

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2008



G UW Chairman Louise Fleet

2008 provided the opportunity for the Golf Union of Wales to build on the favourable start we made in the previous year as a newly merged Union. The merger has been very successful and as we mature as an organisation we continually learn from our experiences and seek ways in which we can improve our business operations. This desire for excellence, coupled with our strategic plan has provided a clear direction for the Union.

Our achievements in 2008 include:

- Success in the Ladies' Home Internationals
- Success in the Senior Ladies' Home Internationals
- Success in team and individual events in South Africa, the UK, Ireland and Europe

- Running a successful programme of golfing events
- Increasing participation in golf through our golf development activities and the first clubs signed up to the Junior golf accreditation scheme
- Holding a very successful golf coaching conference
- Hosting successful and informative seminars for clubs on golf course management, handicapping and marketing
- Ensuring our governance arrangements are suitable for a modern sports governing body
- Maintaining our associations with our sponsors and gained new sponsorship
- Working successful with our partners

Management Committee

I am honoured to lead the Management Committee, as the Board of Directors of the Company and I extend my thanks to my colleagues for their commitment, support and professionalism. The Directors bring a wide range of experience from their respective professions to the Board. A brief resume on each Director can be found in Appendix 1 and their skills and depth and breadth of experience bring real benefits to the Union.

The Management Committee meets at least 3 times a year and there is a strong emphasis on ensuring we deliver against our business plan. An audit of our governance arrangements has been undertaken and the Board has overseen improvements and enhancements to existing arrangements. To meet our aim of being a world class governing body we know that we must always seek to improve. With that in mind we have in place a small working party which is reviewing our current arrangements to ensure that they are fit for purpose and that the Union remains a modern and flexible organisation.



Geraldine Turner

In February, Geraldine Turner concluded her tenure as Chairman of the Handicapping and Course Rating Committee and therefore stood down from the Management Committee. We have benefitted enormously from Geraldine's vast experience in handicapping and course rating in particular and we value the contribution that she has made over the years to Welsh golf through the WLGU, LGU and to the G UW.

Council

During 2008 the Council has been identifying what it means to be a Council member in the G UW. During the past year Council members participated in two very successful workshops from which an agreed understanding emerged of what the role entails. Council concluded that the role comprises:

- Assisting in the organising and running of events
- Serving on committees
- Acting as an ambassador
- Promoting the work of the Union
- Engaging in two way communication between the Union and clubs, counties and individuals
- Being equipped with the knowledge to underpin the role
- Helping to deliver good governance

Council members work extremely hard and play an important part in the Union's activities. All give much time to golf and in addition to their G UW role many are very active in their counties and clubs. I thank them all for the effort, time and commitment that they give to Welsh golf.

There were unfilled vacancies in four counties following the recent elections; we have now filled three of these with co-options. The Union recognises that we need to stimulate interest, particularly from ladies to stand for Council. We will be turning our minds this year to how we can attract more people to stand for Council in the future.



**G UW President 2007/8
Phil Dixon**

Dr. Phil Dixon, our first President of the G UW completed his two year term of office at the end of February and what an admirable choice he has been. Phil had been President of the Welsh Golfing Union and together with his numerous years experience on the WGU Council, his many talents and outgoing personality, meant that he was the ideal person to become our first President. Phil has been exemplary in his role; he has worked tirelessly and has been a first class ambassador for us. His enthusiasm, energy and commitment are to be admired. With his keen interest in golf from junior development with club, county and country to his knowledge of rules, and experience as Selector and Captain of the Welsh Boys Team, we are fortunate that we are not losing this knowledgeable person. Phil has been appointed as the G UW Councillor to the Ladies' Golf Union, an

appointment which I am sure he will carry out with his usual aplomb. We wish him well in his new role.

