



# MAKING YOUR CLUB AND OUR GAME SUSTAINABLE

With sustainability playing an ever increasing role across the globe, in Football we have our own part to play in supporting and helping to achieve global targets.

To ensure that our actions positively contribute to environmental, social and economic benefits, all clubs whether big, small, rural or urban can play an important role in making steps towards taking responsibility for their climate footprint.



Global warming is placing our planet and future generations at risk and all sectors including football has its part to play in working towards a healthier and more sustainable future. Businesses and organisations around the world are identifying ways in which they can positively respond and commit to doing their part in tackling climate change. Raising awareness of the global crisis as well as outlining ways in which our football family can make positive steps in reducing our carbon footprint, will aid local, national and global targets and ensure that your club and our game is sustainable.

First and foremost, it's important for clubs to begin to recognise how they can have a positive impact in this area. Local authorities and councils will have their own local targets and ambitions around sustainability. It is worth checking out your local areas plan, and how you can play your part within your community.

It is easier to implement smaller changes that are more realistic to work towards as a club initially, and ones that are relatively cost effective to achieve.

By communicating with the local community and local authority about the areas you are considering targetting at the club, with help to support local visions and targets, and develop long term support for your plans.

By leading these changes positively and recognising the role that your club can play in changing attitudes towards sustainability, you will create a ripple effect across the clubs and local organisations and businesses. This could make a significant difference to the future of sustainability.



## Single Use Plastic

- Does your club provide a kit package at the start of every season? Have you considered adding a club water bottle to this package? Not only can it act as good marketing of your club, but it can also reduce the need for players and parents to bring single use plastics to training and matchdays. There may also be an opportunity, to stock club water bottles at your ground for people to purchase.
- If your club is unable to offer the above, think about how you could encourage parents and players to bring their own reusable bottle. This could be incentivised by offering free refills either using a kitchen facility (if you have one) or exploring having a refillable station available.

## Sustainable Travel

- Do you know where your members reside in relation to the club house, training/match day venue(s)? A mapping exercise/survey may help you identify the distance players have to travel but also what their typical travel methods are. Understanding this may then help you identify alternatives such as cycle, bus, train or tram routes which may encourage them to consider how they travel to training/match days. Incentivising alternative travel methods may support in your members in taking steps to positive change. One incentive suggestion is to reduce the cost of the membership fees for the following season. By encouraging members to use a sustainable travel method, you could equate each journey to a value, for example 50p. So if a player uses a sustainable travel method twice a week for 40 weeks they could save £40.00 off their membership.
- To help with the encouragement of cycling/use of e-bikes, the club could explore installing a safe place for bicycles to be stored. Bike racks or shelters would be the most ideal solution and are relatively low cost, however this option may not be viable for all clubs. A much simpler solution could be to offer a safe space either on or by the pitch by means of a lock-up/container, this may be one that is empty whilst equipment is on the pitch or a changing room which isn't being used and can be locked.
- Do you have an EV (electric vehicle) charging station close to your venue(s)? Communicating this to your members, away teams and spectators may make your club more attractive to them but also shows the role you are playing in helping with sustainable travel. There are several websites that can help you locate your nearest EV charging station. Don't forget to share that on your club website and in match day information!





## By the Community, for the Community

- How often does your club support local businesses by utilising their services or purchasing their products? Supporting local business not only helps aid the local economy but it can also help make positive contributions to the reduction of your carbon footprint. It is important, that you do your research on any supplier you use. Although purchasing locally will have its' benefits it does not always their supply chain is always 'green'. Ask questions - be inquisitive!
- To help identify which companies are local to you, you can use online local directories or alternatively use Google Maps. Simply enter your club location/post code into the platform and search what businesses are close and more importantly what products and services they offer.

## Waste Management

- Does your training/match day venue(s) have sufficient waste bins? Speak with your local authorities/council or invest in dual waste management bins to help support your members, visiting fans and the public to divide their non-recyclable and recyclable waste.
- The club may want to consider how they can do their part to keep green space free from litter and not only make their playing surfaces safe but also keep their community looking attractive. How can you make this a community event, wider than just the football club? Speak to your local authorities/council as they may have schemes open where you can apply for litter picking equipment to support with your events.

## Alternative Food Options

- As a club you may be fortunate to have on site catering facilities which allows you to provide refreshments to your members. If you do, now maybe a good time to review your menu. It is estimated that in the last 12 months, 1 in 5 (20%) people have reduced the amount of meat they are eating (The Vegan Society). Reducing meat consumption can help lower carbon footprint and greenhouse gases but a revised menu could also ensure that the club evolves and caters for members with a variety of dietary choices/needs.
- If you do not have catering facilities but hire an external catering company in for match days or club events, find out how they are playing their part in reducing their carbon footprint. It is also important to find out how they cater for different dietary choices/needs.



## Digital Communication and Engagement

- Have you considered how the club can use online/digital methods to communicate and share important information? Digitalising some of your traditional printed documents such as handbooks and signing on forms can not only save printing and distribution costs but it can also save volunteers' time.
- Explore how you can connect with members of your community, businesses, and organisations through the use social media especially when it comes to advertising your events. Posters and flyers still can serve a purpose and help communicate to audiences who are not on social media. However digital advertisement can help the club in not only sharing information quicker on a much larger scale, but also reduces the need for paper contributing to the reduction of deforestation.

## Reuse and Recycle Kit and Equipment

- How does your club recycle and reuse kit and equipment? Waste management is not just about rubbish and recycling, it is also about kit and equipment. New kit typically indicates the start of a new season or the beginning of a new partnership/sponsorship deal. It also indicates that kit has had significant wear and new kit is needed. However, there is a 'fast fashion' culture and clothing items, including football kits are continually replaced, despite being in good condition. Consider how you could get several seasons wear out of the club kit. Not only will it support in the reduction of your clubs carbon footprint, but it could also help the club save significant amounts of funds too.
- Fast fashion and the growth of children can mean that football boots and shin pads become items which are continually purchased. The club could consider, how it sets up its own recycle scheme to prevent items ending up in landfills. The redistribution of items collected, could either be to support families within your club who maybe struggling financially alternatively it could be collecting these items on behalf of charities who then recycle and repurpose the items locally, nationally, or globally.
- Most of our clothes including football kits are typically made from fabrics which contain plastic-based materials which are negatively affecting our ocean plastics pollution crisis. With hundreds of club kit being purchased seasonally, clubs may want to begin to explore what their suppliers are doing to help reduce their carbon footprint, but also what ranges are made from recyclable materials.
- If the club needs to purchase new kit and equipment, bulk ordering everything you need in one hit can help save on packaging, CO2 emissions on transportation and cost.



## Terminology Explained

**Global warming** = gradual increase in the temperature of the Earth

**Single use plastics** = any plastic items which are designed to be used or are used only once before they are recycled or thrown away

**Sustainable travel** = minimising travel which has a negative impact on the environment

**Co2 Emissions** = comes from the burning of fossil fuels (oil, coal or gas)

**Ocean plastics pollution** = accumulation of plastic objects and particles which has a direct and deadly impact on ocean wildlife and marine mammals

**Non-recyclable waste** = items which can not be reused or repurposed

**Recycling** = a process where waste is converted into new or repurposed items

