

RYTON GOLF CLUB

GOLF COURSE RISK ASSESSMENT



DECEMBER 2020

[UPDATED FEB 2021]



RYTON GOLF CLUB
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DATE: DECEMBER 2020

NEXT ASSESSMENT:

This risk assessment should be reviewed when there is any change to the golf course requiring a revision to this risk assessment; new information available about risks or control measures; results of checks that indicate control measures are no longer effective; changes to key personnel; or any other aspects requiring a review of the system.

UPDATED:

Feb 2021 – with the diversion of the Keelman's Way route onto the bridlepath running past the 7th hole / in front of the 13th tee.



ASSESSMENT AUDIT

Last Risk Assessment Date:

Action	Yes	No	N/A	By whom/date

Comments:



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GREENS SAFETY SCHEME AND RISK ASSESSMENT

RYTON GOLF CLUB LIMITED

1. Purpose and Scope of the Assessment

Purpose:

The management of health and safety within the golf course in order to minimise the risk of accidents, through the development of safe procedures of operation, for all aspects of golf.

The risk assessment describes the means by which this will be achieved.

All greens employees and managers

Will be responsible for ensuring that health and safety is at the core of all activities undertaken at the golf club.

All golfers, members and visitors (including spectators)

Will be responsible for ensuring they do not endanger themselves, other golfers or other members of the public (for instance, using footpaths / rights of way adjacent to the golf course) whilst present at Ryton Golf Club.

Scope of this risk assessment:

- Identify and assess sources of risk [responsible person - secretary/manager or Club Director]
- Prepare a written scheme for the prevention and/or control of the risk [responsible person - secretary/manager or Club Director]
- Implement, manage and monitor all precautions taken [responsible person - secretary/manager]
- Keep accurate records of all precautions [responsible person - secretary/manager]
- Appoint a person to take managerial responsibility [responsible person - secretary/manager]

The scope of works shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Resurvey and update of all existing risk assessments, on a regular basis.
- Implement and carry out regular inspection and testing regimes as recommended by the RA.
- Monitoring of all measures put in place as part of this risk assessment, on a regular basis with a report being submitted to the responsible person detailing the condition and any remedial works required.



- Providing the responsible person with records of testing carried out and any remedial actions recommended for out of specification results or defects found.
- Providing the responsible person with any recommended system upgrade information.
- The risk assessment to be carried out by a competent operative and actions taken will be specific to the work concerned and the activities undertaken in relation to any specific operation.

The risk assessment shall be reviewed regularly, or if any of the following apply:

- any change to the golf course requiring a review of this risk assessment;
- new information available about risks or control measures;
- results of checks that indicate control measures are no longer effective;
- changes to key personnel;
- any other changes affecting the validity of the risk assessment.

Management structure:

The Responsible Person unless otherwise stated is the Club Secretary/Manager or the relevant Club Director (as noted above). This person, together with the Greenkeeper in Charge, is responsible for ensuring that greens personnel are competent and suitably trained to carry out the duties as prescribed during the day to day operation of the golf club. The Responsible Person delegates the day-to-day operation of the written scheme to the Greenkeeper in Charge (the Competent Person).

The Competent Person(s) is appointed to take day to day responsibility for managing risks during the day to day activities being carried out. They should be able to identify if any constraints prevent the safe carrying out of tasks.

Training:

Training records are to be kept in the Health and Safety Risk Assessment / Log Book and will be made readily available for audit inspections.

All responsible and competent persons should receive basic training supplemented by regular refresher training in the safe use of equipment and the safe means of working.



Communication:

Communication is a key factor in the risk assessment process. The risks need to be identified and communicated to management and employees, to allow the prioritisation of remedial actions to control the identified risks.

The Competent Person takes day-to-day responsibility for controlling any identified risk from the day to day operations, and must have sufficient authority, competence and knowledge of the golf course and its operation, to ensure all operational procedures are carried out in a timely and effective manner.

The Competent Person appointed to implement the control measures and strategies should be suitably informed, instructed and trained and their suitability assessed. Regular refresher training should be given and the Competent Person should have a clear understanding of their role and the overall health and safety management structure and policies of the golf club.

Precautions in place to prevent or minimise risk:

Pre-Planned Maintenance and Inspection

Site Monitoring

General Health and Safety Recommendations

When remedial action should be taken:

Remedial action to be taken in the event that the scheme is shown not to be effective, including control scheme reviews and any modifications made when there is:

- any change to the golf course requiring a review of this risk assessment;
- new information available about risks or control measures;
- results of checks that indicate control measures are no longer effective;
- changes to key personnel;
- any other changes affecting the validity of the risk assessment.



