



GEO Certified[®]

GEO Certified[®] Report Lahinch Golf Club

Prepared by independent verifier, Bob Taylor

Certified by GEO Foundation: October 2021

Valid until: October 2024



“Lahinch Golf Club is an outstanding facility and a superb example of sustainability best practices on the course. The landscape boasts some of the most stunning natural tall dunes I have seen. Other highlights include the wildflower-rich coastal grasslands which support rarities such as bee orchid and red bartsia. Part of the club lies adjacent to the Inagh River estuary which helps to conserve important Atlantic and Mediterranean salt marsh vegetation. The course and club are in very good hands, clearly committed to maximising the area’s ecological value and creating a welcoming environment for all.”

Bob Taylor

GEO accredited independent verifier



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that **Lahinch 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.

Lahinch 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 set for the future, **Lahinch Golf Club** should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, **Lahinch 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

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	Total site area confirmed at 151 acres (Old) 81 acres (Castle) 6 acres (short). The club have a very good understanding of the landscape into which the courses are fitted but have not mapped the individual

			<p>areas. STRI have in the past mapped the main vegetation and habitat types and this informs the club's ecology management. Surveys undertaken to date include wintering birds, botany and broad vegetation/habitats.</p> <p>The courses are in superb condition and management is favourable for the landscape.</p> <p>CIP Engage with local wildlife and natural history individuals/personnel to help build the biodiversity knowledge over the 2 main courses. Reason: To build on the knowledge base of the wildlife taxa over the courses to further inform ongoing and future management.</p>
	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	<p>The club are aware of the protected site status and the legislation in place. The site lies adjacent to the Inagh River estuary SAC. Important for Atlantic and Mediterranean saltmarsh communities. Management is appropriate for the site with mechanical treatments mimicking natural grazing as far as is possible.</p> <p>CIP: Refresh understanding of importance of site for nature conservation and promote internally through sustainability group and social media channels.</p>
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	<p>The club have a survey which includes the site. This was undertaken by the Limerick Field Club. It is a broad survey mentioning middens but positions remain unlocated. The site also supports the castle dating back to 1420. The club has undertaken archaeological surveys on the castle course.</p> <p>CIP: Engage with relevant authorities to look towards securing and preserving the current structure of the iconic dough castle.</p>
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	<p>This is directed by golf play and the clubs experience of the terrain. The course is tight with widened 4m semi rough before out of play rough; limited opportunity to reduce further. Courses have been mapped by Golf Graphics using GPS.</p>
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	<p>The club works to a site wide Ecology Management plan using cutting and collection to mimic natural grazing. The club are aware of problem areas and of ecology hotspots. The old course manager is very passionate about the wildlife of the courses and regularly undertakes walks photographing the flora and other wildlife interests.</p>

			CIP: procure a path management plan to identify important paths and remove and effectively police others.
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		The course managers are aware of key interests such as high populations of bee orchid on the old course and Devil's bit scabious on the Castle. Management is broad but effective; holistic management with minimal pesticide and / or chemical use helps massively at Lahinch, management helps key species such as ground nesting birds and invertebrates which are in good numbers during the main flowering periods. Ragwort is recognised as an important component of the dunes and is contained rather than eradicated. The biodiversity surveys recommended as a CIP above will further help inform the club's knowledge and appreciation of the dunes.
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	Management is geared to encouraging appropriate turfgrasses acclimated to site and golf play conditions. Red fescue and browntop bents are here most wear and salt tolerant and are thus encouraged through management.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		Aeration and topdressing are key alongside monitoring and regular advice from the preferred agronomists. The club on the Castle course are using compost teas and this has helped significantly to improve soil structure especially the breakdown of laying through the soil profile.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Seaweed and compost teas are preferred, the club are reducing their reliance on NPK fertilisers. Soil testing is undertaken 2x/yr with further agronomic tests on soil moisture and turf condition 1x/yr. The club take periodic checks for salinity, soil moisture and canopy temperature.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	Very aware and highly experienced and working to more cultural methods of 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;	Chemical use is very limited to no more than 1 to 2 treatments of fungicide on old greens only. No other chemicals used. Starlings are present in high numbers and this is helping with the control of chafer and leatherjackets, turf damage is reduced but still evident in places on the old course at the time of this visit.

