

Highlights

Many positive Biodiversity impacts (e.g. on pollinators, flora, fauna and wildlife) as a result of different biological and organic treatments/ methodologies used on the golf course.

Moth species increased from 20 to 60.

Pesticide use – 100% reduction on playing surfaces.

Landfill waste – reduced from 2,500 litres to 240 litre per week.

Paper/Cardboard waste – reduced from 1100 litre to 360 litre per week.

Working closely with community, golf groups and tourism associations to promote sustainable approaches.



SRUC Elmwood Golf

SRUC Elmwood Golf, based in Stratheden, is an 18-hole golf course and golf education centre which aims to use innovative greenkeeping practices to create a high-quality golf course which is also rich in biodiversity. They have four primary objectives to achieve their sustainability goals: zero waste on site; zero pesticide use onsite; increased biodiversity onsite; improved sustainability of the restaurant.

SRUC Elmwood golf is a unique and innovative organisation with nature woven throughout all aspects of its operations. Most impressive is their use of the biology of the land to create a course that plays well and benefits the natural environment; zero pesticides is an achievement that should not be understated in what is traditionally a chemical heavy industry.

Category description: Nature Rich Scotland

The Nature Rich Scotland Award recognises businesses and enterprises which are being proactive in protecting or enhancing nature and connecting people with wildlife.

SRUC Elmwood Golf has undertaken a wide range of projects to protect and improve the environment such as:

- Pesticide use – 100% reduction on playing surfaces
- Landfill waste – reduced from 2,500 litres to 240 litre per week
- Paper/Cardboard waste – reduced from 1100 litre to 360 litre per week
- Wildflower meadow established – 1 hectare
- Bird/bat boxes installed – 12
- Hibernaculum installed – 4
- Bug hotels installed – 6
- Recycling bins installed – 15
- Swan island installed – 1
- Hybrid/Electric machinery introduced
- Artificial sand martin habitat installed – 1
- Waste2Water system installed Energy saving lighting installed – 100% in clubhouse



SRUC Elmwood has won other sustainability awards in the past, almost always competing against large corporate golf courses with exponentially larger resources. The low impact and cost greenkeeping methods which they have innovated and developed at Elmwood are impressive. Given the right exposure and support there is great potential to share this best practice across Scotland and the world; resulting in many more golf courses drastically improving biodiversity and supporting nature throughout all aspects of their operation.

The golf course is run and maintained by a small, dedicated team who are keen to do all they can to improve the facility and customer experience, and often go far above and beyond what included in their specific role. Staff regularly work together to determine the best ways for the team to operate to have maximum benefit to both the business and to the individuals.

The judges felt the company's initiatives toward improving the biodiversity was impressive and had a big potential to be replicated in the sector.

Quote from the company:

“It is an honour to be recognised by this year’s VIBES Scottish Environment Business Awards. The team at SRUC Elmwood Golf are proud of the work that they have done, and continue to do, towards ensuring the facility is an environmentally sustainable venue, and working with others to do the same across Scotland.”