2. AIM

2.1 Compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

The risk assessment should be carried out in order to allow the site management to provide the Responsible Person with the necessary site information for arranging all health and safety action plans.

The risk assessment should not only concentrate on the physical condition of the associated greens/golfing equipment, the 'hardware', but must also assess any risk generated by the management and execution of the systems and controls in place for the operation of that equipment.

This risk assessment has also considered conditions that may arise outside the normal day-to-day running of the golf club which may result in increased risk. These include:

1. Maintenance
2. Breakdown
3. Abnormal operation
4. Commissioning
5. Start up after extended holidays or lockdown
6. Unusual circumstances.

The risk assessment must be reviewed regularly or whenever there is a reason to believe that the original assessment may no longer be valid. This may be due to any of the following reasons:

- any change to the golf course requiring a review of this risk assessment;
- new information available about risks or control measures;
- results of checks that indicate control measures are no longer effective;
- changes to key personnel;
- any other changes affecting the validity of the risk assessment.

The risk assessment should be regarded as a working document and updated as required.



3. GOLF COURSE RISK ASSESSMENT

3.1 Introduction

This assessment considers issues relating to the 18 hole golf course. It does not consider any risks that may be present in or around the clubhouse (including the car park), greenkeepers' compound, and practice area. Risks associated with the work carried out by the greens staff are considered as part of a separate risk assessment.

Ryton Golf Club accepts no liability for any damage caused by golfers to vehicles parked in the club car park.

3.2 General course topography

The golf course is generally relatively level, being sited on the valley floor of the River Tyne, at an elevated level above that of the immediate area of the river. There are some, occasionally steep inclines within the golf course, extending over short distances. The former mining activities within part of the course have resulted in minor changes to the topography of the ground over the years.

The golf course is bounded by the River Tyne to the north and by the Newcastle- Hexham- Carlisle railway line to the south.

Access to the course is via the village of Clara Vale.

The Keelman's Way (National Cycle Route 141) runs along the northern edge of the golf course, to the south of the River Tyne. ***In February 2021 this NCR has been diverted (to avoid a section of path at risk of landslip) onto the bridlepath running past the 7th hole and in front of the 13th tee box, to the railway crossing and through Clara Vale / Stannerford Road.***

A narrow stream leads from the pond at the 1st green / 2nd tee along the southern edge of the 2nd hole, widening to form a lateral water hazard further to the east.

A ditch (frequently dry) / lateral water hazard extends along part of the southern edge of the 9th hole.

3.3 Public access

There is a surfaced path / right of way crossing the course from the railway crossing to the river / Keelman's Way, which runs through holes 7 and 13. ***In February 2021 the NCR 141 (as above) has been diverted onto the bridlepath running past the 7th hole and in front of the 13th tee box, to the railway crossing and through Clara Vale / Stannerford Road.***

There is an unsurfaced right of way (footpath) running across the course from the pedestrian crossing on the railway line, northwards to the Keelman's Way, crossing through the 1st, 17th and 4th / 5th holes.

There is a right of way running to the south of the 2nd hole on the course, largely on the far side of the water hazard.



3.4 Staff working on the course

Staff working on the course have priority at all times and golfers should not play shots if staff are within range.

3.5 Use of trolleys, electric trolleys and motorised (electric) buggies

Ryton Golf Club policy document states that “the use of motorised buggies will be the responsibility of the Greenkeeper in Charge, or his/her representative.”

Each buggy driver should be asked to read the list of instructions in the use of the buggy before being allowed to drive on the course. Any member or visitor who wishes to use their personally owned buggy will be required to follow a similar procedure.

Buggies owned and operated by members must be subject to the provision of a copy of an insurance certificate providing 3rd party public liability, initially on making the request to use their buggy and subsequently each year when renewing their membership. This copy will be kept on file in the clubhouse office.

Any visitor bringing their own buggy should be asked to provide a copy of an insurance certificate providing 3rd party public liability before using the buggy on the course.

All buggy drivers must be over 18 years of age.

3.6 Reduced visibility weather conditions

When conditions are foggy, any closure of the course will be at the discretion of the Greenkeeper in Charge, if present, or the Club Secretary / Manager or his/her representative. A sign will be placed at the first tee and at the locker room entrance advising ‘Course Closed’. The course will only be reopened when the weather conditions have lifted such that visibility is adequate for golf to be played.

3.7 Lightning

In the event of lightning, or the imminent threat of lightning, the course will be closed by the Club Secretary / Manager or his/her representative. The klaxon will be sounded once (long blast) signalling that the course is closed. A tour of the course will be carried out to ensure that all players have left the course. Continuing to play at your own risk is not an option.