		Map and track pest and disease hotspots; Establish pest and disease thresholds	Pests and diseases are monitored daily by all greenstaff during their working.
	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 greenkeeping team have 8 trained chem operators with PA1,2, and 6. Full PPE is available and equipment is modern and up to the task All records are kept using Turfkeeper. Stock counts and recording is in place, with cross referencing to Turfkeeper. Machinery is regularly calibrated. It is I understand rare to see chemicals in tanks but any washings would be carried out over washdown activity pad. Any spare mixed chemical would be diluted and used on practice and nursery areas.
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.	A pollution policy is in place and forms part of the clubs health and safety and risk assessment. The policy covers the types of likely pollution and response procedures. Emergency spill kits are available and in place strategically to deal with spillages should any occur. No-spray buffer zones are in place around the more sensitive water courses. Mapping has not yet been drawn up identifying no spray zones and or buffer zones. Chemical use as above is very limited and no-spray zones are more for conservation than for preventing pollution. CIP. Introduce maps, diagrams and / or satellite imagery of the entire site, including a key for turf and habitat components, no-spray / buffer zone areas and other desired features (drainage, irrigation, cultural remnants for example)
	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	A storage cupboard is used in the clubhouse for all cleaning products. The club purchase and uses non toxic bio type products – all areas. No disposal issues within clubhouse due to product selection and use.
	N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from	Ensure wash areas are on impermeable, leak-free surfaces; Mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable surface;	The club have in place a clearway waste to water type system for all washdown and associated activities. This is being reviewed for possible upgrade.

	maintenance facility operations	Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators	Chem-safe and petroleum storage very secure, lit, well ventilated and signed. CIP Undertake feasibility to upgrade waste water system now 16years old. Include renewable opportunities around its operation – all as discussed. Reason - to avoid mains electricity use and regular replacement of microbes.
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	All chemicals are mixed on the washdown activity pad so no migration or outward pollution risk. All maintenance wastes are stored in secure unit and collected by registered contractor periodically. A register is kept and available for all hazardous wastes (responsibility of the mechanic). All fuels are stored in secured double bunded unit within maintenance complex. Good clean access noted; areas well-lit and ventilated. Adequate space present and evidence of spill kits and first aid stations. An emergency wash area was noted within the chemical store. First aid station is also repeated within the canteen.
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)	Clear water system is well used we discussed its upgrade and I have included the club undertake a feasibility to upgrade above. All fuel tanks have bunded containment and all mixing is carried out on the washdown pad limited opportunity for spillage and or pollution, see also N3.2 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	Greenstaff prefer hand watering even with auto irrigation system in place. Irrigation is made more effective given the inclusion of aeration and wetting agent treatments.

			Irrigation is targeted and not broadscale informed by POGO. The club are looking to upgrade the current irrigation system.
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	The irrigation system is serviced annually using EWS Irrigation services. Service certification provided. Irrigation requirement on the course is informed using POGO and also using greenkeeper experience. All irrigation is targeted and backed by hand watering. Irrigation scheduling is evidenced by records kept. The existing system offers individual head control so area specific. A number of additional heads have been added over time making the system less efficient hence planned upgrade.
	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	All water use is metered and separated for each area of the facility This gives a more accurate account of area by area usage. It is the named responsibility of a person within accounts to keep a monitoring record of water use and costs and for identifying and reporting anomalies. The same person reports usage regularly. Water saving practices include training for all new staff (part of their induction), annual updates are distributed at greens meetings. All taps spring loaded and set appropriately. Toilets are low flush and appear to work well. The club feel that the above reduces the need for signage. CIP Carry out feasibility for rainwater harvesting for course and for clubhouse grey water use. Report and discuss findings with sustainability committee.
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	Groundwater is used for clubhouse and course - assessed regularly for salinity and volume. Use is regulated through EPA, annual records are kept and evidenced. The club are keen to follow and lead within golf. The general manager and his team are very passionate and proactive. On the course the greenstaff are using modern drought tolerant grass species cultivars and manage to conserve water by way of the above (aeration wet agent hand watering etc.). See CIP in R1.2.2 above.
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	I noted kerosene use went up in 2020 from 1500 to 2500 litres. This appears to be a result of recording done on purchasing not use. Greater amounts were purchased but have not yet been used. Course is tight with little capacity to reduce operational management further. Some opportunity to reduce time consuming strimming and this was discussed on site. Increasing naturalness forms part of an ongoing management plan.

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	All energy, like water use above is monitored by accounts. CIP include regular updates of energy and water use within focused sustainability group meetings.
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 currently runs on mains electricity but solar is currently being considered for the maintenance facility. Biomass boilers have been considered for whole facility heating but was ruled out due to constraints of space. High efficiency LED is installed lighting throughout clubhouse and the materials storage and workshop areas of the maintenance facilities. CIP Continue lighting upgrade through remaining walkways/corridors, mess room and changing room through maintenance facility. CIP Provide feasibility for ground source heating - Clubhouse area.
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 are very aware of all waste streams. This year 2021 most waste has been generated through the staging of The Irish Open. The club audit waste, 70% of which is food waste from plates and preparation. Waste on course is low; material waste is stored for regulated collection. Note: The majority of Ireland's municipal biowaste, including food waste, is not yet separately collected and recycled. New EU waste legislation (the revised Waste Framework Directive (EU) 2018/851) means that the separate collection of biowaste will be mandatory from end-2023. CIP carry out a feasibility for food waste composting as discussed.
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	An excellent Note is provided within the Restaurant menu informing local sourcing and from where. All meats are supplied by Kelly's Kilrush, seafood from CS Fish Doonbeg, mixed salads from Celtic Salads, vegetables locally from Richardson's. Note 85% of all food purchasing is from within Co. Clare. CIP include detail of all purchasing including timings and seasonality and local preferences etc. in a doc for periodic sustainability meeting updates.
R3.3 Reuse and recycle	R3.3.1 Waste stream separation for maximum	Demonstrate waste separation, reuse and recycling;	Grass and course waste is composted adjacent the maintenance facility an excellent functioning system is in place. Local grass collection bays

