



Every Move

Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan

May 2024

Foreword



Movie buffs and sports fans alike may remember Al Pacino's expletive-laden speech to his American football team in *Any Given Sunday*. In it, he talks about 'fighting for every inch'.

At British Cycling, this became popularised as the more prosaic 'marginal gains'. I can think of no better concept when talking about climate sustainability, a challenge so sizeable, it is easy to feel powerless.

I am, however, a climate optimist. If every individual, community and sector does its bit, humans have consistently shown they have the ingenuity and spirit to prevail.

It's a tough starting point: 2023 was the hottest in history. And climate scientists fear that global warming could be accelerating faster than anticipated, with the groundbreaking Paris agreement – to keep global warming at well below two degrees – looking precarious.

Whether we like it or not, we are the first generation to feel the impact of climate change and we are the last generation in a position to do something about it. It falls to us to act.

But why the sports and physical activity sector?

Firstly, nothing has the potential to suppress physical activity, along with the health and happiness benefits it brings, more than climate change – whether it is disrupting major events or thwarting mass participation. And it will be those least active and most deprived who will suffer the most.

Secondly, because our workforce, supporters and participants expect it. More than 70 per cent of younger people want meaningful action on environmental sustainability. Sectors and organisations who don't act will increasingly lose relevance, reputation and the battle for future talent.

And thirdly, as the footballer Marcus Rashford showed with school meals, we have a unique platform: our voice matters and sport is in a position to engage a nation and lead the way.

So as we gear up to tackle our greatest challenge, we look forward to working with you because we can only achieve this together. Our roadmap must deliver a step-change in support for you, our partners. By definition, marginal gains don't have to be big or expensive: their power is their cumulative effect.

Whether it's encouraging greater car-sharing or walking and cycling to grassroots sports events, creating a sports kit recycling scheme or planting trees at your local club – the thousands of small changes we will make together will add up to something big.

As Al Pacino said: "The inches we need are everywhere around us. On this team, we fight for that inch. Because when we add up all those inches, that's gonna make the difference."

Chris Boardman

Chair, Sport England

Executive summary

Participation levels are being affected by the increasing prevalence of climate change events such as heatwaves and flooding. And like the rest of society, the sport and physical activity sector is contributing to and exacerbating these effects.

We have multiple impacts on the environment, through energy consumption in our facilities and in travelling to participation opportunities and through the equipment we use and waste we create.

We must act now. We want to lead the change that's needed, by being an environmentally responsible organisation and working with our partners, big and small, to show the way and drive sustainability across England.

So we're setting ourselves targets to reduce our own carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 and to achieve net zero by 2040. And we'll embed environmental sustainability into our governance, so that it's considered in every relevant decision made by our board about our own operations and our investment decisions.

Our consultation showed that the sport and physical activity sector want Sport England to provide support, guidance and leadership and this strategy sets out how we aim to provide this.

To deliver this strategy, we will make one of the biggest investments ever in making our sector greener and more sustainable.

Firstly, we will invest to ensure that our buildings are as energy efficient as possible, including our National Sports Centres. This builds on the work we are doing through the Swimming Pool Support Fund, of which £60 million was allocated to make hundreds of swimming pools across the country more environmentally and financially sustainable.

Tennis balls have been repurposed as homes for harvest mice.

[Read more →](#)

Secondly, we will invest in programmes and partnerships to help thousands more people connect with and get active in nature. We commit to investing more than £20 million by 2030 to achieve this.

Thirdly, we will invest to help sporting organisations up and down the country put in place action plans and promote sustainability locally. We anticipate allocating up to 10% of the £160 million Movement Fund in order to promote environmental sustainability and we stand ready to support those organisations.

Finally, we will invest in building resilience to climate change. We will commit up to £10 million until 2030 to help restore sports pitches that are impacted by flooding.

We'll significantly expand the practical support we provide, including capability and capacity building for our partners, training, tools, resources, and the creation of peer learning networks to help the wider sector.

Combined, this is likely to deliver around £100 million of investment to 2030. This will help us become more environmentally sustainable and energy efficient. It represents a substantial investment in sustainability, and a step change in leadership.

We are a signatory to the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework, and will act as a global advocate for positive change.

We will require all system partners to have robust sustainability strategies by 2027 as a condition of funding, and strengthen expectations of those companies that provide us with goods and services.

While recognising the importance of artificial grass pitches (AGPs) in the community sport landscape, we will work with partners and stakeholders to explore better alternatives to the rubber infill used in third-generation (3G) AGPs and increase their recycling too, given concerns about plastic pollution and waste.

By March 2027 we'll also co-develop with the sector a climate adaptation and resilience vision for the sector, supported by a delivery strategy.

We'll convene, connect and unite our partners around the challenges and opportunities. We'll ensure they are clear on how they, like us, must play their part in fulfilling our collective obligation.

And we'll draw in expertise from outside our sector and from other government departments to develop partnerships and solutions to the more complex issues.

What makes our strategy unique is that we make the link between participation levels, inequality, and climate change. We'll use our role and voice to highlight this challenge, advocating for the changes needed to ensure everyone can enjoy the benefits of an active life as our climate changes.



Our vision for the sector

A positive and regenerative sport and physical activity sector championing environmental sustainability with every move.



Sport England's sustainability mission

Sport England will lead, inspire and support the sector to become environmentally sustainable, enabling greater opportunity for all people to participate in sport and physical activity, now and in the future.



Our priority themes

Just transition:
inequalities,
inclusion and
participation

Carbon
emissions:
travel and
facilities

Circular economy:
supply chains,
products and
waste

Blue-green
environment
quality and use

Biodiversity

Adapting to
climate change
and extreme
weather events



Our levers for change

Our operations

Support and capability
building

Leveraging our
investment

Advocacy

Influencing the natural
and built environment

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Glossary of terms

Biodiversity: The variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular place. Biodiversity is essential for planetary and societal health; we rely on it to survive. 'Biodiversity loss' is the decline or disappearance of species.

Carbon footprint: An annual inventory of an organisation's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Carbon hotspots: Sources of high levels of carbon emissions, for organisations to focus their carbon reduction efforts on.

Carbon neutral: Achieving a balance between the greenhouse gases put into the atmosphere and those taken out.

Carbon offsets (and insets): Refers to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions or an increase in carbon storage (within own supply chain) that is used to compensate for emissions that occur elsewhere.

Circular economy: An alternative to our current 'linear' materials and waste system (take-waste-dispose). In a circular economy waste is substantially reduced and materials are circulated throughout the economy at their highest value and utility.

Climate justice: According to Climate Just UK, climate justice relates to concerns about the inequitable outcomes for different people and places associated with vulnerability to climate impacts and the fairness of policy and practice responses to address climate change and its consequences.

Climate resilience: The ability to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to hazardous events or disturbances related to climate change (e.g. floods, extreme weather). Includes adaptation to climate change, resilience to adverse climate events, and community climate preparedness.

Environmental sustainability: The ability to maintain an ecological balance in our planet's natural environment and conserve natural resources to support the wellbeing of current and future generations.

Just transition: A 'just transition' for the sport and physical activity sector means transitioning to a low-carbon economy in a way that's fair to everyone, and where the benefits are shared widely.

Net zero: (according to the Science-Based Targets Initiative, Net-Zero Standard) emissions reductions of 90–95%, balancing the residual 5–10% emissions with carbon removals.

Nature recovery: The protection and restoration of wildlife-rich habitats. Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are a new way of prioritising nature needs on a more local and focused level.

Regenerative: A regenerative approach goes beyond 'sustainability' (doing less bad) to having a net positive impact on the environment and society; approaches that are truly beneficial for humans and restorative for nature.

