CHAIR REPORT

It always seems slightly odd to be drafting a report for a November AGM in September when our financial year runs from April to March and we have much of the calendar year ahead of us. For clarity in this report, I will be mostly referencing the results of our financial year ending March 2026, unless stated otherwise.

Let me start by reflecting on the strategic plan which was released just over a year ago and is summarised as follows

To continue to improve Ellesborough Golf Club, so it is considered as the best members golf club in Buckinghamshire, a club with more than just an excellent year-round course.

This will be achieved by; maintaining, protecting and developing our assets, by diversifying our revenue streams and by normalising the demographics of our membership.

We aim for our membership to continue to enjoy our club and trust they will join us in creating a welcoming and friendly club for members and visitors alike.

One of the questions I was asked this year with regard to the vision was; what does success look like? I think this is a very interesting question and for each of us the answer will be slightly different, we are, after all, talking about a vision. For me we will achieve this vision when most golfers in this area want to join Ellesborough Golf Club because they have heard that, not only is it a challenging and interesting course, but the club is friendly, has great facilities, great food and is an enjoyable place to spend time.

The practical part of the strategy is clear, we will protect and improve the clubs physical assets, particularly the course and club house. This is primarily funded by diversifying our income streams and making sure we maintain a full membership.

We have made some encouraging progress on diversifying our income, last financial year our income from Green Fees and Societies together was up by 55%. We have continued to benchmark our income against similar local clubs and despite our significant improvement we still only receive about 60% of the 'visitor revenue' enjoyed by the average of our peer group. Club membership is encouraging, having a full membership (with a waiting list) means that our subscription revenue has grown by 13%. Noting that our annual subscription members payment rose 4.2% much less than the rise of over 13% in our peer group. The unusual demographics noted in our strategy document has also started to change – in plain English we have more younger members.

These data are encouraging and show we are moving in the right way and the comparative information shows us that we have plenty of scope to improve things further. Our current area of focus is on catering as we believe with the significant improvement in the quality of our food that we have seen in the last six months will create opportunities to continue to diversify our income.

As is often the case when implementing a new strategy, for every two steps forward you finish up taking a step backwards. For us the step backward was driven by warm, sunny weather !!! Not usually an issue for golf but as we are all aware, sometimes too much of a good thing is not welcome. The unusually hot summer weather reduced visits to the golf course for members and visitors alike and consequently less food and drink was required. The final impact is not yet clear, but the gains we had made in visitor income and food and beverage income have certainly been eroded during the summer. Frustratingly our revenue from societies will also be reduced because of the unexpected loss (for one year) of the 'Dayla Day'.

We believe we are moving in the right direction implementing the initiatives that we outlined in the strategic plan at a steady and appropriate pace. This year we have also spent some time working behind the scenes to update and streamline processes which range from how we select Office Bearers, including the Club Captain, Life members etc so that we have a clearer, fair and transparent process. We have updated our finance systems and under the direction

of Andy Mee have instigated a revised budgeting and forecasting process including more in depth reviews of our activity. We are also looking carefully at ways in which we can accelerate the fundamental pillars of our strategy (developing the course and clubhouse) and plan to have options for the members to consider in the first half of next year.

When Bryan Godwyn released the strategy under the pillar of membership there was an initiative which said 'Promote a welcoming and inclusive culture'. We believe that to be considered as the best members golf club in Buckinghamshire will need to evolve our club culture.

Historically our club had a reputation for being unfriendly to outsiders and there are many stories (perhaps apocryphal) of how visitors were treated. Bad reputations improve very slowly, and while they are improving, they are very easily damaged. I firmly believe the club is currently a friendly place, and my experience has been positive when interacting with a wide range fellow members. The Board certainly receive less complaints about 'other members' than in the past but even one complaint is one too many. We ask that you help us in trying to make Ellesborough Golf Club even more special by championing the values and etiquette of golf. On the course, being sensitive about ensuring you are not decreasing the enjoyment of others, particularly if they are playing more quickly. In the clubhouse being friendly and mindful of others would be much appreciated.

