

GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report
Annanhill Golf Course

Prepared by independent verifier Alan Johnston

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2026
Recertification due: 2029

GEO Foundation
Sustainability in and through golf

"Annanhill Golf Course is a professionally managed facility that, although still early in its environmental sustainability journey, has already delivered excellent results. The club's ownership model presents certain management constraints, however, the small greenkeeping team has established a strong foundation that positions the club to become an exemplar of sustainability and a valuable asset to the community.

The team is committed to raising biodiversity awareness and encouraging positive action among golfers, partners and the wider public. Notable initiatives include the creation of wildlife ponds, the establishment of a wildflower corridor and path network and the naturalisation of out-of-play areas. The club also serves as a welcoming and safe space for the local community

The next phase of the club's sustainability journey will involve building on these creative successes, such as the next phase of enhancing the wildlife ponds and developing more formal plans to enhance and monitor the ecological value of the course. The club is also keen to increase its relatively low number of lady members and is actively pursuing an engagement strategy to address this.

I look forward to seeing the club's future sustainability plans come to fruition and becoming a beacon of environmental and community stewardship."

Alan Johnston
(GEO accredited independent verifier)

Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Annanhill Golf Course 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.

Annanhill Golf Course 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, Annanhill Golf Course should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Annanhill Golf Course 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
Director, Certification and Credibility,
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 – 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.isealalliance.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**	General knowledge of the wildlife and habitats on the site	Annanhill Golf Course, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, is an 18-hole, par-71 (6,000-yard) parkland golf course. The overall facility covers approximately 103 acres, and the course is surrounded by urban residential housing. The facility is owned by East Ayrshire Council and managed by East Ayrshire Leisure Trust (Ayrshire360). The verification visit was conducted on 14 September 2026. The assessment included an inspection of the golf course and the greenkeeping compound, accompanied by Ayrshire360 staff, Davie Pratt, Development Officer, and Graham Rice, Head Greenkeeper, as well as an introductory meeting with Christine Keenan, Strategic Lead, Greenspace. During the visit, key areas were reviewed, including the course itself, the greenkeeping compound, and the storage facilities. As agreed with GEO, the clubhouse was exempt from the verification process. The clubhouse is currently closed but is scheduled for full redevelopment and is at the Concept and Design stage (RIBA 2). At the time of my visit, only the gents' locker room and the starters' office were open. The golf club has 800 members. The breakdown of the membership is approximately 280 Juniors and 20 lady members. Over 200 of the membership are over 65yrs of age. The greenkeeping team consists of four permanent members of staff, one of whom is a qualified Marine Biologist. The team is led by Head Greenkeeper Graham Rice and is strategically supported by Davie Pratt. The greenkeeping team have a solid grasp of agronomic practices and turf management, ensuring the course is maintained to a high standard. Their dedication is evident in the ongoing management and monitoring of the course, which is in part governed by regular soil analysis reports conducted by Origin Amenity Solutions.

				The golf course features undulating terrain, with most holes tree-lined on both sides. A ditch and bund boundary has been created at key parts of the course to form a natural barrier, protecting wildlife from the nearby urban area. The greens, tees, fairways, and rough are thoughtfully designed and maintained to blend seamlessly into the course's landscape. **CIP: Please establish an Action Plan to ensure effective implementation and ongoing maintenance of the measures outlined in the baseline Habitat Management Plan. This should include:** • **Clear timelines for delivering each habitat enhancement or maintenance activity.** • **Defined responsibilities for staff members and external partners.** • **Review points to evaluate effectiveness and update actions annually or as required.** • **Detailed habitat maps identifying key ecological features, sensitive areas, and priority zones for enhancement.** **CIP: Please consider expanding the Habitat Plan to incorporate environmental/landscape plans to include:** • **Vegetation and planting strategy** • **Landscape maintenance strategy** • **Species inventories for flora and fauna, with emphasis on protected and notable species.** • **Long-term objectives that align with the club's sustainability strategy and GEO Certification criteria.** **CIP**: **Please develop maps that delineate specific target zones for habitat management, including grasslands, designated 'out-of-play' areas and woodlands.** **Highlight:** The creation of wildlife ponds, delivering both drainage improvements and valuable new habitat. The pond provides breeding habitat for a range of aquatic insects and amphibians.
		N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species	Identify rare, protected or endangered species found on the golf course; Understand legal responsibilities for landscape protection and special area designations, if applicable	Observed: Photographs of an otter and newts that were found near the wildlife pond areas. Annanhill Golf Course is home to a variety of species, including buzzards, blackbirds, wrens, robins, frogs, and squirrels. **CIP: Please review all habitat protection activities regularly. This includes holding staff briefings, monitoring buffer zones, and**