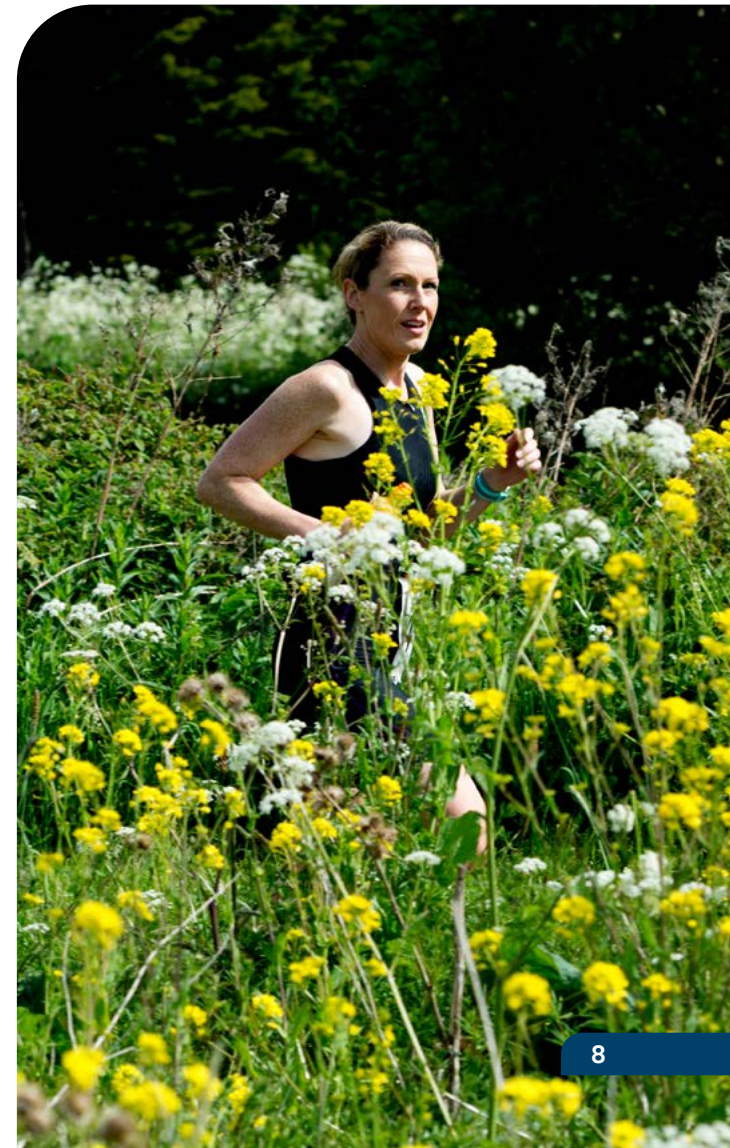
Sector alignment and collaboration

The UK government has set a target to be net zero by 2050 and is clear about its ambition to leave our environment in a better state than we found it.

In August 2023, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) published *Get Active*, its strategy for the future of sport and physical activity. Ensuring the sector is more financially and environmentally sustainable is one of its three core priorities.

UK Sport has also prioritised environmental sustainability by publishing its own strategy, which includes a goal for high-performance sport to have a net positive impact on the environment by 2040, and for UK Sport to achieve net zero itself by 2030.

Achieving these goals relies on the whole sector working together. Convened by the Sport and Recreational Alliance, members of the Sport, Environment and Climate Coalition (SECC), including each of the Home Sports Councils, have been working together to share insight, align priorities and harness the sector's collective resources to reduce the negative impact of sport and physical activity on the environment.



Part of a global system

We are not alone.

Many sporting organisations have pledged their support through the United Nations Sports for Climate Action commitments, aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. That expertise and experience is available to us.



Every Move strongly aligns with these particular Sustainable Development Goals

Our strategy

This is version 1.0 of our strategy. It will evolve and be updated regularly, with and alongside our network of partners, to ensure it represents a collective vision of how the sport and physical activity sector will change.

We are thankful to our partners for all your contributions and the many conversations, focus groups, interviews, and surveys you've supported us with.

We've heard loud and clear and acknowledge that we must learn, grow, and tackle this challenge together. We have already started rolling out training opportunities and look forward to continuing to work in close partnership to drive change.

The collaboration must continue and be woven into our plans to deliver Uniting the Movement to ensure a vibrant, relevant, and financially sustainable sector.

Everyone who takes part in sport and physical activity must also be guardians of our environment, protecting and enhancing it for generations to come. Our sector must be recognised and trusted for its action and leadership on this agenda.



Why this matters

Climate threats to the activities we love

The places and spaces we use for sport and physical activity and our participation are threatened by the effects of climate change. Reduced water and air quality, rising temperatures, and extreme weather events such as flooding, drought, and heatwaves are all expected to increase in the coming decades.

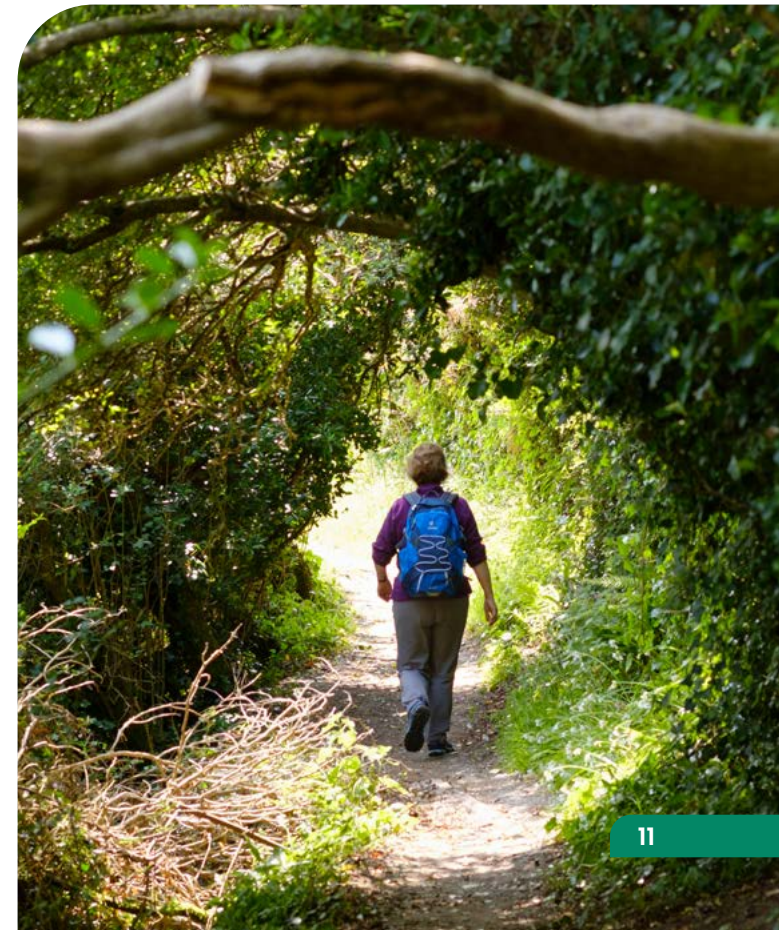
The 'Playing Against the Clock' report warns that by 2050, 23 out of 92 English league football grounds will be at risk from flooding every season, a third of British Open golf courses will be damaged by rising sea levels, and half of previous Winter Olympic cities will be unreliable hosts of winter sports.

Unequal impact

Low-income households, older people, marginalised communities, children, and those with disabilities and long-term health conditions will be most vulnerable to climate hazards. Our [Active Lives](#) surveys show that these same audiences already participate less in sport and physical activity than their counterparts. We believe this will only be compounded by climate change.

Air pollution and increasing temperatures heighten the risk of ill-health for these groups and decrease individuals' ability, as well as their motivation and opportunities, to participate in sport and physical activity. Those who are the most socially vulnerable tend to live and work in the most polluted environments, with little access to green or blue space, and lack the resources to respond.

The negative effects of climate change and benefits of participating in sport and physical activity are not distributed evenly. We're committed to tackling this to ensure a fairer sport and physical activity environment for everyone.



Our changing climate is impacting our opportunities, motivation and ability to be active.



Sporting opportunities lost

An estimated **62,500 football matches are cancelled each season** because of unplayable pitches – that’s 5 cancellations for every grassroots club in England.



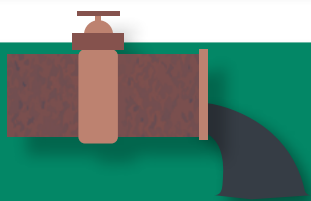
More leadership and action wanted

82% of respondents want their organisation to be more ambitious on environmental sustainability.



Extreme weather impacting our motivation

Lower motivation and enjoyment meant **6 out of 10 adults** did less activity during periods of extreme weather in 2023.



