



COURSE MANAGEMENT POLICY DOCUMENT

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MISSION STATEMENT

The aims and objectives of the Dunnerholme Golf Club are to provide a golf course that provides a true test of golf in a safe and harmonious environment.

These aims and objectives will be attained by developing the Course to its full potential, working with the environment, and having full regard to the needs of the natural flora and fauna.

PREFACE

This document sets out the Policy of The Dunnerholme Golf Club, (hereafter known as the Club), as agreed by the Council, regarding all course preparation matters. The aim of the document is to establish a clear and consistent approach to course management to fulfil the potential of the course for the benefit of members, their guests and visitors.

This is a working document, which the committee will review and amend from time to time, in accordance with changing climate, usage, resources, course layout and changes in the game of golf itself. Any major changes will only happen after consultation, both within the club and with designated professional advisers.

Any major changes will be voted on at the AGM or at a specially arranged EGM. Notice of proposed changes to be given in writing to the Secretary and displayed on the notice board fourteen days prior to the meeting.

INTRODUCTION

The Club was founded in 1905 on land owned by the estate of Lord Wakefield of Kendal. The course and original layout was completed by members as a ten hole links course following the shores of the Duddon Estuary. The course was bought from the estate of Lord Wakefield of Kendal by Messrs G. & W. Penny on 14th June 1985 and subsequently to the Club on the same date. The Penny family have retained the rights to graze sheep on the course up to the year 2035 under conditions set out in the sale document.

The current length is 6,122 yards off the White Tees, the course playing to a standard scratch score of 69. It takes up 73.2 hectares of land, 30 of which is rough pasture and foreshore. Fairways are on a sandy base with fine grasses being kept short by the grazing sheep. The greens are of the original push-up construction with a sand, soil, root zone foundation except the 7th, which was constructed in 1991. The grass species composition at present is approximately 65% browntop bent and 35% annual meadow-grass but it is intended to increase the percentage of browntop.

The weather patterns at the Club provide an annual average of 65 inches of rain with frequent frost and occasional snow through the winter. Climate change in recent years has resulted in milder, wetter weather, which has meant more aeration and top dressing is required to relieve compaction (from more winter play) and dilute thatch accumulations. Climate change predictions in the future emphasis this requirement. Rough is formed by moorland grassland with gorse in the deeper rough. Sheep graze on the course.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Many of the roles and responsibilities relating to this document are determined by the constitution of the Club. The following have specific responsibilities to ensure that the objectives contained within this document are met:

1) The Club Captain

- a) The Captain of the day is responsible for forming a Greens Committee consisting of the following:
The Head Greenkeeper
The Greens Committee Chairman
A number of members appointed by the Council.
- b) In accordance with the statutory rules of the Club, the Captain and Vice Captain will be ex-officio members of the Greens Committee.

2) The Greens Committee Chairman

- a) To liaise, on behalf of the Committee, with the Head Greenkeeper on all matters relating to the management, maintenance and development of the course.
- b) To oversee the maintenance and presentation of the course to ensure that the standards are achieved and agreed policy implemented.
- c) To chair meetings of the Greens Committee at appropriate intervals.
- d) To report to the Committee at regular intervals on matters affecting the course and its management.
- e) To meet regularly with the Head Greenkeeper (at least twice a week with as many meetings as possible to be held on the course) so that current conditions and problems can be viewed and discussed.
- f) To monitor on a monthly basis green spend against budget and investigate any variances and countersign any invoices appertaining to course expenses before payment is made.
- g) To advise the Competition Secretary of the existence of such playing or other conditions on the course which require protection by local rule or otherwise.
- h) To oversee the implementation of the Winter Programme and any other alterations to the course authorized by the Committee.
- i) To ensure that the policies in regard to course closure and the use of winter greens and other protective measures are consistently applied.

