



GOLF COURSE POLICY **DOCUMENT**

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	3
2	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	3
3	RESOURCES	4
3.1	STAFF	4
3.2	FINANCIAL.....	4
4	OBJECTIVE	4
5	TIMING OF WORK ON THE COURSE	5
6	THE COURSE	5
6.1	TEES	5
6.2	FAIRWAYS.....	5
6.3	SURROUNDS AND APPROACHES	6
6.4	ROUGH AND SEMI ROUGH	6
6.5	GREENS	6
6.6	MOWING AND APPEARANCE.....	6
6.7	FERTILISATION.....	8
6.8	TOP DRESSING	8
6.9	DRAINAGE AND DITCHES.....	9
6.10	ALTERNATIVE GREENS.....	9
6.11	BUNKERS	9
6.12	PRACTICE GROUND	9
6.13	TREES, SHRUBS AND PLANTING.....	9
6.14	HOUSE KEEPING.....	10
7	WINTER GOLF	10
7.1	OBJECTIVE.....	10
7.2	POLICY	10
7.3	FACTORS INFLUENCING DAILY PLAYING CONDITIONS	10
7.4	THE DAILY DECISION PROCESS	11
8	THE PLAYING SEASON	11
9	GREEN STAFF AND MEMBERS	11
9.1	WORK ON THE COURSE.....	11
9.2	COMMUNICATION.....	12
9.3	COMPLAINTS.....	12
10	MACHINERY	12
11	IRRIGATION	13
12	ECOLOGY	13
12.1	WILDLIFE.....	13
12.2	RESOURCES.....	13

HANGING HEATON GOLF CLUB

GOLF COURSE POLICY DOCUMENT

1 Introduction

This document has been prepared on behalf of the Members of Hanging Heaton Golf Club (HHGC) by the Committee in consultation with the Green Keepers.

The document has been written to a framework recommended by the English Golf Union and adapted for the requirements of HHGC.

The purpose of the document is to set out guidelines for all aspects of the maintenance, management and development of the course, which have been approved by the General Committee. When finally approved, the Policy should be strictly pursued and any future proposed changes will not be introduced without full consultation with the General Committee. In this respect, the Policy will be reviewed and updated annually by the Committee and changes displayed in the Clubhouse.

Members will be able to put questions and recommendations in writing, prior to the meeting, to the Chair of Greens Committee in order that they may be addressed and discussed on the night.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

The General Committee has overall responsibility for the management of HHCC in all its aspects.

The Greens Committee, through the Chair of Greens Committee or his/her representative, will establish and practise proper management controls in implementing the policies laid down in this document on a day-to-day basis.

The Greens Committee will report via the Chair of Greens Committee or his/her representative to the General Committee on Golf Course matters including financial, development, personnel and machinery. The Greens Committee is responsible for reviewing current standards on the course.

The Head Green Keeper is responsible for the implementation of this Policy in all its aspects. This means: -

- The planning of course maintenance schedules and work plans in relation to the Fixture list in liaison with the Chair of Greens Committee.
- Machinery maintenance.
- Involvement in Planning and budgeting.
- Ordering of course necessities.
- Schedules and records.
- Assistant Green Keepers - Personnel development and training in course issues.
- Discipline.

- Allocation of daily tasks in compliance with the Clubs' Health and Safety policy.
- Management of fertilisers and chemicals.
- Storage and safety.
- Ecology.
- Advise the Chair of Greens Committee and Greens Committee.

Every Member also has a responsibility to the maintenance of the course and easy tasks that should be routine will ensure better enjoyment of the course for all.

Members are responsible for:

- Repairing pitch marks.
- Raking bunkers.
- Replacing divots.
- Applying seed to divots on tees where boxes are provided.
- Placing all litter in the bins provided.

3 Resources

3.1 Staff

The present agreed staffing level includes the following:

Head Green Keeper
 Assistant Green Keeper
 Occasional support workers as and when appropriate (approved by Greens Chair)

There is a continued commitment to training and education of Greens staff who are encouraged to be members of British and International Golf Green keepers Association (BIGGA) and to attend discussion groups organised by this Association.

3.2 Financial

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

4 Objective

The general objective is that this Golf Course is set up and maintained so the course plays to its measured Standard Scratch Score and should undergo continuous improvement such that the course is recognised as one of the best maintained and enjoyable courses in the locality.

This standard will be achieved over as long a playing season as practicable. It is not an attainable target to expect this standard for the whole year round especially during the winter months. However, the aim is that the course will be improved and

maintained in as excellent a condition as possible for the benefit of Members and their guests.

5 Timing of Work on the Course

Much essential work has to be completed at certain times in the year. It will be the aim of the Head Green Keeper, in regular discussions with the Chair of Greens Committee (or his/her representative) and the Greens Committee members to plan this work well in advance so that the periods in which work has to be done can be agreed by taking into account the golf programme. The outcomes are to be communicated to the Members.