This report would not be complete with recognising the hard work of those who support the club. The board and the various supporting committees have many volunteers who give their time selflessly to help run the club. I would particularly like to thank both the Ladies Captain, Pam Munday-Cripps and the Club Captain, Adrian Steele, for their hard work this year. They have both contributed to the Board and have been tireless in supporting their charities and particularly the Summer Ball. The roles of the Captains' are critical to the club and the energy and effort required should not be underestimated, we thank them for both for their service to the club.

Below you will find the evidence of their hard work with the reports of the Captains and the Board members.

CLUB CAPTAIN REPORT

It has been an absolute honour to serve as your Club Captain over the past year. My tenure was interrupted when I became the fortunate recipient of an NHS replacement knee. In hindsight, the timing for surgery was not too bad: at that point the course, and our opportunities to play, were very much at the mercy of the winter storms. Little did we know then that the summer ahead would become one of the warmest and driest for many decades!

After three months or so of feeling rather sorry for myself — regularly self-medicating with red wine — I returned to the course. I began by using a buggy, but before long I was walking, or perhaps limping, the fairways again. In general, my golf has been limited to around two rounds a week, although there was one occasion when I was foolish enough to play six rounds in seven days which wasn't one of my best decisions! Ian Oakes, and Bryan Godwyn before him, set a very high bar for the number of rounds played by a Club Captain during their year. I freely admit that with my new knee I was never going to reach such heights.

As I have noted, the weather has presented real challenges throughout the year. Our new Head Greenkeeper, Matt Mackenzie, and his team have worked tirelessly to present the course in the best possible condition which was most evident on Captains Weekend, Charity Day and Club Championship. They deserve great credit for everything they have achieved.

I have played as much golf this year as I have felt comfortable with, turning out for the Midweek team and B team in numerous matches, as well as for the Mixed team in the annual quad match against Gerrards Cross, Northwood and Sandy Lodge.
I am pleased to report that our opponents are always highly complementary about the welcome they receive from the Club and the condition in which the course is presented. Because I have had to limit my play, I have not been able to join as many roll-ups as I would have wished. The team managers and roll-up organisers do a tremendous job in helping us

all enjoy our golf, and their efforts are greatly appreciated. The roll-ups are an important welcoming element of Ellesborough and help drive a thriving and connected community. For that reason alone, many choose to join the club. This year we have welcomed 52 new members and have a healthy waiting list of 50 plus.

Captains Weekend
The 2026 Captains Weekend was held over 27 and 28 June, with markedly different playing conditions across the two days. Saturday brought the continuation of the previous week's very high temperatures, with baking sunshine and a recorded high of 30°C. By Sunday morning, conditions had changed considerably, with temperatures in the low teens, scattered showers and a stronger wind. Fortunately, the sun returned later in the day, providing a pleasant finish to the weekend.

The weekend was very well supported, with 255 members taking part, comprising 215 men and 40 ladies. Ryan and Emily provided excellent service at the barbecue, ensuring everyone was well fed, while several volunteers assisted me in serving beer and Pimms throughout the weekend. The Sunday evening hog roast and prizegiving was also well attended, with more than 100 members present, although unfortunately some prize winners were unable to join us.

Seventeen holes were sponsored commercially, with one additional hole generously sponsored by members Anthony and Wendy Smith. I am very grateful to all our sponsors for their support. Together with members' sign-in contributions and cash donations, the event raised £3,300 for Cancer Research UK and Alzheimer's Research UK.

There was some excellent scoring over the weekend. Alan Cripps won the men's nett competition with 44 points, while Bev Coates won the ladies' nett competition with 40 points. Liam Abbott and Cathy Armstrong took the gross prizes.

Charity Day
Charity Day 2026 was held on 1 August and was very well supported, with a strong field of 147 members and guests taking part. The event raised more than £6,600 for our chosen charities, reflecting both the generosity of those who attended and the positive spirit in which the day was played.

A dedicated team of staff and member volunteers helped make the day a great success. Particular thanks go to Mark Squire for hosting "Beat the Pro" on the 10th, to Andrew & Cath Pilkington and Alan & Pam Munday-Cripps and Shirley Roebuck for running the "Wheel of Fortune" on the 5th, and finally to Andrew Gardner for arranging for Professional Golfer Harry Goddard to host "Buy a Pro's Drive" on the 15th.

