

EDZELL GOLF COURSES MANAGEMENT POLICY DOCUMENT.

SECTION A

INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE AND PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES

1. Introduction

The following document has been drawn up by members of the Edzell Greens Committee after consultation with the Head Green Keeper of Edzell Golf Club and has been formally adopted by the Management Committee of the Club.

This document is split into the following sections...

- **Section A** – Introduction, Purpose and Principal Objectives
- **Section B** – Course Administration
- **Section C** – Course Maintenance Policies
- **Section D** – Course Development Programme
- **Section E** – Environmental Management Plan

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To specify the responsibilities and procedures for the management of the Edzell golf courses.
- 2.2 To outline the key elements to allow the course to be maintained and developed to agreed standards.
- 2.3 The Course Management Policy having been agreed by the Management Committee and Greenstaff members should be strictly followed and supported.
- 2.4 The Course Management Policy will be reviewed regularly (perhaps annually). If any modification is required it must only be done after wide consultation with greenstaff, greens committee, and the agronomy consultant.

2. Principal Objectives

- 3.1 To continue to maintain the golf courses, in the playing season, to the high standard set in previous years.
- 3.2 To document any future aims or desires of course management; to improve greens on the West Water course, reduce disease outbreaks particularly in the Autumn and improve spring pick-up.
- 3.3 To promote the finer bent and fescue grasses and reduce pesticide, water and fertiliser use by implementing appropriate cultural and mechanical operations.
- 3.4 To manage the course in accordance with The R&A Golf Course Committee's definition of Sustainable Golf Course Management.

Agreed By:

(For Greenstaff)

(For Management Committee)

Date:

SECTION B

COURSE ADMINISTRATION POLICY

The Greens Sub Committee will comprise:

- Head Greenkeeper
- Green Convenor
- Two Assistant Green Convenor
- Nominated members of the Management Committee
- Any club members deemed to have experience relevant to this function

The Greens Sub Committee will meet several times a year. For example:

- Shortly after the AGM to review the course maintenance policy and action plan for the forthcoming season.
- In August / September to select projects from the Course Development Plan for the Winter Programme.
- At the End of September to consider course maintenance budget and capital equipment requirements.

1. The purpose of the Golf Course Committee:

- 1.1. To review the Course Management Policy on an annual basis and make recommendations to the Management Committee for change or modification as deemed necessary.
- 1.2. To consider and recommend to the Committee a five year Course Development Plan. The winter work programme will consist of projects outlined in this Plan. This will ensure all Course Development projects completed are within the overall club policy and in the long-term interests of the Club and its members.
- 1.3. To analyse machinery upkeep and breakdown costs and monitor viability and make recommendations to the Committee with regard to replacement and purchase of new equipment to meet future needs.
- 1.4. To consider on an annual basis the budget for course upkeep prior to the end of the financial year so that a realistic budget can be set and controlled by the Committee.

Roles & Responsibilities

2.1. Role of Green Convener

- To liaise, on behalf of the Management Committee, with the Head Greenkeeper on all matters relating to the maintenance of the golf courses
- To report to the Management Committee at regular meetings on matters affecting the course.
- To call meetings of the Greens Sub Committee at specified intervals.
- To meet regularly with the Head Greenkeeper, generally at least once per week, as many meetings to be held on the golf course as possible, so that current conditions and problems can be viewed and discussed.
- To advise the Match & Handicap Committee of the existence of such playing or other conditions on the course which require protection by Local Rule or otherwise.

- To oversee the implementation of the Winter Programme in accordance with the Course Development Plan and any other changes to the course when authorised by the Committee.
- To ensure that the policies in regard to course closure and use of winter greens are consistently applied.
- To advise the full Committee of the staffing level and the training needs required to maintain standards and implement the Course Administration and Course Maintenance Policy.

