



## **BCLGA Business Plan 2020-22**

### **1 Introduction**

This Business Plan has been developed during 2019 by the Buckinghamshire County Ladies Golf Association Executive Committee following guidance from England Golf and discussion with club delegates.

It identifies the current status, objectives and core areas of activity of the Association, its perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and its financial situation. The Business Plan then sets out a programme of development over the next three years, with specific targets for 2020.

This Plan is issued in February 2020 and will be used as a working document against which to monitor progress.

### **2 Current Status, Objectives and Core Areas of Activity of the Association**

The Buckinghamshire County Ladies Golf Association (hereafter referred to as the BCLGA) was formed in 1923 to encourage and promote the interests of women and girls amateur golf at all levels in the county of Buckinghamshire. It attracted a prestigious first President (Lady Astor) who served from 1923 to her death in 1964.

Membership of the BCLGA is automatic for all women and junior girls who are paid up members of Buckinghamshire clubs affiliated to England Golf. The annual mandatory per capita levy is collected from their club on our behalf by BB&O. Membership stands at 2395 as at October 2018.

The BCLGA is an unincorporated Association with voting members. It is not a commercial business but is run as a "not-for-profit" organisation on business-like methods and standards.

The objectives of the BCLGA are set out in the current BCLGA Constitution (October 2018) as follows:

- i. To encourage and promote the interests of women and girls amateur golf **at all levels** in the County of Buckinghamshire.

- ii. To employ the funds of the BCLGA and implement funding/grants from national and other bodies to further this purpose.
- iii. To arrange and regulate the County Championship and all other competitions held under the auspices of the BCLGA.
- iv. To select and support all County Teams.
- v. To uphold and abide by the Rules and Articles of England Golf (EG).
- vi. To uphold and abide by :
  - i) The Rules of Golf and Amateur Status as laid down by the R&A Rules Ltd (R&A)
  - ii) And the Unified Handicapping System (CONGU) or any other Handicapping System authorised by the National Governing body.
- vii. To be responsible for the election of Officers of the BCLGA and a Voting Member/Representative for the BCLGA at all EG and Regional meetings.
- viii. To establish, implement and abide by:
  - i) A child protection policy and procedures
  - ii) A disciplinary procedure
  - iii) And any other policies, codes and procedures as may be advised by EG

In reviewing these objectives, the Executive Committee considers that the phrase "at all levels" in item i. above is key to our core purpose.

These ongoing underlying objectives for the Association need more specific short-term objectives against which the Executive Committee can be held accountable to the membership. The objectives for 2020 - 2022 are set out later in this Plan. The Business Plan will need to be reviewed from time to time to ensure that it is staying relevant to external developments within the golfing world.

Having looked at the key areas of activity for County Associations suggested by England Golf, the BCLGA proposes to adopt the following:

- A **Talent Development** to include
  - junior golf from pre-handicap to transition to County first team
  - identifying, supporting and developing successful teams at County, Second and Senior levels
  - supporting clubs in developing new adult golfers
- B **Golf Regulatory Issues** to include
  - Ensuring correct handicapping systems within clubs in the county
  - Course rating
  - Ensuring widespread knowledge of the Rules of Golf
- C **Competitions** to include
  - Running the County Championships (main, junior, senior)
  - Running other BB&O/Midland South competitions in rotation
  - Promoting inter-club golfing opportunities (leagues, knockouts, one day meetings)
- D **Governance Issues** to include
  - Financial strategy
  - Insurance

- Business planning
- Succession planning
- Legislation issues (e.g. GDPR, Safeguarding, Disciplinary procedures)

## E **Promoting Good Practice sharing between clubs**

The Business Plan will be lodged on the website for all BCLGA members to access. A copy will be sent to England Golf.

### 3 **Current Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats**

The current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats have been identified with input from club delegates. The main points are:

#### **Strengths**

- ◆ Good size of county and membership, giving reasonable financial stability and affluent membership
- ◆ Excellent professional coaching arrangements for County representative squads, leading to success within Midlands South at junior, second and first team levels
- ◆ Well established Committee infrastructure, with expertise in various golfing areas
- ◆ Engaged Delegates structure, including coaching sessions for delegates
- ◆ Variety of competitions available to the membership
- ◆ Talent development structures are good

#### **Weaknesses**

- ◆ Geographical spread of the County and ageing/declining membership profiles
- ◆ Poorer at attracting support from the higher handicap membership, with declining entry levels for some competitions
- ◆ Difficulties with keeping in communication with all members
- ◆ Less successful with Seniors level teams than other levels
- ◆ Weaker at succession planning and bringing on new Committee members
- ◆ Previous lack of Business Plan and measurable targets
- ◆ More flexibility needed with some of the historic competitions to make them more suitable for today's membership
- ◆ Lack of induction for new delegates

#### **Opportunities**

- ◆ Use website to communicate with members, through regular newsletters/updates
- ◆ Promote good practice between clubs at Delegates meetings, spotlighting club successes
- ◆ Develop support networks for Vice-Captains and Delegates
- ◆ Look for sponsorship to underwrite talent development and other expenditure
- ◆ Organise more inclusive events periodically (like the Gala Day)
- ◆ Work more closely with other organisations to share expertise and costs

