



Get the experts involved

David Figgins-Barrett looks at how bringing in a contractor can be the best way to get a project completed

On a daily basis it can seem that we are bombarded with adverts in golf magazines for golf products that will improve a golfer's game - clubs that strike better, balls that fly further and putters that are more accurate.

Over the years this has inevitably made golf courses less challenging than the original architects intended them to be, yet all players still want to play on challenging and entertaining courses. This means that all clubs are under pressure to constantly, or at least regularly, improve courses while retaining their original character.

"As a Top 100 golf club in England, it is essential for us to ensure that our course remains an exciting and interesting challenge for all that play it. This is why we have adopted a programme of continuous improvements," said BIGGA Member, Steve Mucklow, Course Manager, at Beau Desert Golf Club.

It can be difficult for clubs of all sizes to fund this kind of programme but the alternative is to allow the club to stagnate, which is a very daunting prospect. Whether your main competition is from the club next door or other Top 100 clubs around the UK, the problem is the same. The club and the course need to be better than that of the competition to ensure that they achieve the required footfall to make them profitable. In the current financial

climate it can be difficult for clubs to allocate suitable funding for course improvements and renovations.

"Most Course Managers around the UK are now expected by the clubs to do more with less. This means that we will have to be smart with our budgets, and with some of the improvement projects, outsourcing is the best solution," said Steve.

When these types of projects are undertaken in-house, weather and ground conditions can play a big part in whether the project comes in on budget as it only takes a small amount of adverse conditions for the job to drag on, costing more every day.

An advantage of outsourcing these projects is that you can manage the project budget more effectively as you have a clear project price that a contractor has agreed to meaning that there will be little opportunity for the project cost to increase, and you get better value for money.

When planning your annual improvement programme and the associated budget it is wise to involve your preferred construction partner in the preliminary pricing. This way, when you go to the Green Committee you can be confident in giving them a clear picture of what can be achieved and at what price.

Steve feels that having a professional contractor involved in your improvement projects is invaluable,

as their experience, knowledge and ability to share in your project vision is key to making projects a success."

Beau Desert chose Senior Golf Construction, for whom Stephen Senior, added: "We understand the pressures that golf clubs face, and are happy to work with them to help maximise their budgets and develop a project that will be of great benefit to both the club and everyone that plays the course.

"Having the assistance of a construction company that you can trust to act in your best interests ensures that the club and the members get great value from the work. Year after year, the club, committee and members are happy to approve projects because they know that the budgets won't overrun and they'll get great results," added Steve.

Senior Golf Construction started at Beau Desert Golf Club in 2008 undertaking Laser Grading projects and has completed several successful projects since.

This year the Club's continuing improvement programme will involve lengthening some of the holes to maintain the challenge for all players. To do this seven new tees are being constructed on key holes.

This project indicates the start of the next phase of improvements to our course, and our preferred contractors will continue to be an important part of the further development of our course," said Steve.



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