Circular Economy: new workplace recycling regulations and extended producer responsibility measures introduced; public sector procurement embedding sustainability to reduce pressures on species and habitats.
- Local Places for Nature: £21m in 2024/25 and continued investment delivering thousands of local green enhancements and volunteer engagement.
- Invasive Non-Native Species: GB Strategy delivery, pathway action plans consultation, targeted biocontrol and rapid response capacity to reduce their impact on species and habitats.
- Designated Landscapes: multi-year core and capital funding, targeted biodiversity outputs, and launch of Ffermio Bro (2025/26) for landscape-scale nature recovery efforts through collaboration.

- Nature Networks Fund: over £21 million awarded to 68 projects strengthening protected land and marine sites and ecological connectivity.

1.2 Measured outcomes

- 71km of traditional field boundaries restored and 61ha of invasive non-native species cleared and controlled in Designated Landscapes.
- Sowing of 14,829 m² of wildflower seeds and planting 5,709 native trees/shrubs along trunk roads.
- Large scale planting of native trees as part of the Natural Flood Management schemes - 18,000 trees at Parc Cwm Darren, 88,000 at Y Foel.
- 2149 green spaces created or significantly enhanced through the Local Places for Nature Scheme.
- Biodiversity enhancements on Welsh Government property which include habitat protection for Lapwing, amphibians and reptiles protecting, Osprey nest security and installation of bat and bird boxes and green walls.
- Introduction of Single-use Plastic Products Act 2023 banning single use plastic items.
- For the period 2024-25 17,285kg of ICT waste was either reused or recycled.

2. Summary of actions

A representative range of actions undertaken during the reporting period are summarised below:

2.1 Administrative Estates

Welsh Government administrative offices delivered site-specific biodiversity enhancements including living walls, native planting, ponds, apiaries, wildlife boxes and reduced mowing regimes to encourage pollinator friendly wildflowers and plants. Other actions include repurposing Welsh roof slates following the installation of solar PV, water efficiency accreditation (Waterwise Checkmark) and comprehensive recycling facilities.



*Two facades of the front living wall
at the Aberystwyth office in 2023*



*Biodiversity friendly mowing
regimes at the Merthyr office*

Hedgehog home at Merthyr

Biodiversity

across the Welsh Government administrative estate



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Enhancing biodiversity and wellbeing

Biodiversity enhancement of our estate can help **reduce** our emissions and **build** climate resilience, as well as providing an **attractive** place to work.

Aberystwyth, Rhodfa Padarn

- Bat boxes
- Bird baths
- Bird boxes
- Bird feeders
- Bee apiary (in collaboration with Aber Bee-keeping Association)
- Bumble bee dens
- Bug homes
- Compost bins
- Coffee grounds used for landscaping
- Hedgehog homes
- Living Walls
- Pond
- Slow worm den
- Weather station for Butterfly monitoring
- Wildflower area



Carmarthen, Picton Terrace

- Bird boxes
- Bird feeder
- Wildflower gardens
- Living Wall



Swansea, Llys-Y-Ddraig

- Bird Boxes
- Bird feeders
- Pond
- Wildflower area
- Bug homes
- Living Wall



Llandudno Junction, Sarn Mynach

- Bat boxes
- Bee apiary (in collaboration with Vinci specialists & Conwy Beekeeping Society)
- Bird boxes
- Bird Feeders
- Bug homes
- Hedgehog homes
- Pond
- Wildflower areas



Merthyr Tydfil, Rhydycar Business Park

- Bee apiary (in collaboration with Beacon Bees)
- Bird baths
- Bird feeders
- Bug homes
- Frog House
- Garden bench and bird boxes (handmade by Royal National Institute of Blind People, Merthyr)
- Hedgehog homes
- Wildflower areas
- Pond
- Butterfly home
- Living Walls



Cardiff, Cathays Park

- Pollinator friendly gardens
- Wildflower roof garden



If you want to find out more email biodiversity@gov.wales

NRAP objectives: 1, 3, 4, 6

2.2 Agriculture

The EU Rural Development Programme (2014–2020, extended to 2023), Rural Investment Schemes (2024), and Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) Preparatory Schemes (2025) supported biodiversity through habitat and farmland management, pollinator measures, water-quality improvements, and climate-related actions.

