

For Sale



The Herefordshire Golf Club

Hereford, Herefordshire HR4 8LY

Established in 1896 - A James Braid designed golf course







Established 1896
A James Braid designed golf course

A rare opportunity to acquire a freehold 18 hole private members' golf club situated in glorious countryside close to the historic city of Hereford



A friendly private members' club with clear potential for commercialisation

James Braid designed 18 hole 6,055 yard (par 70) golf course

Practice facilities

Substantial two storey clubhouse

Golf reception / pro shop

Greenkeeping facilities

Turnover c. £520,000

Freehold c. 51 ha (126 acres)

'The Gleneagles of the Midlands'
Host to the Midlands Mid Amateur Championship 2020

*A James Braid designed
18 hole 6,055 yard (par 70)
golf course*









*'The Gleneagles of the
Midlands'*

*Host to the Midlands
Mid Amateur
Championship 2020*





Objectives

The Herefordshire Golf Club's Executive Committee has identified a number of key objectives for the marketing exercise, which are summarised below:

1. To preserve the future of the Club, and the playing of golf at the property.
2. To secure investment in the facilities (both clubhouse and golf course) to ensure that the business remains viable.
3. To attract a purchaser with proven entrepreneurial operational experience, ideally (but not necessarily) in the golf sector.
4. To achieve a seamless transfer of the business.

It is important to note that achieving these objectives, and thereby securing the future of the Club, is arguably more important to the Executive and the wider Club membership than maximising the headline sale price. Offers for the property will be considered in the round, and the preferred bidder will be the party that is deemed best placed to deliver the Club's objectives.

Introduction

First established in 1896, The Herefordshire GC is the oldest Club in Herefordshire, and moved to its current location in 1932. Situated in a truly special location that was first identified by the legendary James Braid, who subsequently designed the course, the Club offers far reaching views of the Shropshire Hills, the Brecon Beacons and the Black Mountains.

Described as the 'Gleneagles of the Midlands', the course is a great test for golfers of all abilities from the 1st tee right through to the 18th green. The course's fine pedigree is reflected in its selection as host for the Midlands Mid-Amateur Championship originally scheduled for May 2020. The Club is a member of the prestigious Society of James Braid Golf Courses.

The Herefordshire Golf Club operates as a true private member's club facility. Inconsistent management and lack of investment over time have brought challenging

financial circumstances in recent years, which have only been partially addressed by the Club's newly appointed Executive Committee. Thus, following a Club EGM in April 2020, at which the members voted to dissolve the Club, the opportunity now exists to shape the next chapter of The Herefordshire Golf Club's history. A purchaser is sought for the property, specifically one who will undertake to preserve the future of the Club, and to invest in the facilities, for the benefit of all.

Offers that meet the Club's objectives are invited for the property, based on a guide price of £1.0 - £1.25 million. All options for the disposal of the property will be considered, including an outright sale, joint venture, sale and leaseback etc, albeit that a sale of the freehold (along with the promise of capital investment) is seen as the most likely scenario to secure the Club's long term future.



Location

The Herefordshire Golf Club is situated amongst stunning countryside some 8 miles from the centre of historic Hereford (population 55,800) and is approached via country lanes that offer a true sense of arrival.

The Club's tranquil location epitomises all that is good about the game of golf, offering a break from the pace of city life.

Approximate distances and journey times include:

Hereford	8 miles / 18 minutes
Leominster	13 miles / 23 minutes
Abergavenny	31 miles / 51 minutes
Gloucester	37 miles / 58 minutes
Birmingham	64 miles / 92 minutes
London	140 miles / 180 minutes

A location plan is shown at the rear of the brochure.



Description of the Property

James Braid is responsible for some of the country's finest golf courses. Now in its 124th year, and 88th year as a Braid designed facility in its current location, this magnificent golf course benefits from a two storey clubhouse, golf shop, halfway house and greenkeeping facilities – all set in a site of c. 51.08 hectares (126.22 acres).

Aerial footage of the property is available [here](#).

