SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY REPORT

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 – Part 1, Section 6 Duty

October 2026

Document Control

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1. Section 6 Duty Statement

Sealand Community Council, as a public authority under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, has a duty to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and, in so doing, promote the resilience of ecosystems.

The Council will fulfil this duty in the exercise of its functions, including decision-making, procurement, community engagement and partnership working, having regard to opportunities to maintain and enhance biodiversity.

2. Introduction and Context

The Council is committed to promoting sustainability and biodiversity through its activities, partnership working and the adoption of sustainable practices wherever practicable.

Biodiversity refers to the variety of living organisms and the ecosystems in which they exist. The State of Nature Report 2023 highlighted significant declines in biodiversity across the United Kingdom. Since 1970, 54% of flowering plant species and 59% of bryophytes (mosses and their relatives, including liverworts and hornworts) have declined in their distribution. Invertebrates, including insects, spiders and millipedes, are also found in fewer places than previously recorded. Pollinators such as bees, hoverflies and moths have experienced significant declines. These findings reinforce the importance of continued action to protect and enhance biodiversity.

The Council serves approximately 2,812 residents, based on Flintshire County Council figures for December 2025. The Council's precept for the financial year 2026–2027 is £64,000.

The Council does not own land or property and does not own any vehicles. This limits its direct control over habitats and green spaces within the community. However, the Council recognises that it can contribute to biodiversity through responsible decision-making, community initiatives, engagement and collaboration with Flintshire County Council, Sealand Primary School and other relevant organisations and landowners.

3. Ecosystem Resilience

In considering its Section 6 duty, the Council has regard to the following principles of ecosystem resilience:

- **Diversity – supporting a variety of species and habitats.**
- **Connectivity – encouraging links between habitats to support wildlife.**
- **Scale – considering how local actions can contribute to wider environmental objectives.**
- **Condition – supporting the quality and health of habitats.**
- **Adaptability – recognising the importance of responding to changing environmental conditions.**

These principles inform the Council's approach to biodiversity, recognising its limited land ownership and reliance on partnership working to deliver practical improvements.

4. Actions to Maintain and Enhance Biodiversity

The following actions identify relevant activities, their intended contribution to biodiversity and the organisations responsible for delivery.

Action	Description	Responsible organisation(s)
Grass Cutting	**Grass cutting and grounds maintenance are undertaken in relevant areas. Selective mowing and allowing grass to grow longer where appropriate can support wildflowers and biodiversity while maintaining public safety and the usability of recreation areas.**	**Flintshire County Council**
Replacement of Dead Trees	**The removal of dead trees along road verges and their replacement, where appropriate, can help maintain tree cover and habitat continuity.**	**Flintshire County Council and Sealand Primary School, as applicable**
Flower Planting and Tree Maintenance	**Maintenance of planting and trees at the two recreation fields in Sealand supports the management and appearance of community green spaces. Opportunities to benefit biodiversity will be considered where appropriate.**	**Flintshire County Council**
Flower and Pollinator Planting	**Planting initiatives support pollinators and provide opportunities to enhance biodiversity within the community. The Council will record relevant planting activities undertaken during the reporting period.**	**Sealand Community Council and relevant partners, as applicable**
Weed Management	**Weed management along relevant roadsides and hard surfaces takes account of public safety, visibility, drainage and opportunities to protect biodiversity.**	**Flintshire County Council and North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent (NMWTRA)**

	NMWTRA is responsible for relevant trunk road areas.	
Community Engagement	**The Council can encourage residents, community groups and landowners to support biodiversity and consider opportunities for nature-friendly activities.**	**Sealand Community Council**

Sustainable Operations and Green Transport

The Council will consider opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of its operations and work-related travel.

Where practicable, the Clerk and Councillors will be encouraged to walk, cycle, use public transport or car-share for work-related journeys, where appropriate to the journey, accessibility, personal circumstances and operational requirements.

Lift-Sharing and Car-Sharing

The Council recognises that lift-sharing can help reduce the number of vehicles used for journeys, potentially lowering transport emissions and travel costs. It may provide a practical alternative where walking, cycling or public transport is unsuitable or unavailable.

