



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru

Mid and West Wales
Fire and Rescue Service



Nature Recovery Action Plan

2023 - 2026





Background

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 has been developed by the Welsh Government to support and compliment the long-term, well-being objectives outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Public bodies that are subject to the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 are also subject to the Section 6 Duty. The Act delivers against the government's commitment to introduce new legislation for the environment and puts in place legislation needed to plan and manage Wales's natural resources in a more proactive, sustainable and joined up way and highlights government commitment to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The Part 1, Section 6 Duty was introduced under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to improve biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems in Wales, essential to our well-being. The duty requires that **public authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions in relation to**

Wales, and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions. The enhanced biodiversity duty is to recognise the link between biodiversity and the long-term functioning of ecosystems.

It is highlighted that public authorities with no land still need to consider each of the aspects of resilience, as their decisions and action can influence ecosystems indirectly, for example, through their procurement policy or through funding decisions and conditions.

To comply with the Section 6 Duty, most public authorities must prepare and publish a plan setting out what action they propose to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote resilience. A report on what individual public authorities have done to comply with the duty since 2019 was published in Spring 2023, alongside this Plan.





Section 1

Introduction and Context

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service is committed to excellence with a vision to become a world class organisation. The Service recognises the increasing importance of the need to protect the environment and conserve the habitats and resources within the area we serve.

As a Service, our operations cover 4,500 square miles of predominantly rural countryside which makes up two-thirds of the area of Wales, covering six counties including, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Pembrokeshire and Powys. Within this area are Special Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).

The Service are committed to reducing it's negative impact on the environment, which is reflected through the Corporate Plan, Environmental Policy, guidance documents, strategies and certifications. The Services sustainability and environment aims and objectives are outlined within the Annual Environmental Report and 5 year Sustainability and Environment Strategy which are published on the external website.

As a Fire Service, there is a commitment to be environmentally responsible, and as such the Service achieved the Level 5 Green Dragon Environmental Management Standard in 2014. Since then, the Service have been committed to maintaining the highest level available each year to date, most recently being in February 2023. To comply with the Standard, the Service have a wide range of Environmental Procedures and guidance available to all members of Staff via the internal website. This is used to support our Service wide Environmental Management System which

ensures continual environmental improvement and raise awareness of environmental sustainability in all our activities.

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service is a statutory member at the Public Service Boards under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and report annually on the Well-being objectives. The Service remain committed to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and have embraced it's duties and role as a statutory partner across the 6 Public Service Boards.

The Strategic Plan 2022-2027 contains Strategic aims and improvement objectives including environmental commitments. This Plan is reviewed annually to produce meaningful strategic aims and improvements and well-being objectives against our strategic priorities on a yearly basis.

Under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Part 1, the Service, as a Public Authority, are required to prepare and publish a plan setting out the Services proposed actions to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem resilience. The following Report highlights what the Service intend to do to comply with the Section 6 Duty and to encourage biodiversity to all owned sites, however small or large scale.

The Report covers all of the Fire Stations, Training facilities and administration buildings within the Service estate and will be complying with Group 2 in Table 1 from the Section 6 Reporting Guidance published by Welsh Government in relation to the Type of Organisations and action relative to their functions.



Section 2

Nature Recovery Action Plan

The Service's first Biodiversity Action Plan 2020-23 was published in April 2020 and outlined the aims and objectives during the 3-year period. The Plan used the Welsh Government's Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales to align objectives to the Fire Service. A separate report has been published in relation to the achievements the Service has made towards the objectives within the Plan.

This Nature Recovery Action Plan 2023-2026 sets out actions which have been specifically identified to meet the Service's objectives to reverse the decline of biodiversity and the Services impact on the environment. The

Action Plan encapsulates more than just biodiversity improvements on our site but also collaboration opportunities with external partners and community groups.

The Services responds to call across two thirds of the geographical area of Wales, but the land Fire Stations and administration buildings occupy is minimal. The Table below categorises the amount of green space present at Service locations and as a result highlights where we can have a direct influence in relation to the Section 6 Duty requirements.

	Less than 5% green space	Less than 5-39% green space	Over 40% green space
Number of locations	37	16	4

As outlined in the Strategic Plan 2022-2027, the Service is committed to embracing sustainability in the delivery of Service excellence. We aim to do this by reducing energy consumption, working towards zero waste to landfill and reducing our Service wide carbon footprint year on year.

The 5-year Sustainability and Environment Strategy sets out the main principles, proposals and required actions to reduce the environmental impacts of the Service Activities and operations.

