

When is an ecological survey required?

Where there is reasonable likelihood that your planning proposal will adversely affect important biodiversity, the planning authority will require information about the species/habitats and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development before granting planning permission.

The type of assessment needed will vary.

Below are **some** examples of the most common site features within householder and other minor planning applications where an ecological survey may be required.

Site features:

- Works to roof/loft conversion
- Demolition of buildings/existing structures on site
- Removal of trees/garden vegetation
- Removal of hedgerows/impact to hedgerows
- Extensions
- Works to garages/outbuildings
- Any changes in ground levels
- Construction of retaining structures
- Any impact to trees/buildings with features that may support roosting bats on/adjacent to the site.
- Any works with woodland on/near to the site
- Any works with watercourses on/near to the site



A Resilient Greater Gwent



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government

Image by Montevideo from Pixabay

Survey Standards

Surveys should be carried-out by appropriately qualified ecologists with experience of undertaking the survey required. Surveys should be up-to-date and follow a recognised methodology.

When seeking an ecological consultant we would advise appointing a member of CIEEM (Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management) to ensure you are engaging with a fully competent professional.

Due to the shifting nature of species and habitats, ecological surveys may need to be repeated if survey information is considered to have expired.

Further Information

Pre-application guidance can be found here:

Planning Forms | Torfaen County Borough Council

Ecological guidance:

A guide to ecological surveys and their purpose:

<https://cieem.net/resource/guide-to-ecological-surveys-and-their-purpose/>

A householders guide to engaging an ecologist:

<https://cieem.net/resource/a-householders-guide-to-engaging-an-ecologist/>

CIEEM Registered Practice Directory:

<https://events.cieem.net/RegisteredPracticeDirectory/Registered-Practice-Directory.aspx>

Bat Surveys - A homeowners guide:

<https://cieem.net/resource/what-to-expect-from-a-bat-survey-a-guide-for-uk-homeowners/>

Planning Guidance

Planning Policy Wales 11

https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/planning-policy-wales-edition-11_0.pdf

