



BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



INTRODUCTION

Football Clubs are an important part of the communities they serve. They bring people together, provide opportunities for participation and volunteering, and often have strong relationships with local schools, businesses, community organisations and public bodies.

This creates an opportunity for Clubs to work beyond their own boundaries. By building partnerships around shared sustainability and community objectives, Clubs can access knowledge, skills, resources and support while helping partners reach their own goals.

Community partnerships do not need to be complicated or formal. A conversation with a local school about biodiversity, working with a business to reduce waste, or joining a community environmental project can all be valuable starting points.

The Together Greener programme encourages Clubs to see sustainability as a shared journey. Working collaboratively can increase the impact of individual actions and help create positive change across the wider community.

This resource will help your Club to:

- Understand the value of community partnerships.
- Identify organisations and groups that share your objectives.
- Start conversations about potential collaboration.
- Develop partnerships around shared goals and mutual benefit.
- Identify opportunities for joint sustainability projects.
- Access skills, knowledge, resources and expertise.
- Involve members, volunteers and the wider community.
- Increase awareness of your Club's sustainability work.
- Strengthen the impact and reach of Together Greener actions.
- Position your Club as an active contributor to its local community.





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BENEFITS

Why Build Community Partnerships?

Partnerships can help Clubs achieve things that may be difficult to deliver alone. A Club may have the enthusiasm and community reach, while another organisation may have specialist knowledge, equipment, funding or volunteers. Working together allows these strengths to be combined.

Community partnerships can help your Club to:

Increase impact - A sustainability project involving several organisations can reach more people and create benefits beyond the Club grounds.

Share knowledge - Partners may bring expertise that your Club does not have, whether that is environmental knowledge, education, community engagement or technical skills.

Access resources - Partnerships can provide access to volunteers, equipment, venues, materials, funding opportunities or specialist support.

Engage new people - Collaborative projects can introduce the Club to people and groups who may not currently be involved in football.

Strengthen community relationships - Working together around a shared objective can build stronger relationships and demonstrate the positive role your Club plays locally.

Create lasting change - Partnerships can help move sustainability from individual projects towards longer-term community action.



WHERE TO START?

Start With Shared Objectives

The strongest partnerships are built around a shared purpose, rather than simply asking another organisation for help.

Before approaching a potential partner, consider what you are both trying to achieve. Look for areas where your interests overlap. The Club does not need to have exactly the same objectives as the potential partner.

For example, a Club and local school might both want to:

- Increase environmental awareness among young people.
- Improve biodiversity.
- Encourage sustainable travel.
- Reduce waste.
- Create opportunities for volunteering.
- Improve local green spaces.

A useful starting point

Instead of asking “Can you help our Club with our sustainability project?”, consider asking: “We are looking at ways to increase biodiversity and environmental awareness through our Together Greener programme. We understand this is also an area your organisation is interested in. Could we explore whether there is something we could work on together?”

This changes the conversation from requesting support to exploring collaboration.





POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Identify Potential Partners

Every Club will have a different partnership network. Start with the relationships you already have before looking further afield. Think broadly about who could contribute to your sustainability journey.

Education

Consider:

- Schools.
- Colleges.
- Universities.
- Youth organisations.
- Training providers.

Potential opportunities include environmental education, student projects, volunteering, research, biodiversity activities and youth-led campaigns.

Community

Consider:

- Community groups.
- Residents' groups.
- Volunteer organisations.
- Youth groups.
- Local cultural organisations.
- Community centres.

These organisations can help connect the Club's sustainability work with wider community priorities.





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Local Government

Local authorities may have expertise, strategies, facilities, environmental programmes or community initiatives that align with your work.

Consider whether your club can contribute to or benefit from existing local priorities around areas such as climate action, biodiversity, active travel, waste, water or community wellbeing.

Environmental Organisations

Local or national environmental organisations can potentially provide specialist knowledge, guidance, volunteers, educational resources or project support.

The aim is not necessarily to create a formal partnership. Sometimes a one-off collaboration can be the first step towards a longer relationship.

Businesses

Local businesses may have sustainability objectives, community investment programmes, expertise, materials or resources that could support a project.

A partnership should provide value to both organisations rather than simply becoming a sponsorship request.





RELATIONSHIPS

Map Your Existing Relationships

Before seeking new partnerships, take time to understand who your Club already knows.

Your committee, coaches, parents, volunteers and members may already have valuable connections.

