



Seascale Golf Club

New Members

Welcome Information Pack



Welcome

We are very pleased to welcome you as a new member of Seascale Golf Club and hope you will have a long association with the Club, enjoying quality golf and good company in pleasant surroundings.

This welcome pack is intended to help you get the most out of your membership and to highlight the facilities and activities available to you as a member of the Club. We want to make all of our members feel welcome. If you have any questions or any suggestions to make please speak to a member of staff, the Manager/Secretary or any member of Council who will be happy to help.

Club History and Background

Founded in 1893, Seascale links are the design of Willie Campbell and George Lowe. The course is a traditional links set out on three levels, with rolling fairways and testing greens, all maintained to the highest standards, offering golfers of all levels of ability an ideal place to test out and develop their skills.

The course measures 6450 yards played from the championship 'Blue' tees with a Course Rating 72.5 Slope 130 and Par of 71 (Yellow 6022 yards, CR 70.3 S 129 Par 71). In the summer on the firm links the ball rolls a long way and the greens can be fast and tricky, just as the designers had intended. As with all true links courses driving straight and keeping away from the rough is the formula for success. It is a course that stands the test of time, presenting an interesting challenge to the best amateurs and professionals, most recently for the Northern Counties 'Big Six' in 2017.

The clubhouse at Seascale provides a warm and relaxing atmosphere for all visitors. Snacks and meals are available throughout the day. The Club caters for individual golfers, parties and societies of whatever size. The Clubhouse has a public licence, so you don't have to be a golfer to enjoy the facilities. The staff pride themselves in offering good quality food from local suppliers, with great beers and refreshing drinks all backed up with good service.

Contact Details

Our Staff will be pleased to help you with any issues or questions. Contact details are as follows:

Postal address: Seascale Golf Club The Banks Seascale Cumbria CA20 1QL

E:mail address: seascalegolfclub@gmail.com

Telephone: 019467 28202 (Option 1 – Bar/Catering, Option 2 – Tee Bookings, Option 3 – Secretary)

Manager/Secretary: Alex Johnstone

House Manager: Kirsty Johnson

Chef: Kirsty Johnson and Lynn Gregg

Greenkeeper: Guy Lawson

Website: www.seascalegolfclub.co.uk

Registering on the Website

Getting registered - To obtain access to the members' section of the Club website as opposed to the publicly available information, members must register initially with their own password. Click on 'Register' at top right and provide the information requested. It is important to ensure that your e-mail address is the current one you are using and have given to be added to your details in the members' record system before trying to register on the website. The members' section or 'Hub' provides you with access to a lot of information about competitions, Club business etc.

You can book into competitions online via the website or HowDidIDo. The Club now requires members to book tee times for practice or social rounds through BRS members on-line booking via the website. Course availability can be found on the calendar on the website and on the BRS on-line Timesheet. During the Coronavirus emergency it is essential that members book their tee times so that track and trace is effective.

Everyone (including members) who play golf at Seascale must book a tee time. If you haven't already registered for this service please visit the website and click "Club" then "Members Online Booking". (You will get your user number from the Manager – and you will need to think of a password.) When you have registered you can book a tee through "Members Online Booking".

Playing after competitions: members should look at the tee sheet through HowDidIDo and tee off after the last tee time booked in the comp. If you haven't got access to the tee sheet and would like a game after the last group tees off then please phone the bar and they will tell you when the final tee time is.

For the few that would like to go out for a few holes after 7.00pm or just before it is getting dark, no booking is necessary.

We would remind members that booking a tee is a commitment to play at that time. This note is also stated on the booking page.

Management of the Club

Seascale is a private members club managed by a Council of elected members. The day-to-day running of the Club is the responsibility of the Manager/Secretary with the House Manager and Greenkeeper and their staff reporting to him. The Manager/Secretary is responsible for administrative aspects of the Club and Council activities, liaising with staff and with the Directors, Captain/Chairman and Chairmen of House and Greens. The business aspects of the Club are managed by the Manager/Secretary who reports to the Directors at regular management meetings. The Captain is the social focus of the Club. A Competition committee is responsible for organising and running competitions.

