



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report

The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers Muirfield

Prepared by independent verifier Carolyn Headley

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2024
Recertification due: 2029

GEO Certified®

 **GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

“Muirfield, the home of The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers, have again demonstrated the highest standards of sustainability across the course and in the clubhouse, as is now expected of one of the highest ranking national and international golf venues.

Strong nature partnerships and consistent habitat management have ensured the course remains a haven for wildlife along ‘Scotland’s Golf Coast’ and through recent refurbishments, the welcoming clubhouse now also reaches a high level of resource efficiency and waste management.

While staff and member awareness and involvement in sustainability activities continues to be good, the club should also take pride in the understated achievements that I have highlighted that could be promoted wider for more recognition.

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

*Carolyn Headley
(GEO accredited independent verifier)*



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers Muirfield 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.

The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers Muirfield 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, The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers Muirfield should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers Muirfield 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	Map all habitats and vegetation types on the site; Regularly update landscape / biodiversity surveys	The team at HCEG Muirfield have shown that they have a very good understanding of the habitats and vegetation types across the golf course and the overall landscape and biodiversity value of the site. The biodiversity on the course was discussed and includes a variety of habitat types including managed amenity grassland, coastal grassland, dune heathland, gorse and sea buckthorn scrub, and plantation woodland. There has been a wealth of habitat, species and landscape data and knowledge gained over many years through regular external expert surveys, maps, audits & plans including an annual ecological monitoring assessment, the latest of which was carried out on behalf of the R&A Championships in July 2024. CIP: Please upload survey records and species sightings to The Wildlife Information Centre for Lothians and Borders (www.wildlifeinformation.co.uk) and the National Biodiversity Network Atlas (https://nbnatlas.org/). The valuable data gathered on the course can then be shared with others, supporting regional and national action and statistics.
	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 course contains part of the Gullane to Broadsands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is part of the wider coastal Firth of Forth Special Protection Area (SPA) and RAMSAR site. We discussed the legal requirements for protecting the SSSI designated area during course management operations and lots of supporting documentation has now been uploaded. Protected, endangered and rare species have been monitored on the site over many years as part of specialist ecology surveys. Highlight: As part of the planning and delivery of a Sand Dune Restoration project in the protected area, which included substantial sea buckthorn removal, the course management team worked

			closely with planning authorities and NatureScot. These partnerships were important to ensure the project was approved and carried out to the highest standard, in accordance with the designation legal requirements. Details and requirements for the SSSI area have been uploaded to the OnCourse Documents Library.
	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 history of the clubhouse and the club membership.
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 areas of managed turfgrass have been optimised over many years by monitoring patterns of play and wear to meet the needs of the club membership, visiting golfers, and also the R&A Championship organisers. The annual ecological monitoring reports contain actions for further naturalisation of the rough areas of the site. This has resulted in the optimisation of managed turfgrass and an increase in botanical interest and coastal wildflowers, improving the habitat for insects and invertebrates.
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	Recommendations and actions specified in the annual ecology reports are followed to ensure the management of the habitats on the course provide a high-quality golfing standard but also benefit wildlife. Over recent years these actions have included rough grassland management, gorse and sea buckthorn management, woodland management (including the felling of storm damaged trees) and native tree planting (with support from the Forestry Commission). These habitat management practices were discussed and it was interesting to hear how the changing climate, weather patterns and seasons are affecting the timing of annual grassland management for example, which takes place now in October. This can cause challenges in programming as the golfing season is also extending, now from April to November. The dune habitats on the course e.g. at the 3rd and 4th holes, have many areas where the invasive species sea buckthorn is compromising the dune topography, the public paths and reducing the potential botanical interest. As mentioned previously, there has been a programme of sand dune restoration and sea buckthorn removal starting in 2016/17 in partnership with NatureScot.

