



Women & Girls Golf

This leaflet has been designed by the EGU/ELGA to help guide golf clubs on how to recruit and retain more women and girls.



England Golf
Growing The Game



Does your golf club have an action plan?

Before conducting activities to recruit and retain women and girls, your golf club may wish to produce an action plan, detailing the following points:

Assess the health of the golf club - conduct an audit.

Identify whether there is a need to recruit and/or retain more women and girls. Has the golf club got membership vacancies in the appropriate categories?

What is your golf club hoping to achieve?

To increase junior girls' and ladies' membership and/or promote the facilities and activities available for women and girls.

What support do you have available to help achieve your aim?

Support from the ladies' and junior section, EGU/ELGA, PGA Professional and County Association. ELGA have recently produced a strategy for women and girls golf 2006 - 2009, with a mission of 'Driving Women's Golf'.

Have you consulted with current female members/players at the golf club?

Gather opinions of what females currently like (and dislike) about the golf club and the opportunities available. It is also important to find out why women and girls have left the golf club.

Is there a need for change?

Lifestyles have changed – does the golf club need to be more flexible with its club procedures and rules? Are there opportunities available for golfers of all ages?

How can we promote our opportunities?

Leaflets, posters, the media, Internet, word of mouth.

Where?

Local facilities, sports/leisure centres, schools, colleges, businesses and community groups.

The information detailed in the following sections provides ideas/suggestions that golf clubs can embrace to help recruit and retain more women and girls. See 'Support & Assistance' to find out where to obtain more in-depth information.

Women & Girls Golf

Recruiting Women

● Free taster sessions

A great way to introduce beginners to the game and the golf club environment. The club's PGA Professional can hold ladies' taster sessions (either a one off or a series of sessions). A representative from the Ladies Section may choose to attend these sessions to promote membership opportunities. Funding from the EGU/ELGA is available to support this type of activity – see 'Support & Assistance'.

● Introductory afternoons/evenings

Devise a set itinerary to introduce women to golf and also promote what the golf club has available – this could include coffee on arrival, a taster session with the Professional, tour of the facilities and a discount voucher for further lessons.

● Bring along a friend/family member

Encourage current female members to bring along a friend/family member to an introductory morning where the beginner receives a free taster session and the current member also receives vouchers for the range or coaching. Again refreshments or a tour of the facilities can be included.

● Beginners coaching packages

This can follow on from a free taster session, whereby beginners are offered a series of coaching sessions (individual or group) for a discounted fee. To encourage a larger number of women, it may be advisable to hold these on an evening or weekend.

● Mother/daughter/family sessions

Encourage females to the golf club in groups, whereby they can receive group coaching with familiar company. Encourage male members to bring along their wives, partners or families and consider offering family membership packages as an incentive for them to join the golf club together.

● Promote opportunities to other groups and facilities

Promote the golf club and the opportunities available to local facilities such as nurseries, playgroups, gyms, leisure centres, schools, local companies and women's community groups.

● Create links and partnerships with local facilities and organisations

Try creating a reciprocal link with local sports clubs, leisure centres or nurseries. This link may be just promotional where the facilities display literature, or a form of discount package could be available for those women who use both facilities.

● Promotion

Advertise the opportunities available for women through local press, leaflets/flyers and the golf club's website. This can be within the golf club's overall marketing strategy.

Retaining Women

- **Different membership packages**

Try offering a selection of different membership packages to cater for all needs and lifestyles, for example Introductory, Family Discounts and 5 Day.

- **Coaching & membership package**

Create a package whereby ladies receive a series of lessons, plus the opportunity to be mentored by a member of the Ladies Section. Those signing up to this package could then receive a reduced membership fee for the first year.

- **Fees & payment methods**

Examine whether it is necessary for the golf club to have entrance fees and whether there can be a choice of how the annual membership fee is paid, be it direct debit, a one off payment or quarterly.

- **Provide adequate opportunities**

Look at whether your golf club is providing sufficient opportunities for female golfers. One ladies day during the week is not always giving women with full time occupations the opportunity to participate. By also offering weekend and evening events/activities your golf club is opening themselves up to a different group of women golfers.

