



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report Knole Park Golf Club

Prepared by independent verifier: Bob Taylor

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2023
Recertification due: 2026

GEO Certified®

 **GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

"Knole Park golf Club is unique, sitting within a much larger landscape managed by an Estate which has a large historic herd of Fallow deer that maintain the grassland rough. Over 500 deer graze the rough to a height that is optimal for the yellow meadow ant. The ant hills here are of considerable size and antiquity - some will be over 1000 years old. Their presence indicates that these grasslands have not been modified by any overuse of chemicals or indeed mechanical cutting. Botanical and invertebrate diversity, though not comprehensively documented, will be very high. Similarly, the ancient and veteran trees on site provide for a rich deadwood resource supporting scarce beetle and fungal assemblages. Following discussion, the club are keen to learn more of the diversity of the site and will commence a habitat and species survey using local naturalists where possible. The club operates via a leasehold tenancy and thus are restricted in terms of management out with the immediate playing surfaces. Nonetheless they recognise the importance of working to an agreed management plan that identifies areas which could be taken out of routine management and indeed to optimise ecology enhancements (reptile hibernacula bat and bird boxes etc.). The club recognises the marketing and general communication pathways this would open up, something they are very keen to explore.

The club have also appointed a sustainability Manager via an internship and are keen not only to highlight their current successes but progress their sustainability initiatives further. I have in this report highlighted a series of CIPs that the club are keen to take on and which they will use to develop a sustainability review document. The document will be a working document to help steer progress through to the next review. This is a very proactive club that will only get sustainably stronger over the next few years. The Sustainable golf certification will help significantly in allowing the club to communicate more within the local and regional community. I was very impressed with the effort this club are putting into sustainable working. With those members like Ed Higgs, keen to drive the initiative forward and with the employment of the sustainability manager, I have no doubt this club will only continue to improve though all aspects of its workings.] I have no reservations in recommending 'award'."

Bob Taylor
(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Knole Park Golf Club has successfully achieved GEO Certified® status for its outstanding work to foster nature, conserve resources and support the community.

GEO Certified® is the most respected certification for golf, based on a credibly and transparently developed modern sustainability Standard of best practice.

Knole Park Golf Club has:

1. Met the required certification criteria for sustainable golf operations
2. Successfully completed the official third-party verification process
3. Successfully passed the final evaluation by GEO Certification Ltd. (autonomous subsidiary of GEO Foundation)

GEO agreed with the conclusions of the official verification report, that, having achieved all mandatory criteria; and with specific Continual Improvement Points (CIP) set for the future and Critical CIP's (CCIPs) to be reviewed at recertification, Knole Park Golf Club should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Knole Park Golf Club can therefore claim a position as a leader in advancing sustainability in golf – making important contributions in protecting nature, conserving resources and strengthening communities.

The GEO Certified® Report that follows comments on the actions undertaken against the criteria, as observed by the independent verifier during the assurance process.

Certification is nearly always the result of a dedicated team effort resulting in many practical and valuable social and environmental results around the golf course, maintenance facility and clubhouse. These dedication and leadership qualities are an important part of ensuring the resilience of the golf facility and the golf industry into the future and also as part of society's wider effort to pull together for people and planet.

We congratulate all involved.

Jonathan Smith
Founder and Executive Director, GEO Foundation
GEO Certification Ltd. Board Member

Kelli Jerome
Executive Director, GEO Foundation

Carole Kerrey
Manager, Data and Reporting, GEO
Certification Ltd.



Verification and Certification

Verification

The official third-party audit was carried out by an independent verifier, accredited by GEO to undertake verifications of golf facilities applying for certification.

Verification involves reviewing practices and data, using the International Voluntary Standard for Sustainable Golf Operations as the guide to ensure comprehensive and consistent evaluation of performance. A detailed verification report is submitted for evaluation by GEO Certification Ltd, a subsidiary of GEO Foundation.

