



Gairloch Golf Club Course Policy Document



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Course Policy Document (CPD) is to set out the policy for the Management of Gairloch Golf Course and to promote good communication. It has been approved by the Management Committee and made freely available to all Members.

Any further changes to the policy will require the endorsement of the Management Committees. The Greens Convener will conduct an annual review of the CPD and make appropriate suggestions for updates where thought necessary, for final adoption by the Management Committee.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The main objective is to maintain the golf course and grounds to the high standard expected from a members' links courses in the North West Highlands . The continued intention is to present a fair test to golfers of all abilities, on a course that is aesthetically beautiful, ecologically sensitive, and which is steadily improving in quality through managed developments within authorised budgets.

1.3 COURSE BACKGROUND

In June 1898 a group of enthusiasts got together and decided to formalise the playing of golf on an area of seaside links between the Bank, the road and the beach, in order to form the present Gairloch Golf Club. The land was gifted to the club by Sir Kenneth S. MacKenzie of Gairloch who was then made Honorary President. The prime mover in the venture was Capt. A.M. Burgess acknowledged as the Founder of the club and the designer of the course as it then stood. The first meeting was held on the course when eleven members were enrolled and the first committee comprising seven officers and members was formed. The main item of business was to agree the membership subscription set at 5/- for the season! Committee

meetings were held on the course, weather permitting, the Smoke Room of the Hotel being used for longer meetings and in bad weather. Teething problems appear to have existed in these early days as committee members came and went frequently. On the course, fences and rabbit holes were a source of trouble! Permission had to be sought from the estate to erect stiles and fill in some of the rabbit holes.

Competitions took place regularly, prizes being donated by club members. The poor old Greens Committee came in for some heavy criticism periodically over the condition of the course. Improvements and the re-siting of some tees and greens were carried out by local contractors (no greenkeeper in those days)! The club didn't acquire a mower until January 1899, when every member was allocated a green to tend throughout the year. Not until January 1901 did the club decide to buy its own greenkeeping tools (a scythe, a spade and a brush)!

This fledgling club played its first match against another club in late 1899 when Ullapool Golf Club were its guests. 10/- was set aside to entertain the visitors in the Gairloch Hotel. At the A.G.M. of the club that year it was decided to reduce the membership subscription to 2s/6d in order to attract new members and to encourage existing members to pay up more readily. *Nothing has changed in over 100 years.*

The current Course Length is:

White 4534 yards
Yellow 4034 yards
Black 4034 yards
Red 3656 yards

	Hole	White Yards	Yellow Yards	Par	Stroke Index	Black Yards	Red Yards	Par	Stroke Index
1	The Leabaidh	320	312	4	8	312	266	4	8
2	Oakwood	160	155	3	12	155	150	3	12
3	Kirkhill	162	152	3	14	152	140	3	14
4	Blind Piper	233	209	3	2	209	196	4/3	6
5	Caberfeidh	317	312	4	6	312	292	4	4
6	Westward Ho!	194	194	3	16	194	154	3	16
7	An Dun	91	91	3	18	91	91	3	18
8	Traigh Mor	526	463	5	4	463	409	5	2
9	Mo Dhachaidh	164	139	3	10	139	130	3	10
	OUT	2167	2027	31		2027	1828	32/31	
10	The Leabaidh	327	312	4	9	312	266	4	9
11	Oakwood	182	179	3	7	179	170	3	1
12	Kirkhill	184	152	3	13	152	140	3	11
13	Blind Piper	244	209	4/3	5	209	196	4/3	7
14	Caberfeidh	423	312	4	1	312	292	4	5
15	Westward Ho!	194	154	3	17	154	154	3	13
16	An Dun	143	91	3	11	91	91	3	17
17	Traigh Mor	526	488	5	3	488	409	5	3
18	Mo Dhachaidh	144	119	3	15	119	119	3	15
	IN	2367	2016	32/31		2027	1828	32/31	
	OUT	2167	2027	31		2027	1828	32/31	
	TOTAL	4534	4043	63/62		4043	3665	64/62	

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. Management Committee

The Management Committee is responsible for the overall direction and control of the Club, including determining policy, approving plans and exerting financial control. The Committee must be consulted on any changes to this policy document and must approve any significant changes that may affect the play of the course. No

alterations to the layout of the Course may be undertaken without the full consultation and approval of the Committee.

