



Embedding Sustainable Development Goals Across Grassroots Football

LEICESTER NIRVANA FC





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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





Reducing Carbon by Reducing Inequalities

A club for the future

Forward

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.

At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change.

Leicester Nirvana have adopted the UN's holistic approach to climate change and fully support the idea of bridging the gap between inequalities and sustainability in grassroots football.

The following projects and initiatives describe some of the ways we are working towards the outcomes set by the UN's SDG's.

We as a club, are committed to supporting our members wider than their football ambitions. This is our community, and we are more than just football. We are a family of like-minded individuals. We are Nirvana, this means more.

Leicester Nirvana Trustees



The UN 5 pillars of sustainable development: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships

Our SDG Change Ambitions

We will be contributing towards the Sustainable Development Goals across our 3 change ambitions:

Culture of Sustainability

We will review our practices, processes and policies to include a vision of sustainability. Not just internally but across our membership and purchases.

Cost of Living


We will support our members and communities with socio-economic factors that may exclude them from pursuing a more balanced and sustainable lifestyle.

Resilience and Empowerment

We will empower and support our communities to be resilient in the face of adversity and to have a voice where needed.



Our Journey to Net Zero: Our partnership with DMU and the UN



“It has been amazing working with Nirvana on this project. Not only have I learnt so much about the challenges at grassroots level, I have been able to watch them grow and provide support a long the way to continue their journey.”

.....
DR MARK CHARLTON

Leicester Nirvana wrote to the United Nations Academic Impact Initiative (UNAI) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Hub based at DMU and asked for a partnership to achieve our green ambitions and help us to become the first grassroots football club in the UK to become net zero.

Seeking expertise and research resource, the partnership could help us to become Net Zero in carbon emissions in all aspects of the beautiful game. This includes travel to games, the players’ diets and nutrition, the kits the players wear to train, the clubhouses and lighting, recycling practices and inclusive values.

A key part of our ambition is to break down barriers to participation on the sustainability agenda for under-represented people and communities by giving a thousand people a voice on the challenges they face on their journey to net zero.





Joining a Global Campaign

Leicester Nirvana were one of the first clubs to become an official member of the United Nations Football for the Goals campaign, and remain a committed member in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Football for the Goals is a United Nations initiative that engages with football stakeholders and major actors to leverage the outreach power of football and the sport's global footprint in advancing sustainability, equality, human rights and climate action by promoting actions and practices that support achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Football for the Goals invites stakeholders in the global football community, including confederations, federations, member associations, leagues, clubs, players, players' associations, sports media and organized fan groups to become agents of change by committing to the principles of sustainable development, developing sustainable practices and acting as champions of the Sustainable Development Goals.



**FOOTBALL
FOR THE GOALS**

Bridging the gap between **inequalities and sustainability** in grassroots football

Leicester Nirvana are aiming to be the UK's first amateur football club to become net zero.



There is a feeling amongst the Leicester Nirvana community that their voices are not being heard in the climate change debate. That we are being left behind as other wealthier communities pursue a Net Zero future with expensive interventions and fewer social challenges to overcome in order to live a more sustainable future.

By aiming to become net zero and sustainable, we seek to break down barriers to participation for under-represented people and communities by giving them a voice on the challenges they face.

Through football, we want to work with stakeholders to find and embed net zero and sustainable solutions, that allow us to create a more sustainable way of life.



