

# **Gathurst Golf Club**

## **Golf course policy document**

### **1. Objectives**

To provide Members and Visitors with good playing conditions all year round from Grass or Temporary Tees to Main or Temporary Greens as appropriate to prevailing weather conditions. To achieve this there will be a programme of Preparation, Fertilization, Mowing and Weed Control at appropriate times of the year.

### **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 2.1 The General Committee is responsible for the overall direction and control of the Club including Policy and Financial Control.
- 2.2 The Greens Committee is responsible for the Management and Maintenance of the Course, Standards, Improvements, Submission of Annual Budgets and Long Term Capital Expenditure projects.
- 2.3 The Greens Chairman will ensure that agreed policies and the requirements of the Course Policy Document are implemented. Course Budgets and Capital Expenditure Programmes will be monitored in conjunction with Treasurer and/or Finance Committee.
- 2.4 The Head Green Keeper is responsible, in conjunction with the Greens Chairman, for the implementation of the Objectives which include but is not limited to:-

- Liaison with the Greens Chairman on staffing & problem areas
- Machinery maintenance and repairs.
- Maintenance of records relating to staff and staff training.
- Planning of annual budgets.
- Implementation of and suggestions to improve, Health & Safety Policy.
- Purchase & storage of Fertilizers, Dressings, Pesticides etc and maintenance of the records pertaining thereto.
- Storage and safety of all equipment.
- Short and long term work schedules.
- Allocation of daily tasks.
- Attendance at Greens Committee meetings and reporting.
- Implementation of Woodland Conservation Schemes.
- The disposal of Waste Oils etc, Fertilizers, Herbicides, Pesticides, Wash Down effluent and the like in accordance with Environmental Guidelines.

### **3. Resources**

#### **3.1 Staff.**

Staffing levels to be agreed between the Head Green Keeper, the Greens Chairman and the Board of Directors of the club.

## **3.2 Training**

Training is an essential element in achieving maximum potential. The Golf Club will encourage and help staff to receive training through approved Colleges and Schemes in Greenkeeping.

Other training courses (e.g. Use of Chain Saws) will be arranged as appropriate and/or as recommended by the Head Green Keeper.

Head Greenkeeper will keep and maintain training records for all staff including himself.

## **3.3 Finance**

The General Committee and Finance Committee are committed to the provision and allocation of sufficient funds to achieve the Policies set out herein.

The provision of necessary machinery and equipment is an essential requisite in achieving such policies and a rolling 5 years programme will be submitted to the above Committees for approval. The Chairman of Greens/Head Green Keeper will provide annual budgets for General Course Maintenance.

Any urgent expenditure in excess of budget requires approval from the above Committees.

## **3.4 Greenkeeping Facilities**

These are situated between the 7th Fairway and the overspill car park and consists of:-

- i. Main Tractor Shed for housing the bulk of Vehicles & Machinery but also includes:-  
Workshop Area.  
Head Green Keepers office.  
Staff Rest Room.  
Toilets Facilities.  
Store.
- ii. Secondary compound for storage of smaller items of equipment and machinery.
- iii. Diesel Storage facilities.

## **4. Work on Course**

### **4.1 General**

Work on the Course will be conducted with as little disruption to Members play as is possible - but Green staff will continue to have priority in accord with the "Guideline on Course Conduct" appearing at Appendix 1.

In conjunction with the Head Green Keeper, Notice Boards Announcements, emails and social media be used to inform Members of "coursework days" that may impact on playing conditions. The co-operation and understanding of Members is required if continuous and satisfactory playing conditions are to be achieved.

## **5. The Course**

### **5.1 General**

The Course is laid out on, basically, a clay structure and is subject to wet conditions.

The long term aim is to relieve these conditions with continued laying of new drains and associated work wherever necessary.

The Head Green keeper has the authority to ban the use of all mechanised and hand trolleys whenever ground conditions so dictate.

## **5.2 Tees**

Winter Tee Mats will be used whenever the Head Green Keeper deems it necessary. These will be maintained in good condition and replaced as necessary. During the Summer months Winter Tees may be removed to storage.

Day to day maintenance is part of overall strategy and includes:-

- i. Regular movement of Tee markers which will be placed at least 3 Metres apart and 2 club lengths from the rear boundary of the Teeing ground.
- ii. Seeding, Aeration, Scarification and Repair.
- iii. Emptying of Waste Bins.
- iv. Filling Tee side "Repair Boxes" with Soil/Seed/Fertilizer etc to encourage Golfers to repair divots.
- v. Ball Cleaners to be topped up.
- vi. Annual maintenance of other course furniture.
- vii. Tees to be cut at a height of 8mm to 10mm

## **5.3 Fairways**

Mowing to a height of 16mm will be the standard during the main playing season.