Certification

GEO Certification Ltd, an autonomous subsidiary of GEO Foundation [both not-for-profit entities], undertook a full review of all content submitted through the OnCourse® online platform and the report submitted by the verifier, ensuring:

- Comprehensiveness – that activities undertaken touched on all elements of the Standard
- Consistency – that the verification approach was balanced, well weighted and with consistent depth of evaluation across each theme
- Accuracy - matching the verification report with evidence submitted by the golf facility to ensure statements and claims were accurate

GEO Foundation is an international not-for-profit founded to advocate, support and reward sustainability in and through golf. Over more than ten years, the group has worked collaboratively with dozens of golf industry associations and government and non-government organisations around the world, to help golf become a sustainability leader, striving for a net positive social and environmental impact. In addition to managing and assuring GEO Certified®, GEO Foundation also provides a suite of credible, practical programmes for golf facility management, new golf developments and golf tournaments called OnCourse®, often delivered in partnership with national golf bodies. Find out more at www.sustainable.golf

Credibility

GEO Certified® is part of the ISEAL Alliance, a group of the world's foremost credible certification systems including Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, Forest Stewardship Council, Marine Stewardship Council and many others. GEO Foundation earned and retains full membership of the ISEAL Alliance global association following a rigorous evaluation against the ISEAL Codes of Credibility in Sustainability Standards and Certification. The ISEAL Codes cover standard-setting, assurance, and monitoring and evaluation. Find out more at www.isealliance.org



Verifier's Report

The Sustainability Agenda for golf covers the following themes and action areas:

THEMES	ACTION AREAS
Nature	• Habitats & Biodiversity • Turfgrass management • Pollution prevention
Resources	• Water • Energy • Materials
Community	• Partnerships & Outreach • Golfing & Employment • Advocacy & Communications

Included below are the observations made by the Independent Verifier against each item in the Standard.

NATURE			
N1 Habitats and Biodiversity			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
N1.1 Understand the site and surroundings	N1.1.1 Sound understanding of the nature and landscape value of the site	Map all habitats and vegetation types on the site; Regularly update landscape / biodiversity surveys	The club are very aware of the designations that protect the site and which influence management. The principal designations include:

			Knole Park SSSI The Kent Downs AONB Individual Tree TPOs The National Trust manage the maintenance of the car parks and the house and are responsible for their management. The golf course sits within an estate occupying over 370ha. The management is controlled by the estate which places restrictions on what the golf club can or could do. The golf course is under leasehold tenancy to the estate. Overall survey data is limited generally undertaken by the estate and the National Trust and not by the golf club. The golf club do not have access to any significant survey and recording information but do keep their own records of wildlife reported by golfers. CIP: Although Knole Park Golf club are limited in the extent of management that they can undertake (and this is no bad thing from an ecological perspective – the site is in superb ecological health), the club is recommended to secure a habitat map outlining the split between ecology and golfing interests. The club should also enable a bio blitz to gain a stronger understanding of the wildlife on the course. Work where possible with local groups in this regard as discussed. The above will help the club understand management requirements. Importantly it will also benefit the club's outreach, i.e information provision and communication roles will be developed further over the next few years. Objectives within the above should include: working with local naturalists to record rare saproxylic beetle assemblages; and reptile recoding alongside botany, birds and butterflies.
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	N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species	Understand legal responsibilities for protected landscapes and species; Record and monitor protected, endangered, or rare species found on the site	The site supports a range of nationally rare and nationally scarce invertebrate species which depend upon the parkland and woodland habitats, particularly on their dead wood components. A nationally rare beetle <i>Platypus cylindrus</i> is present. A number of nationally scarce invertebrates occupy various ecological niches in the woodlands and parkland of this site. <i>Cerylon fagi</i> lives under bark and in the dead wood. <i>Bolitochara mulsanti</i> is a small rove beetle found under fungus infected bark and in decaying fungus. <i>Dienerella elongata</i> is a tiny beetle found in leaf litter, moss, and fungi on this site. The park supports several nationally scarce and local dung beetles, including <i>Aphodius zenkeri</i> and <i>Aphodius borealis</i> which feed on the dung of the deer. Many species of fungus have been recorded from the site. Among the many which have restricted distributions are some living under trees, such as an earth star <i>Geastrum fornicatum</i> and a tube- gilled toadstool <i>Boletus pruinatus</i>, and many associated with dead wood. The latter include: <i>Fomes fomentarius</i> on beech, a polypore bracket fungus rare in the southeast, but more common in Scotland on birch <i>Betulus</i> species, and two gilled bracket fungi, <i>Panellus serotinus</i> growing on standing trees, and <i>Schizophyllum commune</i> on recently fallen timber. Many commoner species have been recorded, including many species of <i>Coprinus</i>, <i>Mycena</i>, and wax- caps <i>Hygrophorus</i>. The club have had the following surveys undertaken: badger; bats; Great Crested Newt - though these are not exhaustive or overly comprehensive. There is scope to significantly improve the clubs overall understanding of the site, hence my recommendation for an additional biodiversity survey using local naturalist groups (see N1.1 above).
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	No archaeological interests noted and / or present. Ecologically, the grasslands and the open woodlands are of historic importance. Management of the grasslands is provided by the roaming herd of over 500+ fallow deer. Tree management is the responsibility of the estate.

