

Spotlight on Sustainability

Silverstone



Silverstone

Created by the Cross Association Sustainability working group

The Venue

Silverstone Circuits is a motorsports racetrack which also hosts corporate and leisure events. Most famously it is home to the F1 British Grand Prix, as well as other large-scale motorsports events such as MotoGP and Silverstone Festival.

Silverstone launched its Shift to Zero strategy in 2022. Silverstone has its own three pillars linked to sustainability which are: Innovation, Experience and Community. These pillars coincide with the AEV commitments of environment, education and collaboration.

ZERO

Which of the commitments did you follow?

At Silverstone we looked to address commitments across Environment, Education and Collaboration.

What initiatives did your venue implement?

One of the first principles that Silverstone focused on with its Shift to Zero was to make energy usage more sustainable and efficient.

This includes the installation of on-site energy generation via 2,764 solar panels which cover an area of 4,329m². This reduces annual grid electricity consumption by 13%. For the remaining electricity usage, there has been a switch to a 100% renewable energy provider on April 1, 2023. We also now have 24 EV charging stations installed on-site for staff and visitors to use.

Additionally, the site now uses HVO biofuels for all site-owned generators, reducing emissions by 90% compared to previous diesel generators. There is also a roll-out of LED lighting across the site, with 50% of lights currently LED and the goal of 100% within 2 years.

Silverstone also has a robust waste plan, and it follows the waste hierarchy across site, however with the nature of business, the focus is more on recycling

(target to recycle 35% of our total waste in 2023) and working on reduction and reusing items initiatives. The Venue Services team utilises recycled materials i.e., plainings are recycled roadways. Across site we look to recycle as much of any materials that are left over.

We have clearly defined recycling targets that are KPI monitored, and we hold monthly meetings about how to improve these figures and engage all stakeholders. Across site we operate 100% landfill diversion, and all the recyclable materials are taken to a materials recycling facility. Hazardous waste is taken away to be recycled

where possible and general waste is taken to be incinerated to help power 50,000 homes in Oxfordshire.

The circuit also separates waste streams onsite through recycling receptacles and a mixed recycling compactor. Our waste contractors also have the ability to separate waste streams to some extent at their collection facility as well. Waste management operational plans are shared with key stakeholders prior to events and all bins are clearly labelled with the waste streams they take.

We are also conscious of making the catering as sustainable as possible, and a key sustainability commitment at Silverstone is its work with TowFood, a local food larder charity. The charity distributes surplus food to people in the local community who are particularly hard hit by the cost-of-living crisis.

Food is donated to the larder throughout the whole year, peaking during the main events. For example, at the 2023 F1 British Grand Prix, we collected over 11 tonnes of surplus food for the charity during the event weekend - this is the equivalent weight of 20 grand pianos!

The catering on-site also consists of vegan and vegetarian options. Furthermore, there are 27 free water refill stations around the circuit, and this year at the F1 British Grand Prix weekend, fans filled the equivalent of 530,680 bottles of water.

In terms of sustainability education, all new staff who work at Silverstone Circuits are required to complete training on the environment as well as on diversity and inclusion. Sustainability updates are also provided regularly through the internal newsletter, such as data on waste. We also have groups with staff from across the business to discuss sustainability progress and future sustainability plans.

Firstly, we have the Green Champions meetings, which provide a more bottom-up approach from representatives from different departments, and secondly we have the Sustainability Task Force with the heads of departments for a more top-down approach.

Meetings with these groups have enabled us to prioritise sustainability objectives that are important to the people within the business.

As well as these internal sustainability engagements, there is also a publicly available sustainability report, which shares information on sustainability achievements such as emissions broken down by scopes, waste data as well as social aspects. Staff in the sustainability department at Silverstone are also part of an external Green Travel Group with other local businesses where we discuss ways of achieving more sustainable staff and fan travel such as possibilities of cycle paths or shuttle busses.

The circuit also takes part actively within the sporting events industry via a working group with sustainability representatives from other sports events organisations.

There is a sustainability code of conduct that all visitors agree to when they sign in on-site. Also, employees have access to health and wellbeing benefits after six months of being with the company.

As well as the engagement with the local food larder (mentioned above) the circuit also engages with the local community by providing opportunities for young people in the local area. In 2022 we hosted 84 local students from Milton Keynes college for internship experiences across some of our most prestigious events. Part of our commitment to engaging with the local community also means ensuring that job opportunities are promoted locally and young people from the community are given the opportunity to experience life behind-the-scenes at Silverstone.



We are also working on reducing traffic around the site for our main events. This year at our biggest events, we invited fans to scan QR codes to let us know how they travelled to the circuit. We received 12,000 responses for the F1 British Grand Prix and 4,000 for the MotoGP. In understanding fans' travel behaviour for our main events, it means that we can start to work on offering suitable sustainable transport options for them.

The circuit has also hosted fund raising events, for example at the Silverstone Festival there was a 5k fun run in aid of Kidney Research UK.

Findings

We will continue to include representatives from different departments in sustainability discussions and planning. This has helped with engagement in sustainability projects from across the business.

In the future we will work on improving sustainability commitments from suppliers through sustainability-focused procurement policy as mentioned above.

We would also like to start doing staff volunteer days. This is an initiative that we have discussed at the Green Champions meetings.

In the future we are also keen to do biodiversity projects onsite. We have started looking into this and it is something that we plan to put into practice next year.

We also need to push for all departments to look at reducing waste generated and look at ways of reusing items.

