

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY GOLF LIMITED

Company Number: 13065967

**Minutes of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Company
held at Gaudet Luce Golf & Leisure Centre
on Thursday 8 May 2025 at 7.00 pm**

Present:

Directors

Ian Rone	Chairman
Jon Cray	Finance Director
John Whitehead	President
Clive Werrett	Governance Director
Ian Griffiths	County Secretary

Representatives of Member Clubs

Bransford Golf Club	David Hunt
	M Fowles
Bromsgrove Golf Centre	John Brothwood
	Deryck Hall
Churchill and Blakedown Golf Club	Bob Julier
Fulford Heath Golf Club	Mike Walker
Gaudet Luce Golf Club	R Moran
Hagley Golf Club	Matt Greaves
	Ian Chambers
Hollywood Golf Club	Malcom Smith
Ravenmeadow & Perdiswell Park Golf Club	Andrew Turner
	Tony Solomon
Stourbridge Golf Club	Gerard Abbis
The Abbey Hotel Golf Club	Andrew Davill
Warley Woods Golf Club	Paul Ross
Worcester Golf and Country Club	Chris Lowe

In attendance by invitation of the Board

Alex Bishop	Former WUGC Executive
Jo Gupwell	Minutes Secretary
Chris Gupwell	Honorary Vice President WCG Ltd
Luke Perry	U14 Team Manager
Will Painter	Past President WUGC
Kevin Fee	U18 Team Manager
Brian Peplow	Past President WUGC
Mark Evans	U16 Team Manager
Tony Edwards	Honorary Vice President WCG Ltd
Dave McGillivray	Past President WUGC

1. Apologies for Absence had been received from:

Colin Day	Former WUGC Executive
Simon Green	2nd Team Captain
Anthony Hill	Director
Les Jenkins	Captain WG&CC
Kevin Clarke	Moseley GC
Ian Milroy	Droitwich GC

Absent

Bewdley Pines Golf Club
Cleobury Mortimer Golf Club
Cocks Moors Woods Golf Club
Droitwich Golf Club
Dudley Golf Club
Evesham Golf Club
Halesowen Golf Club
Kings Norton Golf Club
Moseley Golf Club
Ombersley Golf Club
Redditch Golf Club
Redditch Kingfisher Golf Club
Rose Hill Golf Club
The Kidderminster Golf Club
The Worcestershire Golf Club
Vale Golf & Country Club
Wharton Park Golf Club

- 2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 2 May 2024:** These had been circulated prior to the meeting and were taken as read, confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman of the Meeting.
- 3. Minutes of the General Meeting held on 15 November 2024:** These had been circulated prior to the meeting and were taken as read, confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman of the Meeting.
- 4. Worcestershire County Golf Ltd Annual Report for 2024-20254:** This had been published on the website and was taken as read. No questions were raised in respect of the Report as published. The County Secretary referred to mention in the Report of seeking a grant from England Golf to support Community Golf Instructors. This request for a grant had been successful and includes funding for Mental Health First Aid courses. The County Secretary said that he would be going out to clubs to let them know what was involved and asking them to bid for this support.

5. Worcestershire County Golf Ltd Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024:

A copy of the Unaudited Financial Statements had been on the website and were with the accountants for the independent examination.

The Finance Director gave a summary of the financial position, saying that affiliation numbers were estimated to be down 5% on 2023 at approximately 11,820 men and 680 boys. The turnover of £143,000 was down £5,000 on 2023 due to the lower affiliation numbers. Other income received was down £5,000 due to 2023 including a one-off credit of £8,000 from the closure of the Consortium account. The Finance Director pointed out that charges were £5,000 down on 2023 due to lower team expenses. He reported that the profit for 2024 was £25,000 compared with £32,000 in 2023. Turning to the Balance Sheet, the Finance Director pointed out that there were current assets of £228,000 in 2024 as compared with £201,000 in 2023. The bank account balances were £202,000, up £22,000 on 2023 reflecting the profit for the year. The year-end reserves now stood at £178,000, up £25,000. Looking at the current year, the Finance Director pointed out that there would be no increase in affiliation fees for 2025 although he was concerned about a potential drop in affiliation numbers for the current year due to the general economic outlook. He said that it was too early to identify the impact on club affiliation numbers, but thought that there would be a clearer picture by July. The Finance Director said that the draft budget included a drop in affiliation income plus the inflationary impact of costs such as catering etc. and the increased facility fees that were being paid. Based on current assumptions there was likely to be a small loss, but this was not a concern.