#### **Threats**

- ◆ Increase in social golfers who are not club members

- ◆ Increase in working ladies and the need to adapt competition and committee structures
- ◆ Increased costs of competitions through lower levels of financial support from clubs

#### **4 Financial Situation**

The BCLGA has reasonable reserves in hand. A deliberate decision was taken in 2018 to utilise some of the excess reserves on two schemes: a County Grant scheme (total value of £5000 per annum) to help BCLGA members who need some financial assistance to continue/develop their golf and a Gala Golf Day as a one-off event aimed at all BCLGA members, delivered in July 2019.

Going forward, based on current BCLGA membership trends, ordinary operating cost levels and continued successful performance of the County team in reaching the National Finals, there is likely to be an excess of expenditure over income in future years.

As part of setting up a three year Business plan, the Executive have discussed a financial strategy and reached the following conclusions:-

- Reserves should be held at around £25,000 (equivalent to approximately 6 months expenditure)
- Affiliation fees should be raised in November 2020 from £6.50 per head to £8.00 per head - this recognises the drop of income from sale of County Cards but includes the free issue to all eligible membership
- Competition entry fees for the standard competitions should be raised as they have been static for many years
- The County Grant scheme will be discontinued
- A sponsorship/marketing plan should be developed to bring in additional income over the next 3 years

#### **5 Three Year Development Programme**

The Executive Committee has identified areas of improvement in each of the five core areas of activity which should provide a focus for review and action over the next three years. These are set out below, followed by the priorities for action in 2020.

##### **5.1 Talent Development (TD)**

- Better pre-handicap system
- Better communications with club junior organisers/coaches
- Some format for pre-handicappers to "join" BCLGA
- Develop 3 geographical areas (North - Abbey Hill, Middle - Aylesbury Park, South - Wexham/Wycombe Heights)
- Ladies' sections involving junior girls automatically
- Improved retention of Intermediates
- Better ways of spotting Senior talent - get-togethers across clubs

- Second team/Senior team coaching sessions
- CMW and NFW - Winning teams

## 5.2 Golf Regulatory Issues (GRI)

- Successful introduction of World Handicapping System
- Succession planning for Handicap Adviser and Course Rating Assessor
- Work with neighbouring counties to establish a Rules/Referees Panel
- Increased number of ladies doing rules knowledge courses - At least one ambassador per club

## 5.3 Competitions - promoting greater participation in County golf (C)

- Championships - encourage increased participation, possibly consider new category to find Middle handicap champion - 18 to 28 handicap,
- More golf for the 50+ age lady golfer - maybe some form of 9 hole league, possibly club run
- Consider a 9 hole play and dine programme to attract working ladies, Sat afternoon or evenings - maybe club run and County facilitated and promoted?
- Succession planning for volunteers to run existing competitions
- Possible new Par 3 competition
- Improved promotion of the Charity Eclectic and Cygnet Trophy or revise competition structures

## 5.4 Governance Issues (G)

- Financial strategy - five year outlook, three year plan (including sponsorship options)
- Revise Safeguarding Arrangements and documentation to include Vulnerable Adults policy
- Cross county collaboration on specific topics
- Delegates forum will be lively and interactive
- Improve communications with the membership

## 5.5 Promoting Good Practice sharing between clubs (PG)

- Delegates Forum - more lively; set Smart targets
- Vice-captains - not just an annual meeting but also some form of mentoring and sharing of good practice
- Website - Opt-in targets - 75%
- Regular Newsletters - with interesting articles to share best practice
- AGM attendance up to 100

## 6 2020 Priorities for Action

- 6.1 Reorganise the arrangements for pre-handicap and academy level juniors (TD)
- 6.2 Improve communications with club Junior organisers/coaches (TD)
- 6.3 Succession planning for County Junior Organiser (TD)

- 6.4 Successful introduction of World Handicapping system (GRI)
- 6.5 Succession planning for Handicap Adviser - Appoint an assistant (GRI)
- 6.6 Succession planning for Course Rating Assessor (GRI)
- 6.7 Work with neighbouring counties to establish a Rules/Referees Panel (GRI)
- 6.8 Collaborate with neighbouring counties to run Level 1 rules course(s) (GRI)
- 6.9 New Par 3 competition (C)
- 6.10 Succession planning for Competition organisers (C)
- 6.11 Revise Safeguarding policies and procedures to comply with EG SafeGolf accreditation, including a vulnerable adults policy (G)
- 6.12 Review financial strategy for next three years (G)
- 6.13 Introduce delegates induction programme (G)
- 6.14 Succession planning for Hon Secretary (G)
- 6.15 Regular updates of website and newsletters for opted-in membership (PG)

This is a challenging agenda to tackle in any one year in addition to running the normal business of the Association (Teams, Matches, Competitions etc).

An update on these targets will be made at each delegates meeting during 2020.

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