



# The Alliance Sustainability Project summary report.

*October 2023*



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# Introduction

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Background context of the project, how thinkBeyond approached it, the key project outputs and a summary of the process taken



# Introduction

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## Background

The Alliance sustainability project was initiated by British Triathlon, who have taken a leading position in environmental sustainability and approached UK Sport to seek further support for their work in this area. Recognising that it is more efficient to receive support as a group, British Triathlon (BT), British Swimming (BS), England Hockey (EH), UK Athletics (UKA) and UK Sports Institute (UKSI) came together to form an Alliance. thinkBeyond was appointed by the Alliance and UK Sport to deliver a package of environmental sustainability support to the four National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and the UK Sports Institute.

UK Sport has recently published their own environmental sustainability plan; *Team Of Tomorrow* which includes a commitment to support all NGBs to analyse their environmental impact and develop an environmental sustainability plan by the end of March 2025. The Alliance sustainability project was the first package of support delivered to a group of NGBs. As well as being designed to support the Alliance to move forward with environmental sustainability, the aim of the project was also to test and learn approaches to embedding environmental sustainability within NGBs. The approach to the Alliance project was underpinned by recommendations in an initial NGB Environmental Sustainability Support planning report undertaken by thinkBeyond in February 2023.

Many NGBs in the UK are at the start of their journey to embedding social impact, Diversity, Equality & Inclusion (DE&I) and environmental sustainability (ES) within their organisations. The Alliance project specifically addressed environmental sustainability for the Alliance, but with the context that any strategic output could also be aligned with social impact commitments in the future.

## The challenge and opportunity

The key challenge of the project would be whether a collective approach, based on shared learning and resources, could support five organisations, with limited time and resources to simultaneously develop environmental sustainability strategies and carbon management plans. Each organisation was at a different starting point; so the approach needed to be flexible enough that each NGB could gain value from engaging in the project no matter their current level of maturity.

Given that the Alliance were amongst the 'first movers' of NGBs on environmental sustainability; the project presented a valuable opportunity for the organisations involved to take a leading position, use their platform to drive positive change within their sport and amplify their commitments in order to engage relevant commercial partners and fans, both individually and collectively as an Alliance. An additional challenge was present due to the relationship between UKSI and the other NGBs. UKSI embedded practitioners often have dual roles as employees of UKSI, while also being immersed in and significantly influenced by NGB activity (particularly their essential staff travel). This presented a question about where the emissions impact of respective embedded practitioner activity (such as travel) should sit. The opportunity for the Alliance was that this conversation could happen openly and allow potential for solutions with shared benefit such as sharing data associated with practitioners travel and finding more sustainable travel options for those embedded practitioners.

# The project approach

To support all five organisations simultaneously, who all had limited time and resource to engage in the project, thinkBeyond set the following key objectives and overall approach.

## What we wanted to achieve:

- **Tangible outputs:** Provide tools and plans that allow each Alliance member to take systemic, sustainable action on environmental sustainability.
- **Empowered NGB leads:** Build capacity, skills and confidence of each Alliance lead and their wider team to ensure they can take those plans forward.
- **Lessons to take forward:** Assess the benefits of a collective approach for UK Sport & NGBs involved.
- **Promote knowledge sharing:** Gather shared learning & resources, using it as an opportunity to share knowledge across the wider NGB space.



## How we approached it:

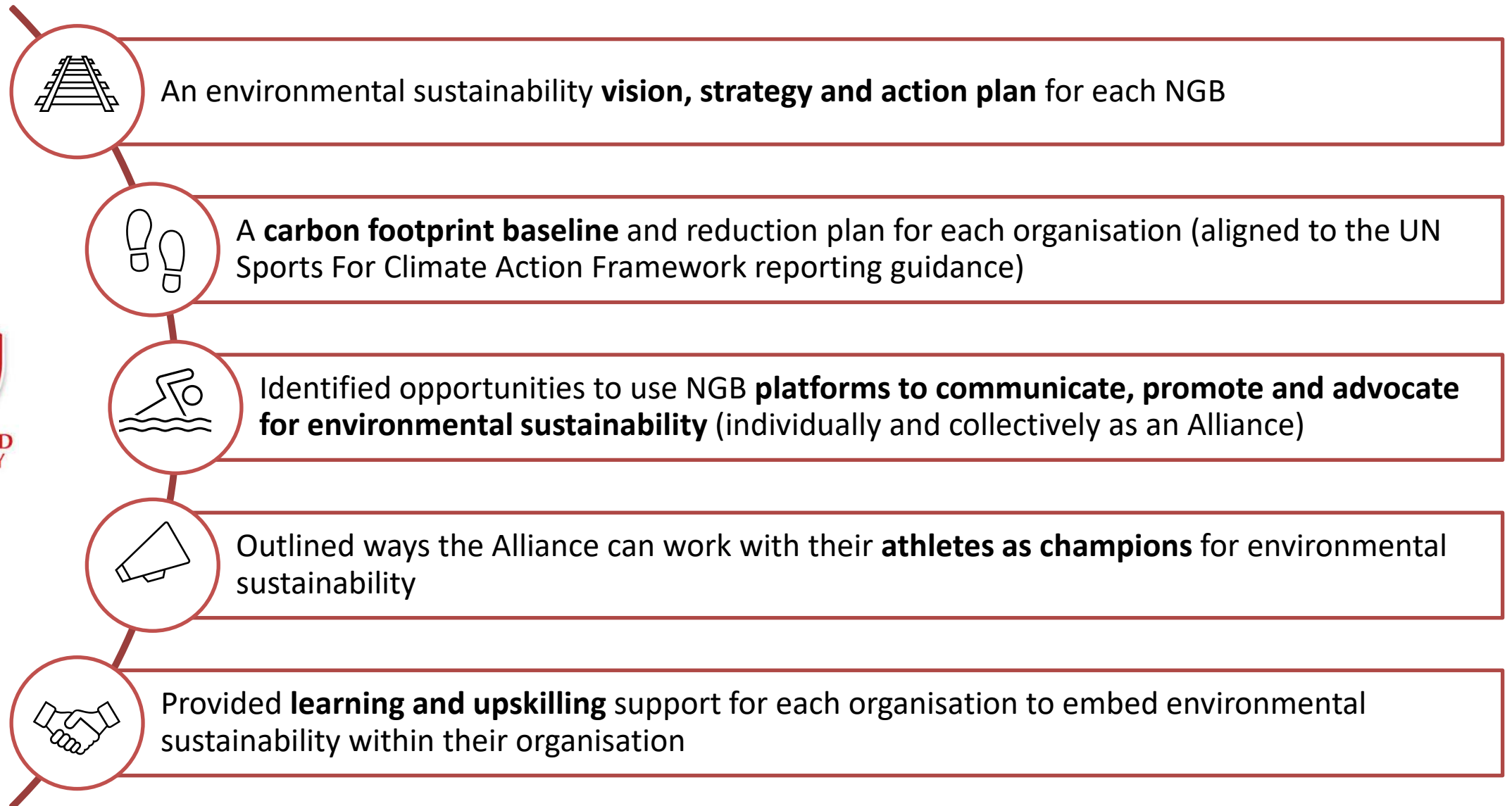
Developed key tools whilst enabling each NGB to shape their plans

Engaged each NGB lead through the process, building their skills and confidence around environmental sustainability

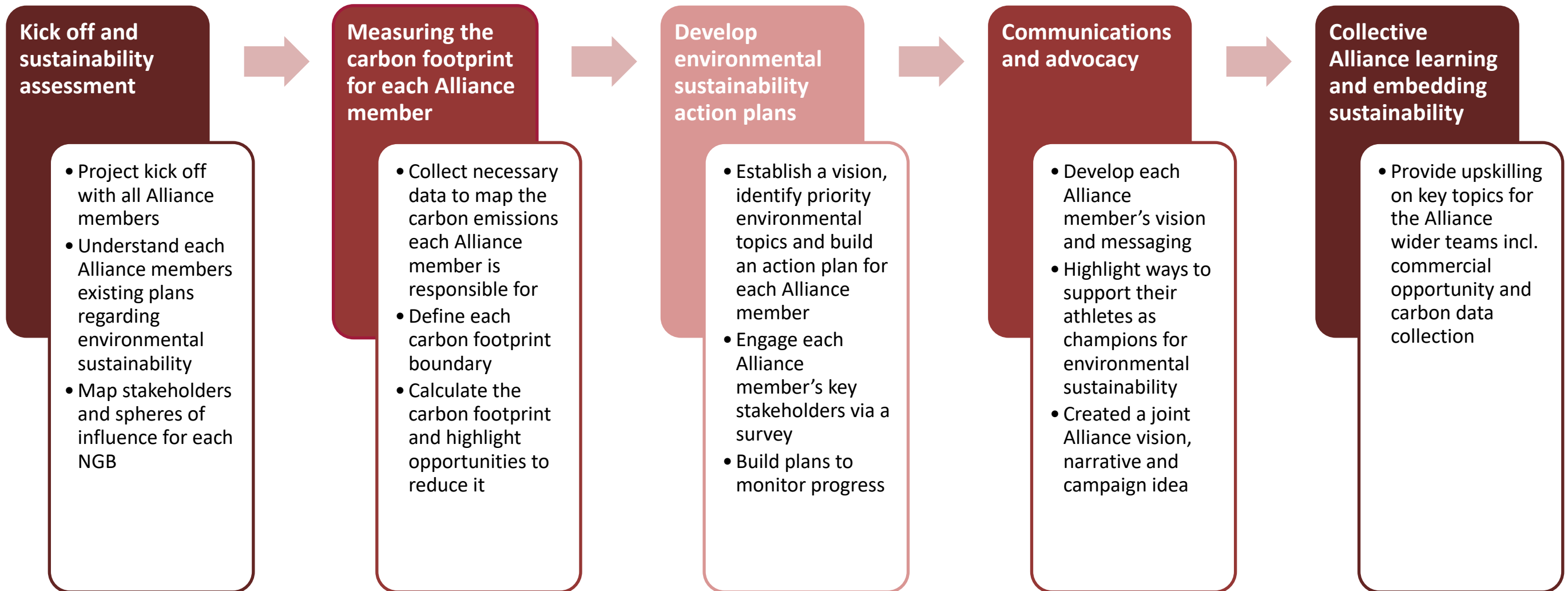
Encouraged collaborative learning between the Alliance, whilst also providing 1-2-1 tailored support

Evaluated the project successes and challenges using an NGB maturity assessment criteria and via surveys and check-ins with the Alliance

# Key project outputs



# The overall project process



*6-month timeline*

# Executive summary

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An overall summary of how the Alliance project went, and the opportunity captured



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# Executive summary

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The Alliance project was successful in supporting a 'cluster' of NGBs to better embed environmental sustainability within their organisations. **The approach of developing tools** to aid systemic, long-term action on environmental sustainability, whilst **upskilling NGB leads** to take their plans forward **worked**.

**Key successes** of the project included; delivering a robust environmental sustainability action plan and carbon footprint, moving confidence, knowledge and capability forward within every NGB and co-creating opportunities for collaboration on key environmental sustainability topics, whilst highlighting a unique role for each NGB. British Triathlon, who were already in a leading position, were able to finalise and externally launch their strategy following the project.

**Key challenges** to project success included; ensuring each NGB had adequate time and resources to fully engage in the project (and therefore maximise the project outputs), a fast project timeframe making it hard to deliver the scope whilst moving at a pace sensitive to the NGB's overall level of understanding (both lead and wider staff members) and balancing individual needs with collective learning.

A collective approach **can be successful if the conditions are right**. The contents of this report include recommendations as to how to adapt future programmes to maximise the chance of success.

# The opportunity

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The delivery of environmental sustainability action plans that include **aligned topics** (such as carbon and waste) provides a valuable opportunity for the Alliance to undertake **collective, impactful campaigns and actions**.

Similarly, the inclusion of topics unique to each NGB within their action plans (such as air quality, water quality and athlete performance) enabled the ability for each NGB to find their **unique role in driving action on environmental sustainability topics** specific to their sport.