			CIP: The Sand Dune Restoration / Sea Buckthorn removal project would make a great Sustainable Golf Highlight.
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		The ecological reports identify a variety of key wildflower species that are encouraged through the recommended habitat management actions. Numbers of notable species have been recorded. Orchids numbers will continue to be monitored as an indicator of botanical biodiversity, with volunteers from the wider staff. Muirfield are also part of the R&A Golf and Biodiversity project and have received surveys of breeding birds and butterflies in 2023/4. These surveys will help the club understand the biological value of the course and provide management recommendations going forward. 13 butterfly species and 43 bird species were recorded, 24 of which are considered notable due to their legal protection of conservation status e.g. being on the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) amber or red list or on the Scottish Biodiversity List (SBL). There are nest boxes across the course and also owl and swift boxes have been installed. There is also a reintroduction project for the red list, nationally declining species Grey Partridge. This year 50 young were reared and released. Highlight: A Swift nest box was added to the clubhouse following renovation work. This is due to be relocated to a more optimal location/position in the new dormy development. I suggest advice could be sought from www.swift-conservation.org to maximise success. CIP: The Grey Partridge release program would make a great Sustainable Golf Highlight. CIP: It was discussed that there could be more member walks organised, in particular to discuss and observe the abundance of bird species including some that are on the BoCC red list.
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	Turf species were discussed and have remained the same on greens, tees and fairways over recent years as deemed appropriate for the current climate and geomorphology on the course.

	other geomorphological factors		There has been a slight increase in red fescue and reduction in bent grass species in the maintained rough which has been a result of the rough management practices.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		Muirfield follow R&A sustainable turf management best practices to maintain good soil structure and condition.
	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 regularly as recommended by agronomy advisors. Monitoring data is used for targeted responsible fertiliser applications and to ensure no over-application of nutrients. Both organic and inorganic fertilisers are used. We discussed the fertiliser quantity data, and the increase in nitrogen and potassium quantities over the last 3 years was justified as an adaption to the changing climate and increased golfer pressure on the course.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	IPM strategies including cultural, non-chemical pest, disease and weed management methods are used to reduce the quantity of chemical inputs needed such as sharpening of mowing blades, surface moisture removal and aeration equipment efficiency.
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	Chemical usage was discussed and records observed. Fungicides, insecticides and herbicides are used minimally, curatively and when necessary preventatively by having good identification practices and monitoring procedures.
	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 there are records of chemicals, product application logs and applicator licenses and training. Health & Safety Policy, protective clothing and equipment, list of hazardous substances and hazardous waste licences are all in place.
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.	I can confirm there are Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and training in place to ensure spills and pollution are prevented along with emergency spill response procedures. Staff are trained how to use spill kits to reduce risk to human health and the environment. Sensitive habitat areas are protected by no spray areas. The spillage policy has been uploaded to the OnCourse Documents library to add to club wide Emergency Response Plan. CCIP: Please add the SEPA Pollution Hotline number to incident reporting procedures and training. Please also make this visible to staff e.g. on noticeboards.
	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	I can confirm all hazardous materials in the clubhouse are safely and securely stored as detailed in the Health and Safety Policy, risk assessments and procedures, and disposal licences. Water services and sewerage licences are in place.
	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	Best practice is followed for chemical and fuel storage and all maintenance facility operations to minimise risk of any spills. There is a biological closed loop system for treating and recycling machinery wash water. Any spills from chemical mixing or container rinsing would go through this system also.
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	Storage tanks are inspected annually by East Lothian Council and are double skinned and banded. I can confirm there is a register of hazardous substances, hazardous waste licences and first aid and emergency response procedures in place. – essential documentation verified. A risk assessments document has been uploaded to the OnCourse Documents library.
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)	A sewerage licence is in place as part of the business water billing agreement.

			Wash bay and recycled operational wastewater treatment system was observed as above in N3.1.3. Wastewater discharge licence has been uploaded to documents library. – essential documentation verified.
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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	Irrigation water is targeted at playing surfaces only and turf species are appropriate for the local climate. Native drought tolerant species are used in planting and landscaping.
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	To guide maintenance practices and support the efficient, targeted use and scheduling of irrigation water, soil conditions are analysed along with climate measurements from an onsite weather station and weather predictions. Irrigation water application is optimised with individual sprinkler controls linked to the automated irrigation computer system and efficient pumps. The Rainbird system installed in 2011-13 is serviced twice a year and calibrated annually. Staff are trained on efficient irrigation practices.
	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	Following a major refurbishment of the clubhouse in 2018, many water saving devices and efficient appliances have been fitted in kitchens and changing/bathrooms. Water consumption is tracked in the clubhouse and analysed for spikes. The slight increase in mains water use in the last 3 years of data is due to increasing golfer rounds and clubhouse visitors.
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	The irrigation system is supplied by abstracted groundwater from a borehole under licence from SEPA under the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) regulations. Data is reported annually as requested.