3) The Greens Committee

- a) The Greens Committee is responsible for implementing the policies outlined in this document.
- b) The Committee is responsible for formulating management strategies, for proposing amendments to the policy document and for assessing progress in relation to the objectives of this policy document.
- c) It will make recommendations and report to the Council Meeting on a monthly basis to provide an update on progress and budgets.
- d) The Greens Committee is also responsible for staff appraisals which shall be conducted on a formal basis and annually recorded.
- e) The Greens Committee will meet monthly or when appropriate to discuss the following:
 - General condition of the course and equipment.
 - Course work in progress.

- General issues.
- Financial issues.
- Staffing issues.

4) The Head Greenkeeper

- a) The Head Greenkeeper is responsible for the day-to-day action required to achieve the implementation of agreed management strategies.
- b) The Head Greenkeeper is responsible for producing budget proposals, staff performance and Health & Safety issues relating to course management (see Job Description).
- c) The Head Greenkeeper is responsible for informing the Committee of impending works on the golf course, which may disrupt play.
- d) The Head Greenkeeper will provide a comprehensive monthly, or when appropriate, written report on the general status of the course covering developments, problems and proposed solutions for course management to the Greens Committee.
- e) The Head Greenkeeper will hold a monthly meeting, or when appropriate, with his staff and report in writing to the Greens Chairman.
- f) The Head Greenkeeper and his staff will work to a Summer and Winter timetable agreed by the Greens Committee.

5) Members and Guests

- a) It is the responsibility of all Members, their guests and visitors to the Club to take every possible care of the course. This will include:
 - i) repairing all damage they impose on to playing surfaces, e.g. pitch marks and divot replacement
 - ii) raking of bunkers after play,
 - iii) obeying instructions regarding traffic management notices
 - iv) accepting all decisions made with regard to course usage.
 - vi) making sure litter bins are used and/or taking litter off the course.

Failure to comply with the above may result in disciplinary action.
- b) Golfers should consider others and help promote and implement the objectives of this document.

COURSE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

1) Greens

- a) The underlying objectives of putting surface management are to:
 - i) Produce a good level of usability year round, barring frost and snow.
 - ii) Provide a good average standard of putting surface for at least 9 months of the year.
 - iii) Build in the potential to be able to produce very high standards of putting surface for short periods at intervals through the late spring and summer months but never to the extent of causing excessive stress to the turf, which may be detrimental to the long-term quality of the putting surfaces.
 - iv) Promote a good level of consistency between putting greens on a daily basis (i.e. little or no bounce).
 - v) To provide within the main golfing season true, firm, fast surfaces that will hold well-struck shots played from closely mown areas, i.e. fairways etc.
- b) The above will be achieved by promoting firm and dry surfaces. ***Soft holding surfaces will be discouraged.***
- c) The general agronomic policies centre around the retention/promotion of bent-fescue dominant putting surfaces. This broadly involves minimal fertiliser and irrigation inputs, with plenty of top dressing and regular aeration.

2) Green Surrounds/Apron (First cut after green)

- a) The green surround shall be maintained to provide a smooth, well presented transition from fairway to putting green. This will include a close cut green surrounds.
- b) Banks and mounds within the green surround shall be mown at a height, which retains an attractive presentation without promoting scalping, drought or wear stress.
- c) The green run-up and green surround shall comprise a similar texture and density of turf as the greens, providing firm and dry surfaces, which will facilitate a wide variety of approach play.

3) Fairways

- a) The fairway is defined at the Club as the land lying between the carry from the tee and the green apron.
- b) The native turf is ideal for fairway play and the management of fairways will be such as to retain this surface.
- c) Fairways shall be mown to present an attractive appearance, producing an informal margin which complements all natural and man made features.
- d) Fairway mats and dropping in the rough will be used during winter months.
- e) Sheep excrement will be removed before all Club and Open Competitions and on a need to basis at other times.
- f) Becks and open drains shall be kept clear of blockages to allow for the free flow of drainage water.
- g) The becks will be cleaned out on a three year rolling cycle in accordance with advice from Natural England.

