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# WELCOME

I am very pleased to introduce you to Growing the Game of Golf in England, our updated strategy for England Golf.

You'll see that we're building on the hard work and commitments of our 2014-2017 strategy and adding a fresh focus on things we believe will make the biggest difference in turning around the sport we're so passionate about.

There's no doubt about recent progress. We've seen growing numbers of golfers make their way through the talent pathway to success on the global stage. We've run and enjoyed outstanding championships for the best amateur players. We've now also started to see participation stabilise and the decline in membership slow down. But there is still much to be done.

Our aim now is to work even harder to support county bodies, golf clubs and golf facilities up and down the country so they can get more people of all ages and abilities playing the sport and maximise their own potential. Clubs have reported some very positive results from our business support in recent months and this has encouraged us to do more of this targeted, bespoke work with clubs who recognise the need for change.

The perception of golf remains our primary challenge. We know it's good for health and mental wellbeing and that it promotes the social connections that enrich life, and we know it provides opportunities for relaxation and competition for all ages. Golf could do more to sell the benefits it brings and we are determined to do that.

My early golfing memories are of amazing summer days spent with my grandfather, who taught me to play. I love that golf is one of the few sports that allow you to learn and have fun across the generations. We need to share these positive experiences and get the message out there that golf is a wonderful sport for all.

This is the driver behind our new strategy and we're looking forward to working with you to inspire and enable more people to play – and to grow the game in England.

Nick Pink Chief Executive April 2017 We are the national governing body for amateur golf. We work at the heart of golf in England, supporting and empowering a thriving community of players, counties and clubs to get the most out of the game we all love.

## WE'RE HERE TO HELP

# **3.6m**

adults played golf in England in the last year

971k people over 16 play golf at least twice a month, 2.2% of the population

5th biggest participation sport in England

UK golfers spend

£4.3bn

a year on the game, 14% of all consumer spending on sport

The annual social value of golf participation in England, representing the cost of improved health, happiness, wellbeing and education performance is...



Over 1,900 golf clubs and...

650k

members are supported by England Golf

The 55 championships we organised last year attracted...

# 6,368

players who were supported by over 1,000 volunteers from the sport's estimated total of 40,000

Our website has...

9.2m

total page views a year and we have 27,600 Twitter followers, 4,200 on Facebook and 2,800 on Instagram

We are supporting...

169

players in our regional and national talent pathway squads

#### Supporting golf in England

- National marketing campaigns
- National and regional team management
- Championships, competitions and events
- Talent identification and development
- Maintenance of rules, standards and handicapping system
- Continuous engagement with industry partners
- Partnering with commercial organisations
- Public affairs
- Business support and education
- Initiatives to increase participation
- HR, legal and governance support
- Member Benefits Programme

## WE'RE BETTER TOGETHER

Golf is having to find its place in a fast-changing world. Which is why finding ways of doing things differently, and better, is a big part of what we enable and support. By working together we're able to test new ideas quickly, learn from each other continuously and spread the word about the developments and improvements that will make the most difference to the game's future.

730

clubs uploaded activity onto the Get into golf website in 2016, which introduced.

**32,595** beginners to the game and led to...

**5,000** new club memberships.

.

We offer support to...

**1,900** 

clubs around legal, disciplinary and governance issues every year.

# over **1,000**

clubs have received business support as part of our Training and Education programme.

# OUR VALUES

Our values are the touchstone for how we do things and how we want clubs, counties, players and partners to experience our organisation.

## HONEST

Acting with integrity, trust, fairness, reliability and transparency.

## INCLUSIVE

Welcoming and enabling everyone to be involved with golf in England.

## RESPONSIBLE

Being personally accountable and passionate about driving a strong future for golf.

## EXCELLENT

Continuously improving, exceeding expectations; setting and encouraging others to adopt the highest standards.

## SUPPORTIVE

Working together to make golf better for everyone and inspiring people to achieve their goals.

#### In 2014 we developed our first national strategy to help golf in England rise to some serious challenges.

Membership was declining. Many clubs were facing financial and business problems and the perception of the game was proving damaging. We decided to lead from the front and set out recommendations for actions that would help us all raise our game.

