



Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystem Duty Report 2022



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Introduction and Context

Human health and well-being depend on healthy ecosystems and the natural environment, which is the source of clean air, water, healthy soils and food. During the COVID-19 pandemic many around the world came to appreciate the importance of access to nature and green space to people's physical and mental health, and the World Health Organisation called for a healthy and green recovery where nature can thrive¹.

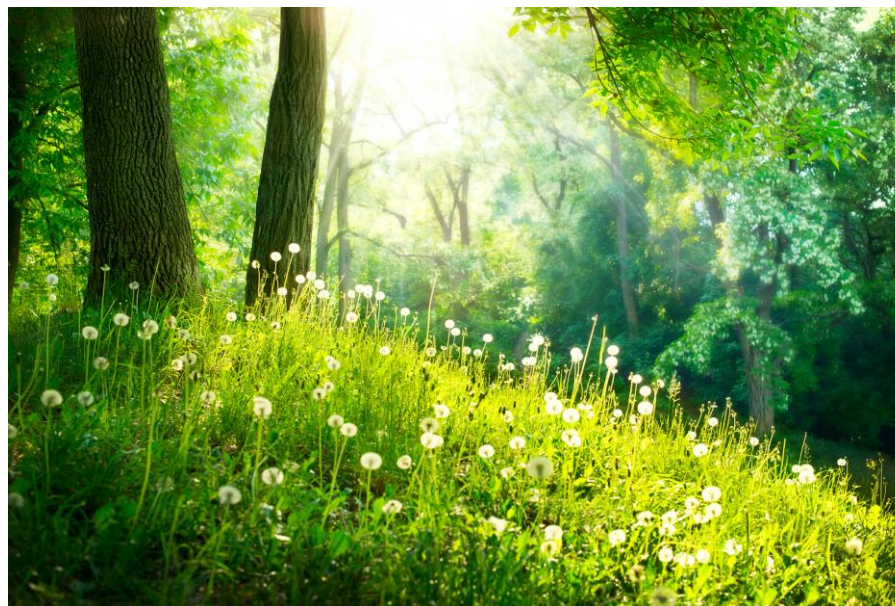
Biodiversity is declining at an alarming rate. Globally over 1 million species are severely threatened, and in Wales one in six species is at risk of disappearing². In response to the decline of species and loss of habitats, Welsh Government declared a nature emergency in 2021 and the need to tackle the nature crisis is incorporated in the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Section 6 of this Act requires public authorities to 'seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems' ensuring biodiversity is considered in business planning, policies, plans and projects. Authorities are required to report on what they have done every three years; Public Health Wales published our first report in 2019 and this report reflects activity between 2019 and 2022.

Public Health Wales is one of the 11 organisations which makes up NHS Wales. We are the national public health agency, with 2,400 staff based in 62 premises across Wales. We work to protect and improve health and well-being and reduce health inequalities for the people of Wales. Public Health Wales is a public body under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFG Act) and our

