

Arcot Hall Golf Club



COURSE MANAGEMENT POLICY DOCUMENT

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COURSE MANAGEMENT POLICY DOCUMENT

OBJECTIVE

To eliminate the risk of sweeping and continued alterations of the course due to changes in Chairman of Greens, Greens Committees and Head Greenkeeper/Course Managers.

Continually to upgrade the quality of every aspect of the course by developing a long term course improvement policy with professional advice and provide a continual improvement prioritized plan over a rolling five to ten year period.

Several people will be involved in compiling such a document, particularly, the Chairman of Greens, the Head Greenkeeper, the Greens Committee, Club Secretary/Manager and possibly the Club Agronomist. General Committee agreement is needed to the initial plan and any significant changes.

INTRODUCTION

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chain of Command - General Committee - Greens Committee – Club Secretary/Manager - Head Greenkeeper - Greens Staff.

COURSE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Identify the characteristics which typify the course e.g. Parkland - Heathland. The type of vegetation and the various aspects which need particular attention on specific areas of the course.

These features should include the playing characteristics and the structural features of putting greens, surrounds and aprons, tees, fairways, semi-rough, hazards, and rough including the practice area. Together with the areas not in immediate play but still contribute to the feature of the course e.g. woodland, scrub, gorse, and heather etc. which can also provide valuable areas for conservation.

COURSE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Having established objectives, broad but detailed principles of the various areas should be laid down.

Where professional advice is required it will be sought from experienced consultants with a proven record.

RESOURCES

Optimum number of green staff to be identified and a commitment made to training and education. A complete inventory of machines and equipment. A phased programme of replacement and a controlled policy of maintenance. Only specific tried and proven materials are to be applied on the course. Quality should not be sacrificed, particularly top dressing, sand, turf and chemicals.

USAGE

There should be a clear stated policy relating to temporary greens and tees, winter play in frost conditions and the avoidance of over use. There should be properly identified periods for essential maintenance with priority given to green staff in the course through the green. A regulation of golf trolley and buggy usage should be considered on the course.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Arcot Hall Golf Club recognizes and accepts its responsibility as an employer to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all its employees.

The Secretary/Manager is responsible for the overall control and implementation of the Company's Health and Safety policy. The Course Manager (Head Greenkeeper) is responsible for ensuring his staff, or any contractor under his control, comply with the safe working practices set out in the Health and Safety Policy Document.

DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure fair treatment for employees who may become liable to disciplinary action. In the case of disciplinary action, the Green staff will be subject to the Company's Disciplinary Procedure. If any of the Green staff has a grievance arising from his/her employment they will have recourse to the Company's grievance procedure.

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

- (a) Agronomist to visit at least once a year.
- (b) Architectural and Structural Work.

Any alterations to the course should only be undertaken after consultation with The English Nature Conservancy Council, the Club Agronomist, British Coal and if necessary, a qualified architect. Bunker and tee alterations or additions should form a phased construction programme.

- (c) Ecology and Conservation Management.

A proper programme of ECOLOGICAL/CONSERVATION management should be started after consultation with English Nature with an ecologist sympathetic to the needs of golfers.

Once the management program is drawn up, implementation will be obligatory, subject to the Green keeper's necessary flexibility in responding to conditions in terms of timing.

CHAPTER 1

COURSE CHARACTERISTICS

PARKLAND (Large and Medium size Trees)

Various areas of the course are parkland which incorporates areas of varying types of woodland. The types of trees which are native to this area: -Common Alder, Ash, Aspen, Silver Birch, Common Oak, Rowan, Willow, Oak, Crack Willow, Beech, Downy Birch, Bird Cherry, Wild Cherry, Scots Pine, Yew and White Willow. Others such as the Sycamore and Chestnut have been present since the 16th century.

The proposed planting scheme and any future schemes should only incorporate native species to guarantee any sort of success with establishing the selected areas.

There are other areas of the course which have smaller species of trees and shrubs. Those that are native to the area are:- Blackthorn, Broom, Alder Buckthorn, Purging Buckthorn, Elder, Gorse, Hawthorn, Hazel, Holly, Dog Rose, Earen Willow, Osier Willow and Gray Willow.

Numerous varieties of these are to be found in the scrub areas which in many places have been left to nature to develop and need to be controlled in order that the natural Heath and Grassland is not unduly encroached upon.

HEATHLAND

Heather and gorse are the main components of the vegetation of lowland heath, comprising: - Common Heather, Cross Leaved Heath, Bell Heather and Gorse, also a number of varieties of rough grasses.

PONDS

The management of ponds is a specialized subject. The water levels must not be allowed to drop below a certain level and quality. The main problem with the ponds that are surrounded with fairly dense foliage is the reduced amount of available sunlight. During the autumn and winter months these ponds are continually littered with leaves and branches from the surrounding trees. It is essential that maintenance of the ponds is undertaken to ensure the water quality is adequate to support wildlife.

STREAMS AND DITCHES

These areas are essential to the drainage of the course. However, in many cases they become encroached by the trees, scrub and weed. This causes them to foul up and also foul the drains which feed into them. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that a rational management program is carried out. Some ditches are no longer viable due to subsidence. These need to be identified and a plan developed to return to their proper use, or to fill and restore the profile of the ground.

CHAPTER 2

PLAYING AREA OF THE COURSE

In 1986 specified areas of the course were deemed to be "SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST." This was confirmed in 1990 by the ENGLISH NATURE CONSERVANCY COUNCIL. From 1992 these areas have been extended to encompass the whole of the course apart from the 1st, 2nd and 18th and parts of the 8th and 17th. An agreement was entered into with Natural England in 2007; therefore any proposed changes to the course on the areas of the S.S.S.I can only be done with the approval of Natural England. This also applies to the application of fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides and irrigation. Therefore the areas of the course deemed to be S.S.S.I, must be managed under strict control.

