



GEO Certified[®]

GEO Certified[®] Report Woodhall Spa Golf Club

Prepared by independent verifier, Dino Minoli

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

“Woodhall Spa Golf Club shows a real commitment, desire, interest and ability across all management departments for continuous performance improvement on sustainable golf. Highlights include biomass boiler that gives a £5,000 saving; modern, efficient irrigation system which has led to a 50% reduction in use; recovering Site of Special Scientific Interest with regeneration of heather, mosses and lichens; forestry debris recycling from the heathland management programme for cart path renovation and biomass fuel; previously maintained turf areas left to naturalise, encouraging native flora and fauna to re-establish. I look forward to seeing the development at the club, particularly the proposed new clubhouse and energy sourcing on the journey to net zero.”

Dino Minoli

(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that **Woodhall Spa 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.

Woodhall Spa 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, **Woodhall Spa Golf Club** should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, **Woodhall Spa 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	This report draws on the following data sources.

			<p>(1) An assessment of Woodhall Spa Golf Club's (WSGC) data submitted to GEO.</p> <p>(2) A view of Google Maps of WSGC.</p> <p>(3) A review of Magic, DEFRA, WSGC Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</p> <p>(4) A review of WSGC's website for dedicated sustainability pages and an online search for related data.</p> <p>(5) An on-site, in-depth verification of WSGC with the general manager and courses manager and conversations with the club professionals and members.</p> <p>WSGC undertakes periodic surveys of the habitat and biodiversity on the site to record and monitor the many plants, trees and animals that are typical of lowland heathland in Britain.</p> <p>Historical surveys have identified around 38 species of trees and shrubs and over 180 horsetails, ferns and herbs. Plants recorded of particular interest because of their scarcity include the Marsh Gentian, Smooth Cat's-ear and Goldenrod. In 1996, a list of mammals, reptiles and birds have been kept and 17 mammals and 5 reptiles have been verified. Post-2003, a study of moths and insects was carried out and 220 species were recorded, some of which were extremely rare such as the Emperor Moth. Fourteen butterfly species have also been recorded. The most notable being the Brown Argus. In addition, 80 species of birds have been verified. This list, although historical gives an indication of the varied flora and fauna at the site.</p> <p>In 2021 and 2018, the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Scarborough Nixon Associates identified 235 and 152 species, respectively.</p> <p>More recently, an estimated, 300 species have been identified, including, 32 notable or protected species (i.e. 4 birds, 18 trees, shrubs, and plants, 6 amphibians and reptiles, 2 insects and invertebrates and 3 fungi).</p> <p>An important recent highlight is Natural England's site assessment, and it found that the site had moved from a 'declining' to a 'recovering' position. The club awaits a visit from Natural England for a full report. (CIP).</p>
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	<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>WSGC is very aware that it has an important SSSI at its site.</p> <p>The general manager and courses manager recognise the importance of the natural habitat and ecology across the site.</p> <p>WSGC works well and extensively in collaboration with Natural England, the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, and a local ecology consultant to manage and protect the important ecology at the site.</p> <p>The management team is particularly aware of the importance of maintaining the varied flora and fauna habitats on the golf courses.</p> <p>And as mentioned protected, endangered, and rare species found at the site are periodically recorded and monitored through biodiversity surveys.</p>
	<p>N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage</p>	<p>Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site</p>	<p>WSGC's cultural heritage includes the historic tower, which is the symbol of Woodhall Spa Golf Club. The tower is a well-known landmark and listed building in Lincolnshire that dates back to the 14th century. It is located behind the 3rd green on the Hotchkin course and provides an iconic backdrop to this hole.</p> <p>English Heritage has provided a grant to restore the Tower, which is completed. The manager conducts occasional public tours of the history of the Tower.</p> <p>There is also interest in how the club looks after the heathland on the golf course under Natural England. Accordingly, many other golf clubs have been taken around to show the heather restoration work on the golf course.</p> <p>There is as well the Viking Way walk, which passes through the site. The Viking Way is a long-distance trail in England running 147 miles (237 km). The route starts on the banks of the Humber in the north and winds through some of the best walking in Lincolnshire. It finishes at Rutland Water. The trail also supports nature trails and bird spotting.</p> <p>WSGC also has a long, close association with the air force, army and ex-servicemen. The iconic Petwood Hotel, which is a stone's throw from the club was the home to the officers of 617-squadron, 'The Dambusters', and many officers played golf at WSGC.</p>

