



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report Woodbury Park Hotel & Golf Club

Prepared by independent verifier Tony Hanson

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2025
Recertification due: 2028

“Woodbury Park Golf Club shows strong environmental and community commitment through well-informed habitat management, native species planting, and conservation measures like bird and bat boxes. Turf and soil health are prioritised with drought-tolerant species and minimal chemical use. Water and energy are carefully managed, with efficient irrigation, solar power, and active monitoring. The club’s engagement extends to partnerships with schools, local charities, and community groups, alongside inclusive practices and staff wellbeing initiatives. These integrated actions highlight a clear dedication to sustainability and responsible resource use, and I am happy to recommend Woodbury Park Hotel and Golf Clubs GEO Recertification.”

*Tony Hanson
(GEO accredited independent verifier)*



Introduction

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

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

Woodbury Park Hotel & Golf Club has:

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

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

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

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

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

We congratulate all involved.

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

Kelli Jerome
Executive Director, GEO Foundation

Carole Kerrey
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 club has developed a clear understanding of the site's habitats, supported by ongoing ecological assessments and regular biodiversity reviews. During the visit, various habitat types were observed, and their ecological value discussed.
	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 team is aware of any nearby protected sites SSSI and SAC, and while there are no statutory designations on-site, the club demonstrates good practice in monitoring and aligning with environmental obligations. The Management has developed a good working relationship with the EA and other stakeholders which was discussed during the course walk.
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	There are no known archaeological or cultural features on the property, confirmed through internal site checks and local records.
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 club has identified areas for naturalisation through monitoring of play and turf use, with turf reduction projects underway in low-use zones. Observations confirmed the presence of unmown habitat buffers.
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	Habitat management is actively implemented through a programme favouring native species and ecological enhancement, based on a habitat plan updated with stakeholder input. Observed the Woodland Management Plan selectively clearing understory and thinning woodland to improve light and airflow to greens and tees, as well as allowing establishment of a range of species from latent seed banks – Bluebells (<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>). Discussed plans for further actions and how the management is explained to members.

N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		Conservation for key species is addressed through tailored practices such as leaving deadwood, limiting disturbance during bird nesting seasons, and installing bird and bat boxes. These features were seen and discussed during the visit
N2 Turfgrass			
N2.1 Maintain optimum turf and soil health	N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors	Select appropriate grass species for climate	The club's turfgrass species include a mix of <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> (browntop bent), <i>Festuca rubra</i> (red fescue), and <i>Lolium perenne</i> (perennial ryegrass) on greens, tees, and fairways Selected for their resilience to local conditions and lower irrigation demand. Turf species and management were discussed during the course walk.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		Soil condition is maintained through regular aeration using slitting, tines and topdressing. Staff demonstrated knowledge of seasonal scheduling and showed equipment used and onsite maintenance during the visit.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Fertiliser applications are based on soil tests. Nutrients are applied using a calibrated spreader Records are kept to document use and allow comparison in future years. This approach was confirmed during discussions and documents reviewed.
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 focus on mechanical and preventative practices, with priority given to mowing heights, moisture control, and disease forecasting. The team has reduced reliance on chemical intervention over recent seasons.

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 use is targeted and minimal, guided by daily scouting and use of disease forecasting models. Disease mapping is practiced for early detection, and treatment is applied only when thresholds are exceeded
	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 .	Confirmed and discussed the chemicals in terms of their stock records course applications and risk assessments. Confirmed and discussed applicator licences and the training undertaken to ensure compliance and safety Observed and discussed the protective equipment and emergency showering facilities. Application mixes are accurate, and the disposal of leftovers is extremely unusual in the event of an excess mix the leftovers would be sprayed on the practise ground.
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.	Confirmed observed and discussed the emergency spill response. The Plan is currently being updated following a review. Discussed and confirmed buffer zones and mapping. Confirmed and observed Pollution Incident Response Plan.
	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	Observed and discussed the storage areas for hazardous materials which are bunded to prevent fugitive escape. Confirmed and observed the waste contractor licences and transfer notes. No wastewater discharge licence required.
	N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure	Ensure wash areas are on impermeable, leak-free surfaces;	Observed and discussed the wash pad used for mixing and fuel dispensing.

	pollution risks are minimised from maintenance facility operations	Mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable surface; Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators	The Pad is completely contained with a Full Retention Separator holding the effluent with a regular emptying service provided by registered waste contractors.
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	Fuel storage tanks are inspected regularly to ensure integrity. Observed and discussed the register of hazardous substances on site. Observed and discussed the bunded fuel storage tanks. Discussed first aid and emergency response.
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)	No wastewater discharge licence is required. Observed the wash bay and closed containment system. Onsite wastewater treatment for sewerage is provided by a Proprietary Biodisc RBC type Packaged Sewage Treatment Plant under maintenance contact and effluent is tested to ensure compliance with water discharge standards

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	Confirmed and discussed turfgrass species present as outlined above. The current combination of species within the sward provides the combination of playing surface and disease and drought tolerance allowing the club to minimise water use.

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	Discussed and confirmed the maintenance schedule of the irrigation system and upgrades to spray heads allowing targeting of irrigation to desired areas. Moisture management and weather compensation feature in the irrigation decision making process. Irrigation is always based on need and not for aesthetic purposes.
	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	Reviewed and discussed water management process including record keeping and consumption comparison to identify potential leaks.
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 club holds a valid Environment Agency abstraction licence and submits usage data through the online portal. Consumption is well within permitted limits.
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	Turf reduction and naturalisation have significantly lowered mowing and irrigation needs. Observations confirmed low-input rough areas with native grasses and wildflowers. CIP: Please explore the feasibility of electric machinery / tools, wherever possible.
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	Energy use in buildings is monitored through meter readings, and consumption is tracked quarterly. Anomalies prompt immediate checks by the facilities manager. CIP: Please consider undertaking an energy audit to identify opportunities for further efficiencies.

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	Solar panels installed on roof areas, reducing grid dependency and emissions. Inverters and monitoring displays were observed during the visit.
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	The club tracks material usage and audits waste to identify opportunities for reduction. Efforts are underway to reduce non-recyclable packaging through supplier engagement.
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	Local suppliers are prioritised, particularly for catering and greenkeeping products. Ethical and environmentally responsible sourcing is encouraged and reviewed annually. CCIP: Please develop a sustainable purchasing policy, with clear criteria for products and materials.
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	Waste streams are clearly separated with labelled bins. Cardboard, plastics, green waste, and metals are recycled. Staff are trained on sorting and contamination prevention.
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 is handled by licensed contractors. Waste transfer notes and documentation were available and reviewed during the audit.

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 club supports community use of its facilities, hosting charity events and school visits.
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		Employees participate in local volunteering and the club donates to regional charities. Examples include staff supporting and organising fundraising events.
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'	Partnerships with schools and conservation organisations are ongoing. Activities include wildlife walks, junior golf coaching, and support for local green initiatives
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 facility encourages physical activity through golf and walking, and promotes wellbeing among members and the public. Mental health awareness sessions have also been held for staff.
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 are inclusive, and visitor access is unrestricted. Course modifications have been made to support less experienced or mobility-limited players.
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	Staff are employed under ethical conditions with health & safety induction and ongoing CPD. Records show strong retention and internal promotion pathways.
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	Sustainability is communicated through the website, social media, and member newsletters. Noticeboards and educational signage are placed around the facility.

	C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability	C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community	Provide evidence of external communications and community engagement	The club promotes sustainability through community projects, stakeholder partnerships, and GEO certification publicity. It uses these to encourage wider adoption of best practice
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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