GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report
Albarella Golf Links

Prepared by independent verifier: Giuliana Ferroni

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2024
Recertification due: 2027

GEO Foundation
Sustainability in and through golf

“Albarella golf course was born from the sea, and it truly lives in symbiosis with its environment. It is home for hundreds of deer, the sandy bunker faces host nests of bee-eater birds and the maintenance building is populated by swallows. The course is watered with treated wastewater coming from the local community. The bunker sand is beach waste sand donated by the municipality - it comes from the seasonal cleaning of the seaside. The Club also helps in cleaning the beaches, by collecting woods that are reused on the course. New signage, posts and tee marks were created in this way. Some old typical wooden boats were restored and placed outside the clubhouse to add beauty and interest to the green spaces. I look forward to further developments in this fantastic sustainability journey over the coming years!”

Giuliana Ferroni
(GEO accredited independent verifier)

Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Albarella 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.

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

For the certification period stated above, Albarella 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
Manager, Data and Reporting, GEO Certification Ltd.

Verification and Certification

Verification

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

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

Certification

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

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

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

Credibility

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

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	Albarella Golf Links is situated in the north-east part of Italy, 40 km south Venice. The course and the facilities are located on the Albarella island, in between the Adriatic Sea and the Venetian lagoon.

				The course was designed by John Dering Harris in 1973 and it was literally born from the sea as it was built importing over two million cubic meters of sand. Albarella Golf Links comprises a 18-hole links golf course, driving range and practice greens, clubhouse and pro- shop, indoor practice area, hotel and restaurant, storage bag and trolleys and maintenance facility. The course covers in total an area of 56 hectares, where 3.1 hectares are wild grassland, 7 hectares are native woodland and shrub vegetation, and 2.2 hectares open water. The Club is located within the 'Natural Park of Po River'. The general manager and all the management team recognise the importance of the site, the need for preservation and improvement of the natural habitat and ecology. Habitats were observed during the course walk, unimproved rough showed a quite various composition and was healthy, as well as the wetlands, woodland, and shrub vegetation. **CIP: Even if the Club shows a clear knowledge of the local biodiversity present on site, a professional biodiversity audit has not been carried out yet. The general manager is willing to have that done soon and habitats to be surveyed and mapped too.** The manager himself carried out an initial ecological and arboricultural survey identifying many species of rare local flora and fauna: <u>Birds</u> Picchio Verde- Picus viridis Upupa- Upupua epops Falco di palude- Circus aeruginosus Cavaliere d'Italia- Himantopus himantopus Beccaccia di mare- Haematopus osteralegus Garzetta- Egretta garzetta Rondine- Hirundo rustica Gruccione- Merops apiaster Airone bianco- Ardea alba Airone rosso- Ardea purpurea

			Ghiandaia- Garrulus glandarius Airone cinerino- Ardea cinerea Fischione- Mareca penelope Moretta tabaccata- Aythya niroca <u>Mammals</u> Riccio- Erinaceus europaeus Scoiattolo europeo- Sciurus vulgaris <u>Insects</u> Libellula- Odonata spp. <u>Reptiles</u> Testuggine palustre europea- Emis orbicularis <u>Plants</u> Giunco pungente- Juncus acutus Since 2020 the Club started many sustainability initiatives such as the installation of 10 bird boxes and two bird feeders. Hives installation to attract bees was tried but maybe because of the high water salinity the bees never colonized the hives. Another try will be done next year. No. 3 piles of rocks were placed in out of play areas for attracting and hosting reptiles. Future projects include: -Bat boxes to be installed next year; -New hives installation; -Bird rafts to be installed on the lakes. -New bug house; -Installation of additional bird boxes.
	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 Club is located within the 'Natural Park of Po River'. Because of that rules apply. For instance, tree felling requires planning application. The institution also doesn't allow any new construction/building but allows the Club to carry out ordinary maintenance of bunkers and tee refurbishment. Entire documentation is uploaded to OnCourse for reference. No. 19 notable species were found living on the course. Rare species are mainly birds as per previous list. The course is also the home of a herd of deer. Hundreds of deer live on the Albarella island and have found a home on the course.

