I Gymru.
I Yfory.

FOR WALES, FOR TOMORROW:
OUR ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS REPORT



WELSH RUGBY UNION • UNDEB RYGBI CYMRU


KICK OFF
3PM

THE WELSH RUGBY UNION LIMITED

Environmental Progress Report

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1. What we've achieved and why it matters.

A MESSAGE FROM WELSH RUGBY UNION

Our context and the environmental challenges we are facing

Welsh rugby is played on floodplain pitches, at coastal clubs, amongst mountains and forests, and in a national stadium a few hundred metres from a tidal river. The environment is not a backdrop to our game. It is the ground beneath it.

Climate change is already disrupting our game. Flooding, drought, and increasingly extreme weather are affecting pitches, facilities, and the communities that clubs serve. Around 70 rugby matches were called off across Wales on a single day in December 2025 as flooding swept through the weekend fixture programme[1]. In August 2026, the WRU issued warnings to clubs as pre-season matches were cancelled and training halted following an extended period of drought[2]. These are not isolated incidents - they reflect the increasing and intensifying pattern of a changing climate.

Alongside these climate risks, and compounding them, is an inextricably linked crisis: the depletion of the natural world that sustains us. Wales is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world, with our natural environment facing severe challenges. Almost one in five Welsh species are at risk of extinction, numbers of monitored species have falling by 20% since 1994 and only 40% of our water bodies currently achieving a "good overall" status.[3] The food we eat, the air we breathe, and the water we use to maintain our facilities all depend on healthy ecosystems.

Nature is also one of our most powerful tools for responding to a changing climate. Healthy and functioning wetlands, woodlands, river catchments, and green spaces absorb floodwater, regulate temperature, and support the physical[4] and mental[5] wellbeing of the communities we serve. Nature is not a nice-to-have; it is critical infrastructure, and it is under pressure.

1. BBC Wales, Heavy rain harming grassroots sport – rugby club. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-67727124
2. Wales Online, WRU issues warning to clubs as pre-season matches cancelled and training halted (August 2026). https://www.walesonline.co.uk/sport/rugby/rugby-news/wru-issues-warning-clubs-pre-34441566
3. Natural Resources Wales, State of Natural Resources Report 2025: Foreword and Summary (December 2025). https://naturalresources.wales/evidence-and-data/research-and-reports/state-of-natural-resources-report-2025/sonarr-2025-foreword-and-summary/
4. Caoimhe Twohig-Bennett, Andy Jones, The health benefits of the great outdoors: A systematic review and meta-analysis of greenspace exposure and health outcomes, Environmental Research, Volume 166, 2018, Pages 628-637, ISSN 0013-9351, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envres.2018.06.030.
5. Bettmann JE, Speelman E, Blumenthal E, Couch S, McArthur T. How Does Nature Exposure Affect Adults With Symptoms of Mental Illness? A Meta-Analysis. Int J Ment Health Nurs. 2024 Dec;33(6):1889-1907. doi: 10.1111/inm.13400. Epub 2024 Aug 29. PMID: 39209768.



Our Ambition:
Reduce the environmental impact of our sport, support the natural environments our clubs depend on, and help make Wales more resilient to the challenges of a changing climate.

WELSH RUGBY'S ENVIRONMENTAL AMBITION

Welsh rugby is rooted in communities across every corner of Wales, and that reach carries both responsibility and opportunity. We believe that rugby can be part of the solution: reducing carbon emissions, cutting energy use, reducing waste and water consumption, and helping to restore nature and biodiversity, together with our clubs, suppliers, and partners across Wales.

There is also a clear practical and commercial case for action. Using less energy and resources, generating more of our own energy, and reducing waste directly lowers our operational costs, and those of our clubs. At a time of real financial pressure across the game, environmental action and financial resilience are increasingly the same agenda.

Access to grants, investment and sponsorship is also becoming contingent on demonstrating credible environmental progress, both in our own operations, in our supply chain, and across the community game.

We are proud of what has already been achieved. This report celebrates the efforts we have made in recent years and sets out what we will do next

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS AT A GLANCE

We have been working on the sustainability of our stadium for longer than many people will realise. A formal sustainability programme began in 2010, and by 2011 the venue had achieved certification to BS 8901, the sustainable event management standard of its day. Since then, we have built considerably on those foundations, reducing our environmental impact whilst, vitally, finding operational and cost efficiencies which support our bottom line. The following sets out our progress in recent years:

OUR TIMELINE

PRE-2024	• **LED lighting upgrades throughout the Principality Stadium:** starting in 2011 WRU have been systematically upgrading lighting to use LED. This aligned with refit works to level 5 in 2015 and a major push during 2022/23 – marking a significant consumption reduction of approximately 200kw. • **Well water abstraction system:** during 2018 WRU installed a well water abstraction system to make use of groundwater which is continuously pumped back into the River Taff from under the stadium reducing the needs for mains water • **Boiler upgrade**: the burners in the stadium boilers were replaced in 2019, improving efficiency and reducing our consumption of gas • **Major Building Management System (BMS) upgrade:** the Principality Stadium BMS received a major upgrade in 2021 to support our efforts to monitor and reduce energy usage
2024	• **Community club energy-efficiency and decarbonisation funding:** build-ing on WRU's pilot programme, the Sport Wales Energy Saving Grant be-came the primary funding route for 24 clubs with £438,753 of investment. • **LED flood light upgrade:** stadium flood lights were upgraded to Musco LED floodlights, giving an increased luminescence output and energy effi-ciency savings of over 270kw • **Electric vehicle (EV) charging points:** our first four electrical vehicle charging points were installed in 2024, available for staff and public use.
2025	• **First fully audited SECR carbon disclosure:** 2,029 tCO_2e, at 19.3 tCO_2e per £m turnover (scope 1, 2 and business travel) • **3,296 solar panels installed on the Principality Stadium roof:** around 1.5 MW, the largest array at any UK sports venue • **Aramark appointed as catering partner following competitive tender:** with contractual sustainability targets on waste, energy and packaging • **Partnership with RSK Group launched** to support development of WRU Sustainability Strategy. • **Seaweed-based food packaging adopted**, reducing single-use plastic consumption at Principality Stadium. • **Expansion of EV charging points:** a further three charging points were in-stalled to create seven total.
2026	• **Solar array begins** generating roughly 1.25 million kWh a year, powering the stadium since February • **Club Investment Model and preferred supplier framework** expanded to support sustainable facility improvements • **Community clubs secure more than £1 million of energy-efficiency funding:** WRU Club Funding Team have directly supported 59 clubs to access various grant funding streams for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects


CARDIFF

2. From our stadium to the community game.





WRU AT A GLANCE

Our reach extends well beyond the stadium. We employ over 300 people. We work with hundreds of suppliers and commercial partners. We welcome millions of supporters through our gates. This positioning gives us a unique opportunity to lead by example and establish opportunities to collaborate on environmental action.

WHAT WRU DIRECTLY MANAGES

The Principality Stadium is the heart of our operations and the pinnacle of Welsh Rugby. It seats approximately 74,500 people beneath the first and largest fully retractable roof in the UK.[6] It hosts the Six Nations, autumn internationals, women's international fixtures, concerts and events, and is a cultural landmark for Wales.

As one of the most recognisable landmarks in Wales, it presents a real opportunity to demonstrate what good environmental practice looks like at scale, and to educate and inspire others through our actions.

It is the centre of much of our progress on improving the environmental sustainability of our organisation. Our ambition is for the Principality Stadium to become the most sustainable stadium in the UK. The sections that follow set out the progress we have made towards that goal.

Achieving our ambitions requires collaboration. Several key suppliers play a central role in our sustainability efforts at the stadium - from where we source the food we sell to how the waste we generate is processed. We are committed to working with partners who share our values.

Alongside the stadium, the National Centre of Excellence and our vehicle fleet represent important parts of our environmental footprint. Progress in both areas depends on working closely with our landlord and fleet operators, and we set out our progress to date and next steps for each within this report.

6. Principality Stadium, Sustainability. principalitystadium.wales/information/sustainability

WHERE WRU SUPPORTS AND INFLUENCES CHANGE

As the governing body for Welsh rugby, we sit in the centre of a network of community clubs, professional clubs, commercial partners, suppliers and public bodies. We aim to lead by example and inspire environmental action across Wales, focussing our engagement on key areas which will be introduced in this report.

Clubs, regional foundations, volunteers, and local partners carry out the work on the ground. Public bodies and commercial partners offer their funding and expertise. Our role is to connect these efforts – to help fund, guide, convene, and champion them.

THE COMMUNITY GAME

The community game is where most people meet rugby – as players, coaches, referees, volunteers, supporters, and neighbours. There are 320 rugby clubs in Wales, of which 282 are full members of the WRU. We have developed the Club Investment Model to drive good governance and management, showcasing our club's ability to effectively utilise available funding. We are one of the only governing bodies in Britain that invests directly in its clubs every year.

Keeping clubs strong is one of the clearest ways Welsh rugby delivers social value — a sustainable club can open its doors more often, host more community activity, and serve people well beyond matchday. Clubs represent a community space where local people can gather and connect. They offer facilities to other sports, venues for live music and festivals, and spaces for celebrations of culture or local anniversaries. Many clubs provide important access to green space in their communities, providing access to nature whilst investing in renewable energy solutions to reduce their impact and overheads.

The environmental challenges facing Welsh rugby — flooding, drought, and rising energy costs — are felt most directly at club level. Supporting clubs to become more resilient to these pressures is one of the most important things we can do, and the sections that follow set out how we intend to help.



OUR COMMUNITY GAME

320
RUGBY CLUBS ACROSS WALES

282
FULL MEMBERS OF THE WRU

£2.84m
INVESTED IN CLUBS EVERY YEAR



COLLABORATION IN ACTION: FIT, FED & FUN

Fit, Fed, & Fun shows what is possible when rugby's reach meets the right partnership. Delivered with We.Soda, the programme has provided children and young people with free physical activity and nutritious meals during the school holidays. Since launching in 2021, the programme has reached 31,909 attendees, with an ambition to engage 20,000 children annually by 2029.[7]

An independent **Social Return on Investment assessment**[8] estimated it generates approximately £4.12 of social value for every £1 invested - more than £5.4 million total. Through independent evaluation, Fit, Fed, Fun has been shown to improve physical and mental wellbeing, increase social connections, reduce food insecurity and strengthen community partnerships across Wales.