<p>N1.2 Opportunities to naturalise the course</p>	<p>N1.2.1 Measures taken to identify and minimise the required area of managed turfgrass</p>	<p>Observe, track and / or monitor golfer play</p>	<p>The total area of land at WSGC is 142 ha. of which, about 46 ha and 94 ha, are maintained turf and habitat respectively. Natural areas at the site include heathland (51 ha), native woodland (30 ha) and wildflower meadows (12 ha) and open water (1ha).</p> <p>There is considerable opportunity to provide habitat for wildlife in support of biodiversity.</p> <p>The courses manager actively looks for opportunities to naturalise the course, where practical.</p> <p>In 2021, for example, an estimated area of 2 ha of new habitat was created. For example, areas that were previously regularly maintained on the Bracken course are now being left to naturalise and encourage the native wildlife to re-establish. As a result, there has been a noteworthy increase in both the numbers and species of insects and birds in and around these areas. As well, this creates an amazing golfing experience.</p>
<p>N1.3 Actively manage habitats for wildlife</p>	<p>N1.3.1 Projects to manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf</p>	<p>Regularly review and follow a habitat management plan; Prioritise native species when planting and landscaping</p>	<p>An important highlight concerns itself with the most impressive habitat management, heather restoration work on the golf course.</p> <p>Between 2016 and 2019 WSGC in consultation with Natural England and a local ecologist have implemented an ongoing habitat management programme on 6 holes of the golf course, every year, for three years. This work included the clear-felling of large areas of the golf course. To restore the golf course to its natural heathland state. The gorse and saplings were becoming invasive on the heathland and their removal has allowed the heather to flourish and begin to re-establish. At the same time, there has been an increase in many of the mosses and lichens, which is decline in Lincolnshire and the surrounding counties.</p> <p>As well this is extremely positive from the golfing perspective. Restoring the heathland and gradually minimising the course of unfavourable species slowly returns the course to its original heathland state. Removing bracken and gorse also creates views and vistas not seen for many years. This ensures the Hotchkin course is preserved as the original architects intended and continue. It also supports the specialised fauna and flora, some of which depend on this habitat to survive. Photographs of the habitat management work are shown on the club's website.</p>
<p>N1.4 Conserve key species</p>	<p>N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species</p>		<p>As mentioned the club recognises that lowland heathland is a priority habitat for many species. Grassland management is directed as appropriate with recognition of the varied habitat interests.</p>
<p>N2 Turfgrass</p>			

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	<p>The greens on the Hotchkin and Bracken for example, support the 80/20 Bent Poa mix and 70/30 Fescue and Poa mix, respectively. These cool-season grasses are suitable throughout the golf course including native links, chalk downland and heathland sites.</p> <p>Factors are taken into account in turfgrass selection for their long-term sustainability, including disease, heat, winter stress and wear tolerance of species, and the soil type and pH.</p>
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		Good cultural practices to maintain soil structure and condition include careful evaluation of the use of pesticides, and testing and monitoring of soil pH among other best practices.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Best practices in responsible fertiliser application include temperature, shade, rainfall, the height of cut, foot traffic, clipping production and soil tests.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	<p>Acknowledged best practices in cultural management include sharpening of mowing blades (5 times/year) and daily, removal of surface moisture during the growing season.</p> <p>Other best practices include scarification, verti-cutting, aeration, adjustment of mowing heights, frequent change of hole locations and hand weeding, whenever possible.</p>
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	<p>The green staff are very aware of wear and disease hotspots and monitor regularly.</p> <p>Scouting is routine and historic hotspots are mapped.</p>
	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	<p>Machinery is frequently washed to a set management plan.</p> <p>Greens staff only use legally registered and approved products. Green staff are licensed for the use of pesticides and staff are inducted and receive periodic training.</p> <p>Applicators are regularly calibrated and tested.</p>

