

BULLFINCH *PYRRHULA PYRRHULA* SPECIES ACTION PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

The bullfinch is a UK priority species and a UK SAP³⁹ has been written.

| Relevant Legislation/Species Status | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| priority species (P) or species of conservation concern (S) | P |
| EC Birds Directive 1979 | - |
| Berne Convention 1982 | - |
| Bonn Convention 1979 | - |
| CITES 1975 | - |
| WCA 1981 | Part I Section 1; Sch. 3 |
| Birds of Conservation Concern List ³⁰ | Red |



© CCBC 2002

2. CURRENT STATUS

2.1 UK and Wales

The bullfinch is a fairly common and widespread species found in woodlands, orchards, and on farmland, where it is associated with dense shrubs, scrub and untrimmed hedges.

Bullfinches feed on a variety of berries, seeds and buds of bushes and trees. However, it has decreased at an alarming rate over the last 15 years with a decline of approximately 50%. The Common Bird Census indicates there has been a 75% decline on farmland and a 47% decline in woodland between 1968 and 1991. This translates to a decrease in estimated population from 300 – 350,000 pairs in 1984 to 190,000 by 1988-91³⁷.

2.2 Caerphilly County Borough

There is no accurate data giving the current population trends of the bullfinch in the county borough, but it is still a locally common species. **Map 2.1** shows the known distribution of breeding sites in the area.

2.3 Links with Habitat

The bullfinch is a species thriving in mature hedgerows, areas of mixed scrub and wet woodlands, and often gardens.

- *Wetlands*
- **Deciduous Woodlands** (wet woodland)
- **Wildlife Corridors** (hedgerows)
- *Urban Habitats* (domestic gardens)
- Scrub

3. CURRENT FACTORS AFFECTING THE SPECIES

- Loss of traditional hedgerow management and hedgerow removal.

- Loss of urban fringe and open countryside due to increasing urbanisation.

4. CURRENT ACTION

- 4.1 CCBC criteria for SIN C status include scrub, woodlands and wetlands.
- 4.2 The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 protect ancient and species-rich hedgerows.
- 4.3 The planting of native hedgerows and trees is frequently a planning requisite for new developments thus creating suitable new habitats for the species.
- 4.4 BTO national surveys⁶ are ongoing and local ornithological societies produce annual reports based on the old counties of Glamorgan (VC41) and Monmouthshire (Gwent; VC35)^{17, 18, 19}.

5. OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

5.1 UK Objectives and Targets

- 5.1.1 In the short term, halt or reverse the decline in the numbers of bullfinches by the year 2003 so that the Breeding Bird Survey index is at least at 1996 levels.
- 5.1.2 In the long term, see a sustained recovery in numbers, so that the BBS index is at least 50% higher than 1996 levels by 2008.

5.2 Caerphilly Objectives and Targets

- 5.2.1 Maintain the bullfinch as a viable breeding species locally. (Target: ongoing)
- 5.2.2 Protect suitable existing habitat from adverse land management. (Target: ongoing)