The Department for Transport's lift-sharing guidance identifies the potential environmental benefits of increasing vehicle occupancy. Its analysis estimated that increasing average road vehicle occupancy from 1.55 to 1.7 people could save nearly 3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent annually by 2030.

The 2025 Mobilityways Commuter Census reported that 16% of its 5,166 surveyed Liftshare community members carpooled to work. This finding relates to the surveyed Liftshare community and should not be interpreted as a figure for all UK commuters or Sealand residents.

The Council will consider opportunities to promote existing lift-sharing and car-sharing schemes, including Liftshare, through its communication channels where appropriate.

Sustainable Office Practices

The Council will continue to consider environmental sustainability in its own operations, including:

- **Using recycled paper where practicable.**
- **Using efficient printing arrangements to reduce waste and resource consumption.**
- **Considering environmental implications when making relevant decisions.**
- **Identifying opportunities to reduce unnecessary paper use and postage.**

Energy Efficiency and Lighting Improvements

The Council recognises the importance of reducing energy consumption and environmental impact. It will continue to consider opportunities to support energy efficiency through relevant lighting improvements, including replacing older lighting with energy-efficient LED lighting and using photocell controls where appropriate.

These measures can help reduce electricity consumption and unnecessary lighting. Lighting improvements should also take account of potential effects on nocturnal wildlife, where relevant and practicable.

Partnership Working

The Council will continue to work with Flintshire County Council, Sealand Primary School and other relevant organisations to identify opportunities for biodiversity improvements, obtain advice and support appropriate community initiatives.

Partnership working will remain important for identifying available funding, sharing information, and supporting environmental improvements in areas managed by other organisations.

5. Outcomes and Measurable Indicators

The Council will use proportionate indicators to monitor progress, recognising that it does not own land or property and does not directly undertake all grounds maintenance activities.

Relevant indicators include:

- **Number of biodiversity planting initiatives undertaken or supported.**
- **Number of trees planted or replaced, where information is available.**
- **Number of relevant partnership activities undertaken.**
- **Evidence of selective mowing or longer-grass management in suitable areas, where information is available.**
- **Number of initiatives promoting lift-sharing or car-sharing.**
- **Number of relevant partnership or community engagement activities supporting sustainable travel.**
- **Progress against agreed biodiversity actions.**
- **Opportunities identified for further biodiversity improvements.**
- **Progress in considering energy-efficient practices within the Council's operations.**

The Council will record outcomes where supporting information is available. Improvements in biodiversity, wildflower growth, carbon emissions or cost savings will not be reported as established outcomes unless supported by relevant evidence.

6. Annual Review of the Section 6 Duty – October 2026

During the reporting period, the Council continued to support biodiversity through partnership working and community planting initiatives. As the Council does not own land or property, it can only undertake limited direct habitat management and relies on collaboration with Flintshire County Council, Sealand Primary School, and other relevant organisations.

The Council secured biodiversity grant funding from Flintshire County Council for the second consecutive year to support community planting. This provides continued opportunities to enhance planting areas and support pollinators.

Flintshire County Council's grass-cutting arrangements supported the maintenance of playing fields and verges during 2026. Wales experienced exceptionally warm and dry conditions during the year,

including a record-breaking dry July. Weather conditions can affect grass growth and vegetation management requirements. Selective mowing and allowing grass to grow longer in suitable areas can support wildflowers while maintaining public safety and the usability of public spaces.

Roadside weed management presented challenges during 2026, requiring consideration of vegetation growth, public safety, visibility, drainage and opportunities to protect biodiversity.

The Council recognises that its contribution to biodiversity depends substantially on partnership working, funding opportunities and the decisions it makes within its own functions. It will continue to record its own activities and seek relevant information from partner organisations to help assess progress.

Any specific improvements in biodiversity, wildflower growth or cost savings will only be reported where supported by evidence.