The reason for the site to be deemed S.S.S.I is the ancient rig and furrow workings on parts of the course and about twelve lowland heath land grasses that are extremely rare and unusual to be surviving together. A rare Least Minor Moth which only breeds in this part of the country is also present on the course.

There are three essentials to a good golf course, a well designed layout, being in good condition and well maintained. The course was designed by a well respected golf course architect, James Braid, and has proved an excellent challenge to all levels of golfers. It is formed on soil varying from loam humus to clay and generally overlaying a clay substructure. Due to the fact that the course is relatively flat, these soil conditions cannot stand up to extremes of heavy rainfall and certain areas are prone to water-logging if the drainage system is not maintained. Some areas are adversely affected by traffic and heavy use, particularly golf trolleys following the same path through the narrow walkways.

Therefore compaction does occur on many areas of the course, especially around the greens and the walkways to the next tee. The policy being pursued is to relieve compaction by an intensive aeration program and to avoid further damage in the winter months when the ground is wet or frozen and the grass has stopped growing, by limiting the use of trolleys. Pathways will be created wherever practicable. These paths will be constructed with an under-laying of ash and a cover of red track.

Due to the introduction of the five year plan of replacement machinery, we are now fairly well equipped with modern, efficient machinery; therefore there is no reason why the course should not be well maintained. The introduction of expensive machinery and equipment brings with it expensive maintenance costs; these must be controlled, monitored and budgeted for, and then there should be no major problems. It is essential that the policy is not allowed to lapse.

The course is gradually improving and by following a course management policy, it will continue to improve year on year.

TEES

There is a continuing program of maintenance to the tees which involves extensions, where required, leveling and top dressing in order to ensure the best possible conditions are maintained to accommodate the demands of increased traffic.

It is essential to have winter teeing areas and if necessary to resort to man made fabric tees. The winter tee areas have all summer to recover but are essential to preserve the main teeing areas for the main golfing calendar.

FAIRWAYS

The particular aspect of the fairways is the rig and furrows. The Conservancy Council calculates that these have been in existence since the 17th Century, hence their special interest, and they will not allow this feature to be altered, only maintained. These rig and furrows do create a drainage problem which will have to be eliminated.

There are several varieties of grasses in the fairways; the aim should be to encourage only the better quality finer grasses to flourish. This will be achieved by following a program of verti-draining, hollow-tining and sanding each year after the main playing season. Over-seeding will be practiced as needed to maintain a good level of growth and definition.

GREENS SURROUNDS

A similar situation exists as for that of the fairways. Some areas will improve with verti-draining, scarifying, hollow-tining, over seeding and fertilising.

SEMI-ROUGH AND ROUGH

We will not be allowed to fertilise these areas. Therefore, again, an ongoing aeration program will have to be followed.

BUNKERS

A number of bunkers are prone to ponding and some fairway bunkers are now misplaced. An ongoing program is in progress of re-draining and re-shaping. It is essential that this is continued. It is also essential to attain consistency of grade of sand in order that an acceptable uniformity of reaction can be expected. (See Bunker Report) Appendix 6

GREENS

The greens will be presented in such a way as to provide a good standard of putting surface for as long as possible throughout the year. This will be achieved by gradual replacement of the broad leaved grasses with bent and fescues. In normal circumstances hand cutting of greens will take place twice each week.

It may be necessary to come off the greens in extreme wet periods, especially during severe frost and snow. This decision will not be taken lightly and will only be implemented if it is considered the greens will be damaged unduly. Build in the potential to be able to produce a very high standard of a true putting surface with good pace throughout the summer months.

The present greens have a number of problems: being small they are much harder to maintain than larger greens, due to the concentration of play over a limited area, having less space for alternative pin placement and the walk on and off areas become concentrated and compacted, leading to successive damage in specific areas.

Soil greens such as we have may be out of play due to water logging more than average. They will also hold frost longer. Poorly drained greens tend to carry an annual meadow grass component, which generates excessive thatch, which in turn inhibits drainage (leading to foot printing and plugging) whilst in dry weather they will be hard and unreceptive. They will be more prone to disease scarring, uneven growth and seed head development and pace will be difficult to control.

To overcome the conditions outlined above a program of regular aeration of the greens is essential. Application of top dressing to greens on a frequent basis will help build a more receptive base for the promotion of the fine grasses mentioned earlier; it will also dilute the organic matter, thus reducing undue water retention.

Greens surrounded by trees suffer from dampness (slower putting surface and disease), leaf coverage in autumn and droughts in summer (due to competition for moisture). They will also hold frost longer in winter.

New methods and additives need to be looked at, as and when available to improve this important part of the course.

CHAPTER 3

COURSE MANAGEMENT POLICY

GREENS

The underlying objectives of putting surface management are:-

- (a) To produce a good level of usability year round, barring severe frost or snow.
- (b) To provide a good standard of surface for at least 10 months of the year.
- (c) To build in the potential to be able to produce very high standard of fast and true putting surface for determined periods during the main competitive season.

Annual meadow grass is still present in most of the greens. The policy is to continue to reduce this gradually, introducing and encouraging the finer fescue and bents to dominate. This can be achieved by regular mowing, at heights and frequency appropriate to the time of year and prevailing weather conditions.

Hand cutting will take place normally twice each week, which will also help minimise compaction.

Aeration must be carried out on a regular basis. Slit tine weekly, verti-drain at least spring and autumn and if weather permits repeat in December. Top dressing will be applied after verti-draining, using the recommended quality from an approved supplier, agreed by the Agronomist. Verti-cutting will be carried out fortnightly. Scarifying will be carried out regularly at an appropriate frequency depth of cut.