Create a simple partnership map:

POTENTIAL PARTNER	EXISTING RELATIONSHIP	SHARED INTEREST	OPPORTUNITY
Local school	Parent is a teacher	Biodiversity	Joint planting project
Local business	Existing sponsor	Waste reduction	Recycling project
Community group	Volunteer connection	Local environment	Community clean-up
Local authority	Existing facility contact	Climate resilience	Drainage project

You may discover that the Club already has access to much of the network it needs.



CONVERSATION STARTER

Start the Conversation

Partnerships normally begin with a conversation rather than a formal proposal.

Keep your initial approach simple and focused.

Explain:

- Who you are.
- What your Club is trying to achieve.
- Why you think there may be shared interests.
- What you would like to explore.
- What the potential benefit could be for both organisations.

Avoid approaching a potential partner with a fully developed project and expecting them simply to deliver it. Instead, invite them into the conversation.





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MUTUAL BENEFIT

Build Around Mutual Benefit

A successful partnership should provide value to everyone involved. This does not mean that every partner has to receive the same benefit.

For example, a Club might provide:

- Community reach.
- Volunteers.
- Facilities.
- Football participation opportunities.
- Communications channels.
- Access to young people and families.
- A platform for engagement.

A partner might provide:

- Specialist knowledge.
- Training.
- Equipment.
- Materials.
- Funding.
- Volunteers.
- Educational resources.
- Technical expertise.

Together, these contributions can create something neither organisation could easily deliver alone.





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SHARED PROJECTS

Develop a Shared Project

Once there is interest, identify one practical project that provides a clear opportunity to work together. Start small where appropriate.

Potential projects could include:

Biodiversity - Create a wildlife area, planting project or biodiversity trail involving Club members, schools and community volunteers.

Waste - Develop a community waste reduction or reuse campaign.

Travel - Encourage walking, cycling, public transport or car-sharing to football activities.

Water - Work together to raise awareness of local waterways or improve water management around the club.

Education - Develop sustainability learning activities for young Players, Coaches, Volunteers or local schools.

Climate Action - Work with community partners to increase awareness of climate risks and explore practical local adaptation projects.

The important thing is that the project connects to a real shared objective.





SET RESPONSIBILITIES

Agree Roles and Responsibilities

Clear expectations help prevent partnerships from losing momentum.

For each project, agree:

- What are we trying to achieve?
- Who is involved?
- What will each partner contribute?
- Who is coordinating the project?
- What resources are required?
- What is the timescale?
- How will success be measured?
- How will the project be communicated?
- When will we review progress?

This does not always require a formal agreement. For smaller projects, a simple shared action plan may be sufficient.





GREENER GOALS

Use Your Together Greener Goals

Community partnerships can be particularly useful when delivering your Together Greener Goals.

Consider whether one or more of your Green Goals could be delivered collaboratively.

For example:

Green Goal: Improve biodiversity around the clubhouse.

A Club might work with a school and community group to create a native planting area.

This can turn a relatively simple Club action into a wider community project involving young people, volunteers and local environmental knowledge.





INVOLVE MEMBERS

Involve Members and Volunteers

Partnerships should not sit entirely with the committee. Give members and volunteers opportunities to participate.

This could include:

- Volunteering at project days.
- Helping identify potential partners.
- Taking part in community events.
- Supporting communications.
- Collecting data.
- Taking photographs.
- Sharing ideas.
- Representing the club at local meetings.

Young people can also play an important role. Sustainability projects can provide opportunities for leadership, learning and practical experience beyond football.





INVOLVE YOUNG PEOPLE

Partnerships With Schools and Young People

Football Clubs can be powerful partners for education because they already provide a familiar and engaging environment for young people.

Collaborative activities could include:

- Biodiversity planting days.
- Environmental competitions.
- Climate awareness sessions.
- Sustainable travel challenges.
- Waste reduction campaigns.
- Nature walks.
- Art or design projects.
- Young sustainability ambassador programmes.

Consider asking young people:

“What could our Club do to make a positive difference to our environment?”

Their ideas may identify opportunities adults have overlooked.





LOCAL BUSINESSES

Working With Local Businesses

Local businesses can bring valuable resources and expertise to sustainability projects.

Rather than approaching businesses only for financial sponsorship, consider whether there are other ways to collaborate.