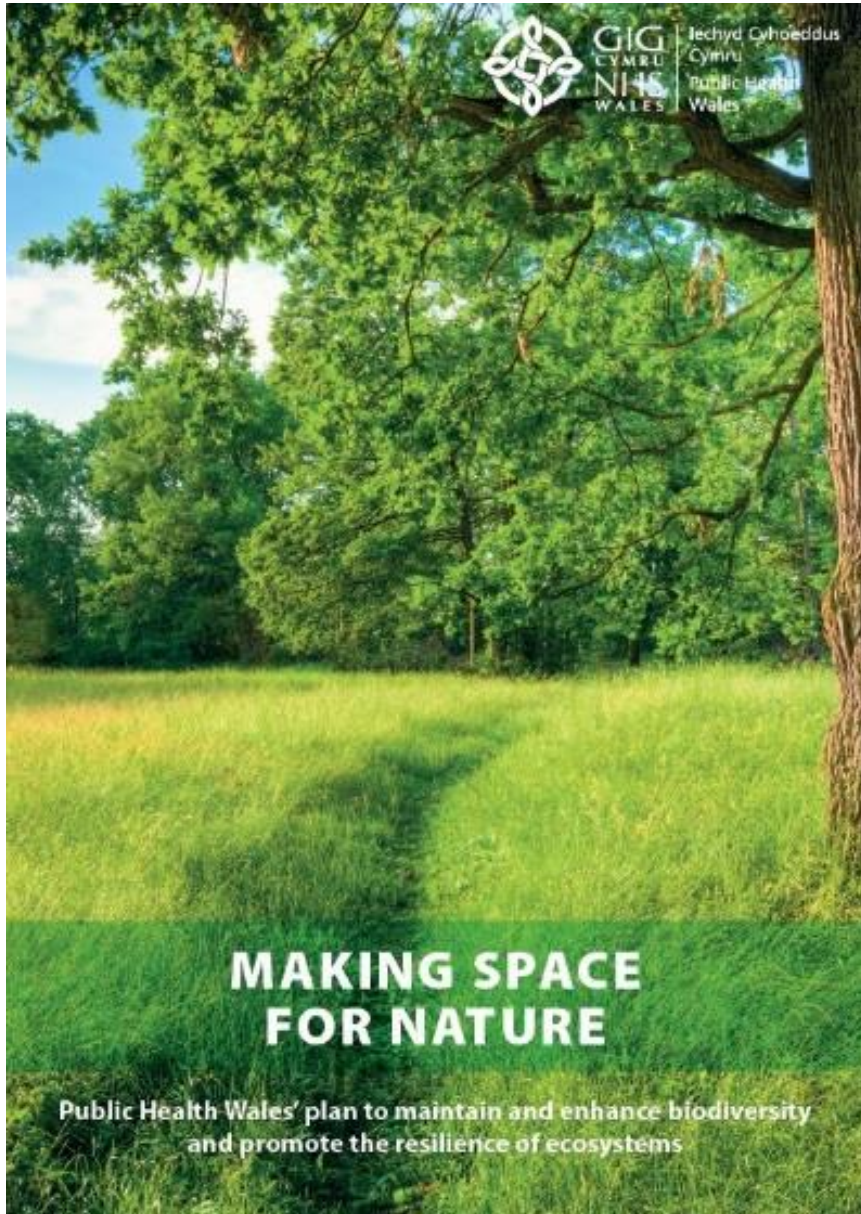
¹ [WHO Manifesto for a healthy recovery from COVID-19](#)

[Annual Report](#) explains how we are responding to this, recognising the importance of ensuring that the climate and biodiversity are considered as part of everyday decision making.

We are required to report on action against the objectives in the [Nature Recovery Action Plan \(NRAP\) for Wales](#), and on actions relating to buildings and grounds management, procurement, sustainability, awareness raising, cascading funding criteria, and providing education and training. We need to report against NRAP objectives 1, 4, 6 and against 2, 3, and 5 relating to our own estate.



² [The State of Nature Wales 2019 report | WWF](#)



We published our Biodiversity Action Plan, '[Making Space for Nature](#)', in 2019; the five areas for action for the organisation to support nature are the themes of this report. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on our ability to deliver the commitments, however this Section 6 report outlines the progress we have made in a number of areas. It also provides us with information that will allow us to review and update our existing Biodiversity Action Plan to ensure that it reflects our new priorities and ways of working.

As well as these five action areas, our Plan highlights how we have applied the sustainable development principle, through the five ways of working, to develop the document, and illustrates how the actions contribute to both the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales and the organisation's seven Strategic Priorities which are also our Well-being Objectives. These are currently being reviewed as part of the process to review our Long-term strategy (2018-2030) and will be updated in 2023.

This report is an opportunity to evaluate and reflect on the steps we are taking to support biodiversity, and to identify where we are having an adverse impact so that we can put positive steps in place towards reducing our impact.

Highlights, Key Outcomes and Issues

Since 2019, we have made positive progress in a number of areas:

- Set up the Public Health Wales Climate Change Programme Board which aims to oversee our organisational approach to the climate change response.
- Developed our Decarbonisation Action Plan (2022-2024) outlining the commitments we are taking to reduce our carbon emissions across our buildings, transport and procurement.
- To coincide with COP26, in 2021, Public Health Wales published a series of infographics highlighting the importance of climate change impact on the health and wellbeing of the population of Wales, and to support public bodies and businesses to take action to address any impacts.
- Established Green Advocates, an informal staff network to help staff gain knowledge about aspects of sustainable development, climate change, decarbonisation, biodiversity loss, plastics and more.
- Published a 'Resources for Sustainable Health' e-catalogue which brings together all the resources produced by the Health & Sustainability Hub aimed at helping organisations and individuals to consider the natural environment and the health of the planet and people in everything they do.
- Cardiff Healthy Travel Charter commitments achieved - supporting staff and visitors to adopt healthy, active travel to work reducing air pollution, carbon emissions and making a positive impact on our natural environment.
- Work with other public bodies – we have produced a range of guidance and resources for other organisations, and in partnership with other organisations, including the Green Opportunities e-briefings, Health Impact Assessments, Greener Primary Care Wales framework.
- A number of case-studies, including those highlighted in this report.