Fertilization is very important. Frequency, quantity and timing of application are variable: reference should be made to the recommendations of the visiting Agronomist.

Watering - Timing, frequency and quantities applied all need careful management; the policy is minimum irrigation, only enough to keep the finer plants healthy, which will discourage meadow grass and help promote a firm true putting surface. Any dry patches will be treated with wetting agents and hand watering.

Pesticides - Pests, disease and weeds all need to be strictly controlled promptly, using the approved materials.

Hole changing - The frequency of hole changing and the spread of pin sites affect greens considerably. The policy is to use the outer areas of the greens during the winter to preserve the centre of the greens for the main competitive season.

Drainage works. Drainage should be carried out as routine when needed according to priority.

TEES

The maintenance of the tees is a high priority. The objectives is to produce a playing surface with a firm level stance and uniform grass cover from which clean contact can be made to the ball for twelve months of the year. The winter tees will be maintained and given time to recover when they will again be used for the winter period. If necessary, man made teeing formations may be introduced on the more difficult areas. Frequency and height of cut will be appropriate to season and weather conditions.

Regular aeration including regular slit tining and hollow coring is essential, and tees should be top dressed/over seeded at least twice each year. During the summer months there will be an on - going program of regular divoting using quality material and seed. Special attention will be given to those tees experiencing high wear, such as the par three holes. Applying plant growth regulators (PGRs) such as Primo Maxx should help improve the wear resistance as well as benefiting in other areas.

Verti-cutting and scarification to be carried out at appropriate frequency and depth of cut.

Fertilisation - The amounts, frequency and types of material should be applied as recommended by the visiting Agronomist.

Water - This is important on tees used through the growing season, where a program of continual renovation is in operation to repair damage due to wear and tear. Timing, frequency and quantities applied all will be appropriate to weather conditions.

Pesticides/Herbicides – Worms and weeds should be controlled chemically as needed using approved materials and methods.

Tee Box Movement - The frequency of tee box movement is vital to the even spread of wear. They should be moved daily in the main competitive seasons.

Drainage - This should be carried out as routine when needed and according to priority.

BUNKERS

Bunkers should be well constructed and designed so that they are consistent in nature one to the others, drain freely, are visible and influence play positively and fairly.

There must be sufficient depth (at least 100mm) of clean sand above the binding layer within the bunker and the surface layer should be maintained in a loose condition over a firm base. The sand should be kept free from weed growth and stones.

Drainage - This should be carried out as routine when needed according to priority.

When drains are replaced perforated PVC pipe should be laid centrally in a trench 230mm below the bunker floor and back filled with pea gravel aggregate 8-12 mm gauge then covered with a geo-textile membrane. This should be cut to overlap the trench and then firmly tucked into the subsoil and firmed in before covering with the approved bunker

sand. A full specification for bunker construction can be found in the STRI advisory leaflet 28.

The bunkers should be deeply raked every other day (Mon, Wed and Fri) and before any weekend competitions. Rakes will be provided for each bunker and should be placed in and not outside the bunker.

In addition bunkers should be checked on a daily basis and lightly raked where necessary.

SURROUNDS

Green surrounds may be defined as a mown area around each putting surface which will vary according to the layout of the green. Therefore we must consider providing good run - up conditions to the putting surface, maintain fair, consistent lies and a good attractive visual setting.

Mowing height and frequency of cut will be appropriate to season and weather.

Aeration is required as routine, i.e. slit tining, hollow coring and chisel tines. These areas should be verticut on a regular basis.

FAIRWAYS, PRIMARY CUT and SEMI-ROUGH

The underlying objective of fairway management is to produce an acceptable playing area giving a firm relatively even stance with relatively uniform grass cover, from which a clean contact with the ball can be made to produce a shot which can be controlled.

The first or primary cut has been introduced to improve definition.

The objective of semi - rough management is to produce of an area adjacent to the first cut which will attract a degree of stroke penalty.

Mowing frequency and height of cut will be according to the growing season. Shaping should enhance appearance and approach to the green.

Aeration should consist of regular deep slitting and hollow coring especially on the rig tops and possibly scarification at least once each year. Top dressing and over seeding may be needed to maintain good playing conditions.

Fertilizer should not be warranted on fairways where the object is to encourage the better quality grasses. This will certainly not be allowed on the areas of SSSI. However there may be some instances where very poor growing conditions, due to the very shallow depth of top soil, where careful fertiliser treatment (based on nitrogen) may be necessary.

Cutting heights for all playing areas have been agreed by the General Committee, see attached sheet at Appendix 8

Divotting - should be carried out as regular maintenance at least twice each year, using quality material and seed.

Pesticides and Herbicides - Worms and weeds should be controlled when necessary using suitably approved materials and methods.

DRAINAGE AND DITCHES

At Arcot Hall the dispersal of surface water is of paramount importance. Therefore the ditches must be cleared as regular routine maintenance to ensure the free flow from the drainage system. The drains flowing into these ditches have to be checked and cleared on an annual basis and checked after or during heavy rainfall. Additional drains will be laid as necessary in an ongoing improvement program.

TEMPORARY GREENS

It is the firm intention that the ongoing work to relieve compaction and thatch will make the use of temporary greens less necessary in the long term. In the meantime, under certain conditions, temporary greens will have to be brought into operation.

Acting on behalf of the Captain, it is the responsibility of the Head Greenkeeper, Secretary/Manager or the Chairman of Greens to decide on a day - to - day basis the need for temporary greens to be brought into operation. The considerations are:-

- Is the normal green too soft to take the traffic of the course?
- In frost conditions would the traffic on the course cause excessive damage?
- If the normal green is being worked on intensively a temporary green may be brought into action in order that the maintenance could proceed more quickly with greater productivity.