Pollution threatening water quality

Only 16% of rivers, lakes and streams in England – habitats for wildlife and the spaces we swim and paddle – **are classed as in ecological good health.**



Flood-prone areas impacting activeness

23.4% of people living in flood-prone areas in England live in the **20% most deprived neighbourhoods.** There, **55.4% of people are active** compared to **68.1% in the least deprived.**



Children’s active habits interrupted

Extreme heat meant **30% of children were unable to be as active** as they wanted in July 2022.

The impacts of sport and physical activity on our environment

Sport and physical activity can contribute to climate change, environmental pollution and a reduction in biodiversity which, in turn, negatively affects the activity itself.

Biodiversity and nature are integral to the places and spaces where sport and physical activity take place. Outdoor sports and activities rely directly on healthy ecosystems – for example, pitch sports rely on good quality turf. Changes in insect populations, due to biodiversity loss, can affect the health of these grass pitches. Freshwater and marine ecosystems support activities like swimming, sailing, and surfing. Pollution, loss of biodiversity, and changing water temperatures can affect water quality and safety.

Greenhouse gas emissions, micro-plastics and other pollution result from:



Connecting participation, inequalities and environmental sustainability



- Poor water quality
- Micro-plastics
- Air pollution
- Biodiversity crisis
- Changing climate (flooding, drought, heat)
- Greenhouse gas emissions

Taking action to improve ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Active travel
- Clean air and water
- Access to green space

Taking action to increase PARTICIPATION

- Physical health
- Mental and emotional wellbeing
- Local opportunity

- Poor access to green space
- Rising energy costs
- Closure of facilities

WHERE WE WANT TO BE



Taking action to improve INEQUALITIES

- Clean air
- Connection to nature
- Climate justice
- Access to kit

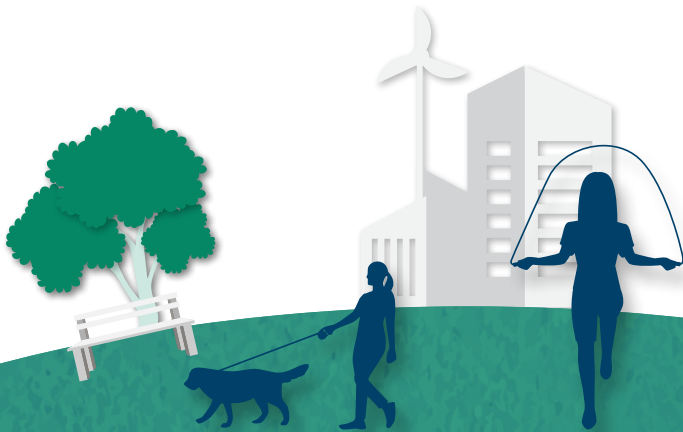
- Limited transport options
- Social inequalities (low income, poor health)
- Discrimination
- Disability



Adaptation and regeneration

This strategy is not just about reversing the environmental impact of our sector. It also seeks to support communities across England to mitigate and adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.

A sector that is regenerative, and prioritises environmental sustainability and resilience, will reduce the wider socio-economic inequalities in our society by ensuring everyone can experience the benefits of sport and physical activity through future climate shocks.



Our journey so far

Sport England has put strong foundations in place and this strategy aims to accelerate progress. It sets out how we will use our influence across our industry.

Some of our key actions in recent years are summarised below. We have taken many of these in collaboration with other organisations.



Sport England Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan

Sector leadership and support

- Appointed a full-time **Environmental Sustainability Strategic Lead**, to drive this agenda on behalf of Sport England.
- Joined the **Sport & Environment Climate Coalition**, established to lead and coordinate the sector's efforts on climate change and environmental sustainability.
- Developed and published [sustainability guidance and resources](#) for clubs and organisations.
- Developed [active design guidance](#) with support from Active Travel England and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities.
- Managed the government's £60 million [Swimming Pool Support Fund](#) to improve the energy efficiency of public swimming pools.
- Worked with the **National Trust** to enhance and establish additional habitats, alongside the creation of 10 multi-use trails to improve wildlife corridors and meadow restoration to increase biodiversity net gains.
- [Adapted our Small Grants programme](#) to invite applications from projects that focus on supporting inactive and less active people to become more active, while reducing their impact on the environment.
- Updated the [Code for Sports Governance](#) in 2021 to include a requirement for organisations we fund to factor environmental social governance into decisions and actions.
- Sport England leaders have stepped up on our external leadership for environmental sustainability in England and internationally, speaking openly about sustainability ambitions and challenges at **events and conferences**.

- Over the last 10 years we have awarded £5.7m to 1,089 projects through the **Emergency Flood Relief fund** to help clubs and organisations recover from the damage to flooded facilities.

Our offices and operations

- Calculated the carbon footprint of our offices and National Sports Centres, set targets, and developed an internal decarbonisation action plan.
- Signed up to the United Nations [Sports for Climate Action Framework](#).
- Developed and approved a new corporate Environment Policy.
- Procured a new Corporate Travel Management system with Agiito, enabling lower-emission options to be chosen for all journeys and hotels.
- Downsized and relocated our head office to a government agency hub in Canary Wharf, which is managed with a strong focus on sustainability.

Our National Sports Centres

In 2011, ambitious contracts were set up for Bisham and Lilleshall, requiring them to deliver a sustainability strategy with annual reporting on progress. Key environmental sustainability actions have also been implemented more recently across our other two sites.

Bisham and Lilleshall

- Active relationship with operator Serco on energy efficiency and broader sustainability improvements.
- Energy efficiency upgrades, including LED upgrade programme (including sports surfaces), boiler upgrades, building management systems, and double glazing.
- 100 solar panels installed at Bisham.
- Biomass boiler installed at Lilleshall.
- Boreholes installed on both sites for irrigation.
- Electric vehicle chargers installed on both sites.
- Onsite leased vehicles are moving to electric as existing leases end.

Plas y Brenin

- Through the Dark Skies project, minimised all lighting onsite to reduce light pollution in the National Park.
- The team focus on repairing and reusing mountaineering equipment.
- Planned a three-year rolling investment programme to include a full window replacement to improve energy efficiency.

Redgrave Pinsent Rowing Lake

- The course has been reclaimed from old gravel pits with part of the coaching road formed on a bund of material dredged from the site.
- Solar panels on the training facility roof.
- All lights are LED and use motion sensors.
- Has timber cladding.



Case study

New Performance Archery Centre

Sport England have funded the construction of a new dedicated Performance Archery facility at the Lilleshall National Sports Centre, establishing Lilleshall as the ‘Home of British Performance Archery’.

The new facility features a 70m indoor and outdoor shooting range, enabling all-year-round shooting, changing rooms, coaching and training support areas, and cycle parking.

High levels of environmental sustainability have been a key factor in the design approach. Designed to be energy self-sufficient, it has a low-carbon design with high-quality insulation, solar panels on the roof, along with additional battery storage to ensure the benefit is gained all year round.

Hot water and heating are generated via air source heat pumps, which are located externally to avoid the building requiring any kind of gas supply.

[Read more →](#)



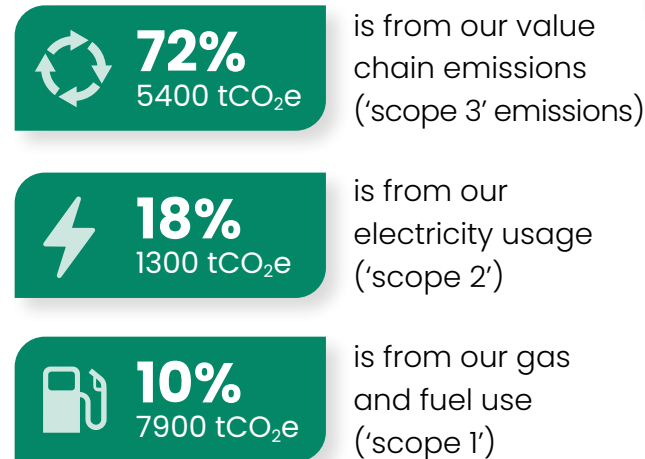
Our carbon footprint

We understand that our largest carbon impact is through the activities of the organisations that we fund, which are not captured in this analysis.

