

## **GOLF IRELAND FAQs**

*Q. What will happen to historic competitions in the ILGU now that Golf Ireland will be based on a four regions model?*

A. The transition to Golf Ireland will provide an opportunity to streamline the number of elite championships from five districts to four provinces. This will create space in what is currently a congested calendar. Golf Ireland will ensure that the legacy of historic competitions is maintained.

*Q. Will the GUI and ILGU Inter-club events and championships still take place?*

A. Yes. Events such as the Men's and Womens' Cups and Shields will continue to be played and will be administered by Golf Ireland, as will the various championships for golfers of all ages.

*Q. Will the interprovincial matches continue?*

A. Yes. Golf Ireland will continue with interprovincial matches for men and women. A proposal will be developed on how to administer the competitions and how to integrate a new events calendar to facilitate women's and men's competitions.

*Q. What will happen to ILGU Mid Leinster clubs and Donegal clubs which currently play in the Connacht District?*

A. Under Golf Ireland, clubs will be structured by province. This will result in ladies' sections currently in ILGU Districts moving province. Changes will occur for Mid Leinster clubs moving to either Munster or Leinster and clubs in south Donegal/Cavan moving to Ulster.

*Q. What will happen to handicapping in Golf Ireland?*

A. Discussions are currently ongoing in relation to the potential implementation of World Wide Handicapping (WWH). If WWH is introduced in 2020, Golf Ireland will be governed by this system instead of by the current CONGU system. Irish handicaps will continue to be administered by Golf Ireland.

*Q. Will Golf Ireland help to grow junior golf?*

A. Developing junior golf will be a main priority of Golf Ireland. Boosting the number of young people participating in our sport is of the utmost importance. These players are the future of the game. Golf Ireland acknowledges that a greater emphasis needs to be placed on the development of new initiatives and fresh thinking to make the game of golf a more enticing proposition for young people. Clubs and Club Services

*Q. How will my club become a member of Golf Ireland?*

A. All clubs currently affiliated to the GUI and ILGU will automatically be affiliated to Golf Ireland on its establishment. Each club will affiliate as one entity to Golf Ireland and clubs will be members of the company. Golf Ireland will provide support and guidance to clubs on how to manage the process of change from ILGU/GUI affiliation to Golf Ireland

*Q. Why are ILGU and GUI proposing to establish Golf Ireland?*

A. The creation of one governing body for golf will make it easier to promote the game. It will project a clear and consistent message that golf in Ireland is inclusive, contemporary in its approach and in keeping with modern societal views, while continuing to be healthy, challenging and fun. Ireland is the only country in the world that still has two separate governing bodies for golf, divided along gender lines. Membership numbers in clubs are challenging and the appeal of golf in Ireland, indeed as in the rest of the world, continues to decline. We need to do everything in our power to encourage participation by both men and women, boys and girls. Golf in Ireland was thriving in the 1990's and early 2000's, with approximately 220,000 people holding membership of affiliated clubs and playing the game. Over the last decade that number has fallen by nearly 40,000, as current membership numbers show 183,000 golfers as members of GUI and ILGU clubs.

*Q. Have funding bodies put pressure on the ILGU and the GUI to create a new body?*

A. No, the GUI and the ILGU are the authors of this initiative, we are the ones who want to create Golf Ireland, as we believe it will bring myriad benefits to the game of golf in Ireland. Financially, a single body will be more efficient and effective than having three separate organisations (ILGU, GUI and CGI) governing the game. Moreover, under Golf Ireland there will be a significant opportunity to increase funding. Funding agencies are likely to be better disposed towards a single governing body which represents all golfers equally.

*Q. What are the benefits that Golf Ireland will bring?*

A. Golf Ireland will have one vision and one strategy, for both men and women, to lead golf into the future. There will be increased emphasis on support and services for the member clubs of Golf Ireland. Family-friendly initiatives and promoting an inclusive environment will be at the forefront of Golf Ireland's objectives. The aim of these initiatives will be to help attract more people to the game, to support ongoing harmonious relations in our clubs the length and breadth of the country, and to have families say as a group that "this is a sport for us." This will inevitably heighten interest among commercial sponsors and Government bodies, as golf will be a more attractive proposition. Golf Ireland will work tirelessly to ensure the future is bright for the game of golf in Ireland. Structure and Operations of Golf Ireland.

*Q. Why will Golf Ireland be structured by province?*

A. Many sports in Ireland are administered on a provincial basis and it is a structure that has served them well. Golf Ireland will have a National Board which will be appointed by affiliate clubs at the AGM. There will be four Regional Executives, consisting of 14 members nominated by affiliate

clubs and elected by clubs at Regional AGMs. The administration of Golf Ireland will be managed from a central Head Office with support from the Regional Executive Offices. All of Golf Ireland's regional offices will be sufficiently staffed to ensure the game of golf is administered efficiently in each region

*Q. Can I just continue to play my golf?*

A. Of course, the change will not adversely impact on golfers' enjoyment of the game. Clubs can continue to run their own competitions for members and visitors, as they currently do, with both men's competitions and ladies' competitions. Golf Ireland will provide guidance and support to clubs and best practice guidelines, as our sport moves to embrace a more modern culture.