Until 2023, **Glastir Advanced (GA)** was the main agri-environment scheme, targeting with bringing about positive sustainable land management outcomes including to help halt biodiversity loss in addition to improving water and soil quality, flood risk, and landscape enhancement. By 2023 it involved over 211,422 ha, including 62,879 ha of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). **Glastir Commons** covered 177 commons (114,798 ha).

Other RDP schemes included **Glastir Small Grants** for capital works for the creation of new, and restoration of existing, hedgerows to improve connectivity and tree planting to improve ecosystem resilience.

Habitat Wales Scheme (HWS) 2024

Provided continuity for GA participants and opened access for new applicants. It protected existing habitat areas and added new land into management with habitat totalling over 233,000ha including 38,400ha of SSSI.

Habitat Wales Scheme 2025

Introduced under SFS Preparatory Schemes, aligning with SFS Universal Action 5 (management of existing habitats) covering 245,000ha of habitat.

Growing for the Environment (GftE)

Supports home grown, low-input forage and biodiversity beneficial crops, preparing farmers for SFS habitat creation actions. For the period 2024–26 contracts were awarded covering over 3000ha of crops.

Small Grants – Environment

Capital grants for hedgerows, tree planting, and other environmental works. Eight rounds have delivered major restoration and new planting and have delivered around 196 km of hedgerow restoration and 105 km of new planting. In 2024/25, additional contracts supported a further 144 km of restoration and 73 km of new planting.

Organic Schemes

Organic farming promotes sustainable land management in areas most vulnerable to biodiversity loss.

Organic Conversion Scheme 2023: 3,246 ha of land under conversion.

Organic Conversion Scheme 2026: 3,198 ha of land accepted for conversion.

Organic Support 2024–25: This is designed to encourage continued organic farming practices, and 51,275 ha of land is covered under the scheme.

Control of Agricultural Pollution

Regulations introduced in 2021 reduce nutrient pollution which has a negative impact on biodiversity through upsetting the balance of ecosystem. It includes funding to NRW for compliance and enforcement and £69m invested in infrastructure grants. Non-compliance rates decreased from 63% to 53% between 2023–25.

Sustainable Farming Scheme (from 2026)

Developed under the Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023, SFS requires 10% habitat management on participating farms and improvement of designated sites. It will

replace the Basic Payment Scheme by 2029, offering actions for habitat creation, species recovery, and landscape-scale cooperation.

NRAP objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6

2.3 Biodiversity and Marine

30by30

30by30 is the global target to protect and effectively manage 30% of land, freshwater, and sea by 2030, agreed under the COP15 Global Biodiversity Framework.

In June 2025 Wales published its 30by30 Framework², defining criteria for areas that count towards the target and ensuring they form a resilient ecological network.

Following the 2022 Biodiversity Deep Dive, Wales continues two pathways to 30by30:

Protected sites (e.g., SSSIs, SACs), supported by the Nature Networks Programme, the Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Network Management Grant Scheme, and from 2026 the SFS which will further support farmers to manage land for biodiversity within protected sites.

Naturfa sites, a new system recognising places with equivalent biodiversity value and management. A pilot is developing assessment tools and a restoration pipeline to help sites meet recognition criteria.

Marine Protected Areas grant-funded projects for 2025–26 include a Saltmarsh Action Plan, HPAI monitoring on Grassholm, migratory-fish monitoring in the Dee Estuary, and work on marine biosecurity. JNCC is reviewing Wales's MPA

² [A 30by30 framework for Wales | GOV.WALES](#)

Network Management Framework to keep it aligned with UK and international standards.

Targeted investments include:

£100,000 (2024–25) for Seagrass Network Cymru, supporting a national plan to restore 266 ha of seagrass by 2030.