	recycling and re-use opportunity	Track how much waste goes to landfill, or is reused / recycled	<p>are to be enlarged but we also discussed the possibility of using small trailers hitched to the mowers that could eliminate the need for grass collection bays.</p> <p>Although all clubhouse and maintenance waste separated and appropriately reused recycled or disposed there is limited readily available data recording waste stream identification and protocols.</p> <p>CIP develop a waste stream management plan which identifies the principal waste streams, identifies the waste hierarchy, and identifies waste management protocols and channels. Food waste may be an area where purchase of waste could be minimised, preparation could be assessed to see if improvements could be made etc.</p>
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	<p>The club engage 'Clean Ireland' for all recycling of club general waste. And have a copy of their trade licence.</p> <p>Containers for recycling and or reuse are collected by 'Chem Free'. Similar licence is in place allowing tracking of wastes should the need arise.</p>

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		<p>The character of the town is a limiting factor for much of this section of sustainability interest. The club target junior and cadet coaching from 8yrs old. But club rules restrict uptake to a local 10mile radius. Similarly, licensing laws restrict meals and drink availability within the restaurant.</p> <p>Fundraising events are encouraged for local good causes.</p>
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		<p>The Irish Open brought in additional recognition and resources to the local area, the club work closely with local schools and local resource groups (for disadvantaged children) by way of fundraising days,</p>

<p>C1.3 Establish active community partnerships</p>	<p>C1.3.1 Positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the local community and other groups</p>	<p>Create a 'sustainability working group'</p>	<p>Lahinch Golf Club has an important and very active role with 'Burren Eco Tourism'. The club attend meetings and assist with marketing, the sustainability drive and shared social media (the golf club has over 11000 followers so massively increasing The Eco Tourism reach).</p> <p>The club have set up their own sustainability committee which is open to interested staff and meets quarterly to push all aspects of the club's sustainability drive. The committee has been running for 1 year and is proving important in increasing awareness and in moving the agenda forward.</p> <p>Minutes from each meeting are taken and recorded. Different staff are encouraged and asked to present on their areas of special interest.</p> <p>CIP. Through the hosting of the Irish Open 2019 greater opportunity now lends itself to engaging more with the local community re the club's role within and for the community.</p>
<p>C2 Golfers & Employees</p>			
<p>C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing</p>	<p>C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities</p>		<p>The dune landscape at Lahinch is unique, it is visually and ecologically stunning and this itself is a major boost to individual health and wellbeing for those that play. Staff are very welcoming to all. The club does provide a vital and valuable role for the community. This was made very obvious during the 2020 lock downs with locals taking to the beach to hit their golf balls.</p> <p>Bar and restaurant staff really struggled without the work and sense of purpose; locals too lost their social inclusion. This had a short term but negative impact on the club and the town.</p> <p>The club management have adopted an open door policy for all staff (wellbeing and health), and staff problems more vocalised as a result of lockdown are all taken seriously.</p>
<p>C2.2 Be open and inclusive</p>	<p>C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies</p>	<p>Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors</p>	<p>Open club policy with few limits on membership other than handicap and 10-year-old joining age limit. The club have 2700 members so is stretched through the busiest periods. Membership for adults has had to close from 2017 but the club however, still support and are recruiting through junior channels.</p> <p>Schools are encouraged with SNAG coaching provided by the assistant pro. who undertakes regular visits to schools throughout the region.</p>

			<p>CIP Increase opportunities for vegan and vegetarians within restaurant menus.</p> <p>CIP Increase number of disabled car parking spaces within car park.</p>
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	Recruitment policies form part of the club's Sustainable Procurement policy evidenced during the visit No issues of note here.
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	Members are notified and regularly updated on all matters pertaining to the facility via e mail. This includes recycling policies which I was shown during the visit. The club have a strong social media network. It was interesting to note that wildlife posts are the least well received. Members, here at least, are more keen to play and follow the club than understand the nature on the course. Nonetheless the club takes great pride in managing and conserving one of the most diverse and important dune grassland landscapes in Ireland.
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	<p>Following the hosting of the Irish Open in 2019, the club has set the foundations to further improve social outreach communication and community inclusivity. The village and local region are highly desirable locations for domestic and international tourism, so it is important that the club takes an active role in promoting sustainability through enhanced engagement with the local community.</p> <p>CIP Reinstate supervised school activities on the course, Brian (Old Course) has a great deal of knowledge and would be well placed and keen to lead this.</p> <p>CIP continue to work and improve local awareness of the importance of the site through club and outside channels other than golf (Local newspapers working with biodiversity and wildlife or natural history groups etc.).</p>

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