

N & C Golf Club Risk Assessment for all golfers in different weather and / or golf course ground conditions

The following **Risk Assessment** was carried out by Phil Allen with input from the General Manager, Gareth Williams, and the Head Greenkeeper, Chris Ball. This replaces the version dated 15 January 2024. The document covers all golfers, whether walkers who carry their golf bags or use trolleys and buggy users, playing golf at N & C Golf Club.

The National Golf Clubs' Advisory Association (NGCAA) issued guidance in late 2021 saying that the safe use of buggies on the golf course must be considered to ensure compliance with Equality and Health & Safety legislation, regulation and England Golf's guidelines. Our approach also promotes and follows EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) standards.

This means that member and visitor golfers who have a physical disability or are less able, due to an injury for example, should have the same opportunity to play golf and use the club's facilities as able-bodied golfers. Golf clubs should make every effort to accommodate disabled, less able and able-bodied golfers and make reasonable adjustments to help satisfy this objective. However, golf clubs should also consider and make allowances for important factors such as health and safety reasons, eg. risk of personal injury to oneself and others, and take measures to avoid or reduce anticipated damage to the course, eg. tyre and skid marks from buggies and trolleys.

Our primary consideration at N & C Golf Club is the personal safety of **all** people on the golf club's property.

The Risk Assessment below demonstrates our efforts and commitment to making the golf course as accessible as possible to all golfers in all weather and ground conditions.

1. Normal weather and / or ground conditions

Table 1 below relates to when the **full course is fully open with no restrictions**. For approximately 90% of the time, it is anticipated that this will apply (and will be the default position) where weather and course conditions are good and allow normal play.

Table 1

| Nature of Risk | Exposed Risk H/M/L | Controls / Mitigating Factors | Residual Risk H/M/L |
|--|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| A. Risk of injury to buggy users (1 & 2 seater) and other people or damage to property or the golf course through the dangerous operation of buggies as a result of inconsiderate driving, going too fast or driving across uneven or wet / slippery ground | Medium | 1. Buggy hirers or owners should adhere to the club's Buggy Policy and Safe Working Practice documents. Both documents are available to view in the Pro shop and/or on the website. 2. Buggy hirers should read and sign the Safety Policy Acknowledgement form before hire commences. 3. Buggy owners are reminded of the Disclaimer letter issued to them dated 26 August 2022. 4. Buggy operators should use pathways where available. 5. Extreme caution should be used when operating a buggy in the car park and clubhouse area. 6. Only those aged 17 or older and hold a full, valid driving licence can operate a buggy. 7. Signs on the golf course or other communications warning buggy operators of dangerous or forbidden areas must be observed. 8. Buggies should be operated with courtesy, care and consideration at all times for the safety of other buggy and golf club users. People on foot must be afforded the right of way at all times. | Low |

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|--|-----|--|-----|
| conditions or areas of the golf course / club where buggies should not be driven. | | <p>9. Buggy operators should always consider the terrain as well as the environmental factors that may affect vehicle safety:</p> <p>9.1 Drive the buggy only as fast as the terrain and safety considerations allow.</p> <p>9.2 Drive the buggy straight up and down slopes to reduce the risk of the buggy tipping over.</p> <p>9.3 Slow down the buggy before corners and execute all turns at reduced speed.</p> <p>9.4 Avoid sudden stops or changes in direction.</p> <p>10. Buggies should only be operated on golf course property and in daylight hours.</p> <p>11. The consumption of alcohol and/or the improper use of drugs when operating a buggy is forbidden.</p> <p>12. Buggies should only be used for the number of occupants it was intended to carry and by people who are authorised to use one.</p> <p>13. Buggies must not be driven on to tees, greens, the slopes leading up to them or between green side bunkers and greens. Any areas roped or cordoned off should also be observed and avoided.</p> <p>14. Off the golf course buggies should be parked safely and with consideration to other golf club users. The parking brake should be engaged.</p> <p>15. Operation of buggies will be monitored by members, green staff and CCTV. Misuse will be reported to the General Manager who has the authority to prohibit anyone from using a buggy.</p> | |
| B. Risk of injury and damage to the course by all golfers, except buggy users. Includes those who use trolleys and those who carry. | Low | <p>Caution and care should be exercised when negotiating slopes, banks and wooden steps. These can be slippery and present trip and fall hazards both in wet and dry conditions.</p> <p>Care should also be exercised to avoid sprinkler head recesses, tee markers, path edges etc...</p> <p>Trolleys should not be taken on to tees, greens, areas close to greens or be taken between greens and green side bunkers.</p> <p>All signs should be observed and areas that have been roped or cordoned off should be avoided.</p> | Low |

Inclement weather during play

Obviously, golfers can start their rounds in good weather and ground conditions but inclement weather during play, eg. heavy rain, can quickly change these conditions. In this situation, conditions can transition from Table 1 above to Table 2 below.

2. Abnormal weather and / or ground conditions

For c.10% of the time playing restrictions may need to be introduced by the Head Greenkeeper due to abnormal weather and / or ground conditions. In these situations, there will be a daily inspection of the golf course to assess the risks primarily to personal safety and also for potential damage to the golf course, eg. by trolleys and/or buggies. A Golf Course Update / Status communication will be issued (email to members, a posting on the Club V1 Members' Hub and course information from the telephone line (01635 40035 option 4), at the start of the day to inform golfers of the playing restrictions that apply. Depending on the daily risk inspection any playing restrictions may range from 'full course open but two-seater buggies not allowed on the front 9 holes' to 'back 9 only open (or holes 1 and 10 to 18), carry bags only, no trolleys or buggies'. In exceptional conditions it may be necessary to close the entire course.

