N & C Golf Club Risk Assessment for all golfers in different weather and / or golf course ground conditions

The following **Risk Assessment** was carried out by Phil Allen with input from the General Manager, Gareth Williams, and the Head Greenkeeper, Chris Ball. This version replaces the version dated 15 December 2022 entitled 'Risk Assessment for Buggy Use at N&C golf club for different weather and ground conditions'. The document has been updated to include all people playing golf at N & C Golf Club – this includes buggy users and walkers.

The National Golf Clubs' Advisory Association (NGCAA) issued guidance in late 2021 saying that the safe use of buggies on the golf course must be considered to ensure compliance with Equality and Health & Safety legislation and England Golf's guidelines. This means that member and visitor golfers who have a physical disability must have the same opportunity to play golf and use the club's facilities as non-disabled persons. Golf clubs should make every effort to accommodate both disabled and non-disabled golfers and can make reasonable adjustments to help satisfy this objective. However, golf clubs should also consider and make allowances for important factors such as health and safety reasons, eg. risk of personal injury, slippery conditions, particularly on banks and slopes etc… and take measures to avoid or reduce anticipated damage to the course, eg. tyre and skid marks from buggies and trolleys.

Our primary consideration is the personal safety of **all** people on the golf club's property.

1. Normal weather and / or ground conditions

Table 1 below relates to when the full course is fully open with no restrictions, ie. business as usual. For approximately 95% of the time, it is anticipated that this will apply (and will be the default position) where weather and course conditions are good and allow normal play.

Table 1

Nature of Risk	Exposed Risk H/M/L	Controls / Mitigating Factors	Residual Risk H/M/L
A. Applies to all buggy users (1 and 2-seater). Personal injury, eg. trips and falls etc…, injury to others, eg. golf ball incidents etc… and damage to property or the golf course even when weather and ground conditions are good.	Medium	1. Buggy hirers or owners should adhere to the club's Buggy Policy and Safe Working Practice documents. Both documents are available to view in the Pro shop and/or on the website. 2. Buggy hirers should read and sign the Safety Policy Acknowledgement form before hire commences. 3. Buggy owners are reminded of the Disclaimer letter issued to them dated 26 August 2022. 4. Buggies should use pathways where available. 5. Extreme caution should be used when operating a buggy in the car park and clubhouse area. 6. Only those aged 17 or older and hold a full, valid driving licence can operate a buggy. 7. Signs on the golf course warning buggy operators of dangerous or forbidden areas must be observed. 8. Buggies should be operated with courtesy, care and consideration at all times for the safety of other buggy and golf club users. People on foot must be afforded the right of way at all times. 9. Buggy operators should always consider the terrain as well as the environmental factors that may affect vehicle safety: 9.1 Drive the buggy only as fast as the terrain and safety considerations allow.	Low

		9.2 Drive the buggy straight up and down slopes to reduce the risk of the buggy tipping over. 9.3 Slow down the buggy before corners and execute all turns at reduced speed. 9.4 Avoid sudden stops or changes in direction. 10. Buggies should only be operated on golf course property and in daylight hours. 11. The consumption of alcohol and/or the improper use of drugs when operating a buggy is forbidden. 12. Buggies should only be used for the number of occupants it was intended to carry and by people who are authorised to use one. 13. Buggies must not be driven on to tees, greens, the slopes leading up to them or between green side bunkers and greens. Any areas roped or cordoned off should also be observed and avoided. 14. Off the golf course buggies should be parked safely and with consideration to other golf club users. The parking brake should be engaged. 15. Operation of buggies will be monitored by members, green staff and CCTV. Misuse will be reported to the General Manager who has the authority to prohibit anyone from using a buggy.	
B. Applies to all other (non-buggy user) golfers. Personal injury, eg. trips and falls etc…, injury to others, eg. golf ball incidents etc… and damage to the course even when weather and ground conditions are good.	Low	Slopes, banks and wooden steps represent slip hazards in both wet and dry conditions. There are trip and fall hazards on the golf course too just like other golf courses, eg. sprinkler head recesses, tee markers, path edges etc… Trolleys should not be taken on to tees or greens or areas close to greens. Trolleys should also not be taken between greens and green side bunkers. All signs should be observed and areas that have been roped or cordoned off should be observed and avoided by all golfers.	Low

2. Abnormal weather and / or ground conditions

For c.5% of the time there may be playing restrictions due to abnormal weather and / or ground conditions. In these situations, there will be a daily inspection of the golf course to assess the risks to personal safety and damage to the golf course. A Golf Course Update / Status communication will be issued (email to members plus a posting on the Club V1 Members' Hub) at the start of the day to inform golfers of the restrictions that apply. Depending on the daily risk assessment any restrictions may range from the 'full course open but two-seater buggies not allowed on the front 9 holes' to 'back 9 only open, carry bags only, no trolleys or buggies'. In exceptional conditions it may be necessary to close the entire course.