In gathering information for this report, a number of challenges have been highlighted in relation to Public Health Wales' actions to support biodiversity and ecosystem resilience which include ensuring that the Biodiversity duty is incorporated across all decision making, including the Long Term Strategy and plans. Enabling staff to take part in voluntary activities, which ceased during COVID-19, is challenging to start up again due to time and work pressures. We have recognised opportunities to support colleagues who are keen to champion biodiversity action within the workforce, and also to encourage greater internal collaboration; as well as to produce further guidance for staff.

Engaging and supporting our staff

Despite the mobilisation of the full weight of the organisation's resource during the pandemic we have established:

- A new Climate Change Programme Board to provide strategic leadership and direction on the climate change agenda.
- A Green Advocates informal voluntary staff network who meet quarterly, at lunchtime. All members have joined voluntarily and to date we have engaged with up to 83 staff on a range of topics including healthy travel, sustainable food and biodiversity.
- An internal Decarbonisation, Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Collaborative (DESCCC) group to share learning and ideas.



Our Health and Sustainability Hub has continued to publish and promote a range of resources and e-guides to support and provide staff with sustainable steps which we can all take to 'Be the Change' for Wales' well-being goals. These resources are targeting individual-level behaviour change in the workplace or at home. The guides are on themes of Welsh and global concern, including [Helping Nature to Flourish](#) and [Home and Agile working](#).

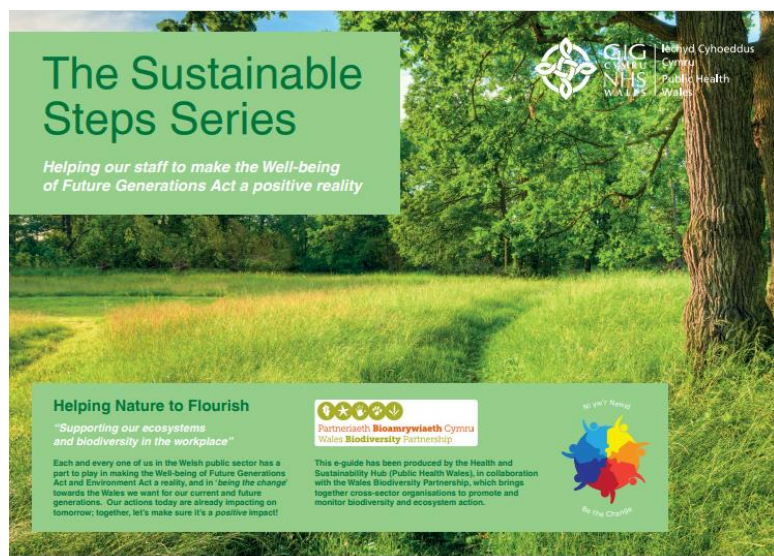
To supplement the e-guides, the Hub has also created the [Well-being Goals Challenge](#), which contains six challenges to try: a plant-based diet, reducing waste, green travel, slow fashion, ethical consumption and supporting wildlife. The Hub also produced a series of Green

Opportunities e-briefings to support a Green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic; the theme for the Autumn 2021 [e-brief was Biodiversity](#). Themes in other editions include waste reduction, energy, emissions and pollution, reducing the impacts of travel, and of food production and consumption.



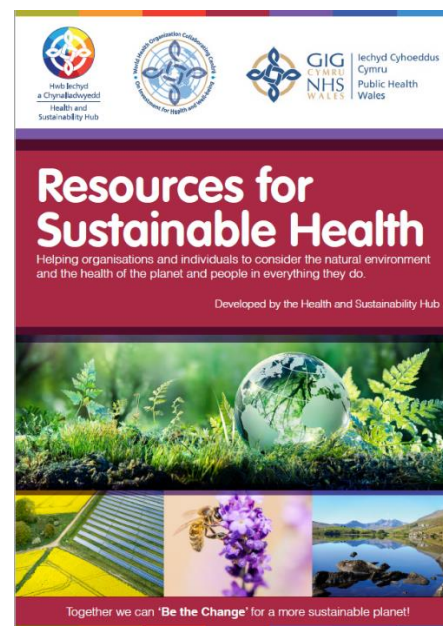
Since 2019 the Hub developed two toolkits to support teams to consider their environmental impacts and take action:

- [SIFT Healthy Environment Workshop](#) is an online activity to enable teams to identify their environmental impacts - to reduce the negative and maximise the positive impacts. It supports teams and individuals to take action on decarbonisation, biodiversity, zero waste and climate change.
- [Step Change for a Sustainable Planet](#) to help organisations and their staff respond to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals helping them to put into practice the principles of sustainable development.



This area for action on biodiversity supports the following objectives in the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales:

Objective 1 'Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels' by highlighting work across PHW to support understanding within the organisation amongst staff. Work to embed biodiversity throughout decision making is explained in greater detail in later sections.



