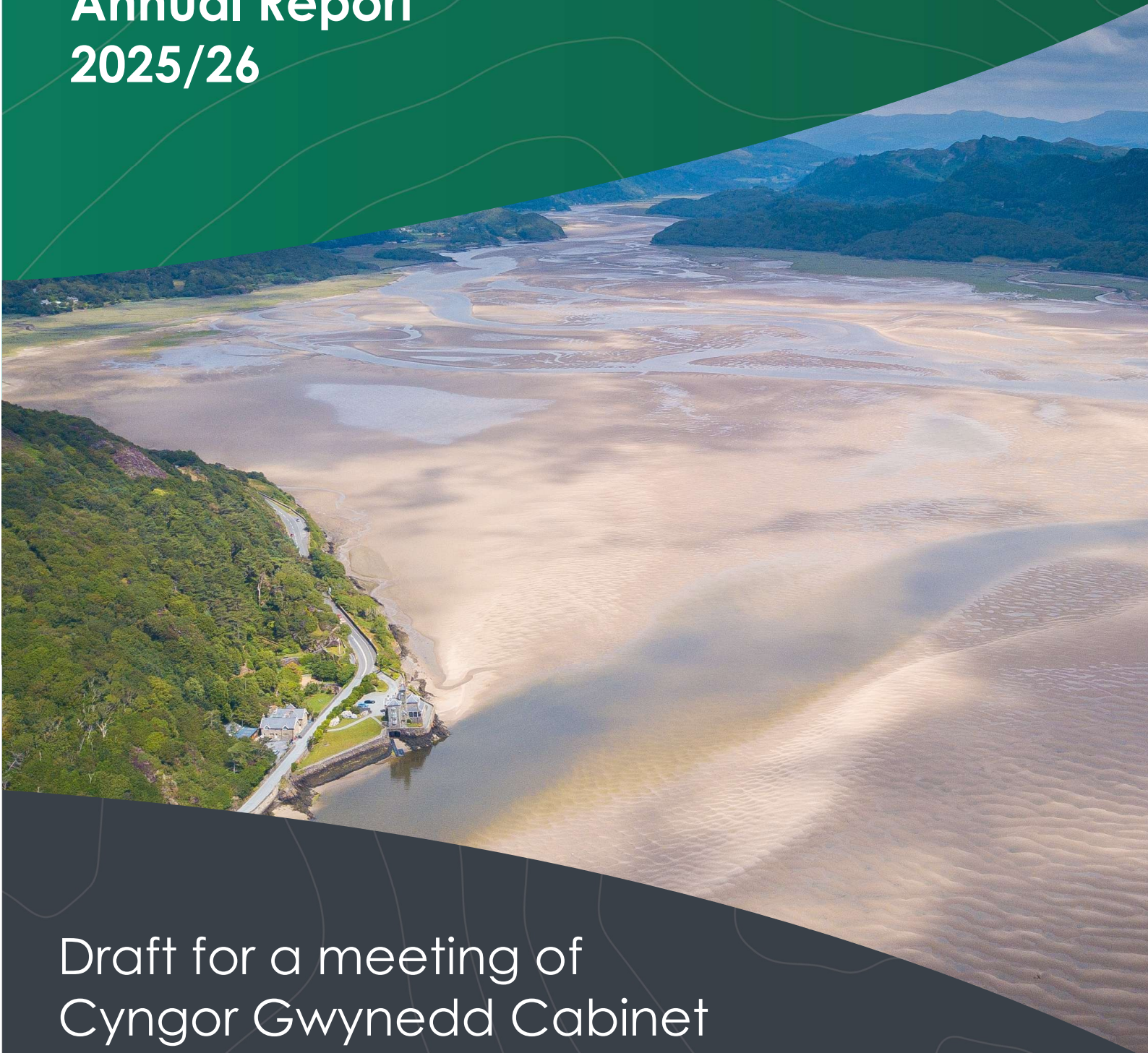
Cyngor Gwynedd

Climate and Nature Annual Report 2025/26



Draft for a meeting of
Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet
10 November 2026

gwynedd.llyw.cymru

Contents

1. Foreword of the Cabinet Member for the Environment
2. Measuring in order to reach the aim
3. Carbon Emissions and Absorption 2025/26
4. The Gap to Net Zero
5. Section 6 - Maintaining and Enhancing Biodiversity
6. Buildings and Energy
7. Movement and Transport
8. Waste
9. Governance
10. Procurement
11. Land Use
12. Biodiversity

1. Foreword of the Cabinet Member for the Environment

The climate and nature crisis is not a threat to the distant future. Its effects can be seen in our communities, on our land and on our coast today. Gwynedd's environment and nature are just as unique and special as its people and language, and we have a responsibility to protect them, not only for us today, but for the generations to come after us.

This annual report gives us reason to be hopeful. During 2025/26 the Council's carbon emissions, excluding procurement, fell by 39% compared to the 2019/20 baseline year and 6% compared to 2024/25. Of course, this work did not begin in 2019; for over a decade before that, Cyngor Gwynedd has been at the forefront of prioritising the need to reduce our carbon footprint and responding to the climate crisis.

We recognise that no council, nor one community, has the capacity to solve the climate crisis alone, but we do have a responsibility to do everything within our ability to lead by example and be a force for positive change. The progress we are seeing this year is a clear sign that we are moving in the right direction, and evidence that leadership, consistent action and deliberate investment can lead to real change.

Some of the biggest reductions in our carbon emissions have been seen through the work achieved in buildings and energy. We have continued to be proactive by investing in the fabric of our buildings, installing additional solar panels, upgrading LED lighting and introducing more low-carbon heating systems. Not only does this investment reduce carbon emissions, but it also helps to reduce building running costs and make better use of public resources.

