

Wareham Golf Club — Course Policy Plan

Objectives

With the aid of a phased improvement programme provide the members with year round golf playing off grass tees and on the main greens in the winters providing it is not to the detriment of the long term health and condition of the course.

Roles & Responsibilities

Policy making for the Golf Course:

Board of Directors in consultation with the Golf Course manager and any other relevant Professional Advisor (agronomist, ecologist etc)

Management of the Golf Course and Greenstaff:

The Director of Golf via the Golf Course manager or in their absence the Deputy Golf Course manager

Liaison between the Golf Course Manager and the Board of Directors:

Course Director or Director of Golf

Resources

The minimum agreed staffing level to maintain the golf course as required by the Course Policy Plan CPP is four fulltime staff, ideally consisting of:

- Golf Course Manager
- Deputy Golf Course manager
- 1st Assistant
- 2nd Assistant
- Summer Contract

Additional staff, whether fulltime or part time, may be employed as and when required with the approval of the Course Director within the budget for staffing as may be agreed by the Board of Directors.

There is a commitment to training and education of green staff who are encouraged to obtain National Vocational Qualifications in greenkeeping. The Staff are also encouraged to become members of the British & International Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA). Staff to receive the required training in First Aid and Health & Safety issues as directed by the Board of Directors.

Financial

The Board of Directors are committed to provide an agreed annual budget for purchase of materials and services necessary for the successful implementation of the CPP.

The Golf Course Manager will produce a rolling programme of machinery replacements, additions, repairs and renewals for consideration by the Course Director and final approval by the Board of Directors for incorporation into the Club's financial plan.

Timing of Major Work on the Course

Timing of essential maintenance operations such as the aeration programme will take priority over the fixtures programme and will be communicated well in advance to the members through course bulletins and notices. The Golf Course manager will agree with the Director of Golf the timings as far in advance as possible so competitions and visiting societies can be fitted in around the maintenance programme.

Closure or Part-Closure of the Golf Course

There are several reasons for closure or part—closure of the golf course including weather and course work.

- 1 . **The course will be closed if lightning** is in the vicinity, this will mean work should cease on the course if individuals are unable to use machinery providing complete protection. The Green staff should ensure that the Director of Golf or in his absence Clubhouse staff are informed to ensure all staff and players are fully aware that play has ceased and everyone moves off the course to safety. A siren will be used both to indicate the start and finish of the closure. Any golfer failing to stop playing shall be reported to the Director of Golf.
2. **The course will be closed** by fog if the bunkers on the first cannot be seen and only opened again on the authority of the DOG, GCM or a Board Member.
3. **The course may be closed** if it is deemed that frozen ground conditions make it potentially dangerous for safe movement around the course (rare event)
4. **The course or parts of the course may be closed** if the ground conditions become impossible to have playable conditions, usually after exceptionally heavy rainfall, likelihood during the winter months.
5. **Part-closure of the course** may be put in place by the GCM for the green staff to undertake maintenance works which if the hole is not closed may hinder their work and for the safety of the workers. Type of work would include hollow tinning of the greens, major maintenance works, new works etc. Advance warning to be given by the GCM to the DOG who will inform the membership and visitors.

Egs

- Hollow tinning of a green, the hole is closed with an appropriate sign at the tee once all the works are completed the hole is reopened.
- Use of facilities like temporary greens and tees are restricted for use with winter conditions or when long term maintenance are involved, and agreed by the Course Director.

Machinery

The GCM will produce a rolling 5 year plan of machinery replacements, additions, repairs and renewals for consideration, amendment and final approval by the Course Director and the Board of Directors for incorporation in the Club's financial plan.

The GCM has responsibility to keep himself up to date with developments in golf course equipment and to bring his recommendations to the notice of the Course Director.

The GCM is responsible for the maintenance of all equipment in all its aspects — maintenance records to include for preventative maintenance, major servicing, adjustments etc.