Overall, future topics that could **bring future clusters of NGBs together and underpin a collective approach** could include; organisation size, remit of grassroots vs high performance, type of sport/ common objective with regards to environmental sustainability, similarity in starting points and common challenges.

**Other examples** where a similar collective approach could work, include; teams within leagues, other smaller organisations within sport and through a similar approach to embedding social impact within NGBs.

# Carbon Baselines

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Defining boundaries for each NGB and calculating carbon footprints



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# Boundary setting and data collection

## What we did:

We knew that each NGB lead had no, or very limited, knowledge of carbon measurement and management. We also knew that data collection processes can be time-consuming. Therefore, we kicked off with a carbon workshop, to help define each Alliance member's carbon footprint boundary whilst providing some training to each NGB lead. The workshop involved understanding each organisation and co-creating consistent principles for setting carbon footprint boundaries based on an operational control approach. The aim of this was to have a standardised approach to setting carbon footprint boundaries which could be consistent for NGBs, whilst addressing the overlapping nature of some activities within the boundary (particularly with UK Sport's Institute). Using the outputs from the workshop, thinkBeyond then formalised each Alliance member's carbon boundary, the boundary rationale and the associated data to collect.

One of the challenges was pitching the data requests at the right level; trying to balance what was feasible and available for each NGB to collect in order to calculate an accurate baseline, while also recognising that each NGB was on a learning journey and the best possible data may not be available right away. In order to try and strike this balance, we created a simple carbon data tool, centred around adequate and preferred types of data. The idea was for the tool to help upskill each NGB lead to lead the data collection process internally.

## Key Learnings:

- We generally found more pro-active engagement in carbon effective data collection where Alliance members had sustainability embedded as part of their specific role (e.g., British Swimming and UKSI). In our experience, having clear roles and responsibilities, and time allocated to specific tasks within the project set delivery up for success.
- More external ongoing support, or NGB leads having greater time to understand and get to grips with data collection and carbon footprint measurement during a future project would help build internal capacity to collect, and improve the type of data they collect, going forwards.

## How we did it:

Alignment to best practice carbon accounting standards (GHG Protocol)

Alliance workshop 1: Carbon footprint workshop with all Alliance members

Comprehensive data carbon data tool, including some data collection templates and draft emails

1-2-1 support to aid data collection

# Carbon calculation tool

## What we did:

We needed to create a tool that was easy to use but was also flexible enough to evolve with the changing quality of data so it could be used in the future.

Therefore, we created a tool which, was a mix between automation and manual input, with the manual input relying on the user to understand one basic concept of carbon accounting – matching the type of data to a type of emission factor.

One of the challenges we recognised at the project's outset was time. Data collection within organisations can be slow. This was apparent during the Alliance project with the data collection process taking longer than planned. Subsequently, it meant that the carbon calculations were completed during the later stages of the project.

The tool was provided with written guidance as to how to use it. However, it was tricky to deliver necessary practical support for the NGB leads to use the tool within the project timeframe so full testing of the tool's ongoing use within the organisations will need to happen after the end of the project.

## Key Learnings:

- Data collection is a challenging process. It is a technical topic that is not immediately easy to understand and communicate to other members of staff. Therefore, adequate time and expertise is needed to support each organisation to collect their data and build the skills and confidence to continue to do so in the future.

## How we did it:

Alignment to best practice carbon accounting standards (GHG Protocol)

A mixture between automation and manual input within the carbon calculation tool

Provided a written guide on how to use the tool, within the tool itself

1-2-1 support on how to use of the tool

# Key successes and outputs

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## Key Successes:

- ✓ A boundary approach which navigated some of the more complex challenges for NGBs (e.g., differing levels of control, the inter-woven role of UKSI).
- ✓ Creation of legacy tools that can be used going forward.

## Carbon Data Request Tool:

- ✓ A carbon footprint boundary for each Alliance member.
- ✓ A reference data list illustrating examples of adequate and preferred data.
- ✓ Bespoke data collection tracker.
- ✓ Data collection templates for the big categories.

## Carbon Calculation Tool:

- ✓ Carbon footprint baseline for each Alliance member conducted based on the data available (except UKA, where no data was available during the time of the project).
- ✓ A tool which we believe could, with sufficient familiarisation time/help, be used by NGBs internally on an ongoing basis.

# Developing environmental sustainability actions plans

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Setting visions for environmental sustainability, building action plans with objectives and KPIs and drafting narrative



# Setting visions and choosing priority topics

## What we did:

We kicked off with an interactive, collaborative workshop, playing back and learning from consistent challenges faced by all the Alliance members as well as providing a short sustainability 101 overview.

We broke out into working sessions to help each NGB set an environmental sustainability vision, identify the environmental sustainability topics that matter to their organisation and then undertook a prioritisation exercise.

Using the outputs from the workshop, thinkBeyond then wrote up and developed each NGB's vision, strategy and action plan. We worked with each NGB lead to engage their internal and external stakeholders via a survey (such as staff, athletes, board members, members, home nation NGBs) to receive further input on the strategy and vision.

Once each vision and strategy was consolidated for each NGB, we applied thinkBeyond's expert lens - bringing knowledge of topics impacted by each NGB, the topics impacting the sport of each NGB, helping identify the key opportunities within the topics and ensuring alignment with frameworks.

## Key learnings:

- The NGB leads are currently unlikely to be experts in environmental sustainability, therefore, they require specific expertise to help shape their visions and strategies. Upskilling to a certain extent is effective but does not replace the breadth of technical knowledge to develop and drive an effective environmental strategy forward. The approach we took required balancing upskilling NGB leads on topics during the workshops, whilst ensuring thinkBeyond provided the amount of expertise needed to effectively shape each NGB's strategy.
- Ensure sufficient time is given to engage all necessary stakeholders in the strategy development process. Some NGBs received good response rate to their engagement survey (for example UKSI with 84 responses and British Swimming with 66), whereas others found it challenging to circulate their survey.

## How we did it:

Alliance workshop 2:  
Vision setting and  
prioritisation workshop  
with all Alliance members

Enabling NGB lead to  
shape their vision and  
helping choose priority  
topics

Engaging key  
stakeholders via a survey

Finalising each vision and  
strategy through  
thinkBeyond expert lens

# Building action plans with objectives and KPIs



## What we did:

As we consolidated each NGB’s priority topics and vision, common themes shared across the NGBs emerged, these topics were carbon and climate, and waste and resources.

We identified clear opportunities for alignment within each of these topics, for example:

- Common headline commitments on carbon emissions (i.e., Net zero by 2040 aspirations)
- Recognition to reduce overall waste production and resource consumption at events
- The need to accelerate a circular economy for athlete and practitioner kit and equipment

The specific delivery of these commitments of course would vary between each NGB (e.g., across the types of equipment used) but overall, the framework is suitable for all.

For each organisation, we also included a third, unique environmental focus area specific to each organisation and their sport. For each NGB, a unique topic was highlighted as important, for example; water quality for British Swimming, air quality for UKA and playing environment for England Hockey.

In addition to addressing priority topics, we shaped the strategy to include pillars focused on embedding sustainability into the governance of each NGB, opportunities for industry leadership and collaboration, and ways to communicate and advocate for environmental sustainability. As with the topic-specific pillars, here we maintained consistency in the framework but allowed for bespoke measures for each NGB.

Once we had the overall vision and frameworks in place, we held ongoing 1-2-1 sessions with each NGB to build out detailed objectives, KPIs and actions behind the strategy as a whole.

## Key learnings:

- It takes time and expertise to develop a robust environmental sustainability strategy and action plan (including tailored objectives, targets and KPIs that are useable for an organisation). None of the NGB leads are experts in this area and also had competing commitments during the project (for example, organising events). Therefore, to maximise chance of success, allowing sufficient time and allocating dedicated resources to developing the strategy and action plan is crucial. Competing commitments for NGB leads should be managed so that they do not take time away from project delivery. For example; British Swimming were able to engage in more 1-2-1 sessions with the thinkBeyond team and were able to better shape more tailored, specific action plans for their NGB.
- Assigning sustainability to an individual's role with allocated time and responsibility is one way to help, as well as providing additional 1-2-1 expert support for individuals with less environmental expertise.

## How we did it:

Embraced alignment across consistent topics; climate and carbon, waste and resources

Highlighted a third topic unique to each NGB, specifically impacting their sport

Provided 1-2-1 support to build tailored objectives, actions and KPIs

Created specific targets for each NGB within a consistent overall framework

# Consolidating action plans and drafting narrative

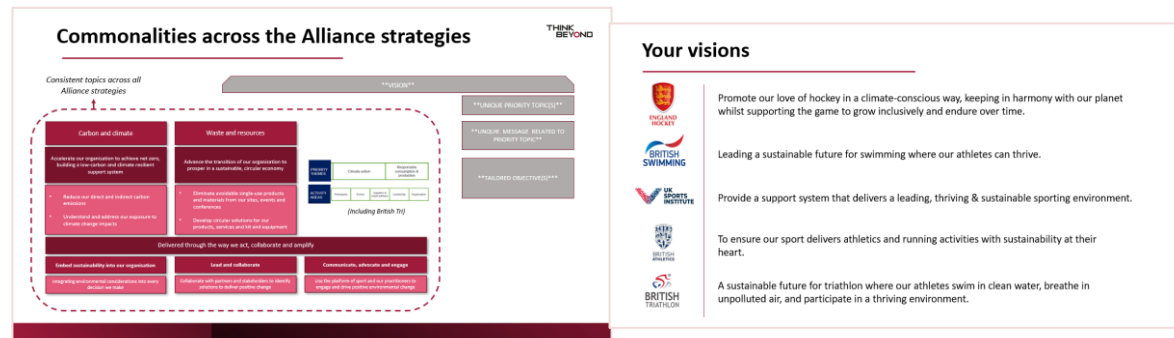
## What we did:

Once each NGB had a vision, a strategy including priority topics and an action plan we helped summarise the plan into a strategy on a page.

Firstly, we held a collaborative workshop with all the Alliance members, where they played back their action plans and co-created messaging for each topic.

Reflecting the combination of joint topics between the Alliance (such as carbon and climate and waste and resources), as well as each NGB's unique topics and vision, this final strategy on a page served as a consolidated set of key messages that could be used to communicate every commitment and topic within their action plan.

This process also helped build each Alliance member's understanding of their action plan and confidence in communicating it.



## Key learnings:

- Whilst there are clear similarities between the Alliance, each organisation does have differences in environmental topics as well as ambition levels (such as England Hockey's remit covering grassroots as well as high performance). It was also flagged by multiple NGBs (particularly Hockey and Swimming) that they wanted to maintain an element of individuality in how they communicated their sustainability plans.
- Therefore, it was important that we provided a framework that balanced collective Alliance commitments and joint messaging with areas that were unique to each NGB. Matching NGBs as closely as possible within their clusters would make this as easy as possible to achieve through a collective approach.

## How we did it:

Alliance workshop 3: co-creating key messages and communicating sustainability

NGB leads undertook practical tasks to build confidence

Consolidated each NGB strategy into a plan on a page

# Key successes and outputs

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## Key successes:

- ✓ A strategy framework covering aligned topics between the Alliance, as well as topics unique to each NGB.
- ✓ Key messages that could be used to communicate every commitment and topic within each NGB's action plan.

## A consolidated strategy on a page:

- ✓ A unique vision for each NGB.
- ✓ Priority environmental topics covered within each plan.
- ✓ Foundational pillars supporting each NGB to embed their action plans within their organisations, lead and collaborate with each other and partners and communicate and engage their wider stakeholder on environmental sustainability.

## Detailed action plans:

- ✓ Detailed objectives, targets, KPIs and actions behind each pillar.

# Communications and campaigns

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Building confidence in communicating sustainability and highlighting opportunities for collective actions and campaigns



# Opportunities for individual and collective campaigns

## What we did:

Firstly, as part of Alliance workshop 3, we provided each NGB lead with practical guidance on how to communicate sustainability in any context, as well as specific tools to communicate to key internal and external audiences.

Next, was to explore ways each NGB could amplify commitments within their plans, both individually and collectively.

The similarities within each NGB vision (for example, a focus on leadership) and common messages across topics (for example commitments around carbon emissions, an imperative to address travel and end of life kit waste) presented stand out opportunities for collective action and impact.