N1.2 Opportunities to naturalise the course	N1.2.1 Measures taken to identify and minimise the required area of managed turfgrass	Observe, track and / or monitor golfer play	The site is superbly managed by the estate and the roaming deer. The greenstaff manage the in-play areas. CIP: We discussed several opportunities for conservation improvement during the visit. These ranged from locating areas that can be taken out of intensive amenity management to providing opportunities for biodiversity (reptile hibernacula, for example). This should be considered by way of an agreed ecology management plan (by end year 1).
N1.3 Actively manage habitats for wildlife	N1.3.1 Projects to manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf	Regularly review and follow a habitat management plan; Prioritise native species when planting and landscaping	The club will secure a habitat and an ecological management plan to further the positive conservation management over the site. Although the club are constrained in the extent of work they are allowed to take on due to the existing covenants in place, this is one of the best conservation courses I have had the privilege to visit. The grasslands are ancient in origin evidenced by the scale and size of the any hills. These are indicative of minimal disturbance and no chemicals. The management plan once in place will detail additional opportunities rather than a need to commence or improve upon existing practices. I would hope the plan also covers the extent of in play areas and the possibility of reducing these areas if and where appropriate. Pathways too could be looked at within the plan. The club do remove disused tees when others are built. This is not generally common practice on golf courses.
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		Knole Park Site of Special Scientific Interest includes areas of acidic grassland, parkland, woodland, and several ponds. The dead wood and ancient woodland invertebrate fauna is regarded as the finest example of its type in Kent. The site supports a rich fungus flora.

			No specific measures are given to protecting priority species other than conserving dead wood and replacing close to the trees from which it came.
N2 Turfgrass			
N2.1 Maintain optimum turf and soil health	N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors	Select appropriate grass species for climate	The club source suitable turfgrass species suited to the site These include the finer leaved drought tolerant species. The club are working with the retained agronomist to transition all areas from a dominance of Poa to Agrostis that is more in keeping with the adjacent acid grasslands. This work is ongoing and is informed by site survey and soil and turfgrass analysis.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		To further the above (N2.1.1), the club carry out favourable maintenance to include aeration on a repeating 3 to 6 week basis using a variety of tine sizes depending upon aim. The club topdress for drainage and surface quality and undertake organic matter sampling over 4 to 5 indicative greens per annum. Even though my assessment was undertaken following a series of very inclement weather conditions including storms, the greens were amazingly firm. Fusarium was evident but never excessive – very impressive maintenance of the putting surfaces!.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	The fairways receive calcined iron urea and ammonium sulphate in accordance with turf and soil requirements and under agronomic guidance.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	Cultural management techniques are widely used. This is essential given the nature of the site. Verticutting is limited and greater reliance is given to deep and shallow tine aeration, topdressing and cutting management. The club have a mechanic

			for blade sharpening. Reliance is given to hand-weeding greens tees and approaches etc.
N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or cure defined / identified turf health issues	Establish patterns and levels of risk for pests and diseases; Scout the course daily for early signs of pests and disease; Accurate pest and disease identification; Map and track pest and disease hotspots; Establish pest and disease thresholds	The club, given the sensitivity of the site, always work to minimise all inputs. Insecticides are used in a targeted manner based upon visual analysis and identification of problems arising. Growth regulators are used monthly. Evidence on the ground given the proximity of the any hills in relation to the putting and playing surfaces suggests no impacts arising. CIP: Please map disease hot spots and other pest problems, creating a hard copy drawing and making it visible to all green keeping staff (by end year 1). All staff should be briefed on a periodic basis to retain a high degree of vigilance whilst operating out on the course. Any issues should be identified and reported without delay.
	N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions	Use only legally registered and approved products; Ensure staff are fully qualified and licenced to use pesticides; Regularly calibrate and test applicators; Use appropriate protective equipment; Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of turf .	All chemicals are kept in a purpose built chem safe with lock. Signage was present and the area around the safe was relatively free of obstructions. The club endorse staff training (in place), and 3 staff are trained in chemical use to PA level 6 Spray equipment is modern, supporting low drift nozzles etc. All mixing is carried out within the compound on a purpose- built pad linked to a Waste to Water System. COSHH was outlined and is followed. It is installed on the Ground 2 Control Resource and safety management system.
N3 Pollution Prevention			