However, our National Sports Centres consume a lot of energy, we rent several offices, travel to events and spend time with partners and communities, and purchase goods and services.

In 2023, we calculated our carbon emissions for all these activities using a base year of 2019/2020 due to the impact of Covid-19 on our National Sports Centre operations.

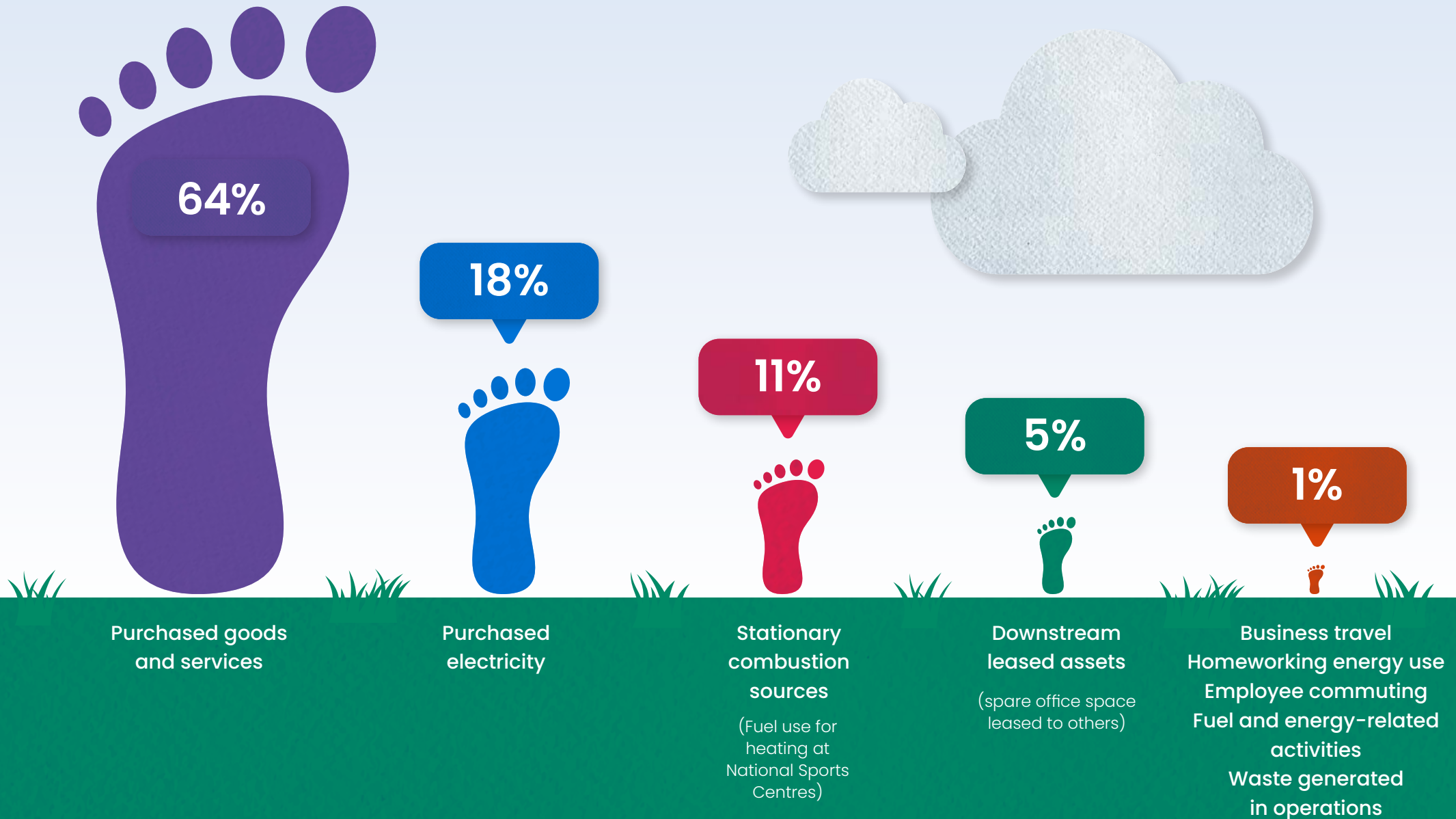
Sport England's total base year carbon footprint was calculated as approximately **7500 tCO₂e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent)**.



For more information on these calculations, a [methodology report](#) is available. We have developed an [internal decarbonisation plan](#).



Sport England total base year carbon footprint breakdown by scope category



Environmental sustainability consultation

In partnership with sportscotland and Sport Wales, in 2023 we consulted with participants, partners and environmental experts across the sector.

This included national governing bodies, active partnerships, sports clubs and community organisations, local authorities, and the owners and operators of the places and spaces where physical activity happens.

It explored current challenges, action, opportunities and support needed, and included surveys, focus groups and expert interviews.

Read the [executive summary of the consultation report](#).

475

survey respondents from across GB



82%



want their organisations to be ambitious on environmental sustainability

58%



said energy consumption is a key environmental challenge, irrespective of whether they own their own facilities

76

different sports and activities represented



58%



consider reliance on cars as their organisation's greatest environmental impact

56%



said moral and ethical reasons are the strongest drivers for action, followed by business resilience and saving money

86%



believe their organisations are either somewhat or very knowledgeable on sustainability issues

25%



of organisations have never tried to access sustainability advice

55%



of organisations see lack of funding as the greatest barrier to acting on environmental sustainability

Support you feel is needed

We found increasing awareness about climate change and what it means for sport and physical activity. You made it clear that further support is needed to initiate and accelerate positive action.

Challenges and drivers of action

Extreme weather impacting participation was considered one of the main challenges facing the sector, followed by financial pressures.

Member and staff expectation, moral obligation, and reputational risk were quoted as the main drivers for climate action within the focus groups.

Key areas you told us to focus on

Environmental challenges that the sector would like support to tackle are:

- **Travel:** reducing carbon emissions associated with travel to/from the places where sport and physical activity takes place.
- **Facilities:** reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions from facilities.
- **Circular economy:** reducing consumption and waste associated with kit, equipment and general operations.
- **Water quality and use:** improving water quality (rivers/lakes/sea), managing rising water costs, managing flooding and drought on pitches and other green and blue spaces.
- **Adapting to climate change and extreme weather events:** to maintain the sector's ability to provide sport and physical activity opportunities, now and in the future.



A 2050 vision for the sector

Zero carbon and climate resilience

- Sports facilities generate renewable energy for the local community and showcase circular and sustainable build methods.
- Facilities and sports are adapted to our changing climate (e.g. flood resistant).

Active design

- Walking, cycling and low-emission travel through nature-rich corridors is the norm.
- Physical activity and sustainability principles underpin the design of our community spaces.

Nature thriving

- Everyone has access to clean green and blue spaces to enjoy, play and relax in.
- These spaces are biodiversity and wildlife-rich.

Community hubs

- Sports facilities and events are community orientated and co-located with health and other essential services.
- Clubs regenerate and transform local communities through sustainable and inclusive practices.



Our vision for the sector

A positive and regenerative sport and physical activity sector, championing environmental sustainability with every move.

Our mission

We will lead, inspire and support the sector to become environmentally sustainable, enabling greater opportunity for all people to participate in sport and physical activity, now and in the future.



Sport England Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan

Our priority themes

We have six priority themes that we hope will help clubs and organisations to identify their own priorities.

These themes cut across the five areas in which we will take action to deliver the ambitions of Every Move: operations, support, investment, advocacy, and the natural and built environment.

You can see a detailed action plan including key performance indicators and milestones at Annex A.

Just transition: inequalities, inclusion and participation

We know that the most disadvantaged communities are likely to be those most affected by climate change and extreme weather events.

We will weight our decisions towards demographic groups, or geographic areas, that experience the greatest levels of inequality or climate impacts. We will champion and support a fair and just transition to a lower-carbon sector.

Carbon emissions: travel and facilities

The main sources of greenhouse gas emissions are from travel and operating offices and facilities. Decarbonising the energy needed for heating space and hot water is a particular challenge.

Across our action plan, we will promote opportunities to reduce or remove emissions from travel and facilities.

Circular economy: supply chains, products and waste

As in many organisations, most of Sport England's emissions are from the goods and services we procure.