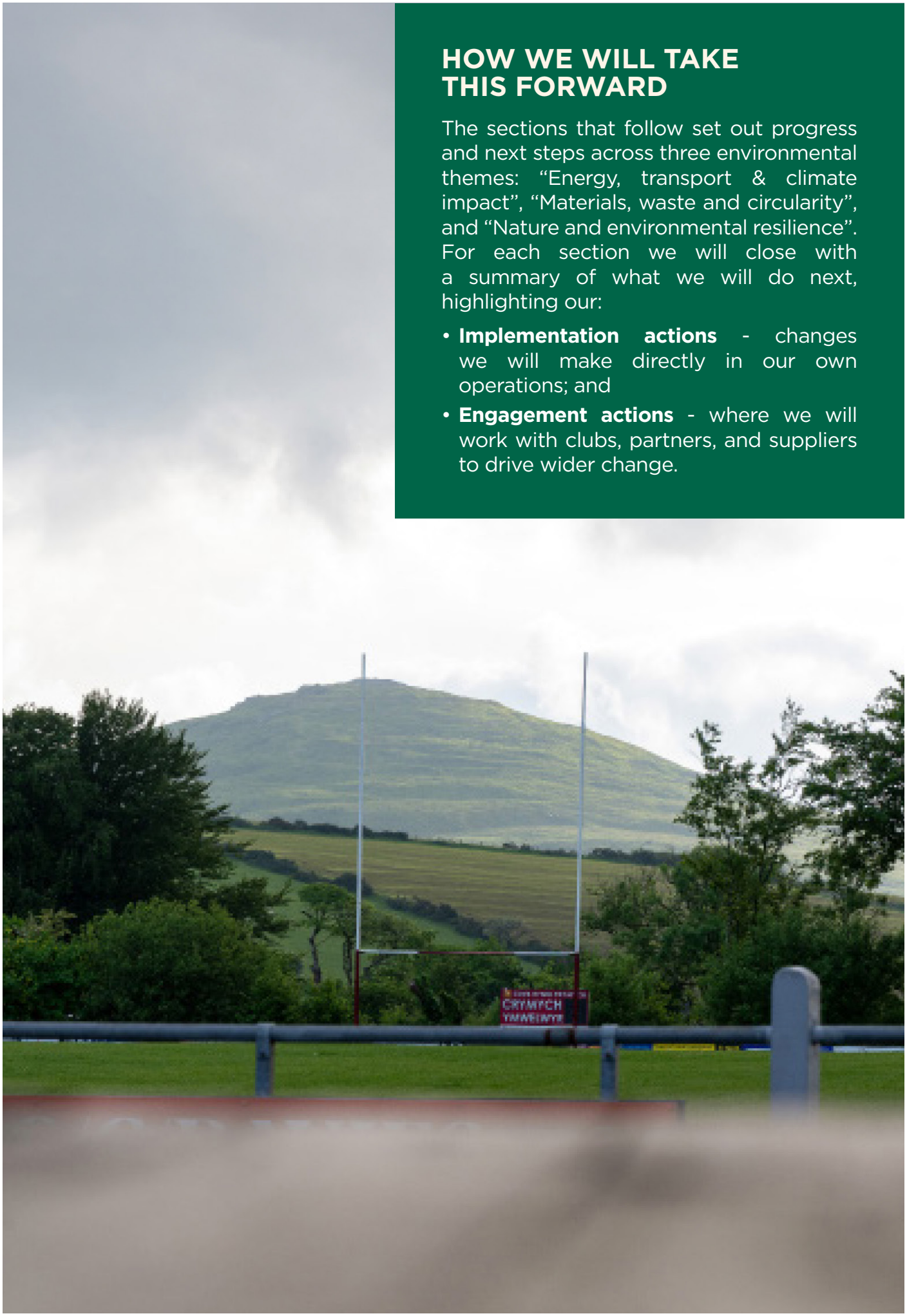
This is a model we want to build on. As we develop our environmental commitments, we will be exploring partnerships that use rugby's community presence to tackle shared challenges — whether connecting communities to nature, reducing food waste, or supporting clubs to adopt low-carbon solutions.

7. Crys i Bawb, Work undertaken so far: 2024.
8. University of Gloucester, A Social Return on Investment (SROI) of the Fit, Fed and Fun programme 2022-24, September 2025. www.wesoda.com/media/3ba933a2/wru-we-soda-fit-fed-and-fun-programme-delivers-over-pound-54-million-in-social-value.pdf

HOW WE WILL TAKE THIS FORWARD

The sections that follow set out progress and next steps across three environmental themes: "Energy, transport & climate impact", "Materials, waste and circularity", and "Nature and environmental resilience". For each section we will close with a summary of what we will do next, highlighting our:

- **Implementation actions** - changes we will make directly in our own operations; and
- **Engagement actions** - where we will work with clubs, partners, and suppliers to drive wider change.



3. Energy, transport & climate impact: Cutting carbon emissions and energy use

OUR STARTING POINT AND PROGRESS

Understanding and reducing our greenhouse gas emissions is a core part of our environmental commitment. As required under the UK's Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) framework, we report our energy consumption and associated greenhouse gas emissions annually, covering Scope 1 (direct emissions from gas and company travel), Scope 2 (purchased electricity), and Scope 3 business travel (grey fleet mileage from business travel). Our current Scope 3 boundary is limited to grey fleet mileage, and we intend to expand this over time in accordance with the GHG Protocol.

Our most recent reported figures, from FY2024–25, show broadly stable performance. We will be establishing an updated greenhouse gas emissions baseline to underpin our future commitments and targets.

FY2025–26 emissions figures are not available at the time of publication due to data issues and no longer having access to a previous platform used for calculating our greenhouse gas emissions. We will report these in our next annual update.