10th tee start - with effect from November 2023, when there have been playing restrictions, play may start from the 10th tee. This allows as many golfers as possible, whether in a buggy or walking, the opportunity to play some golf. For example, there may be times when the whole course is open but buggies and trolleys are only allowed on the back 9 holes. Starting from the 10th tee enables buggy and trolley users to play 9 holes and not have to try and 'cut in' half way round the course. Also, if the whole course is open and it is 'carry bags only' there will be a number of golfers who would choose to carry their clubs for 9 holes only and in this case the back 9 holes would be preferable (as it is an easier carry compared to the more undulating front 9 holes).

Table 2 below shows the most likely scenarios that may be adopted depending on personal safety considerations and golf course conditions.

Table 2 A

| Nature of Risk | Most likely Scenarios * | Exposed Risk H/M/L | Controls / Mitigating Factors | Full course open | Back 9 only open | 2-seater buggies ** | 1-seater buggies ** | Residual Risk H/M/L |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------|--|------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| A. Risk of injury to buggy users (1 & 2 seater) and other people or damage to property or the golf course through the dangerous operation of buggies as a result of inconsiderate driving, going too fast or driving across uneven or wet / slippery ground conditions or areas of the golf course / club where buggies should not be driven. | A | High / Med | All 15 controls / Mitigating factors from Table 1A above plus following the 'Blue Line route' when advised *** | Y | | 2/3 | 1 | Med |
| | B | High / Med | | Y | | 2/3 | 2/3 | Med |
| | C | High | | N | Y | 2/3 | 2/3 | High / Med |
| | D | High | | N | Y | N | 2/3 | High/ Med |
| | E | High | | N | Y | N | N | High |
| | F | N/A | N/A | N | N | | | N/A |

* Scenario A being the fewest playing restrictions to Scenario E having the most playing restrictions and Scenario F is where the course is closed.

** 1 - buggies allowed all 18 holes 2 - buggies allowed back 9 only 3 - buggies allowed holes 10 to 13 only N - buggies not allowed

*** The Blue Line route for buggy users featured in the Friday Round Up emails of 13 and 20 December 2024. It included a map of the golf course and highlighted the safest route around the golf course, by following the blue line, in inclement conditions. The blue line route utilises all the available paths on the golf course. In addition to providing the safest route for buggy users, keeping to the blue line will reduce and minimise any damage to the course from tyre marks / tracks etc.... When there are golf course restrictions the daily Golf Course Update / Status communication will advise when the Blue Line route should be followed by buggy operators. All buggies on the course should display the 'Blue Line' map in the front of buggy.

Medical Exemption Certificates - another scenario the club may use is that when buggies are allowed and there are course restrictions, they will only be permitted by those buggy users who have a Medical Exemption Certificate.

Frosty ground conditions - in these conditions, buggies will not be allowed on the course until the white frost has cleared. As a guideline this may not be until around 11am. Extreme care and caution should be taken on these cold days as the ground may remain frozen and be extremely slippery. The Head Greenkeeper will inform the Pro shop and General Manager when buggies are allowed. There may be times when different rules apply to 1 and 2 seater buggies.

Table 2 B

| Nature of Risk | Most Likely Scenarios | Exposed Risk H/M/L | Controls / Mitigating Factors | Full Course open | Back 9 only open (or holes 1 and 11 to 18) | Trolleys * Allowed | Carry only * | Residual Risk H/M/L |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------|---|------------------|--|--------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| B. Risk of injury and damage to the course by all golfers, except buggy users. Includes those who use trolleys and those who carry. | A | Med / Low | The same Controls / Mitigating Factors from Table 1B above. | Y | | 1 | | Low |
| | B | Med / Low | | Y | | 2 | 3 | Low |
| | C | Med | | Y | | N | 1 | Med / Low |
| | D | Med | | | Y | Y | | Med / Low |
| | E | High / Med | | | Y | N | 2 | Med |
| | F | N/A | N/A | N | N | | | N/A |

Scenario A being full course open but with some buggy restrictions and Scenario B being the fewest playing restrictions for walking golfers to Scenario E having the most playing restrictions and Scenario F is where the course is closed.

* 1 - all 18 holes 2 - back 9 only (or holes 1 and 11 to 18) 3 - front 9 only N - Trolleys not allowed

Golf course Paths - many of the paths are currently in a poor state of repair. Some of the material on the paths is loose, some areas are uneven and there is some rutting. Collectively, all these factors create hazards with a risk of falls and trips for all path users. The paths, even in their current condition, do enable and allow buggy users the opportunity to access the course and play golf even in inclement conditions when buggies are not allowed on the grass areas. (This may be due to personal safety reasons and / or the risk of damage to the course.) The golf club is implementing a plan to address and improve the condition of the paths.

Given this knowledge extreme caution, care and diligence should be taken by all path users.

Duty of Care

These mitigating measures and restrictions are in place to help satisfy our legal and moral responsibilities to provide a safe environment for all golfers and to help preserve the condition of the golf course. It should also be noted that all golfers should be aware of and exercise a **Duty of Care** to minimise the risks of personal injury, injury to others and damage to property and the golf course.

This **Duty of Care** includes minimising the risk of golf ball incidents from all golfers by following standard golfing etiquette, ie. golfers should only hit their shots when it is safe to do so. A loud shout of FORE should be made for any errant shots going towards other people.

Phil Allen.

Newbury & Crookham Golf Club.

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