

# CHESTER-LE-STREET GOLF CLUB

## Course Development Bulletin to Members – April 2017

### Phase I

Now that the season has started we hope that all members are enjoying the course and the challenges introduced by the new bunkering. The new ditch on the 12<sup>th</sup> hole in particular seems to be an attractive hazard, unless you have the misfortune to be in it.

The tree planting, which was agreed when the project commenced, has now been completed. This was mainly RHS of hole 5 with the intention of shielding the motorway and the traffic island on the A167, which has always been an eyesore, particularly in the winter months. These areas have been planted with alder and sycamore and the planting is intentionally dense in order to encourage rapid vertical growth. The trees planted in the castle field and the top field are native lime trees, with the addition of three oaks.

All areas of the course are now in play, apart from areas clearly marked as GUR.  
Preferred lies ceased on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April.

Now that the weather is improving we are completing some tidy up exercises, which could not be carried out in the winter.

These include:

- Weed spraying: we have budgeted for 15 days during the year - of these, 3 days have been completed
- Further maintenance RHS of holes 3, 5, and 6
- Further harrowing & seeding on holes 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15, and 17

A top priority is to complete the levelling of the bottom of the 12<sup>th</sup> ditch in order to prevent water collecting there. This will be addressed during a dry spell.

Wet areas on holes 1, 10 and 12 are identified for drainage work later in the year.

### Phase II

We have re-visited the plan for the 3<sup>rd</sup> hole with Ken Moodie, the architect. This was mainly because we are reluctant to give up on the white tee, which provides the best aspect and best test for the hole. Retaining the existing tees has resulted in a new plan with bunkers RHS of the fairway and mounding on LHS. This still needs to be agreed and will be further discussed with Ken on his next visit, which is scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> June.

The next phase has had much discussion over the last few months and we have reached the stage where it is appropriate to share this with you. Please note that **all** features for **all** holes are still planned but the delivery of the complete plan, or phases within it, are reliant on many factors not least of which is the availability of funds.

Much of the positive feedback we have received from you, the members, is that the new bunkers create the most significant impact. This has resulted in us considering a different approach whereby we complete bunkers & mounding on certain holes rather than complete holes in their entirety. On reverting to the published plan we see that this approach is actually put forward as a consideration from Ken Moodie in section 8:

*'Given the fact that most of the work will be carried out in-house it will probably form the basis of a plan with several years duration. In relation to the tree work and bunker renovation we would recommend trying to complete in 5 years. This will provide the strategic and aesthetic improvements required and link the character of the 3 landscape zones'*

We then considered each hole and identified those, which either need strengthening, or need additional features from an aesthetic point of view. The following holes are now agreed as candidates for a phase II project: 3, 5, 6, 17, and 18.

The cost of delivering this with all new & renovated bunkers, mounds, and in-fills, including design is in the region of £40,000, or £48,000 with contingency. The costs are now being reviewed by the architect and will be further discussed in June.

Following that review, and again subject to financial resource being identified, the next steps will be to organise the topographical survey and to organise a contractor for the hard landscaping. Please note that we would like everyone to enjoy a full playing season before any work commences and that disruption will be kept to a minimum.

## Flags

We would like to take this opportunity to update you on the rationale for reverting to traditional flags:

The white flags get dirty very quickly and are sometimes difficult to discern, particularly on holes such as the tenth. On some holes it is not obvious to players where the green centre is, e.g. hole seven.

Many players have yardage distance devices.

The markers on each hole provide 100-yard and 150-yard distances to the centre of the green and, of course, the centre of green on par threes is from the tee stone(s).

Changing the flags using 3 colours is time-consuming when there are many, more important tasks to be addressed. The holes are changed 2 or 3 times per week, depending upon resource, time and scheduled events. The 3-colour system is estimated to take an extra 2 to 3 hours per week which is difficult to schedule in, particularly in the growing season and when we are under-resourced. This is the main reason for reverting to yellow-out and red-in.

Many players fail to find the green with approach shots (the average on the USPGA is 12/18).

Please note, there is a very interesting article on dispersion for the average male amateur golfer at [blog.trackmangolf.com/performance-of-the-average-male-amateur/](http://blog.trackmangolf.com/performance-of-the-average-male-amateur/) - if you have time please try to read it.

The flags on many holes can be seen before those holes are actually played:

Hole	Rationale
1	Position is visible from approach shot
2	Lower tier or top tier is indicated by additional, smaller flag
3	Position is visible from 2 <sup>nd</sup> tee
4	Position is visible from approach shot, around 100 to 150 yards
5	Most approach shots are mid to long irons so centre to rear of green is sound strategy
6	As 4
7	Position is visible from the tee
8	Position is visible whilst playing 4 <sup>th</sup>
9	Position is visible from 4 <sup>th</sup> tee
10	As 2
11	Position is visible from approach shot
12	Very shallow green so centre of green is sound strategy
13	Position is visible from approach
14	Position is visible whilst playing 13 <sup>th</sup>
15	Position is visible from 14 <sup>th</sup> tee
16	Position is visible from tee
17	Position is visible whilst playing 15 <sup>th</sup>
18	Position is visible from 12 <sup>th</sup> tee and 15 <sup>th</sup> tee

In closing we would again like to thank the many volunteers who have helped on the project.

The green-staff have been fantastic. As a reflection of the latter I am pleased to inform you that Barrie Lee has been promoted from Head Green-Keeper to Course Manager. This is a reflection of his many years of hard work and dedication to the golf club.

Thanks again to you the members for your positive and helpful feedback.

### C Henderson

Hon. Secretary (on behalf of the GP committee)