In all our work we will use our spending power to promote and enable the circular economy. Furthermore, we will promote and enable the recycling of sports clothing and equipment to benefit grassroots clubs and participants most in need.

Blue-green environment quality and use

Improving the quality of our natural environment is essential to ensure that ecosystem services, such as clean air, flood prevention or recreation opportunities, are provided.

Across our work we will support innovation to promote positive environmental impact and reduce pollution, including microplastics. We will support key partners to advocate for improved access to quality blue and green spaces where physical activity takes place.

Biodiversity

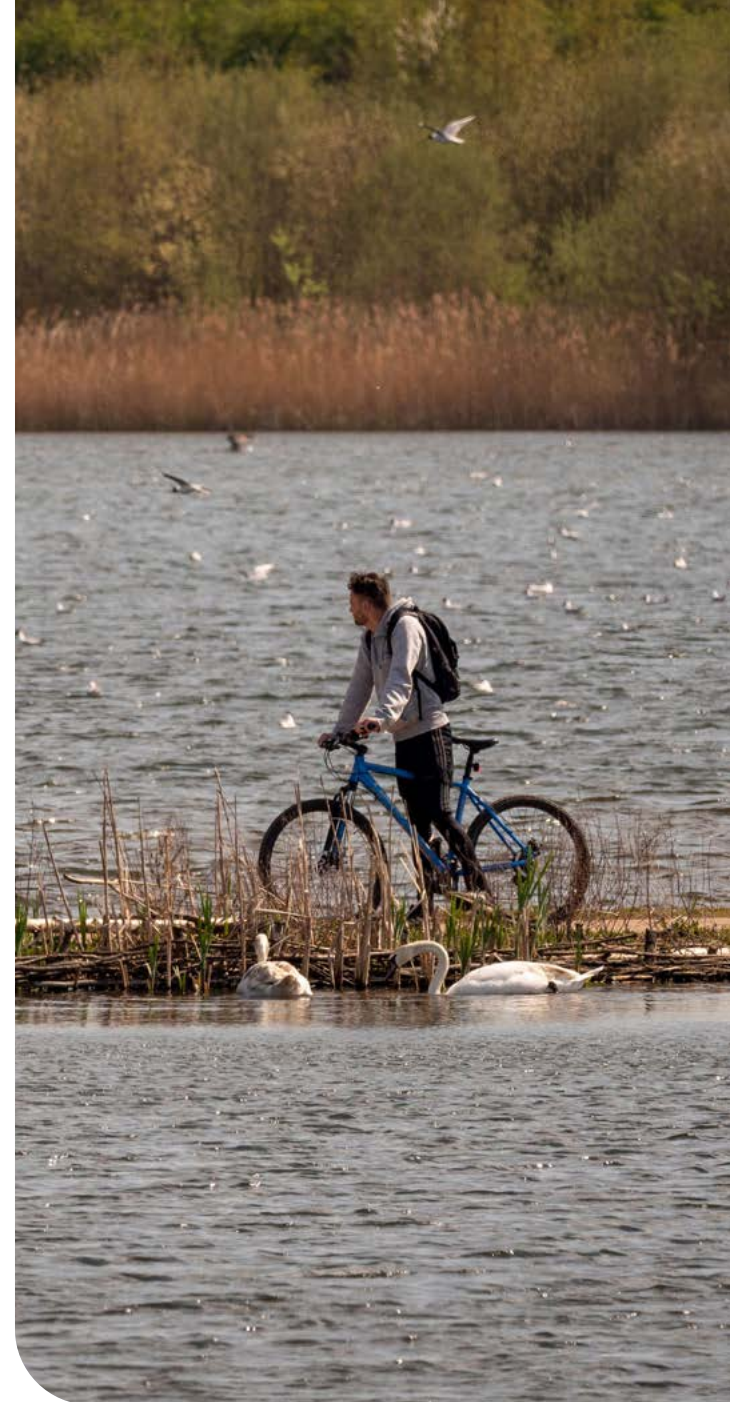
Improved biodiversity is essential to healthy living.

We will work to protect and enhance the biodiversity at our National Sports Centres and at the places and spaces where sport and physical activity takes place, including through biodiversity net gain opportunities that arise in the planning system.

Adapting to climate change and extreme weather events

Our climate will continue to change, and it is essential that we build resilience and adapt to these changes.

We will work to understand how sport and physical activity is likely to be affected in the future and collaborate and advocate to ensure investment and practice deliver a resilient sporting infrastructure moving forward.



Delivering progress: Our levers for change

We will take action using five different levers to deliver change across the six themes.

The actions for each lever are provided in the action plan at Annex A. The five levers are:

- Our operations
- Support and capability building
- Leveraging our investment
- Advocacy
- Influencing the natural and built environment



How others are taking their first steps



Case study

Paddle UK: Protecting our blue-green environments

Paddle UK is the national governing body for paddle sports. Paddlers see first-hand the impacts of climate change and pollution on 'blue' environments (bodies of water including canals, rivers, lakes, and sea coast).



©Paddle UK

Paddle UK are playing an active role in responding to these challenges and encouraging positive environmental behaviours, with initiatives such as:

- Developing the 'Paddlers' Code', to guide paddlers on best practice to respect, protect, and enjoy the natural environment.
- Facilitating the annual 'Big Paddle Cleanup' campaign, encouraging and equipping local clubs to organise their own local waterway clean-up events.
- Leading action on managing invasive non-native species, partnering with government, providing guidance and removal kits, and organising volunteer events.

Paddle UK believe in having a positive impact on the blue environment, as much as it has a positive impact on us.

[Read the full case study](#) →

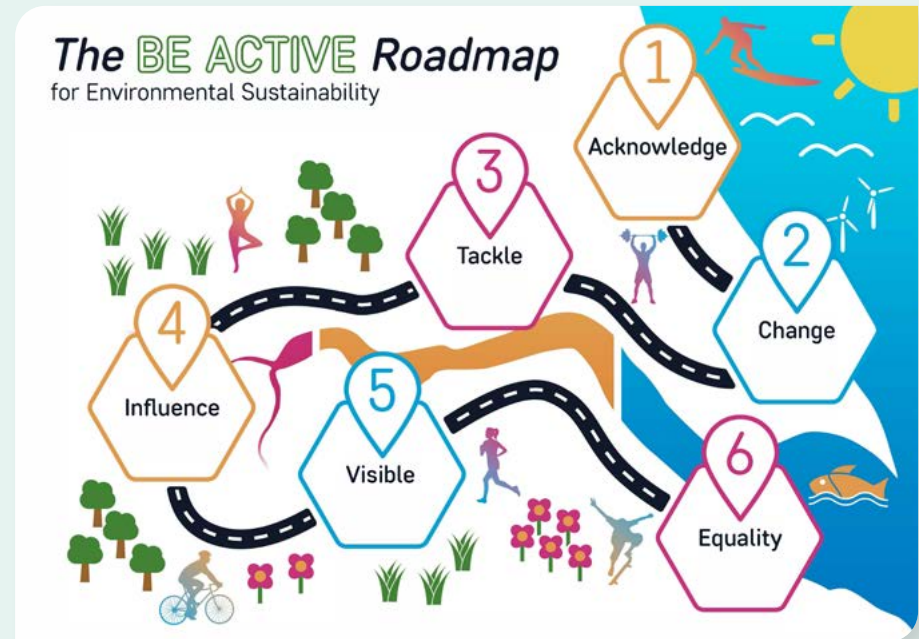
Active Humber: Accelerating carbon emissions reduction

Active Humber is part of the national network of active partnerships, aiming to make it easier for everyone to enjoy an active life. The Humber region is both one of the highest carbon-emitting and least physically active regions in the UK.

Active Humber's CEO recognised that sport can be a catalyst for climate action and so the charity started by tackling their own carbon emissions, including:

- Moving office to a low-carbon building
- Prioritising hybrid meetings to reduce travel
- Switching to an ethical, low-carbon bank and pension provider
- Encouraging employees to reduce energy use at home
- Purchasing local, sustainable sports equipment and clothing

To support clubs and the community to reduce emissions, Active Humber provides several online resources, including roadmaps, plans, and videos.