- **Total energy consumption** fell slightly from 10,140,464 kWh (FY23–24) to 10,037,095 kWh (FY24–25).
- **Total emissions** were broadly flat at 2,029 tCO_2e (FY24–25) versus 2,027 tCO2e (FY23–24).
- **Scope 1** (direct emissions, e.g. gas and company travel) fell from 772 to 693 tCO_2e; Scope 2 (purchased electricity) rose from 1,189 to 1,215 tCO_2e; and Scope 3 (grey fleet) nearly doubled, from 66 to 121 tCO_2e.
- **The emissions intensity ratio**, normalised against turnover, improved from 19.7 to 19.3 tCO_2e per £m – meaning emissions per pound of turnover decreased even as absolute emissions held steady, reflecting revenue growth from £103m to £105m.

Emissions	2023/24	2024/25	Variance
Scope 1	772 tCO_2e	693 O_2e	-10.2% (79 tCO_2e)
Scope 2	1,189 tCO_2e	1,215 tCO_2e	2.2% (26 tCO_2e)
Scope 3	66 tCO_2e	121 tCO_2e	83.3% (55 tCO_2e)
Total	**2,027 tCO_2e**	**2,029 tCO_2e**	**0.1% (2 tCO_2e)**

Overall, our emissions have remained stable and have not reduced in absolute terms, and our Scope 3 boundary remains limited. The reduction in Scope 1 emissions, driven in part by energy efficiency improvements discussed later in this section, and the improving intensity ratio reflect real progress in our direct operations. Expanding our Scope 3 boundary to cover travel, supply chain, and procurement is a priority for the next reporting period.

This baseline is the foundation for our Net Zero ambition. We are committed to developing reduction targets and a credible pathway, and our next steps are set out below.

FLAGSHIP CASE STUDY: SOLAR AT PRINCIPALITY STADIUM

3,296
SOLAR PANELS ON THE STADIUM ROOF
Covering 6000m²

1.5 MW
INSTALLED GENERATING CAPACITY

~285 tCO_2e
APPROXIMATE ANNUAL EMISSIONS SAVINGS (14% 2025 FIGURES)

Our largest single step to reduce our direct emissions was the installation of 3,296 solar panels on the two fixed halves of the Principality Stadium roof, completed in late 2025. With around 1.5 megawatts of capacity, this is the largest installation at any UK sports venue. This array has been generating electricity for the stadium since February 2026, supported by smart metering under a ten-year operations agreement.

Based on design-stage projections, the installation is expected to generate approximately 1.25 million kilowatt-hours annually, delivering an estimated 285 tCO_2e reduction in Scope 2 emissions and around £300,000 per year in combined energy cost savings and export income. After a full year of operation, we will report actual generation, emissions savings, and financial benefits — providing a verified picture of the installation's impact.

The project was also delivered with sustainability in mind. Pallets and packaging were segregated for recycling, the crane was sourced locally to reduce transport emissions, and site staff were accommodated locally to cut travel-related impact.

This investment marks a significant step towards our ambition of making Principality Stadium the most sustainable stadium in the UK and provides a strong foundation for further environmental improvements.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY, TRANSPORT AND CLUB SUPPORT

The solar installation is one part of a broader effort to reduce our operational emissions (scope 1 and 2 emissions). Our emissions reporting and the Energy Saving Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) audit process are helping us to identify and act on further opportunities. Two recent initiatives illustrate this:

Extensive LED replacement / upgrade: LED light bulbs are substantially more energy efficient when compared to alternatives, they use around 75-90% less electricity than incandescent bulbs of the same brightness. They also have a much longer lifespan. This means they decrease both our operational emissions and our running costs. We have been progressing an extensive, iterative replacement programme throughout the Principality Stadium which is around 95% complete. The final few areas (some bars and back of house rooms) will be replaced as the current fittings reach their end of life.

Electrifying our car fleet: We have worked with our car fleet provider, Mercedes, to convert 51% (30/59) of our company cars to electric vehicles and reduce our business travel emissions. Many of the remaining 29 are also hybrid vehicles.

HOW WE SUPPORT OUR CLUBS

Decarbonisation is something we must achieve collaboratively and at scale if Welsh rugby is to play its part in tackling climate change. Fortunately increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy generation have the dual benefits of reducing carbon emissions and energy costs. The challenge comes in securing the budget to invest in relevant measures to achieve these benefits.

To support our club's efforts in accessing more investment and funding we have developed the **Club Investment Model** with **170 out of 282 member clubs (60%) now holding Platinum** accreditation under this standard. Over the last three years this has helped clubs access more than £1 million of external grant funding, with the Sport Wales Energy Saving Grant having funding a total of 59 clubs (£438,753 in 2024/25 and £628,156 in 2025/26). WE have also developed a preferred contractor list to highlight reputable organisations who can support clubs on initiatives to lower their operational costs and environmental impact.

Projects funded through the scheme have focused on onsite renewable energy generation. These projects have enabled clubs to reduce their environmental impact whilst also reducing operational costs and supporting their financial sustainability.

Case study: Machen RFC

Machen RFC have demonstrated how a small, rural community rugby club can combine environmental action with greater financial resilience. Following an energy survey of the clubhouse, the club invested approximately £32,000 in 32 solar PV panels and two 20 kW battery storage units, helping it generate and utilise renewable electricity on site.

"Ultimately, the PV installation is about combining environmental responsibility with financial resilience, reducing our carbon footprint while creating long-term savings that can be invested back into the club, community and the people we serve."

- Machen RFC

The solar panels were installed across the club's south-facing roof and rear flat roof. The investment was supported by a Sport Wales Energy Saving Grant, with the remaining cost met from the club's own funds. Since installation in April 2026, the system has saved the club 11.18 MWh of energy, equating to £2,722 in cost savings.