The objectives are reviewed annually and are published in our Annual Environmental Report and through environmental corporate commitments. The Service reports against 4 improvement and wellbeing commitments, one of which is a commitment to minimising the Services impact on the environment.

The Service's aim is to continually improve working practices and activities with consideration to short- and long-term environmental impact. The Service will continue to strive to reduce its carbon footprint and continue with research into green sustainable renewable technology for fleet and buildings, while looking for collaboration opportunities to improve its impact on the environment. The Service aim to be an environmentally sensitive Fire Service where sustainable development and environmental issues are embedded into all its decision-making processes; enhancing the economic, social and environmental well-being of the communities it serves.



There is a wide range of work being undertaken within the Service which works towards environmental objectives. These projects tie into the Section 6 Duty as guided by the objectives of the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales. These objectives are as follows:

Objective 1

Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels

Objective 2

Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management

Objective 3

Increase 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.



Section 3

Aims and Objectives

The table below highlights the objectives in the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales as well as the objectives the Service has developed alongside them. These will be regularly monitored, and progress will be highlighted within the quarterly Sustainability and Environment Group Meetings. These objectives will be used to guide decisions in activities and projects over the next 3 years.

The Fire Service do not own a large amount of land, as such objectives are based mainly on collaborative partnerships, staff awareness, encouraging biodiversity function on adjacent land and decision making at incidents to mitigate the impacts on biodiversity and the environment as much as possible.

Wales NRAP Objectives	MAWWFRS NRAP Objectives for 2023-26
Objective 1 Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout the decision making at all levels.	1.1 Continue to support Arson Reduction Team community engagement. 1.2 Raise awareness of biodiversity amongst staff through awareness training, highlighting it's importance to the area we serve and how our activities can have a positive and negative impact on it. 1.3 Establish through education, a culture of awareness and conservation throughout the Service of species and habitats on our sites. 1.4 Implement and progress the Wales Wildfire Charter – providing information on firebreak areas and various types of habitat on to operational crews at the scene via the Mobile Data Terminal.
Objective 2 Safeguard species and habitats of principal importance and improve their management.	2.1 Collaboration with external organisations to highlight species of importance both on site and on adjacent land. 2.2 Reduce direct carbon emissions from Service fleet to improve local air quality. 2.3 Continue to work with Ground Maintenance Teams to encourage diversity on site. Allow areas to grow wild and unkept, while informing the public and staff and raising awareness on the benefits. 2.4 Collaborate with local Wildlife and Biodiversity Groups to encourage species to site and halt the decline of biodiversity on a local level.



Objective 3 Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation.	3.1 Work with external organisations where possible to manage areas of habitat importance, identify and map these habitats across the areas we cover. 3.2 Map species or areas of biodiversity importance on Mobile Data Terminals to assist crews in decision making while attending incidents. 3.3 Work with local community groups to increase resilience and enable local land management within farming communities.
Objective 4 Tackle key pressures on species and habitats.	4.1 Ensure areas of biodiversity importance are highlighted on the Mobile Data Terminal for fire crews to be aware. 4.2 Work with Local Nature Partnerships in each county to ensure species and habitats are known and identified.
Objective 5 Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring.	5.1 Establish a Nature Recovery working group to monitor the objectives to feed into the quarterly Sustainability and Environment Group Meetings. 5.2 Improve Staff awareness in reducing emissions, encouraging biodiversity and nature recovery. 5.3 Improve water consumption monitoring and install Rainwater Harvesting on suitable sites; 5.4 Consider improvements/monitoring of water consumption at incidents. 5.5 Improve our Business Management Systems and Solar Panel installation and monitoring on Service locations.
Objective 6 Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery.	6.1 Executive Leadership Team involvement in implementation of the Nature Recovery Action Plan Objectives. 6.2 Monitor and report on Service Nature Recovery Action Plan 2023-26 in quarterly Sustainability and Environment Group Meeting. 6.3 Provide updates on Nature Recovery Action Plan objectives in the Annual Environmental Report.

Section 4

Delivery, Monitoring and Review

The Service is committed to working towards the objectives outlined within this Nature Recovery Action Plan over the next 3 years. Delivery of the objectives will be monitored by the Sustainability and Environment Manager and the Nature Recovery Working Group, and will be achieved through external collaboration opportunities, adaptability, and resources.

The Objectives will be monitored quarterly under the Sustainability and Environment

Group Meetings and reported on within the Annual Environmental Report which will be published on the Service external website. Highlights and outcomes will be reported on in the Section 6 Duty Nature Recovery Action Plan Monitoring Report every 3 years.





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