



**Environmental Sustainability
Roadmap 2025 - 2030**



Introduction



AoC Sport's environmental sustainability roadmap is a guide to support our goal to be more environmentally sustainable. We will be following Association of Colleges Sustainability Policy, BASIS's 12 principles and Sport England's Every Move Strategy to help provide guidance in ways of working that can impact our overall priorities.

In our strategic framework we identify that environmental sustainability will be achieved by following the five guiding principles of the United Nations Sports for Climate Action Framework in everything that we do:

- Undertake systemic efforts to promote greater environmental responsibility.
- Reduce overall climate impact
- Educate for climate action
- Promote sustainable and responsible consumption
- Advocate for Climate action through communication

Our goal is to create an offer that aligns with the needs of our staff, members, and their students, whilst minimising our impact on the environment. Recognising the challenges of achieving, net zero or carbon neutral status, we acknowledge that not all our objectives can be accomplished simultaneously. Therefore, we are committed to a phased implementation of our solutions over the next five years, with the aim of being carbon neutral by 2030.





In implementing its Sustainability Policy, AoC will, so far as reasonably practical focus on six key areas:

1. Minimise its consumption of energy and resources, and publicly publish its carbon footprint in the annual accounts through the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting framework.
2. Use materials and equipment and develop procurement practices and procedures which minimise harm to the environment.
3. Undertake environmental impact assessments on policies, procedures and systems of work.
4. Facilitate the recycling and correct disposal of waste materials.
5. Promote an awareness and understanding of sustainable development issues amongst staff through their induction, training programmes and internal publicity.
6. Ensure that employee well-being and safety is prioritised through fair and equitable work practices, and the implementation of AoC's equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

We are in the process of measuring our Scope 1, 2 and 3 and will plan on publishing our baseline for this roadmap by 30th June 2025.

This will also be a working document and will evolve as we evolve and we would welcome partners advice and support as we look for solutions as a sector.





Background



At AoC Sport we have created a programme aimed at educating, promoting and advocating colleges in climate action, and sustainable consumption. We want to develop an offer that meets the needs of our students and members within the means of the planet.

We will;

- Collate and share case studies of best practice within the sector
- Invite colleges to pledge to take short, medium and or long term actions to tackle the climate crisis.
- Share information, toolkits and knowledge to colleges about key topics through our membership of BASIS.
- Plan and promote the Planet Earth Games – Colleges competition which uses gamification and empowers colleges and students to lead on climate action
- Recruit student Green Ambassadors at colleges to lead their college in creating positive change, providing them with training and funding pots to support this.
- Celebrate the work colleges are doing through our Sustainability in Sport Award as part of our annual AoC Sport Awards
- Continue to look at new opportunities to engage colleges with climate action initiatives.

As we are engaging our members to take action and educating them on the climate crisis, it is important for us to lead by example and show the changes we have made, and are committing to make to ensure we are environmentally sustainable.





This roadmap outlines our current sustainability efforts across all functions of AoC Sport and sets clear targets for reducing our environmental impact. It details the actions we will take to achieve these goals, ensuring accountability and progress tracking.

We have identified seven key areas within our operations where actionable goals can be set to effectively monitor, track and reduce our organisation's carbon footprint.

1. Meetings - Regional Networks, internal meetings as well as with member colleges and partners
2. Competition structures - Fixture creation, league and cup planning
3. Delivering sporting events - Regional Tournaments, Local Development Opportunities (LDO), National Championships and Cup Finals
4. Development Events - Student Leadership Programme Development Days, Conferences, Partner Events (hosted and attending)
5. National Representative teams - Football, Hockey and Netball
6. Office Space - Review office impact, energy (lights and water), waste management processes
7. General working practices - Everyday working for all staff

To support our work in promoting and influencing members and partners in taking climate action we will also:

1. Train all AoC Sport staff to become Carbon Literate
2. Establish our baseline in Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. Setting a baseline for reduction targets
3. Collate and share case studies showcasing sustainability best practice in Colleges
4. Work with partners such as BASIS to share our work, inspire and encourage others to take climate action.
5. Share information about climate change through our communication channels.
6. Work with Planet Earth Games to encourage AoC Staff and member colleges to take climate action.



**What we currently do and what
changes we will make**

Meetings

Regional Networks, internal meetings as well as with member colleges and partners

What we do currently

- Conduct weekly online meetings internally through Microsoft teams
- Occasional in person meetings as a team in a central location, at the London AoC office, or at our office in Stoke Sub Hamdon
- Catch up meetings with colleges online and at college sites
- Teams work remotely, at the office in Stoke Sub Hamdon and at the London AoC Office
 - Teams use various forms of commuting such as walking, cycling, driving and public transport.
- Termly College networks at a central college location in each region bringing colleges together in one place.
 - Providing Lunch and Refreshments
 - Some networks are also delivered online on Microsoft Teams.
- Partner meetings mainly conducted online on Microsoft Teams but are occasionally in person at central locations.