The property is split by a private right of way / unmade track that leads to a farmstead on the adjacent Foxley Estate. The clubhouse, golf reception, car park and holes 1-4 and 12-18 occupy the land to the west of the track, with holes 5-11, the halfway hut and greenkeeping complex occupying the land to the east.

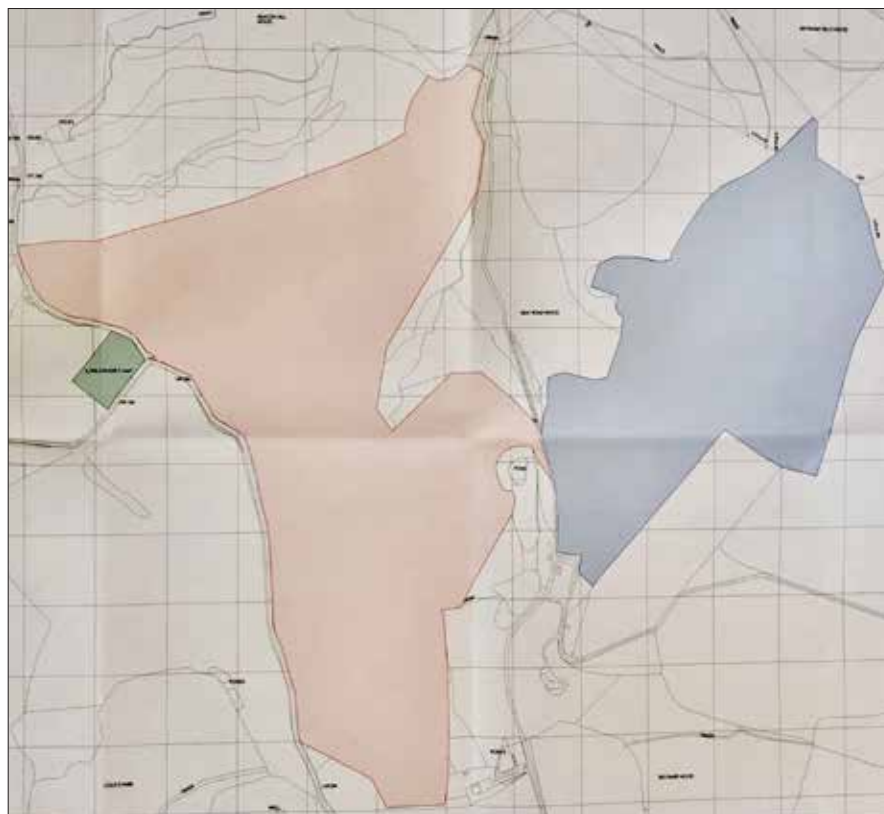
An indicative site plan of the property is shown opposite. The facilities comprise:

18 Hole Golf Course

The 18 hole golf course extends to 6,055 yards (par 70) from the white tees and comprises four par 3s, twelve par 4s and two par 5s. Whilst the layout is essentially a single loop of 18 holes, the course's configuration permits a loop of 6 holes (1-4 and 12-13), a loop of 9 holes with official CONGU qualifying status (1-6 and 11-13) or a loop of 13 holes (1-13) to be played from the clubhouse.

The James Braid layout makes full use of the natural features of this special site. The undulating terrain provides a fine setting for the course, which winds through valleys, climbs hills and plays through mature narcissus laden woodland. The special nature of the course is reflected in its selection as the host venue for the 2020 Midlands Mid-Amateur Championship.

Greens and tees are predominantly of traditional construction. The original (and majority of the current) greens were built using a local soil and sand mix, and now have a top surface of 3" to 4" made up of top dressing over the years. The 5th, 11th, 12th and 15th greens were constructed in the early 90's again using a mix of soil and sand mix, whilst the 9th green was newly constructed in 1995. An automated irrigation system is laid to greens and some tees. The course is presented to a high standard throughout.



