



Scottish Golf

**Golf and the Government's
relaxing of lockdown restrictions
Phase 3 – 22 April update**

Introduction

These safe golf procedures focus on how golf clubs can make additional changes as part of the Government's Phase 3 restrictions and have been prepared in consultation with Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland. Any updates to the guidelines following the introduction of Scotland's new allocation of Local Tier Levels are highlighted with *.

We urge everyone to remain respectful of the guidelines and to apply good individual judgement, to ensure that in time we can move to a fully phased reintroduction of the game as we all know and love it.

It should be noted that the Scottish Government continues to monitor the situation closely and has not ruled out the reintroduction of restrictions, which could see golf suspended once again if public health measures dictate, or if the guidelines are not followed.

It is therefore imperative that golf clubs take the necessary steps outlined in this document prior to play under Phase 3 and adhere to the guidelines, which could be subject to update or change at any time.

To support all golf clubs and golfers during this period, we have set up a designated area on the Scottish Golf website to ensure updates are clear and accessible to all. Click [here](#) to access our COVID-19 updates and through time additional phases of the re-introduction to golf in Scotland.

There may be a variance in guidelines and procedures throughout the UK, it is therefore important that golf clubs and golfers in Scotland follow procedures outlined by Scottish Golf and the Scottish Government.

Procedures for “Golf Clubs”

The following safe golf procedures set out the basis on how golf clubs can make additional changes and continue to provide a safe environment for golfers as outlined by the Scottish Government’s Phase 3 relaxation of restrictions. Procedures are subject to change, and we would ask all golf clubs to regularly check [here](#) for updates.

For Golf Clubs to continue operating their course they should ensure that:

- All activity is consistent with current guidance on health, physical distancing and hygiene – facilities should also make sure they can adapt to changes in guidance at short notice.

General Guidelines:

- Physical distancing rules outlined by the Scottish Government should always be adhered to - [Click Here](#)
- Members who are in the highest risk (shielding) group outlined by the Government can return to play, however the restrictions for individuals in this category are slightly different and could impact the size of group in which a shielding member can play. Categories are outlined - [Click Here](#)
- Members with colds or any symptoms of Covid-19 should not be allowed on the premises of the golf club.
- It is recommended that each golf club appoints a responsible person(s), referred to as the COVID officer, to act as the point of contact on all things related to Covid-19. The COVID officer must ensure that full risk assessments, processes and mitigating actions are in place. An e-learning module for COVID officers is available to support those undertaking the role – [Click Here](#)
- Any golf club/course which is accessed on a regular basis by over 200 members or visitors, in a single day, must have in place a designated COVID officer and appropriate risk assessments. More detail is available in sportscotland’s Phase 3: Return to Sport and Physical Activity guidelines – [Click Here](#)
- All golfers should ensure that they are following the current travel guidelines appropriate to their local authority’s protection level (Appendix 1).*
- All golfers should be aware of travel guidance outlined by the Scottish Government and this should always be followed. Further information on what travel is permitted in the five protection levels for each local authority area is available* – [Click Here](#).
- Car Sharing should be avoided* - [Click Here](#).

Tee Times and Access to Course:

- Tee-times should be managed and booked in advance – there should be no turn up and play allowed.

- Daily timesheets and intervals are at the discretion of the golf club – the following groupings will be permitted during Phase 3:
 - All golf clubs should ensure that they are following current guidelines appropriate to their local authority's protection level (Appendix 1).*
- Competition play may resume in accordance with the updated guidelines and schedule 1 as attached to this document. Use of digital scorecards must be in accordance with Handicapping Regulations and full compliance is required to permit scores for qualifying purpose.
- Travel to and from the golf course must not mix households i.e no car sharing, and golfers should adhere to the guidance above on travel under the new local tiering system.*
- Foursomes and Greensomes format
 - Each partner should use their own golf ball, which is only handled by that player. For example, the player teeing off from hole 1 is the only player that touches the ball from teeing off through to completion of the hole. The partner teeing off from hole 2 does likewise with their ball.
 - When marking and replacing the ball on the putting green this should be conducted by the partner the ball belongs to. Under this situation (or any other where the ball must be replaced) the original ball must be used and must not be substituted by another ball.
 - Under the Rules of Golf, a partner is permitted to drop the side's ball in taking relief. It is also permissible to drop another ball when taking relief.
- Tee timesheets & records of all visitors should be kept for a period of 21 days to assist with contact tracing should the need arise.