By initiating the Alliance project, British Triathlon had already recognised crossover swim and run aspects of their sport with other Alliance members. UK Sports Institute sitting across all sports also provided a link across the NGBs.

We held another collaborative workshop specifically focused on the opportunities for collective campaigns on joint topics. This was attended by each Alliance lead plus relevant communications staff from each NGB. We played back the collective topics amongst the Alliance, worked together to ideate opportunities for action and campaigns around those topics, and then looked at how they could be used to engage key audiences and 'sell' sustainability to prospective partners.

## Key learnings:

- The amount of engagement from NGB comms teams in the workshops varied. For example, England Hockey's communications lead flagged that it was proving tricky to elevate sustainability as a priority within the organisation. British Swimming informed us that although their new CEO had stated that social impact and sustainability would be important moving forward, it had so far still been difficult to solidify it as a strategic priority at board level.
- In thinkBeyond's experience, it is not uncommon that environmental sustainability is still not seen as a strategic corporate priority. However, once recognised, it can become central to an organisations purpose, and act as a driver for campaigns and ultimately commercial reward. Setting environmental sustainability as a strategic priority that is seen as complementary to performance and the NGB's mission would maximise the chance of wider organisational buy in and engagement in future projects.
- In addition, communicating sustainability is a challenging task which requires expertise and understanding to navigate effectively. We provided guidance on this within workshop 3, however, it was flagged by numerous NGBs that they would have appreciated more time covering this topic and seeing relevant examples as inspiration. It was also evident that NGBs confidence in communicating their plans built throughout the project. Future programmes should recognise the need to upskill and build confidence on communicating sustainability.

## How we did it:

Provided practical principles for communicating sustainability to key audiences

Alliance workshop 4: ideating opportunities for collective action and campaigns

Focused on 'selling' sustainability and making it relevant for each NGB

# Key successes and outputs



## Practical principles for communicating sustainability

Sustainability can seem ‘complex, overwhelming and scary’ but is also recognised as being ‘essential’ and important in terms of providing accountability. Avoiding greenwashing and making it meaningful are the key communication challenges.

Top tips:

- ✓ Do keep the messages simple – but make sure the evidence is there, underpinning the topline message
- ✓ Do let action speak louder than words – reporting achievements and
- ✓ Do include a call-to-action – break things down so your audience feel

- Don’t overpromise and underdeliver – do the opposite!
- Don’t make claims without being able to evidence – ensure the facts
- Don’t focus on the negatives – focus on the positives, the possibles,

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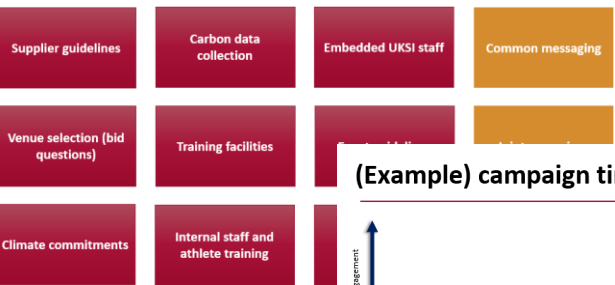
## Practical principles for communicating sustainability

Starting points for involving and engaging your audiences:

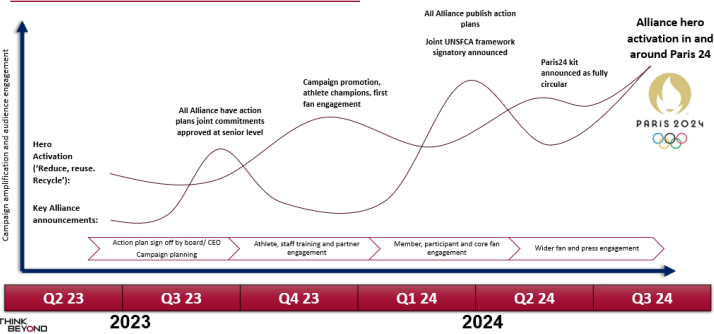
Audience	Role(s)	Tactics to engage	Examples
Senior/ leadership	Leadership, ownership, responsibility; adoption and leading by example; strategy tracking and evolution	Make accountable; make reporting a requirement; board member lead/champion	At an industry event, CEO talks about how board meetings are now car-free at venues which support active travel and are accessible by public transport, the contribution to carbon savings that have been made, the benefits of the approach and how it's being rolled out to other activities including major events.
Employees/ athletes	Employees: actioning strategy and implementing the action plan Athletes: championing the strategy and actions	Create engagement (not just comms); CEO leadership by example; Team for Tomorrow focus	Employee Champions and supported athlete organise a litter pick in a local park with [x] athlete's old school; Champions, athlete and the school's Environment Committee visit a waste facility afterwards to see what happens to waste when it's been thrown away versus being recycled.
External/ partners/ fans	Partners: delivery, support, accountability, supply, reach Fans: engagement, action, feedback, education	Provide solutions to challenges; clear call to action; keep it simple and positive	(See over the page!)

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## Where can the Alliance collaborate?



## (Example) campaign timeline



## Key successes:

- ✓ Co-created ideas and opportunities for the Alliance to engage in collective action and campaigns on environmental sustainability.

## Communicating sustainability:

- ✓ Practical principles to help each NGB lead communicate sustainability in any context.
- ✓ Increased NGB lead confidence in how to talk about challenging topics (such as travel).
- ✓ Guidance on how to engage key internal and external audiences on sustainability.
- ✓ Understanding how to sell sustainability to prospective partners.

## Collective actions and campaigns:

- ✓ A long list of opportunities where the Alliance could collaborate on joint topics.
- ✓ An example joint campaign plan and hero activation ideas (co-created by the Alliance, and with the example focus being around Paris 2024).

# Athletes as champions

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Understanding athletes' perceptions regarding environmental sustainability, outlining how NGBs could work with them to become champions for environmental sustainability



# Helping NGBs support their athletes as champions

## What we did:

In today's landscape, athletes have a crucial role to play in communicating and advocating for environmental sustainability.

Firstly, we worked with the Alliance leads to circulate a survey to understand athletes' perceptions of sustainability, appetite to engage in the topic and current challenges and barriers.

Using the outputs of the survey, wider data and research on athlete perceptions, previous work thinkBeyond had delivered for UK Sport in this area\* and the lived experience of ex-GB athletes (now thinkBeyond employees; Jo Leigh and Peter Speight), we held a collaborative workshop aimed at:

- Understanding the current landscape of athletes as advocates
- What role do athletes want to play
- How the NGBs could work with them

We focused on how each organisation could best work with their athletes both as champions for environmental sustainability but also nurturing broader athlete skills that could support the management and delivery of each NGB's action plan.

Key to our approach was providing tools the NGBs could use to support their athletes to engage with environmental sustainability now and in the future.

## Key learnings:

- Despite 36/ 36 athletes stating they expected their NGB to take action on environmental sustainability (via the stakeholder engagement survey) it was difficult to engage athletes to attend the 'Athletes as Champions' workshop. Athletes want to support and engage in environmental sustainability but enabling them to do so in a way that fits around performance commitments is key.

## How we did it:

Engaging NGB athletes  
throughout the project  
(via surveys)

Alliance workshop 5:  
Athletes as champions  
for environmental  
sustainability

Drawing on the lived  
experience of ex GB  
athletes (and  
thinkBeyond team  
members)

*\* Findings taken from Alliance sustainability stakeholder engagement survey, tailored athlete survey and thinkBeyond x UK Sport athlete consultation project in 2020 (involving interviews, focus groups and survey with 47 athletes across 19 NGBs)*

# Key successes and outputs

## 36/ 36 athletes

...surveyed by the Alliance think their NGB should take **action to address environmental sustainability issues\*** ...

Top three **barriers** ...to engaging in activism/advocacy:

- Lack of **confidence** (77.8%)
- Lack of **knowledge** (66.7%)
- Fear of being misunderstood (61.1%)\*

### Key successes:

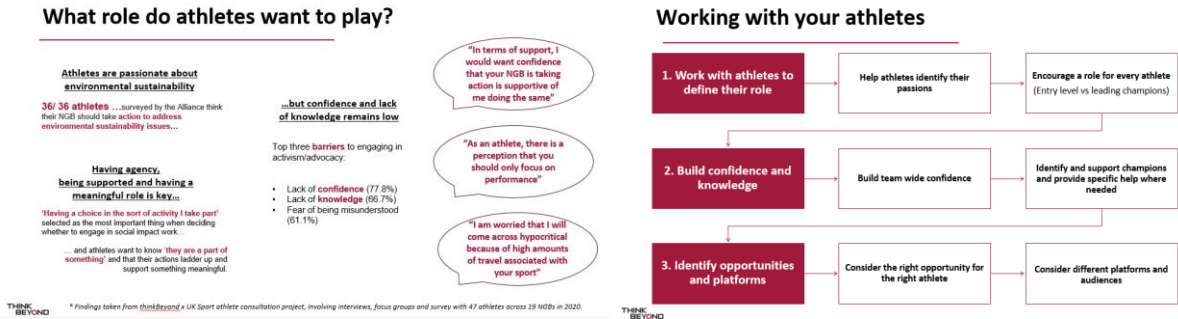
- ✓ A set of tools that could help each NGB to work with their athletes to become champions for environmental sustainability, now and in the future.
- ✓ Outputs grounded in perceptions and needs of athletes regarding environmental sustainability and performance.

### Athlete engagement:

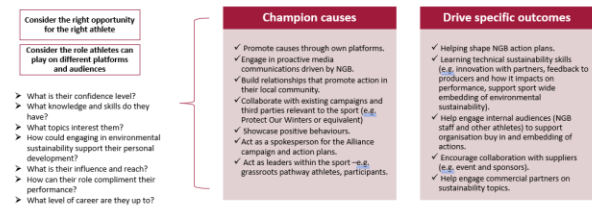
- ✓ 36 athletes engaged via a survey.
- ✓ Insights into athlete's perceptions of sustainability, appetite to engage in the topic and current challenges and barriers.

### Tools to support athletes:

- ✓ Example opportunities for how athletes can advocate for environmental sustainability, as well as support the implementation of NGB plans.
- ✓ Example key messages to provide to athletes when talking about environmental sustainability, their NGB's action plan and their individual role.



#### (Example) opportunities for athlete champions



#### (Example) messages for athlete Champions



# Learning and embedding environmental sustainability

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Building confidence and knowledge, supporting NGB leads to take their plans forward, and embedding sustainability within their organisation



# Embedding sustainability built into project process

## What we did:

A key objective of the project was to ensure that the tools we provided to each Alliance member could be taken forward and used to embed environmental sustainability within their organisation.

Firstly, by holding a 1-2-1 maturity assessment at the start of the project we understood the current knowledge and confidence of each NGB lead (for example, level of carbon literacy), as well as the wider starting point of their organisation (for example, level of senior support for environmental sustainability).

Using this knowledge, we were able to ensure the Alliance project helped build knowledge and skills within the NGB and embed the tools within the business.

We attached learning outcomes specific to each NGB lead to every workshop (for example; providing specific carbon literacy training as part of Alliance workshop one). Focused on supporting NGB leads to practically apply each project output within their organisation (for example; leading carbon data collection).

