

Response from UK golf bodies to Prime Minister's announcement

The UK Government has announced that golf will be able to resume in England on Wednesday, 13 May 2020. All outdoor sport must be done alone or within a household group and that includes golf. There is no change to the current position in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and so golf courses in these countries must remain closed for now.

It is important to stress that this remains an extremely difficult situation throughout the UK and we are acutely aware that many lives have been lost to the COVID-19 pandemic. The effects of the virus will continue to be felt for a long time to come. As a sport we must work together to resume play responsibly as and when the relevant Government determines it is safe to do so. We must ensure that the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved from golfers, to club staff and greenkeepers is maintained at all times. Golf clubs and golfers have observed the lockdown very well and must keep it up and act responsibly as play resumes.

We recently provided documents giving guidance on operations and resuming play and golf clubs should consider this carefully as they restart their businesses. We also provided Essential Maintenance Guidelines to help greenkeepers to prepare their courses for play. We fully appreciate the huge amount of expertise that exists within golf clubs throughout the country and this best practice guidance simply aims to achieve as consistent an approach as possible to protecting everyone. We are seeking further clarification from the Government regarding other golf-related facilities.

The pandemic has already had a substantial impact on golf clubs and venues and the focus will soon turn to trying to recover from the crisis. As a group we will continue to do all we can to provide support and guidance in that effort.

These organisations have come together to help golf in the UK during the COVID-19 crisis and, through the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Golf, to work with Government to promote safe golf:

The Belfry; the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association; the British Golf Industry Association; England Golf; the Golf Club Managers' Association; Golf Ireland; the Golfing Union of Ireland; the Irish Ladies' Golf Union; IMG; The Professional Golfers' Association; PING; The R&A; Scottish Golf; Syngenta; the UK Golf Federation; Wales Golf.

Ends.