



NORMANTON GOLF CLUB

Minutes of the Greens Committee meeting

Tuesday 24th May 2022

Attendees: Andy Hall, Chair. Rich Carter, Golf Director. Andy Bell, Brian Harvey, John Whiteley, Jayne Turner, Section reps and Members.

Apologies: Dave Crampton HGK, Gary Pritchard Golf Pro.

Meeting held in Hatfeild Hall 1730 and on course walk about 10th - 9th- 8th -13th -7th & 18th .

Agenda Items:

- Progress of Greens 2022 and next year's Hollow Core plans (Recent conversation with STRI, Gwynn Davies feedback).
- Development of grass on the approach to 9th green. (Visit and discuss what more can be done)
- 8th hole improved layout of Fairway and inclusion of shrubbery (Visit and discuss fairway cut to develop semi rough)
- Provisional winter plan to improve tees on 10th, enlarge white area by up to 50% (AH idea for discussion at tee)
- Irrigation update. What works, what is being made good to work soon, what will need doing this winter. (DC Update the committee on what works, what doesn't work, why and what we can do now and going forward. Requirements)
- Suggestion to plant 7 trees on the roadside near the entrance, 8th hole. In tribute to 70 years of the Queens Platinum anniversary. (Discuss at the sight, explain recent landscapers visit and ideas)
- Suggestion to fill the corner bunker 9th this winter, starting in Oct, seed and repair. add few extra trees / or not / to the site. Less repair, less sand, reduce work. Is this bunker in play for the majority of players?(On site discussion)
- Suggestion to line the bunkers 6th, in order to reduce the sand stone breaking away into the bunker. Possibly doing this where the same happens elsewhere.
- Drainage in bunkers to be repaired in winter 2022/23
- 14th & 18th paths completion.
- Invite of Open Country project 'Wild About Wakefield'
- Greens talk shop evening STRI 22 June 2022.

AH Asked for members comments and feedback from the committee and peers on the greens progress since HC.

Most were of the opinion that it took too long for the greens to recover, that more sand dressing could have been laid and watering feeding was not sufficient.

RC/AH pointed out a recent teams (online) discussion with STRI agronomist expert, Gwynn Davis. Gwynn had explained the need to reduce thatch from the top level of the greens, this will reduce water retention at the top and increase it lower down, encouraging roots and improving recovery in the long term. There are many other benefits such as disease reduction and resilience generally. But there is a penalty in the medium term.

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RC Said this practice had been forgone for several years prior to 2020 and thatch had increased as a result. He pointed out that after asking Gwyn the same question Gwyn's view was that if the thatch was reduced this would allow the greens to heat up quicker and therefore speed up recovery.

AH Said sand had been applied in vast quantities, nearly 5 ton per hole on average. Too much sand would smother the growth and that sand is a good conductor of the cold, as well as warmth. In April it was seasonally cooler than usual, probably a feature of years to come due to climate changes. Watering or wet conditions during dressing, is bad for the greens, it congeals on the surface, and water cools an already cold thatch layer, all undesirable for the grass. Rainfall is welcome though, once the dressing is laid. Feed was applied, and has been done on two occasions since March, long term fertiliser (Slow Delivery) is used, to deliver nutrients over a longer period.

All members listened to the explanations, and agree to accept the consequences of HC and the possible long recovery, to give good results, albeit only now in May.

AB had had played at Sandmoore recently, where their greens were in much poorer state than ours due to slow recovery. They commenced their greens work the same time as we did, in March.

JW asked about other methods, including scarifying, Air2G2, Micro tining and slitting.

AH Said, some of these methods are approved to remove thatch, but most have consequences for recovery, the climate plays a big part. Once thatch is reduced, we can consider other methods, but this is probably not possible just yet. The worst is behind us for this year, we will work hard to reduce disruption as much as possible in future however we must use the data that is provided to assess the greens health, which will in turn drive the our strategy to have long term stability and playing conditions. We will use our Slitter in the Autumn and winter, and Micro Tines for the next phase of aeration. Once our pro core machine arrives which has been on order since April 2021, this will be a relatively unobtrusive process, with only limited amounts of dressing needed to be applied every two weeks or so.

Other points on the Agenda were read through and later discussed on course during a walk about.

AH raised the prospect of filling the corner bunker on the 9th fairway. It was felt by the committee to be a good idea long term, once the trees at the corner had matured. It was decided to pause the idea for a few years.

AH Raised the prospect of trialling bunker liners, that the stones appearing in several bunkers were of sandstone. This stone is not from the sand imported into the bunkers, but falling from the surrounding edges. The 6th double bunker was prevalent with sand stone, lining the bunker might retain the falling stone and create a cleaner bunker. This and possibly other bunkers may be chosen for winter work and liners to be fitted.

JT asked if drainage and sand quality could be improved in several large bunkers, citing the 3rd, 16th. Others were discussed. The committee will be selecting several bunkers for this work to be done over the winter.

RC suggested we may sample a 35 grade of sand rather than the 45 we use now which is a slightly heavier blend and matches the sand which is put onto the greens.

AH. The 14th footpath and 18th path, are to be completed and tidied up as soon as the red crush is delivered, hopefully this week. At the end of the winter work, and start of the season, the grass cutting took priority and these paths had to wait till we were on top of the fast growing grasses.

