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| **UPHALL GOLF CLUB****Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2014** |
| **Minutes written by:** Steven Grady | Page 1 of 12  |
| **Location of Meeting :** Uphall Golf Club |
| **Date of Meeting :** 11th February 2014 |
| **Present -** Captain – Vice-Captain - Treasurer - Secretary - Match Secretary - Assist Match Secretary – Green’s Convenor - Ass Greens Convenor -  | J McDermott E KennedyB MackintoshS GradyA StevensonJ McDermott  | Ladies Captain – Ladies Convenor - Linlithgowshire Rep - Sponsor Convenor - House Convenor – Asst house convenor - Junior Convenor - Membership Convenor- Club Manager - G Law   | T RobertsonA StevensonD WatsonE Kennedy |
| **Distribution:** All members of UGC Club Administrator Website |
| **Meeting Agenda****Item 1. Club Captain’s Introduction and Review of the Past Year****Item 2. Minutes of the Annual General meeting of 12th February 2013****Item 3. Matters Arising.****Item 4. Presentation of the Club Accounts and Balance Sheet.****Item 5. Golf Course overview.****Item 6. Junior Update.****Item 7. Council recommendations on Fees and Subscriptions.****Item 8. Election of Office Bearers and Council Members.****Item 9. Appointment of Club Auditor.****Item 10. Any other Business.****Item 11. Date of the next Annual general Meeting** **(Tuesday 10th February 2015 19.30hrs)** |
| **Total attendees at the 2014 AGM were 86.** |