			maintaining accurate documentation, all in accordance with the Habitat Management Plan. **CIP**: **Please consider developing informative signage for visitors and stakeholders that highlights and communicates the environmental significance of the projects undertaken within the wildlife pond areas.** **CIP: Please consider conducting a course-wide BioBlitz, focusing on the identification and monitoring of bird species and other wildlife present across the course.** **CIP: Please consider developing a map that highlights protected areas and habitats of ecological importance, to be displayed as a reference for all greenkeeping staff.** **Highlight:** Efforts are underway to further enhance the wildlife pond areas in order to support greater biodiversity. **Highlight:** An otter was spotted and photographed in the waterway adjacent to one of the wildlife ponds, which is a very rare occurrence.
	N1.1.3 Sound understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site, if applicable	Discussed: A previously unmapped, stone lined well situated on the 5th hole was uncovered during drainage-excavation works in 2019. The well may be of archaeological significance, and the team at Ayrshire360 consulted with the West of Scotland Archaeology Service for advice. Although still to be accurately dated, historic environment policies generally favour the preservation of features in situ. As such, the well is currently stone-capped at 400 mm below ground level. **CIP**: **Please consider ways to highlight the well's archaeological significance, such as installing informational signage near the 5th hole, adding material within the clubhouse, or sharing details through the club's communications channels.**
N1.2 Opportunities to naturalise the golf course	**N1.2.1 Measures taken to identify and minimise the required area of managed turfgrass**	Monitor patterns of play to identify underutilised areas of turfgrass	Observed: Unmaintained areas and the presence of felled tree limbs and branches have been intentionally retained and piled within woodland sections to create wildlife habitats. Additional underutilised areas on the course have also been identified for naturalisation. **Highlight:** The club received £300k from the Nature Restoration Fund, with part of this funding used to create a new pathway network that enables the public to connect with the golf course in a designated and safe manner.

				Discussed: Routine reviews are conducted for managed turfgrass areas. There is a policy of non-intervention for out-of-play areas and grassland habitats. **CIP: Please document and map turfgrass and wildflower areas under current and future developments.**
	N1.3 Actively create and manage habitats for wildlife	**N1.3.1 Projects to create and manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf**	Prioritise native species of varying size and structure when planting Prioritise native trees and shrubs when planting Prioritise native aquatic species of varying size and structure when planting Establish mowing buffer zones next to water bodies and wetlands	Observed: The newly created Habitat Management Plan (post verification visit) that outlines management protocols for the golf course. It details protected species and ecological assets. The club has implemented practices to safeguard wildlife and habitats by creating ditch and bund wildlife corridors, wildflower areas and an effective path network, ensuring alignment with both the golf course and its surrounding environment. Observed: The club addressed a long-standing waterlogging issue at the 7th hole and transformed the affected area into a wildlife pond, resolving drainage challenges while creating a valuable new habitat for amphibians. Discussed: Recent tree planting has introduced young native species, including Silver Birch, European Beech, and English Oak. **CIP**: **In accordance with the newly created Habitat Management Plan, consider establishing a Habitat Management Group comprising representatives from Ayrshire360, club members, and designated partner organisations.** **Highlight:** Signage along the newly created pathways to educate golfers and the public about the importance of wildflowers in supporting local pollinators. **Highlight:** The creation of the wildlife ponds has resolved historic flooding issues while simultaneously enhancing the biodiversity present across the course. **CCIP: Please ensure that a map is displayed in the greenkeepers' office with all biodiversity sensitive areas and buffer zones across the course clearly marked.**
	N1.4 Conserve key species	**N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species**	Follow local best practice to protect or attract endangered, protected or rare species found on site	Observed: The pollinator programme has mapped out out-of-play roughs designated for transformation into wildflower networks using native Scottish seed mixes.