The same principle applies to our work in the field of nature. The Council cannot deliver the change needed alone, and collaboration is central to our response. Through the Gwynedd Nature Partnership, we work with public organisations, voluntary organisations, individuals and town and community councils to protect and enhance nature. During 2025/26, the Partnership worked with town and community councils and local organisations to strengthen biodiversity, connect people to nature and ensure lasting benefits for communities.

Despite the progress, there is still a lot of work ahead of us. The gap to reach net zero is significant and we need to continue to reduce emissions while also increasing the carbon absorption capacity of our lands and habitats.
The results for 2025/26 give us a solid foundation to build on, but they also remind us that we need to continue to make bold decisions, invest wisely and work closely with our communities and partners in order to make the best use of every pound available to us. By doing so, we can continue to reduce our climate impact, restore nature and create a greener, fairer and more resilient Gwynedd for future generations.



Cllr. Craig ab Iago
Environment Cabinet Member

2. Measuring in order to reach the aim

This annual report presents the Cyngor Gwynedd emissions and absorption accounts of Cyngor Gwynedd for the year 1 April - 31 March 2025/26 and provides an update on the work done to implement the Council's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan.
By taking an objective view of the work done in 2025/26, and the results of that in terms of carbon emissions and absorption, we would be better placed to measure the best way forward to reach our goal to be a net zero and ecologically-positive council.

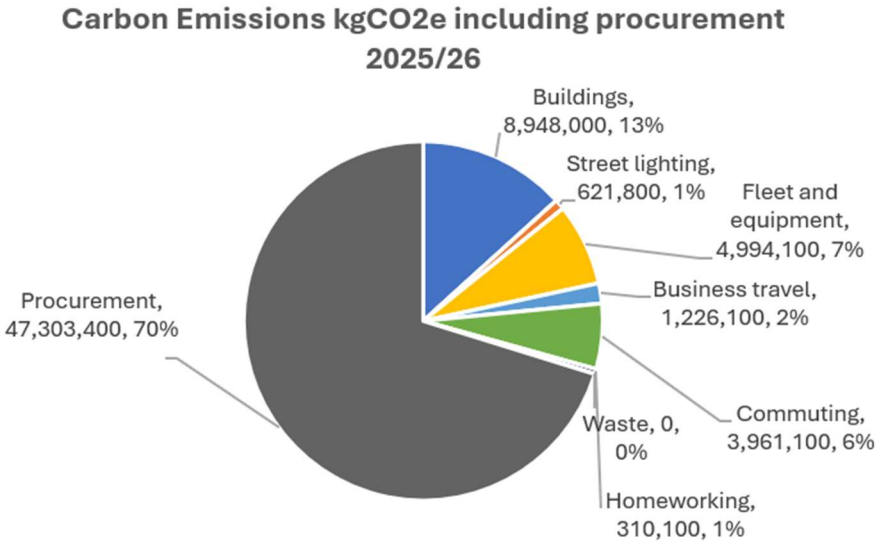
3. Carbon Emissions and Absorption 2025/26

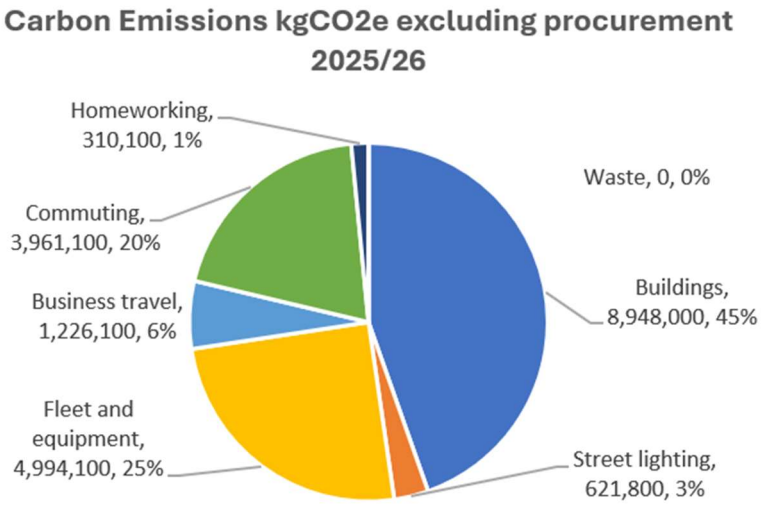
Like most other public organisations in Wales, Cyngor Gwynedd calculates carbon emissions, following the Welsh Government's guidance, and then presents the results to the government annually.
The carbon emissions are being compared with the Council's baseline years, namely 2019/20 and the previous reporting year, 2024/25, whilst providing an explanation for any variances.
By measuring the carbon emissions and absorption data every year, we will have evidence to see where we are along the journey to be a net zero and ecologically-friendly council.

Carbon Emissions

The total Cyngor Gwynedd carbon emissions in 2025/26 **EXCLUDING** procurement emissions was 20,061,200 kgCO2e. This is a reduction of 39% since the 2019/20 baseline year, and a 6% reduction since 2024/25.
The total Cyngor Gwynedd carbon emissions in 2025/26 **INCLUDING** procurement emissions was 67,364,600 kgCO2e. This is a reduction of 8% since the 2019/20 baseline year, and a 11% reduction since 2024/25.

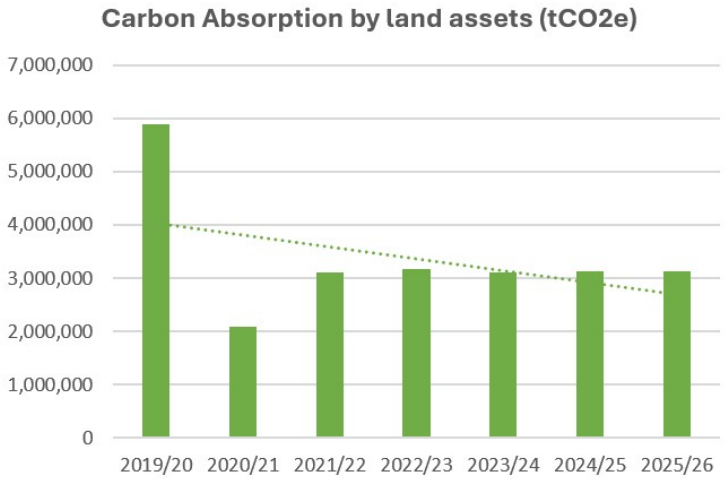
The first chart below shows our carbon emissions over 8 headings and includes procurement emissions (purchasing goods and services).
The methodology of measuring carbon emissions resulting from our procurement processes is imperfect because it is based on the amount of money we spend. The more we spend the greater the emissions.
As the procurement data can create an imperfect picture, the second chart opposite presents data for the remaining 7 headings after procurement is disregarded.
More information about why emissions increase or reduce are to be found in the subsequent chapters.