Where there is insufficient time to evacuate the course and there is a threat of lightning, golfers and others are advised to comply with the following:

- keep as low down as possible, seek refuge in the nearest bunker or hollow;
- leave golf equipment and stand at a distance from this;
- DO NOT shelter under trees or go to high ground;
- Switch off your mobile phone and do not use it;
- DO NOT put up your umbrella;



- DO NOT stand close to any stream or pond.

The golf course will be reopened by the Club Secretary / Manager or his/her representative by the sounding of the klaxon, three times, once the risk of lightning has passed.

3.8 Paths

Where paths are available on the golf course, all golfers (walking or using a buggy) must use these.

3.9 Painted white lines / G.U.R. (ground under repair)

Where temporary white lines are painted on the golf course, these are provided to ensure the safety of all golfers and to assist the greens staff in maintaining or repairing damaged or vulnerable areas of the course. Golfers with buggies and trolleys must remain outside these lines.

3.10 Footwear

All golfers must ensure they are wearing golf shoes that are adequate and suitable for the ground and weather conditions on the day of play.

3.11 Golfers' insurance

All golfers (members and visitors) are advised to take out adequate 3rd party insurance to provide cover for liability at law for damages payable in respect of:

- Death or bodily injury
- Loss of or damage to material property.

As of July 2019, England Golf provides £10m personal liability insurance as part of the member's affiliation to England Golf, in the event that they are held liable for injuring someone or for causing serious property damage at a golf club.

3.12 Safety notices

All users of the golf course should be made aware of the full risk assessment which is available to be read on/in the:

- Club website
- General office
- Mens locker room
- Ladies locker room

Please take the time to familiarise yourself with its content.

Ryton Golf Club wants everyone to enjoy their round of golf but accepts no liability for any accident or damage caused by not following the safety notices and guidelines whilst playing the course.



Thank you for your understanding on this matter.

3.13 Responsibilities

Maintaining this Risk Assessment is the responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer.

3.14 Overview of Risk Assessment definitions

The risk assessment will address the following:

- Generic risks whilst playing golf
- Risks from carrying clubs and using pull and motorised trolleys in dry and wet conditions
- General hazards within the golf course.

GENERIC RISKS WHILST PLAYING GOLF:

RISK DESCRIPTION	GRADE OF RISK	RECOMMENDATION	GRADE OF RISK WITH RECOMMEND'N IN PLACE
Being struck by a golf ball hit offline by a golfer playing on another part of the golf course	High	All players must remain alert at all times to the behaviour of nearby players. Players who have played an offline shot must immediately shout 'Fore' to alert all surrounding players that the shot has been struck.	Medium
Being struck by a golf ball hit by a playing partner	High	Non-playing partner(s) must not advance in front of the shot being played without watching the shot being played. Players who have played a shot towards a playing partner(s) must immediately shout 'Fore' to alert all surrounding players that the shot has been struck.	Medium
Being struck by a golf ball played by a golfer in the following group	Medium	Following golfers must ensure that those in front have advanced further than they can hit their best shot.	Low
Being struck by the swinging club of a playing partner	Medium	Players to stand at least 2m from the arc of the swinging club.	Low



RISK DESCRIPTION	GRADE OF RISK	RECOMMENDATION	GRADE OF RISK WITH RECOMMEND'N IN PLACE
Tripping on uneven, sloping or slippery ground	Medium	<p>Obvious tripping hazards should be removed by fellow golfers and green keeping staff.</p> <p>Sloping areas which become wet and are lacking in thick grass cover should be roped off by green keeping staff to prevent entry by players.</p> <p>Extra care should be taken by all golfers encountering these conditions (including ensuring they are wearing proper footwear)</p>	Low
Tripping over a fellow golfer's playing equipment, trolley or buggy	Low	Care should be taken by all golfers on the course.	Low
Slipping when on sloping ground, e.g. the sides of bunkers, especially when ground conditions are wet	High	<p>Enter and exit bunkers from the shallowest sides wherever possible.</p> <p>Trolleys and buggies must be kept at least 5m from such slopes in all conditions.</p>	Medium
Steep slopes on the sides of raised tee boxes can be slippery when wet	High	Use the steps in place to ascend tee boxes	Low
Slopes within the course may become slippery when wet	Medium-high	<p>Treat slopes with care, particularly when conditions are wet.</p> <p>Ensure golf shoes are adequately spiked and suitable for the ground and weather conditions on the day of play.</p>	Medium-low
Ponds / streams: marked by hazard posts (see hole by hole analysis)	High	<p>Players should remain outside the line of the hazard stakes. Only enter the staked area on foot and with extreme caution to avoid slipping into the water.</p> <p>Keep all trollies and buggies 3m from the edges of hazards.</p>	Medium



USING MOTORISED BUGGIES IN WET CONDITIONS

If the Greenkeeper in Charge or his/her representative considers that the course conditions are too wet to safely operate motorised buggies without damaging the course and risking damage to buggies / users, the 'course conditions' notice on the front page of the Club website will be amended to state that buggies are off (i.e. not to be used).