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| **Item 1** |  **Club Captain’s Introduction** Good evening everyone and welcome to our 2014 Annual General Meeting. Thank you all for attending this evening despite the terrible weather conditions outside. Could I ask first of all if there is anyone present who is not a fully paid up member of the club can they please leave the meeting. The AGM is a private and confidential meeting not open to the press and therefore anyone representing the Press should also leave. No information should be provided to the Press without prior authorisation from the council. Can I ask that all mobile phones are switched off please and any questions to come through the chair in a proper manner.May I ask everyone to be upstanding to observe a minute’s silence as a mark of respect to the members and former members that have passed away during this past year. **Club Captain’s Review of the past year 2013-14**This year we had a much better time of it weather wise. The cold start to the season with little growth held back the greens, however, with some warm dry weather the course began to take shape.The course is still our number one priority and the jewel in any golf club’s crown. The Greens Committee have worked hard all year long with the Greenkeepers and we have a separate point on the agenda for discussion about the course. Jim and Gordon will do a presentation and then take questions.This year’s Club Championship was retained by Andy Stevenson beating Peter MacMillan in a good match. The 2nd class was won by Charlie Nisbet and the 3rd class being won by Bob Young.The Ladies championship was won by Susan Rennie with Fiona Comber winning the handicap championship. In the Juniors, the A class was won by Jack Cummings with Robbie McDermott winning the B class. Congratulations to all the winners.In the Linlithgowshire competitions, Graeme Stevenson won the 1st class Spring Event, Jamie Culpan won the 2nd class County Championship and Shaun Allison won the 2nd class Autumn Handicap. Our league team maintained their position in Division One for next year, so well done to our players. The senior team finished joint third in their league.The Council has changed slightly throughout the year with Ron Comber resigning due to a change in work circumstances. Terry Robertson has joined on a co-opted basis and I appeal for members to join the Council as it is your club and it needs hands on input to make things happen.The Council has been involved with the SGU in developing a new business plan. The club held a members forum hosted by the SGU which was well attended. Following this we attended a workshop held at Stirling University and ongoing dialogue continues with the SGU on a number of fronts.A new website is at present being developed by our professional web designer. This is a key tool in the ongoing progression of our club.I would like to thank all the sponsors for their support throughout the year, we realise times remain tough. Sponsorship is an area where Gordon excels and along with other committee members we are trying to bring in some much needed revenue; however, it is not easy in this financial climate. That said, Gordon has been able to attract some new sponsors, but we are always looking for more – at the end of the day every penny generated is reinvested or goes to keep fees down.The winter league has returned this year and is run by Gordon and Davie Meldrum, with approximately 34 entries this year, my thanks to all.All the voluntary work carried out by members is very much appreciated, from Neil Logan doing our utilities, Brian Watson with our membership database and numerous others for helping out on the course, property maintenance, planting of the new flower bed – the list goes on.I would like to finish off by thanking the Council members for their hard work this year and Gordon Law for his continued help with the running of our club.**John McDermott, Captain.****Apologies: R Comber, F Comber, D Carr, A Wilson, J A Little, F Brazenall, P MacMillan and R Middleton.** |
| **Item 2** | **Minutes of the Annual General meeting of 12th February 2013:** *That the Minutes of the AGM of 12th February 2013 be accepted as a true record of the proceedings:* **Proposed By** : R Sneddon **Seconded By** : B Mackintosh Snr **Carried** |
| **Item 3** | **Matters Arising:**The only matter arising from the minutes was the white line marking of the car park; the Captain explained that this was on-going issue and it is hoped that it will be rectified shortly. |
| **Item 4****Item 5** |  **Presentation of the club accounts****Treasurer's Report 2012/13 Financial Year** The report was given by the Honorary Treasurer, Bill Mackintosh on behalf of the committee. You will find included as part of the AGM pack accounts for the 12 month period ended 31 October 2013, which show a loss for the year of just over £4k. This shows reasonable progress from last year's results, especially against a continued fall in membership numbers, with the knock-on effect in fees. The following table shows a comparison of the member numbers in the key categories: **Full PAYG Senior Youth Young Person Junior****2011/12 282 41 110 9 5 119****2012/13 241 60 118 10 4 122** The over-supply of golf facilities and aggressive discounting, particularly through Groupon type deals, is a key factor, with no real barrier to entry for folks who just fancy a change of scenery, feel that their per round cost is too high and just pay as they play, or are simply finding it difficult to cover the cost of membership fees in what, despite what the politicians say, are still difficult times.  You'll be aware that two well-known Edinburgh clubs, Lothianburn and Torphin Hill, closed due to financial difficulties last year and general industry feedback is that there will be more casualties. We are confident that with continued prudent management and ongoing course improvements, Uphall Golf Club will not join that list!  As is usual, I will run through the headlines of the finances and some of the major variances in the line items. There is also one specific line item (lease termination of £4,595) which I will explain, as without that cost, we would have shown a small profit for the year.  As always, "cash is king" - we have closely managed the Club's cash position and the overdraft has reduced by almost £30k compared to the same time last year. We operate well within the overdraft facility, (although reliance on this increases in the winter months) and have been returned to the "normal" bank, having spent some time in the "high dependency unit" over the last few years. Creditors and accruals increased by around £6k, but all of our suppliers are paid in line with agreed terms.  In terms of the bar, despite only a modest increase in turnover, the profit was up by almost £8k to £26k. This was achieved through a combination of close management of wage costs and reduced cost of sales, the latter being achieved through running a tendering process to identify a supplier to provide our draught products in particular. Belhaven were successful in being retained as our supplier at a negotiated reduced cost. We were also able to secure a further £8k in Advance Discount Loan from Belhaven - this is an efficient way to borrow,as repayment follows sales. This was a factor in us being able to continue the investment in the golf course, supported by, amongst other things, voluntary work by members and the provision of labour, heavy plant and machinery by Gordon Bow Plant Hire.  In terms of next year's subscriptions, there is no increase proposed in any category, with 3 key areas where we feel attention is needed actually proposing a fairly significant decrease, per the proposed fees table included in the AGM pack.  Your Committee continues to be concerned at the demographics of the membership, where we have a significant gap between the ages of 18 and 30/35, hence this approach. We also need to make the transition from Junior member to the next categories less abrupt and make sure our significant investment in Junior member’s results in them becoming fully fledged members.  The decreases in Youth, Student/Full-time Education and Young Persons fee levels mean that these do not follow the Club Constitution, although under the terms of the general waiver approved at last year's AGM, the Committee could have offered these. However, in the interests of transparency we feel it is appropriate to draw these changes to your attention, although we do not propose a permanent change tothe Club Constitution. I would ask you to support these proposals. One point I must raise. Most of our membership fees come by Direct Debit in advance, but we still have some 132 members who settle in full each year. Can I please remind you that the deadline for "annual payers" is 31 March. Last year, the Club Administrator spent an inordinate amount of valuable time chasing fees up into May and June - can you please help us by paying promptly - not only does it save the Club time, it also reduces our overdraft quicker, which saves interest and that can only help us all. Finally, we are working closely with the SGU on finalising a formal Business Plan which will be the basis on which we drive our Club forward to bigger and better things. The Treasurer then went on to highlight some completed actions in the past year:-* Renewal of drinks suppliers on new and improved terms.
* New Cooker, Computer and Boiler.
* Professional Web designer identified through a tendering process.
* Full revision of all fuel supplies.
* Negotiated an improved package from BT to upgrade our Broadband.
* Full revision of Greenkeeping equipment with the sale of redundant machinery and the purchase of new machinery.
* Waste Management strategy renewed.
* SGU Business Planning underway.
* Junior Section Handbook created.
* Significant investment in time for a Planning Appeal re the Arnold Clark sign.
* Full revision of all Clubhouse cleaning requirements.