- £30,000 to establish Saltmarsh Network Cymru.
- £100,000 (2024–26) to extend RSPB's Biosecurity for Wales project, strengthening invasive-species prevention and long-term governance for offshore seabird sites.

Designated Landscapes will also be central to 30by30, supported through the Ffermio Bro scheme to drive landscape-scale nature recovery (also see Designated Sites section).

The Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill³ is being developed to enshrine the environmental principles in Welsh legislation, establish an oversight body, and create a biodiversity target-setting framework with monitoring and reporting requirements.

Evidence: ERAMMP⁴ and the Integrated Modelling Platform (IMP) have informed policy development, including SFS design and national trends reporting.

Integrated Impact Assessments continue to embed biodiversity across other policy areas.

Welsh Local Environment Record Centres are funded at £119,000 per annum to support biological data collection, recording networks, and the continued availability of biodiversity information across Wales.

³ [Environment \(Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets\) \(Wales\) Bill](#)

⁴ [ERAMMP](#) | [ERAMMP](#)

Life Projects: Two major projects have been funded:

Four Rivers for LIFE – An NRW-led £10m river restoration project (2021–2026) improving the condition of the Cleddau, Teifi, Tywi and Usk SACs. Actions include removing barriers to fish migration, enhancing river habitats, reducing nutrient and sediment inputs, and tackling invasive species and plastic.

LIFE Quaking Bogs – An NRW-led £5m EU and Welsh Government project (2022–2026) restoring SAC Quaking bogs and Transition mires. Measures address drainage and hydrology, reduce nutrient enrichment and biomass, reintroduce grazing, and control invasive species. The project covers seven SACs including Crymlyn Bog, Rhos Goch and Preseli's, aiming to improve resilience and support species such as the marsh fritillary butterfly.

Nature Network Fund

The Nature Networks Fund supports nature recovery in Wales by improving protected sites and strengthening ecological connectivity, creating a Resilient Ecological Network. Delivered with the National Lottery Heritage Fund and NRW, it provides grants of £50,000–£1 million to organisations enhancing land and marine site resilience. Between 2023 and 2025, 68 projects have been funded with over £21 million awarded.

Further details and examples of other projects can be found [here](#).

Natur am Byth

We are investing £800k over four years in an NRW-led project to reverse the decline of endangered and iconic species. Working with environmental charities, the programme spans nine focus areas across land, freshwater and marine environments, delivering Wales' largest natural heritage and outreach initiative to save species and reconnect people with nature.

Naturewise

The Naturewise training course builds staff capacity to address the nature emergency by strengthening understanding of people–nature connections and embedding nature-positive approaches in policy. During the reporting period, 50 colleagues completed the course. A review and evaluation are underway to ensure continued relevance and impact.

Pollinators

Action Plan for Pollinators Taskforce

Welsh Government hosts biannual meetings of the Pollinators Taskforce, enabling partners to share best practice. The Taskforce launched the Bee Friendly scheme in 2016, with around 130 organisations now undertaking pollinator-friendly actions. Bee Friendly Champions continue to promote the initiative, supported by Welsh Government officials.

At UK level, we contribute to the Pollinator Monitoring Scheme, combining long-term records with new surveys to track population change. The Taskforce also established a subgroup on road verges and amenity grasslands, launching the ‘It’s for Them’⁵ campaign in 2022 with toolkits, education packs and signage to encourage biodiversity-friendly mowing practices.

Healthy Bees Plan 2030

Jointly published with Defra, the Healthy Bees Plan 2030 aims to strengthen biosecurity, support beekeepers, and use research to improve honeybee health. Implementation is overseen by the Bee Health Advisory Forum. Welsh Government funds the National Bee Unit to promote good husbandry and reduce pest and disease risks through inspection and education in Wales.