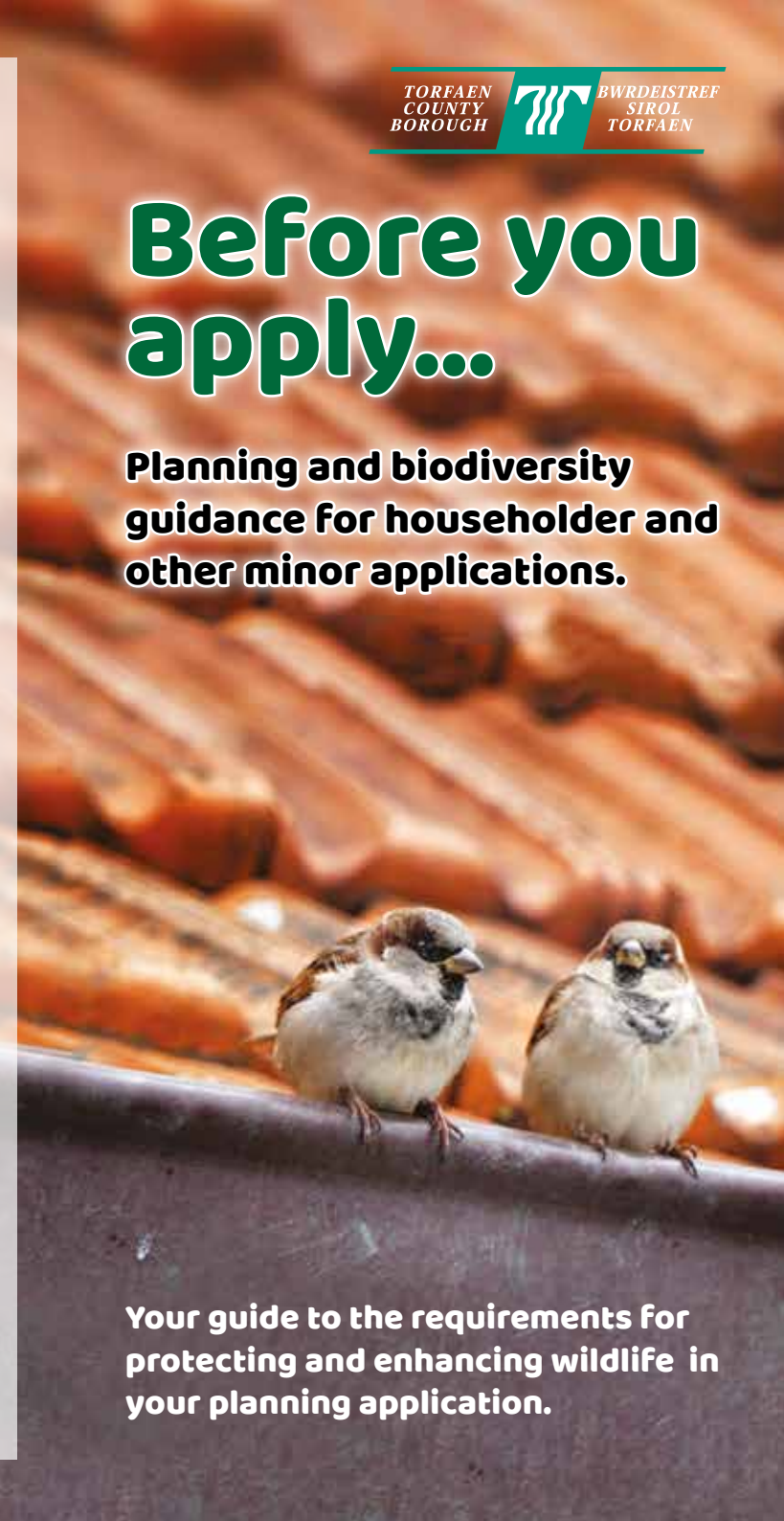
**Royal Town Planning Institute
'Biodiversity in Planning'**

<https://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/1563/biodiversityinplanningpracticeadvice2019.pdf>

Before you apply...

Planning and biodiversity guidance for householder and other minor applications.

Your guide to the requirements for protecting and enhancing wildlife in your planning application.



How is biodiversity related to Planning?

Biodiversity is the 'variety of all life'.

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to consider biodiversity when assessing planning applications. Planning Policy Wales 11 sets out that 'planning authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. This means that development should not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species, locally or nationally and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity' (para 6.4.5 refers). This policy and subsequent policies in Chapter 6 of PPW 11 respond to the Section 6 Duty of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Where there is a likelihood that a planning proposal might affect protected species or habitats, the council will require survey information in order to make an assessment of the impacts of the proposals. This information will need to be provided before a planning decision is made.

What is 'biodiversity net gain'?

The concept of biodiversity net gain simply means leaving biodiversity in a measurably better state than before.

The purpose of this guide

Planning pre-application advice will offer guidance on the timings of any required surveys, as well as mitigation and enhancement advice. The early consideration of biodiversity before applying for planning permission is in the interest of your application in order to prevent delays and associated costs. This guide provides basic advice to anyone considering submitting a planning application, in order to keep you on the right side of wildlife legislation and help the wildlife on your doorstep. The level of enhancement required should be relative to the scale of the proposed development. All details for proposed enhancements should be submitted up-front as part of your planning application.

Biodiversity Enhancements

Even if your planning proposal is unlikely to adversely affect existing biodiversity, as a local authority we still have a duty to be pro-active in promoting biodiversity enhancements. One of the ways we can improve ecological connectivity and deliver biodiversity net gain is by ensuring all householder planning applications include consideration for biodiversity enhancements. The list below shows just some of the ways these can be incorporated into householder proposals.



- Bat boxes/bricks



- Swift Brick



- Bee bricks



- Bee post

- Native hedge planting
- Wildflower patches
- Bird boxes (Sparrow/swifts etc.)
- Hedgehog holes/tunnels