



Scotland's Junior Golf Strategy





Every child encouraged to reach their full potential



Introduction

The Scottish Executive has committed its full support, as a consequence of its bid to host the Ryder Cup in Scotland, to the development and implementation of Scotland's Junior Golf Strategy that will provide new opportunities for every child in Scotland.

The delivery of this strategy branded as clubgolf will require the need to build partnerships with all the organisations who have a role to play in the development of golf - clubs, local authorities, Area and District Golf Associations, and Area Institutes of Sport - under the direction and leadership of the Scottish Golf Union, the Scottish Ladies' Golfing Association, **sportscotland** and the Professional Golfers Association. The strategy puts in place a single plan and a coordinated structure that will deliver the Scottish Executive's and Scottish Golf's commitment to the people of Scotland by 2009.

The aim of the programme is to create a development pathway from entry level to the sport through to the highest levels of achievement, enabling increased access to the game, higher participation levels, improved standards of performance, and a sustained growth in all of these areas in the future.

clubgolf is a brand designed for the youth of Scotland by the youth of Scotland. clubgolf is the brand name of Scotland's Junior Golf Strategy developed under the direction and leadership of the Scottish Golf Union, the Scottish Ladies' Golfing Association, **sportscotland** and the Professional Golfers Association. The Scottish Executive fully support this strategy as part of their commitment as a result of the 2009 Ryder Cup bid for Scotland.

Ambitions

The approach to delivering the strategy will be characterised by the following ambitions for Scotland as a nation, where:

- Every child will have the opportunity to experience golf;
- Every child who chooses golf will be welcomed into a sport that they can play for life; and
- Every child who steps up to the first tee will be encouraged to reach their full potential.

Every organisation that becomes involved in the implementation of the strategy will be expected to subscribe fully to these ambitions and this plan provides the basis upon which they can be realised.

Background

For a variety of reasons, clubs are becoming increasingly interested in attracting new members and visitors in order to sustain their business and secure their future. As a result they are keen to bring in more juniors and are looking for leadership and support on how best to do this.

The current context for golf in Scotland is summarised in the Appendix 1.

Principles

The strategy is guided by the following principles:

- The programme must deliver what is right for children in Scotland;
- The programme must take into account the political position of Scotland within the UK;
- The programme must be delivered within the context of the national strategies promoted by the Scottish Executive and its agencies as well as Scottish Golf;
- The programme must provide truly national coverage;
- The programme must be sustainable beyond 2009;
- The programme will require to be "cutting edge", in order to achieve the world leader status that Scotland desires (reference Ryder Cup Bid 2009);
- The programme will be built on a modern approach to coach/volunteer education and development;
- The programme will cater for the continuous progression of both players and coaches, including professionals;
- The programme must build sustainable partnerships to avoid duplication of effort and resources; and
- The programme will apply to any child (boy or girl) 18 years and under in Scotland.

The priority in the first stages however will be to build the programme which will ultimately allow every 9 year old to access golf by 2009 (reference Ryder Cup bid 2009)

Objectives

Objectives will be achieved by a five-phase process working towards 2009:

2002 – 2003: Partnership Development (completed)

2002 – 2003: Pilots and Evaluation (completed)

2003 – 2005: Programme Development

2006: Roll-out of full National Programmes

2009: 100% of targets met

2014: Scottish successes at the Ryder Cup and other World events

- Every 9 year old in primary education (approx 50,000 entering P5 in 2009 and decreasing thereafter) having the opportunity to access an entry level/modified golf programme at school
- 20,000 9-14 year olds annually accessing a programme that is specifically designed and made available to community groups (e.g. scouts, guides) as well as social inclusion partnership areas where many of the children in these areas would not normally gain access to golf.