			We discussed current abstraction limits and storage capacity and while currently sufficient, these will continue to be monitored to ensure resilience to future climatic changes. Abstraction quantities data was discussed and the slight increase in 2022 was justified due to climate reasons and the Women's Open championship requiring increased irrigation. SEPA Water Abstraction Consent has been uploaded to the OnCourse Documents library.
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	On the course many areas have been naturalised over the years minimising areas of managed turf, machinery fuel use, turf inputs and irrigation pumping. There has been a move towards electric and hybrid machinery and golf carts and power tools. As technologies improve, electrification of larger fleet vehicles and mowers will be investigated. Highlight: All electric greens mowers were used during the Women's Open championship in 2022.
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	The clubhouse refurbishment was an opportunity to improve the energy efficiency and many energy saving solutions have been implemented across the facility, e.g. LED lighting, light sensors and controls. There are good records of both power and water to both the maintenance facility and the clubhouse. Standard grid electricity has reduced by 3% between 2021 and 2023 data. Targets could be set for a further reduction for 2025+ usage.
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	While there are no renewable sources of energy used at present, future opportunities are being investigated. Highlight: 4 Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points at the clubhouse have been installed for members, visitors and the local community helping to lower emissions from golfer transportation. CCIP: While onsite renewables may not be feasible, please investigate renewable electricity sourced suppliers when contracts are renewed to support a move towards lower carbon energy usage.

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	Across all departments, the materials and resources used are closely monitored and good stock control practices and records are kept. Efficient use of resources and good maintenance, repairs and reuse prolong materials lifespan to reduce the demand to purchase new materials. Recycling areas were observed and waste separation practices are in place to meet Scottish waste management legislation. Sand for use on the course is extracted under licence from the dunes, reducing the need to purchase and import sand supplies. Green waste is also composted. Single use catering products have been eliminated and office paper and supplies are also minimised. Highlight: In the club shop, water bottles have been removed from sale completely reducing the amount of single use plastic. Branded reusable bottles/flasks are available to buy and there are drinking water refill points on course and in clubhouse. This would make a good OnCourse highlight if plastic bottle reductions could be estimated.
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	Sustainable purchasing practices are in place for all departments to follow when making purchasing decisions, supporting a more circular economy. Purchasing decisions are made to maximise the use of certified, recycled, or recyclable products without reducing quality, and to reduce the impact of deliveries by buying from local suppliers where possible. I had an informative discussion with Joanna Tait, Merchandise Manager. In addition to the plastic water bottle removal, there was a good awareness that some clothing suppliers are now moving towards more sustainable / recycled fabrics/dyes etc. Discussions have been had with merchandise suppliers, and deliveries and packaging are reducing. All packaging is recycled correctly, and we also discussed reducing waste volume with a compactor and changes to waste bin uplift frequency. In discussion with James Hall, Clubhouse Manager, it is clear that the catering provision is of a very high standard and much thought is put into where suppliers are from, including accreditations, seasonality and locality e.g. fish from local east Lothian ports. A good relationship with a local butcher ensures waste is minimised at both ends of the chain, e.g. they

