

Penrith Golf Club,
Salkeld Road,
Penrith,
Cumbria.

Course Policy Document

April 2018

PENRITH GOLF CLUB

GOLF COURSE POLICY DOCUMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Policy Document – This document sets out details of the management of the golf course at Penrith Golf Club and has been approved by the General Committee of the Club. It has been posted on the web-site and noticeboards in the Clubhouse for the benefit of all members.

The policy will be followed strictly and any “major” changes will not be introduced without full consultation with the Club’s **General** Committee. Major changes will include, course design changes, tree felling (except conifers), removal or construction of bunkers and restyling/reconstruction of greens/teeing grounds.

This document will be reviewed on an annual basis.

1.2 History of the Club. – Penrith Golf Club was founded in May 1890, on the site of the former Penrith Racecourse. The Inglewood Golf Club as it was originally known, employed a professional (for 2 weeks only!!!) and a Secretary, who was authorised to purchase a lawnmower, hole-cutter and spade!! The course was initially laid out by a number of local people, but it was not until 1920, that renowned golf course architect Dr Mackenzie, was engaged to provide advice on laying out the course again after the 1st World War. He commented that “it is unusual to come across such good golfing ground as that in the occupation of the Penrith Golf Club.”

Up until the 1950/60s, the course was predominately of moorland/heathland nature, but thereafter a considerable number and species of trees were planted, which gives the course its current characteristics. The course is approximately 6200yds off the blue tees, and the standard scratch from these tees is **71**. The course and environs extend to approximately 70 acres, and the terrain is fairly flat apart from the 11th and 12th holes. The geology of the ground ranges from sand, gravel and clay, to sandstone bedrock and exposed areas of rock.

The greens are earth pop-up type in construction, and are populated by bent grasses in particular, with annual meadow grass in the minority.

The climate in the vicinity of the course is typical Lakeland in nature, with above average rainfall.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The Greens Committee – is responsible for the management of the golf course, including finance, machinery and personnel; will meet regularly and not less frequently than once every eight weeks; will prepare a schedule of course improvements planned for **2018-21**.

The Greens Chairman will present a Golf Course report at meetings of the General Committee, and the Greenkeeper will attend meetings and advise the Greens Committee. In particular, he will give a detailed report of the work done by his staff in the preceding month and present his proposals of work scheduled for the following month(s).

The Secretary/Manager will maintain management control, monitor agreed policies and ensure that correct management practises are followed. He will also be in charge of discipline following procedures laid out in the Terms & Conditions document.

The Chairman of Greens, along with the Greenkeeper, will monitor the allocated budget, in association with the Treasurer, to ensure that expenditure remains within the agreed budget.

The Greenkeeper and the Greens Committee will be responsible for the implementation of this policy in all its aspects - i.e. preparing work schedules; maintaining machinery; planning and long-term budgeting; maintaining schedules and records; allocation of daily tasks; adhering to Club's health and safety policy; application of fertilisers and chemicals and their safe storage and conservation. The Greenkeeper will liaise with the Secretary Manager / Greens Chairman on any problem areas.

2.2 Members, their guests and Visitors - All persons utilising the facilities at the Golf Club shall accept responsibility to take every possible care of the course and attendant facilities. They shall at all times, adhere to the etiquette according to the Rules of Golf, such as repairing divot and pitch marks, and raking of bunkers. They shall also be alert to the position of greens staff when they are about to play, to ensure that they do not endanger them.

3. RESOURCES

3.1 Staff: The agreed staff level is -

1 **Head** Greenkeeper;
1 **First** Assistant Greenkeeper;
2 Greenkeepers;
1 Apprentice Greenkeeper;
Total FTE staff – 5

Green-keeping staff will work a 45-hour week, 6.30 a.m. to 3.30p.m. from 1st April to 30th September, and a 35-hour week, 7.30 a.m. to 2.30p.m. from 1st October to 31st March. Each member of staff will be entitled to 4 weeks annual holiday, plus recognised Bank Holidays. Not less than 2 weeks holiday will be taken between 1st October and 31st March.

