



Manchester Golf Club

Course Policy Document (Reviewed and approved by Council 6th October 2014)

With effect from 1st 7th October 2014

Introduction

The purpose of this policy document is to set out details of the Management of the Golf Course at Manchester Golf Club (MGC), which have been approved by the Council and made freely available to all members to keep them well informed. This is to be used as a working document, but designed to stand the test of time. Any future revisions must be approved by Council and the Greens Committee after due consideration. Where necessary, expert opinion should be obtained internally and externally.

Course Description

Manchester Golf Club is situated just outside the small village of Hopwood approximately 5 miles north east of Manchester city centre and supports an 18 hole Championship course of vast proportions. Covering approximately 80 ha (250 acres) the course is a mixture of heathland, parkland and moorland in character with hole definition and separation provided by extensive tracts of high quality acidic rough grassland and naturally regenerated woodland. It is widely regarded as a relatively prestigious establishment that supports a very individual golf course, particularly within the Manchester area.

Laid out on a ridge of wild and rugged land half way between Manchester and Rochdale it is the sort of country one expects to find among the hills of Lakeland rather than nestling in the 'Cotton Capital'!

The rolling plateau, broken up by woods of sycamore and birch, and divided into two by a wide irregular ravine with a brook winding through the bottom of it, makes ideal golfing ground. Innumerable minor gullies and other features contribute to the adventurous quality of the holes. The wild hitter will often find himself in real 'tiger country' of bushes and bracken.

The course was designed and laid out in 1912 by renowned course architect Harry Shapland Colt. Using all the features nature provided to him Mr Colt designed a heathland/grassland course supporting outstanding views both within the course and over longer distances across Saddleworth Moor to the north. It totals 6,490 yards with CSS 72. It presents a real challenge to the low handicap golfer, yet the yellow course; 6,235 yards CSS 70 also offers a choice to suit all handicaps. In short, the course as a whole provides as stiff a test as is to be found in British inland golf.

Since 1912 the course has seen many alterations, as successive management regimes have played about with the design. Nature has also played its part in changing the course, with many areas being overrun by self-seeded Birch and Oak trees. It is therefore the long term



aim of MGC to maintain and where necessary revert the course back to its former glory as it was originally designed by Mr H S Colt. MGC also recognizes the need to maintain consideration of modern technology and practices in achieving this, as of course a modern day Mr Colt would do.

MGC is without doubt one of the best tests of golf in the North-West of England. The course has hosted numerous prestigious competitions. These include top class amateur events and Tour Qualifying.

MGC's heritage has to be protected, and where appropriate improved, for the benefit of the Club's Members, present and future. Continuity of policy is essential in golf club management, and nowhere is this more important than on the golf course.

Many of the problems inherent in golf course management were addressed by the Royal and Ancient Golf Club (R&A) in its publication 'The Way Forward' issued in 1998. One of its key recommendations was that Clubs should formulate and publish their own course management policy document, working to a five-year plan at least. This approach has been strongly endorsed by both the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) and the English Golf Union (EGU).

To ensure such long-term policy is put into effect, it is essential, therefore, that this Course Management Policy Document should be drawn up, and approved by the Green Committee and the Council.

Aim

The aim of this policy document is to set out guidelines for the sympathetic and proper management of the MGC course and all its grounds/associated lands to ensure implementation of a structured and clear forward plan for the ongoing improvement and therefore enjoyment of members and visitors of MGC.

Roles & Responsibilities

General

The management of the course involves a wide range of people and it is essential, therefore, that their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined at the outset.

The Council

The Council is responsible for the overall direction and control of the Club, including forward policy, plans and financial control.

The Green Committee

The Green Committee is responsible for the management of the golf course, course maintenance, course standards and improvements, recommending any significant course changes, the submission of annual budgets, as well as long term capital expenditure plans and



projects. They will meet regularly and keep minutes, which will be available for the next Council meeting.

The Green Chairman and Secretary/Manager

The Green Chairman and Secretary/Manager should establish management controls to ensure that the policies laid down by the Green Committee are implemented, and that the in-year Course Budget and Capital Expenditure Programme are monitored including any major variations approved by the Green Committee, Finance and the Council. They are also responsible for ensuring that, whenever possible, the course is available for play by Members, guests, visitors and Societies.

The Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper

The Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper is responsible, in conjunction with the Green Chairman and Secretary/Manager, for the implementation of this Policy in all its aspects, which includes but is not limited to:

- Planning maintenance schedules in relation to fixture lists and societies
- Liaising with the Green Chairman and Secretary/Manager on any problem areas
- Machinery maintenance and repair
- Planning and preparation of annual and long term budgets
- Attending all Green Committee meetings and reporting on agenda items
- Maintenance of schedules and records relating to machinery and staff
- Personnel education – training, discipline, allocation of daily tasks, appraisals
- Implementation of the Club's Health and Safety policy
- Purchase and storage of fertilizers, dressings, pesticides, fungicides and chemicals
- Storage and safety of all equipment and materials
- Ecology
- Green staff holiday planning

Resources

Staff

The agreed staffing level includes the following:

- Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper
- Deputy Head Greenkeeper
- 1st Assistant/Mechanic
- Greenkeepers – 2
- Trainee/Apprentice Greenkeeper
- Temporary Summer Assistant (s)



This number is considered adequate at the moment but with ever increasing demands on course presentation, coupled with more rounds per year, the Club may need to consider increasing this number.