Phil will be succeeded by Ted Lloyd who was elected to the Council in 2008 and prior to that served on the WGU Council for many years. For Ted, the Presidency is the culmination of more than 40 years of service to Rhuddlan Golf Club, which also includes service at county and national level. Over the years, Ted has been very involved in undertaking handicapping, course rating and refereeing. He will be an excellent successor to Phil and we are all looking forward to working with him over the next two years.



**GUV President
2009/10 Ted Lloyd**

2008 Financial Results

The statutory accounts cover the year to 31 December 2008.

The budget for 2008 projected a deficit of £25,000 for the year; the reported result was a deficit of £37,000. The principal cause of this variance was a greater than expected fall in membership numbers, which has impacted our subscription income.

We acknowledge the continued support of all our sponsors, as well as various organisations for their generous grants. All such funding makes a significant difference to our ability to achieve our aims.

Our balance sheet remains strong, reflecting the prudent cash management and rigorous budgetary control of the union.

We anticipate that the economic climate will result in further falls in membership numbers, which will put strain on the 2009 Income and Expenditure account. However, reserves are sufficient to continue to invest in the development of the game, and to contemplate a modest deficit in the short term.

The Staff

We are fortunate to have such a team of excellent and hard working staff, led by Chief Executive Richard Dixon. They have all done a great job in running the Union and I thank them all for the hard work and effort that each of them has made.

We welcome two new members of staff who have joined us in recent months: Zoe Thacker (Golf Development Wales) and Katherine Jones who joins the admin team.

Golf Development Wales – Developing the Game in Wales

It has been a busy year for Golf Development Wales with the implementation of the new d³ strategy; the launch and pilot of the Junior GolfCert club accreditation scheme and the completion of the application process for the Ryder Cup Legacy fund. We have also said a sad farewell to the previous Golf Development Manager, Brian Davies who had been in post since 2002. Brian has joined the Sports Council for Wales as Manager of High Performance and we wish him well in his new career. Hannah James (formerly the South Wales Golf Development Officer) has been appointed his successor and Zoe Thacker fills the vacancy

left by Hannah, joining the experienced Dilwyn Griffiths of North Wales. Sian Jones now provides admin support to GDW and she completes the Golf Development Wales team.

The new d³ strategy is now in operation. This aims to build on the successes of the previous 'Making a Move' strategy with an increased focus on supporting golf clubs and beginner playing facilities.



The d³ strategy takes account of the inherent personal life-skills within golf and reflects that in developing someone as a golfer, you are also helping to develop them as a person as well as developing the sport in general.

The development schemes fit into 5 main categories: Schools and Community, these are the participation based schemes linked to club membership (Dragon Sport Tri – Golf, 5 x 60 Golf Xtreme, Mass Audience festivals); Club Membership Schemes (Junior Golf Cert, Girls Start Golfing Schemes; Starter Centres and Women Start Golfing Schemes); New Facilities and Co-ordinators (Ryder Cup Legacy fund, Regional Centres and Local Authority Development Co-ordinators) Coach and Volunteer Education and finally Child Welfare.

In terms of general participation and opportunities, participation has increased over a 2 year period for 11 – 16 year olds by 7.6 percentage points, this represents a further 17, 500 participating in the sport for this age group. The number of annual beginner golf opportunities has also increased by 19,000 to 219,000.

In 2008 some of the highlights have been:

- the continued success of Dragon Sport Tri – Golf in Primary Schools. There has been a 48% increase in the number of participants to 4800.
- the increase in 5 x 60 Golf Xtreme in Secondary Schools. This was the first year of 5 x 60 being introduced into Secondary Schools. Regular golf coaching took place in 76 of the 87 schools with over 1650 participants. With the introduction of the 5 x 60 scheme to more schools in 2009 we should see further increases.
- the continued development of Local Authority Golf Co-ordinators, located in Pembrokeshire, Cardiff, Newport, Gwynedd and Anglesey. These are having a huge impact within these areas. In Pembrokeshire alone, 8 out of 10 clubs are running school club links, over 600 pupils participated in regular golf coaching and junior membership has increased dramatically in some of the golf clubs.
- 35 clubs delivered the Women and Girls Start Golfing Scheme. Nearly 800 females took part and in total these clubs gained over 400 trial members.
- Over 7000 children took part in 700 beginner golf club sessions as a result of the Starter Centre initiative.