			The natural park organization is responsible for maintaining the deer population under control so every year many deer are moved mainland to the natural reserve to avoid overpopulating the course. A 4 to 5m buffer zone is maintained around all the water features.
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	No Archaeological, historic, or cultural designations advised.
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	Turf, woodland and meadows are all managed appropriately for the season - at the time of the site visit in May 2024. The current areas of manged turfgrass provide excellent playing conditions. They looked even more impressive given the activity of the deer on the course and the low quality of the irrigation water (wastewater). Not managed rough has been significantly increased in the past years (4 hectares more) to promote biodiversity, to reduce inputs of chemicals, man hours and fuel consumption. Every year the Club is determined to expand the natural roughs, so that fairway areas will be reviewed periodically to maintain the balance of playability and naturalised habitat. New habitats include wildflowers to attract insects and pollinators.
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	Since 2020 the Club has been involved in projects that aim to manage turf with the least input possible, preferring organic products. Moving toward sustainability, the aim is also to provide more firm and true links playing surfaces. Habitat creation and management and species conservation have continued in the past years showing a continuous effort to improve and protect local threatened species (mainly birds). The Club has a habitat management plan in place for the existing vegetation and the new naturalized areas: one cut yearly on some

				areas, one cut every two years on other areas or selective cut on others, depending on the vegetation species. They also do understory thinning and scalloping woodland edging to further enhance habitat and encourage succession. Dead trees are also left on site. A 4 to 5m buffer zone is maintained around all the water features. The vegetation surrounding the water features is not managed by the Club. They found it very difficult as it is controlled by the deer population. The deer keep the pond sides tidy and eat any new plantings.
	N1.4 Conserve key species	**N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species**		No specific conservation requirements for the rare species. However, the Club shows a sensitive management geared to conserving the threatened species on site - maintaining habitat onsite to enhance ecological diversity while keeping an excellent golfing experience. The Club is very aware and respectful of the deer and bird population. Signage is provided. Also, the sandy bunker faces are colonized by local seaside birds. Bunker maintenance is respectful of the bee-eater meros apiaster nests. The maintenance building and the reception corridor host numerous swallows' nests that are maintained and protected as well. The Club also work tirelessly to communicate and educate members and visitors on the ecosystems, environmental matters and sustainable practices - explaining the rich biodiversity present on site, how to play golf but at the same time respect the unique environment of the course. This is also a great way to manage the players expectations.
	N2 Turfgrass			
		N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties	Select appropriate grass species for climate	The turf selection for greens is 80% creeping bentgrass and 20% poa annua.

	N2.1 Maintain optimum turf and soil health	**adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors**		On tees, fairway and semi-rough at Albarella there is 50% Bermuda, 30% poa annua and 20% Ryegrass. The turf mix is appropriate for the local climate and has therefore been identified as the preferred species to provide greater drought, salinity, heat, pest resilience and playing characteristics. Considerations for turfgrass selection include disease, winter stress and wear tolerance and soil type and pH. The quality of the putting and playing surfaces were good. We discussed agronomic practices and agreed ongoing measures. I have no issues with the quality of these areas. Clippings are not collected, but returned to the turfgrass - except for greens and collars where the clippings are left on rough and semi-rough. There is a nursery source of turf for repairs and maintenance for tees and fairway, but not greens.
		N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		The management of the course is reliant on traditional greenkeeping practices. Golf course maintenance fully respects the environment and favours mechanical cultivation operations such as topdressing, verticutting and coring. This promotes good soil health and encourages deeper rooting and consistency.
		N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Fertiliser inputs are minimum and very low compared with other golf courses in the area. This clearly suits the site well. The greens looked healthy but not over fertilised. As discussed above, playing surfaces are not overwatered and overfed to maintain a firm and true links style. The Club is adjusting the fertilisation rates based on the deer population that act as a natural fertilizer. The course was built from sand so has excellent free draining condition. Bunkers are likely to flood during rainfall events because the water table is very shallow.