Carbon Absorption

The amount of carbon dioxide being absorbed and stored by the Council's land assets helps to offset a proportion of the Council's carbon emissions, and close some of the gap to net zero.
However, calculating the estimated carbon absorption rate is challenging because you would need a very deep level of detail about sites, and thus far there is no clear guidance in the Welsh Government guidance on how best to gather the correct data.
Meanwhile, we are using data being collected through OS maps and the Council's asset management system. We had a problem with using this technology in 2025/26; therefore, we have used the data for 2024/25 as we are confident that there has not been a great deal of change in land use or land purchasing and selling from one year to another.
More information on what the Council has done during the year to improve the quality of lands and their ability to absorb carbon can be seen in the Land Use and Biodiversity chapters.
Lands owned by Cyngor Gwynedd have absorbed 3,123,254 kgCO2e of carbon during 2025/26.



4. The Gap to Net Zero

Our gap to net zero (**excluding** procurement) in 2025/26 was 16,937,946 kgCO2e. This is a reduction of 37% since the 2019/20 baseline year, and a 7% reduction since 2024/25.
Our gap to net zero (**including** procurement) in 2025/26 was 64,241,346 kgCO2e. This is a reduction of 5% since the 2019/20 baseline year, and an 12% reduction since 2024/25.

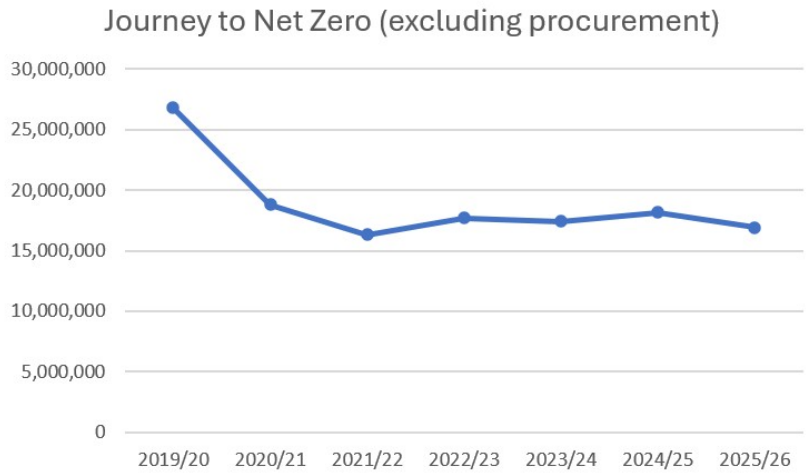
Emissions
20,061,200
$kgCO_2e$



Absorption
3,123,254
$kgCO_2e$

The Gap to Net Zero
16,937,946
$kgCO_2e$

In simple terms, the gap to net zero is the amount of CO2e that we need to remove in order to reach our ambition of being a net zero and ecologically-positive council. The gap is calculated by deducting the total value of the carbon being absorbed from the total of the carbon being emitted.
The Climate and Nature Emergency Plan, and this annual report, shows that Cyngor Gwynedd is attempting to close the gap from both sides at the same time, and acknowledges the equal importance of reducing emissions and increasing absorption levels.



5. Section 6 - Maintaining and Enhancing Biodiversity

The aim of the Cyngor Gwynedd Climate and Nature Emergency Plan is to be a net zero and **ecologically-positive** council. One route to take to reach that aim is to ensure that we implement 'Section 6'.
According to Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, public authorities operating in Wales have a duty to "seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity" and to "promote the strength of ecosystems".
In practical terms, this means that public bodies, including local authorities, must consider biodiversity and nature in all aspects of their work, not just in environmental projects.
The Welsh Government published a national biodiversity strategy, namely the 'Nature Recovery Action Plan' in 2015 which outlined the commitment to reversing biodiversity loss in Wales, and the objectives for action. It contains 6 objectives for nature recovery in Wales:

- **Objective 1**: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision-making at all levels
- **Objective 2**: Protect species and habitats of paramount importance and improve their management
- **Objective 3**: Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and creating new habitats
- **Objective 4**: Address key pressures on species and habitats
- **Objective 5**: Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring
- **Objective 6**: Implement a governance framework and support to achieve the objectives

In order for Cyngor Gwynedd to meet the 'Section 6' requirements, we need to prove how we have contributed to each of the 6 objectives above.
At the end of each section of this annual report, you will find a description of how the work that has been undertaken contributes to the realisation of one or more of the above 6 objectives, which in turn comply with Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.
Here is a summary of the link between the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan projects and the Objectives of Section 6:

Climate and Nature	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5	Objective 6
Buildings and Energy		✓	✓		✓	
Movement and Transport		✓	✓			

Waste						
Governance						
Procurement						
Land Use						
Ecology						

6. Buildings and Energy

The carbon emissions deriving from **buildings and energy** in 2025/26 is 45% of the total (excluding procurement), which is a 23% reduction since 2019/20 and a 10% reduction since 2024/25.

The carbon emissions deriving from **street lighting** in 2025/26 is 3% of the total (excluding procurement), which is a 44% reduction since 2019/20 and a 13% reduction since 2024/25.

