

# AGM 2016 – CLUB CAPTAIN’S REPORT<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

My report last year began by stating we have had a demanding and eventful year with the Club moving forward in a positive and determined way. That goes for this year too. Moving into the new Club Structure with a Club Manager in charge has proved to be a highly successful step in the right direction. Shona Reid has done (is doing) an excellent job. Shona knows Club procedures inside out and shows an amazing ability to simultaneously keep on top of a whole range of issues and demands. We are indeed very fortunate to have her excellent services. Office-bearers and Committee members endeavor to support Shona in the exercise of her responsibilities and that will continue to be the case. But for the record, the Club Manager is the one entitled to take executive decisions between Committee meetings and this system is working extremely well. Well done Shona! Keep up the good work.

Another vital aspect of Club management has been the appointment of a Bookkeeper/Administrator to deal with complex financial matters and to support our CM. Paul Manson has taken over from Heather Harper who had to stand down for family reasons. Both have done (is doing, Paul) an excellent job and we are grateful to Heather for going the extra mile in helping Paul settle in to his new role. We are also grateful to Jim Cattnach who is always on hand when any advice is needed.

Speaking of finances, the Rock Foundation Account has now seen a total of £47,000 raised. At this time last year the outstanding loan on the Clubhouse stood at £31,000. This year it stands at £13,000!!! My thanks to all those who have continued to support this worthwhile cause. I look forward to the day when we can close the account and gain a major Clubhouse asset.

## FINANCE

Our Treasurer Bobby McClymont, will report separately on our detailed financial situation, but I thank him for the work he has put into helping to control our finances in a balanced and fair way. Thanks also to Graeme Johnston and George Milne our Bank Relationship Managers for their supportive encouragement and advice in all our deliberations. Grateful thanks to TRAC Oil & Gas for continuing to act as Club auditors and supplying us with attractive new scorecards, this year with a plan of the golf course on the back of the card. A number of behind the scenes donations from members for various items has been a welcome addition to our income. Thank you all.

## NEW CLUB CONSTITUTION

A further significant enterprise in improving our Club Management structure has been to address the issue of a clearly obsolete Club Constitution. The process of review and revision has been well publicised. Members have been given ample opportunity to make comment on the proposed new Club Constitution. It is my hope members will support the proposal and allow us to test out the new

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constitution in the coming years. We are particularly grateful to John Gray for the immense amount of work he has put into revising our Club Constitution and for his very helpful pamphlet explaining the key changes. John will move the adoption of the proposal during our meeting. The proposal is so placed on the agenda to allow for the election of the new Committee under the provisions of the new Constitution which would have immediate effect.

The above initiatives make for a more stable and effective form of governance as will the continued development of the Club Business Plan mentioned in last year’s report. This will be high on the list of priorities in the coming year.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

Several years ago the Club produced a Health and Safety document covering a wide range of issues. In the light of H&S Legislative Compliance Audit, it requires updating and we are very grateful to one of our Corporate Members groups, Quensh, for their continued support in this process. Thank you Quensh.

## MARKETING

We are ever mindful of the need for making our Club known and encouraging both new members and visitors. The use of the Website (Thanks to Martyn Colebrook) and social Media is one way to sell our wares. The production of Newsletters also helps to keep our members informed and to publicise particular events. This is an area our Club Manager will continue to exploit.

## COMPETITION EVENTS

Competition events have run smoothly despite the fact that we are without a formal Match Secretary at present. Thanks to Roger Addison and our CM for carrying out these tasks on an ad hoc basis and for the volunteers who have closed the competitions. The staffing and stocking of the Club Pro Shop is an integral part of running competitions and we are indebted to a team of regular workers, both staff and volunteers, for all that they do. I repeat again this year my special thanks to Donald Webster for his constant and ubiquitous support. Thanks to Oliver Philip in shop duties and to all those who cover the shop on a voluntary basis. The purchase of new computers and the setting up of the most up-to-date software is a welcome development.

A successful Prize Giving Evening took place earlier this month. Our thanks to Karen Shaw and Sarah Shackleton for presenting the Ladies Section and to Donald Webster and Roger Addison for presenting the Men’s trophies. Well done and congratulations to all the winners.

But also thanks to Graham Lorimer (Quiz Nights) and Arline Seager (Bingo Nights) for reminding us there is more to life than golf!

## JUNIOR SECTION

In many ways, a Golf Club’s future depends on its Junior Section. After a very successful period of catering for young golfers at Newburgh there has been a major dip in fortune. Something of a crisis exists. The Committee will be addressing this problem in the coming year and trying to find ways of attracting more youngsters

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and volunteer coaches to the Club. Please help if you can.

## **CLUB COURSE MANAGEMENT**

Course management continues to face challenges particularly in the area of adequate machinery and associated costs. Despite this our course continues to attract favourable comments from both members and visitors. We survived a difficult period when our Head Greenkeeper, Jim Peace, met with an accident at home and was off work for several weeks. We are most indebted to Forbes Bruce and Dale Robertson for taking on extra responsibility during Jim’s period of absence. We received many positive comments on their sterling work. A shoe/trolley cleaning machine has appeared by the Golf Shop. It awaits wiring up. Many thanks to Dougie Morrison for this creative and generous donation. We were sorry to lose Norman Stephen as Greens Convener this year given the high quality of his contributions to course maintenance. However, we are glad he will continue to carry out voluntary work as time allows. Thank you Norman.

The Committee remain grateful for the dedication shown by a number of regular volunteers who do scaffolding, rabbit hole filling, bunker raking, and pin positioning. Keep up the good work. Others? – please feel free to increase their numbers.

## **CLUBHOUSE MANAGEMENT**

Our Clubhouse has hosted a number of highly successful events and we remain grateful to Sandy Penny & staff and Martin Buhler & catering staff for the regular work that goes in to making our Club a good place to be. But there is one person who goes about her work conscientiously, quietly and super efficiently, day in day out, without fuss and very pleasantly, and that is our Clubhouse Cleaner, Pauline Sharp. Many thanks Pauline. I know you will keep up your good work. We greatly appreciate all that you do.

There is a variety of social functions and our thanks are due to all those who work behind the scenes to make them a success. Additionally, we have to thank a range of willing volunteers who help to keep our fabric in good order. The Old Rakes, but with Dave Philip latterly almost on his own, and Ladies Section have both done sterling work in ensuring that the surrounds outside of the Clubhouse are kept in good order.

## **CLUB-HUB COOPERATION**

Informal meetings between Golf Club (Club) representatives and Gallows Hill Sports Centre Committee (Hub) representatives continue to take place from time to time.

## **THE WAY FORWARD**

The way forward is steady as you go. We have made significant progress during the course of last year. We can only proceed on the basis of continued careful oversight of our Club finances. There will be clear demands (some foreseeable and some unforeseen) on our modest resources. But this will not prevent us from taking on worthwhile challenges. One such challenge, for example, will be the investigation of the creation of new, fit-for-purpose Green Keeping sheds. Your Committee will

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examine ways and means of realising this goal. In the meantime, we look to everyone to continue to support Newburgh Golf Club by playing their part in its healthy development.

## A FINAL THANK YOU

Finally, my thanks go to our Committee for all the hard work carried out in your name this year. On a sad note, Stuart Gill was obliged to resign from the Committee on grounds of serious ill health. We are greatly indebted to him for his imaginative contributions to the work of the Committee and Golf Club.

Best wishes for the coming year.

Don Hawthorn

Club Captain

28<sup>th</sup> November 2016