The Course Manager in conjunction with the Secretary/Manager and Green Chairman shall undertake an annual salary review for all staff.

Finance

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

Greenkeeping Facilities

The existing facilities are situated on the R/H side of the entrance to the car park, with a secure compound adjoining a large purpose built building consisting of:-

- Course Managers office.
- 2 Toilets (1 disabled with shower).
- Kitchen / Staff room.
- Drying room including lockers.
- Large main area for housing machinery
- Dangerous and hazardous chemical storage including separate chemical clothing and vehicle wash down facilities
- Workshop area
- Tool storage facilities
- Outside are a secure container for additional storage and a wooden paint store.

In addition to this is a Pump house and water storage facility situated behind the Professionals shop.

Machinery and Equipment

The Green Committee regards the provision of the necessary machinery and equipment as an essential pre-requisite in achieving the policies set out in this document. To ensure this, a rolling ten year capital expenditure programme will be submitted for Council approval as part of the annual budget cycle. This programme will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Additionally, as part of the annual depreciation exercise, all equipment will be reviewed and disposals made as necessary.



Training

Training is an essential element in achieving a well trained and motivated staff. MGC is committed to help and encourage training and education through approved colleges. All permanent green staff are encouraged to obtain National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's) in Greenkeeping to the maximum of their individual abilities. Staff, are also encouraged to become members of BIGGA, and to attend discussion groups organised by the Association.

Objectives

The objectives will necessarily alter as year's progress. The objectives are that MGC golf course should retain its position as one of the best maintained and enjoyable courses in the North of England. The aim is to achieve good playing conditions all year round, taking into account weather conditions. It is to be maintained in excellent condition for the enjoyment of members of all handicaps and visitors. Visitors are welcome provided they satisfy the Club's criteria of membership of a recognised golf club, and playing ability up to a minimum standard laid down by the Council.

Timing of Work on the Course

General

Much essential work has to be completed before a certain time each year day and within certain timescales during the year. Moreover there are times when play on the course will have to be restricted to allow the green staff to 'set up the course' for special events. As far as possible these restrictions will be kept to an absolute minimum.

During winter months a policy of closing individual holes may occasionally be adopted, in order to permit uninterrupted essential work to be carried out. Any such programme will be notified to Members well in advance.

It will be a priority of the Green Committee, the Green Chairman and Secretary/Manager and the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper to plan essential course work, including the Winter Programme well in advance. Members will be kept informed via the Notice Board and in the 'Green News' folder, of any essential work and restrictions on play. The co-operation and understanding of Members will, however, be required if the Club is to maintain the present high standards, as well as seeking to achieve longer-term improvements. Green staff shall have priority on the course ahead of competitions commencing prior to 9am.

The course may be closed ahead of a limited number of published major events.



Hours of Work

The Greenstaff work a flexible shift pattern depending upon the time of year, the available light and the differing needs of competition golf. This pattern is based around: -

April to October

- 6am – 2pm (one 30 minute break) – Though this may vary for big events

November to March

- 7am – 3pm (one 30 minute break)

The above hours can be different depending upon available light, MGC golf competition needs and work required at any given time.

All staff are rostered for weekend and public holiday working, at the appropriate overtime rates (salaried staff maybe credited with lieu hours where additional time worked). Records of weekend attendance need to be maintained. In each playing season events will be identified and agreed when all members of the green staff will be required to work.

The Course

General

The course is laid out on soil structures ranging from sand through loamy humus to peat and gravel generally overlaying free draining sandy substructure. Some areas that cannot withstand very wet conditions are prone to water logging. These areas are adversely affected by traffic caused by heavy use, particularly golf buggies and trolleys.

Compaction has occurred in many areas around the course, especially around greens and on walkways to the next tee. The agreed policy will be to relieve compaction by intense aeration programmes to avoid further compaction in the winter months when the grass has stopped growing, by restricting the use of buggies and trolleys and diverting traffic. Any such restrictions will only be imposed when it is deemed absolutely necessary.



Buggies may only be used on the acceptance of a doctor's note, and then only by the person (s) to whom the note relates. Buggy routes are clearly identified, and detailed instructions are provided to all users. Storage facilities for buggies are in short supply, and are provided at a reasonable rate, on a first come first served basis.

Tees

Good maintenance of teeing grounds is essential. A rolling programme of renovation and levelling will be maintained. Cutting to a height no lower than 12mm, tining, scarifying and fertilising are all undertaken on a programmed basis. The use of tees throughout the winter is an objective, which will be continued. The areas used in the winter suffer from wear and are recovered during the spring. The use of artificial tee mats in winter is to be phased out as new winter tees are constructed and existing ones renovated.

The day-to-day maintenance of the teeing grounds is part of the overall strategy, and routine duties must include: -

- Movement of tee markers three to four times a week
- Emptying of rubbish bins three to four times a week
- Divotting of any major damage, coupled with the removal of old divots
- Minimum twice weekly cutting of all tees at appropriate heights, ensuring care is taken not to scalp the sloping edges of the tees
- Trimming of the stone tee markers
- Regular inspection and spot spraying for weeds
- Aeration and scarification
- Overseeing without inclusion of ryegrass
- **Gold & Blue tees to be cut on a weekly basis**

These duties are of course dependant on time of year and growing conditions.