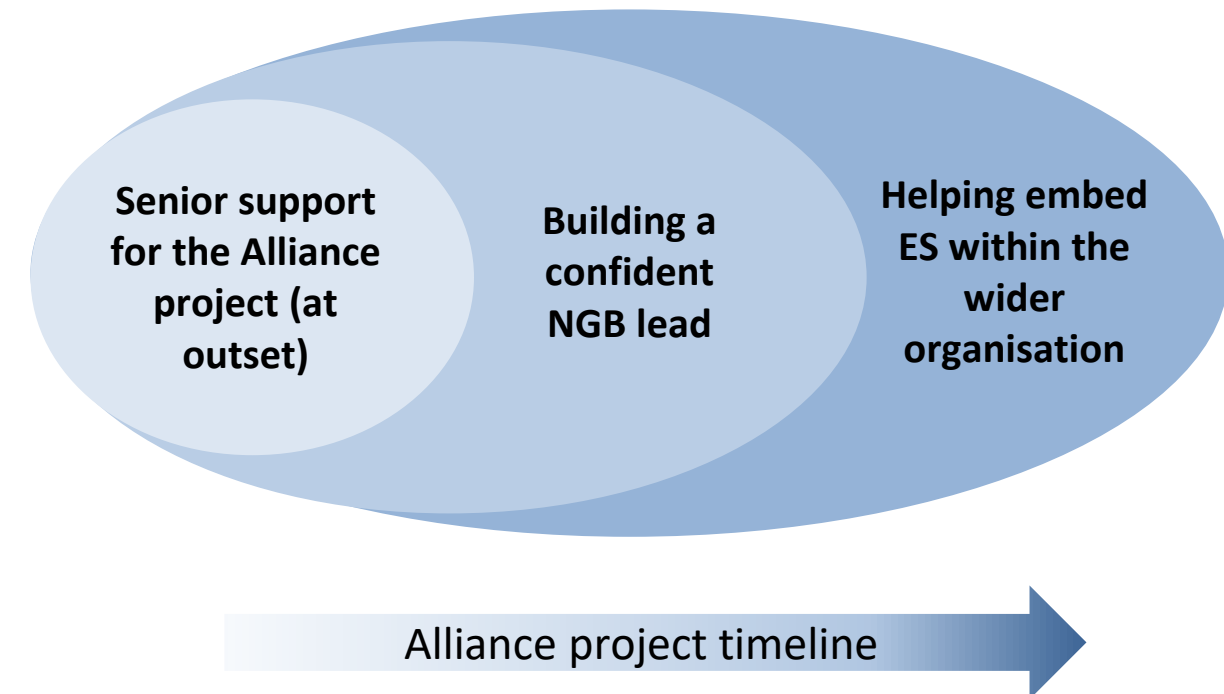
A stakeholder engagement and athlete perception survey was built into the project process, which helped each NGB take the first step of building understanding and buy-in to environmental sustainability within their organisation. We also provided 1-2-1 support, helping NGB leads take specific action to embed environmental sustainability, for example; guiding their working groups and aiding sign-off at senior level.

Finally, we also held five learning moments available for wider members of their organisation to attend, focused on practical knowledge around key environmental sustainability topics.

## Key learnings:

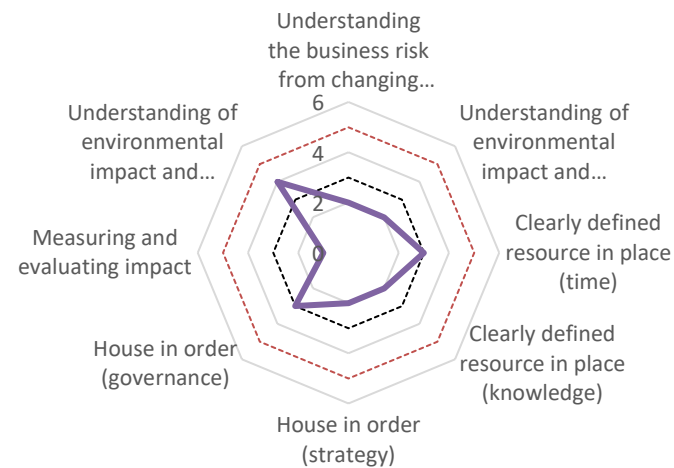
- Holding a maturity assessment at the start of the project was an essential step to ensure we understood each NGB's starting point with regards to embedding environmental sustainability within their organisation. However, it also uncovered similarities and differences between the NGBs that were not apparent before project kick off (for example; EHs remit of grassroots vs performance). To maximise the success of future programmes, aligning 'clusters' of NGBs based on similarities in their maturity could help ensure collective workshops and learning moments are as effective as possible to all attendees.
- Despite good response rates amongst staff within the NGB's stakeholder engagement surveys (for example; 66 EH staff, and 84 UKSI staff), it was a challenge to find appropriate timeslots for workshops and online learning sessions that worked for key personnel. In our experience, having sustainability clearly assigned to roles and responsibilities, as well as making it a strategic priority helps ensure relevant staff members fully engage with it.

## How we did it:



# Key successes and outputs

## Maturity assessment criteria



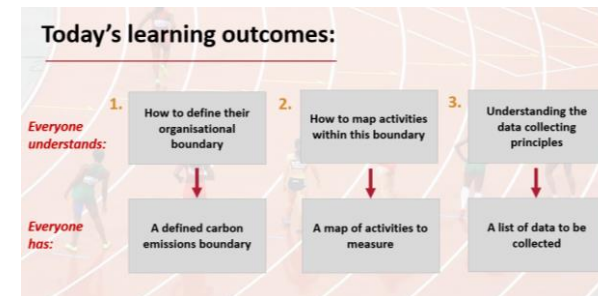
## Survey



### England Hockey - Environmental Sustainability Survey

England Hockey is currently working with social impact and sustainability consultancy thinkBEYOND and UK Sport, to produce a focused environmental sustainability action plan. We want our action plan to focus on the environmental issues of highest importance to England Hockey based on the environmental issues that impact our sport most as well as the activities we take as an organisation, and the expectations of our staff, athletes, members and other key stakeholders.

➤ When asked 'Do you think it is important for England Hockey to take positive action on environmental sustainability?' **96% answered 'Yes' and 4% answered 'No'** (out of 66 responses).



## Learning moments

Challenges and opportunities working session

Operationalising sustainability

Sustainability and sport 101

Climate transition plans

Commercial partnerships guidance session

## Key successes:

- ✓ Concurrently developing environmental sustainability tools, whilst helping each NGB lead embed them within the business.

## Building confidence and knowledge:

- ✓ 1-2-1 maturity assessment interview to understand each NGB's starting point.
- ✓ Learning and development built into every step of the project process, focused on building a confident NGB lead.

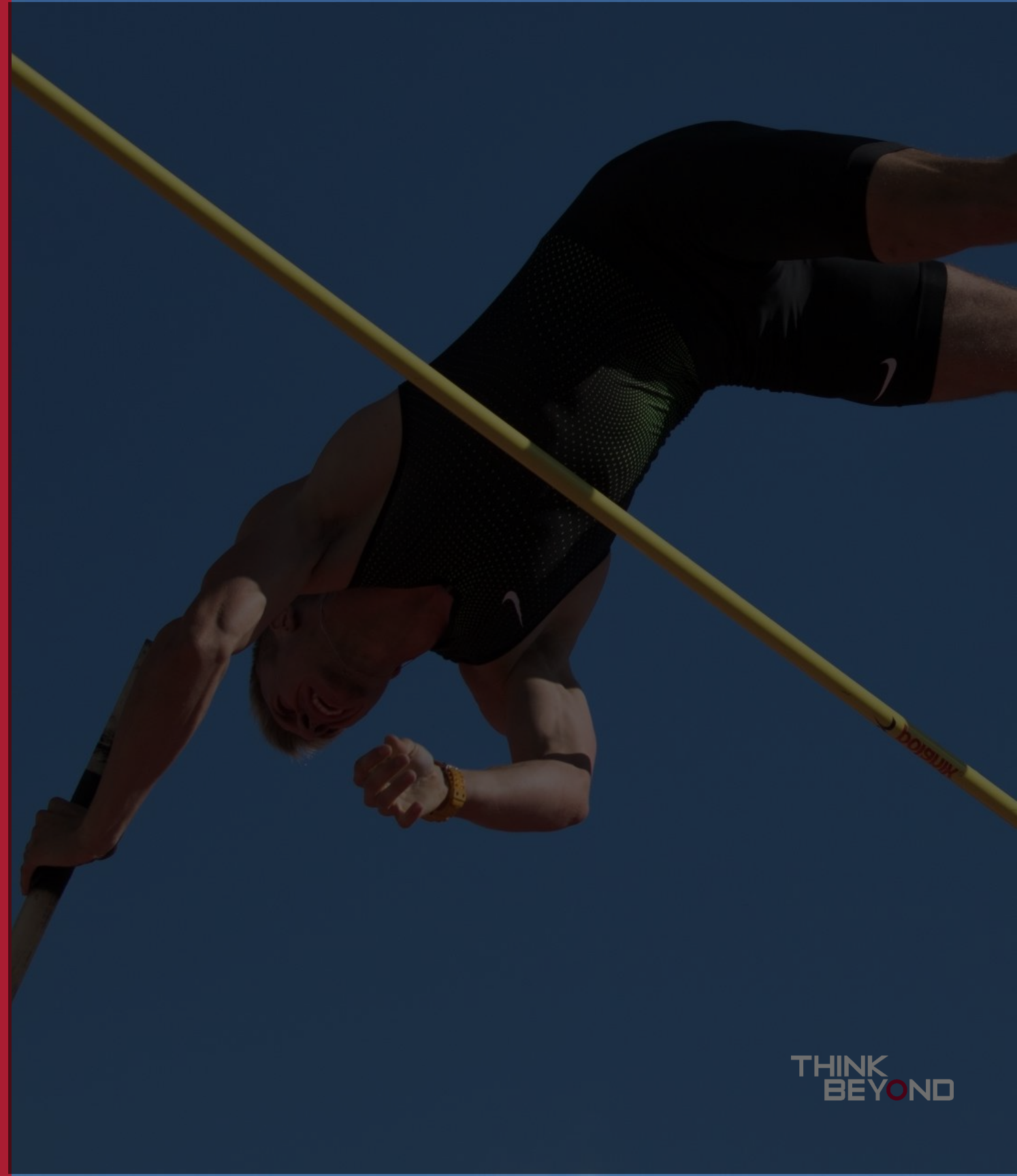
## Aiding buy-in and embedding within the business:

- ✓ Stakeholder and athlete engagement surveys.
- ✓ 1-2-1 support, helping each NGB lead embed ES into their organisation.
- ✓ 5 learning moments focused on practical guidance on key topics, open to wider members of the NGB organisation.

# Learning and evaluation

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An overview of the project level successes, learnings and recommendations for how a future project process could be adapted



# Key project successes

Overall, the Alliance sustainability project, via a collective approach, proved successful in moving all participating NGBs forward in embedding environmental sustainability within their organisations. Fundamentally, the main project objectives were achieved.

## Project objectives (a reminder):

- **Tangible outputs:** Provide tools and plans that allow each Alliance member to take systemic, sustainable action on environmental sustainability.
- **Empowered NGB leads:** Build capacity, skills and confidence of each Alliance lead and their wider team to ensure they can take those plans forward.
- **Lessons to take forward:** Assess the benefits of a collective approach for UK Sport & NGBs involved.
- **Promote knowledge sharing:** Gather shared learnings & resources, using it as an opportunity to knowledge share across the wider NGB space.



## Key successes:

- ✓ Delivered a robust environmental sustainability action plan to every NGB.
- ✓ Measured each NGB's carbon footprint and provided a plan to reduce it.
- ✓ Moved confidence, knowledge and capability forward within every NGB (*albeit at varying levels and with limitations*).
- ✓ Helped embed environmental sustainability within each organisation (*albeit at varying levels and with limitations*).
- ✓ Measured and evaluated project success via the NGB environmental sustainability maturity assessment tool.

## In addition:

- ✓ Co-created opportunities for collaboration on key environmental sustainability topics, whilst highlighting a unique role for each NGB.
- ✓ Built confidence in communicating sustainability.
- ✓ Highlighted ways to work with athletes and Champions.
- ✓ Promoted collaboration and knowledge sharing between participating NGBs.

\*You can find a full assessment of the project success per NGB within slides 34- 39 of the report, as well as our learning and evaluation methodology and maturity assessment criteria in the appendix of the report. The detailed findings outlined there were used to inform the learnings on this slide.

# Main project level learnings

However, despite successful project outputs, there were challenges. Considering the learnings highlighted throughout this report, we have highlighted the three main project level learnings that can be taken forward into future programmes.