Meetings

Networks, internal meetings as well as with member colleges and partners

Changes we will make

Phase 1

- Attempt to take public transport to network meetings and internal meetings where possible
- Arrange to have online meetings or in person meetings in a central location that has good public transport links to reduce travel time / increase use of public transport. Make sure venues have EV charge points; cycle parking and facilities
- Track carbon impact of our travelling to meetings, through internal staff travel surveys and tracking expenses through concur
- Plan and share internal and external meeting dates and venues (if in person) at the start of the year, where possible to allow people to plan transport use easier, promoting the public transport option on all communications for the event.
- Share information about local public transport links with joining instructions / meeting information to support colleagues taking public transport

Phase 2

- Ensure joining instructions for college networks acknowledges and raises awareness of the carbon impact of each mode of transport and encourages sustainable travel
- Implement guidance on actively reducing single use plastics within meeting settings, and for catering provision that is plant-based and sustainably sourced.
- Ensure the correct amount of food is ordered / or under order so that there is not any food waste. if there is work with the catering teams to manage food waster and surplus food, with thought around food hygiene and safety regs)
- Create and distribute a fact sheet internally and to colleges highlighting the benefits of public transport.

Phase 3

- Explore credible and verified carbon offsetting projects to mitigate the environmental impact of travel for meetings, using recommended offsetting organisations endorsed by AoC's partners.
- Incentivise use of public transport / lift sharing, through setting up a reward system within AoC with vouchers and discount codes.
- Influence partners and members about the carbon impacts on travelling to meetings etc.

Competition structures

Fixture creation, league and cup plannings

What we do currently

- Run Leagues and Cups across the country, regionally and nationally over 16 fixture weeks
 - Majority of leagues are regional for colleges teams
 - Premier leagues for each sport are ran super regionally or nationally to ensure quality of competition is matched.
- Accept entries for our competitions using an online platform which supports to generate fixtures and league results
- College teams are required to contact the opposition with details of the fixtures including kick off time, venue location and team colours
- Colleges often send multiple teams to different locations each week based on their fixtures, increasing travel demand and the need for bus hire..
- We run cup competitions starting regionally and progressing into larger areas eventually creating national fixtures
- College teams often fall into disagreement on fixture detail and generate high email traffic including competitions team to solve issues
- Deliver trophies and medals for leagues and cups at the end of year across all the leagues.





Competition structures

Fixture creation, league and cup plannings

Changes we will make

Phase 1

- Review college transport methods to fixtures, through college travel surveys
- Review distance travelled by each college, segment by sport and regions
- Add Team Contacts, Home venue, kit colours, kick off times, and post match food information on Competition platform to reduce email traffic and ease of organising fixtures
- Share sustainability messages upon entry of competitions and when fixtures are released, include information about waste, single use plastic, travel emissions etc.

Phase 2

- Plan more localised leagues and competitions where possible
- Look to double up fixtures where colleges are playing the same college in different sports, reducing need for number of buses and overall travel where possible
- Use Recycled / Sustainable Trophies and Medals

Phase 3

- Generate environmental policies and guidance for colleges who enter our leagues and include accepting guidance in the terms and conditions of the competition.
- Regular communications about reducing carbon impact with fixtures
- Run a green fixture week - all games to run one climate action intervention as part of the fixture, as part of the Colleges Green Week.
- Include information about facility upgrades that colleges / fixture venues should have when colleges are hosting their home fixtures.

Delivering sporting events

Regional Tournament, LDO's, National Championships and Cup Finals

What we do currently

- Deliver multi-sport tournaments across all nine regions, featuring 13 different sports, bringing colleges together at a central venue within each region
- Where possible we host multiple sports in a single day at one venue, but in some cases, events are dedicated to just one sport
- Local Development Opportunity events where multiple colleges attend festivals at one college site
- National Championships, a three-day multi-sport event held at a university campus in April, featuring 1,300 students competing across 13 different sports while staying in local accommodation and student halls.
- Multiple national cup finals hosted primarily in the Midlands over several weeks at a central venue for colleges that have reached the final





Delivering sporting events

Regional Tournament, LDO's, National Championships and Cup Finals

Changes we will make

Phase 1

- Send communications to all participating colleges about carbon impacts as part of joining instructions
- Share advice on running low carbon events.
- Go paperless at events - make use of technology and pre sending information for colleges
- Share information about local public transport links with joining instructions / meeting information to support colleagues taking public transport