AH. Said he had invited a Charity based organisation to look into planting some colour on parts of the course that isn't in play. The rear of the HWH, and the entrance for example. This and an idea to screen the entrance, 8th hole side, with trees to commemorate the Jubilee. An application has been submitted to the LA to seek permission to construct two small walls either side of the entrance to give an impressive look to the club on arrival. More about this later this year if the LA approves the plan.

The Committee spent an hour walking the course, starting at the 10th Tee.

AH offered an idea to improve the 10th tees, especially the red, yellow and white, which are small and uneven. We will approach GP and DC for their thoughts on this, and if the size of any or all of these tees can be improved on. This would be a major winter project.

The grass recovery on the 9th was inspected, GUR will be placed over areas of rough and not repaired. Dressing and Seeding will be applied, this may need roping off.

A long discussion on the design of the 8th took place, RC will ask his contact to make a simulated model of our suggestions to see what the final look and feel is. We generally agree it is one of the poorest holes, and needs some character. This can be done at ground level with grass cutting, and vertically to shape the hole. Once the simulation is made we will share this with the Golf Pro, DC and the committee to consider implementation of any changes..

AB Pointed out an anomaly with the 13th OOB, since the pond restoration, a ball can sit on grass to the left of the pond, apparently in play but OOB according to the stakes. It will be staked as soon as possible on the bank. This will mean a ball on the 13th side is in play, however, a ball on or over the bank towards the 7th will be OOB as intended.

AH suggested planting something in the area of the 13th pond to improve its character, this could be Pampas or gorse on the left hand bank, the Committee agreed.

The 13th grass recovery, since drainage work is progressing satisfactorily, the 18th path will be tidied up as soon as possible.

AH. Said he had witnessed a large section of dead wood fall from the tree 7th pond. This tree had been inspected by a tree surgeon recently and he had identified Ash Dieback. There is a very large section of this tree which has died, and it needs removing, probably half of the tree will need cutting to remove the affected section safely, this will happen very soon, possibly Monday 30th May. This has to happen, and is for H&S reasons and not to simplify the hole.

AH. Other trees or tree limbs will be removed also during the visit, especially around the practice green. The nets and mats of the practice green will be repaired or replaced soon.

AB and his scratch and nett team have taken on a project to carry out cutting back the undergrowth surrounding the practice area. This will be developed by DC and the team to improve and increase the size of the practice area generally, the recovery of grass around the outside area may take a season to develop.

The practice bunker and all on course bunkers have small growths of grass within, AH will ask members to rake, and where encountered, remove small grass or weed growth and place it either on the ground aside the bunker or in the rough areas. This detail of work is extremely manpower intensive. The greens team have been asked to devote more time to this area of detail.

AH. Said, more rakes will be provided including better quality rakes and rake stands, especially for large bunkers. He will promote the use of rakes in his report. RC is in the process of raising money to make an available a sum of money to buy the new quality rakes, he is hopeful that the first £500 will be raised by June which will give 12 rakes and stands. It is hoped to improve the overall quality and improved impression to the members and visitor experience.

The team, finished off on the 18th top level, to inspect the area of green that was severely damaged, dried out and cracked last year. The greens staff had implanted (Hexicut) turf from the surrounding green. There will be more transplants to fill those persistent dry areas. Hand watering of dry areas due to the sprinklers missing, either because of wind or lack of distribution is an irrigation problem. This is something we are aware of, sprinkler distribution is part of the overall irrigation project being looked at. The 11th Green has a similar problem, DC and the team have done several grass transplants to repair these areas.

○ **Outstanding and ongoing items list Reviewed 25-05-2022**

ITEM	NAME	Update or Actioned	Last Raised
Stint readings	DC GD	STRI Booked 22-06-22	18-08-2021
Funding plans	AH RC	Ongoing/ Agreed	07-10-2021
Footpath Surveys	AB JW	14 th 18 th completion asp	25-05-2022
TORs agreement Long term plan	AH	On the Website	02-07-2020
Drainage	DC	Turf Repairs ongoing	25-05-2022
Bunker survey	BH & JS	Bunkers to be identified for work over winter 2022/23	25-05-2022
Dustbin replacement	DC & AH	Donors required Sections?	07-10-21

Tree thinning	DC JW	Ongoing	25-05-2022
OOB and hazard stakes repaint	DC	Ongoing / 13 th new stake at pond.	25-05-2022
All 18 Tees	AH DC	Grass treatments applied	May 2022
Greens damage repair	DC	Ongoing	25-05-2022
Irrigation	AH DC	Funding agreed	02-12-2021
Traffic lines and GUR 9 TH	DC	Ongoing /9 th GUR requires highlighting	25-05-2022
6 TH Ditch weeds	DC/AH	Chemical applications applied May 22	25-05-2022
STRI Visit booked	AH RC DC GD	Talk Shop evening booked 22 June 2022	25-05-2022
7 th Pond tree to be crowned.	AH DC	Ash Dieback	25-05-2022
Practice putting area improvements	AH DC AB	Ongoing	25-05-2022
8 th redevelopment simulation	RC	Design required to consider	25-05-2022
8 th Jubilee trees	AH	7 trees along the entrance to screen the hole	25-05-2022
13 th Pond develop 7 th side bank	AH DC	Possible plant/shrub	25-05-2022