N3.1 Prevent pollution across the entire site	N3.1.1 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from golf course operations	Document procedures for emergency spill responses; Maintain mowing buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas; Maintain spraying and spreading buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas; Create a map / aerial visual reproduction, drawing etc of the course showing buffer zones and no-spray, no-spread areas.	See CIP under N2.3.1 relating to providing a site map of disease hotspots. This to be in place by end of year 1. The club recognise the need for no spray zones, but all areas are out with areas that may be sprayed so less relevant here than many other clubs. The greenstaff operate controlled mixing on the pad. This is undertaken by qualified staff and spraying is always weather dependant. The facility supports emergency lighting. The club outsource fire safety checks. Sand is available for smaller spills. CIP: As part of the maintenance facility upgrade, please ensure everything is done to accommodate diesel, as well as other petroleum's and chemical storage and use. Ground 2 Control software is used to log hazardous substances in stock and used.
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Ensure all hazardous materials are safely and securely stored; Ensure compliance with all required standards and systems for hazardous waste and wastewater discharge	The chemicals used in the kitchen are primarily those used to clean worktops and the bar surfaces. These are stored in an unlocked cupboard out of public sight. Any products stored where the public i.e., members etc. could gain access are stored in a locked cupboard. The club outsource all cleaning to a local company who deal with their own COSHH requirements hence limited number of chemicals are stored and / or used by the club. The club relies on the company to record its chemical use.
	N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from maintenance facility operations	Ensure wash areas are on impermeable, leak-free surfaces; Mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable surface; Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators	The facility supports a waste to water washdown area, and it is used for all appropriate operations.

	N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances	N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe disposal of all hazardous substances	Maintain a register of hazardous materials available to authorised staff; Safe storage in secure and ventilated concrete or metal building; Sufficient storage capacity; Impermeable flooring; Spill containment kits present; Emergency wash area; Fire extinguisher in the immediate area; Secondary containment for fuel, either externally constructed, or integrally manufactured; Regular inspection of storage tanks	Ground 2 control is used to log storage and use of all hazardous materials. Greenkeeping chemicals are stored in the chem safe. Chemicals used in the clubhouse are Manually logged and a file is retained First aid kits are in place monitored and serviced monthly by Majenta Compliance. This company also carries out emergency lighting testing and monitors fire safety equipment servicing . The petroleum storage is via double bunded containers with bunded spill base. An up-to-date shower facility is available within the maintenance complex for all greenstaff.
	N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water	N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage and discharge licences	Wastewater discharge licence; Appropriate treatment of machinery wash water (impermeable surface, oil / grease / clipping separation)	Storm water enters the existing drainage pathways. However, the club are currently looking at possibilities of harvesting general storm water for on course use. The Waste to Water system is effective and used daily. No surface run off noted.

RESOURCES			
R1 Water			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
R1.1 Minimise water demand	R1.1.1 Measures to reduce the need to consume water	Target irrigation to essential playing surfaces only	On course irrigation covers greens, tees and approaches. The system allows individual head operation and targeted application. All heads have recently been replaced.

			The system is monitored annually for leaks etc using professional engagement. This also allows for staff training. Leaks and use are monitored using Rainbirds Nimbus system. Application is timely, advised by the on- site weather station and through physical observation using TDR soil moisture probes. The club are in the process of installing a reservoir for water capture and irrigation use. This will significantly reduce current reliance on mains water.
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course	Conduct regular irrigation performance checks; Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices; Ensure effective application of water to target areas; Ensure irrigation schedules are informed by weather patterns and soil moisture analysis	The club are aware of water as a finite resource. They have an up-to-date automatic irrigation system in place to provide efficient targeted water use. All irrigation heads are individually controlled. To further minimise use, the club are removing old tees once out of commission. The greenkeeping team take regular moisture checks. Players have the use of water fountains to refill bottles and for general drinking.
	R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings	Audit water use regularly; Review bills frequently and look for irregularities; Encourage water-saving practices amongst staff and visitors; Categorise and track water consumption	The changing rooms have benefited from their recent upgrading. This included the installation of flow rate adjusters in the showers, providing effective reduced flows. Irrigation is used. Water is split between clubhouse, maintenance facility and golf course (irrigation). The club receive two bills from 2 separate water meters. The first set of data is available for 2022 as an excel document. The data is available for 2023 but the excel record was at the time of the visit in need of completion.