Refurbishing buildings to save energy

Three sites have seen improvements made to the buildings' fabric in 2025/26, namely Hafod Mawddach care home, Ysgol Llanbedrog and Byw'n Iach Penllyn (Bala). Substantial alteration work was done in order to stop energy waste, and in turn this will save money and carbon. This work is also necessary in order to prepare the site for the installation of heat pumps. This was all possible due to the Low Carbon Heating Grant contribution from the Welsh Government. More information on Ysgol Llanbedrog can be found below.

Electrification of heating systems

After upgrading the sites of Hafod Mawddach, Ysgol Llanbedrog and Byw'n Iach Penllyn, they were then ready for us to install heat pumps. As it is not possible to close the sites whilst the work is being done, patience is required when scheduling the work, but we look forward to seeing the results of the end of the project in 2026.

In 2025/26, heat pumps were also installed in 3 new sites: Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes (Bangor), Ysgol Felinwnda and Ysgol Maesincla Language Unit (Caernarfon). 11 sites are now heated by further heat pumps.

Installation of PV solar panels to save energy and costs

Solar panels were installed on 6 new sites, and further panels were added on another 9 sites in 2025/26, producing 973.25 kW of clean energy every year.

This brings the total number of Cyngor Gwynedd sites that generate their own electricity to 64. 50 of these are schools and 6 are care or nursing homes.

We can see the results in full during 2026/27, but all PV installations are expected to save energy purchasing costs of £34,495 per year, as well as annual carbon savings of 128.7tCO2e.

Solar Panels, and more...

A very exciting project completed during the year was the installation of a solar canopy on Ysgol Hafod Lon in Penrhyndeudraeth, as part of a local smart energy system. More information on this work can be seen below.

Thanks to a grant from Ynni Cymru, local smart energy systems were installed at the Byw'n Iach Plas Silyn (Penygroes) and Plas Ffrancon (Bethesda) leisure centres. Solar panels have been installed to power the buildings, with the remaining electricity being stored in batteries. In turn, these will power a community charging hub.

LED Lighting Scheme
LED bulbs use much less electricity than the other 'long-life' lightbulbs, and therefore, there is a big financial benefit in electricity cost savings and resulting carbon savings benefits.
LED lighting was installed on 8 sites during 2025/26, and from the existing data, we have been saving at least 29,513 kWh of electricity in a year, which leads to a saving of £6,492.86 in annual costs.

Street lighting, signage and traffic
64 new sites were added to the Gwynedd street lighting network in 2025/26 (e.g. new housing estates, highways). Nevertheless, we are still seeing a reduction in energy use and 13% of a reduction in carbon emissions since the previous year because we are continuing with the LED lighting renovation programme. The carbon reduction since the 2019/20 baseline year is 44%.

Energy advice on fuel poverty
The Council's Energy Team supports residents with energy costs, and information on energy efficiency in the home and information on tariffs. Over 100 drop-in sessions were held to provide advice and information for residents, and many of these were in collaboration with local community organisations.
ECO4 is a national initiative aimed at helping low-income households improve their home energy efficiency and reduce bills and carbon. 1,140 homes in Gwynedd received an ECO4 grant, and increased their EPC score, reducing bills.
Unfortunately, the ECO4 initiative will end in December 2026, but in reality, the applications to the initiative have dropped substantially since December 2025. We are expecting an announcement from the Welsh Government on what is coming next under the Warm Homes scheme.

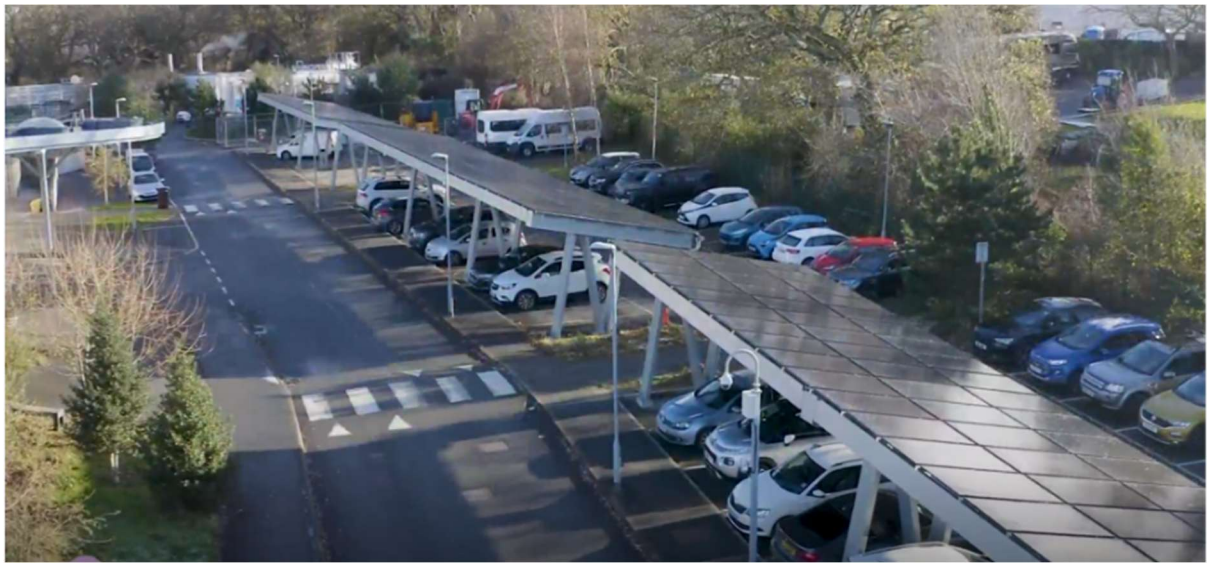
Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)
The Welsh Government commissioned a programme for all local authorities in Wales to develop a Local Area Energy Plan to contribute to these national targets to reach net zero. The Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet adopted our Local Area Energy Plan in September 2025, and its intention is to look at the most efficient and cost-effective methods of de-carbonising a complete energy system for Gwynedd by 2050.