In the launch year of the Junior GolfCert. club accreditation scheme, 8 clubs have received the higher award and 25 clubs are working towards this. Golf Development Officers will be encouraging and assisting golf clubs in achieving their Junior GolfCert.

Child and adult welfare is an important aspect of any junior golf activity in Wales and GDW will continue to be a partner in the NSPCC Children in Golf Steering Group. A new Lead

Child Protection Officer for Golf has been recruited who will provide further help, advice and support to clubs and counties in this key area.

The joint project with the PGA (a Manager of the PGA in Wales and Coach Education) is also having an impact. A successful Coaching Conference was organised with inspirational speakers and there has been an increase in the number of Level 1 – 3 coaches trained.

The development of golf in Wales has also benefited from the Ryder Cup Legacy fund, a £2 million pot financed by the Welsh Assembly Government to help develop beginner playing facilities as part of the Ryder Cup Bid commitment. The third and final round of applications is now closed and 7 Ryder Cup Legacy facilities have been completed, 20 are in construction and 15 have permission to start work.

The final aspect of GDW's work has been the establishment of Regional Centres of Excellence, 3 of the centres have been completed (The Vale of Glamorgan, Clay's Golf Centre and the Celtic Manor Resort), 1 is almost complete (Llangefni) and 1 is in the final planning stage (Machynys). Counties and national squad players have a specified amount of free access to these centres to help develop them as elite golfers in Wales.

Within 2009 a pilot of a Family Start Golfing Scheme will take place. This will focus on getting more families active and playing golf together. Clubs that participate will offer special family packages to encourage the participants into membership.



A New Welsh Rules and Etiquette DVD teaching resource will also be launched. This is designed to introduce the rules and etiquette to groups of beginners in a fun and interactive way. This has been sponsored by SWALEC and each club will receive 1 free copy.

As well as this, in the near future the useful Clubs Junior Guide CD Rom will also be available as a web based tool on the Golf Development Wales website and the new Junior Leaders Workshop will be launched.

Elite Performance and Coaching

2008 was a real mixed bag for Welsh Amateur golf. Craig Evans and Nigel Edwards got us off to a great start by winning the International Team event at the South African Amateur and then Nigel followed that with runner up in the South African Amateur. Breanne Loucks flew the flag for the ladies by winning the South African Stroke Play and then the match play and a couple of months later won the Irish Open Stroke Play.

At the European Nations Cup the Ladies' Team of Tara Davies, Sarah Hassan and Hannah Jenkins finished 2nd to the Spanish and Sahra finished 3rd in the individual.

There were some very bright performances at the Amateur Championship at Turnberry; 6 Welsh players qualified, 5 then reached the last 32, James Frazer reached the quarter finals

and Joe Vickery lost out narrowly in the semi final. The Ladies' British Amateur was very similar with 5 players qualifying for the last 64.

The European Team Championships were disappointing across the board with none of our teams contesting the top flights.



The victorious Welsh Ladies' Team at Wrexham

The Home Internationals were a different story and provided the highlight of the year. The Ladies' team produced the goods down the closing stretch at Wrexham and came away as Champions for only the second time in the history of the event. This was a fantastic success and we congratulate all of the team for their fine performance. The Senior Ladies' buoyed by this success followed suit three weeks later despite an anxious last afternoon. Again many congratulations to the team on a fine win.

In honour of these two historic wins, a lunch was held in Cardiff in December which was very well attended.

At the World Championships in Australia it was the men who challenged for honours and were looking good with only four holes remaining but two late bogeys resulted in an 11th place finish.

Breanne Loucks and Sahra Hassan turned professional after successful amateur careers and we wish them every success.

