

The R&A Women in Golf Charter

A commitment to a more inclusive culture within golf

We, Birchwood GC call on everyone involved in golf to play their part in developing a culture that values women's involvement in every aspect of the sport, from participating to pursuing a career.

- Our aim is to increase the number of women and girls playing and working in golf.
- To achieve this goal and to enable women to flourish throughout golf, we recognise the need for a fundamental shift in culture. There is a clear ethical need for change and the potential economic benefits of growing the sport through more women and girls playing are substantial.
- The R&A commits to playing a leading role in this process and to working with affiliates, partners and the wider golf industry towards achieving this goal.
- In signing this Charter, we Birchwood GC commit to making tangible efforts to develop a welcoming and inspiring environment for women. We will do more to attract women into golf, to remain, and to have rewarding careers.

The Charter:

- Is a statement of intent from the golf industry and Birchwood GC, to unite and to focus gender balance at all levels
- Commits us all to supporting measures to increase the number of women, girls and families playing golf
- Calls for positive action to encourage women to pursue careers in all areas of the sport
- Recognises the need for change that creates an inclusive environment within golf and our golf club

Signatories commit to activate this Charter by:

- Developing and implementing an internal strategy for enhancing gender balance at every level
- Establishing senior management responsibility and accountability for gender balance and inclusion, which is discussed and reviewed at committee/board level with Birchwood GC
- Strongly advocating more women and girls playing and working in golf.
- Working with key stakeholders to develop and embed a more inclusive culture.
- Promoting the Charter and our goal of encouraging more women and girls to play golf and work in golf.

How we at Birchwood GC plan to achieve this

1. Deliver two initiatives annually targeting women/girls and families that are aligned with key England Golf campaigns
2. Promote a membership pathway, for women/girls and families to progress within the club
3. Have designated Champions/Mentors within the club who can assist and support new participants and members
4. To achieving and maintain 30% female representation on our Board of Directors by actively promoting these positions linked to appropriate role descriptors that are not gender specific
5. To become a SafeGolf accredited club and ensure policies and procedures remain up to date
6. Appoint a designated Charter Champion within the club who can assist with the promotion and reporting of the charter

Signed on Behalf of Birchwood GC:

Club Manager/Secretary/ Chairman:

Date:

Simon Wilkinson

Charter Champion:

Kath Mackie

Date: 23 September 2021

Signed:

[Signature]

Signed:

K Mackie

These objectives will be embedded into the club business/operational plan and reviewed on an annual basis, to ensure that this inclusive commitment remains robust.

	Commitment	Current Situation	How this will be achieved	Date/Progress/Targets/Comments
1	Deliver a minimum number of two initiatives each year targeting women/girls and families that are aligned with key England Golf campaigns	The lady members have run lady specific starter clinics in past years with some success. Our Professional has been fully involved in these and is committed to the same involvement in the future. Lady Captain 2020 was due to run further taster days and a ladies' academy but Covid-19 meant all was cancelled, and this has continued until our Professional was comfortable with holding lessons again face to face.	Professional to hold regular group lessons for all lady members Hold "Golf Taster Days" and academy sessions as soon as possible, led by the Professional. Market the golf academies to local Business Park, schools and current members. Produce a leaflet targeting specifically the ladies of the nearby Science Park – this has been delayed due to Covid and businesses working from home. Have a Ladies Section Page on the Club's Website. Local clubs have WhatsApp group where each club promotes activities and events of their ladies' section, use this media to promote our club.	From mid-August 2021, the Professional will hold weekly group lessons for the lady members. In Autumn 2021 the Professional will also promote external lessons for ladies and a new 9 hole membership. Further lessons, and taster days/ Academy for Ladies to be initiated in Spring 2022. We are conscious of increasing the number of Lady members. This is not easy in an economy which is aiming for equality of the genders at all levels in employment and therefore reducing leisure time for ladies. We have re-formed our Marketing Committee and one of the objectives is to increase the number of Lady members, and the Club has also contracted a professional recruiter to aid with this. Target: To Recruit at least 3 new lady members per year.

