

Worcestershire Golf Club

COURSE POLICY DOCUMENT

1. Introduction	3
2. Roles and Responsibilities.....	3
3. Resources.....	3
4. Timing of Work.....	3
5. The Course	4
5.1. Tees.....	4
5.2. Fairways	4
5.3. Surrounds and Approaches	5
5.4. Rough	5
5.5. Greens	5
5.6. Fertilizers.....	5
5.7. Top Dressings	6
5.8. Draining and Ditches.....	6
5.9. Temporary Greens	6
5.10. Bunkers.....	6
5.11. Pin movement & Positioning.....	6
6. Closing the Course.....	7
7. Greens Staff and Members	7

7.1. Work on the Course.....	7
7.2. Complaints.....	7
8. Machinery	7
9. Irrigation	8
10. Financial Control.....	8
11. Ecology.....	8
12. Professional Advice	9
Appendix A - Players' Code of Conduct.....	9
1. Daily Course Preparation	
2. Notices to Players	
3. Etiquette	
Appendix B- Course Improvements.....	10
1. Bunker Work	
2. Irrigation	
3. Large Practice Area	
4. Par Three Course	

1. Introduction

This Policy Document sets out the principles, approved by the Greens Management Committee, for the management of the golf course with effect from ? And will be re-visited and updated on an annual basis.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Whereas the Board is responsible for the management of The Worcestershire G. C. in all its aspects, the Course Manager is delegated responsibility for the detailed management of the golf course including greens finances, personnel, machinery and general management of staff in conjunction with the Greens Committee.

The Course Manager along with the Greens Committee will establish management controls that monitor the policies set and ensure correct management practices are followed. The Course Manager is wholly responsible for the Greens budget.

The Course Manager should have an input to the Fixture List along with the club management team and Handicap & Match Secretary, giving consideration to work on the course.

The Course Manager is responsible for the implementation of this Policy in all its aspects, planning of maintenance schedules in relation to fixture lists; liaising with the Green's Chairman on any problem areas; machinery maintenance; planning and long-term budgeting; schedules and records; personnel; education; training; discipline; allocation of daily tasks in compliance with the Club's Health and Safety policy; fertilizers and chemicals; storage and safety; ecology.

3. Resources

The agreed staffing level is as follows:- Course Manager, Deputy Head Greenkeeper plus Greenkeepers - minimum of 5 currently.

Total: minimum of 7 currently.

There is a strong commitment to the training and education of green staff. All staff are encouraged to obtain Certificates in Greenkeeping to the maximum of their individual abilities. Staff will be encouraged to become members of BIGGA and to attend discussion groups organised by that Association.

The Board should allocate sufficient funds to achieve the policies set out in this document.

4. Timing of Work

Much essential work has to be done at certain times in the year. It will be the aim of the Course Manager, taking into account the golf programme, to agree in advance the

scheduling of this work with the Greens Committee and the Green's Chairman, so that the periods of intense activity can be communicated to Members.

5. The Course

The Course is an 18 hole parkland course with some original MacKenzie designed greens. The course is a testing par 71 (SS72) of 6455 yards with three par 5's and 4 par 3's. The character lies in the testing slopes on many of the greens and the tree lined fairways. There are spectacular views of the Malvern Hills from many holes and of the Severn Valley from the high points of the course which all helps to provide an interesting and challenging game of golf. The original MacKenzie greens were designed as clay based push-up type but an ongoing process of installing drainage in the greens has vastly improved their year round playability. The course is built on loamy humous and clay, generally overlaying a clay substructure. This mix of soils presents problems in wet conditions and will hold water in some areas, land drains were installed in some of the fairways several years ago and vertidrainage and scarifying has greatly improved their effectiveness. Surfaced pathways have been created wherever practicable to enable wear to be controlled between holes and to provide ways for buggies.

The Course Manager and the Green's Chairman will make a course inspection on an annual basis to plan course improvements and the general results of the maintenance programme. This inspection should be documented and discussed by the Greens Committee as appropriate.

5.1. Tees

The maintenance of teeing grounds has a high priority. Cutting to a height between 8mm and 14mm. Tining, scarifying and fertilizing will be done on a programmed basis. During the summer months there will be an on-going divoting programme. Grass tees will be used whenever possible though on certain difficult tees, mats will be used as alternatives when weather conditions dictate. There is a programme in progress to rebuild and consolidate certain tees and to install irrigation on them all.

5.2. Fairways

Fairways will be cut to a height between 10mm and 15mm and the "first cut" between fairway and rough will be cut to 26mm As well as the normal fertilising programme they will be vertidrainage, deep tined, slit tined and scarified when conditions allow in order to improve the quality of the grass.

5.3. Surrounds and Approaches

Normal cutting heights will be no lower than 8mm and not more than 13mm on the surrounds and approaches.

5.4. Rough

Semi-rough will normally be cut to a height of 50mm, the rough out of play areas to be cut once per year. The semi rough will be cut every week or as needed.