			regularly buy a whole cow and get all the cuts of meat to be used in various ways. Waste is also reduced through careful menu planning, good stock control, single use plastics reduction, supplier delivery optimisation and packaging reduction.
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	Muirfield partner with Greensman for controlled waste collection from the course management department. Green waste is composted and reused. Recycling bins are on the course for golfer waste. In line with legislation, clubhouse waste is collected in separate colour coded bins for uplift including, Dry Mixed Recycling, food waste, glass, electrical and hazardous waste. Cooking oil from the clubhouse is also recycled. Staff are trained and given regular reminders of the recycling procedures. I met with Mike Reid, Head of Finance and Karen Ladbroke, Finance and Payroll, and we discussed how utility and waste bills are monitored and analysed. While total annual waste data is variable as it is dependent on the number of rounds/visitors, (e.g. higher during the 2022 Women's Open year), I suggested that recycling rate could be used as a measure of performance. We discussed the annual data from 2021, 2022 and 2023, and this showed a very respectable 63%, 65% and 67% waste recycled as a percentage of total waste. It is hoped that when 2024 data is analysed this upward trend is continuing and even less waste is ending up in landfill. CIP: To encourage continual improvement in waste recycling, I suggested recycling rates could be used as a target metric to work towards (e.g. 75% by 2028).
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	All waste legislation is complied with including the uplift of hazardous / chemical containers. Waste carrier licences and permits are in place.

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 at Muirfield is enjoyed by both members of The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers, along with local and international visitors. The course is accessible to non-golfers also including paths, bike and horse-riding trails linking up with wider access tracks and pathways down to the beach. Safety information signage is in place. The clubhouse restaurant, function and meeting rooms are accessible to members and partners for a variety of social events and activities.
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		There has been a large amount of community and charity support given by Muirfield for a number of years (£150k raised in 2023) and staff are encouraged to volunteer. Human health charities supported include Doddie Aid for Motor Neurone Disease. Environmental Charities supported include the local Seabird Centre and a Beach Clean event that was held in 2024. While staff across all departments are involved in sustainability efforts some have volunteered to be more involved. Gary Eunson – Deputy Course Manager has led the OnCourse/GEO certified process with input from Colin Irvine Course Manager and others. Karen Ladbrooke from the finance team has a keen interest in biodiversity and will be supporting annual orchid counts to assist with monitoring programmes. Richard Ridell, assistant greenkeeper and mechanic has been appointed as biodiversity champion and has also been involved in wider R&A nature initiatives.
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'	Many of the members of the HCEG live in the vicinity of Muirfield and as such the club is at the heart of the local community.

			Over many years the club has collaborated with local education establishments and outdoor/environmental interest groups. The local community are encouraged to use the new EV charge points. The club has engaged with the Forestry Commission, SEPA, local fairtrade networks and local council/biodiversity groups on many projects and initiatives over the years e.g. working with NatureScot on the sand dune restoration project and on the improvement of public footpaths across the site. Also working with local farmers for composting of green waste. Further community engagement was discussed to promote sustainability activities and achievements.
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 Muirfield - from keeping everyone safe with a comprehensive Health & Safety Policy and incident plans, to on course drinking water provision and storm shelters to help in all types of weather. Walking is promoted with the provision of trollies. Better mental health is encouraged with coaching and mentoring initiatives to build confidence on life skills amongst staff. Accessibility is ensured and equipment provided for those with limited mobility.
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	Membership policies were discussed and appear to be open, non-discriminating and inclusive. While still relatively low, female and younger member numbers are rising.
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	Employee safety is ensured with robust policies, training and working conditions in place. Fair employment policies such as equal opportunities recruitment, discrimination reporting and employee benefits are in place. Apprenticeships and work experience opportunities are also offered.

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	Communication regarding sustainability matters with staff is good, with information displayed in the maintenance facility and included in team meetings and training. Members are given regular updates and the opportunity to get involved. There is limited amounts of direct promotion of sustainability activities and achievements with the local community unless via word of mouth of members. CCIP: Please explore the feasibility of promoting more examples of environmental and sustainability achievements via the club website and other stakeholder communications.
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	We discussed potential opportunities to promote sustainability and increase community engagement through joining local and regional biodiversity initiatives, engaging with more environmental stakeholders/suppliers and opening up the course for nature walks/ birdwatching meetups in partnership with ecology experts. CCIP: As per C3.1.1. above, please explore the feasibility of more positive external communication and awareness raising through various communication channels e.g., using GEO Certified status and Sustainable Golf Highlights as evidence of sustainability achievements.

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