



All-Party Parliamentary Group for Golf

Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 21 March 2018, Committee Room 20

Meeting commenced 1800

In attendance

Members: Craig Tracey MP (in the Chair); Glyn Davies MP; Stephen Gethins MP

Organisational Associate Members: Brendon Pyle, Ben Evans, Sarah Sorrell (Golf Foundation); John Gerrie (The R&A); Scott Bartlett (Mytime Active); John Maguire (Richmond Golf Club); Les Howkins, Samantha Strutt (BIGGA); Colin Ballantyne, Patrick Cunningham (NAPGC); Lee Strutt, Jason Neve (RAC)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Mark Timlett; Richard Payne; Rudi Guraziu; Anthony Hanson; Steve Alabaster; Will Carr; Caron Morton; Caroline Hardy-Evans; Lauren Blease; Adrian Hyyrylanien-Trett; Stephen Smith; Paul Williams

Secretariat: Mark Ramsdale

Welcome

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the meeting, and particularly

- New Organisations: Ladies European Tour
- New Clubs: Clacton Golf Club
- New Individual Associate Members: Nicole Wheatley; Jason Waite; Gareth Hughes; Rudi Guraziu; Jasmine Norcott; Emma Ballard; Lauren Blease

Apologies

Members: Lord Wallace of Tankerness; Rt Hon Eleanor Laing MP; Baroness Nye of Lambeth; Lord Butler of Brockwell; John Mann MP

Honorary Members: Sir Neil Macfarlane; Karl M^cCartney; Jim Gales MBE; Sandy Jones; Helen Melville

Organisational Associate Members: Andrew Cooke (Golf Tourism England); Ian Skellern (NGCAA); Maureen Roberts, Rob Maxfield (The PGA); Richard Haygarth (UKGCOA); Bob Williams (GCMA); Vivien Saunders OBE, Fletcher Ransberry, Mark Wyatt (AGCO); Philip Morley (BGIA); Lesley Webb (The Royal Automobile Club); Richard Shaw (Community Golf); John Clark (PING); Stephen Toon (Sunningdale); Fiona Lyttle (GTC)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Colin Harding; Andy Pollock; Andy Lloyd-Skinner; Keith Mannering; John Bushell; Jim McLaggan; Linda Segerstam; Rob Spurrier; Tom Abbott; Geoff Russell; Nick Lunn; Alex Walker; Emma Ballard; Kevin Hart; Christine Langford; Barry Pace; Nicole Wheatley; Ed Richardson; Julie Otto; Andy Hiseman; Iain Carter; Eddie Bullock; Trevor Martin; John Weir; Mark Heveran; Glen Halsey; Duncan Kelso; Gavin Corbett; Brad McLean; Deanne Tager Smith; Liz Kahn

Action: To record apologies in minutes in writing, but no longer read out at future meetings.

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Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous Group meeting were considered an accurate account.

Matters arising

- The Secretariat was liaising with bodies involved with the 2019 Solheim Cup, to offer any support that the Group could provide.
- The Group liaised with The R&A regarding the Brigands Golf Society, but no information could be found.
- The Group raised correspondence with The R&A regarding disabled golf, and received the following response:

The R&A is committed to the development of disability golf and provides funding support to the European Disabled Golf Association, Handigolf Foundation, British Amputee and Les Autres Sports Association, British Blind Golf Championship, On Course Foundation, Society of One Armed Golfers, South Africa Disabled Golf Association, World Deaf Golf Championships and the Henrik Stenson Handigolf Camp. In January 2018, The R&A hosted a Symposium on Disability Golf in St Andrews, Scotland.

The R&A, together with the USGA, publishes the Modified Rules of Golf for Players with Disabilities allowing golfers with different disabilities to play together and with able-bodied players. The R&A also assists in the production of a framework for Rankings for Golfers with Disability (R4GD).

Following golf's return to the Olympic Programme in 2016 and confirmation of its place in the Summer Games in Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 the prospect of Paralympic Golf is under active consideration.

Action: Group to offer any support that it can provide in the development of the sport for those with disabilities, and look to schedule a future meeting or panel discussion on disabled golf.