## HOW DID WE DO?



NEW MEMBERS for england's golf clubs from national initiatives

**EE25** GENERATED FOR GOLF CLUBS THROUGH NEW MEMBERS

COUNTIES TO MERGE THEIR MEN'S AND WOMEN'S UNIONS ASSOCIATIONS

SUPPORTED

**15,200** NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND COUNTY SQUAD PLAYERS SUPPORTED

CHAMPIONSHIPS AND EVENTS ORGANISED ACROSS THE COUNTRY OUR UPDATED STRATEGY 2017/21 =

1.

It's now time to identify exactly what golf needs from us over the next four years. To do this, we've looked back to make sure we bring the best practices and programmes with us and we've looked forward, listening to the golf community's concerns and priorities to create a shared vision for the future and a refreshed strategic plan.

# WHAT THE GOLF COMMUNITY TOLD US

We organised regional workshops, meetings and an online survey to find out from thousands of managers, captains, secretaries, PGA professionals, county organisations, volunteers, voting members and stakeholders around the country what they think about the state of the game and what's important to them.

There's a need to see members as customers who can vote with their feet and go elsewhere.

Take a greater lead in encouraging more radical developments in the format of the game.

Clubs need to be open to the public more and change dress codes and other barriers holding the game back.

Clubs need to be open to change, to make the game more accessible for women, children and families and make golf more about social and healthy activities.

# WHAT WE NEED TO FOCUS ON NOW

The golfing community believes there is still a lot of work to be done if golf in England is to realise the potential we all know it has to thrive and grow.

There's consensus on where this work needs to be concentrated: reaching more new players, particularly women and girls, and retaining more existing players. This lays down a challenge: we've got to get a better understanding of players, our customers, and get better at providing what they want. We believe this is the key to unlocking the changes we need to see. More women and girls involved in golf. Rising membership revenues and flourishing modern clubs, welcoming all with appealing membership and playing offers. We have put this focus on the customer at the heart of our new strategy to give us the greatest chance of being able to...

> grow the game of golf in England.

# OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

We're setting out to grow the game of golf through seven strategic objectives. Developed in consultation with the golf community, six of these objectives are developed from our work since 2014.

One is brand new – and will boost the impact of them all.

# NEW

#### **BEING CUSTOMER FOCUSED**

We aim to put everyone who has an interest in golf, from independent players and supporters to club members and investors, at the heart of everything we do.

By understanding each customer's motivations and behaviours and responding to their differing needs and wishes, we will engage them in a way they want, expand their involvement and grow the game.

#### STRONGER COUNTIES AND CLUBS

Our ambition is to help counties and clubs strengthen their business models and internal operations and become more resilient and responsive to customer needs. Enabling golf clubs to survive and thrive is the route to more members and players and a more buoyant sport.

#### **EXCELLENT GOVERNANCE**

Our goal is to become a model of best practice delivering our strategy in line with our values. We will work alongside the golf community to make sure structures, policies and procedures promote the highest standards, resulting in stronger management and supporting sustainable growth.

#### IMPROVED IMAGE AND PROMOTING THE BENEFITS OF THE SPORT

We are intent on challenging the negative perceptions of golf, promoting the positive health, wellbeing, social and economic benefits of the sport and raising the profile of the England Golf brand. We will share information across the golfing and wider communities and make best use of all media to build our case through compelling evidence and customer experiences.

#### MORE MEMBERS AND PLAYERS

Our goal is to inspire more people to take up golf, to play more often and to join a golf club. Membership will always be a core part of our sport but the health of golf in England now demands that we explore ways of attracting more independent players into golf clubs and become more adept at retaining their business, ideally but not only by converting them into members.

#### OUTSTANDING CHAMPIONSHIPS, COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS

Our aim is to target all levels of golfer with a wide range of well organised and professionally promoted competitions and events. From top-level championships to regional competitions and other events, activities like this are essential to the golfing experience and the expansion of the game.

#### WINNING GOLFERS

We aim to support and develop elite golfers. We manage a performance pathway which aims to produce the best amateur golfers in the world. We also support the transition of individual into the professional game. The more winners we produce, the more players we hope to inspire.

# WOMEN AND GIRLS

Getting more women and girls into golf is essential if we're to grow the game in England.

This is the group with by far the greatest growth potential for our sport and the group that must be fully represented within the game if it's to modernise and thrive.