			Observed: The three newly created wildlife ponds providing high value amphibian breeding habitat. In addition, the club has established a dedicated wildlife corridor by constructing a ditch and bund system. More than 2,000 Hawthorn and Blackthorn trees have been planted, creating a diverse habitat that supports birds, insects and pollinators. Discussed: The club has plans to install bat and bird boxes within the woodland area, utilising repurposed pallets. **CIP: Please consider the establishment of a bug hotel for the woodland area, constructed using logs and repurposed wooden pallets. This would contribute to wider biodiversity gains across the site.** **CIP**: **Please try to create connections with organisations focused on nature and biodiversity such as the national BioBlitz network and the Scottish Wildlife Trust.** **CIP: Please develop an organised approach to updating and documenting all monitoring data. Keep a record of all species sightings to support long-term biodiversity tracking.** **Highlight:** Work has been undertaken to create wildflower corridors alongside the newly established path network. This pathway enables the public to connect with the golf course in a designated and safe manner, guiding golfers and the public through woodlands, past the ponds and along the wildflower corridor.
N2 Turfgrass			
N2.1 Maintain optimum turfgrass and soil health	**N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors**	Select appropriate grass species for the climate	Discussed: The selection of turf throughout the course including greens, tees, and fairways has been carefully aligned with local climatic conditions and is highly appropriate for a parkland course. Satisfied that the team routinely evaluates soil health, taking into account the seasonal variation, play conditions, and weather patterns.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition	No specific international requirement, however, identify course management and agronomic activities and look for continual improvements	Observed: A monthly course management and maintenance programme displayed in the greenkeeping office, outlining feeding schedules and aeration practices. Satisfied the greenkeeping team adheres to sound turfgrass management principles, supported by regular physical assessments and from soil-testing reports compiled by Origin Amenity Solutions.

	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Test and monitor soil pH; Follow legal requirements when timing fertiliser applications Ensure staff are fully qualified to use fertilisers Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment Regularly calibrate and test applicators	Observed: Soil sampling records and testing procedures are in place. I am satisfied that fertiliser applications are informed by soil test results, with nutrient levels managed appropriately according to the findings. Discussed: Spraying applications are carried out using calibrated equipment, supported by record keeping Observed: Spraying equipment and PPE present within the greenkeeping compound. Observed: Spraying control and record sheets.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	**N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management**	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Change hole locations frequently	Discussed: Maintenance and sharpening of tools. Machinery maintenance and repairs are managed off-site by East Ayrshire Council. Equipment was also observed within the greenkeeping compound. Observed: All greenkeeping machinery, including Toro Greenmaster ride on mower.
N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	**N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or cure defined / identified turf health issues**	Identify and track pest and disease hotspots, including sensitive areas Scout the course daily for early signs and symptoms Accurately diagnose to determine the cause of weeds, pests and diseases	Discussed: The quality of the playing surfaces is closely monitored, with a continued focus on reducing the need for chemical inputs through sustainable management practices. Risks and potential hotspots are tracked through regular inspections and on-course observations. Discussed: Sward management options include mowing and reusing clippings around the base of trees **CIP: Please create a map of potential pest and disease hotspots, ensuring it is accessible to all greenkeeping staff and integrated into routine inspection and monitoring practices.**
	N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions	Use legally registered and approved products; Prefer products for the specific weed, pest or disease; Follow legal requirements; Ensure staff are fully qualified to use pesticides; Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment;	Observed: Spraying equipment, chemicals and PPE located in greenkeeping storage facility. Discussed: Chemical and product logs, along with stock level management procedures. Discussed: Fertiliser movement and loading, which are undertaken on an impermeable surface in the greenkeeping store. Discussed: Chemical use, rinsing protocols and applications practices. **CCIP: Please ensure that chemical logs are updated and clearly displayed for staff to reference and observe safe practices.**

		Regularly calibrate and test applicators; Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of amenity turfgrass	
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 ; Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer areas next to water bodies and wetlands; Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer zones in and around ecologically sensitive areas	Discussed: Spraying operations are carefully controlled, with staff demonstrating a strong understanding of best practice in ecologically sensitive areas and near ponds and watercourses. **CCIP: Please create an Emergency Spill Response Plan. Include clear notification and reporting protocols within the document.** **CCIP: Please display spill response procedures and reporting guidance in the greenkeeping office to ensure a rapid and coordinated response in the event of an incident.**
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Formal wastewater discharge agreement, if applicable	Not applicable to Annanhill golf course .
	N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from maintenance facility operations	Wash machinery over an impermeable, leak-free surface; Mix and load pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable, leak-free surface; Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators	Observed: The greenkeeping store, which is a well-ventilated metal building with concrete flooring throughout. Discussed: All chemicals and fertiliser stored and loading on impermeable surfaces within the greenkeeping store. **CIP: Please undertake a general tidy up of discarded material surrounding the greenkeeping store.**
N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances	**N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe disposal of all hazardous substances**	List of hazardous substances, made available to authorised staff; Product and material data safety sheets; Well ventilated concrete or metal building; Impermeable, leak-free flooring; Sufficient storage capacity; Spill containment kits;	Observed: Fuel for greenkeeping machinery is stored in a lockable container within the greenkeeping compound, providing secure storage. Observed: A register of PPE requirements specific to greenkeeping machinery tasks is in place. **CCIP**: **Please create a list of hazardous substances. This, as well as Safety Data Sheets (SDS's), should be clearly visible and readily accessible to staff.**

