TGC GOLF CLUB
WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN 2022

For and on behalf of:

TGC Golf Club

Prepared by

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OUR BRIEF

I have been asked to produce a plan for the woodland management at TGC Golf Club ("TGC").

My first task whenever given a woodland management brief, is to determine the primary use of the land. In the case of TGC, it's obvious that the prime use of the land is for a golf course, and this is the overriding factor when I consider our woodland management plan.

I identify the existing tree and vegetation cover and detail the management required to ensure their sustainability, whilst always being aware that the trees and woodlands are an intrinsic element of the golf course, helping to form the landscape in which golf is played.

Management is vital to ensure their potential is realised and their long-term future safeguarded, but without proper management, the woodlands will encroach onto the playing surfaces, detract from the air and light that is essential to maintain healthy swards, and obscure the beautiful views that are available at TGC. As you all know, over the years, many of the views that TGC enjoyed in the early years of the course have been lost to encroaching woodland.

This initial document is to provide an overview to you, the members of TGC, highlighting the good, the bad and the ugly aspects of your current woodlands.
As we progress through the process, I will work closely with your Course Manager to agree a hole-by-hole programme.

REFERENCES

I have vast experience with trees on golf courses having worked on over 500 courses in recent years, including North Hants, Coombe Hill, The Addington, New Zealand, Royal Wimbledon, Worplesdon, Sunningdale, Royal Lytham & St. Annes and St Georges Hill.
I have written many articles for Greenkeeper International and The Golf Club Secretary and have given lectures at BTME at Harrogate, EGU road shows and presented a seminar for the Dutch Golf Federation.

OVERVIEW of TGC GOLF CLUB

TGC is a beautiful golf course, set on the Downs with wonderful views to the surrounding area and the fine grasses required to produce quality playing surfaces. These are unique features that need to be emphasised and maintained so that the course receives the accolades it deserves.
Harry Colt the famous golf course architect who designed TGC was the first person to identify the agronomics required to produce quality golfing conditions. He recognised that the fine grasses, infertile and free draining soils that links golf offered could be found elsewhere – such as at TGC.

It should be noted that both heathland and downs are transitory ecosystems and if no management occurs then they will return to woodland. Firstly, through turning to scrub as pioneers such as thorn will invade followed by high canopy species such as oak and ash.

If the quality of TGC is to be maintained, it is essential to adopt a management prescription that protects the fine calcareous grassland.
This means that a form of cutting and collecting in the late summer is necessary to stop enrichment and the establishment of trees in areas of rough. Collection is essential as if arisings are left then they will leach nitrogen into the soil causing enrichment.
I am pleased to see that over the past 2 or 3 years, this regime has started and already the benefits can be seen.

Trees and shrubs naturally fertilise the soil as they draw up nutrients from subsoil then deposit them back into the topsoil through leaf drop. Legumes such as gorse are even more destructive as they naturally fix nitrogen from the atmosphere and deposit it in the soil causing fertility and creating an ecosystem that favours the broadleaf grasses that are undesirable for golf. It is therefore essential to restrict gorse to areas away from playing surfaces.
Once trees have established and the under-storey has become enriched, plants such as ivy, bracken and bramble colonise, this adds further to the fertility and the progression goes on.

Trees are now part of the landscape at TGC and should be retained to form the framework of the landscape.
However, care needs to be taken as to the location of the woodland to protect the agronomy and downland character of the course.

TGC has a great advantage over many golf courses in that it has a strong structure of established woodland which if managed would complement the layout.
It should not be forgotten that part of the pleasure of golf is the surroundings you play in.
This often goes unnoticed as it is a subconscious pleasure but nevertheless is crucial to the quality of the experience.

As with many of the more established courses, TGC is now beginning to show her age.
Ingress has occurred in certain areas, as the woodland edge has expanded, and trees have grown up in places that may not be appropriate and the strategy of the holes diluted.

On an established layout such as yours, it is essential to maintain the genius loci of the landscape and my management prescriptions always reflect this. The character of a course can often be changed unintentionally through lack of woodland management, i.e. regeneration blocking scenic views or infringing on play, or by poorly designed planting which may adversely affect the strategy or aesthetics of the course.

WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

The trees and woodlands are generally even aged at TGC and require thinning to allow the remaining trees to reach their potential. If thinning does not occur, then wind blow will be likely.

The encroachment of trees has had a detrimental effect on a golf course and in some areas, the strategy of the hole has changed, often penalising only the poorer player.
A situation which Harry Colt the doyen of golf architects once wrote, when asked do you design a hole for the scratch player or the high handicap golfer ***'I have never considered the poorer player as he has enough problems on his own account without my intervention.'***

Ingress can create problems on tee boxes as players naturally favour one side, it can block scenic views or create unnecessary blind shots. Further as with all great paintings or landscapes, great golf holes tend to have a framed view with trees, bunkers or sand dunes acting as the border to focus attention on the strategy intended.

However, if subsequently something such as gorse are added to the foreground, then the focus of attention is changed and the design lost, after all who would think of adding some garden shrubs to the foreground of a 'Constable' landscape!

The same should therefore apply to a golf hole if it is to maintain its integrity.

Trees and shrubs adjoining greens can also have a strong influence on the quality of the grass sward as only the broader leaf grasses are shade tolerant, this then means a player has the added problem of a poor lie to play what would normally be a delicate chip shot.

Shade, poor air circulation and competition for water and nutrients create conditions that encourage disease as the grass sward is stressed and the humidity suits fungal growth. In fact, it was Harry Colt that wrote the first paper on Fusarium when he noticed that disease appeared on several courses on the same day. He then kept a diary of the climatic conditions and found the association between humidity and fungal disease.

Playing surfaces will also remain out of play for unnecessarily long periods in frosty conditions, as the low winter sun will not be able to warm their surfaces.

As enrichment occurs and broad leaf grass begins to dominate so the nature of the rough changes from wispy fine grass to a rank dense mass. This causes slow play and impossible recovery shots.

It should be noted that what the course manager requires to achieve good presentation and what is good conservation management are the same a necessity for light, air, and infertility.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AT TGC

At present the course has a bit of an identity crisis !
There are areas of natural woodland that create a strong framework on which the landscape character should be built.
Unfortunately, over the years planting and/or thinning has occurred often in linear patterns with species inappropriate for a golf course. This has led to an unnatural appearance in certain areas.

All the truly great courses have a very natural landscape with indigenous species forming the core of the structure. TGC already has this structure and with some judicious removal both the landscape and reputation of the golf course could be increased and the fine grasses safeguarded.
It is therefore necessary to identify the landscape character that the club desires and then enhance this with careful management. Nature never works in straight lines therefore it will be necessary to break any symmetric appearance.

TGC was definitely a downland course that evolved to what it is today.
There are few true downland courses in Britain and TGC is one of best; this should be used to market the club to both members and visitors.

TGC has many wonderful green settings and delightful contours that are being lost as trees and scrub encroach removing the drama of the original design and much of the landscape interest. Care must be taken to ensure such features are emphasised and not hidden.

TGC has many fine trees that have lost their integrity due to overcrowding. As previously stated, a number of years ago it was considered the correct thing to plant every gap that was available on a golf course with any form of tree. The species selection either being aesthetic (from a gardener's point of view) or for fast establishment with no consideration to the effect on the landscape of the site.

AGRONOMICS

In a number of areas playing surfaces are suffering from shade and poor air circulation this predisposes the grass sward to disease and creates an environment where the broadleaf grasses will dominate. TGC is very lucky in that it has naturally the fine grasses required for quality golf every effort should therefore be made to retain the ecosystem.

CLUBHOUSE

TGC has one of the most attractive clubhouses in the country and it is therefore important to ensure views from the course to the clubhouse are maintained and visible from as many points around the course as possible.

CARBON CAPTURE

Suitably managed grassland can hold as much carbon as a woodland - and for longer.