Clubhouse, Equipment and Course Set-up:

- Clubhouses and sports facilities which provide catering and bar services, can operate providing they adhere to Scottish Government guidance appropriate to the protection level in which they are operating (Appendix 1). Further information [Click Here](#).*
- Starter facilities can operate, providing that all physical distancing measures are adhered to and appropriate hygiene measures are put in place.
- Professional/Retail shops should ensure they are adhering with the current guidelines for your local authority's current protection level (Appendix 1).*
- Other facilities i.e. driving ranges, swing studios and club fitting should be operated in line with the current guidelines for your local authority's current protection level (Appendix 1).*
- Professional caddy services may resume, providing all physical distancing and hygiene measures are adhered to. There are no restrictions on the number of households a caddy can have contact with per day, but services should be limited to carrying of bag, providing advice and not passing golf clubs to the player.
- Risk assessment – should be carried out and documented.
- Physical distancing – the 2m rule applies to all these settings. Facilities need to adapt to encourage physical distancing.

- Workforce – ensure the relevant workplace guidance is followed for staff, and any existing health and safety advice is maintained and aligned.
- Face Coverings – Golf Clubs should ensure that golfers wear face coverings when indoors, the only exception being when using hospitality services.
- Cleaning – hand and respiratory hygiene are core measures and provision should be made for these. Clear guidance and plans are needed for cleaning facilities and equipment, and waste disposal. More detail is available in the governments non-healthcare guidance [Click Here](#) and we would encourage more detail to be provided/signposted to on this.
- Buggies, electric or pull trolleys, clubs should not be available for hire unless safe sanitising practices can be guaranteed.
- Where practice putting greens are open, the holes should be filled in, covered, or the cup raised and procedures for use should be considered, for example giving priority of use to the players in the next group due to tee off.
- Signage should be erected to reinforce physical distancing rules.
- Hand sanitisers should be made available.
- Bins may be reintroduced as long as strict sanitisation and staff safety can be maintained.
- Water fountains may be reintroduced as long as they do not allow face-to-tap drinking. Water fountains should only be used to refill personal bottles or disposable containers.
- Ball washers, rakes, benches, divot boxes and non-essential furniture should be removed from the course. Where such fixtures are permanent, they should be taken out of use.
- Holes/cups should be altered to facilitate easy retrieval of golf balls.

Locker Rooms

- Changing and locker rooms may open. More detail is available in sportscotland's Getting Your Facilities Fit For Sport Guidelines – [click here](#)
- Sports facility operators may open toilets for public use if they follow the guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website, [Click Here.](#)

Advance Planning and Communication with Golfers:

- Agree to put in place proper management procedures to ensure golfers comply to this protocol.
- Communication to all members that they should follow the “Procedures for Golfers.” Provide golfers with regular updates on any changes made.
- Members are instructed not to touch the flag/flagstick, or the flagstick should be removed.

Procedures for “Golfers”

The following procedures have been established to ensure a safe environment for all golfers and all on-site staff, as outlined by the Scottish Government’s Phase 3 relaxation of restrictions. Not only are Golfers expected to comply with the rules they must also observe the government and public health restrictions - [Click Here](#). Both sets of regulations / procedures are subject to change, we would ask all golfers to regularly check with Scottish Golf and their Golf Clubs for regular updates.

