



SUSTAINABILITY DRIVE
ENGLAND GOLF
ENGAGE | EDUCATE | EMPOWER

England Golf Driving for Sustainability 2025-2030

Future-proofing our sport



Foreword

This plan sets out **England Golf's sustainability commitments** for the next five years as well as a guide for golf clubs, facilities and golfers to enhance or make commitments of their own.

*"As custodians of large areas of English countryside, the golfing community has a unique opportunity to enhance the natural environment and **lead the way in biodiversity recovery and efficient use of resources** as well as community wellbeing.*

*With all stakeholders engaged, working together and sharing best practice, we can make a difference. We must begin with gathering the data so that we can measure, track and evidence progress which will have the additional benefit of **improving the perception of golf and its environmental impact**"*

Kirstin McEvoy, Head of Sustainability, England Golf



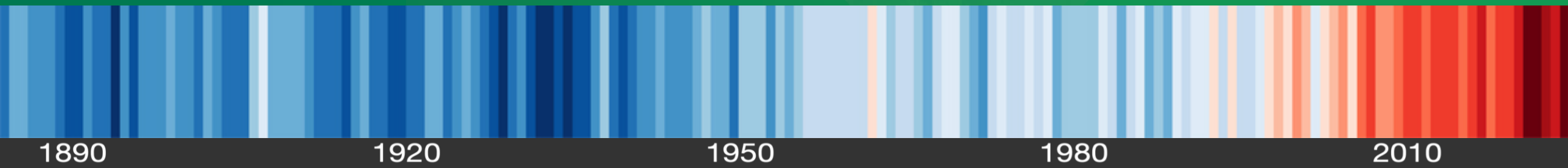
VISION
Our vision is
to lead golf to become
more sustainable, to
create positive change,
and to secure longevity
for golf in England.

Sustainability in Golf Timeline



The above timeline gives some insight into the progress that England Golf and the Sport have made.

The graph below shows the Global Climate Stripes, with darker red colours representing hotter years.



Let's Inspire More Golfers!



Sustainability is one of the key drivers for England Golf within its Strategy 2025-2030.

Purpose

England Golf aims to collaborate across the industry to future-proof the game for generations to come

Climate change is impacting sport globally, and golf is no exception. Increasingly frequent extreme weather events, prolonged periods of drought, and shifting seasonal patterns are disrupting play, damaging facilities, and challenging course management.

England Golf recognises **both the risks and the opportunity for the game** to lead through adaptation and mitigation.

By **engaging, educating, and empowering** our stakeholders, we aim to safeguard the game's future and demonstrate leadership in sustainable sport.

Engage

with stakeholders
to position golf
as a solutions
provider

Educate

on the
opportunities and
challenges that
golf has regarding
sustainability

Empower

golf clubs and
facilities to future
proof themselves

Golf and Sustainability: Why It Matters & How the Sport Can Lead

Climate change is increasingly impacting golf through rising temperatures, floods, droughts, and extreme weather, increasing maintenance costs and disrupting play. Global goals such as **aiming to limit warming to 1.5°C** and the **Government's Net Zero 2050 target**, call for rapid emission reductions and stronger protection of nature across every sector, including sport.

With **millions of people** engaging with golf in England each year and **extensive areas of** managed green spaces, golf has both the reach and responsibility to lead. By improving resource efficiency, reducing carbon footprint and protecting biodiversity, the sport can enhance course resilience, reduce costs, and **set a positive example for sustainability in sport.**

There are 11.1 million people engaging with golf per year in England

There are over 1800 affiliated golf clubs and facilities in England



Challenges

Land Use Pressure • Perception & Participation

Growing demand for land and limited membership diversity **make some golf clubs vulnerable to redevelopment**. Strengthening local engagement and showcasing golf's social and environmental benefits are key to **securing long-term course protection**.

Legislative Changes & Restrictions

Tighter regulations on fertilisers and pesticides, coupled with **supply constraints**, are increasing costs and complicating turf management. Courses must adapt to **maintain playing quality** while meeting environmental standards.

Rising Costs, Resources • Staff Retention

Rising costs for turf care materials, fuel, and equipment are **stretching course budgets**. Ongoing **staff shortages** in greenkeeping and hospitality add pressure, challenging clubs to maintain **course quality and service standards**.



Rising Temperatures • Water Scarcity

Hotter, drier conditions are increasing **competition for limited water supplies** from sectors such as agriculture and energy. Golf courses must adopt sustainable water strategies, **improve irrigation efficiency** and select drought-tolerant plant species to **maintain playability and resilience**.