Fairways

The fairways have shown marked improvement in recent years following annual vertidrainage and scarifying. There are still a number of areas, however, where there is only poor growing medium. A continued programme of vertidrainage, deep tining, slit tining and scarification will be maintained to effect improvement to both drainage and growth to improve the quality of the grass, discourage poa annua and encourage fescues. Stripping and patching of worn areas, where recovery will not occur naturally due to excessive wear and/or compaction, particularly on bunker shoulders and areas of high traffic density, is essential and should be undertaken as necessary.

Similarly, those fairways where small hollows and depressions have occurred which result in lush grass and unfair lies must be levelled to maintain fairway height which in turn assists in eliminating attractive areas for worms. Spot and/or boom spraying for weed and other infestation is to be undertaken at least annually to ensure the best quality and consistency of surface. Cutting to a height between 12mm and 15mm is to be continued.

The use of fertilisers and dressings on fairways is not normally necessary. A policy of regular scarification and divotting is carried out throughout the year.



With the increase in winter play, it is essential that measures be taken to protect fairways during this period. The use of mats and other measures during the winter period should always be under consideration. Certain fairways may well be closed during winter months.

Surrounds & Approaches

To prevent the green surrounds and approaches from being infested with poor quality grasses, they will receive a similar aeration and feed treatment programme as the greens. The presentation of the surrounds of greens, tees and approaches, has a marked visual impact on the course. A surround will be formed of one tees machine width around each green. This will merge into first rough cut to protect high spots and prevent scalping.

The aim is to have large approaches (25-30 yards) where possible. Traffic around the approaches will be controlled by white lines or strips to force people away from these areas. The approaches will then merge into the fairways.

Careful cutting of the surrounds is essential to avoid scalping and achieve an even surface. It is also essential that sprinkler heads be maintained in full working order, to ensure uniform water coverage.

Rough

Semi rough will normally be cut to a height in the region of 25 - 35mm. This should enable the ball to remain visible, yet slowing it down. Rough will be cut to a height in the region of 65 - 100mm. Other areas of rough, identified as being well off-line, will be left in their natural state, for ecological and practical reasons. In this respect MGC will seek expert help from the appointed Agronomist.

Greens

Annual meadow grass is the predominant species on all greens. The long term policy is to reduce this gradually and encourage fine bent and fescue grasses to develop and thrive. This objective cannot be achieved quickly whilst still maintaining greens in a good state for play. This long term objective can be achieved by a continual programme of aeration to create conditions, which encourage healthy bacterial activity, which in turn breaks down the thatch layer and encourages the deeper rooting species of grasses. Consistent over seeding throughout the year is also essential and it is policy to utilise only bent/fescue seed.

The height of cut on greens is the responsibility of the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper, and depends on his reading of future weather conditions, forthcoming events, the state of the soil etc. During spells of good growing weather the effective height of cut should be no lower than 3 - 4mm, rising to 4.5 - 7mm during winter months.

Grooming, scarification and verti-cutting will be undertaken throughout the summer, together with the use of tining to encourage moisture penetration and the deeper rooting grasses.



Judicious use of the automatic irrigation system, coupled with some hand watering with or without the use of wetting agents, is essential in relation to the prevailing climatic conditions and soil moisture content. Watering should not, however, be used as a means of creating artificial holding conditions for balls being played into greens, which is contrary to policy. Similarly, hand watering is used solely to alleviate stress and prevent the risk of dieback in hot, dry or drought conditions (see also paragraph 13 irrigation).

A structured programme of aeration throughout the year, using a combination of vertidrainage, tining (slit, core and pencil) and scarification, is essential to reduce compaction and the build up of thatch. Similarly, to assist with the maintenance of fast and true putting surfaces, regular top dressing (see paragraph 9) is crucial during the growing season.

Draining and Ditches

The dispersal of water from the course and good draining are of paramount importance. All ditches are regularly examined and have to be kept free of debris and silt. During the summer months the banks are cut and cleared, and the sludge is removed to ensure the free flow of water, and to prevent flooding as far as possible. Other drains on fairways are to be examined, and blockages cleared to ensure the free flow of water off the course.

Old drains are liable to collapse, and may need to be totally replaced. The recent programme of drainage replacement work has been a great success, and will continue.

The underlying soil at MGC is sandy in nature, with areas of peat and gravel. The natural build up of thatch over the years has necessitated several drainage schemes to be undertaken. While it is the long term policy to reduce these layers of thatch some more work may need to be carried out.

Guideline for drainage works are clearly set out by the greens committee including:-

- Installation of correct falls, use of correct size pipe, **free draining sand/soil mix** and the use of checklists to record all works.
- **The recycled 6mm grit supplied by Whitemoss is the fill material of choice as it also acts as a filter medium.**
- In addition any drains installed with man-hole are to be cleaned and rodded on an annual basis.
- In the event of large scale schemes a recognized drainage expert to be consulted before commencement of work.
- Outfalls are to be inspected periodically during and after rainfall to assess the effectiveness of the various drainage systems.

