

Customer meeting minutes

Thursday 5th May 2022

Club House

MG, GL, ND, KH, DW

██████████ – update on the Trust.

Break down on the trust financial challenge we will face in the future with a rise in utility bills. This won't affect the maintenance on the course with any works already planned. However future project and investments will be a challenge.

██████████ – update from the course

Brief Intro;

- Been at Poult Wood for Just over 7 months and really enjoying it. Both courses have loads of potential to keep improving.

Staff

- Been quite a lot of staff changeover in the time I've been here
- Tough at times throughout the winter, especially where we lost a couple of experienced greenkeepers. However, our new starters █████ and █████ more than make up for their lack of greenkeeping experience with great attitudes and willingness to learn new skills.

Machinery

- Some long delays but finally received some new machinery at the start of this year;
 - 1) Tractor
 - 2) Leaf collector
 - 3) Sprayer
 - 4) Greens mower
 - 5) Utility vehicle
 - 6) Tractor mounted aerator.
- New kit will massively improve our efficiency and quality of finish we're able to achieve.
- Smaller digger was traded in for a larger digger which will enable us to tackle larger projects in-house, e.g. bunker renovations and drainage work

Maintenance week at back end of March

- Hollow-tined all the greens (to reduce amount of thatch that has built up over the years)

- Quite changeable weather but overall a very productive week and we managed to get all the greens cored and top-dressed
- Been long delays on getting more sand from quarries to top up since maintenance but finally able to put out this week after waiting 5 weeks for more sand to arrive
- Going forward during the season we want to carry out very light dressings every few weeks on the greens to ensure they stay true and smooth.
- We're hoping to aerate the greens, with small solid-tines, every 4/5 weeks as well to ensure we keep decompacting the profile, which will help the roots develop and increase the efficiency of any rain or irrigation we apply.
- Also solid-tined and seeded all the tees and approaches back in March, to thicken up the grass coverage.
- The tees, especially when I started last year, had next to no grass on them and it was really important to us to strengthen these areas before letting play go back on them. We're now divoting them regularly to ensure the tees recover quickly from all the wear they receive.

Jobs/Projects we achieved over the winter:

- 1) Drainage installed on two of our wettest greens, the 1st and 2nd. Meaning these greens will perform much better throughout the winter months.
- 2) We raised the canopies and cleared all the lower limbs through a lot of copses down the middle and bottom end of the site. Will make it easier to get into these areas and play shots from in and around them, as well as making it easier for our machines to get into these copses in the future for mowing and leaf clearance.
- 3) We renovated the pathways from the 4th green to the 6th tee and 6th green to the 7th tee. The pathway by the 6th carry was extended slightly as well.
- 4) When I started there were 4 fairway bunkers that were marked as ground under repair on the 18 hole, as well as 2 on the 9 hole. The 3rd and 6th bunkers had already slightly been filled but needed finishing off. 6th bunker has now been finished and we're just waiting for the seed to establish before opening the area back up.

Aim will be to do a similar job on the 3rd, and the two on the 9 hole. However, the 11th and 16th fairway bunkers will be re-instated.

Quick overview of future winter work and projects;

- More efficient leaf clearance with our new machine

- Installing drainage into the wettest greens (9,10,11,15,17) to reduce the requirement for temporary greens.
- Continue thinning out some of the woodland areas around our most shaded greens (and eventually tees), for example 11 and 17 greens, which usually don't see any sunlight and very little air movement from October through to April.
- Continue to renovate and extend key paths around the course.
- Bunker renovations - refreshing the drainage and re-turfing the bunker faces back to original design.
- Tee renovations, to include leveling and potentially extending some of the tees., e.g. 17
- Long term we're looking at ways to improve the overall drainage of the site. Achieved through; aeration of outfield areas and clearance of drainage outlets, could be tied in with dredging and cleaning up the ditches and ponds, allowing the water to freely move across the site.

Questions asked –

- **How do you prioritise profit and why are the golf members not asked for their input?**

MG – A list is made up on idea from the Trust and then will be looked at the desirability and how easy is it to deliver and put into a list.

We haven't had a customer meeting since before covid, we will aim to hold 2 a year, this way we can gain the feedback from the members as well as going out to the members in a survey, which was last completed in 2019 again due to covid.

- **When will the drainage be sorted?**

ND – this is planned for future work, it's a massive job and will look to get an outside company in to clear ditches, green staff over the winter will continue to choose certain problem areas and do necessary works to improve.

- **Is there a 5-year plan for the course and will this be published to the members?**

MG – Yes, once we have one I cant see why we couldn't publish it.