



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report Kingsbarns Golf Links

Prepared by independent verifier Carolyn Hedley

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2025
Recertification due: 2030

“My Nov 2025 visit to Kingsbarns Golf Links marked the 3rd certification for the facility and as such, I was looking for a demonstration of a sustained high level of environmental best practice, and also evidence of continual improvement and new projects across a variety of areas. I was pleased to see and hear that all departments continue to drive progress and improve their environmental performance for long term sustainability.

A key highlight of such progress was learning about the opening of the new staff welfare facility, a sustainable building designed for energy efficiency including an air source heat pump and recycled materials such as the outdoor recycled plastic furniture. The installation of solar panels at the maintenance facility and Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers are further initiatives to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels and support carbon reduction. The Clere Golf topographical survey and ongoing monitoring is another highlight and shows the use of cutting-edge technologies to support course management decision making.

A further highlight was the new beehives installed on the course and the adjacent wildflower meadow cultivation. This was additionally commendable as is part of a wider regional initiative and also produced honey to be sold in the clubhouse. Finally, I am impressed with the ongoing development of the new electronic recording system, which will enable course data, records, training and licences etc to be accurately recorded, monitored and reported.

I hope my suggested continual improvement points are taken on board and I look forward to reading and hearing more positive sustainability communications from Kingsbarns Golf Links over the next few years.”

Carolyn Hedley
(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Kingsbarns Golf Links 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.

Kingsbarns Golf Links 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, Kingsbarns Golf Links should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Kingsbarns Golf Links 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 – 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	Understand all habitats and vegetation types on the site; Regularly update landscape / biodiversity knowledge and records	The Course and Facilities Manager Innes Knight and his team continue to have a very good understanding of the natural habitats and landscape value of the site. Course appearance, playability and biodiversity is enhanced by the ongoing implementation of expert survey recommendations for the grasslands, scrub and gorse, sand dunes, hedges and woodlands. Woodland management advice continues to be received from ecological consultants including a risk assessment and tree management action plan. There is ongoing engagement with wildlife and ecology professionals such as the Scottish Wildlife Trust and staff at the University of St Andrews for habitat creation and restoration advice. This includes an ongoing relationship with Will Cresswell, ornithologist at the University, advising on birds including Corn bunting protection (a previous OnCourse Highlight). Further surveys such as a botanical survey are still planned for the next few years in conjunction with St Andrews University. The potential for insect and butterfly surveys was also discussed. CIP: Please undertake further surveys and the upload all survey records/data and species sightings to the Fife Nature Record Centre: (https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/environment2/fife-nature-records-centre) and the National Biodiversity Network Atlas (https://nbnatlas.org/). This valuable data gathered on the course can then be shared with others, supporting regional and national action, initiatives and statistics.
	N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for	Understand legal responsibilities for protected landscapes and species;	The designated Site of Special Scientific Interest, the Fife Ness SSSI, along the coastal area which includes part of the 15th to 12th Holes,

	protected areas, habitats and species	Record and monitor protected, endangered, or rare species found on the site	continues to be protected during course management operations and events in accordance with the NatureScot requirements. Further information regarding special designations can be found at the Nature Scot website: https://sitelink.nature.scot/
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	The historical and cultural heritage of the site is understood, including the links to the Cambo Estate. The Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) and Archaeological areas continue to be protected in accordance with Historic Scotland requirements. There are plans to potentially use new topographical survey equipment to gain a greater understanding of these areas as they are underground. (see N2.2.1)
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 managed turf areas on the course have been optimised over a number of years taking into consideration golfer and tournament requirements. As such there has not been any changes in maintained turfgrass areas since the last certification. Out of play areas are naturalised with grassland and scrub habitats defining the in and out of play zones, keeping golfer landing areas in mind.
N1.3 Actively manage habitats for wildlife	N1.3.1 Projects to manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf	Prioritise native species when planting and landscaping	Restoration work programmes are carried out throughout the year to prioritise native habitats and to benefit wildlife whilst still producing a high-quality golfing experience. There is the added benefit of conducting works during the winter season as there are no golfers to disrupt or work around. Projects including, woodland management, dune/coastal and grassland management are often in conjunction with the Cambo Estate and Fife Coast and Countryside Trust. Prior to the Dunhill Tournament, plans are put in place to protect habitats and species from spectators/temporary infrastructure etc. and to minimise reinstatement requirements. Highlight: Wildflower habitat strips have been created recently to benefit pollinating insects and to provide a pollen source for the new bee hives. (See N1.4.1)

