



CLIMATE AWARENESS & ADVOCACY



INTRODUCTION

Climate change is one of the defining challenges of our time. Around the world, communities are already experiencing more frequent and severe weather events, rising temperatures, biodiversity loss and increasing pressure on natural resources.

These changes also affect football, impacting pitches, facilities, participation and the communities that clubs serve.

Football has a unique ability to bring people together and inspire positive action. Every club has the opportunity to play a part by reducing its environmental impact, preparing for climate risks and encouraging sustainable behaviours within its local community.

This resource introduces the basic fundamentals of climate change, explains why it matters to football in Wales and provides practical ideas to help your Club raise awareness, build resilience and become a positive advocate for climate action.

This resource will help your Club to:

- Build understanding of climate change and why it matters.
- Recognise how climate change is affecting football in Wales.
- Understand the difference between climate mitigation and climate adaptation.
- Identify practical climate actions across all Together Greener topics.
- Raise awareness among members, volunteers and the wider community.
- Engage players and young people in climate conversations.
- Inspire positive behaviour change through communication and education.
- Become a local advocate for climate action and environmental stewardship.





CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change can sometimes feel like a distant or complex issue, but its impacts are increasingly being experienced close to home. Raising awareness is the first step towards creating meaningful action and advocates for change.

Scientific evidence from organisations including the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#), the [United Nations](#), the [Met Office](#) and the [Global Tipping Points Report](#) shows that the Earth's climate is warming due to human activities, particularly the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation and unsustainable consumption.

Across the UK and Wales, the effects are becoming more visible through changing weather patterns, increased flooding, wildfires, hotter summers, water droughts and impacts on biodiversity. These changes present challenges for communities, businesses and sport.

Football Clubs can play an important role by helping people understand these issues, encouraging positive action and advocacy while demonstrating that everyone can contribute to solutions.

Climate action is not about doing everything at once, it is about taking practical steps that collectively make a significant difference.





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Understanding Climate Change

Climate change refers to long-term changes in global temperatures and weather patterns caused primarily by increasing greenhouse gas emissions.

Greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane and nitrous oxide, trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere. Human activities have significantly increased the concentration of these gases since the Industrial Revolution, causing global temperatures to rise.

The Earth's average surface temperature has already increased by approximately 1.1°C above pre-industrial levels. Without significant reductions in emissions, further warming is expected during this century.

Climate change affects:

- Weather patterns.
- Rainfall.
- Sea levels.
- Biodiversity.
- Agriculture.
- Water resources.
- Human health.
- Sport and recreation.

Every fraction of a degree matters. Limiting future warming reduces risks to people, nature and communities.





GLOBAL CLIMATE

Global Climate Risks and Tipping Points

Harmful tipping points in the natural world threaten humanity by disrupting life support systems and societal stability. The effects of tipping points will be transmitted and amplified throughout our globalised world.

Scientists increasingly warn that some natural systems may be approaching critical "tipping points", thresholds beyond which changes could become rapid or irreversible.

Examples include:

- Melting polar ice sheets.
- Declining Arctic sea ice.
- Coral reef loss (bleaching).
- Amazon rainforest degradation.
- Changes to major ocean currents.

While these global issues may seem distant, they reinforce the importance of reducing emissions now to limit future risks.

To mitigate these risks, we should focus on positive tipping points, opportunities where beneficial changes become self-sustaining. History shows rapid societal shifts are possible.

The actions taken by communities today contribute to wider global efforts to protect future generations.

View the latest research on tipping points in the [Global Tipping Points Report](#).





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WALES CLIMATE

Climate Change in Wales

The climate in Wales is already changing. From warmer and wetter winters, hotter and drier summers, and more extreme weather events such as wildfires, floods and droughts. These shifts threaten local nature, raise sea levels along coastal towns, and stress local water and food supplies.

Evidence from the Met Office indicates that Wales is experiencing:

- Warmer average temperatures.
- More frequent heavy rainfall.
- Increased winter flooding.
- Hotter and drier summers.
- Increased wildfires.
- Greater pressure on water resources during prolonged dry periods.
- Increased risks to biodiversity and ecosystems.

For football Clubs this will result in:

- More postponed fixtures.
- Greater pressure on pitch maintenance.
- Increased repair costs.
- Changes to training and match schedules.
- More frequent weather-related disruptions.

