It is often said that if golfers knew the reasons why maintenance activities were being carried out by greenkeepers on the golf course, they would be much more tolerant of their activities.

At one golf club where I used to advise, any attempt to improve the course by aerating the greens, for example, was met by the members replacing the Chairman of Green. Every year a new Chairman was appointed and as a result the course condition was never allowed to improve.

You can guess why I don’t visit that club anymore!

Greenkeepers use various ways to communicate with golfers – possibly word of mouth as they go about the course or a note posted on the club notice board.

Alternatively, there might be a paragraph in the club’s newsletter or in a report from the Green Committee, which may be posted on the phone during the day and these are easily downloaded onto the blog.

But is this the best way to get the message across? Information can help communication within golf clubs. We started getting visitors early on and within a few months we had 5,000 hits.

“Tell the members about it - and they come. If done well, a blog is better than any other way to get the message across. In an upcoming edition of Golf Course Management, I suggest a paragraph in the newsletter is much better than a report from the Green Committee. And these are not kept up to date, visitors will lose interest.”

It is important to keep it interesting and up to date, with lots of pictures.

“Tell the members about it and they come. If done well, a blog is better than any other way to get the message across. If specific problems are being addressed to improve the course, they feel as they are being listened to.”

In winter, the blog has to be kept fresh.

If the course is closed or work such as bunker renovation and drainage is being carried out which many of the members don’t ordindarily see, the blog emphasises the unseen work which goes on day by day around the course.

The blog is not for everyone and, if not kept up to date, visitors will lose interest.

However it only takes minutes to download a few pictures which have been taken on the phone during the day and these are easily downloaded onto the blog. Bob Melville, Richard Jacques and Richard Lightfoot all use Google Blogger, but there is other software, such as WordPress.

So what are the secrets of success?

Richard says: “If you are going to blog, it is important to do it frequently so that it remains topical and worthwhile for visitors to return to.”

All the greenkeeper bloggers I have spoken to say that members know what is going on at their course.

Richard Jacques of Malton & Norton Golf Club was encouraged to start blogging by seeing other successful blogs, such as his favourite from the team at Swasgass.

In the UK, Richard also looked at blogs from this side of the Atlantic, including that produced by Bob Melville at the Craig Golfing Society. Another successful blog is Richard Lightfoot’s at Beauford Lakes Golf Club.

Richard Jacques’s blog has a direct link from the club’s website homepage so that members can easily find it.

He says, “The greenkeeper’s blog gets a lot of visitors. We started getting visitors early on and within a few months there were many more as the blog became better known within the club and by the time we had been going for seven months we had had 5,000 hits.

“I find that if golfers know why things are being done around their course they are more supportive and tolerant.

If specific problems are being addressed to improve the course, they feel as if they are being listened to.”

A link from the club’s website homepage so that members can easily access it is also a good idea.

Does the presence of the blog improve the golf club membership’s understanding of the greenkeepers’ role? Or are the people who read it the usual suspects who show up to trips to the workshop to see the machinery or who attend course walks? Does it draw in the people who are still sitting around in the bar and who would benefit most from this education? Hopefully, by making the information easily accessible, the message will get through to golfers.

The greenkeepers I have spoken to think blogging is a worthwhile thing to do, so I say get signed up to WordPress or Blogger and start blogging.