Creating a Net Zero Strategic Plan

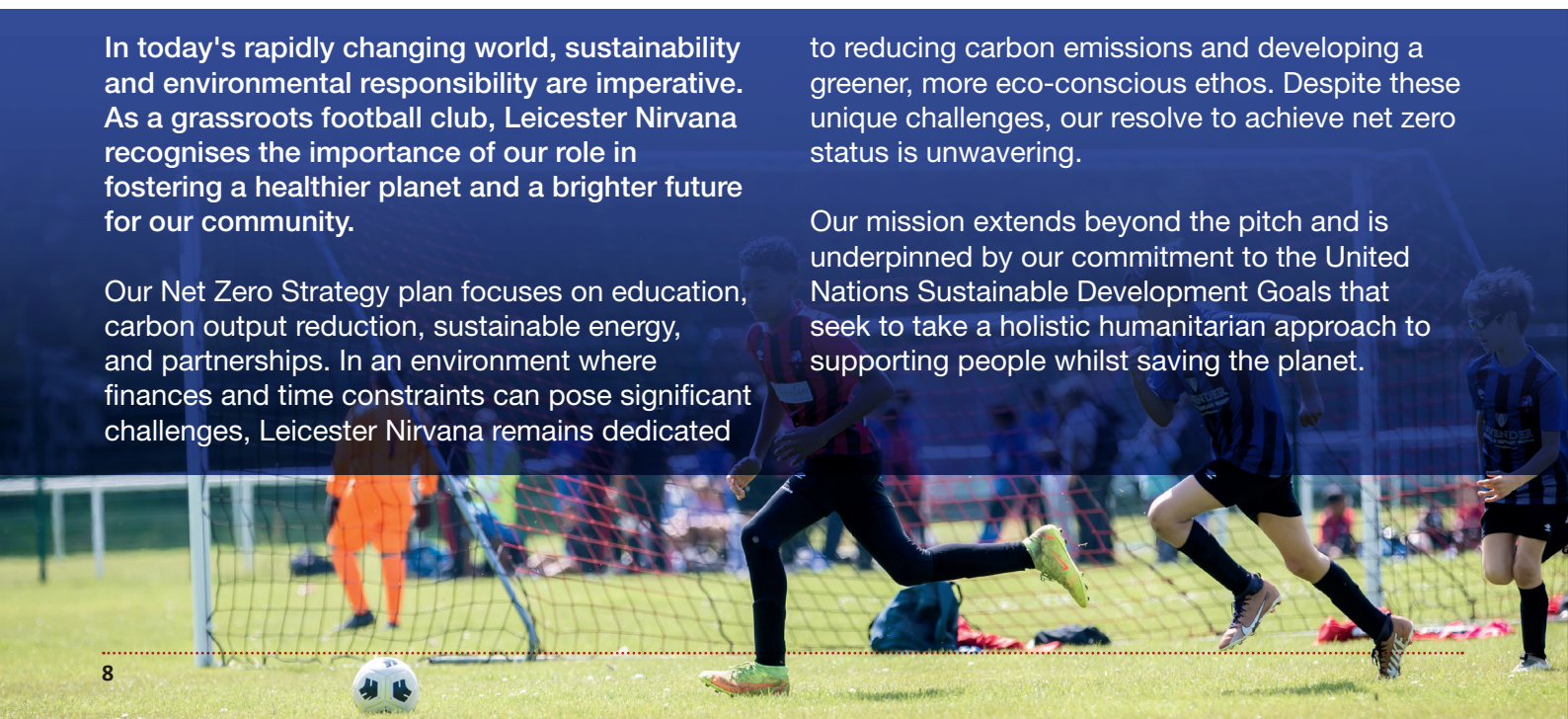
Achieving Net Zero

In today's rapidly changing world, sustainability and environmental responsibility are imperative. As a grassroots football club, Leicester Nirvana recognises the importance of our role in fostering a healthier planet and a brighter future for our community.

Our Net Zero Strategy plan focuses on education, carbon output reduction, sustainable energy, and partnerships. In an environment where finances and time constraints can pose significant challenges, Leicester Nirvana remains dedicated

to reducing carbon emissions and developing a greener, more eco-conscious ethos. Despite these unique challenges, our resolve to achieve net zero status is unwavering.

Our mission extends beyond the pitch and is underpinned by our commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals that seek to take a holistic humanitarian approach to supporting people whilst saving the planet.



Creating a Net Zero Strategic Plan: Our 5 strategic objectives


1 

Education and Engagement

Objective:
Raise awareness and engage the club's community in sustainability efforts.

Actions:

- Community Awareness
- Sustainability Ambassadors
- Green Initiatives


2 

Carbon Output Calculation

Objective:
Assess and understand the club's current carbon footprint.

Actions:

- Carbon Audit
- Data Collection
- Baseline Establishment

3 

Carbon Reduction Strategies

Objective:
Assess and understand the club's current carbon footprint.

Actions:

- Carbon Audit
- Data Collection
- Baseline Establishment

4 

Sustainable Energy Partnerships

Objective:
Collaborate with partners to attract funding for sustainable energy solutions.

Actions:

- Grant Applications
- Local Partnerships
- Sponsorship Opportunities
- Cost Efficiency

5 

Long-Term Sustainability

Objective:
Embed sustainability into the club's culture to ensure continued progress.

