

# PLYMOUTH ARGYLE & ARGYLE COMMUNITY TRUST

## ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2022-25





# INTRODUCTION

Plymouth Argyle and the Argyle Community Trust recognise the importance of, and are committed to, minimising our environmental footprint.

We have already designated energy conservation as a key objective. However, energy and carbon emissions are only one part of our environmental footprint.

The Club & Trust executive teams have agreed an Energy and Environment Policy which considers the effects of our operations on the environment.

The Policy confirms that we will comply with legislation and other requirements and continue to operate in an environmentally friendly way as a responsible business contributing towards reducing global warming and our environmental impact.

The Energy and Environment Policy is also beneficial for operations as it helps minimise the use and cost of utilities and other consumables, which will contribute towards our objective of becoming a financially sustainable Championship Club in line with our Vision and Values.

This Energy and Environmental Plan is intended to set out some key actions necessary to achieve the aims and objectives of this Policy over a three-year timeframe (2022 to 2025).

However, we should recognise that this Energy and Environmental Plan is only the start of our environmental improvement journey.



# AREAS COVERED BY THE PLAN

This Energy and Environmental Plan applies to all our operations. The intention of the Plan is also to influence areas not in our direct control, but which affect our environmental footprint. For example, we do not have direct control over how fans travel to and from home and away games, nor do we have direct control of our suppliers' operations.

However, in both cases we can nonetheless influence the overall environmental impact.

The following areas account for the majority of our energy and environmental footprint:

## **Gas, Electricity, Water, Fuel, Waste, Business Travel, Nature, Procurement**

This is not intended to exclude other areas which contribute to our environmental footprint, but these areas provide an initial focus for the Energy and Environmental Plan.

There are sections below for each of these areas, and we have identified the key objectives for each area.

The reduction of our carbon emissions - largely through the reduction in gas and fuel consumption – is also covered by our Energy and Environmental Policy and Plan.



# BASELINE AND DASHBOARD

Our operations have been significantly affected since the start of the pandemic in March 2020. Different operating patterns have been running over the last couple of years, ranging from periods with no football and events, to football behind closed doors, to outdoor events only, to more normal operations but with Covid-19 restrictions.

It is therefore not representative to use this period as a baseline against which to assess and report changes to our environmental footprint.

However, it seems that in 2022 we are starting to emerge from the most damaging effects of the pandemic.

Therefore, an important first step in the Plan is to establish a representative and reliable baseline which we will use to create a transparent environmental reporting dashboard.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Establish an environmental reporting dashboard

Using the dashboard & baseline data, we will aim to reduce our overall energy use by 15% across the Club & Trust



# THE GREEN GREENS

One of the biggest challenges for delivering this plan will be to create a culture in which all our stakeholders, particularly staff, understand and are committed to creating sustainable improvements in our environmental footprint. Everyone has a part to play, supporters, suppliers and staff alike, it is a collective responsibility.

- 'Winning the hearts and minds' of all our stakeholders through engagement and help everyone understand how they can help us manage and improve our environmental footprint. In other words, it just becomes a way of working.
- Processes and guidance which ensure that environmental considerations and impacts are not forgotten or treated simply as a 'nice to have' add-on.

## OBJECTIVES

Establish environmental champions in all departments

Publish guidance to staff which explains how we they can contribute to our Environmental Policy, and set up bi-monthly meetings to review progress.

Reviewing all areas of the operation in everything we do, such as how we source materials, when we water the pitch and how we work with our partners



# GAS

Our gas use is largely driven by heating and cooking.

Gas (and fuel) use also accounts for the majority of our carbon emissions so reductions in usage will reduce these as well as decrease our costs and usage of non-renewable hydrocarbon fuels.

## OBJECTIVES

Identify and install appropriate gas meters to help understand gas usage across all our sites and operations

Identify and install improved control systems for optimising energy use in heating systems

Whenever new or upgraded gas equipment is required, consider switching to decarbonise the operation with low or zero carbon efficient technologies.

At some point in the future, there may be opportunities to replace some or all our hydrocarbon consumption by green hydrogen or zero carbon energy sources.

Green hydrogen would be produced using renewable energy sources.

At the time of writing, the production, distribution, and equipment designed to use green hydrogen is still in its infancy.



# ELECTRICITY

We consume electricity in most, if not all, of our operations. The Energy and Environmental Plan has two environmental themes for electricity:

- Sourcing electricity from renewable sources. This includes electricity from the utility companies from renewable sources such as solar and wind power, as well as potentially generating electricity on-site from solar panels.
- Minimising and reducing consumption through efficiency measures such as improved metering and increased awareness.

## OBJECTIVES

Identify and implement opportunities for increasing the amount of electricity supplied to us that is generated from renewable sources including from on-site solar panels

Identify, prioritise and implement change of lighting across our sites to low energy (ie LED) alternatives

Identify and install appropriate electricity meters to help understand electricity usage across all our operations

Identify and install improved control systems for optimising electricity use in lighting and electrical systems, including for example timers and sensors



# WATER

Water use can fluctuate widely depending on the need for pitch watering and the number of home games which governs the use of urinals.

