

## You told us and we listened, 2015 member survey

Helping us be the best small golf club in Scotland, the first steps on our journey

### Part one – Volunteers and satisfaction



## Introduction

**Our aim is to be the best small golf club in Scotland**, a big and audacious goal but we need big targets to aim for. Running a small golf club is a continual challenge and balancing act:

- we must balance our role as current members against protecting the viability of the club for our children and grandchildren. We are the current guardian of Longside Golf Club
- we will spend money on the course but must not overextend ourselves
- we want to make the course playable today but take care against doing damage which may cause problems next year

The fact is that this is your golf club, **you are both a customer and an owner which is a unique position for a business**. Our role as a committee is to represent your interests and protect the interests of future members too.

To help shape our future we undertook our first major member survey in May. This piece of work was undertaken to identify what your priorities are for the club now and in the future. To respond to your comments your committee promises to:

- be transparent and tell you what you told us
- focus on the areas you tell us are a priority
- do everything we can within our existing resources
- explain to you what we can do with more resources to help:
  - us (and you possibly) secure commercial support and sponsorship
  - us identify where you can support your club as a volunteer
  - us identify if you believe you want to invest additional financial resource in your club

Due to the scale of responses the results of the survey are presented in two documents. The analysis is done by your volunteer committee around their other commitments. **This first volume focuses on the role of volunteers and overall satisfaction.**

The second volume will focus on what you have told us specifically about the club. Both pieces of analysis will be used to create a 5 year plan for the club which we will seek your endorsement for at our 2015 AGM.

## Volunteers

Our volunteers are remarkable, they keep our club alive. Your committee wants to formally say that without our volunteers we would not have a club, our club would be financially unviable and the course would not be playable. The comments below provide some views on our volunteers but one member put it best by stating that:

*“The volunteers are the heartbeat of our club”*

Some of the other positive comments made are listed below:

- Everyone does a very good job which, I think, should be appreciated by everyone.
- Crucial in the viability of the club
- Cannot thank them enough for giving their time to help keep the club running.
- A huge thank you to all for their much needed help
- Superb, they should all be commended and anyone who does it should at the very least be recognised at the end of the season
- Remarkable dedication, without their efforts we would not survive.
- Superb. An asset to the club. I'd like to go on record to thank them for keeping the club open and alive
- Volunteers make a great difference, most remarkably on the course. The contribution of both Johnny Findlay and Jim Will especially is tremendous
- It's really great that so many people are willing to give up time regularly to help behind the bar. And there's always someone working on the course! Couldn't run the club without them
- Fantastic efforts all round. Sanding of divots and raking of bunkers is greatly appreciated as this makes a huge difference when playing. Bar staff do a great job and make everyone feel welcome. The club would not be the same without their efforts
- The course is getting tidier all the time, thanks to the tremendous commitment of the volunteers. The bar is a far better place having the volunteers too
- Without them the club wouldn't function. Doing a great job
- They are a great asset to the club, but they are also the members who use the club, and maybe the clubhouse misses them on a social level
- Brilliant to see when money is tight it means the club can keep going
- Nothing but good. It is a source of pride to have volunteers actively having such a large positive impact on the club

*“Their contribution in the past few years cannot be measured and we are very lucky to have such enthusiastic and committed volunteers”*

We received so many direct and positive comments it is not possible to include all of these without creating a lengthy document but we hope these provide a good flavour.

Of course with unlimited resource we would be delighted if our volunteers spent time relaxing in the bar and putting on our greens. However, the realistic position is that without a significant change in our membership base that we will always require volunteers. The next subsections explore your views on this based on your comments.

## Professional support and growing the team

You recognise the club cannot survive with volunteers alone. The question is are you willing to help us secure commercial sponsorship or for your subscriptions to increase? Let us know.....

- Good on them if they have the time it obviously helps the other members by keeping the fees down
- Excellent active participation. Committee should ask members direct what they can do to help the club.
- From what I have seen so far the volunteers are carrying out good work and it is something I may consider in the near future to aid with the ongoing work on the course.
- The volunteers do a fantastic job with helping on the course but the club needs to be careful not to depend too much on these people as it is basically the same ones each year and that won't go on indefinitely.
- Fantastic we would not have a golf course without the work the volunteers have put in. I think that it is great that so many different people can find a way to contribute to the club and every little helps.
- Been a volunteer myself for another charity I would thank them for the time and commitment they have made. The club needs to be careful not to take advantage of their commitment or they will soon stop giving us there time. Keep up the good work.

Your committee wants to provide as much paid and professional support within our club as possible. It is clear that further professional support is required, but not at any cost. **We have revised clubhouse arrangements and cut costs to a minimum to achieve the maximum current staffing on the course.**

However, we have professionals throughout our club, please approach us to volunteer too. Your professional support may not relate to the course, you may have bar, entertainment, fundraising, business, construction or other expertise. This is your club so your help will be welcomed.

