



WYCOMBE1 WANDERERS

BeOne – Sustainability Strategy

#OneClub #OneCommunity



OUR VISION

“A sustainably-minded, healthier, more connected community.”

OUR MISSION

“To Place Wycombe Wanderers FC at the forefront of creating a sustainably-minded community, which actions its environmental responsibility.”



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wycombe Wanderers (WW) believes that sustainability is a key issue, not only for us as an organisation, but society as a whole – it is our responsibility to tackle it together – to BeOne.

Without immediate action, both the community of Wycombe and the future of football as we know it are at risk. Therefore, it is our collective belief that we must collaborate to create innovative solutions and work together to implement them immediately, if we want to have any chance of ending our environmental crisis.

As many as 150 species go extinct every day due to the effects of climate change and habitat destruction (UN). We have seen cities, communities and households all over the world, devastated by the impacts of extreme weather events as a direct result of global warming.

Improving our sustainability will in turn improve our efficiency, optimise our operations and ultimately benefit us financially, leading to on pitch benefits. It is our responsibility as a club to unite people and lead on positive change to benefit our supporters and our local community.



INTRODUCTION

This sustainability strategy has been created to unite Wycombe Wanderers FC, Wycombe Wanderers Foundation, the Chiltern Rangers (leaders in local conservation) and we hope, our local community to **BeOne** in the fight to become a sustainable green club and community. It is intended to form part of a holistic approach and can be read as a whole or as parts.

The overriding aim is to improve our sustainability and integrate biodiversity within the successful running of the club, in conjunction with various stakeholders including – WWFC players, staff, the trust, fans and the wider local community. We are proud to be home to the PFA's Sustainability Ambassador David Wheeler, a key member of the BeOne Group.

It is VITAL to recognise that the climate change and biodiversity crises can only be tackled in partnership by all sections of society: public, private, third sector, football clubs, community organisations and schools, all working together to do their bit. As a professional football club, we aim to be a leading light, taking responsibility for our actions and activities as we move forwards.

STRATEGY CONTENTS

- 1) Key Strategies
- 2) Our Pledges
- 3) Who is responsible?
- 4) Impact Assessment – The Context
- 5) Biodiversity - Changing Perceptions
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- 7) Energy and Emissions
- 8) Single Use Plastics
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- 11) Monitoring and Reporting
- 12) Next Steps



KEY STRATEGIES

Wycombe Wanderers pledge to become carbon neutral by 2030 through joining the UK Government SME Climate Hub initiative.

WW aims to align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals UN SDG's in all future strategies.

WW understands the importance of biodiversity and aims to engage with the COP15 Global Biodiversity Framework wherever possible in all future strategies.

In conjunction with our community, WW will establish an Environmental Sustainability Action Plan that will lay out a road map for the organisation to achieve our environmental sustainability targets in a step-by-step approach using timelines.

The BeOne Group, made up of passionate staff members will continue to meet regularly, whilst taking the lead on the implementation of this strategy and listening to our community.

WW commits to conduct an Environmental Impact Review at least once every three years. This data will be integral to the continued evolution of our Environmental Sustainability Action Plan.

OUR PLEDGES

- ✓ **We commit to reducing our emissions from energy and utilities.**
- ✓ **We will reduce our environmental impact from transport.**
- ✓ **We will reduce our environmental and social impacts from sourcing.**
- ✓ **We will continue to improve our waste management and levels of recycling.**
- ✓ **We pledge to take a stronger stance on biodiversity loss and work with our community to find ways that we can protect nature.**



WE CANNOT DO THIS ON OUR OWN WE NEED YOUR HELP!



If this strategy is to be successful it requires:

A recognition of its need...

A recognition of its importance...

Buy-in from all stakeholders...

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY...

Action!

Together, we can play our part,
together we can make a difference
#BeOne



IMPACT ASSESSMENT



The Context – Why is this strategy required?

This document does not exist in isolation. It is also part of a wider context from an international level with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals ([UN SDG's](#)) specifically contributing to at least seven (3,4,5,6, 13, 14 & 15).

These goals together with the Lawton report 2010 ([UK Nature Review](#)) helped inform national government targets and a 25 year environmental plan ([Environmental Plan](#)) which is advocating a “bigger, better and more joined up, approach to conservation in the UK”.