The Herefordshire Golf Club Indicative Site Plan

Red:

79.94 acres

32.35 hectares

Blue:

44.88 acres

18.16 hectares

Green:

1.4 acres

0.57 hectares

Total:

126.22 acres

51.08 hectares

Not to scale

For identification purposes only

Feature holes on the course include:

1st hole – A demanding opening par 4 reaching almost 400 yards. Drive over a large bank onto an undulating fairway, lined on both sides by mature trees. The second shot must carry over a steep bank protecting a long but narrow green. Statistically, the toughest hole on the course in competition, the first hole is one of the most challenging openers around.

4th hole - The epitome of risk and reward. At only 286 yards on the card, a simple mid iron off the tee will take the danger out of play. A pitch onto a well-protected green will yield a straight forward par 4 for those who play safe. If you have a sense of adventure, a driver from the tee brings the chance of a birdie, or even a rare eagle, into play. Beware, the pond to the right is the last resting place for many a stray drive!

11th hole – With panoramic views of over half of the course, the drive down to the fairway is a spectacular start to this par 4. Avoid the woodland to the right and the treacherous rough to the left and you will enjoy an inviting second shot to a two-tiered green. With not a flat putt to be found, leave yourself below the hole for a chance of a birdie but watch out for the slopes.

15th hole – While every par 3 offers a unique challenge, the signature 15th hole will take some beating. Set in a picture-perfect amphitheatre, look upon from the elevate championship tee, your heart is in your mouth while your ball is in the air. Will it finally land on grass, sand or water will depend on your ability to judge the elevation drop, assess the changeable wind direction and to hold your nerve!

The course had a 4.21 star (out of 5) 'Highly Rated' rating on Golfshake as at April 2020, testament to its pedigree and popularity.

Practice Facilities

A 9 hole practice putting green, and a chipping green with practice bunker are located adjacent to the clubhouse.

A short practice ground (suitable for iron play) is situated close to the starter's hut and first tee, a short walk from the clubhouse.

A golf simulator is housed in the golf reception building.

Clubhouse

The two-storey clubhouse, which is believed to have been constructed in the early 1930s (and later extended in the early 1980s) occupies a commanding position on the western boundary of the property. The focal point for all those who use the site, the clubhouse offers far reaching views over the golf course.

The building is primarily of traditional construction, with brick, timber weatherboard and partly rendered elevations, under a mainly tiled, but part flat felt, roof. The accommodation extends to approximately 559 sq m (6,019 sq ft) and includes:

Ground Floor:

- Lobby/Entrance Hall
- Golf Reception / Manager's office
- Gentlemen's changing room / locker room with showers and WCs
- Ladies' changing room / locker room with showers and WCs
- Bar store and cellar
- Boiler room

First Floor:

- Lounge Bar (120 covers)
- Restaurant (80 covers)
- Kitchen (commercially fitted and equipped)
- Bar
- Lobby
- Outside seating area

Apartment (80.7 sq m / 868.6 sq ft) comprising lounge, kitchen, two bedrooms and bathroom

The clubhouse has a traditional feel throughout and offers obvious scope for sympathetic refurbishment.



A large, partially tarmac surfaced and part stone surfaced, car park is situated adjacent to the clubhouse, across Raven's Causeway, a public highway.

Golf Reception Building / Pro Shop

The golf reception building is situated immediately north of the clubhouse. Of timber frame construction, with timber weatherboard elevations under a tiled roof, the accommodation extends to approximately 45 sq m (486 sq ft). The accommodation comprises a Professional's area including an indoor golf simulator with curtain divider, and a separate room / office with a workbench.

The indoor golf simulator facility provides video, practice, GC2 launch monitor tracking, and is ideal for practice and club fitting.

Starter's Hut and Half Way House

A small Starter's Hut / shed is situated close to the first tee.

A Halfway House is located adjacent to the 11th green and greenkeeping complex. Of timber construction, with timber clad walls under a felt roof, the halfway house provides a refreshment point for golfers. Ladies and Gent's WC are available adjacent to the greenkeepers' complex.

Greenkeepers' Complex

The purpose built greenkeepers' facilities are located towards the centre of the property, with access off a private track that leads to the public highway.

