



# Van Community Council

## Biodiversity Report



**VAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL/ CYNGOR CYMUNED Y FAN**  
**Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1**  
**Section 6 The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty.**

**Introduction**

Van Community Council serves approximately 5,976 residents (census 2011) including the areas of Lansbury, Porset, Castle Park and Mornington Meadows in Caerphilly. The precept for 2019-20 is £25,000

Van Community Council comprises of ten elected Members and one paid part-time member of staff.

The Community Council does not own or manage any buildings but does own one piece of land which was acquired in October 2018. This is lying to the south of Van Terrace in Caerphilly. Future management and use of this land is currently under consideration.

Within the geographical areas served by Van Community Council, there is one industrial area known as Caerphilly Business Park. In addition, there are currently substantial areas of open countryside including Gwern y Domen, Castle Mound, Van Mansion and Coed y Maerdy.

There is a thriving ecosystem and a wide range of wildlife lives in this vicinity. Extensive areas of mature trees over pasture, hedgerows, scrub and ruderal herbs, as well as some protected species. It has rare wildflower meadows, several types of fungi, insects, birds and more. Residents benefit from this ancient greenfield land, which is greatly used by the local community for walking, riding and enjoying the natural environment.

## Services and Activities

The Community Council provides a range of services to its local community which have an impact on biodiversity. These include:

- Gwern y Domen is currently under threat from developers wishing to build 600+ homes with associated infra-structure. Van Community Council have noted their objections which assisted in the rejection of a recent planning application.
- Giving grants for projects in the Council's area. These impact on biodiversity through cascading funding criteria.
- Actively supporting litter picks.

## Action

### **Tackle negative factors: e.g. Reduce pollution**

- Office supplies such as paper are sourced locally
- Where possible items are made from recycled materials
- Increase use of communications technology to reduce paper
- Use of energy saving lighting

### **Support capacity and/or other organisations**

- Grant-making policy to require any organisations receiving a grant from Council to demonstrate how this will contribute to supporting biodiversity as part of their project

### **Restore and create habitats and resilient ecological networks**

- Encourage the planting of hanging baskets and planters with native pollinator friendly flowers
- In recent years, wildflowers have been planted at roundabouts, road islands and road verges – to provide a refuge for bees, butterflies and birds, encouraging pollination and reducing grass cutting requirements.

**Raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance**

- Members who are School Governors work with schools and partner organisations to increase activity at sites such as St James Primary School
- Promote local green projects and initiatives on the Community Council website and social media pages.
- Supported litter picking events, including local schools and voluntary groups as an opportunity to raise awareness and promote the “reduce, reuse and recycle” ethos.

**Safeguard principal species and habitats**

- Van Community Council will ensure that biodiversity is high on our priorities when considering the land at Van Terrace.

**Embed biodiversity into decision making and procurement**

- Van Community Council take into account biodiversity when considering planning applications. Formal objections in relation to speculative applications from developers on green field sites, impacts of developments on public rights of way, tree preservation orders and the safeguarding of SINC areas have been submitted as a result.

**Monitor**

**How and when will the S6 duty be monitored and the S6 plan reviewed?**

- Council will work on identifying additional opportunities to embed biodiversity and ecosystems into Council activities.
- The plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Clerk in conjunction with Full Council.