



12/07/10 New Environment Booklet for the Open Championship

Spectators at this year's Open Championship are being encouraged to enjoy the nature as well as the golf, with a new guide to habitat management on and around the Old Course at St Andrews.

Written on behalf of The R&A by the Scottish Golf Environment Group (SGEG), a subsidiary of the Scottish Golf Union (SGU), the guide has been produced to raise awareness of the ongoing environmental management work to protect and improve the important wildlife and habitats found on and around the St Andrews Links.

With support from the SGU, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Lexus and input from St Andrews Links Trust and the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust (FCCT), this booklet follows on from previous guides that covered the general wildlife value in 2000 and the St Andrews Links Trust's environmental management plan in 2005.

Produced during this the UN's *International Year of Biodiversity*, the 2010 guide describes the gorse, heather and grassland management of the Links along with the coastal erosion and dune stabilisation works that have been carried out in recent years. It also introduces the environmental impacts addressed during the planning and construction of the new Castle Course.

Steve Isaac, Director of Golf Course Management for The R&A said:

"The Scottish Golf Environment Group has done an excellent job in putting the publication together and we are most grateful to the Scottish Golf Union, Scottish Natural Heritage and Lexus for their financial contributions towards the booklet. Compiling the booklet could not have been achieved without the full cooperation of the Links Trust or the help of the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust. The R&A believes that this publication demonstrates the excellent working relationship between golf and environmental organisations and highlights the benefits that golf courses can bring to us all through sustainable management."

Katherine Leys of Scottish Natural Heritage said: "It is particularly welcome in this the International Year of Biodiversity to see golfing and environmental bodies working closely together on conservation practices. Scotland is really leading the way in the world of golf and the environment,

The traditional management of Scottish links courses can create a challenging golfing environment but it can also conserve some of the rarest and most fragile wildlife. This new publication shows that with commitment from everyone involved golf courses can be good for wildlife.”

Carolyn Hedley, Project Manager of the Scottish Golf Environment Group said: “We are delighted to have been involved in the writing of this booklet. We are pleased to help raise awareness amongst the Open Championship visitors of the sustainable environmental management of the Old Course and the beautiful surrounding habitats and species. This is an example of the positive environmental work being carried out across many Scottish Golf courses”.

10,000 copies of the booklet will be available to spectators during the Championship. To download a copy of “The Old Course: A guide to the environmental management of the links for wildlife conservation” go to <http://www.sgeg.org.uk/publications.html> or go to www.randa.org website and www.opengolf.com/en/TheCourse.aspx?selectedItem=%7bD6A6D861-DF52-4C98-9E3D-B19ECFF32984%7d for more information.

For more information on the free advisory service available for clubs from the Scottish Golf Environment Group including advice on nature, water, waste, energy and the Scottish Golf Environment Certificates go to www.sgeg.org.uk.