6 The Course

The general policy of green keeping at HHGC will be mainly traditional with avoidance of excessive use of fertilisers and water. Cultural control including hollow tining, verti-draining and top dressing will be employed to combat thatch and compaction.

6.1 Tees

The maintenance of tees has high priority. This may involve, mowing, tining, scarifying, top dressing and fertilising and will all be practised on a programmed basis. During spring and summer months divoting with a good quality seed mix will be on going.

The use of mats in winter will be continued with the possibility of additional tees being formed where practicable. There may be some attempt to experiment with grass tees during the winter months

Advancements in artificial turf will be monitored and possibly trialled from time to time to test their suitability for winter tees.

6.2 Fairways

Regular cutting will continue, from spring to autumn, to try and promote a uniform sward.

In summer crosscutting will be carried out as appropriate, to ensure a more even playing surface.

Fairways will be fertilised annually as appropriate and subject to the prevailing weather conditions.

The use of fairway mats during winter will be employed to reduce the damage caused by divots. The timing of the decision to implement winter fairway mats will be driven by the consideration for the protection of the course and not the golfing calendar. Conditions should be monitored and an agreement to the timing reached between Greens Chairperson, Head Green Keeper and the Captain keeping the interest of the course and members in mind.

6.3 Surrounds and Approaches

In addition to cutting, both these areas are included in the fertiliser and top dressing programme and winter maintenance programme.

6.4 Rough and Semi Rough

Regular cutting and an occasional application of weed killer will manage these areas.

The height of the first cut (if applicable) and rough will be determined through Greens Committee meetings and will again be subject to the prevailing weather conditions

6.5 Greens

Our objective is to produce firm, fast greens during the season for as long as weather conditions permit. Consistent green speeds of between 6 and 9 (stimpmeter readings) are expected across all greens throughout the golfing season.

Annual Meadow Grass is an evident species on all our greens as on the great majority of courses in the UK. We will continue to try to keep this to a minimum and encourage finer Bent grasses to dominate.

Over seeding is done mainly towards the end of summer and early autumn when soil temperatures are warm enough to germinate the seeds and also when cutting heights are raised.

Regular maintenance in addition to mowing will include verti cutting (which may affect the pace to the greens by smoothing the putting surface) between spring and autumn depending on growing conditions.

The out of season maintenance will include a programme of aeration by hollow coring or verti-draining and slitting to relieve compaction and the surfaces will be kept as dry as possible (daily switching) to keep down fungal attacks.

6.6 Mowing and appearance

Heights of cut throughout the year will be the responsibility of the Head Green Keeper and depends on the prevailing weather conditions.

The Head Green Keeper will advise the Chair of Greens of his recommendations and actions.

The mowing policy is subject to the prevailing weather conditions and the following specifications are for guidance however the Head Green Keeper must use his discretion at all times in the best interests of the course : -

Tees

Toro cut at 10mm weekly, twice per week at the height of the season.

The tee after cutting will be reset for play giving consideration to the wear of the teeing area. This includes the repositioning of tee markers and maintaining their appearance.

Seed boxes and ball washers will be checked weekly and filled as required.

Greens

The summer height of cut will be maintained at 4mm depending on conditions and at the Green Keepers discretion.

Greens will be cut as often as possible at the height of the season, Friday evenings as late as possible or Saturday morning and Sunday mornings in preparation for competitions and as required during the week in order to prepare the course for matches and social golf depending on conditions and at the Green Keepers discretion.

The programme will be adjusted to suit the rate of growth in spring and autumn.

As well as frequent machine cutting, to maintain green speeds a regime of regular verti-cutting and hand cutting (weekly when conditions permit) will be employed.

Surrounds

Surrounds of greens will be cut to a similar height as the semi-rough (1st Cut). The surround of a green will encompass all ground within a reasonable distance, to facilitate mowing, from the edge of the fringe, banks and bunkers.

Fringes and Approaches

Fringes and approaches, at the height of the season, will be cut to maintain a distinction between the surround and green.

Approaches include areas and banks in front of greens; particular attention will be given to the approach to the 4th and 9th greens.

Fairways

Height and frequency will be changed according to growth and weather conditions. Generally the height will be maintained at 19mm.

As short a height as possible will be maintained when conditions allow.

Due to the nature of the course, dips and hollows form on some fairways, cross mowing during the season will help to reduce the grass levels.

The practise of shaping the fairways to produce areas of carry and restricted run will be maintained and regularly reviewed by the Greens Committee and the Head Green Keeper.

Semi- rough (1st Cut) and rough

The frequency of cutting and height will be changed according to growth and weather conditions. Distinctions between fairways, semi- rough and rough will be maintained. (See below).