10th tee start - with effect from November 2023, when there have been playing restrictions, all play has started from the 10th tee. This enables all golfers, whether in a buggy or walking, the opportunity to play some golf. Table 2 below shows the most likely scenarios that may be adopted depending on personal safety considerations and golf course conditions.

Table 2A

Nature of Risk	Exposed Risk H/M/L	Controls / Mitigating Factors	Most likely Scenarios	Full course open	Back 9 only open	2-seater buggies *	1-seater buggies *	Residual Risk H/M/L
A. Applies to all buggy users (1 and 2-seater). Personal injury, eg. trips and falls etc…, injury to others, eg. golf ball incidents etc… and damage to property or the golf course.	High / Med	All 15 Controls / Mitigating Factors from Table 1A above plus keep buggies to paths / tracks in the dip on hole 13.	A	Y		2/3	1	Med
	High / Med		B	Y		2/3	2/3	Med
	High		C	N	Y	2/3	2/3	High / Med
	High		D	N	Y	N	2/3	High/ Med
	High		E	N	Y	N	N	High
	N/A		F	N	N			N/A

***** 1 - buggies allowed all 18 holes 2 - buggies allowed back 9 only 3 - buggies allowed holes 10 to 13 only N - buggies not allowed

Scenario A being the fewest playing restrictions to Scenario E having the most playing restrictions and Scenario F is where the course is closed.

Frosty ground conditions - in these conditions, buggies will not be allowed until the white frost has cleared. As a guideline this may be around 11am. Extreme care and caution should be taken on these cold days as the ground may remain frozen and be extremely slippery. The Head Greenkeeper will inform the Pro shop and General Manager when buggies are allowed. There may be times when different rules apply to 1 and 2-seater buggies.

Table 2B

Nature of Risk	Exposed Risk H/M/L	Controls / Mitigating Factors	Most Likely Scenarios	Full Course open	Back 9 only open	Trolleys * Allowed	Carry only *	Residual Risk H/M/L
B. Applies to all other (non-buggy user) golfers. Personal injury, eg. trips and falls etc…, injury to others, eg. golf ball incidents etc… and damage to property or the golf course.	Med / Low	The same Controls / Mitigating Factors from Table 1B above.	A	Y		1		Low
	Med / Low		B	Y		2	3	Low
	Med		C	Y		N	1	Med / Low
	Med		D		Y	Y		Med / Low
	High / Med		E		Y	N	2	Med
	N/A		F	N	N			N/A

***** 1 - all 18 holes 2 - back 9 only 3 - front 9 only N - Trolleys not allowed

Scenario A being full course open but with some buggy restrictions and Scenario B being the fewest playing restrictions for walking golfers to Scenario E having the most playing restrictions and Scenario F is where the course is closed.

Golf course Paths

Many of the paths are currently in a poor state of repair. Some of the material on the paths is loose, some areas are uneven and there is some rutting. Collectively, all these factors create hazards with a risk of falls and trips. The paths, even in their current condition, do enable and allow buggy users the option to access the course and play golf even in wet conditions when buggies are not allowed on the grass areas. (This may be due to personal safety reasons and / or the risk of damage to the course.) The golf club is devising a 'Paths Strategy' to address and improve the condition of the paths.

Given this knowledge extreme caution and diligence should be taken by all path users. Golfers who use paths do so at their own risk. The golf club will not accept any liability for accidents or incidents.

Duty of Care

These mitigating measures and restrictions are in place to help satisfy our legal and moral responsibilities to provide a safe environment for all golfers and to help preserve the condition of the golf course. It should also be noted that all golfers should be aware of and exercise a **Duty of Care** to minimise the risks of personal injury, injury to others and damage to property and the golf course.

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