In July 2021 the Hub published an e-catalogue [Resources for Sustainable Health](#) which introduces and explains what all of the Hub's publications and resources contain and what they can help with. This aims to enable individuals and teams to find information they need with ease. The resources promoted in the e-catalogue will help teams and individuals reduce their impact on the environment and climate change, and encourage sustainable behaviour in both their work and home life.

We recognise that as our organisation is refocusing our work post pandemic, there is a significant opportunity for us to re-engage with staff and support them to utilise the resources that are available. Several teams highlighted that it would be beneficial to see more staff communications, workshops and training to increase engagement and action to support biodiversity.

Sustainable Procurement

Public Health Wales Procurement is part of the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership and, because of its impact, is a key area to support our work on climate change and biodiversity. Although our Procurement Champions Group (mentioned in the previous report and Biodiversity Action Plan) no longer exists, work is ongoing to engage procurement colleagues in a different way, and to work with Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) to highlight opportunities where procurement decisions and actions can reduce impact and pressure on the natural world.

NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership recognises the requirement to deliver sustainable and responsible products, provisions, and services to the people of Wales. There is a comprehensive strategy to support the delivery of sustainability in every category of spend. Under each strategy a Sustainable Risk Assessment is required for all procurements exceeding £25,000. Procurement services undertake reviews for spend under £25,000 on a regular basis to consolidate spend within existing or new frameworks and identify sustainability opportunities. Additionally, procurement can use external frameworks that provide sustainability for all levels of expenditure. Biodiversity is also covered within the Sustainability Procurement Code of Practice which is issued with every tender. This Code of Practice has a number of aims including to reduce waste, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to procure in a manner that focusses on the preservation and effective management of natural resources.



Procurement services are identifying better ways to monitor procurement and contracts. It is possible to make simple changes by looking at key procurement items and removing unsustainable items from the catalogue, examples include:

- the All Wales aim for all cleaning items to be biodegradable, where available;
- only FSC approved or recycled paper can be purchased;
- food requisition requests should be palm oil free;
- purchase of water in single use plastic bottles is unnecessary. Staff based in mobile units or other screening locations for example can be provided with reusable/ refillable bottles as an alternative.

Awareness raising to influence behaviour change is important too. Procurement Shared Services have set up an intranet page for staff to share their stories about what they are doing to procure in a more sustainable manner. Simple steps such as consolidating orders can lead to less waste and less emissions, thus reducing impacts.

In 2022 Procurement Shared Services worked with Revolution Zero on the Wales Green Surgery Challenge which investigated the operational, financial and environmental feasibility of utilising reusable surgical textiles in operating theatres. If the suggested changes are made this will result in reducing emissions by more than

955 tonnes CO₂e per year, reduction of offensive waste by more than 302 tonnes per year, as well as cost savings.

Funding from WRAP Cymru has allowed Facilities and Estates staff to register with [Warp-it](#), a charity which helps redistribute, reuse and recycle surplus redundant resources such as furniture, equipment, fixtures and fittings. During the recent refurbishment work items were initially offered to Health Boards but if not wanted they were offered to charity.

Some teams in Public Health Wales are also supporting sustainability in procurement by ensuring that the paper they use is [FSC](#) approved and that any paper provided by contractors meets the same requirements. The pandemic has led to a considerable change in ways of working with an estimated 1250 staff (around half of the workforce) working 75% of their hours from home. An indirect reduction in printing as a result of remote working practices has been highlighted by colleagues with many people reporting that they have never had a need to print anything since they began working at home. One example from colleagues in the Quality, Nursing & Allied Health Professionals Directorate shows that during 2021-22 they spent £2,943 on printing and for the first six months of the current year (2022-23) they have only spent £225, a significant reduction. Our Research and Evaluation Team are moving away from printed reports, which will also reduce the need for paper and postage.

Other actions to reduce the impact of procurement across the organisation highlighted by colleagues in Improvement Cymru include:

- Encouraging staff to stop the purchase of merchandise at events, training and seminars due to the environmental impact.
- Asking suppliers what they are able to do to minimise single use and waste when providing quotes.
- Minimising the use of printed material and encouraging the use of electronic PDF document packs when producing training materials

Health and Screening Services work with partners in minimising printed products and transitioning safely to more digital outputs, whilst also considering digital accessibility, which is a major concern. They are also investigating sustainable sourcing of kits and products in relation to the upcoming Sexual Health tender.

The pandemic also led to most meetings being held on line via Teams leading to savings in terms of procurement of catering and other items.