## Appropriate resource and expertise is needed to deliver and embed environmental sustainability

- None of the NGB leads are experts in environmental sustainability. Whilst we were able to increase all their confidence and knowledge levels throughout the project and leave them in a good position to take their plans forward, the process relied heavily on thinkBeyond's external expertise.
  - In addition, it was clear that the NGB leads found it difficult to balance the project requirements with other commitments (such as attending events). The NGB leads who had environmental sustainability assigned as part of their specific role were able to give more 1-2-1 time to shape their individual action plans, and therefore receive more tailored and useable project outputs (for example, British Swimming).
- **Therefore;** having both appropriate internal resources dedicated to owning, coordinating and embedding environmental sustainability, as well as appropriate expertise to create the technical tools to do so is crucial to project success. This is especially true during a project which aims to simultaneously create tools and embed environmental sustainability at the same time.

## Making environmental sustainability a strategic priority maximises the chance of success

- In thinkBeyond's experience, it is often challenging to make environmental sustainability a central, strategic priority for an organisation. It was no different during the Alliance project. Whilst most NGB leads were able to coordinate some level of internal engagement during the project, for example via the stakeholder survey, athlete survey and other specific means such as setting up working groups, there were still limits to how easily they were able to drive environmental sustainability forward within their organisation.
  - Unsurprisingly, those NGBs who had clear senior support for environmental sustainability (such as British Swimming) were able to engage their communications leads to attend every comms-focused workshop. Despite CEO level support, British Swimming still stated they did not feel environmental sustainability was yet elevated to a strategic priority.
- **Therefore;** having senior-level sponsorship for environmental sustainability as a strategic priority, which is seen as something that supports and complements the NGB's central mission will help ensure it receives the appropriate level of engagement needed from wider internal stakeholders.

## Balancing individual needs with shared learning is crucial to a collective approach

- The maturity assessment interviews held during the Alliance project were crucial to understanding each NGB's starting point with regards to environmental sustainability and allowing for a tailored learning journey throughout the project.
  - However, it required a careful balance to provide support that met the learning requirements of all the NGBs simultaneously. For example, pitching the carbon literacy training as part of workshop one was a challenging brief given the NGB's varied level of understanding regarding carbon.
  - In addition, it was essential to create a consistent framework that allowed us to develop action plans simultaneously for multiple organisations, whilst also allowing flexibility to include topics that were specific to each of the organisation's unique characteristics and sport.
- **Therefore;** carefully balancing collective learning with individuals needs will ensure NGBs receive effective, tailored support whilst enjoying the benefits of shared learning. In addition, a consistent framework allows a cluster of NGBs to work collectively on joint commitments (such as alignment to UNSFCA carbon reporting requirements) whilst also honing in on their unique opportunity to help address environmental sustainability.

*\*You can find a full assessment of the project success per NGB within slides 34- 39 of the report, as well as our learning and evaluation methodology and maturity assessment criteria in the appendix of the report. The detailed findings outlined there were used to inform the learnings on this slide.*

# Our recommendations

A collective approach to embedding environmental sustainability within a group of NGBs does work. However, given the learnings uncovered during the project and summarised on the previous slide, our main recommendations for changes made to a future project are as follows:

## Learning

Appropriate resource and expertise is needed to deliver and embed environmental sustainability

Making environmental sustainability a strategic priority maximises the chance of success

Balancing individual needs with shared learning is crucial to a collective approach

## Recommendations for future programmes

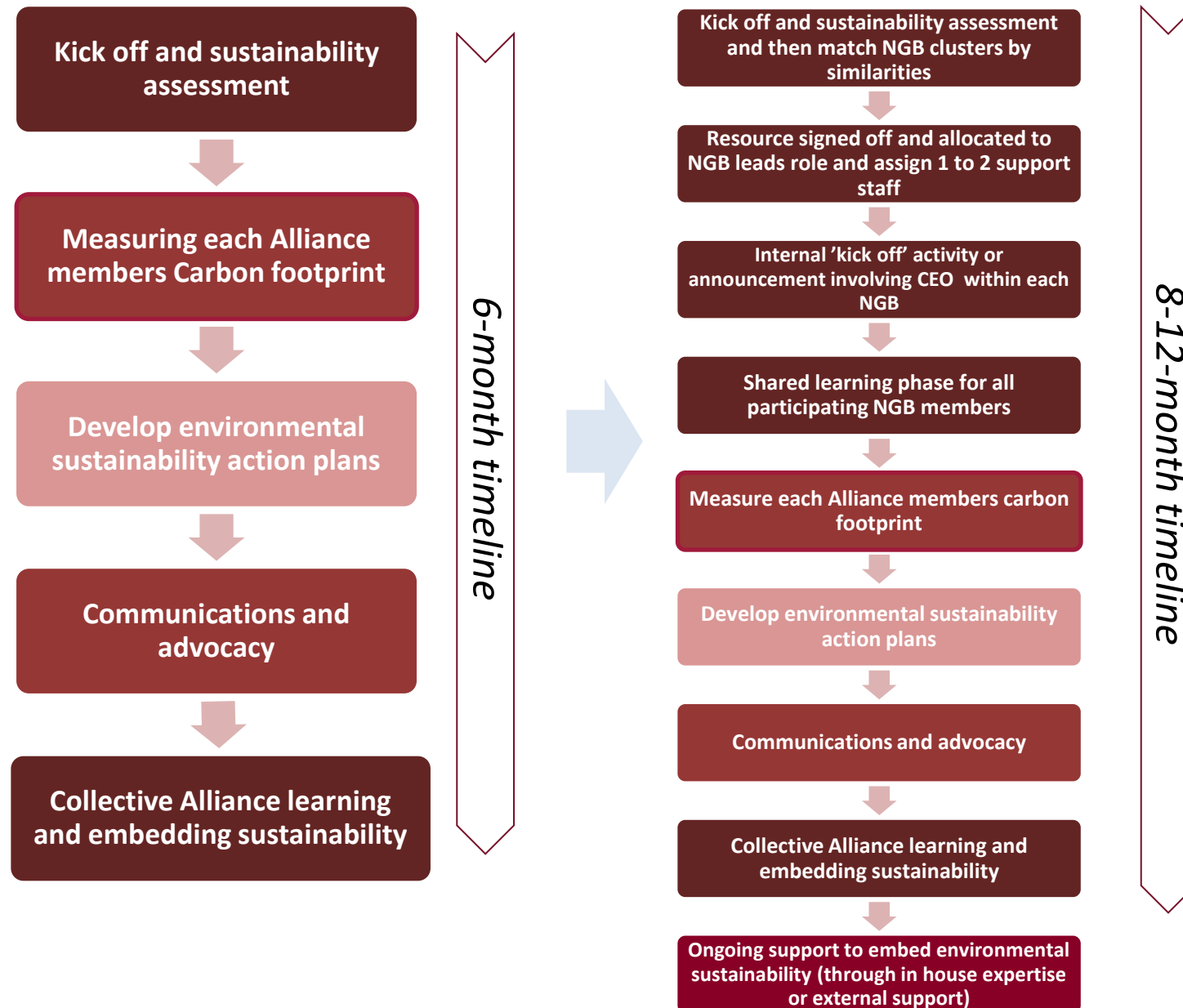
- ✓ Allow sufficient time and allocate dedicated resources to developing the strategy and action plan. Competing commitments for NGB leads should be managed so that they do not take time away from project delivery. This could be done by officially assigning the responsibility as part of their role or receiving senior-level sign-off for the specific amount of time and resources needed.
- ✓ Re-frame the NGB leads role on the project to being the owner, coordinator and project manager of environmental sustainability internally (rather than expecting them to become in-house experts). The NGB lead can then effectively extract the expertise from external consultants (in this case thinkBeyond).
- ✓ Consider allocating 1-2 additional members of staff to 'own' key aspects and support the NGB lead (such as carbon data collection). UKSI were able to take this approach due to having three members of staff dedicated to the project with one owning data collection and another action plan development.
- ✓ Provide ongoing resources to support the NGB lead to effectively embed environmental sustainability after project wrap up. This needs to come from either in-house expertise or ongoing external consultancy support.
- ✓ As well as receiving senior sign-off for the project, seek explicit sponsorship for environmental sustainability being a central strategic priority for the organisation upon project outset. This will help wider members of staff see engagement in the topic as something that is relevant and important to them and their role.
- ✓ In addition, frame environmental sustainability as something that is complementary to the organisation's purpose, mission and commercial success. This will help communications and marketing teams to see environmental sustainability as something that can support a successful commercial strategy and in turn, will help NGBs to maximise the commercial opportunities that having a strong environmental sustainability commitment presents.
- ✓ Consider an internal engagement activity, involving CEO/ C-suite staff ahead of project kick off to emphasise senior level commitment.
- ✓ Match clusters of NGBs as closely as possible dependent on size, type of organisation, remit of grassroots vs high performance, type of sport/ common objective with regards to environmental sustainability, level of maturity/ understanding so group learning is of maximum relevance to all attendees.
- ✓ Consider a shared learning phase before project kick off to aid a basic level of understanding around environmental sustainability for those NGBs that have a lower level of existing understanding and knowledge.
- ✓ Ensure project outputs enable clusters of NGBs to work collaboratively on topics where it makes sense, whilst honing in on their unique contribution to environmental sustainability.
- ✓ Allow more time for informal discussion and group learning within the project scope.
- ✓ Allow for adequate 1-2-1 time to support NGB leads who need greater support within project scope.

*\*You can find a full assessment of the project success per NGB within slides 34- 39 of the report, as well as our learning and evaluation methodology and maturity assessment criteria in the appendix of the report. The detailed findings outlined there were used to inform the recommendations on this slide.*

# How our project process could be adapted

From....

...To



## Summary of the main changes:

- Project timeframe is increased to allow more flexibility in the learning journey and additional 1-2-1 support.
- Begin with the NGB maturity assessment interviews and then match NGB clusters based on similar starting points and existing challenges (this would allow for a more tailored learning journey within the group learning sessions in the project).
- Define the resources needed to maximise project success then allocate appropriate time and responsibilities to the NGB leads role, sufficient resource to external consultancy support, as well as assign 1-2 additional members of staff to support specific aspects (such as carbon data collection).
- Encourage an internal kick-off activity or announcement where senior-level staff commit environmental sustainability to be a strategic priority for the organisation.
- Run a shared learning phase ahead of the main project kick-off to get NGB leads and staff up to a minimum level of knowledge around environmental sustainability before moving into developing the project outputs (this phase could also be delivered to multiple 'clusters' of NGBs at the same time).
- Allocate ongoing support to help embed environmental sustainability at the end of the project (either by encouraging NGBs to recruit in-house roles or fund ongoing external consultancy support). The latter could be delivered to clusters of NGBs simultaneously.

# The results for each NGB

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A summary of the project starting point for each NGB, the changes that happened during the project (including a 'before and after' rating against our maturity assessment criteria) and specific learnings per NGB

## Starting point and key barriers for the NGB:

British Triathlon (BT) started the project with an existing sustainability strategy that had been built internally. It had an existing steering group with senior representation across the organisation, board and with CEO support. Organisation-wide awareness of environmental sustainability was stated by the NGB lead as 'good', but knowledge limited. There were clear areas BT highlighted as needing help with, such as their carbon baselining, defining their strategy structure, supporting target development and guiding measuring and monitoring. There were plans to launch BT's strategy, and the NGB leads wanted support in doing this effectively. Overall, BT started as a leading NGB in this area, and needed help to solidify and strengthen their strong start whilst looking ahead to measuring progress, communicating their impact and engaging prospective partners.

