



# HEVER CASTLE GOLF CLUB

## MASTERPLAN 2017



With the backing of our Loyal Members, dedicated Committee, a proactive Staff team and with the support of our Owners, we continue to strive to move the Club further forward to the benefit of all and are delighted to share some of our plans for 2017 and beyond.

J Wittenberg

Club General Manager



# HEVER CASTLE GOLF CLUB

## COURSE DEVELOPMENTS

The course remains our number one focus with the support of and ongoing investment from the owners. Please find details below of our focus for 2017.

### Greens



2016 saw the successful implementation of the years planned works with a strict monthly maintenance regime of tining and top dressing combined with an extensive 'drill & fill' program during annual maintenance week enabling us to hit our total aggregate target of 180 tons as recommended by the STRI during our ongoing work with them.

All of this should lead to better draining greens, reduce the build-up of unwanted organic matter and result in a healthier and more robust grass plant.

Of course, the biggest test as to whether we are making progress comes from the experience of you, our members. Putting aside those couple of awkward weeks we seem to get in Spring, we have received much positive feedback from you indicating the greens are more receptive to a good shot and are consistent to chip and putt on.

This is backed up by some stellar performances from the membership this year with both Jenson Hull & Dave Dunlop attaining 'scratch status' and Mike Swan getting down to 2!

With a firmly established Greens Improvement program now in place we look forward to widening our focus to incorporate both the green surrounds and approaches to further improve the aesthetics and playability of the Course.

### The 12<sup>th</sup>

With water playing a big part of our course layout we are acutely aware of the erosion and destabilizing undercutting which is caused by Winter flooding which appears to be on the increase.

Our most urgent concern is the greenside bank on the 12<sup>th</sup> hole. Fortunately we have identified a solution that will provide a long term solution to erosion giving decades of protection and at the same time much improve the aesthetics of the hole with even greater use of strategic planting.

Work will commence during annual maintenance week in August.





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## Greenkeeping Team



We are pleased to announce that we have taken on another full time Greenkeeper which takes our total to 9. During Winter this helps us greatly in our efforts towards the tidying of the course and green surrounds and our coppicing within wooded areas. During Summer when we are busy mowing we now have the resource to allow us to clearly focus on course presentation.

## Club Developments

### Green Course

At the request of our Seniors we trialed a course set up to the 'classic' yardage over which many long established local courses play at just over 6,000 yards. Whilst it's great Hever can be played at over 7,000 yards the fact remains that the game continues to attract many Senior golfers who play for enjoyment and a fair challenge, not to mention the fact that we endure long wet Winters where a more friendly course is a good option for many.

The Green Course has now been assessed and awarded an SSS rating of 69 which means it is available for competitive play.

Men's competitions remain unaffected with play off the Yellow Tees in Winter, Whites in the Summer and Blues as before.

### Driving Range



We take great pride in our driving range and this year aim to deliver an even better practice experience. The Range dispenser will be upgraded to the latest technology allowing members to use their cards for dispense. We are also looking to improve the ball that we use in the dispenser and new matting systems will be put in place to help provide an even more realistic practice experience.

### New technology for Members card transactions

Our members will soon have the freedom to monitor and top up their own Levy card and Flexi points accounts online ensuring you are never 'caught short' at the bar or in the pro-shop as you will be able to easily keep track of your club finances. Once the system is 'live' a quick 'how to' guide will be sent to members ensuring they can get full use out of the new service.





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## New Buggy Fleet

Many of you will be pleased to hear that a new buggy fleet will be arriving in the Spring. An upgrade over the previous version, members will be able to travel comfortably & reliably and with a high frequency charging system there will be greater availability than before.



## Part of the Hever Castle Estate Heritage & Ambition

As we now share the same shield as Hever Castle, the Club's synergy on the Estate has started to bring us even more recognition as a Course and a Club with ambition, and with a secure appreciation for its heritage. Currently rated 15<sup>th</sup> in the Kent rankings in the Top 100 courses, The Kent Golf Partnership and English Golf Tourism has also shown great interest in Hever Castle as a golf experience alongside some of the far longer established courses in our region. As a Club we will be looking at opportunities to widen our profile over the coming years and are currently negotiating with a sky televised event to feature the course in 2018.



**This is an example of the Heritage shield being commissioned to go above the front entrance to the Club.**

## The Hever Castle Business Centre

We are commissioning the creation of 6 new office lets in the large unused space adjacent to the Club office. This project is designed to support the club's existing revenues and our continued investment into the club's future. The office will feature comfortable spaces, with feature glass doors and high speed internet access.

We already have two prospective tenants, and if Members or their friends/family may be interested in the Let please register your name in the Club Office and we will make sure you are contacted before Agents are issued details.



**Wifi Upgrade.** Usage of our wifi network has increased and our current system has strained at times. We are pleased to announce that we will be upgrading the system to allow members and their guests a wider coverage of wifi and a more consistent service.

## Closing Comments

As you can see we remain firmly committed to moving the Club & the Courses further forward. None of this would be possible without your continued support so we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for this and we look forward to a happy and successful 2017.