WORK ON THE COURSE

The Green Staff will be vigilant so that they do not delay play unreasonably. However, work has always to be productive and is especially important at the beginning of the day.

All players are therefore asked to give consideration to the Greens Staff whilst carrying out their duties by not stopping their work unreasonably, and by realising that it is in their own interest not to do so.

CHAPTER 4

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The General Committee is responsible for the management of ARCOT HALL GOLF CLUB in all its functions.

The Greens Committee is responsible for the detailed management of the Golf Course, including planning of maintenance and development programmes aimed at agreed performance objectives, along with development of equipment and manpower plans, and obtaining General Committee agreement when required.

The Head Greenkeeper is responsible for constructing a plan of action that will ensure that these objectives are met and will attend and report to the Greens Committee on progress against these objectives. He is responsible for the implementation of this Policy in all its aspects - planning of maintenance schedules in relation to fixture lists; liaising with the Secretary/Manager on any problem areas; machinery maintenance; planning and long term budget strategy; schedules and records; personnel education; training; discipline; application of the Club's Health and Safety Policy; fertilisers and chemicals; storage and safety; ecology. The keeping of records is of the utmost importance in order to monitor progress towards the set objectives. See appendix 7.

The Secretary/Manager is the Head Greenkeeper's line manager and will establish appropriate management controls to monitor progress against the objectives set by the Committee, ensuring correct management practices are followed. Variations from budget and deviations from policy will be investigated and brought to the attention of the Greens Committee. He will co-ordinate the AHGC Fixture List with the Vice Captain, considering all work in progress on the course, and communicate all alterations and changes.

Timing of the work on the Course

Much essential work on the course must be completed before a certain time of the year. It will be the aim of the Head Greenkeeper, in his regular discussions with the Chairman of Greens or his representative and the Secretary/Manager, to plan this work well in advance so that the periods in which the work has to be done can be agreed, taking into account the golf program. Members will be informed of any planned work projects.

RESOURCES

STAFF - The agreed staffing level is currently agreed as follows:-

Head Greenkeeper

1st Assistant

2nd Assistant

Assistant Greenkeeper

Trainee/Assistant Greenkeeper

Total 5

There is a commitment to training and education of staff who are all encouraged to obtain City and Guilds in Green keeping to the maximum of their abilities. Staff are to be encouraged to become members of BIGGA and to attend discussion groups organised by

this Association and to attend the various trade fairs in order to keep abreast of modern developments.

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

FINANCIAL CONTROL

In September in each year the Secretary/Manager, Greens Chairman and the Head Greenkeeper will prepare a budget including a list of replacement machinery in line with the five year plan, requirements for fertilizer and other chemicals, top dressing, seed etc. This will lead to a definitive budget for the financial year for capital and revenue expenditure. These will be discussed in Finance Committee and, when agreed, recommended for final approval to General Committee.

A monthly review of actual expenditure, compared with the budget will be made and any significant differences explained.

MACHINERY

The Head Greenkeeper will maintain an inventory of all course machinery and each year update the 5 year equipment plan based on needed replacements and/or additions, for approval by the Greens Committee and then to the General Committee for incorporation into the Clubs Financial Plan.

The Head Greenkeeper is responsible for keeping himself and the staff up to date with developments in golf course machinery and to bring his recommendations to the Greens Committee when discussing the five year plan.

He is also responsible for the maintenance of all machinery in all its aspects - records of use, preventative maintenance, major servicing, adjustments etc. He and his staff must recognise the heavy investment which has been entrusted to his care out of the Club funds and prudently preserve these investments

CLOSURE OF THE COURSE

On behalf of the Captain, the following officers are authorised to open or close the course – Head Greenkeeper (or his nominated deputy), Secretary/Manager, Chairman of Greens, Head Professional (after consultation with any of the previous named officers).

The Decision of the Head Greenkeeper, being ultimately responsible for the condition and presentation of the course, should not be over-ruled. He must, however, take into consideration the commercial implications before making a final decision to close the course.

The course should be closed during unusual weather conditions when damage to the course is likely to occur if play were to be permitted. Such conditions would exist if the greens were waterlogged, the course was flooded or in the case of severe frost or snow.

In summer a decision to close the course may be rescinded if, after the conditions which closed the course have ceased, and after an inspection of each of the 18 holes on the course. In the case of the Head Professional or the Captain, he should attempt to contact the Head Greenkeeper, the Secretary/Manager or the Chairman of Greens. When the Head Greenkeeper or his deputy has closed the course, he will communicate to the Professional the possibility of opening the course if conditions improve. If, in the opinion of the Head Greenkeeper or his deputy, the course should remain closed for the day, then the decision cannot be rescinded, except in exceptional circumstances.

In winter the definition of "Frost" should be taken that if there is a hoar frost i.e. there is a white frost but the plant tissues are not frozen, then play can be allowed without serious damage. If the ground is frozen but there is no frost on the plants, then play may be allowed without serious damage. However, if the plant foliage is frozen, then the course should be closed until the frost has cleared from both the foliage and the ground.

The course may be closed early morning for frost; however the course will be re-inspected at 11:00 am and may be opened for afternoon play, providing there will be no damage to the course.

During a competition, the course may be closed by any of the above named authorized officers, the captain, or the person supervising the competition, if in their opinion the course has become unsuitable for play due to adverse conditions.

CHAPTER 5

REGULATION OF GOLF TROLLEY USAGE

With the rapid expansion of golf and the increasing demands of play there has been a corresponding increase in the number of trolleys on our course. Although a potential benefit to the golfer, their impact on the golf course must be carefully considered and, if necessary, restrictions enforced.

Their primary drawbacks can be related to the constant attrition to the same routes, notably around the main playing areas of greens and tees. Very often the same routes are exploited through the walk on and off areas - with worn turf surfaces and compacted soils the inevitable consequence.