			<p>Greens staff practice spot treatment with handheld sprayers and wipers and there are shrouded sprayers and anti-drip nozzles.</p> <p>Residual products are diluted and disposed of on untreated playing areas.</p>
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	<p>Document procedures for emergency spill responses;</p> <p>Maintain mowing buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas;</p> <p>Maintain spraying and spreading buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas;</p> <p>Create a map / aerial visual reproduction, drawing etc of the course showing buffer zones and no-spray, no-spread areas.</p>	<p>There is a documented emergency spill response procedure and forthcoming poster on this (CIP), to ensure an immediate and effective response.</p> <p>There is also an impermeable curbed flooring to contain liquid spills.</p> <p>Greens staff maintain un-mown buffer areas and no-spray zones next to water bodies and ecologically sensitive areas.</p> <p>When spraying a local environment risk assessment for pesticides (LERAP) of 5m+ is applied to watercourses to protect aquatic life.</p> <p>Greens staff irrigate lightly after the application of fertilisers.</p>
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	<p>Ensure all hazardous materials are safely and securely stored;</p> <p>Ensure compliance with all required standards and systems for hazardous waste and wastewater discharge</p>	<p>All chemicals are logged and recorded and stored securely and there is signage, ventilation and ease of access.</p> <p>There are designated and appropriate areas for safely and securely storing waste materials before collection.</p> <p>Waste materials such as glass, cardboard and mixed waste are collected and recycled by Veolia – a registered, waste carrier and a UK leader in resource management and benchmark company for ecological transformation.</p>
	N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from maintenance facility operations	<p>Ensure wash areas are on impermeable, leak-free surfaces;</p> <p>Mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable surface;</p> <p>Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators</p>	<p>The mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilisers are undertaken over an impermeable surface.</p> <p>Triple rinse pesticide containers are safely stored before disposal.</p>
N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances	N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe	<p>Maintain a register of hazardous materials available to authorised staff;</p>	<p>There is a record of hazardous materials.</p>

	<p>disposal of all hazardous substances</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>All hazardous materials are safely and securely stored in a secure metal box, chemical storage building and ventilated concrete building.</p> <p>The mixing of hazardous materials is undertaken on impermeable flooring.</p> <p>There are spill containments kits, emergency wash area and fire extinguishers to hand, secondary containment for fuel and regular visual inspection of storage tanks.</p> <p>There is secondary containment of fuel in the event of spills, bump barriers to prevent machinery accidents and nozzles fitted with automatic shut-off valves.</p> <p>Hazardous materials such as 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 safely and securely stored before collection.</p> <p>Waste materials from the maintenance facility, are collected by a registered hazardous waste handler, Greensman – a leading and experienced provider of, for example, specialist waste management, in Yorkshire and throughout the UK.</p> <p>Similarly, used cooking oil is collected from the clubhouse, by Booker, a licenced collector.</p> <p>The clubhouse has and complies with its formal discharge agreement to discharge its wastewater to the mains sewer.</p>
<p>N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water</p>	<p>N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage and discharge licences</p>	<p>Wastewater discharge licence; Appropriate treatment of machinery wash water (impermeable surface, oil / grease / clipping separation)</p>	<p>The maintenance facility has a closed-loop ESD 'Waste2Water' system (an efficient and compliant solution for essential turf-care operations).</p> <p>This is designed for washing down machinery and equipment and is used for grass clipping and oil and grease separation.</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	<p>A recent important highlight is the installation of a modern, efficient, Toro irrigation system, on the Hotchkin. This has resulted in a dramatic water saving of around 50% over previous years. The better sprinkler calibration has enabled the greens staff to target the specific playing areas of the golf course that need watering, which was previously not the case.</p> <p>The Toro irrigation upgrade is also planned, in the near term, for the Bracken. So going forward, all things being equal, there should be further reductions in water consumption for irrigation of the golf courses (CIP).</p> <p>Rainwater harvesting is a consideration in the design of the proposed new clubhouse (see below) (CIP).</p> <p>Water butts for use across the site are being explored, where practical. (CIP)</p>
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	<p>Apparent practical measures to maximise water efficiencies include regular irrigation performance checks and staff training on efficient irrigation practices.</p> <p>As well, irrigation schedules are informed by weather patterns, TDR sensors for soil moisture analysis and there is night-early morning irrigation, for less evaporation and a more efficient application of water.</p>
	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	<p>Practical measures to use water efficiently in buildings include the regular auditing of water use, periodic review of bills to look for irregularities and categorising and tracking of water consumption, at seven metered points across the facility.</p> <p>Water-saving practices to reduce water consumption in the clubhouse are enabled through the installation of low flush urinals and the recent fitting of water savings devices (e.g. water-efficient compression taps and showerheads).</p>