5.5. Greens

Annual meadow and bent grass are the predominant species on all greens. The policy is to reduce the thatch layer gradually, long term. The objectives can be achieved by a continual programmes of aeration (Inc. hollow tining, and deep scarification) and top dressing with a 70/30 sand/ loam mix periodically during the season, to create conditions in which healthy bacterial activity will break down the thatch and thus encourage the deeper rooting of the grasses.

The height of cut on greens is the responsibility of the Course Manager and depends on his reading of future weather conditions, upcoming competitions, the state of the soil etc. During spells of good growing weather the normal height of cut will be between 3 & 4mm. During other times and the Winter period the height of cut may be up to 6.5mm.

Grooming and verticutting will be carried out throughout the summer. Pencil tines will be used to encourage moisture penetration and the deeper rooting grasses.

A new irrigation system was installed during the Autumn of 2017, enabling the greens to be watered much more efficiently and effectively in order to produce a more consistent playing surface.

The Course Manager will be responsible for the use of wetting agents, fungicides, pesticides, herbicides and growth regulators on the greens.

The autumn and winter treatment of greens will include hollow tining, deep tining, vertidrainage, scarifying and top dressing. There will usually be a course maintenance week in the Autumn and/or Spring, the timing to be arranged by the course Manager in conjunction with the Handicaps and Competitions Chairman.

The Putting Green and the Chipping Green will mimic the greens on the course as near as possible. They will be cut at the same time as the other greens. The putting green will be closed when deemed necessary by the Course Manager due to weather conditions or essential work.

5.6. Fertilizers

The policy is to use suitable fertilizers based on analysis. Organic granular and liquid nitrogen-based fertilizers will be used which may also contain quantities of iron and potash.

5.7. Top Dressings

Top dressings are applied to greens at the rate deemed suitable solely by the Course Manager.

5.8. Draining and Ditches

The dispersal of surface water is of paramount importance. An ongoing drainage programme of maintenance and upgrade will be undertaken on a yearly basis as resources allow.

5.9. Temporary Greens

It is our expectation that ongoing work to instal drainage and reduce thatch will make the use of temporary greens less frequent. This will apply to some greens sooner than others.

It is the responsibility of the Course Manager or, in his absence, the Assistant Head Greenkeeper on duty, to decide on a day to day basis the need for temporary greens to be brought into use. Considerations will include whether the main green is too soft to take foot traffic, and in frosty conditions, whether footmarks could damage the top crusty surface or the rooting system below.

If intensive work is required to the main green, a temporary green may be brought into use, in order that the work may proceed more quickly and efficiently.

5.10. Bunkers

Bunkers will be raked every day by the Greenkeepers and the sand levels monitored and supplemented as necessary. A rake will be provided for each bunker and all players will be expected to rake their pitch marks and footmarks. The rake will be replaced in the middle of the bunker with the handle resting on the front edge of the bunker. See web site for example.

5.11 Pin Movement & Positioning

Main Greens:

Normal Playing Season – The pin will be moved to a different area of the green 2 or 3 times per week. There is a pin placement map for greenskeepers use to ensure the even rotation of pin positions.

Winter Playing Season – The pin will be moved to a different area of the green at least once per week or more often if required. Plastic hole protectors will be used to keep the shape of the holes during the Winter period.

Temporary Greens:

When these greens are in use the pin will be moved to a different area of the green at least once per week or more often if required.

All of the above frequency of movement and areas of the green to which the pin can be re-positioned to is dependent upon the weather.

6. Closing the Course

In general the course tends to close itself in so far as play becomes impractical in extreme weather conditions. However, the course may be closed due to abnormal weather conditions if damage might result if play were permitted.

Examples might include occasions when greens were waterlogged, or the course flooded or under snow.

The decision to close or reopen following closure of will be the responsibility of the following people in the order detailed below:-

- Senior Greenkeeper on Duty
- The Professional or Assistant
- If a Competition is in play, the person on the day in charge of the competition

In winter months a decision to close the course may be rescinded during the day.

Temporary greens may be used when there is a frost, when the main greens are very wet or are being worked on.

7. Greens Staff and Members

7.1. Work on the Course

The Greens Staff will be vigilant so that they do not delay play unreasonably however, work always has to be productive and especially so early in the mornings. Greens staff have priority prior to first official tee off time. All players are expected to give consideration to Greens Staff by not preventing their work unreasonably, particularly during the early morning.

7.2. Complaints

Members and visitors must not complain about the conduct of a member of staff, nor about the state of the Course, to any member of the Greens Staff. Any complaint must be made to the Admin Manager via the Suggestions Box and it will be passed on to the relevant Committee to investigate and reply. If this cannot be dealt with satisfactorily to the member and or visitor, the matter will be referred to the Board.

8. Machinery

The Course Manager will produce a rolling 5 year plan of machinery replacements, additions, repairs and renewals for consideration, amendment and final approval in conjunction with the Greens Committee. This will then be submitted to the Board, for incorporation into the Club's financial plan.

The Course Manager has responsibility to keep himself up to date with developments in golf course machinery and to bring his recommendations to the notice of the Greens Committee.