The total values for Carbon pools within grassland and deciduous woodland are roughly similar at 300 tonnes per hectare. Most of this is below ground in the soil for grassland and, depending on the levels of ground disturbance, locked away for a very long while. A third of this (about 100 tonnes per hectare) in woodland is in the trees themselves. The trees will release their Carbon as limbs fall off or the trees die, but perhaps the most significant is the seasonal release in the autumn when leaf drop occurs.

GORSE, BRAMBLE AND BRACKEN

Gorse, bracken and bramble can be a cause of concern. They form a significant threat to the sustainability of the woodland and grassland.

As a legume, Gorse naturally fixes nitrogen from the atmosphere causing enrichment.

It spreads rapidly through seed and will regenerate vigorously after cutting. Gorse is light demanding and will, therefore, tend to spread towards the playing surface. It is problematic, for interference with play through difficulty in retrieving lost balls; unwanted spread and control of unwanted growth.

Gorse will vigorously colonise adjoining areas of grassland. It should therefore be removed from any areas anywhere close to the playing surfaces.

Bracken spreads through rhizomorphs in the soil and can colonise up to 10 metres from the parent plant through suckering, its thick fronds create an impossible situation for finding balls and bracken harbours ticks that can spread disease. The accumulation of dead fronds over years acts as a mulch, smothering other plants. Bracken can be controlled chemically with the use of Asulox.

Bramble is a frequent problem where woodland has been cleared or thinned as the accumulation of nutrient from falling leaves provides ideal conditions for its growth. Whilst there are a number of chemical controls available, our experience is that using these may actually result in increased bramble cover through the selective removal of potentially competing plants, with the bramble being able to “tough it out with the herbicide” better than other plants. Careful spot-spraying is the best approach here.

As with Bracken cutting, it is essential that areas to be managed in this way are easy of access and management.

In short, all areas of gorse, bracken & bramble need careful and constant management.

RHODODENDRON

The major problem here is the species *Rhododendron ponticum*, with a mauve flower.
It grows very rapidly and smothers other plants, both chemically and physically.
Extension growth is often more than 60cms a year, with the leaf rosettes behind the growing point dying back. This means that hard cutting into the previous year's growth often reveals an unsightly matt of black twigs.

Regularly trimmed areas become a wall of green, advancing stealthily ever outward. The species sets seed and spreads rapidly from seed under suitable conditions, adding to the strong tendency of low branches to layer in front of the original plant. The roots seem to inhibit the growth of other plants.

Removal of unwanted rhododendron is best through grubbing out, cutting and burning of as much as possible and then burying of root plates which have not burnt.

Legislation

Due to its invasive nature R. ponticum is covered by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is listed under Schedule 9 of the Act and Section 14 of the Act states that it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause the species to grow in the wild. Recently it has become clear that R. ponicum is a major host for Phytophthora and infected areas must be cleared by law. Extending such clearance to reduce the potential for further infection is a desirable goal, but a potentially expensive one.

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TURKEY OAK

Much of the oak on the golf course is Turkey oak which is spreading rapidly into the areas of heath.
Turkey oak (Quercus cerris) is a non-indigenous tree introduced to Britain in the 18th century and is now impacting on the native oak population.
It is less valuable to wildlife, but much faster growing and often supresses the more desirable native species.
Turkey oak is a host of the knopper oak gall wasp *Andricus quercuscalicis*, whose larvae damage the acorns of native British oaks.
Turkey oak has no timber value and will hybridise with the native oak adversely affecting the ecological value of the golf course. This will also impact on the costs of future management as the timber has no value except for firewood.
Most of the areas of oak scrub on the course comprise of turkey oak due to its aggressive colonisation properties. ***It should be an aim of the club to remove Turkey where possible.***

In 1998, the Ministry of Defence ordered the felling of all Turkey oaks on its UK bases.

The National Trust declared: **"**The Turkey oak is **an invasive alien species** that supports very little wildlife and is damaging to the native English oak. I shall be felling several areas of these trees over the next few months. Most of our wildlife lives on native plants" Whilst introduced species from all around the world may add colour or interest (our gardens are full of them), they can be very invasive and damaging when they get established in natural ecosystems.