2	Promote a membership pathway, for women/girls and families to progress within the club	Three Ladies on Council are all members of the House Committee under the direction of the House Chairman and are also members of the Marketing committee.	A female Council member to take responsibility for monitoring gender balance within the Council.	A role to be created on Council or be part of the Lady Captain's role – to be discussed further. Target: Work towards this in 2022.
	Ladies have full equality with male members in the administration and management of Birchwood Golf Club. Lady members can serve as Club Captain, President and are elected to Council for three year terms. They can act as sub-committee chairperson.	Work towards a female Council member becoming a member of the Management Committee.	After the AGM 2021 the Council Management Committee was confirmed and Lady Captain is now included on this Committee. Target: Completed 2021.	This initiative has been extensively discussed, and further discussions are on-going re how to enter mixed competitions on V1/England Golf. Target: Introduce a Mixed Roll Up 2022 Season
	Ladies have representatives serving on the Club's Greens Committee, Handicap Committee and Competitions Committee.	Work with key stakeholders to develop and embed a more inclusive culture by adding further mixed competitions for members, e.g. monthly mixed roll ups followed by social/meal in the Clubhouse.	Surveys are sent out regularly to members from Council to find out what it is that members require from their club.	
	Ladies hold competitions on Tuesday morning and also on Saturday morning which is specifically aimed at working ladies.			
	The overall integration of play currently presents no problems. The club operates many mixed competitions. These include mixed knockouts, mixed invitation days, mixed open competition days. There is a Ladies v Senior Men match.			

3	Have designated Champions/Mentors within the club who can assist and support new participants and members	The Ladies Section have for many years established a buddy system for new lady members. A written policy is in place and at the moment this is under the LC jurisdiction who discusses with her committee and appoints a suitable 'buddy' to inform the new lady member of the workings of the club, general play, competitions and generally guides the new member to become a full participant of the Ladies Section.		Charter Champion to liaise with Official Bodies re any training/information available for Buddies.
4	To achieving and maintain 30% female representation on our Board of Directors by actively promoting these positions linked to appropriate role descriptors that are not gender specific	BGC's Council consists of 14 member Directors. Currently, 4 are women – including the LC and LVC who automatically become directors on their appointment.	Maintain, and hopefully increase, gender balance on Council by encouraging more lady members to stand for election. Ensure all lady members are approached to ascertain their interest in serving on Council in good time for the Club AGM in January.	The Lady Captain and Lady Vice Captain automatically become Directors on their appointment and therefore serve on Council for 2 years. This may or may not form part of a 3 year term depending on when they were elected. Target: Actively encourage ladies to become members of Council

5	To become a SafeGolf accredited club and ensure policies and procedures remain up to date	<p>Birchwood GC achieved Golf Safe Accreditation achieved in January 2021 and will be renewed annually. It is hoped that our Welfare Officer will promote junior golf. We offer 12 months free golf membership to juniors. Council is considering offering free golf membership to juniors (up to the age of 16) whose parent(s) are currently members.</p> <p>The Professional is required to maintain their DBS membership.</p>	<p>Charter Champion to seek the support available at county (Union of Cheshire Golf Clubs) and national level (England Golf and R & A) to promote, market and run family days, Open Days and events specifically aimed at girls.</p> <p>Keep register of documents up-to-date – these are held and maintained by the Office Manager.</p> <p>Currently we have 13 junior members, but we used to have a very active Junior section (75 members) run by an excellent junior organiser. He left to work at County level. The best way to grow junior membership is through current members. Organisers of any junior sporting activity are negatively impacted and not encouraged by the rules and regulations in place. These are necessary but don't encourage people to participate in the running of junior sport Target: Promote family days to encourage young people into golf – hold an event 2022.</p>
6	<p>Appoint a designed Charter Champion within the club who can assist with the promotion and reporting of the Charter</p>	<p>Council receives monthly membership updates in all categories.</p> <p>Lady Captain 2020 Kath Mackie will undertake the Champion role for now. Once she leaves Council, it may be more appropriate for another Committee member to take up the role.</p>	<p>Formally share progress and updates/changes to the Charter with England Golf moving forward.</p> <p>The club will formally display the Charter commitments internally and externally – noticeboards, website, social media, membership packs and utilise the England Golf press release</p> <p>The charter Champion to provide England Golf with an annual report on progress on commitments made</p>