THE GOLF COURSE

Greens

Objective

To provide in the main golfing season, true, firm, fast surfaces that will hold a well struck shot played from a closely mown area. A policy to reduce the extent of meadow grasses in the greens with replacement by bent grasses.

To be achieved by:

- **Aeration programme:**

Including hollow tinning, verti-draining, scarifying. The importance of an aeration programme must not be underestimated as it will permit the growing of healthy grass. The aeration of the greens will permit air to the root system, deep rooting of grass and access of water to greater depths. The objective is to encourage the grass to deep root and obtain moisture at greater depths, which should reduce the reliance on additional watering during dry spells. Main season tinning operations will be carried out with the objective of causing minimal disruption to putting surfaces e.g. predominately by use of micro tines.

- **Fertilisers and top dressings**

Fertilisation, organic nitrogen based fertilisers only will be used with small quantities of iron. Light and frequent topdressing shall be applied to the greens as required throughout the main playing season and following both spring and autumn verti-draining or hollow tinning. Regular topdressing between the spring and autumn application shall be applied to maintain putting quality and ball holding ability of greens throughout the summer. The dressing shall be designed on the basis of particle size distribution, rate of

percolation and moisture retention to give the greens the following - putting quality, ball holding and compatibility with existing soil conditions.

- **Cutting heights**

Shall be the responsibility of the Golf Course manager and will depend on weather conditions, upcoming competitions and ground conditions. The height of cut during the main golfing season shall be in the range of 3.5 - 5mm and along with other operations including topdressing, verti-cutting etc provide a quick putting surface without compromising the condition of the greens. Outside the main golf season the frequency of mowing and the height of the swath shall be left to the decision of the Golf Course manager. Variable mowing pattern will be used to ensure that grass is encouraged to grow upright.

- **Verti-cutting (Scarification) and Grooming**

Shall be used to remove the straggling surface stems of grasses and encourage a more upright growth habit. The depth of cut will depend on the conditions prevailing. Scarifying shall only be used when there is adequate grass growth. Verti-cutting on a frequent basis and grooming two or three times a week during the main playing season. With poa-annua seeding any verti-cutting or scarifying should cease.

- **Over seeding programme to improve sward composition**

With the gradual replacement of meadow grass with the introduction and encouragement of bent and fescue grasses. Over seeding may be incorporated in with the top dressing programme and at other times during the main growing season.

- **Removal or pruning of trees that inhibit light and air circulation.**

All greens to be checked yearly for problems associated with trees and low level foliage. There may also be problems with tree roots that invade into the foundations of greens and surrounds removing any goodness from the soil and denying this to the grasses.

- **Use of temporary greens,**

It is the responsibility of the GCM (or the Senior Greenkeeper on duty) in consultation with the DOG to decide on a day to day basis the need for temporary greens to be brought into use. Considerations are:

- Is the normal green too soft to take foot traffic?
- In frosty weather would foot-marks damage the grass fibre?

- **Frost policy**

Temporary greens will be used while destructive frost conditions persist and reverting to main greens when the GCM considers the effects of the frost has passed.

- **Changing of the position of hole**

There shall be two holes cut per green. The cutting of a new hole should be carried out on rotation and no hole shall remain in the same position for longer than fourteen days. Both holes to be checked daily to ensure they comply with the definition of a golf hole (see Rules of Golf — as approved by R&A Rules Ltd and The United States Golf Ltd). When a hole is not in use it will remain open and treated as an immovable obstruction (this will avoid damage or distortion to the hole). Note: R & A Rules of Golf: Rule 24-2)

Tees

Objective

To provide a firm, level surface during the main golfing season.

To be achieved by:

- **Maintenance programme**

Includes aeration, applications of top-dressing and fertilisers, and over seeding. The tee ground will require regular work including top-dress applications, the stripping of grass turfs filling depressions and relaying with old or new turfs. All works continuing throughout the year. The tee areas extended where possible using material either generated from the course or imported.

- **Cutting height during main season,**

8 — 12 mm range for minimum height with at least two cuts per week dependent on growth. The mowing pattern to ensure that grass is encouraged to grow upright. The cuttings shall be collected and disposed off course.