TURKEY OAK – Continued

One such species found at TGC is *Quercus cerris*. This "invasive alien" grows at an amazing rate, outstripping native oaks and causing them to be stunted or leaning towards the light. It supports about four species of invertebrates, compared to the hundreds that live on and around the English oak.

Identifying Turkey Oak

The leaves are distinctive and different from those of the native oaks (sessile or pedunculate). Whereas the leaf of the latter is quite broad, the leaf of the turkey oak is 'narrow' and more 'angular'. The top surface of the leaves is a dark, rich green but the lower surface is paler. A leaf stalk or petiole is clearly visible.

The acorn is the most distinguishing feature when identifying this tree. The cup is frilled and very distinctive. They are produced over a two-year period turning from green to a light brown.

NOISE REDUCTION.

I am often told that taking down trees increases the noise from adjoining roads.

Research has generally concluded that the greatest effect that trees have on noise attenuation is a visual one. Ayler (1972) reports that a visual screen with gaps in it to be more effective than a dense screen in making people think they Ire hearing less noise. Correspondingly, a visually impenetrable screen increased the perception of noise. Road noise is between 72-78 decibels, and it is found that the best results for noise reduction is a screen located close to the source. A belt of trees and shrubs 30 metres deep will have an acoustic reduction of around 6db so has a relatively low impact of the actual reality of the situation.

By supplementing the screen with shrubs along the boundary a greater impact on noise reduction should be achieved. In summary the increase in road noise is most likely to be a perception rather than a fact, as the thinning works will have had minimum effect on the acoustics and a great effect on the visual appearance.

Ash Die Back

Unfortunately, like most locations in England, TGC has not escaped from Ash dieback.

This is a highly destructive disease of ash trees (*Fraxinus* species), especially the United Kingdom's native ash species, common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). It is caused by a fungus named *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (*H. fraxineus*), which is of eastern Asian origin.

The disease is also known as 'chalara', ash dieback, and chalara dieback of ash.

Calling it 'chalara' ash dieback helps to distinguish it from dieback on ash trees caused by other agents.

The asexual phase of the fungus's life cycle was formerly known as *Chalara fraxinea*, hence the name of the disease, and the sexual phase was called *Hymenoscyphus pseudoalbidus*.

Some older scientific, technical and policy documents which are still consulted use these earlier names.

Chalara ash dieback is present in most parts of the United Kingdom. Its effects are most visible in regions where the fungus has been present for the longest time, and where local conditions are most suitable for the fungus.

Chalara ash dieback has the potential to cause significant damage to the UK's ash population, with implications for woodland biodiversity and ecology, and for the hardwood industries.

Ash is one of our most useful and versatile native tree species, providing valuable habitat for a wide range of dependent species. It can grow in a variety of soils and climatic conditions. The ‘airy’ nature of its foliage allows light to penetrate to the woodland floor, encouraging ground plants and fauna. Several insects, other invertebrates, lichens and mosses depend wholly on ash for habitat.

Identification and Symptoms

Among the first symptoms that an ash tree might be infected with *H. fraxineus* is blackening and wilting of leaves and shoots in mid- to late summer (July to September). These months are the best time of year to survey ash trees for chalara symptoms in the foliage. This is because once autumn begins in late September or October, the normal seasonal change in the colour of the leaves can be mistaken for symptoms of the disease.

Most infected leaves are shed prematurely by the tree, but in some cases the infection progresses from the leaves and into the twigs, branches and eventually the trunk, causing dark lesions, or cankers, to form in the bark. These often have a characteristic elongated-diamond shape centred on the joints between branches, or where branches join the trunk. The lesions typically, but not always, spread upwards and downwards from the joint as the infection spreads in both directions. They can eventually girdle the whole trunk, cutting off the tree's supply of fluid and nutrients from the roots.

If lesions are not large enough to entirely girdle the affected stem, they can dry out and crack open over time as the tree grows around the damage. They should be visible at any time of the year.

You are not legally required to take any particular action if you own infected ash trees, unless your country forestry or plant health authority serves you with a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN) requiring action. This is unlikely.