The winning team, with an excellent score of 100 points, was Jenny Stevens, Elaine Bramley, Fiona Coverley and Rosalind Connor.

Club Matches and Club Competitions
The Scratch, B Team and Midweek teams have once again represented the Club in the usual programme of inter-club matches, achieving mixed results across the season. I have been pleased to play several times for both the B Team and Midweek Team, although, for some reason, my services have not yet been required by the Scratch Team! The Scratch Team (competitive league) have played 5 matches and won 3, the B Team (friendlies) have played 7 and won 2, and the Midweek Team (friendlies) have played 14 and won 7. As is often the case, our home form was strong, with most defeats coming in away fixtures. Very well done to everyone who has represented the Club in these fixtures, and particular thanks go to the respective organisers, Austin Siggers, Andrew Pilkington and Graham Kemp, for their time and commitment.

Club Championships are the golfing highlight of the year, and congratulations must go to our worthy winners:

- Mens Arron Rogers (Gross), Jordan Carroll (Nett)
- Ladies Cathy Armstrong (Gross), Tina Allen (Nett)
- Seniors Phil Pearce (Gross and Nett)

Social
The highlight of the social calendar was Celebration Night (Summer Ball in all but name), held on 13 June. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend due to a longstanding prior engagement in Portugal. However, I understand the evening was a great success, and many members have expressed both their appreciation for the event and their wish to see it repeated in 2027.

Quiz Nights have continued to be popular and well-supported events. My thanks go to John and Angela French for their organisation, good humour and skilful handling of the occasional disputed answer.

Club Restaurant evenings have also been well supported, with Chef Matt Larcombe and his team delivering consistently high standards. Congratulations and thanks go to the whole catering and bar team for their continued efforts.

Charities
At the time of writing, we have raised approximately £10,000 for our two chosen charities, with the final total expected to increase further following the Silent Auction. Cancer Research UK and Alzheimer's Research UK will benefit directly from the generosity shown by members and guests, and the Club can be rightly proud of its support for these very worthwhile causes.
I would also like to offer my sincere thanks to the members of the Charity Working Group, who have generously volunteered their time, energy and expertise throughout the year: Pam Munday-Cripps, Andrew and Cath Pilkington, Shirley Roebuck and John Gardner. Their enthusiasm and commitment have made a significant contribution to our fundraising efforts, and I very much hope the Charity Working Group will continue as a permanent part of the Club's charitable activity.

Reflection on Year and Looking Ahead
The Club is in fine fettle and is very well organised to meet the challenges of the coming years. James Turner and the Board under the of counsel of David Allsop are doing a great job of running things and it has been a pleasure to be a director with them. I must also note that I am grateful for the helpful guidance of John French our new, but not that new, President!

I'd also like to highlight others that I haven't already mentioned:

- Peter Doncaster and the clubhouse team who keep things running so smoothly.
- Angela Turner who helped so much with our charity work and kept me on schedule.
- John Scheu and his team for providing such a welcoming environment.
- The Ladies Captain Pam-Munday-Cripps who I have enjoyed working with and for her valued support.
- My Vice -Captain Andrew Pilkington who has been a most able and enthusiastic deputy.

Adrian Steele – Club Captain

LADIES' CAPTAIN'S REPORT

It has indeed been a pleasure and an honour to represent the Ladies Section of this esteemed club during the past year. It has been a year of up and downs. I tackled some tricky issues, during the year but this did not detract from the pleasure of being Captain.

I hired a small charity orchestra to play Christmas tunes which was a lovely start to the Christmas season We had a very successful Christmas meal and golf, although the weather for the golf wasn't the best! 84 ladies enjoyed the meal and entertainment including a quiz, a game and an amusing speech by Simon Turner.

Drive In
The Drive – in took place on the 1st tees with plenty of supporters. There was a great atmosphere in the Clubhouse where refreshments were provided.

Taster Day
The Academy Committee held a taster day in April which was successful in introducing new ladies into the Academy.

Ladies' Talk
An ex-Chelsea Flower Show Exhibitor gave a fascinating speech in March.