4) Tees

- a) Tee maintenance shall provide for a firm, level stance with a uniform, dense grass cover from which a clean contact with the ball, off the grass, can be made.
- b) Design limitations to this objective, e.g. size and shade, shall be corrected in a planned programme of upgrading
- c) Construction of separate grass winter tees will be promoted, these sited in such a way as to provide a different traffic route to and from the tee except where man-made paths are available (then these paths should be utilised). If insufficient space is available then artificial tees will be used.
- d) Steps to and from the tees will be built/rebuilt to conform to safety standards, minimum tread being 350mm. Where possible natural sloping banks will be promoted.
- e) Tees will be cut at least twice a week during the growing season.
- f) All tees will be provided in a tidy manner whatever time of year.

5) Bunkers

All but one bunker has been grassed over.

6) Rough

- a) The semi-rough shall be mown to provide a nominal penalty to the wayward shot.
- b) The deeper rough shall be managed to retain and encourage the native vegetation as stated.

7) Signage

Signage on the golf course shall be clean, legible, sited for the best visual impact and consistent.

8) Paths

The objective of all paths are that they shall be safe, even surfaced, well maintained and fit for purpose.

9) Buggies and wide wheeled trollies

Paths and access routes shall be provided so that wide wheeled trollies may be used with minimal disruption to the playing surface.

7) Litter

The Club commits to a policy of "zero" rubbish/litter.

COURSE MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

1) Greens

- a) Greens will be mown as and when required through the growing season at a height of 4 to 6 mm.
- b) This will be raised to a height of 6 to 7 mm over winter and mowed often enough to retain a uniform, neat surface.
- c) Greens will be mown to a height of 4 -6 mm for all competitions. Mowing heights will not be taken below a height of 4 mm.
- d) For extra pace, rolling, verticutting and top dressing programmes will be employed.
- e) Verti-cutting, top dressing and aeration programmes will be formulated to prevent the development of more than 10 mm of dilute thatch to the turf base and to prevent the development of notable compaction to the soil profile.
- f) Fertiliser, with no phosphate input unless chemical analysis indicates deficiency, and irrigation will be provided to a minimum level, merely to redress wear in order to retain a dense turf of fine texture.
- h) Greens will be top dressed from March to October as and when required. The amount of top dressing used is a judgmental decision and must be agreed between the Head Greenkeeper and the Committee.
- i) Greens maintenance will be programmed to minimize disruption to play but, where possible, to maximize the benefit from each operation.

2) Green Surrounds/Apron

- a) The surround and approach will be managed, except for cutting, in as similar a manner to greens as is feasible.
- b) The surround and apron will be mown to a height of 10 to 16 mm, and mown a minimum of twice each week.
- c) The approach will be mown to a height of 9 to 12 mm a minimum of twice a week and as necessary over the winter.
- d) Weed and pest control to be programmed as necessary in accordance with Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) and Natural England.

3) Fairways

- a) Fairways will be cut to a height of 12 to 18 mm at the necessary frequency to maintain neat and consistent surfaces.
- b) Aeration will be carried out to promote firm and dry playing surfaces, concentrating on main traffic areas and known wet spots in the late summer and autumn.
- c) Divot repairs will be completed on a weekly basis to landing, and on a monthly basis to all other areas of the fairway. Volunteers using self help containers will be encouraged.
- d) Weed and pest control measures on paths and steps etc. will to be taken as necessary in accordance with COSHH and Natural England recommendations.
- e) Sheep excrement will be removed as and when conditions allow.

4) Tees

- a) Tees will be maintained as for green surrounds.
- b) Divot repairs will be completed on a daily basis to those tees taking heavy damage and every week for the remainder.

