

Longcliffe Golf Club Environmental Policy

This environmental policy was written with the help of England Golf's policy guidance. The policy aims to provide a written record of the Club's environmental goals and to set out how members and staff can help to bring about environmental improvements and ensure legal compliance.

The policy sets out its overall environmental aims together with an underlying rationale. In order to work towards those aims, the policy outlines seven specific strands or areas of activity. Each strand then breaks down into numbered objectives.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the associated action plan. This action plan maps out specific actions to be taken. Actions to achieve the objectives will be phased over a 5 year period. The Club will not attempt actions across all the strands at the same time, but will focus on particular strands each year as appropriate.

RATIONALE

The Golf Club is adopting this policy for the following reasons:

- At a time when the world is increasingly aware of environment issues, and the risks that human activity pose, we need, as a responsible institution, to do what we can to protect and enhance the environment in which we play the game and live our lives.
- To provide, in the long term, a more beautiful and more enjoyable environment for our members and for our staff.
- As environmental awareness grows, legislation on such matters becomes more significant. It is important to protect the Club by having robust measures and policies in place that minimise risk of non-compliance and litigation
- Loughborough and its surrounds have experienced rapid development in recent years and this development is set to continue. As this development continues it becomes more important to have regard to the long term effect of what might eventually happen on our neighbouring land.
- We are all familiar with issues surrounding the future of golf as a sport. In adopting this policy, the Club aims to enhance its offer to potential members and thus help to protect its future viability.

PRINCIPLES

Longcliffe Golf Club commits itself to:

- Providing a safe and pleasant working environment for all its staff
- Enhancing the natural environment of the golf course for the benefit of both golfers and wildlife
- Conserving energy and water
- Reducing waste
- Preventing pollution from all our activities
- Promoting wider environmental change by careful choice of products and services
- Working towards a 'greener operation' in collaboration with neighbours and partners
- Creating a positive ethos about environmental issues that will have a positive influence on all adults, young people and visitors who come into contact with the Club

As far as is reasonably possible, the Club's directors will support all parties to ensure that this policy is implemented across all the activities of the Club and will periodically review the effectiveness of the policy.

The Club will form an Environmental Working Group (EWG) to drive the policy forward. This group will report periodically to the directors and to the members as well as providing news of progress through newsletters, a noticeboard and other means.

The EWG will seek to identify and recruit any expertise and experience that exists among members.

STRANDS

In order to work practically towards the principles outlined above, the Club will organise its actions into a number of strands. Each strand will break down into a small number of related objectives. Work will be planned each year to align with these strands and objectives. The strands will identify general areas for action; the objectives will be more specific. Specific actions planned for a time period will be drawn up in the form of Action Plans.

It will not be practical or possible to have an equal focus on all the strands of action at the same time. Instead, the Club, through its EWG, and in consultation with directors and the Head Greenkeeper will prioritise actions according to the circumstances, taking account of

- Opportunities that arise
- Budget constraints
- Progress made

The strands of action are:

- 1. Flora and Fauna and nature conservation**
- 2. Water use**
- 3. Energy use**
- 4. Waste and recycling**
- 5. Chemical use**
- 6. Purchasing**
- 7. Education and training**

Many of these strands of action will involve contacting and working with other bodies, e.g. local authorities, grant bodies, wildlife and nature bodies, planning authorities, local community groups and neighbours.

Rather than being presented as a separate strand, liaising with partner bodies is a kind of action which appears across all strands.

Throughout this Policy the word "We" refers to the Directors, the Head Greenkeeper and the EWG though the Directors may delegate the practical tasks to the Head Greenkeeper and / or the EWG

STRAND 1 FLORA AND FAUNA

The golf course has the potential to be of significant value in promoting wildlife but a balance must be struck between the needs of a functioning golf course and wildlife needs; though these need not be incompatible.

1.1 Protected species

- We will research and take advice with regard to protected and rare species on the golf course
- Any protected or rare species present on the course will be identified to members and visitors
- Course management will be developed to take account of protected or rare species

1.2 Out of play habitats

- We will identify potential out-of-play habitats
- Plans will be developed for the management and enhancement of these habitat areas

1.3 Birds and Bats

- We will seek advice from nature agencies concerning bird life and bats around the course
- Plans will be developed to enhance habitats for the growth and diversity of birdlife and bats
- The development of birdlife and bats around the course will be monitored, partly by means of a sightings list on an 'Environment' noticeboard.

1.4 Mammals and invertebrates

-We will endeavour to protect, improve and expand areas which may provide suitable habitats for these creatures. However, this will not be done in any way that has any detrimental effect on the golf course.

1.5 Invasive species

- We will research the invasive non-native species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Weeds Act 1959 and, by liaising with the Head Greenkeeper, will ensure that these species are not purchased or otherwise introduced on to the golf course.
- Advice will be sought regarding the management any existing invasive/non-native species. This will include "woodland management" and appropriate actions will be taken in consultation with the Directors and the Head Greenkeeper.

STRAND 2 WATER USE

Water is a shared resource and must be fairly balanced between the needs of the Golf Club, other local services and homeowners and local wildlife. We must ensure that we do not use more water than our local water environment can sustain, and that we do not pollute our local environment.

2.1 Recording water usage and increasing efficiency

-We will continue to measure water usage on the course and keep it to a minimum.