There is a commitment to training and education of greens staff who are all encouraged to obtain qualifications in Green-keeping to the maximum of their individual abilities. Staff are also encouraged to become members of B.I.G.G.A. and to attend discussion groups and seminars organised by that Association. Members of the greens staff will be encouraged to obtain further qualifications necessary to enhance their progress within the green staff structure.

3.2 Financial - The General Committee of the Golf Club is committed to the allocation of sufficient funds to achieve the policies set out in this document.

4. OBJECTIVES

4.1 General. The objectives for **2018/19** (the year of the revised document) are that this golf course should **further** improve to become recognised as one of the best maintained and enjoyable courses in the area, and that this standard will be achieved for the major part of the year. It is accepted that the same high standard cannot be maintained during the winter months. It is to be maintained in excellent condition for the enjoyment of members of all handicaps and their guests.

4.2 Greens should -

- Be true, firm and dry.
- Be consistent within and between surfaces, including any practice greens.
- Deliver the effects of spin on well struck shots.
- Provide an acceptable and sustainable speed, around 8.5 – 9 on the stimp meter.
- Be available for play for as much of the year as possible.
- Be of a tidy appearance.

4.3 Fairways should –

- Be firm and dry, **having adequate drainage to shed surface water.**
- Provide freedom of swing (i.e. eliminate sharp contouring and overhanging branches etc)
- Provide consistently acceptable lies.
- Provide a surface where the ball sits on top of the turf.
- Be cut to a height no lower than 14mm

4.4 Tees should –

- Be level, firm and dry.
- Have adequate recovery capacity i.e. be of sufficient size to retain this characteristic.
- Be of sufficient elevation to provide view and definition.
- Be fairly aligned.

4.5 Bunkers should –

- Contain dry, clean and firm sand.

- Be filled to a maximum of 75mm of sand in the middle section with the top 8-12mm being loosely raked.
- Be consistently maintained throughout the course.
- Facilitate the fair presentation of the ball.
- Facilitate a fair stance for the golfer.
- Be shaped and raked to keep balls away from the bunker edge.
- Be well presented and defined, containing a proprietary bunker liner in as many as possible.
- **Have faces that are either revetted or grass faced.**

4.6 Semi-rough – will be cut at a height of 25mm, and two semi-rough machine widths.

4.7 Rough – The rough will be cut to a uniform height throughout the course of 75mm.

4.8 Woodland – Trees shall be harvested from time to time, to ensure a health stock, and will be thinned appropriately to allow safe passage of the rough-cutter machine. A minimum distance between trees will be set at 3 metres, and any trees felled, will have the stumps removed by a fit for purpose machine, and the resulting disturbed ground re-instated properly. **In addition, any tree within 5 metres of a course drainage pipe shall be removed and the stump treated as detailed above.**

5. TIMING OF WORK ON THE COURSE

5.1 Planned work. It will be the aim of the Head Greenkeeper, in regular discussions with the Greens Committee, to plan this work well in advance so that it is done with the minimum disruption to the golf programme and members can be advised of any unavoidable disruption. Should maintenance work require to be carried out on the course during playing times, the Greenkeeper shall ensure that the safety of the staff is maintained at all times, and should it be necessary, for example, to temporarily close a green for remedial works, then a temporary green shall be brought into play until this work is completed. It is recommended that a week be allocated in August/September for major renovation/remedial work, in order that the course ‘heals’ quickly, and normal playing conditions are achieved as soon as possible.

6. THE COURSE

6.1 Tees

The maintenance and improvement of tees has high priority. Cutting will be to a height no lower than 10mm, and tining, scarifying and fertilising are all practised on a programmed basis. The use of grass tees will operate throughout the main playing season and as far as possible into the winter period.

Nevertheless, temporary winter tees will be used wherever they are needed to prevent unacceptable damage to the permanent tees.

Tees will be dressed with lawn sand in spring, will be aerated on a regular basis throughout the year and will be treated with organic fertiliser as required.

6.2 Fairways

Fairways will be cut to a height no lower than 14mm. They will also be deep tined and hollow cored in order to improve the quality of the grass, and reduce the amount of thatch below the surface.