- c) Verti-cutting will be performed on all teeing ground as and when required.
- d) Weed and pest control measures will be taken as necessary in accordance with COSHH and Natural England recommendations.
- e) Tee markers will be moved to new locations on a regular basis.

5) Bunkers

See Course Management Objectives 5

6) Rough

- a) The semi-rough will be topped as necessary to present a uniform surface at a height of 30 to 40 mm. Deeper rough vegetation is to be managed as per the environmental management plan (to be developed).
- b) Weed and pest control measures to be taken as necessary in accordance with COSHH and Natural England recommendations.

7) Signage

Signage and tee markers will be cleaned regularly and be free from bird droppings, mould or other inappropriate markings.

8) Paths and Tracks

All the paths and tracks on the course are open or closed at the discretion of the Head Greenkeeper. They may be moved or rerouted in winter to save certain parts of the course, and may be signed as appropriate.

9) Course furniture

Course furniture will be repainted or treated as required during the winter months. Any broken signs, advertising boards etc. will be repaired as soon as possible.

10) Buggies and trollies

Buggies and trollies may be taken on the course. Buggy bans and/or trolley bans may be implemented if their use is deemed unsafe or unacceptable to course conditions.

11) Temporary greens

In the winter months, or at the discretion of the Head Greenkeeper, temporary greens may be introduced to protect the normal greens. This would be unusual in the playing season but it is not specifically precluded.

7) Rubbish/Litter

- a) Rubbish is to be removed from the bins weekly and as required.
- b) Surrounds of course are to be cleared as and when required.

COURSE MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

1) Staff

- a) The Club is committed to sustaining the optimum staffing level consistent with financial constraints and also to provide for the necessary training and education to retain a structured staffing profile. At any one time we would expect to employ a Head Greenkeeper.
- b) Additional part time staff may be employed as deemed necessary during the year. Any volunteers who work on the course will be given any necessary training.
- c) The Club is committed to rewarding staff to BIGGA salary scales where knowledge and training levels have been achieved.
- d) The Club will pay the annual membership subscription to BIGGA for all members of the green keeping staff.

2) Machinery

- a) A full inventory of course maintenance equipment will be maintained by the Head Greenkeeper. A planned programme of replacement will be produced on an ongoing measure although there will be flexibility within this structure to delay or bring forward purchases as the need arises.
- b) All machines are to be used with care and according to the manufacturer's instructions. The maintenance programmes in the appropriate manufacturer's handbook are to be strictly adhered to.
- c) All machinery will be cleaned and lubricated, as necessary, after use. The main items of machinery will undergo routine servicing as agreed with the supplier.

3) Materials

Only specified materials will be purchased for use on the golf course. Quality will not be sacrificed. (Natural England to be consulted)

4) Working Environment

A good standard of work based facilities will be provided for the staff in line with good practice and Health and Safety requirements. Machinery and materials will be stored and used in accordance with Health & Safety requirements.

5) Course Usage

Course Closure

Whilst it is the aim of the club to offer year round golf to its members there will be occasions when the course is deemed unfit to play. Closure of the course because of bad weather is on the instructions of the greens staff. In the absence of the greens staff then the Greens Chairman or a responsible official of the club may temporarily close the course to ensure the safety of players. Closure means all of the course and all practice areas. No person, unless authorised, is allowed to enter these areas when closed.

6) Winter Golf

- a) The aim of the Club is to offer golf to its members all year round, however, there will be occasions when the course will be deemed unfit for play.

- b) The Chairman of the Greens Committee, or his Deputy, will be the sole arbiter in this decision. Every effort will be made to keep the closing of the course to an absolute minimum.
- c) When conditions permit, as many of main greens as possible will be kept open, i.e. the naturally drier ones or those less susceptible to frost.
- d) Temporary greens will be prepared well in advance of possible use to present a decent surface on occasions when the main greens are out of commission.
- e) Winter tees may be used through the winter.
- f) Fairway mats and 'dropping in the rough' will be used during the winter months.

