



## **COURSE POLICY DOCUMENT**

**Approved by the General Committee May 2018**

Course Policy Document

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## **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this Policy Document is to set out details of the management of the Golf Course at Wollaton Park Golf Club, which have been approved by the General Committee.

Any future proposed changes will not be introduced without full consultation with, and the formal approval, of the General Committee.

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

The General Committee is responsible for the management of Wollaton Park Golf Club in all its aspects.

The Course Committee has overall responsibility for the management of the course — including the provision of appropriate finance and machinery.

The Head Greenkeeper and Club Professional attend meetings of the Course Committee to offer their advice.

The General Manager, being responsible for all personnel, will establish management controls that monitor the policies set by the Course Committee to ensure correct management practices are followed. Anticipated variations from budget will be notified to the General Committee for approval.

The General Manager co-ordinates the club fixture list, giving consideration to work on the course and will communicate all alterations and changes to the list to the Head Greenkeeper giving adequate notice.

The Head Greenkeeper is responsible for the day-to-day management of all Green keeping staff and the implementation of this Policy in all its aspects — planning of course maintenance schedules in relation to fixture lists; liaising with the General Manager 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; fertilisers and chemicals – storage and safety, including ecological aspects.

### **3. Resources**

Staff — The establishment staffing level is as follows:

Head Greenkeeper

Deputy Head Greenkeeper

Green keepers – 5

Total 7

There is a commitment to the training and education of greens staff who are all encouraged to obtain National Vocational Qualifications and City and Guilds Certificates in Green keeping to the maximum of their individual abilities.

Staff are also encouraged to become members of BIGGA and to attend meetings and events organised by this association.

The General Committee is committed to the allocation of sufficient funds to achieve the policies set out in this document.

### **4. Objectives**

The objectives will necessarily alter as years' progress. The objectives for 2018 until 2019 are that the Golf Course should be gradually improved to a high standard whereby it is recognised as one of the best maintained and enjoyable courses in the Midlands. This standard will be achieved for the major part of the competitive year from May until October. It is unrealistic to expect typical mid-season playing conditions for the entire year, especially during winter months, which are devoted to necessary preparatory work for the following season.

Our clear intention is to maintain the Course in excellent condition for the full enjoyment of members of all handicaps and their guests. We seek to provide challenging golf for category 1 and professional players and an excellent golfing experience for all other players.

### **5. Timing of Work on the Course**

Much essential work has to be completed before specific deadlines in the year. It will be the aim of the Head Greenkeeper, in regular discussion with the Chair of Course and the General Manager, to plan this work well in advance. The periods in which work has to be done can then be agreed, taking into account the golf programme, and will subsequently be communicated to members on the designated notice board.

## **6. The Course**

Tom Williamson, the Professional, Greenkeeper and Club Maker at the Notts Golf Club, Hollinwell, designed the Golf Course at Wollaton Park Golf Club. A nationally recognised golf course designer from the early 1900's, he co-authored a significant book on the subject in the late 1920's. He applied his design skills to the use of naturally presented features within the Wollaton Park to provide an interesting and challenging course.

At that time, when the course opened in 1927, just prior to the introduction of steel shafted golf clubs, there was only light traffic on any golf course and the designer would be surprised to observe both the intensity of use of the course today and the ball flight distances that modern equipment can achieve.

Trolley and buggy wear between greens and tees, unknown and unconceivable in the 1920's, is an increasing problem; solutions have been sought and applied over the years with increasing success but will present challenges for the future.

The Course lies on several soil types ranging from loamy humus to sandy and free draining. Water retention on the course is very localised and generally is not a problem. This allows our Course to be open when many other courses and the surrounding area are closed.

Compaction has occurred in many areas around the course, however this has been relieved to a great extent by verti-draining all fairways and walkways in alternate years during the winter period. The use of trolleys and buggies will be banned when, in the Head Greenkeeper's opinion, this is necessary to prevent damage to the course. Pathways will be created wherever practicable.

### **6.1 Tees**

The maintenance of tees has high priority. Cutting to controlled cutting heights, tining, watering, and fertilising are all practised on a programmed basis. During the summer months there is always an on-going programme to repair divots. The use of grass tees throughout the winter months will be continued. These tees are heavily worn during the winter and have to be given time to recover during the summer – ongoing tee extensions in the —Winter Work Programme|| materially assist in this process by spreading wear. A divot-fill mixture is provided in boxes on the tees of all par 3 holes and it is essential that players use this to fill divot holes to preserve grass growth.

### **6.2 Fairways**

Cutting to a controlled height will continue taking into account any STRI recommendations. Fairways are verti-drained every other year to improve the quality of the grass. This discourages annual meadow grasses and encourages fescues, which then allows for more precise iron play. During the

winter months cutting height may be increased to enable the grass to recover. Bare areas on the course are to be scarified, seeded, fertilised, watered and protected on a continuing basis.

### **6.3 Rough & Semi Rough**

Areas of first-cut and semi-rough are to be maintained at controlled cutting heights. Areas in and around trees are to be maintained as semi-rough. In order to commence restoration of fine fescue-grassed rough, the Club is implementing the agronomist's recommendation to remove heavy rough close to the fairways.