Pitch watering accounts for over half of our water consumption.

Investing in better measurement and control facilities will allow us to identify opportunities to reduce our overall water consumption.

## OBJECTIVES

Identify and install appropriate water meters to help understand water usage (and water outflow?) across all our operations

Ensure that water outlets are inspected on a regular basis, to identify and resolve any leaks

Identify and install improved water control systems (eg valves, timers and sensors) for minimising overall water usage

Review the performance and control of the pitch watering to identify the conditions which minimise water use for maximum pitch grass benefit

Review and identify opportunities for water recycling from pitch watering



# FUEL

For Argyle and the Trust, fuel usage is predominantly petrol and diesel, and is consumed for transport and operating machinery. These forms of fuel are from non-renewable hydrocarbon resources and result in carbon and other emissions.

While our own operations use fuel, a proportion of our visitors use vehicles to travel to Home Park for matches and events, as well as away fans travelling to matches up and down the country.

## OBJECTIVES

When due, replace all pool cars and other petrol or diesel vehicles (including lawn mowers and other pitch maintenance machinery) with fully electric and/or electric hybrid versions

Install electric vehicle charging stations at Home Park.

Work with and ensure that transport suppliers (eg for team travel) use fuels and provide vehicles with the lowest emission and environmental impact

Work with local authorities and other appropriate organisations to influence and encourage our site users to travel to/from the site in ways which minimise the environmental impact

Work with and encourage fans to travel where possible to/from away games using transport with the lowest environmental impact

Encourage all staff to travel to/from the site in ways which minimise the environmental impact and/or adopt work patterns (eg hybrid office – home working) which reduce our environmental footprint.



# WASTE

Our operations generate several sources of (solid and liquid) waste. The key objectives of the Plan are to minimise waste wherever possible. Where it is not possible or very difficult to avoid creating waste, we will ensure that as much of the waste can be recycled as possible.

The issue of waste is a broad area, and although we have identified some initiatives below, it is likely that there will be more work to do. Establishing baselines so that we understand exactly where and how much waste is generated and how much is recycled will be important.

## OBJECTIVES

Review all our operations to identify what waste is created, how much waste is created, and how much of the waste is recycled.

Identify and improve processes (for example opening and closing procedures in hospitality) which affect or contribute to waste, to reduce the amount of waste which is generated.

Reduce and phase out all single use plastics.

Identify and implement opportunities (for example digital tickets and communication) to minimise the use of paper and printing

Ensure that any waste and equipment which has reached the end of its useful life is disposed by contractors or other means in an environmentally responsible way

Stakeholder and Supply chain engagement in year 2 – engage with five biggest supply partners.



# NATURE

Our operations are delivered in various environments, including natural, habitable, and green spaces.

The conservation and preservation of these spaces is paramount, therefore our objectives within this area are:

## OBJECTIVES

Review the footprint and impact of our delivery within parks and green spaces.

Develop social action initiatives that make use of green spaces such as planting wildflower, installing bat and bird boxes/bird baths/insect hotels, allotments, wildlife paths.

Introduce natural clean air into our facilities, delivery venues and offices such as indoor plants.

Review of materials being used that can damage the environment such as chemicals, using organic materials as an alternative .



# PROCUREMENT

We work with many local and national suppliers, therefore managing and reducing the impact of our supply chain can indirectly reduce our broader carbon and environmental footprint:

## OBJECTIVES

Review and audit all our existing suppliers to determine their Environment focus and if our Policies align. Consider including sustainability rating criteria in tendering processes.

Use life cycle analysis to determine the lifespan of purchased items.

Work towards recognised standards and environmental management ISO14001 and Sustainable Procurement ISO20400.

Procure Energy efficient devices and appliances and, where possible, products made from sustainable materials.

Procure items and materials made from natural materials rather than synthetic plastic.



# NET ZERO / DECARBONISATION

Carbon offsetting is a way to compensate for our emissions by funding an equivalent carbon dioxide saving elsewhere. However, it is more of an action to do after we have taken other steps to reduce our emissions.

Carbon offsetting is a complex area and before we spend money on funding carbon emissions reductions elsewhere, we want to make sure that we (i) understand our own carbon footprint, (ii) have taken actions to minimise those emissions and (iii) identified and achieved due diligence on third party carbon offsetting opportunities. This Plan covers the first of these steps, calculating our carbon footprint, after which steps (ii) and (iii) will be considered and reviewed.

We will use consultants who have experience in this field, to help us establish our baseline carbon footprint and provide advice on next steps. If/when we pursue carbon offsetting opportunities, we will prioritise investments which benefit our local and regional area.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Calculate our carbon footprint and a journey to net zero



# FINANCIAL INVESTMENT

Implementation of the Plan will require financial investments in new and/or upgraded equipment, systems and processes.

We will aim to make these investments as cost effective as possible, through optimising existing capital and revenue budgets and seeking external grants wherever possible.

Also, the approval of all new investments will require an assessment of their energy and environmental impact and how this will be minimised.

THANK YOU

