

The R&A Women in Golf Charter

A commitment to a more inclusive culture within golf

We, **Houghton le Spring GC** call on everyone involved in golf to play their part in developing a culture that values women's involvement in every aspect of the sport, from participating to pursuing a career.

- Our aim is to increase the number of women and girls playing and working in golf.
- To achieve this goal and to enable women to flourish throughout golf, we recognise the need for a fundamental shift in culture. There is a clear ethical need for change and the potential economic benefits of growing the sport through more women and girls playing are substantial.
- The R&A commits to playing a leading role in this process and to working with affiliates, partners and the wider golf industry towards achieving this goal.
- In signing this Charter, we Houghton le Spring GC commit to making tangible efforts to develop a welcoming and inspiring environment for women. We will do more to attract women into golf, to remain, and to have rewarding careers.

The Charter:

- Is a statement of intent from the golf industry and Houghton le Spring GC, to unite and to focus gender balance at all levels
- Commits us all to supporting measures to increase the number of women, girls and families playing golf
- Calls for positive action to encourage women to pursue careers in all areas of the sport
- Recognises the need for change that creates an inclusive environment within golf and our golf club

Signatories commit to activate this Charter by:

- Developing and implementing an internal strategy for enhancing gender balance at every level
- Establishing senior management responsibility and accountability for gender balance and inclusion, which is discussed and reviewed at committee/board level with Houghton le Spring GC
- Strongly advocating more women and girls playing and working in golf.
- Working with key stakeholders to develop and embed a more inclusive culture.
- Promoting the Charter and our goal of encouraging more women and girls to play golf and work in golf.

How we at Houghton le Spring GC plan to achieve this

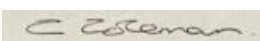
1. Deliver two initiatives annually targeting women/girls and families that are aligned with key England Golf campaigns
2. Promote a membership pathway, for women/girls and families to progress within the club
3. Have designated Champions/Mentors within the club who can assist and support new participants and members
4. To achieve 30% female representation on our Club Committee by actively promoting these positions and maintain 30% female representation on our Club Board of Directors
5. Continue to stage and develop male and female competitions on the same day
6. Continue to maintain / improve on course toilet facilities for females
7. To become a SafeGolf accredited club and ensure policies and procedures remain up to date
8. Appoint a designated Charter Champion within the club who can assist with the promotion and reporting of the charter

Signed on Behalf of Houghton le Spring GC:

Club Secretary: Bernie Munroe
Date: 08.02.21

Signed: 

Charter Champion: Chris Coleman
Date: 08.02.21

Signed: 

These objectives will be embedded into the club business plan and reviewed on an annual basis, to ensure that this inclusive commitment remains robust.

	Commitment	Current Situation	How this will be achieved	Date/Progress/Targets/Comments
1	Deliver a minimum number of two initiatives each year targeting women/girls and families that are aligned with key England Golf campaigns	In 2019 the club delivered; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 4 May 2019 Girls Golf Rocks Open Day. In July the previous PGA professional operated a Ladies Academy Membership In April / May Junior previous assistant PGA professional operated Golf Passport weekly coaching sessions. 	The club is planning to deliver; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A series of girl's taster sessions Girls Golf Rocks programme The sessions / programme will be promoted through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Club social media platforms Local social media platforms Local schools and their social media platforms Other local organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls taster sessions offering 12 places to be delivered April – May 2021. Girls Golf Rocks programme offering 8 places to be delivered April – May 2021.
2	Promote a membership pathway, for women/girls and families to progress within the club	As of December 2020 our club has; <p>Lady members - 29 Intermediate lady members – 2 Golf Fits All lady members – 5 Junior girl members (age 17 and under) - 9</p> <p>Our club currently has a 6-hole Academy course which also has a 3-bay driving range. The Academy course offers individual and family memberships as well as pay and play</p>	<p>Women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The club to develop the membership pathway for women especially the transition from the academy membership to full membership. Introduce buddy scheme (see section 3) Look to develop a recruitment programme for women <p>Girls</p> <p>Build on the existing pathway through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising profile of the junior pathway on club website and social media platforms Promotion through local schools <p>Current girls' pathway;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wee wonders – academy course Blue tee group – 6-hole competitions off blue tees (scores tracked in readiness to move to Academy) Academy – 12-hole competitions with tees allocated through ability and informal handicaps. Junior Competition – 18-hole handicap qualifier competitions <p>The club has its own dedicated Junior Facebook page which a key factor in the operation and success of the junior section.</p>	<p>Women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathway established and promoted through club website and social media platforms. Buddy scheme implemented with 5 buddies appointed Recruitment initiative / s or programme / s for women established and publicised through club website and social media platforms. Development and delivery of a new recruitment programme for women. 4 women recruited. <p>Girls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 girls to move from Taster sessions / Girls Golf Rocks programme into the club's junior pathway programme. Junior pathway programme published on club website and social media platforms.