⁵ [It's for Them campaign: stakeholder toolkit | GOV.WALES](#)

Section 6 Duty Working Group

The Section 6 working group, comprising public authorities and umbrella organisations, meets twice yearly to share good practice in biodiversity. Presentations covered pesticide reduction, grassland management for pollinators, and ecosystem resilience. Additional activities included workshops at a biodiversity and planning event and at a Public Service Board conference in Wrexham, as well as a presentation and Q&A session at a Powys community council event.

UK Cetacean Conservation Strategy

The UK Cetacean Conservation Strategy, led by the Scottish Government, addresses porpoise, dolphin and whale species in UK waters. Six recommendations target pressures including water quality, bycatch and underwater noise, with interventions supported through the MPA Management Grant Scheme or Nature Networks Fund.

Wales Biodiversity Partnership

Welsh Government funds the Wales Biodiversity Partnership (£115,000 annually, plus £10,000 for its 2025 conference). The Partnership provides a biodiversity portal and convenes stakeholders. The recent Aberystwyth conference focused on collaboration, innovation, green finance and monitoring.

Wales Coasts and Seas Partnership (CaSP Cymru)

CaSP Cymru, convened and funded by Welsh Government, delivers the vision of clean, healthy and biologically diverse seas under the Welsh National Marine Plan. Work aligns with UN SDG 14 and focuses on three enablers: ocean literacy, sustainable investment, and coastal capacity. Delivery includes the Ocean Literacy strategy (Y Môr a Ni), regional coastal co-ordinators, the MARINE Fund Cymru, and expert collaboration on biodiversity targets.

Welsh Seabird Conservation Strategy

Wales' first Seabird Conservation Strategy, developed with statutory bodies and stakeholders, covers 29 species. Evidence-based recommendations address 20 pressures, with publication expected in early 2026.

NRAP objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6

2.4 Cadw

Cadw integrated biodiversity into grounds management across 130 properties through revised maintenance regimes, wildflower establishment, site management plans and staff training, improving habitat diversity while conserving historic significance and visitor experience.



General review of Cadw properties and mowing/management regimes, looking for potential projects to improve biodiversity such as reducing mowing regimes and creating rides through wooded areas.

NRAP objectives: 1, 3, 4, 5 & 6

2.5 Circular Economy

Beyond Recycling strategy actions progressed, including workplace recycling regulations⁶ (2024), extended producer responsibility for packaging⁷ (2024), deposit return scheme development, reuse infrastructure, and business support to reduce material use and waste, addressing drivers of biodiversity loss.

NRAP objectives: 1, 4, 5 & 6

2.6 Climate Change

Public engagement strategy⁸ (2023–2026) through Climate Action Wales which delivered campaigns, Wales Climate Week⁹, and grant-funded ‘Climate Conversations’¹⁰, strengthening public understanding of links between nature, decarbonisation and adaptation including highlighting the links between nature, decarbonisation and climate adaptation¹¹.

NRAP objectives: 1, 4, 5 & 6

2.7 Designated Landscapes

Biodiversity is one of the Welsh Government’s priorities for National Park Authorities (NPAs), and a key action within the Minister’s Term of Government letter¹² to NPAs for 2022-26 and Strategic Grant Letter 2025-26. NPAs and National Landscapes progressed biodiversity deep dive actions, nature mapping

⁶ [Workplace recycling | GOV.WALES](#)

⁷ [Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging | GOV.WALES](#)

⁸ [Climate Action Wales: Public engagement strategy 2023 to 2026 | GOV.WALES](#)

⁹ [Wales Climate Week - Climate Action Wales](#)

¹⁰ [Climate Conversations Fund - Climate Action Wales](#)

¹¹ [Biodiversity and nature - Climate Action Wales](#)

¹² [National park authorities: term of government remit letter | GOV.WALES](#)

and plan realignment, supported by core and capital funding, delivering invasive species control, habitat restoration, boundary restoration, tree planting and land managed for biodiversity. Ffermio Bro¹³ launched in May 2025 to enable collaborative, landscape-scale conservation in designated areas.

NRAP objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6

2.8 Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) Act 2023

This legislation¹⁴ introduced bans on widely littered single-use plastics and provides powers for further bans (e.g. wet wipes containing plastic). Extended producer responsibility and workplace recycling regulations reduce waste and support circular economy outcomes.