Bucks County Ladies Golf Association (BCLGA) Competitions
Our lady member Lois Shoosmith has nearly completed her year as County Captain. She has overseen her young team win the South Area County Week and come 3rd In the National Finals and very well done to our Cathy Armstrong who did a sterling job as 1st Team County Captain.

It has been a very successful year for our teams. The Winter Scratch team have won their way back into the Premier Division, the Summer Silver A Team have been narrowly pipped by Harewood Downs to 2nd place in Division 2, The Summer Silver Scratch B Team came mid table and the Summer Bronze Scratch have heroically jumped from Division 3 last year to Division 1 next year by winning their league. Sue Clutterbuck and Sally Spence can collect their trophy at the County AGM. Thanks to these ladies and also to Mary Hipperson, Karen Burrows, Liz Bennett for organising the teams so well.

Once again, our luck ran out with our Bucks Shield matches as our tricky opponents, Chartridge Park, ended up winning in the first round. Thanks to Jean Garrett for organising the teams.

Friendly Matches
Overall friendly matches have had mixed results, as is normal! These fixtures have given all standards of golfers the opportunity to play in relaxed and friendly competitions. It has been a very enjoyable aspect of my lady captain's role, and one which is a super part of our golfing calendar. Our new fixtures (which I organised last year) with Henley and Moor Park were much enjoyed. Many thanks to Cath Pilkington (Vice-captain) and Sharle Norton for organising these 19 fixtures; which is no mean feat!

Well done to Sue Clutterbuck and Tina Allen who will go forward to represent the club in the Daily Mail Foursomes.

Ladies Championships
It was a pleasure to play on Sunday morning for the first time this year. 24 people played on Saturday with Cathryn Comben winning the day with 69 net and 22 ladies played on Sunday managing the full 36 holes, with Jackie Wells coming out on top for that day. On Sunday we supplied a sandwich lunch for the competitors. Congratulations to Cathy Armstrong for winning the gross competition overall, and to Tina Allen for winning the overall net trophy. We are considering ways to encourage more entries to this prestigious event.

Away Trips
We ran a very successful trip to Stoke -by-Nayland where fun and laughter were the main objectives! The venue was much appreciated as were the food and staff.

The Golf Day at Winter Hill was a very hot one, with scorched fairways and hot competitors! 51 ladies attended. Unfortunately, the catering was below the standard we were expecting, but we are working to provide some recompense.

Ladies Captain's Day
Another rather warm day was enjoyed by all. Nearly all our ladies got thoroughly involved with the pink theme; with pink balloons for mulligans, chipping with Ollie and a very hard putting competition with Alan. The pink afternoon tea was delicious, and pink prizes were certainly well received. A new pop-up shop called Famara came to show off their wear/wares! The amount raised for charity was £298.00. Thank you to everyone for their support and kind messages.

The Invitation Day
This warm and friendly event was organised beautifully by Sue Clutterbuck and Tina Allen. We were looking for extra people to bolster our numbers; and are looking at a slightly different way of operating but we are keen to continue to stage this very enjoyable event next year. The raffle raised a creditable 320.00for charity. The Surprise Shop provided a great opportunity to upgrade our golf gear!

The Ladies Open
This year we were not only full of entrants (80 ladies) but we had a waiting list! June Winter orchestrated a brilliant Open with wonderful prizes, The weather was perfect and the course was on the mend! So many visiting ladies complimented us on the way the Open was run – the friendliness, the food, the prizes, the flowers, the course etc. The ladies came from 21 different clubs including 4 Ladies' Captains and the Berkshire County Captain. The halfway house was, as always, delicious, well-presented and served. We had very many excellent raffle prizes and this raised an amazing £550. A well-deserved congratulations to June and all her helpers for making this an event many are determined to return to next year!

Communication
The Ladies Business WhatsApp has enabled communication with all the ladies to be an easy and efficient way of getting messages to everyone involved. Thanks to the previous Ladies' Captain for setting this up. There have been some Newsletters but fewer than previously, as news can be distributed more easily by WhatsApp. Our Ladies Committee Meeting Minutes have been circulated in hard copy and on the WhatsApp platform, giving members easy access to what has been discussed and agreed. Thanks to our secretary Julie Mercer for her work here.