The project's biggest challenge was affordability. As with most clubs, much of Machen RFC's income is needed for essential running costs, maintenance and supporting rugby activity. Delivering a substantial capital project therefore depended on external financial support alongside club investment. An energy survey was important in establishing the long-term benefits and helping the club make a confident investment decision. Support from Sport Wales was ultimately instrumental in enabling the project to proceed.

For Machen RFC, the project is about more than simply reducing electricity bills. Lower energy costs mean more income can be reinvested in rugby, facilities, and community activities, but the club also wanted to demonstrate that even a small community rugby club can take practical action to reduce its environmental impact.

Machen RFC extends its thanks to Sports Wales for their help and support in enabling this project to succeed.



WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Implementation Actions

We are committing to lowering our greenhouse gas emissions across our operations, logistics, and purchasing in ways that are cost-effective and build long-term financial resilience. Our ambition is to operate the most sustainable stadium in the UK.

We have previously set our long-term ambition to be Net Zero by 2050. To further this goal, we will:

- set scope 1 and 2 emissions reduction targets by Q2 of 2027
- develop a carbon management plan and scope 3 emissions reduction targets by the end of 2028
- review and update our roadmap to achieve Net Zero by the end of 2028, with a view to bringing the target forward where evidence supports this.

In addition to these measurement and planning commitments, we will develop a sustainable travel policy, review options to replace mechanical and electrical equipment with more efficient upgrades as part of a lifecycle replacement programme, and work towards ensuring all electricity purchased is from renewable sources by the end of 2027.

Engagement Actions

We are committed to identifying, piloting and sharing best practice to reduce energy bills and lower emissions with our community clubs. We will work with commercial partners, our supply chain and community clubs to develop practical, cost effective, low carbon solutions. We will:

- support our community clubs to generate renewable energy on site, with a target of 75% of member clubs generating some of their own electricity by 2035
- engage with our priority suppliers to reduce scope 3 emissions by 2030.

To underpin these ambitions, we will continue to identify and signpost funding opportunities for renewable energy and integrate environmental considerations into the Club Investment Model. We will also establish regular knowledge sharing across our network and review partnerships that can inspire and accelerate environmental action across Welsh rugby.

4. Materials, waste and circularity.

OUR WASTE BASELINE AND CURRENT PERFORMANCE

Every major event at Principality Stadium generates significant volumes of waste, making waste management one of our most visible and impactful environmental responsibilities. This is especially relevant to our stadium operations as major events generate significant volumes of food, packaging and other waste materials. Effective waste management is vital to reduce waste volumes, lower costs, support legal compliance, meet stakeholder expectations. It also gives us a platform to encourage more sustainable behaviour among supporters, clubs and communities.

In our most recent annual reporting cycle, July 2025 to June 2026, around 93% of the waste we generated was non-recyclable — a figure we are committed to reducing.

Food waste and single-use items are two key areas of focus, and we are working with charity partners to redistribute surplus food.[10] We also experienced spikes in non-recyclable waste generation in two months during this period. Our non-recyclable waste figures spiked in two months during this period: in August 2025, following the end of the summer concert season, and in February 2026, during a substation replacement project that coincided with two Six Nations matches.



Timeline	Non-recyclable	Food	Metals & Plastics	Glass	Paper and card	Total
Jul 25-Jun 26	7,460,410	80,628	132,275	137,425	245,258	8,055,996
(unit is Kg)	92.60%	1%	1.60%	1.70%	3%	

All stadium waste is segregated for recycling into dry mixed recycling, compostable food waste and pitch waste[9] for processing by Cardiff Council. Cardiff Council provide insight into the tonnage of metals & plastics, paper & card, and glass which is recycled, along with food composted and the remaining non-recyclable volume each month.

These spikes highlight the importance of working closely with contractors, event partners, and attendees to improve recycling rates — and this remains a key priority for us going forward.

9. Principality Stadium, Sustainability.

10. Nation.Cymru, June 2026

CIRCULARITY IN ACTION

Reducing waste requires a shift towards more circular ways of working — keeping materials in use for as long as possible through reuse, repair, and recycling, rather than the traditional take-make-dispose approach. We have already begun to embed this thinking in our operations.

When the stadium pitch is renewed, the root zone is reused, and the rye grass turf is redistributed to rugby clubs across south Wales. The old mid-tier seating, which will be replaced in early 2027, will be fully recycled — with all steel and plastic components recovered by a specialist supplier for circa 15,000 seats.



To reduce waste from matchdays and events at Principality Stadium we are moving from single use to reusable cups. In 2025, around 1.4 million single-use cups were used across our events. Our analysis shows that a reusable cup system could cut cup-related waste by almost 99% and associated plastic waste by around 94%. Early cost modelling also suggests the change can be made at a cost comparable to, or lower than, our current approach.

This programme will be rolled out across the Principality Stadium for the Nations Championship match against Japan on Saturday 7th November 2026.

We recognise the challenges, too. Reusable cups require more material to produce, so their benefits depend on them being returned and used again and again. Industry data suggests around 8% of cups are lost per event, meaning a typical cup only gets around 12 uses. Our year one financial model is based on more cautious assumption of 6 uses per cup. Keeping cups in circulation will require clear communication, convenient return points, and efficient collection and washing, working closely with supporters, partners and suppliers. We are committed to meeting these challenges so that every cup counts, and sustainability is part of the experience for everyone who visits the stadium.