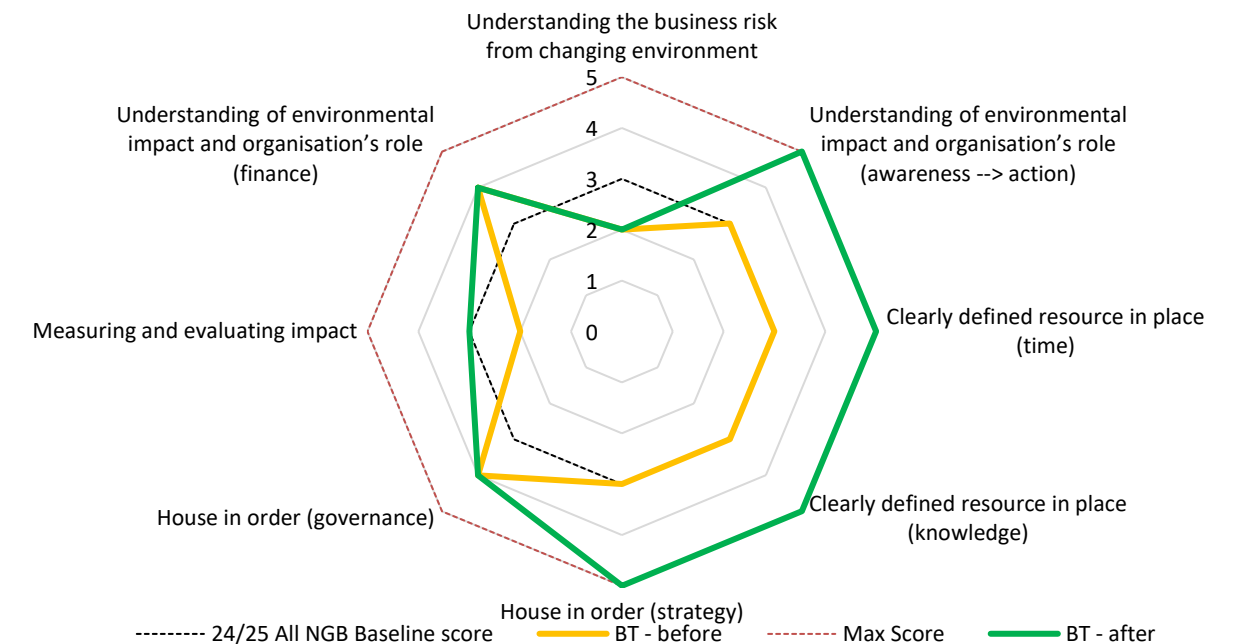
## The changes that happened during the project:

- ✓ Full organisation wide understanding increased (good examples of action being taken; e.g. British Triathlon achieved World Triathlon Championship Series gold standard at their AJ Bell 2023 Sunderland event)
- ✓ Existing strategy was restructured and objectives, targets and KPIs strengthened
- ✓ NGB lead confidence in understanding and communicating the strategy increased
- ✓ Full time social impact and sustainability manager appointed at British Triathlon
- ✓ Baseline carbon footprint calculated (with measurement tools provided)
- ✓ British Triathlon launched their strategy externally
- ✓ Good understanding of role environmental sustainability can play in securing commercial partners, with conversations progressing with existing partners
- ✓ Begun sharing best practice; played a leading role in the Alliance with their progress being used as examples to the other NGBs throughout the project
- Some understanding of climate risk and some action being taken, but no formal evaluation delivered as part of this project

## NGB specific learnings:

- As BT was already in a strong position at the start of the project, thinkBeyond's support was focused on solidifying and strengthening what it already had in place. As a result of this support, BT was able to go on and launch their strategy externally and begin engaging prospective commercial partners with greater confidence. One learning is that it takes time for an NGB to go from taking no action on environmental sustainability to being in a position to launch and confidently communicate its plans to all necessary stakeholders. BT started embedding environmental sustainability within the organisation in 2020 and launched in 2023. Therefore, future programmes should be realistic in how far they can push an NGB forward within a given timeframe.

## Fundamentals



## Expanding impact

	Before	After
• Programmes/ activities	2/5	3/5
• Communicating impact	1/5	3/5
• Driving commercial revenue	2/5	3/5
• Sharing best practice	1/5	2/5

*\*The information on this page is informed by verbal feedback from the NGB, observations from the thinkBeyond team and reflections from UK Sport (please note; BT was unable to complete the formal evaluation survey).*

## Starting point and key barriers for the NGB:

UK Sports Institute (UKSI) was at the start of its sustainability journey. At the start of the project, there were passionate individuals driving sustainability forward, and some level of knowledge internally (for example their Director of Finance & Business Operations had been on a carbon literacy course and one member had a relevant master's degree). There was early engagement from senior leadership, with a desire to act and a steering group in the process of being set up. Organisation-wide understanding and buy-in was limited and there was no current strategy. There was appropriate financial and human resource allocated to the project at outset (with two members of staff having allocated time, and plans to recruit a dedicated role), so UKSI had a good platform to maximise the support from the Alliance project.

## The changes that happened during the project:

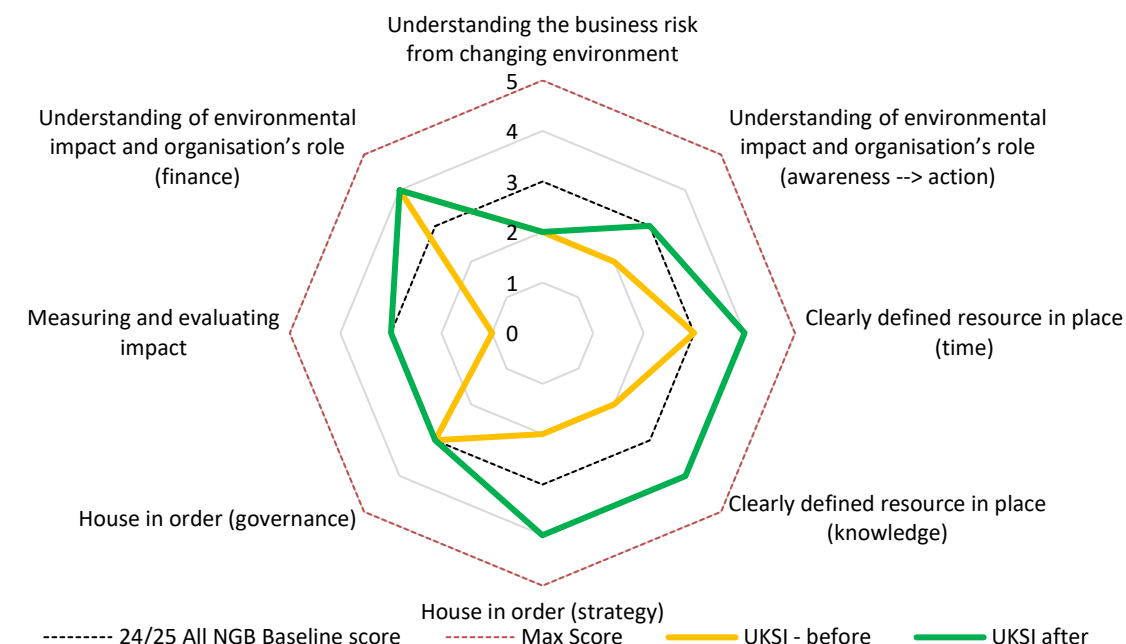
- ✓ Increase in overall understanding of sustainability and organisation's role (UKSI's staff engagement survey received 84 responses, with 98% stating they think environmental sustainability is important to UKSI)
- ✓ Individual with a dedicated role on environmental sustainability employed during the project
- ✓ Have a clear environmental sustainability action plan
- ✓ Baseline carbon footprint calculated (with measurement tools provided. With one UKSI staff member having data specialism, their confidence to take it forward was highlighted as 'high')
- ✓ Measurement & evaluation tools have been provided and confidence has been built for dedicated staff members to use them
- ✓ There is a defined narrative and key messages associated with their strategy in place
- ✓ Opportunities to share best practice and 'leadership' areas identified (i.e. athlete performance focus)
- ✓ Some changes in 'expanding impact' section of the maturity assessment criteria – having developed a defined narrative to communicate their plans and understanding how to engage prospective commercial partners
  - Strategy not yet presented to SMT/ senior leadership for sign off, but plans are in place to do so
  - Strategy not circulated internally or launched externally
  - Some understanding of climate risk and some action being taken, but no formal evaluation delivered as part of this project

## NGB specific learnings:

- Overall, UKSI was one of the most engaged organisations in the project. It had two allocated members of staff at project outset, one with existing carbon data collection experience. UKSI was then able to employ a dedicated internal lead to take the strategy forward. Future programmes should strongly consider encouraging NGBs to hire or allocate an internal lead, with relevant expertise, who can help take the project outputs forward.

*"We now have dedicated sustainability leads and strategy, but are yet to take this to senior leadership. Integrating sustainability into existing decision making remains the biggest challenge." – NGB project lead*

## Fundamentals



## Expanding impact

	Before	After
• Programmes/ activities	2/5	2/5
• Communicating impact	1/5	2/5
• Driving commercial revenue	1/5	2/5
• Sharing best practice	1/5	1/5

*\*The information on this page is informed by verbal feedback from the NGB, observations from the thinkBeyond team, reflections from UK Sport and an evaluation survey completed by the UKSI team.*

## Starting point and key barriers for the NGB:

British Swimming was at the start of its sustainability journey and at the beginning of 2023 appointed a new role which sustainability falls into (Diversity, Inclusion And Social Responsibility Manager). British Swimming did not have a sustainability strategy or any kind of monitoring or evaluation process in place. There has also not been any financial investment around sustainability prior to the Alliance project. However, there was some appetite within the organisation around this topic, including from athletes, but with limited organisation wide buy in and understanding. The new role was the first step in driving environmental sustainability forward. Carbon literacy has been completed by the Diversity, Inclusion And Social Responsibility Manager but no other formal training or knowledge building had been applied.

## The main changes that happened during the project:

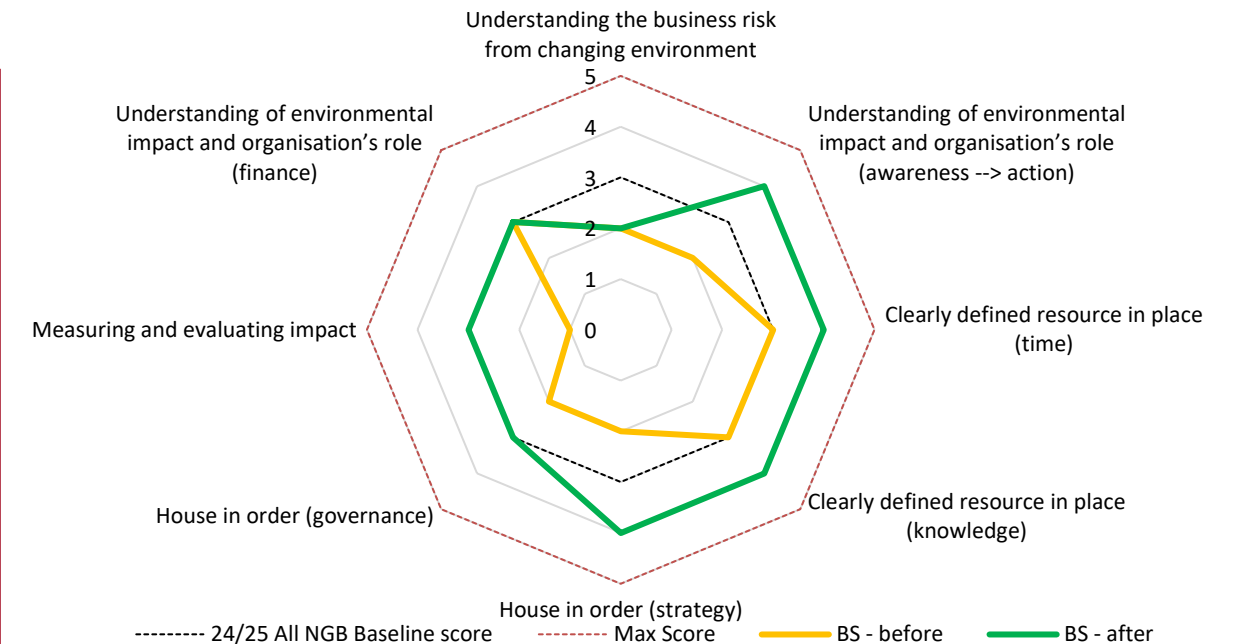
- ✓ Increase in organisation wide understanding and awareness (BS received 46 responses from their stakeholder engagement survey, including 20 staff and 14 athletes)
- ✓ The Diversity, Inclusion and Social Responsibility Manager had the time and support to focus on environmental sustainability
- ✓ Baseline carbon footprint calculated (with measurement tools provided. Although this was flagged as the area the NGB lead is least confident taking forward)
- ✓ Have a clear environmental sustainability action plan
- ✓ Sustainability working group set up and operating
- ✓ Measurement & evaluation tools have been provided
- ✓ Defined narrative and focus areas, initial strategy presented to CEO (although yet to be signed off) and some internal engagement (steering group set up)
- ✓ Some changes in 'expanding impact' section of the maturity assessment criteria – having developed a defined narrative to communicate their plans and understanding how to engage prospective commercial partners.
  - Do not yet have senior sign off to support their strategy (but with plans to do so in Autumn 2023)
  - Some understanding of climate risk and some action being taken, but no formal evaluation delivered as part of this project

## NGB specific learnings:

- Overall, the NGB lead (Diversity, Inclusion and Social Responsibility Manager) was able to fully engage in the project. Having a dedicated lead, with dedicated time and resource meant BS was able to capitalise on the support thinkBeyond provided. The BS lead noted that they felt fully confident in understanding and communicating their action plan, had shaped the targets, and mentioned the value of being able to engage in 1-2-1 support with thinkBeyond. The more dedicated time and resource the NGB lead can have to engage in the project, the more successful it is likely to be for the NGB.
- However, despite this, the NGB lead observed that whilst their CEO had given initial support, it was proving challenging to get senior level sign off for specific actions and budget allocation within the new action plan. On future programmes, ongoing support for internal resource, combined with senior sponsorship for specific actions within the NGB strategy will help ensure environmental sustainability continues to remain a priority for the organisation once a project finishes.

