

CHESHIRE COUNTY GOLF PARTNERSHIP

Press release

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For immediate release

CAPTION: Matthew Gillingham (far left) and assistant Sam Matthews at Wilmslow Golf Club and the only all-girls group in the Cheshire County Golf Partnership Go 4 Green 16 to 19 project.

ONE OF the oldest clubs in Cheshire is bringing the game to a new generation of players.

Wilmslow Golf Club – which was founded in 1889 – has embraced the latest projects to ensure that golf has a bright future by attracting newcomers to the sport.

The club, based at Great Warford just a few miles from Wilmslow's bustling town centre, is supporting a scheme aimed at encouraging teenagers in the 16-19 age bracket to give golf a go.

The initiative has been launched by the Cheshire County Golf Partnership and is aimed at bringing complete beginners into the game while showing young adults that they have not missed the chance to try a different sporting challenge.

The Go 4 Green 16 to 19 campaign offers eight free lessons from qualified PGA coaches – with equipment provided as part of the introductory group lessons.

One of the biggest groups in Cheshire is at Wilmslow – and it is the only all-girl group.

The club has used the links established through junior organiser Andrew Henshaw with the Alderley Edge School for Girls to help build up a 20-strong group.

Says head professional Matthew Gillingham: “The girls have been having great fun getting to grips with playing golf, which was totally new for the majority of them. We have been building up the skills they require and hope to play a few holes out on the course before they finish.

“Hopefully some will have enjoyed it so much that they want to carry on when the course has finished.

“Playing with their friends has made it far less daunting than going up to a club on their own and is a good way of encouraging people into golf.

“These kind of schemes are very important for the future of golf – introducing more players to the game can only help clubs in the years ahead.”

Wilmslow is looking to build on its existing junior section of more than 100 players and hopes to extend its successful links with Alderley Edge School for Girls to other schools in the area.

It is also looking to encourage more ladies and girls to join.

The ladies membership fee is presently on offer with a 50 per cent discount on the entrance fee, and

the club has included free lessons and coffee mornings as part of its package of incentives for women to sign up.

Craig Thomas, the Cheshire County Golf Development Officer, added: “Wilmslow is just one example of the work going on at clubs throughout Cheshire to encourage more people to participate in golf and shows how a proactive approach to building links in the local community can pay dividends.”

The Go 4 Green 16-19 campaign is one of a number of initiatives undertaken by the Cheshire Golf Partnership, a collaboration of the major stakeholders in golf, including the English Golf Union, The English Women's Golf Association, the PGA, the Golf Foundation and Sport England. In Cheshire the partnership is supported by the Cheshire Union of Golf Clubs, the Cheshire County Ladies Golf Association and the Cheshire PGA.

For more details of the activities in Cheshire visit www.cheshiregolfpartnership.com.

For more information on the work of the Cheshire Golf Partnership contact Craig Thomas, County Development Officer, Cheshire County Golf Partnership.

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