

# **THE UNIFICATION OF WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY GOLF LTD. AND WORCESTERSHIRE & HEREFORDSHIRE LADIES COUNTY GOLF LTD.**

This document has been prepared to inform member clubs that, following on from previous work, the Boards of WCGL and WHLCGL have agreed to take the next step towards the merger of both companies to create a unified County body. This step is to formally approach clubs with the justifications for a merger, and to seek and address member club's views and concerns. Member clubs will then vote on the proposal to set up a working group to define a new business structure and understand the legal procedure needed to form a unified County body.

## **PROPOSAL**

### **1. Aim**

The aim is to create one body which represents all amateur golf in Worcestershire. This will provide a single point of contact for member clubs giving more effective support, provide more opportunities to grow the game and encourage greater participation in golf.

### **2. Justification for merger**

The Boards have identified the advantages and disadvantages of merging as outlined below. The advantages:

- A unified voice for amateur golf in the County with a single vision, common purpose and strategy for developing and promoting golf in the County;
- Improved service to clubs – listening to and supporting clubs;
- A single point of contact for WHS queries;
- Economy of Scale – harmonising affiliation fees, sharing resources etc.
- Access to more volunteers to help with developing and promoting golf in the County – competitions, teams and matches, player development and educational programs for clubs, players and volunteers;
- More effective communications including a shared website, to improve the perception of golf resulting in increased participation in County competitions, events and access for golfers of all levels to meet ED&I obligations;
- A commitment to providing equal opportunities for staff, players and volunteers;
- Making golf more attractive and accessible to the public especially, women, juniors and hard to reach groups; and,
- Opportunities for additional income generation and sponsorship.

The disadvantages:

- Any merger would be of unequal partners – men's and women's unions, associations and companies have different board structures, finances and competition / match commitments;
- A new company would be set up entailing costs (solicitors fees etc.) and the rewriting of Articles, Rules and policies;
- Agreement on a new board structure would be needed that equally represents both the men's and women's interests;
- Although there would be a merger on paper there would be a period (2+ years) before true unification was achieved; and,
- There might be resistance from affiliated clubs and individual members.

However, WCGL and WHLCGL have been working together for some time such that:

- The Articles and Rules of WCGL and WHLCGL are very similar;
- The mandatory England Golf documents are the same and other policies, procedures and guidance are being shared;
- Affiliation fees have been harmonised;
- Joint competitions are being played – Junior Championships and 'mixed' competitions;
- Volunteer resources for Course Rating and Refereeing duties are being shared; and,

### **3. Next Steps**

A working group will be set up to define a new business structure and the legal procedure needed to form a unified County body. The working group will be made up of no more than two members of each Board and two affiliated club representatives (one male and one female). Priorities for the working group will be to formally engage with England Golf for their support and to develop and set a timetable for the merger. It is anticipated that the working group will take approximately twelve months to report its findings.

Once the business structure is defined and the legal procedure understood, there will be a second vote by Member clubs to formally approve the merger. The working group will then produce a timeline for unification and manage the merger including the recruitment of the new board and volunteer committee members.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation with this proposal and anticipate that all member club will agree with and support our vision to unify WCGL and WHLCGL.