Consideration will be given to selective top dressing on a worst first basis, when finance becomes available

6.3 Semi Rough

Two widths of the semi-rough cutter will be cut at a height of 25mm

6.4 Surrounds and approaches

Surrounds will be cut to a single height of no less than 8mm. Special care and attention will be given to the creation and improvement of aprons which will be vertidraind when possible, slit tined, scarified and fertilised on a regular basis.

6.5 Rough

Rough will be cut to a uniform height of 75mm.

6.6 Greens

The composition of grasses on the greens is a mix of predominantly bent, with some annual meadow grass. The policy is to reduce the annual meadow grass gradually, and slowly introduce and encourage bents to dominate. This policy cannot be introduced quickly and still maintain greens in a good state for play. Long-term the objective can be achieved by a continuous programme of aeration to create conditions for the healthy bacterial activity to break down the thatch into compost and to encourage the deeper rooting species of grasses. We will continue to progress a regime of getting the soil biology correct, in conjunction with Symbio, and to this end, will look to **continue** a process of using compost teas on the greens to encourage healthy bacteria.

The height of cut on greens is the responsibility of the Head Greenkeeper and depends on his reading of future weather conditions, forthcoming competitions, the state of the soil etc. During spells of good growing weather the normal height of cut is 3.5 - 4.5mm.

Greens will be cut or switched daily unless inclement weather determines otherwise, groomed and verti-cut throughout the summer. Pencil tines will be used to encourage moisture penetration, aid aeration and foster the proliferation of deeper rooting grasses. Holes will be changed as determined by the Head Greenkeeper.

A policy of minimum irrigation is being followed and any dry patches which develop will be treated with wetting agents and more intensive use of pencil tining.

The autumn and winter treatment of greens includes hollow tining, deep tining, verti-draining, slit tining and scarifying.

In order to produce greens that can be utilised as 'winter greens', where there is an apron, a specific area of this apron will be tended so as to produce as good a surface as possible for use when summer greens are declared unplayable. It shall be de-lined by a white line and shall also be deemed ground under repair from 1st November until 1st April (a local rule shall be introduced to cover this issue); shall be cut and rolled as required; and provide a surface as close as possible to the main greens.

6.7 Fertilisation

The policy is to use no phosphates. Organic nitrogen based fertilisers will be used with small quantities of iron and potash when their need is identified. The spring feed is an organic-based fertiliser provided by Symbio, and will be used as and when required, depending on sward health and weather conditions

6.8 Top dressing

Top dressings will be applied to greens in Spring and Autumn following verti-draining or hollow tining and during the remainder of the year when possible. Top dressings used will be from Whitemoss. This will be a mixture of soil and pure sand at a ratio of 80/20.

6.9 Drainage and ditches

All surface water outfall drainage systems to be monitored on a regular basis so as to ensure satisfactory discharge. Additional drainage is required in certain areas and the main fairways requiring attention are the 2nd/3rd/15th and 17th. These will be prioritised as and when finance becomes available and will be connected into existing outfalls.

6.10 Temporary greens

The agreed programme of work for the greens will make the use of temporary greens less frequent. Nevertheless, they will need to be brought into use from time to time. An intensive programme of work will be implemented to develop aprons to greens for use as 'frost' greens when necessary. Where aprons cannot be developed, an area for a 'frost' green will be identified and improved to ensure an acceptable putting surface. (Specifically the 10th 11th and 14th)

It will be the responsibility of the Head Greenkeeper or, in his absence, the senior greenkeeper on duty, to decide on a day-to-day basis the need for temporary greens to be brought into use.

Permanent greens will be used except when play would cause unacceptable damage.

6.11 Bunkers

Bunkers will be raked by greens staff as required and on the morning of special events. They will be examined regularly for water retention and the drains kept clear.

A rake will be provided for each bunker and all players will be expected to rake their pitch marks and footmarks. The rake will be replaced inside the bunker in accordance with E.G.U. recommendations. Over the next 4/5 years we will endeavour to re-configure, line and re-face all bunkers on the course, subject to availability of staff time and adequate financial resources. A considerable number have been completed over the past two seasons and we hope this will continue.

6.12 Water Hazards

These will be maintained in accordance with advice from English Nature. Water levels will be maintained and marked in accordance with E.G.U. Rules.

