

Chairman's Blog March 2021

Dear Member,

I am writing this, when we have just finished our first Q&A session with members. I think it went very well, with the Board answering 24 questions and the recording of the session is now on the forum for you to view and listen. We covered a multitude of topics including ...

- The roadmap plan for the golf course over the next 12-18 months.
- The current state of our finances and the many projects that the club have currently committed to do with your money.
- The 8-minute interval of tee times in the booking system
- The future of the online booking system (see below)
- The Board have agreed to swap the normal tee and the competition tee over on the 17th.

The Board have also made a couple of other recent decisions –

- In future elections of officers and directors, you will only be asked to vote 'for' somebody and not given the option to vote 'against', as we do not think this is appropriate.
- Steve Denman and Richard Evans have been given the go-ahead to do more work, straight away on improving the 13th tee (to get as much done as possible before we re-open).
- We will not be increasing subscriptions in June for 2021/22.
- There will no election of officers at October's AGM, as this will be only 8 months following their election in February.
- We have decided to send out a survey to canvass members' opinions on whether we should keep the online booking system or not. Watch this space.
- When we re-open visitors/green fees & guests will not be able to book any tee times for the first 6 weeks, allowing members as much availability as possible. Societies will be able to book from mid May. However we have 3 societies who had booked to play in April and we have already re-scheduled them once before, so we have decided to allow them to play. We hope you will understand. Thank you.

Important points from the minutes of March's Board Meeting are:

As the 'Ladies' are an official section of the club's membership, the Board has agreed that they should be given 2 reserved slots on a Saturday morning at 10.30am and 4 reserved slots on a Thursday at 09.00am. This is in line with how they operated pre-Covid.

Course and clubhouse re-opening – details of this has been posted on the forum and a recent email has also been sent to all members, to clarify how things will operate from 29 March.

Furloughs – we have reviewed the staff furloughs and it has been agreed that the admin staff will return full-time from 29 March and the bar staff will return on shifts from 12 April. Jan Murphy will start again on 1 April to do the ordering and the staff rotas and then after Easter, to get the bar and cellar ready.

Front signage – we are looking to replace the front Club sign with a fresh look, which Mick Avery has very kindly offered to do for us free of charge. Thank you once again, Mick.

Membership – we are still receiving requests for membership. 10 more since the beginning of March, giving us a nett increase of 68 new members, since pre-Covid. The Board feels that we still need to communicate with the new members in explaining how the club has previously operated, as they have only experienced us during the pandemic.

Society bookings in 2021 – Bharat Patel and myself will soon be carrying out a review of all bookings received this year and then we will decide whether we need to do any more promotion on this.

Open week – once we have seen the level of renewals in May/June, the Board will consider whether we should hold an Open week, to attract more visitors/green fees and possible new members.

Clubhouse functions – we are definitely going to do some more advertising in the next few months, to promote our function facilities. Also Bharat Patel is looking at the events already planned for this year and will be looking to organise some new events for members straightaway in July and August. Watch this space.

The Board have decided to try out a tracking unit for security of our buggies. More on this to follow.

Steve Denman, Richard Evans & myself are scheduled to meet soon to discuss our priorities for the course roadmap. I hope to have the 1st draft for all to see in April.

We are putting up a few more signs re. private property before we re-open on 29 March, so if you do come across any members of the public walking across the course and not realising that we are back in operation, please point out to them as politely as possible that the course is private property, for use by members of the golf club only and direct them towards the foot path running from Oaks Lane down to Oaks Farm. Thank you.

We are very pleased to say that we have finished a few outstanding projects, ready for our re-opening. These include a new heated parasol cover on the patio (primarily for smokers' use), a fresh coat of paint and improved lighting in the players' bar, further work on the new 13th tee and Larry Coyne has kindly agreed to re-tarmac where the oak tree was removed in the front car park.

As stated previously, we are continuing with the re-decoration of the exterior of the clubhouse and outbuildings and Larry Coyne, our house director, is considering new options for the ladies entrance. However, the Board have agreed that temporarily, the ladies will be able to use the main front entrance to access their changing rooms, golf shoes (not spikes) and carry bags will be allowed, but obviously not trolleys. Once again, thank you for your understanding.

Finally, new posters will be going up soon, to remind members of the dress code for the clubhouse and on the course.

Thank you for your patience if you have managed to get this far, well done. Hopefully you are now up to date with what's going on at YOUR golf club.

Best regards

Keith Povah, Chairman