Bunkers and Hazards

This is an area that has required and will continue to require considerable improvement and upgrading over recent winter programmes. The major areas of concern were differing sand consistency, sand compaction and poor or ineffective drainage particularly in the deep and low lying bunkers.



A sustained programme of refurbishment will be continued to include drainage where necessary. The bunkers at MGC have seen many changes over the years. In 2004 it was decided to employ a recognized expert in Colt courses (Hawtree) to overhaul MGC's bunkers. Plans were drawn up and the work is currently underway. The aim is to provide a consistent style and improve their playability. The bunkers should be stone free and free draining with banks and slopes that are as easy as possible to maintain. The maintenance of the bunkers is an ongoing task, but we must endeavour to provide a consistent depth of sand and tidy edges and banks.

The definition of bunker margins must be maintained so that golfers are in no doubt as to whether or not they are in the hazard. Bunker fringes should be edged and trimmed to a height that will permit a ball to be gathered into the hazard. Regular harrowing and deep raking is essential to maintain a consistent depth of sand. To facilitate consistency of texture and playing characteristics, 'Whitemoss Bunker 2' bunker sand will be used in all bunkers. Each bunker is to have its own rake – 2 or 3 rakes for the larger bunkers. Rakes should be placed inside bunkers on the stands provided, with the heads in the sand, which reduces the chance of them being struck by a ball to a minimum.

Future renovation and construction of bunkers is to include a bunker liner. This will prevent sand contamination and the issue of stones being introduced to the sand following washouts.

Heather Gorse Broom and Other Natural Habitats

Over the years the heather has been adversely affected due to the proliferation of self seeded trees (mostly silver birch and oak) and grass cover. It is the Club's policy to revive the heather by removing all but specimen trees and stripping away grass to allow heather to grow through. Of necessity this will be a long term plan, and it is encouraging that over recent years rejuvenation has progressed well. The Club will seek advice from an identified specialist in the growth/rejuvenation of heather. The Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper will keep in regular contact with his colleagues at other Clubs where heather is an important part of the habitat.

Areas of gorse on the course are to be pruned back on a regular basis to encourage fresh growth. The re-introduction of Gorse throughout the course should be carried out so as not to impact on playing areas.

No burning will take place between 1st March and 1st September, to protect nesting birds and other wildlife.

The Practice Ground

The Club's practice facilities have been adequate and every opportunity will be examined to improve them. The Club provides paying facilities made available by the Professional at the left of the 18th tee down the driveway through the car park. There is a practice bunker, sheltered bays, open astroturf bays and grass teeing area all opening out onto a driving range of approximately 300yds in length adjacent to the railway line. In addition the internal practice ground between the 2nd and 3rd holes, commonly referred to as 'agony hill!' is available to members free of charge. There is also two practice greens and chipping area at the entrance



to MGC along with a warm up net adjacent to the main putting green. The care of the practice areas is the responsibility of the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper and proper communication needs to be maintained with the Professional in connection with the paying facility to ensure its continued appropriate presentability.

Paths and Tracks

The policy of the club is to provide safe and maintainable pathways for the golfers. These should ideally be grass but in areas where traffic or gradient make this impossible “Red track shale or similar” should be used.

These paths should include drainage gullies or some form of surface drainage. They should be wide enough for golf buggies, but it is not the club’s policy presently to provide a complete route around the course for buggies. The paths should be kept weed free and the shale topped up at regular intervals.

The access routes around the course for green staff should be also be usable for emergency vehicles.

All paths should be regularly inspected and repaired and renewed where necessary. Artificial paths should be kept free of weeds.

Temporary Greens

It is the Club’s policy only to have temporary greens when absolutely necessary. Ongoing work programmes will reduce the need to use temporary greens.

It is the responsibility of the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper or, in his absence, the Senior Greenkeeper on duty, to decide on a day to day basis, the need for temporary greens to be brought into use. Considerations are: -

- Is the normal green too soft to take foot traffic or waterlogged
- In frosty weather would footmarks damage the top crusty surface
- If the normal green is being worked on intensively, a temporary green may be brought into use in order that the work may proceed more quickly, with greater productivity.

Fertilisation and Chemicals

The policy is to keep the use of fertilisers and chemicals to a minimum. Organic nitrogen based fertilisers will be used with small quantities of iron and potash. Phosphates will only be used in exceptional circumstances, to assist with regeneration.

Top Dressing



Top Dressings applied to greens will take place as often as possible throughout the playing season and follow the little and often principal. Major dressings in the spring and autumn following vertidrainage or hollow tining will be needed. Ideally placed in the diary for the 3rd week of March & the week following Festival week. Total Dressings on greens approximate up to 100 tonnes per year, comprising of Whitemoss Dressing 2 double washed sand. Top dressings are also applied to tees, surrounds and selected fairway areas. These quantities may vary slightly from year to year dependent on weather conditions and the golfing calendar. Top dressings will be brushed in immediately after application.

Closing the Course

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

During a competition the Course may be closed by the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper or, in his absence, the Senior Greenkeeper on duty or an authorised member of the Green Committee if they consider that the course has become unsuitable for play due to any reason such as flooding, thunder/lightning, fog, snow, or any other reason. The competition Committee will ensure that competitors are made aware of this advice.