6.13 Boundary Walls & Fencing

In the absence of any previous approved policy, boundary walls and timber fencing will be inspected on a regular basis, initially by the Greenkeeper and any essential repair work brought to the attention of Greens Chairman / Secretary Manager for remedial action, by appropriately competent contractors or if the skill is available in-house, by volunteers or greens staff.

Whilst sections of boundary walls are in need of minor repairs, and respective costings accounted for within prescribed Annual Budget expenditure, we should not overlook the fact that major repairs of some section, may need to be carried out in the not too distant future.

Due to the increased number of traffic movements along Green Lane, we will approach Edinburgh Woollen Mills (who own the Bio digester plant) for assistance in re-building the dry stone wall along Green Lane, which seems to have deteriorated very quickly since the traffic increased.

6.14 Pathways

With the introduction of new pathways throughout the course, the Greenkeeper will ensure that all pathways are correctly maintained, and that all grassed entrance / exit points are protected from extensive damage. Consideration will be given to replacing the existing sandstone dust pathways, with artificial turf, which will blend in better with the natural surroundings of the golf course. This will have the added benefit of preventing the blockage of drains by the sandstone dust, which adds to the maintenance time required by greens staff.

6.15 Products/Substances used on the course

It is our aim to become much more sustainable through reducing our usage of chemicals to produce our playing surfaces, in order to develop finer turf grasses by producing healthier living soil. To achieve this, we aim to reduce the application of:-

Fungicides

Sulphate of iron

Irrigation water

Inorganic fertiliser, and

Decrease the disruptive physical thatch removal.

In addition, we intend to increase the application of:-

Seaweeds

Compost teas

Wetting agents

Chelated iron

Organic fertiliser, and

Increase the amount of aeration work that we complete on the course.

This sustainable approach will deliver a healthier, more free draining root zone, populated by finer grasses, which are less susceptible to disease, and produce a much more smooth putting surface, at a sensible mowing height.

6.16 Major work on course.

Should any major work be proposed on the course, this shall be agreed by the Greens Committee, in consultation with members of the General Committee. Major works will include:-

Removal of trees that will cause a lasting impact on the course

Removal of bunkers

Re-definition of fairways, greens or aprons

Re-definition of the course boundary

Any other major change as agreed by the Greens Committee.

7. CLOSING THE COURSE

7.1 Course closure. The course may be closed on the authority of the Head Greenkeeper or, in his absence, the Assistant greenkeeper on duty, when weather conditions demand and damage to the course would result if play were permitted. Such conditions would exist if the greens were waterlogged; if the course was flooded or affected by severe frost or snow. The Competition Secretary and Chairman of Greens will be informed if course closure affects a Club competition. In the event of the need to use temporary greens during a Ladies' or Gentlemen's Competition the appropriate Competition Secretary or their nominated representative will be informed prior to the commencement of the competition. The course may be closed by the Secretary, Chairman of Greens, Member of the Committee or Professional supervising a competition, if they consider that the course has become unsuitable or dangerous for play.

Notice of a decision to close the course and time of next inspection will be recorded on the Greenkeeper's answer-phone, the course notice-board and the Club web-site.

A decision to close the course will be reviewed at 8.00 a.m. Noon and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday (6.45 a.m. and 11.00 a.m. weekends and Bank Holidays), except when conditions make such action clearly unnecessary.

8. GREENS STAFF AND MEMBERS

8.1 Work on the course

The Greens staff will be vigilant and ensure that they do not delay play unreasonably. Nevertheless, Greens staff must be able to get through their work, and all players are therefore asked to give consideration to them by not stopping their work unreasonably, particularly at the beginning of the day, and to realise that it is in their own interest to do so. A code of practice has been established to cover the subject and published on the notice-board. It should be noted that Greens staff have absolute priority on the course, for the completion of their duties, and Members and visitors must respect this decision.

8.2 Complaints

Members and visitors may not complain about the conduct of a member of staff nor about the state of the course to any member of the Greens Staff. Any complaint must be made to the Secretary /Manager or Greens Chairman, in writing, who will investigate the matter, together with the Head Greenkeeper. If they cannot deal with the complaint themselves, the matter will be submitted to the Greens or General Committee.

