

CARMARTHENSIRE LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

POST-INDUSTRIAL AND BROWNFIELD SITES



Conservation objectives

- * Encourage the retention of representative good examples of brownfield sites in Carmarthenshire.
- * Maintain and enhance the brownfield sites with significant wildlife interest through appropriate management.

What you can do to help:

- * Seek advice if you wish to develop a brownfield site.
- * Let us know of any species-rich sites in the county.

Further information:

www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk

The most species-rich site in the UK is a brownfield site in Essex: the 27.5 ha (55 acres) site has more biodiversity per square foot than anywhere else in the UK!



What are post-industrial and brownfield sites?

Post-industrial and brownfield sites include land (rural and urban) that is or was once occupied by industrial or other human uses but which is now disused or partially used, e.g. colliery sites, disused quarries, spoil tips, restored opencast sites, demolished or derelict factory sites, industrial lagoons, derelict railway land, redundant dockland, contaminated land, former refuse tips, etc.

Sites can often remain unused for many years and recolonisation can lead to the establishment of a range of wildlife, and habitats from bare ground to grassland, scrub and woodland. The biodiversity value of these areas is often underestimated and sites can be seen as unsightly 'wasteland'. However, they often provide alternative habitats for many species that have declined due to loss of their native habitats in the wider countryside. Brown hare, skylark, lapwing, a variety of butterflies and other invertebrates, reptiles and amphibians, can all thrive on brownfield sites.

Remnants of original habitats may remain within sites, which can be important for biodiversity and provide a local source of species for recolonisation of disturbed areas. Brownfield sites can act as wildlife corridors in built-up areas and provide valuable habitats in otherwise poor rural situations. Sometimes exotic species may grow from dumped soil and ballast from other habitats or even other countries reflecting an area's past international trade. In addition these areas are often valued by local people for casual recreation so brownfield sites can have wildlife, cultural and recreational potential.

Where are they in Carmarthenshire?

The majority of post-industrial sites occur in the south-east of the county, particularly on the Coalfield and the limestone quarrying areas, although most towns have some derelict land.

What are the threats?

- * Lack of awareness of the biodiversity value of these sites.
- * Re-development or reclamation.
- * Use of non-native species in planting schemes and unsympathetic landscaping.
- * Damage to sites caused by motorbikes, fly tipping and vandalism.
- * Lack of management and spread of invasive species.

What is being done locally

- * The biodiversity value of post-industrial sites is increasingly recognised and promoted.
- * Increasingly advice is being sought about the biodiversity value of these sites when they are being developed.

Where you can visit this habitat

There are a number of sites you can visit: Ynys Dawela Nature Reserve, Mynydd Mawr Woodland Park, Millennium Coastal Park.