The facilities comprise two metal frame buildings, with part concrete block and timber weatherboard elevations and steel formed panels, under profiled Asbestos corrugated sheet roofs and with concrete floors and surrounds. The accommodation includes machinery and equipment storage areas, maintenance room / workshop, rest room, and WC.

A bunded diesel tank, irrigation tank and storage bays for course materials are available close by.





Tenure & Possession

The entire property is held freehold.

All aspects of the business are operated in hand with the exception of the Pro Shop, which is franchised (rent free) to Adam Whiting, PGA Professional. Importantly, the Club have retained the sales of balls, gloves, tees, gloves and similar small items of golfing ephemera, the Pro selling golf clubs and similar hardware. The franchise agreement is terminable on 90 days notice. The golf simulator housed in the Pro Shop is the property of the Pro, who retains all income therefrom.

The flat in the clubhouse is currently let to a third party under an Unfurnished Assured Shorthold Tenancy. The UAST is terminable on two month's notice.



The Existing Business

Trading History

The Herefordshire Golf Club is a true private members' golf club, and trades as Herefordshire Golf Club. The Club operates by means of a series of Committees. The principal committee is the Executive Committee, which comprises 6 members who serve on an unpaid basis and is responsible for the strategic direction and day to day operation of the business. Historically, the Club's principal objective has been the provision of golfing facilities for its membership, rather than operating on a commercial / for profit basis.

Being a private members' golf club, VAT is not currently charged on membership subscription income or visitors green fees, albeit that this will change under proprietorial control.

Trading accounts for the Club for the years ending 31st December 2017 – 2019 can be summarised as shown below:

	2019	2018	2017
	£	£	£
Bar	82,880	70,530	74,598
Food	132,737	124,530	110,545
Green Fees	53,453	40,812	55,728
Subs	213,170	209,713	194,139
Competition	12,658	14,256	11,944
Buggy	11,405	11,237	2,048
Misc.	15,473	16,319	10,771
Turnover	521,776	487,397	459,773

In each of these years the Club traded at a small EBITDA loss.

Detailed trading and management accounts will be made available to parties who undertake an accompanied inspection of the property and sign an NDA.

Golf Membership

The Herefordshire Golf Club offers various categories of membership - a selection of which are shown below. The membership year runs from 1st April, but newer entrants to some categories renew on a rolling basis. Typical membership fees for the 2020 season are:

Category	Subs	Subs
	Gents	Ladies
7 Day	£807.00	£798.00
7 Day Joint	£786.00	£778.00
5 Day	£659.00	£651.00
5 Day Joint	£639.00	£630.00
MOD	£400.00	£400.00
Lifestyle	£319.00	£311.00
Social	£30.00	£30.00



No joining fee is currently levied. Prospective members are invited to meet the Club Captain or Vice Captain who explain the golfing and social activities of the Club, and how to get the best possible benefits from membership. The Club had a membership of 283 (as at 1st May 2020) following the 1st April 2020 renewal.

Lifestyle membership provides entry into monthly competitions but excludes major competitions, Lifestyle members pay a green fee each time they play.

All members are entitled to discounts on bar beverage prices and some catering prices when using their members swipe cards.

Green Fees

The headline 18 hole green fees for the 2020 summer season are:

	Mon – Fri	Weekend
Visitor per round	£25.00	£30.00
Visitor all day	£35.00	£40.00
Members guest	£15.00	£15.00
Twilight	£15.00	£20.00

A half day rate is charged for 2for1 vouchers, County Cards and Open Fairways. Reciprocal green fee rates of £10.00 during the week and £15.00 at weekends have been agreed with four local Clubs.

Buggy & Trolley Hire

Typical buggy and trolley hire charges are:

	Buggy	Trolley
Visitor (18)	£25.00	£3.00
Visitor (all day)	£35.00	£5.00
Member (18)	£15.00	£2.50
Member (all day)	£20.00	£4.00

The Club retains all revenue from buggy and trolley hire.