FOOD, PACKAGING & RESPONSIBLE SOURCING

Following a competitive tender, Aramark UK was appointed as our food, drink and hospitality partner at Principality Stadium in November 2025, taking over in mid-December ahead of the 2026 Guinness Six Nations and the summer concert season. As a value driven organisation, Aramark agreed to include contract requirements around waste, energy and packaging.[11] A key contractual commitment is that a minimum of 50% of food sold at Principality Stadium will be sourced in Wales. Sourcing more food in Wales enables us to support local jobs and communities, shorten supply chains, strengthen traceability and responsible standards, and offer fresh, and offer high-quality produce with a distinct Welsh identity. We hope this enhances the matchday and hospitality experience while demonstrating visible social and environmental responsibility to supporters, partners and funders.

11. Principality Stadium, "Aramark UK named as new food, drink and hospitality partner for Principality Stadium", 3 November 2025; The Caterer, 4 November 2025.

WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Implementation Actions

We are committed to reducing waste to landfill and eliminating single use plastics across our operations, through smarter procurement, better waste management, increased recycling and a shift towards reusable materials. We will:

- Reduce non-recyclable waste generated by 1/3 by 2030 based on a 2025/26 baseline (8,055,996 Kg)
- Deliver waste management and circularity training to all WRU staff by end of 2028
- Develop sustainable material guidelines and share these with 100% of our procurement staff by end of 2027.

Achieving these targets will require targeted behavioural change initiatives for staff and event visitors to improve waste segregation and reduce waste to landfill.

Engagement Actions

We are committed to working with our suppliers to identify lower impact materials and products, to prioritise Welsh sourcing wherever feasible, and to share learnings with our community clubs and wider network.

We will:

- continue to ensure 50% of food sold at The Principality Stadium is sourced from Wales
- engage with NGOs and food banks to eliminate edible food waste
- collaborate with suppliers to remove all single use, and fossil fuel derivative plastic from our purchased goods and materials.

Beyond these targets, we will explore opportunities to maximise Welsh sourcing of products and materials, expand the reuse of second-hand kit and equipment across our community clubs, and work with suppliers to pilot alternatives to fossil fuel-derived plastics.



5. Nature and environmental resilience.

WHY NATURE AND RESILIENCE MATTER TO WELSH RUGBY

Welsh rugby depends on a healthy natural environment. Nature regulates our climate by absorbing surface water after rainfall and lowering temperatures in summer. Nature maintains the soil we use for growing food, processes the water we drink and use for maintenance and cleans the air we breathe.

Whilst we have made considerable efforts to manage our water consumption — as detailed in this section — our future ambitions around nature and biodiversity are broader. Inspired by what we are already seeing from several community clubs, this section sets out our intentions to support nature recovery across Wales and the steps we are committed to taking.

WATER MANAGEMENT AND RESILIENT VENUES

Minimising our use of mains water reduces our environmental impact and helps protect local water supplies. This is particularly important given the increasing pressure on water resources from a changing climate. Water management at Principality Stadium has been a priority since the original build, with systems developed and refined over time to reduce our reliance on mains supply.

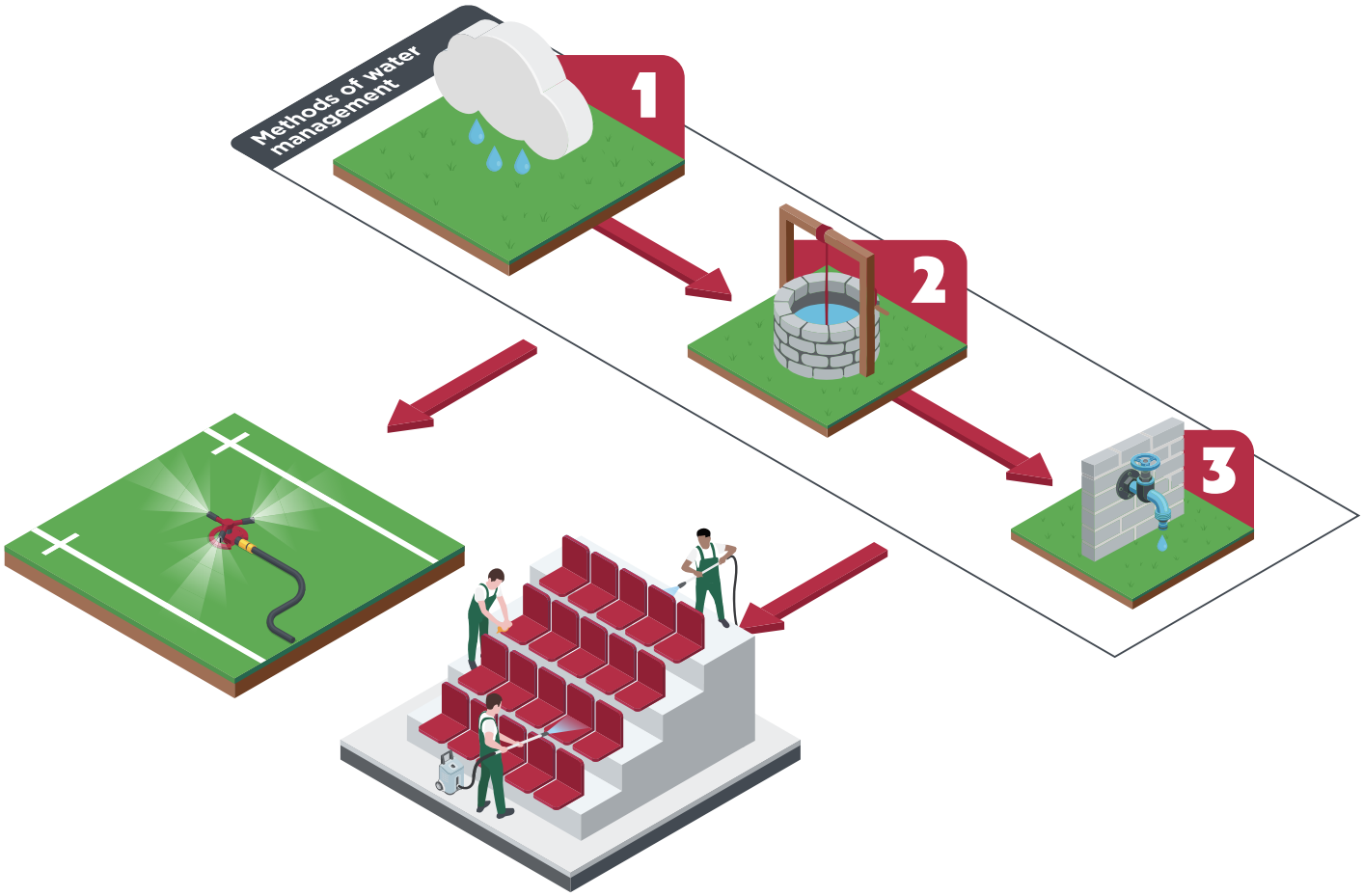
A rainwater harvesting system was installed at the time of the original stadium build. It collects water from the roof and feeds it into a water storage tank adjacent to gate 1, with any surplus discharged into the River Taff. This rainwater is then used to irrigate the pitch.