Planning ahead helps Clubs adapt to these changing conditions.

Find out more in the Met Offices [State of the UK Climate Report](#).





IMPACT ON FOOTBALL

Why Climate Change Matters to Football

Football depends on healthy natural environments, reliable facilities and thriving communities. Climate change is already affecting how football is played, managed and experienced and has led to problems in changing the dates of the football season.

Examples include:

More Frequent Flooding

- Waterlogged pitches.
- Match postponements.
- Damage to clubhouses and infrastructure.
- Increased maintenance costs.

Hotter Summers

- Player welfare concerns.
- Heat stress during training and matches.
- Increased irrigation requirements.
- Drier playing surfaces.

Storms and High Winds

- Damage to fencing.
- Floodlights.
- Roofs.
- Trees.
- Equipment.



FOOTBALL'S IMPACT

Football's Impact on the Environment and Climate Change

Football both contributes to climate change and is increasingly affected by global impacts.

From the energy used to heat and light clubhouses, to the journeys made to training and matches, the food and equipment purchased and the way pitches and facilities are managed, football has an environmental footprint.

These impacts are interconnected. For example, reducing unnecessary travel can reduce emissions, while planting trees and improving biodiversity can help create more resilient Club grounds. Reducing energy and water use can lower both environmental impact and operating costs.

For Clubs, understanding these connections is an important first step. It is not about expecting one Club to solve climate change, but recognising the many opportunities football has to reduce its impact, adapt to changing conditions and use its influence to encourage others to take action.

Find out more about football's impact in [‘The Growing Carbon Footprint of Football’ Report](#).





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What Activities Contribute to Football's Environmental Impact?

Some of the main football activities that can contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, resource use, pollution and wider environmental impacts include:

Travel and transport – journeys by players, coaches, officials, volunteers and supporters to training, matches and events.

Energy use – electricity, gas and other fuels used for lighting, heating, hot water, changing rooms and clubhouses.

Facilities and infrastructure – construction, maintenance, refurbishment and the materials used in buildings, pitches, car parks and other facilities.

Purchasing – football kits, equipment, food, drinks, cleaning products, office supplies and other goods and services.

Waste – single-use plastics, food waste, packaging, damaged equipment and other materials that are thrown away.

Water use – water for showers, toilets, cleaning, catering, pitch maintenance and irrigation.

Pitch and grounds management – mowing, fertilisers, pesticides, machinery, irrigation and other maintenance activities.

Events and matchdays – the combined environmental impacts of travel, energy, catering, waste, water and event materials.

Digital and communications activity – while less visible, digital services, use of AI, equipment and data use also have environmental impacts.

Land and biodiversity management – how Club grounds are managed can influence habitats, soil, water quality, wildlife and resilience to extreme weather.



FOOTBALL'S ROLE

Football Can Be Part of the Solution

Every Club can make choices that reduce emissions, conserve resources, protect nature and help its community respond to climate change.

The Together Greener approach is designed around this principle; Clubs do not need to tackle everything at once. Progress can start with practical changes across Energy, Waste, Travel, Biodiversity, Water and Management, supported by measurement, action planning, communication and continuous improvement.

Football also has something particularly powerful; influence. Clubs bring together players, coaches, volunteers, families, supporters, schools, sponsors and communities.

Football has the potential to be a driver of change, using the reach and visibility of the sport to raise awareness and catalyse action.

That means a Club's climate action is not only about reducing its own footprint. It is also about inspiring the people connected to the Club to make positive changes beyond the football environment.





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FOOTBALL'S ACTION

Climate Action in Football

Football Clubs can positively contribute to climate action through everyday decisions. The Together Greener Programme provides practical actions across six key themes. Every action contributes to reducing environmental impact.

Energy

- Reduce electricity use.
- Improve energy efficiency.
- Install LED lighting.
- Consider renewable energy.

Travel

- Encourage walking and cycling.
- Promote car sharing.
- Reduce unnecessary journeys.
- Support sustainable travel planning.

Waste

- Reduce single-use plastics.
- Improve recycling.
- Prevent food waste.
- Reuse equipment.

Water

- Fix leaks.
- Install water-efficient fixtures.
- Harvest rainwater.
- Reduce unnecessary water use.

