

## Greens Report November 2024

November so far has been quite a good month, the temperatures are slightly higher than normal, and more of a bonus the rain has kept away. It's been a mild and dry start to the winter. As a result, we have been able to cut with a bit more regularity.

Tee tops are cut once a week, along with the intermediate once a week. The greens are getting cut at least twice, occasionally 3 times, with the height of cut increasing slowly on a weekly basis. We are currently cutting greens at 4.25mm. This will increase to our desired winter height of 5mm in the next 2 weeks.

We have flymo'd the green banksides probably for the last time this season. The growth has definitely started to slow but it has allowed us to keep things tidy, whereas in comparison to last year, our final cuts of the season were hampered with the horrendous wet weather – key indicators are at the end of the report.

One of the biggest continual tasks at the moment is the tidying and removal of leaves. This job has been so much more efficient and manageable with the tractor mounted blower, and has definitely been a noticeable and valuable purchase.

Now that all the tees are on winter mats, we have swapped the wooden markers, to bring in the current markers to allow to dry out, stain, paint and refurbish over the winter. We have also done the same with the 150yd markers. The wooden ones have been replaced with our old plastic markers to allow them to dry out to refurbish also.

All the bunkers have been Rotavator'd, re-shaped where needed, edged, tidied and weeded ahead of the winter. We are continuing to sarel roll the greens on a 2 -3 week basis, along with slitting the greens with our Sisis green slitter.

We are still treating the greens monthly with wetting agent and seaweed. Now that we have applied our winter fertiliser, our seasonal liquid application will now stop as it's not required as high rates of nitrogen over the winter are not good for the plant. We will replace the feeds with low applications of iron when weather allows (main problem over the winter of applying products is frozen ground, this is a huge NO).

The irrigation was successfully shut down and drained off at the start of the month. While it was being shut down by AV Irrigation, we have tidied and trimmed all the greens pop-ups and hydrant boxes.

I noticed we had a blocked drain at the silver birch trees at the 17<sup>th</sup> path. The loose gravel, with the heavy rain we had at the start of the month had blocked the pipe. The water was travelling over the plastic drain (as the pipe couldn't accept the water) and following the path onto the 16<sup>th</sup> green. We tracked the pipe back to the blockage, dug out approximately 10m of pipe, renewed and replaced pipe, gravelled and re-instated. The job has been successful.

Over the last couple of weeks after I met with John and Ian, it was discussed that the members wanted certain fairways widened. I explained that we would start to cut them out at height increments rather than chop them right down. This has been done in preparation for the beginning of the season. The fairways in question were 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. All these have been done, along with a couple more I felt could do with a slight reshape. These being top side of 2<sup>nd</sup> and the bottom of 13<sup>th</sup> to the green.

As you will all be aware, the 3 trees on the corner of the 7<sup>th</sup> fairway have had some work carried out. I just wanted to give a quick explanation on how I came to the decision we took for the work to be carried out.

Out of the 3 trees, we had 2 ash and a beech tree. The smaller ash, I noticed last year had no leaf growth and had lesions all over it. This is a sure sign of Ash die back disease. With working alongside Forestry

Commission, when we originally met 2 years ago, Ash dieback is a huge ongoing task for them, any assistance or signs of Ash dieback is to be treated immediately and sadly that is by the removal as so the disease can't spread.

When the small tree was felled, it was rotten and completely hollow. My next issue was the tree next to it was also an Ash. The chances are, if one Ash is situated next to another the disease has a high risk to spread. This tree also had a snapped limb, this limb needed to be climbed and felled safely. The decision was made, while felling the dangerous hanging limb, a good survey would be carried out to see if the tree could be saved. As a club, we do not want to fell trees unless it's through reasons of danger, disease or dead). Sadly, upon closer inspection, this Ash tree also showed signs of early dieback and lesions. With the removal of the 2 Ash trees, the thought behind it also was that the Beech tree on the corner will now be open to more light and nutrients which will hopefully benefit the life of the Beech. We trimmed some lower branches and branches that were showing signs of rot, again to hopefully get longevity from the tree. I'm sure you all agree, that if that tree goes, the whole aspect of the par 5 will be spoilt and gone.

When we've had some time between jobs, the garden at the 6<sup>th</sup> tee, was completely overgrown. We've dug out the plants we want to save, and over the winter months we will tidy it and replant what we need to. Hopefully do something similar to what we did at the first and make it low maintenance but colourful and effective.

Jack Shotton began his Level 2 Apprenticeship in Greenkeeping. This is a 24 month course, however with his existing experience, the course is likely to be completed in around 18 months. The development of the team for the future is key and it is great that Jack is being supported by the club in his development.

Once again, thank you for your continued support.

Regards David

### Key Course Indicators

Rainfall in October was around 50% less this year than 2023. November and December 2023 were exceptionally wet, which we hope will not be repeated.

| Rainfall | January | February | March | April | May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December | Prog to Oct |
|----------|---------|----------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|-------------|
| 2022     |         |          | 72    | 41    | 41  | 61   | 50   | 42     | 134       | 136     | 197      | 44       | 577         |
| 2023     | 64      | 67       | 139   | 104   | 64  | 27   | 154  | 136    | 118       | 257     | 219      | 189      | 1,130       |
| 2024     | 97      | 85       | 97    | 96    | 184 | 48   | 148  | 36     | 116       | 130     |          |          | 1,037       |

| Buggies off | January | February | March | April | May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December | Prog to Oct |
|-------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|-------------|
| 2022        |         |          | 8     | 0     | 0   | 0    | 0    | 0      | 0         | 2       | 12       | 14       | 10          |
| 2023        | 27      | 3        | 24    | 16    | 0   | 0    | 0    | 4.5    | 6         | 12      | 21       | 26       | 92.5        |
| 2024        | 26      | 25       | 28.5  | 22    | 4.5 | 1    | 1    | 0      | 0         | 4       |          |          | 112         |

| Course Closed | January | February | March | April | May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December | Prog to Oct |
|---------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|-------------|
| 2022          |         |          | 1.5   | 0     | 0   | 0    | 0    | 0      | 0         | 0       | 2        | 12       | 1.5         |
| 2023          | 6       | 0        | 4     | 0     | 0   | 0    | 1    | 0      | 6         | 4       | 9        | 5        | 21          |
| 2024          | 5       | 3        | 2.5   | 8     | 2.5 | 0    | 1    | 0.5    | 1         | 3       |          |          | 26.5        |