*Q. Will Golf Ireland interfere with the running of our club?*

A. Golf Ireland will not interfere with the day-to-day running of its affiliate clubs. It will support clubs and advise them on best practice models with a set of overarching principles, which it will encourage clubs to follow.

*Q. What changes will we see in our club?*

A. The decision to implement change will be for individual golf clubs to decide themselves. A set of overarching principles will be available, and these principles will be promoted by Golf Ireland. If clubs follow them, they will progress along the road towards improved governance and management practices.

*Q. What is Golf Ireland's stance on equality?*

A. Golf Ireland will seek to ensure that clubs treat all members fairly and that rights and entitlements are determined by membership categories and not by gender.

*Q. Will we have to continue with three tier structures?*

A. There will be no requirement for separate ladies' and men's clubs. Each club will be free to decide whether to move to a single structure. Clubs will also be free to retain their existing structure. Golf Ireland will provide guidance on best practice governance structures and will be at hand to provide support for any club that decides to transition to a one club model.

*Q. Will affiliate clubs have more of a say in Golf Ireland?*

A. Affiliate clubs will have the opportunity to have delegates attend both the national and regional AGMs of Golf Ireland. The AGMs will be run in an open and transparent manner, and clubs will have the opportunity to bring notices of motion, to question issues and to make appropriate suggestions.

*Q. Will clubs still have two captains – one for men and one for women?*

A. Affiliate clubs will be members of Golf Ireland, but will remain as self-governing entities, and will determine their own honorary positions.

*Q. Will single gender clubs be welcomed as affiliate members of Golf Ireland?*

A. Yes. Both male and female single gender clubs will be welcomed as affiliate members. All single gender clubs currently affiliated to the GUI and ILGU will be affiliated to Golf Ireland on day one of its establishment.

*Q. What impact will Golf Ireland have on the scheduling of our club competitions?*

A. The scheduling of club competitions is a matter for clubs. The ILGU and the GUI do not currently get involved in the organisation of club competitions and nor will Golf Ireland. Golf Ireland will, however, offer training and support for clubs that would like to learn about best practice when it comes to running club competitions.

*Q. What will happen to the Confederation of Golf in Ireland (CGI) and will the services it provides still be available to clubs?*

A. The CGI will be dissolved and the services that it currently provides will be retained and extended by Golf Ireland. These services will be delivered at regional level, so clubs will have direct contact with their development/club support officer. Governance of Golf Ireland.

*Q. What will happen to the voice of women in Golf Ireland given the disparity in the proportion of female members (22%) relative to male members (78%)?*

A. Golf Ireland will lead from the front in promoting equality and inclusivity for all golfers. The role of Golf Ireland President will alternate between men and women, and there will be a minimum 30% representation of both genders at Board and Regional level. Golf Ireland is committed to ensuring that the voice of both men and women is equally heard. The voting system at Golf Ireland General Meetings and Regional Meetings has been devised to ensure that male and female club members will have a say in the outcome of elections and voting on notices of motion.

*Q. Who will be the President of Golf Ireland?*

A. The President of Golf Ireland will come from an agreed regional rota. The President will hold office for one year, with the position alternating annually between men and women. The region responsible for putting forward the President will decide, independently, who is nominated for the position.

*Q. There is no equality legislation in Northern Ireland. How will Golf Ireland manage this?*

A. Golf Ireland will lead by example and will require a minimum 30% representation of both genders at national and regional level. If they wish, clubs can follow the lead of the national body and their regional executives and can replicate these structures. Best practice guidance and support will be available for all clubs.

*Q. Will club members be able to influence elections and how do you become elected to a regional executive?*

A. Elections for the regional executives will be conducted through a democratic process. Clubs will send representatives to their regional AGM, at which regional executives will be elected. These delegates will be decided by each club on a non-gender basis and will attend regional AGM's as representatives of their clubs. Golf Ireland will establish clear and defined terms of office for all elected positions which will result in greater opportunities for election to executive and board positions.

## **Finance**

*Q. What financial benefits will be achieved?*

A. It is proposed that the operations and structure of Golf Ireland will be funded from the combined resources of the current organisations, the GUI, ILGU and CGI. Replacing three organisations with one will provide the opportunity to remove duplication, enhance efficiency, achieve cost savings and ensure that a more cost effective and comprehensive service is provided. These savings can then be used to develop and improve the game of golf in Ireland.

*Q. Will the affiliation fee be the same for men and women in Golf Ireland and if so, what will that fee be?*

A. Yes, a single affiliation fee will be in place for both men and women, and a lower rate will be in place for junior golfers. The affiliation fee will be paid by each club to Golf Ireland for every club member. The adult fee will be €24 in Ireland and £20 in Northern Ireland. The junior fee will be €5 and £3.50. These amounts will be fixed for the first two years of Golf Ireland.