2.2. The Greens Convener

The Greens Convenor must be an elected or co-opted member of the Management Committee. In accordance with the constitution of Gairloch Golf Club Golf Club.

The Greens Convener will ensure that Golf Course Maintenance remains a high priority in relation to other functions of the club, and to:

- Develop Policy and Long Range Initiatives in conjunction with the head Greenkeeper
- Promote better planning, budgeting and working standards

2.3 The Head Greenkeeper

The Head Greenkeeper is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of course maintenance. Also for producing budget proposals, staff performance and Health & Safety issues relating to course management and for informing the Members of impending works on the golf course which will disrupt play.

The Head Greenkeeper will provide a monthly written report on developments and proposals for course management to the Greens Convener for submission to the Management Committee meeting.

The Head Greenkeeper is responsible, in conjunction with the Greens Convener and Management Committee for the implementation of this Course Policy Document (CPD) in all respects, but not limited to.

2.4. Members, their guests and visitors

The greens staff cannot do everything and there is much that the members/ visitors can do to assist in keeping the course tidy and in the best possible condition.

Some of the things that we all can do include:



- Repair pitch marks on the greens.
- Replace divots and tread them in carefully

- Pick up any litter and either place it in the nearest bin or remove it from the course.
- Carefully rake bunkers pushing the sand towards the face rather than pulling it towards the rear.
- Replace rakes inside the bunker in a position least likely to interfere with a ball in motion.
- Avoid slow play when course is busy

3. RESOURCES

3.1 STAFF

The staffing levels for golf course maintenance are one full time and one part time as follows:

1 Full Time Head Greenkeeper

1 Part time Greenkeeper

3.2 HOURS OF WORK

The course staff works a flexible shift pattern depending on the time of year and the availability of light.

All staff are rostered for weekend and holiday working to provide for moving the hole cups & tee markers, bunker raking and green mowing.

3.3 FINANCE

The Management Committee is responsible to the approval of the Club's Annual Budget, including the Golf Course. This will include funding for the purchase of materials, machinery and services necessary for the successful implementation of the CPD. The Management Committee, after consultation with the Greens Convener and Treasurer will agree and approve the levels of expenditure on machinery maintenance and renewal. The Management Committee, following recommendations from the Greens Convener will perform an annual review of the green staff wages.

4. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The Golf Course is the Club's main asset. The short to medium aim is that the golf course should be maintained to such a good standard that it is recognised as being one of the best maintained and best presented courses in the area. Therefore our slogan of "Probably the best wee course in the Highlands" should be taken seriously as a branding strategy with the long term aim to ultimately change the slogan through steady annual development to be objectively branded "the best nine hole golf course in the Highlands".

Play from visiting golfers is to be welcomed, as are golf societies to take advantage of our Gold, Silver and Bronze packages.

Greens staff shall be encouraged to receive training where applicable that will enable them to meet realistic expectations and achieve the highest maintenance objectives possible within the confines of the course maintenance budget.

5. TIMING OF WORK ON THE COURSE

Various tasks and work programmes have to be implemented at specific times of the year. It will be the aim of the Head Greenkeeper in regular discussions with the Greens Convener, to plan all the essential work well in advance so that the periods in which any disruptive work has to be done can be agreed after taking into account the golf programme.

Particular focus will be directed at the prestigious club competitions to ensure the course is presented at its very best such as:

- Mens Open
- Walk On Open
- Ladies Day
- Inter Club matches.

To enable the course to be presented in tip top condition the Head Greenkeeper will make a request through the Greens Convener for volunteers to assist in labour intensive work such as divot replacement on fairways, trimming of rough and general tidying up of course etc as directed by Greenstaff.

