You must check all the large trees first. Look very carefully round the cartwheel area of their root systems for signs of upheaval of the ground.

All large trees that show evidence of drastic movement in their root system will have to be removed. They might seem quite safe at the moment but once they come into leaf they will blow over very easily. A damaged root system can't always be detected by visible signs of heave. But sometimes you can feel it. If you stand under a tree that has a loose root system you will feel yourself rising and falling as the tree sways in a strong breeze.

Even if everything seems OK don't become complacent. The full effects of the hurricane will only come to light over a period of several years. Watch your trees carefully as they come into leaf. If the crowns seem thinner than usual and the leaves smaller, it could be that the trees were damaged below ground.

Make sure that before you fell any standing trees, even if you are convinced that they are unsafe, you have the right to do so. Trees covered by tree preservation orders or those standing in conservation areas cannot be felled without first obtaining permission from the local planning authority.

Although, as I have said, you can't do anything to stop a hurricane, you can take steps to reduce its impact on the tree cover of your golf course. The majority of trees that succumbed to the might of the wind on October 16th were elderly. Where trees are represented by all age groups the effect of a disaster is likely to be less.

Don't assume that by replacing all the lost trees next year you have solved your tree problem. If all the replacements are the same age you will simply be storing up a repeat performance for future generations.

Ideally, a tree replanting programme needs to replace existing losses in the first year and then add a few more each year.

You should be able to get assistance with tree planting schemes from bodies such as the Forestry Commission. Check with them before you finalise your replanting programme.