Risk – High level from buggies skidding uncontrollably or overturning, causing injury to drivers, passengers and others, as well as damage to the course.

Recommendation – Use of buggies will be banned until course conditions improve.

GENERAL HAZARDS PRESENT ON OR NEAR THE GOLF COURSE

The information below identifies the main hazards that members and visitors may encounter when playing, practicing on or walking the golf course. This is not a comprehensive list as adverse weather and unforeseen human or other actions may create new and unforeseen hazards. Being aware of this information will reduce the risk to yourself and others. The Golf Club Management may deem it necessary to close the course if risks to members and the public are considered excessive.

All golfers must adhere to the following:

1. Be aware of and adopt golfing etiquette, do not play a shot when others are in range; if an error of judgement is made in terms of distance or direction, shout "FORE"!
2. Be aware of the behaviour and location of other golfers and members of the public, particularly on holes running alongside the River Tyne / Keelman's Way and railway line path. ***In February 2021 the Keelman's Way / NCR 141 has been diverted (to avoid a section of path at risk of landslide) onto the bridlepath running past the 7th hole and in front of the 13th tee box, to the railway crossing and through Clara Vale / Stannerford Road. There could therefore be increased use of this path by members of the public who may not be aware of the dangers of being hit by a golf ball, or may be moving quickly (cycling) and therefore harder to spot when teeing off on the 7th and 13th.***
3. Be aware of your playing partners, do not walk in front of them when they are playing a shot, or stand in range of the arc of their golf club.
4. Be aware of greens staff when these are working on the course, give them time to move away before playing a shot. If they are unaware of your presence, attract their attention as best you can (noting they may be wearing ear defenders so may not hear you easily).



5. Many holes on the golf course run in parallel, and some holes play across other holes; if unsure where your ball will finish shout **"FORE"**! as a precaution. See also the hole by hole notes for more information.

Hazards associated with ponds, streams and ditches

All banks and edges of ponds, streams and ditches should be treated as potentially slippery and caution taken when negotiating these. Do not step onto frozen ice. Keep motorised buggies and trollies clear of hazards and at least 3m from the edges of these.

Hazards associated with trees on the golf course

Many of the poplars on the golf course contain a lot of dead wood and may shed branches at any time, particularly in strong winds. Avoid walking close to trees in windy weather as branches can fall unexpectedly.

Hazards associated with animal damage

Rabbits and other animals can dig holes in areas of the golf course, be aware of the risk of stepping into a hole, particularly in areas of long grass; this may result in sprained or broken limbs.

Hazards associated with chemicals used on the course

Avoid oral contact with anything that has come into contact with the golf course, especially if signs "Caution Spraying" are in place. The golf course will at times have traces of fertiliser, fungicides/herbicides and other chemicals, as well as animal waste.

Hazards associated with dead animals

Any dead animals found on the course should not be handled but reported to a member of staff, who will take action to address this.

Hazards associated with adverse weather

Additional care is required when moving round the golf course in wet, cold or icy conditions. During hot weather, ensure you remain well hydrated by having a bottled drink with you, wear a hat and apply sunscreen.

Players must take responsibility for their own safety on the course when it is open for play.

If the klaxon sounds, you must leave the course for your own safety.

Hazards associated with slopes and banks

Wear the correct footwear on the course, having regard for the weather / ground conditions.

Take care when going up or down slopes; use steps where these are provided; avoid taking buggies and trollies up or down steep slopes, especially if an alternative route is available.

Do not brake suddenly when driving buggies on slopes, especially in wet conditions.



Enter and exit bunkers from low points.

PRACTICING

This is limited to the designated areas – practice ground (adjacent to the 5th hole); practice net (adjacent to the car park) and practice putting green (to the east of the car park / behind the 16th tee).

ACCIDENTS / OBSERVED DANGERS AND HAZARDS

Please report all accidents to the golf club office (by phone, 0191 413 3253 if the office is unmanned) or a member of staff. First aid kits are located ...