©Active Humber



[Read the full case study](#) →

Case study

Whalley Range Cricket & Lawn Tennis Club: Climate adaptation and biodiversity action

The Whalley Range Cricket & Lawn Tennis Club is an inner-city Manchester community club. In 2012, the club experienced drought followed by a once-in-a-century flooding event. The same level of flooding then occurred in 2016 and every year after that.

The club decided to act:

- Native trees and fruit trees were planted on the outskirts of the field to better soak up excess water
- The outskirts were left to re-wild with reduced mowing and trimming
- Daisies, clovers, and other ground covers were allowed to grow on the outfield, welcoming back the worms, insects, and birds
- Wildlife was further encouraged with bug hotels and bird boxes

Through their actions, the Whalley Range team have played their part in protecting the sport for future generations to enjoy.

[Read the full case study →](#)

Case study

Deer Park Archers: enabling a just transition and championing inclusion

A community archery club in Gloucestershire that exemplifies sustainability, participation, and inclusion.

Traditionally, archery can present barriers to participation. Deer Park strives to be inclusive for all ages, physical abilities, neurodiversities, and financial situations, as well as promoting environmental sustainability:

- The outdoor grass shooting surface was reinforced with a plastic grid to allow for all-weather, all-ability use.
- Specific have-a-go days are hosted for people with diverse neuro or physical abilities to provide a safe introduction to the sport.
- The facility is built on an old, inert landfill site; the team have reduced invasive species and re-introduced native species and woodland.
- The neighbouring recycling plant is a major sponsor, supplying many of the materials that the club requires.

By focusing on the individual and not just the archer, Deer Park Archers have strengthened their position for grants and financial support from the local council and community.

[Read the full case study →](#)

The National Trust: enhancing biodiversity

The National Trust is Europe's largest conservation charity with a purpose to deliver benefit to the nation through nature, history and beauty. By 2030, the Trust aims to create 20 'green corridors', which will provide valuable habitats for biodiversity and wildlife, as well as improving access to nature and encouraging active lifestyles.

The first green corridor announced was Bathampton Meadows, to the east of Bath city centre. The Trust is regenerating what was previously low-quality, drained agricultural land by re-wetting, re-wilding, and re-introducing local native species.

The vision includes:

- 30 hectares of habitat-rich wildflower meadow
- 2 hectares of wetland creation for the population of wild beavers
- 1.4km of hedgerow and 600 trees planted
- Community orchard with endangered local heritage varieties of fruit tree
- 7km of new 'path for all' access



[Read the full case study](#) →

Case study

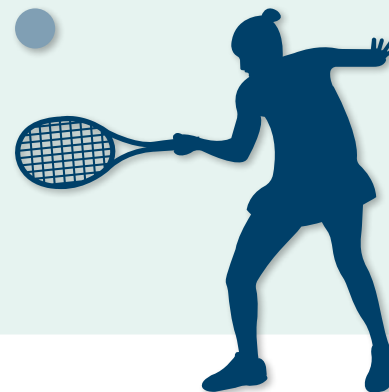
LTA: contributing to the circular economy

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the national governing body of tennis in Great Britain. Through its environmental sustainability plan, the LTA has addressed issues related to climate action, resource efficiency and the natural environment.

At major events, the LTA has introduced circular economy initiatives, such as:

- Improved waste separation (more types of bins)
- Reusing event staff uniforms
- Reusable cups and water bottle refill stations
- Using branded material from previous events to manufacture water bottle holders, and recycled plastic bottles to make media bibs
- Sourcing locally and considering low-carbon food, as well as donating leftover food to charities

To support positive action across the wider tennis landscape, the LTA provide great online resources, including templates for environmental sustainability policies and action plans, and an innovative partnership with Pledgeball to encourage participants to take positive actions.



[Read the full case study](#) →

Collaboration and creating the conditions for change

Working together

No organisation can achieve sustainability on its own, but working together we can build a positive and regenerative sport and physical activity sector, inspiring change across society.

Sport England governance

- Our **Chair** is the board champion, responsible for environmental sustainability leadership internally and externally; putting in place suitable roles and responsibilities to ensure that environmental sustainability is managed and considered throughout the organisation; and overseeing the successful delivery of this strategy.
- The **Executive Director, Policy and Integrity** is the executive sponsor for environmental sustainability and will ensure that the challenges and opportunities for delivering our mission are understood and that it is included in our business plan, monitoring progress and driving success.

- The **Executive Director, Digital, Marketing and Communications** is the executive advisor for environmental sustainability and will drive our external advocacy.
- An **internal working group** will ensure and improve the coordination of the delivery of this strategy. **All staff** will understand our strategy and their role in achieving it. They will be empowered to take positive environmental action.
- An **external steering group** will be established to ensure the voice of the sector informs and supports actions and learning.

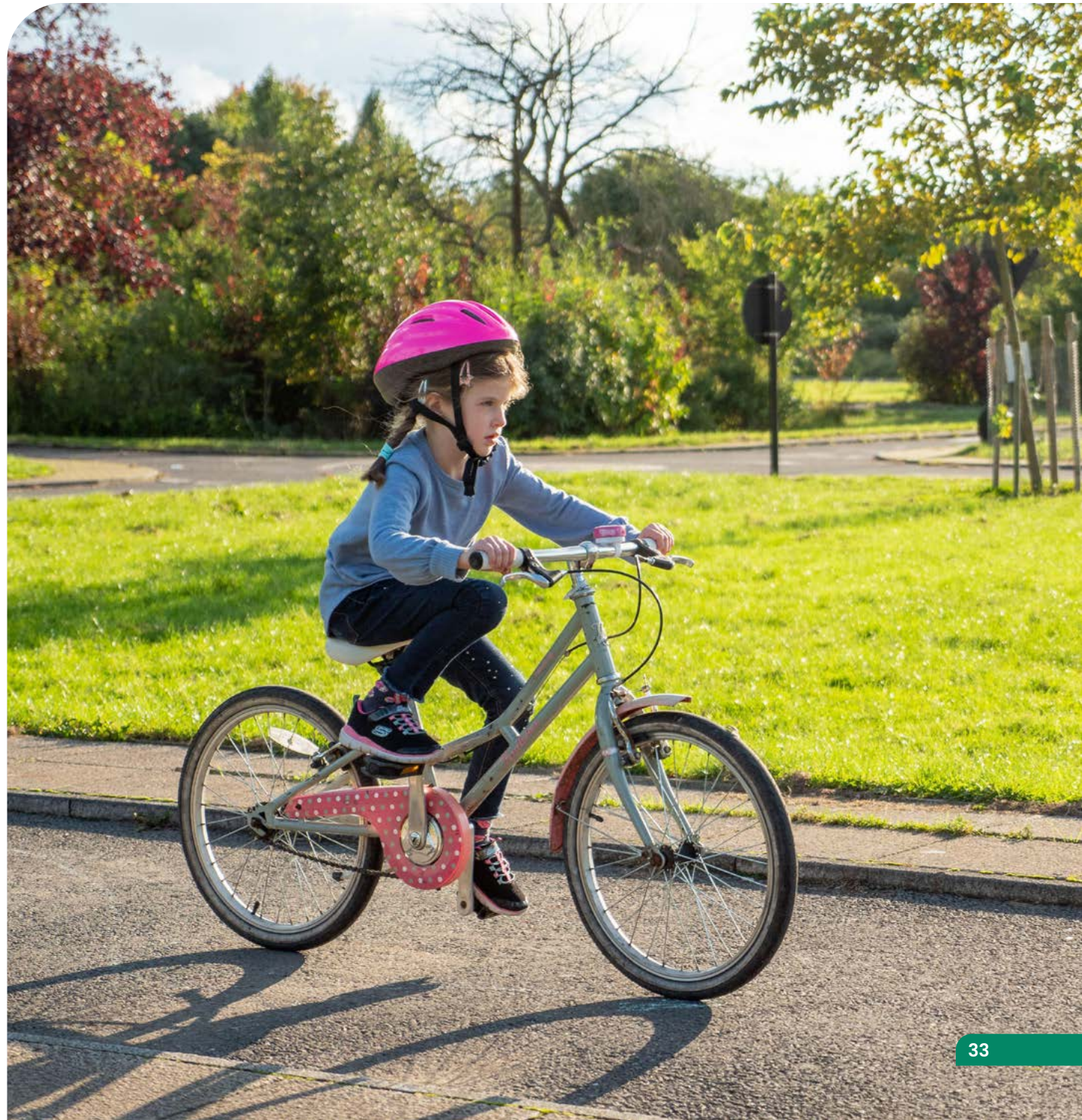


Our key reporting commitments are:

- UK government/Department for Culture, Media and Sport [Greening Government Commitments](#).
- United Nations Sports for Climate Action Framework.
- Sport England Annual Report, where we will report on progress against this strategy, and share what's working and learning that can galvanise further action.