- **Social events**

Try to run regular social activities that embrace all sections, to help encompass new lady members into the fabric of the golf club. Specific events for the Ladies Section may also be appropriate along with family events. Ask members what social activities/events they would like to attend.

- **Appoint a Ladies 'point of contact'**

New female members may find it beneficial to have a 'point of contact' within the Ladies Section who is available for perhaps the first year of membership to discuss any queries/issues with.

- **Mentoring**

The transition from the driving range to the golf course can be daunting and many women may benefit from knowing that a mentor is available should they require it.



- **Regular playing & competitive opportunities**

Golf clubs can offer a variety of playing opportunities including competition matches, matches against other sections of the golf club and friendly competitions against other Ladies' Sections. Although not all women golfers want to play competitive golf, they may wish to participate in friendly matches.

- **Look after your members**

By regularly communicating with members of the Ladies Section, the golf club can assess whether they are providing a good service both on and off the course and also whether members are getting value for money.



Women & Girls Golf

Recruiting Girls

- **Free taster sessions**

An ideal way of introducing beginners to the game and the golf club environment, without their parents/guardians having to financially commit. PGA Professionals can choose to hold juniors' only taster sessions or even girls' only sessions. Dependant upon the age of the juniors and the numbers involved, girls' only sessions can be more beneficial, as girls are often daunted by mixed groups. Funding from the EGU/ELGA is available to support this type of activity – see 'Support & Assistance'.

- **Promote friendship**

Following a girls' only taster session, a golf club can organise for the group to have a drink and snack to encourage friendships and continued participation.

- **Brownies & Guides**

Contact local Brownie and Guide groups to arrange a taster session for them. The Group Leaders are usually delighted to be able to offer the girls a different activity. The initial session could take place outside of the golf club, followed by fun activities and coaching at the golf club.

- **Schools & Colleges**

Adapted equipment, such as Tri Golf and Golf Xtreme can be taken into schools and community groups to give girls the opportunity to try golf, with the flexibility to run indoor and outdoor sessions. See www.golf-foundation.org for further information.



- **Follow on sessions**

A follow on programme of structured lessons can be offered to girls that have received a taster session outside of the golf club - again group sessions may seem more appealing.

- **Create links and partnerships with other leisure/sports facilities**

Try creating a link and promoting opportunities at local tennis, hockey or dance clubs.

- **Promotion**

Look at how the golf club is promoting the game, is it attractive to junior girls?

Try promoting different areas of the game such as health and fitness or the social aspect.

- **Appoint a Girls' Organiser**

Having a female point of contact available for taster sessions and introductory activities can make the golf club environment less daunting for beginners. This role is also important to ensure girls are represented on the junior and ladies' committees.

- **Coaching qualifications for female members**

Members of the Ladies Section can be encouraged to obtain volunteer coaching qualifications to help support the Professional in encouraging/training junior girls.

Women & Girls Golf

Retaining Girls

● **Involve current members**

By having females from within the club (current junior members or members from the Ladies Section) available to mentor or give advice to new junior girls, it will help the new members feel more at ease within the club environment.

● **Different membership packages**

Try offering a selection of different membership packages that offer good value for money. Golf will be in competition with other sports/social activities, so parents/guardians need to see that the golf club is offering a good package.

● **Coaching & membership package**

Create a package whereby junior girls receive a series of lessons. By helping junior girls to improve their skills through structured coaching, the golf club is helping to develop their association with the club. Those signing up to a coaching package could then receive a reduced membership fee for the first year. The EGU/ELGA has funding available to support junior coaching programmes, see 'Support & Assistance'.

● **Dress codes & equipment**

Where possible golf clubs should try to relax dress codes for a short period of time to help the new junior girl adapt from beginner to regular player/club member. Loan equipment should ideally be available for those unable to initially commit.

● **Regular coaching & competitions**

To encourage junior girls into membership, it is important that golf clubs offer a wide range of coaching and competitive opportunities. By promoting what is available, the potential member and their parents/guardians will be able to see how progression can occur through structured activities.