This advice is designed to be of help and guidance. MGC is not liable for any damage or injury caused by the following of this advice.

A decision to reopen the Course may be taken at any time after an inspection by an authorised person, who will ensure this it is safe to resume play. An authorised person would include the Head Greenkeeper (or other member of green staff designated in charge by the Head Greenkeeper on any particular day). If no member of the Green staff is available for whatever reason the decision would rest with the Green Chairman.

The course will remain closed until a thorough inspection has been made by an authorised person (to be decided).

The following signals will be used to announce decisions:

- One prolonged klaxon blast (repeated) Suspension of play
- Two short klaxon blasts (repeated) Resumption of play
- Four short klaxon blasts (repeated) Cancellation of play

When play is suspended, if the players in a match or group are between the play of two holes, they shall not resume play until a resumption of play has been signalled. If they are in the process of playing a hole, they shall discontinue play immediately and shall not thereafter resume play until a resumption of play has been signalled. If a player fails to discontinue play immediately, they shall be disqualified unless circumstances warrant waiving such penalty as provided in Rule 33-7.

On the signal for suspension of play being given Competitors, Caddies and Spectators should proceed to the nearest shelter or vacate the course.



However, if the suspension is due to the proximity of an Electric Storm, golfers or caddies should leave clubs well away from where they are sheltering. They should NOT walk or shelter under trees, stand on high ground, shelter in any building with a metal roof, put up an umbrella, use a mobile phone. They should keep as low as possible, if necessary crouching in the nearest bunker.

Resumption of play will be signalled by two blasts of the klaxon. Competitors and Caddies sheltering in the Clubhouse, will be informed that play will be resumed shortly, and will be given sufficient time from this notification to the two blasts of the klaxon, to reach the point on the golf course where they were when play was suspended. When Competitors and Caddies have been given chance to get back to where they were when play was suspended, the klaxon will be sounded (two short blasts).

No competitor shall resume play until the two klaxon blasts have been blown. Failure to comply (Rule 6-8b) shall lead to the Competitor being disqualified.

Green Staff and Members

Work on the Course

The increase in the popularity of golf, coupled with earlier retirement, has resulted in members and visitors playing more and wishing to play earlier. The golfer of today is much more aware of the quality and presentation on courses, and demands constant improvements in the playing surfaces on a year round basis. The Green Staff are faced with ever increasing levels of compaction, wear and tear and the need to work without inconveniencing the golfer.

Improved mechanisation has assisted the greenkeeper to carry out most tasks quickly and efficiently, but inevitably there are conflicts between the greenkeeper and the golfer. The staff are aware that the course is there for the benefit and enjoyment of member and visitors, and work programmes are planned accordingly.

To achieve the best possible balance: -

- Start early enough to prepare the course by working ahead of the golfers
- Course closures are planned well in advance to ensure that a full course is available

This has the added advantage of increased productivity, as staff can work without interruption. Additionally, other closures are necessary when preparing for major Club competitions and/or major open events.

Our green staff take a great pride in their professional workmanship and their presentation of the course. Golfers can help by a little thought and by the following:

ALWAYS REPAIR ANYTHING YOU SEE, EVEN IF YOU DID NOT DO IT YOURSELF

- Please repair pitch marks This is continuing problem, particularly after weekend play



maintenance are completed 'in house'. The policy is therefore to employ amongst the green staff a qualified mechanic.

Irrigation

General

The overall policy is to use as little water as possible to encourage deeper rooting grasses to predominate. However, almost every season there are times when rainfall is insufficient to sustain grass growth and needs to be supplemented. Water is also needed on demand to wash in fertilisers and other treatments. Therefore a guaranteed source is essential for the maintenance of a golf course.

Water Supply

The irrigation system is fed from a tank located behind the professional's premises. The header tank is itself fed off a pumped supply from Trub brook. There is also a back up mains water supply. The water supply must be used in conjunction with the Greensaver system located in the pumphouse. This will ensure the correct quality of water for the course.

The System

The irrigation system is inspected and pressurised at 100 lbs/sq inch in March/April when the danger of frost is past and is drained down in October/November. There are approximately 80 sprinkler heads on the Course. The sprinkler heads are **Rainbird** geared heads – 4 heads to a green delivering 25 gallons/minute.

Financial Control

Long term budgeting In September each year the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper, in consultation with the Green Chairman, will produce a list of machinery, showing performance and notes on any problems that have shown up during the year. This will lead to a definitive spending budget for the next financial year for replacements and repairs, which should be in line with the 10 year rolling budgets. These will then be discussed by the Green Committee, and recommended for approval by Finance and the Council.

Additionally, the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper, in consultation with the Green Chairman, will produce a budget for purchase of fertilisers, chemicals and dressings for the next year.

The Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper must not incur any expenditure, unless it is within budget. If any expenditure is required urgently in excess of budget, it must be authorised by the Green Chairman, who will consult with the Chairman of Finance.

A continual review of actual expenditure, compared with budget, will be maintained and the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper asked to explain any significant differences. This



information will be distributed to all Council Members as a part of the monthly financial information report prepared by the Finance Chairman.