*"Great educational awareness building for myself and understanding how we engage with wider internal and external partners and where communication can help, have all been really useful." - NGB project lead*

## Fundamentals



## Expanding impact

	Before	After
• Programmes/ activities	2/5	3/5
• Communicating impact	1/5	2/5
• Driving commercial revenue	1/5	2/5
• Sharing best practice	1/5	1/5

*\*The information on this page is informed by verbal feedback from the NGB, observations from the thinkBeyond team, reflections from UK Sport and an evaluation survey completed by the BS NGB lead.*

## Starting point and key barriers for the NGB:

England Hockey (EH) was at the start of its sustainability journey. After updating the organisation's overarching strategy during COVID, EH had set and implemented a robust Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategy (DEI) called 'Responsible leadership'— this had seen impactful success. There was then demand from the women's team, the CEO and members of the board for EH to take action on environmental sustainability, which ultimately, they want to fully embedded into the overarching organisational strategy, sitting alongside their DE&I activities. A sustainability steering group was formed in December 2022 and meets monthly. Prior to the Alliance project EH had no environmental sustainability strategy in place, no carbon footprint baseline and no process for monitoring their actions. The key barriers highlighted were ensuring the appropriate level of financial and human resource, along with the appropriate organisation appetite to implement the strategy after the Alliance project.

## The main changes that happened during the project:

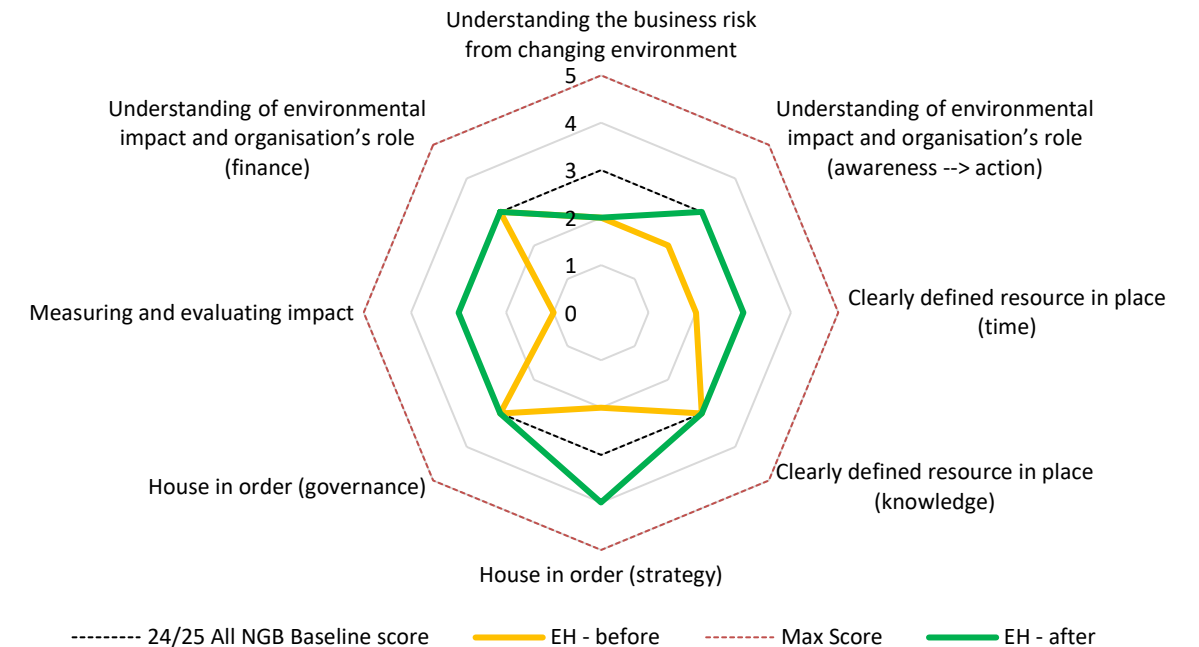
- ✓ Increase in NGB leads confidence and knowledge (NGB lead selected 'Fairly confident' when asked how confident they feel understanding their environmental sustainability action plan)
- ✓ Some increase in organisation wide understanding, buy in and organisations role (however, limits to this were flagged by the NGB lead via the evaluation survey stating: 'organisation understanding is still mostly contained to EH's working group')
- ✓ Clearly defined team in place
- ✓ Have a clear environmental sustainability action plan (however, the degree of senior support for the strategy is yet to be seen)
- ✓ Baseline carbon footprint calculated (with measurement tools provided. Although this flagged as the area the NGB lead is least confident taking forward)
- ✓ Measurement & evaluation tools provided
- ✓ Some changes in 'expanding impact' section of the maturity assessment criteria – having developed a narrative to communicate their plans and understanding how to engage prospective commercial partners
- SMT support for environmental sustainability was seen as reducing (via survey responses, EH flagged that the biggest remaining barrier they see is being able to effectively communicate the strategy internally and coordinating momentum across the organisation)
- Some understanding of climate risk and some action being taken, but no formal evaluation delivered as part of this project

## NGB specific learnings:

- Compared to some other NGBs on the project, England Hockey's NGB leads were able to engage in less 1-2-1 support from thinkBeyond. They also provided verbal feedback that it had been harder for them to engage their wider organisation. This is despite receiving 34 staff and 25 athlete responses to their stakeholder engagement survey. The more that environmental sustainability is made a clear priority by senior leadership and the more dedicated time and resource that can be allocated, the better engagement is likely to be in future projects.
- England Hockey flagged that they needed a more grassroots focus in elements of their strategy (specifically, within their 'playing environment' pillar). This was at odds to other NGBs, who all had a clear focus on high performance (HP). In addition, it was then difficult to engage England Hockey in 1-2-1 time to tailor their action plan more closely to their needs. Future programmes should encourage NGB leads to have dedicated time available for 1-2-1 support and also match NGBs as closely as possible within assessment criteria (such as their HP vs grassroots remit) to allow clusters to receive support that is as relevant as possible.

*"We feel fairly confident understanding and taking our action plans forward, but it's the first time we've done it and it's not yet implemented so hard to assess if the outputs will work!" – NGB lead*

## Fundamentals



## Expanding impact

- Programmes/ activities
- Communicating impact
- Driving commercial revenue
- Sharing best practice

## Before

## After

2/5	2/5
1/5	2/5
1/5	2/5
1/5	1/5

*\*The information on this page is informed by verbal feedback from the NGB, observations from the thinkBeyond team, reflections from UK Sport and an evaluation survey completed by the EH NGB lead.*

## Starting point and key barriers for the NGB:

UK Athletics (UKA) was at the start of their sustainability journey. Prior to the Alliance project, an initial framework (highlighting priority areas including; events, staff and athlete travel, partnerships and procurement, facilities and operations) had been created by passionate individuals in the organisation who are leading this work alongside their main roles. There was some senior sponsorship, but board-level sign-off for a strategy had not happened. There was pressure for action from key stakeholders including event teams, local councils, World Athletics and outspoken athletes. The wider organisation was early on in both awareness and understanding of environmental sustainability. So far, UKA has not begun implementing coordinated activities to support a strategy and was not measuring impact. However, there was some good work happening via the event teams already. A key barrier will be financial and human resources to implement the strategy given UKA's current financial position. Major opportunities include leading and driving change by influencing the 6,000 smaller athletics events around the UK that UKA licence.

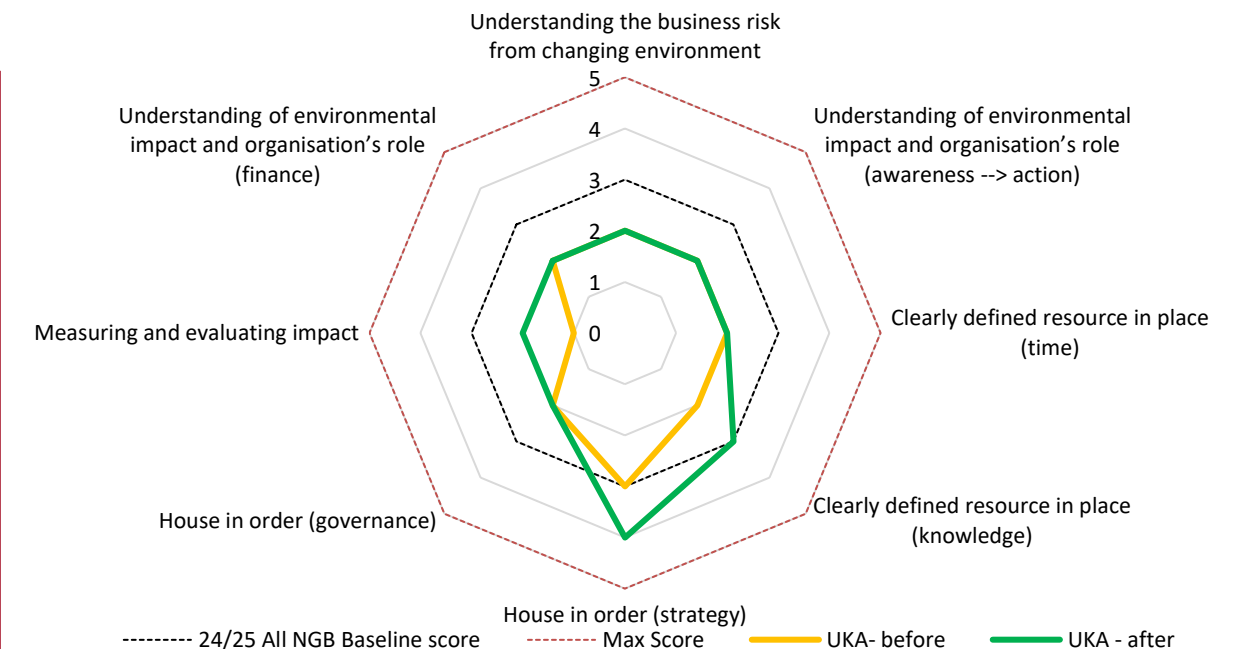
## The main changes that happened during the project:

- ✓ Some increase in NGB leads confidence and knowledge
- ✓ Have a clear environmental sustainability action plan (it is worth noting, there were some gaps in the strategy development process for UKA. Particularly that the stakeholder engagement survey was unable to be circulated during the project)
- ✓ Have a measurement & evaluation tool available
- ✓ Some changes in 'expanding impact' section of the maturity assessment criteria – having developed the start of a narrative to communicate their plans and building understanding of how to engage prospective commercial partners
- No carbon footprint calculated (UKA were unable to collect all the necessary data to calculate their carbon footprint during this project. However, the activities to measure, and list of data was provided to UKA and the NGB lead confirmed understanding of how to collect the data. So, it is possible for these tools to be used moving forward)
- Plans to present UKAs updated strategy to CEO and board were highlighted, but unclear whether this happened during the project
- Whether organisation wide awareness, understanding and buy in increased during the project was unclear
- Some understanding of climate risk and some action being taken, but no formal evaluation delivered as part of this project

## NGB specific learnings:

- UKA's current financial situation, along with other organisational factors meant allocating time and resource to environmental sustainability could not be made a priority during the Alliance project. The extent to which the NGB could move forward was therefore severely limited compared to other Alliance members. Future programmes should consider whether an NGB is experiencing particularly challenging circumstances and consider tailoring expectations and support to that NGB to allow for those circumstances.

