

## **Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 Section 6 -**

### **The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty:**

#### **Three Year Review of existing Plan as at November 2025 and Action Plan until December 2028**

#### **Acton Community Council**

##### **Introduction and Context**

Acton Community Council is one of four Wrexham Town Centre Community Councils created in 1985. It owns one building, the Maesydre Power House and has no other landholdings. The Council serves approximately 13,659 residents and 5795 households (based on the 2011 census). The precept for 2024-25 is £225,890.00.

The Council is committed to encouraging and promoting sustainability goals and practices whenever possible. It seeks to encourage the retention of green open spaces, mature trees and green corridors for wildlife, use of native plants and a broad spectrum of tree species.

Situated within the five wards of the Community of Acton:

- Acton Park is owned and managed by Wrexham County Borough Council and has Tennis Courts and a bowling green within its curtilage. The Community Council fully supports the retention of this valuable open space and funds an annual Park Ranger Post through a Service Level Agreement arrangement with Wrexham County Borough Council
- The area consists of mainly mixed density residential property and has some open spaces included within them, mature tree planting schemes and several estates have deep grass verges
- It includes part of the town centre shopping area with a large supermarket and a Civic Quarter containing the Law Courts, Former Police Station site, RWF Memorial, the Memorial Hall Swimming Baths and Peace Gardens at Bodhyfryd that is bordered by Holt Street, Chester Street and Powell Road.
- There are six Primary/Junior Schools within the Community and one Secondary school together with the former Groves High School site that is currently vacant.
- There is an Owain Glyndwr protected open space known locally as the Spider Park and St John's Field. The Community Council supported its designation as a protected open space.
- The Former Rugby Playing Field at Dean Road/ Holt Road which was owned and managed by Glyndwr University, having received Planning Permission on appeal to be developed for Housing has been sold to a private developer.
- A natural informal open space known as Borrass Bog borders Bieston Close, Huntsman's Corner and the Llanypwll Link road
- The Nine Acre Field is a recreation ground with a Pavilion owned by Wrexham County Borough Council and in 2022 was been renamed as the Queen Elizabeth II field with the intention of it being protected from development. Some part of the Field have now been opened to limited public access.
- There are Children's playing fields situated at Aran Road, Ffordd Garmonydd and Acton Park that are owned by Wrexham County Borough Council and part funded by the Community Council under a Service Level agreement arrangement. There are also private developer funded play areas on the Redrow estate off Holt Road
- The Green at Little Acton is a large open space where the Little Acton Community Centre is sited
- The Acton Community Resource Centre is owned and managed by Wrexham County Borough Council and was part funded for ten years by the Community Council under a Service Level Agreement arrangement.

##### **Action Report**

How the Council assists biodiversity (through functions with regard to land management, grant funding, education activities)

In respect of Public services delivery, the Council is now subject to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as its Precept is above £200,000. This Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change. The Act is unique to Wales attracting interest from countries across the world as it offers a huge opportunity to make a long-lasting, positive change to current and future generations.

Action carried out to:	Example	Monitored by
Embed biodiversity into decision making and procurement	Reflected in the commitment to biodiversity and natural areas in its response to the Wrexham Unitary development Plan Taking into account any biodiversity considerations when responding to planning applications	Comments made in documents Consideration of biodiversity demonstrated in consultation responses and objections to planning applications, including a request for the retention of younger trees around the perimeter of a proposed development site. Financial support was given to Residents Groups opposing the development of 9 Acre Field and Dean Road Playing Field
Raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance	The Park Ranger is required to produce annual surveys and a report on biodiverse activities within Acton Park.  Summer and Winter survey work of trees, birds etc is undertaken and reported quarterly to the Community Council Supporting the Friends of Acton Park Group and the Angling Club in their work to improve the Park and water quality in the lake. Public participation by Children, School Groups and other local groups to use the Park as a resource. The Council has provided financial support via a three year Service Level Agreement which has enabled the Park Ranger to be employed for four days a week over each twelve month period	Through Feedback from the Park Ranger, Friends group , Council members and residents  Formal detailed Reports from the Ranger to the Community Council are reported to the Council meetings  Daily and weekly activities are highlighted on the Council's Facebook page by the Park Ranger  Recording number of people taking part in activities Recording Biodiversity within the Park
Safeguard principal species and habitats	Champion mature trees such as the "bird and bee" oak tree. and Sweet Chestnut tree The Ranger carries out general maintenance and improvements to overgrown areas and paths within the Park	Submission documents and Council's Facebook Page  In 2023 the UK Tree of the Year was won by the Park's sweet chestnut tree; described in the commendation as a towering sweet chestnut renowned for its beauty and history .The 484-year-old tree in Acton Park, Wrexham,