Added benefit
All of the above work has led to spending with several local contractors, with 4 companies that are local to Gwynedd. Not only has this kept the pound in the local economy; it has also upgraded the skills of the workforce, strengthening their situations in the future.

Success story - Ysgol Llanbedrog
The school's pupils and staff are now learning and working in a much more successful environment. This low carbon heating project has refurbished the heating system and retrofitted improvements to the school's Victorian building fabric and its extensions. The project commenced in 2024 following the Council's success when securing several

grants through the Welsh Government's Low Carbon Heating Grant Programme. The project is expected to complete in October 2026.
The work has included installing an air source heat pump (*ASHP*), internal and external insulation, triple glazing windows and a mechanical ventilation system that regains heat (*MVHR*). Together, these measures have created a comprehensive retrofit project that improves the building's energy performance, reduces carbon emissions, and provides a more comfortable and sustainable environment for the pupils and staff of Ysgol Llanbedrog.

Success story - Ysgol Hafod Lon
A new local smart energy system was developed on the school's site in 2025/26, and the electricity generated will not only save energy costs for the school, but it will also power the charging point for a new electric mini bus that transports the pupils to the school and back home.
139kW solar systems were installed on the site - a combination of solar panels on the roof and 147 panels on a 120kW solar canopy that supplies electricity to the school building, mini bus charging point, and a 215kW battery.
At peak times of solar generation in the summer, it was estimated that the school is 50% self-sufficient as a result of the project. There are substantial savings as a result of the project in terms of importing less energy from the grid, financial savings as a result of reduced electricity bills (estimated at £19,941 per annum), and carbon savings (estimate of 24tCO2e per annum).





The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Aim for long-term benefits when planning construction or building renovations.
2. Save 5% of carbon emissions from buildings by bringing them up to the CIBSE 'good practice' standard.
3. De-carbonise the Council's energy supply.
4. Increase our carbon 'credit' by installing solar farms to generate energy that the Council could use or sell.
5. Reduce our carbon emissions by expanding our use of PV to create renewable energy.
6. Use *Passivhaus* low carbon construction methods in developing our innovative housing pilot scheme.
7. Offer advice and information to Gwynedd residents about the benefits and opportunities of using low carbon building methods when building homes and low carbon heating/energy systems to maintain a home.
8. Improve the fabric of Council-owned buildings to make them as energy efficient as possible.
9. Electrification of building heating systems to reduce carbon emissions.
10. Install EC (electronically commutated) ventilation fans in buildings to reduce the energy needed to run them compared to normal fans.
11. Set individual room heating regulations to reduce the energy required to heat a building.
12. Upgrade specialist lighting in leisure centres to reduce energy consumption.
13. Upgrade streetlights and traffic signs to use less energy.
14. Prevent the over-development of fossil fuel energy schemes.
15. Maximise the benefits that come from implementing our energy and heating policies.
16. Equipment used within Council buildings to be as energy efficient as possible.

17. Improve the energy infrastructure in Gwynedd and north Wales to maintain low carbon energy and transport systems.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The above work contributes to the objectives below:

Objective 2: Protecting species and habitats of paramount importance and improving their management

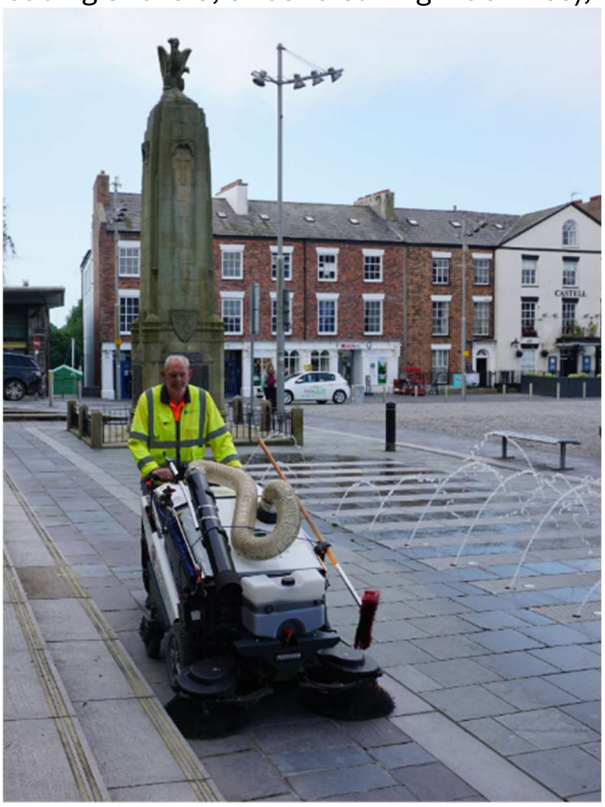
Objective 3: Increasing the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and creating new habitats

Objective 5: Improving our evidence, understanding and monitoring

7. Movement and Transport

The carbon emissions deriving from the council **fleet** in 2025/26 is 25% of the total (excluding procurement), which is a 3% reduction since 2019/20 and a 4% reduction since 2024/25.
The carbon emissions deriving from the **staff commute** in 2025/26 is 20% of the total (excluding procurement), which is a 30% reduction since 2019/20 and a 6% reduction since 2024/25.
The carbon emissions deriving from **business travel** in 2025/26 is 6% of the total (excluding procurement), which is a 37% reduction since 2019/20 and a 4% reduction since 2024/25.

Green Fleet Plan
Since adopting our Green Fleet Plan 2023-29 in January 2023, our policy is to buy new electric vehicles (EV) where possible as the current fleet of petrol and diesel cars reach the end of their lifespan.
The Council owns 82 cars or small electric vans and 9 hybrid, and 6 electric equipment (*loading shovels*, street cleaning machines), namely 40% of all cars and vans we own.





