

# CHESHIRE COUNTY GOLF PARTNERSHIP

Press release

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Craig Thomas, the new county development officer for the Cheshire County Golf Partnership



Golf Foundation president Colin Montgomerie with Craig Thomas (centre) and other award winners



Craig Thomas, winner of the Golf Foundation's Burroughs Award



Golf Foundation president Colin Montgomerie with Craig Thomas (centre) and other award winners

AWARD-WINNING golf coach Craig Thomas is taking on a new challenge – leading the drive to get more people into golf in Cheshire.

The 30 years-old has been appointed county development officer for the Cheshire Golf Partnership and will be helping spearhead a wide-ranging number of projects aimed at increasing participation in the sport throughout the county.

Cheshire is one of the largest county partnerships in the country with 104 golfing facilities.

“Cheshire is a tremendous area for golf and over the years the clubs, county union and association and PGA pros have done a great job in promoting the sport and developing talent,” said Thomas. “My role will be to help deliver schemes that bring people of all ages and abilities into the sport,

providing the opportunities for people to enjoy the health and social benefits of golf, and creating pathways into future golf club membership.”

Thomas was one of the first to qualify as a PGA professional through the foundation degree programme at The Belfry and has since gone on to achieve AA status – the highest available.

He has also won the Golf Foundation's Burroughs Award for his work with special needs children – an area he still specialises in through his projects in the Staffordshire area - and was presented with his award at Wentworth Golf Club by Europe's Ryder Cup winning captain and Golf Foundation president Colin Montgomerie.

The Burroughs Award is for those people who support young golfers as they deal with adversity.

Commenting on his award, Thomas says: “I wanted to take away the barriers that are stopping these individuals from taking part in golf.

“Seeing someone who thought they would never hit a golf ball doing just that is a priceless feeling and makes all the hard work worthwhile.”

Formerly head professional at The Chase Golf Club in Staffordshire, Thomas is one of three founder members of the Golf Academy, based at The Range, in Essington, and Greenfield Golf Club near Wolverhampton, which has recently been awarded RangeMark.

The Academy has concentrated its efforts on opening up the sport to all-comers.

“I believe it is important that we make golf as accessible and affordable to people to give them the best possible opportunities to take up the sport,” he added.

Thomas takes over the Cheshire role from Sean Hammill, who will be concentrating his efforts on his position as county development officer for Staffordshire.

Says Hammill: “This is a good move all round with more dedicated time for both counties.”

Thomas will be working for 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](http://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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