To ensure the safe return to golf in Scotland, golfers should adhere to the guidelines:

In advance of play:

- If you are ill or have any symptoms of COVID-19 then stay at home.
- Schedule your tee-time in the manner prescribed by your golf club. Under no circumstances should you arrive at the club without booking in advance.
- Tee group sizes will be determined by the Golf Club.
- Ensure you have enough golf balls, tees etc. as the facilities at the Golf Club may be closed and you should not exchange equipment with other members.
- All golfers should be aware of travel guidance outlined above and this should always be followed. Further information on what travel is permitted in the five protection levels for each local authority area is available* – [Click Here](#).*
- Golfers from different households should travel separately.
- Aim to arrive at the Club no more than 15 minutes prior to play.
- Park your car in such a way as to facilitate physical distancing.
- Change your shoes in the car park

On the course:

- Do not arrive at the first tee more than 5 minutes before your allotted tee time.
- Always observe physical distancing rules on the course.
- With no rakes allowed on the course, golfers to make their very best efforts to smooth the sand using their club and/or their feet.
- Following play of a hole, do not enter the next teeing area until the all members of the group in front have played their tee-shots and exited the teeing area.
- Do not share equipment, food or drink with other players during your round.
- Do not use on-course water fountains, ball cleaners etc.
- Do not touch the flag or flagstick. Putt with the flagstick in and remove your own ball from the hole. Remember not every putt needs to be holed out in casual golf.

After your round:

Golfers may access indoor locker rooms and storage for the dropping off and collection of sports equipment or clothing.

Face coverings must be worn when using all indoor spaces in the clubhouse.

In addition, following guidelines should be observed:

- Use toilet facilities at home before you leave.
- Bring your own hydration / food to the course.
- Bring your own hand sanitiser to the course and use regularly during the round.

Closing Remarks

Scottish Golf will remain in regular dialogue with Scottish Government, with regards to the procedures outlined in this document that are for playing golf during Phase 3 of relaxed restrictions.

Golf Clubs are asked to note that the restrictions for permitted number of households to interact, physical distancing and hygiene are mandatory aspects that all facilities must adhere to. We have been made aware of a small number of clubs who are not following these rules and in doing so are potentially risking the position for whole golfing community. It is also important to remember that household interactions and group sizes differ indoor and outdoor and both clubs and players need to be aware of their responsibilities in adhering to these.

We must remember that it is our shared duty as custodians of golf to ensure that we all play our part in following the protocols set out in this document to ensure that the phased return to the game is managed in line with Scottish Government guidelines.

Given the fluidity of the current situation there may be a requirement to update and re-issue this guidance at regular intervals to reflect future government advice. In addition, if local lockdown restrictions are enforced then further amendments to the above protocols could be required.