			The extensive rough grassland areas are now managed with a Ventrac ride on mower which gives increased accessibility. CCIP: Please review and update previous environmental action plans, nature maps and expert reports into one new over-arching Nature Action Plan, detailing known data, objectives, actions, timescales, responsibilities and some key targets / KPIs. CIP: Following the success of the wildflower area creation at the hives, it would be beneficial to establish many more pockets of this valuable habitat across the course and wider facility. I suggest creating a separate Highlight focussing on grassland management and wildflower area creation, detailing techniques used and wildflower species that are thriving. CIP: The Sand Dunes planting and transplanting work could be made into a Highlight and used in the promotion of environmental achievements / communications with walkers along the coastal path.
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		Many of the priority species detailed in the Fife Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) are supported by the positive conservation actions at the Links such as the Corn Bunting project (Previous Highlight). The woodland protection work is likely to also support the variety of bat species on the Fife LBAP priority species list. A bat survey would confirm this and the team should ensure that any bird and bat boxes are regularly monitored and species numbers recorded. The planned botanical survey could highlight further plant species of note. Highlight: Busy Bees! - I observed the beehives that have been installed in a corner of the site along with a long strip of wildflower meadow. These are increasing the populations of bees and other pollinating insects which are vulnerable and in decline nationally. This is part of a wider initiative in the East Neuk area of Fife linking local apiaries. In conjunction with a local producer, collected honey is now available for purchase in the clubhouse and I can confirm it is of a high quality!
N2 Turfgrass			
N2.1 Maintain optimum turf and soil health	N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and	Select appropriate grass species for climate	The turf species mix on the course was discussed. Overseeding has resulted in a slight increase in fescue and bent species on the greens with a reduction in poa annua which will increase turf tolerance to the

	other geomorphological factors		changing climate conditions and the high traffic impact of the shorter season on the links.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		Kingsbarns Golf Links continue to follow sustainable turf management industry best practices with support from agronomy expert advice to maintain good soil structure and condition. This includes the testing and monitoring of soil pH, and annual organic matter testing to inform management practices such as aeration and verti-cutting and sand/top dressing. Highlight: There was a Clere Golf Topographical Scan survey carried out prior to the Alfred Dunhill championship. Going forward, using the vLoc3 RTK-Pro handheld scanning equipment they can increase the accuracy of course data by contour mapping surface/subsurface features that will assist with management decisions. GPS linked back to desktop imaging; multiple layers can be added including disease observations and potentially underground scheduled ancient monument details. This demonstrated to me the long-term commitment to invest in and utilise new industry technologies and equipment to maximise the understanding of the course parameters.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Soil nutrient levels are tested to support the targeted fertiliser program. We discussed the fertiliser quantity data for the greens and turf nursery and how applications are adapted as necessary throughout the season, before the Alfred Dunhill tournament, and during the recovery and reinstatement period after the event. This year there was no cutting required during the tournament week.
	N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; IPM strategies including cultural, mechanical pest, disease and weed management methods are used to reduce the quantity of chemical inputs required; e.g. sharpening of mowing blades, surface moisture removal and aeration equipment efficiency. Washing of machinery and golfer shoes and equipment also helps reduce the spread of any diseases.
	N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or	Establish patterns and levels of risk for pests and diseases; Following good identification and monitoring practices within established tolerance thresholds, an integrated approach of both preventative and

	cure defined / identified turf health issues	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	targeted curative applications is needed when non-chemical pest and disease management is insufficient.
	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	I can confirm only legally registered and approved products are used. Highlight: Procedures, monitoring results and product use records are being added to a new computerised recording system being developed for Kingsbarns Golf Links by consultant Paul Miller. It is being developed to cover all aspects of course management administration including turf inputs & chemical logs, resource use, equipment calibration and servicing, staff training & licences, and other HR matters. This tailor-made and innovative system will ensure data kept is accurate, secure and easily accessible, making legislation compliance and reporting easier.
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	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;	I can confirm procedures and staff training are in place regarding the management and minimisation of environmental pollution risk and hazards for course management operations and to deal with the event of any chemical or product spills or emergencies. These include operational procedures, spill kits and mowing/no spray zones for the ditch at the 18th and the protected shoreline. Sprayer training / licences etc are provided by Neil Christie. CCIP: Although evidence of pollution prevention and spill procedures / risk assessments was observed, these should also be uploaded to the OnCourse Documents Library in addition to those already added for risks to human health. These are required as part of the Emergency Response Plan Essential Documentation.