2.2. Role of Head Greenkeeper

- To maintain the course in accordance with Golf Course Management Policy.
- To manage the greenkeeping staff and discharge the duties as defined in the Head Greenkeeper job description.
- To determine the daily work programme and allocate tasks to the Greenstaff accordingly.
- To ensure that the greenkeeping operation in all respects is carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy of the Club.
- To keep abreast of developments in greenkeeping machinery and play a key part in the formulation of the capital equipment rolling programme.
- To liaise with the Green Convenor, as necessary, on all matters affecting the course.
- To liaise with the Secretary on administrative and disciplinary matters.
- To maintain records as necessary.

3. Health and Safety

- 3.1. The Club's arrangements to comply with Government legislation are detailed in our "Health, Safety and Environment Manual".
- 3.2. The contents of the Manual are binding upon the Committee of Management and the Greenstaff.
- 3.3. The policy is reviewed annually by audit.
- 3.4. The Greenstaff are provided with all necessary protective equipment. It is incumbent upon the staff to wear the equipment for those tasks specified.
- 3.5. Greenstaff must only undertake work for which training has been provided. They must not undertake any work they consider to be unsafe.

4. Capital Equipment Provision

- 4.1. To provide for replacement of capital equipment and equipment upgrading, the Club operates a five-year 'rolling' programme. This is an integral part of the Finance and Development Committee remit.
- 4.2. A sum of money is set aside each year in the Capital Development Account for the express purpose of funding the purchase of major items of greens equipment either as replacements or additional items.

5. Control of Revenue Account Expenditure

- 5.1. The greens expenditure budget shall be set at the start of the financial year taking account of the previous years' spend and any anticipated changes to the spend pattern.
- 5.2. Expenditure shall be monitored on a monthly basis by means of the 'expenditure to budget' control exercised by the Treasurer / Secretary. Variance to budget will be investigated.
- 5.3. The Head Greenkeeper has the authority to purchase consumable items such as sand, seeds and fertilisers and sanction machinery repairs. He is, however, accountable for operating within budget constraints. In this regard, close liaison with the Green Convenor is necessary.

6. Record Keeping

- 6.1. The Head Greenkeeper should maintain a record of:
 - All fertilisers, pesticides, fungicides and herbicides applied to the course. The record should contain details of date of application, quantity applied, area treated and personnel carrying out the application. Such records must satisfy all requirements of the relevant Pesticide Legislation.
 - Date of placing of order, and receipt of, major purchases including sand, fertilisers and pesticides.
 - Items of machinery sent for overhaul and repair and details of the work carried out. A detailed service and repair record should be maintained for each major item of machinery.
 - Staff training carried out internally and externally.
 - Any accident or incident affecting the health, safety or well-being of the staff.
 - All products such as pesticides bearing a COSHH hazard warning sign. Details of quantities stored should be available at the Chemsafe.
 - Personal Protection Equipment issued to staff and details of periodic inspection.

7. Training.

- 7.1. Training of staff should be considered as 'on-going' and the Club will assist in any reasonable way in their participation in greenkeeping related courses.
- 7.2. Qualified staff should be encouraged to attend lectures, demonstrations and seminars on greenkeeping matters considered to be of potential benefit to the Club and will be allowed time off work, normally with pay, to do so.
- 7.3. It shall be a condition of employment that apprentices attend 'college' and successfully pass relevant examinations or assessments.

8. External Consultants

- 8.1. The Club subscribes to the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) and receives a copy of the STRI Bulletins. Advice can be obtained in writing or by telephone.

- 8.2. A decision should be taken on an annual basis in regard to an Advisory Visit by an STRI or other agronomist.
- 8.3. Following the visit of a STRI agronomist and receipt of his report it will be necessary to review Section B of this document to take account of any recommendations made.

9. Communication with Members.

- 9.1 Members must be informed of any application of a chemical substance with a hazard to health.
- 9.2 Members should be warned in advance of any course maintenance operation that is likely to disrupt play e.g. Verti-draining or hollow coring. This is the responsibility of the Secretary in conjunction with the Green Convener / Head Greenkeeper.
- 9.3 The contents of the Winter Programme should be communicated to Club members. Similarly the membership should be made aware of the Course Management Policy Document and, periodically, the progress on its implementation.
- 9.4 The members should be made aware of the Club arrangements to discharge its obligations to Health and Safety legislation and matters that affect them personally.
- 9.5 It is also important that members be made aware of the fact that to maintain the course to the desired standard, work has to be undertaken at times that will cause inconvenience and disruption to play, e.g. aeration and top dressing programmes.