			Ph is alkaline due to the high salinity of the irrigation water (wastewater coming from the surrounding houses). The wastewater is treated locally and reused by the Golf Club, the Tennis Club and to water the public green spaces. **CCIP: Please conduct soil tests this year.**
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	**N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management**	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	Pesticide inputs are very low compared with other golf courses of the area to control adversities. The Club uses pesticides on greens only and as required to maintain plant health as per national legislation. Equipment maintenance is also considered key to turf maintenance and includes maintenance and repairs, sharpening blades regularly. Adjusting mowing heights and patterns and occasional roll instead of mow. Together with hand removal of weeds where appropriate.
N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	**N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or cure defined / identified turf health issues**	Establish patterns and levels of risk for pests and diseases; Scout the course daily for early signs of pests and disease; Accurate pest and disease identification; Map and track pest and disease hotspots; Establish pest and disease thresholds	The management team has a good understanding of turf management to include recognition of issues and how to prevent them. Knowledge of the course, continuous inspection, daily scouting for disease and data gathering allow turf management to be based on a systemic approach. The greenkeeping team recognize the early signs of disease on areas that are prone to issues, preventing the use of chemicals. Considerations in selecting pesticides include legally registered and approved products only and products for specific weed, pest and disease control.
	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 .	The course management has a chemical/product log. Chemical/product room at the maintenance building was inspected. All chemicals are kept within a locked, clean area. The building was ventilated and with good light. Chemical applications are recorded, and stock levels maintained.

			Greens staff are fully qualified and licenced to use pesticides. Spraying and protective equipment is appropriate. Not the most modern equipment (i.e., no GPS computerised technology) but they are calibrated and tested. All equipment is checked annually.
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.	The course maintenance facility has an emergency spill response procedure that is communicated to the greens staff. Applied course management measures to reduce the risk of pollution: retaining un-mown, no-spray, no-spread buffer areas/zones next to water bodies and wetlands and ecologically sensitive areas, and hand weeding whenever possible. Buffers are 4 to 5m. The staff have a good level of knowledge and strictly respect the perimetral buffer zones as well as environmental precautions (timing, absence of wind, dry grass, closed golf course) to use pesticides and fertilizers. Chemical and fertiliser mixing is undertaken on a closed-loop wash down pad in case of spills. The wash down pad is not close by the maintenance building but located on a peripheral area. This is because of the height of the water table. The water table is very shallow at Albarella Golf Links. At the maintenance building there is not enough fall to avoid any risk of pollution in case of a spill.
	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, reviewed and discussed fertilizer, chemical and fuel storage areas. As above, hazardous materials are safely and securely stored. Storage assessed and appropriate. Full compliance with all safety protocols. Staff are trained.

			The Club has licenses to dispose of hazardous waste in a legally compliant manner. Waste disposal licences discussed and reviewed, along with discharge licence. Fuels and oils are stored in bunded proprietary tanks.
	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	Wash areas and mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilisers are undertaken over an impermeable, leak-free surface located slightly further away from the maintenance building as per above.
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	Local authority inspection is not required. As above, chemical/product log has been inspected. All chemicals are in a safe storage, in asecure and ventilated building. There is sufficient storage capacity and impermeable flooring. Mixing is undertaken on the wash down pad to prevent escape. Liquid fuels are stored in appropriate bunded containers and checked regularly. Observed first aid but access to water / showers, changing rooms for personnel are located at the clubhouse. There is a register with all the hazardous materials. Levels of stock are maintained.
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 required. The clubhouse has and complies with its formal discharge agreement to discharge its wastewater to the mains sewer. Several measures in place to monitor water quality. All is carried out by the local authority that is checking the water supplied (treated wastewater) and exiting from the course. Water testing is both chemical and biological carried out by the municipality of Albarella island.