So we're setting our sights higher than ever, and will focus more intently than ever, on encouraging female participation, removing barriers to representation and putting the welcome mat out.

# Getting more women and girls into golf: the case for change

STATES OF CLUB MEMBERS ARE WOMEN

# GIRLS REPRESENT BOYS REPRESENT

## THE AVERAGE CLUB IN ENGLAND HAS 21 UNDER-16 MEMBERS **LESS THAN 3** OF WHICH ARE GIRLS

THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF WOMEN MEMBERS PER CLUB HAS STAYED STATIC FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS AT

# 640,000 WOMEN AND GIRLS SAID THEY WERE INTERESTED IN TAKING UP GOLF

#### Golf is a game for everyone

There's nothing inherent in golf that makes these statistics inevitable. Everyone of any age and gender can appreciate the personal benefits golf brings, from excitement and relaxation to healthier living and friendship, as well as the opportunities it brings for family fun across the generations and, unlike any other sport, its handicap system allows people of different abilities to play and compete together. Even the traditional separation of golf bodies is becoming a thing of the past, with men's and women's organisations now united at national and international levels and the R&A and the Ladies Golf Union merging in January 2017.

# It's time to make change happen

We know what we can achieve when we put our collective minds to it. Of the 32,500 beginners introduced to the game via Get into golf, for instance, 43% were female. The time is right to make this issue our top priority. To make sure that it guides every plan we make and directs every action we take to achieve our strategic objectives.

It's not just about designing membership schemes to cater for women's lifestyles and taking marketing messages to the places they go. It's also about making sure women's voices are heard everywhere from the club committee to the county board. Only when female golfers have access to the same resources and roles as men can we truly promote the sport as a game for all.

# DELIVERING OUR STRATEGY

# BEING CUSTOMER FOCUSED

Putting everyone from players to volunteers at the heart of everything we do

#### What we'll do

- Promote equality and diversity throughout golf in England and continuously develop our understanding of barriers to the sport experienced by under-represented groups and what would encourage them to play
- Roll out an effective digital engagement strategy with communications and offers tailored to different customer needs for improved relevance and response
- Develop a better understanding of the volunteer workforce in order to implement an effective recruitment and retention plan

- Develop research and insight into golf in England and share this with local and national partners to help develop the sport in line with our strategy
- Continuously develop our understanding of players' motivations and behaviours through insight and segmentation so we can respond to their differing demands

#### How we'll measure success



Improved golfer and stakeholder satisfaction with England Golf performance year on year measured through surveys



**Help clubs** understand their market position and understand their customers



**Increased customer engagement** with the number of members registered on our benefits programme up by 30%

# STRONGER COUNTIES AND CLUBS

Helping counties and clubs become more resilient and responsive to customer needs

#### What we'll do

- Implement a club-centric approach across all areas of the organisation
- Develop relationships with appropriate partners to improve business-to-business support that provides financial and other benefits to golf clubs
- Improve effectiveness of England Golf communications to county bodies and clubs that positively support the game of golf
- Develop the existing training and education programme for counties and clubs

- Support the development and delivery of county action plans that contribute to the seven strategic objectives
- Encourage the creation of merged county bodies responsible for all golf activities
- Develop a governance code for golf and specific governance guides for club and county bodies
- Lead on the development of handicapping, including any changes to the Central Database of Handicaps

#### How we'll measure success



50% of counties merging their men's, women's and golf development organisations to create one strong body for golf in each county



An increase in the Net Promoter Score for golf club and county engagement measured through an annual stakeholder survey



**Targeted active engagement** with 1,300 golf clubs leading to an increase in membership by 50% of clubs

# EXCELLENT GOVERNANCE

Adopting standards, policies and procedures to become a model of best practice

#### What we'll do

- Embed the England Golf values throughout the organisation
- Ensure we maintain the highest standards of governance and exceed our legal and HR obligations in order to become a model of best practice
- Develop workforce plans for our staff and volunteers with dedicated resource

- Gain Investors in People accreditation
- Promote diversity in our leadership and workforce and all forms of participation in golf
- Ensure we retain a strong financial position, explore all appropriate income streams and ensure that all investment demonstrates value for money

#### How we'll measure success



Compliance with the Code for Sports Governance by 1 January 2021



**Gain highest standard of accreditation** for Sport England Equality Standard



**5 commercial partnerships in place** with national brands to increase our exposure and reach IMPROVED IMAGE AND PROMOTING THE BENEFITS OF THE SPORT

