

Caring for Our Environment in and around Llanyre and Newbridge-on-Wye 2023-2026

How Llanyre Community Council is Supporting Nature & Biodiversity

Our local environment is one of our community's greatest assets — from green spaces and woodlands to wildflower verges and protected habitats such as the SSSI of Aberithon Turbary. Over the past few years, Llanyre Community Council has been working to care for these spaces, support wildlife, and help nature thrive alongside our everyday community life.

This work supports the **Environment (Wales) Act 2016**, which places a duty on public bodies to protect and enhance biodiversity and build resilient ecosystems — but more importantly, it reflects what local people value about where we live.

Our Green Spaces

The Community Council is responsible for a variety of local green spaces that play an important role in supporting wildlife and wellbeing, including:

- **Llanyre Play Park**
- **Llanyre Recreation Field**
- **Woodland area of Pritchard's Patch in Llanyre**
- **Two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)**, including the local turbary sites
- **Newbridge on Wye Village Green**
- **Two village laybys**

How we manage these spaces, — from grass cutting to planting and how you use them — has a real impact on biodiversity.

Positive Action for Nature

Here are some of the key environmental and biodiversity activities we've undertaken:

Protecting Special Habitats

- The Heritage Lottery funded project to restore habitat at **Aberithon Turbary**, improve access, and create a **community nature reserve was completed**. The project involved volunteers from the community and not only helped nature but created new friendships and developed new skills and interests for those taking part and those visiting the nature reserve.
- We supported an application made from Newbridge-on-Wye Primary School, which received funding to plant trees in the community nature reserve for a Community Orchard
- A funding application to Natural Resources Wales for a further Peatland Restoration Project at Aberithon Turbary has been successful and work began during 2025.
- We are also working with **Natural Resources Wales** on appropriate management of our SSSI sites.

Supporting Wildflowers & Pollinators

- We continued to manage grass cutting to establish and maintain the **wildflower verge in Newbridge on Wye**.

- Flowers planted through the **Local Places for Nature scheme**, funded by the Welsh Government which were planted during the pandemic continue to flourish and add to the wildflower corridors within and through our built area.
- Flower planters in Llanyre have been maintained for the community by volunteers and new locally purchased planters have been bought.

Managing Green Spaces for People and Wildlife

- Grass cutting has been **reduced where appropriate**, with a pathway maintained around the recreation field to balance access and biodiversity. In 2025 we responded to requests to create a cut play space on the recreation field but have maintained uncut areas.
- Community members continue to plant **trees, bulbs, and wildflowers**, particularly around the children's play area.
- Green waste is composted, pesticide use is kept to a minimum instead mechanical methods are used where possible.

Woodland Care

In **Pritchard's Wood**, natural methods are used wherever possible:

- Bark and wood chippings on paths was replaced
- Cut branches and brushwood left in piles to create habitats for insects and small wildlife.

Planning and Development

Although community councils are not statutory consultees and do not approve or reject applications, we can provide informed, material comments highlighting potential impacts on wildlife, habitats, trees, green spaces, drainage, and landscape character, and by referencing ecological reports or local environmental knowledge. We aim to make constructive comments that focus on mitigation, enhancement, and sustainability with an expectation that they help the planning authority (PCC) make better-informed decisions.

When commenting on planning applications we review proposals using relevant local and national policies, such as the Local Development Plan, Planning Policy Wales, and biodiversity and climate duties under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 we also consider the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Local impact is an important consideration. During this reporting period we commented on XXX applications.

Working with the Community

The Council also supports biodiversity by:

- Offering **small grants** to community-led projects that benefit the local environment
- Encouraging volunteering and outdoor activity
- Supporting working groups to improve shared spaces
- Sharing information about nature and biodiversity through noticeboards, at our meetings, and on our website

Challenges Faced

Like many communities, progress hasn't always been easy. Limited resources in our Council to develop, co-ordinate and manage projects affect the action we can take. While the ongoing cost-of-living pressures impacts on volunteering. However, we remain committed to building momentum as circumstances improve.

Looking Ahead

Biodiversity and sustainability will continue to be **central to decision-making** for the Community Council — from planning consultations to procurement and land management.

- Biodiversity will be a **standing agenda item** at the Council's Annual Meeting
- Environmental impacts will be considered alongside cost and practicality
- We will continue working with expert organisations and listening to local residents.
- We will continue whenever possible to buy local first as a means to reduce our carbon footprint.
- Although Llanyre Community Council makes use of remote access for some meetings, it continues to hold regular face to face sessions. This is done, firstly, to actively support and sustain important local community assets (such as Llanyre Church Hall and Newbridge on Wye Community Centre), and secondly to recognise that digital activity is not without environmental impact, including the energy demands of data centres. By maintaining a balance between online and in-person meetings, we aim to act responsibly both within the local community and in our wider environmental considerations.
- A **plant list for community open spaces** produced in 2021 to help guide planting and management decisions is due for review and we plan to link this to a community nature day.
- We will support action to develop a community garden with benefits to both wildlife and wellbeing

We encourage everyone to think about nature and 'get Involved'!

If you're interested in volunteering, learning more about local wildlife, or helping care for our green spaces, we'd love to hear from you. Together, we can make sure our local environment remains healthy, welcoming, and resilient for future generations.