



All-Party Parliamentary Group for Golf

Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 24 October 2018, Committee Room 8

Meeting commenced 1800

In attendance

Members: Craig Tracey MP (in the Chair); Lord Moynihan; Lord Lennie; Baroness Nye of Lambeth

Honorary Life Member: Sandy Jones

Organisational Associate Members: John Yapp, Maureen Roberts (The PGA); Samantha Strutt, Leslie Howkins (BIGGA); Bob Williams (GCMA); Alistair Booth (GTC/Frilford Heath Golf Club); John Gerrie (The R&A); Philip Morley (BGIA); Doug Poole, Richard Haygarth (UK Golf Federation); John Maguire, Les Howkins (Richmond Golf Club); Richard Shaw (Mytime Active); Lesley Webb (Royal Automobile Club); Ben Blackburn (England and Wales Blind Golf)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Jonathan Earl; Stephen Smith; Andrew Lloyd-Skinner; Jane Carter; Eddie Bullock; Linda Segerstam; Sarah Forrest; John Brooke; Adrian Hyrylaien-Trett; Fran Bune; Nicole Wheatley; Emma Ballard; Caron Morton; Matthew Urwin; Alex Giacchetti; Katherine Nathan; Mark Timlett

Secretariat: Jack Baker

Welcome

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

New Members:

- Lord Goddard

New Supporter:

- PING

New Organisational Associate Members:

- Scottish Golf
- Event Scotland
- Golf and Health Project

New Individual Associate Members:

- John Brooke
- Liam Robb
- Jane Carter

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Apologies

Members: Dame Eleanor Laing MP; Steve Brine MP; Laurence Robertson MP; Lord Robertson of Port Ellen; Lord Wallace of Tankerness;

Honorary Members: Helen Melville; John Simpson

Organisational Associate Members: Colin Ballantyne (NAPGC); Fiona Lyttle (GTC); Jonathan Wright (The PGA); Ian Skellern, Deb Bufton (NGCAA); John Clark (PING); Andrew McKinlay (Scottish Golf); Stephen Lewis, Brendon Pyle (Golf Foundation); Mike Round (Ladies European Tour)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): John Roger Jones; Andy Hiseman; Caroline Hardy-Evans; Tom Abbott; Barry Pace; Andy Pollock; Dennis Taylor MBE; Barry McGregor; Christine Langford; Lauren Blease; Gareth Hughes; Paul Williams; John Bushell; Nick Lunn; Gary Salt; Julie Otto; Jim McLaggan; John Weir; Geoff Russell

Minutes of previous meeting

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

Matters arising

The Group became a signatory to The R&A's Women in Golf Charter.

Correspondence

- A letter was sent to Georgia Hall, congratulating her on winning the Ricoh Women's British Open 2018.
- A letter was sent to Ryder Cup Team Europe Captain, Thomas Bjorn, wishing him and all involved with Team Europe well for the 2018 Ryder Cup.
- A letter was sent to the family of golfer Celia Barquin, expressing the Group's condolences and sympathies following her murder.
- The Group received a response to Co-Chair Craig Tracey MP's letter to HM Treasury from Rt Hon Mel Stride MP, noting that the government would not be making changes to the rules on VAT and sport for the foreseeable future.
- An email was received from a golf enthusiast welcoming work emphasising the health benefits of the sport, particularly to older people.
- Research on behalf of England Golf on water usage in golf clubs was received and circulated.
- An email was received raising a perceived lack of financial support provided to talented junior golfers reaching international competitions. **Action: Secretariat to liaise with The R&A.**
- An email was received with information on the Srixon Junior League Final at Kings Hill Golf Club.

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- An email was received from the Press Association asking for the APPG's view on the Ryder Cup and The Open not being on the list of protected events for live free-to-air television. A response was provided, which noted that the question was not unique to golf, and that it had been raised at the Group's meetings with the likes of Sky Sports and The R&A.
- Information was received from the European Disabled Golf Association on their work in the sport.
Action: Secretariat to look into future panel discussion on disability golf.
- England Golf's disability manager sent a copy of a recent study on the activity trap, on the fear of disabled people losing their benefits, if they were to be seen as physically active.

The Chair passed on congratulations to Team Europe on their Ryder Cup victory.

Group activity report

Parliamentary

At Defence Questions, Group Vice-Chair Dame Cheryl Gillan MP raised the work of the On Course Foundation in supporting the recovery of injured service personnel and veterans through golf, and invited the Minister to attend the 2019 Simpson Cup, played between American and British ex-servicemen. The Minister accepted the invitation and paid tribute to the work of the On Course Foundation and founder John Simpson in particular.

In a Westminster Hall debate on listed sporting events, John Grogan MP noted that The Open championship was no longer available to view on free-to-air television, and that the only live golf on British free-to-air TV was the final two rounds of the Masters from the United States. Responding on behalf of the government, Margot James MP's opinion was that The Open was much missed from the BBC, but that broadcasters could only spend so much money on rights for different sporting events, and that this needed to be balanced against other genres. The Minister also noted that highlights were still shown on free-to-air television for golf.

