



33RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY 22ND JANUARY 2026

CLUB SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mr President, Vice President, Captains, fellow Committee members, Ladies & Gentleman.

Bromsgrove Development Plan

Without doubt, the major issue of the year was the launch of Bromsgrove District Council's Draft Development Strategy (DDS) in June. Under Government proposals for easing the housing shortage, Bromsgrove District Council were being instructed to deliver 12,155 new dwellings by 2043, of which around 3,000 are already in supply.

The DDS contained a proposal for housing or other development on site BRM01 which contains the entirety of the Golf Centre together with adjacent land. Management Committee set up a small working group – myself, John Brothwood, Cath Chidley, Gary McCartney, and Lee Machin - to develop a challenge to this proposal.

Over the three months of the consultation period, we tried to keep all members informed of our activities through:

1. In early July, we sent a call to arms, specifically asking those with specialist knowledge and experience to get in touch. Several members did so.
2. In early August, we set out what we had done to date, and asked members to send letters of objection to the Council via email or through the Council's online portal. We provided a templated email which members could adapt as required.
3. In early September, we thanked everyone for their support, provided information on what we had been doing, and what the next steps would be in this long process. The indicative timeline paper shows just how long.

Rather than follow the questions within the restrictive DDS, we chose to structure our reasoned response in line with key chapters in the National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF). That document helpfully provides numerous statements about the importance of leisure facilities for health and well-being, environmental protection, flood defence, and connecting young people to their communities. These statements have been used to question and contradict the Council's position.

As we repeatedly stated, a growing town requires more leisure facilities, not less.

By the time the consultation closed in late-October – it had been extended due to website issues – opposition to the development of BRM01 entailed:

- 2,898 templated objection letters which we handed over to the Council on Wednesday 15th October. Of these:
 - 1,850 came via the Midlands Golf Bromsgrove shop where John Bunn and his team made visitors aware of the issue and encouraged them to sign an objection letter. As we said in that letter, the Golf Centre is a regional resource, and this is evidenced by signatories from postcodes across the Midlands.
 - 1,048 came via Brian Green (Major) and his friends who over a four-week period urged those visiting Bromsgrove High Street to sign an objection letter.
- Around 500 objection letters were emailed to the Council by club members and their families. The precise number is not known.
- Over 350 separate objections were raised on the Council's online portal.
- A 29-page reasoned response was submitted electronically to the Council on 5th September and in print form on 15th October.
- England Golf submitted their objections on 17th October.

The working group were also busy in building supportive relationships with local politicians and working with the media, both print and online.

- The front page of the Bromsgrove Standard carried an article and photo covering the handover of the objection letters to BDC. [Online Edition - The Bromsgrove Standard](#)
- Midlands Golfer ran a small article on the potential loss of the golf course for housing. [Battle lines are drawn for BGC's future - Midlands Golfer](#) and a larger feature about the threat to regional golf courses, drawing heavily on our experience.

Clearly, the Council have a mammoth task in sifting through the 9,000+ responses they've received across all 21 sites listed in the DDS. If current timescales are kept, they had until the end of this month to assess whether they needed to modify their housing strategy, and how. The (amended) strategy will then be sent to the Secretary of State's officials for an initial view. A second public consultation will follow in June/July.

To complicate matters, just before Xmas the Government published a revised NPPF for consultation. The working group will assess how different this new document is to the December 2024 version and whether it materially affects our arguments. We'll let members know of our deliberations via email.

Other activities

Management Committee agreed to several recommendations from the Competition Committee.

- Increase in the number of Mixed Yellow Tee Stablefords.

- Single Divisions for Midweek Winter Stablefords (November to February) to align with the Winter Singles played at Weekends.
- Moving Winter Singles from White to Yellow Tee Stablefords as most holes will have mats in use throughout the winter months. This enables the competition to be WHS compliant.

Other matters of interest

- A proposed merger of the Men's and Ladies County associations seems as far away as ever as member clubs voted against creating a working group to explore options. For the record, we voted in favour.
- England Golf have decided not to allow clubs to set Handicap Allowances for their competitions that differ from the current mandatory allowances. This is despite Golf Ireland's trial proving successful. The issue will be looked at again in 2028.

Deryck Hall
Club Secretary
January 2026