Well water abstraction, our next source of water, added in 2018, makes use of groundwater. The stadium is built below the aquafer[12], meaning we must continuously pump water from beneath the stadium to prevent flooding. Typically, this water is pumped out into the River Taff, but when the rainwater tank referenced above runs dry, we use the water to irrigate the pitch, along with washing down the seating areas. This is our largest source of water.

Mains potable water is used as a last resort for operational purposes, and for drinking water and food preparation for fans, staff, and catering. Our established harvesting and abstraction systems mean mains consumption for operational use is kept to a minimum.

Our operations at the National Centre of Excellence also avoid using mains water for irrigation and maintenance, with 100% of this water sourced from a borehole on site. We recognise that this source does not come without environmental considerations. Water is abstracted in line with our licence to protect the water table, river flows, wetlands, and neighbouring users — particularly during periods of drought.

12. An aquifer is an underground layer of permeable rock, sand, gravel, or silt that holds and transmits groundwater.



We also recognise that water management is also a growing concern for many of our clubs. We are reviewing ways to share best practice on this topic and suppliers on the Preferred Suppliers List are available to support clubs in managing water more sustainably.

NATURE ACTION ACROSS CLUBS AND ASSETS

This is an area where our progress is still in its early stages. We cannot yet point to a track record of action, but we are committed to supporting nature recovery across Wales going forwards — through habitat creation, restoration, and biodiversity improvements.

We will prioritise action where doing so also builds resilience to flooding, drought, and other climate hazards.

We are inspired by what some of our clubs are already doing independently, often with limited resources and delivering significant positive local impact. For example, Caernarfon Rugby Club has maintained areas of long grass and wildflowers around the clubhouse and pitches, including land designated for wildflower growth by Gwynedd County Council. These areas support biodiversity by providing more varied habitat and flowering vegetation, while also reducing mowing needs for club volunteers.

Blackwood RFC applied for Woodland Trust support to restore habitat and increase soil and riverbank stability as part of their efforts to mitigate previous flood damage and hopefully build resilience to future impacts of flooding. It received 420 saplings which were planted by a team of over 100 volunteers[13]. These habitat areas bring wider community value. They create a more attractive setting, give space for communities to enjoy local wildlife, and demonstrate that the clubs are balancing sport, nature and local access.

13. https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/blackwood-rfc-tree-pack-case-study/

The section below set out our intentions to build on this, working with our staff, our National Centre of Excellence landlord, community clubs, and external partners to find space for nature, support habitat restoration, and improve access to green space across Welsh rugby.

Case Study: Forgeside RFC Community Garden

Following the disruptions of Covid, Forgeside RFC were left with a problem area to manage. A troublesome parcel of land beside their pitch had become overgrown, suffered from fly-tipping and was being targeted by arsonists.

To help find a solution for this area the club consulted with local residents. Forgeside grew up around an ironworks founded in 1836. Few residents in the local area have access to their own garden. So, the idea for a community garden was born.

The idea began small, with three raised beds, then grew with the support of funding from the RHS Community Grant Scheme and Keep Wales Tidy. The garden now includes more raised beds and a polytunnel to enable the community to grow fresh food, with 15 local families actively using the garden and providing food for the local food bank. A pizza oven, BBQ area, band stand and composting toilets enable a range of events and activities for the local community - from birthday parties to concerts and dance shows.

500 native saplings were planted to create a hedgerow, along with 20 fruit trees (apple, pear and plum), and a small wildflower area. The garden also includes two beehives cared for by local beekeepers, two bug hotels (one built by the local Scout group and one donated by Keep Wales Tidy),

bird boxes (built by the Scout group) and two hedgehog houses (both occupied), maximising the benefits for local biodiversity alongside the local community. The garden also uses rain-fed water butts and Intermediate Bulk Containers (IBCs), with the pumps powered by solar panels to lower their environmental impact regarding water and energy.