## Financial need

Over the last two years the committee has put a major focus on cost control to keep the club alive, this has included developing the volunteer support from which we all benefit. The committee are also volunteers and would welcome support from others to increase revenue coming into the club. This help may come in the form of:

- Bringing your friends and family to eat at the club
- Encouraging friends to join
- Securing sponsorship from business associated
- Donating memorabilia to the club for fundraising
- Providing your expert in-kind support to help us grow commercially

**“They are hardworking and generously giving their time. As a club we should be looking to lessen the need for them by making the club more financially secure so that it can pay staff to undertake the volunteered work and I see little sign of the committee undertaking this task.”**

**“I would like to see fees raised to alleviate the need for volunteers, having said that I think they do a good job.”**

**Should we consider raising fees to gain more support for our volunteers? Or do you have fundraising ideas which might help us secure an apprentice greenkeeper?**

**The honest truth**

Some of you do not support the clubs efforts to use volunteers. As noted we committed to being transparent throughout this process with our analysis.

*“This is not a good idea as there is no competent persons to have the knowledge and experience as fully qualified and paid persons to carry out the work. Come time they will get fed up and we will be back to square 1 with no one to carry out the tasks in hand of the day to day running of the club”*

*“Good - but need another green keeper”*

Simply the club cannot afford another greenkeeper unless we secure an additional:

- 80 members; or
- increase fees by 25%; or
- double our bar revenue.

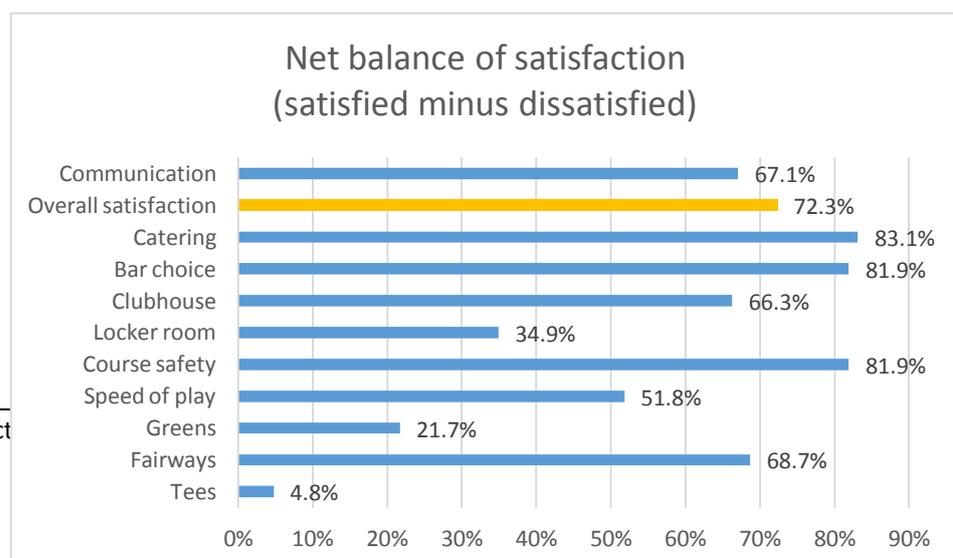
Your committee is welcome to new ideas in this area and some initial thoughts are below.

Action	Who
<b>Thank the volunteers. When you are on course or in the bar, take a little time to thank the team</b>	All members
<b>Committee to retain the maximum possible on-course professional support for volunteers</b>	Committee
<b>Members – consider if you can volunteer. We will be creating new work packages which will help you contribute</b>	All members
<b>Tell us if you are happy for us to raise subscriptions to employ a new greenkeeper</b>	All members
<b>Support us with a fundraising campaign</b>	All members (specifically those who want to directly contribute time or support)

**Satisfaction**

We asked you to let us know how satisfied you were with various aspects of the club. To present the data in a simple manner

Volunteers and satisfact



we have presented a 'net balance', this shows how many of you were either 'Extremely satisfied' or 'satisfied' and takes off any 'dissatisfied' or 'extremely dissatisfied' members.

**It is clear that the areas of greatest dissatisfaction are the Tees and Greens, our locker room is also a low scoring area.**

**This is not a surprise to us on the committee (we are golfers too) and we are considering remedial actions which do not detriment the financial future of the club. We are also aware that the fairways are not how we would want although the score was positive at the time of the survey**

Broadly speaking the majority of other areas score well with particularly high scores for catering, the bar and course safety. Overall satisfaction with our club is generally high although that is not to be complacent with 10% of members either extremely dissatisfied (3.6%) or dissatisfied (6%).

Based on the results we will update you on actions for our greens and tees. We already have a clear long-term strategy for our greens which we will communicate and will give an update on tees shortly.