



# SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

## WHY?

- *Football has a **unique reach and influence***
- *Its mass appeal means that it has an **ability to connect, engage and change behaviours***
- *Football clubs are at **the heart of communities** and have a responsibility to do the right thing for those **communities and for society***
- *But they also have a large carbon footprint*

***Aberdeen FC can use its reach and influence to change behaviours***

***Aberdeen FC can do the right thing for people and the planet***



## IT MAKES BUSINESS SENSE

- *Reducing **emissions** = reducing costs*
- *Leverage **commercial opportunities***
- *Build the blueprint for a **modern, sustainable Club** and set the scene for a new, **net-zero stadium***
- *Enhance reputation as a **challenger Club** – **top the sustainability league!***
- *Harness existing **good practice** and drive **further improvements***



## NEW SIGNING

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### *Aberdeen FC Signs Up to UN Sports for Climate Action Framework*

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#### *We have pledged to:*

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



## AVOID GREENWASHING

- *Be specific to be credible – **clear goals, objectives and plan***
- *Be **transparent** – communicate internally and externally*
- *Bolster your claims with independent verification - science-based approach*
- *Avoid making claims in a vacuum – every course of action has an impact*
- *Enable and **encourage consumers to act***
- *Aim to truly make a difference – and be able to **demonstrate it***



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*Aberdeen FC is committed to reducing our impact on the environment, inspiring our communities to embrace a low-carbon future and driving sustainable changes for generations to come.* ”



## OUR STRATEGY

*Reduce emissions  
by 50% by 2030*

*Be carbon neutral  
by 2040*



## COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

- *To position AFC as **leading the way** in sustainability within sport/football*
- *To demonstrate to wider stakeholders (e.g. UN, UK and Scottish Governments, Aberdeen City Council, business community and footballing authorities etc.) that the Club is **committed to achieving net-zero***
- *To **influence behavioural change** among stakeholders, particularly our supporters, **by enthusing and engaging them** in the part they can play in delivering our plans and making a difference*





## WINNING THE LEAGUE

- Self-proclaimed **“greenest” teams in Scotland** and England, e.g. Hibernian and Forest Green Rovers – conveniently both already **“green”!**
- Lack of transparency means we **can’t compare AFC with other Clubs**
- Creating an element of **competition around sustainability** could be key to accelerating the shift.
- AFC is a strong contender to **win the sustainability league**



## GAME PLAN

*Step 1 - Identify*

*Step 2 - Plan*

*Step 3 - Validate*

*Step 4 - Budget*



## TRAINING

### Carbon Literacy

- *Carbon Literate employees understand how climate change will affect them – **both geographically and sectorally***
- *The training provided the **knowledge and skills required to reduce their carbon footprint**, with typical realised carbon savings of **5 - 15% per person***
- *This has been delivered to the leadership team, green (ops) team and those in commercial roles such as procurement and fan engagement.*



## KICK-OFF

OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT:

***6,491 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions every year***

OUR PLAN:

***How we will eliminate over 3,200 tonnes of CO2 by 2030***



## FIRST-HALF

*The plan involves **all parts of the Club**, from stadium and football operations, commercial sales and corporate hospitality through to fan engagement and travel*

*Harnessing **existing good practice and improving:***

- Innovative water management*
- LED sensor-operated lighting*
- Eco-friendly showers and heating at Cormack Park*
- Recycling of food, waste oil for biofuel, grass cuttings and wood, scrap metal and plastics, paper and cardboard.*
- Reduce the impact of fan travel through partnership with First Bus.*



## HALF-TIME

### ***Short to medium term priorities:***

- *Install new LED floodlights*
- *Invest in electric vehicles and lawnmowers for the ground staff*
- *Introduce an employee salary sacrifice electric vehicle scheme*
- *Enhanced waste management programme which includes recycling grass, food, equipment, paper, cardboard and plastics.*
- *When renewing electricity and gas supplies, commit to green energy and carbon offsetting*

### ***Longer-term priorities:***

- *New net-zero stadium*
- *Fan campaign – advocate for climate action*



## FULL-TIME

*Sustainability is an increasing concern within the world of football, but being sustainable is not just about managing the risks like climate change – it's about **building a vision that captures value.***

*It's about **strengthening relationships with fans.** Becoming more efficient whilst **improving our brand and reputation.***

*Sustainability is about more than measuring and reporting our carbon emissions. It is about **leadership, engagement and implementing meaningful change** that delivers benefit to the planet and to AFC.*



## POST-MATCH

### Changing Behaviours

- *Launch **engagement and awareness programmes** for players, suppliers, sponsors, partners and corporates*
- *Extend this to fans and the wider community*
- *Launch a campaign to **encourage fans to take responsible steps** to reduce their own footprint*
- *Help fans to make better environmental choices, from **adopting lower carbon transport** to matches and to **reduce, reuse, recycle and***