8.3 Works during Club Competitions

Greens staff will refrain from any work which will change the state of the course during an official Club Competition.

9. MACHINERY

9.1 Replacement policy. The Head Greenkeeper will produce a 5 year rolling plan of machinery replacements, additions, repairs and renewals for consideration, amendment and approval by the Greens Committee and ultimately the General Committee for incorporation into the Club's financial plan.

The Head Greenkeeper has responsibility to keep himself up-to-date with developments in golf course machinery and to bring his recommendations to the notice of the Greens Committee.

He is also responsible for the maintenance of all machinery - keeping records of use, routine maintenance and major servicing, etc. He will recognise the heavy investment which has been made and ensure that all machinery is used with care.

A machinery audit must be carried out on a regular basis, to appraise the Greens/General Committee of any impending financial implications around machinery replacement.

10. IRRIGATION

10.1 Water usage. The overall policy is to use as little water as possible to encourage deeper rooting grasses. However, in almost every season there are times when rainfall is insufficient to sustain grass growth and needs to be supplemented. Water is also needed on demand to wash in fertilisers and other treatments. Therefore, a guaranteed water source is essential for the maintenance of a golf course. The bore-hole pump will be serviced at five yearly intervals from 2002, as confirmed by Service Engineers.

10.2 Water Supply

Extraction is with the consent of the Environment Agency and sufficient supply is assured even in periods of drought, **and the licence will continue to be updated as required.**

10.3 The System

The Irrigation system is pressurised at 100 lbs. p.s.i. in March/April when the danger of frost is past and is drained down in November. There are 116 sprinkler heads on the course and each green and tee is controlled by a computerised programmer in the Greenkeeper's Hogust. The programme is designed to bring sprinklers into use on a pressure balance basis. The sprinkler heads on the greens are Hunter I 25's delivering 13 gallons/minutes; there are two sprinklers on each tee delivering 5 gallons/minutes with a semi-circular spread as required by the size of each tee.

11. FINANCIAL CONTROL

11.1 Long-term budgeting: in May each year the Head Greenkeeper will produce for the Greens Committee a list of machinery, showing performance and notes on any problems which have shown up during the year. This will lead to a definitive spending budget for the next financial year for replacements and repairs which should be in line with the 5 year rolling budgets.

Additionally the Head Greenkeeper will produce a budget for purchase of fertilisers, chemicals, fuels and dressings for the following year.

In June each year the Greens Chairman will prepare and submit to the General Committee for approval a budget for the year commencing in October. Quarterly review of actual expenditure, compared with budget, will be made and the Head Greenkeeper asked to explain any significant differences.

All Individual items of capital expenditure of a value of or in excess of £5000 which are proposed to be included in any budget shall, prior to such inclusion, be approved by the General Committee and shall also be approved by the General Committee immediately prior to contracting for such expenditure.

All contracts for purchases are the responsibility of the Greens Committee and shall be negotiated and authorised by the Greens Committee, or other persons specifically authorised on its behalf by the Chairman of Greens, such authorisation (and the extent thereof) being notified to the General Committee through the Secretary.

All purchases of capital equipment, supplies and services in excess of a value of £3000 shall require, where practicable, tender by at least 2 suppliers.

The Greens Committee and the Treasurer, in consultation with an independent auditor shall effect and maintain a full inventory of all machinery and Stock with a valuation thereof at 30th September each year, delivering a copy of such valuation to the Secretary on or before the 31st October each year.

In consultation with the Head Greenkeeper and the Secretary Manager, an independent auditor will maintain a system of stock control, valuation and reports to monitor the delivery, use and disposal of all

Equipment, Machinery and stock by the Head Greenkeeper so as to avoid loss. This information shall be presented to the Greens Committee for consideration, before any machinery is disposed of.

All accounts for payment shall be authorised in writing by the chairman of Greens or such member of the Greens Committee as he may appoint save that, in respect of items not exceeding £500 in value, such authorisation may be delegated by the Chairman of Greens to any other officer of the club.