			The club's JLO and her team are a major factor in the current operation and success of the junior section.	
3	Have designated Champions/Mentors within the club who can assist and support new participants and members	To Introduce buddy scheme to support the women and girls who will be going through the pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the role of a golf buddy to lady members and recruit volunteers. Provide the new buddies access to the Golf Hero's E-Learning. Promote the golf buddies on the club website and social media platforms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have a minimum of 5 golf buddies recruited by May 2021.
4	<p>To maintain 30% female representation on our club board of directors</p> <p>To achieve 30% female representation on our club committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our club has 3 board of directors (Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer) this consists of 2 men and 1 lady. Our current club committee consists of 14 members consisting of 10 men and 4 women (4 = 28.6% and 5 = 35.7%). The club's Greens Sub Committee has female representation. Positions on the club committee and sub committees are actively promoted through the lady secretary who directly e mails all lady members to encourage them to stand for club committee and subcommittees. The club's current election process involves club secretary informing all members the date of the AGM along with the number of committee members required. Members are asked to propose and second nominee / s by a set date in accordance with club articles of association. The club does not have any formal written role descriptors. 	<p>By promoting the need for more women to stand for election to club committee at AGM though;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lady secretary via direct e mails all lady members Invite club Chairman to ladies' pre-season meeting <p>By promoting the need for more women to stand for election to club sub committees though;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lady secretary via direct e mails all lady members Invite club Chairman to ladies' pre-season meeting. <p>Develop role descriptors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop role descriptors for board members, committee members and sub committees using England Golf Governance Guide and Governance Pack resources. 	<p>Maintain and increase female representation by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing female committee members re standing for election. Continue with direct e mails to female members to encourage nominations. Invite club Chairman to ladies' pre-season meeting to advocate more female involvement in the running of the club not just on committee but on sub committees too. Publish role descriptors on club website and promote through intelligent golf platform.

<p>5.</p>	<p>Continue to stage and develop male and female competitions on the same day</p>	<p>Our club currently during the Summer competition period;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male and female competitions on the same day (Sunday). Where possible competitions are aligned so both men and women are playing the same format (note men and women play for their own trophies). • On designated Wednesdays all club members can enter the 9-hole Howler Competition. The top 4 from each competition, regardless of membership category, progress to final. • Three Captains days are held each year with separate men's, women's and junior competitions (all single stableford) held on the same day followed by a presentation. • In 2020 the club introduced a Volunteers Cup single stableford competition (to recognise all the volunteers who stepped up during Covid). This competition will continue as a club competition open to all. • Holds two competitions per year where pairs / teams are made up of a lady, man, senior and junior. • Holds 6 mixed pairs competitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually competitions secretary, incoming men's and ladies' captains and junior liaison officer meet to agree the fixture dates formats etc for the following season. This also gives an opportunity to add / refine competitions and add new initiatives. • All competitions promoted through club website / Facebook and Intelligent Golf notifications as well as direct e mails to lady members. 	<p>Progress tracked through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club committee minutes / captains' reports. • Captains subcommittee minutes. • Ladies committee minutes • Promotion / draws / results published on club website / Facebook and Intelligent Golf notifications.
<p>6.</p>	<p>Providing access to on course toilet facilities for females</p>	<p>Our club currently has a female only soak a way toilet accessible from 7th, 12th and 16th tees. It is a fenced structure with a gravel floor.</p>	<p>Work with the Greens subcommittee to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a maintenance schedule • Update signage 	<p>Progress tracked through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greens subcommittee minutes. • Female representative on Greens subcommittee.
<p>7.</p>	<p>To become a SafeGolf accredited club and ensure policies and</p>	<p>a. Adopted the required club policies b. Appointed a Club Welfare Officer c. DBS checks are obtained for relevant</p>	<p>The management team at the club has approved all the policies and procedures.</p>	<p>Keep a register of when the key policies and documentation needs to be updated and when key members of</p>

	procedures remain up to date	club personnel d. Club staff and volunteers have obtained any required qualifications e. PGA Professional(s) are included on PGA SafeGolf Coaches Register	All documentation is up to date on the England Golf portal and notify our local England Golf Club Support Officer. We expect to complete by 31.03.20. Our annual review date is 31 March	staff and volunteers need to undertake relevant training
8	Appoint a designated Charter Champion within the club who can assist with the promotion and reporting of the charter	To capture and record a baseline of all the key measures we are committing to within the charter including membership data for our club to determine the impact of the charter	Formally share progress and updates/changes to the charter with England Golf moving forward	To provide annual measures to help determine the impact of the charter
		To appoint a charter champion utilising the role description provided. The champion will be responsible for the promotion, activation and reporting on the progress of the charter.	The club will formally display the charter commitments internally and externally – noticeboards, website, social media, membership packs and utilise the England Golf press release	The charter Champion to provide England Golf with an annual report on progress on commitments made