



RECRUITMENT OF PGA PROFESSIONAL



INFORMATION PACK FOR PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS

August 2020

***NOTE: Closing date for applications extended to
Sunday 4th October 2020***

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BACKGROUND TO THE APPOINTMENT

Some three years ago Aboyne went through a major strategic review identifying areas for streamlining operations to ensure the club serviced the needs of members and visitors whilst operating within tight financial parameters. The resulting restructure dispensed with the role of Club Secretary and combined the responsibilities of Club Professional in to a rounded 'Director of Golf' appointment.

This new opportunity attracted a high level of interest and we were fortunate to recruit a PGA Professional who brought high levels of membership engagement and customer care to the role. Such was his impact, his standing in the industry drew the attention of other leading clubs and when an opportunity presented itself to return on promotion to his native Central Belt of Scotland, he accepted the opportunity. Naturally we were disappointed to lose such a well-regarded Pro, but we were also delighted that he could advance his career based on his learnings at Aboyne: he left with our full endorsement.

With the subsequent COVID-19 lockdown and closure of our course and clubhouse at the start of this season, the Council at Aboyne decided not to seek an immediate replacement. Having now recommenced operations, we are looking to appoint another PGA Pro in good time for the start of the 2021 season.

We aspire to attract another gifted, ambitious and highly driven Pro who is possibly looking for their first stand-alone appointment where they can build on the foundations we have put in place whilst continuing to evolve our offering and our growing reputation and standing in the golfing community. Candidates will wish to note that our previous Pro (Fraser Dunlop) is willing to talk to fellow PGA members about the opportunity and his time with the club.

LOCATION

Set in the heart of Royal Deeside, Aboyne Golf Club sits on the eastern edge of the historic Cairngorms National Park and is truly a captivating setting for golfers offering a memorable challenge.



Some 30 miles West of Aberdeen on the A93, the route is popular for tourists with the adjoining 'Queen Victoria' trail leading to the royal residence at Balmoral. The area also attracts visitors as part of the Grampian 'Castles and Whisky Trail'.

Aboyne is under an hour from Aberdeen International Airport with connecting flights to most UK airports and the European hubs of Amsterdam and Paris. It is also well served to various Scandinavian countries.

The Central Belt of Scotland is around two-hours away with dual-carriageway along the A90 through Dundee or the more scenic route over Braemar on the A93. Inverness is also around two-hours north over the Cairngorm plateau. The nearest railhead is Stonehaven (some 30 minutes away from Aboyne) with overnight 'Caledonian Sleeper' connections to London.

OVERVIEW OF ABOYNE VILLAGE

Aboyne village is located ½ mile from the course. It is a picturesque close-knit Royal Deeside community centred around a large village green. It is served by a variety of traditional shops and a well-stocked recently refurbished Co-Operative store. The village has a small selection of hotels, pubs and B&B facilities catering for passing tourist trade.

The village has a primary and nursery school comprising some 400 pupils and an Academy with close ties to the golf club. Presently some 650 pupils come to Aboyne Academy from a variety of outlying feeder primary schools. The Academy is held in high regard and has formed a strategic partnership with the club supporting us on a range of marketing issues.

A video giving an overview of the village together with an indication of current property prices can be found at [Aboyne video from Aberdeen Solicitors Property Centre \(ASPC\)](#)

CLUB OVERVIEW

A private members Club, Aboyne is the oldest on Royal Deeside established in 1883. Originally founded on Aboyne village green, the course moved to Formaston Park in 1905 and was developed by architect Archie Simpson. The layout remained virtually the same from 1913 until new holes on the back nine were added in 1990 by renowned designer Martin Hawtree.



The Club has a membership of around 630 drawn from all walks of life and is considered to be very friendly and welcoming by visitors. It is very much an all-inclusive and family orientated club being part of the local community. The membership is long serving with a sizeable number of members commuting out to Aboyne from Aberdeen to play their golf such is the high regard the course and club are held in.

The club this year has joined the 'PlayMoreGolf' syndicate which has attracted a number of new members seeking greater flexibility in their membership.

The Men's Section holds competitions Wednesday and at weekends which are well attended. The men's team has been successful in winning the Deeside League in the last few seasons.

The club also has a very active Men's Senior section which competes on a Tuesday and regularly plays matches against a host of other clubs in the region.

The Ladies Section holds competitions Wednesday and at weekends. We are fortunate to have a number of young female golfers who are part of the Scottish Golf elite set up. We are proud to be the home club of the current Scottish Golf Women's Amateur Champion 2019.

We currently use the 'Club Systems International Club V1' programme together with 'BRS' tee booking system. Later this year we plan to gradually introduce the Scottish Golf VMS application.

