

## Chepstow Town Council Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Report 2022

### Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6 (duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems)

- Chepstow is located in south-east Wales in the county of Monmouthshire, with the Wales border with England to its eastern side.
- The River Wye flows through Chepstow. The Severn Estuary runs adjacent to (but outside the boundary of) Chepstow. The area is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Wales Coast Path heads west from Chepstow following the entire coast of Wales. The Offa's Dike Path begins in Chepstow and heads north taking you along the entirety of the Wales/England border.
- The town centre boasts a castle and ancient port wall; in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries Chepstow was a busy port and shipyard, and some of the historic buildings date back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century.
- The town is very hill which makes active transport difficult for many residents. The town is also bisected by the A48, one of the south wales 'trunk roads', which suffers from heavy congestion resulting in extremely poor air quality. There is a permanent air quality monitoring station sited on the A48 and Chepstow Town Council participate in Monmouthshire County Council Air Quality meetings.
- The M48 (previously the main M4 route) connect Chepstow to the M4 main artery from South Wales to London, and is the location of the Severn Bridge, which was opened in 1966 linking to Gloucestershire on the English side of the River Severn.
- Chepstow Town Council do not own any land, meaning that all biodiversity enhancement must take place in partnership with Monmouthshire County Council, and other relevant authorities, such as South Wales Trunk Road Agency.
- The population of the town was 12,500 at the 2011 census.
- The precept raised by Chepstow Town Council for the period 2022-2023 is £657,551.

## **Chepstow Town Council - Biodiversity and Ecosystems Actions 2019-2022**

<b>Action required</b>	<b>CTC Actions 2019-2022</b>	<b>CTC Further work 2022-2025</b>
<b>Embed biodiversity into decision making and procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTC reconfigured its committees so that all projects are discussed via an 'Environment and Amenities Committee', which has environmental impact at the core of its decision-making processes.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Draw up a sustainable procurement policy. This was put on hold during Covid.</li> </ol>
<b>Raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using website and social media to convey information to residents regarding environmental issues, international awareness days, CTC projects.</li> <li>• Community Projects Officer has undertaken carbon literacy training, and to join One Voice Wales Green Hub sessions.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage more councilors to attend the Green Hub and Climate Champions meetings.</li> <li>2. Implement a schedule of social media posts so that the council is putting out information to the community regularly.</li> </ol>
<b>Safeguard principal species and habitats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with MCC (including Biodiversity Lead) to develop/enhance green spaces into in Chepstow into diverse habitats that can encourage some of the principal species.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To develop a working relationship with the biodiversity team who are able and willing to provide CTC with support on biodiversity projects in green pockets of land across the town.</li> </ol>
<b>Restore and create habitats and resilient ecological networks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban nature gardens and community vegetable gardens have been installed.</li> <li>• Obtaining Keep Wales Tidy Local Places for Nature packages.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaise with Monmouthshire County Council to identify 'abandoned' areas of land such as small greens/verges within the heavily populated areas of Chepstow.</li> <li>2. To consult with the Environment and Amenities Committee to apply for any possible grant funding and grant packages such as the Keep Wales Tidy Local Places for Nature.</li> </ol>
<b>Tackle negative factors: e.g. reduce pollution use nature-based solutions, address invasive species</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTC are engaging with various local groups that are focused on different aspects of pollution in Chepstow, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Transition Chepstow (Chepstow Transport Plan)</li> <li>○ Friends of the Lower Wye (pollution in the River Wye from up-river mass farming)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage an open and ongoing dialogue with these community groups and support when we can by means of grants or projects.</li> </ol>