It is possible to set up the golf course in many different ways by varying widths of cut (e.g. fairway width), height of semi-rough, carries from tees etc. Generally, the course will be set up to offer a challenge to golfers of all abilities without being so difficult as to spoil the players enjoyment or where play is unduly slowed down owing to searching for lost golf balls. The Head Green Keeper in consultation with the Chair of Greens (following agreement in Greens Committee) will review course set up and presentation regularly to maintain the measured course Standard Scratch Score.

Generally the semi-rough (1st cut) will be maintained at 35mm and the rough at 65mm.

Particular attention will be given to areas where ride on machinery cannot be used i.e. round tree bases, banks on tees and greens etc. These areas should be regularly mown and if appropriate treated with an appropriate herbicide.

6.7 Fertilisation

The use of fertilisers and pesticides are only used as and when required.

Casting worms are controlled by spraying with pesticide.

Moss is not a problem at HHGC, but is present on some fairways. A moss killer may be used at the discretion of the Head Green Keeper to keep incidences under control.

Some stocks of chemicals will be kept for immediate treatment in case of attack. The Head Green Keeper is responsible for maintaining the stock levels and safe storage.

The Head Green Keeper will use fertiliser as and when he considers it appropriate.

6.8 Top Dressing

Top dressing is applied to the greens after hollow tining as this ensures the dressing is well worked in.

A programme of top-dressing tees will be maintained in order to produce level tees. This includes divoting through the growing season.

6.9 Drainage and Ditches

In general, being a sloping site in an elevated position the course drains very well, with the odd exception.

The Club's policy is to review and improve the drainage as required.

6.10 Alternative Greens

Alternative greens will be used in winter, only when the normal greens are frosted or considered too wet to take foot traffic.

Alternative greens will be created on green approaches where possible or on a suitable area of fairway. They will be cultivated from the beginning of September marked as GUR until needed

6.11 Bunkers

Presently, there are 29 sand bunkers on the course, mainly protecting greens. This degree of bunkering, the positioning and shaping will be a regular subject of review by the Greens Committee with additional bunkers introduced for course improvement.

The Green Keepers will manually rake bunkers at weekends and Monday mornings if appropriate, due to weekend traffic and Friday afternoon in preparation of the course and prior to any major club events.

Bunker edges will be trimmed regularly as required and clippings removed to avoid grass and weed invasion. Sand levels will be continually renovated to ensure consistent levels and playability.

A rake will be provided at each bunker; all players are expected to rake their pitch and footmarks.

Rakes should be left outside bunkers as recommended by R&A.

6.12 Practice Ground

The Practice Ground at HHGC is for Members who bring their own practice balls and also the Professional for teaching. There is also a practice bunker and chipping green. These will be maintained to the same standard as the course as time will allow.

6.13 Trees, Shrubs and Planting

It is the responsibility of the Head Green Keeper to ensure trees and shrubs are pruned/felled to maintain growth and health and prevent disease.

A programme of tree management and planting will be introduced and maintained to ensure the integrity of fairway and hole definition and improve the aesthetics of the course. Trees/shrubs are generally replaced/planted in the autumn, winter or spring months when any new plantations will also be considered.

Advice will be taken from a consultant Tree Specialist if the need arises.

6.14 House Keeping

It is the responsibility of the Head Green Keeper to ensure that the course and course buildings are kept in a neat, tidy and clean condition.

- The Green Keeper's locker room including kitchen, toilet and shower facilities will be cleaned weekly.
- The tractor shed will be regularly swept and tidied, at least once per month and the Green keeping compound will be kept tidy and free from rubbish. Weed killer will be regularly applied to the hard standing and surrounding areas.
- Bins on the course will be emptied when required.
- Litter on the course will be removed and every attempt will be made to avoid mowing over litter.
- Paths, steps and other hard standing areas (incl. blower area) to be kept tidy and free from debris.
- Up keep of course furniture should be included within the winter programme.

7 Winter Golf

7.1 Objective

To keep the golf course open and playable with minimum constraints for as long a period as possible whilst ensuring that play during winter does not, to any significant degree, compromise the quality of the course during the rest of the year.

7.2 Policy

Implementation of a sound management programme in summer and autumn is vital in developing and maintaining a healthy dense sward capable of offsetting wear and tear. In this respect early autumn aeration is particularly valuable in wet weather in keeping the surface open, well aerated and free draining.

The principle requirement in winter is to maintain the aeration programme, keep a watchful eye for disease, treating this when necessary and to spread wear through careful pin positioning, re-routing traffic and using alternative tees.

When adverse conditions lead to an increased degree of damage, then there is no option but to place restrictions on course usage including the use of winter Greens and trolley bans.

7.3 Factors influencing daily playing conditions

Frosted Greens.

Play on frosted Greens damages grass blades and also grass roots in thaw conditions, which are slow to recover in the non - growing season, this is sufficient reason for the restriction of play to temporary greens.