12. CONSERVATION

12.1 Tree preservation. In an area like Penrith, with an abundance of mature woodland on the course, it is important to have a policy to preserve the trees and the habitat of birds, animals and flora on the course. The woodland cannot be left unattended, and diseased trees must be pruned or felled. Certain animals – grey squirrels, rabbits, moles - do damage to the course, and it is the responsibility of the Head Greenkeeper to keep this problem under control.

Trees and hedges etc. which affect the course, particularly those that overhang tees or greens and prevent the growth of grass, have to be pruned, and on some occasions felling may be necessary. In addition, felling is required in order to give 3m wide access to the rough-cutter.

This work has to be done under the control of the Head Greenkeeper who will engage a tree surgeon when necessary and always recognise the need for tree preservation and ensure that any tree preservation orders are respected.

Tree planting/removal will take place where and when necessary, with professional advice being obtained as required. Hedgerows, wood edges and specimen trees will be incorporated in a 4 year planting programme, as prepared by the Greens Committee following the advice of the Forestry Commission..

13. PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

13.1 Expert knowledge use. Notwithstanding the complete confidence the Committee has in the competence and technical knowledge of the Head Greenkeeper, it is the Club's policy to seek expert opinion as and when necessary.

No alteration to the architecture of the course may be undertaken without the approval of the General Committee.

A qualified tree surgeon will be employed to fell or prune any mature tree, until such time as the Head Greenkeeper receives the required qualification, to carry out this work on behalf of the Club.

Health and Safety Issues will be addressed following consultation with our appointed Health and Safety officer.

14. HEALTH AND SAFETY

14.1 Policy. The Greens Committee and all Greens staff are to ensure that they are familiar with and comply with the Club's current Health and Safety Policy Statement. The H&S policy document is held in the Secretary/Managers office, and should be updated on an annual basis. The Greenkeeper must ensure day-to-day compliance by all staff, of all relevant legislation in relation to Machinery, Pesticides, Workplace regulations, Construction work and any other pertinent work tasks.

14.2 Risk assessment production. Risk assessments shall be produced for all tasks that pose a risk to the workforce and these shall be assessed and updated on an annual basis.

15. Training.

15.1 Training budget. An adequate training budget shall be put in place to ensure that Continuous Professional Development opportunities are available to all Greens staff. This will assist in the continual improvement of the course, and will enable all staff to upgrade and update their knowledge base.

16. Environmental Policy.

16.1 Maintenance and preservation – the policy. Penrith Golf Club is committed to the maintenance and preservation of the golf course for future generations in a sustainable and environmentally-

friendly manner. The General Committee endorses the adoption of environmentally-friendly practices throughout the course and Clubhouse. They realise the importance of such practices not only locally, but nationally and globally. These practices include waste minimisation and recycling, energy efficiency, minimal use of chemicals, water resource management, nature and landscape conservation.

In order to promote good environmental practices, our Policy with regard to the environment is as follows:

- a) To identify the significant environmental impacts of our activities and to develop suitable objectives, targets and management programmes, applying appropriate operational procedures to minimise our environmental impact.
- b) To comply with relevant legislation, regulation **and** other requirements relating to our environmental impact and to improve employees' understanding and commitment to environment practices through structured communications and training in a safe working environment.
- c) To prevent pollution, minimise our inputs of utilities and resources and the outputs of emissions to the atmosphere, effluents to waters/sewers and wastes to disposal facilities, endeavouring to re-use, recover or recycle materials where practicable.
- d) To develop and maintain constructive relationships with relevant environmental organisations to ensure good communications and sourcing of best advice.
- e) To introduce sustainable operating procedures and practices to minimise Penrith Golf Club's overall impact on the environment.
- f) To strive for continual improvement in overall environmental performance.

17. Communication.

17.1 Updates. Every effort will be made to communicate with Members and Visitors, relating to course management, which has a direct bearing on course condition. Newsletters will continue to be composed and the web-site will be fully utilised to ensure that as many people as possible receive the appropriate information regarding the course.

Members will be continually updated regarding the progress in relation to the Course Policy Document, and Members will be encouraged to make constructive suggestions, in writing, to the Chair of Greens or the Secretary/Manager.

On course notices will be used sparingly, and where relevant, but will be kept to a minimum for aesthetic reasons.

Jan 2015.

Updated - April 2018. Allan Dickson. Greens Committee Member.