



GEO Certified[®]

GEO Certified[®] Report Golf At Goodwood

Prepared by Independent Verifier, Tony Hanson

Certified by GEO Foundation: October 2021
Valid until: October 2026

GEO Certified[®]

The logo features a green circular icon with a white golf ball inside, followed by the text 'GEO Foundation' in green, with 'GEO' on the top line and 'Foundation' on the bottom line. Below this, the tagline 'Sustainability in and through golf' is written in a smaller green font.

**GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

“Goodwood Golf Club have continued their work to improve their environmental performance. The increased awareness and acceptance created by the published ecology and habitat management plan has gained approval and understanding, along with a greater appreciation of the habitats found across the South Downs. Man hours, machinery use, and fuel consumption have been reduced through the reduction of closely managed areas. The club has also invested in a range of battery powered course equipment to help reduce emissions.”

Tony Hanson

GEO accredited Independent Verifier



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Golf At Goodwood 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.

Golf At Goodwood 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 set for the future, Golf At Goodwood should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above Golf At Goodwood 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

Richard Allison
Manager, GEO Certified Facilities



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



Verifier's Report

The Sustainability Agenda for golf covers the following themes and action areas:

THEMES	ACTION AREAS
Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats & Biodiversity • Turfgrass management • Pollution prevention
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Energy • Materials
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	Reviewed course plans and images; Discussed and confirmed survey documents and habitat plans; Course walk included a review of habitat types and creation on site

	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	Reviewed habitat and ecology plan; Observed the implementation of the plans and the ambitions to develop the habitat and ecology
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	Discussed and observed the historic features onsite; Discussed the collaboration on the management of features and the close relationship the club has with regulators and the National Park Authority
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 buggy fleet is fitted with GPS programable controls, this allows the management to restrict the areas the buggies can go; Restrictions include protecting historic and ecological areas, although the system does allow areas of high traffic to be reduced or redirected; Data also allows mapping of landing zones and playing areas – this provides the opportunity to review grassing plans and reduce managed turf areas.
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	Outlined within the course ecology plan; Habitat creation projects are being undertaken in multiple locations around the course; With wider collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, habitat plans are being developed to encourage species that predate on chaffer grubs and crane fly as a natural pest control programme.
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		Hedgerow enhancement project is being planned to create bat/wildlife corridors; A management plan for the extensive Calcareous Grassland has been developed with the Sussex Botanic Group
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 site is extremely free draining and located on chalk downland close to the south coast. Prevailing winds also influence soil moisture levels; The sward content and playing characteristics of the course reflect the location and calcareous downland nature as a virtue; Management programmes are designed to encourage drought and disease resilience, with close monitoring of research on turf maintenance techniques and seed innovation.

	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		The management have taken agronomic advice from industry leading consultancies to enhance on site knowledge; Advice is implemented, ensuring cultural oncourse practices encourage the desired playing characteristics and reduce negative pressures.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Recording and management records and experience allow the considered use of fertilisers; The discussions during the course walk reinforced this considered approach.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	The discussions during the visit confirmed the management style, and wholistic methods used to reduce the risks of creating unnecessary pressure on the turf; Equipment maintenance and dew removal form part of the “basic” elements of course management.
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	Confirmed and discussed the course management programme; Maps, spray and no spray areas are clearly outlined – 10m buffer zones are implemented. Chemical applications are considered, with decisions based on site knowledge to allow cultural management to reduce the risk/magnitude of issues, or potential preventive application.
	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	Reviewed the chemical stock records, applicator licences and operator PPE; GPS technology allows precise areas and mix volumes to prevent excess volumes and the need for dilute chemical disposal on turf
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;	The club are in the process of reviewing their existing health & safety and pollution management programmes; The discussion on site highlighted the knowledge of the potential hazards, the site pathways and the locations and application of the spill equipment onsite; Spray area mapping was reviewed and 10m buffer zones were confirmed.

		Create a map / aerial visual reproduction, drawing etc of the course showing buffer zones and no-spray, no-spread areas.	CIP Formalise the 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	Confirmed waste contractor licences; Reviewed storage of hazard materials – pre and post use, including bunds and protections; Confirmed waste discharge. CIP Ensure that used cooking oil is stored on bund stands
	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	Confirmed waste contractor agreement; Discharge licence confirmed; Contained pad used for washdown and course input mixing; Reviewed the closed loop wash down system.
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	Confirmed and reviewed storage records, bunded tanks and chemical and fertiliser storage; Fuel delivery is located on the washdown pad, with auto shut devices fitted to dispensing equipment; Safety equipment is in place and use discussed; Bunding discussed above
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)	Discharge agreements discussed above; Wash pad and closed loop system discussed above; Closed loop water treatment systems discussed above.

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 on-site is managed based on need; Delivery accuracy is monitored and weather conditions taken in to account on areas of the course more susceptible to spray drift.
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	Soil moisture management is monitored with GPS data linked to mobile phone apps to identify moisture levels; Irrigation controls allow parts of greens to be watered to maintain uniformity; More servicing and management of the irrigation system and infrastructure is being undertaken due to limits on available water, and the system age.
	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	Invoices and meter readings and reviewed regularly; Any atypical meeting or billing is reviewed.
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	Abstraction licence reviewed
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	Course management has embraced the many more naturalised areas; Tee edges and bunker tops are allowed to grow more than has been the case, allowing greater ecological diversity and reducing machinery and man hours. CIP

			Identify the additional areas of habitat to try to establish the increased area
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	Invoices are regularly checked against billing data; Any atypical bills or meter readings are reviewed
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 club have installed a solar array on the buggy shed roof; The clubhouse building uses a renewable tariff
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	Waste and recycling rates are monitored and discussed with the waste contractor; Separation methods are being reviewed to increase recycling rates, and order are being consolidated where possible to reduce delivery miles and packaging
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	Discussed and confirmed the ethical purchasing policy; Local suppliers are preferred, where possible; Environmental impacts are taken in to account during the review stage.
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	The club is working with suppliers and waste contractors to identify opportunities to reduce waste and improve recycling rates; Recycling centre reviewed during the visit.
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	Waste contractors details reviewed – images of the contract agreement taken during the visit.

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 clubhouse bars and restaurants are available for public use
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		Volunteering for local charities and community projects is encouraged.
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'	Close relationships and collaboration are maintained with local landowners; The club works with the South Downs National Park Authority and wildlife groups

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 the facility are understood and enhanced where possible.
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	The club has an open and inclusive policy for the site and membership.
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	The club has an open and inclusive policy for employment Health & Safety systems are in the process of being reviewed and updated as part of a management technology upgrade being undertaken.

C3 Communications

C3.1 Engage golfers and members	C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness	Provide information on the facility's sustainability commitments, actions, or achievements	The club have a strong physical and electronic communications infrastructure;
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	and understanding amongst members and visitors		To reinforce the purpose of increasing wild areas on course, the club drafted and released a hole-by-hole ecology plan, in association from course signage
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 has cultivated close relationships with a wide range of stakeholders; Information is provided on activities and events undertaken onsite via electronic media

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