The *Green Infrastructure Action Plan for Pollinators in South-east Wales* is a Welsh Government Nature Fund project which aims to reverse the decline in pollinators. The project covers the local authorities of Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Torfaen.

Managing Residential Areas for Pollinators - An introduction for estates managers is part of a series of guidance booklets produced to accompany the *Action Plan*. Other titles available in the series are:

Managing Green Space for Pollinators - An introduction for managers
Managing School Grounds for Pollinators - An introduction for head teachers
Managing Highway Verges for Pollinators - An introduction for highway managers

More information is available at:

http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/
http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/
http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/
http://www.torfaen.gov.uk/

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CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
CAERFFILI

Cyngor Bwrdeisdref Sirol
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MANAGING RESIDENTIAL AREAS FOR POLLINATORS

An introduction for estates managers

Green Infrastructure Action Plan for Pollinators in South-east Wales
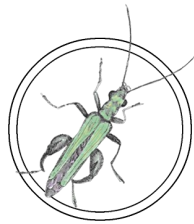
Why Manage for Pollinators?

In Wales the main groups of pollinators are bees and wasps, flies (including hoverflies), butterflies and moths, and beetles. Collectively these are responsible for pollinating our crops and about 75% of flowering plants in Wales. Ultimately human life on Earth depends on pollinators.

It is widely accepted that pollinators are declining in Wales, Britain and Europe, and have been for many years. The main causes are loss of flower-rich habitats and use of pesticides in agriculture. They may also be declining due to pests and diseases, spread of non-native species and climate change.

By adopting appropriate management practices, we can help to support pollinators in both rural and urban areas. Managing for pollinators helps fulfil the legal and moral duties of Local Authorities for the well-being of future generations. It can provide cost-effective solutions to grounds maintenance, engagement with community groups and individuals, whilst also resulting in a visually pleasing and ecologically valuable townscape and countryside.

Poor pollinator habitat: Relatively uniform area of long grass with few or no flowers:
PEGS score 1-2

Moderate pollinator habitat: Road verge with lots of flowers of 2 main colours adjacent to playing field:
PEGS score 4-5

Good pollinator habitat: Unimproved grassland of varied structure adjacent to broad-leaved woodland:
PEGS score 8-9

How to Improve Areas for Pollinators

In general, a greater variety of habitats and plants will support a more diverse range of pollinators. The following measures will help to reverse the decline in pollinators:

- increasing diversity of flower-rich resources;
- increasing abundance of food resources; and
- extending the availability of flower-rich resources throughout the life cycle of pollinators.

Action Plans based on different Green Infrastructure (GI) types and a Management Actions Toolkit have been developed to achieve these measures.

The Future for Pollinators

Pollinators do not recognise borders so working across existing local authority areas will enhance the wider pollinator resource and improve pollinator habitat connectivity and populations throughout South-east Wales. In addition, sharing machinery and expertise will mean more can be done with existing resources.

Whilst the local authorities are important in the management of their land for pollinators, wildlife trusts, community groups and other organisations will be important to help implement the actions and monitor changes in pollinator populations. Actions can also be taken on private land.

A local authority Pollinator Policy will guide the planning process and ensure that there will be adequate provision for the future. Targets will also be set by the local authority which must be considered when developing actions for specific areas.

Managing Residential Areas for Pollinators

Green space in **residential** areas may provide opportunities for a range of green infrastructure types whilst maintaining community use. Provision for pollinating insects needs to be made sensitively, and introduced in close collaboration with residents to ensure that they are aware of the benefits and support the action. It may be best to introduce changes in a phased manner.

🟧 **Formal play** - maintaining provision for community use such as formal play and ball games etc. is important – long grass, meadow planting etc. for pollinators can be incorporated at the edges.

🟦 **Mown Grass Margins -** mown margins to paths keeps them clear and indicates that an area is being maintained.

⬛ **Long Grass/Meadow -** leaving grass to grow longer or developing a traditional meadow will provide a wider range of habitats and species, compliments the horticultural flower beds, and costs less to maintain.