- **Rotation of tee markers,**

Markers are to be moved daily to ensure wear and tear is reduced to a minimum. Markers to be spaced to suit width of the tee areas, e.g. narrow tees — full width and wide tees split. Daily, all divots are to be filled with a mixture of top-dressing/grass seed. Enclosed boxes with a topdressing/seed mixture to be provided and maintained on all par three tees.

- **Policy on the use of tees for general play/visitors,**

During the main playing season the white tees are for competitions and members only general play (commencing no later 1st April and ending no earlier than 31 October), the yellow tees are for general play (including visitors), red tees for ladies and blue tees for Juniors and new players not yet deemed profficient.

- **Resting of Tee Areas.**

During the period from November to March it may be necessary for a selection of tees to be taken out of play. Usually this will be following the recommendation from the GCM when the:

- Conditions have become unplayable or they require major maintenance and shall be conveyed to the Course Director.
- Maintenance work will be expected to be carried out on the 'closed' tees. The work likely to include aeration, drainage, re-grading and/or re-turfing.

Fairways

Objective

To provide a closely mown surface consistent for hitting of well struck shots to firm greens

- **Maintenance programme** includes aerating the subsoil and topdressing/over seeding to improve the quality of the grass swath, discourage meadow grasses and encourage fescues and bent grasses.
- **Cutting height during main season** shall be in the range 14 - 20mm. The mowing pattern to ensure that grass is encouraged to grow upright. All fairways shall have well defined edges. The frequency of mowing will be determined by the growth pattern, some fairway areas once a week others requiring two or more cuts.

Surrounds and Approaches

Objective

To provide areas approaching and surrounding the greens that is closely mown and also capable of being used for winter temporary greens

Maintenance programme includes aerating the subsoil and topdressing/over seeding to improve the quality of the grass swath, discourage meadow grasses and encourage fescues and bent grasses.

Cutting height during main season shall be in the range 10 - 15mm. The mowing pattern to ensure that grass is encouraged to grow upright. The frequency of mowing will be determined by the growth pattern, most areas once a week others will require two or more cuts.

Rough & Semi-Rough

Objective

To provide rough with a fair penalty but not to be a cause for slow play.

- **Extent of Rough**, the areas to be treated as rough will in the main be those areas which could be considered reasonable areas for the playing of golf.
- **Cutting height during main season** will be in the range of 100 - 125mm. Mowing during the main growing season shall normally be once a week. The mowing pattern to ensure that grass is encouraged to grow upright.

Irrigation

Objective

To use water sparingly, little and often. Whilst recognising that during periods of drought it will be necessary to irrigate in order to sustain grass growth.

- **Maintenance programme**, the irrigation system shall be pressurised during March and drained down in October. At the time the system is drained down the whole system shall be checked and any maintenance requirements organised for implementing prior to the system being pressurised the following spring. A check of all Sprinkler heads, the control boxes, and the computerised system are required with a written report (added to Appendix I).
- **Irrigation system use**, on the computerised system each sprinkler head requirement to be checked periodically to ensure that the green or tee is receiving the desired water requirement. Water is an expensive resource and the grass only requires sufficient water to sustain growth. With regular aeration of tees and greens the water requirement can be reduced. Watering of greens and tees should not commence before May and normally be completed by the end of August. Hand watering of greens is to be encouraged to reduce the overall watering demand but ensure that those greens or areas of greens in need of water are given the appropriate quantities. Water sparingly, little and often.
- **Hand watering and wetting agents**, during periods of drought for those greens that have areas with poor water retention slitting and wetting agents along with hand watering shall be encouraged,

Woodland/Grassland/Water Bodies

Objective

To provide and maintain as part of the golf course areas which are woodland, grassland and water features for the benefit of fauna, flora and the enjoyment of golfers and others alike.