10. Course Development

- 10.1 A five year programme for Course Development should be drawn up by the Golf Course Management Policy Committee and endorsed by the Management Committee.
- 10.2 Each year projects outlined in the Course Development programme will be selected and carried out as the Winter Work Programme.
- 10.3 The content of the annual Winter Work Programme should be made available to Club members.

11. Competition Days

- 11.1 The Head Greenkeeper will be provided with a fixture list annually on its publication by the Secretary and it is his responsibility to ensure that satisfactory arrangements are made for all competitions held at the Club.
- 11.2 For nominated competitions the greens will be cut on the day of the competition. Otherwise the greens will be cut during the preceding day and switched on the morning of the competition.
- 11.3 Under normal circumstances it is expected that new holes will be cut for each nominated competition. If there is rain in the early morning of a competition a check

should be made for flooding. Any holes under water, or likely to become under water should be changed to higher, drier ground.

11.4 The presence of all flagsticks should be checked.

11.5 All bunkers should be raked.

11.6 In compliance with the Standard Scratch Score and Handicapping requirements no tee marker should be more than 10 yards in front or behind the PERMANENT DISTANCE MARKER and the total change to the measured playing length of the golf course must not exceed 100 yards.

11.7 On days of heavy dew 'switching' should be carried out as follows:

- Greens if not cut.
- Teeing areas.

12. Use of Pesticides

12.1 Pests should be controlled as far as possible by cultural and mechanical means.

12.2 When application of a pesticide is necessary, i.e. incidence is beyond the stated tolerance threshold, spraying must be strictly controlled in compliance with the Pesticide Regulations using approved substances.

12.3 Spraying must only be done by persons deemed 'competent' under the provisions of the regulations using approved personal protection equipment.

12.4 Spraying should not be carried out in windy conditions and contamination of watercourses must be strictly avoided in accordance with a 'no spray zone' policy i.e. spraying should not be carried out within 1 metre of a watercourse.
(see www.netregs.org.uk for further legislation advice)

12.5 A notice must be posted notifying members and visitors of the hazard on each occasion a substance with a health hazard is applied.

13. Closure of the Course

13.1 The only reason for course closure should be adverse weather conditions.

13.2 The Head Greenkeeper, or his deputy, has full authority for declaring the course closed and re-opened.

13.3 In the absence of an authorised member of staff the decision to close or re-open the course will be taken by the Green Convener or nominated Committee Member.

13.4 In the event of closure, notices should be displayed to inform members and should, where possible, indicate the time of the next course inspection.

13.5 A log should be kept of course closure and the reason.

14. Security

- 14.1 All relevant security measures must be deployed at the end of each working day.
- 14.2 Keys must not be left in the ignition of any vehicle when unattended.

15. Storage

- 15.1 All hazardous chemicals must be stored in the Chemsafe, the contents and quantities of which must be listed and displayed.
- 15.2 Fertilisers should be stored on pallets and kept off the ground.
- 15.3 Sands, top dressings and path covering materials should be stored in the compound provided, ensuring that the various materials are kept apart. Top dressing should be kept as dry as possible.

16. Resources

- 16.1 The agreed minimum staffing level to provide a course maintained to the desired standard is six full time staff comprised of the following:
 - *Head Greenkeeper.*
 - *First Assistant Greenkeeper.*
 - *Three Greens keeping staff.*
 - *One Apprentice.*
- 16.2 In addition a person/s will be seasonally employed part-time to carry out any tasks as required.
- 16.3 Regular review of staffing levels will be conducted.