Societies

The Herefordshire Golf Club offers fine facilities for societies up to 80 players. The Club has a good reputation with society organisers and enjoys high levels of repeat business. Typical summer society packages include:

18 holes	£20.00
All day golf	£30.00
Weekend premium	£5.00
Coffee & bacon roll	£5.00
One course meal	£10.00
Desert	£4.00

Upgrades to the standard packages are available on request.



Roundage

The Club's records show that the following rounds were played at the course during 2019:

Member	21,400
Visitors	800
Opens	4,800
Societies	1,000
Total	28,000



Functions & Private Parties

The clubhouse is available for members and non-members to hire, with a maximum capacity of 120 for a sit down meal, or larger groups on a buffet basis. Functions are charged on an ad-hoc basis depending on numbers and food required.

Licences

Herefordshire Council granted a Club Premises Certificate (ref. CP00067) renewable each January, which permits the supply of alcohol to members and guests between the following hours:

Monday – Thursday: 10.00 - 00.00

Friday – Saturday: 10.00 - 01.00

Sundays: 11.00 - 23.00

The Club has the benefit of a PRS / PPL Licence, which is renewable each November.

Golf Course & Grounds Maintenance Equipment

The Club has a full complement of golf course maintenance equipment, all of which is owned outright with the exception of a leased John Deere Gator that was purchased in 2020.

The Club has a fleet of 10 buggies. 3 are owned, 2 are held under a lease agreement (which is typical for the sector) and 5 are leased April to October each year under an ad-hoc agreement with a local PGA Golf Professional.

Staff

The Club currently employs 11 members of staff, comprising 3 greenkeepers, 1 accounts / administration person, 2 golf reception / administration staff, 2 chefs, and 3 bar / catering staff.

The Club has a self-employed PGA professional.



Services

Mains electricity is connected to the property. Water for the clubhouse is from the Club's own bore hole. Foul drainage is to a private drainage system.

Clubhouse central heating and hot water is by means of oil-fired boilers, whilst cooking is by electricity and bulk tank gas.

Water for the golf course irrigation system is obtained from a private borehole on the course situated near to the maintenance facilities.

Energy Performance Certificates

The relevant EPC ratings for the property are:

Clubhouse:	C55
Clubhouse Flat:	D63
Golf Shop:	C67



Town & Country Planning

Herefordshire Council adopted the Herefordshire Local Plan on 16th October 2015. Under the Plan, the whole of The Herefordshire Golf Club is classified as a Local Wildlife Site / a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

Whilst HCC's planning policy and the Club's own principal objectives appear to seek to restrict alternative / residential use of the site, it is anticipated that offers may be received for parts of the property that are conditional on planning permission being available for alternative use. Whilst the Club's preference is to receive unconditional offers for the whole property, conditional offers for part of the property may be considered, as long as such offers provide capital for reinvestment in the Club's golfing facilities.

Basis of Disposal

Offers in the region of £1.0 - £1.25 million are invited for the freehold property, fully fitted and equipped.

Consumable stocks are to be taken over by the purchaser at valuation on completion of the sale.

The sale contract will include a clause reserving a percentage of future residential redevelopment value to the vendors and / or restrictive covenants against development, the terms of which are to be agreed with the purchaser.

Website

For a further insight into The Herefordshire Golf Club please visit: www.herefordshiregolfclub.co.uk

Information & Viewing

For further information on the Club, or to arrange an inspection of the property, please contact:



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Important Notice

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 2. Any information contained herein (whether in the text, plans or photographs) is given in good faith but should not be relied upon as being a statement or representation of fact.
 3. Nothing in these particulars shall be deemed to be a statement that the property is in good condition or otherwise nor that any services or facilities are in good working order. It should not be assumed that the property remains as displayed in the photographs.
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 7. The information in these particulars is given without responsibility on the part of the agents or their clients and neither the agents nor their employees have any authority to make or give any representations or warranties whatever in relation to this property.
 8. HMH Golf & Leisure will not be liable, in negligence or otherwise, for any injury or loss arising from the use of these particulars.
 9. The property is offered for sale subject to contract and availability.
- Sales particulars prepared in May 2020.