6. THE GOLF COURSE

6.1 GREENS

Greens over-view

As golf greens have a certain tolerance level, both physical and biological, the optimum summer height of cut for the current grass species is 5.0mm. It is understood that consistent cutting at lower levels will weaken the sward and may cause long term damage. To ensure the sustainability of the greens, the ground staff must comply with the cutting regime set out in this policy document. However, for selected major competitions and appropriate weather, the height of cut may be reduced below 5.0mm to offer faster paced putting surface.

Standard heights will be quickly resumed to avoid prolonged stressing of the sward. In the unusual event that the sward becomes adversely stressed by unpredictable causes, such as pests and diseases, it may be necessary to slightly raise the height of cut for a short period of time to aid recovery.

Greens cutting policy

During the main playing season mowing is to be carried out at a minimum of three days per week.

During the summer season (Spring to Autumn), holes are moved twice a week

During the winter season, holes are to be moved once per week.

Winter mowing height on greens shall be 6.0mm using the hand pedestrian machine. The pedestrian machine shall be favoured from End of October to Mid March inclusive.

The aprons to the greens are to be cut at a minimum height of 13mm.

Verti-cutting to be carried out typically every two weeks during the growing season in accordance with requirements of the grass growth and agronomic objectives. Verti-draining and hollow coring to be carried out every Spring and Autumn.

The Verti-draining works to be carried out during the spring and the autumn will use 12mm diameter tines to help improve drainage, improve root growth and lessen compaction. Additional verti-draining will take place typically in mid October using the wider 19mm diameter tines.

Additional works to be carried out leading up to all major Club/Open Competitions such as Walk On Open, Mens Open, Club Championship, and the major Ladies' events.

6.2 TEES

Divoting will be carried out weekly on all tees. Divot mix boxes are to be provided on some par 3 holes and regularly checked and refreshed by the ground staff.

Tee markers to be moved once a week as a minimum onto a fresh area, offering the golfer a flat stance.

Cutting to take place twice a week between Monday and Friday, with a cutting height of no lower than 13mm.

Weather permitting verti-draining to be carried out once a year.

6.3 FAIRWAYS

Cutting to a height no lower than 15mm.

Divoting to be carried out as and when staff are available and supplemented by member volunteer 'divoting parties' for major competitions and events.

Fairways to be treated for weeds using spray chemicals.

6.4 BUNKERS

Bunkers to be attended to daily with raking twice a week and on major competition days. All bunkers to be examined regularly for water retention and damage. A rake to be provided for each bunker.

The rake will be placed in and not outside the bunker and parallel to the direction of play on that hole.

The trimming of the edges to be carried out at least once a month.

Bunker styling will remain faithful to the traditions of seaside links golf.

Sand depth typically will be no more than 100mm (4”) and no less than 50mm (2”). Sand particle size will conform to all guidelines laid down for bunker sand.

6.5 SURROUNDS AND APPROACHES

Cutting to take place twice a week with a cutting height no lower than 13mm. Scarifying or hollow coring and over seeding to be carried out every Autumn. Verti-draining to be carried out annually.

6.6 SEMI-ROUGH AND ROUGH

Semi - Rough

Semi-rough to be cut twice a week at a height of 25mm.

Any fast growing areas to be cut more frequently.

In most areas the semi rough will be no wider than the width of one cut of the semi- rough machine along the side of the fairways, although this will increase in highlighted areas that are deemed to be too penal to the lesser player.

Rough

Rough to be cut once per week at a height of 55mm.

Selective herbicides will be applied as and when needed but as a spot treatment only. Blanket coverage with herbicide will be avoided if possible.

6.7 FERTILISATION

Granular organic based nitrogen fertilisers to be used, also liquid spray fertilisers containing trace elements of iron/seaweed. Soil

samples to be taken on a regular basis to ascertain the nutrient status and to correct any deficiencies found.

6.8 TOPDRESSING

Topdressing over-view

The links course greens at Gairloch are naturally soft, however the Club has a policy aim to try and offer firm, dry greens for the summer months of the year and the application of topdressing is essential to achieving this aim. It is acknowledged that the existence of topdressing lying on the surface of a green can be frustrating for some golfers. However, the application of topdressing enhances the soil structure and is considered an important process for the sustainability of putting greens for a well used course nine hole course such as Gairloch GC.