This area for action on biodiversity contributes to the following objectives in the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales:

Objective 1 'Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels' and Objective 4 'tackle key pressures on species and habitats' by taking action and changing behaviour that currently has adverse impacts on species and habitats locally and globally'.

Developing our Estate

Public Health Wales staff are based across 62 premises. We own 1 building, lease 18, with the rest a mixture of offices in shared buildings, laboratories and screening services within hospitals or other buildings where we have Service Level Agreements. 43 are within health board sites.

Large scale refurbishment or building maintenance projects include recognition of the need for procurement decisions to consider environmental impacts, biodiversity, emissions and climate change. An example of protecting a bat colony in one of our buildings is included as a case study later in this report.

One of our sites in north Wales - Clwydian House, Wrexham - has recently been modernised. We worked with Collecteco while clearing the building and £5,950 value has been donated to the community, 1,890kg CO₂e avoided and 2,250kg diverted from landfill. As part of the fit out

- 220m² of Grade A recycled carpet was laid;
- showers and bike racks were installed to allow for green travel;
- all work was completed by a local builder to Wrexham – keeping the costs in Wales, with 80% of the workforce from Wales;
- ziptaps (for instant boiling water) have been installed; and
- ceiling tiles and the metal used as part of the tile framing have been recycled (see [product sustainability declaration](#)).

Furniture purchased for the refit was purchased from Crown Workspace using their pre-proposed options.



Following the Welsh Government's Towards Zero Waste Policy, recycling bins have been successfully installed across many sites within our estate despite space challenges in our buildings and in landlord bin areas.

Public Health Wales does not own any land or have any direct responsibility for management of any green space around our buildings and staff locations, which places significant limitations on the actions we could take to support biodiversity across our estate. However the organisation does have the ability to work with and influence other organisations. For example, a high percentage of our staff are based on health board sites, and where this is the case they

are able to access green space such as Llandough and Morriston hospital, benefiting from spending time in that space. They're also able to join in and support projects to develop the green space as a garden for pollinators, wildflower meadow or even allotment or orchard - all habitats which offer much more to benefit biodiversity than grassland cut throughout the year. As green space, gardens, trees, and wildlife have been proven to be hugely beneficial to physical and mental health our role in formally influencing other public sector and NHS organisations can be based on scientific research and peer reviewed papers³.

³ [Spending at least 120 minutes a week in nature is associated with good health and wellbeing | Scientific Reports; Positive effects of nature on your mental wellbeing; Soil bacteria work in similar way to antidepressants.](#)

The Estates and Facilities team are also supporting the installation of electric vehicle charging points across our sites – 8 have been installed to date with further sites planned (subject to funding being agreed). One of our sites – Magden Park, Llantrisant – also benefits from solar PV generating 14.3% of electricity used during 2020/21 saving 11,981kg CO₂e.



This area for action on biodiversity contributes to the following objectives in the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales:

Objective 2 'safeguard species and habitats of principal importance'; Objective 4 'tackle key pressures on species and habitats' and Objective 5 'improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring'.

Promoting Environmental Sustainability

Public Health Wales' vision, through its focus on environmental sustainability, is to be a sustainable organisation, which protects and enhances our environment. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on our ability to support our previous 'Environmental Sustainability Programme' however we have continued to develop resources to support behaviour change, as well as:

- Continuing to work to reduce our organisational carbon footprint, including the use of our 'Be the Change' individual-level behaviour change 'movement'. This work includes monitoring our footprint and undertaking action that will have the greatest impact on reducing it.
- Continuing to promote the reduction, re-use and recycling of materials, including food waste.

The main areas of progress made since 2019 are as follows:

1. A new **Climate Change Programme Board** to provide strategic leadership on the climate change agenda. The Climate Change Programme Board will agree a strategic direction on Public Health Wales' role in tackling the impact of climate change on public health, co-ordinate responding to requests for evidence, information or support, monitor commitments to climate change work in the strategic plan and identify opportunities for cross organisational working.
2. **Public Health Wales' Decarbonisation Action Plan (DAP)**, developed between 2021 and 2022, outlines the action the

organisation will take over the next two years to reduce our carbon emissions and support the Welsh Government target of a net zero NHS by 2030. Both the Environment Wales Act (2016) and the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) have been incorporated into the plan, and will be considered in the delivery of all actions. All Directorates across Public Health Wales contributed to discussions, workshops and research to develop the plan with key enablers from Estates, Procurement and the Health and Sustainability Hub.

Specific actions relating to biodiversity focus on enhancing and promoting green spaces, redeveloping underutilised spaces and investigating opportunities for carbon off setting, while other actions recognise the impact of reducing emissions on biodiversity. The actions will challenge individuals, teams and directorates within the organisation to think and behave differently and consider their impact on biodiversity, the environment and climate change as they undertake service delivery and support implementation of the DAP.