Woodland Management Policy includes the thinning and removal of trees affecting areas of the course such as the tees and greens where their presence may be detrimental to good grass growth. Any programme of tree removal and trimming is to be submitted to the Chair of Greens Committee for approval. Plants that are detrimental to the management of the course including gorse, ragwort, bracken and rhododendron shall be either removed or managed to ensure that grassed areas, fauna and flora are not affected. In the case of ragwort the GCM to ensure that all plants are dug out and destroyed at the flowering stage prior to the dispersal of the seeds. Gorse is unlikely to be completely eradicated but the GCM is to ensure that all areas of gorse are controlled and maintained and not allowed to spread into grassed areas, areas of heather and woodlands. Heather regeneration is to be encouraged in conjunction with the minimising the areas of gorse and bracken is an important part of a long term programme.

Animals that do damage to the golf course like squirrels, rabbits and moles must be kept under control by culling. The GCM shall arrange a programme of culling to ensure damage to the course is minimised. Damage by any animal is the responsibility of the GCM to carry out repairs and minimise the disturbance to the golf course. Other wildlife like badgers and reptiles are protected species and must not be harmed.

Grassland includes that area beyond those considered as rough, normally left uncut from year to year. These areas may include other types of flora along with fauna and are generally kept as 'wild' areas. Golf may be played from these areas but is likely to be infrequent. The GCM shall ensure that these grassland areas are managed which includes removal of gorse, ragwort, bracken and other evasive plants.

Water Bodies includes the pond (15th hole), areas of the Morden Bog (4th, 7th & holes) and the open ditch down the course along side the 12th fairway and crossing the 9^h 13th and fairways. The pond also includes the banks and shall be maintained to ensure that the pond retains its height and shape of banks and depth of water. The management of the pond shall include the encouragement of both fauna and flora along with appropriate wildlife.

Ditches and Drainage

Objective

To provide and maintain ditches and drainage to ensure that the golf course is available for play all year round

The GCM is to programme maintenance on the existing drainage systems to ensure that they operate effectively during periods of heavy rainfall. Maintenance work to open ditches shall include the removal of debris and build up of silt. Ditches are habitats for wildlife the GCM prior to any work shall ensure that the necessary precautions are taken to avoid destroying those habitats. Land drainage shall be maintained by ensuring the pipe work is free of debris and that the outlets are not blocked. Pipe work may be cleaned either manually or mechanically. Land drainage has a finite life before major works are required, the GCM shall ensure that drains not working to capacity are added to the ongoing programme of maintenance or for renewal.

Bunkers

Objective

To provide and maintain bunkers to ensure they provide a fair hazard.

The bunkers shall be regularly checked and raked daily, to ensure they remain playable whilst providing a fair penalty. Drainage is provided to many of the bunkers, they are to be checked for water retention and drains kept clear.

The GCM is to have a rolling programme of bunker renovation which may include rebuilding, adding sand and drainage improvements. Any major works the GCM is to inform the Chair of Greens Committee prior to any works being carried.

A rake will be provided for each bunker with two for the larger bunkers. The rakes are to be left in the hazard.

Public Right of Way

Objective

To maintain the public right of way between the 1st and 2nd holes for the safety of the public.

The GCM to ensure the public right of way running through is free of obstructions and awareness of green staff when working on or adjacent the pathway that the Public must have free and unobstructed access at all times.

Health and Safety

Objective

To ensure that at all times the golf course is both a safe place to work and for the playing of golf.

The Board of Directors of Wareham Golf Club as the employer has the duties under the Health and Safety Work Act 1974 to ensure the workplace (golf club including buildings and course) is a safe environment for work and the playing of golf. This

responsibility also extends to golfers and members of the public that may visit the golf club. The main requirements of the employer is to undertake a risk assessment for all aspects of the golf club including the course and the green keepers buildings. A copy of the current risk assessments are held by the Director of Golf and GCM. A Review of risk assessments will be undertaken annually.

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Greens committee

R Jones; J Shimmons; R Preston; B Hobbs; R Wills

With thanks to R Beaven, P Cooper, J Morris and J Palmer on whose document dated 1 January 2005 this is based