			Secondary containment e.g., bunds or drip trays; Emergency wash area, as per local requirements (body shower and / or eye wash station); Hazardous substances safely collected by a registered company or body ; Follow any additional legal requirements	
		N3.2.2 Legal compliance in the storage and handling of fuels and gases	Tank secured to a horizontal, flat, non-combustible surface; Secondary containment of fuel in the event of spills e.g. bunds and drip trays; Inspection of storage tank(s) at least quarterly, if required; Fire extinguisher in the immediate area	Observed: A diesel storage tank is located on an impermeable base, with no signs of leakage or corrosion observed during the visit. Observed: A petrol fuel storage box located within the greenkeeping store. Observed: Fire extinguishers are positioned adjacent to the fuel storage area. **CCIP: Please establish a fuel tank inspection regime, including a review of the organisation's policy for fuel inspections to ensure full compliance.** **CCIP: Please remove materials stored on top of and adjacent to the diesel tank to reduce contamination risks.** **CCIP: Please purchase a spill containment kit to strengthen emergency preparedness and environmental protection.**
	N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water	**N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage, treatment and discharge**	Impermeable, leak-free surface; Treatment as per local requirements (oil, grease and / or clipping separation; Formal discharge agreement, if applicable	Discussed: The club has an arrangement in place for mowers and machinery to be cleaned at East Ayrshire Council's wash bay facility, which is reported to include an interceptor sump. The council facility is located approximately one mile from Annanhill golf course . Observed: A washdown area is present within the greenkeeping compound. This facility is used predominantly for the Toro Greenmaster mower, with clippings removed using a hose. **CIP: Please explore a business case for installing a dedicated ClearWater system or similar treatment solution within the greenkeeping compound.** Confirmed: The facility does not utilise septic tanks.

				Confirmed: No evidence of illegal discharges were identified during the visit. **CCIP: Please develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the wash down process. The SOP should include the requirement for greenkeeping staff to use a blower to remove residual clippings prior to transportation and before commencing the wash down process.** **CCIP: Please create a local washdown solution within the greenkeeping compound. Consideration should be given to installing a concrete wash bay with a gulley that can be accessed and cleaned, or alternatively adopting portable wash pad systems as a compliant on-site option.**

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**	Select appropriate grass species for the climate e.g., drought and disease tolerance; Target irrigation to essential playing surfaces; Prioritise native, drought tolerant species for landscaping and planting	Discussed: The club has water meters in place that collects the facilities water consumption data. This feeds directly into the Business Steam system enabling any issues to be reported to the Ayrshire360 team. Observed: Turfgrass species are appropriate for a parkland golf course, and I am satisfied that the greenkeeping team manages and targets irrigation effectively using their experience and on course observations. **CIP: Please consider investing in a targeted irrigation control system that records water usage across the course and provides real time insights to support precise irrigation on selected areas.**
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	**R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course**	Schedule irrigation based on informed assessment of soil moisture and weather forecasts;	I am satisfied that the greenkeeping team schedules irrigation based on informed assessments, supported by soil testing results and weather forecasts.