🟪 **Flower beds and shrubs -** traditional planting beds and shrubberies can still be important with an appropraite choice of pollinators-friendly plants

🟫 **Food growing area -** growing vegetables and planting fruit trees and bushes provides pollen and nectar and reinforces the important role of pollinators in our food supply. It can be a great way to engage residents and strengthen communities.

🟩 **Wildflowers** - strips of pure flower mixes provide a good source of nectar and pollen for long periods, and can be visually attractive.

Management Actions Toolkit

The GI Action Plan provides details of the different management actions (and codes) suggested for any site, as shown in the '*Management Actions Toolkit*'.

CODE	ACTION	AIMS	BENEFITS TO POLLINATORS
G5	Remove cuttings from site and dispose of centrally or at an appropriate place on site.	Produce species rich grassland for pollinators with more flowers	

BENEFITS	LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS	COST	TOTAL (3-9)
✓✓	++	££	6

For each site a variety of actions should be implemented with consideration of adjacent sites and management with the aim of achieving year-round resources for pollinators.

The actions include grass cutting, hedgerow treatment, etc.

Before deciding what to do with any space, the **GIS database** can be used to understand the site's characteristics and constraints (e.g. designations). The value of what may already be there should also be assessed using **PEGS** - see the next page...

Pollinator Evaluation Grading System (PEGS)

When planning green infrastructure projects for pollinators, it is important to assess the value of the existing resource before making changes, so that poor resources can be targeted for improvement and good resources are not accidentally removed.

Pollinators have a wide range of requirements and assessing the value of a habitat is complex. PEGS is a simple form that can be used to assess a site for its potential for pollinators as follows:

Score	Value for pollinators
0-3	Poor value for pollinators, high potential for improvements
4-7	Moderate value for pollinators, room for some improvement
8-12	Good value for pollinators, maintain

	Score	0	1	2	Score
Habitats		Amenity grassland Bracken... (see Action Plan for full list)	Flowering crops Heathland Hedges Marsh...	Broad-leaved woodland and scrub Orchards...	
Adjacent habitats within 25 m		Score as for habitat; select highest score	Score as for habitat; select highest score	Score as for habitat; select highest score	
Vegetation structure		Uniform in height and space	Variable in height or in patchiness (not both)	Varied in height and lots of different patches	
% vegetation covered with flowers		Less than 5 %	5-20 %	More than 20 %	
No. different colours of flowers present (e.g. blue, pink, red, yellow)		0 or 1 colour only	2-3	4 or more	
		Absent	Small amounts	Lots	

The Green Infrastructure Action Plan

The *Action Plan* is a collection of 'tools' to help guide a range of users to select one or more management options. It can be used for individual sites or strategically across wider areas.

LOCAL AUTHORITY DEPARTMENTS

INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGERS

NGOs/COMMUNITY GROUPS

LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES

LAND CLASSIFI-CATIONS

ACTION PLAN

PEGS

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE STAFF

HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

GIS DATABASE

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE TYPES

CASE STUDIES

LOCAL AUTHORITY GIS STAFF

GENERAL PUBLIC

● Tools
● Users

The individual *Green Infrastructure Action Plans* set out the aims, desired outcomes and suitable actions with links to the relevant *Management Actions Toolkit*.

Green Infrastructure type: Housing Green Space

Aims	• Manage housing green space in a way which provides greater benefit pollinators
	o manage some areas of grassland for pollinators
	o incorporate pollinator-friendly planting into new or existing b
	o select pollinator-friendly trees and shrubs
	• Ensure public amenity needs are still met
	• Reduce cost of maintenance or avoid increases

Desired Outcomes	• Housing green space with a diversity of sward types for grass areas, a featuring a range of flowering species throughout the year.
	• Formal beds planted with species that attract and provide for a range pollinators throughout the year
	• Trees and shrubs that attract and provide for a range of pollinators throughout the year
	• Areas that are attractive to the public and offer the opportunity to in with and learn about the natural environment.
	• Local residents understanding the value and importance of pollinator the plants they need

| Assessment steps | • Assess constraints such as public use of space, e.g. active and formal recreation |
| | • Assess value of existing biodiversity and pollinator resource of grassla formal beds and tree planting. |