Topdressing application policy

In Spring and Autumn, following verti-draining or hollow tining, a heavier application at a rate of 2kg/m². (Ten tonnes to be applied as one heavy application, followed by a lighter application to top up holes the following week) Overall forty tonnes/annum will be applied.

Further light top dressings will be applied in the mid-summer.

The Greenstaff and Competition Committee will co-ordinate a suitable timing for this by consulting the fixture.

6.9 DRAINAGE AND DITCHES

All drainage ditches and drain outfalls to be cleaned and checked twice each year in the autumn and the winter to remove fallen leaves and obstructions. Broken drains will be mended at the earliest opportunity. In light of changing weather patterns and flooding becoming the norm in winter, green staff will review a drainage and ditch report and make recommendations.

6.10 TREES & LANDSCAPE PLANTING

Tree and woodland management will form a part of each annual programme and will also be an integral part of general course maintenance. Major trees need liaison with estate

The sympathetic management of trees to reduce the number of unwanted trees and overhanging tree limbs shall be carried out to have the following affect:

- Allow light and air into key areas of the Course to improve turf quality.
- Encourage flora and fauna to re-inhabit overgrown areas.

6.11 CLUBHOUSE & GARDENS/LANDSCAPING

The garden beds bordering the Clubhouse, potted plants and hanging baskets are the responsibly of the House Convener they are to be maintained throughout the Spring/Summer. The House Convener will when necessary ask for volunteers to assist in weeding planting etc.

The paths around the clubhouse are to be kept clear of litter and weeds with periodic spraying. The Clubhouse patio area is to be kept tidy with any temporary storage of materials tidied when not in use. The Greens staff will chemical spray patio/paths when requested.

6.12 PRACTICE GROUND

Practice Areas:

- The ‘main’ practice area are the nets and bunker behind the ninth/ eighteenth green

- The putting green adjacent to the first tee.

All practice areas will be maintained regularly. The practice bunker behind the ninth/eighteenth green is to be inspected on a regular basis and kept in a usable condition. A rake is to be provided.

6.13 PATHS

Wherever possible all paths leading to and from teeing areas should be artificially surfaced to allow year round use. Such paths should be properly constructed with suitable material. All paths should be regularly inspected and repaired and renewed where necessary and should be kept free of weeds.

6.14 DEFINING THE COURSE

As required by the Rules of Golf, correct procedure will be followed to ensure the defining of *out of bounds*, *water hazards*, *lateral water hazards*, *ground under repair*, *obstructions* and any integral parts of the course. Particular emphasis will be made on these matters for the start of the handicap qualifying period in the spring, with regular monitoring during the season. A local rule where it is permanent will be printed on the scorecard, temporary local rules such as Winter rules and Winter no qualifying competitions must be place on noticeboard. The competitions committee will be responsible and take advice from Head Greenkeeper

6.15 WINTER COURSE MANAGEMENT

As part of the intention to offer year round golf, the Head Greenkeeper, assisted by Greenkeeper staff and in consultation with

Greens Convener, will follow the following winter management program:

6.15.1 Traffic Management

To protect parts of the course prone to extreme wear, ropes and stakes will be used to prevent players from walking over such areas. Sand, seed and turf will be used at the appropriate time to repair worn areas.

6.15.2 Tee Mat Management

Artificial Tee Mats may be used during the winter months to protect the main grass tees. Subject to budgetary and geographical constraints, permanent winter tee mats may be constructed, allowing good access from off an adjacent path. The Head Greenkeeper will ensure that these mats are regularly re-sited to avoid damage to the grass tee and that their alignment is square to the hole and kept free of debris and they are placed on a level area.