JUNIOR SECTION

The club is fortunate to have an active junior section playing their medal competitions on a Tuesday night attracting upwards of 30 youngsters. Juniors progress from initial 3-hole, thru 5, 9 to become 18-hole players. This high attendance stems from the work done by the Primary Schools 'Active Schools Co-Ordinator' based at Aboyne Academy encouraging youngsters into the game. In addition, golf camps have been provided by our PGA Professional in the Easter and Summer holidays.

The club participates in the Aberdeen and District Junior Pennant League (ADJPL) and reached the regional finals in 2019. We are fortunate to have several juniors – both male



and female - who have progressed on to represent the club at regional and national level. Indeed, a number have elected to make a career in the sport and have or are now studying in the USA on golfing scholarship.

MEMBERSHIP OF BODIES

Aboyne is an affiliated member of Scottish Golf (SG). The club has worked hard over the last few years to enhance its relationship with the governing body and has utilised the full range of business support services and planning tools provided by SG.

The club also supports the regional Destination Management Organisation (DMO) 'VisitAberdeenshire'. In this capacity, the club has representation on the 'Golf Industry Board' which is tasked with setting the future strategy and subsequent promotion of golf in the region.

THE COURSE

Aboyne offers golfers of all abilities a memorable challenge. The long-established course has won many plaudits as one of the best maintained, varied and challenging inland courses in Scotland.



Such is Aboyne's growing reputation, in 2016 it was selected by the governing body to host the "Scottish Golf Women's County Finals". In 2017, the club was asked by Scottish Golf to host the Scottish Golf Junior Open regional qualifier.

2018 saw the R&A award the club the 'Ladies Coronation Foursomes Regional Finals'. Also, in 2018, Scottish Golf held the Men's North-East Open at Aboyne attracting scratch

players from across Scotland.

Visitors are delighted with the contrast found between the front and back nine. The course presents a rich variety of holes making the most of the natural variations in the terrain which is a mix of rolling parkland with inviting fairways and elevated links-like heathland with tighter targets. Mature trees and water are in play on many holes.

Aboyne Loch is a notable feature lending character and scenic beauty to the course as well as providing a hazard to be avoided on the last hole of the relatively flat outward tree-lined parkland nine. Thereafter, the course changes character to rugged heathland and climbs gently providing magnificent panoramic views over the Aberdeenshire countryside.



Golfers are tested by the course's distinctive feature which see several holes with undulating fairways formed around the historic 'rigg and furrows' of medieval farming which add a unique terrain challenge. Lying on free-draining soil, the course enjoys a surprisingly dry micro-climate.

The club has a practice ground and short-game area as well as putting green and a brand new 2-bay practice net facility. A major project last winter saw the re-establishment of 'Grants Lochie' at the 6th hole to give golfers even more risk and reward options on the course. Further course enhancements are planned.

A promotional video of the course can be seen here: <https://youtu.be/3Eq1IHBcV84>

THE CLUBHOUSE

The original clubhouse was replaced in the 1970's and offers stunning panoramic views around the course, across Aboyne Loch, and along the River Dee valley towards 'Lochnagar' mountain range and the Royal residence at Balmoral.



The club offers a full range of bar and catering services with food being provided by our recently appointed and highly regarded contractor Mike Taylor and his team. Bar operations are run in-house.

The upstairs dining and bar areas have recently gone through a major refurbishment programme to modernise the clubhouse and attract additional local residents to become social members of the club.

Within the downstairs area of the clubhouse there is a dedicated shop for the Professional which was upgraded with new lighting and shelving to allow an extensive range of stock to be carried as well as a back-office repair facility. The club offers electric buggy hire administered by the Professional.

THE CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

Renowned as one of the best maintained, varied and challenging inland courses in the Scotland, we have a growing reputation and standing as we service our existing membership, society and outings, and UK and Overseas visitors. Our websites features translations in Dutch, German, French, Spanish, Norwegian, Danish and Swedish to cater for the wide array of Northern European golfers who visit combining golfing holidays on beautiful Royal Deeside as well as exploring the array of local castles, distilleries and the Royal residence at Balmoral.

As we prepare for the 2021 season, we seek to appoint a PGA Professional with the vision, values, and drive to make our club a preferred golfing destination of choice.

The role offers an exceptional opportunity to be your own boss and establish your own reputation and standing within the industry as you will be the focal point for all golfing activities at the club. The role would suit an established PGA Professional looking for a new challenge or for an Assistant Professional looking to progress their career in their first stand-alone appointment.

If you can offer us dynamism and flair, with strong sales, marketing and customer care experience then we would be keen to meet you.

The overall objective of the role is to deliver a cost-effective, efficient golf operations service to members and guests using modern management systems and technology. As this is a significant customer-oriented role, it is essential to have a strong passion for golf, providing a level of service in which attention to detail is paramount.

Whilst not exhaustive, we would envisage the following key responsibilities: -

- Day to day management and administration of all golf operations within the parameters of the Club's business plan and approved budget.
- Provide a first-class golfing service consistent with the standards, policies, procedures and ethos of the Club.
- Establish and maintain robust management tools, metrics and reporting structures to ensure the effective running and reporting to Council of all areas of golf operations. Manage the

BRS tee booking system to its full potential generating and analysing playing trends and providing appropriate regular reports to Council to maximise course usage.