Seascale Golf Club is a limited company and a registered Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) whose Directors along with the Club Council are responsible for the smooth running of the CASC and for enhancing and promoting the enjoyment of the game of golf for every Seascale Golf Club member and potential member, working closely with the Club Staff to maximise the profitable use of the Clubhouse and create social opportunities for members.

Directors and Council are responsible for:

- a. Organisation of Club golf competitions and matches.
- b. General Rules and Procedures.
- c. Rules for competitions.
- d. Disciplinary matters.

Every year the Club holds its Annual General Meeting. This takes place towards the end of November and we encourage all members to attend. This provides an opportunity to offer suggestions and make a positive impact on how the Club is managed.

Etiquette Including Dress Code

The R&A rules of golf sets out the etiquette and standards expected by all players of golf and details can be found at:

<http://www.randa.org/rules/rulestsub/rulespage>

Seascale Golf Club is a friendly and welcoming Club. However, we do ask that members and visitors adhere to the guidelines below both on and off the course:

Course – Proper golfing attire is required at all times.

- Trousers. (No tracksuit / jogging bottoms, combat trousers or jeans) - Shirts with collars and sleeves. (No vests allowed) - Golf shoes – not trainers. - Smart fitted shorts. (No cycling shorts / football shorts or highly decorated bermuda shorts) - If wearing a peak cap, it must be worn with the peak at the front - and not worn in the Clubhouse

No golf shoes or wet weather clothing in the foyer or bar (use first left -hand door to go straight to changing rooms – having firstly brushed off excess grass etc outside.)

Members and visitors are asked to follow the dress code applied by the Club and also to advise their guests playing the course or attending a function on their behalf. The Club encourages a reasonable standard of dress in the Clubhouse, with a ‘smart but casual’ approach for golfers based on clothing that is principally designed for golf.

Staff may refuse admission to anyone dressed inappropriately. We would ask all members to refrain from wearing caps/hats whilst in the Clubhouse.

Mobile Phones - Observe etiquette and don't let your mobile be a distraction for other players or customers.

Exceptions may apply to Club functions – these will be notified in advance

The Spirit of the Game

Golf is played, for the most part, without supervision of a referee or umpire. The game relies on the integrity of the individual to show consideration for other players and to abide by the rules. All players should conduct themselves in a disciplined manner, demonstrating courtesy and

sportsmanship at all times, irrespective of how competitive they may be. This is the spirit of the game of golf.

Safety

General Safety Points

- Always consider your safety and that of your playing partners, fellow players, greens staff and members of the public.
- You are responsible personally for any injury or damage that you cause and you should have personal liability insurance sufficient to cover any injuries to yourself, fellow players, members of the public and damage to property.
- Members of the public have right of way on all public footpaths. You **MUST NOT** play your shot if a member of the public could be placed in danger. Public rights of way on road to right of 1st and 2nd – along the boundary from 17th to 13th greens – from 14th tee past 10th green, 11th tees and up right hand side of 9th.
- **DO NOT** play a shot if fellow players are within range especially if visibility is impaired.
- **DO NOT** play a shot if greens staff are working ahead – wait until they have waved you on and stood clear.
- **DO NOT** tee off in foggy conditions if you cannot see the first left hand bunker on 1st hole.
- Observe the safety instructions for Buggies on the course.
- There are adders on the golf course. They are venomous, but not aggressive. They are a protected species and must not be harmed or interfered with.

Safety Hole by Hole

Hole 1 Public in range? – Don't play. Allow players ahead to reach the green.

Hole 2 Public in range? – Don't play. Allow players ahead to reach the green.