Type of Activity Indicative Start Date (subject to change)	Level 0 Late June 2021 (subject to change)	Level 1 7 June 2021 (indicative - TBC)	Level 2 17 May 2021 (indicative - TBC)	Level 3 26 April 2021	Level 4 (Stay Local) Current
On Course Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups of up to 4 golfers with no restrictions on number of households. All tee times must be booked in advance. Professional caddy services may continue. Starter facilities can operate, providing that all physical distancing measures are adhered to and appropriate hygiene measures are put in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups of up to 4 golfers with no restrictions on number of households. All tee times must be booked in advance. Professional caddy services may continue. Starter facilities can operate, providing that all physical distancing measures are adhered to and appropriate hygiene measures are put in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups of up to 4 golfers with no restrictions on number of households. All tee times must be booked in advance. Professional caddy services may continue. Starter facilities can operate, providing that all physical distancing measures are adhered to and appropriate hygiene measures are put in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups of up to 4 golfers within Scotland with no restrictions on the number of households. All tee times must be booked in advance. Any golf club/course which is accessed on a regular basis by over 200 members or visitors, in a single day, must have in place a designated COVID officer and appropriate risk assessments. More detail is available in sportscotland's Phase 3: Return to Sport and Physical Activity guidelines – click here Professional caddy services may resume, providing all physical distancing and hygiene measures are adhered to. There are no restrictions on the number of households a caddy can have contact with per day, but services should be limited to carrying of bag, providing advice and not passing golf clubs to the player. Starter facilities can operate, providing that all physical distancing measures are adhered to and appropriate hygiene measures are put in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups of up to 4 golfers within Scotland with no restrictions on the number of households. All tee times must be booked in advance. Any golf club/course which is accessed on a regular basis by over 200 members or visitors, in a single day, must have in place a designated COVID officer and appropriate risk assessments. More detail is available in sportscotland's Phase 3: Return to Sport and Physical Activity guidelines – click here Professional caddy services may resume, providing all physical distancing and hygiene measures are adhered to. There are no restrictions on the number of households a caddy can have contact with per day, but services should be limited to carrying of bag, providing advice and not passing golf clubs to the player. Outdoor starter facilities can operate, providing that all physical distancing measures are adhered to and appropriate hygiene measures are put in place.
Clubhouse Facilities – locker rooms and toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All clubhouse facilities may open. Use of changing and showering facilities should be avoided where possible, although they may be available (other than in Level 4 areas where indoor facilities should remain closed) for participants who require additional support such as disabled people or those with special needs. Where changing rooms and showering facilities are to be used specific guidance relating to use of 'Changing and Showers' is available in sportscotland's Getting Your Facilities Fit For Sport Guidelines – click here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All clubhouse facilities may open. Use of changing and showering facilities should be avoided where possible, although they may be available (other than in Level 4 areas where indoor facilities should remain closed) for participants who require additional support such as disabled people or those with special needs. Where changing rooms and showering facilities are to be used specific guidance relating to use of 'Changing and Showers' is available in sportscotland's Getting Your Facilities Fit For Sport Guidelines – click here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All clubhouse facilities may open. Use of changing and showering facilities should be avoided where possible, although they may be available (other than in Level 4 areas where indoor facilities should remain closed) for participants who require additional support such as disabled people or those with special needs. Where changing rooms and showering facilities are to be used specific guidance relating to use of 'Changing and Showers' is available in sportscotland's Getting Your Facilities Fit For Sport Guidelines – click here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All clubhouse facilities may open. Use of changing and showering facilities should be avoided where possible, although they may be available (other than in Level 4 areas where indoor facilities should remain closed) for participants who require additional support such as disabled people or those with special needs. Where changing rooms and showering facilities are to be used specific guidance relating to use of 'Changing and Showers' is available in sportscotland's Getting Your Facilities Fit For Sport Guidelines – click here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indoor clubhouse facilities should be closed. One off appointments to retrieve equipment are permissible. Toilets may remain open, subject to following Government public toilet guidelines at all times – click here.
Indoor Hospitality Government Hospitality Guidelines: Click here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indoor hospitality may continue. Groups may consist of up to 10 people from 4 households. Alcohol may be served. Licensing times apply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indoor hospitality may operate until 23.00. Groups may consist of up to 8 people from 3 households. Alcohol may be served. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indoor hospitality may operate until 22.30. Groups may consist of up to 6 people from 3 households. Alcohol may be served (2 hour dwell time). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indoor hospitality may operate until 20.00. Groups may consist of up to 6 people from 2 households. No alcohol may be served. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indoor hospitality facilities should be closed. Takeaway services may be provided for consumption off the premises. Takeaways may no longer allow customers indoors, and must instead operate from a hatch or doorway. The sale of alcohol for consumption outdoors is not permitted.
Outdoor Hospitality Government Hospitality Guidelines: Click here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All outdoor hospitality may continue. Groups may consist of up to 15 people from 15 households. Under 12s do not count towards restricted numbers or households outdoors. Alcohol may be served. Licensing times apply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All outdoor hospitality may operate until 23.00. Over 18s: Groups may consist of up to 12 people from 12 households. Under 12s do not count towards restricted numbers or households outdoors. Alcohol may be served. Licensing times apply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All outdoor hospitality may continue. Over 18s: Groups may consist of up to 8 people from 8 households. Under 12s do not count towards restricted numbers or households outdoors. Alcohol may be served. Licensing times apply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All outdoor hospitality may resume. Groups may consist of up to 6 people from 6 households. Under 12s do not count towards restricted numbers or households outdoors. Alcohol may be served. Licensing times apply. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All outdoor hospitality facilities should be closed. Takeaway services may be provided. Takeaways may no longer allow customers indoors, and must instead operate from a hatch or doorway. The sale of alcohol for consumption outdoors is not permitted.