Promoting the benefits of golf and challenging negative perceptions of the game

#### What we'll do

- Grow and develop a public affairs programme targeting key influencers to raise awareness of the positive benefits of playing golf
- Promote the social, health and wellbeing benefits of playing golf with a particular focus on the promotion of women and girls
- Implement more targeted and effective marketing campaigns

- Establish and maintain strong commercial partnerships that are aligned to our strategic objectives
- Secure national, regional and local media coverage of our activities and events

#### How we'll measure success



Increase the public profile of England Golf with more Ministerial and MP engagement



**10% of our income** to be derived from commercial partnerships



Improve communication with counties, clubs and golfers

# MORE MEMBERS AND PLAYERS

Inspiring more people to play golf, to play more often and to join a golf club

#### What we'll do

- Implement marketing campaigns and programmes to support recruitment and retention, including the promotion of alternative playing formats
- Deliver specific programmes aimed at women, people with disabilities, children and young people to grow the game
- Develop relationships with stand-alone ranges, par-3 courses, adventure golf and other facilities that support growing the game
- Encourage an innovation culture with key partners, sharing good practice through a range of media
- Develop a national club volunteer plan with key stakeholders
- Support clubs and counties, national and local partners in developing and improving players of all abilities

#### How we'll measure success



**Increase the number of golf club members** in England to 675,000



Increase the number of people playing golf in England at least twice a month to over 1 million



Increase the proportion of female golfers to 20%

# OUTSTANDING CHAMPIONSHIPS, COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS

Organising first-class events for every level of golfer and every type of customer

#### What we'll do

- Provide appropriate support to regions, counties and clubs for their championships, competitions and events, such as templates and training events
- Enhance the organisational structure to put England Golf at the heart of national and regional amateur championships and events
- Lead the national implementation of the new rules of golf in order to support the golfing community
- Enhance the development of championship volunteers at regional and national levels through training and incentives
- Increase the engagement of clubs and their members in our championships
- Build a national and regional referee network through educational recruitment and retention campaigns

#### How we'll measure success



**Increase the satisfaction ratings** of players competing in England Golf championships



Championship panel consists of **20% women referees** 



Full field for England Golf women and girls' championships by 2020 season

# WINNING GOLFERS

Supporting and developing elite golfers

#### What we'll do

- Support the progression of talented players through the pathway from clubs, counties and regional to national level
- Develop personalised development plans for national and regional squad players
- Carry out a full review of our performance programme
- Identify appropriate competitive opportunities at national and international levels
- Maintain a continuous professional development programme for coaches, managers and volunteers
- Support the transition of elite amateur golfers to the professional game through the give-back agreement

#### How we'll measure success



**Improvements in performance** in World Amateur Golf Rankings for our elite men and women



Average handicap reduction of 1.4 among regional under 16 boys and girls. Average handicap reduction of 4 for county level boys and girls



**90% attendance** at continuous professional development sessions by England Golf national and regional coaches

# PARTNER

"England Golf not only provides very good strategic direction for the sport, it also has a first-rate attitude to partnering that means we have clarity about our roles and complete confidence in each other as we work together to bring young people into the game and make that crucial transition between welcome and retention."

Brendon Pyle Chief Executive, The Golf Foundation

## GOLFER

"Winning Gold in the 2016 European Team Championships topped off my England Golf career in a way I could only have dreamt of. I owe so much to the tireless work of England Golf, my coach and his 100% belief in me. From the very beginning of my days in York to the very end in Iceland he pushed me to be the best player I can be."

Bronte Law Professional Golfer

## COUNTY

"We decided on incorporation because the time was right to stop burying our heads in the sand and look at the possible implications of not protecting volunteers from personal liability, but we could not have done it without the assistance of England Golf, whose guidance meant that what could have been daunting was made simple."

Trevor Reynolds President, Devon Golf Limited

## CLUB

"England Golf's online mapping tool has helped us target our marketing better, giving insights into the behaviour of groups of potential golfers and the ability to profile our membership. This is exactly the kind of help golf clubs need."

Richard Haygarth Owner, Maple Leaf Golf Group

# LET'S GROW THE GAME OF GOLF

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