Rising Energy Prices

Higher fuel and electricity costs are driving up the expense of irrigation, mowing, and clubhouse operations. Investing in **energy-efficient systems** and renewable sources can help clubs reduce **long-term costs** and emissions.

Coastal Erosion, Sea Levels • Extreme Weather

Rising sea levels, flooding, and severe storms threaten course stability and playability. **Proactive adaptation** and resilient design are vital to protect playing areas, assets and **minimise operational disruption**.

Opportunities

Reduced Operating Costs • Waste Management

Sustainable decisions across maintenance, resource use and purchasing can significantly **reduce running costs** and cut the amount and types of waste a course produces. Clubs can also access funding for improvements, strengthening both **financial and environmental** resilience.

Increase Biodiversity

Enhancing **biodiversity** in both in-play and out-of-play areas **supports healthy ecosystems**, reduces risk of pest and disease, and enriches the landscape. This improves course resilience and the overall **playing experience for golfers**.

Carbon Reduction • Efficient Energy Use

Reducing energy use, transport, and material waste **lowers costs and emissions**. Depending on the site, clubs can explore solar, wind, or other **renewable technologies to improve self-sufficiency** and environmental performance.



Course Playability • Water Resilience

Efficient water use and on-site capture **reduce requirements while maintaining course quality**. Integrating natural flood management **supports local communities** and ensures reliable irrigation, building **resilience to drought** and extreme weather.

Reduce Chemical Input

Gradually reducing fertiliser, pesticide, and fungicide use **improves turf and soil health** while maintaining playability. Exploring alternative management approaches prepares clubs for **future regulations and supply challenges** and protects local biodiversity.

Community Ties • Enhance Reputation & Image

Sustainability **strengthens a club's reputation** and demonstrates leadership to members and the wider community. Partnerships with **local suppliers and initiatives** that highlight environmental and social value **help protect the long-term future** of the course.

GOALS



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1

Deliver tangible and measurable impact; reducing use of resources and improving natural habitats

2

Golf to become a leader in the sports industry for driving environmental and social impact in our communities

3

Support golfing facilities and golfers to embed sustainability into decision-making

4

To showcase our tournaments as an example for sustainability

GOALS

1

Deliver tangible and measurable impact; reducing use of resources and improving natural habitats

Identify data requirements and put mechanisms in place to measure and track necessary information

Work with suppliers to measure the impact of goods and services procured

Plan for how difficult-to-measure data will be captured in the future and set budgets and timescales

2

Golf to become a leader in the sports industry for driving environmental and social impact in our communities

Work with the sports industry to share best practice in driving environmental and social impact

Set up a steering group with leading organisations and experts to guide methodology, ensure credibility and champion findings

Seek opportunities to work with partners, sponsors and suppliers to drive impact beyond golf

3

Support golfing facilities and golfers to embed sustainability into decision-making

Implement mechanisms to support affiliated golf clubs, facilities and golfers to make impactful progress in sustainability

Dedicated to providing golf clubs, facilities and golfers through fostering learning and providing tailored support

Maintain current, informative and user-friendly resources to support golf to make progress across all 12 sustainability principles

4

To showcase our tournaments as an example for sustainability

Collaborate with venues and tournament stakeholders to improve the sustainability of events

Identify and implement transformative initiatives to reduce the impact of tournaments

Measure and communicate and replicate successful initiatives at all events

Principles of Sustainability

(Aligned to British Association for Sustainable Sport)

Environmental Responsibility



Energy & Emissions



Waste Management



Water Resources



Materials & Chemicals



Transport & Travel



Food & Drink



Biodiversity & Habitats

Social Progress



Accessibility & Equality



Healthy Options



Engagement & Education



Procurement & Employment



Economy & Community

Economic Activity

Effective initiatives and projects **address multiple principles** at once to maximise benefits.



Water Resources

Water management is arguably one of golf's biggest challenges. As our climate changes and rainfall becomes more intense, we are seeing more periods of flooding. Then, with hotter, drier summers, the challenge turns to finding sustainable, affordable sources of water to use in irrigation.



Biodiversity & Habitats

The space we utilise for golf in England is sizeable, and the moral responsibility that comes with that means managing courses with nature in mind is imperative. Out-of-play areas offer significant opportunities for wildlife to thrive, so club management policies must embrace this.