			<p>It is worth noting that further resource-saving practices are, to a degree currently on hold in light of the proposed new clubhouse building next mentioned.</p> <p>A potentially most important highlight for the next verification is WSGC's proposed new clubhouse. Its design will include important key considerations on sustainability.</p> <p>Additionally the equipment and appliances from the existing clubhouse building will be reused in the new building, where practicable and cost-effective, to save money, minimise waste and reduce the club's carbon footprint. For example, LED lighting, dishwashers, a new boiler and a planned new electric cooker, could all be moved across to the new building.</p>
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	<p>Historically, WSGC complies well with its Environment Agency (EV), annual water abstraction licence of 28,000 cubic meters/year. (See above). The club has recently had its abstraction licence increased given the historic context and recent reduction in water consumption from the installation of the Toro irrigation system.</p> <p>In practice the club draws on the water during the winter months, to fill two reservoirs, to utilise during the summer.</p>
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	<p>Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed from fossil fuels across the facility include 4 electric golf carts and 4 electric utility vehicles, 5 hybrid mowers.</p> <p>A noteworthy highlight is the replacement of an old inefficient, 20+ year-old gas boiler, with two, modern, energy-efficient ones. This has resulted in cost savings and a reduced carbon footprint.</p> <p>Management communicates with its staff on measures to reduce energy consumption across the facility. Staff are asked to be mindful to turn off lighting in unoccupied spaces and only turn on lights, when needed and turn down or switch off heating when appropriate and thermostats are seasonally adjusted.</p>

			<p>Approximately 25% of staff including the manager cycle to work. This has health and well-being and cost-savings benefits for employees and helps reduce the club's carbon footprint.</p> <p>An estimated 50% of appliances in the clubhouse are A-rated. This is likely to be increased in line with the new clubhouse (CIP).</p>
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	<p>Measures to maximise energy efficiency include regularly monitoring and reviewing the golf facility's energy usage, to highlight unpredicted and/or inefficient and costly practices.</p> <p>As well, LED and A-rated energy appliances have been progressively installed in the clubhouse, for example.</p> <p>Maintenance vehicles are regularly serviced, to maintain their optimal performance and extend their working life.</p> <p>Motion sensors for indoor lighting, automatic timers and adjustment of heating and cooling systems are to be reviewed and updated, as appropriate (see new clubhouse building) (CIP).</p>
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	<p>WSGC has undertaken significant capital expenditure to source alternative, renewable forms of energy.</p> <p>An important highlight is the recent installation of a biomass boiler, in the maintenance facility for electricity generation. Biomass is a renewable energy source, generated from the burning of wood, for example. It releases carbon dioxide when burned, but considerably less than fossil fuels. Moreover, the wood is collected from the golf course, which reduces the carbon footprint of the Club's supply chain. The biomass boiler produces around 31,000 Kilowatt hours of electricity.</p> <p>This gives an annual saving of about £5,000. In addition, the maintenance facility is now more or less self-sufficient regarding electricity and hot water.</p>

			<p>This thought process is also being considered for the driving range, along with solar panels. As the driving range has seen a noteworthy increase in energy demand from the 'top tracer' system and lighting, for example. (CIP).</p> <p>Electric charging points for vehicles are being monitored and explored in light of market developments and the new clubhouse building. (CIP).</p>
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	<p>Several measures have been introduced to reduce materials demand.</p> <p>Actions taken to minimise paper usage include web-based communication of electronic newsletters, membership subscriptions and invoicing.</p> <p>There is no single-use plastic, such as cutlery.</p> <p>Menu planning includes flexible portion sizes, locally sourced, seasonal food and certified, sustainability sourced foods such as the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). (CIP).</p> <p>There is also a 10p charge for plastic bags in the pro shop. This has resulted in a circa 80% drop in their use. A no plastic bag policy is being considered. (CIP).</p>
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>The club actively tries to buy many of its goods and services from local suppliers.</p> <p>Several green procurement practices are evident, across the facility.</p> <p>Recycling bins for the golf course are made from recycled materials.</p> <p>Crushed aggregates and woodchips are used on the golf course.</p> <p>Credible, eco-labelled products such as Fairtrade and EU eco-labelled paper are purchased in the catering and clubhouse, respectively.</p> <p>Bamboo tees and branded reusable water bottles are sold in the pro shop.</p> <p>The golf professional for example, asks its golf equipment and apparel suppliers if they can reduce their packaging.</p>