Ecology

MGC contains a mixture of parkland and natural heathland 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. Woodland maintenance will be carried in such a way that it has as little an impact on the natural habitat as possible and encourage wildlife.

Certain animals such as rabbits do damage to the Course and have to be culled.

Trees that affect the Course, particularly when overhanging teeing grounds, preventing the growth of grass or heather, or the safety of golfers by obscuring visibility for playing shots safely, may need to be lopped or removed. This work has to be implemented under the control of the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper, Tree planting will take place where and when necessary, with professional advice sought when conditions require. The Green Committee and Council, must approve the felling of any trees.

An annual action plan is to be approved by Greens and Council for silver birch/willow/oak clearance throughout the course. The annual diary and action plan in line with sound ecology is as follows for MGC:-

1. Approved tree felling to be undertaken during the period October to February only.
2. Any gorse pruning to be undertaken during the period October to February only.
3. No open fires to be lit on the course between 1st March and 1st September. At all other times only if necessary.
4. No hunting dogs allowed on the course at any time.
5. No falconry hawks to be flown on the course at any time.
6. Shooting will be tightly controlled. Two people are allowed to shoot on the course details of who are retained by MGC General Manager. Night time lamping should only be allowed when necessary in line with rabbit numbers (high or low) although no lamping should take place between 1st March and 1st August in any event in view of its negative effect on other wild life. Only rabbits, magpies, carrion crows, Canada geese and grey squirrels are to be culled.
7. Japanese Knot-Weed and Himalayan Balsam are a serious threat to the course and action must be taken annually during May to July to eradicate them.
8. Action may also be taken as required to eradicate Ragwort from the course.
9. In appropriate areas Heather & Gorse will be re-introduced and protected during its early growth.
10. Review of litter bins and effectiveness should always be on the agenda to ensure litter not found on the course.
11. The ponds on the 10th, 12th & 15th are now superb wildlife features and have the added advantage of flowing water (in and out). Consideration to encourage and maintain additional wildlife such as Great Crested Newts, amongst others, should be continually sought from English Nature.



Professional Advice

Notwithstanding the complete confidence the Council has in the competence and technical knowledge of the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper, it is the policy of MGC to seek opinions and audits from a qualified Agronomist and/or the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) at Bingley, at such intervals as are from time to time deemed appropriate. The Agronomist currently nominated is Robert Laycock. He will visit the course four times per season, and submit a comprehensive written report, which will be considered by the Green Committee to draw up a suitable action plan.

The Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper is also authorised to seek assistance from Robert Laycock or the STRI, for soil analysis or for any questions we may have concerning abnormal occurrences, such as an invasion of unusual fungi or pests.

Significant alternations may only be made to the architecture of the Course with the approval of Council after consultation with appropriate experts and consideration of comments received.

Health and Safety

The Secretary/Manager is the Clubs Health and Safety Officer, and co-ordinates all Health and Safety issues throughout the Club.

MGC maintains a Health and Safety policy, which shall be distributed to all members of the greenkeeping staff, together with a comprehensive risk assessment policy. The Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper is responsible for maintaining and updating the Club's policies relating to greenkeeping issues, in consultation with the Secretary/Manager. Safe systems of work should be undertaken at all times. Risk assessments and method statements should be used and updated as appropriate in line with the general Health and Safety policy of MGC.

The Club's Health and Safety Consultant Advisor shall make at least one visit per year, and produce a written report on any matters affecting Greens Health and Safety. This will be considered by the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper and the Green Committee to draw up a suitable action plan.

All accidents and/or incidents must be reported to officials as soon as possible, for recording into the Clubs accident/incident book.

Players have a responsibility for the Health and Safety of themselves and others whilst on the course. Guidelines are currently under review.

Course Planner

MGC are committed to maintain an accurate, quality course planner for sale in the Professionals shop.



Web Site

MGC are committed to provide comprehensive details of the course via the Club's web site www.mangc.co.uk

Appendices



1. General Course set up and Guidelines

The importance of presenting the course at its best at all times cannot be overstated. There are agreed standards for all areas of course. These practical general set up and guideline notes are attached for adoption alongside the course policy document.

All below is in addition to the general agronomy policy and course maintenance work that takes place at various points throughout the year as contained in the main body of the policy document.

Summer Weekly Cutting Regime

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|-------------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| Greens (7) | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Tees/Tee Banks (3/4) | √ | √ | | | √ | | |
| Approaches/Collars (2) | √ | | | | √ | | |
| Fairways (2/3) | √ | √ | | | √ | | |
| Semi Rough* (1/2) | | | | √ | √ | | |
| Rough* (2/3) | | √ | √ | √ | | | |
| Greenside Banks* (1/2) | √ | √ | √ | | | | |
| Range Tee | | √ | | | √ | | |
| Practice Facilities | | √ | | | √ | | |
| Bunker faces/banks/surrounds* (2-3) | √ | √ | √ | | | | |

Driving Range to be cut at least once a month.
Clubhouse areas to be tidied on a weekly basis, dependant on work load, trying to avoid overtime payments.