Locally here in Buckinghamshire and the Chilterns AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) these aims are distilled further via a few key policies, strategies and documents which ensure biodiversity is accounted for by all including the Bucks Biodiversity Action Plan ([Action Plan](#)) and Chiltern Conservation Board Management Plan ([Future Proofing The Chilterns](#)).

There are a number of other habitat and species priorities. For example, the Buckinghamshire and Chilterns butterfly and moth priorities and list of bird species which are of conservation concern.

The intention of this strategy is to clearly demonstrate that the football club is not acting in isolation, but considering deeply its place in the local community and acting responsibly to benefit all. We believe that in doing so, nature and our environment, the football club and local people, especially their mental health, will all benefit.



CHANGING PERCEPTIONS - OVERVIEW

What does 'good' look like for biodiversity?

Areas that are traditionally neat and tidy, regularly “managed and maintained” are often devoid of biodiversity, usually because people mow, cut and tidy before life cycles of plants or invertebrates are complete. Sometimes this is unavoidable and even desirable, for example for health and safety to ensure people are safe. However, this is not necessarily always the case.

Throughout this strategy, we will be advocating for our ‘as and when is right for nature’ and ‘right tree, right place, right reason’ mantra of an approach to the management of spaces and places. Trees in particular are not necessarily the solution to all environmental difficulties. This is where here in Buckinghamshire and the Chilterns AONB, chalk grassland is hugely underrated and an important part of the landscape for carbon sequestration and the benefit of biodiversity and people.

Frequency of Cutting

High frequency cutting is just one way of managing green space. It is commonly perceived that well managed equates to high frequency cutting, resulting in short-clipped, ‘neat’ grass. This argument is reinforced by the change resistant mindset of ‘it’s always been done this way’. However, this does not necessarily mean this is the right or only way to do things. Nor does it mean that this entrenched approach cannot change.

As a society, we have become obsessed by tidiness of open spaces, confusing an ideal that neat and tidy, always equates to well-managed. The reality is not quite so binary. There is a place where the neat and the not-so-neat can coexist for maximum biodiversity benefit and still look 'nice' e.g., short neat border mowing around wildflower areas.



CHANGING PERCEPTIONS 1/3



Principles We Can Adopt

Less is More

To boost biodiversity and reduce our footprint on the planet more broadly, we need to minimise the use of herbicides, pesticides, fungicides. Unless on the playing surface, there simply is no need to apply chemicals into the environment where other options exist - this is often where volunteers can help e.g., cutting, raking, jet washing and so on. Application of chemicals should be the last resort action in order to satisfy a H&S requirement. Fewer mows is nearly always going to be beneficial for biodiversity.

No Mow May

Where possible (clearly, we couldn't on the pitch!) we will join the national scheme to reduce grass cutting to aid pollinators and to allow biodiversity to thrive.

Where Can We Enhance Biodiversity?

1. Adams Park

All measures for biodiversity in and around the stadium have, out of necessity, played second priority to the health and safety of visitors and spectators, often numbering many thousands of people, albeit for a relatively short space of time. However, small gains can still be made in the short and longer term:



CHANGING PERCEPTIONS 2/3



Existing Stadium

Bird boxes, as part of a broader initiative in High Wycombe to help save our swifts as well as other woodland, and farmland birds, and bird baths can be placed on and around the stadium. These will need to be carefully situated and secured to walls or trees in a manner that they are well out of the reach of people at a minimum height of 5m. They should not be placed over, commonly used areas such as: walkways, entrances and exits, windows etc. Grass bank at entrance – this should be cut and arisings collected and put on the compost heap once a year in September. This is a priority habitat and full of amazing wildflowers such as orchids, kidney vetch, knapweeds, clustered bellflower, field scabious and many more.

Potential New Stand and/or Terrace

A new building is the perfect opportunity to include integrated bee, bat and bird boxes to the structure. It demonstrates our commitment to a holistic approach, not simply greenwashing. This is an extremely low risk way of delivering direct biodiversity benefits and minimising long-term maintenance issues. The objective for any new build would be to meet the highest possible energy and heat efficiency standards to minimise energy consumption, in turn keeping emissions and costs down.



CHANGING PERCEPTIONS 3/3



2. Training Ground - Marlow Road

At our existing training base, with some careful thinking and changes to management, biodiversity gains can be made quickly.