The Treasurer also announced incentives for introducing a full member who pays their subscription for 2014/15 in full. £100 will be credited to the member’s swipe card for bar purchases or you can have £50 to spend in the pro shop. Just think, if 1 in 5 of us can introduce a new member, that would be 60 or so additional members, which would allow us to do so much more round the course / club and minimise any increases in fees going forward. **Bill Mackintosh****Honorary Treasurer** The Treasurer then said that he would now take questions from the floor.No Questions were forthcoming from the floor.**The Captain** then asked that the accounts be accepted, and asked for a proposer and seconder. **Proposed By: B Crighton** **Seconded By : B Mackintosh Snr Carried** **Golf Course Overview****Gordon Law as Course Manager gave his report.**Gordon thanked the members for their patience over the past two years, indeed he went on to mention the excellent spirit that now exists within the golf club, with many members giving up their own time to help out with various tasks around both the Golf Course and also behind the scenes in the Office. Gordon went on to thank all involved with the Keydraw, which once again has proved to be very popular and successful in the past year. An expression of thanks was also made towards all of the individuals who have provided the club with some extremely generous donations.Special mention was made of the Greenkeeping team, it is clear that Peter, Gary and Neil have bought into the programme of works and it is clear they are doing a great job in the execution of the works around the course.Once again the golf club is indebted to Gordon Bow Plant Hire who have once again contributed greatly to enable the project work to be carried out with great professionalism and efficiency, without them we would have only been able to complete a fraction of the work that has been done on the golf course, a warm thank you and applause came from the floor.Gordon mentioned a couple of projects about to be tackled, these being the repair and lining of the car park and also the repair of the car park protection fencing, it is hoped to complete these tasks prior to commencement of the 2014 playing season.Gordon finished by advising that he is very happy with the progress being made and is now convinced we have a golf course that is extremely marketable, but stressed that it is up to each and every member to play their part and spread the positive word in an attempt to attract more visitors and more members.**Jim Saunders gave an overview of the works carried out.****Introduction**We are now two years into a three year journey. A journey that started with embarrassment and humiliation on the condition of our course. The majority of members, including myself, were mortified by the deterioration of our course.**What has been carried out and achieved:-*** We now have 18 greens plus our putting green area with complete drainage systems.
* We have a perimeter catch drain on 12 of our most vulnerable greens that prevents or slows down the speed of water from travelling over our greens.
* We have hollow tined our worst greens on 8 occasions over the past 2.5 years.
* We have spread 120 tonne of course white sand over our green surfaces. This has contributed significantly to our improved firmness on our green surfaces.
* We have also deep scarified on three occasions to a depth of 25mm with a Graden machine.

**What has been the outcome of this extensive programme?*** Thatch levels (Organic matter) reduced by approximately 50%. The remaining thatch is much diluted and allows water to pass through.
* Greens are significantly firmer and able to withstand winter play.
* Number of lost playing days and requirement to play on winter greens significantly reduced.
* Improved income generation opportunities for the club.
* Positive feedback from members.
* Increased number of playing rounds.
* A clear direction of travel.