			CIP: Please submit records on time and annually onto a master spreadsheet. Please review trends within the club with regards to overall usage issues and opportunities for cost savings. CIP: Please provide periodic comms to advise careful and sustainable water use throughout the facility.
R1.3 Source water responsibly	R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water	Ensure appropriate water abstraction permit and reporting, as required	Currently mains throughout the Facility. However, the club at present are exploring options of rainwater harvesting for facility use.
R2 Energy			
R2.1 Reduce energy demand	R2.1.1 Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed in course maintenance	Minimise areas of managed turf to reduce mowing, irrigation, and turf inputs	Tees are removed once decommissioned. The entire facility is managed not just by the greenstaff but by a herd of over 500 Fallow deer. This greatly reduces the overall burden of rough management, but it does bring other more localised problems at green and tee level. Because management is largely concentrated to the playing surfaces, the rough has historically been left. Vast areas support large yellow meadow ant hills some of which will be ancient in origin. Their presence indicates grasslands of very high conservation quality having had minimal unwarranted management intervention in the past or indeed present.
R2.2 Maximise energy efficiency	R2.2.1 Measures to use energy and fuels more efficiently in buildings	Audit energy use regularly; Regularly review bills; Categorise and track energy consumption	Changes within the changing rooms have reduced consumption. The club are working to replace all lighting on a phased basis. Most areas of the clubhouse now support LED lighting on motion sensors. A number of fluorescent fittings and other lighting sources were noted within the greenkeeping facility. This will be dealt with under the proposed maintenance facility upgrade. The club use a master spreadsheet to record and track energy consumption and analyse trends

			CIP: Scope exists to fine tune energy invoice logging to ensure issues are noted at the earliest of opportunities.
R2.3 Source energy responsibly	R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy	Determine potential sources of renewable energy in the area and on-site, through renewable energy providers	The club are currently exploring the possibility of introducing solar panels on the lake. Solar panels are present on the clubhouse outbuilding. The club are somewhat restricted in what could be achieved by the leasehold covenant that is in place and which restricts aspects of the clubs working. CIP: Please carry out and or expand the feasibility to cover air and ground source heating opportunities and report findings by end year 2.
R3 Materials			
R3.1 Reduce materials demand	R3.1.1 Products and materials selection based on necessity, including opportunities for recycled, reused and locally sourced alternatives	Undertake a review of materials consumed	Although no strict procurement policy is in place, the club do audit outgoing materials particularly foodstuffs The club has a policy of no luxury purchase and / or stockpiling. Overall demand for food stuffs is low due to the relatively low number of visitors. CIP: Notwithstanding the above, the club were advised to develop a procurement policy and a monitoring programme that is easily accessible and regularly communicated (all areas) – by next review. The policy should consider current waste streams and any savings and / or efficiencies that may be possible.
R3.2 Purchase responsibly	R3.2.1 Practical use of an ethical / environmental purchasing policy	Adopt a sustainable, or ethical / environmental purchasing policy to maximise the use of locally sourced goods and goods made from recycled, recyclable and certified materials	No policy in place but discussed and club are keen to move forward with this. CIP: Please develop a procurement policy and ensure this element of working is included (as above see R3.1).

			The policy should enable the auditing and sourcing of all materials used through the facility. All heads of dept will need to be onboard. Please work to a local, regional and national hierarchy.
R3.3 Reuse and recycle	R3.3.1 Waste stream separation for maximum recycling and re-use opportunity	Demonstrate waste separation, reuse and recycling; Track how much waste goes to landfill, or is reused / recycled	Glass, plastics, card and general wastes are all separated and removed by BIFFA and country styre recycling. CIP: Please produce and maintain a disposal record which documents and logs all collection invoices from the recycling contractors by next review. This will ensure a confirmation trail is available and can be accessed should the need arise.
R3.4 Demonstrate legal compliance	R3.4.1 Compliance with all local and regional waste management regulations	Use authorised waste and recycling contractor for general, hazardous, industrial and green waste	Glass, plastics, card, and general wastes are all separated and removed by BIFFA and country styre recycling. Kitchen oils (Olleco). No stock piling so limited waste.