Actions:

- Policy Integration
- Sustainability Coordinator
- Goal Setting
- Club Profile



Setting a Foundation: Key Actions So Far

SDG Actions

Settings conditions to become net zero.

- Development of a partnership with DMU and the UN to become net zero.
- Becoming a UN Football for the Goals member.
- Presenting to the UN online at the DMU Business week.
- Featured in a National blog for the Football and Climate Change Newsletter.
- Supported DMU SDG engagement at our club presentation day and our women and girls festival.
- Introduced a net zero policy statement to demonstrate the club's commitment.
- Created a net zero strategy for the club with strategic objectives.
- Creation of a volunteer framework for the club.
- Creation of presentations for marketing, partnership and SDG actions.
- Completed a travel survey with members in partnership with DMU.
- Visited partner clubs in Germany to discuss net zero initiatives and build partnerships.
- Featured in podcasts with colleagues from the United States and again with colleagues from across Africa.

We are proud to be one of the first clubs in the UK to calculate our carbon footprint.

Meeting the United Nations

We were fortunate to meet and present to UN representative Carlos Islam, Special Events Manager at the United Nations, whose job it is responsible for execute events and campaigns at UN Headquarters in New York and elsewhere that support and promote issues on the UN agenda.

Taking opportunities to present our perspective on how and why we began our net zero journey is important to share as part of the sustainability agenda. Particularly from an inner-city perspective and to decision makers who are in a position to act on people's experiences.



Promoted on a Global Stage

The third United Nations Football for the Goals members' meeting that convened on the 23rd January 2024, and has a membership spanning across more than 265 organisations from 86 countries around the world.

The work Leicester Nirvana has been doing was able to form part of an update that Dr. Mark Charlton from De Montfort University (DMU) delivered to United Nations Regional Directors from across the world, including from Delhi, Buenos Aires, Western Europe, Geneva, Mexico City, Nairobi, Rabat and Pretoria.





Supporting the SDG's

LEICESTER NIRVANA FC



Goals

1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Football for free

At Nirvana we understand that our club is made up of many different people in very different circumstances. Football has the power to keep young people engaged and can be used as a preventative tool to keep them safe and away from harm. We believe that every child should have access to physical activity, which is why we developed a bursary scheme to support those who are most vulnerable, to allow them to continue to play football without worry of a financial burden.

Reference: 1.B Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions



Education and Qualifications

Providing young people with volunteering opportunities is something that we do very proactively. We also take a further step and provide support to young people and our members to gain football related qualifications, opening up the opportunity to transition into future paid employment. This is most evident in supporting referees to become official in their capacity.

Reference: 1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance



Goals

10

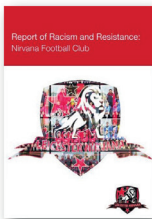
Reduce inequality within and among countries

Discrimination Champion

We have worked strategically over the years with National and Local partners to create a more equal playing field for under-represented groups. We are a club that will stand up and speak out against discrimination in football, having been historically affected by racism ourselves. We have lobbied and met with Local and National football bodies to shine a light on discriminative behaviours and practices at a grassroots level. Campaigns include:

- Religious head coverings
- Underage racial abuse
- Review of reporting mechanisms

Reference: 10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard



1 in 5 

PEOPLE HAVE EXPERIENCED

DISCRIMINATION

ON AT LEAST ONE OF THE GROUNDS PROHIBITED UNDER INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Equal Game Annual Women and Girls Day

To support the progression of women and girls football, we created an open day to increase and showcase women and girls football. This includes skills football taster sessions, fun games and a participation tournament for new to mid level teams, including disability.



“We take pride in our partnership with Nirvana and our shared values for breaking boundaries, community involvement and building a lasting legacy. Together we are building a platform for womens development both on and off the pitch”

- Rara Avis FC

Goals

10

Reduce inequality within and among countries

BAME Football Forum

From a grassroots viewpoint, there is a year on year increase in reported incidents of discrimination in football, a virtually non-existent South Asian contingency of players in the professional game and a lack of Black managers across the English Leagues. These mainstream issues are the tip of the iceberg and at a grassroots level, the impact is arguably greater, with the issues affecting many more people from vulnerable communities.

The BAME football Forum (BFF) is a partnership of grassroots clubs and community members that have been formed to develop a network of support. The aim of the forum is to help, promote, support and encourage the development and progression of BAME football, thereby ensuring the broader needs of the football community are met.