**So what is year three, this year, going to look like?*** A significant reduction in disruption to members from carrying out intensive maintenance works.
* Reduced frequency of hollow coring events.
* In Spring we will micro core and dress.
* If, as predicted, we get a cold and dry Spring, we will not force the grass on, we will let nature do its business and predict good green surfaces when there is sufficient growth.
* No major improvement projects planned for our green surfaces for the next few years.

**Other relevant topics**:-* Fairway Drainage improved significantly over the past couple of years.
* Drainage outlets on 10th and 13th fairways moving up to 130,000 litres of water per 24 hour period. That is equivalent of 4.5 Fuel Tanker lorry loads. As a result we do not have a significant drainage problem on our course.
* Winter Golf – you will have noted that we have been playing a full course this winter, playing off our tees and playing from fairways and full greens. Feedback from members has been extremely positive and we are planning to continue with this change in future years. There will be no obvious or longer term damage to our greens, tees or fairways from this change in policy. Winter playing rounds have improved significantly, borne in part from favourable weather, but also improved playing condition of the course.
* Reconstructed bunkers – we have received some indifferent feedback on the new levels of the bunkers at 1, 4, 6 and 7. Some golfers have suggested that they may be too easy to play out from. I would suggest that previously they were too difficult, get underneath the face of the bunker on the right of the 1st and you knew all about it! It was important to lift our bunkers above the natural water table. Difficulty is derived from the steepness of the grassed face rather than how deep a hole you dig. A parkland course should have saucer shaped bunkers rather than bowl shaped.
* Tees – members will have noticed that last year we commenced a scarifying, hollow coring and over seeding programme for our tees. This will continue over the coming years and we will begin to notice a year on year improvement.

**Conclusion*** We have made progress and will continue to monitor and take corrective actions when required.
* Hollow coring must remain an annual task and not left to one side with a change of greens convenor.
* We plan to reduce the size and scale of our winter projects going forward which will allow members to enjoy their course and have it free from heavy excavation projects.

**Huge Thanks*** To our greens staff as they have done a fantastic job during a period of significant change over the past few years, well done to Peter, Gary and Neil.
* Our volunteers for allowing our greens staff to focus on key priority tasks.
* To Gordon Bow for his ongoing valuable contribution.

Jim then said that he would now take questions from the floor.**Richard Sneddon** asked what the plans are for the left hand side of the 3rd green.**Jim** replied that it is the intention to create a minor swale approximately 12 inches deep to trap water as it comes off the hill, and will also prevent hooked balls from coming onto the green. The **Captain** thanked Jim For his full and concise report. |
| **Item 6****Item 7****Item 8****Item 9** |  **Junior Update****Tom Flannigan** provided apologies on behalf of Peter MacMillan the Junior Convenor who is on holiday.Tom went on to provide a report to explain the activities being undertaken by the Junior section:-* A junior support team was established 2 years ago in order to assist the Junior Convenor with the juniors who did not have handicaps.
* Formation of a Mini Section – this consists of first time juniors, 9 year old boys and girls, some complete novices. The purpose being to get them up to handicap level as soon as possible.
* The Mini section play at the end of the junior monthly medal in groups of 3 with adult supervision, cover 7 holes on clubhouse side of the course, this helps to instil simple basics, ball id, order of play, marking scorecards, slow play and general golf etiquette.
* Once 7 hole competence level achieved they are advanced to a 9 hole competition where they are taught how to cross the road, judge speed and volume of traffic, crossing is adult supervised.
* The next stage is to move to 18 holes in order to achieve a handicap and off they go over to the junior competition golf, the transition from 9 hole to 18 hole happens quite quickly.
* It is recognised that a thriving Junior section is important to help the club fill the 18-40 age bracket as this is an area of membership throughout golf that remains in decline. It is pleasing to report that Uphall is 2 seasons ahead of the game with a steady movement from the junior section.
* Tom went on to thank Sheila Cowie and Jannette Paterson for their efforts over the past two seasons.
* A welcome pack has been produced in an effort to develop links with all primary schools in Broxburn and Uphall, this will help the schools develop “sport in the community” and in particular, golf. We are trying to target P5, P6 and P7 pupils to encourage membership from this age group.