Hole 3 Allow players ahead to clear corner of dyke. Watch out for drives from 4th tee.

Hole 4 Allow players ahead to clear the ridge. Watch out for players coming down 3rd. Take care in the right hand semi-rough against stray balls from 5th tee.

Hole 5 Allow players ahead to clear the area from men's 6th tee to gap in dyke. Wait at tee until players on 6th blue tee have driven off. Watch out for players in the right hand semi-rough on 4th.

Hole 6 Allow players ahead to clear the ridge. Watch out for blind second shot – allow players to clear the green.

Hole 7 Allow players ahead to clear the fairway cross bunker.

Hole 8 Watch out for players on 4th tee and out of sight on 3rd green.

Hole 9 Don't play until the bell has rung. Always ring the bell to say you are clear. Public in range on right? - Don't play.

Hole 10 Public in range? – Don't play. Watch out for players on 11th tee.

Hole 11 Allow players ahead to clear the halfway mounds. Watch out for players on 12th fairway and rough.

Hole 12 Allow players ahead to clear the bunker plus 100 yards. Watch out for players on 12th fairway and rough.

Hole 13 Public in range? – Don't play. Allow players ahead to reach the 14th tee.

Hole 14 Public in range? – Don't play. Allow players ahead to clear the fairway ridge. Allow players from 15th tee to get well clear 14th front area.

Hole 15 Allow players ahead to reach the green. Watch out for players coming up 14th and 16th fairways and rough.

Hole 16 Allow players ahead to clear the ridge beyond 14th green. Watch out for players coming down 15th fairways and rough. Public in range? – Don't play. Blind shot to green – Don't play until players ahead are on 17th tee.

Hole 17 Don't play until the bell has rung. Always ring the bell to say you are clear. Public in range on right? - Don't play.

Hole 18 Blind shot. Don't play until players ahead are on the green. Report to bar staff any balls struck into area of road, houses or car parks.

Pace of Play

Golfers, golf clubs and competition organisers have differing views on what constitutes acceptable pace of play, but they are all agreed that slow play detracts from the enjoyment of the game for far too many players. Few players complain about play being too quick. There is a responsibility therefore on all players and administrators to ensure that golf is played at a good pace, and a pace appropriate to the course being played. Factors that may influence what is considered an appropriate pace may be the difficulty of the course, distances between tees, the weather and also the range and ability of the players on the course. The guidelines below if adhered to will help ensure a reasonable pace of play:

On the Course

- All players must maintain their place in the field, which is immediately behind the group in front and not ahead of the group behind. This is a group responsibility and not an individual one. All members should be proactive in addressing the slow play problem
- Should your group fall a clear hole behind (e.g. you are on the tee of a four or five par hole and the previous group has already left the green) and it is delaying the group behind please invite the group behind to play through (irrespective of the number of players in that group)
- If you hit a ball that you think may be hard to find, or it may be out of bounds, please hit a provisional ball to save having to walk back if the first ball can't be found
- No more than **three** minutes is allowed to search for a ball. Be ready to call through if you can't find your ball within two minutes and proceed by enforcing the golf rules governing the conditions under which your ball was lost. If more than one ball needs to be found, split up and search for all the balls at the same time
- Go to your ball and get ready to hit your next shot as soon as it is feasible: i.e., not impeding another player's shot or endangering yourself. Don't always wait for your mate to play before going to your ball**.
- Short hitters to tee off first
- Walking briskly between shot
- Leaving your golf bag, buggy or cart strategically placed to side of the green nearest the next tee.