17. Complaints

- 17.1 No complaint on any matter relating to the conduct of the staff or condition of the course should be made directly, or by innuendo, to any member of the Greenstaff.
- 17.2 All complaints and comments should be made to the Secretary or Green Convener.
- 17.3 Where appropriate, such complaints shall be requested in writing and brought before the Management Committee for their consideration.

SECTION C

GOLF COURSE MAINTENANCE POLICY

The mission statement of course management at Edzell Golf Club :

'To provide the best possible year round playing surfaces in an environmentally responsible manner and within the budget constraints of the Club for the Main and West Water Courses.'

1. Greens

1.1 Maintenance objectives

- The aim of maintenance is to provide firm, smooth and true greens that remain playable throughout the year and are economically and environmentally sustainable.

1.2 Promoting the finer grasses

- The Club is committed to encouraging the finer grasses such as bent and fescue on the greens and the reduction in the proportion of annual meadow grass. This will reduce the vulnerability of the greens to Climate Change, stricter pesticide legislation and tighter water use. It will also provide consistent year round golfing surfaces.
- To promote these grasses, the following policy for the management of the greens has been agreed

1.3 Fertiliser and irrigation

- The main aim is to keep productivity as low as possible. This means restricting water and fertiliser inputs to a minimum, i.e. only enough to provide uniform growth.
- The annual nitrogen application should be approximately 80 kg/ha. Fertiliser is only applied to keep the surfaces uniform never to provide good colour.
- Unless otherwise advised by our agronomic advisors, fertilisers in general will be nitrogen based with little or no phosphate.
- Fertilisers used will be predominantly organic in nature, e.g. seaweed based. The last fertiliser application should be made no later than mid-September.
- Watering should not be carried out with the intent of producing soft amenable 'targets'. Water will only be applied to keep the turf alive, never to make to greens more receptive.
- To optimise water penetration and provide uniform surfaces, wetting agents will be used.

1.4 Aeration and top dressing

- Regular aeration will be carried out when required throughout the year by an appropriate method. An outline aeration programme is documented below but the intensity and frequency of work is subject to weather, ground conditions and growth.
- Weekly slit tining normally between October and January on the main course and between October and March on the West Water Course.
- Weekly solid tining of 6 holes in rotation during the playing season
- Verti-draining normally in the early autumn and early spring if required
- Hollow coring in the spring and autumn as necessary. The autumn operation should be carried out during strong growing conditions. This normally means no later than mid-September.
- Top dressing will consist of medium coarse 80/20 mix. Regular laboratory analysis will be carried out to monitor its quality.
- The aim is to apply 100+ tonnes of top dressing to all 27 greens during the course of the growing season. Regular light dressings should be applied in summer and heavier applications directly after coring operations. It should never be applied so as to smother the turf.
- Top dressing should only be applied during growth so the material can be rapidly absorbed into the turf. It should be gently worked into the base of the turf using means to minimise damage to the turf.
- After every coring operation the holes should be filled with fresh top dressing.

1.5 Surface refinement

- To promote the finer grasses it is essential to minimise the disturbance pressure on the turf. This means refining the surface gently and never aggressively.
- Mowing will be carried out when required. During strong growth this will be daily.
- Hand mowing will be undertaken as frequently as possible.
- When using the triplex mower, the final perimeter cut will be missed out a couple of times a week to minimise wear through scarring.
- A sensible height of cut will be established, at which healthy turf, stress-free turf can be maintained.
- Gentle verticutting will be implemented as required. This should never be aggressive. This should be complemented with light grooming and brushing.
- Light top dressing mentioned earlier will provide a smooth and true surface.

1.6 Green speed

- To provide greens of reasonable speed without imposing undue pressure on the turf we will roll, top dress and brush rather than cut low and intensively verticut.
- The speed will be controlled by use of a Stimpmeter. The object is to provide greens reading 7-9 feet on the Stimpmeter at the height of the playing season and no slower than 6 feet at other times.