With the exceptions of felling for public safety or timber production, I advise a general presumption against felling living ash trees, whether infected or not. This is because there is good evidence that a small proportion will be able to tolerate *H. fraxineus* infection. There is also the possibility that a proportion of ash trees can become diseased, but then recover to good health. These, too, would be valuable for our research, although it is still too early to know whether there are such trees in the British ash population.

However, by keeping as many ash trees standing as possible, I can identify individuals which appear to survive exposure to the fungus and which can be used for breeding tolerant ash trees for the future.
That said, public safety must be the priority, so keep an eye on the trees' safety as the disease progresses, and prune or fell them if they or their branches threaten to cause injury or damage. In particular, watch for basal lesions (lesions, or cankers, forming near the bottom of the trunk), which can weaken the trunk and make the tree more prone to falling.
There is no known cure, although some fungicides might be effective in suppressing the disease, enabling individual ash trees of particular value to be saved. These might include trees of high amenity, heritage or cultural value. However, such treatments often have to be re-applied periodically, perhaps every year, and can therefore be expensive.

DESCRIPTION of TGC

Location	The course is situated on the Oxted Downs.
Climate	Jan. 6-8ºc avg. July 14-16ºc avg. Annual rainfall 0-625mm. Growing season 7-8 months.
Geology	Underlying chalk
Soil Type	Overlying sands and gravels
Drainage	Due to the geology, the majority of course is generally free draining

WOODLAND/DOWNLAND DESCRIPTION

The course is set within the Oxted downs and benefits from the fine grasses and free draining soil associated with calcareous grassland. Areas of calcareous grass and potential wildflowers add to the ecological value and interest of the site.

Pioneer species such as Turkey oak, Ash and Gorse have invaded creating thickets that will eventually succeed to high canopy woodland.

Any areas that are left unmown for any period will become invaded by scrub this will have an injurious effect on the agronomics of the course as scrub enriches creating an ecosystem that favours the undesirable broadleaf grasses that are detrimental to quality playing surfaces.

Light and air are also essential to the fine grass sward and if it is to be managed to the highest standard ingress and planting that has occurred around some tees and greens will cause problems with the agronomy and should be removed.

MANAGEMENT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Maintain and enhance the quality of the golf course

- To protect the golfing strategy of holes by creating sustainable woodland cover.
- To improve the quality of grass sward by managing the trees and woodland and stopping encroachment into the line of play.
- To enhance the Downland character of the course

Maintain and enhance the long-term landscape value of the course.

- Bring existing woodlands into management so their long-term impact on the landscape can be preserved.
- To Maintain the views to the broader landscape and highlight interesting features
- To provide a unified landscape character

Enhance the value of the course for wildlife.

- Utilise native species.
- Thin existing woodland where appropriate to encourage development of natural regeneration of tree species and ground flora and a more diverse canopy structure.
- To maintain the calcareous grassland

Ensure safety of members, guests and employees.

- Fell or make safe trees identified as potentially unsafe.

Encourage long term vision and continuity of management policy.

- Ensure all work proposals are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and costed.
- To ensure that the necessary licenses are obtained from the Forestry Authority.
- Review management on an annual basis.

METHOD

The trees and woodlands at TGC have been surveyed to identify and assess their ecological value and importance to preserve any environmentally interesting features.
The trees and woodlands have also been surveyed in order to produce a management prescription that will protect and enhance the sustainability of the woodlands.
The strategy of the course in relation to trees and golf has been assessed and suggestions have been made in a holistic manner. Similarly, the agronomic influence of the trees and woodlands has been investigated.
Various site visits have been made by John Nicholson to ensure all aspects of golf course management are clearly identified.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

Recent decades have seen a natural increase in tree cover as regeneration of self-seeded Turkey oak ash, thorn and sycamore in areas of unmown rough. Whilst trees and woodlands are now part of the character of the landscape and strategy of the course, care must be taken to preserve the fine grasses that make the course so special.
A policy of consolidating and enhancing existing woodland areas should also be implemented. This will serve to maximise the benefits of tree cover whilst ensuring its long-term sustainability.
Past planting, has lacked cohesion.
Exotic's, such as Turkey oak and sweet chestnut have been introduced, often adjoining more attractive trees, removing their integrity and in some cases suppressing the more desirable species.