Biodiversity

- Plant native trees.
- Create pollinator habitats.
- Reduce herbicide use.
- Protect wildlife.

Sustainable Club Management

- Measure carbon emissions.
- Develop sustainability strategies.
- Monitor progress.
- Engage and educate members.



RAISING AWARENESS

Raising Awareness Within Your Club

Climate awareness grows when it becomes part of everyday Club life. Simple communications can encourage positive behaviour and help members understand why sustainability matters. Small conversations often lead to lasting behaviour change.

Ideas include:

Matchdays

- Sustainability announcements.
- Promote active travel.
- Encourage reusable bottles.
- Celebrate Green Goals.

Clubhouse Displays

- Climate information boards.
- Energy-saving reminders.
- Waste reduction messages.
- Biodiversity displays.

Teams

- Climate-themed activities.
- Nature walks.
- Tree planting.
- Sustainability challenges.

Social Media

- Share sustainability tips.
- Highlight projects.
- Celebrate volunteers.
- Promote campaigns.

Club Events

- Open days.
- Community litter picks.
- Biodiversity workshops.
- Climate awareness evenings.





CLIMATE ADVOCATES

Becoming Climate Advocates

Football Clubs are trusted organisations within their communities. By leading through action, Clubs can inspire others and strengthen local environmental leadership.

Consider:

- Sharing sustainability successes.
- Raising awareness of climate change and solutions.
- Working with local schools.
- Partnering with community organisations.
- Supporting local biodiversity projects.
- Taking part in national environmental campaigns.
- Encouraging members to adopt sustainable lifestyles at home.
- Working with sponsors who share sustainability values.

Advocacy is about encouraging positive action rather than telling people what they should do.



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PARTNERSHIPS

Working Together Across Wales

Climate action is strongest when organisations work together. Partnerships often unlock additional expertise, volunteers and funding opportunities.

Opportunities include collaborating with:

- Local authorities.
- Natural Resources Wales.
- Keep Wales Tidy.
- Size of Wales.
- RSPB Cymru.
- Wildlife Trusts Wales.
- Community groups.
- Schools, colleges and Universities.
- Local businesses.
- Environmental charities.





COLLECTIVE ACTION

Taking Collective Action

One football Club making small changes may appear modest. However, when hundreds of Clubs across Wales and hundreds of thousands across the globe take similar actions, the collective impact becomes significant.

Imagine if every football Club:

- Reduced energy use by 10%.
- Switched to LED lighting.
- Increased recycling.
- Encouraged car sharing.
- Created habitats for pollinators.
- Reduced water consumption.
- Measured and reduced carbon emissions.

Together, these actions would save substantial carbon emissions, reduce costs, protect biodiversity and inspire thousands of people to take action beyond football.

This is the power of collective action.





FURTHER RESOURCES

Continue your learning

Below is a list of resources to further extend your awareness and understanding of Climate change and advocacy.

- [Climate Action Wales.](#)
- [United Nations Climate Change.](#)
- [Met Office.](#)
- [NASA.](#)
- [WWF.](#)
- [BBC.](#)
- [National Geographic.](#)
- [World Health Organisation.](#)
- [New Scientist.](#)





FURTHER SUPPORT

Climate change presents significant challenges, but it also provides an opportunity for football Clubs to lead by example, strengthen their communities and protect the game for future generations.

Every action taken, whether reducing energy use, planting trees, encouraging sustainable travel or educating members, contributes to a wider movement that extends far beyond individual Clubs.

By embedding climate awareness into everyday decision-making and working together across Wales, football can become a powerful force for positive environmental change.

Climate change is a global challenge, but meaningful action starts locally. Together, the collective actions of football Clubs across Wales can help build more resilient communities, protect our natural environment and ensure the game continues to thrive for generations to come.

Use what you have learned in this resource to:

- Build understanding of climate change within your Club.
- Identify how climate change may affect your facilities and activities.
- Take practical climate action across all six Together Greener topics.
- Prepare your Club for future climate risks through adaptation planning.
- Raise awareness among players, volunteers, members and supporters.
- Work with local partners to deliver community climate initiatives.
- Celebrate and communicate your sustainability achievements.
- Inspire others to take action and become advocates for a more sustainable future.

Further information on Management can be found at www.faw.cymru/togethergreener-management

If you require support completing this resource, please contact sustainability@faw.cymru