We were all delighted when Amy Boulden was presented with the Carwyn James Award at the Welsh Sports Personality Awards in December.



Amy Boulden receives the Carwyn James award

The coaching programmes have developed over the last year with individual player assessments/action plans, practice diaries, individual fitness testing and programmes - now we need the players to take action on the knowledge and information that has been provided.

The age group coaching has a real intensity and competition for places with the introduction of skills tests providing clear feedback to attendees and their parents.

Championships and Events

Congratulations to all our Champions, both individual and team. Special mention must be made of Rhian Wyn Thomas who became the first Welsh winner of the Ladies' Open Stroke Play Championship since 1989 and to Glamorgan who secured the Men's, Ladies' and Boys' County Championships.

A summary of the winners of our national championships and Welsh performances in international team events follows:

INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS	WINNER/POSITION
Ladies' Open Stroke Play Championship	Rhian Wyn Thomas (Vale of Glamorgan)
Ladies' Close Championship	Kirsty O'Connor (Nelson)
Senior Ladies' Match Play Championship	Vicki Thomas (Carmarthen)
Welsh Open Stroke Play Championship	Chris Wood (Long Ashton)
Welsh Open Youths' Championship	Jonathan Gidney (Church Stretton)
Welsh Seniors' Championship	Glyn Rees (Fleetwood)
Welsh Open Seniors' Championship	John Jermine (Sunningdale)
Welsh Boys' Championship	Ross McLister (Cardiff)
Welsh Girls' Championship	Amy Boulden (Llandudno (Maesdu))
Welsh Amateur Championship	Ben Westgate (Trevose)
Welsh Boys' U15 Championship	Patrick Mullins (Whitchurch (Cardiff))
Welsh Boys' U13 Championship	Alex Price (Llanwern)
Welsh Ladies' Seniors' Championship	Jane Rees (Hendon)
Welsh Individual Handicap Championship (Reduced to 1 round)	Cat 'A' : B A Jones (Alice Springs) Cat 'B' : G Jones (St Mary's)
TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS	
Welsh Inter Counties	Glamorgan
Welsh Boys' Inter Counties	Glamorgan
Welsh Ladies' County Championship	Glamorgan
Welsh Ladies' Team	Vale of Glamorgan
Welsh Team	Royal St David's
Welsh Handicap Team	Pontypridd
Welsh Junior Inter Club	Pontypridd
Ping Welsh Mixed Team Challenge	St Giles
Victory Shield	Celtic Manor
European Boys' Team Championship	12 th
European Girls' Team Championship	15 th
European Men's Team Championship	11 th
European Ladies' Team Championship	11 th
Boys' Home Internationals	3 rd
Girls' Home Internationals	4 th
Men's Home Internationals	4 th
Ladies' Home Internationals	1 st
Senior Men's Home Internationals	4 th
Senior Ladies' Home Internationals	1 st

Welsh Champions – Ben Westgate & Kirsty O'Connor



2008 saw the introduction of the Welsh Ladies' County Championship and in a continuing effort to provide competitive golf for those of varying ages and abilities a Girls' Under 16 Championship will be introduced in 2009.

Handicapping and Course Rating

During 2008 four of our course raters attended a USGA Seminar in order to enhance their knowledge and the initial rating of ladies' courses under the USGA regulations continues with approximately two-thirds of our courses completed. Men's courses have been rated under this system for many years and are re-rated every ten years. Many clubs made applications for 9 Hole Standard Scratch Scores and it will be interesting to receive feedback from those clubs as to the number of 9 Hole competitions they have staged. It is hoped that the introduction of 9 Hole competitions, together with Supplementary Scores, will enable players to return more cards for handicapping purposes.