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions



Goals

12

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Measuring our carbon footprint: Leading the way

As the world looks to the professional football game to step up their net zero ambitions, our football club is flying the flag for grassroots football and net zero. In a ground breaking partnership, we collaborated with De Montfort University (DMU) to estimate the full organisational carbon footprint from all emissions sources of the football club for a baseline year or a baseline period. This pioneering initiative is amongst the first amateur football clubs Nationally and guides us on our path to achieving our Net Zero goals.

Supporting this remarkable effort was Dr. Leticia Ozawa-Meida, a senior research fellow at DMU, MSc student Wilfor Zuluaga and Nirvana volunteer, Ivan Liburd. The team worked closely to



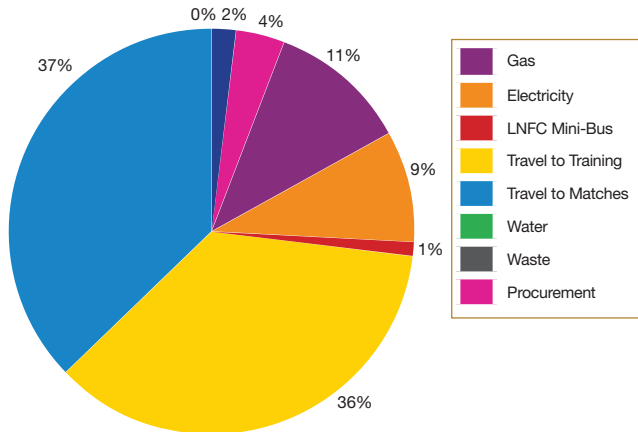
comprehensively assess emissions across all facets of the club's operations, ranging from the energy usage in the clubhouse to the transportation habits of players and families.

The results of the carbon footprint show that the largest sources of emissions of Leicester Nirvana relate to energy use, gas and electricity (70%), followed by the emissions related to travel of players and families to the matches (27%), and in less extent to emissions due to water use, waste generated and procurement of players uniforms (3%).

Reference: 12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse

Leicester Nirvana carbon footprint 2022/23 by emission sources

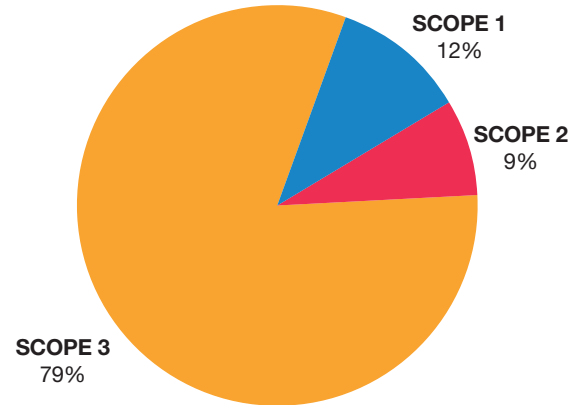
2022/23 [tonnes CO2e]		
Energy related	Gas	6.497
	Electricity	5.038
Transport related	LNFC mini-bus	0.599
	Travel to training	21.027
	Travel to matches	21.875
Other sources	Waste	0.065
	Water	1.392
	Procurement	2.526
TOTAL		59.018



Leicester Nirvana carbon footprint 2022/23 by scope

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION

2022/23 [tonnes CO2e]		
Scope 1	Gas	6.497
	LNFC mini-bus	0.599
Scope 2	Electricity	5.038
Scope 3	Water	0.065
	Waste	1.392
	Travel to training	21.027
	Travel to matches	21.875
	Procurement	2.526
TOTAL		59.018





Climate Education

It is important for those in a strategic position within the club to better understand the agenda of climate change and how it is and can affect communities up and down the country and worldwide. We want to ensure that all our members have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.

With this in mind, we are continuously increasing individual learning through attending seminars, meetings, and workshops around net zero and football. Not only have we been able to build our knowledge, but we have been able to share our learning on a broader scale.

One of the things we are looking at is how to substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction and recycling.

Reference: 12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources

Goals

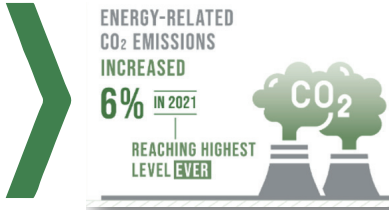
13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Net-Zero Policy Statement

Our net-zero policy statement outlines our commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions or greenhouse gas emissions. It communicates the Leicester Nirvana's long-term vision, goals, and specific actions we plan to take to reach net-zero status.

