

Revenue Budget Summary - Oak Leaf Golf Complex

Budget Description	Budget Holders	2024/25 Gross Budget	2024/25 Net Budget
Golf Course and Driving Range	Judith Thexton (Head of Leisure) Steve Cooper (Works Manager) Chris Lawson (Golf Administrator)	£460,100	£104,700

Purpose of the Budget:

The purpose of the Oak Leaf Golf Complex Budget is to fund the operational resources including staffing, sub-contractors, premises, vehicles, machinery, and equipment required to run and maintain a municipal golf course, golf shop and driving range to the required standards.

Scope of Activity and Nature of the Service:

The Oak Leaf Golf Complex is managed and administered on a day-to-day basis by the Golf Administrator, a team of golf shop assistants and a part-time driving range ball picker.

The golf shop staff are responsible for opening and closing the premises, customer service and care, taking payments, cleaning, ordering, and managing shop stocks, picking up balls on the range, organising coaching, marketing, and undertaking club repair services.

The maintenance and upkeep of the golf course and driving range is undertaken by works section staff. The golf course employs three permanent green keeping staff with additional cover provided from the works section as and when required. The various vehicles and machinery required to maintain the golf course and driving range are managed and maintained by the works section, and include fairways, tees and greens mowers, and the range ball collector, ball washer and ball dispenser.

The golf complex budget provides for the costs of the golf shop and green keeping staff, the running costs of the golf complex building incorporating the driving range, changing rooms, toilet facilities and golf shop, the running costs of the golf course irrigation system, equipment such as flags, range balls and nets, equipment maintenance, course maintenance materials, pesticide spraying works undertaken by external contractors, insurance, subscriptions, marketing, and scorecards.

The golf course and driving range is a discretionary service area.

Contribution to Council Aims:

The provision of a golf course and driving range contributes to the following Council Strategic Aims:

Aim 2: "To manage the Council's finances and assets in a responsible manner"

Aim 3: "To provide accessible, affordable leisure facilities and opportunities"

Performance Measures and Indicators:

The provision of the golf course and driving range contributes directly towards the Strategic Aims highlighted above, as well as the following targets within the Service Delivery Plan:-

- Ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Improve advertising of the golf complex using the Council's newsletter publication.
- Ensure that social media is used to advertise the golf complex.
- Monitor energy consumption, implement energy saving initiatives and reduce usage.
- Ensure all staff have an annual appraisal.
- Deliver the golf complex related capital works set out in the Asset Management Plan.

A historic performance target for the golf course was to generate a surplus of income over expenditure. This was regularly achieved until the onset of the economic difficulties in 2008. This, along with poor weather conditions and increased competition, has had a significant impact on income and taken alongside increases in running costs, has resulted in the facility currently being provided at a net cost to the taxpayer. However, it remains a long-term target to return the golf course to a position of surplus.

Key Budget Changes for 2024/25:

The Golf Course Budget has increased by £33,700 to a net running cost of £110,050 per year.

Additional budget provision has been required for increases in staffing costs from the local pay government pay award and inflation on running costs, in addition to this income budgets have reduced as a result a drop-in activity in part due to the inclement weather and the course operating on reduced holes or closed. Membership fees have been frozen in 2024/25 to acknowledge this with the hope to encourage increased membership numbers and green fees.

The Driving Range Budget has reduced by £16,250 per year to a net running surplus of £5,350.

This is largely as a result of a substantial increase in driving range income, partly as a consequence of the increase in income in the current year as a result of the VAT changes in relation to leisure services and partly due to increased usage of the facility as well as an increase in charges. There has also been a significant increase in income from sales of golf equipment in the golf shop. Utility costs have reduced following the fall in charges. These changes have all contributed to a reduction in the net cost of the facility which is budgeted to return a surplus in 2024/25.

Importance of Service to the Community:

The golf course had a total membership of 185 in 2023/24 and also has a significant number of casual 'pay as you play' users.

There were 10,267 rounds played on the golf course in 2023/24, broken down as follows:-

Member Rounds 6,358
Casual Rounds 3,909

This is a decrease on previous years, due to wet weather and course closures.

Driving range sales of baskets of balls increased to 17,281 in 2023/24 from 15,341 in 2022/23. Prior to the coronavirus lockdown, usage increased year on year to just under 19,000 baskets of balls in 2019/20. Usage since reopening following lockdown has steadily increased. Although usage showed an increase, the wet weather and subsequent hand picking of the range balls, as well as supply issues on replacement range balls had a detrimental impact on income.

The 2024 'Your Parish, Your Choice, Your Voice' Satisfaction Survey showed over 70% of respondents rated the quality of the course and driving range as good or very good, 88% rated the golf shop and facilities highly.

External Funding and Fees and Charges:

2024/25 fees for the Golf Course and Driving Range are as follows:-

	Adult	Senior Citizen	19-25	15-18	Under 14
7 Day Membership	£447	£402	£152	N/a	N/a
5 Day Membership	£402	£352	N/a	£52	£22
Peak Green Fees – Weekday	£19.00	£19.00	£19.00	£19.00	£19.00
Peak Green Fees – Weekend	£22.00	£22.00	£22.00	£22.00	£22.00
Green Fees Winter	£10.50	£10.50	£10.50	£10.50	£10.50
Buggy Hire – Member	£16.00	Driving Range - Large Basket of Balls		£7.25	
Buggy Hire – Non-Member	£24.00	Driving Range - Small Basket of Balls		£4.00	

Total budgeted income for 2024/25 is as follows:-

Green Fees £75,000
Memberships £58,750
Buggy Hire £5,750
Hire of Equipment £1,200
Shop Sales £93,350
Driving Range £83,500
Total £317,550

Charges are regularly benchmarked against other providers and membership prices in particular are amongst the lowest in the region. Charges are reviewed by Policy and Resources Committee.