A question was raised as on how the grant from iGolf had been used. The County Secretary explained that this had been used for Under 14s coaching and that for the current year it would form the basis for the Community Golf Instructor course. He said that it was now necessary to bid for an iGolf grant. A member commented that this would cover a small number of clubs and not to all 32 in the County. The County Secretary said that grass roots includes Juniors and that England Golf were now being restrictive. The grant would include funding for Mental Health First Aid courses.

6. Notice of Appointment of the County Captain:

The Chairman was pleased to announce that Adam Norman of Moseley Golf Club would continue in the role for 2025.

7. Election of Director:

The Chairman reported that Jonathan Cray had been elected by the Board as Finance Director, having been proposed by Clive Werrett and seconded by Ian Griffiths.

8. Appointment of the Company's Independent Examiner:

It was proposed by the Chairman that Mrs Shona Cutler of Shona Cutler Limited should be appointed as the Company's Independent Examiner. Carried unanimously.

9. County Secretary's and Directors' Report:

- 9.1. County Competitions Hosting Plan 2026:** The County Secretary reported that there were 14 County competitions to be arranged, 2 Midland Golf Region competitions and 15 matches and that it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain the organisation of these. He advised that he was already contacting clubs about hosting in the 2026 season and asked that clubs should look favourably on requests.
- 9.2. Courtesies:** The County Secretary advised that, following the change to the Rule on courtesies, matters had improved. There had been one event so far for 2025 and 23 courtesies had been given which was very encouraging. He said that he would be checking back with the clubs to see how many of the tee times were taken up.
- 9.3. England Golf Voting Member Report:** The County Secretary advised that he had attended the England Golf AGM and General Meeting. He reported that the new President of England Golf was Alistair Booth and the President Elect was Debbie Richards. Two new Directors had been appointed, Joanna Davies and Mark Bardsley. He went on to report on progress with the National Golf Centre build which it was planned would start in November 2025 with the accommodation block being built at the same time for which a loan was being sought. The County Secretary advised that the Gerald Micklem Award which is in recognition of an outstanding contribution to furthering the interests of amateur golf in England had been given to Maureen Clarke.
- 9.4. Midland Golf Union:** The County Secretary advised that he attended MGU meetings on behalf of the clubs. He reported that there would be two Worcestershire clubs hosting events in 2025, the MGU Seniors League playoff at Gaudet Luce and the MGU Seniors Autumn Championships at Hagley. He further reported that the County would be paying 29p per club member by way of an affiliation fee to the MGU.
- 9.5. Clubs No Longer Affiliated in Worcestershire:** The County Secretary advised that two clubs, Sapey and Little Lakes, were no longer affiliated to Worcestershire. However, the County were in the process of talking to Little Lakes about them becoming a new 9 hole club which would become affiliated later in the year.
- 9.6. Course Rating:** The President reported that the programme of re-rating the clubs in the County was continuing and that in 2025 Ombersley, Halesowen, Churchill & Blakedown and Bewdley Pines would be dealt with.
- 9.7. Governance:** The Governance Director reported that a Rule change had been made concerning courtesy of the course and that new documents had been introduced. These were an ED&I Policy which is a requirement of England Golf, Adverse Weather Guidance for County Competitions which is on the website and which were clubs were welcome to look at and take whatever they wish from it. In addition an Alcohol, Drugs and Anti-Doping Policy Statement had been issued. The Governance Director made it clear that this did not mean that the County would be testing players.

The Governance Director reported that he and the President had recently given a Rules Ambassadors Course at which few Worcestershire clubs had been in attendance which he had found disappointing.