7) Traffic Management

- a) Measures to control traffic movement round the course will be taken throughout the year as deemed necessary.
- b) Only wide-wheeled trolleys may be taken on to the course.
- c) A power trolley ban may be implemented from time to time when their use is deemed unsafe or when their use provides an unacceptable risk to course condition.
- d) Golfers must follow all traffic management measures. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

8) Competitions

- a) In the event of severe weather conditions leading to doubt over the play ability of the course for the duration of a competition, the Competition Secretary will decide on the outcome.
- b) Local Rules to cater for unusual conditions will be published as and when necessary. These will be prepared by the Competition Secretary for review by the Green Committee prior to posting on notice boards.

9) Soft Spikes

- a) The use of soft spikes is to be encouraged throughout the summer months.
- b) The Club is to move towards a year long soft spike policy.

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

1) Plan

- a) A rolling 5-year course development plan will be formulated to take into consideration:
 - i) The need for green reconstruction.
 - ii) The upgrading of tees and development of grass winter tees.
 - iii) Rough management
 - iv) The maintenance and improvement of the drainage system on the course.
- b) The development plan will comprise a list of proposed projects to be completed on an annual basis but incorporating enough flexibility to allow for movement of individual projects forward or back a year in accordance with limitations of weather and finance.

2) Professional Advice

The Club will seek professional advice as and when required and will budget accordingly.

3) Course Architect

If deemed necessary any major alteration or addition to the golf course proposed within the course development plan will be presented to a professional golf course architect for his/her comments before being undertaken. The architect will be expected to take into account the traditional design of the course when advising on such matters.

4) Environmental Management

Environmental management programmes are to be agreed and implemented after consultation with Natural England. The Club will attempt to work in harmony with the natural flora and fauna of the area. The type of seed or grass we are trying to encourage is fescue and/or bent. It should be our intention to manage the turf where we naturally encourage these species to spread from plants that are already established. Over-seeding should only be done when repairing damage or forcing a green to catch up with the others.

Becks will be cleaned out bi-annually with the recommendation of using a scissor bucket which only removes vegetation attached to a digger no bigger than 8 tonnes to minimise disruption as they already struggle to maintain a good fall.

5) Health & Safety

A specialist consultant on Health & Safety issues will be employed to produce a working document on all problems relating to safe and best practice on the golf course. This document is held in the keeping of the Club Secretary and is available for inspection on request.

Members are reminded that the Rules and Regulations of the Club state:

“Insurance

Members are responsible for their own safety and their golf equipment whilst on the course. The Club does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage.

Members are solely responsible for taking out adequate insurance cover in respect of injury to third parties, damage to vehicles or property, and any loss of any equipment”.

COMMUNICATION AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

Communication

- a) Every effort will be made to maintain a dialogue with members on issues relating to course management which have a direct bearing on course condition.
- b) Members will be informed by notices of works likely to cause disruption to play at least 2 weeks in advance of the commencement of any such works unless there are unforeseen circumstances. On course notices will be used when relevant.
- c) Members will be encouraged to support the objectives of the document by making constructive suggestions in writing to the Chairman of the Greens Committee.
- d) This policy is to be reviewed annually by the Greens Committee at their November meeting.
- e) Copies of this document will be placed in the clubhouse and on the web site and updated as necessary.
- f) It is a condition of membership of the Club that members make themselves aware of the contents of this document.

Complaints

- a) Any complaints relating to the condition of the course must be made in writing to the Secretary of the Club.
- b) Any complaints on the behaviour of employees of the Club must be made in writing with the details and the names of any witnesses, to the Chairman of the Greens Committee who will inform the Secretary of the Club.
- c) Members of the Club **SHALL NOT under any circumstances approach employees** of the Club or members of the Greens Committee with complaints or course problems but must adhere to the above procedures. *Verbal abuse of staff or committee members will not be tolerated.*