He will be responsible for the maintenance of all machines in every aspect including records of use, preventative maintenance, major servicing and adjustments. He will recognise that the machines represent a considerable investment of the Club's funds and he will be prudent in maintaining them.

9. Irrigation

The overall policy is to use water efficiently to sustain decent grass growth and recovery of the grasses and to promote deeper root growth, in combination with providing a smooth running surface that will take spin and be firm but not too hard. Water is also needed on demand to wash in fertilizers and other treatments. Therefore a guaranteed water source is essential for the maintenance of a golf course.

The Irrigation System used is(TBC)

Sprinklers on the greens and approaches are(TBC)

Sprinklers on tees are to be installed in due course.

The system will be designed to allow delivery of accurate amounts of water as calculated by the Course Manager using information obtained from the on course meteorology centre. The system is supplied by extraction from a stream into two storage tanks and backed up with a mains water delivery to the tanks. The extraction licence allows us to take...120 cu mtrs per day. 12,000 cu mtrs per annum during the period from 1st April to 31st September.

10. Financial Control

In September each year the Course Manager will produce a list of machinery, showing performance and notes on any problems which have shown up during the year. This will lead to a definitive Expenditure Budget for the next financial year for replacements and repairs which should be in line with the 5 year rolling budget. This will be referred to the Board for approval.

Additionally, the Course Manager will produce a budget for purchase of fertilizers, chemicals and dressings for the next year. A monthly review of actual expenditure, compared with budget, will be made within the budget forecast produced in conjunction with the Finance Committee.

11. Ecology

Ecological management of the course is based on the following principles:-

- Planting of native trees and shrubs (see the detailed WGC Tree Policy)
- Creation of habitat piles to encourage insects, animals, birds and fungi
- Continuous planting cycle to maintain different ages of woodland
- Maintenance of some rough uncut areas and the sowing of wild flower areas around the course
- Avoidance of herbicides and pesticides where possible, especially in wild areas

Trees which affect the course, particularly when overhanging teeing grounds and greens, and preventing the growth of grass, will need to be maintained which may require pruning back and occasionally even felling may be necessary. This work has to be implemented under the control of the Course Manager who always has to recognise the need for tree preservation and to ensure that any tree preservation order is respected. Tree planting will take place where and when necessary, with professional advice sought should conditions require.

12. Professional Advice

The Board should have complete confidence in the competence and technical knowledge of the Course Manager and it is not necessarily the policy of the Club to seek opinions and audits from the outside bodies. However, the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) at Bingley has been used in the past and this is a practice recommended by the Royal & Ancient.

The Course Manager is also authorised to seek assistance from the STRI or other such bodies for soil analysis or for any questions he may have of any abnormal happenings such as invasion of unusual fungi or pests.

No alterations to the architecture of the Course will be undertaken without full consultation and approval by the Board. In case of any major changes, a notice will be posted in the clubhouse for a 21 day before such projects are begun. The members will be kept informed of proposed improvements to the course and updates on progress at regular Greens Forums by the Course manager.

Appendix A - Players' Code of Conduct

1. Daily Course Preparation

The greens staff start work at 6.00am in summer, and depending on daylight no later than 7.30am in winter, players starting before 9.00am should therefore give priority to greens staff so that daily course preparation can be completed in the shortest possible time. Players must obey any restrictions which apply regarding use of trolleys and should not play on greens where a temporary green is in use. Players must take great care to ensure that they play without endangering greens staff or other players. In particular players should not play to any green where work is in progress.

2. Notices to Players

The following events will be published daily, usually on the Club website:

- Hours when tees are reserved

And on appropriate noticeboards:

- When chemicals are being used on the course
- Where temporary greens are in use
- When abnormal work is in progress
- Restrictions on trolley or buggy use

3. Etiquette

- Observe carefully golfing etiquette
- Start from the correct tee depending on the time in accordance with the notice (1st and 8th tees only)
- Keep up with the match in front, not just ahead of the match behind. If you are unable to do this, stand back for a few minutes and allow the match following to come through

- Repair pitch marks on greens
- Replace divots firmly on fairways.
- Rake bunkers and replace the rake in the bunker
- Wear appropriate dress as per club website and notices around the club

Appendix B- Course Improvements

1. Bunker Work

Remodelling of all the bunkers has been completed in order to remove the Sportscrete and make them all more visible to players from fairways and tees with sloped edges allowing balls to run into flat bases.

2. Irrigation

A new irrigation system was installed during the Autumn period of 2017. The first phase is the greens and approaches, with the addition of tees in due course as the tees are reworked, followed by the addition of sprinklers on the greens walk-off areas. The system has been designed to allow the addition of fairway sprinklers and a Par 3 course irrigation system, should there be a need in the future.

3. Large Practice Area

The large practice area is to be improved in due course: awaiting recommendations from the Greens Committee and the Course Manager.

4. Par 3 Course

Pilot holes may possibly be prepared to give the members an idea of what could be done with un-used areas of the grounds. A business plan has been drafted and will be put before the members if approved by the Board as part of the Club's 5 year plan.