It should therefore be a long-term objective to create a more natural landscape, which has a continuous theme throughout the course. All the highly regarded courses have a natural appeal to them.

Within the course are several areas of calcareous grass that should be managed as hay meadow by cutting and collecting the arisings. This will avoid enrichment and encourage the fine grasses and wildflowers.
It will increase the wildlife value of the golf course by safeguarding habitats for invertebrates such as butterflies and will ensure that areas of rough have fine wispy grass that allows a recovery shot to be attempted. Lost balls and slow play will be avoided.

Many of the plantations on the course have an even aged closed canopy and have never been thinned; this creates a fragile environment as all the trees will mature at the same time. Further it does not allow the trees to reach their full potential as they will become supressed by adjoining stems.

The aim should be to have a net loss of trees but a net gain in the quality of the trees that remain. This will increase the landscape value, safeguard the agronomics, and reduce maintenance as mowing speed will be increased.

Many of the original features that Colt would have emphasised have been lost to the encroachment of trees. Colt was always aware of good views and interesting contours; his green setting often utilised the topography to add interest to both the golf and landscape. Trees and scrub flatten the landscape appearance and, in many cases, have removed the drama of the topography and green settings. ***Views have been lost and the potential to add landscape interest is illustrated by the works already done on hole 12, where a spectacular view has been returned.***

CONTINUOUS COVER MANAGEMENT.

A woodland that is managed in a sustainable manner seeks to ensure that a young generation of trees is produced to replace those in senescence. In commercial forestry; this is achieved by clear felling then restocking an area of woodland. When the objectives are aesthetic and conservation based, it is preferable to have a range of age classes within the wood. Continuous cover management has advantages in providing continuity of landscape and wildlife habitats. In mature woodland restocking occurs via natural regeneration or planting in gaps in the canopy. These gaps may arise as a result of natural tree death or wind blow. Where natural regeneration or planting is required and no gaps exist these will need to be created by selective felling.

'' Woodland requires management to keep it rich in wildlife. There are all too many instances of neglected or badly managed woodland which over a period of time becomes a dark dense tangle of vegetation. The need for effective woodland management has never been greater and clubs whose courses are damaged by the storms of recent years should rethink their management to assist the trees and the wildlife they support.''

On Course Conservation, Managing golf's natural heritage. The Nature Conservancy Council 1991

SELECTIVE THINNING OF EVEN-AGED STANDS.

Assuming the average lifespan of for instance birch woodland on the golf course is 40-45 years, a significant proportion of the woodland area must be regenerated each year to prevent a rapid deterioration in future decades.

The removal of stunted stems and those of poor form will concentrate future growth on better, more attractive trees, particularly around tees and greens. Tree removal will allow better light penetration and air circulation that will improve the quality of the grass sward.

Where possible, in areas of woodland, the grass should be allowed to grow naturally. This will benefit tree growth and will improve the sustainability of the woodland as natural regeneration will be allowed to develop.

TREES AND GOLF STRATEGY.

Consideration should be given to the shape of the woodland edge in relation to the golfing strategy of holes.
Trees can benefit the strategy of a golf course in many ways.
They can be used to frame a fairway that cannot be seen due to the topography of the site.
Trees can emphasise a dogleg hole by exaggerating the orientation of the fairway or strategically to add interest by creating a heroic carry that, if negotiated successfully, will reward the player with a birdie opportunity.
Tees set into woods create the feeling of seclusion and woodlands can be designed to coalesce making a fairway appear narrower than it actually is.
However, care must be taken as trees form a strong three-dimensional hazard which can easily destroy the intended strategy of a hole if planted in the wrong place. Trees are a dynamic entity, increasing in size over time, often encroaching into the line of play.

'Trees are a fluky and obnoxious form of hazard, but they afford rather good protection, and if a clump of these exists at such a spot it might be considered justifiable to leave it standing.'

H.S.Colt Some Essays on Golf Course Architecture, 1920.

