



Welcome to our Wrag Barn Members Evening 2022.

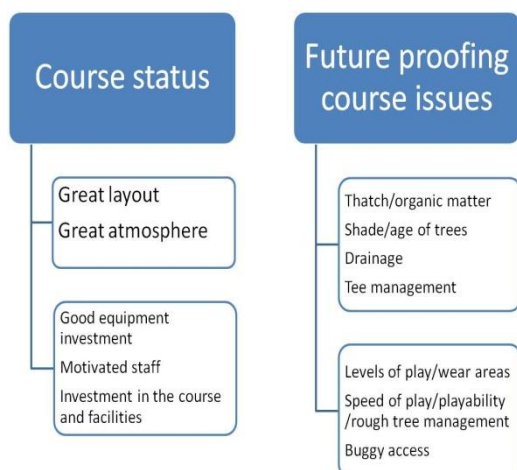
I'd like to welcome our Wrag Management Director, Johnathan Callister and Sports Psychologist Michael Caulfield.

I am also supported by our Head Greenkeeper Neil Carter and the Mrs.

The club has seen a lot of changes over the last two and a half years. Johnathan has been very involved in the planning of the clubhouse improvements and will talk in a minute about things from his perspective.

I'm going to say a few words about our activities

on the course and where we hope to make further improvements in the coming years. Oddly, we are in a stronger position currently than we were before the Covid pandemic. We actually have a waiting list of people wanting to join, which is tremendous and has enabled us to reinvest in the club with confidence, despite all the political upheaval and economic headwinds.



Last year we benefitted from having the advice of Chris Haspell who identified our strengths and politely pointed out some of our weaknesses and we have started to implement his list of ideas and recommendations. Unfortunately he isn't able to join us tonight, which is a shame but I hope he will be back again soon to impart his wisdom.

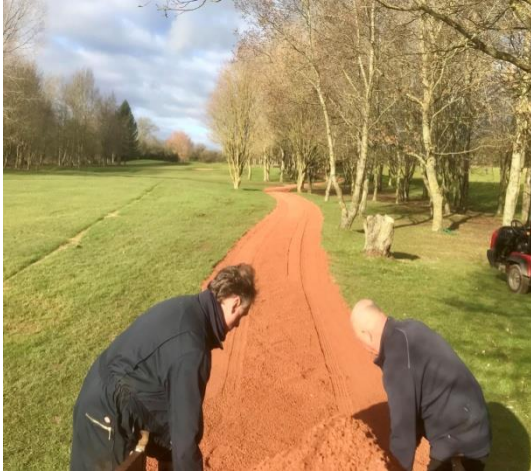
Our first priority was to improve the quality and enjoyment of playing golf with a lot of emphasis on keeping the course in good condition for longer through the winter months



Worm cast management has had to change recently. We're no longer able to use the chemical that controls the worm casts and have to employ a combination of permitted sprays and brushing.

We've left the grass on the fairways and tees a bit longer which reduces the mud and the mess it creates.

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Early in the year the lads were able to get on with winter maintenance plus a few projects including the path on the 11th. We hope to create more paths on the course which improves disabled access. The priority areas are from the 1st green to the second tee the 7th fairway



Anyone working the land has to deal with the four seasons and last year we had 3 storms in the spring. This was the damage inflicted by Storm Eunice and I'd like to thank the members who volunteered to help with the clear up.



We installed a new water tank for the irrigation system .and created a path on the 5th which provided spoil for a bank to reduce the visual impact – Verity has been credited with the wild flower display – actually it was my idea.

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The Captains Drive in was able to go ahead in March and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who volunteers to work behind the scenes led by the Captains of each section to make Wrag Barn the club it is



Chris Haspell identified a number of trees for removal to aid light and air flow access to the greens and tees. This has been an ongoing project and we have seen significant improvements on the 17th and 7th green; also the practice green and the ladies 14th tee. This winter we want to take out more conifers which are impacting the appearance of the old tee on the 9th and the 2nd tees. In August we had a tree survey which assessed the increasing risk posed by ash die back. Fortunately most of our ash trees are not tall enough to be very dangerous and we can manage them ourselves. We have got a list of crowns which need to be reduced.



Work on the greens was implemented in March, the greens were hollow cored and we were able to use our new top dresser to apply 25 tons of sand. It took several weeks for the putting surfaces to properly recover but they were in good condition for the Men's Championships when I think everyone agreed the course was in fabulous condition.

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This is the 17th shortly after maintenance and again the week of the championship. This green is causing some concern at the moment as it is taking some time to recover from heat stress. We have a plan to introduce zeolite which is a form of volcanic ash and will help dry the surface of the green. We need to pass the verti drainer over as soon as possible but at the moment it is too wet.



We replaced and repaired the sprinkler heads as part of the rolling programme of maintenance and rewired the system on 4 greens. After a false start we now have an integrated control system which Nobby operates from his phone and he can specify the water delivery on each green.

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After two years of waiting the new range balls arrived and we have installed new flags on the greens which measuring devices pick up for accurate information.



The summer programme was very much setting up the course for all the events and we had some fun – again thank you to everyone who organises the competitions.

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Junior week was a resounding success with some tremendous achievements – if nothing else this picture shows how well everyone integrates.



We can't mention the Juniors without congratulating them on winning the Wiltshire Junior League and Wiltshire Junior Knockout Cup.
And..... Congratulations to our Ladies A league team who won the Wiltshire Scratch League Division One.

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As we got into July the heat wave arrived with inevitable consequences – there is very little we can do for the fairways and the course looked like a savannah with little green oasis' but everyone enjoyed the fabulous weather and the advantage of 300 yard drives. On the whole most of the grass has recovered but there are a few areas which look like a bad hair transplant. We will attend to those in the spring of next year. Some of the greens suffered but are 95% better now.



Our endeavour to extend the playing season continued in August when we returned to the drainage project. We installed more drains and sand banded across the drains on the 11th, 7th and 15th. I'm pleased to say they have held up well after some substantial amounts of rain over several weeks.

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We have purchased some new winter mats which are far more user friendly than the old mats as you can put a tee into them and they aren't filled with sand so less brutal. We have started levelling the tees on the 5th and installed a new path to the ladies tee. More tees are in the pipeline weather permitting. Hollow coring and maintenance to introduce as much sand as possible into the greens is planned for the spring. We will continue with a programme of winter tree work.