Wet Greens.

Similar slow recovery is experienced on Greens which are wet enough to 'foot print' when walked on, this is sufficient reason for the restriction of play to temporary greens.

Very wet ground conditions.

When damage could be caused, particularly to walkways between greens and tees, by wheels skidding on powered trolleys or even pull trolleys, this is sufficient reason for restrictions on trolley use.

7.4 The daily decision process

The hierarchy for the decision of suitability of the course for play is:

- Club Captain
- Chair of Greens
- Head Green Keeper
- Club President
- Vice Captain
- Vice President

The Greens Committee will make decisions regarding the balance of the short-term interests of Members versus the long-term interests of the course. The Greens Committee, in the absence of the Captain or Chair of Greens, will generally delegate routine daily decision making to the Head Green Keeper, based on prevailing course conditions as follows: -

The Head Green Keeper will make a decision regarding the playability of the course and notify the Chair of Greens regarding: -

- Availability of the main Greens
- Use of alternative Greens where necessary
- Closure of the course

8 The Playing Season

It is recognised that climatic conditions can vary tremendously at the start of the season and the course will be prepared to provide the best playing area that the conditions allow without in any way jeopardising the quality of the course during the months that follow.

9 Green Keepers and Members

9.1 Work on the course

The Green Keepers will be vigilant so that they do not delay play unreasonably. However, work has always to be productive.

All players are therefore to be aware that at HHGC Green Keepers have priority. Members should not play their ball when the Green Keepers are within range. Members are expected to wait until the way is clear or the Green Keepers indicate that the Member can continue.

9.2 Communication

The need for communication both upwards and downwards is well recognised. The Head Green Keeper and Chair of Greens Committee will work together on the timing of course maintenance works with consideration to the fixture list.

On issues concerning course maintenance and development the Head Green Keeper is the Green Committee's consultant specialist. For this reason the Head Green keeper will attend all Greens meetings as part of his/her role at HHGC.

Members will be kept informed via notices on the Greens Notice Board/The Blog, other Notice Boards within the Clubhouse and on the course.

Members are encouraged to express their thoughts and opinions via the Greens Committee.

9.3 Complaints

Any complaint regarding the conduct of a member of the Green Keeping staff or about the condition of the course must be made to the Chair of Greens Committee who will investigate the matter with the Head Green Keeper. If they cannot deal with the complaint themselves the matter will be referred to the full Greens Committee and General Committee.

Members and visitors must not make such complaints directly to Green Keeping staff!

10 Machinery

As part of the annual budget review, the Head Green Keeper in conjunction with the Chair of Greens will be required to produce a recommended 5-year rolling plan of machinery replacements, additions, repairs and renewals for consideration and final approval by the Greens Committee for incorporation into the Club's Business Plan.

The Head Green Keeper has the responsibility to keep himself up to date with developments in golf course machinery and communicate his recommendations to the notice of the Greens Committee.

The Head Green Keeper is also responsible for the maintenance and housing of all machinery in all its aspects - record of use, preventative maintenance, major servicing, adjustments, etc including daily checks of water and oil levels. The heavy investment,

which is made in plant and equipment, requires that these investments are protected through maintenance and correct operation.

11 Irrigation

An irrigation system is installed at HHGC on both greens and tees and the water supply metered from the mains. The Club's policy is minimal use of irrigation to encourage finer deeper-rooted grasses. However, it is the responsibility of the Green Keeper to ensure sufficient water is applied to maintain the integrity of the playing surface of greens and tees.

Irrigation will only be used when there is insufficient rainfall to sustain life or the integrity of the playing surface is effected and occasionally to wash in fertiliser or topdressing.

The Green Keeper is responsible for the operation of the irrigation system (and notifying the appropriate contractor responsible for the maintenance when required) to ensure its operation throughout the year. The effectiveness of course irrigation shall be monitored to ensure the best possible system of watering is employed.

12 Ecology

The scale of the golf course and the amount of wildlife and landscape features it supports, as well as the resources consumed, mean that we have a considerable environmental responsibility as stewards of the land.

12.1 Wildlife

The golf course provides a suitable habitat for a variety of wildlife, which will generally be encouraged both for ecological reasons and for the added enjoyment of members. Wildlife will be managed in consultation with conservationists and necessary action taken if problems arise.

Areas not considered to be part of the playing surfaces will be managed to encourage natural growth to promote self-seeding and sustain insect life and thereby, hopefully, the return of a greater variety of bird life.

12.2 Resources

Our policy of minimising the use of fertilisers, chemicals, pesticides and water not only leads to good turf management but it is also an environmentally good practice. It is recognised that the use of some quantities of chemicals will be necessary: these will be stored and applied correctly so as not to pose an environmental risk. Outdated hazardous products will be safely disposed of.