			<p>Goods are bought in bulk, whenever possible. For example, fertilisers for the golf course and paper towels for the catering.</p> <p>WSGC purchases its electricity from SSE, a FTSE 100 company that has the largest renewable electricity portfolio in the UK and Ireland and is real Living Wage and Fair Tax Mark accredited (Annual Report, 2021).</p> <p>WSGC is exploring an ethical procurement policy with supportive practical training for each department. To support and help progress the greening of businesses and sectors for sustainability.</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>Materials collected for composting/reuse on the golf course include soils, sands, cores, turf and clippings. Metals are stored and taken away for recycling.</p> <p>An important highlight is the use of woodland debris for wood chippings on cart paths that arises out of the annual tree management programme.</p> <p>There are designated resource collection areas and clear, labelled recycling bins, both at the clubhouse and on the golf course for glass, cardboard, plastic, cooking oil and general waste.</p> <p>The breakdown and tracking of how much waste goes to landfills or is reused/recycled are calculated using a very good calculator on the Veolia website.</p> <p>The recycling of food waste is being explored, where practical and cost-effective. (CIP)</p> <p>Progressing plant-based options and organic food on the menu is being considered where practical. (CIP).</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	Authorised waste contractors, such as Veolia, Booker and Greensman, collect waste materials from the club, in a legally compliant manner.

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>WSGC provides access to the Viking Way which passes through the golf course.</p> <p>The club actively supports the maintenance of public footpaths and rights of way that intersect the site.</p> <p>Signage is provided and paths are maintained in collaboration with various groups to ensure safe and easy access for non-golfers.</p> <p>WSGC provides access to its building facilities, including promoting catering facilities and making meeting rooms available to local community groups and function rooms available for hire.</p> <p>The clubhouse is also accompanied by England Golf headquarters which provides a large conference, meeting and function space for public and golfing organisations.</p> <p>The club have good nutrition and injury avoidance programmes and greater inclusivity is encouraged through golf tuition programmes for all through the club's Golf Academy.</p>

			<p>There are an increasing number of junior competitions and matches, with supporting tee times and a junior academy course and mixed-gender matches including away trips to other golf clubs.</p> <p>The club is looking to erect signage, as appropriate, across the site to communicate on sustainability. This will help enhance the club's reputation and gain support in the local community for its sustainability efforts (CIP).</p> <p>The club is also exploring the opportunities for hosting green meetings that arise from its certification and potential, green clubhouse building. (CIP).</p>
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		<p>WSGC has important and generous local and national, charity work.</p> <p>Five charitable events and five charities, for example, are supported and the total amount of money raised for charity is well over £20,000.</p> <p>Supported charities and events include the Royal National Institute for the Blind; Golf Day in aid of Missing People; Captains Charity AM/AM in aid of Saving Lives in Lincolnshire and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.</p> <p>WSGC also helped with the refurbishment of Jubilee Park, a famous Victorian Park, which fell into disrepair. The club continues to provide annual financial support to Jubilee Park to help ensure that it is maintained for the benefit of the local community and visitors.</p> <p>An estimated 500 hrs of volunteering are carried out by facility members (e.g. tournaments).</p> <p>The head chef has also gone on a charity run, with the club's support.</p>
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'	<p>WSGC's sustainability drive is discussed in regular departmental meetings with the general manager, secretary, courses manager, catering managers and club professionals.</p> <p>The club has positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the local community and other groups. For example, the Lincolnshire Bird Committee hosts its annual general meeting at the club.</p>