## **5.4 Rough**

The Rough will normally be cut to a height of 48mm with the semi rough at 22 to 24mm.

Other areas will be cleared as required by the Greens Committee, and in consultation with the Head Green Keeper.

## **5.5 Greens**

The aim is to maintain the present high quality of the Greens to enable them to be used as often as possible especially out of season. The Head Green Keeper will decide if Temporary Greens are to be brought into play and to this end will ensure that such Greens are prepared in advance of the Winter season.

The greens approaches and collars will be cut to a height of 10mm.

The height of cut of the Greens during summer months will be approximately 4 to 5 mm.

and should have a stimpmeter reading of 9.  
Grooming, Verti cutting/draining, slitting, tining, hollow tining, scarifying and other treatments will be undertaken at appropriate times.

## **5.6 Bunkers**

Definition of Bunker margins are to be clear with edges, fringes and faces trimmed.  
Regular raking will be undertaken.

Rakes will be provided in each Bunker; replaced quickly when broken and are to be placed and kept in the Bunker itself.

The quality of Bunker Sand will be the subject of annual review.

## **5.7 Woodlands & Trees on the Course**

These will be maintained in accordance with advice received from the Forestry Commission and other expert sources to ensure continuity in the growth of the variety of trees currently to be seen. New plantings will take place as necessary.

Ditches will be kept clear of debris to improve drainage.

The Club will seek expert advice as required on the treatment of the Woodlands and Trees.

## **5.8 Practice Ground**

This area will be maintained and cut regularly. The practise bunker is to be inspected on a regular basis and kept in a usable condition.

## **5.9 Paths & Tracks**

All paths and tracks are to be inspected regularly and repaired/renewed as necessary. Artificial paths to be maintained as required.

## **5.10 Temporary Greens**

It is the policy of the Club to play to Temporary Greens only when absolutely necessary. However the Head Green Keeper (or senior Green Keeper on duty) will have responsibility on a day to day basis for the decision to play to Temporary greens.

## **5.11 Chemicals & Fertilizers**

Use of these commodities will be kept to a minimum.

Storage is to be in a secure area/cabinet and appropriate records kept of their purchase and use.

## **5.12 Top Dressings**

Greens will be top dressed at least once per year, the decision to undertake such work being the responsibility the Head Green Keeper.

## **5.13 Machinery and Equipment**

The policy of the Club is to purchase, maintain and replace when necessary the best, and most appropriate, range of machinery or equipment for the upkeep of the course.

The Club has invested in specialist machinery and equipment to ensure the continuing high standards of course maintenance. A rolling capital plan of replacement and additions should be prepared, and maintained/updated for consideration annually and for incorporation into the Club financial plan.

The Head Green Keeper has a responsibility to keep up to date with developments in golf course machinery and to recommend (with quotations) acquisitions and disposals.

The Head Green keeper is also responsible for the maintenance of all machinery and equipment, including Health & Safety requirements, and records of servicing, maintenance and repair.

All heavy plant/machinery to be inspected periodically and records kept.

## **6. Course Closure**

The course may be closed on the authority of the Head Green Keeper (or senior Greenkeeper on duty in his absence). The Greens Chairman (or other Committee member) must be advised as soon as such a decision is made.

During Competitions the course may be closed by a member of the Competition Committee supervising the event. The following signals on a klaxon will be used:-

- i) Suspension of Play 1 prolonged blast.
- ii) Resumption of Play 2 short blasts (Repeated).
- iii) Cancellation of Play 4 short blasts (Repeated).

## **7. Irrigation**

The objective is to use as little water as possible whilst recognising that from time to time Sprinklers will be needed. These are fed from a bore hole next to the workshop.

## **8. Finance**

Each year, the Greens Chairman, in consultation with the Head Green Keeper, will produce a spending budget for the next financial year which should be in line with the rolling budget mentioned in paragraph 2.3 above. Recommendations will be made to the Finance Committee and through them to the General Committee for approval.

No expense shall be incurred outside budget guidelines. Any urgent expenditure in excess of budget must be recommended by the Greens Chairman and authorised by the Finance/General Committee.