### **6.4 Greens**

The sward on the greens is made up of a mixture of annual meadow grass and bent grass. The policy of top dressing and over-seeding with appropriate grasses will continue which will allow bents to dominate, particularly during winter months. Aeration is essential for the health of the turf, a full programme agreed with the agronomist will be carried out to ensure full depth aeration. The programme of aeration is in place to create conditions for healthy bacterial activity is vital to breaking down the thatch. This programme is designed to encourage the deeper-rooting grass such as the bents.

The greens are vertidraind as and when required. The height of cut on the greens is the responsibility of the Head Greenkeeper and depends on his reading of future weather conditions, forthcoming competitions.

Grooming and verti-cutting will be applied to greens throughout the summer and also the use of pencil tines to encourage moisture penetration and the deeper rooting grasses.

A policy of minimum irrigation is being followed and any dry patches which develop will be treated with wetting agents and hand watering.

The autumn and winter treatment of greens includes the application of a winter fertiliser, hollow and slit tining, scarifying and top dressing.

It should be noted that a high stimp meter reading is not the primary aim of the Club, consistency of speeds, green to green, and truth of roll are.

### **6.5 Fertilisation**

The fertilisers that are used on the course comply with all current legislation. The specific fertilisers used throughout the year are the responsibility of the Head Greenkeeper.

All fertilisation will be carried out with due regard to developing modern low impact policies on Golf Course Maintenance as noted in the Ecology Policy Statement.

### **6.6 Top Dressing**

Top dressing is applied to all greens particularly after hollow tining. Solid tining is carried out throughout the year as decided by the Head Greenkeeper after taking into account advice from the agronomist.

Top dressing is also applied to tees.

### **6.7 Temporary Greens**

It is the firm intention that on-going work programme to relieve compaction and reduce thatch will make the use of temporary greens less frequent particularly in the winter.

It is the responsibility of the Head Greenkeeper or in his absence, the Senior Green keeper on duty, to decide on a day-to-day basis the need for temporary greens to be brought into use.

Factors to be taken into consideration are:

- a) Saturation to the point that greens are too soft to take foot traffic.
- b) Foot traffic on frosty weather crusting damaging the surface grasses.
- c) If the normal green is being worked on intensively a temporary green may be brought into use in order that work may proceed quickly and with greater effectiveness.
- d) The border of temporary greens will be marked by the use yellow paint.

### **6.8 Hole Cutting**

During the main playing season from May until October it is expected that holes will be re-cut on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday mornings prior to the start of competitive play – occasionally in times of heavy traffic / soft underfoot conditions extra re-cuts may be required.

### **6.9 Bunkers**

Greenkeepers will rake all greenside bunkers by hand at least three times each week. Fairway bunkers will be raked by machine at least three times each week ,note, due care and attention to bunker edges is essential when the machine is being used . They will be examined regularly for water retention and the drains will be kept clear. They will be drained using appropriate materials and waste water will be discharged away from the fairway. All bunkers will be continually maintained which will include the replacement of sand where necessary.

At least one rake will be provided for each bunker. Players are expected to rake their pitch marks and footmarks after playing out of a bunker. The rake should be replaced within the bunker.

Sand on the grass around bunkers will be blown off on a regular basis.

The Course Committee is committed to explore the use of better bunker sands which will be trialled and, if proven advantageous, will be adopted for bunkers.

## **7. Closing the Course**

The Course may be closed with the authority of the General Manager, Head Greenkeeper or, in his absence, the senior Greenkeeper on duty, when adverse weather conditions have occurred and damage to the course would result if play were permitted. Such conditions would prevail if greens were largely waterlogged, if the course was flooded and during severe frost or snow.

During a competition, the General Manager or an authorised member of the Course Committee or Competitions, Matches and Handicaps Committee

supervising the competition at the time may close the course if they consider that the greens have become unsuitable for play through flooding, snowfall, or if dangerously high wind conditions occur.

A decision to close the course may be rescinded after an inspection by the Head Greenkeeper or the senior Greenkeeper on duty, if in their opinion the course becomes fit for play.

In the absence of any Green keeping Staff, the Club Professional may make the decision to close or open the course, in consultation with the General Manager, a member of the General Committee or a designated Committee Member.

## **8. Greens Staff and Members**

### **8.1 Work on the Course**

The Green keeping Staff will be vigilant so that they do not delay play unnecessarily and, whenever practical, will work in the opposite direction to the order of play.

All players will give priority to the Green keeping Staff working on the course.

### **8.2 Complaints**

Members and visitors may not complain about the conduct of a member of staff nor about the state of the course directly to any member of the Green keeping Staff. All complaints must be made to the General Manager who will then decide on the course of action. Any complaints relating to the Course will be fully investigated with the Head Greenkeeper and the Chair of the Course Committee.

## **9. Machinery**

The Head Greenkeeper will produce a rolling, 5-year plan of machinery replacements, additions, repairs and renewal for consideration, amendment and final approval by the Course Committee and the General Committee for incorporation into the Club's financial plan.