Bird and bat boxes can be fixed to larger trees and the building complex, especially swifts and house sparrows on the building - these are red listed species of conservation concern. Tawny, owl and barn owl boxes on some of the bigger trees to link to the wider farming and wooded landscape.

There are quite literally marginal gains to be made at this site in conjunction with the ground staff mowing and grounds maintenance. We will look at sacrificial areas away from the training pitches where biodiversity can thrive through reduced and slightly altered mowing regimes. This will promote wildflower growth and increased bird nesting habitat over time. This also promotes foraging habitat for birds and bats and invertebrates. This also has an added benefit of reducing the amount of cutting required down to an annual cut and collect rather than weekly or multiple times a week cutting as part of the current regime. This has the benefit of saving fuel and therefore carbon emissions.

Also, these peripheral areas can be taken out of input ratings, for example, fertilisers, pesticides, herbicides, again, driving by adversity gain, reducing cost by financial and environmental as these chemicals have a high carbon footprint and long-term cost to the environment.

We can look at new areas of hedge and tree planting (native & fruit trees) for example around the boundary. This will have the benefit of increasing security and reducing visibility through the site, making the site more attractive to biodiversity, particular birds and invertebrates at the same time. Tree and hedge planting also has the added benefit of helping sequester carbon as well = win, win, win.



IMPACT ASSESSMENT



3. Proposed Adoption of Sands Bank Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

Sands Bank LNR is a 30-acre nature reserve dominated by chalk grassland on a south facing slope facing towards Adams Park and woodland on the top. It forms part of the Dashwood estate. Chiltern Rangers, in association with a range of partner organisations undertake the management at this site to secure it for wildlife and the community. However, this is an ongoing requirement and challenge. Chalk grassland is a biodiversity action plan priority habitat in Buckinghamshire. It is rare and highly valuable as a declining and diminishing habitat in the Chilterns. Chalk grassland can support approximately 40 plant species per square metre including orchids, eyebrights, vetches and knapweeds. 30-34 species of butterfly can also be spotted on site, it is also home to 6 species of butterflies in the (Wycombe) Blue family:

- ▶ Adonis blue
- ▶ Chalkhill blue
- ▶ Small blue
- ▶ Common blue
- ▶ Holly blue
- ▶ Brown Argus

How many football clubs are lucky enough to be located next to a nature reserve? As such we must protect it and play our part in helping it to thrive. We live in a highly water stressed environment and have internationally important chalk streams about 1 mile from the stadium which need to be protected ([Chiltern Streams](#)).





23 of 150 fan respondents* want to see a reduction of single use plastic

More Co2 in atmosphere than at any point in human history



33% of extreme weather events in the last 20 years have been human influenced



Why?

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B

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Our reach Social Media following → 500,000