Women In Golf
The R&A WIG Charter is now an important part of the Club and is on the Club's Website. The WIG champion, Karen Young, ran an introductory event for girls this year, which had a pleasing take up.

Social
I was asked what sort of a social event I would like this year, and I opted for a Summer Ball. I organised a committee and after many meetings much planning, we put on a magnificent event including a transformation of the clubhouse, a saxophonist, a splendid marquee, flowers, canapes, a delicious meal, a fun casino and a great band playing in a star-spangled marquee! A great time was had by all! Thank you to Nikki, Sharle, Sarah, Suzanne, Andrew, Peter and Simon for all their hard work.

Charity Day and Charity Donations
Adrian Steele and I, plus our committee, worked hard to achieve much sponsorship and prizes for this event; including a glossy brochure to advertise these. The Wheel of Fortune and the Pros provided some fun and amusement. It was a great day for the club members and for our charities. I would like to sincerely thank the membership for the outstanding donations given to our charities (Alzheimer's Research UK and Cancer Research UK) this year. As a community, which is in many ways privileged, it is a powerful and satisfying way to help charities, which are reliant on such donations, to make a difference.

The Ladies Section
We are lucky to have very many keen, helpful and friendly lady golfers in our section. Volunteers are many but we could use even more! The competition team spend many hours each week organising our many competitions so many thanks to them. Our Academy team spend many hours of their time bringing on the new-to-golf ladies. These ladies will mostly filter down into becoming full golf members, as has happened this year. Many thanks to our Academy Committee and buddies. Thanks also to my wonderful gardening group who have re-vamped one garden and tidied up another. I would encourage any members who have not yet been involved in any amount (big or small) of the organisation of our section to put yourself forward- as we need you!

In Summary
I am proud to have been given the opportunity to lead this great community of lady golfers for this last year. I have very much enjoyed working with Adrian who has encouraged me to share the microphone, the workload and his dad jokes! I have welcomed the insight into the workings of the Board and valued the support of the office and catering staff. I hope I have encouraged the club to move forwards in some ways. It has been a great honour to be Ladies' Captain and all that this entails.
Thank you.

Pam Munday-Cripps – Ladies' Captain

HOUSE REPORT

On-going development's
Due to all funds being allocated to the new Reservoir very little new projects were started in 2026 apart from maintenance.

Four new parasols were purchased for the summer months and provided cover when needed. These were the best and with the heaviest bases that were on the market. We still have, and always will have, the issue of being in a very windy spot. This has caused the parasols to be lowered to protect them and members, when the breeze gets too much. We are currently looking at bolting the parasols to the patio, to make them less liable to fall.

Please be patient if the bar staff lower them, on hot days. This is purely for health and safety reasons.

It is worth noting that only the bar staff are allowed to raise and lower the parasols. They must also not be moved as they are locked in place.

Ladies changing rooms
The Ladies entrance is currently undergoing an update to smarten it up and also to provide better lighting to the steps.

Greenkeeper's Cottage
After Dave Goodchild retired, the Cottage was inspected to ascertain what works needed doing prior to Matt, Head Greenkeeper, moving in. This work will commence within the next 3 weeks.

For the future
Even though there have been no major projects on going we have been looking at future work that could be done to enhance the club and members/guests experience.

I have been reminded by many members that we are primarily a golf club. BUT, as will be seen by our accounts, we do not make enough surplus funds each year. The downside of this is that we struggle to fund major improvements to the course and to the clubhouse.

Most of our income comes from Subscriptions, Green fees and societies. There is only so much that we can increase prices before we are uncompetitive and/or lose members. Therefore, we must look at where we can increase our revenue elsewhere.

I have said for years we should maximise the potential of the amazing views we have either through our own events or renting out for functions. To do this we really require a Spike Bar, a better equipped kitchen and separate toilet facilities to avoid using guests the changing rooms. To that end I have been working on various designs to see what can be achieved using the existing clubhouse but with alterations and additions.

This is a long-term vision, probably 5-10 years, but needs to be in the club's development plan.