The Head Greenkeeper is responsible for keeping himself up-to-date with developments in golf course machinery and to bring appropriate recommendations to the Course Committee.

He is also responsible for all aspects of the maintenance and care of all machinery including records of use and preventative maintenance.

Work in-house will consist of changing filters and oils, general oiling and greasing. Major repair work to machinery is to be carried out by specialist contractors. Grass cutting units are to be maintained in first class order. Currently units are sent to specialist contractors at least annually for re-grinding and re-setting with additional routine maintenance carried out 'in house'.

## **10. Irrigation**

The Club's policy is to use as little water as possible in order to encourage deeper rooting grasses to predominate. However, in almost every season, there are times when rainfall is insufficient to

sustain grass growth and needs to be supplemented by irrigation. Water is also needed on demand to wash in fertilisers and other treatments therefore a guaranteed water source is essential for the maintenance of the golf course.

### **10.1 Water Supply**

Water is supplied from the bore hole into two 12,000-gallon holding tanks.

### **10.2 The System**

There are approximately 125-sprinkler heads on the course, 4 at each green with others on the tees. The system is pressurised by a pump at 150 pounds per square inch; water is fed around the course through a network of plastic pipes. Twenty four-volt decoders at each station (green or tee) open one at a time to allow water to be distributed on to the playing area. Additional sprinkler heads will be provided as recommended by the agronomist. The pump will be serviced on a regular basis during the winter period. The system, although functional, is old and will require modernisation in future years.

### **11. Financial Control**

Following the end of each golf season the Head Greenkeeper will produce a full and detailed report of all machinery, showing their performance with notes on any problems which have occurred during the year. This will be done in order to produce a definitive funds requirement for the next financial year for replacements and repairs which should be in line with the 5-year rolling budgets.

Regular review of actual expenditure compared with budget will be made and the Head Greenkeeper may be requested to explain any significant differences by the General Manager.

### **12. Ecology and Trees Policy**

This policy is to preserve as sensibly as possible the habitat of birds, animals and flora on the course. This is especially true of the long-standing herds of fallow and red deer resident in the park which have access to the Course. This also applies to the preservation of sensitive and threatened species, such as bats which are known to be resident within the Clubhouse and in nearby tree roosting sites.

Certain animals like deer, squirrels, foxes, badgers, and moles, do cause some damage to the Course. Although not damaging the course directly, there are many corvids which attack the less aggressive birds which also have to be kept under control. However, it is the responsibility of the Wollaton Park Management to address these issues.

The Club accepts its responsibility to follow all appropriate directives and laws committing the sport to investigating and applying low chemical, low watering and low pesticidal greenkeeping techniques – with the additional responsibilities of minimising usages of fuel, spillages of contaminants and potential minor pollutions resulting from the routine maintenance of mechanical equipment and the disposal of cut grasses and collected leaves.

Trees on the Course will be managed sensitively with due regard to the Tree Hazard Assessment contained within this document as an appendix.



Trees that actually affect play, particularly overhanging tees and those that prevent growth of grass on greens and elsewhere, will be sensibly and routinely lopped. On some occasions felling may be necessary – always with the agreement of the General Committee and also with the approval of our lessors, Nottingham City Council, particularly in the event of safety surgery work necessary on any tree which has a specific tree preservation order extant.

It is the intention of the Club to plant replacement trees in place of single tree hazards which are necessarily removed.

Tree planting will take place where and when necessary but only in accordance with the Wollaton Hall & Park Management Plan and course architect's recommendations.

### **13. Professional Advice**

It is the policy of the Club to seek opinions and advice from qualified agronomist and tree specialists on an annual basis.

The Head Greenkeeper is also authorised to seek assistance from qualified specialists for soil analysis or for other abnormal happenings such as invasions of unusual fungi, pests, and infections of sward and other grasses

### **14. Boundary Fences and Gates**

The boundary fences (as designated on the agreed lease) and access gates are the responsibility of the Club and continuing maintenance will be carried out on these in order to comply with the terms of our lease.

### **15. On-Course Toilets**

The septic tanks serving the toilets will be emptied and cleaned on an annual basis.

### **16. Non Turf Issues**

#### **16.1 Teeing Ground**

All tee markers will correctly positioned and will be in perfect condition, all bins will be emptied of rubbish and be clean, in perfect condition and positioned correctly.

All benches will be in perfect condition and positioned correctly.

All Tombstones will in perfect condition with the yardage plates clean ie, clear of grass cuttings, mud etc.

#### **16.2 Pathways**

All pathways will be in good repair and edged where appropriate, adequate signage will be positioned to ensure golfers use the paths provided.

#### **16.3 Fairway Yardage plates**

Fairway yardage plates will be edged once per week or more if deemed appropriate.

#### **16.4 Bunkers**

Additional attention to detail surrounding the bunkers – weeding bunker edges, removal of stones where required and edging will be attended to at least once per week.

#### **17. Appendices**

- Course Land Survey 2016
- STRI Report 2017
- Tree Survey and Recommendations 2016
- Architects Recommendations 2017