The Action Plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis and progress will be reported to the Climate Change Programme Board and Business Executive Team.



Research for the Action Plan shows that Business Travel emissions from our grey fleet (staff using own vehicles) have reduced significantly since 2019/20, with a 59.33% reduction in the last 2 years, leading to a positive impact on the environment (although we recognise that this may not continue as staff return to offices post pandemic). An organisational 'Work how it works best' initiative is a trial approach to enable continued flexible working and choice for all employees.

3. **Carbon Footprint Research Project** - Public Health Wales is currently undertaking a research project to assess the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the organisations' carbon footprint during 2020/21. Using organisational data and data collected from staff on their personal footprints during



working at home, the results of the project will also identify behaviour change measures required to support our work to reduce our carbon emissions and impact on the environment. Some teams are conducting allied research, for example Health Protection and Screening Services are looking into understanding the impact of the email traffic on carbon footprints and way of minimising unnecessary emails.

4. Launched the **Greener Primary Care Wales Framework and Award Scheme** in June 2022 to encourage primary care practices to take action on environmental sustainability and biodiversity.
5. **Healthy, sustainable travel opportunities** are being promoted across the organisation, supporting the implementation of the Cardiff Healthy Travel charter commitments which Public Health Wales signed up to in 2019 and completed in 2022. During the pandemic it was not possible to undertake face to face staff engagement, however two Healthy Travel sessions for staff have taken place in 2022.
6. The Health and Sustainability Hub and Microbiology teams are working on a project aimed at **reducing the amount of single use plastic items used in laboratories**. Funded by Welsh Government, we are working with Revolution Zero and WRAP to support our Microbiology service to identify and implement changes that will reduce our environmental impact.

7. A new **Decarbonisation, Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Collaborative** has been established to support collaboration, enabling the sharing of information and knowledge across Public Health Wales.

In addition, some teams and Directorates have identified their own impacts and developed actions. For example the Quality Nursing and Allied Health Professionals team have committed to raise awareness of the Biodiversity Duty through Directorate level meetings, ensuring that it will be considered in the development of their 2023-24 Strategic Plan.

Waste is a big issue in terms of indirect and even direct impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems. Monitoring waste is a challenge for Public Health Wales as it is handled by a variety of shared services organisations. The NHS, including PHW, has seen huge increases in waste especially plastic PPE, even though there are the reported decreases in paper, food waste and other waste as a result of staff working at home during the pandemic (although this doesn't include waste generated by people working at home). Our facilities colleagues are supporting the organisation to recycle all waste streams, and some individuals are taking personal responsibility for the appropriate reduction and segregation of waste and making colleagues aware of their actions to enable wider participation.



This area for action on biodiversity contributes to the following objectives in the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales:

Objective 4: 'Tackle key pressures on species and habitats' from pollution and environmental damage by acknowledging our impact and taking steps to manage and reduce; Objective 5 'Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring' by gathering and sharing evidence and acknowledging where evidence is difficult to gather and Objective 6 'put in place framework of governance and support for delivery' - to make changes will require strong leadership and commitment across the organisation.

Working with other Public Bodies in Wales

Natural Resources Wales:

Public Health Wales and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have recently re-established a Memorandum of Understanding originally signed in 2020. It will enable greater collaboration, add value to existing ways of working, and support a joint approach to the delivery of biodiversity targets and commitment to apply the sustainable development principle as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. In its simplest terms the memorandum will ensure that people's health is considered in NRW's work looking after Wales's environment and equally, natural resources are understood and considered in all public health decisions and developments.

This greater collaboration will help ensure support is available for the further development of Public Health Wales's Biodiversity Action Plan in response to the Environment (Wales) Act and subsequent Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystem (Section 6) reports.

In addition, Public Health Wales sit on the advisory board for NRW's Nature and Us Citizen Assembly which will run in 2023. Working collaboratively to engage communities in setting a vision for a future Wales where society and nature thrive together will allow Public Health Wales and partners to understand the values and visions of the public when developing future policies and projects.



Health sector:

- Public Health Wales are working with Swansea Bay University Health Board's Sustainable Development Officer and Decarbonisation Group to share best practice and identify opportunities for collaboration, for example, the Welsh Government funded projects looking at waste in laboratories. We are also working with a number of other Health Boards and Trusts as we develop our approach to capacity building and training on the climate and nature emergencies.

- We work with Health Education and Improvement Wales and Green Health Wales to share best practice and identify opportunities for collaboration and opportunities to include biodiversity and ecosystem awareness across education and training.
- Staff from Public Health Wales have supported and presented the Green Health Wales Conferences in 2021 and 2022.