In contrast, golfers who prefer to carry their clubs can circumvent obstacles with greater ease and traverse the putting surfaces, thus adopting a much wider range of traffic routes.

The pressures imposed by golf trolleys are particularly acute during the late summer and winter months when the decline is aggravated by the lack of natural recovery and the vulnerability of the wet soils to compaction forces. The advent of wide wheel trolleys has eased the pressure to a degree, but the emergence of heavier electrically driven trolleys has increased the scouring effect on turf - notably under wet surface conditions.

Undoubtedly, the temporary suspension in the use of golf trolleys will in most instances, have a marked influence on the viability and quality of the turf surface. Enforcing a local rule that clubs must be carried will help break the pattern and spread the load of golf traffic more evenly.

The majority of golfers should be sufficiently fit to carry a light bag and a reduced number of clubs in winter, without significantly diminishing their enjoyment of the game. However, where the course is deemed to be playable for golfers who carry, golfers who, by medical certificate, can only play with use of a buggy/trike must be allowed to play providing it is considered safe to do so.

A ban on trolleys will prove most effective through the winter months (e.g. November to February) when the surfaces are most vulnerable.

The use of trolleys is inextricably linked with the need for adequate traffic control. Such directives can take several forms, including ropes, hoops and white lines; possibly backed up with strategically placed signs. Through these means, vulnerable areas can be protected and different traffic routes brought into use.

The introduction of purpose built paths, to take the weight of trolley traffic, may be warranted in certain areas, e.g. alongside tees, but these must satisfy golfing, management and aesthetic criteria.

Where course layout allows, consider building separate alternative tees, which will be mainly used in winter but could, at need, take some summer play. They should be sited so that traffic will naturally follow a different route to that used in summer.

The above measures should not be regarded as a substitute for a temporary trolley ban, but rather as being complementary with the objective of countering the increasing pressures on our golf course and maintaining optimum playing conditions.

CHAPTER 6

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

ARCOT HALL GOLF CLUB LIMITED, Arcot Hall, Dudley, Cramlington, Northumberland, recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all its employees.

ARCOT HALL GOLF CLUB will take all necessary steps to meet this responsibility paying particular attention to the provision of:-

- a) Plant and systems of work that are, so far as it reasonably practical, safe and without risks to health.
- b) Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own safety and health at work.
- c) Safe access and egress in properties, working places, and recreational areas controlled by the Club.
- d) Welfare first aid facilities to comply with any relevant legislation.

This general policy will be reviewed annually by the Committee and where considered appropriate will be updated.

The Club reminds all employees of their own duties and responsibilities under the Health & Safety Legislation to take care for their own safety and that of other employees and other persons who may be affected by their activities at work and these duties and responsibilities are as follows:-

- a) Employees must take reasonable care for their own health and safety at work and for that of other persons who might be affected by their activities.
- b) Employees must comply with the safety policy and co-operate with the Committee and perform any duties in a manner which complies with any legal requirements.
- c) Employees must not interfere with, or misuse, equipment or systems of work which have been installed to comply with legislation.
- d) Employees must observe safety rules at all times, use the correct tools and equipment for the job, wear appropriate protective clothing and use safety devices where supplied.
- e) Employees must report any accidents, unsafe practices or systems of work, damaged or defective machinery, plant or equipment, to a responsible person.
- f) Employees must report any incident of being hit by golf balls or of near misses.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

THE SECRETARY OF ARCOT HALL GOLF CLUB LIMITED

MAIN AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

To carry out the following in keeping with the Club's responsibilities and in accordance with the established procedures of the Club -

- a) To understand the Health and Safety Policy of the Club and to accept, as Safety Officer, responsibility for all operations under its control.
- b) To ensure application of the policy.
- c) To ensure that the statutory requirements are observed and that relevant records and reports are kept.
- d) To ensure that all personnel receive necessary instructions on their responsibilities for safe working procedures and that these are being carried out.
- e) To institute regular safety check procedures covering house-keeping, plant equipment, buildings environment and welfare facilities.
- f) To establish emergency procedures in the event of serious injury fire or illness.
- g) To ensure that appropriate training is provided where necessary.
- h) To ensure that due consideration is given to the protection of the public.
- i) To periodically appraise the effectiveness of the policy and ensure that any necessary changes are made.

DEPARTMENTAL SAFETY SUPERVISORS

THE GOLF COURSE & WORKING AREAS/PREMISES ALLOCATED TO "OUTSIDE" STAFF

THE HEAD GREENKEEPER

The Head Greenkeeper is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Acts, as applicable to his area of responsibility as to staff under his jurisdiction are carried out:-

- a) To maintain at all times safe working practices.
- b) To ensure that relevant safety publications are available for reference.
- c) To consider all aspects and representations of safety from the Safety Officer and to take such actions as is deemed appropriate.
- d) The correct and safe operation of machinery, maintenance and cleaning, fitting and use of guards.
- e) Provision and maintenance of the correct first aid box contents.
- f) To ensure the safe use of electrical equipment, servicing and installation by competent persons, the guarding and securing of cables and correct connection between appliance cable and plug.
- g) To ensure that the wearing of protective clothing and ear protection units is carried out when working conditions require their use.
- h) Proper supervision in the storage care and use of corrosive and injurious chemicals including flammable spirits and fuels and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- i) To report immediately to the Safety Officer any matter affecting health, safety or welfare which in his opinion requires attention.

CHAPTER 7

JOB DESCRIPTION

HEAD GREENKEEPER

Responsible to the Secretary/Manager.

Responsible for all other members of the Greens Staff.

Overall responsibility to ensure the course is kept in a first class condition and that it, and the areas surrounding it within the boundaries of the course, are tidy, well presented, and maintained, all in accordance with the detailed standards contained in the Club's Course Management Policy Document and within budgets previously agreed by the Committee.