				The Club conducts regular visual inspections of the water assessing the general condition of the water features. Detailed tests are done by the local authority.

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	Continuous effort from the management team to improve irrigation practice and minimise water usage for a total irrigated area of 12 ha. The water supply source is wastewater coming from the neighbouring houses. It is locally treated by the municipality and used within the Albarella island. It is used by the Golf Club, the nearby Tennis Club and for watering of the public green spaces and local gardens. A decrease in water usage is reported over the last years, also pursuing a fast and true link style. A high firmness of the playing surfaces also alleviates the damages created by the deer population. The quality of the irrigation water is not great. Treated and tested by the local authority it is high in salinity. The turf species mix proved to be appropriate to survive in this condition. Irrigation water use is based on need on greens, tees and fairways, with the use of rainfall forecasts. Hand water on greens on demand. Irrigation is targeted prioritising native tolerant species and selecting appropriate climatic species.
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	**R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course**	Conduct regular irrigation performance checks;	The irrigation system is as old as the golf course and is not computer controlled. The Club appreciate the need for having

			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	that updated. It could be implemented in the future to save energy (water is anyway wastewater that would go the sewage). Discussed adjustment of sprinkler heads to water playing surfaces only. Discussed use of soil moisture sensor to support irrigation practices to prevent over irrigation. **CIP: Please consider procuring a soil moisture sensor in the future.**
		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	Water usage is tracked. The Club carries out water use audits and a review of water bills. Water-saving practices at the maintenance facility include using compressed air as much as possible instead of water. At the clubhouse, water-efficient appliances and plumbing include volume reduce cisterns, low-flow toilets and aeration taps, and efficient dishwashers and washing machines.
	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 does not need a water abstraction licence. The course is watered using wastewater coming from the surrounding houses and treated locally by the municipality of the Albarella island. Being wastewater, the local authority conducts annual checks on the irrigation water quality both chemically and biologically.
	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	Albarella has significant unmanaged habitat areas on the golf course. This, in turn, reduces the need to mow and irrigate and saves energy and water. Reduction in the area of closely managed turf grass has also contributed over the years to reduce manpower and fuel consumption.

	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 Club confirm internal record keeping. Utility bills and invoices are continuously reviewed against previous consumption. Measures to improve energy efficiency in the clubhouse include sensors for indoor lighting, automatic timers and adjustment of heating and cooling systems. Vehicles are regularly serviced for best performance. LED lighting is being introduced. Despite the measures in place to save energy the success of the course and facility inevitably meant a rise in energy use.
	R2.3 Source energy responsibly	**R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy**	Determine potential sources of renewable energy in the area and on-site, through renewable energy providers	The installation of photovoltaic panels is being considered for the future. A renovation of the clubhouse building is due soon. The owner is going to make the building more efficient (new doors and windows, new boiler and heating system). This would result in a lower consumption of both energy and water.
	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 has implemented a policy aimed at reducing its energy consumption through waste reduction self-awareness campaigns targeting members and visitors. Players and staff are encouraged to minimise waste through communication, signage, and good practices. The Club discourage the single-use liquid containers, cups, cutlery, and products. Encourages flasks and no. 5 fountains can be found along the course. The Club aims to eliminate plastic bags and containers. The Club also consider durability of products when purchasing. Considerable work has been undertaken to improve recycling rates and separation of waste streams to increase its value. Suppliers are working with the Club to reduce packaging and delivery miles. 80% of suppliers are local, located within 30 miles.