The work of the **Primary Care Division** has an influence on system leadership which will have an impact on biodiversity. They would like to see climate change and biodiversity as a golden thread in all work areas. Their role is leading by example, supporting other parts of the health and care system to consider biodiversity in their day to day work. Ongoing initiatives support individual professionals in primary care and independent contractors. Actions cover the following:

1. [Greener Primary Care Wales Framework and Award scheme, launched in June 2022](#), includes a number of actions relating directly to biodiversity and many more broadly within categories of the framework under estates, procurement, and developing staff. A specific example of one action is cited below:
 - e.g. *The practice has optimised its outside areas and green spaces for biodiversity and has increased the opportunities available for local wildlife to thrive, as well as supporting the benefits of green spaces to health and wellbeing.*
2. Cluster planning and delivery - also working on a proposal for primary care clusters to consider climate change mitigating actions in their annual planning cycles and inclusion in their IMTP's (Strategic Plan). We are working with a small number of pilot sites to scale up actions on a cluster population basis.

3. Contract reform – inclusion of biodiversity consideration into primary care contract reform discussions.



Greener Primary Care Wales

Public Bodies:

Many of our resources and publications including the 'Be the change...' series, toolkits and the e-briefs especially, have been shared widely with public bodies, and contain lots of advice to help other organisations increase awareness and take action.

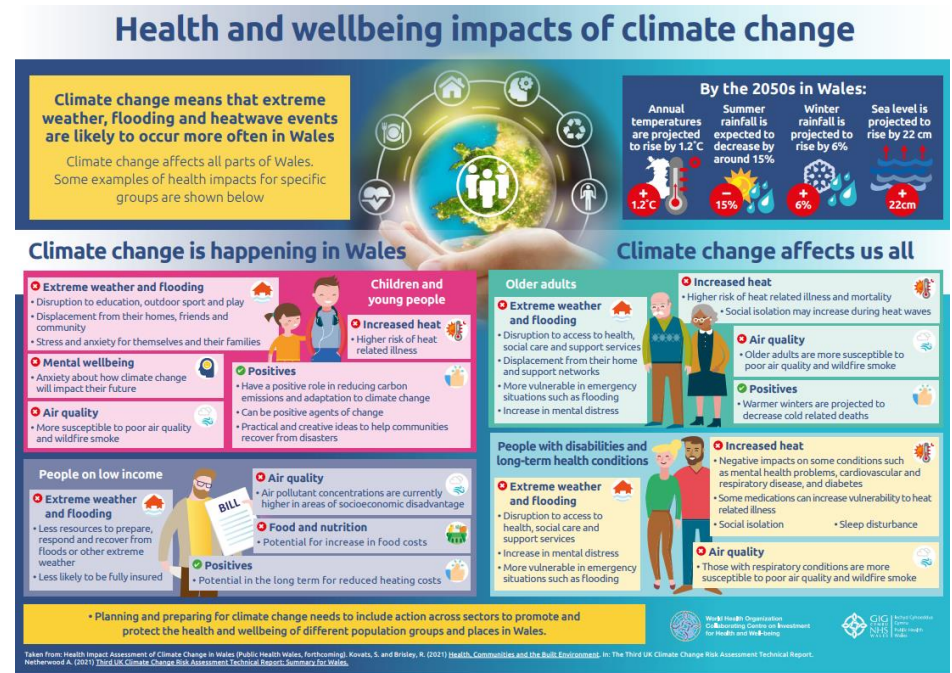
Sustainable development and biodiversity are considerations in the **Health Impact Assessment** (HIA) framework used by Public Health Wales's Health Impact Assessment Support Unit (WHIASU), providing a systematic and flexible evidence based process to identify the positive and negative impacts of policies, plans and events on the health and well-being of a population. Some HIA's include consideration of biodiversity and ecosystem resilience specifically or consider climate change which is directly linked, for example:

- ‘Circular Economies and Sustainable Health and Well-being: The public health impact of public bodies refocusing on waste reduction and reuse in Wales’. This report looks at any problems and benefits for people and organisations as a result of moving to a circular economy, one in which there is no waste because resources are repaired or reused.

There is also a wealth of useful information included in the WHIASU spatial planning and health guidance and toolkits; all resources can be accessed [here](#).



To coincide with COP26, in 2021, Public Health Wales published a [series of infographics](#) highlighting the importance of climate change impact on the health and wellbeing of the population of Wales, and to support public bodies and businesses to take action to address any impacts. They focus on the relationships between the natural environment and health, and some of the key health and wellbeing impacts of climate change and those population groups who could be worst affected. They summarise the benefits of nature to physical, social and mental health and wellbeing, and provide ideas for actions on how everyone can take care of nature. A full Health Impact Assessment on climate change in Wales will be published in 2023.