Golf Course Management

Through its Golf Course Management Committee the G UW promotes "best practice" in all areas of golf course management. On the back of its successful preamble in 2007 and in partnership with the R&A, the G UW presented 3 roadshows for member clubs in 2008 titled "Sustain Don't Abstain". An assortment of expert speakers were recruited and informative presentations focused on all aspects of sustainability. Details of all presentations can be found on the G UW website at the following link: www.golfunionwales.org/Autumn_Roadshows.aspx

It is intended that golf course/agronomy themed roadshows will become an annual event.

The Golf Course Management Roadshows are part of a number of similar initiatives the G UW provides for the benefit of our clubs and the findings from the survey referred to later in this report will help us more accurately target future needs.

Sponsorship

The G UW were successful in retaining all its major sponsors in 2008 including CCV Underwriting Sports & Leisure, Magners, PING, Pinnacle Office Equipment, Footjoy and Titleist whilst also recruiting 2 new high profile sponsors in Swalec and Hugh James

Solicitors. We have also been successful in achieving pound for pound Sportsmatch funding for all the cash sponsorships meaning that additional funding has been available to Golf Development Wales for their numerous initiatives.

We are extremely grateful to all our sponsors, both new and long-standing, for their invaluable support they give the game in Wales. In an ever competitive environment for external funding we will continue our endeavours to attract new sponsors, to build on the services we currently provide to sustain the game and support our member clubs.

In addition we would also like to express our gratitude to the R & A and Sports Council for Wales; their generous support is vital to our ongoing development and the achievement of our goals.

Club Services & Communications

We are conscious of the need to regularly and clearly communicate the activities of the G UW to all our stakeholders. Equally important is ensuring that our stakeholders are able to communicate effectively with the Union and receive appropriate and timely information or advice.

In the latter part of 2008 the G UW contracted the services on a part time basis of respected journalist Hamish Stuart and we have noticed much improved media coverage as a result. The Welsh Club Golfer publication offers us the opportunity to feature articles about the Union which is helping to raise our profile. The Union is also continually reviewing and upgrading its website www.golfunionwales.org which is becoming an ever more important primary source of information about the Union's activities.

In recognition of changing trends in club membership and the associated challenges clubs are facing, the G UW has changed the name of its Communications Committee to Club Services & Communications. We have also amended the job description of the director of Golf Development so that a significant proportion of Hannah James' time will focus on assisting clubs in creating modern robust business structures. Both of these actions stress the importance that the G UW places on the importance of delivering benefits to clubs.

In October 2008 the G UW in partnership with Ryder Cup Wales, Visit Wales and the Golf Club Managers Association hosted a series of Roadshows focusing on golf club marketing techniques, membership issues and associated IT solutions. Feedback from the Roadshows has been extremely positive and it is definitely an area we will concentrate on going forward. In partnership with Visit Wales the G UW will be launching a Wales version of Golf Central during 2009.

A comprehensive survey of all member clubs has been instigated and is nearing completion. Analysis of data collected is scheduled for April of 2009 and the results from the survey will help guide the G UW's future actions.

CCV Welsh Golf Awards

The CCV Welsh Golf Awards were presented at the Ryder Cup Wales Annual Gala and Awards Dinner held at the Vale of Glamorgan in October.

Aberdovey Golf Club won the Welsh Golf Club of the Year Award and saw off tough competition from a number of outstanding entries. During 2008 the Club: maintained its

position in the UK's top 50 golf courses; developed IT systems throughout the club thanks to a grant from the RCW ICT fund; installed a real-time on-line tee time booking system; developed a new website which is the centre of an integrated marketing campaign; and secured a Ryder Cup Wales 2010 Legacy Fund grant to transform a little used snooker room into a purpose built indoor practice centre for juniors and beginners.