6.15.3 Winter Greens

Temporary winter greens will be made available as an option in case of wet weather, frost or snow to protect the main summer greens. In an effort to offer as good a putting surface as is possible from such temporary greens, the Head Greenkeeper and Greens Convener will plan a temporary winter green course setup. This will be agreed during the summer months and include the positioning of the winter greens, dates for their marking and cutting, hole positions and use of enlarged hole cups if appropriate. All winter greens will be prepared and marked out in good time prior to the winter.

7 CLOSING THE COURSE, TEMPORARY GREENS, WINTER PLAY

7.1 COURSE PROTECTION POLICY

It is the intention of Gairloch Golf Club to provide its members and guests with year round golf. Playing off grass tees and where applicable artificial mats. Using main greens during the winter months however, may not always be possible and temporary greens and tees may be introduced as appropriate.

Exceptional wet winter weather conditions is the norm now in the North West Highlands. Therefore the Head Greenkeeper may have to close parts of the course more than usual. Therefore the course or part of the course may be closed to prevent long lasting damage. Such conditions would exist if the greens were waterlogged, the course was flooded and during frost and snow. A decision to reopen the course may be taken at any time following an inspection by the Head Greenkeeper or appointed Deputy.

It is hoped that members will recognise that decisions are not taken lightly and are designed to protect and sustain the playability of the golf course, particularly during the winter months, as well as to ensure the safety of golfers.

7.2 COURSE CLOSURE AND CANCELLATIONS OF COMPETITIONS.

The Management Committee wish to stress that they and the staff will make very effort to keep the Golf Course open, in full or in part, for play by members and visitors and will communicate information concerning the daily course status via the website, an email to members if applicable and a notice hanging on course entry gate and the staff in the clubhouse will be informed.

If recommended by the Head Greenkeeper, a decision to close the course due to adverse weather conditions, which put the condition of the course and the safety of golfers at risk, can be made by the following personnel:

- Head Greenskeeper and appointed Deputy

- Greens Convener

Re-opening the course will be made by the same decision making process. In their absence deputies will be appointed to ensure continuity.

Note: Suspension of play in competitions or the abandonment of a competition may be taken by the person responsible for the event; as such a decision is concerned with the conditions for playing golf and not potential damage to the course. The decision can be made by the following personnel:

- Competition Convenor
- Head Greenskeeper or Deputy
- Greens Convener

Suspension of play will be communicated to players both by the use of a Klaxon and verbally by staff/committee members. Klaxons are located in the Club House.

The relevant Competition Convener and Club Captain will be informed if the course closure affects a club competition.

- Once closed, the Course remains so until all 'Course Closed' signs are removed
- It is accepted that the main reasons for course closure are snow, heavy frost, slow thaw and flooded fairways and greens.

- It is the responsibility of the Greenkeeping staff to decide whether the holes should be placed in the winter greens in the event of frost.
- It is agreed that once the winter greens are in use they remain in these positions for the day.
- In the event of the winter greens being in use, the Head Greenkeeper must inform Competition Convener before competition starts

7.3 TEMPORARY GREENS & TEMPORARY TEES

In the event of the need to use temporary greens during a club competition, the appropriate Competition Convener or their nominated representative will be informed prior to the commencement of the competition.

As noted in the Club's Course Protection Policy (7.1), it is the intention of Gairloch Golf Club to provide its members and guests with year round golf. Playing off as many grass tees as possible and using the main greens during the winter months, however, may not always be possible and temporary greens and tees may be introduced as appropriate.

7.4 FOG AND LIGHTNING

Thick fog or an electrical storm (see policy on notice-board) would demand the temporary closure of the course until safe conditions prevail for the protection of both golfers and ground staff. Head greenkeeper or nominated deputy will make the decision to declare the course unsafe and close the course

8. GREEN STAFF AND MEMBERS

8.1 WORK ON THE COURSE

The Green Staff must be vigilant so that they do not delay play unreasonably. However, work has always to be carried out efficiently, this being especially important at the start of the day when staff will try to get ahead of golfers.

All players are therefore asked to have consideration to Green Staff by not stopping their work unreasonably, particularly at the start of the day, and to understand that it is in their own interests to do so.