NRAP objectives: 1, 4, 6

2.9 Invasive Non-Native Species

Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) are human-introduced plants and animals that spread and harm ecosystems, the economy, health, and society. They are the second biggest threat to biodiversity after habitat loss and one of the top five global drivers of biodiversity decline. Delivery against the GB INNS Strategy, which aims to minimise their introduction and establishment, included pathway action plans consultation (zoos, pets, boating, angling, horticulture). We are funding a number of projects such as NRW management of *Topmouth gudgeon*¹⁵ with native predator introductions, expansion of the GB INNS Inspectorate, CABI biocontrol research for Himalayan balsam and swamp stonecrop, and collaborative frameworks via the Wales Resilient Ecological Network.

¹³ [Ffermio Bro - Farming in Designated Landscapes \(stage 1\): rules booklet \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

¹⁴ [The Environmental Protection \(Single-use Plastic Products\) \(Wales\) Act 2023 | GOV.WALES](#)

¹⁵ [Natural Resources Wales / Native fish introduced to control invasive species in Carmarthenshire](#)

NRAP objectives: 1, 4, 5, 6

2.10 Forestry

Trees and woodlands make Wales resilient to climate change, rich in wildlife, and supportive of food, jobs, and the rural economy.

National Forest for Wales (NFW) expanded through woodland creation and restoration, including urban Coetiroedd Bach and community woodlands via grants. New powers to apply and vary environmental conditions on felling licences (from April 2024) strengthen protections. The Woodland Restoration Scheme¹⁶ addresses *Phytophthora ramorum*¹⁷ impacts and promotes species diversification under UK Forestry Standard. SFS aims for 17,000–21,500 ha of tree planting by 2030. Over £2.8m has been invested in collaborative landscape projects meeting all six NFW outcomes. The programme also includes 23 Coetiroedd Bach (Tiny Forests¹⁸) in urban areas, created using dense native planting, and 64 Woodland Investment Grant projects to enhance community woodlands.

NRAP objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

2.11 Information Technology (WEEE)

We use a Waste Electrical and Electronic provider which is an authorised, approved treatment facility and are audited periodically by the Environment Agency and comply with all environmental legislation including the WEEE Directive. This helps biodiversity by reducing the demand for natural resources

¹⁶ [Woodland Restoration Scheme | Sub-topic | GOV.WALES](#)

¹⁷ [Phytophthora ramorum | GOV.WALES](#)

¹⁸ [Coetiroedd Bach \(Tiny Forests\) | GOV.WALES](#)

through the reuse and recycling of equipment. For the period 2024-25 we reused and recycled the following quantity and weight of equipment:

Waste hierarchy	ICT waste category	Quantity	Weight (kg)
REUSE	Items for commercial sale	2,514	5,769.75
RECYCLE (non-hazardous)	Broken items (non-hazardous)	3,214	10,457.58
RECYCLE (hazardous)	Broken items (hazardous)	101	1,057.73
TOTALS	—	5,829	17,285.06

NRAP objectives: 4, 5

2.12 Landfill Disposals Tax Community Scheme

Five funding rounds since the last report supported 71 projects with over £3.2m investment near landfill and waste transfer sites, delivering biodiversity, environmental enhancements and waste minimisation/ diversion from landfill.

Further information and details of some of the projects funded can be found [here](#).

NRAP objectives: 1, 3, 4 & 6

2.13 Local Places for Nature Programme

Established in 2020 to improve nature in local areas with expenditure in 2024/25 totalling £21m and £15m allocated for 2025/26. Schemes include:

- Local Nature Partnerships, managed by WCVA across all Welsh authorities and national parks, provide specialist advice to drive long-term nature recovery. Their work has already influenced mowing and verge management practices, which are being mainstreamed across Wales from 2025–27 to embed good practice.
- Community Packages Scheme. Pre-paid packages are provided to small community groups to create nature gardens.
- Breaking Barriers Scheme. Support is provided to underrepresented and hard to reach groups to help them engage and participate in nature-based activities.
- Coastal Capacity Building Scheme. Supports capacity building and collaboration in coastal areas to help foster sustainable growth and nature recovery (see CASP entry).
- National Forest Landscape Scheme. Funding provided to landscape projects to support collaboration and deliver the National Forest outcomes.

