

Dear Members

As we enter the summer months we felt it would be appropriate to issue a few updates to keep everyone informed of the current areas of focus outside our normal activity.

5 Year Plan

Our 5 Year plan vision and review identified areas of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within our strategic and operational objectives. In consultation with all departments we have been on a journey to address all areas with a view to making improvements. The 5 Year plan elements are our compass to help formulate policy and decisions. Key focus areas have been presentation of the course, clubhouse, and standard of facilities offered and associated staff service levels delivered with each and every encounter with our members or guests. The above, as you would expect, have been coupled with a strong financial rigour to ensure we operate within our agreed budgets.

Obviously, it is you who will ultimately decide if things are progressing in the right direction and the result of our forthcoming annual survey (which you should have received on 30th may via email) will give us a better insight, so please make the effort to complete it before the new closing date of Friday 22nd June.

Clubhouse

The Clubhouse plays a major role in delivering a 5 Year Plan that includes, not only the recruitment of new members, but also the retention of our current members. This means providing for an increasingly diverse community of golf and social membership. To this end, we have been looking at ways in which the management of the clubhouse environment can offer a more comfortable and enjoyable atmosphere for all. To date we have:

- Redecorated the restaurant to provide a fresher look.
- Closed the dividers between the restaurant and the bar to reduce the noise levels throughout the clubhouse.
- Restricted the number of diners in the restaurant to 80 at any one sitting, which also complies with health and safety regulations.
- Cleaned the clubhouse curtains.
- Included a section on the club survey that invites members to tell us how they engage with the restaurant and what their dining preferences might be.
- Introduced a more accessible coffee machine at reasonable prices to encourage member engagement with the clubhouse particularly when the bar and kitchen is closed.
- Agreed with the caterers a strategy for refocusing their business towards member and guest satisfaction rather than corporate hospitality by offering regular Sunday lunches throughout the year.
- Encouraged the caterers to offer more 'themed' evenings throughout the year for members and guests.

- Replaced the aging plasma TV with a smart TV so both now have access to Sky HD.
- Networked the TVs to enable the communication of club information, including competition results.

All of this, of course, has been carried out within a clubhouse that is now showing its age. This year we have had to deal with a number of unforeseen events such as; the rising damp in the changings rooms and the consequent refurbishment; the increasing ineffectiveness of the main boilers during very cold weather; the replacement in the kitchen of several major items such as a water heater, a fridge, an oven and the overhead lighting.

Our future plans are to replace the carpets in the dining room and to refurbish or replace the dining chairs that are now creaking and worn with age.

All of the above would have been of a far greater cost if we were not able to use the internal expertise and labour of our own staff. Many thanks must go to the volunteers who have supported the work of the Board and in particular to Robin Marling, whose inventory work has helped us obtain a clearer idea of what's required in the future (not forgetting his fire officer duties!) and to Marc Davies, whose gardening skills have freshened up the clubhouse and first tee surrounds.

Caterers

Whilst all departments have been consulted, a few members have asked if one of our objectives is to change our caterers. This is certainly not the case as we are aware their food quality is the envy of many other clubs and previous experience suggests comparable replacements would be hard to find.

We simply are undergoing due diligence to ensure operational H&S legal compliance, optimise and measure membership engagement and finally ensure there exists a fair financial balance to cover the annual kitchen cost base once all associated revenue streams have been accounted for.

Greens Forum

On the issue of the course the irrigation system is now fully operational and hopefully we will see continuous improvement on both greens and aprons and indeed the tee boxes in the future. Steve and the finance team should be congratulated that everything has been completed within budget and whilst the contractors did overrun on their schedule, we are all set for the season ahead.

Our greens forum has highlighted all the areas, which have been improved. At the forum we did acknowledge the concerns from some of our members in relation to the tidiness of certain areas around the course suggesting these relatively small jobs should have been completed by now. Now that the irrigation project is

complete, we thank the conscientious members for their constructive feedback and confirm a full programme will be started to tidy relevant areas.

Rule Changes 2019

The rule changes for 2019 can now be viewed on the R&A website
[World Handicap System 2020](#)

As you may be aware, the World Handicap System is being introduced from 2020.

Following our attendance at the recent WHS seminar, we would like to give you a brief outline of the information we were given at this early stage. The software still needs to be finalised.

Presently, there are six different governing bodies for golf worldwide and the new system will cover everyone.