2.2 Treatment of washdown water

- We will seek advice on the treatment and disposal of washdown water and any associated legal requirements

- We will plan for measures to be legally compliant within a reasonable timescale, if necessary
- Washdown facilities will be regularly checked

2.2 Alternative irrigation sources

- We have dug a bore hole for water extraction for use on the course and will continue to comply with water extraction regulations
- We will continue to measure water use on the course

STRAND 3 ENERGY USE

Saving energy has positive environmental and financial benefits.

3.1 Recording and reducing energy and energy costs

- We have installed a bio mass wood-pellet-burner boiler
- We have installed solar panels
- Both of the above provide the Club with green energy which is efficient and cost effective

3.2 Alternative energy sources

- We will keep energy supply under review and as the technology changes and improves we will, at the appropriate time, consider alternative sources of energy
- We will liaise with a consultant re carbon sequestration on the course

STRAND 4 Waste and recycling

Waste is created in all areas of the golf club. Reducing waste can have significant environmental and financial benefits. In particular, reducing plastic usage and waste is a growing global issue to which we should respond.

4.1 Waste and recycling compliance

- We will investigate legal requirements surrounding waste and refuse management, taking advice from the appropriate authorities
- Having conducted an audit of our current practice regarding waste disposal, we will work with local authorities to manage our waste and recycling operations more effectively
- Staff and partners working at the Golf Club need to be fully aware of waste and recycling issues and how they can contribute to a cleaner, 'greener' operation. This will include replacing the current rubbish bins in and around the course with recycling bins for plastic, paper, glass and tins as well as general rubbish. We will also liaise with Paul Price re the replacement of single-use plastic cups

-Members of the Club and visitors will be made aware of the Club's policies with regard to recycling and all will be encouraged to recycle their rubbish appropriately

-The Club's sewage disposal system currently uses an aerator / digester which in turn feeds into a reed bed. Its effectiveness, considering the increased use of clubhouse since installation, is under review. Aerator and reed performance should be regularly tested and maintenance should be carried out annually.

4.2 Plastic

- Across all areas of the Golf Club, we will seek to reduce plastic usage, especially single use plastic

STRAND 5 CHEMICAL USE

Chemical controls are an important tool in golf course maintenance. However, chemicals must be used with care and must be stored and disposed of according to legal requirements.

5.1 Safe storage and disposal

- We will research the required standards for the safe storage, use and disposal of oils, fertilisers and pesticides
- We will aim to ensure that our storage facilities meet all legal requirements
- We will ensure that chemicals are only applied by qualified personnel and in appropriate weather conditions
- We will dispose of hazardous waste through an appropriate waste contractor

5.2 Chemical use on the golf course

- We will seek advice from the appropriate authorities on pest and disease identification and management
- Playing surfaces will be monitored to identify pests and diseases quickly and accurately
- Where possible, the control of environmental factors will be used to manage and control pests and diseases. Chemical control of pests and diseases will be employed as a last resort, once agreed damage thresholds have been breached, and once other methods have failed.

STRAND 6 PURCHASING

The Golf Club can have an impact outside our own organisation by the careful choice and purchase of products and services.

6.1 Procurement policy

- We will try to minimise packaging where possible and look for packaging which is recycled or can be recycled easily
- Where possible and suitable, we will use local suppliers, especially with regard to food and seasonal products, to reduce transport costs and work in collaboration with the local economy
- We will seek to reduce or eliminate peat in our course treatment, researching alternatives to peat-based top dressings
- When purchasing equipment of any kind, we will try to purchase the most energy efficient products and those with the longest effective life
- We will look to introduce a procurement procedure that interrogates potential suppliers' positive commitment to Environmental Policies

6.2 Partnership with the pro shop

- We will work in partnership with David Mee and the staff in the pro shop regarding procurement policy

STRAND 7 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

An ethos of 'green' behaviour around the golf club will contribute to the reputation of the club, its appearance, its costs, and its influence on all who come into contact with us.

7.1 Staff education and training

- We will, when recruiting staff, make them aware of the Club's commitment to protecting and enhancing the environment. Appointments will take account of applicants' experience of, and commitment to, positive environmental policies
- The Club will commit itself to the professional development of its employees with regard to environmental factors. This applies particularly with regard to legal compliance matters
- The Club will look for opportunities to improve environmental practice by sharing expertise with partner clubs

7.2 Member awareness and involvement

- We will develop means to make members aware of the Club's environmental policy and how they can contribute to it. This will include signage developments and a noticeboard
- In particular, young people who come to learn the game at this Club will be made aware of the Club's commitment to the environment. We will seek, through our behaviour as well as within their training and coaching, to educate them in how golf can take place in a way that not only causes minimal harm to the environment but can also enhance it.
- Once 'a greener operation' begins to be established, the Club's marketing material will place an emphasis upon its positive environmental policies
- We will seek opportunities to publicise any significant achievements or developments regarding the environment, to improve the Club's image and contribute to its recruitment and overall health

7.3 Accountability and consultation

- This policy is formed under the auspices of the directors of the Club. They will periodically review its operation with the EWG. The EWG will be accountable to the directors for the implementation of the policy
- Members will be involved and consulted as much as possible: e.g. at the annual general meeting, and through notices and newsletters and informal meetings.

Frank Fay Environment and Ecology Working Group.