SPECIFIC DUTIES

a) Course

- 1) Carry out appropriate maintenance and treatment of the entire playing surface of the course, greens, tees, fairways, roughs and surrounding areas in accordance with the Course Management Policy and following the priorities agreed by the Greens Committee.
- 2) Implement treatment programs recommended by the agronomist retained by the Club through PSD Agronomy after approval by the Greens/General Committee.
- 3) Assist in preparing winter maintenance program for the Greens Committee.
- 4) Ensure the sprinkler system is fully operational at all times.
- 5) Maintain records of the application of pesticides and fertilisers.
- 6) Advise on the use of temporary greens and tees when necessary and on whether the course should be closed in the event snow, frost or flooding.
- 7) Construct new tees, greens, paths or any other project as approved by the Greens/General Committee.
- 8) Maintain the woodlands, scrub, heath, boundary fences, ponds, streams and drainage ditches in accordance with the Course Management Policy Document.
- 9) Take appropriate action against rabbits, moles and other pests.
- 10) Assist in making recommendations on ways in which the course can be improved and helping to implement a rolling plan to achieve continued improvement.

b) Machinery and Equipment

- 1) Recommend and assist in the preparation and continuation of a rolling plan for the purchase of replacement and new equipment.
- 2) Ensure that all equipment is maintained correctly, serviced where necessary and cleaned after use.
- 3) Maintain a ledger of all equipment and an inventory of smaller hand-tools etc.
- 4) Ensure that the green keeper's sheds and office, toilets and working area are kept in a clean and tidy condition.

c) Consumables

- 1) Maintain adequate stocks of pesticides, fertilizers, chemicals, top soil, top dressing and other consumables as necessary.
- 2) Ensure that all consumables particularly those subject to a COSHH assessment are stored in accordance with statutory requirements.

d) Staff

- 1) Be involved in the interviewing, engagement, motivation and training of all members of the Greens Staff.
- 2) Organise and control the Greens Staff on a daily basis.
- 3) Be the first step in the disciplinary procedure.
- 4) Ensure all the Greens Staff are familiar with the standards and procedures required by the Club as set out in the Course Management Policy.
- 5) Ensure that the Greens Staff are instructed in, and comply with, matters relating to Health & Safety in particular:-
 - i) Using the correct protective clothing including ear protection.
 - ii) Using the equipment in a correct and safe manner.
 - iii) The storage and use of pesticides, fertilizers, chemicals, fuels etc.
 - iv) The display of warning signs after application of pesticides, fertilizers and chemicals.
 - v) Ensuring the first aid kits are correctly stocked.
- 6) He should also ensure that COSHH assessments are made where necessary and that the Club's Health & Safety Policy Statement is displayed in the Greens Shed and is read by all staff.
- 7) He should make recommendations on annual pay increases for Greens Staff and authorise overtime payments to staff.
- 8) He should carry out yearly appraisals of the staff.

e) General

- 1) He should attend all Greens Committee Meetings and make his report.
- 2) Ensure the Greens Staff are fully briefed to maintain the course adequately when he is on holiday or absent for any other reason.
- 3) Assist in the preparation of the annual greens budgets and monitor actual expenditure during the year against those budgets
- 4) Check supplier's invoices for all purchases in relation to the course.

CHAPTER 8

ECOLOGY

In the area of the nature of Arcot Hall, with its abundance of natural woodland within the perimeter of the course, it is an important part of the policy to preserve the natural habitat of birds, animals, and flora on the course. The woodland cannot be left unattended, fallen trees have to be removed when they present a hazard; invading scrub has to be controlled.

Certain animals such as deer and rabbits and especially moles do damage the course. The Greens Staff have been trained to control the moles; it is essential that they are kept under control.

Trees which affect the course, particularly when overhanging teeing grounds (preventing the growth of grass), have to be lopped. On some occasions felling may be necessary. This work has to be implemented under the control of the Head Greenkeeper who always has to recognise the need for tree preservation and to ensure that the tree preservation order is respected. Tree planting will take place where and when necessary, with professional advice sought when conditions require.

Although welcome to some wildlife, scrub can be a problem on the golf course. Managed hedges or woodland can be choked by invasive scrub which invades other areas.

Good management ensures that this does not become a problem by keeping the spread of invasive scrub at bay. However it must be remembered that on more exposed areas some scrub, if well controlled, may provide useful cover.

In the parkland setting trees and woodland are important landscape features, which add character to the course, but they must be appropriate to their surroundings and care must be taken with their planting and management.

When planting it is important to choose native species which are characteristic to the local environment. It is best to avoid non-native tree types as they are of limited value to the wildlife. Do not plant up an area such as a species - rich grassland as this is also good for the wildlife.

Areas of water are important not only as an interesting hazard which adds challenge to the game but as a valuable wildlife habitat. Take care to ensure that the water quality is suitable for the wildlife by guarding against fertiliser and pesticide run off. Likewise, clear banks at a time when it is least likely to cause damage to the wildlife. Ponds should be cleared in September or early Autumn on a three year rotational basis.

Advice can be obtained from The Nature Conservancy Council.

CHAPTER 9

CODE OF CONDUCT - MEMBERS, VISITORS AND GREENS STAFF

1. Daily Course Preparation

This includes work on Tees, Bunkers, Aprons and Greens. It normally takes the staff 4 hours to complete these daily tasks following the most productive route around the course.

Work starts at 6.30 a.m. in summer and, depending on daylight, no later than 7.30 p.m. in winter.

Players starting before 9.00 a.m. in summer are asked to give priority to Greens Staff so that daily course preparation can be completed in the shortest possible time.

2. Notices to Members and Visitors

The following events will be shown on notice boards updated daily:-

- a) When chemicals are being used on the course.
- b) When abnormal work is in progress.
- c) Greens which are in temporary (winter) use.

