



All-Party Parliamentary Group for Golf

Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 17 January 2016, Committee Room Fifteen

Meeting commenced 1801

In Attendance

Members: Baroness Nye of Lambeth (in the Chair); Lord Butler of Brockwell

Organisational Associate Members: Nigel Freemantle (FSPA); Philip Morley, Doug Poole, James Thellusson (BGIA); Alistair Smith (NGCAA); Sophie Vukelic (STRI Group); Tim Payton (England Golf); Cae Menai-Davis (The Golf Trust); Colin Ballantyne (NAPGC); Richard Shaw (Community Golf); Maureen Roberts, Jonathan Wright (PGA); John Gerrie (The R&A); Jason Stanton (Mytime Active)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Susan McKenzie; Mark Timlett; Katherine Nathan; Mark Heveran; Tom Critchley; Tim Oliver; Duncan Kelso; Glen Halsey; Jonathan Earl; Dan Balme

Secretariat: Jack Baker, Mark Ramsdale

Other: Dr Andrew Murray, Dr Roger Hawkes (Golf and Health Project); Omar Malik (The R&A); Paul Dunstan, Briony Carlyon (European Tour); Daryll Archibald (University of Edinburgh)

Welcome

The Chair welcomed:

- New Honorary Members: Helen Melville
- New Organisational Associate Members: STRI Group
- New Individual Associate Members: Jonathan Earl; Linda Segerstam; Mark Heveram; Barry Pace; Nick Solski; Andy Pollock

Apologies

Members: Karl McCartney MP; Stephen Gethins MP; Scott Mann MP; Rt Hon Cheryl Gillan MP; Jason McCartney MP; Alan Brown MP; Mark Menzies MP; Lord Wallace of Tankerness; Dr Philippa Whitford MP; Lord McConnell of Glenscorrodale

Honorary Members: Helen Melville

Organisational Associate Members: Richard Coleman, Themis Kokolakis, Paul Harrison (Sheffield Hallam University Sports Industry Research Centre); Alistair Booth (Frilford Heath Golf Club); John Clark (PING); Sami Strutt (BIGGA); Richard Haygarth, Andy Lloyd-Skinner (UKGCOA); Sandy Jones, Kyle Phillpots (PGA); Neil Sjoburg (AGCO); Stephen Lewis, Brendon Pyle (Golf Foundation); Lesley Lowrie (GOSTA Training); Fiona Lyttle (GTC); James Reader (Covea Insurance); John McBride (NAPGC); Jasbir Athwal (Waterton Park Asian Golf Society); John Maguire (Richmond Golf Club); Ian Skellern (NGCAA); Roger Moreland (England Golf Partnership)

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Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Gilian Kirkwood; Andy Hiseman; Andy Pollock; Iain Carter; Stephen Alabaster; Geoff Russell; Michael Coffey; Dennis Taylor; Linda Segerstam; Eddie Bullock; Deanne Tager Smith; Richard Payne; Keith Mannering; Caroline Hardy-Evans; James Edwards; Caron Morton; Peter Gwilliam

Minutes of previous meeting

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

Matters arising

- The Secretariat is investigating Group ties and scarves, and should have these available for purchase at the next Group meeting.