Review and update of this strategy

We recognise that this is a fast-moving field. We will review this strategy every two years to ensure it remains relevant.



About Sport England

Sport England is an arms-length body of government responsible for growing and developing grassroots sport and getting more people active across England.

We're here to invest in sport and physical activity to make it a normal part of life for everyone in England, regardless of who you are. Because it's not always a level playing field.

Right now, the opportunities to get involved in sport and activity – and reap the rewards of being active – depend too much on your background, your gender, your bank balance and your postcode.

We're determined to tackle this and unlock the advantages of sport and physical activity for everyone.

Our [Uniting the Movement](#) strategy includes an action to step up environmental sustainability and embed net zero into everyday thinking.

We welcome any comments and suggestions – you can email us on sustainability2@sportengland.org.

This document was produced in collaboration with [Useful Projects](#), part of the Useful Simple Trust.

usefulprojects



Annex A

Every Move Action Plan 2024–2027

Introduction

The following action plan summarises key actions Sport England will take to deliver its environmental sustainability strategy Every Move.

Strategic key performance indicators

Performance area: Stepping up on environmental sustainability.

Indicator: Sport England models by reducing its own organisational climate impact.

Metric: Sport England greenhouse gas emissions.

Performance area: Stepping up on environmental sustainability.

Indicator: Sport England promotes environmental standards and holds funded partners to account.

Metric: Outcome of a qualitative review of submissions on Requirement 5.2 ESG of the Code for Sport Governance.

System performance indicators

Performance area: Environmental.

Indicator: Sector sustainability.

Metric: The reported effect of extreme weather events on people's participation in activity.

Our operations

We will take internal action to improve our own environmental performance and that of the National Sports Centres and will openly share our journey and learning with partners.

Focus area	Action	Performance indicator	Target	Start date
Our corporate offices and operations				
United Nations Sports for Climate Action Pledge	Sign up to the United Nations Climate Change Sports for Climate Action Pledge	Progress towards achieving the Pledge's targets	Be on track in achieving the five targets identified in the UNSfCA Pledge	2023/24
Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and environmental impact	Develop and maintain robust measurement and reporting of environmental impacts	Integration of environmental sustainability reporting into the organisation's financial and public reporting	Environmental sustainability reporting included in Sport England's regular financial and public reporting by March 2025	2024/25
		Targets and interim targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions established	A 50% reduction of emissions achieved by 2030 with net zero achieved by 2040	2024/25
Circular economy	Include sustainability in procurement policies and approaches	Procurement policies and guidance developed	Sustainable procurement embedded and applied to all contracts by March 2025	2024/25
	Deliver a supplier engagement programme	Key suppliers engaged	Key suppliers provide evidence of sustainability by March 2027	2026/27
	Promote sustainability through tenant working groups	Sport England represented on tenant working groups	Sport England contributes to tenant working groups	2024/25

Our operations

We will take internal action to improve our own environmental performance and that of the National Sports Centres and will openly share our journey and learning with partners.

Office management and culture	Establish a cross-directorate working group to improve environmental sustainability	A cross-directorate working group is established and meets quarterly	At least four meetings of the working group are held each year by March 2025	2024/25
Travel	Using policy interventions, education and incentives, promote the most sustainable form of business travel	Sustainability is incorporated in all relevant policies	All staff are aware of and abide by relevant policies relating to business travel by March 2026	2025/26
Governance	Embed environmental sustainability considerations into decision-making processes	Percentage of board papers that include environmental considerations	100% of relevant decisions consider environmental sustainability	2025/26
Employee awareness	Promote staff learning and awareness of sustainability policy and practice and increase awareness of impact and progress	Staff understand and include sustainability considerations within their role	100% of staff understand and include sustainability considerations within their role by March 2026	2024/25
Offsetting	Establish a credible approach to carbon offsetting and insetting	Carbon offsetting and insetting mechanism established	Established an approach to carbon offsetting and insetting to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 and net zero by 2040	2026/27

Our operations

We will take internal action to improve our own environmental performance and that of the National Sports Centres and will openly share our journey and learning with partners.

National Sports Centres

Carbon emissions	Work with centre operators and users to improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions from facilities and travel	Programmes of work agreed to improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions	Evidence of agreed programme of work for each centre	2024/25
Circular economy	Work with operators to include sustainability in procurement policies and approaches, to reduce waste and increase recycling	Policies and procedures established to include environmental sustainability criteria in procurements and commissions	All tenders and contracts include environmental sustainability criteria by March 2026	2024/25
Blue-green environment	Develop short- and long-term plans to improve the natural capital and biodiversity of the centres	Natural capital and biodiversity plans developed for each site	Natural capital and biodiversity plans developed and being implemented for each site by March 2027	2025/26
Employee and customer awareness	Promote staff and visitor learning and awareness of sustainability policy and practice and increase awareness of impact and progress	Programme established to raise awareness of sustainability policy and practice at each site	100% of staff and 80% of visitors aware of sustainability policy and practice by March 2026	2024/25
Climate resilience	Develop site-wide climate resilience plans including risk assessments and adaptation plans	Development of climate adaptation plan for each site	Climate adaptation plan produced for each site	2026/27
Offsetting	Establish a credible approach to carbon offsetting and insetting	Carbon offsetting and insetting mechanism established	Established an approach to carbon offsetting and insetting to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 and net zero by 2040	2026/27

Support and capability building

We will work to ensure partners understand how they can play their part and have the capability to contribute to the collective vision to realise a positive and regenerative physical activity sector.

Focus area	Action	Performance indicator	Target	Start date
Coalitions	Represent grassroots sport and physical activity in sector partnerships and coalitions to drive sustainability action aligned with national and sector priorities	Evidence of coalition positively impacting sustainability actions at scale	Evidence of strategic coalition positively impacting sustainability actions at scale by March 2026	2024/25
Tools and resources	Build on the existing SECC-produced resource to develop a sector resource hub with guidance, templates, case studies, and carbon tools, to inspire, guide and support action	Percentage of system and place partners using resource hub and reporting positive impact	50% of system and place partners using resource hub and reporting positive impact by March 2026	2024/25
Learning opportunities	Run a series of co-designed environmental sustainability webinars and facilitate peer-to-peer learning networks around shared challenges and opportunities	Reach and impact of learning opportunities	Learning opportunities are accessed by diverse organisations from across England and, through a qualitative assessment, demonstrate a positive impact by March 2025	2024/25

Support and capability building

We will work to ensure partners understand how they can play their part and have the capability to contribute to the collective vision to realise a positive and regenerative physical activity sector.

Training	Roll out environmental sustainability training across the sector providing options to suit different training needs	Number and range of pledges for action to improve sustainability made through training opportunities	100% of attendees pledge to take action for sustainability across a range of issues	2024/25
Connect agendas internally and externally	Through our sector leadership role and partnership work, including SECC and DCMS, strategically influence and join up policies, strategies and approaches associated with sports participation, inequalities, and environmental sustainability	Opportunities taken to influence policies, strategies, and approaches to ensure a joined-up approach to environmental sustainability	Evidence provided of opportunities to influence policies, strategies, and approaches across different sustainability issues by March 2026	2024/25

Leveraging our investment

We will leverage our multi-million-pound investment to support collaboration and innovation as well as strengthening the conditions to promote sustainability for our partners.

