



GEO Certified[®]

GEO Certified[®] Report Royal Liverpool Golf Club

Prepared by independent verifier, Dino Minoli, MSc, PhD

Certified by GEO Foundation: July 2022
Valid until: July 2025

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

“The Royal Liverpool Golf Club has great commitment towards more responsible and sustainable golf. Sustainability highlights include an above average energy-rated clubhouse; LED lighting; solar panels; imminent electric car charging points; branded re-usable water bottles and drinking stations; conservation of protected species - natterjack toad, kestrel boxes, with 4 baby chicks; biopesticides to control weeds; targeted irrigation to reduce water; progressive maintenance fleet electrification; cycle-to-work scheme; responsible purchasing; waste recycling; on-site sand use for topdressing to reduce fuel and CO₂ emissions; safeguarding policies; female golf promotions; charitable support and community volunteering. I much look forward to seeing how current and new sustainability practices will develop at the club.”

Dino Minoli

(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that **Royal Liverpool 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.

Royal Liverpool Golf Club has:

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

GEO agreed with the conclusions of the official verification report, that, having achieved all mandatory criteria; and with specific Continual Improvement Points (CIP) set for the future, **Royal Liverpool Golf Club** should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, **Royal Liverpool 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	RLGC has long-standing, ongoing, favourable consultations, with local, regional and national environmental organisations on the habitats, biodiversity and special ecological areas in and around the site. Consultations include Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Wirral Council, Natural

			<p>England, Herpetological (reptile and amphibian) Conservation Trust, Ecology Consultants; Bob Taylor and Sophie Olejnik, Alistair Beggs, R&A Agronomy, and Rodney Environmental Consultants.</p> <p>The club's Ecological Management Plan (2022-2027) and drone maps show images of the habitats, vegetation types and statutory designations affecting the site.</p> <p>The Cheshire Wildlife Trust's Botanical Survey 2021 has recorded and monitored the varied plant life across the golf course. The survey found that overall many of the roughs are now species-rich, acidic, sandy grassland.</p> <p>Further recommended surveys comprise Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Plant Survey of the pond to confirm orchid and other identifications, Butterfly Conservation, to confirm the occurrence of the grayling butterfly and the Tanyptera Trust for general invertebrate surveys. (CIP).</p>
	<p>N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species</p>	<p>Understand legal responsibilities for protected landscapes and species; Record and monitor protected, endangered, or rare species found on the site</p>	<p>The club's Ecology Management Plan shows the special ecological areas in and around RLGC. Including the Ramsar site, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC).</p> <p>These sites are nominated for several reasons concerning notable, protected habitats and species. Of note here is the natterjack toad, a European Protected Species under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.</p> <p>The site is also part of Meols Drive Conservation Area and designated as a Local Wildlife Site and Site of Biological Importance for its priority habitat for sand dunes, saltmarsh and lowland mixed broadleaf woodland.</p> <p>Red Rocks SSSI on the edge of the golf course is also important as a typical example of a sand dune system including brackish dune slack and reedbed. The area supports diverse flora and fauna including the only English locality of the wildflower Mackay's horsetail, and is a breeding site for frogs, common toads and natterjack toads.</p> <p>The site is also functionally linked to the Dee Estuary Special Protection Area for birds, amphibians and plants and is part of Wirral Borough Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy.</p> <p>Protected, endangered, or rare species found on the site include feeding waders (shorebirds), bar-tailed godwit, common tern, knot, little gull, cormorant, oystercatcher, grey plover, sanderling, dunlin and redshank. Other important species found here include numerous wildfowl.</p>