Correspondence

- The Group's Co-Chairs wrote to The R&A Chief Executive, Martin Slumbers, thanking him for his presentation to the Group.
- Co-Chair Stephen Gethins MP wrote to newly appointed Chief Executive of Scottish Golf, Andrew McKinlay, congratulating him and offering to meet. A positive response was received.
- An email was received from Honorary Member John Simpson of the On Course Foundation, offering to present at a future Group meeting, and also the opportunity for Members to play against On Course beneficiaries.
- An invitation for Members to take part in a charity golf event at Ageas Bowl in Southampton in Autumn 2018 was received and will be circulated to Members.
- The Group received correspondence regarding an issue around discrimination between male and female players at a golf club in Wales, specifically related to tee times for female players. The Secretariat noted it was understood that the issue at the club was resolved. **Action: Group to write to Wales Golf.**

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- The Group received correspondence regarding efforts to bring a statue for John Rattray, the signatory to the first rules of golf, to Leith Links. The Group had agreed to auction a smaller version of the statue at its annual dinner later in the year.
- An email was received regarding coaching sessions run by Golf in Society for those with Parkinson's disease, including a Putt for Parkinson's event on World Parkinson's Day, Wednesday 11 April, in Harrogate.
- An email was received regarding an initiative to promote positive stories about women working in golf. The Secretariat had requested further information.
- An email was received regarding work done by Environmental Solutions International on resource efficiency, waste management, compliance and incident response in the golf sector.
Action: Secretariat to investigate a panel discussion at a future meeting on golf and the environment.
- An offer from golf writer Roger McStravick, to speak to the Group.

Pending

- Vice-Chair Rt Hon Dame Cheryl Gillan MP wrote to the Royal Horticultural Society to explore opportunities to celebrate golf's heritage.

Group activity report

Parliamentary

Co-Chair Stephen Gethins MP tabled an early day motion welcoming the announcement that The 150th Open would be played at St Andrews in 2021.

During a debate on the Northern Ireland Budget (Anticipation and Adjustments) Bill, Ian Paisley asked questions about golf tourism and the youth Commonwealth games. Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Northern Ireland, Shailesh Vara, said he appreciated the vital importance of golf tourism to the economy but that, along with the youth Commonwealth games, this was a matter for the devolved Assembly.

Public

Co-Chair Craig Tracey MP met with Chief Executive of England Golf, Nick Pink.

Co-Chair Craig Tracey MP met with representatives of The Golf Trust to discuss their work in the sport.

Co-Chair Craig Tracey MP and the Secretariat attended the England Golf Awards.

The Secretariat met with representatives of the UK Golf Course Owners Association, to discuss their work.

The Group sent out press releases on:

- The meeting with The R&A Chief Executive Martin Slumbers;
- Co-Chair Stephen Gethins MP's early day motion on The 150th Open.

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At the time of the meeting, the Group had 831 followers on Twitter. The Group's twitter name: @ParliamentGolf.

AOB

There being no other business, the Chair brought the main business of the meeting to a close.

Main business concluded 1809.

Presentation: Brendon Pyle, The Golf Foundation

The Chair welcomed Brendon Pyle, Chief Executive of The Golf Foundation.

Thanking the Group for raising £10k in the last two years for the Golf Foundation, and helping the Foundation raise its profile, Pyle spoke to a presentation.

Thanking Pyle for his presentation, Craig Tracey MP spoke about the scope and reach of the Golf Foundation, as well as the positive reach of families.

Pyle spoke about the Foundation's youth panel with England Golf which contains golfing and non-golfing members from age twelve upwards. That panel had helped develop Street Golf and provided thinking around safeguarding. In terms of involving young people in clubs, the Foundation had been holding serious conversations about Golf Sixes in clubs as the Golf Sixes League had been causing much excitement in the sport.

On encouraging more girls to play, and if a different approach was needed or adopted, Pyle noted the average number of girl members at a club is one. The Foundation's approach was to take part in activities initially with girls only, developing confidence and competence before mixing. There are some excellent role models and ambassadors in female golf, particularly with LET. The Foundation has ten 10 female regional officers, a league officer for females and over a third of the Foundation's board are women.

On the culture of clubs, and statistics suggesting more children want to play in more than one club, Golf Sixes has a culturally different model and is intended to enable children to play in more clubs.

It was suggested in questioning that for those children who enjoy golf, they are possibly encouraged to play too much and treated like mini-professionals so by they age they would join a club, they are not as keen. Related, professionals in clubs are becoming junior organisers as parents are not. This led to discussion on golf as a career choice for young people. There are lots of opportunities and careers in the sport.

On questions relating to the demise of golf on free-to-air television and playing figures, Pyle spoke about there being a relationship but that current coverage is second-to-none and offers a much more diverse means to watch golf which is suited to young people.

Meeting closed at 1911

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