At Leicester Nirvana, we are dedicated to playing our part in combatting climate change and creating a sustainable future for generations to come. We recognise the urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the critical role football clubs play in addressing this global challenge. As such, we pledge to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

Reference: 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning



13 CLIMATE ACTION

The SDG 13 Climate Action icon is displayed, consisting of a white eye shape with a globe of the Earth as the pupil, set against a dark green background.



Our Vision:
To be a leader in sustainability and a driving force in the transition to a low-carbon economy. We envision a future where our operations have a net-zero impact on the environment, contributing to a healthier planet for all.



Goals

16

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Youth Justice and Reparations

In partnership with the Children and Young People Justice service at Leicester City Council, we developed a youth reparation coach mentorship programme with young people involved in or entering the criminal justice service.

Reparation orders require a young person to perform restorative work that cannot involve payment, keeping young people on the right path. The placement programme allowed young people aged 16 to 18 to take part in team training sessions as an assistant coach, assisting young children with football skills, building their engagement and communication skills.

This unique placement ran every other month, with 2 placements each programme lasting 4 weeks and took place on a weekend. Attached to this placement was a 4 hour online EE Playmaker assistant coaching qualification that enhanced the young persons knowledge.

Delivering a youth reparation coach mentorship programme with young people involved in or entering into the criminal justice service.



Reference: 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

Goals

16

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Reducing Serious Violence

Leicester Nirvana were a member of the community panel that supported the development of a Knife Crime and Serious Violence Strategy for Leicester.

Taking a whole system approach, Leicester City Council worked with partners including communities to create the strategy recommendations, which are all formed around a prevention approach to reducing violence, particularly amongst young people.

The community panel, of which we were part of, met regularly and held public consultations to gather the views of other community members.

Nirvana were also an advocate for the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Violence Reduction Network, which sought to enable system change and mobilise key partners into action.

Working with local charities and community activists, Nirvana has been proactive in advocating for the reduction of knife led violence. This includes TV news appearances, radio interviews and local events.

Each year, Nirvana dedicates a special award to members that have gone above and beyond, in memory of those who have lost their lives to violence.

Reference: 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere

Reference: 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children

Reference: 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels



Goals

5

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



MORE THAN 1 IN 4 WOMEN
(15+ YEARS)



HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO INTIMATE
PARTNER VIOLENCE (641 MILLION)
AT LEAST ONCE IN THEIR LIFETIME

5 GENDER
EQUALITY



Campaigns

It is important to be visible in the quest for equality. We actively support UN's campaigns as well as other football bodies calling for gender equality in football, such as:

- Football for the Goals
- Correct the Internet campaign
- Let Girls Play

Reference: 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

Female Representation

As a club we have always advocated for female representation in football at all levels. We are making a conscious effort to grow our women and girls offer, not only on the pitch by developing our girls football and a new women's team. But also by having representation at a strategic level as trustees and by supporting female coaches to become qualified.

Reference: 5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels



Goals

6

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all



FOR AT LEAST
3 BILLION PEOPLE,
THE QUALITY OF THE WATER
THEY DEPEND ON IS
UNKNOWN DUE TO A LACK
OF MONITORING



OUR
AMBITION
FOR THE
FUTURE

6 CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION

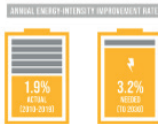


Goals

7

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

NEEDS TO SPEED UP
TO ACHIEVE GLOBAL CLIMATE GOALS



OUR
AMBITION
FOR THE
FUTURE

7 AFFORDABLE AND
CLEAN ENERGY



Water Technology

Managing the use of water in a more sustainable way is something that would benefit our building and the world. Our aim to develop best practices and use technology to move us toward our end goal.

- Rain capture and recycled rain water
- Water filter units

Reference: 6.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.

Reference: 6.B Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.

Renewable Energy

With the cost of living constantly on the rise, our ambition is to be able to use renewable energy powered by solar and wind. Currently these technologies feel out of rich for inner city communities. We aim to utilise:

- Solar Panels
- Wind turbines
- Carbon releasing materials

Reference: 7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.



Leicester Nirvana FC

A Club for the Future

LEICESTER NIRVANA FC



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