- Maintain insights into relevant market trends to provide understanding, direction and guidance to Council around planned new sales and membership initiatives. Determine areas in which the recruitment of new members could be achieved, and where green fees, society use, and functions/events might be enhanced.
- Devise and implement pro-active communication tools, both internally and externally, aimed at retaining members, driving recruitment, and pursuing visitor revenue streams. Ensure all promotional activity is properly structured, communicated and delivered to the highest order.
- Develop strategic partnerships and commercial relationships with the local business community, golf societies, tour operators, event organisers and other relevant bodies and agencies so that Aboyne is clearly identified as a leading golfing destination in the region.
- Continue to raise the club's profile in the local area supporting and strengthening our community involvement. Build relationships with the general public, local stakeholders and prospective new members (both playing and social) with particular emphasis on the attraction and long-term development of juniors to the club.
- Establish and operate an appropriately stocked shop and repair facility providing expert advice and a quality service within the operating hours agreed with Council.
- Recruit and employ a shop support team ensuring they maintain a professional and welcoming approach. Train and enforce consistent customer service standards.
- Organise the arrangements for all visiting Societies, negotiating green fees etc... Operate as a Course Starter and Marshall to ensure speed of play and compliance to local regulations as well as appropriate behaviour on and off course.
- Deliver tailored coaching to members and visitors at fees agreed with the Council.
- Work with respective sub-committees in the administration of competitive golf. Assist in the organisation and running of tournaments, providing expert advice on rules, and helping to maintain handicap records.
- Secure, protect and maintain all Club assets whether financial, stock, buildings or equipment.
- Ensure compliance with all applicable Health & Safety legislation. Manage and keep under constant review all H&S issues. In conjunction with the Head Greenkeeper, ensure that risk assessments for the grounds and course are carried out on a regular basis in compliance with best practice. Ensure that the course is monitored for dangerous playing conditions and that appropriate action is taken as needed.

This list of responsibilities, duties and tasks may be revised or extended by Council.

THE LIKELY CANDIDATE

We are open-minded as to the level of experience candidates should have: the appointment is more to do with the cultural and strategic fit rather than previous background and length of prior service. Amongst the attributes the successful candidate will likely need to demonstrate are: -

- Abundant energy with a clear passion to grow the game. A candidate who possesses the necessary vision to develop the club, its ethos, standards and reputational standing based on a continuous improvement ethic.

- Good operational experience in a golf environment demonstrating a strong track record of providing service excellence to members and visitors.
- Capable of producing, managing and presenting simple monthly operations and financial reports against agreed budgets and KPIs.
- Evidence of improving the profitability of an equivalent scale golfing entity based on sound business acumen and financial literacy.
- Possess competent IT skills with an appreciation of golf-specific membership, handicap and diary management computer systems. Proficient with email, internet and MS Office applications and the day to day management of websites.
- Good working knowledge of marketing and media channels with an aptitude to further develop our social media presence.
- Possess an entrepreneurial spirit with good time management skills. Adopts a flexible outlook and approach to working hours with a good sense of humour.
- Be clearly visible and proactive with a 'hands-on' management style and flexible approach. Enthusiasm for providing customer satisfaction at all levels and ages is paramount.
- Excellent command of oral and written English. Diplomacy skills coupled with an understanding of confidentiality and ability to practice it.

To be considered for this exceptional opportunity candidates will preferably hold the following: -

- Be a PGA Member ideally qualified or working towards AA status or above. Current PGA Assistants looking to further their career are encouraged to apply as this role offers a logical step up in responsibility and accountability.

The terms for this self-employed position are negotiable. The remuneration package will be designed to enable the successful candidate to deliver the required level of service to the club with the opportunity to benefit from the success of their own retail sales and coaching provision.

TO APPLY

Closing date for applications has been extended to Sunday 4th October. Virtual pre-screen interviews will be held on an adhoc basis. We would hope to meet candidates in early/mid October. Shortlisted candidates will likely be invited to present to Club Council in mid/late October. We would hope to conclude a formal offer to our preferred candidate in November 2020. We anticipate the appointed candidate would start in Jan / Feb 2021 or sooner if notice period and availability permits.

The appointment will be subject to, and dependent upon, the receipt of references and the carrying out of relevant 'Disclosure Scotland' checks for child protection requirements. You may be asked to undertake a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check or equivalent.

If you would like to be considered for this excellent opportunity, please email a cover letter and CV, demonstrating your suitability, with an indication of your remuneration to: president@aboynegolfclub.co.uk

For a confidential discussion prior to submitting your application then please email us at president@aboynegolfclub.co.uk and the head of the selection panel will contact you accordingly.

Aboyne Golf Club Council

1st September 2020