- 50,000 9-14 year olds in the clubgolf programme in any one year from 2009, each having transferred from the school golf programme into the core skills programme operated by clubs
- 100,000 members of the Scottish Junior Golf Club (i.e. the 50,000 9 year olds in the schools programme plus the 50,000 children in the core skills programme)
- 50,000 junior members of golf clubs
- Percentage of girl golfers to increase from 10 to 20% of junior golfers
- 200 clubgolf Centres (ie clubs delivering the core skills programme)
- 20 new junior specific golf facilities
- 45 affiliated junior golf facilities (existing driving ranges and commercial facilities)

Achieving the objectives

These objectives will be achieved through four key action areas, namely:

- A youth focused and researched approach taking the lead from the views, opinions, and needs of the juniors themselves;
- The development of player/coach integrated National Junior Programmes that provide and cater for the progression of a child entering golf through to full and active participation as a golfer on an ongoing basis;
- A professional officer network to deliver the action plan; and
- Providing the appropriate facilities to meet the needs of the anticipated changing patterns of demand.

Integration between all golfing bodies is vital if the programme is to be successfully delivered.

Strategic focus

The programme will have a focus of six strategic areas:

- Research and Evaluation
- Programme Development
- Facilities
- Marketing and Branding
- Partnerships
- Infrastructure

The following outlines what the strategy intends to deliver in these important areas. The detail of how this will be achieved over time will be captured in annual plans and adjusted as the stages of development change through time.

Research and evaluation

One of the main strengths of the programme will be the in-built research and evaluation processes intended to ensure the programme is robust and has a customer focus. Each element of the pilot and delivery phases of the programme will be subjected to independent evaluation, with the information gathered used to inform and further develop the programme. It is also important that the programme is informed by good information and practices from elsewhere, therefore the programme design will be open to input from, and partnership with, other countries. Finally it is also important that the programme reflects the needs of its customers, particularly the juniors themselves – both current golfers and non-players - and as a result focused market research will be used at the pilot and development phases of all aspects of the programme.

Programme development

The Programme Development component of the clubgolf programme is intended to ensure that anyone who enters the programme, regardless of where they live, will have the opportunity to access a quality golf experience. Whilst the programme will have many new and exciting initiatives, these must be delivered with the junior players as the focus of attention. Failure to do this will mean failure to engage appropriately with the potential and current junior golfers of Scotland.

The following list encompasses the main delivery systems for clubgolf in Scotland and outlines a pathway that will enable any beginner to progress through each of the stages that are necessary, to fully develop into an elite player.



“Golf is our inspiration, children are our future.”



Key areas

Golf clubs will be encouraged to provide an environment that is genuinely welcoming and encouraging to juniors. This will include the availability of a meaningful and sustainable coaching programme that is managed by club professionals and delivered at the early levels by adequately trained volunteers.

Of particular importance is the need for positive discrimination for girls to gain sustained access to golf in Scotland - whether this be through specifically designed programmes or a specific emphasis within generic programmes. The programmes to support changing attitudes and the player pathways include specific target groups such as girls in golf, social inclusion and people with a disability.

Where will it be delivered?

Education and schools

(i) clubgolf in Primary Schools

This programme will develop from a brief introduction to golf, to a modified game for 9-12 year olds in primary schools - taking cognisance of the work already undertaken in the development of modified golf games from around the world. This will require the development of appropriate resources to introduce golf into Scottish school life, and linking with new initiatives (such as active primary school co-ordinators, and TOPs) will allow golf to be accessed both inside and outside of the curriculum. clubgolf will supply the most appropriate tools for the class teacher to extend the golfing experience within a school environment covering the requirements of the 5-14 curriculum. This will include training, resources and on-going support from the golfing community. In Scotland, this means linking into the TOPs school programme.

(ii) clubgolf in Secondary Schools

Traditionally secondary school golf, similar to that of junior golf, has revolved around competitions aimed at those with a lower handicap. Schools also use activity weeks as an area where golf can be played and accessed by all. Through links to golf clubs, Secondary Schools have a role to play in the programme. Including pre-service and in-service for teachers', curricular development and extra curricular opportunities, the programme can utilise School Sports Co-ordinators to allow access and development in golf.