Public Health Wales’s World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre (WHO CC) produces a range of reports and guidance for other organisations, for example

- [Inequality in a Future Wales: Areas for action in work, climate and demographic change - World Health Organization Collaborating Centre On Investment for Health and Well-being \(phwwhocc.co.uk\)](#) in collaboration with the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales;
- and the recently published [Climate Change and Health in Wales: Views from the public - World Health Organization](#)

[Collaborating Centre On Investment for Health and Well-being \(phwwhocc.co.uk\)](https://phwwhocc.co.uk)



The WHO CC also recently published their work on [Communities and Climate Change in a Future Wales](#), recognising and exploring how the impacts of climate change (both direct and indirect) might affect different populations in different ways. The Socio-Economic Duty provides Public Health Wales with the opportunity to assess the impact of our decision making on those who experience socio-economic disadvantage, ensuring that the decisions we take do not inadvertently exacerbate inequalities in Wales. In 2023, the WHO CC plan to provide resources to support other NHS organisations to embed the duty. Supporting NHS bodies to embed the duty and apply

it to decisions such as those that deliver a zero-carbon future will help to ensure policies and decisions that benefit people and nature, whilst also recognising impact on inequalities.

Public Health Wales promotes health across all policies – a One Health approach – which calls for a collaborative effort to attain optimal health for people, nature and our environment, aligning with the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. It will help us consider how we both affect, and are affected by, decisions and action that impact biodiversity. Tackling huge global issues requires a collaborative approach.



This area for action on biodiversity contributes to the following objectives in the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Wales:

Objective 1: 'Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels' and Objective 5 'Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring' to determine how we can safeguard species and ecological networks.

Review of Section 6 Duty

Our Long Term Strategy is currently under review and provides a significant opportunity to ensure that our work on biodiversity and climate change is integrated into our organisational priorities and new well-being objectives. Climate change has been highlighted as the most significant threat to human health and Public Health Wales is taking steps to ensure that this receives significant focus both internally and in our work across the health system. This will support our work on biodiversity and ecosystem resilience as they are inextricably linked to climate change and human well-being.

As previously mentioned Public Health Wales published its first Biodiversity Action Plan in 2019, setting out our priorities for action. Delivering these actions has been a significant challenge due to our role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and pressures on staff and resources over the last two years, however engaging colleagues in updating this report will provide useful information to review and update our current Action Plan in 2023.

Public Health Wales recognises that a key issue is to identify our impacts, positive and negative, to try to be as accurate



as we can, and to strengthen how we monitor and report progress.

We recognise that people are part of biodiversity, we cannot live without it, and we need to take positive action, and lead by example, to minimise the threats to our health and livelihoods.

Case Studies

Planting Trees with unwanted printer cartridges

When Mark Roden took responsibility for the storeroom at Public Health Wales' Microbiology Service, he found a large amount of toner cartridges. He suspected that these were no longer required. He recorded the location and model of every printer across the department to work out which cartridges weren't needed. In the first instance, Mark offered the surplus cartridges to the wider public health network but with no success. He decided to look for a company who would recycle them, and came across [Cartridge Forest](#) who plant trees for every reusable cartridge that they are sent. Mark sent 40 surplus printer cartridges and in return **800 trees have been planted**, saving an estimated 144 tonnes of CO₂.



Saving bats in our Screening site

The flat roof at our Screening site in Cardiff recently reached the end of its life span and had to be replaced.

The Grade II listed building is home to a roost of Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) bats which are protected, and special arrangements had to be put in place to ensure the colony was not disturbed.



The roofing work was carried out at a time and in a manner which ensured that the bats roost could remain. All bats in the UK are protected by law, and are endangered due to habitat loss, lack of places to roost, decline in insect prey, chemical pesticides and wood treatments, loft insulation and other building work. They provide an important service to ecosystems; in the UK all bat species are insectivores so play a part in controlling insect populations. We will continue to monitor and raise awareness of our successful urban bat colony.

Green Advocates talking Biodiversity

In September 2022, the Health and Sustainability Hub hosted another Green Advocates meeting which focussed on biodiversity. Vee Brannovic, from Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen Local Nature Partnership, gave a talk about why biodiversity matters, how we are all part of it, why we can't live without it and how we can help to reverse the current decline in wildlife.

Vee highlighted practical projects in Wales and discussed our shared responsibility to act to make a difference - helping nature, along with the health of people and planet. The session was very well received by all who attended and we got some great questions and discussions. Answers to questions and additional information exchange has taken place in response, shared with all who attended, helping increase knowledge and enthusiasm.