Works needed

- One of the club's objectives is to be as near Nett Zero as possible. One way we can do this is to fit Solar panels and batteries to the clubhouse. This would cut down our electrical cost's. Payback on this scheme is 5-7 years. After that we are in profit.
- Our car parks need re-surfacing as many areas are in a bad state plus white lines need to be added.
- Every year I am asked to look at the issue with Ladies, who wish to use their toilets, having to walk around the clubhouse and back. This causes delays on the tees and stress to some ladies. Permission has been given, in the summer months to use the front entrance to gain access to the changing rooms. This becomes a bigger problem in the wet winter months with muddy shoes.
- I have looked at a design to have a Half-way house and toilets adjacent to the 10th tee. This would solve 2 problems.
    - Easy access to toilets.
    - In line with other clubs, we would have a proper halfway house not a window into the kitchen.

I have seen guests and members standing at the window, trying to purchase drinks/food but unable to gain attention from staff. This is NOT a fault of the kitchen staff. They are busy serving food in the clubhouse.

If we want the club to be professional this is something we will need to look at. All these future projects are dependent on when and if funds are available.

Social

Since our new Matt our Head Chef started there has been a notable improvement in the quality of the food that we are now able to serve.

I have received many comments from members supporting this. Unfortunately, the menu prices had to be increased. There are many factors that have influenced this.

- The higher cost of gas and electricity
- Increase in minimum wage
- Increase in National insurance
- Increase in Fuel
- Wage increases
- Cost of food supplies going up

All these affect our costs, but we are still competitive with outside organisations.

Question: How can you have fun and support the club at the same time?

Simple. Support our social functions. Easy. Social functions are important to the club. It is a great opportunity to meet other members, enjoy yourself, plus all profits that are made are re-invested back into our club to increase our income to enable us to spend more on the course and clubhouse.

The committee and I endeavour to keep all our events affordable. We cost the food, entertainment, staff costs, gratuity and a minimum profit margin.

Events

We run a large range of events each year:

- Quiz nights
- BBQ's
- Race nights
- Night Golf
- Restaurant Nights
- Entertainment evenings with live music and food.
- Xmas draw night
- Children's Christmas party

We are currently looking for 2027 adding:

- Family BBQ afternoon. Bring the whole family along for a fun afternoon with games and puzzles to keep the younger members of your family entertained which allows you time to enjoy a drink and delicious food.
- Bingo Nights. Lots of requests for these to be run.
- Games nights.
- Casino nights.

Not every one of these events will appeal but if you are able to attend at least one or two events it will make a big contribution to moving the club forward and you never know, you might enjoy it.

Please, if you can, support the social committee's hard work and support your club.

Summer Celebration
This year we held our Summer Celebration. This was a big success with over 130 members and guests attending. The event went well and finished at 1am. Following that, a few weeks later, we held a BBQ which again was well attended. My huge thanks to all the committee ladies and gents who gave a large amount of their time to ensure the Summer Celebration was such a big success.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members who have supported the social events we have held over the years, and I look forward to seeing you at the up-and-coming events.

Simon Bearman. Board Member for House

GOLF REPORT

The golf committee comprises a dedicated team of volunteers who generously contribute their time to enhance the enjoyment of golf at Ellesborough. I want to express my sincere gratitude to Karen Burrows, Bev Hodgson, Peter Jacobson, Simon Shelly, Adam Piddington, David Holland, and, of course, the ever-present James Turner (GM).

This year, our goals closely aligned with those of previous years:

Course Congestion Solutions
Course congestion remains a primary concern raised by our members. We've conducted surveys and gathered valuable data on course usage, with special thanks to John Shepherd and Paul Collier for their assistance. Our course, while a joy to play year-round, attracts a full membership of enthusiastic golfers. This leads to peak times—particularly Friday and Saturday mornings—where congestion is more pronounced.

While we appreciate the enthusiasm of our members, we must all consider the following:

- Shared Space: Remember, Ellesborough is our golf course, and fostering a welcoming environment benefits everyone.
- Pace of Play: If you find yourself unable to complete a full round, consider playing fewer holes to accommodate others.
- Allowing Others Through: If another group is behind you, please step aside when it's appropriate to let them through.