3. Players and Greens Staff

Players are to ensure that it is appropriate for them to play without endangering the Greens Staff and should not play to a green if work is in progress on that green.

Greens Staff will, when working on a green, stand aside when appropriate and signal when they are ready for a ball to be played to that green.

During the early part of the day players are asked to give priority to Greens Staff. After course preparation is complete. Greens Staff are to give priority to players.

4. Complaints

Any complaint is to be in writing to the Secretary/Manager and not directly to any member of the Greens Staff. The Secretary/Manager will deal with the complaint, in conjunction with the Head Greenkeeper, if of a minor nature. Serious complaints will be passed to the Committee.

Appendix 2

The Sports Turf Research Institute

ADVISORY LEAFLET

TEE CONSTRUCTION

(1) With the demands of modern golf in mind and looking to the future increased demand on tee space, we suggest the following total tee sizes should be aimed for, where space is available:-

Par 4 and 5 holes

Mens 250m² (300 sq.yd.)
Ladies 84m² (100sq.yd.)

Par 3 holes

Mens 330m² (400sq.yd.)
Ladies 84m² (100sq.yd.)

When designing and building new tees or enlarging existing tees, ease and rapidity of maintenance should be borne in mind, e.g. the ability to get maintenance equipment and, preferably, triple mowers on to the surface of tees is very important. Banks should be given a shallow slope for rapid mowing. Avoid steep banks which have to be flymo'ed by hand. Allow room for moving tee markers from side to side as well as from front to back, on top of requirements such as elevation according to the demands of the hole (elevation must be kept to the minimum) and try to avoid poor sites, where grass growth will be slow, e.g. under trees, where tree root growth, overhang of branches, lack of sunlight and frost can be problems.

(2) Form the shape of the tee in the subsoil providing a smooth, evenly firmed subsoil formation surface with, perhaps, a slight fall from front to back, for example of between 1:70 to 1:100. One large teeing area is less trouble to maintain but constant use by golfers can create serious wear patterns. Therefore, in certain circumstances, two teeing areas can reduce wear patterns considerably.

(3) Where it is necessary to elevate, build up the formation surface using dean subsoil fill as free from heavy clay and large stones as possible. Build up in no more than 225 mm (9 in.) layers, finning adequately at each stage to eliminate soft spots.

If rubble is used as fill, blind it with coarse sand to adequately support the topsoil.

(4) When determining the finished level, allow for a minimum 200 mm (8 in.) depth of sandy topsoil or a friable sand/soil mix under the surface and a minimum of 150 mm (6 in.) of a similar material on the banks.

(5) Spread the topsoil, or topsoil and sand on to the formation surface and cultivate layers to an even mix.

(6) Form a smooth, evenly finned turf bed by alternate raking and heeling. Spread a pre-turfing fertilizer, say bone meal, at 70 g/m² (2 oz. per sq.yd.) and gently rake into the surface soil.

(7) Turf the area with the best material available, this can be from a turf nursery, practice ground or the side of a fairway. Make sure the new turf consists of fine grasses, such as *Agrostis* and *Festuca spedes*, and as free from thatch or clay at the turf base as possible. Settle with a light rolling using an implement weighing up to 250 kg (5 cwt), making two passes in transverse directions. Then top dress with sandy compost at a rate of around 3.0 kg/m² (6 lb. per sq.yd.) and work this well into the joints. Further light top dressing will be required at intervals to produce the final true surface.

(8) Do not bring newly laid areas into play until the turf is well established and a true surface for close mowing has been developed by top dressing at intervals. Otherwise results will be disappointing.

The Sports Turf Research Institute

ADVISORY LEAFLET

BUNKER CONSTRUCTION

(1) Bunker design must relate to the architect's concept of their strategic and visual impact at a hole, and also to soil type, degree of exposure, natural contours of the surrounding land, as well as future maintenance and costs.

INLAND SITES

(2) On inland sites, especially where impermeable clay subsoil exists, drainage must have priority. Ensure that external ground contours are shaped so as to shed surface water run-off around the bunker. This will vary according to site from a gentle rise to the bunker up of some 25 mm, to a carefully shaped shallow grass swale around the front and sides most affected by run-off.

(3) On poorly drained subsoils, build up, rather than excavating deeply into the ground. The base need be no more than 150 mm below general ground level to minimise difficulties achieving a suitable drain outlet. Shape the bunker floor to provide a uniform fall to a drain running the length of a larger bunker, or to one low sump point from which an outlet drain can be provided.

(4) Pipe drains - clayware or perforated PVC - should be laid centrally in a drain trench some 230 mm below the bunker floor, and with a uniform fall of not less than 1:200 to connect with a convenient outlet drain. Backfill the trench with clean, hard stone aggregate, 8-12 mm gauge to subsoil formation level, and make evenly firm.

It is essential to stop finer particles from the bunker sand filtering through to rapidly block up the pipe drains. In the past, upturned fibrous sods or old sacking were used to cover the gravel. Nowadays the trend is to use a geotextile membrane, taking care to choose one of a suitable grade (consult suppliers of e.g. Ten-am, Tytar, Lotrak). The fabric should be cut to overlap each side of the trench by 150 mm and then be firmly fixed into the subsoil, pushing the free edges into a 75 mm slit and firming in.

(5) At sites where the bunker floor is gravelly, or is the type of subsoil which works into and quickly contaminates the sand, it is worth using the geotextile membrane over the whole base of the bunker.

(6) Provide 150 mm firm depth of topsoil over surrounds and bunker banks to ensure satisfactory grass growth. Allow for a definite 'surround' to a putting green, the contrasting heights of cut set off the close mown putting surface to advantage, and the intermediate height of surround turf is much less susceptible to drought effects (inevitable as sand splash builds up).