			<p>As well, WSGC collaborates well with local education groups, including local schools, colleges and universities, internships and apprenticeships. For example, there are five apprenticeships with Riseholme College, Lincoln.</p> <p>The club works in partnership with wildlife charities, environmental protection agencies and civic/community projects, including, the Environment Agency, Natural England, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and a local ecology consultant.</p> <p>As well, the club has worked with the turfgrass industry suppliers to document best practices on the impact of the use of plant protection products on the golf course.</p> <p>WSGC also significantly benefits the local economy. For instance, the Hotchkin is ranked the 54th best golf course in the world. This draws in golf tourists who require accommodation and hospitality, for example.</p> <p>The club as well denotes resources within the local community. For example, collected wood on the golf course, to be sold, was appropriately cut up and donated to a local school, for children to sit on, in outside classes, during Covid. This was captured in photographs and communicated to the local community, thereby generating very positive feedback and goodwill for the club.</p> <p>The club is actively considering sustainability champion(s), for the golf course and clubhouse, to help support the management's drive for more responsible and sustainable golf (CIP).</p>
C2 Golfers & Employees			
C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities		<p>WSGC provides important health and well-being benefits.</p> <p>This comes from walking and playing golf in a clean, healthy environment and socialising in the golf course and clubhouse.</p> <p>The club has also hosted 22 tournaments with an estimated 2,500 participants.</p> <p>There is a good mix of tournaments planned for this year at WSGC. Including the Woodhall Spa Trophy, Central England Mixed and Mens Foursomes, Summer Hotchkin and Bracken Team Opens, English U18 Amateur Championship, England Golf Week and County Champ of Champs (Women).</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>WSGC demonstrates inclusive policies for members and visitors.</p> <p>The club follows and implements the ‘England Golf Equality and Diversity Policy’. Its aims are three-fold. (1) Promote fairness, equality, diversity and respect for everyone working, volunteering, or participating in golf. (2) Assist in eliminating discrimination from golf. (3) Promote positive action in favour of under-represented groups in a proportionately and lawfully manner.</p> <p>WSGC offers an application for intermediate membership (i.e. U21, U25 and U28) and its green fees and open days are relatively lower in price when compared to golf courses of a similar ranking.</p> <p>As well, WSGC is a Safegolf accredited club. As such, thecClub recognises that it has a responsibility to protect and safeguard children and adults at risk and ensure that everyone can enjoy golf in a safe environment. Concerns might include: bullying of children by their peers or by adults and lacking awareness of the safeguarding needs.</p> <p>England Golf and WSGC run several programmes to encourage more inclusivity in golf. For example, ‘Women on Par’ uses a variety of fun course challenges to support beginners to get out onto the golf course. As well, England Golf in collaboration with the Golf Foundation has a Junior Golf Strategy (2021-25). It has three objectives. (1) To increase the profile of golf in schools and communities. (2) To support the transition from programmes into club-based activity. (3) To develop the workforce supporting junior golf.</p> <p>To this end, WSGC has a ‘First Step Into Golf’ programme. Including a junior academy, after-school & weekend group coaching, par 3 competition and talent identification and development.</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>WSGC practices equal opportunity recruitment and hiring policy.</p> <p>Greens staff are given training on the use of pesticides (as mentioned), health and safety and manual handling, hospitality and landscape management, conservation and protection of plants and animals and biodiversity protection.</p> <p>WSGC also provides local employment opportunities in course management and maintenance, clubhouse management and hospitality and catering and golf professionals</p> <p>As well, juniors are given work opportunities/experience across the golf facility (e.g., bar staff and professional shop).</p>

			The club is exploring running training and workshops on aspects of sustainable golf, such as, ethical procurement, green marketing and sustainability leadership. This will support continuous sustainability improvement and generate new business opportunities and competitive business advantage for better bottom-line performance (CIP).
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	<p>The general manager, club secretary, courses manager, golf professional and memberships manager, are all engaged and information is provided, in the weekly head of department meetings, on sustainability.</p> <p>The club has a dedicated sustainability page on its website that is to be updated (as mentioned below). To communicate and raise awareness of the work with Natural England to manage a site of special scientific interest on the golf course, for example. (CIP).</p> <p>The club has a wildlife guide leaflet for golfers and other users of the site. Golfers are engaged in the facility's sustainability commitments and how they can lend their support through newsletters, for example.</p> <p>The club has also shared its sustainability highlights online with the wider golfing community.</p> <p>As mentioned, the club wants to have environmental champions, for the golf course and clubhouse, to help communicate, implement and monitor, sustainability across the facility and the club is exploring training to support this. (CIP)</p>

			<p>Sustainability posters are also to be displayed, as appropriate, across the facility, to raise awareness and understanding and gain member and visitor and stakeholder support for the club's sustainability commitments and efforts. (CIP).</p> <p>The club also wants to produce an updated annual sustainability review and carbon footprint, via GEO OnCourse, to show continuous year on year improvement in sustainability performance in support of sustainable golf. (CIP)</p> <p>The club is also exploring a new sustainability competition/cup and notice board, in the potential new clubhouse building. This could help raise awareness of sustainable golf, celebrate and capture the club's certification aims and foster a sustainability legacy. As well, the competition could be a platform to promote and sell sustainability equipment and apparel.</p> <p>The club, as well, is interested in running a survey of the members to measure their environmental worldviews. This will help the club cost-effectively measure the level of member support for the club's environmental strategy, policy and initiatives and see if it varies according to demographics. The club will also be able to see if there is a shift in attitudes over time. (CIP)</p>
<p>C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability</p>	<p>C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community</p>	<p>Provide evidence of external communications and community engagement</p>	<p>The club is reviewing and updating its ecology webpage, which could be extended to the broader sustainability spectrum.</p> <p>As mentioned, the club plans to use a poster(s) to help communicate what sustainable golf is about and its benefits. The club's sustainability vision and mission statement, for example, can be included here (CIP).</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