- Cart users should be particularly aware of the extra time taken in sharing a cart and look for ways to speed up play, for example, move ahead of walkers to look for possibly lost balls, try to position the cart for easy access when leaving the green to reduce the number of times that you have to get in and out.
- Always conduct yourself in a disciplined manner. Try and demonstrate courtesy and sportsmanship at all times, irrespective of how competitive you may be - this is essentially the SPIRIT OF THE GAME

On the Green

- When you reach the green, move to your ball and repair any pitch marks. Where possible, line up your putt prior to your turn to putt
- If your ball needs to be marked, then do it as quickly as you can. Anticipate the requirements of your fellow player. Move back and line up your putt
- Except in match play, and where you will stand on someone else's lie, when you start putting, continue until you have holed out. If playing a par or stableford event and you can no longer score on that hole, pick up your ball and let others continue
- The first player to finish putting should take control of the flag and be ready to replace it in the hole when the final player has completed the hole
- Players should proceed to the next tee without delay. The following group should be waiting to play their approach shots, so the path taken to the next tee should be borne in mind. This is particularly the case on holes 3 and 13. Think ahead; leave your cart or buggy in a place where you won't be hindering the following players
- Cards should be marked as quickly as possible after completing the hole, but it is best to mark the cards at the next tee. Please mark your card when it is not your turn to play and remember, at all times your place in the field is immediately behind the group in front and not in front of the group behind.

****Ready golf**

- With more members keen to play it is important that we all address 'pace of play' issues. A simple change is to play 'Ready Golf' on the course and on the putting green. Allowing players to play when they are ready to do so, rather than adhering strictly to the "farthest from the hole plays first" stipulation should be encouraged, except during match play games. Examples of ready golf include playing when someone in your group is assessing a tricky shot, shorter hitters playing first if longer hitters have to wait and hitting a shot before helping someone to look for a lost ball. Another is putting out as long as you are not on someone's line.
- Being ready to play should be very easy and considerable time will be saved if players do these things efficiently. For example, if each player in a four-ball that shoots 80 each takes an average of five seconds less to play each shot they will save over 26 minutes (80 shots x five seconds x four players).
- We would like our members to make a point of applying this at Seascale.

Pitch Marks & Divots

We pride ourselves on the condition of our greens throughout the year. However, such playing surfaces can only be maintained if all golfers repair their pitch marks on the green. We would ask you to not only repair your pitch marks, but ensure that all players within your group adhere to this policy – and look for another one to repair – if we all do that we will make a big dent in the problem.

Golfers are also responsible for the repair of all divot marks. If you make a divot, please replace it in its original location. On tees with soil boxes – make sure you cover your divot mark.

Competitions

Club competitions are played from April through September each year. We also hold “winter” competitions from October to March using winter handicaps and which do not impact on ‘summer’ handicaps. (The latter is subject to change as we assimilate the World Handicap System).

Competitions are played every Wednesday and on most Sundays during the golfing season. These are a mixture of Medals and Stablefords, but also we hold a good number of Team competitions. The full fixture list is available on the website and on the notice board. Most trophy competitions are played off the White Tees. From 2018 we introduced the option to play individual competitions from White, Yellow or Blue Tees (and from 2020 the option is there to play from Red Tees which should help more senior members). Knock-out Competitions are ongoing through the season with the finals in September with entry required by the end of March for the draws in April.

The club operates the updated Club V1 competition and handicap management system. You can book for competition play 7 days in advance using the Touchscreen in the Lounge, or by accessing competition booking online via the website or HowdidIdo. Please contact the Manager/Secretary or Competition committee if you are experiencing problems in booking in. Entry into a competition is by signing in at the Touchscreen via your Loyalty Swipe Card, using the name index or by using your PIN number (10xxxx where xxxx is the number on your Swipe Card). Competition entry fee is taken off your Loyalty card (you will be advised to top up if you have insufficient funds on the card).

If you cannot play you must cancel your booking, using the on-line system or by contacting and informing the bar staff, Manager or Competition committee. This will allow other players looking for a tee time to book. Etiquette requires that you should also notify your playing partner (you should never be in the position of leaving a fellow member alone on the tee). For full details of our competition policy and associated No Show policy, please refer to Local Rules and Regulations for Competitions on the website or the Club notice board.