			Water quality testing (biological, chemical and physical) on the course is carried out by SEPA. CCIP: Please ensure the SEPA Pollution Hotline number 0800 80 70 60 is added to incident reporting procedures and training and made visible to staff e.g. on noticeboards. CIP: As discussed, there have been some recent changes to SEPA legislation to be aware of. From 1 Nov 2025, water, waste management and industrial activities are now regulated under the Environmental Authorisation (Scotland) Regulations 2018 (EASR). This will replace Pollution Prevention & Control Regs (PPC) and The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regs 2011 (CAR) among others. I recommend looking at the SEPA or NetRegs websites for more info on EASR.
	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	All hazardous materials e.g. cleaning products in the clubhouse are safely and securely stored as detailed in the Health and Safety Policy, risk assessments and procedures, COSHH guidance and disposal licences. Waste oils and food waste are collected by specialist contractors. There is a formal discharge agreement for wastewater going to the mains sewerage network.
	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	Pollution risks and spills associated with maintenance facility operations are minimised by best practice procedures, very organised and tidy working areas and secure turf product and fuel storage. Machinery washing and chemical mixing is on an impermeable wash bay area and effluent treated by a Waste2Water closed loop biological system. All other wastewater goes to a septic tank which is emptied by a licenced contractor. Waste chemical containers are triple rinsed.
	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; Registers of hazardous materials have been uploaded to the Document Library. Licences and records of all hazardous materials, inspections and staff training are also part of the new electronic recording system. Storage tanks are inspected by Fife Council and are double skinned and banded. Hazardous materials are securely contained.

		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	Emergency wash areas, spill kits, first aid kits and fire extinguishers are present. Advice is received by Environmental Health experts.
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)	Wastewater is to either mains sewer with agreement or to a septic tank at the maintenance facility. As mentioned in N3.1.3, the W2W closed loop biological machinery washing system is on a contained impermeable washpad which may get extended. Natural reedbed treatment options were also discussed as a treatment option for any spills from chemical handling.

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 Appropriate grass species for the climate e.g., drought and disease tolerance	Irrigation water is abstracted under a SEPA abstraction licence from two groundwater boreholes. The reduction in quantities of water needed to be abstracted from 23984m³ in 2022, 16452m³ in 2023, down to 15952m³ in 2024 was discussed and justified as due to a combination of climate factors,

			increase in fescues on greens, improvements in irrigation targeting, efficiency and accuracy, and hand watering. It should be noted that water abstraction regulations also come under the new EASR regulations discussed in N.3.1.1.
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 levels	Adrian Motram consultant has recently advised on irrigation system performance and optimisation and there is a programme of ongoing maintenance being carried out including upgrades to sprinklers, leaky joints and valve boxes. There have also been improvements to the borehole pump efficiency by replacing the flexible abstraction hose with a steel riser that is less susceptible to corrosion. Soil moisture monitoring and weather station data also improve accuracy and the reduction in water use.
	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	Public/mains water usage in the Clubhouse and maintenance facility has risen slightly over the last 3 years, which is as expected with increased number of golfers and users of the clubhouse catering. Water saving devices have been installed across all the buildings. Staff are encouraged to reduce water across the facility. CIP: Please try to submeter the system so mains usage data can be split between the buildings. Submetering can also be used within the clubhouse to separate data for the kitchens from the changing facilities. This will highlight areas of high usage, any anomaly or leak detection and will help prioritise any repairs or improvements.
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	As discussed in R1.1, the course irrigation system is supplied by abstracted groundwater under licence from SEPA under the new EASR regulations. The permit is in the OnCourse Documents Library and abstraction quantity data is reported annually as requested. Current permitted abstraction limits and storage capacity is sufficient at the present time but these will continue to be monitored to ensure resilience to future climatic changes. SEPA Drought Maps / predictions are also considered in warmer months to monitor the security/availability of the abstraction resource.