## **9. Ecology**

Gathurst Golf Club consists of Parkland & Woodlands. It is an important part of our Policy to preserve the natural habitat and to that end Woodland maintenance will have as little impact on wildlife as possible. Certain animals, however, e.g. squirrels, moles and rabbits damage the course and may need to be culled humanely.

Tree felling will only take place when absolutely necessary and within the 3 cubic metre per quarter allowance, unless for Health & Safety reasons when the approval of the Environment Agency or similar body will be obtained.

## **10. Complaints**

All complaints should be addressed to the Greens Committee. If the complaint cannot be settled to the satisfaction of the member by the Greens Committee it shall be referred to the Board of Directors.

No member shall reprimand or instruct the Green Keeping staff.

#### **11. Professional Advice**

The Greens Committee may seek advice from qualified Agronomists or other experts notwithstanding the authority which the Head Green Keeper holds for seeking assistance and soil analysis etc from such bodies as the Sports Turf Research Institute.

#### **12. Health & Safety**

The Health & Safety policy will be made available to all staff with comprehensive Risk Assessment forms and Training Records.

All accidents must be reported to officials immediately and recorded in the incident book kept for this purpose.

The advice and recommendations of the Clubs Health & Safety Officer will be carried out as quickly a possible.

#### **13. Insurance**

The club will have both public and employee liability with certificates to be kept in the Administration office.

All golfers using the course must be insured against accidental damage or injury to a third party.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Guidelines on Course Conduct**

The Golfer wants to play without interruption and the Greenstaff want to get on with the job free of Hazard.

These two objectives can be in conflict, hence these Guidelines. Legislation demands that the Club has a duty of care for its Staff, which means that the working environment has to be as risk free as possible.

#### **On The Green**

##### ***Golfers***

It only takes a few minutes to cut a Green so please be patient. You should only be held up for a short time.

##### ***Greenstaff***

If a Green is started then finish.

Do not start if there is a Golfer waiting.

Ensure the Golfer is held up for the minimum amount of time.

Where possible, switch off running machinery if close to Golfers.

## **On the Fairway**

### ***Golfers***

Will not play any shot that 'chases' Green Staff.

Give time to complete a 'run' (there and back on short fairways).

Only play a shot after Greenstaff have 'stepped' aside.

On longer Fairways only play your shot if working Greenstaff are out of reach.

### ***Greenstaff***

By your behaviour do not tempt Golfers to play a shot at you.

Complete a 'run'(there & back on short holes) and then stop on the side whilst the shot is played.

On longer Fairways Golfers can play towards you if you are well out of range

When cutting towards Golfers they will wait until you have passed them or have pulled to one side.

If close to Golfers about to play switch off running machinery if possible.

## **In The Rough**

### ***Golfers***

Allow the Greenstaff to finish a run-gang mowers cannot be reversed.

Be tolerant, the Greenstaff will be concentrating on a line and may not see Golf balls.

### ***Greenstaff***

Be tolerant and watchful, golfers may be in areas where vision of the hole is restricted.

## **General**

Where "blind" shots are played on a hole, the Greenstaff will close that hole for the duration of their work. The holes most likely to have to be closed when work is being undertaken are holes 2, 4, 8, 10, 14 and all par 3 holes.

### ***Golfers***

Greenstaff have priority on the Course for safety reasons and to get the job done in a reasonable time.

The Golfer will give the customary respect to the Greenstaff who are members of the Clubs staff.

The Golfer should make it clear what their intentions are.

### ***Greenstaff***

Priority on the Course is a responsibility not to be abused but treasured.

It is given to make the working environment safer and so that the job can be done.

Greenstaff will work in directions which minimise disruption of ordinary play.

Greenstaff will conduct themselves in a quiet & courteous manner at all times.

Greenstaff should make it clear what their intentions are.

### **Complaints**

#### ***Golfers***

Golfers complaints will be made in writing to the Greens Committee.

#### ***Greenstaff***

Greenstaff complaints will be made to the Head Greenkeeper who will report the matter to the Chairman of Greens.

### **Public Footpaths**

The Public Footpath that crosses the course will have signs at each end to warn the Public that they are entering private land and warning of the danger of flying golf balls.

A clearly defined path will be shown for the Public to follow. Additional signs will be placed on the pathway to warn the Public which direction golf balls are likely to come from.

#### ***Golfers***

Golfers will give priority to any member of the Public using the Public Footpath.

They will only play shots after checking that no-one is on the Footpath.

Holes affected are 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 18.