Our reach...
-> Social Media 500k+
-> Adams Park 9,500



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#OneClub
#OneCommunity



95% of wildflower meadows lost since 1950

Fan perception of our duty to reduce our climate impact 4.29/5



n



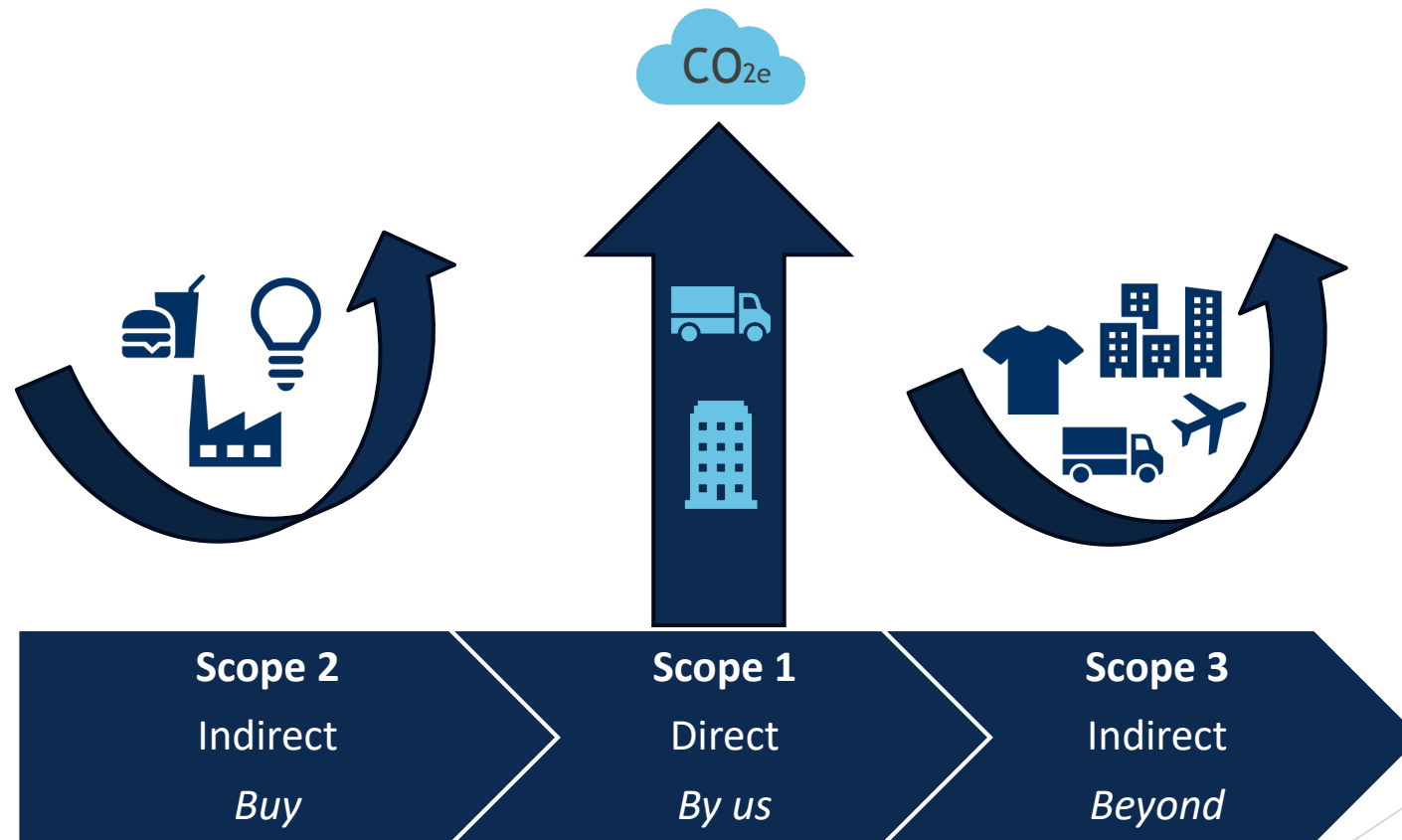
40m Fewer birds than 25 years ago



ENERGY & EMISSIONS



Wycombe Wanderers Football Club is committed to reducing the club's carbon footprint. With a continuous review of incoming services, output and a move to using predominantly local suppliers who are focussed on renewable and sustainable products. The club is moving towards becoming a carbon neutral business.



CLEAN ENERGY



Background

WWFC is currently locked into an Energy contract with NPower, until 2025. Energy supplied from renewable sources sits below the national average and the club have spoken at length, with Troo (broker), to negotiate a change and increase in the renewable sources. Any extension of the contract (made clear Jan 2023) must see a sharp increase in energy supplied from renewable sources and sit well above the national average.

Solar

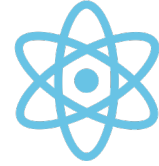
Where small installations require power, solar will be considered at all times. The security barrier at the training ground is operated from solar power and all future installations will see this considered as a preferred option. The club is looking to redevelop stands within the stadium in the next 3 years (2023-2026). Stand developments will have solar panels fixed to the roofs of the new stand/s in order to enhance our efficiency energy security, protect against rising energy costs and reduce emissions.

Sustainable Transport

The club has a commitment to our fans, neighbours, and the wider community to reduce traffic, and pollution, in and around the stadium on a matchday. A 'Park and Stride' service has been implemented with a local school, offering 250 spaces, 1 mile from the ground. This has offered a service to approx. 9% of our average gate (assuming each car has a minimum of 2 passengers). Three electric vehicle charging points are being installed in July 2023 - two at Adams Park (publicly accessible) and one at Marlow Road. We are also close to agreeing an electric vehicle leasing agreement for playing and club staff including Matt Bloomfield and David Wheeler.