1.7 Hole cutting and changing

- To ensure that holes are not crowned when cut it is mandatory to use either a board or a hole cutter with a flange attachment. The position of holes for competitions is at the discretion of the greenkeeping staff.
- Hole locations should be made up of 6 front third, 6 middle third and 6 back third where possible.
- If rain is forecast it would be prudent to cut holes in high spots. This should be borne in mind by staff preparing the course in the morning of competitions.
- Holes should be changed at least twice a week.

1.8 The growing environment

- Where vegetation shades greens it is the policy to limit their negative influence by appropriate pruning / removal.

1.9 Overseeding

- To further the aim of increasing the promotion of finer grasses, it is the Club policy to overseed the greens as required with an appropriate seed mix. High quality cultivars will be used at all times.

2. Tees

2.1 The aim is to provide a firm, level and well-grassed teeing platform on each hole.

2.2 To accomplish this objective, the maintenance programme should involve regular aeration, controlled feeding and top dressing.

2.3 The mowing height is normally in the range 8-10 mm. Tees shall be mown at least twice a week.

2.4 Divot marks should be restored weekly using a mix of sand / loam / seed.

2.5 All the tee markers should be progressively moved back (or forward) in a planned fashion so that a teeing area once used can be top dressed, seeded and rested.

2.6 Full use should be made of those tees affording an alternative route to the hole so as to minimise wear and tear of the walk-off areas. This is particularly important in the winter months.

2.7 Permanent distance markers should be maintained such that they are clearly visible.

3. Fairways

- 3.1 It is desirable to develop some shape and form to the fairway cutting and so avoid 'straight lines'. Once the desired contouring has been established it is important that the member of staff cutting the fairway preserves the agreed line. The 'agreed line' should be established before the first cut of the season.
- 3.2 The need for fairway weed control should be assessed on an annual basis. Spot or localised treatment is much preferred to an overall application. It is preferable that spraying is carried out at the start of the growing season before weeds flower and seeds form. This should minimise the incidence of weeds the following year.
- 3.3 In periods of wet weather and vigorous growth it may be necessary to disperse grass cuttings to provide presentable playing and aesthetic conditions.
- 3.4 Deep aeration will be required on at least an annual basis to improve surface drainage. Scarification and localised sand dressing may also be required.
- 3.5 Irrigation application may be required in periods of excessive dry weather. Irrigation should only be applied to keep the turf alive.
- 3.6 Divot marks should be restored weekly using a mix of sand / loam / seed this should be carried out by the greens staff and the additional seasonal worker / s.

4. Bunkers

- 4.1 Bunkers should be raked a minimum of 4 times a week. Any stones or other debris should be removed. This should include the practice bunker(s).
- 4.2 A constant monitor should be kept on the level of sand in the bunkers and on their 'playability'. The need for topping up a bunker with sand should be brought to the attention of the Head Greenkeeper by those members of staff maintaining bunkers on a daily basis.
- 4.3 When bunkers are 'topped up' the sand should be consolidated to reduce the likelihood of the ball 'plugging'
- 4.4 Approved bunker sand with a controlled particle size from a reputable supply source should be used.
- 4.5 The design of the bunkers should be in accordance with the character of the course.

5. Semi-Rough

- 5.1 The purpose of semi-rough is to punish the wayward shot and so reward the straight hitter. This should be done mindful of the searching for golf balls and impact on the speed of play. It should be the intent to 'reward' the player playing from the fairway.

- 5.2 Semi-rough should therefore be maintained at a height where there is a reasonable expectation that the ball will be found but the next shot will be significantly more difficult than from an equivalent position on the fairway.
- 5.3 For operational reasons semi-rough must be maintained within a 'range'. A satisfactory range has proved to be 1½ - 2 ½” .
- 5.4 It is vitally important that care be exercised when cutting among trees to avoid damage to the tree trunks as damage so inflicted leads to disease and curtailment of the lifespan of any tree so affected.

6. Out-of-play areas

- 6.1 The natural vegetation type to the course will be promoted at all times. This should involve appropriate maintenance as instructed by a qualified ecologist.
- 6.2 It is the policy to minimise unnecessary cosmetic mowing to out-of-play areas, as this will save time and fuel. It will also provide a more natural look.