	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	Food and course consumables and services are predominantly organic and certified products and sourced locally. The Club also prefer seasonal products that are 0 km and members are happy to suggest, promoting local excellence. The Club purchase goods made from recycled materials, whenever possible. Similarly, the Club purchases responsibly throughout the maintenance operation. The bunker sand is waste sand coming from the Albarella beaches. Seasonally the local authority cleans up the beaches and the waste sand is donated to the Club instead of going to the mainland landfill. As it arrives the beach sand is contaminated by shells and organic matter, so it is sifted on site before use. The Club uses the beach sand for ordinary bunker sand replacement. New sand is bought just for the topdressing of tees and greens. The Club also helps in cleaning the local beaches by collecting woods that are reused on the course. New signage, posts and tee marks were done in this way. Some old typical wooden boats were restored and placed outside the clubhouse to add beauty and interest to the green spaces. Furthermore, the Club accepted soil material coming from a local housing/pool redevelopment. Instead of letting the soil to be transported to the mainland landfill, the Club used it for rebuilding new tees on holes 4, 16 and 17. Now from the more elevated tee position it is possible to see the sea.
	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	Materials collected for composting and reuse across the golf course include soils and sands, cores, turf, leaves and small branches and clippings.

				There is also a colour-coded bin system for separation of materials. Abandoned single use cups and cutlery. There are recycling points outside the clubhouse, with separate bins for glass, paper, plastics and metals. Measures to minimise food waste include careful menu planning and flexible portion sizes. Food waste is also minimised with most food waste going to local compost and /or used by the Club staff.
	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	An authorised waste contractor collects waste materials from the maintenance facility and from the clubhouse. Recycling is according to local authority rules. The Albarella island gained the EMAS certification for sustainable waste management.

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 has an open and inclusive membership and guest policy. Community use of the facilities are encouraged. Albarella Golf Links provides for several social activities at the facility. It organizes events, books and art expositions. The Club also promote natural and cultural visits within the 'Natural Park of Po River'. The restaurant and meeting rooms are available to local community groups and function rooms are available for hire. Other activities include paths for walking and running and birdwatching. There is a wooden birdwatching tower within the course permit.

				The Club removed the fence on the northern boundary, between the course and the seaside. Now that the course is open and completely accessible, signage is provided to welcome and raise awareness in the community. The course is Pet friendly. The Club would love to increase the number of juniors. Initiative includes discounted membership and tuition packages for the local community.
	C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	**C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes**		The Club supports many local charities such as 'Fondazione Marcegaglia', helping disadvantaged children, 'Associazione Volontari Ospedalieri di Padova' that is supporting the research on the health sector and other charities with the aim of sending goods to the poorest areas of Africa. The Club hosts a variety of charity tournaments and events, raising funds that have increased in the past years.
	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'	The Club educates members and staff on sustainable matters and practices. The Club collaborated with a local distillery in the creation of a spirit made with herbs (milk thistle) harvested on site, with natural methods and ingredients only. The Club's sustainable policies and best practices are shared through the main boards, social media, website, internal notices, newspapers/magazines, and electronic newsletters.
	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 benefits of golf have been well documented, and the Club encourages awareness across staff and members. There is a good mix of tournaments planned for this year.

	C2.2 Be open and inclusive	**C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies**	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	Inclusive policies demonstrated for members and visitors. Friendly atmosphere and Albarella also provides local employment opportunities in course management and maintenance, clubhouse management and hospitality and catering and golf professionals. Affordable membership and tuition programmes for the local community, families, and children.
	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	Albarella GC follows an equal opportunity recruitment and hiring policy. Employees have a formal induction and also have opportunities to progress and undertake training, both internally and externally. Greens staff are given training on the use of pesticides, fire procedures and health and safety.
	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	Communications are provided by a combination of social media, website, internal notices, flyers and leaflets, newspapers/magazines and electronic newsletters. Sustainability panels are also displayed across the facility, to raise awareness and understanding and gain member and visitor and stakeholder support for the Club's sustainability commitments and efforts. The Club has leaflets for golfers and other users of the site to provide information on its many activities.
	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	Communications are provided by a combination of social media, website, internal notices, flyers and leaflets, newspapers/magazines and electronic newsletters.

				The 50 years book has just been released and it tells the story of the course and how it promotes its symbiosis with the surrounding natural environment. The Club has leaflets for golfers and other users of the site to provide information on its many activities, natural and cultural initiatives and sociable events such as the latest Salvador Dali exposition within the Albarella island.

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