Correspondence

- The Group received a number of pieces of correspondence related to restrictions on chemicals from turf professionals. The Group wrote to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, raising these concerns.
- Co-Chairman Karl McCartney MP wrote to the Chairman and Chief Executive of Network Rail, regarding a transport infrastructure issue to be resolved before the next staging of The Open at Royal St George's. The Group received a response from the Chief Executive, explaining the process and offering to meet.
- The Group also received a response from rail Minister Paul Maynard, noting the feasibility study commissioned by Kent County Council and others.
- The Group wrote to Sky Sports Head of Golf, Jason Wessely, thanking him for his presentation to the Group, but also expressing its disappointment at the omission of women's golf. The letter also requested information on discounted subscription rates for golf clubs. In his response, Wessely included information on Sky Sports' coverage of women's golf, and noted a bespoke rate card for golf clubs which sees on average golf clubs pay less than other licensed premises. **Action: Secretariat to organise visit to Sky for Members.**
- The Group also received information from England Golf on their work with Sky on Get into golf.
- The Group wrote letters of thanks to Covea Insurance and those who donated items for the charity auction at the Annual Dinner.
- The Group received an email regarding the closure of North Weald Golf club.
- The Group received email regarding the relationship between England Golf and County Golf Unions, and perceived difficulties for England Golf in implementing programmes. **Action: Secretariat to liaise with England Golf.**
- The Group received a note suggesting The Golf Trust as a future speaker at a Group meeting, and providing some information on their achievements. **Action: Secretariat to look into involving**
- A number of pieces of correspondence were received related to the VAT issue in golf.
- The Group received note of thanks from the Golf Foundation, for the money raised at the Group's annual dinner.

The Chair noted the Group's thanks to the Secretariat for organising a very successful inaugural annual dinner.

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Group activity report

Parliamentary

There were no references to golf in Parliament since the last meeting.

The following early day motions were tabled in the House of Commons:

- HELEN MELVILLE OF THE LUNDIN LADIES GOLF CLUB (Recognising the contribution to the sport that Helen had made, and her receipt of the Group's inaugural longstanding achievement award) – Stephen Gethins MP

Public

The Group held its annual dinner on the House of Lords Terrace and raised over £4500 for the Golf Foundation.

Co-Chairman Karl McCartney MP met with representatives of Network Rail and The R&A, regarding a transport infrastructure issue relating to the return of The Open to Royal St Georges.

Co-Chairman Stephen Gethins MP wrote a piece on the Group for St Andrews in Focus magazine.

The Group sent out press releases on:

- Its meeting with Sky Sports Golf;
- The Group's inaugural annual dinner;
- The HLF announcement and closure of Beckenham Place Park golf course.

At the time of the meeting, the Group had 424 followers on Twitter. The Group's twitter name is @ParliamentGolf.

Forthcoming Activities

The Chair noted dates for future meetings, all subject to change.

- 25 April
- 11 July
- 17 October

AOB

The protection of historically relevant golf courses was raised. It was agreed that the Group would raise this with The R&A. **Action: Secretariat to liaise with Chair to take forward.**

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

Main business concluded 1821.

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Presentation: Dr Andrew Murray and Dr Roger Hawkes, Golf and Health Project

The Chair welcomed Dr Andrew Murray and Dr Roger Hawkes from the Golf and Health Project.

Dr Murray and Dr Hawkes thanked the Group for its invitation to speak, and gave a presentation on the work of the Golf and Health project.

The research undertaken by the project so far was discussed, and it was noted that golf can provide moderate intensity physical activity, which was advocated by the WHO and all Chief Medical Officers. The project had also found that golfers tend to live longer, and that regularly playing golf was associated with reduced risk of a range of chronic diseases. Potential health benefits to spectating were also raised.

Future research priorities were discussed and included spectator benefits, golf and mental health, muscle strengthening and diabetes.

Opening to questions, it was noted that the benefits of physical activity cannot be banked for later life, and that golf is a sport that can be enjoyed by those of all ages.

A range of other potential areas for research, including dementia and autism were also discussed.

Increased health risks to golfers were raised, including potential increased risk of skin cancer.

The importance of opening up golf to a wider range of participants was raised, as were alternative forms of the sport, including 9-hole golf.

As short video was shown, which included interviews with a range of Golf and Health's ambassadors.

Potential benefits to spectators were discussed in more detail. There was a discussion of the work of the European Tour to engage more with spectators, and give publicity to health benefits from spectating.

Mental health benefits to participants were discussed. While it was acknowledged that playing can be stressful in short term, over the long term mental health tends to benefit.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking Dr Hawkes and Dr Murray, and all those in attendance for their continued support. It was agreed that the Group would consider how best it could further support the work of the Golf and Health project, to further promote the project's work to policymakers, and increase awareness of the many and varied health benefits of golf.

Meeting closed at 1902

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