Other awards handed out during the glittering ceremony were:-

- The CCV Tour Pro of the Year which went to Ian Woosnam who during 2008 won the European Seniors' Tour Order of Merit the Polish Seniors' Championship, the Russian Seniors' Open and he also made the cut in the Masters.
- The CCV Development Wales PGA Professional of the Year (identified by Golf Development Wales as having contributed most to grass-roots development in 2008) went to Darren Griffiths who is an excellent example of a PGA Professional who understands the benefits of doing the fundamental work at grass roots level. He mixes his commitments at this beginner level effortlessly with elite individual coaching making him such an asset to Welsh golf.
- The CCV Welsh Amateur of the Year went to Breanne Loucks. Breanne won the Welsh Ladies' Order of Merit title, the South African Ladies' Stroke Play and Match Play Championships, the Irish Ladies' Open Championship, was a member of the GB & I Curtis Cup Team (for the 2nd time) and was a member of the Welsh Ladies' Team which won the Home Internationals.



Ian Woosnam presents the Golf Development Wales PGA Pro of the Year Award to Darren Griffiths

Conclusion

We have made significant progress and achieved much during 2008, but the G UW is not without fresh challenges as we enter our third year. One of the foremost of these is declining club membership which is a shared concern with golf clubs. This will be a key priority for us over the coming year and we look forward to working with clubs to identify a solution to this problem.

The G UW is very aware that the Ryder Cup will raise the profile of golf in Wales. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity and we must take maximum advantage of this event in order to secure both short and long term benefits for Welsh golf.

The Council has re-elected me as Chairman of the G UW. I feel privileged and honoured to have been asked to serve a second term and I would like to thank the Board of Directors and Council members for the confidence they have shown in me.

Louise Fleet
Chairman
March 2009

Appendix 1

The G UW Board of Directors 2009

Louise Fleet

Louise is the current **Chairman** of the G UW taking office from 1 January 2007. She previously served on the WLGU Executive Committee from 2001-2005. She is an Executive Director of Ryder Cup Wales 2010 Ltd, and serves on its Audit Committee and the Legacy Fund Committee. She is a member of Clyne and Pennard Golf Clubs in Swansea and Royal Liverpool Golf Club in Hoylake and plays off a handicap of 6. She works for the Wales Audit Office as a Performance Specialist and her area of specialism is Corporate Governance. She is a Magistrate on the Swansea Bench where she is also currently the Vice-Chairman of the Family Panel. She was awarded her M.A. in Public Policy and Management from the University of Swansea in 2007.

Ted Lloyd

Ted has recently succeeded Dr Phil Dixon as **President** of the Golf Union of Wales. The presidency is the culmination of more than 40 years of service to Rhuddlan Golf Club, as well as at county and national level. He has served on the WGU/G UW Council for over 20 years. Ted is a qualified referee and regularly referees G UW tournaments and events. He was Junior Organiser for Rhuddlan Golf Club for many years providing advice and encouragement to young people coming into the sport. Ted is also an active member of the G UW's Course Rating Panel.

Guy Bates

Guy was elected **Treasurer** of the G UW at the AGM in April 2008 and he is the G UW Council's nomination for 2009. He is a Chartered Accountant, becoming ACA qualified in 2005 with PricewaterhouseCoopers having joined them in 2003. He spent 4 years in the Audit and Assurance department and has worked on a wide range of audits from small owner managed businesses, to blue chip organisations. Projects undertaken have included the audit of financial statements, and reviewing the controls and governance in operation, including Sarbanes-Oxley compliance work.

Guy's current role is within Business Recovery, advising businesses in various stages of distress. Experience has ranged from advising banks regarding their lending position, to the administration of insolvency companies.

Guy has been a member of Royal Porthcawl for 17 years representing a number of clubs teams during this period, his current handicap is 6.

Andy Ingram

Andy is an Investment Broker by trade and has run his own business for some 20 years being previously employed as a Building Society Manager. He is a member of Royal Porthcawl, Cardiff and Cradoc Golf Clubs playing off a handicap of 2.