At DCMS Questions, Gregory Campbell MP raised the return of The Open to Royal Portrush in 2019. The Secretary of State welcomed the return of the tournament and expressed his hope that it would be a successful championship.

At Business Questions, Nic Dakin MP raised Europe's Ryder Cup win and Tony Jacklin's instrumental role in rejuvenating the competition as its most successful captain ever, further noting his success as the only British golfer to win both the British and US Opens and calling for recognition for his contribution to golf and wider public life. The Leader of the House welcomed this point, and noted that she was sure that many Members from across the House might provide letters of support.

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Group Co-Chair Stephen Gethins MP tabled an early day motion recognising author and golf historian Roger McStravick's endeavours to ensure a fitting memorial to St Andrews golfer and clubmaker Jamie Anderson, who won The Open three times in a row between 1877-1879, with the erection of a headstone at his unmarked grave in the grounds of St Andrew's Cathedral.

Public

Co-Chair Stephen Gethins MP hosted a reception on behalf of the Group and in conjunction with VisitScotland, celebrating one year to go until The 2019 Solheim Cup.

Co-Chair Craig Tracey MP hosted a reception on behalf of the Group and in conjunction with The R&A, Golf and Health Project and ISPAH, celebrating a global consensus on the health benefits of golf.

Co-Chair Stephen Gethins MP met with the new Chief Executive of Scottish Golf, Andrew McKinlay.

The Secretariat met with representatives of BIGGA, England Golf, Scottish Golf, The PGA and Golfbidder to discuss a number of initiatives.

Related to activity, the Group put out press releases on:

- The panel discussion on golf and the environment;
- PING becoming a supporter of the Group;
- The election of officers for 2018/19;
- The Solheim Cup 2019 "Year to Go" reception;
- Becoming a signatory to The R&A's Women in Golf Charter;
- Wishing Team Europe well for the Ryder Cup;
- Welcoming the global consensus on golf and health;

The Secretariat noted the Group's twitter account, @ParliamentGolf.

The Chair discussed the First International Congress on Golf and Health and welcomed support from the Public Health Minister and government. **Action: Group to investigate further work in this area.**

AOB

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

Main business concluded 1740

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Panel Discussion: Robert Maxfield, Chief Executive, The PGA

The Chair welcomed Robert Maxfield, Chief Executive of The PGA.

Maxfield spoke to a presentation, first focusing on the history and heritage of The PGA and discussing the organisation's founding principles. There was also discussion of how the European Tour and Ladies European Tour had been formed and then split away from The PGA.

There was discussion of The PGA's purpose and vision, to serve the industry through its membership, and to support the professional and personal lives of members. The PGA's educational programmes were highlighted in particular as a vital element of the organisation's work, including a full degree programme but also distance learning too. Future educational opportunities were raised, including further education through CPD programmes, and a potential foundation degree with reduced academic volume.

Maxfield discussed The PGA's membership and noted that PGA professionals were now covering around sixty different roles in the industry, and that the organisation had needed to adjust to a membership with more diverse needs. The PGA's work to attract more female members was discussed, as was work with those with disabilities.

The role of the golf professional at the heart of the game was highlighted, and Maxfield noted that The PGA needed to support the changing role of PGA professionals.

The We Love Golf campaign was discussed as an example of The PGA's work to encourage more women, families and girls in particular to play the game. Activity at The Open and the Women's British Open was also discussed, along with The PGA's support and contribution to the Golf Foundation's work.

Maxfield discussed the history of the Ryder Cup from the first match at Wentworth in 1926 to the most recent match at Le Golf National, and noted that the match is now the third biggest sporting event in the world. Significant economic contributions to host economies were discussed, as well as a huge impact on local development of golf. Legacy from Le Golf National, Gleneagles and Celtic Manor was raised.

On the future of The PGA, Maxfield noted that the organisation would be driven by the needs of its members and the industry.

The Chair thanked Maxfield for his presentation and noted his pride that The PGA was based in his constituency, along with the excellent facilities at the Belfry.

Opening to questions, developing The PGA's membership was discussed, and the importance of expanding further education programmes and highlighting other opportunities in the sport.

On The PGA's strategy to get more women into the game, Maxfield noted that more needed to be done to publicise opportunities available, and also to engage young people at an earlier stage, as well as creating more pathways.

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There was discussion around need for change at golf clubs to make these more accessible to women and families, and also the need for more female professionals.

The importance of bringing through the next generation of golf course managers and greenkeepers was discussed, including providing a better pathway. The PGA's close relationships with the GCMA and BIGGA were also raised.

There was discussion of the importance of professionals in connecting with new golfers, and in providing a positive club environment which catered to different needs and provided a hub for the community.

The PGA's relationship with the European Tour was raised and discussed.

On The PGA's vision for growing golf participation, Maxfield noted that a challenge for the industry was the changing way in which golfers played the game, with far more golfers not holding club membership.

The We Love Golf campaign was discussed in further detail.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking Maxfield for his presentation.

Meeting closed at 1931

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