Action required	CTC Actions 2019-2022	CTC Further work 2022-2025
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air Quality working group.</li> </ul>	
<b>Use, improve and share evidence</b>	CTC have employed a Community Projects Officer who takes part in the One Voice Wales Green Hub community, as well as the MCC Climate Champions community to share experiences, successes and learning with each other.	1. To continue to be a part of these groups and share experiences.
<b>Support capacity, and/or other organisations</b>	By providing grants and promoting events CTC support Transition Chepstow, Gwent Wildlife Trust, and local youth groups for their biodiversity work.	1. To continue to provide support to groups involved in improving biodiversity.
<b>Key outcomes: (use narrative and metrics where possible)</b>	Two specific areas within the town have been enhanced (in terms of biodiversity) as well as choice of planting in town centre planters being driven by the need to provide a range of habitats.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To create at least one biodiversity area within each council ward.</li> <li>2. To continue to monitor open spaces within each ward and implement projects to improve biodiversity where the opportunity arises.</li> </ol>
<b>Review points, e.g. enablers and barriers to action, improvements to forward plan</b>	<p>Several projects have been attempted but sadly rejected by outside influence, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Green wall along a section of the A48 – the level of consultation and investigations that the South Wales Trunk Road Agency (SWTRA) required from CTC meant that around £14,000 was required just to complete the investigations necessary to submit an application for permission to site the green wall.</li> <li>2. Green roof bin shelter – there was a public backlash against this, claiming that it was unsightly and not suitable for a town centre in a conservation area.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To continue trying to engage the South Wales Trunk Road Agency to establish air pollution reduction measures that are realistic and achievable on the CTC budget.</li> <li>2. To explore streets in close vicinity to the A48 where permission for green walls may be more easily achieved from MCC.</li> </ol>
<b>How and when will the S6 duty be monitored and the S6 plan reviewed?</b>	S6 duty will considered in relation to all projects at committee meetings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Report to be reviewed at the first meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee each year.</li> <li>2. Community Projects Officer to use the S6 plan and duty to continually monitor and direct projects of the Council.</li> </ol>

## Chepstow Town Council - Biodiversity and Habitats by Ward

WARD	OPEN SPACE/HABITAT IDENTIFIED	CURRENT USE	ACTION/STATUS/MONITORING
<b>Bulwark</b>	1. Burnt Barn Road	1. Orchard	1. Existing, ongoing
<b>Chepstow Castle</b>	1. Small grass area adjacent to highway. 2. Small raised flower bed adjacent to highway in town centre. 3. Small grass area (owned by M&S) adjacent to highway and bus depot. 4. Caird Street, Garden City	1. Castle Dell Orchard 2. Community vegetable growing space created in 2021 by local youth groups with support from CTC. 3. Places for Nature pollinator garden created 4. Open space	1-3 Existing, ongoing 4. Garden City community groups interested in growing here.
<b>Larkfield</b> <a href="#">Report</a> produced by Cllr Dominic Power	1. Fairview (north of orchard) 2. Land adjacent to High Beech 3. High Beech to Severn Bridge dual carriageway grass verge	Open spaces/verges	Explore options for biodiversity improvements, e.g. nature packages.
<b>Maple Avenue</b> <a href="#">Report</a> produced by Cllr Sadie Tulley	1. A466 grass verge 2. Bulwark Community Centre car park 3. Burnt Barn Rd play park/field	Open spaces/verges/play parks	Explore options for biodiversity improvements, e.g. nature packages.
<b>Mount Pleasant</b> <a href="#">Report</a> produced by Cllr David Barnes	1. St Lawrence Park play area and surrounding land 2. Woolpitch Wood play area and surrounding land	1. Play areas 2. Open spaces/uncut areas	1. could be improved as the gateway to Chepstow/Wye Valley 2. Potential for community growing space. Planters/veg growing beds could be sited inside the play parks (with permission from MCC), and

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Various roadside verges</li> <li>4. Ruffett's Close</li> <li>5. Tempest Drive</li> <li>6. St Lawrence Road/Newport Rd roundabout</li> <li>7. Larkfield Park/Chepstow Town FC outside playing fields</li> </ol>	3-7 Open spaces/roadside verges	<p>outside of the park boundary (check ownership).</p> <p>Explore options for biodiversity improvements, e.g. nature packages.</p>
<b>St Kingsmark</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kingsmark Avenue Orchard</li> <li>2. Deans Hill Orchard</li> </ol>	Existing orchards	Existing, ongoing.
<b>Thornwell</b> <u>Report</u> produced by Cllr Dale Rooke	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thornwell Road/Bulwark Avenue Orchard</li> <li>2. Alice Crescent</li> <li>3. Tenby Lane/Denbigh Drive</li> <li>4. Bishops Close/Lewis Way</li> <li>5. Bluebell/Caernarfon/Denbigh opposite roundabout</li> <li>6. Fisherman's Walk</li> <li>7. Conway Drive (uphill from Tesco) grass verge</li> </ol>	Open spaces	Explore options for biodiversity improvements, e.g. nature packages.