On completion of your competition round, ensure that your handicap is written on your card, check the score on each hole, sign your card along with your marker, enter your score into the computer via the Touchscreen - finally place your card inside the competition box. At first glance this may look complicated but there will be plenty of help from staff and members to guide you through the process.

(During the Coronavirus emergency follow the temporary arrangements to keep yourself and others safe).

If you have a “no return” you should still enter your score in the computer. This is a mandatory requirement for the competition/handicap system. Failure corrupts the competition results, results in excessive time re-calculating the results of the competition and may result in penalties on your handicap.

From 2018 the Club started using the BRS Online Booking system to allow booking into and paying for entrance to our Open competitions. The BRS system is also be used by visitors wishing to book and pay for tee times and is now a requirement for members’ tee booking.

Details of Open competitions at other Clubs in and outside of Cumbria can be found online by looking up Golf Empire.

How to Get a Handicap

If you do not already have a handicap, you need to play three rounds and have your card signed by a member with an “active handicap” and then submit them to the relevant handicap secretary. Your scores will be checked using CONGU regulations and you will then be allocated a WHS (World Handicap System) handicap.

Once you have been allocated a handicap you will be allocated a unique CDH (Central Database of Handicaps) number from England Golf. You will retain this throughout your amateur career and Seascale will manage your handicap throughout your time with the Club. If you already have a handicap or have had a handicap at another club you should provide us with details including your CDH number. If you wish Seascale to manage your handicap you must ask your previous club to give you a copy of your handicap certificate (which you should then give to our Manager/Competition committee) and ask your previous club to delete you from their handicap system. If you wish your handicap to continue to be managed by your previous club this can be done and you will be treated as an AWAY player at Seascale – but you must ensure that you notify us regularly of your scores and handicap revisions.

From November 2020 golf handicaps are awarded based on the World Handicap System under the auspices of the GB&NI association, CONGU who regulate the playing of competitive golf in this country. Englandgolf will take a stronger role in managing WHS Handicaps and have created an on-line platform which members are invited to register onto and check their handicap developing once they have been awarded one and they have their CDH number.

[**My England Golf sign-up**](#)

A player’s Handicap Index is automatically generated based on their best 8 scores from the last 20 games. If fewer than 20 scores are available to calculate a handicap Index, a sliding scale is used. For new golfers to gain their handicap Index, they must submit a minimum of 54 holes (using any combination of 9 and 18 holes on a measured course and marked and signed by another player). For the purposes of the initial award of a Handicap Index two 9-hole scores are combined. The maximum hole score for new golfers is par +5 strokes, and holes not completed or scoring above this will be adjusted to par + 5. If you are having problems playing sufficient competitions you can pre-register a supplementary score/general play round, entering the scores on completion. With WHS players are

encouraged to take every opportunity of entering scores for as many rounds as possible which will reflect closely their playing ability and level. Follow the link to learn more about the World Handicap System: <https://youtu.be/rmPfFeeVQCM>

Ladies Section

The Ladies Section is administered by the Lady Captain and her Committee who meet every month to administer the business of the section. On obtaining a handicap you may enter the various competitions played by the Ladies.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to ask any committee member; a list of names and telephone numbers can be found in the Ladies Lounge.

Ladies Handicaps - New members who have never held a handicap must attain a WHS handicap by submitting a minimum of 54 holes (using any combination of 9 and 18 holes on a measured course and by another player) with cards marked 'for handicap' and posted in the Ladies' Card Box in the ladies lounge. These cards must be marked in accordance with the Rules of Golf, CONGU rules and local rules.

Any of the Ladies' Section will be happy to mark cards, so please play with different members, especially those with experience, but it is preferable for a mentor to do this to begin with. Once the requisite handicap cards have been completed, you will be given a WHS handicap index as per CONGU guidelines for calculating initial handicaps.