(iii) Special Schools

As the strategy is an inclusive document the outcome of what is required in primary and secondary education will be used and amended as necessary to cater for those who are educated at special schools. Children with a disability will be included through the Target Groups. The aim is for any junior from the age of 9-18 to be welcomed into an environment that allows them to have an experience of golf.

Priority will be given to fun, skills development, golf as part of a healthy and active lifestyle, and child safety.

Community

This area of the programme will have two purposes. First it will allow community groups to offer golf (whether at a Sports Centre, Local Authority vacation programme, or a volunteer group such as the Scouts or Guides) as part of their own programmes. Linking to golf clubs, golf courses, golf facilities etc, this will offer an additional experience for youngsters whilst they pursue their social interests through a medium other than golf. Second the programme will be portable in that it can be taken "to" the community in areas where it is unlikely that many children will have the chance to play golf outside of the school experience.

This may be extremely relevant in some social inclusion areas. The programme will mainly comprise a modified skills development scheme.

clubgolf skill development

This next stage is the follow on programme from the initial introductory experiences and will be delivered at the golf club (and/or practice facilities). It would also be developed as a tool to support and measure an individual's progress through the programme. Where appropriate the same principles would be applied at golf practice or training facilities always ensuring the necessary link and access to a golf club is in place for the ultimate expression and practice of the game. The programme will be coach led and will require the training of volunteers. Priority would be given to fun, skills development, golf as part of a healthy and active lifestyle, and child protection/safety.

The SGU and SLGA will also introduce a suitably modified junior handicap scheme to ensure that juniors can map their progress on the course in an appropriate manner prior to achieving a full handicap.

clubgolf and SLGA/SGU competition structures

As a part of the progression of junior players, all clubs participating in the clubgolf Club Development programme will provide the appropriate competition structures to reinforce player development. There will be two main focuses for these competitions:

- Pre-Handicap; and
- Handicap

There will be clubgolf competitions for pre handicap golfers that could be delivered in a festival type format. In conjunction with this both the SGU and SLGA will engage in a joint review of their current competition structure to assess the possibility and value of a national junior tour and an order of merit, as well as a number of competitions involving boys and girls on the same day. All competitions will fall under the jurisdiction of the SLGA and/or the SGU. The development of an appropriate competition structure incorporating varying levels of competition will also allow more players access to the challenge of appropriate competitive golf.

clubgolf PGA education

PGA Professionals and traditional junior programmes have relied on one to one or group coaching i.e. hands on coaching. In order to develop a national and truly sustainable programme this emphasis needs to change from hands on coaching to coach education with a professional at the hub, ensuring appropriate quality control of programmes within clubs, between clubs and in schools/ driving ranges. This will link directly with the clubgolf Club Development Charter Mark and is at the heart of the clubgolf development programme.

A national programme, suitably flexible to allow for local delivery, is required to be developed to provide, in a sustainable manner, the necessary 'stepping stones' for a junior to be introduced to the game of golf and develop their skill to whatever level their talent and desire takes them. This specifically means reaching juniors who would traditionally not gain access to golf (i.e. through their family) - best achieved through a player development programme. It also requires a focus on coach education to enable the successful and sustainable delivery of such staged programmes nationwide.

clubgolf PGA education programme

There is a need to develop an appropriate coach education programme for golf which sees the volunteer as a level 1 and 2 coach in golf club environment and practice facilities. These volunteer coaches will then, once a specified golfing level has been achieved by the junior, in turn link into the assistant professional and professional network for further player development as appropriate. This coach education programme must involve strong quality control provided by professional golfers fully trained in coach education and keeping an overview of development programmes in conjunction with a network of development officers. This will link directly to the PGA Coach Education network (refer to player development pathway in Appendix II).