The **Captain** thanked Tom For his report.**Council recommendations on fees and subscriptions** **The Captain** asked for the following Fees to be adopted.**The following was put to the members:** **2014/15 2015/16** Joining Fee: None NoneMember £588 or (12 x £49) £588 or (12 x £49)Member (Pay as you Go) £588 £588  (£147 then £49/Month) (£147 then £49/month)Senior member £352.80 or (£29.40 x 12) £352.80 or (£29.40 x 12) Junior member (9-17) £20 £20 Youth Member (18-21) £100 £100Further Education Member £100 £100Young person member (22-25) £250 £250 5 day member £392 £392 Country Member £392 £392 Locker rental (Adult and Junior) £20 £20 **Green fees - To remain as per last year** Weekday Round £23 Weekday Day £30Weekend Round £30Weekend Day £40Winter Weekday Round £13Winter Weekend Round £16Introduced Guest £10 Introduced Junior Guest £3 Honoraria £750  **Note: all the above Green Fees include the premium for personal Liability Insurance, Linlithgowshire Golf Association contributions and subscription fees to the SGU and Lothian’s Golf Association.****Note: all Junior locker fees go towards the running of the Junior section.** **J McDermott asked if there were any other proposals, there being none the council recommendations were Proposed by Aidin Dobie and Seconded by Bill Crighton and were carried.** **Election of office Bearers and Council Members****J McDermott Read out the nominations for the office bearers and council positions.****Captain J McDermott Proposer : B Mackintosh Seconder : S Grady****Vice-Captain E Kennedy Proposed : J McDermott Seconder : S Grady****Hon Secretary S Grady Proposer : B Mackintosh Seconder : J McDermott****Hon Treasurer B Mackintosh Proposer : J McDermott Seconder : S Grady****Match Secretary A Stevenson Proposer : J McDermott Seconder : B Mackintosh****Council Members****1 year to re-election** **A Wilson Proposer : J McDermott Seconder : E Kennedy****2 year to re-election****P MacMillan Proposer : J McDermott Seconder : E Kennedy****Nominations for Council Members** **Derek Watson Proposer : J McDermott Seconder : E Kennedy** **T Robertson Proposer : J McDermott Seconder : E Kennedy****The remaining positions are vacant.** **2 members for 2 years** **2 members for 1 year** **1 member for 3 years****No one came forward to take up these positions.** **The Captain** said that these positions will remain open during the year for anyone to come forward; they would then be co-opted on to the council. **There being no further nominations the aforementioned were elected unopposed.** **APPOINTMENT OF CLUB ACCOUNTANTS**The re-appointment of **Whitelaw Wells** as Accountants of the Club. Proposed by B Mackintosh and Seconded by E Kennedy and Carried. |
| **Item 10** |  **ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**1. **Bill Carlyon** asked that the Council give some thought to moving the “lower” tee on the 2nd hole as this, in his opinion, represents a serious Health and Safety issue. The Captain thanked Bill for his thoughts and confirmed that this would be placed before the Council for consideration.
2. **Alan Midwinter** praised the condition of the Golf Course and commended the Management Committee who have managed to move the Club forward significantly despite the ongoing difficult economic climate. The Captain thanked Alan for his good wishes.
3. **Richard Sneddon** asked if the Council have considered a leaflet drop in the local area to increase membership etc. Gordon Law advised that we have just completed the delivery of a booklet to all houses in Broxburn; this booklet included a one page advert for the Golf Club. Gordon also advised that there will be a further leaflet drop at the end of March to advertise our Open Day which is to be held on 3rd May. Bill Mackintosh also advised that we will have a free article in the next “Visit West Lothian” publication which is delivered to 80,000 households in West Lothian.
4. **Aidin Dobie** asked if the Council had access to a database of previous members who have left the Club so that we can contact them and invite them back. The Captain advised that this will be placed before the Council for consideration in the planning for the Open day.

As there was no further questions, **The Captain** thanked the members for attending and closed the meeting at 8.25pm. |
| **Item 11** |  **DATE OF THE NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING****The date of the next AGM is Tuesday 10th February 2015 at 7.30pm.** |