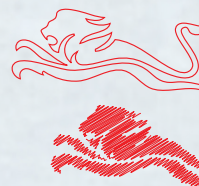


SPEAKING UP FOR SUSTAINABILITY

A SIMPLE GUIDE FOR TEAM ENGLAND ATHLETES



Climate change is already reshaping how we train, compete and enjoy sport — from flooded pitches and courts to rising energy costs that put pressure on the facilities we rely on. As summers get hotter, extreme heat is becoming a real barrier to staying active, especially for disabled people, older adults and those with long term health conditions. These challenges are tough, but they're also a wake up call — and across England, athletes, clubs and communities are stepping up to protect their sports and plan for the future through sustainability in sport.

Team England and Sport England are working together to shine a light on sustainability in sport ahead of the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games.

For Team England at Glasgow 2026, sustainability isn't about perfection; it's about making better choices, being honest about the challenges and using the power of sport to inspire change. We're already taking practical steps: from more sustainable kit, to choosing sea freight over air freight, reusing surplus kit, prioritising coach and train travel, and supporting greener venues.

This toolkit gives you simple ways to talk confidently about climate change, how it affects your sport and what we can all do to protect the places we play.



START WITH YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE

The strongest message is usually the simplest: this affects my sport.

Climate and environmental change are already disrupting sport- from extreme heat and poor air quality to flooding, water pollution, cancelled fixtures and unpredictable training conditions. For some athletes that means tougher hot weather training; for others it's polluted open water, waterlogged pitches, damaged facilities or unsafe competition environments.

"I'm not a climate expert, but I know what it means when the places we train and compete are affected. Protecting the environment is part of protecting sport."

"For athletes, this isn't abstract. It affects our health, our safety, our preparation, our performance and the places we love."

Try saying 





KEEP IT PERSONAL, NOT PREACHY

People respond better to honesty than perfection and you do not have to claim you have solved everything.

Talk about small changes that fit your life: how you fuel, your kit or how you travel. For instance, using a refillable bottle, repairing or reusing kit, reducing waste, choosing lower-impact food when available, car-sharing, taking train or coach journeys where possible, or supporting clubs and events that make greener choices.

"I'm trying to make better choices where I can. It's not about being perfect – it's about progress."

"Athletes don't control everything, especially around travel and competition schedules. But we can still make choices, ask questions and encourage better systems."



USE YOUR PLATFORM TO POINT TOWARDS SOLUTIONS AND POSITIVE CHANGES YOU'RE SEEING

Athlete voices carry weight. You can help fans, clubs, sponsors and event organisers see that sustainability is part of the future of sport.

Focus on practical improvements: less single-use plastic, better recycling, reusable event materials, more durable kit, smarter travel, energy-efficient venues, healthier food choices, and facilities that can cope with hotter, wetter and more unpredictable conditions.

"Sport has always adapted and innovated. Sustainability is another chance to lead."

"We can make events better for athletes, fans and the planet without losing what makes sport special."



CONNECT SUSTAINABILITY TO PERFORMANCE AND FAIRNESS

Yes, this is about protecting climate and nature. But it is also about athlete welfare, safe competition, access to sport and fairness between communities.

The Commonwealth brings together countries already facing very different climate pressures – from heat and drought to storms, flooding and coastal risk. That gives athletes a powerful reason to speak with care and solidarity.

"Sustainability matters because every athlete deserves safe places to train, compete and recover."

"This is also about fairness. Some communities and countries are feeling the effects much more sharply, even though they have contributed least to the problem."



BE READY FOR DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

You may be asked: "But athletes fly to events – isn't that hypocritical?" It's a fair question. A good answer is honest and calm:

"Elite sport does involve travel, and we should be honest about that. The point is not to pretend there is no impact. The point is to reduce what we can, improve the systems around us, and use our influence to push for better choices."

OR:

"I can't change everything on my own. But I can use my voice, make better choices where I can, and support organisations that are taking this seriously."

Try saying

Be ready

THREE SIMPLE MESSAGES TO REMEMBER

Protect the places we play. Sport depends on clean air, safe water, healthy green spaces and resilient venues.

Progress, not perfection. Nobody gets everything right. What matters is making better choices and asking better questions.

Athletes can lead without being experts. Your story, your sport and your values are enough.