			The site supports 32,366 individual waterbirds comprised of 2,414 wildfowl and 29,952 waders. (Natural England, 2011).
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	<p>RLGC is part of The Kings Gap Conservation Area 2000, which was set up to conserve the special architectural and historic features of Hoylake.</p> <p>RLGC contains some important public buildings (Commercial Grade II Listed Building). As they are associated with the Victorian and Edwardian periods that provide a sense of time-depth to this area.</p> <p>RLGC is also an important part of the Wirral Landscape Character. From the course, views extend across the Dee Estuary to the Hilbre Islands, and towards the Welsh coastline including mountains within the Clwydian Range and the northern part of Snowdonia. These provide a distinctive backdrop to views over sand dunes and the golf course.</p> <p>What is more RLGC in its early years doubled as a horse racing track and links golf course and some of the club's equine history is preserved. The first and sixteenth holes are called Course and Stand; the saddling bell hangs in the clubhouse; and many of the fence posts bordering the putting green have a pineapple on top. As pineapples were often given as prizes for winning jockeys.</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>RLGC manages the playing quality expectations of the golfer, with equal conservation of the natural environment and biodiversity on the golf course. Specific efforts include - minimising the amount of amenity grassland on the course, such as natural carries (with less maintenance); removal of artificial shale pathways and successful restoration of natural grass pathways that supports a more natural feel to the golf course; provision of out of play areas and ecological rough to connect habitats.</p> <p>Ongoing work to improve and diversify habitat edges, careful weed control and mowing patterns in favour of indigenous flora, removal of inappropriate trees and bushes e.g. Burnett rose to control scrub and the creation of new ponds on the golf course in support of wetland scrapes.</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's Ecological Management Plan aims to enhance the wildlife value of the course and benefit golfers during the playing of a round. Specific emphasis is given to scrub management and removal, tree removal, and bare sand creation to meet the condition targets from Natural England. This will also ensure the golf course is more playable and enjoyable for golfers.</p> <p>The Plan sets out ecological objectives for active conservation including retention and removal of scrub and its ongoing management, conservation of fringe rough for golf and wildlife, retention of offline</p>

			<p>grasslands for invertebrate, small mammal and bird interest, retaining and increasing the extent of dune slacks by consent and sand scraping, developing a culture of accepting bare sand, to ensure retention of dynamism and mobility of the dunes. This work is to be completed by end of year 5, 2027. (CIP).</p> <p>As well, The Cheshire Wildlife Trust Survey suggests botanical interventions for visual interest, nectar/pollen and flower-rich swards. (CIP).</p>
<p>N1.4 Conserve key species</p>	<p>N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species</p>		<p>The above-mentioned Ecological Plan and Botanical Survey have identified a range of conservation highlights across the course. Comprising of orchid, strong dune flora, a pond, supporting high botanical interest with southern marsh orchid, marsh pennywort and water mint all growing within the fringe of reed and rush vegetation. While the taller sandhills support typical dune species such as bird's-foot trefoil, wild carrot and common vetch.</p> <p>Moreover, the grasslands support day-flying moths and other invertebrates which tend to attract other wildlife such as small mammals. These in turn provide a food source for hunting kestrel that is a frequent visitor and resident on the course. What is more, there are two kestrel boxes, at the site, one of which is home to four chicks.</p> <p>As well, the sparse scrub found on the golf course benefits small birds, such as whitethroat.</p> <p>The denser grasslands also support a series of runs made by both smaller rodents and amphibians including common newt and common toad. The natterjack toad is rarely encountered on the course with numbers in the breeding pools just off the course often showing variable or poor success. Access onto the course for the natterjack toad is becoming increasingly available through the sand scrapes that are now in place it is hoped that additional areas will be accommodated through the delivery of this plan.</p> <p>One bird that has been frequently recorded in the past is the short-eared owl and there have been recent sightings of this bird.</p> <p>The links manager and greens staff are working with Cheshire Wildlife in creating Natterjack toad ponds and scraped shallow to encourage spawning. The toad pools are fenced off during the spring to autumn months to allow spawning without recreational disturbance. And a recent count found that there were 33 spawn strings, which is encouraging for new life soon.</p>