Output (2023/24 & 2024/25)	Total
Green spaces created or significantly enhanced	2,149
Wildlife meadows/verges with new mowing practice	562
Community orchards created	307
Community growing projects	799
Volunteers involved	25,956
Trees planted (hectares)	443 ha (estimated)

NRAP objectives: 1, 3, 6

2.14 Pesticides

Delivery against the UK Pesticides National Action Plan (2025–2030) to promote sustainable use and minimise impacts, including uptake of Integrated Pest Management¹⁹ approaches within SFS, local authority training, and development of bracken management decision support to reduce chemical reliance. Other actions include promoting sustainable pest and land management by launching a pesticide mailing list, delivering local authority training on alternatives to chemical control, and collaborating with NatureScot and Natural England to develop a bracken management framework and decision-making tool to minimise chemical use.

NRAP objectives: 1, 4, 5 & 6

2.15 Planning

Planning Policy Wales 12²⁰ (PPW) and Future Wales – The National Plan 2040²¹ provide the national framework. PPW Chapter 6 was updated in 2023 to clarify net benefit for biodiversity via a step-wise approach and strengthened SSSIs protection. Future Wales Policy 9 safeguarding is being operationalised through the Gwent Levels pilot, mapping resilient ecological networks.

Outcomes are emerging as these biodiversity beneficial policies embed in local development plans and decisions, supported by governance through the Planning and Biodiversity Forum.

NRAP objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6

2.16 Procurement

¹⁹ [Integrated Pest Management \(IPM\) | GOV.WALES](#)

²⁰ [Planning policy Wales | GOV.WALES](#)

²¹ [Future Wales: the national plan 2040 | GOV.WALES](#)

The Wales Procurement Policy Statement embeds biodiversity via the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Sustainability risk assessment is applied across procurements, with new regulations under the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023²² advancing socially responsible procurement aligned with sustainable development. Collaborative fleet EV procurement demonstrates carbon reduction and supply chain benefits.

NRAP objectives: 4 & 6

2.17 Property

The Property Infrastructure function, delivered through the Property Business Plan, comprises:

- Property Delivery Plan (PDP): delivering new employment sites and premises, often on WG-owned land.
- Asset Management (AM): managing WG's property portfolio for business use and future development.

Both strands operate under the Corporate Asset Management Strategy, aligning economic growth with emissions reduction, social value, and environmental resilience. Biodiversity is embedded throughout, with projects integrating green/blue infrastructure, open spaces, active travel, and low-carbon buildings.

WG's land portfolio includes diverse habitats supporting species such as barn owls, otters, bats, and marsh fritillary butterflies, with opportunities for enhancement and connectivity. Major schemes undergo Environmental Impact Assessments/Habitat Regulation Assessment with input from NRW, ecologists, and NGOs, and masterplans require biodiversity measures including sustainable drainage schemes (SUDS) and ecological appraisals.

²² [Social Partnership and Public Procurement \(Wales\) Act | GOV.WALES](#)

Ecological assessments average £100–200k per site, with long-term management costs built into contracts. While development can impact biodiversity, projects often deliver net gains through habitat creation, brownfield restoration, and resilience measures guided by the NRW DECCA framework²³.

Governance Arrangements and Leading by Example

Welsh Government embeds sustainability and biodiversity into property delivery through mandatory guidance and oversight. The Sustainable Development Integration Tool (SDIT) and Biodiversity Guidelines ensure compliance with the Well-being of Future Generations Act, applying across all divisions and projects.