* Denotes variable days subject to conditions/workload

() Denotes no. days to complete

Cutting Heights

| | Full Season | Winter |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Greens | 3-4.5mm | 4.5 – 7mm |
| Tees | 12mm | |
| Tee Banks | 28mm | |
| Approaches/Collars | 12mm | |
| Fairways* | 14mm | |
| Semi Rough | 28 -35mm | |
| Rough | 75 -100mm | |



| | |
|------------------------------|------|
| Greenside Banks | 28mm |
| Bunker faces/banks/surrounds | 28mm |

All the above dependant on weather & ground conditions.

Additional notes agreed:

Greens – cut daily. Heights to range between 3mm – 4.5 mm during full competition season depending on nature of competition & conditions. During winter months height of cut to be raised between 4.5mm – 7mm depending on conditions. **The greens iron is designed to complement the management practices and will be used at the Course manager's discretion.**

Brushes on mowers to be used as and when needed, taking into account growth and disease pressure. Additional verti-cutting at discretion of course manager subject to conditions & competitions. Always ensure different directions of cut day by day. Trim holes with scissors after mowing. Always ensure when holes changed board & scissors used & bow to tie flag.

Tees – Always check direction of cut. Keep chain cover side of tee mower away from tee blocks on perimeter cut. Never pile grass clippings. Keep tee markers 6-7 paces apart, never full tee width & ensure correctly aligned. Use correct divot seed, **ryegrass on par 3 tees only.** **Tee markers to be moved daily.**

Fairways – **B/W cutting suits the style of course, striping of fairways to be carried out to remove uneven growth.** Divot seed not to include ryegrass on fairways.

Bunkers – **Bunkers raked as often as possible depending on comps and weather conditions.** When raking do not smooth edges of turf with sand. Check rakes/stands together. Remove stones disturbed when raking. Remove grass clippings caused by strimming/mowing. **Occasionally, bunkers will be deemed GUR following adverse weather.**

Changing holes – **Holes to be changed before any medal comp and also on Tuesday/Wednesday, depending on comp schedule. During major events, holes may be changed daily. Try to follow the 6 Red/Blue/yellow positions, but not strict if conditions dictate.** Position carefully in light of weather conditions Eg; wet – high points; very windy/dry – avoid severe slopes. Apply golfing common sense!!!

Practice Areas – To be cut Monday/Friday & look presentable at all times.

Bins/Ball Washers – **Topped up weekly. Bins to be emptied depending on competition activity.** All agreed no litter should be on course as far as can be prevented.

General Tidiness – Weeding to be undertaken on all areas regularly – keep eye on benches/gardens/tees/steps/fairways/semi in particular. Where GUR is needed, use it. For example 12 on left; 6 RHS; front13 etc. Aim to reduce GUR areas with good quality repairs at all times.



Set Up General Guidelines

Ideally, the course would be 'set-up' every **day but budget and staff levels do not allow this**. Best practice should accommodate this aspect of course presentation as often as is practical, and this may entail producing a list of priority areas and operations. It is good practice to produce a daily/weekly checklist of set-up procedure (as above), so that all staff are aware of their responsibilities on this front and to enable the course manager to ensure these are being attained during the regular course inspection. This checklist may incorporate the following guidelines.

Teeing ground

- Position tee markers so play is correctly aligned to the centre of the landing area on the fairway. It is vital that the tee markers are set properly to the designated landing area as the alignment of the tee and its mowing may not necessarily achieve this
- On par 3 holes the position of the tee markers should complement the day's hole position
- Tee markers should be placed to a width which minimises the chances of players teeing up in front of the markers. Generally, the narrower the width used on any day increases the options for spreading wear.
- Tee markers should be placed so as not to risk hitting markers to forward teeing grounds
- The tee markers should be placed in accordance with the *Rules of Golf*
- Consider any obstruction to the preferred line of flight off the tee, e.g. tree branches, and accommodate the right- and left-handed golfer.

For tournament set-up other issues may also need to be considered, such as:

- Advance identification of which level areas are likely to be in use for the tournament and a request that these are reserved for the event
- Cutting daily in the late afternoon as the grass is usually drier and therefore less likely to clump
- Divot filling **to be carried out as often as possible**.
- The tee markers should be moved to positions relevant to weather conditions for the day and the length and shape of the hole. If possible the tee positions should not vary to such an extent as to significantly alter the length of the course

Fairways

- Mow to agreed patterns. This may relate to design and grass species, as well as equipment available. Avoid straight lines to fairway edges, but also avoid an overly contoured cut
- Mow to agreed widths. This may also relate to hole design but standard of play should also be a consideration, providing wider landing areas for the poorer standard of golfer. This should bear in mind the siting of such from each teeing ground. Fairway width can vary from 25 to 40 metres and the difficulty of each hole should be taken into account when deciding on width delineation



- Present a tidy surface for play as resources allow. This should take into account the need to sweep or drag fairways to lift old divots, other debris and dew.

More specific issues may be considered for tournament set-up, such as:

- Mowing narrower fairways, say to 22 to 32 metres in width. Mowing heights to be employed during the event should be established far enough in advance so as not to show any discoloration or scalping
- **Divot filling of fairways as often as possible.** Check for any areas of ground under repair that may need marking.