There have been rumours about having to record your scores after each round played, whether in competition, or friendly golf; this is incorrect. Instead of an exact handicap as now, everyone will have a handicap index (also, to a decimal point based on your best EIGHT 18-hole rounds out of the last TWENTY). If you only play 9 holes at a time, the minimum requirement is 54 holes, which can be made up of any combination of 9 or 18. An average of the gross differential is then taken by the computer software (thank goodness!).

Competition rounds will all be included, there will be no such thing as a non-qualifier, and you will also be able to record friendly rounds as long as you indicate before play that this is your intention. This can be anywhere in the world that is linked to the System. It will not include Alliances, AmAms or Match Play.

You now have your handicap index, but this does not mean these are the shots you will receive! Each course will have a course rating and a slope rating based on difficulty, and this will be on show at each club. You will need to check these with your handicap index on the chart provided. A difficult course will give you more shots and an easier one fewer. This is the WHS as we understand it at present but future seminars will be attended.

Pauline Belsham (2018/19 Handicap Secretary)

Mike Sterry (Chairman, H&C)

Membership

Now that we have evaluated the attrition rate in relation to our members post subscription date, we are pleased to announce that there has been no material difference from previous years. We have, however, seen an improvement in the rate of new membership inquiries for full members, intermediates, trial memberships and juniors with many interviews having already taken place. Hopefully, these and future events will lead to an overall increase by year end.

Resolution re rules Articles and rules update

We have completed the first phase of the Club rules review in light of the suggested deletions and amendments by members. The second phase will be a proposed new version of the rules recommended by the Board. The consultation period, during which further suggestions can be made, will run until the end of June. The Board will then publish a completed version of the rules for adoption at the AGM in August.

Junior report 2018

We are now half way through the year so I would just like to update everyone at the club on the progress we have made with the Junior section thus far. This year we wanted to really ignite the section, we put a great deal of effort into developing a 5-year strategic plan throughout the winter to inspire growth and sustainability. We have a new junior organiser to run, organise competitions and social events throughout the year to give the juniors an opportunity to get more involved with the club outside of the academy coaching days.

The whole emphasis of the plan was centred around 5 elements:

- Pathway: Creating a clear pathway through the academy into the club
- Progression: Having an academy which is structured and centred on progression
- Safety: Create a safe environment for children to learn and have fun in
- Fun: To increase retention, we aim to make all coaching sessions enjoyable
- Sustainability: To create a consistent flow of juniors into the academy

We launched a new brand, the 'Elgar Academy' at the start of the year, with the objective to fill the academy. We had so much interest and people wanting to join that we had to add another group in order to handle the volume of interest. The academy is now at maximum capacity, which was one of our main goals for 2018 and we are extremely pleased with the feedback we've had.

Ryan will be launching a new schools program of coaching in order to create a constant flow of juniors into the new program to increase the sustainability of the section. We also aim to launch junior open days in the coming years with the end goal of being recognised as a higher achiever in junior development.

Going forward we plan to keep building the academy and look to progress more kids into the elite Elgar programme which is more structured, smaller group coaching on weekends. This will then get the more capable players entering club competitions and gaining valuable experience on the course.

I would just like to thank everyone who has supported the programme so far and a special mention to Sally Dare, Joyce Duncan, Dave Marshall and Tony Pullen for helping substantially so far.

Kind Regards

Paul

Members Achievements

Congratulations to the Droitwich Shield winners Dave Marshall, Jason Allies, Pete Lupino, Steve Lane, Phil Shurmer and Tom Howells who so admirably brought home this coveted Shield.

Congratulations also go to Grace Bowen who won the gross and nett prizes at Gaudet Luce Junior Open on the 27th May.

Celebrity Charity Event

Our Captain took on quite a challenge to host a celebrity invitational event on Thursday the 24th May. However, I am very pleased to announce it was a resounding success for not only the participants, but hopefully all the volunteers who generously gave their time to ensure the event went smoothly both on the course and within the clubhouse. Feedback has been excellent and I believe we now have raised the profile of The Worcestershire a little more with their endorsements. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the generosity of everyone involved ensured a wonderful contribution in excess of £6,000 towards the Alzheimer's Society.

Summary

It is always a task to determine just how much information our members require and whilst we try hard to understand your priorities, we hope our focus has been in the right areas up to now. To gather a better understanding of your needs and opinion's may I ask that you complete our membership survey recently issued and indeed, if for some reason this has not arrived in your email could you please contact Judi to address this issue.