

Hello Golfers...

Sorry it's been so long since the last newsletter but things have been pretty busy here with the return to golf after each of the lockdowns and natural migration of staff leaving us a bit shorthanded to do things like... err newsletters ;)

But with that said and done it's been great to see new faces working at the complex and I'll take this opportunity to introduce the new contracted employees to you that have either started or are starting soon;

- Greg (Retail Manager)
- Mollie (Retail assistant)
- Lucy (Retail assistant)
- Sonja (Full time cook)
- Cauly (Full time cook)
- Jane (Cleaner)

I'm sure you'll make them all feel welcome and take it easy on them while they're getting up to scratch with everything. On a similar note I'd like to publically thank all of my existing staff for really holding the place together in recent tough times... and thank you golfers as I know many of you have also passed on your appreciation to them.

Hopefully you've enjoyed the golfing season this year with the more defined cuts and the little changes we've made around the course and I hope you'll agree the course has played very well through the majority of it.

Following on from the last newsletter and what's past

- The woodland to the right of the 10th has now recovered from the woodland management we carried out. New plant life including woodland flowers and ferns have started to cover the ground now that light and air has been able to circulate through these areas.
- Another note of thanks needs to go out to DGC members who earlier in the year helped with the hollow tining and top dressing, moving the grass cores to badly worn areas...they all slept well that night. To EGC members who did a huge spring clean of the course prior to opening which paid dividends and to the ladies section who helped tidy, weed and plant outside the clubhouse. Thanks again it's great to work within such a community who care.
- We've almost completed the renovations of greenside bunkers, removing old compacted sand and replacing with China Clay which is a natural sand that stays fluffier for longer due to grains being of irregular shape. We're hoping to complete these within the next couple of months.

Complex and Course news

- It's been a nightmare this year trying to get stock for the pro shop and it can't have been all on the same boat that got stuck in the Suez Canal! However we've managed to secure more deliveries and the shop is full again. We've just taken delivery of a selection of trolleys and bags which are in high demand at present so if you're thinking of treating yourself or putting it on the Xmas wish list act now as there's still a shortage coming into the country. This also applies to all hardware including putters woods and irons.
- Rhys and Nick, our two pros have both been really busy with golf lessons this year but they still have availability for those of you who want to sharpen your game and in their newly refurbished teaching bay, video lessons really help you to visualise the instruction they're giving.
- We've carried out extensive spiking of our fairways these past few months and are also slit tining to help with compaction and in turn with surface drainage.
- The damage to the greens that was caused by vandalism a couple of weeks ago is well on its way to repairing although they still look a bit unsightly in places ☹️
- Bracknell Council carried out an exploratory dig on the 13th to find out issues with the drainage that we experienced for the last two years. Unfortunately we've found that the old farmer's culvert which leads to the drain on 12 has collapsed and will need major works to repair... I'll keep you updated.
- This week sees the start of tree maintenance by outside contractors. Some trees will be felled and others cut back. Please be aware that this is due to disease and health of the course not for aesthetics.



Obviously removing some of these trees will have an impact on the holes (see in the pictures above of the 7th after the willow was removed). But like with the 7th we've not taken all the stumps to ground level to allow new growth to take place in future years. The logs have been stacked in woodland areas for the benefit of nature and the ecosystem but

are well out of the way of **MOST** golfers shots. For those of you who struggled with the willow on the 7th... You're welcome ;)

- Our own woodland management works will also start to commence in the near future when growing stops and other maintenance slows down, again this is to give health to larger trees and improve the airflow around the course. We've already started on the 15th but there's still a way to go.
- Last month we brought in the company Total Weed Control to spray the entire course with selective weed killer. This may cause a few small bare patches in places but we'll be repairing those in play where necessary.
- The greens were treated with iron this week to toughen up the sward as autumn and winter approaches, this can go a little black with people walking on them but nothing to worry about. Slit tining of the greens will take place next week weather permitting but this hopefully won't cause too much disruption to the playing surfaces of the greens.
- New signage has now been delivered for all the tee boxes which we'll be installing when we get some time. These are to replace signs that have gradually come down over time due to rotting posts. The new signs are made of a recycled composite so should survive anything the weather has to throw at them.



Disease

Arrrgh... We're coming to that time of the year when disease pressure builds and we're at risk of disease on the greens. Unfortunately there's no magic wand or anything we can do to guarantee we'll be disease free but our preventive maintenance and spraying will help to minimise any impact. We've already sprayed once, fertilised and treated them with iron this month and we'll spray again each month for the next 3 months with differing fungicidal sprays to hold off as best we can any attack.

To close

Just to say it's been great to see so many new members join both the complex, the clubs and the new Playmoregolf membership as well.

And for those of you who aren't members both Downshire Golf Club and Easthampstead Golf Club for the men and Easthampstead Ladies for the women are still taking members. They accept golfers of all standards and hcps.

So if you're new to the game or want to enter some friendly but competitive competitions please go to the boards in the corridor and pick up an application form.

That's it from me and thanks for reading.

Simon

General Manager