● **Make activities fun & enjoyable**

Golf may be one of many sports/social activities that junior girls participate in, so it is essential that golf clubs make their time at the club fun and enjoyable to encourage continued participation. Golf clubs can register for the EGU/ELGA National Skills Challenge and receive a variety of FREE resources to help achieve this, see 'Support & Assistance'.

● **Variety of membership categories**

Consider offering a range of membership categories such as 'Student' or 'Intermediate' to help support those junior girls that are continuing into higher and further education.

● **GolfMark Award**

Golf clubs can develop their junior structures through the EGU/ELGA GolfMark Award, see 'Support & Assistance'.

● **Junior handicapping scheme**

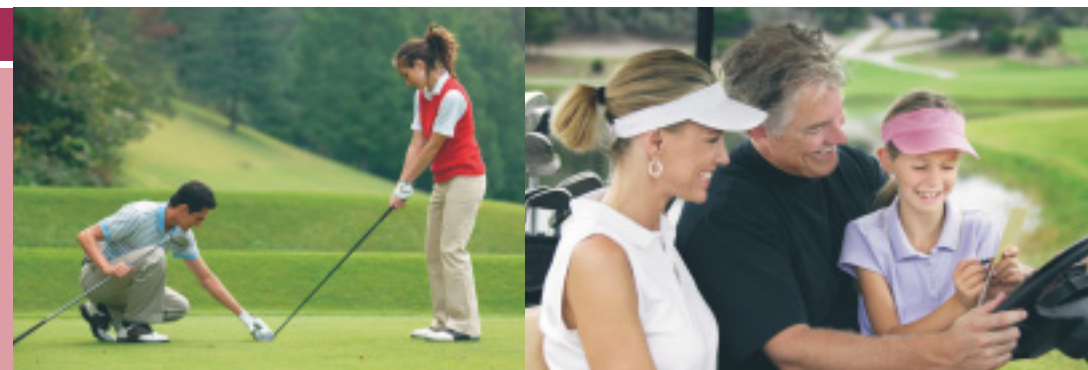
The EGU/ELGA recommend that golf clubs use the CONGU Junior Handicapping Scheme, to help monitor improvement and provide motivation, see 'Support & Assistance'.

● **Player pathways**

Ensure that talented players are given the correct support and information on how to develop their talent. See 'Support & Assistance' for information on County Associations.

● **Regular communication**

By regularly communicating with girls and their parents/guardians, the golf club is encouraging interest and involvement and they can also assess whether they are providing a good service both on and off the course.



Support & Assistance

The EGU/ELGA has a variety of resources available to support golf clubs in recruiting and retaining more women and girls:

● **Regional Development Officer Network**

Available to support the needs of golf clubs and counties. For contact details see www.englishgolfunion.org

● **Junior Organisers' Handbook**

A comprehensive guide to running a successful junior section, produced by the EGU/ELGA - see www.englishgolfunion.org

● **GolfMark Award**

EGU/ELGA accreditation scheme that identifies and recognises junior and beginner friendly golf facilities - see www.golfmark.org

● **Factsheets**

EGU/ELGA information on recruiting and retaining women and girls. Factsheets can be downloaded online at www.englishgolfunion.org/womenandgirls

● **Coaching Grant Aid**

Grants available annually from the EGU/ELGA to support beginner and junior coaching programmes - see www.englishgolfunion.org

● **National Skills Challenge**

The EGU/ELGA encourage juniors to practice skills and increase their enjoyment of the game - see www.getintogolf.org/skills

● **County Associations**

Support for women and girls golf - see www.englishladiesgolf.org

● **County Golf Partnerships**

A structured way of developing golf at county level - see www.englishgolfunion.org

● **Websites**

Specific web pages dedicated to women and girls golf:

www.englishladiesgolf.org

The official website for women and girls amateur golf, including information on their strategy 2006 - 2009.

www.englishgolfunion.org/womenandgirls

Information for golf clubs on women and girls recruitment and retention (includes factsheets and case studies).

www.getintogolf.org

Information for women and girls on how to 'get into golf'.

www.englishgolfunion.org/juniorgolf

Information for junior girls on golf.

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