Ensure that slopes to banks and surrounds near bunkers are graded and finished with smooth, easy contours that allow maintenance with modern triple cut surround mowers.

BUNKER SAND

(7) There is no perfect formula for bunker sand, final choice being a compromise between material having suitable particle size, colour, freedom from lime, and cost in descending order of priority. Current

recommendations for an inland course are to select a sand with at least 95% of the particles in the size range 0.125 to 1.0 mm, and the vast majority between 0.25 and 0.5 mm. There should be no more than 2% fine gravel and less than 2% silt and clay.

Advisory Leaflet No.28 (01/09)

Bingley, West Yorkshire, BD16 1AU. Telephone (0274) 565131 Fax No. (0274) 561891

The Sports Turf Research Institute

ADVISORY LEAFLET

GOLF GREEN CONSTRUCTION

DRAINAGE CARPET METHOD

MATERIALS

- 1. TURF** - Imported fescue and bent on appropriate sandy soil.
- 2. GROWING MEDIUM** - Laboratory tested mix of uniform medium grade sand and topsoil.
- 3. BUNDING LAYER** - Very coarse sand (1-2 mm grade) or fine grit (2-4 mm grade).
- 4. AGGREGATE** - Hard angular gravel 8-10 mm grade (not limestone).
- 5. DRAINS** - Perforated plastic: main 110 mm diameter; laterals 80 mm diameter.

CONSTRUCTION PROFILE

Imported turf or seeded sward -is sufficient time available.

Approved sand and soil mix -minimum 250-300 mm firmed depth beneath putting surface.

Blinding layer - minimum 50 mm firmed depth.

Stone carpet - minimum 100 mm firmed depth.

Pipe drain.

Advisory Leaflet No.29 (01/09)

Bingley, West Yorkshire, BD16 1AU. Telephone (0274) 565131 Fax No. (0274) 561891

The Sports Turf Research Institute

ADVISORY LEAFLET

**EFFECTS OF PLAY ON GOLF GREENS UNDER
ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS WITH
PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO FROST**

The aim of management is to keep play on the main greens for as near 12 months in the year as possible. However, this ideal has to be matched with the drainage qualities, soil type, aspect and elevation of the greens in question as well as prevailing weather conditions. An indication of the type of damage arising from play under adverse conditions is given below and, whilst appreciating that golfers expect winter play, these requirements must be kept in perspective. Most competitive golf and important fixtures take place outside the winter period. Winter golf is normally less competitive and if the little inconvenience caused by playing to temporary greens of a satisfactory standard is accepted, when necessary, then the putting surfaces of the main greens are better preserved for when they are required and expected to be at their best.

WET CONDITIONS

In wet conditions, the surface soil around the pin is likely to become severely compacted and regular solid/slit tine aeration will help minimise ill effects on drainage and the sward. Hole Changes should be frequent, use being made of the outer regions of the greens as far as possible, although keeping towards the front in very wet spells. At short holes where plugging is severe under wet conditions, light applications of suitable sand can help.

FROSTY CONDITIONS

Damage caused by play during frosty weather falls into two main categories.

1. When frozen, plant tissues are easily bruised by players' feet. Following a thaw, it is often possible to see brown footmarks for several weeks, particularly around hole sites. The greater the weight of play in hard frost, obviously the greater becomes the extent of this damage. Affected areas remain thin for long periods, affecting the truthfulness of the putting surface, and are more susceptible to disease in spring.
2. Long term damage is caused when play takes place after a sudden thaw. In these conditions the top 13 mm (1/2 in) or so becomes soft, whilst the underlying soil remains frozen. Root damage occurs from the shearing action as players' feet move the soft, unfrozen surface across the frozen sub-surface. This disrupts putting surfaces and creates weak areas that may not recover before the height of the competition season.

TEMPORARY GREENS

The best way to overcome these problems is to mow out separate temporary greens of good quality, perhaps 100-200 m² (110-220 sq.yd.) well clear of the major putting surfaces, and prepared in advance. Many clubs do not wish to go to this trouble and put temporary holes on the approach, but damage may still be caused when retrieving balls which go through on to the actual green.

Appendix 6

Planned Bunker Improvements.

14th Aug 2007.

5 Year plan for bunker refurbishments.

Hole	Drainage required	Replace Sand	Reconstruct. Face	Time Required	Priority	Material Costs	Comments.
1							Complete
2	No	Yes	Yes				
3	No	Yes	Yes				
4	No	Yes	Yes				
5	No	Yes	Yes				
6	No	Yes	Yes				
7	No	Yes	Yes				
8	No	Yes	Yes				
9	F/w bunker	Complete	Complete				
10	No	Yes	Yes				
11	No	Yes	Yes				
12	Yes	Yes	Yes				
13	Yes	Yes	Yes				
14	Yes	Yes	Yes				
15	Yes	Yes	Yes				
16	R/h bunker	Yes	Yes				
17							
18							Complete

Appendix 7

Record Keeping Requirements

Greens

- Species composition
- Consistency of speed between surfaces
- Number of hours/days of lost play due to inadequate drainage or winter conditions
- Fertiliser usage and Type.
- Water use through irrigation
- Pesticide usage and Type.
- Thatch depth and density.

Green surrounds and fairways

- Species composition
- Play lost to flooding
- Fertiliser usage and Type.
- Water use through irrigation
- Pesticide usage and Type.
- Thatch depth and density.

Tees

- Species composition
- Levels
- Recuperative capacity
- Fertiliser usage and Type.
- Water use through irrigation
- Pesticide usage and Type.

Bunkers

- Days flooded.
- Depth of Sand.

Course development

- Keep a record of projects planned, those completed and related costs
- Record the quality and amount of materials used for each project.