		Evaluate new irrigation technologies e.g., central control, precision sprinklers etc.; Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices; Adjust sprinklers to playing surfaces only	As noted in 1.1, the club would benefit from adopting a controlled irrigation system, enabling irrigation records to be reviewed regularly alongside weather reports and wider course management data.
	R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings	Monitor and record water consumption (bills, flow meter etc.); Encourage water conservation practices amongst players and staff	The clubhouse was not in scope for the verification visit. However, water consumption billing records for the facility are reported to be reviewed regularly by East Ayrshire Council, the owners of the golf course. The facility has water meters that collect water consumption data, which feeds into the Business Stream system and highlights any issues for prompt investigation.
R1.3 Source water responsibly	**R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water**	Water abstraction permit, if required; Report water consumption to environment agency, if required	Confirmed: A water abstraction licence is not applicable to Annanhill golf course .
R2 Energy			
R2.1 Reduce energy demand	**R2.1.1 Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed in golf course maintenance**	Naturalise non-playing areas to reduce mowing and other energy intensive inputs	Observed: Areas have been left for naturalisation and discussions with staff confirm that an ongoing naturalisation process has been implemented across the entire facility. Discussed: The total area of the facility is 103 acres, of which 46.4 acres are not cut and are maintained as habitat areas.
R2.2 Maximise energy efficiency	**R2.2.1 Measures to use energy and fuels more efficiently in buildings**	Monitor and record energy consumption (bills, meters etc.)	As noted in 1.2.2, the clubhouse was not in scope for the verification visit. However, the facility's energy billing records are reported to be reviewed regularly by East Ayrshire Council. **CIP: If possible, please source energy consumption records from East Ayrshire Council for the greenkeeping compound and starters' office to support ongoing monitoring and identify opportunities for improved efficiency**.

R2.3 Source energy responsibly	**R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy**	Understand the energy mix of your electricity supplier; Explore possible greener energy providers	Discussed: The future opportunities for renewable energy associated with the new clubhouse development. Observed: The EV buggy and golf boards used by golfers.
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**	No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to reduce the demand for materials and look for continual improvements	Discussed: The course is owned by East Ayrshire Council, who also manage waste collection. The Council's preference is to collect general waste from the facility and process recycling centrally at their waste management depot. As a result, the club has limited control over the recycling approach currently in place. Observed: General waste collection bins are located at the greenkeeping compound and throughout the course. **CIP: Please provide waste and recycling bins within the greenkeeping compound and at the starters' office to encourage best practice recycling behaviours among staff, golfers and members of the public.** **CIP: If possible, please seek to influence and gain approval from East Ayrshire Council to integrate the club's preferred best practice recycling measures into the facility's waste-management arrangements.** **Highlight:** Repurposed 3G football pitch surface has been used for pathways. Also, tee markers have been created from unused rounded wooden posts, demonstrating resourcefulness and circular economy principles.
R3.2 Purchase responsibly	**R3.2.1 Commit to sustainable purchasing practices**	Favour responsible, lower impact products	Discussed: Formal sustainable purchasing processes and policies are managed centrally by East Ayrshire Council. Opportunities for the club to influence sustainable procurement are currently limited due to the clubhouse not being operated or owned by Ayrshre360. However, through the purchasing of snacks and goods sold at the starters' office, it is evident that the club is committed to ethical procurement practices. **CCIP**: **Please develop and implement an Annanhill golf course Sustainable Purchasing Statement that outlines preferred criteria, including local sourcing, responsible resource management and alignment with Ayrshire360's overarching sustainability policies.**

R3.3 Reuse and recycle	**R3.3.1 Waste stream separation for maximum recycling and re-use opportunity**	Put in place a recycling separation system, according to local rules and availability; Clear, simple and visible bin signage; Monitor and record weight of waste for each stream e.g. invoices, bills etc.	Observed: Clearly labelled general waste bins are located within the greenkeeping compound and throughout the golf course. **CIP: As noted in 3.1, please seek to influence and gain approval from East Ayrshire Council to integrate waste stream separation and best-practice recycling opportunities preferred by the club.** **CIP**: I**f possible, please agree with East Ayrshire Council on the most appropriate process for monitoring waste generated from golf club operations to support improved monitoring.**
R3.4 Demonstrate legal compliance	**R3.4.1 Compliance with all local and regional waste management regulations**	Authorised waste collector for general, hazardous, industrial and green waste, if required	Confirmed: All waste disposal practices are compliant with current regulations.