OUR LOCAL SUPPLIERS



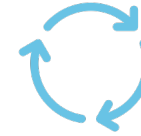
Partnering with local suppliers, means we are supporting our community and reducing unnecessary emissions from procurement. Below is an ever-expanding list of our valued local partners/suppliers:

- ▶ **Rebellion Brewery** - 3.4 miles from the stadium
- ▶ **Bumble Bee Cider** - Oxford-based 22 miles from the stadium
- ▶ **Artisan Gourmet Meat** - sourced entirely from local farms 4.1 miles from the stadium
- ▶ **Westside Farm Shop** - 1.6 miles from the stadium supplying all our fruit and vegetables

Plant based **Vegetarian and vegan options** are available throughout the stadium. Our conservation partners **The Chiltern Rangers**, do vitally important work, sit on the WWF board and BeOne Group, and operate a stone's throw from Adams Park. More info on the Chiltern Rangers can be found at chilternrangers.co.uk.



SINGLE USE PLASTICS



15% of fans
want to see
a reduction
in SUP's*

WWFC is committed to removing all single use plastic products by the close of 2024...

- ▶ The club operates a food wrapping policy. All goods brought from external food vendors and kiosks is served in fully recycled wrapping.
- ▶ All cutlery served in food vans and kiosks is made from wood.
- ▶ All straws within the stadium are 100% recycled.
- ▶ The club has provided large shower gel dispensers on all shower walls – single use shower gel bottles have been banned.
- ▶ Discussions continue around a reusable drink glass/cup solution. A matchday generates approximately 6,000 single use glasses. WWFC Waste Disposal Partner (Grundon) currently recycle these by incineration, which in turn creates power.
- ▶ In January 2023 a 3-year deal was agreed with Nationwide Paper (based 500 yards from the stadium) to provide WWFC with unbleached paper towels, and toilet roll made from recycled materials and hand foam replacing single use plastics.
- ▶ Our partnership with Grundon Waste Disposal and Waste Management Services continues to reduce our emissions, ensuring that no waste is currently taken from WWFC to landfill.



WATER



WWFC is looking to engage with an industry expert to understand the full use of water across the stadium and training ground. We recognise there is likely to be a high percentage of wasted water from inefficiency, outdated equipment and unknown leaks, identifying where these are is key.

Action is being taken! WWFC recently signed a 5-year deal (Feb 2023) with WhiffAway, a company who have provided all urinals with a product that breaks down urine crystals and therefore removes the need for water. This will save WWFC...

- ▶ 7,500m³ PA in litres that's...
- ▶ 7.5 million litres a year or...
- ▶ 1.65 million UK Gallons
- ▶ A carbon saving from that is around 3,160kg of CO₂e every year



ENGAGEMENT



For this strategy to be effective it relies on engagement from all stakeholders, otherwise it will merely be words on a piece of paper. ACTION is now more important than words. From the club side you can expect to see BeOne presence across the club and in matchday and non-matchday activations, player engagement led by our Sustainability Ambassador David Wheeler and via WWF into our community. If we are to take it to the next level, the action must spread beyond Adams Park, we are calling on our supporters and our community to join this important fight. TOGETHER we are stronger - BeOne.

The **BeOne Group** consists of the following members:

- ▶ David Wheeler – WWFC player and PFA Sustainability Ambassador
- ▶ Neil Peters – WWFC Head of Football Business Operations
- ▶ Matt Cecil – WWFC Head of Media
- ▶ Mark Gaitskell – WWF Chief Executive
- ▶ John Shaw – Chiltern Rangers Managing Director



WHAT NEXT?



Monitoring and Reporting

If this strategy is to be effective it has to be monitored and the impact measured, this is an ongoing process which requires stakeholder input, however, initial milestones that we will adopt are as follows:

1. Quarterly reviews
2. Community review
3. Annual impact report
4. Inclusivity Strategy

Next Steps

As an organisation committed to inclusivity, it is important to us to engage with, recognise and support people of all backgrounds and beliefs, whether that's at Adams Park on a matchday, or through the work of our Foundation. Whilst both organisations are already making huge efforts to improve the inclusivity of WWFC – the formalisation of these efforts into an Inclusivity Strategy, falling under the BeOne banner is an important next step we are committed to taking. Football is a powerful vehicle for change and football is for everyone BeOne.

Interested to hear more, or want to get involved email community@wwfc.com.