Members of other or previous clubs who are making Seascale their home Club for handicap purposes are requested to inform the Handicap Secretary that this is the case. A copy of their brief handicap certificate/record to date should be provided and they must get the previous club to take them off their handicap system.

Players with new WHS handicaps are immediately eligible to submit supplementary/general play scores which must be pre-registered – enquiries about this to be referred to the Ladies Handicap Secretary or Club Handicap Committee.

Ladies Competitions & Medals

Medals are played primarily on Thursdays, the alternative days are Saturdays or Sundays. All competitions run by the Ladies' Section require the players taking part to register their intention to play by putting their name on the entry list. This will be closed two days before the competition.

The entry fee for prizes must be paid prior to commencing play, normally using the Touchscreen/Swipe Card. After the list has been closed, if you are unable to play for any reason, you must notify the Competition Secretary and your playing partners in good time.

For knockout or eclectic competitions, players will need to register their intent to play by signing the competition book and entering the fee paid in the locker room prior to playing in the competition. Players not signing the book prior to commencing play will be disqualified.

Kestrels

The Senior Section of the Club is called the Kestrels (a bird commonly seen around the course). You can join them once you are 55 and you will receive a warm welcome. During the season they play home and away games against most of the Cumbrian clubs – usually on a Tuesday at about 9.30 - 10.00am. Contact Alan Isherwood who organises their competitions.

Social Golf

Of course playing the game doesn't mean competition all the time and there are many groups that are happy to see new members getting involved and mostly with partners chosen 'out of the hat'. Just as a reminder- here is a selection of the better-known groups – more detail on the web.

Seascale Links Society (Slinks) - Fridays throughout the season.

Egremont Society - Wednesdays/Saturdays all year.

Gosforth Society – Sundays pm.

Practice Areas

There is a fairly extensive practice area allowing the full range of clubs to be used. There is a putting green, a chipping area and a practice bunker. A coin-operated ball machine is used to dispense balls to be used on the practice area – members are asked not to pick balls up from the practice area. The area can be set up at certain times to allow a six-hole par 3 course to be used, mainly for Juniors and learners. The practice facilities will be further developed in the near future.

Locker Room and Trolleys

Although the locker room and trolley shed have security coded locks, possessions are left at your own risk. It is inadvisable to leave valuable items such as clubs/trolleys etc. unattended outside the Clubhouse.

Buggies

The Club has a limited number of buggies for hire at £15 per round for members and £20 per round for visitors. Users must comply with the safety notices. In periods of wet weather notices may be put in place requiring buggy users to keep to roads and tracks and to avoid doing damage to wet and sodden areas. Personal buggies may be stored and charged in the buggy storage area depending on availability and payment of annual rental. The Manager's permission must be sought before bringing personal buggies onto the course (limits apply) and users must supply proof of liability insurance.

Beyond the Golf

Social Events - The Club holds a number of social events throughout the year but they will only be a success if members come and support them. Details of all events are posted on the website/Facebook and in the Clubhouse.

Functions - The Club can be hired for functions by both members and private individuals throughout the year. For more information, please contact the Manager/House Manager.

Conferences and Meeting Facilities – Companies and organisations make good use of our conference and meeting facilities for groups up to 25 in number – all fully catered for.

The Bar - The club has a well-stocked bar. All members are issued with a Club Members' Loyalty Card. Members are able to "top up" their card balances at the bar and as a result will receive discount on all drinks and meals, when using their member's card to pay. Opening hours are usually from 0730hrs to 2300hrs through the playing season with reduced hours during winter.

Catering - Catering is available Wednesday – Sunday 11.00am – 4.00pm. We also have "extra" events that we hold throughout the year.

Satellite TV – is available in various parts of the Club.