COMMUNITY

C1 Health & Wellbeing

Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
C1.1 Improve health and wellbeing	**C1.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities**	Plans in place to respond to incidents and emergencies	Discussed: The club has formal Health and Safety policies covering all aspects of its operations, including HSE registers and Ayrshire360 risk assessments that support daily greenkeeping activities. Observed: Health & Safety signage and PPE requirements for greenkeeping operations are in place. Observed: An automated defibrillator located at the clubhouse.
C1.2 Be open and inclusive	**C1.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies**	Membership policies free from discrimination across age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnic background	Discussed: The club has an impressive junior membership base of approximately 280, supported by a range of initiatives designed to engage young people from the area. The club is also actively seeking to increase its relatively low number of ladies' members and is committed to addressing this through a variety of approaches. The club has previously

			hosted Ayrshire Ladies and Ayrshire Junior golf events and is exploring opportunities to host future ladies' events to attract new female members. I am very satisfied that the club is open, welcoming and free from discrimination.
C1.3 Employ fairly, safely and provide career opportunities	**C1.3.1 Ethical and legal employment, working conditions and professional development**	Adopt an equal opportunity recruitment and hiring policy; Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for hiring and employment; Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for worker safety	Discussed: Employment practices meet all relevant legal requirements. All staff are employed are reported to have formal contracts with clearly defined roles. Personal development and legislative training form part of the club's commitment to maintaining a safe and compliant workplace.
C2 Outreach & Inclusion			
C2.1 Diversify access and provide multifunctionality	**C2.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility**	No specific international requirement, however, identify multifunctional activities and look for continual improvements	Discussed: The club collaborates closely with Ayrshire College. The college delivers Level 5 and Level 6 accredited horticulture courses and uses the golf course as part of the students' learning programme. Tasks undertaken include vegetation control, tree planting, and flower bed creation. **CIP**: **Please explore further outreach and engagement opportunities, such as developing educational nature trails, forming partnerships with local schools or hosting outreach events with organisations such as RSPB or the Scottish Wildlife Trust.** **Highlight:** A 'Talking Bench' has been installed on the course, signposting physical and mental health support services available across Ayrshire. Both golfers and members of the public can access this information via a QR code.
C2.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	**C2.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes**	No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to support volunteering and charity and look for continual improvements	Discussed: The club actively engages with its members, with some involved in volunteering activities, including researching the history of the course and its surrounding areas. This has included collaboration with Kilmarnock Historical Society to investigate the historical uses of the golf course. **CIP: Please try to create a volunteering charter or similar framework to support, recognise, and guide volunteer involvement.**
C2.3 Establish active community partnerships	**C2.3.1 Positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the**	No specific international requirement, however, identify partnerships and community	Discussed: The club has an impressive engagement programme and has established constructive relationships with local neighbours and community partners. This work is led by Ayrshire360 staff member Margaret Mellon,

		local community and other groups	activities and look for continual improvements	who has fostered an open, friendly and welcoming environment for members and the wider public from the local neighbourhood. **Highlight:** The club has created a very welcoming atmosphere for all members of the community. Fostering an informal support network, providing opportunities for members to relax and build connections. This was observed during the verification visit. **CIP**: **Please try to develop a Community Engagement Plan or similar framework that sets out objectives and opportunities for ongoing partnerships, outreach activities and wider community collaboration.**
	C3 Communications & Advocacy			
	C3.1 Engage staff and golfers	**C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness and understanding amongst members and visitors**	Involve staff and committees in sustainability efforts; Involve golfers in sustainability efforts; Post sustainability information in the clubhouse and / or on the golf course	Discussed: The club's sustainability efforts are led by Davie Pratt, who is actively engaged in developing and implementing practices that embed sustainability across all areas of club operations. **CIP: Please increase awareness of the club's sustainability initiatives through website content and wider communications channels.**
	C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability	**C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community**	Share at least 3 Highlights on sustainable.golf	Discussed: A wildflower corridor has been established alongside the newly created 'mile-a-day' path network. This project has connected golfers and dog walkers in a safe and harmonious way, with all users benefiting from access to the golf course. **CIP: Please consider engaging with organisations such as RSPB, the BioBlitz network, or local volunteering bodies to explore opportunities related to the biodiversity benefits provided by the golf course and its three wildlife ponds.** **Highlight:** Historical information boards were observed at the 1st, 5th, and 9th holes, referencing William Wallace, coal mining, and historic railway activity. These features provide meaningful local heritage context and enhance the cultural value of the course
	C3.3 Follow a journey of continuous improvement	**C3.3.1 Measures to help track, review and improve sustainability and climate action**	Put measures in place to ensure that OnCourse can be updated annually	Discussed: Sustainability action areas can be effectively guided by the development of a Habitat and Environmental Management Plan, providing structure and direction for ongoing enhancement across the course.

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