			<p>Common toads have been found in dunes and important sand scrapes have been constructed and marram grass planted.</p> <p>There are also plans to join Operation Pollinator to support bee populations. (CIP).</p>
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 golf course turf grass species are a mixture of fescues and bent grasses considered optimal for the course. As these grasses occur naturally in this ecosystem, provide the finest year-round surfaces, and promote true links playing conditions, in a cool, temperate climate and thrive under a regime of minimal inputs of fertilisers, chemicals and water.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		Effective course management practices are evident to maintain healthy turfgrass. Including carefully evaluating the use of pesticides, testing and the monitoring the soil pH and the use of organic / compost fertilisers and top dressings.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Good course management considerations are apparent in careful fertiliser applications. Comprising soil and leaf tissue tests, temperature, sunlight, shade, rainfall, the height of cut, foot traffic, clipping production and customised growth curve.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	Sound cultural practices are employed to maintain the health and quality of the playing area and minimise the need for chemicals. Consisting of regular sharpening of mowing blades, removal of surface moisture, adjustment of mowing patterns and occasional roll instead of mow, scarifying, verti-cutting, aeration, and frequent changing of holes and tee positions and directing foot traffic.
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	Course management measures are undertaken to manage pests and diseases. Including daily scouting of the course for early signs and symptoms and accurate diagnosis to determine the cause of weeds, pests and diseases. As well, machinery is washed down under a management plan in support of pest and disease prevention.
	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;	Good course management is apparent in the use of pesticides. Pesticides are only legally registered and approved products and only used preventatively / curatively for specific weeds, pests and diseases. Greens staff, are correctly qualified and licenced, in the use of pesticides and

		Regularly calibrate and test applicators; Use appropriate protective equipment; Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of turf	staff wear correct protective clothing. Spraying equipment is regularly calibrated and tested and left-over products are diluted and disposed of correctly. Further concerns in pesticide application take in legal requirements, development state / life cycle, weather conditions and environmental factors; in particular bird breeding and bee pollinators. The links manager uses a biopesticide, pelargonic acid over glyphosphate. This is perceived to be a better way to eradicate weeds on bunker faces, sand scrapes and areas around the clubhouse.
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.	There is an emergency spillage response plan on display in the maintenance facility. Greens staff maintain un-mown buffer areas and no-spray zones next to water bodies and ecologically sensitive areas. When spraying a local environment risk assessment for pesticides (LERAP) is applied to watercourses to protect aquatic life.
	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	Chemicals are logged, recorded and stored securely and there is signage, ventilation and ease of access (Chemsafe). There are designated, appropriate areas for safely and securely storing waste materials before collection. Waste materials are collected from the site via registered waste handlers (e.g. Greensman).
	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	The mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilisers are undertaken over an impermeable surface. Triple rinse pesticide containers are safely stored before disposal.
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;	There is a list of hazardous substances, made available to authorised staff. All hazardous materials are safely stored in a secure metal box, chemical storage building and ventilated concrete building.

		<p>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</p>	<p>The mixing of hazardous materials is undertaken on impermeable flooring.</p> <p>Spill containments kits, an emergency wash area and fire extinguishers in the immediate area are present.</p> <p>There is secondary containment for fuel in the event of spills and regular visual inspection of storage tanks.</p> <p>Nozzles are fitted with automatic shut-off valves and stored in drip trays.</p> <p>Hazardous materials (lubricants, pesticides, fertilisers, oil filters, batteries and fuels) are stored safely and securely.</p> <p>Waste materials (e.g. used oil, filters and batteries, pesticide containers, and fertiliser bags) are also safely and securely stored before collection.</p> <p>Waste materials from the maintenance facility, are collected by a registered hazardous waste handler, Greensman.</p> <p>Similarly, used cooking oil is collected from the clubhouse, by FryFresh, a licenced collector.</p>
N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water	N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage and discharge licences	<p>Wastewater discharge licence; Appropriate treatment of machinery wash water (impermeable surface, oil / grease / clipping separation)</p>	<p>The maintenance facility comprises a closed-loop, Hydrotech wastewater treatment system with a curbed, impermeable surface, and Carbsorb, coal-based activated carbon.</p>

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	Following a recent irrigation audit the links manager is progressively replacing 225 full circle sprinkler heads, with part circle ones, to ensure targeted irrigation to essential playing surfaces only. This could lead to a 33% saving in water used on the golf course. In addition, heads that