Staff training and clear expectations for partners strengthen delivery, while the Property Leadership Team reviews projects and advice papers to ensure biodiversity impacts are addressed. Welsh Government also promotes awareness across public bodies and professional groups, highlighting Wales's distinct biodiversity duties and leading by example.

Buildings and Low Carbon / Net Zero

Welsh Government demonstrates carbon reduction across its property portfolio, requiring all new commercial developments to meet net zero in-operation standards. Sites integrate sustainable transport and active travel, while projects such as AMRI (North Wales) and Cross Hands East (Carmarthenshire) showcase energy-efficient, net zero buildings. WG also supports carbon storage through woodland creation and soils management, embedding opportunities for planting and habitat improvement into master planning and site management.

Asset Management Function

Welsh Government's Asset Management embeds biodiversity protection across the estate through contractor-led landscape management guided by ecological appraisals. Measures include species-appropriate grazing, tree planting,

²³ [Ecosystem Resilience in a Nutshell 1: what is ecosystem resilience?](#)

boundary restoration, invasive species control, and building adaptations for bats and birds. Landscaping requirements mandate local species, sustainable materials, and protection of nesting sites.

Energy efficiency is advanced through smart metering, EV charging, LED/solar lighting upgrades, and refurbishment to low-carbon systems. Biodiversity enhancements include wildflower creation, habitat boxes, and routine ecological features. Across sites such as Brocastle, Bro Tathan, Llanelli Gate and Gilestone Farm, projects deliver habitat management, species protection, and ecological resilience, combining carbon reduction with estate modernisation.

Property Projects – Strategic Site Development

Welsh Government delivers strategic sites across Wales, embedding biodiversity and sustainability in employment land and infrastructure. Examples include Ty Ddu with woodland and river corridor protection, Brocastle with dormouse licensing and habitat enhancements, and Rhyd-y-Blew safeguarding Lapwing and amphibians. Smaller projects such as LSN reroofing and Blaenant Colliery restoration incorporate bat and bird measures, while sites like Dafen and Woodlands Estate address nutrient neutrality and sensitive design. Collectively, these projects demonstrate ecological protection and sustainable design integrated into development.

Studies, Research and Policy Contributions

The division supports biodiversity research and planning policy. Contributions include invasive species biocontrol, the Gwent Levels Strategic Enhancement Plan (SEP) assessing M4CAN sites and informing Policy 9 guidance, and biodiversity integration in Celtic Lakes master planning. The SEP has strengthened cross-government collaboration and influenced Planning Policy Wales, exemplifying how ecological resilience can be embedded into national frameworks.

NRAP objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6

2.18 Soils – National Peatland Action Programme

National Peatland Action Plan restoration delivers direct benefits to Section 7 habitats (raised bog, blanket bog, lowland and upland fens/swamps; wet woodland where on peat). From 2023 to 2025, >1,200 ha was fully restored, with wider habitat improvement activities totalling c. 3,184 ha (2023/24) and 2,073 ha (2024/25). Monitoring indicates restoration is placing habitats on recovery trajectories, with hydrological instrumenting and biodiversity metrics development underway. Additional benefits include fire risk reduction through rewetted peatland stalling wildfire spread, and invertebrate monitoring which found that within three years of restoration there was evidence that invertebrate fauna were beginning to resemble those of near-natural bog surfaces.

For the financial years 2023-2024, and 2024-2025, total habitat improvement activity amounted to the following:

Habitat	23/24	24/25
Upland Flushes, Fens and Swamps	191.25	282.34
Lowland Fens and Reedbeds	9.2	21.45
Raised Bog	1005.48	483.43
Blanket Bog Not on Welsh Government Woodland Estate	668.13	410.5
Blanket Bog on Welsh Government Woodland Estate	203.68	204.64
Blanket Bog (Combined)	871.81	615.14
Total activity on listed habitats (ha)*	2077.74	1402.36

Active on land not mapped as habitat**	1106.2	1670.6
Total Activity on all land (ha)***	3183.94	2072.96

**These figures will not include restoration activity to restore blanket bog from land currently mapped as coniferous plantation.*