Professional/Retail Shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All professional and retail shops may open. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All professional and retail shops may open. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All professional and retail shops may open. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All professional and retail shops may open. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All professional and retail shops should be closed. Click and collect is permitted – all customers must have an allocated time slot for collection. Indoor starter facilities should not be offered at this time.
Other Facilities – driving ranges, swing studios and club fitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indoor facilities may open. More detail is available in sportscotland's Opening of Indoor and Outdoor Sport and Leisure Facilities – click here. Under the age of 18 – The number of participants allowed to take part in organised indoor sport or physical activity should follow Scottish Government guidance. Over the age of 18: Can open on a 1:1 basis for individual exercise. Club fitting services may be offered at this time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indoor facilities may open. More detail is available in sportscotland's Opening of Indoor and Outdoor Sport and Leisure Facilities – click here. Under the age of 18 – The number of participants allowed to take part in organised indoor sport or physical activity should follow Scottish Government guidance. Over the age of 18: Can open on a 1:1 basis for individual exercise. Club fitting services may be offered at this time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indoor facilities may open. More detail is available in sportscotland's Opening of Indoor and Outdoor Sport and Leisure Facilities – click here. Under the age of 18 – The number of participants allowed to take part in organised indoor sport or physical activity should follow Scottish Government guidance. Over the age of 18: Can open on a 1:1 basis for individual exercise. Club fitting services may be offered at this time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indoor facilities may open. More detail is available in sportscotland's Opening of Indoor and Outdoor Sport and Leisure Facilities – click here. Under the age of 18 – The number of participants allowed to take part in organised indoor sport or physical activity should follow Scottish Government guidance. Over the age of 18: Can open on a 1:1 basis for individual exercise. Club fitting services may be offered at this time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All indoor or a combination of indoor and outdoor facilities should be closed. Fully outdoor facilities (regardless of whether bays are covered or not) and if access to the bays may be controlled with physical distancing and all appropriate hygiene measures in place these may remain open. Club fitting services may not be offered at this time.
Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All outdoor coaching is permitted. Group coaching should not exceed group sizes of 30. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All outdoor coaching is permitted. Group coaching should not exceed group sizes of 30. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All outdoor coaching is permitted. Group coaching should not exceed group sizes of 30. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All outdoor coaching is permitted. Group coaching should not exceed group sizes of 30. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only outdoor coaching is permitted. Over the age of 12 - Group coaching should not exceed group sizes of 15 including coaches. Under the age of 12 - Group coaching should not exceed group sizes of 30 including coaches. Number of coaching sessions that may be delivered per day are unlimited.
Travel (18 years old or over) Government Travel Guidelines: click here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May travel to and from a Level 0, 1 and 2 area to take part in organised sport, physical activity, training and competition. They should not travel to a level 3 or 4 area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May travel to and from a Level 0, 1 and 2 area to take part in organised sport, physical activity, training and competition. They should not travel to a level 3 or 4 area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May travel to and from a Level 0, 1 and 2 area to take part in organised sport, physical activity, training and competition. They should not travel to a level 3 or 4 area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults living in Level 3 areas may leave their local authority area to take part in a informal exercise and organised sport that starts and finishes in the same place. All travel to and from the venue must take place on the same day with no overnight stays permitted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults living in Level 4 areas may leave their local authority area to take part in a casual game of golf. Adults living in Level 4 areas should only travel locally to take part in a competitive or qualifying round. All travel to and from the venue must take place on the same day with no overnight stays permitted.
Travel (17 years old or under) Government Travel Guidelines: click here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May travel to and from Level 0, 1, 2 and 3 areas to take part in informal exercise and organised sport, training and competition. May also travel to and from a Level 4 area, if for example, they belong to a club which is just outside their own local authority area. They should however travel no further than necessary to take part in the organised activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May travel to and from Level 0, 1, 2 and 3 areas to take part in informal exercise and organised sport, training and competition. May also travel to and from a Level 4 area, if for example, they belong to a club which is just outside their own local authority area. They should however travel no further than necessary to take part in the organised activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May travel to and from Level 0, 1, 2 and 3 areas to take part in informal exercise and organised sport, training and competition. May also travel to and from a Level 4 area, if for example, they belong to a club which is just outside their own local authority area. They should however travel no further than necessary to take part in the organised activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May travel to and from Level 0, 1, 2 and 3 areas to take part in informal exercise and organised sport, training and competition. May also travel to and from a Level 4 area, if for example, they belong to a club which is just outside their own local authority area. They should however travel no further than necessary to take part in the organised activity. All travel to and from the venue must take place on the same day with no overnight stays permitted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those living in a Level 3 or 4 area may leave their local authority area to take part in a casual game of golf. May travel to and from Level 0, 1 and 2 areas to take part in a competitive or qualifying round. May also travel to and from a Level 3 or 4 area, if for example, they belong to a club which is just outside their own local authority area. They should however travel no further than necessary to take part in a competitive or qualifying round. All travel to and from the venue must take place on the same day with no overnight stays permitted.