TREE SAFETY.

Ongoing monitoring of tree health and safety should be carried out on an annual basis.
Particular attention should obviously be given to trees on and immediately surrounding the playing surfaces.

THINNING SEMI MATURE COPSES

Copses normally require thinning 10 to 15 years after planting once the canopy begins to close. This will ensure that the trees produce an attractive branch free stem that is beneficial to both players and greens staff.
Thinning too early will produce shrubby scrub type trees with many low branches. Thinning too late will result in drawn trees that will be liable to wind blow or wind snap.

MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

General

TGC has a large percentage of woodland therefore removing trees in the wrong location will not affect the overall experience and landscape of the course.
Linear stands of trees have been introduced between holes. This creates an unnatural appearance and causes unnecessary maintenance as it slows mowing and creates many man hours of leaf collection.
In many areas the original design has been lost as contours are flattened by trees and the interest of playing a challenging shot from an undulation has been removed as the trees dictate only one option to chip out sideways. This defeats Colt's philosophy as it removes the skill from the better player and creates penal golf.

Many of the stands of trees and woodlands that form the boundary to the course are not sustainable as the canopy is even aged and therefore all the trees will decline at the same time. The linear stands also remove the integrity of more attractive specimen trees which become lost within the stand. Hence the phrase ***"Cannot see the wood for the Trees".***

A policy should be introduced to highlight the better specimen trees and create copses this will increase the landscape value as the symmetry will be broken and will allow the remaining trees to reach their potential.

I WILL, AS THE NEXT PHASE OF MY WORK, PREPARE A HOLE-BY-HOLE DETAILED ANALYSIS, WITH MY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WOODLAND MANAGEMENT ON EACH PART OF THE COURSE.

FOR NOW, HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF THE PROBLEM AREAS AROUND TGC:

On the 1st tee: To the right of the tee the trees encroach effectively reducing the size of the playing area as players naturally favour the unimpeded line of play. The tee would also benefit from increased light and air, the trees should be thinned heavily, and the encroachment removed.

On hole 2: The work to the RHS of the 2nd fairway, which I discussed with the Course Manager and Course Director has now been carried out.

This has greatly improved the aesthetic value of the hole, but also the quality of the swards and playability.

However, the trees to the RHS of the fairway stress the swards on the fairway and semi-rough

Hole 3 : think about removing some of the tress to the RHS of the fairway to open up the hole, particularly from the Red/Blue tees ….

Hole 4: Shade all across the tee box – stunting growth of the swards

Hole 4 – Shade on the green, inhibiting healthy swards

The 4th green suffers from heavy shading, which predisposes the green to disease and stresses the sward**.**

Hole 5: The tees are suffering from the shade created by the Turkey oak to the right.

The conifer is killing the new turf.

Hole 6: Trees around the greens are casting shadows which inhibit growth during autumn and winter months, encouraging disease and damaging the swards.

Removing three trees to the rear of the green will have no real impact to the backdrop of the green as there are trees beyond.

Hole 13: The woodland to the right of the hole requires thinning as it has now closed canopy. It blocks views that once existed and is generally out of play.

The gorse to the right of the hole now screens the view to the right of the green removing the drama of the topography and green setting.

The drama of the green setting and fall off to the right has been lost to the ingress of gorse and bracken.

Hole 14: The green suffers shade even in winter due to the trees to the right and rear of the green.

How much better if the tress on the bank were also removed ?

SUMMARY

There is a lot to be done and it will take many years to achieve our goals. However, by establishing a full woodland management plan, and sticking to it year-on-year, spectacular results and improvements can be made to the quality, playability, and enjoyment of the course.

Going forward, we will present to you, the members, our plans for each phase of the project on a yearly basis.

Some work will appear to be drastic, but drastic action is needed in many areas.

I will wind up by repeating my comments right at the start of this document. You have a very beautiful golf course, which has suffered over the past 50 years from a lack of cohesive and measured woodland management.

Always remember what Tandridge is: it's a golf course.

We all love trees and none will be removed without due process and an overriding need to protect and enhance the golf course.

John Nicholson
November 2022