Energy & Emissions

Global emissions are accelerating climate change, so reducing them is fundamental to our future. With energy costs rising, exploring initiatives that decrease usage helps reduce emissions and saves golf clubs money.

England Golf Commitments 2025-2030



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England Golf Commitments 2025-2030



Water Resources

Work with the water industry to find practical solutions to the challenges faced by golf

Work with golf clubs to support with planning for increased water resilience and self-reliance

Investigate funding solutions to support golf clubs with investment in water resilience



Energy & Emissions

Commission an internal energy audit, implement a carbon reduction plan, which includes the switching of energy supplies to certified green sources

Encourage employees and volunteers to move towards greener transport including increased use of EVs and efficient route planning

Engage our partners, sponsors and suppliers to reduce their emissions



Biodiversity & Habitats

Showcase benefits of golf courses to local communities, by providing evidence of the environmental value of golf

Understand existing habitat composition across golf courses by completing national baseline mapping and identifying the greatest opportunities for enhancement

Provide guidance on strengthening ecological networks, regional biodiversity priorities and animal species richness



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**Golf Clubs &
Facilities**

Golf Clubs & Facilities Commitments 2025-2030

Golf Clubs & Facilities Commitments 2025-2030



Golf Clubs & Facilities

Create an action plan, ensuring first that legal requirements (such as waste segregation) are met, tackle areas where biggest impact can be made and budgeting for longer-term projects

Seek opportunities to increase community engagement, focusing on social, health, wellness and educational initiatives and linking to nature

Sustainability on the Board agenda, support with sustainability data collection and survey completion



Water Resources

Carry out a water audit to identify current consumption and sources

Use local resource option studies to identify opportunities for resilient water supplies

Consider what adaptations are/ will be required, obtain quotes, compile business cases and include in budget planning



Energy & Emissions

Carry out an energy audit, look at what uses the most consumption, is there an opportunity to install timers or reduce usage?

Switch energy supplies to certified green sources

Investigate opportunities for on-site generation



Biodiversity & Habitats

Work with local organisations and specialists to align with local nature recovery strategies

Take part in targeted, annual monitoring of key species on your golf course

Leverage England Golf's habitat mapping results for your club and use it to identify opportunities for enhancement



Golf Clubs & Facilities



Golfers

Golfers' Commitments 2025-2030

Golfers' Commitments 2025-2030



Golfers

Challenge your golf club to be more sustainable, include sustainability as a criteria when choosing which club to join

Use your membership votes to support investment in sustainability initiatives

Don't forget your reusable water bottle or coffee cup



Water Resources

Be understanding during dry spells if your playing areas aren't as green as usual

Support your golf club with their transition to self-sufficient water supplies

Ensure your personal water usage on site is responsible and let your club know if you spot leaks or dripping taps



Energy & Emissions

Consider switching to greener transport, make the move to an electric car and/or car share when you play. If you'd like to cycle, encourage your course to provide storage.

If you're playing in competitions, or for fun further afield, consider using public transport

Consider what you can do outside of golf to reduce your emissions, switch to a green energy supplier



Biodiversity & Habitats

Make sure you don't leave anything on the course, switch to natural tees and pick up broken ones

Let your golf club know if you've seen unusual species out on the course

Suggest and support your club's initiatives to improve the nature at your club



Golfers

Sustainability Plan 2025-2030

VISION	To lead golf to become more sustainable, to create positive change, and to secure a long-term future for golf in England				
PURPOSE	Engage	Educate		Empower	
GOALS	Deliver tangible and measurable impact; reducing use of resources and improving natural habitats	Golf to become a leader in the sports industry for driving environmental and social impact in our communities	Support golfing facilities and golfers to embed sustainability into decision-making	To showcase our tournaments as an example for sustainability	
FOCUS	Water Resources		Energy & Emissions		Biodiversity & Habitats
VALUES	INCLUSIVE	HONEST	SUPPORTIVE	EXCELLENT	RESPONSIBLE

Time for Action

*"Golf not only has a **huge opportunity to future-proof itself** against the challenges of climate and social change, but if we act collectively, we can also create a platform to showcase the incredible sustainability actions our sport continues to drive.*

*Having a positive impact on the environment is **paramount to the ongoing success of golf**, and all of us at England Golf are proud to play as energised a part as needed in **accelerating progressive change.**"*

Jeremy Tomlinson, CEO, England Golf



Reach out to us today at sustainability@englandgolf.org, for support. We have a wide range of tools, resources and experts on hand to help any kind of golfing venue or facility