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	Over many years mown turf areas have been reduced where possible and naturalised areas encouraged such as the new wildflower areas. This has minimised energy use in machinery and irrigation pumps. Good maintenance of course machinery and vehicles also minimises fuel use.
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	I can confirm that energy consumption is regularly monitored, and bills reviewed. Staff are trained in energy saving practices and during inductions. As was the case at the last certification, various energy efficiency measures such as LED lighting with controls and sensors, efficient heating and insulation have been installed across the facility buildings. The newly built staff welfare facility was designed and constructed with many 'green building' elements such as the large amount of natural light, high insulation values and energy saving solutions installations and controls.
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	Highlight: Onsite renewable energy is generated through solar photovoltaic panels on the maintenance facility roof supplying an estimated 20,000 kwh. Highlight: Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points have been installed in the public and staff carparks to provide a service to those with electric vehicles. This will encourage the use of sustainable travel and help to lower emissions from golfer transportation. Highlight: The newly constructed staff welfare building is designed with high energy efficiency and with an Air Source Heat Pump supplying energy for the underfloor heating and hot water. This is reducing the need to use fossil fuel energy sources.
R3 Materials			
R3.1 Reduce materials demand	R3.1.1 Products and materials selection based on necessity, including	Undertake a review of materials consumed	Across all departments, the materials and resources used continue to be closely monitored and good stock control practices and records are kept.

	opportunities for recycled, reused and locally sourced alternatives		Products and resources are efficiently used and good maintenance, repair and reuse practices are in place where possible to prolong materials lifespan and reduce the demand to purchase new materials. Paper and single use plastics have been reduced e.g. the water bottle filling station encourages use of reusable water bottles. Where materials cannot be reused, waste separation and recycling practices are in place to meet Scottish waste management legislation. Waste contractor ENVIA produce useful data and analysis on an online customer dashboard.
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	Through discussions with a variety of staff it is evident that choices of suppliers and purchasing decisions are made with environmental and ethical factors in mind. Although no written sustainable purchasing policy was viewed, in addition to high quality products, locality of production, recycled and recyclable materials and certifications were important factors. CCIP: Please document current practices in a formal Sustainable Purchasing Policy. This would encourage consistency and new ideas for all employees when making purchasing decisions. The pro shop is moving gradually away from single use plastic with reusable water bottles and water refill points available. In discussion with shop staff, there is an increasing awareness of suppliers and products that are promoting sustainability credentials. This includes sustainable clothing fabrics and recycled products and reduced packaging. Compacting and recycling of packaging was also discussed and there are plans to invest in a cardboard compactor / baler. CIP: I would encourage the shop staff to continue to have conversations with suppliers about their sustainability credentials and product developments and to encourage customers to choose sustainable products available through positive communications and 'subtle' signage. Highlight: There continues to be a large variety of fruit and vegetables produced in a poly tunnel on site led by Hugh Barnier that supplies the clubhouse kitchen for seasonal menus. Certified products such as marine stewardship fish are sourced from the local

			harbours in Fife, meat from local producers, and local whisky and honey branded specially for Kingsbarns. To ensure minimal waste in the kitchens, good stock control and menu planning practices are in place including portion size flexibility along with supplier delivery optimisation and packaging reduction. I observed the outdoor furniture at the new staff welfare facility is also made from recycled plastic.
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	Dry Mixed recyclables, glass and food waste are separated with recycling bins across the facility and course, and all removed from site in accordance with legislation and specialist contractors. There are plans to separate out and bale cardboard from mixed recycling to reduce volume and uplifts. Green waste such as soil, cores and clippings is reused on site or composted and waste wood is recycled into course signage. Old equipment and range balls are also donated. The ENVA dashboard is set up to report quantities of waste streams. While data presented shows 98% total recycled (likely due to waste incineration rather than to landfill), the onsite recovery data of 47.39% is the recycling rate within the control of the facility. With advice from ENVA and looking at trends over the busier and quieter periods of the year, they have managed to optimise bin sizes and adapt the frequency of bin uplifts. CIP: To encourage continual improvement in waste recycling, I suggest onsite recovery % or recycling rate (a % of total waste produced) could be used as a measure of performance with a target metric to work towards (e.g. 60% onsite recycling by 2028). I also suggest that data from the Alfred Dunhill event period could be analysed separately from normal operational periods.