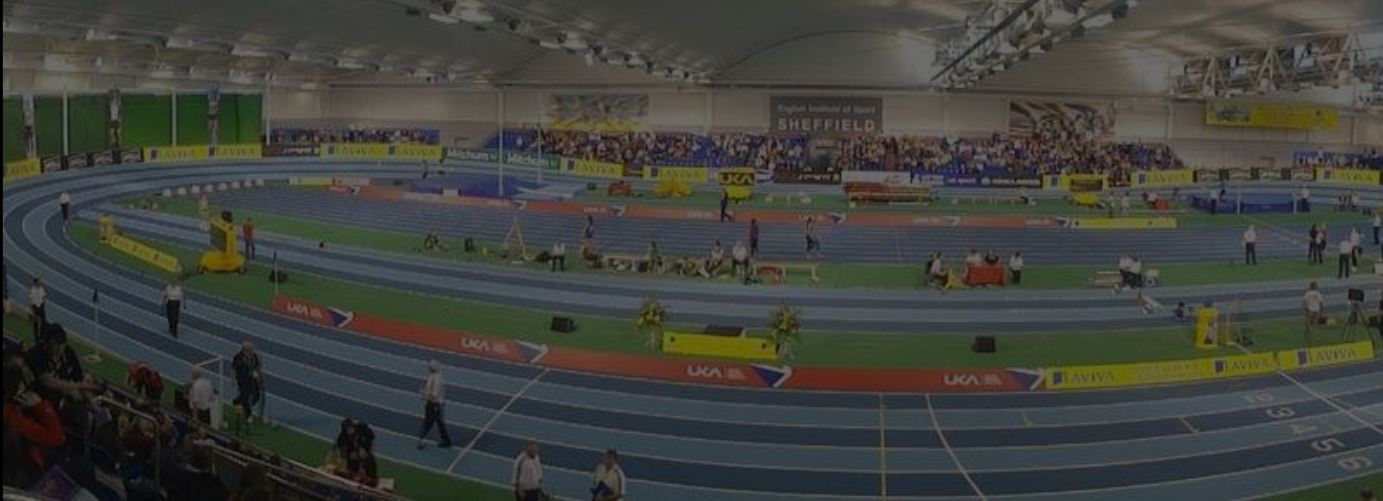
## Fundamentals



## Expanding impact

	Before	After
• Programmes/ activities	2/5	2/5
• Communicating impact	1/5	2/5
• Driving commercial revenue	2/5	2/5
• Sharing best practice	1/5	1/5

\*The information on this page is informed by verbal feedback from the NGB, observations from the thinkBeyond team and reflections from UK Sport (please note: UKA was unable to complete the evaluation survey).



# Appendix.



powering success  
inspiring impact

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# Learning and evaluation methodology in full

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The maturity assessment criteria we measured each NGB against at the start of the project and then used to measure project success against objectives and learning outcomes

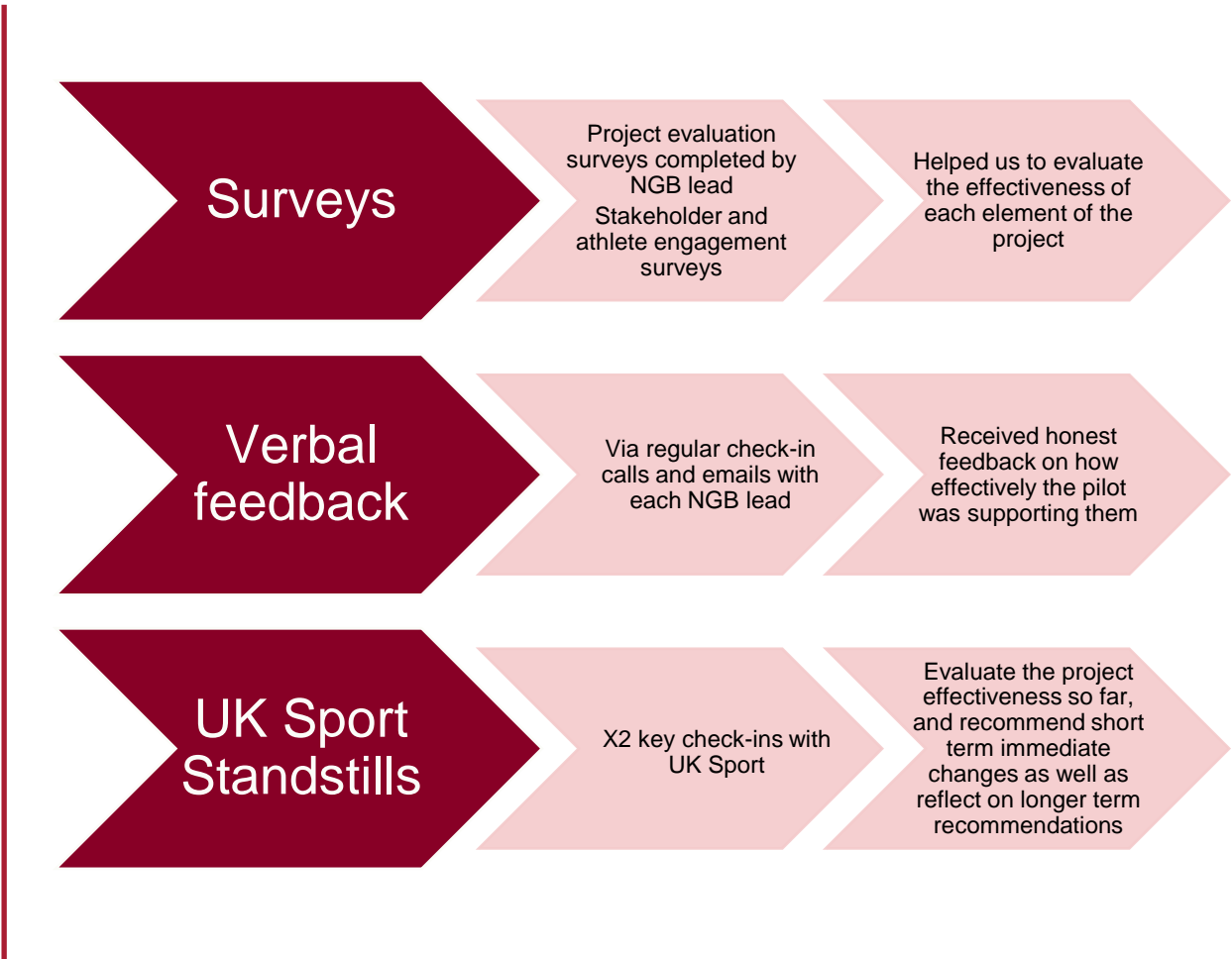
# Learning and evaluation methodology and process



We developed a maturity assessment criteria



We learned and evaluated success against that criteria throughout the project



# Maturity assessment criteria in full



Criteria	Rating (1-5)	Best practice
Understanding of business risk from changing environment	1 - Little to no assessment across the NGB of the risk 2 - Some understanding of the risk but no formal evaluation and actions taken ad hoc to deal with issues on a short-term basis 3 - Full risk evaluation and strategic plans in place to address short-, medium- and long-term change 4 - Local advocacy with wider stakeholders around reducing relevant environmental risks 5 - Influencing wider policy change around relevant environmental risks	Evaluation of the risk to the business of changing climatic conditions and other environmental factors
Understanding of environmental sustainability and the organisation's role	1 - Very little awareness across the NGB of the importance of environmental sustainability 2 - Some do know the importance of sustainability, but the majority don't 3 - Most people recognise the importance of sustainability, and are willing to do more 4 - Most people know the importance of sustainability and there are some good examples of people taking action 5 - As an NGB we recognise the importance of sustainability and actively try to use our wider spheres of influence (people, partners etc.) to encourage positive action on this topic.	Full, organisation wide understanding and buy in of organisations opportunity to create impact, the assets available to deliver it
Clearly defined team in place (time and knowledge)	1 - No resource 2 - Someone takes it on, in a voluntary capacity, in addition to their existing role 3 - Someone has it formally recognised as part of their role 4 - There is a part-time role specialist role looking at environmental sustainability (internal or external) 5 - There is a full-time role looking at environmental sustainability with resource allocated to deliver it (internal or external)	Team responsible for ensuring that there are outcomes around social impact and sustainability activity and appropriate resource allocated to deliver
House in order strategy	1 - We meet our legal compliance and that is it 2 - We place internal or external value on sustainability, but nothing else 3 - We have a sustainability policy and are working on developing our environmental sustainability strategy/action plan 4 - We have a sustainability policy, and we have a strategy/commitment around this topic established 5 - We have a policy, strategy/commitment established around this topic and actively try to use our wider spheres of influence (people, partners etc.) to encourage positive action on this topic.	An embedded environmental impact and sustainability action plan with the governance to support it. (e.g., senior leadership buy-in and someone accountable)
House in order governance	1 - No, not at all - and don't think they would support 2 - No, but they would support going forward 3 - Yes, I think they understand the importance and would support this agenda going forward 4 - Yes, they understand the importance and already actively support this agenda 5 - Yes, they understand the importance and someone in SMT is accountable to this agenda	
Programmes/ activities	1 - No current delivery of actions within environmental sustainability plans 2 - Some ad hoc delivery of actions within environmental sustainability plans 3 - Some programme delivery of actions within environmental sustainability plans 4 - Good programme delivery of actions within environmental sustainability plans including connectivity around impact activity incl. athletes, major events, relevant stakeholders, suppliers, partners 5 - Excellent delivery of actions within environmental sustainability plans including connectivity around impact activity incl. athletes, major events, relevant stakeholders, suppliers, partners	Ongoing progress against action plan Utilising all assets to drive change Connectivity of environmental impact activity, incl. athletes, major events and engaged with relevant stakeholders
Measuring and evaluating impact	1 - No, we don't measure anything in relation to environmental sustainability 2 - Yes, we measure some environmental data/actions/initiatives, but it is very ad hoc and high level 3 - Yes, have started to measure environmental data/actions/initiatives 4 - Yes, we measure some environmental data/actions/initiatives and actively use this to support improvement to what we do 5 - As above, and we actively report this externally	Measurement and evaluation occurs Clear carbon footprint methodology in place Sustainability plan in place to support and clear cycle of continuous improvement
Communicating impact	1 - No communication 2 - Defined narrative for sustainability at the NGB and some ad hoc communication on 'good news stories' related to NGB activity 3 - Plan in place for communicating environmental sustainability externally to stakeholders 4 - Environmental sustainability central to NGB communication plans, data driven progress underpins messaging and stories 5 - Environmental sustainability activity fully integrated into NGB communications plans, purpose and messaging. Impact reports released	Defined narrative Creating engaging and compelling content using all assets e.g., staff, volunteers, athletes, major events
Driving commercial revenue	1 - No consideration of environmental sustainability as part of commercial discussion 2 - Some consideration of environmental sustainability as an important driver of commercial partner conversations 3 - Good understanding of role of environmental sustainability in driving commercial partner conversations 4 - Environmental sustainability is central to drive conversations with commercial partners (with 1-2 partners secured) 5 - Environmental sustainability is fully embedded into partner strategy with all partners considered based on their alignment to NGB commitments with environmental sustainability action plan	Engaging partners and driving additional revenue
Sharing best practice	1 - No wider sharing 2 - Sharing some ad hoc announcements regarding environmental sustainability that show NGB activity in action 3 - Good, regular sharing of activity 4 - Coordinated strategy for sharing best practice activity and impact 5 - Leading and sharing relevant knowledge within the sector	Share expertise with others to drive improvement across the sector