We're actively exploring ways to enhance your golfing experience, including a hybrid booking system that shows promise. The golf team will continue to address this important issue.

Competitions and Communication
We strive to keep you informed about upcoming competitions, club matches, and course closures. We are also reviewing playing divisions to ensure they align with your interests and

needs. There's always room for improvement, and we appreciate your feedback as we work to enhance our communication.

Increasing Income from Course Activities
We are actively working to increase income through various activities, such as promoting green fees for visitors, arranging society days, and hosting corporate events. A key part of our long-term strategy is to reduce our reliance on member subscription fees while balancing the need to protect playing rights.

We will continue to promote quieter times on the course and key events that can generate significant funds for the club. For example, the Clutch Tour will return next year as a two-day event, expanding on its success from this year.

Final Thoughts
Thank you for your comments, ideas, and support throughout another busy year. We have a fantastic golf course that can be enjoyed year-round, and our active membership fosters a vibrant community. With mutual respect and a spirit of cooperation, we can all enjoy our golf and create a harmonious environment.

Bryan Godwyn – Board Member for Golf and Strategy

GREENS REPORT

At the start of the membership year, the Greens Committee set itself three core goals: improving water security; implementing the recommendations contained within the long-term course strategy; and improving the presentation of the course so that it is equally enjoyable and challenging for all members.

But before getting into those, I would like to pay tribute to the greens team we are fortunate to have at Ellesborough.

An extraordinary greens team
Matt Mackenzie took over as Head Greenkeeper last summer, following Dave Goodchild's retirement after more than 40 years at the club. At the same time, Carl Cordwell became Deputy Head Greenkeeper. Together, they have brought a whole new level of experience and data-led science to both the way the course is maintained day to day and how it is improved over time.

Matt and Carl work alongside an overall team of seven greenkeepers, and the work all of them do to keep the course in such great condition year round is nothing short of amazing. It was particularly pleasing to see so many of you recognise the quality of their work in the membership survey conducted this July. We are all looking forward to seeing the results of their efforts continue to be evident out on the course.

The entire Ellesborough family was shocked by the tragic loss of our greenkeeper, Alan King, who died at the age of 59 last December. In his couple of years at the club, Alan had become a hugely popular figure with both the team and the membership. And it wasn't just at Ellesborough — more than 400 people attended Alan's funeral to honour his larger-than-life character. I'm delighted that we now have a bench out on the course to remember him.

Water security – a slow and long-winded journey
The summer we have just experienced has brought the subject of water security very much to the fore, and most of you will know of the club's intention to build a reservoir to the left of the 14th fairway.

When completed, the reservoir will provide ample water for irrigation year round and will be filled over the winter entirely from the club's borehole and rainwater.

Of course, keen observers will have noted that the proposed reservoir site is still an area of blue-staked rough rather than glistening water, as the club continues to deal with a myriad of complications relating to our planning application.

As I write this, we are putting the finishing touches to a further set of survey data to be submitted to Buckinghamshire Council, and we have been given a new determination date of the end of October. Hopefully, there will be positive news to share at the AGM itself.

In terms of construction, we are planning for work to start in late summer 2027, with the new reservoir completed and full in time for 2028. That leaves us with next summer to get through using our existing combination of borehole and mains water.

Long-term course strategy – a marathon, not a sprint
Members may recall that approximately 18 months ago we published our long-term course strategy, completed for us by European Golf Design. That report now sits in the Club Documents section of the HowDidiDo app and is something the Greens Committee reviews each year before deciding which recommendations to take forward.

The strategy document provides us with a template for course improvement that we will keep coming back to. Over the past couple of years, that effort has involved significant reworking of the bunker complexes on the 5th, 8th, 9th and 10th holes. In addition, we have already changed the shape of several fairways and greens in line with the recommendations made.

Other than completing the work on the left-hand bunker of the 8th hole, which was delayed from 2025, this year's winter works programme is still to be confirmed while we await the results of the bunker remediation trial, of which more below.