Semi-rough

- Mow to agreed widths. The width of the first cut should, preferably, be standard but variance to this may relate to hole design, standard of play and degree of difficulty of the hole
- **Semi-rough width must be uniform throughout the course. Height of cut to remain standard.**
- Mow to agreed patterns. This may relate to equipment available and the band of semi-rough cut should follow the shape of the fairway edge
- Present a tidy surface for play as resources allow, and this aspect will contribute to the decision on graded rough.

Tournament set-up may bring other considerations into your plans, such as:

- Specific mowing heights and widths of graded rough, to be agreed far enough in advance to achieve the objective
- There may be specific requirements for encompassing any and all bunkers
- There may be a requirement to cut semi-rough in the same direction, i.e. tee to green or vice versa.

Collars/aprons

- Mow to agreed height
- Mow to an agreed width which should be maintained around the entire outline of the green. This is a principle that should be adopted for green surround mowing as a whole, though the apron may vary in depth depending on the length of the approach shot into the green. A deeper apron may be cut for longer approach shots, e.g. perhaps out to as much as 5 m, with a narrower apron (to collar width) for short approach shots
- Mow to agreed grading. The mowing pattern of the collar/extended green surround will depend on the design of the green complex and machinery/resources available. The mowing **direction** around greenside bunkers should be determined



- These mowing criteria may be considered as part of tournament preparation. An

outside authority may require a different set-up to that usually employed and an adequate preparation period for any such alterations must be agreed.

Bunkers

- Ideally, bunkers should be raked daily in advance of play
- Sand in bunker faces should be shallow enough to prevent plugging yet sufficient enough to ensure the ball remains in the bunker
- Keep grass on the bunker perimeter tidy to enable clear definition of the hazard boundary.

For tournament set-up, other considerations may need to be made:

- Check levels of sand in bunkers to prevent an excess of or heavily compressed sand
- Any new sand required in bunkers should be added well enough in advance of the event to allow for suitable consolidation
- Bunker rakes should be available at all bunkers and be positioned **inside** bunkers in a position least likely to interfere with play
- The grass on the banks and round the edges of bunkers should be mown in accordance with design and course layout.

Putting surfaces

- Mow to agreed height
- Mow to designated dimensions. Putting surfaces can be prone to 'green creep' if not regularly monitored.
- If the type of machinery changes, i.e. from triplex to pedestrian mowers or vice versa, then care must be taken to ensure that bench setting compensates for the actual finished cut; this ensures consistency of finish whichever type of machine is employed on any particular day
- Pace of the green should be the optimum related to prevailing conditions but smoothness should never be sacrificed for speed. Consistency of pace between greens is more important than the pace of any one surface
- A desirable putting surface is firm – not hard – and will accept a well-struck iron shot and deal differently with a poor strike or a shot from the rough

Many factors affect the selection of good hole positions, but the primary objective is to reward a good shot and the following points should be considered:

1. Take into account, where appropriate, the design of the hole as it was intended to be played and the effect of predicted weather
2. If rain is likely, holes should not be cut where water would accumulate



- 3. The hole should be positioned within the green to accommodate the required approach shot, i.e. deeper in the green and farther from its sides for a long iron than for a short pitch shot
 4. Generally, the hole should be positioned at least four paces from any edge of the green. If a bunker is close to the edge, or if the ground slopes away from the edge, the distance should be greater, especially if the shot is more than a pitch
 5. The ground 60–90 cm around the hole should be as level as possible. In no case should holes be positioned within three paces of a very severe slope or ridge. If the design of the green dictates that the hole be positioned on a slope, the hole should be cut vertically, not with the slope
 6. Consider the condition of nearby turf, especially taking care to avoid old hole plugs which have not completely healed
 7. There should be a balanced selection of hole positions for the entire course **were possible**, with respect to left, right, central, front and back positions
 8. The member of the greenstaff who cuts the holes must make sure that the *Rules of Golf* are observed, i.e. the hole must be 108 mm in diameter (its outer diameter must not exceed this measurement) and at least 101.6 mm deep. If a lining is used, it must be sunk at least 25.4 mm below the putting green surface unless the nature of the soil makes it impracticable to do so.
- The practice putting green should perform in a similar fashion to those on the course.

Info Only.

For tournament set-up there may be other considerations, such as:

- The possible reservation of certain areas of the green for hole locations
- The skill level of those playing should always be considered when preparing the greens in relation to pace and firmness
- The condition of the putting greens at the end of the tournament should be as similar as possible to how they were during the practice rounds
- For a tournament played over several days, the course should be kept in balance daily as to the degree of difficulty. One form of balanced daily treatment is to select six quite difficult hole positions, six which are moderately difficult and six which are relatively easy
- Try to keep a balance of using the left and the right of the green and vary as much as possible the number of paces from the front edge of the green
- For tournaments lasting more than a day, including practice days, anticipate the players' walking routes. Position holes for early rounds so that good hole positions for later rounds will not be spoiled by players leaving the green
- In match play, a hole position may, if necessary, be changed during a round, provided that in each match the players play with the holes in the same position. In stroke play, Rule 33-2b requires that all competitors in a single round play with each hole in the same position, other than when it is impossible for a damaged hole to be repaired so that it conforms with the Definition (see also the Note to Rule 33-2b)



- When 36 holes are played in one day, it is customary for hole positions not to be changed between rounds, but there is no Rule to prohibit changing them. If they are changed, all players should be informed.