

# Constructor is given golf course in settlement of six-figure debt

**G**olf course constructor Brian D Pierson has opened his own course. Run by eldest son Mark, Hamptworth Golf and Country Club, on the edge of the New Forest, was given to the Piersons to settle a six-figure debt by the original developers, Hamptworth Park Leisure, who had a 125-year lease on the land.

The Piersons started building the course in 1991, then stopped halfway through when the developers' money ran out. Eighteen months of negotiations later the company which has built more than 180 golf courses worldwide took over the whole project, scaling down the plan for a grandiose clubhouse.

Laid out over 175 acres, running in and out of the 700-acre English Nature-managed Langley Wood, Hamptworth has the potential to become one of the best courses in the south-west.

Newly-appointed head greenkeeper Keith Hill-Jones says he wants to make it the best course in the area in the next couple of years.



Mark Pierson, Robert Key MP and Brian Pierson

Based on a Philip Sanders design, it measures 6,500 yards off the back tees and features several intimidating, tree-lined tee shots, some monster bunkers and a par 5 of 582 yards.

Water hazards are provided by the River Blackwater as it meanders through the course, which was opened last month by Salisbury MP Robert Key. Other hazards are natural too – plenty of trees and hedges and only 19 bunkers.

Greens are built to Jim Arthur specifications. The 9th and 18th holes finish on a double green guarded by a massive bunker which one over-enthusiastic writer described as being "as big as the Isle of Wight".

One of the most daunting holes is the 360-yard 14th which doglegs slightly to the right once you have driven through an avenue of trees that may make even the best players consider using a 4 iron.

Construction of a 6,500 sq ft clubhouse is planned for next year.



Hamptworth's double green – the 9th and 18th

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■ More than 220 companies are booked in at the Landscape Industries show June 8/9 at the National Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire.

■ The Greenkeeping Supply Company has been set up by Liam Galway. He will be supplying course furniture from Tacit, Pattissons and Standard Golf, as well as clothing and tools. Tel/fax: 0245 248880.

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