Performance pathway - talent identification

Talent Identification will run through all aspects of the programmes on offer. This allows both the SLGA and SGU to identify potential young talented players outside of the more traditional structures. This system of holistic talent ID will allow 'late developers' to be identified and linked to the most appropriate coaching. Fast-tracking will also allow the coaches to guide those players with the ability to progress onto more advanced programmes.

Target groups

Within this strategy three specific target groups have been identified in addition to mainstream groups, who in the current climate do not have regular access to golf either outside or within a club environment. As previously outlined, the strategy is for the children/players of Scotland and with this in mind the strategy will only become all-inclusive when the issues of why certain groups of young people are not accessing golf are addressed. The decision to not play golf should only be made by the young person after they have had an opportunity to try the game and therefore make an educated decision rather than a decision made because of a lack of opportunity.

Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs)

Children and young people living in designated SIP's areas have as much right to access golf as a person from any other area of Scotland. The barriers to children/young people accessing golf must be investigated and routes into golf found so that the barriers are broken and the desire and potential of the children/young people is realised. All aspects of the programmes that will be delivered in a club/community programme will be available in SIPs areas.

Girls in golf

With only 2,700 girls currently members of golf clubs in Scotland there is a definite need to increase the levels of girls participating. Sweden are one of the best exponents of targeting girls to play golf whether it be measured by participation rates or the number of tour professionals they have. Scotland produce good female players despite having such a low number of girl golfers. If we increase this number and introduce girls to a quality skills programme we can increase the number of club members and the number of top young girl golfers over time. The way in which such skills programmes will be delivered will be distinct for girls compared to boys.

Disability

Scotland has credibility in the world of disabled sport for young people at both the participation level and the high performance (paralympian) level. Offering opportunities for young people with a disability to try golf and come into a structure that allows them to play in competitions that suit their needs must be the focus of this area of work. Again the same programmes that would be offered to other groups will be made to suit as appropriate.

Facilities

There is limited value in investing in changing attitudes to be more positive towards junior golfers and developing national programmes to deliver this to a wider audience, if juniors are then forced to play on inappropriate facilities e.g. a complete beginner playing on a long 9/18 hole golf course or at worse, do not have access to golf facilities.

There is little point in raising expectations of gaining access to the game for a wider group of juniors within schools and/or driving ranges, if there is not the capacity (physical or attitudinal in the making) for juniors to achieve sustained access to the game.

Key Areas:

Research the capacity of the existing golf facilities to grow the game

50% of Scottish golf clubs have no waiting list and these clubs are largely outside of the main urban population bases, particularly Edinburgh and Glasgow. However, the true capacity of existing facilities to accommodate more players and juniors in particular is not fully understood - whether the constraints are physical capacity or attitudes within a club, precluding any further juniors gaining access to the course in question. This needs to be understood in greater depth, especially on a regional basis, so that a Scottish golf facilities strategy can be developed and used to determine the best use of limited public (lottery, local authority), R & A and potentially private investment in capital development funding in the future.

Development of a clubgolf facility programme

There is a requirement to present a series of common-sense design models for the use of existing or surplus land in and around golf courses, specifically for use with junior golfers. These models need to be developed for the Scottish context and made readily available to any club, driving range, local authority or golf course developer to assist them in providing appropriate facilities for juniors. Again any public or R & A funding for capital development can encourage golf clubs/developers to incorporate such models into their facilities as a condition of funding. Each facility developed under the guidance of the strategy will become a clubgolf (see marketing and branding) facility and can use the title of clubgolf, which will become synonymous with quality and junior/youth friendly golf facilities.