He was initially elected to the Welsh Golfing Union in 1989 and has since captained the Welsh Boys', Youth and Men's Teams. In 2004 and 2006 he was Captain of the European Junior Ryder Cup Team. As Captain of the Men's Team he led Wales to their first Home International victory in 2002. He has also represented Wales at Junior and Youth level. Andy is the **Chairman of the Teams & Performance Committee**, Chairman of Selectors for the Welsh Men's Team and a selector for GB & I and the Walker Cup Team. Andy has been instrumental in setting up the new coaching structure for the G UW. A significant achievement in this area of the Union's work has been the winning of the Ladies' Home International series in September at Wrexham Golf Club, for only the second time in the history of ladies' golf in Wales.

Elen Pierce

Elen is the **Chairman of the Club Services & Communications Committee**. She is a Welsh speaking native of Caernarfon, Gwynedd, but now lives and plays golf (Fairwood Park) in Swansea. She attended Aberystwyth University where she gained a science degree and was Chair of the Athletic Union, and Deputy President and Treasurer in 1972. Elen held a career until the mid 1990's within Tourism and was elected a Fellow of the Tourism Society in 1992. She specialised in economic development and marketing and was responsible for the privatisation of the regional office of the Wales Tourist Board. She was the first Managing Director of Tourism South and West Wales which provided membership services to 1500+ trade members, management services for Tourist Information Centres throughout the region, and joint marketing activities. She then changed careers and was the Fund Raising Manager of Childline Cymru/Wales, a Trustee, then Chair of Caerlas - a charity supporting homeless vulnerable individuals and has recently retired from her post as Chief Executive of Welsh Women's Aid.

Judy Ganz

Judy is the **Chairman of the Golf Course Management**. Her academic qualifications were gained at London and Oxford Universities. She has a professional career of nearly 40 years in Human Resources at Morphy Richards in Orpington, Kent; the Beecham Group, Toiletries Division - (now SmithKleinBeecham) in Maidenhead and finally at the University of Wales, Swansea. At Swansea University her responsibilities included the initiation, introduction, application and organisation of all Personnel Policies for over 3000 employees, Trade Union negotiations, Salary negotiations, Staff Development, Staff Appraisal and responsibility for the Medical Centre. She was Head of a Department of nearly 30 people. Judy is driving forward the Golf Course Management Committee and has hosted successful road shows last year, with more to follow this autumn. She has written the Golf Course Policy Document and has written or updated all of the Union's Personnel Policies.

Neil Niblett

Neil is the **Chairman of the Championship & Rules Committee**. He is Managing Director of Niblett Architecture, an Associate Member of the Institute of Architects and Surveyors, and a Technical Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

He has owned and run his own Architectural practice for the past 27 years having previously been a Town Planner in local government. He specialises in the design of Health Care buildings and advises the Department of Health, Primary Care Trusts in England, Local Health Boards in Wales and the British Medical Association on various issues relating to their design and procurement. He employs a range of professionals including Chartered Architects and Surveyors.

Neil has been involved in golf for over 40 years, firstly as a junior member at West Monmouthshire Golf Club and then as a full member of Cradoc Golf Club before joining the Monmouthshire Golf Club in 1981. He played for the Gwent County Boys' team and the Brecon and Radnor County Men's team. He was Captain of the Monmouthshire Golf Club in 2000 and served on the general committee for 10 years. He was elected to the Welsh Golfing Union in 2003 and formed part of the Handicap and Standard Scratch Score Committee where he assisted in course rating and handicap audits. He is a qualified referee and a category one player.

Pam Valentine

Pam is **Chairman of the Handicapping & Course Rating Committee**. She is a Solicitor and Senior Partner with a large Wrexham based law firm. A former Welsh Girls' Champion Pam has represented Wales at junior, full and senior level and she has also served as International Team Captain at junior and full level.

Pam has served on the WLGU Executive Committee, the WLGU and LGU Training Committees and also the LGU Handicap Revisions Committee. As the WLGU's Honorary Solicitor from 1983 to 2006, she played a leading part in the recent merger of the WLGU and WGU as Chair of the Merger Committee 2005-2006. Pam was Chairman of the GUV's Communications Committee in 2007.