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	Kingsbarns continues to be compliant with waste legislation, and waste contractors James Finlayson and ENVA are authorised / licenced. There is an increasing amount of data produced by waste contractors which helps in monitoring. Note: There are also changes to some waste regulations in the new EASR.
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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		As Kingsbarns Golf Links welcome local and international visitors and do not have a membership of golfers, there are limited non-golfing social events. They are, however, welcoming to the public providing paths and safety information signage for safe access to the beach and along the coastal path. The course is also used for educational visits / course walks. Kingsbarns, along with other golf clubs and landowners, attended a meeting organised by James Gemmell of Fife Coast & Countryside Trust and the Local Access Officer. They were able to relay their experiences and the challenges in managing the coastal path and ideas and examples of best practice were discussed for encouraging safe access for walkers.
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		Staff continue to be encouraged and provided time to take up volunteering opportunities and they have supported 20 charities annually including community sports and wildlife charities. The course and clubhouse are made available for charitable golf events and tee times are donated to support charitable fundraising.
C1.3 Establish active community partnerships	C1.3.1 Positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the local community and other groups	Inform and include staff, members, and committees in sustainability efforts	Key members of staff from each department contribute to sustainability activities.

			There continue to be course walks and educational visits from local schools, further education and other community partnerships. Resources are often shared within the golfing community “particularly for the Dunhill Championship”.
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 health & wellbeing of staff, members and visitors is important at Kingsbarns Golf Links. Walking is promoted and encouraged with access paths and trollies provided (99.5% of rounds). For those with limited mobility/disability, buggies are available and the clubhouse is accessible. The buggies now have a QR code system to monitor usage and there are plans to expand this to machinery and course vehicles, with links to instruction manuals etc. The Health & Safety Policy details procedures to reduce risks and protect human health and emergency plans. Drinking water supply stations are provided at the starters building and out on the course along with an emergency communication device and storm shelters to help in all types of weather.
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	As there are no members at Kingsbarns, visitor golfer policies are open, non-discriminating and inclusive. They aim to be accessible and encouraging for family golf and local community engagement.
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	Fair employment policies such as equal opportunities recruitment, living wage and overtime, apprenticeships, discrimination reporting and employee benefits are in place. Employee safety is ensured with robust policies, inductions, training and working conditions as detailed in the Health & Safety Policy. In the greenkeeping department, risk assessments, staff qualifications, training/HR records and licences etc are on the new electronic recording system. Staff can link into this system via WhatsApp to respond to

			communications, questionnaires and training requirements supporting a move to paperless record keeping.
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 staff teams at Kingsbarns Golf Links are aware and often contribute to the sustainability efforts being made and are trained in sustainability best practices that are part of their role. Some sustainability achievements will be visible to visiting golfers such as the high-quality course and natural habitats, drinking water stations, recycling points and seasonal menus etc. There are of course a multitude of other actions and achievements that go on in the 'back of house' that visitors are not aware of. As discussed with Chief Executive Alan Hogg, there are many more opportunities to showcase the excellent sustainability achievements that have contributed to retaining GEO Certified status over many years. CIP: The website could easily include the GEO Certified logo alongside other golfing accolades, with a link to more details and additional publication of the Highlights in this report. The use of photos for nature/species present could be added to the course section of the website. There is also an opportunity to promote GEO Certified at the starters building for golfers checking in. CIP: Wider stakeholder communications and social media could be used more to highlight positive 'green' stories to reach potential visitors. The Dunhill Championship is an ideal time for this and pre-written content could be prepared in advance to pass to Dunhill communications teams with information available for spectators.
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	There were examples given of activities where sustainability was promoted through course walks with local communities and international greenkeepers and students. There are also more proposed nature activities in partnership with local education establishments. Many of the afore mentioned nature activities are part of regional initiatives e.g. the beehives/wildflowers/honey production, and the local public access meeting.

			CIP: I would encourage this further by linking in with the Fife Biodiversity Officer for initiatives and beneficial contacts. CIP: Continuing to discuss sustainability ambitions with suppliers, contractors and other business stakeholders could help with product purchasing decisions, site protection and open up new project funding opportunities. CIP: More positive external communication and awareness raising would be beneficial through various communication channels, using GEO Certified status and Highlights as evidence of sustainability achievements. CIP: Golf Environment Awards and Scottish Environment Business Awards (VIBES) could also be entered.
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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