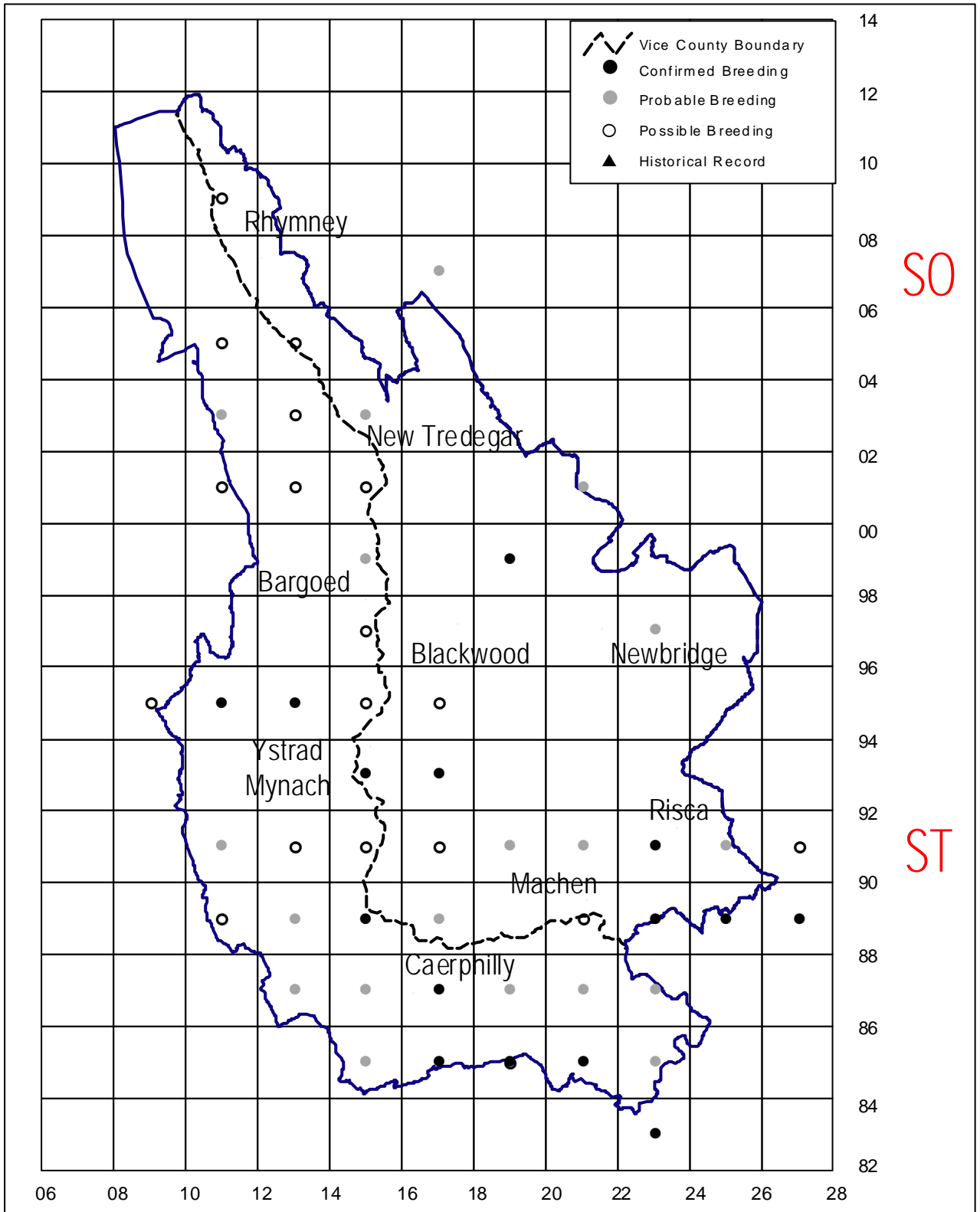
6. ACTION AND KEY PARTNERS

| Action | Key Partners | | Year to be complete or in place by | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|----------|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| | Lead | Partners | 2003 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 6.1 Policy and Legislation | | | | | | | | | | | |
| No action proposed. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6.2 Site Safeguard and Management | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6.2.1 Manage land owned by CCBC in a way that is suitable for the habitat requirements of the species. | CCBC | Gwk | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 6.3 Species Management and Protection | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6.3.1 Promote landscaping schemes for industrial and housing developments that provide suitable nesting habitats and native species as a source of food. | CCBC | Gwk | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 6.3.2 Continue to implement wildlife legislation. | Gwent Police | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

| Action | Key Partners | | Year to be complete or in place by | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| | Lead | Partners | 2003 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 6.4 Advisory | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6.4.1 Promote the sensitive management of hedgerows by farmers and other land managers. | NAWAD | CCBC NFU FUW Gwk | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 6.5 Future Research and Monitoring | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6.5.1 Regularly survey and monitor bullfinch populations in Caerphilly county borough. | GBC GOS | CCBC CCW BTO | ✕ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 6.6 Communications and Publicity | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6.6.1 Include images and information about the species in leaflets, posters etc. for the general public, to be made available in Country Parks and other CCBC facilities. | CBP | CCBC | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | |

✕ Survey year to be determined.

MAP 2.1 - BULLFINCH



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Caerphilly County Borough Council, LA09004L, 2001.

Atgynhychwyd o fapiad yr Arolwg Ordnans gyda chaniatad rheolwr Llyfifa ei Mawhydi hawffraint y Goron. Mae atgynhychu heb awdurdod yn torri hawffraint y Goron. Gall hyn arwain at erlyniad neu achos sifil. Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili, LA09004L, 2001.