Benefits of Being a Member

There are many benefits to being a member of Seascale Golf Club:

- Affiliation to EnglandGolf and Cumbria Union of Golf Clubs (CUGC).
- Provision of a County Card giving 50% off a round at over 1300 Clubs..
- Access to the 1893 Club with one free round per year at over 30 Clubs.
- Provision of Personal Liability and 3rd Party Damage insurance at Seascale and other UK courses
- Access to and management of an official WHS handicap.
- Access to play in open competitions, club competitions, regional leagues and alliances.
- Access to a range of competitions and social golf on a regular basis.
- Access to a driving range
- Access to a sport that can have a positive impact on your health.
- Access to coaching with a qualified PGA Advanced Professional.
- Access to other golf courses through matches, competitions and reciprocals.
- Access to bar and catering discount when using member's card.
- Access to a thriving club, with a sense of belonging and opportunity to make new friends.
- Access to an activity the whole family can participate in.

Golf Terminology & Other Information

Fairways: Closely mown grass areas that go from the front of the teeing area and up to the green. Semi rough and then deeper rough normally surround the fairway. The rough is grass cut longer than the fairway and is intended to penalise players that miss the fairway.

The Green: The area that you are trying to get the ball onto, as this is where the hole is situated. They are well maintained areas of grass that are mown very low so that they are a smooth surface for putting on. They vary in size and shape and have differing levels of slope. The hole location on a green is moved by the greens staff on a regular basis.

Obstacles: These occur as golf courses are made up of many different features, trees, length of grass, bunkers, water and bushes. If you hit your ball straight, it is rare to encounter obstacles but if you go off line they come into play. They break up the landscape but also make golfers manage their way around the course.

Bunkers: A hazard consisting of a prepared area of ground, often a hollow, from which turf or soil has been removed and replaced with sand or the like.

Water Hazards: Any sea, lake, pond, river, ditch, surface drainage, ditch or other open water course (whether or not containing water) and anything of a similar nature on the course.

Lateral water hazard: A water hazard or part of a water hazard so situated that it is not possible, or is deemed by the committee to be impracticable, to drop a ball behind the water hazard in accordance with the rules.

Rough: Grass grown longer than that on the fairway.

Local Rules: Local rules are specific to your Club and it is important that you make yourself aware of them as they may have an influence on the interpretation of the rules of golf. They are in place for local features such as young trees that may be staked and therefore you may get a free drop.

Rules of Golf: consist of a standard set of regulations and procedures by which the sport of [golf](#) should be played and prescribe [penalties](#) for rule infractions. They are jointly written and administered by the R&A (spun off from [The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews](#)) and the [United States Golf Association](#) (USGA). The R&A is the governing body of golf worldwide except in the United States and Mexico, which are the responsibility of the USGA. The rule book, entitled *Rules of Golf*, is published on a regular basis and also includes rules governing [amateur](#) status.

Handicapping: The purpose of a WHS (World Handicap System) handicap is to enable all golfers to be able to compete on a fair and equitable level, regardless of skill, males and females alike. Affiliated Golf Club members can obtain an official WHS handicap, which allows entry into Club competitions and access onto other courses.

What is a handicap and why do I need one? A golfer's handicap is a number assigned to him/her, which defines his/her skill/ability level. A handicap gives all standards of golfers an opportunity to play together or compete against one another on an equal level. In a stroke play event, a golfer's handicap is deducted from his/her "gross" score (total shots taken) to provide a "nett" figure (total

shots taken minus handicap). In a match play event, a player's handicap determines how many shots they will either give to, or receive from, an opponent.

Golfers are divided into the following categories:

CATEGORY 1 – handicaps of 5 or less. CATEGORY 2 – handicaps of 6 to 12. CATEGORY 3 – handicaps of 13 to 20. CATEGORY 4 – handicaps of 21 to 28. CATEGORY 5 – handicaps of 29 to 36 (juniors, learners and ladies only). CATEGORY 6 – handicaps of 37 to 54 (juniors, learners and and for a limited number of Club competitions).