The following list outlines a number of issues that require to be progressed by a facilities group to achieve the above ambitions and ultimately inform a National Junior Golf Facilities Strategy

- Design criteria for new and adapted facilities
- Prototype designs for new and adapted facilities.
- Database information on current facilities.
- Junior facilities planning model by geographic area [a mapping exercise on the type of facilities we predict will be required in each area against what currently exists].
- Information on technical aspects of facility design.
- Information on equipment required at facilities.
- Information on operational costs of developing and running facilities.
- Information on accessing funding for design and construction of facilities.



a sport you can play for life



Marketing and branding

An important part of developing any golf programme will be the marketing and branding of products thereby increasing the awareness of the whole development structure and its opportunities. This must be undertaken through a clear plan, and information about what the end user requires, likes and thinks about the game of golf will be essential. It will become clear from this information that the services and programmes on offer will require marketing, research, and branding to make golf 'cool' to be involved with.

Another important issue is to ensure that the delivery programmes appear accessible and therefore they will be presented in an open, appealing manner to the youngsters. This will require careful attention to detail in the design and management of the programme branding.

Qualitative research has been undertaken and a clubgolf brand has been designed and agreed by the youth of Scotland.

Given the diversity of the programmes, consistency in the way the programmes are presented is important. This will allow any of the youngsters to gain trust in the programmes - no matter which strand of the programmes they are dealing with. One of the easiest ways of dealing with this issue is to have an umbrella brand - 'clubgolf' - which can be attached as appropriate, e.g. clubgolf Centre, clubgolf Coach, clubgolf Community etc. This allows each programme element to be identified but still maintains the association with the umbrella programme branding.

One other factor to be taken into account is that the brand should mirror the attributes of the programme, i.e. there is no point in creating a 'cool' brand if the programme itself does not live up to this image. This will lead to disappointment in the gap between the audiences' perception of what they are about to take part in and what they subsequently experience.

*to deliver the Scottish Executive's commitment
for golf to the children of Scotland by 2009*

Partnerships

The national strategy is designed so that it can be adopted and implemented at a local level Scotland wide. This will be achieved by entering into partnerships with all who have a role to play in delivering the strategy and supporting the development of a local plan that links directly with the national programme. (This will be applicable to national agencies, local authorities, Golf Clubs, volunteers, PGA Pros, businesses etc.) This will allow for a sense of ownership of the strategy amongst the partners and a consistent approach to delivery at all levels.

Partner delivery regional strategy

The strategy delivery mechanism will match the Scottish Area Institute of Sport six area model as this is already a well established and easily managed structure (i.e. 6 regions) for the further development of the sport. The model is a good one to utilise as it already has partnerships in place and therefore this gives golf a good opportunity to quickly build its partnerships around an already established structure. There will be a Regional Manager responsible for the building of partnerships that will deliver the programme in each region.

Local authority strategy

All 32 local authorities in Scotland will be engaged, and encouraged to link the golf programme to their education, recreation and development, SIP's, facilities, and health outcomes. Support will be available for organisations that wish to employ local golf development officers.

Golf club plans

Golf clubs will also be helped to develop their own junior plans and programmes, in line with the national strategy. Adoption of clubgolf programmes means that the club can plan their future with confidence that their junior playing standards and membership have been taken fully into account.

Infrastructure/Professional officer structure

In order that the programmes outlined can be delivered, assessed, developed and linked into the National Junior Golf Strategy for Scotland, an officer network must be put in place. This network will comprise of six regions - East, West, Tayside/Fife, Highland, Grampian, and Central. Key responsibilities of the Regional Managers will be:

- To develop strategic partnerships, golf clubs, local authorities, Area/District associations and area institutes within their respective regions
- To put in place a plan for their region
- To work with our partners to develop an infrastructure for junior golf at a local level
- To lead a specific element of the programme nationally
- To facilitate and co-ordinate the delivery of these plans

These officers will be employed by the members of the clubgolf partnership and managed through the clubgolf Executive.