A business might provide:

- Materials.
- Equipment.
- Professional expertise.
- Volunteer time.
- Transport.
- Printing.
- Technical support.
- Access to its own sustainability initiatives.

In return, the Club might provide community visibility, recognition, opportunities for employee volunteering or a platform to demonstrate shared local impact.

Think partnership first, sponsorship second.



ENVIRONMENTAL ORG'S

Working With Environmental Organisations

Clubs do not need to become environmental experts themselves; Environmental organisations can provide valuable expertise, particularly where a project involves biodiversity, habitats, water, climate or environmental education.

Instead, consider asking:

- Can you advise us?
- Could you provide a workshop?
- Could someone help us identify local wildlife?
- Could you help us design a biodiversity project?
- Are there existing community initiatives we could join?
- Are there opportunities for volunteers to work together?

A small amount of specialist guidance at the beginning can significantly improve the quality and impact of a project.





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START SMALL

Make Partnerships Accessible

Not every Club or organisation has the same resources, relationships or capacity.

Don't assume that partnerships need to involve funding or large projects.

Small collaborations can be the beginning of much bigger relationships.

A successful partnership might be:

- A one-hour educational session.
- A single community clean-up.
- A joint social media campaign.
- A volunteer day.
- A shared biodiversity project.
- A longer-term strategic partnership.



COMMUNICATE

Communicate Together

When a partnership delivers something positive, celebrate it together. Agree how the project will be communicated and, where appropriate, provide partners with photographs, statistics and stories they can use through their own channels.

This can multiply the reach of your work. Remember to recognise all partners involved.

Consider communicating:

- The challenge you identified.
- Why you decided to work together.
- What you did.
- Who participated.
- What changed.
- What you learned.
- What happens next.





MEASURE IMPACT

Measure the Impact

Taking a few simple measurements can demonstrate the value of the partnership.

Depending on the project, you could record:

- Number of people involved.
- Number of volunteers.
- Number of young people engaged.
- Number of organisations involved.
- Trees or plants planted.
- Area of habitat created.
- Waste reduced or collected.
- Water saved.
- Carbon emissions reduced.
- Travel behaviour changed.
- Funding or resources secured.
- Educational sessions delivered.

These measures can support your Sustainability Progress Tracker, annual reporting and future funding or award applications.





MAINTAIN

Maintain the Relationship

A partnership should not disappear when the project ends. Take time to review what happened together.

Ask yourself:

- What worked well?
- What could have been better?
- What did each organisation learn?
- Did we achieve our shared objective?
- Is there another opportunity to work together?
- Could we expand the project?
- What should we do differently next time?

A simple thank-you message or follow-up meeting can help turn a one-off project into a lasting relationship.





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COMMUNITY IMPACT

From Partnership to Community Impact

The most effective partnerships move beyond simply completing a project. They help create a culture where organisations recognise that they can achieve more by working together.

A football Club can become a connector within its community, bringing together people, organisations and resources around shared priorities.

Your Together Greener journey can therefore become more than a Club sustainability programme. It can become a platform for collaboration and positive environmental action across the communities that football serves in Wales.



PARTNERSHIP PLANNING TEMPLATE

Club Name:

Date:

Community Partnership Planning Template - Use the following questions to help your club identify and develop a potential partnership.

QUESTION	COMMENTS
Who could we work with?	
What shared objective do we have?	
What could we achieve together?	
What could our club contribute?	
What could the partner contribute?	
Who will coordinate the project?	
What resources are needed?	
What is the timescale?	
How will we communicate it?	
How will we measure success?	
When will we review the partnership?	
What could happen next?	



FURTHER SUPPORT

Sustainability is a collective challenge. Clubs do not need to have all the answers or all the resources themselves. By identifying shared objectives and working collaboratively with others, Clubs can increase their knowledge, reach and impact while strengthening their relationship with the communities they serve.

The strongest partnerships are built on trust, shared purpose, mutual benefit and action. Work together where you can, share what you learn and create change beyond the Club.

Use what you have learned in this resource to:

- Map the organisations and groups already connected to your club.
- Identify potential partners with shared sustainability or community objectives.
- Start conversations and explore opportunities to collaborate.
- Agree a clear shared objective.
- Develop a practical project together.
- Involve members, volunteers and young people.
- Measure and celebrate the impact of your partnership.
- Communicate success through both organisations' networks.
- Review the relationship and identify opportunities for future collaboration.

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

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