Focus area	Action	Performance indicator	Target	Start date
Sport governance	Work collaboratively to provide resources and support for partners to continue to meet and continuously improve their approach to Requirement 5.2 Environmental Social Governance in the Code for Sport Governance	Outcome of a qualitative review of resources provided and submissions on Requirement 5.2 ESG of the Code for Sport Governance	Evidence to demonstrate how well Tier 3 partners factor ESG considerations into their decision-making and the actions they implement by March 2026	2024/25
Build sector capacity	Explore opportunities to increase capacity to deliver sustainability initiatives to help drive systems change	Business case developed to establish approach and funding to increase sector capacity	Business case approved by November 2026	2025/26
Funding	Incorporate environmental sustainability requirements into funding criteria for system and place partnerships and require our system partners to have credible sustainability action plans in place	Percentage of system partners with a credible sustainability action plan in place	100% of system partners have a credible sustainability action plan in place by March 2027	2025/26
	As part of our £160m Movement Fund, launched in April 2024, we will encourage organisations to invest in environmental sustainability alongside increasing participation in sport and physical activity and tackling the inequalities in those participation levels	Demand from projects with sustainability as a key focus	Number of applications with sustainability as a key focus show a year-on-year increase to March 2027	2024/25

Advocacy

We will use our collective influence to drive progress.

Focus area	Action	Performance indicator	Target	Start date
Campaigns	Develop and implement compelling environmental sustainability awareness-raising and behaviour change materials for the grassroots sport and physical activity sector – focused on mobilising action	Number of website views of our digital resources	To double the number of website views of our digital resources from the current baseline by the end of 2025	2024/25
Visuals and media	Develop imagery, videos and case studies that better reflect the vision for a regenerative future for the sport and physical activity sector, inspiring and showing how to take action	Number of website views of our digital resources	To double the number of website views of our digital resources from the current baseline by the end of 2025	2024/25
Influence policy	Influence national and international policy, championing the potential role and contribution of the sport and physical activity sector, seeking to draw in funding for sector action	Sport England contributes to national and international sustainable sport policy and practice	Evidence of Sport England's influence and involvement in developing policy on at least eight occasions by March 2025	2024/25

Advocacy

We will use our collective influence to drive progress.

Climate justice	Establish our voice on climate justice to develop and communicate the narrative around the links between climate change, participation and inequalities	Level of media and social media reach on environmental sustainability	To double both media and social media reach on environmental sustainability in 2024 compared to 2023	2024/25
Thought leadership	Position Sport England as a trusted advisor on environmental sustainability in the community sports and leisure sector	Stakeholder survey results from strategic partners and representation on key platforms	Evidence from stakeholder survey results from strategic partners and representation on key platforms establish Sport England as one of the top voices on sustainability in sport	2025/26
	Develop a national 'green powerlist' to promote the voices of leading role models to continue to drive and influence change	Positive engagement from across the sector for the establishment of the new list	Stakeholder survey results recognising the importance of champions within our sector	2025/26

Influencing the natural and built environment

We will seek to help those engaged in delivering and managing the natural and built environment, addressing each location's unique challenges and opportunities to create and maintain high-quality environments that encourage people to move more, reduce emissions and enhance biodiversity.

Focus area	Action	Performance indicator	Target	Start date
Artificial grass pitches (AGP) - Recycling	Sport England will work with partners including the Football Foundation and England Hockey to mandate through grant conditions that AGP surfaces are recycled when reaching end of life	Agreed mandate to ensure that all AGPs funded by the Football Foundation and England Hockey include a specific grant condition requiring the artificial surface to be recycled via an approved mechanism, when reaching the end of life	By June 2024, 100% of new AGPs funded by the Football Foundation requiring the disposal of an existing artificial surface will include a grant condition requiring the disposal to be via an approved recycling mechanism	2024/25
		Agreed mandate to ensure that all AGPs funded by the Football Foundation include a specific grant condition requiring the artificial surface to be recycled via an approved mechanism, when reaching the end of life	By June 2024, 100% of new AGPs funded by the Football Foundation will include a grant condition requiring the artificial surface to be recycled via an approved mechanism, when reaching end of life	2024/25

Influencing the natural and built environment

We will seek to help those engaged in delivering and managing the natural and built environment, addressing each location's unique challenges and opportunities to create and maintain high-quality environments that encourage people to move more, reduce emissions and enhance biodiversity.

Artificial grass pitches (AGP) – Recycling	To support this action, Sport England and partners, including the Football Foundation, will assist efforts to increase recycling capacity available to sports providers nationwide. This will include supporting industry partners, such as contractors and consultants, to find viable solutions, and undertaking advocacy with government and regulators (such as the Environment Agency) to expedite such solutions being implemented	Increase in capacity for end-of-life artificial surfaces within England to be disposed of via an approved recycling mechanism	By March 2028, sufficient capacity exists to cater for 100% of artificial surfaces within England which have reached end of life to be recycled via an approved recycling mechanism	2024/25
Artificial grass pitches (AGP) – Transition away from rubber infill in 3G pitches	Sport England will work with partners, including the Football Foundation, to research alternatives to rubber infill for 3G pitches. This will include agreeing criteria to determine viability of alternative infills	Completion of research project to determine viability of alternative infills	By March 2025, initial decision taken on whether to commence the transition process away from rubber infill or a continuation of evaluation process of alternative infills for a further 12 months	2024/25

Influencing the natural and built environment

We will seek to help those engaged in delivering and managing the natural and built environment, addressing each location's unique challenges and opportunities to create and maintain high-quality environments that encourage people to move more, reduce emissions and enhance biodiversity.

Artificial grass pitches (AGP) – Transition away from rubber infill in 3G pitches	By March 2025, initial decision taken on whether to commence the transition process away from rubber infill or a continuation of evaluation process of alternative infills for a further 12 months	Number of new 3G pitches containing rubber infill funded by the Football Foundation	When a viable alternative infill is agreed, 100% of new pitches funded by the Football Foundation will not contain rubber crumb infill	2024/25
Artificial grass pitches (AGP) – Information and awareness-raising	Sport England will work with key industry stakeholders, including the Football Foundation, England Hockey and SAPCA, to provide guidance and information, promoted through a coordinated information campaign, advocating for users and sports operators to manage, operate and use AGPs in an environmentally sustainable manner	Guidance created and adopted by key stakeholders as best practice and promoted through an information campaign	Information campaign to be implemented/live by March 2026	2025/26

Influencing the natural and built environment

We will seek to help those engaged in delivering and managing the natural and built environment, addressing each location's unique challenges and opportunities to create and maintain high-quality environments that encourage people to move more, reduce emissions and enhance biodiversity.

Artificial grass pitches (AGP) – Information and awareness-raising	Sport England will work with key industry stakeholders, including the Football Foundation, England Hockey and SAPCA, to provide guidance and information, promoted through a coordinated information campaign, advocating for designers, consultants, manufacturers and installers to provide pitches which have measures to reduce environmental impact	Guidance created and adopted by key stakeholders as best practice and promoted through an information campaign	Information campaign to be implemented/live by March 2026	2025/26
Facilities and planning	Through our capital investments, test and monitor designs that raise standards of creating sustainable sports facilities	Review performance of designs to raise standards of creating sustainable sporting facilities	Evidence to show year-on-year improvement in designing sustainable sports facilities by March 2027	2024/25
	When updating and creating new design guidance notes and planning guidance, ensure that they seek to help mitigate and create resilience around climate change and where appropriate seek environmental enhancements	Design guidance and information availability	Revised Playing Pitch Strategy and Needs Assessment Guidance by autumn 2024	2024/25
			Produce active design case studies by summer 2024	

Influencing the natural and built environment

We will seek to help those engaged in delivering and managing the natural and built environment, addressing each location's unique challenges and opportunities to create and maintain high-quality environments that encourage people to move more, reduce emissions and enhance biodiversity.

Active environments	Through our commitment to creating active environments, continue to embed the principles of Active Design into national and local policy and our wider engagement with the planning system	Evidence to demonstrate the embedding of Active Design into policy and planning systems	Evidence to demonstrate the embedding of Active Design into policy and planning systems by March 2026	2024/25
	Multi-million-pound investment to promote physical and mental wellbeing opportunities in the natural environment whilst working collaboratively to reduce and mitigate climate change, promote biodiversity and connection to nature	Levels of physical and mental well-being alongside habitat enhancements	Improved physical and mental well-being of participants alongside habitat enhancement in at least four locations by March 2027	2024/25
Building resilience	Develop a climate adaptation and resilience vision for the sector supported by a Sport England strategy	Sector vision agreed and climate adaptation plan developed	Sector vision agreed and climate adaptation plan developed by March 2027	2026/27



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