8.2 HEALTH & SAFETY

There is a Health and Safety Document kept in the main office and a nominated member of the committee will take responsibility for keeping this document up to date and informing staff of updates. COSHH assessments when working with dangerous chemicals will be done by Greenstaff and document filed in main office.

8.3 COMPLAINTS

Members and visitors should not complain about a member of Staff or the Course directly to any member of the Green Staff. Any complaint must be made to either the Greens Convener or the Club Captain, who will investigate the matter together and report to Management Committee.

9. MACHINERY

A rolling plan for the replacement, renewal and addition of machinery will be produced by the Head Greenkeeper and reviewed annually and

approved after consultation with the Greens Convener and presented to the Management Committee for inclusion in the Club's overall financial plan

The Head Greenkeeper shall keep himself up to date with developments in golf course machinery and bring recommendations to the attention of the Greens Convener.

The Head Greenskeeper is responsible for the maintenance of all machinery in all aspects: - records of use, preventative maintenance, major servicing, adjustments, etc.

10. IRRIGATION

The overall policy is to use as little water as possible, albeit not to the detriment of the grass growth. Irrigation of turf will be kept to a minimum. Its main purpose is to keep the grass alive and to be used as a management tool remaining faithful to the links characteristics.

10.1 WATER SUPPLY

The policy is to manage the water supply and always use the water available from the mains supply.

10.2 THE SYSTEM

The irrigation programme for the Golf Course is the sole responsibility of the Heads Greenskeeper, and in his absence, his Deputy.

It is widely accepted that over-watering through the growing season is of major detriment to the year round quality of sports turf, especially in the winter period when the Golf Course still demands play.

11. FINANCIAL CONTROL

Reviews of expenditure, compared to budget will be made by the Head Greenkeeper and Greens Convener, and variances will be reported to the Treasurer and then the Management Committee.

Prior to September each year a course budget forecast for the following financial year is required. This will show an accurate monthly cash flow forecast of the annual expenditure for normal course maintenance and will be prepared by the Treasurer following consultation with the Head Greenskeeper and the Greens Convener. The Treasurer will include the course budget within the overall club budget and submit this to the Management Committee for approval in October. The Head Greenkeeper shall identify a machinery programme and replacement cost for all major equipment. It is the intention that the annual replacement cost be included in the annual budget.

Proposals for significant improvements to the course, such as new features, rebuilding or re-modelling of features, shall be budgeted for separately to the normal course maintenance budget, and a separate course development budget shall be prepared for approval.

12. ECOLOGY

It is an important part of the Policy to preserve the natural habitat of birds, animals and flora on the Course.

Woodland maintenance will be carried in such a way that it has as little an impact on the natural habitat as possible. Trees that affect the Course, particularly when overhanging teeing grounds and preventing the growth of grass or the safety of golfers by obscuring visibility for playing shots safely, may need to be pruned. On some occasions felling may be necessary. This work has to be implemented under the control of the Head Greenkeeper, where any major tree felling has been identified the the Head Greenskeeper should inform the Management Committee who will inform the 'Laird' for approval before work can commence.

Tree planting will take place where and when necessary, with advice sought when conditions require. Care is taken to encourage seasonal flora and fauna, such as blue bells, and daffodils.

13. PROFESSIONAL CONSULTATION

Where applicable professional advice may be sought. Before appointing consultant a scope of work and cost to be produced. Approval of the Management Committee will be sought before giving the go ahead to appoint external consultation.

14. STAFF TRAINING

Training is an essential element in achieving a well-trained and motivated staff. Gairloch Golf club is committed to help and encourage training. The Head Greenkeeper will identify any training requirements well in advance to allow funds to be allocated from course budget.

The annual course budget will include provision for an annual nominal sum to allow for potential training.

15. COMMUNICATION

Gairloch Golf Club is committed to provide comprehensive details of the course and regularly updated information for members and visitors via the Club's web site <http://www.gairlochgolfclub.co.uk>

Or designated course information notice boards.

16. COURSE DESIGN ALTERATIONS

Any major plans to alter the course to be ultimately approved by the Members.