The Governance Director advised that he had been working on a presentation to greenkeepers on how to mark their course and explained what this involved.

10. **Unification with Worcestershire & Herefordshire Ladies Golf Association:** The Governance Director explained that the two Boards were seeking to take the next step towards unification which meant looking at the things that need to be in place in order for unification to happen. He advised that a written Resolution had been sent to all member clubs to vote on taking the next step. The Governance Director said that a working group needed to be formed to look at what will be required if unification is to take place. He advised that England Golf had recently produced a new draft Guide on unification and he was pleased to report that Worcestershire appeared to be on the right track. The County Secretary reported that to date he had only received seven returns and that the County needed to receive as many returns as possible by the end of May. A positive vote will see the formation of a working group to determine the business and legal requirements for unification.
11. **England Golf Club & County Support Officer Report – Nick Jones:** Mr Jones advised that he covered Worcestershire, Shropshire, Herefordshire and Staffordshire. He advised that England Golf were trying to build a relationship with every club and that they needed input from everyone and not just club secretaries and managers. He pointed out that there was currently a pilot of 10 Focus Clubs being used across the region to work more closely to influence clubs in their decision-making and ultimately create positive change. He stressed that this would be supporting all clubs. Turning to England Golf's priorities, Mr Jones advised that the launch of the new strategy was imminent which would outline what the goals were and what it was hoped to achieve for 2025-2028. England Golf are carrying out ED&I audits in clubs to make sure that there is ongoing support on this. Clubs can ask for this. Mr Jones advised that following the recent Supreme Court ruling, England Golf had taken a step back with respect to transgender. Turning to SafeGolf, Mr Jones advised that it was necessary to ensure that club officers were fully compliant. Mr Jones then turned to WHS support and talked through some of the problems, pointing out where help and guidance could be found. He advised clubs to reach out to the County Secretary for support initially and then on to England Golf.

A member pointed out that the WHS was a bone of contention to many members and suggested that instead of talking to handicap secretaries, England Golf should be talking to the actual golfers. Mr Jones said that England Golf were looking to do this as soon as possible, but it would be a problem getting people to come and listen. He was told that if England Golf advertised this, people would attend. The County Secretary advised that he was happy to come out to clubs to talk about the WHS. He pointed out that the WHS was not a matter for England Golf, but the R&A. England Golf cannot make decision on this. However, England Golf have said that if they receive enough information about problems they will take these to the R&A.

12. There being no further official business of the meeting, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.45 pm and asked if there were any matters to be brought up in the following Open Forum.

OPEN FORUM:

1. **Registration of Players:** A question was raised about why it was necessary to register all the players in County golf competitions. The County Secretary explained about the benefits of the

new software being used which he thought was working well. He said that he would be happy to hear comments as the season progressed.

2. **Unification of WCGL and WHLCGL:** A member asked whether there was a reason why Herefordshire ladies would not combine with Herefordshire men. The County Secretary said that this would be a matter for the working group and pointed out that there were only five Herefordshire ladies clubs.
3. **Sustainability:** The County Secretary reported that there is a man at England Golf who is passionate about sustainability. He said that it might be possible to get him into the County to give a presentation which he believed would be beneficial if it could be arranged.
4. **2025 Under 16s Boys and Girls Open Amateur Stroke Play Championship at Hawkestone Park:** Brian Peplow reported on this annual competition with which he is closely associated and had been involved in arranging for 10 years. He wanted to mention a few of the players who had been outstanding – Amelia Bryan of Guadet Luce, Niamh Bush of Droitwich, Harry Evans of Worcester Golf & Country Club, Alex Perry of Droitwich, Oliver Badger of Hagley, Hayden Sarfo of Worcester Golf & Country Club and Jake Jeff-Johnstone of Bromsgrove. Mr Peplow advised that all the players had behaved exceptionally well. The Chairman said that it was encouraging to hear about talented young players and thanked Mr Peplow for all he did. Mr Peplow also wished to point out that in organising the competition, Ping had been approached for trophies. They had provided 12 golf bags and had come each day to support the competition.