			<p>throw water 15-20m on paths are being replaced with heads with less throw. This work will take place over the next three years. (CIP).</p> <p>Water samples from a nearby land drain are also being tested to see if this water can be used on the golf course. If so, then this would result in using less water from the borehole. (CIP).</p> <p>Other measures to use less water include screened compost top dressing in dry areas of the fairway to help retain moisture.</p> <p>Also, an analysis of wash-down water usage has found that a jet wash (which is current practice) produces big water savings over a big hose wash down i.e. over 100,000 litres of water are saved in a 24hr period.</p>
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course	<p>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</p>	<p>Measures to maximise water efficiencies take in regular irrigation performance checks (servicing twice a year and annual calibration) and staff training on efficient irrigation practices.</p> <p>Irrigation schedules are informed by weather patterns and TDR sensors for soil moisture analysis and there is night-early morning irrigation, for less evaporation and efficient water application.</p> <p>Other specific measures to maximise irrigation efficiency and reduce water usage include: selective use of graminicide Rescue to develop more drought resistant grasses; focused, hand-watering of greens, and as mentioned, there is a policy to progressively reduce the number of Rainbird irrigation heads and swapping out full circle heads for part circle heads.</p>
	R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings	<p>Audit water use regularly; Review bills frequently and look for irregularities; Encourage water-saving practices amongst staff and visitors; Categorise and track water consumption</p>	<p>Water consumption is audited / tracked for the tees, walkways, approaches and greens, for each hole of the golf course to help maximise water efficiencies.</p> <p>Measures to use water efficiently in buildings include volume reducing cisterns, low-flow toilets, motion percussion taps and efficient appliances (dishwashers and washing machines) and regular review of water bills.</p>
R1.3 Source water responsibly	R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water	<p>Ensure appropriate water abstraction permit and reporting, as required</p>	<p>RLGC complies with its Environment Agency abstraction licence i.e. 28,000 m³ per year. In 2021, water consumption for the golf course and grounds was 18,236 m³. While mains water consumed for the clubhouse and maintenance facility was 2,425m² and 315m³, in turn.</p>
R2 Energy			

<p>R2.1 Reduce energy demand</p>	<p>R2.1.1 Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed in course maintenance</p>	<p>Minimise areas of managed turf to reduce mowing, irrigation, and turf inputs</p>	<p>Measures to reduce energy demand on the golf course include naturalisation of non-playing areas to reduce maintenance, prioritisation of low irrigation and low maintenance vegetation types and the removal / modification of resource-intensive and heavily maintained features.</p> <p>Several measures are apparent in the clubhouse to reduce energy demand. Including LED lighting (70%), PIR motion sensors and wireless controlled thermostats. (Note, some of the lightings cannot be changed to LED due to the building's age) and regular review of energy bills and use of natural lighting.</p> <p>Audit PIR motion sensors for improved performance (e.g. room occupancy and natural lighting opportunities). (CIP).</p>
<p>R2.2 Maximise energy efficiency</p>	<p>R2.2.1 Measures to use energy and fuels more efficiently in buildings</p>	<p>Audit energy use regularly; Regularly review bills; Categorise and track energy consumption</p>	<p>The clubhouse has a relatively high B-rated energy performance certificate. The average EPC rating for a home in the UK is D.</p> <p>RLGC is also about to install electric vehicle charging points in the clubhouse's carpark. (CIP).</p> <p>There is progressive electrification of the maintenance fleet, where practical. Currently, there are five electric utility vehicles, six electric pedestrian mowers, and two electric triples (a new introduction to the market). This saves around £7,000 a year and improves the club's carbon footprint. (CIP).</p>
<p>R2.3 Source energy responsibly</p>	<p>R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy</p>	<p>Determine potential sources of renewable energy in the area and on-site, through renewable energy providers</p>	<p>The solar panels at the clubhouse generate a saving of around £1,500 using the feed-in tariff.</p> <p>Explore green energy tariffs. (CIP)</p>
<p>R3 Materials</p>			
<p>R3.1 Reduce materials demand</p>	<p>R3.1.1 Products and materials selection based on necessity, including opportunities for recycled, reused and locally sourced alternatives</p>	<p>Undertake a review of materials consumed</p>	<p>There is a progressive move from paper to electronic communication e.g. web-based invoicing of members' subscriptions. (CIP)</p> <p>As well, there are two water fountains out on the golf course and one at the club's main entrance.</p> <p>Branded reusable water bottles are sold in the pro shop.</p> <p>There is no single-use plastic cutlery.</p> <p>Consider a no plastics policy (CIP).</p>