7. Trees

- 7.1 To allow full development of growing trees it is necessary to 'thin out' certain trees particularly in 'plantations'.
- 7.2 Natural regenerating species such as hawthorn require to be rigorously controlled.
- 7.3 Tree management should be considered annually at the setting of the Winter Programme.
- 7.4 Consideration should be given regularly to the replacement of old or dying trees in strategic golfing positions so that the replacement tree(s) can be established before the original requires to be removed.
- 7.5 Care should be exercised when planting in the vicinity of tees or greens to ensure that when the tree or shrub is fully developed it does not create excessive shade or deny the required circulation of air to the tee or green.
- 7.6 Broad-leafed and/or conifer species such as sycamore, chestnut, cherry and Sitka spruce should be avoided. Native species such as birch, oak, Scots Pine and beech are more desirable.

8. Irrigation System.

- 8.1 The prime function of the watering system is to allow survival of the grasses on the greens and surrounds in times of relative drought. It should not be used to provide 'target golf'.
- 8.2 Our total average annual water usage is 850 cubic litres.
- 8.3 It is not advisable to use the system in the cold dry conditions of early spring as the cold wet greens so provided inhibit growth.

- 8.4 It is important that the watering system be tested in early spring to ensure that it is in working order for the incoming season.
- 8.5 To protect the system, it should be drained to the lowest point in autumn before the onset of frost.
- 8.6 Hand watering should be implemented as necessary to minimise the use of the automatic system.

9. Drinking Fountains

- 9.1 Drinking Fountains should be checked to be in working order at least once a week.
- 9.2 They should be turned off and drained down at the start of the winter months to ensure that they do not get damaged by freezing.
- 9.3 They should be turned back on at the start of the new season, (weather dependant).

10. Winter Golf

- 10.1 Temporary greens should only be used in times of hard frost, thawing conditions or abnormal rainfall. A detailed frost policy should be posted for the Members prior to the winter season commencing.
- 10.2 Temporary greens should be prepared on suitable relatively flat areas of the fairway in the month of September. They should be progressively cut down and lightly scarified to provide acceptable putting surfaces. The green areas should be white lined to provide positive definition.
- 10.3 Alternative natural turf winter teeing grounds will be used where possible during the winter period including medal competitions.
- 10.4 The need for fairway protection should be reviewed on an annual basis and a fairway mats policy introduced as required details should be posted prior to the winter season commencing.
- 10.5 Winter Tee mats should be lifted cleaned and stored once the regular playing season recommences.

11. Traffic management and course protection

- 11.1 The need for fairway protection should be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 11.2 Provision will be made to provide alternative traffic routes for summer and winter play. This will spread wear.
- 11.3 White lines and ropes shall be used to protect sensitive parts of the course. The Greenkeeper with referral to the Greens Committee will implement protection measures as required.
- 11.4 It is the responsibility of all golfers to repair their own pitch marks and replace their divots.

12. Additional Duties

- 12.1 The greenstaff are responsible for maintaining the paths and grassed areas and flowerbeds fronting the Clubhouse. The grassed areas should be weed free and grass clippings removed. It is important that these areas are routinely maintained to a high standard as they create the initial impression of the club and course.
- 12.2 Collections of grass at the shoe and trolley cleaning point should be removed on a regularly.
- 12.3 The course should be 'toured' on a weekly basis (or more frequently if required) to collect discarded cans and bottles and other debris.
- 12.4 Bins at tee boxes should be regularly emptied particularly before and after weekend play.
- 12.5 Ball washers should be checked regularly and topped up as required, and all the ball washers should be emptied and refilled as required.
- 12.6 A weekly check should be carried out on the boundary fences or walls, with repairs carried out as necessary.

SECTION D

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

The following areas should be included in this section....

- Environmental Management Planning
- Wildlife and Habitat Management
- Landscape and Cultural Heritage
- Waste and Energy Management

Each area is entirely Club specific. Therefore, to provide sufficient detail under each heading requires thorough consultation with an appropriate qualified Golf Course Ecologist.