Any dangers noticed such as wasps' nests, unsafe branches of trees, rabbit holes should also be reported as soon as possible (as above).

HOLE BY HOLE ANALYSIS

Abbreviations:

OOB – out of bounds

R – right

L – left

- 1st hole: OOB to the right of the hole (railway line)
Risk of wayward shots played to the left hitting people playing the 17th
2nd shots / long tee shots – risk of hitting men on the 2nd medal tee, beyond
and to the right of the hedge
Pond to the back right of the green
- 2nd hole: OOB to the right of the hole (railway line, right of way)
Do not tee off if golfers are on the 17th tee (forward and to the left)
Lateral water hazard runs to the right of the fairway
Risk of wayward shots hitting players on the 17th and 3rd holes
- 3rd hole: OOB to the right of the hole (Keelman's Way path)
Risk of wayward shots hitting players on the 2nd hole
- 4th hole: OOB to the right (Keelman's Way path); also fenced off area of underground
combustion beyond the path – DO NOT ENTER
Risk of wayward shots hitting players on the 16th hole



- 5th hole: OOB to the right (practice area)
Be aware of players on the 15th hole to the left of the 5th hole
When approaching the green, be aware of anyone teeing off from holes 14 (above and to the left) and 15 (forward and to the left) as they may not see you
- 6th hole: OOB to the right (Keelman's Way path)
Risk of wayward shots hitting people on the 9th hole
- 7th hole: Be aware when playing from the tee that there may be members of the public using the path from the railway crossing to / from the river; they have right of way. ***Diversion of the Keelman's Way onto this path (February 2021) may increase the numbers of people using this route, some of whom may not be aware of the risk of being hit by a golf ball***
If golfers are playing from the 10th (yellow / winter) tee, please wait until they have played and moved on before hitting tee shots
Be aware when approaching the green that there may be people teeing off on the 13th hole (to the right); wait for them to finish teeing off before walking to the green
- 8th hole: OOB to the right (golf club access road)
Wayward tee shots risk hitting people playing the 13th
- 9th hole: Wayward tee shots may hit people playing the 13th
Lateral water hazard runs to the left of the further part of the fairway, ensure your footing is secured if playing a shot from this hazard or if stepping into or out of it
- 10th hole: OOB to the right of the hole (Keelman's Way path)
Steeply sloping ground to the right of the green; be careful in wet / slippery conditions
- 11th hole: OOB to the right (Keelman's Way path) and left (railway line)
Be aware of people playing the 12th hole when hitting tee shots as well as when waiting to play
- 12th hole: OOB to the right (path and railway line) (and to the left from the gents tee)
Steep slopes lead up to the tee boxes from the area of the 11th green and fairway, be careful in wet or slippery conditions



Be aware of people to the left who are playing the 11th, and 10th holes when playing this hole

13th hole: Ensure there is no one approaching from either direction on the public path between the railway crossing and the river, before teeing off – they have right of way. ***Diversion of the Keelman's Way onto this path (February 2021) may increase the numbers of people using this route, some of whom may not be aware of the risk of being hit by a golf ball***

Have regard for golfers playing the 7th hole, even though you have right of way – they may not be aware of this

Be aware of people playing the 8th hole when teeing off / playing this hole, you may not be able to see them

Please ring the bell when leaving the green, to let players behind you know the green is clear

14th hole: Be aware of golfers on the 15th hole; do not tee off if there are golfers on the ladies tee, or walking from the gents tees onto the 15th fairway

Be careful when walking down the path from the tee towards the green, golfers may be playing from the 15th tee (to the left)

Use the path, do not walk or take buggies down the slope from the tee box to the 15th fairway

15th hole: OOB to the right (car park)

Wayward tee shots may hit golfers on the 5th hole (to the left); wayward approach shots may hit golfers on the 16th tee box (to the right)

Wait on the fairway level with the 16th tee if golfers are playing from this tee box, do not approach the green until they have finished teeing off

16th hole: Wayward tee shots may hit golfers playing the 17th (to the right) or the 4th (to the left)

Wayward approach shots may also endanger golfers on the 4th hole

Be aware of golfers teeing off from the 4th hole when approaching the 16th green

17th hole: Be aware of golfers teeing off on the 2nd hole when standing on the tee box; although you have right of way, they may not be aware of this

Be aware of golfers playing the 1st hole when playing approach shots to the green

18th hole: OOB in the area of the clubhouse and car park, to the right



Be aware of golfers who may be walking from the clubhouse to the first tee, also those who have just left the 18th green, and anyone playing the 17th green

Wayward shots may also hit golfers playing the 1st hole.