Phase 2

- Recycled / Sustainable medals and trophies for tournaments and cups
- Go through sustainability requirement check list for venues when booking; water fountains, no plastic bottles, recycling facilities. If these are not currently in place we will look for alternative venues or raise in discussions that these should be put in place.
- Promote and encourage participants to lift share where possible
- At tournament registrations provide sustainability and waste information providing space responsibility and waste bags to collect. Highlight recycle zones for plastic and other recyclable items
- When booking facilities / venues ensure all showers are low flow / shorter timer / lower temperature

Phase 3

- Ensure all sports for regional tournaments in each region are in the same location on the same day
- Recycle and Reuse all equipment from previous years, don't buy new when don't need to.
- Allocate waste responsibility zones to colleges in attendance

Development Events

Student Leadership Programme Development Days, Conferences, Partner Events

What we do currently

- Plan and deliver a leadership programmes for student activators and ambassadors at colleges to develop student leadership and encourage more students to get active.
 - Provide online resources, e-learning and certificated courses for student ambassadors
 - Including Carbon Literacy Training
 - Provide Free Kit for ambassadors and activators
 - Host online staff symposiums to share best practice of running volunteer programmes at their colleges
 - Provide funding opportunities for colleges to bid into to develop, support and run their volunteer programmes and getting more students active.
 - Host leadership development training days for student volunteers annually at major sports stadiums, universities, and college campuses, 3 times a year, two north and south events in November and March and 6 sub region events in January / February
- Attend and host online and in person Sport England system partner events
- Host one-day in-person conferences at central venues, bringing together multiple staff members and speakers for professional development and networking.
- Host information webinars for colleges across multiple interest points throughout the year.





Development Events

Student Leadership Programme Development Days, Conferences, Partner Events

Changes we will make

Phase 1

- Include key sustainability awareness messages in joining instructions for colleges.
- Track carbon impact of colleges attending events - track modes of transport and distance travelled
- Use venue sustainability check list when booking venues for development days and conferences
 - Ensure there is a plan in place from the host venue for waste, recycling, food waste reduction and single use plastic elimination plans
- Make sure kit provided to ambassadors is ethically sourced and made.
- Share information about local public transport links with joining instructions / meeting information to support colleagues taking public transport

Phase 2

- Book venues in central locations for colleges with good transport links
- Plan and share event dates and venues (if in person) as far in advance as possible to allow people to plan transport use easier.
- Ensure food and drink provided doesn't include single use plastic and is ethically / sustainably sourced, preferably vegan.
- Work together with the catering division on how to manage food surplus and food waste
- Create and share internally and with a college fact sheet that states the benefits of using public transport to reduce travel emissions

Phase 3

- Explore credible and verified carbon offsetting projects to mitigate the environmental impact of travel for meetings, using recommended offsetting organizations endorsed by AoC's partners.
- Incentivise use of public transport / lift sharing
- Influence partners and members about the carbon impacts on travelling to meetings etc.
- Make sure venues to have EV charge points; cycle parking and facilities.

National Representative teams

Football, Hockey and Netball

What we do currently

- We run national representative teams in 3 sports; Football, Netball and Hockey
- Run separate trial days for the different sports across the country
 - Football Phase 1 - 4 regional trial dates for 580 nominated students (men's and women's)
 - Football Phase 2 - 60 Male and 60 Females invited to central venue (Shrewsbury) Over one weekend
 - Netball - 1 trial date ran over 2 days at a central venue in the country with students paying to trial (Walsall)
 - Hockey - 1 trial date at a central venue in the country with players being nominated (Worcester)
- Host training event and sessions with volunteer coaches
- Play fixtures against other organisations such as RAF and other home nations
 - Netball and Hockey play up to 5 fixtures between January and June
- Football play 3 fixtures and finish the year with a football tournament in Italy against other Nations, hosted and paid for by the Italian FA which is Free to enter.
- We send invitations and updates to players and staff before and after with information encouraging car sharing and telling them to bring reusable water bottles and code of conducts
- Staff and volunteers build up a lot of car / van mileage to trials with equipment, sponsorship signage and to run the events
- Recently Football recruited regional volunteers to support players from that region and help run trials locally which helped reduce staff and volunteer travel distances
- Run education sessions at football's first fixture at St Georges Park.





National Representative teams

ECFA, Hockey and Netball

Changes we will make

Phase 1

- Share Sustainable messages to players at trials and in rep teams in code of conducts and joining instructions, including no plastic bottle messages and lift sharing information
- Run Trials for Football, Netball and Hockey all on the same day at the same venue to increase numbers from colleges and enable shared transport easier
- Make sure venues to have EV charge points; cycle parking and facilities;
- Use venue sustainability check list when booking venues for trials
 - Ensure there is a plan in place from the host venue for managing waste effectively, including single use plastics and food.