7. Barriers

The Council recognises the following challenges in fulfilling its Section 6 duty:

- **Limited land ownership: The Council does not own land or property and therefore has limited direct control over habitat management and green spaces.**
- **Reliance on partner organisations: Grounds maintenance, tree management and roadside weed control are undertaken by other responsible organisations.**
- **Weather conditions: Changing weather patterns can affect grass growth, vegetation management and the timing of maintenance activities.**
- **Public safety and operational requirements: Roadside maintenance must take account of visibility, drainage and safety alongside opportunities to support biodiversity.**
- **Financial and resource constraints: The Council must prioritise expenditure and consider available funding when identifying additional initiatives.**
- **Transport and accessibility: Walking, cycling, public transport and lift-sharing may not be practical for every journey, individual or set of circumstances.**

The Council will continue to address these challenges through partnership working, proportionate planning, and identifying practical opportunities within its functions.

8. Future Actions

The Council intends to continue developing its approach to biodiversity and environmental sustainability through the following actions:

- **Maintain partnership working with Flintshire County Council, Sealand Primary School and other relevant organisations.**
- **Continue to pursue suitable grant funding for community planting and biodiversity initiatives.**
- **Record planting activities and other relevant actions undertaken during the reporting period.**
- **Encourage biodiversity-friendly practices where appropriate and consistent with safety requirements.**

- **Consider opportunities to promote biodiversity through the Council's communication channels.**
- **Encourage sustainable travel choices for work-related journeys where practicable.**
- **Consider promoting existing lift-sharing and car-sharing schemes to residents and local organisations.**
- **Review available evidence and identify further opportunities to maintain and enhance biodiversity.**
- **Continue to consider environmental sustainability within the Council's decision-making and operational practices.**
- **Consider the environmental impact of any future vehicle procurement, where applicable.**

The delivery of these actions will depend on available resources, funding, partner support and the Council's functions. Any proposals requiring additional expenditure or the introduction of new schemes will be subject to separate consideration and approval by the Council.

9. Monitoring and Review

The Clerk will oversee the recording and monitoring of the Council's relevant biodiversity activities.

Progress will be reviewed annually, taking account of:

- **Actions undertaken by the Council.**
- **Available information from partner organisations.**
- **Relevant decisions and expenditure recorded in Council minutes.**
- **Feedback and opportunities identified through partnership working.**
- **Relevant promotional activities relating to sustainable travel and lift-sharing.**
- Changes in relevant legislation or Welsh Government guidance.

The Council will update its biodiversity actions as necessary to reflect progress, changes in circumstances and relevant Welsh Government guidance.

The next annual review is scheduled for October 2027. This annual review is distinct from the Council's statutory three-yearly reporting obligations under the Section 6 duty.

10. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Council's biodiversity work supports the principles of sustainable development and contributes, where relevant, to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

In particular, the Council's approach is relevant to the following well-being goals:

- **A Resilient Wales – through opportunities to maintain and enhance biodiversity, support pollinators and promote ecosystem resilience.**
- **A Healthier Wales – through support for accessible, well-maintained community green spaces and a healthy natural environment.**

- **A Globally Responsible Wales – through consideration of resource use, environmental sustainability and opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of the Council's operations and travel.**

The Council will continue to consider the longer-term environmental implications of relevant decisions and opportunities to contribute to the well-being of the local community.

11. Forward Actions and Priorities

2026–2027

- **Continue community planting initiatives, subject to available funding and partner support.**
- **Record relevant biodiversity activities and outcomes.**
- **Maintain engagement with Flintshire County Council and other relevant organisations.**
- **Review opportunities to support pollinators and biodiversity within the community.**
- **Consider opportunities to promote walking, cycling, public transport and lift-sharing for suitable journeys.**

2027–2028

- **Review progress against the actions identified in this report.**
- **Consider further planting or biodiversity initiatives, subject to funding and available opportunities.**
- **Identify any additional information needed to assess outcomes.**
- **Review opportunities to encourage sustainable travel and assess any feedback received.**

2028–2029

- **Continue to monitor progress against the Council's biodiversity priorities.**
- **Consider further planting and biodiversity initiatives, subject to funding and available opportunities.**
- **Review the effectiveness of the Council's approach using available evidence.**
- **Update biodiversity priorities and the Section 6 plan as appropriate.**

This policy was reviewed and agreed by Council at its meeting held on 19th October 2026.

A Griffiths – Clerk of the Council – October 2026