COMMUNITY			
C1 Outreach			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
C1.1 Diversify access and provide multi-functionality	C1.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility		The Golf course is part of a much wider estate supporting approx. 8 access points for public. Several permitted rights of way cross the course. Public access numbers are high due to the superb nature of the ancient deer park. Its resident

			populations of fallow deer and the provision of a public car park managed by the National Trust. The club in places have planted a hedgerow to help to protect the public. This adds additional habitat whilst proving functional. The club engage with The National Trust on H&S. They pointed out the guidance from The Golfers Handbook. The club engages annually with local sports clubs and contribute to the chamber of commerce.
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		The club provides golf days for local charities (good causes). These include age concern. The club operates a reciprocal voucher programme enabling charities to explain their roles at the club. The local primary schools also partake in golf club activities.
C1.3 Establish active community partnerships	C1.3.1 Positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the local community and other groups	Create a 'sustainability working group'	Engagement with Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce and local businesses'. The club provides a forum for local businesses like the estate agents etc. to detail their services. The club operates a youth development scheme run by the pro. CIP: Opportunity to broaden outreach. Please undertake a feasibility with a view to expanding engagement with local communities above existing practices. Please try to implement at least 2 new initiatives before next verification review.
C2 Golfers & Employees			

C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities		The club recognises the physical and mental health benefits of playing within the Knole parkland landscape. This was evidenced by the clear growing artisan section within the club. It was pointed out that the over 80s are by and large a very able and active group. CIP: Develop the existing communication structure further to highlight the physical and mental health benefits through the club's social media channels. Please expand the current 'fit bit' recording programme to the local membership and the 70s and 80s groups. Please try to develop at least one new initiative in this respect over the next 2 years. You could draw on the R&A resources here.
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	There are no restrictions to membership through all categories. The club provide reduced subscription packages to encourage younger clientele. The club drive women's golf and are part of the Women in Golf Programme. The pro shop runs the love golf programme giving non-golfers the chance to try the sport.
C2.3 Employ fairly and safely, and provide career opportunities	C2.3.1 Ethical and legal employment, working conditions and professional development	Follow all relevant national legislation and best practice for employment, health & safety etc	The greenkeeping team is mixed (8 staff in total includes one female member). The club support a good diversity of staff throughout the club. A club handbook for new employees is in place. CIP: Please consider expanding the induction process to include a more in-depth programme of sector-based working for stronger familiarisation with the clubs workings (by end year 1).

C3 Communications			
C3.1 Engage golfers and members	C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness and understanding amongst members and visitors	Provide information on the facility's sustainability commitments, actions, or achievements	The club use the Intelligent Golf Software to contact golfers. Contact to members is regular and normally no more than 6 weekly. The club have recently highlighted their sustainability launch and have highlighted stories around the on course Fallow deer. The club use a notice board to highlight bird interests and engage with the membership to supply their own records and observations.
C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability	C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community	Provide evidence of external communications and community engagement	The club have launched their sustainability drive to members. They have appointed an intern from Edinburgh Univ. to develop the sustainability platform further ("hence the number of guiding CIPS through this report – given to help further the programme"). Mr Ed Higgs is also a very proactive member currently helping to move the sustainability initiative forward. The club is a top 100 venue (today's Golfer). I have above in C1.3 and C2.1 highlighted the clubs' relationships within the community and how they perhaps could be improved. Discussion was provided during the assessment and notes were made This is an areas that will continue to improve over time.

Golf and Sustainability

Among all sports, golf has a particularly close relationship with the environment and communities, golf facilities can bring many benefits to people and nature - from the protection of greenspace and conservation of biodiversity; healthy recreation for all ages; local supply chains; and jobs, tourism and other forms of economic value.

Adopting a more sustainable approach is also good for golf. It's about presenting a high-quality golf course and providing a memorable experience in natural surroundings. It's about being as efficient as possible. And it's about supporting the community in a range of ways that bring increased recognition, respect and contact.

At a broader level, it's important that golf credibly demonstrates its commitment, and its social and environmental value – strengthening the sport's image and reputation for the long term.

Golf facilities that participate in OnCourse®, an international sustainability initiative assured by the non-profit GEO Foundation, are taking a comprehensive approach and striving to be leaders in the community.

Find out more at www.sustainable.golf