***In total, 1106.2 ha and 1670.6 ha of restoration activity occurred during the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 reporting periods respectively on land not mapped as Section 7 habitat; a proportion of these figures will have been on coniferous plantation.*

****Multiple activities on the same area of peat are combined so not to double count the area in receipt of beneficial activity. This figure includes the reported >1,200ha of peatland fully restored during this period – i.e. 23/24 600ha restored and 2,583.94ha of habitat improvement activity totalling 3,183.94ha.*

Natur – bioamrywiaeth mawndir Cymru
Nature – biodiversity on Welsh peatlands



NRAP objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6

2.19 Transport

Llwybr Newydd i Natur (2023) set actions for the Strategic Road Network. A £2.4m fund (2024) enabled habitat creation and enhancement (c. 144 ha

improved), extensive native planting, woodland management and innovation (e.g. amphibian-friendly infrastructure). This included 30,000 new native trees and shrubs planted and 240,000 young native plants and bulbs planted by Trunk Road Agencies including wildflower grasslands expansion, hedgerow creation, wildlife boxes, pond management, invasive species control and community engagement. Specific actions include:

- Wildflower Planting: 2,850 native wildflowers, including Devil's-bit scabious for Marsh Fritillary butterflies.
- Wildflower Seeding: 14,829 m² seeded;
- Mowing regimes adapted for biodiversity.
- Rare Species Planting: 11 Black Poplar trees; 1,983 blackthorn and 200 Wych Elm for hairstreak butterflies.
- Laid 2,025 m of hedgerow.
- Installed 225 wildlife boxes, including 90 dormouse boxes, 66 bird and wildlife boxes, 49 bat boxes, 17 pied flycatcher boxes and 3 swift boxes.
- Managed ponds covering 3,190 m².
- Completed detailed ecological surveys on 20% of the soft estate network using bespoke software.



Planting of 215,000 bulbs and spring flowers at multiple locations in Carmarthen to provide an early nectar source for pollinators.

Amphibian-friendly gully pots (image below) developed by a PhD student at Swansea University



Scleddau layby on the A40 in Pembrokeshire: site management regime has been relaxed from four cuts a year to a single late summer cut and collect to enhance

Blackthorn planting to support the Brown Hairstreak butterfly and small number of Wych Elm to support the White Letter Hairstreak.

NRAP objectives: 1, 2 3, 4, 5 & 6

2.20 Water

Strategic priorities for water companies emphasise biodiversity outcomes and nature-based solutions. Natural Flood Management schemes (NFM) for 2023-25 have delivered major biodiversity gains. Outcomes include large-scale native tree planting and woodland corridors (this included the planting of 18,000 trees at Parc Cwm Darren and 88,000 at Y Foel), wetland and peatland restoration for carbon storage and water quality, and riparian planting to stabilise rivers and support wildlife. Aquatic habitats have been enriched through woody debris dams, while urban projects expanded green infrastructure and pollinator spaces. Improved soil management boosts biodiversity and carbon storage, with wider benefits for recreation, amenity, and community engagement.

The 2025-26 schemes built on the previous years with the aim to expand woodland, wetland, and meadow habitats, enhance ecological connectivity, and restore natural hydrological processes through leaky dams and floodplain reconnection. Projects also focus on peatland and soil restoration, urban green infrastructure, and community SUDS. Collaboration with local authorities and landowners enables landscape-scale benefits, while monitoring ensures biodiversity gains are measured and inform future action.

Details of some of the projects can be found [here](#)

The Water Quality Capital Programme has invested £56m since 2022, including metal mine remediation such as works which prevents over 20 tonnes of zinc, lead, and cadmium per year from entering waterways at Frongoch, and improving ecological status and resilience.

NRAP objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6

3. Next steps

Next steps include implementation of SFS (from 2026), continued delivery of the 30by30 framework, passage and implementation of the Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill, and scaling of local and landscape-scale initiatives including Designated Landscapes and Local Places for Nature.

Section 6 biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty: report 2023 to 2025