Phase 2

- Select trial venues and fixture venues central and with good access to public transport
- Don't buy new kit each year, look to introduce a rolling cycle of kit and recycling previous years
- Introduce sustainability training / information session at first fixture camps for all players

Phase 3

- Explore credible and verified carbon offsetting projects to mitigate the environmental impact of travel for meetings, using recommended offsetting organizations endorsed by AoC's partners
- Look to offset excess carbon impact from travelling to fixtures using recommended offsetting organisations used by AoC's partners
- Incentivise use of public transport / lift sharing
- Influence squads and opposition about the carbon impacts on travelling to fixtures etc.

Office Space

Review office impact, energy (lights and water), waste management processes

What we do currently

- Current electricity supplier is SSE who are working towards a net zero emission plan by 2030.
- All electrical items are switched off at night.
- 2 x printers have built in stand-by modes.
- Central heating timer.
- Radiators have thermostatic valves.
- A dedicated recycling point for plastic and paper
- Paper is confidentially recycled and certified.
- Do not use single use cups for staff or visitors
- No paper-mail shots
- Working towards a paperless office (invoices, statements etc....)
- Electric hand dryer in toilets so no need for paper towels
- Professional disposal of sanitary waste.
- Use a Dishwasher - slimline in the office
- Central water station - bottles are recycled.
- Office cleaning products are made from recyclable products.
- Plants in office – welcoming, improve oxygen levels etc.
- Car share to office & social events
- Re-use office Christmas decorations
- Sustainability reporting on annual accounts





Office Space

Review office impact, energy (lights and water), waste management following the waste hierarchy - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover

Changes we will make

Phase 1

- Remove wastepaper bins from desks and implement appropriate waste separation process i.e. General Waste and Dry mixed recycling.
- Ensure all cleaning products are non-toxic.
- Use Filtered water from the office to support reduce waste and plastics, encouraging reusable bottles and cups at the refill station.
- Include sustainability within all departmental meeting agendas in order to embed within organisational culture and ways of working.

Phase 2

- Installation of motion sensor lights & LED lights to reduce energy use
- Speak to local council about other forms of recycling – food.
- Install a hot water tap

Phase 3

- Concerted effort to partner with suppliers who have a sustainability policy.
- Incentivise use of public transport / lift sharing / active travel to get to the office.

General working practices

Everyday working practice

What we do currently

- The majority of staff work remotely, with some based in offices in the South West
- Sustainability policies have been created and staff training provided on the carbon impacts within the workplace
- Meetings mainly held online with in person meetings consciously set up to be central locations and good for public transport
- Set up projects that support action against climate change and engaging members in the climate change agenda
- In-person meetings only held on an ad-hoc basis and when necessary
- When meetings are not near a public transport hub staff do travel by car.
- Sometimes merge work events to ensure shared travel by colleges
- Timings for meetings vary in time but generally start at 10:30 and finish by 3:30 to allow use of public transport within the working day.
- Sustainability reporting on annual accounts





General working practices

Everyday working practice

Changes we will make

Phase 1

- Ensure Environmental sustainability is part of day to day conversations as well as planning in projects and events.
- Provide training for all staff on Carbon Literacy to enable staff to integrate sustainability into their professional role
- Pre agree number of in person meetings at Summer away days for the year so people can plan their transport much further in advance to enable ease of booking public transport or lift sharing
- Explore the opportunity of Electric Vehicle purchase schemes

Phase 2

- Combine meetings where we are able to ensure lift sharing and public transport more easily accessible
- Involve all internal stakeholders in sustainability improvements and reviews and reports that can be published annually to members, partners and funders
- Share discussions and influence partners around sustainable actions in working discussions
- Factor environmental sustainability within all project planning and decisions

Phase 3

- Have a member of staff sitting on committees / boards for sustainability in sport and internally making sure that AoC Sport has a voice in the conversations and supporting the sector.



Tools and Organisations to support these changes

- BASIS Membership - Learnings of webinars and best practice
- Carbon Literacy Trust - Sports Kit and Knowledge E learning
- SECC Resource Hub
- Event Carbon Emission Consultation
- Planet Earth Games
- <https://www.whatshalfway.com/>
- BASIS Whatsapp Group
- Communication Templates - Joining Instructions for events and tournaments
- Venue Booking Checklist
- Conference Session Guidelines
- Conference / fixtures / tournaments Bring and Don't Bring List
- Public Transport guides for events
- Carbon Emission Tracker
- FE Sustainability Roadmap
- Tournify App and SportLomo
- Kitround / Action for Sport - Kit Recycling / Exchanges

AoC Sport commit to reviewing the roadmap every January to ensure we are on track with our targets, adjust if necessary as well as adding / deleting information as relevant. This will be the responsibility of the lead of the sustainability programmes alongside SLT and the AoC Sustainability manager.