		has stood since the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.
Restore and create habitats and resilient ecological works	Encourage Wrexham Biodiversity and Planning Officers to maintain and manage habitats and expand ecology via planning comments	Planning Comments
Tackle negative factors ie reduce pollution, use nature based solutions address invasive species	Reduction in use of pesticides at Ffordd Garmonydd Play area and Acton Park Play area and seeking alternate solutions such as replacing the bark surfacing in the fenced area of Ffordd Garmonydd to prohibit the growth of weeds	To provide funding for alternate proposals through Service Level Agreements
Use improved and share evidence	Any Data collected as part of an Annual Wildflower and Bat Surveys in Acton park will be forwarded to the Ecology Officer. Winter Surveys within Acton Park from 2021 form a baseline for future years and full year data /evidence	Submission of information to Wrexham County Borough Council by the Acton Park Ranger
Support capacity and/or other organisations	Work in partnership with Arboricultural Officer in supporting TPO applications. Provided funding for Annual Park Ranger post and Acton Play areas and for a Young People project to work with 8-18 year olds providing informal environmental education opportunities  Made provision within the Council's budget for Environmental schemes within the Community Streetscene	Outcome of Planning and TPO applications Performance Reporting under the Service Level Agreements provide evidence for positive biodiversity benefits . Since 2022/23 the Ranger Post has been funded on a full 12 months basis with additional provision for activities/events that encourage the wider public to visit and engage with Acton park  Amount of money spent

## Review of s6 duty

### What has worked well?

The Service Level Agreements with Wrexham County Borough Council and the Caia Park Partnership have enabled a focus on biodiversity matters and facilitated informal education for young people to understand the process and care required to grow successfully their own plants and vegetables. Financial support to the Friends of Acton Park and the Angling Club have improved the biodiversity within the Park and improvements to the management and water quality of the lake has improved resilience and been able to identify blue green algae at an early stage. A grant to purchase a water aerator helped prevent the development of blue algae on the lake. Further purchases to improve the oxygen quality at the lake in Acton Park by the Angling Club have been supported financially by the Community Council.

There is a much higher footfall in the Park since the Covid lockdown period. This has resulted in the biodiversity of the flora and fauna at the Park being enjoyed and appreciated by a broader range of Acton Community residents and other visitors. A reinvigorated Friends of the Park Group now holds regular work days and has close liaison with the Park Ranger in helping to maintain all areas of the Park. The Park Ranger has been proactive in publicising the work, surveys and tree trails within the Park via regular social media posts and the Council's Facebook Page . The extended duration of the Ranger post has enabled events to be held in the Park throughout the whole year and there is growing attendance at the events demonstrating how well the Ranger post is supported with a multitude of opportunities to



promote and assist biodiversity within the Park.

The Community Council continues to engage with Wrexham CBC Officers and the Park Ranger to ensure that Acton Park continues to evolve and encompass greater biodiversity through supported planting schemes and ongoing review and maintenance through the Ranger and Friends Group.

#### **What have the barriers been?**

The Council owns no land and can only recommend and encourage other land owners in the Community to embrace biodiversity. There are several different Groups of Park users and the Community Council seeks to support Wrexham CBC as the land owner to manage expectations and resolve conflicting interests of the various Park user groups.

The Covid Pandemic and Lock Down restrictions negatively impacted on data collection and general work/ publicity/tours within the Park; the footfall in the Park greatly increased during this period. Since 2021 detailed surveys of the Wildflowers and Bats in Acton Park have been carried out and the results of such surveys should be sent by the Ranger to the Wrexham Ecology Officer. The Restrictions saw a loss of opportunities to carry out further tree studies, nature walks looking at birds, bird boxes and significant tree species: Grass cutting at the Park has left some open ground for the growth of wildflower meadow. The Council is supportive of the Friends of Acton Park Group and the new Park Ranger is proactive in addressing several paths that have become overgrown and undergrowth has been severely cut back during the autumn of 2024. With the expanded Ranger post continuing through to 2025/26 there are new opportunities for the recently appointed Ranger to recommence engagement with local schools and groups and routine maintenance jobs around the Park are taking place.

**Green Flag status:** The Park lost this status in 2024 but the Community Council is supporting Wrexham CBC Officers who are drawing up a Plan and working towards regaining this Award for 2025. The purpose & aims of the Green Flag are:

- To ensure that everybody has access to quality green and other open spaces, irrespective of where they live.
- To ensure that these spaces are appropriately managed and meet the needs of the communities that they serve.
- To establish standards of good management.
- To promote and share good practice amongst the green space sector.
- To recognise and reward the hard work of managers, staff and volunteers.

#### **What will you change?**

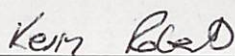
Work with the Wrexham Local Biodiversity Officer and seek advice whenever necessary. Will seek to encourage the planting up of hardscape/paved areas and publicise the work of Groundwork and other ecology groups on the Councils website. The Community Council will seek to liaise with other organisations working within the Park and bring forward proposals to support Wrexham County Borough Council in its management and continuing improvement of the biodiversity of ecosystems within the Park at Acton.

#### **How and When will the s6 duty be monitored and the s6 plan reviewed?**


The Duty will be monitored by the Council Members and the Clerk reporting back to the Council through a regular agenda item at Council meetings. Over the last three year period the Council has reviewed this duty and published its Plan on its website [www.actoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk](http://www.actoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk)

The s6 plan will continue to be developed and reviewed in response to such reporting and any other evidence or information that may be made available to the Council. At the time of Publication of this report there is no specific time or date set for the plan to be reviewed but this will be done in the next twelve months.

Signed for Acton Community Council



Chair



Clerk to the Council

Date 11 December 2025