Balancing enjoyment, challenge and playability for everyone, all year round
With 655 members, it can often feel as though we have 655 opinions on what makes the perfect course. But the Greens Committee has attempted to listen to as many of you as possible about where you would like to see improvements to the overall presentation of the course.

The crunch comes with the playing surfaces themselves, and the results of the recent membership course survey — completed by more than 50% of you — show that most members feel we are playing on significantly above-average greens, approaches, tees, fairways and rough. The greens team's work to produce further improvements here will continue unabated.

Over the past year, we have invested in new benches, tee markers, flags, tee bins and seed boxes across the course. Anecdotal feedback from many of you suggests that these have been well received.

We have also focused on our environmental strategy over the past year and are close to earning GEO Foundation recognition for sustainable golf course practice. Obviously, a new reservoir will help enormously here, but we have also invested in new wash-down facilities to avoid harmful chemicals entering the ground, and introduced a range of more scientific fertiliser and other chemical regimes that not only reduce usage but improve turf quality.

Of course, none of us can do much about the weather, and this summer was quite a challenge for the course. The very nature of a hilly downland course was always going to make things difficult once the grass stopped growing in the heat. And while the greens team did an admirable job in keeping our greens, tees and approaches alive, some areas of the course really did suffer.

From late September onwards, the greens team are over-seeding the entire course with several tonnes of grass seed. With hotter and drier summers set to become more frequent, we are planning for this to become a more regular part of our annual maintenance programme.

Finally, going back to the membership course survey, it was no surprise to see members' views on our bunkers being such an outlier. While a total rebuild of all 70-plus bunkers on the course

to modern standards is unaffordable in the short term, we are trialling new sand and raking patterns on the 16th, as well as in one of the practice bunkers. The trial will run until the end of the year, at which point a decision will be made on whether to dig out and replace the sand in every bunker across the course.

A bit like painting the Forth Bridge, work on the course is never really completed. It just gets better over time.

Frank Durden – Board Member for Golf

MEMBERSHIP/MARKETING REPORT.

Membership/Marketing
I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those members who chose to support the club with their subscriptions at the beginning of the year, and those that have joined Ellesborough Golf Club throughout 2026.

We are currently at full membership and have 56 people on our waiting list, which is a very positive position for the Club.

During the year we have looked at ways of keeping those on the waiting list involved with the Club, while making sure that anything we offer does not affect our existing members and their enjoyment of the course.

The Marketing Team has continued to work on the Club's Brand Book and various marketing materials. We have learnt along the way that having a clear and simple brief from the start makes the whole process much easier.

It was also good to see Ellesborough featured in the summer edition of Wendover News, highlighting the work we are doing to encourage girls and juniors into golf.

Harry Allsop joined EGC as our Communications and Marketing Coordinator during the year, giving us additional support in this area.

The Club's signage application was also completed and submitted to Bucks Council and we are currently waiting for it to be processed.

Juniors
The Junior Committee has been busy this year trying to grow the Junior Section. We successfully achieved Junior Hub Accreditation with England Golf and The Golf Foundation and received a £1,000 grant from BB&O as part of this.

One of our main aims has been to encourage more girls into golf. Our Junior Girls Taster Day in June was a great success, with 23 girls aged between six and twelve attending. A number went on to take up discounted group lessons, and some children from Griffin House School also joined our Summer Camps.

Following this, the Junior Committee and John Scheu have been looking and exploring ways at developing a closer relationship with Griffin House School, which we hope will introduce more youngsters to the Club.

We also held a very enjoyable Junior Fun Competition with 18 Juniors and Cadets of varying abilities taking part. It was particularly nice to see families coming along and getting involved.

Overall, there has been some really good progress with the Juniors this year and hopefully we can continue to build on this.

Looking Ahead
With the Club at full membership, our priority is to look after our existing members while keeping those on the waiting list interested and involved.

For the Juniors, we want to build on this year's progress, encourage more girls into golf, develop our relationship with Griffin House and explore other local schools and continue to provide enjoyable opportunities for Juniors and Cadets of all abilities.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has helped with Membership, Marketing and Juniors during the year. Much of what we do relies on members and volunteers giving up their time, and their help is very much appreciated.

Zoe Ludlow – Board Member for Marketing and Membership