Other functions to be engaged on a contract basis will be:

- Marketing
- Research
- Public Relations

Funding

The action plans will be delivered through partnership funding provided by the Scottish Golf Union, Scottish Ladies Golf Association, the Professional Golfers Association, Local Authorities and the commercial sector through sponsorship.

The Scottish Executive has provided new funding to enable the development of programmes and the setting up of a regional development network. This funding reached £500,000 per annum in 2003 and has been committed through to 2009. It is anticipated that the Scottish Executive's contribution will provide in the region of 50% of the funding necessary to fully implement the programme.

Conclusion

In order for these programmes to be set up, partnerships will be sought with a variety of different agencies such as local authorities, commercial sponsors and the golfing fraternity to develop the programmes. The aim is to deliver the Scottish Executive's and golf's commitment for golf to the children of Scotland by 2009. In doing so, the sport of golf, and this programme in general, will also deliver on the other key social and political objectives such as health, activity and social inclusion.

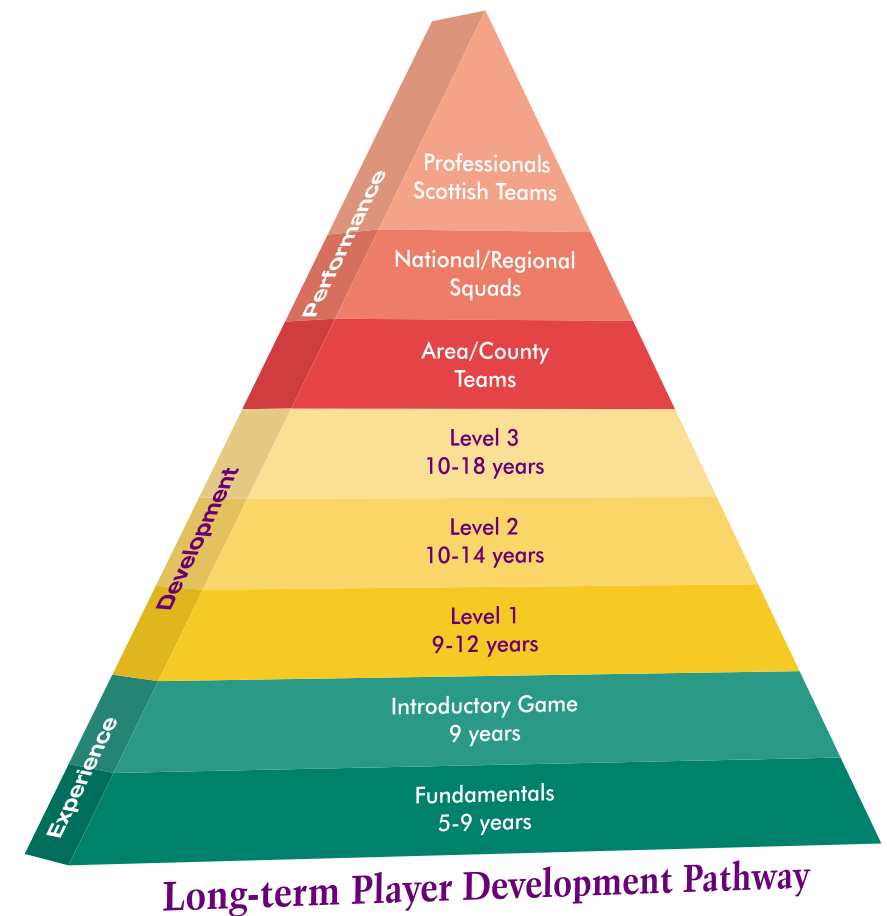
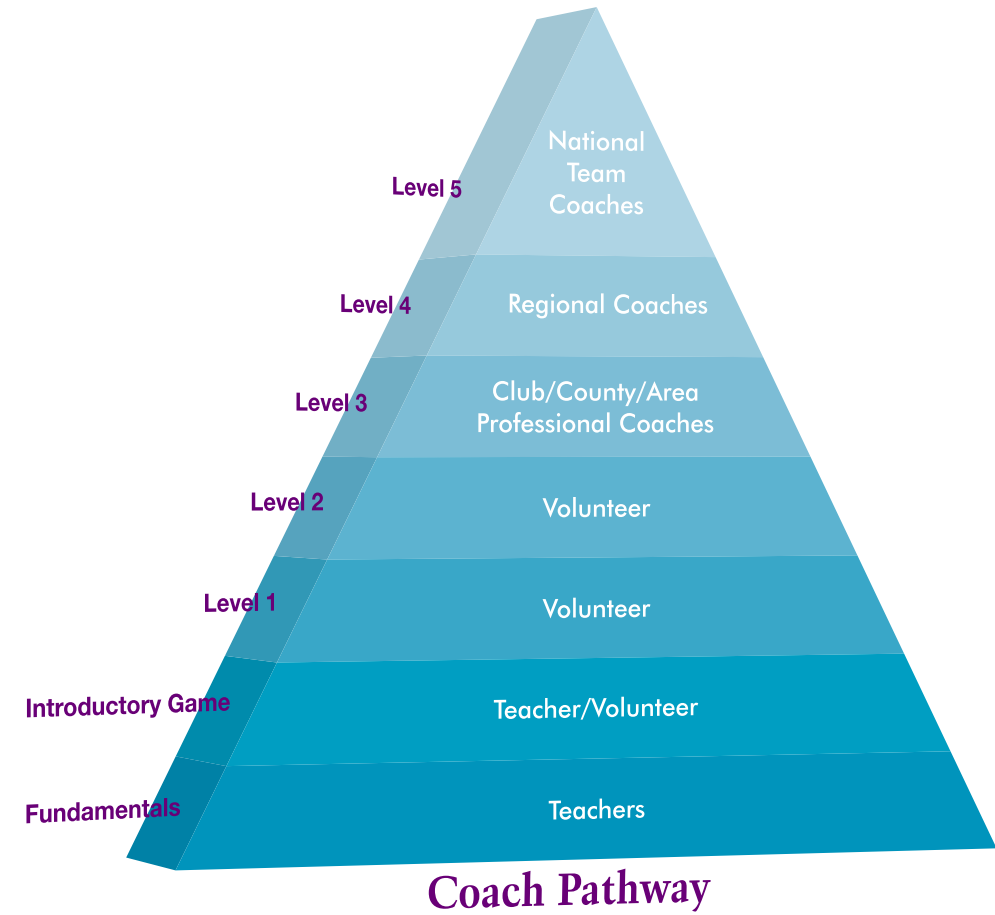
Appendix 1:

The current context for golf in Scotland is summarised as follows:

- Over 250,000 members in 584 golf clubs
- Over 28,000 juniors, of which 2,700 are junior girls
- Between 10% and 12% of the population over the age of 16 regularly play golf ("regularly" defined as once per month)
- Approx 100 new golf courses built in Scotland over the past decade
- Membership has only grown slightly over this period
- The population of Scotland in general is ageing
- There will be 15% less 15 year olds in Scotland in the next ten years
- 44% of Scottish golf clubs have a professional at their club and in total there are a maximum of 470 teaching professionals in Scotland
- The health and physical activity rates of Scottish children have declined over the last 10 years (reference the National Physical Activity Task Force Report 2002)

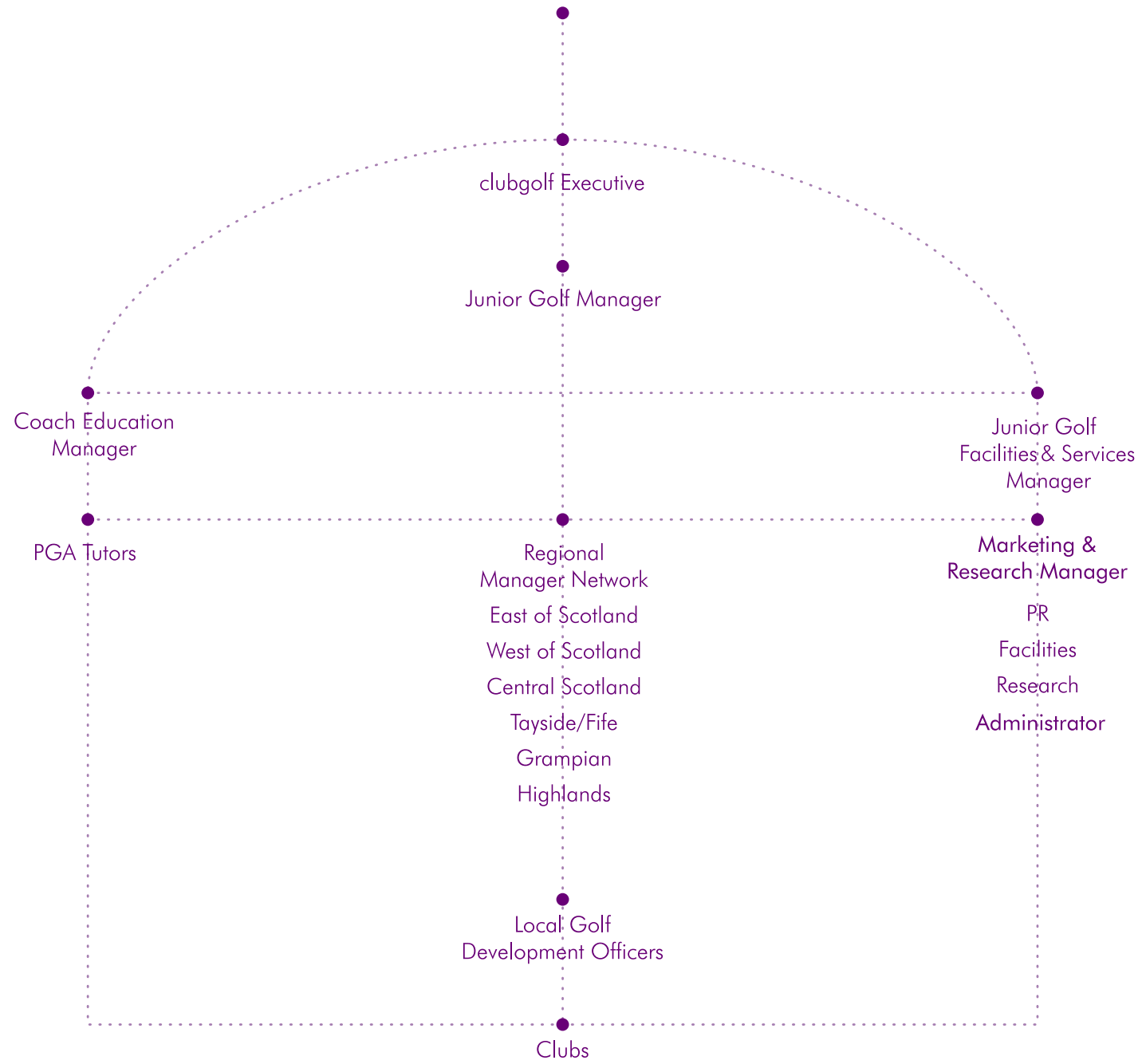
- Scotland has a significant (540) number of courses per head of population, with truly national coverage
- In comparison to other countries, the 50 or so driving ranges and training facilities in Scotland are minimal
- 50% of Scottish golf clubs have no membership waiting list 37% of those with a waiting list report their list is in decline
- Scottish golf clubs currently spend an average of £720 per annum on coaching (range £75 to £3,000)

(Note: Juniors are defined as those boys and girls aged 18 and under)





Scottish Junior Golf Strategy



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