*Please note that these guidelines are subject to update and change.

Schedule 1

R&A - Rules of Golf Related Matter

For handicap qualifying competitions, please refer to Scottish Golf's support document [here](#). This will be a requirement for all handicap qualifying competitions in Scotland.

Until further notice, R&A have released the following provisions as acceptable on a temporary basis:

Scoring in Stroke Play (Rule 3.3b)

- In view of concerns around handling and exchanging scorecards (which may be in paper or electronic form as already provided in the Rules), on a temporary basis, Committees may choose to allow methods of scoring in stroke play that do not strictly comply with Rule 3.3b, or do not comply with the normal methods used under Rule 3.3b. For example:
 - Players may enter their own scores on the scorecard (it is not necessary for a marker to do it).
 - It is not necessary to have a marker physically certify the player's hole scores, but some form of verbal certification should take place.
 - It is not necessary to physically return a scorecard to the Committee provided the Committee can accept the scores in another way.
- As provided in the Rules of Golf, scorecards can be electronic, which could include emailing or texting scores to the Committee if acceptable to the committee.

Flagsticks

Committees may choose to adopt the following policies on a temporary basis:

- Require that players leave the flagstick in the hole at all times. It is a matter for the Committee to decide whether it establishes this policy by way of a Code of Conduct or Local Rule, and whether it provides a penalty under the Code of Conduct or for a breach of the Local Rule.
- Not have flagsticks at all.
- As a temporary provision, flagsticks can be used for the purpose of player safety which do not meet the specifications in Part 8 of the Equipment Rules. For example, a Committee may temporarily decide to use a flagstick that has an added movable platform or tray to help prevent touching the flagstick when removing the ball from the hole.
- Allow players to centre the flagstick in a safe manner which does not involve using the hand, even when wearing a glove or using a towel (for example, by using a club). The centring of the flagstick may be allowed while another player putts (this may be desirable in windy conditions when the flagstick is required to be left in the hole and is leaning towards the player making the stroke).

Hole and Definition of Holed

- A method of inserting the hole liner may be used that means that all of the ball does not fall below the surface of the putting green and can be easily retrieved by handling the ball only. But if any of the following provisions are used, play in such circumstances is not in accordance with the Rules of Golf:
 - Treating a ball as holed or holed with the next stroke if it is within a certain distance of the hole.
 - Having the hole liner sitting above the surface of the putting green and treating a ball as holed if it strikes the liner.

- Treating a ball as holed when it has bounced out of the hole for any reason (for example, when it has bounced off the flagstick, a tray attached to the flagstick or the hole liner).

Bunkers

- If rakes have been removed from the course, or if the Committee has requested rakes not be used, it is recognised that bunkers may not be smoothed as well as when there are rakes on the course. Players should be requested to smooth bunkers using their feet or a club, which was the method used to smooth bunkers until relatively modern practice of having rakes on the course was introduced. This may not provide an ideal lie in a bunker but coping with imperfect lies, whether in a bunker or elsewhere, is a normal part of the game.
- But if the Committee decides that, even with players making their best efforts to smooth the sand, the condition of the bunkers is likely to be so abnormal that it will be clearly unreasonable for players to play the ball as it lies, the Committee may use one of the following options:
 - Change the status of the bunkers to be part of the general area and declare them all ground under repair.
 - Introduce preferred lies in bunkers, for example allowing a place in the bunker within one club-length not nearer to the hole than where the ball came to rest.
- But if the following provision is used, play in such circumstances is not in accordance with the Rules of Golf:
 - Allowing a ball to be lifted, the bunker to be smoothed and the ball to be replaced.

Note: A Committee should consult its handicapping authority for guidance on whether scores are acceptable for handicapping purposes.