How do I improve my handicap? A player should complete a handicap qualifying round (the handicap committee will stipulate whether a round can be classed as "qualifying") and return a nett score (gross score minus handicap) which will then result in a score differential calculation (how different that score is to the CSS (Competition Standard Score). These differentials are reviewed continually, and the player's Handicap Index is kept up to date by calculating the best 8 scores from their last 20 games. So a player's handicap keeps up with his current ability and performance.

Golfing Definitions

Addressing the Ball: Taking your stance and grounding the club, except that in a water hazard a player simply addresses the ball by taking a stance.

Air shot: Striking at the ball intentionally and missing it. It is counted as one shot.

Casual Water: A temporary accumulation of water on the course where you may take a free drop.

Divot: Turf that is removed from the ground when a player's swing hits the grass.

Dog-leg: A hole that does not follow a straight line from the tee to the green.

Draw: A shot that curves in slightly from right to left.

Fade: A ball that curves in slightly from left to right.

Fore: A warning shouted to alert other players that a ball in flight is heading in their direction.

Gross Score: The actual number of strokes a player has taken before his/her handicap is deducted.

Grounding the Club: Touching the surface or ground with the sole of the club at address.

Ground Under Repair (GUR): A damaged area of the course in which you may take a free drop.

Honour: The right to play from the teeing ground; determined by the lowest score on the previous hole or on the first tee by the flip of a coin.

Hook: A ball that starts right of your target and curves left.

Loft of the Club: The amount or degree of loft that is built into the club face.

Loose Impediment: Natural objects that are not fixed or growing, such as twigs, loose rocks, pine cones, leaves.

Lost Ball: Any ball that cannot be found within 5 minutes of starting to look for it and wasn't seen to go into a water hazard of any type.

Nett Score: A player's score having subtracted the handicap from the gross or actual score.

Obstruction: Anything artificial or man-made whether erected or left on the course, as well as artificially constructed roadways or paths.

Out of Bounds: Any areas outside the boundaries of the course in which play is prohibited, as defined by white stakes.

Penalty Stroke: A stroke added to the score for an infraction of the rules.

Pitch Mark: An indentation made by a ball landing on a green. All players must repair their pitch marks.

Provisional Ball: Another ball that is played when you think your ball might have gone out of bounds or is lost. Always announce that you are playing a provisional ball.

Stance: The position of the feet when addressing the ball.

Stroke: The name given to each attempt to strike the ball.

Take a Drop: The name given to the act of picking up the ball and dropping it in another spot in accordance with the rules.

Through the Green: All of the area of the course with the exception of the teeing ground, the green and any hazard.

Topped: A rolling or low bounding shot that is caused by striking the ball above the centre line.

Wrong Ball: Any ball other than the ball in play, a provisional ball or in stroke play a second ball.

Code of conduct

- Respect your fellow golfers. - Be courteous at all times. - Play fair and honest. - Listen, learn and try to improve. - Practice hard.

- Look smart, be polite and stay healthy. - Treat others as you expect to be treated yourself. - Be a role model to juniors.

Etiquette

In golf the way you behave on and off the course is very important. Good behaviour is called 'etiquette'. It is important for three reasons:

- To make sure you are safe - To make sure you look after the course. - To make sure you don't hold up players behind you.

Safety First and Last

- Always remember that golf is dangerous if certain rules are not observed. - Be aware of other players and where they are in relation to you. - Stand a safe distance from anyone swinging their club because they may not know you are there. Never step in front of the hitting line or tee. - Make sure you have room to swing your club. Never swing a club towards someone else. - Shout "FORE!"

immediately if you think your ball may hit someone. - Duck and cover your head if you hear ‘FORE!’ shouted at you and face away from where the shout has come from.

Above all, please ensure that all golf course policies in relation to health & safety and adverse weather conditions are always followed.

If you follow these tips you are more likely to enjoy your round of golf and so are other golfers.