

Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6

HOLT COMMUNITY COUNCIL - 2022 Report.

dated July 2022.

Name of Community Council: Holt Community Council

Introduction and Context:

Holt Community Council (HCC) provides a range of services to our local community which have an impact on biodiversity. These include:

- 1) Responsibility for the maintenance and improvement of several green spaces including a Woodland area (The Copse) at one entrance to the village, Church cemetery, and around the public toilets and Bowls Green. We are also involved in the maintenance and upkeep of the park (owned by the Holt Town Trust) and Castle Grounds (owned by Wrexham Borough Council). In addition, an area surrounding a Multi-use games area on a new estate development will come under the HCC remit in 2022/23.
- 2) Maintaining the main paths along roads through the village by weeding and spraying.
- 3) Encouraging the use of waste bins for villagers and visitors along with the use of poo bins for dog walkers. Litter Picking Group formed in 2021/22.
- 4) Providing grants for projects in the HCC area. This impacts on biodiversity by pursuing sustainability goals and practices wherever possible.
- 5) Awareness and improvement of the environment, biodiversity and geodiversity.

We serve approximately 1300 residents.

The precept for 2022/23 is £32,985

Action Report

Embed biodiversity into decision making and procurement:

- 1) Considered biodiversity decisions when considering planning applications and other associated matters, such as footpath diversion orders and neighbourhood services matters.
- 2) Considered adaptation and mitigation responses to the impacts of climate change.
- 3) Considered specific timings for green space, hedge and path maintenance to avoid affecting breeding birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles.

Monitored by:

- 1) Commitments made in HCC documents.
- 2) Consideration of biodiversity demonstrated in decisions on area maintenance responsibilities and planning applications.

Raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance:

- 1) Within a broader awareness and improvement of the environment such as the replacement of conventional street lighting to more energy efficient and cost-effective LEDs to the potential installation of an Electric Charging Point in the village. Installed early 2022.

- 2) Awareness and improvement of the environment such as the replacement of conventional lighting to more energy efficient and cost-effective LEDs.
- 3) Awareness and improvement of the environment such as to the potential installation of an Electric Charging Point in the village. Actioned!.
- 4) Encourage the Community to volunteer in the context of nature/green spaces such as litter picking.
- 5) Encourage the Community to volunteer in the context of nature/green spaces such as supporting our local Gardening Group in the attempts to organise planters at our Village Cross and in select other locations to improve the appearance and environment of the Village. Planters in place with watering system along with many other areas now planted.
- 6) Encourage the Community to volunteer in the context of nature/green spaces such as financially encouraging and supporting our local Gardening Group to acquire and develop an allotment.
- 7) Encourage the Community to volunteer in the context of nature/green spaces and the environment by supporting the Gardening Group and local residents in their application for "Wales in Bloom".
- 8) Encourage the Community to volunteer in the context of nature/green spaces and the environment by supporting the Holt Town Trust in their maintenance and development of Commonwood, a series of agricultural strip fields, previously Common Land, on the outskirts of the Village.

Monitored by:

- 1) Feedback from Council Members, residents and visitors to the Village.
- 2) Numbers of people taking part in activities.

Safeguard principal species and habitats:

- 1) Contributed to the management of protected and environmentally important sites and species including Local Wildlife Sites such as the Woodland seen on entering the Village from the A534 and the River Terraces on parkland near our Castle where rare Common Club-tailed dragonflies have been noted. A giant model of this rare species has been placed on the 2nd Terrace in collaboration with the Ne Wales Wildlife Trust to raise awareness of this endangered species.
- 2) In addition, HCC has supported the NE Wales Wildlife Trust's planting of Black Poplars on the Castle parkland.
- 3) Contributed to the management of protected and environmentally important sites such as the SSSI of the River Dee in conjunction with Natural Resources Wales.
- 4) Contributed to the management of protected and environmentally important sites such the Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS) of the 2nd Terrace of the River Dee and the faulted bedrock at Holt Castle in conjunction with NE Wales RIGS. As we all know, Geodiversity underpins Biodiversity.
- 5) Manage land around the Castle and adjoining parkland to buffer and join them as part of a resilient ecological network.

- 6) Try and prevent any negative impacts on protected species.
- 7) Increase the Meadowland sites by adding a wildflower meadow at the Bridge entrance to the Village.

Monitored by:

- 1) Records of any sites or species safeguarded as noted in the minutes of the HCC.
- 2) Feedback from Council Members, residents and visitors to the Village, as well as Ne Wales RIGS members.

Restore and create habitats and resilient ecological networks:

- 1) Encourage and financially support the creation by our Gardening Group of planters with native pollinator friendly flowers. These will be located on the Cross and Public Toilets.
- 2) Support, at one entrance to the Village, an HCC copse in which trees, shrubs and bluebells have been planted and a community bench, Bug hotel, nesting boxes etc have been installed. This area is now a haven for Wildlife.
- 3) Changed mowing regimes by reducing the frequency and area of cuts to encourage wildflowers and other pollinator-friendly plants, also providing cover for mammals, amphibians and reptiles.
- 4) Changed hedge trimming regimes such as not cutting hedges during the Spring and early Summer to avoid disturbing nesting birds.
- 5) As previously stated, HCC has supported the NE Wales Wildlife Trusts planting of Black Poplars on the Castle parkland.

Monitored by:

- 1) Area of habitat increased.
- 2) Feedback from Council Members, residents and visitors to the Village.

Tackle negative factors for e.g. reduce pollution, use nature-based solutions, address invasive species:

- 1) Support the work of Wrexham Borough Council to control the Himalayan Balsam invasive species along the River Dee through monitoring and encouragement.
- 2) Encourage the Holt Gardening Group to use environmentally friendly tools and limit the use of pesticides.
- 3) Use less pesticides on the HCC street cleaning and weed suppression.

Monitored by:

- 1) Areas of invasive species tackled.
- 2) Amount of pesticide applied.

Use improve and share evidence:

- 1) Taken advice and support from the NE Wales Wildlife Trust on improving the environment and biodiversity of the Village.

- 2) Taken advice and support from the NE Wales RIGS on improving the environment and geodiversity (as it underpins biodiversity) of the Village.

Monitored by:

- 1) Use of expert advice.

Support capacity and/or other organisations:

- 1) Working in partnership with the N. Wales Wildlife Trust to improve local wildlife areas and to provide extra volunteers.
- 2) Working with NEWRIGS and Wrexham Borough Council to maintain and improve RIGS sites within the Holt area.

Monitored by:

- 1) Partnerships formed to deliver biodiversity (and geodiversity) benefit.
- 2) Amount of money spent which will provide positive biodiversity benefits.

Review of s6 duty

What has worked well:

- 1) The creation of wildflower and plant areas has been a success
- 2) The installation of LEDS to replace traditional cost-ineffective lighting.
- 3) Partnership with NE Wales Wildlife Trust in delivering improvements to the Village environment and biodiversity. Also, the relationship has been beneficial in raising awareness of biodiversity issues in the area.
- 4) Providing encouragement and support for local organisations in the delivery of biodiversity improvements.

What have been the barriers?:

- 1) Lack of expertise to identify best practice.

What will you change?:

- 1) Establish contact with the Local Environmental Records Office and the Local Biodiversity Officer to seek advice.

How and when will the s6 duty be monitored and the s6 plan reviewed?:

- 1) The duty will be monitored through feedback from the public and individual officers reporting back to HCC, on an as and when needed basis, the success or otherwise of the actions taken by HCC.
- 2) The s6 plan will be reviewed in the light of these reports and any other evidence or information that is made available to HCC. This plan will be reviewed annually and a s6 report issued.