The garden supports thriving wildlife while strengthening community pride, wellbeing and belonging. The garden is free to use and open to all, welcoming non-rugby users, volunteers, schools, nurseries and rehabilitation placements, creating a shared space that encourages learning, stewardship and connection. A WhatsApp group and social media channels help members share produce, exchange advice, and stay connected.



WHAT WE WILL DO NEXT

Implementation Actions

We are committed to managing our assets and venues to adapt to a changing climate, building resilience to flooding, drought, and extreme weather, whilst creating space for natural habitat to support biodiversity and long-term environmental health. We are also committed to reducing water use across our operations wherever feasible to ensure long-term availability and efficiency. We will:

- Develop a biodiversity action plan with our landlord at The National Centre of Excellence by the end of 2027
- Assess the feasibility of installing green roofs on Principality Stadium turnstiles by 2030.

To support this, we will carry out a structured review of our assets and land management practices with the focus on identifying opportunities to enhance natural habitat and build climate resilience.

Engagement Actions

We are committed to supporting our clubs to protect and restore natural habitats, build climate resilience, and share practical, cost-effective approaches to manage water and protect facilities from extreme weather. We will:

- Work with our community clubs, supplier and partners to increase woodland habitat in Wales by 1%, 1,740 hectares, by 2035
- Identify and appraise options for a long-term nature/climate NGO partner by end of 2027
- Engage with Local Authorities and Natural Resource Wales to understand the climate hazards most relevant to our community clubs and explore how we can support them to become more resilient, by 2027.

To support this, we will engage with Natural Resources Wales, Welsh Water and other relevant bodies to explore collective effort on nature, highlight opportunities to volunteer at local nature reserves across Wales. We will also work towards increasing woodland cover through targeted tree planting by clubs and in partnership with conservation organisations and inspire local pride in biodiversity through annual challenges and pledges for nature action.



6. What happens next.



ACCOUNTABILITY AND FUTURE REPORTING

Our environmental initiatives and projects are led by our Chief Operating Officer, supported by our Head of Facilities and Safety. They will be supported by a refreshed cross-functional Sustainability Network who will coordinate activity, monitor progress, remove barriers, share learning and ensure that implementation and engagement actions are being taken forward consistently across the organisation.

We will publish an annual sustainability update, reporting honestly on progress, highlighting where we are on track, and being clear where further work is needed. In 2027 onwards this will align with our annual reporting cycle.

If you are a club, supporter, or partner who would like to get involved or collaborate on any of the commitments in this report, we would love to hear from you. Please get in touch at with Darren Crossman, Head of Facilities and Safety, at **dcrossman@wru.wales**.

SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

This report has set out our progress and commitments across three environmental themes: Climate, Materials and Circularity, and Nature and Resilience. The table below summarises our key next steps under each theme, split between actions we are taking within our own operations and those we are pursuing through engagement with clubs, partners, and suppliers.

The table below summarises these planned next steps.

Theme	Commitment	Targets
Energy, transport & climate impact	**Implementation:** Lower emissions across our operations, logistics, and purchasing in ways that are cost-effective and build long-term financial resilience. Our ambition is to operate the most sustainable stadium in the UK.	- set scope 1 and 2 emissions reduction targets by Q2 of 2027 - develop a carbon management plan and scope 3 emissions reduction targets by the end of 2028 - review and update our roadmap to achieve Net Zero by the end of 2028, with a view to bringing the target forward where evidence supports this.
	Engagement: Identify, pilot and share best practice on reducing energy bills and lowering emissions with our community clubs. We will work with commercial partners and our supply chain to develop practical, cost effective, low carbon solutions.	- support our community clubs to generate renewable energy on site, with a target of 75% of member clubs generating some of their own electricity by 2035 - engage with our priority suppliers to reduce scope 3 emissions by 2030.
Materials, waste & circularity	**Implementation:** Reduce waste to landfill and eliminate single use plastics across our operations, through smarter pro-curement, better waste management, increased recycling and a shift towards reusable materials.	- reduce non-recyclable waste generated by 1/3 by 2030 based on a 2025/26 baseline (8,055,996 Kg) - deliver waste management and circularity training to all WRU staff by end of 2028 - develop sustainable material guidelines and share these with 100% of our procurement staff by end of 2027.
	Engagement: Work with our suppliers to identify lower impact materials and products, prioritise Welsh sourcing wherever feasible, and share learnings with our community clubs and wider network.	- continue to ensure 50% of food sold at The Principality Stadium is sourced from Wales - engage with NGOs and food banks to elim-inate edible food waste - collaborate with suppliers to remove all sin-gle use, and fossil fuel derivative plastic from our purchased goods and materials.
Nature & environmental resilience	**Implementation:** Manage our assets and venues to adapt to a changing climate, building resilience to flooding, drought, and extreme weather, while creating space for natural habitat to support bio-diversity and long-term environmental health. Reduce water use across our op-erations to ensure long-term availability and efficiency.	- develop a biodiversity action plan with our landlord at The National Centre of Excellence by the end of 2027 - assess the feasibility of installing green roofs on Principality Stadium turnstiles by 2030.
	Engagement: Support our clubs to pro-tect and restore natural habitats and build resilience to climate hazards. Shar-ing practical, cost-effective approaches to reducing water use and protect facili-ties and pitches from extreme weather, such as flooding and drought.	- work with our community clubs, supplier and partners to increase woodland habitat in Wales by 1%, 1,740 hectares, by 2035 - identify and appraise options for a long-term nature/ climate NGO partner by end of 2027 - engage with Local Authorities and Natural Resource Wales to understand the climate hazards most relevant to our community clubs and explore how we can support them to become more resilient, by 2027.



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