We have succeeded to save energy costs and carbon emissions during the year as we saw a 6.1% reduction on fuel use (petrol and diesel) between 2024/25 and 2025/26. This was due to the transfer to an electric fleet and favourable weather, which meant fewer gritting trips during the winter.
66% of all of our fleet's carbon emissions derive from our HGV vehicles, and that because we are continuing to use diesel lorries. We should also bear in mind that these HGV lorries are waste collection and delivery vehicles, and road gritting vehicles,

therefore the carbon emissions associated with waste collection and delivery for processing is recorded under 'fleet' carbon emissions instead of 'waste'.

Electric Car Charging Points
Fleet - by the end of 2025/26, the Council had 58 charging points in 12 locations across the county in order to keep our fleet of electric vehicles on the road.
Public - by the end of 2025/26, the Council has installed and manages 48 charging points in 12 locations and 12 additional charging points in 4 Council-owned sites in collaboration with Transport for Wales.

Success story - Green Fleet Plan
The Energy Service (Welsh Government) reported that Cyngor Gwynedd has the second highest number of green vehicles in its fleet compared with other rural councils in Wales.

Active Travel
Bangor - The work of creating the multi-use path for cyclists and pedestrians between Ysbyty Gwynedd and Treborth was completed. The plan also includes the installation of a new crossing in front of Ysgol y Faenol, Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor.
Mynytho - Walking paths and crossings were created for Ysgol Foel Gron, as well as an improved footpath and crossing to connect with the shop and post office.
There are several other projects commenced in 2025/26 that are continuing into 2026/27 and 2027/28 -

- Walking and cycling paths from Chwilog to Afonwen, and Tywyn to Aberdyfi.
- Feasibility and design work on a series of other plans, including travel routes: Llanberis-Caernarfon, Llanystumdwy-Cricieth, Bethel-Caernarfon.

Cyngor Gwynedd is responsible for managing and maintaining the coast path in the county. We installed path use monitoring devices in 8 locations along the coast path, and the 3 sites with the highest use of the 8 were - Dinas Dinlle, Llanbedrog, Penrhyn Bangor.

Success story - Lôn Las Ogwen
The work of building the new Pont Sarnau bridge, has created a safer and more accessible path for everyone who wishes to walk, cycle or scoot along Lôn Las in this part of Dyffryn Ogwen, improving the connection with paths to reach Llyn Ogwen and the Zip World attraction.
The improvements include installing a subway for cattle so that the path does not need to be closed occasionally, which will help farmers and path users alike.

Success story - Schools' active travel
The Schools Transport Pack was prepared as part of the efforts to improve safety around schools and encourage more sustainable travel across the county. The pack has been developed to provide clear and practical information for headteachers, school staff and parents, as well as useful resources to promote active travel and reduce traffic congestion around schools, which in turn will improve the quality of the air breathed in by our children.

The pack has been developed by Cyngor Gwynedd and has been funded by the Welsh Government with support from Transport for Wales.



Public transport
During 2025/26, the Council piloted and monitored the Sherpa'r Wyddfa services, the G23 between Barmouth and Porthmadog and the Fflecsi in south Meirionnydd - and increase of 6.6% was seen in the number of journeys compared to the previous year. Across the county's bus services, we saw an increase of 14.7% in bus journeys in 2025/26 compared with 2024/25.
A 4% reduction in journeys from those paying for a ticket, but a 36% increase in journeys with a free bus pass. 60% of journeys were made with paid tickets, and 40% with a free travel pass.
Improvements totalling £500,000 were completed to bus stops in 3 locations in Arfon, 3 in Dwyfor and 3 in Meirionnydd.

Staff Commute
The data that we have been gathering for 2025/26 is slightly different to previous years as we have been conducting a staff commute questionnaire. As the sample collected was not representative enough, the final data is a combination of an analysis of the questionnaire and of data based on the 2021 Census.

Business Travel
One significant change made in 2025/26 was changing our arrangements to measure the carbon emissions deriving from business journeys much more accurately than previous years.

Staff and councillors use public transport or private cars to make necessary journeys for their work, and we are now able to connect with the DVLA's data systems to receive an accurate measure of the vehicle engine's carbon emissions.
Therefore, it is encouraging that the emissions are reducing, particularly since several journeys are made on public transport or personal electric vehicles.

The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Move away from using fossil fuel vehicles towards a fleet of ULEV vehicles (cars and vans).
2. Install electric vehicle charging points for Council vehicles.
3. Have low carbon or zero carbon fuel options for the Council's heavy fleet.
4. Install electric vehicle charging points for Gwynedd residents.
5. Reduce business travel.
6. Reduce carbon emissions through staff commuting habits.
7. Encourage active travel among staff – in the interests of health and well-being and to reduce carbon emissions.
8. Encourage active travel among residents and visitors to Gwynedd to improve physical and mental well-being and reduce carbon emissions of short car journeys.
9. Reduce carbon emissions and parking problems in areas that are popular with visitors.
10. Increase opportunities for community organisations to access EV or ULEV vehicles or use low carbon technology.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The above work contributes to the objectives below:

Objective 2: Protecting species and habitats of paramount importance and improving their management

Objective 3: Increasing the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and creating new habitats

Objective 5: Improving our evidence, understanding and monitoring

8. Waste

Carbon emissions from Council waste in 2025/26 are 0% of the total (excluding procurement) which is a 100% reduction from 2019/20 and consistent with the 2024/25 figure.
The Welsh Government changed the methodology of calculating the waste carbon emissions in 2024/25. Now, all waste treatment methods, except for landfill (e.g. recycling, incineration, anaerobic digestion, etc.) give us a figure of zero. All residual waste from Gwynedd residents and businesses is treated on the Parc Adfer site in Deeside, where it is incinerated to generate energy, therefore no waste is taken to landfill.
It should be borne in mind that the figure for **processing** waste is 0%, as the carbon emissions of **collecting** waste and **delivering** it for processing is counted under the fleet carbon emissions - see the chapter on 'Movement and Transport'.
Although a proportion of the waste we recycle has increased from 55% to 65% over the past decade, the progress has stopped. The Gwynedd recycling percentage in 2025/26 is 65.1% compared with 65.3% in 2024/25. Therefore, it will be some challenge for us to meet the Welsh Government's target for recycling, reusing and composting 70% of our waste.