			Consider a formal responsible purchasing policy for the whole facility (CIP).
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	<p>Practices to purchase responsibly in the catering include choosing local beverages (e.g. Marston Pedigree, Trappers Hat and Liverpool Gin), meat (e.g. Althams, a trusted local butcher since 1856) and fish (Neve of Fleetwood, who source fish and seafood responsibly and work with the Marine Stewardship Council to develop sustainable products). Together, this helps minimise food miles that in turn helps to reduce the club's carbon footprint. As well, compostable cups, for teas and coffees, are used at the halfway house, and out on the golf course and menus are organised to use local seasonal produce and Fairtrade-certified products are purchased, where practical.</p> <p>The local supplier network is estimated at 18 of which 12 (66%) are located less than 100 miles away.</p> <p>Locally sourcing of goods and services not only supports the local economy but also reduces the club's carbon footprint. What is more, the head chef has requested a herb garden that is in its infancy and once established will be used in the club's catering. (CIP).</p> <p>Similarly, the professional shop uses paper over plastic bags, and there are branded re-usable bottles and bamboo tees. Where practical, environmentally friendly golf equipment and apparel could be progressed, as this is one of the top trends identified in a recent Golf Monthly article (CIP).</p> <p>There is bulk purchasing whenever possible to limit packaging and transport, in the maintenance facility. (CIP).</p>
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	<p>The links manager reuses and recycles on-site course materials, where practical. For example, an estimated 4,000 tons of sand from the construction of the sand scrapes have been used for top-dressing on the golf course. This has resulted in significant cost savings and environmental benefits. The club has saved around £150,000 and reduced the carbon footprint of the club's supply chain.</p> <p>Waste streams collected at the clubhouse for recycling include glass, plastic, paper / cardboard, metals and dry mixed. Waste is collected by a registered waste handler, BIFFA for sorting and recycling.</p> <p>There are recycling bins on the golf course (x3) and outside the pro-shop and catering.</p>

			<p>Used cooking oil is taken away for recycling (renewable energy / fuel), by FryFresh, edible oils and food services, authorised oil recovery and recycling collector and sustainability certified company, under the Renewable Energy Directive. Surplus food is occasionally donated to local homeless charities and sent down to the greens staff.</p> <p>Waste streams collected at the maintenance facility for reuse and recycling at the site comprise soils and sands, cores, turf and scarified materials, clippings, waste from gardens and leaf litter.</p> <p>In the clubhouse, equipment and goods no longer required are donated in the local community for reuse. For example, heated and chilled buffer units were donated to a neighbouring rugby club in exchange for charity donations.</p> <p>Contracted refuse collectors mentioned below separate waste for recycling.</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>Waste streams from the clubhouse and maintenance facility are collected for recycling by authorised waste and recycling contractors, BIFFA (UK registered, waste carrier and leader in resource management and a benchmark company for sustainability) and Greensman (a leading, experienced provider in specialist waste management), respectively.</p> <p>Crates, for example, are collected by Wellocks (a British Consortium, AA-rated company) and cleaned and reused in food distribution for growers.</p> <p>Explore the above-mentioned waste contractor websites to help audit and improve upon the club's waste streams (CIP).</p>

COMMUNITY			
C1 Outreach			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes

<p>C1.1 Diversify access and provide multi-functionality</p>	<p>C1.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility</p>		<p>Walkers have access through the course via three rights of way.</p> <p>There are signs to welcome walkers, ramblers and other users explaining access rights and best practice.</p>
<p>C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity</p>	<p>C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes</p>		<p>RLGC support of charitable causes is principally through the provision of free rounds of golf for fundraising activities, which equates to around £26,000 per year. As well, there are direct donations of around £1,000 per year.</p> <p>The club hosts tournaments which donate funds to one or more selected charities. Including, Hft, which promote healthy lifestyles for people with learning disabilities, Liverpool Hospitals Charity Day, and the Michael Marshall Memorial Golf Day in aid of The Brunswick Youth Club in Bootle.</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>Staff are encouraged and supported to volunteer for good causes. Active community partnerships include a re-turfed, 5-a-side football pitch goal mouths and maintenance of a local roundabout, in Hoylake.</p> <p>The club collaborates with local education groups such as the University of Liverpool and, as mentioned, local environmental groups.</p> <p>Further notable community engagement includes the annual hosting of the Hoylake Schools Championship.</p> <p>RLGC is exploring the establishment of a sustainability working group in consultation with appropriate interested individuals and parties. (CIP)</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>RLGC is essentially a flat golf course that supports walking to play a round of golf (circa 90% of golf rounds are walking).</p> <p>RLGC has only a few electric buggies and they are for those golfers with a medical certificate.</p> <p>There is also a cycle-to-work scheme, secure cycle parking and lockers and showers. Five of the club's staff use cycles, electric (x2) and pedal cycles (x3) to travel to and from work.</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>RLGC is a charter signatory member of 'Women in Golf' and 'Girls Golf Rocks'. These are R&A and England Golf initiatives to encourage more women and girls to play the game and join clubs, and inspire more families to enjoy golf as a group leisure activity and open up more opportunities for women to work within the golf industry.</p> <p>The club's buildings are offered as function rooms for hire (e.g. Local Enterprise Partnership).</p>
<p>C2.3 Employ fairly and safely, and provide career opportunities</p>	<p>C2.3.1 Ethical and legal employment, working conditions and professional development</p>	<p>Follow all relevant national legislation and best practice for employment, health & safety etc</p>	<p>In 2021 RLGC set out formal safeguarding policies and procedures, for children and young people. The club also has a golf welfare officer for children and parents and adults should any concerns arise on Safegolf.</p> <p>Young members are a part of the club's house committee and assist with social functions for members and visitors to the club.</p> <p>Very good working conditions are made available to staff within the local community to work in the club's catering, for example.</p> <p>RLGC provides important economic benefits to the local and regional economies. RLGC hosted The Open Championship in July 2014 and attracted 203,000 golf enthusiasts. It achieved a 94% overall satisfaction rating of very good and had a total economic impact of £76 million to the northwest of England. RLGC once again hosts The Open in 2023.</p> <p>Greens staff are trained in pesticide applications, health and safety and habitat management. Continuing professional development also involves registering in GEO's OnCourse programme and becoming GEO certified.</p>
<p>C3 Communications</p>			
<p>C3.1 Engage golfers and members</p>	<p>C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness and understanding amongst members and visitors</p>	<p>Provide information on the facility's sustainability commitments, actions, or achievements</p>	<p>There is signposting along the coastal walkway showing walkers the story of the Natterjack Toad.</p> <p>RLGC has a 'Sustainability' page on its website, drone maps and a website platform, Shorehill Golf, and summary newsletters from Chairman of the Green, to communicate to staff and members on the special ecological areas, in and around the site and environmental initiatives, on the golf course.</p> <p>The club's Twitter account has almost 17,000 followers. The club also makes use of its website, The Liverpool Echo and Golf Monthly. These communications engage with the local and wider golf community on positive events at the club.</p>

			<p>The clubhouse's B-rated Energy Performance Certificate is displayed on the main notice board.</p> <p>The club has published its sustainability highlights online with the wider golfing community and other interested stakeholders.</p>
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>RLGC is updating its sustainability page on its website to include details on GEO and the broader sustainability agenda. (CIP).</p> <p>The club also plans to use posters on the benefits of sustainable golf and raise awareness of RLGC's registration and GEO certification (CIP).</p> <p>The reports and communication and marketing materials within GEO OnCourse are also being investigated by the club. (CIP).</p> <p>In future, there could be member's evening and course walks to further communicate on sustainability issues. (CIP).</p> <p>Together, this will help the club gain stakeholder support, customer retention and satisfaction, and generate new business opportunities from their sustainability efforts.</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