Waste and Recycling Strategy 2025-2030
2025/26 was a year of developing, and consulting with Gwynedd's public, on the new strategy. It was adopted in its final form by the Cabinet in July 2026.
The strategy places emphasis on increasing recycling, improving services, maintaining the current infrastructure and investing in the infrastructure of the future.

Changing recycling habits
Whilst the work of developing the new Waste and Recycling Strategy is progressing, the recycling service trialled new arrangements to increase the amount of waste being recycled and reduce how much is sent for processing at Parc Adfer:

- hessian sack trial piloted on 3 routes in the Arfon area
- opening black bin bags at the recycling centres in order to move waste that would have been disposed of, and placing the material in the recycling skips instead
- campaign to raise awareness amongst residents

Street cleanliness and waste
The Tidying Team is offering a street maintenance and cleaning service, and service to clear any fly tipping. Here are some of the results:

- 31% reduction in fly tipping between 2024/25 and 2025/26
- Keep Wales Tidy is monitoring cleanliness levels across local authorities, and the number of sites inspected in Gwynedd in 2025 which reached the acceptable level was 64.5% compared with 58.5% in the whole of Wales.

Reduce food waste
The Emergency Food Aid Fund is a grant aimed at supporting projects that provide food aid to people. During 2025/26, 41 community groups were supported through the fund, with £150,300 being allocated to support food banks, food pantries, supper clubs, and a lunch box provision.

Reduce paper use
During 2025/26, the new contract for printers across the Council's sites was commenced, and the new arrangements will substantially reduce paper use and will save energy.

The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Repair and modify equipment that would otherwise be disposed of and incinerated and sold.
2. Reduce the number of items arriving at waste incineration sites by encouraging people to repair and re-use.
3. Promote a circular economy in order to reduce the number of items being disposed of and reducing carbon emissions in the supply chain from the purchase of new goods.
4. Reduce food waste by supporting community projects seeking to re-distribute food that would otherwise be thrown away.
5. Reduce the amount of street waste that is disposed and increase the amount of street waste that is recycled.
6. Reduce paper use.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
The above work contributes to the objectives below:
Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision-making at all levels.
Objective 2: Protecting species and habitats of paramount importance and improving their management.
Objective 3: Increasing the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and creating new habitats.
Objective 4: Addressing key pressures on species and habitats.

9. Governance

No carbon emissions derive directly from the work in the Governance field.

Improving skills and knowledge
We continue to promote our Climate and Nature training e-module among staff and councillors as it explains why the Council needs to do work in these areas.
See the chapter on Biodiversity / Ecology for information on the tree protection training.

Workforce Development
Two new members of staff were appointed on professional trainee and apprentice contracts during the summer of 2025:

- Planning Ecologist Professional Trainee
- Energy Degree Apprentice

Policy Revision
2025/26 was a year of reviewing and recreating some of the main strategies that is leading the Council's climate and nature work. We consulted during the year on the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan and the Waste and Recycling Strategy, and they were accepted by the Cabinet early on in 2026/27.
The 2026-2031 Procurement Strategy was also accepted by the Council's Cabinet during the year, and it provides sound guidance on buying locally, gaining social value and reducing carbon.

Sharing information in order to change habits
It must be acknowledged that changing deeply embedded habits is one of the hardest tasks on our journey to net zero. Nevertheless, we have used our social media to share information and good news stories about how residents and businesses, as well as staff and councillors, reduce our carbon footprint.
We consulted widely with community initiatives, other public enterprises, and residents, when developing the Local Area Energy Plan, and work has commenced to discuss collaborating on future energy plans.

The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Elected members and staff who:
    - understand the implications of the impact of climate change
    - make decisions based on information about the effects
    - act in the most positive manner possible towards mitigating the impact of climate change and being ecologically positive
2. Encourage staff to develop careers in areas that reduce the impact of climate change or are ecologically positive.
3. Review current Council policies and strategies so that reducing carbon emissions or reducing the impact of climate change is a factor in reaching a decision.

4. Share information publicly about the work the Council is doing to reduce carbon emissions to encourage others to change habits.
5. Support communities to plan and deliver local solutions to local needs.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
The above work contributes to the objectives below:
Objective 1: Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision-making at all levels.
Objective 6: Implementing a governance framework and support for achieving the objectives.

10.Procurement

70% of the Council's carbon emissions during 2025/26 were from our procurement processes, which is a 16% increase from 2019/20 and a 14% reduction from 2024/25. The method of measuring procurement carbon emissions, or the supply chain, is based on spending alone. Simply put, the higher the spending, the greater the emissions. The increasing cost of purchasing goods and services and inflation increases, therefore leads to an increase in carbon emissions under the 'procurement' heading.
Due to the problems of this methodology, we are introducing two sets of emissions data - with, and without, procurement data.

Improving our evidence
In an attempt to move away from the spending methodology only, we collaborated with our suppliers in 4 high-spend areas in order to obtain much more accurate information about their carbon emissions - food contracts for schools, school transport contracts, information technology equipment, printers.
The information was inputted in the 'Tier 2' section of the Welsh Government's data spreadsheet, and the results have shown that the emissions have reduced, compared when measuring based on spending.

Supporting suppliers
If we help our suppliers to decarbonise their way of working, this will help us better understand our supply chains' carbon emissions, as well as help the climate!
During 2025/26 the Council collaborated with Busnes Cymru and Adra to hold support sessions for the providers of the care and housing sector, and to help them create Carbon Management Plans.
The officers have held 'meet the buyer' events to highlight the expectations when awarding procurement contracts and reducing carbon emissions is one of those.

2026 - 2031 Procurement Strategy
The new strategy accepted by the Cabinet in January 2026 identifies seven priority fields, which include: Local benefits, zero carbon, value for money, social value, technology, governance arrangements and the Welsh language.
To assist with the implementation of the new strategy, we have been supporting officers within the Council which award contracts regularly to raise awareness and understanding of the objectives to buy local, gain social value and reduce carbon.

The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Providing market support, particularly to local providers, to be able to measure the impact of their operations on their carbon footprint.
2. Understanding and measuring carbon emissions when realising contracts in the procurement chain.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
The above projects contribute to the objectives below:

Objective 5: Improving our evidence, understanding and monitoring.
Objective 6: Implementing a governance framework and support for achieving the objectives.
The above work contributes to these two Objectives, as receiving and monitoring Carbon Management Plans would give us evidence of how providers are going to protect biodiversity.

11. Land Use

We are currently using an estimated figure for the absorption levels of all council lands (including 'brownfield' sites built upon), whilst we check the accuracy of the data.
As no major changes have occurred between 2025/26 and the previous year, we are temporarily using the 2024/25 data.
All Council lands absorb 3,123,254 kgCO2e net worth of carbon in 2024/25 and 2025/26. This is 47% less than the 2019/20 baseline year.
Offsetting the carbon absorbed against our carbon emissions contributes to reducing the gap to net zero.

Establish and develop tree nurseries
Extra care had to be given to three existing tree nurseries - at Plas Glyn y Weddw, Llanbedrog, Blaenau Ffestiniog and Tregarth - following the major storms in 2025/26, but we managed to undertake the necessary remedial works.
New species of gorse and Welsh apple trees, which are genetically unique, have been discovered, and seeds collected and replanted in the nurseries.
A new tree nursery has started being established at Parc Glynllifon near Caernarfon, at a new and exciting project jointly with the Adults Department in order to offer work and well-being opportunities for vulnerable adults.

Urban tree planting
We managed to attract a grant from the Welsh Local Government Association, to run a feasibility study to see what tree would be best to plant and in what locations in urban and coastal areas. This work should lead to creating a tree planting programme to help with flood risks and create an environment to help the well-being of residents.

Protecting woodlands
Through the work of the Gwynedd Nature Partnership, the Council was involved in the work of improving public access to the woodlands of Parc Meurig in Bethesda and Coed Doctor in Llanberis.
Four community orchards were planted at Cricieth, Y Ffôr, Carmel and Abererch, jointly with local organisations.

Measuring carbon in trees
The work of investigating what model better suits our woodlands - the drone can measure how much wood and dead wood exists in a woodland, and we also use the Ezytreev and Forest Research systems.
The ability to measure correctly will be important, not just to understand the value of tree carbon for the purposes of our journey to net zero, but also to understand the health of the trees in order to treat and protect them. This is essential as a part of the work of the team responsible for Ash Dieback.

Measuring carbon in our lands
We collaborated with DataMapWales and the WLGA on a national scheme to see whether it was possible to map the carbon value of lands, but unfortunately, the results

of the project were not as we had hoped. Therefore, we are continuing to experiment with the best methods of measuring and keeping record.
Meanwhile, we are using data arising from OS maps, and the Welsh Government's carbon data collection methodology.

The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Identify the contribution of Council-owned trees to carbon absorption and storage and flood reduction.
2. Identify the contribution of Council-owned lands to carbon absorption and storage and flood reduction.
3. Establish tree nurseries to grow trees ready for planting.
4. Identify opportunities to plant trees as part of the National Forest for Wales initiative.
5. Controlling Ash Dieback Disease in trees and compensating for any carbon emissions as a result of felling trees.
6. Council-owned woods are protected to maximise their potential to absorb carbon and become habitats for nature.
7. Conserve agricultural land in Gwynedd and using it for a competent purpose and managing afforestation projects.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
The proposed policy contributes to each of the six objectives.

12. Biodiversity / Ecology

Collaboration
The Gwynedd Nature Partnership is a collection of public and voluntary organisations and individuals who collaborate to protect and enhance nature in the county. Although Cyngor Gwynedd administrates the partnership, it succeeds due to the level of successful collaboration.
During 2025/26 the Partnership collaborated with 5 town and community councils on work to improve quality and access to nature in the communities. The Council also collaborated, via the Partnership, with the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service to improve the quality and safety of land near Abersoch.

Support and spread the word
Information about the work of the Gwynedd Nature Partnership, Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau, Llŷn AONB and Council biodiversity teams are all shared via social media channels regularly, as well as in the Llygad Llŷn and O Dan y Don magazines.
Educational workshops have been held at Plas Glyn y Weddw and the Llwyn Isaf Wild Landfill sites.
The Council and the Partnership visited local shows and fairs to gain the interest of residents in the protection of nature.





Success story – 'For Them' (*'Iddyn Nhw'*)
One of the biggest successes of 2025/26, were our plans to plant and protect wildflower meadows, particularly on road verges. A target was set by the government to create a meadow across Wales, and now over 25% of all those meadows are in Gwynedd.
This project has proven that there is no need for huge lands to be able to make the biggest difference. Plots of land on road verges, which are often ignored or neglected, can be a valuable haven for insects and wildlife.
If grass and flowers are left to 'grow wild', please do not assume that the location is not being looked after. On the contrary! The photo shows a machine being used to cut the grass carefully at the end of the season in order to collect seeds to plant during the next season.





The work being described above will all contribute towards realising the **Projects of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan** -

1. Identify the steps we need to take to protect nature's habitats and biodiversity into the future.
2. Identify our valuable species and habitats and what measures are needed to protect and restore them.

3. Increase the number of pollinators by conserving habitats or planting new habitats.
4. Support voluntary and community organisations and town and community councils that protect or enhance nature.
5. Nurturing and maintaining Gwynedd residents' interest in ecological issues so that they want to help conserve nature.
6. Protecting valuable habitats for nature.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
The projects above contribute to each of the six objectives.

