



This is an additional paper to the main consultation paper and contains further information for those wishing to explore some areas in more detail.

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A. Equality

Equality in this context refers to ensuring that all members have fair and equal access to opportunities, roles, and representation within the Club. It does not require identical outcomes or equal numbers in every role, but it does require that:

- selection processes are transparent and based on objective criteria
- leadership roles are genuinely open to all eligible members
- structures do not create actual or perceived barriers to participation
- all members feel that their interests are represented within the Club's governance

Equality also includes the concept of **inclusion**, meaning that members should feel welcome, valued, and able to participate fully in the life of the Club regardless of gender.

Governance arrangements can sometimes create **perceptions** of imbalance even where no formal restriction exists – the Board wishes to ensure that perception matches reality.

B. Current Captaincy Structure

(a) The current position

The Club, since its inception, has had a Captain who has always been a man, and a Ladies' Captain. These positions are established by the Articles of Association of the Club which, together with the Bye-Laws, govern the operations of the Club.¹ This is a model which has been used by many clubs over the last 100+ years, and is a model that many clubs continue to use.

The current Captaincy structure is set out in the Articles of Association of the Club. Article 20.1 states: "The Captain's Committee shall consist of the following members:

¹ Copies of the Articles and the Bye-Laws are available on the Club's website and in the Clubhouse. Any change to the Articles of Association requires a vote by members; changes can be made to the Bye-Laws by the Board or the Captain's Committee at any time by means of a notice on the Club Notice Board and the Club's website.



- a Captain (chair)
- a Vice-Captain;
- a Ladies' Captain,
- a Ladies Vice-Captain
- the immediate past-Captain

all of whom shall be 7-day Voting Members of at least two years' standing.....".

The Articles of Association do not state that the Captain is a man, nor do they state that the Ladies' Captain is a woman! Masculine pronouns are used in reference to the Captain as they are in regard to other roles. But, as Article 1 states "the masculine includes the feminine.....". The use of masculine pronouns in this way was standard practice in drafting legal documents until recently.

The duties of the Captain's Committee are set out in Article 24; Article 24.1 states that the Captain's Committee is "responsible for all golf and social events..." meaning it is responsible for the golf and social events of all members, regardless of gender. As Chair the Captain is ultimately responsible for golf and social activities for all members of the Club, regardless of gender.

Whilst there is a Ladies' Committee, this is established under the Bye-Laws to "assist with the day to day running of the Ladies' Section of the Club" and "...shall assist and advise with regard to certain practical matters" which relate to the ladies specifically. (Bye-Law 12.1 and 12.6). This is not a sub-committee of the Captain's Committee.

(b) What are the Current Roles of the Captain and Ladies' Captain?

There is currently no role description for the Captain, although the Nominations Committee is currently working on one. In the Articles of Association, the Captain is described as the Chair of the Captain's Committee whose responsibilities are referred to above and as an alternate chair of a General Meeting. The only other specific reference to the role of the Captain is in the Bye-Laws in relation to disciplinary procedures.

Similarly, there is no role description for the Ladies Captain, although the Nominations Committee is currently working on one. There is no mention of a Ladies' Captain in the Articles, and the Bye-Laws state that the Ladies' Captain is a member of the Ladies' Committee and acts as the Chairman of it. The Bye-Laws also set out the Ladies' Committee responsibilities as described above.

(c) What do England Golf say?

England Golf state in "A governance Guide for Golf Clubs"² that:

"There should either be

(1) one Club Captain representing men and women who will be appointed from male and female members;

or (2) a Men's Captain and Ladies' Captain with equal status.

It is not good practice to have a Male Club Captain and a Ladies' Captain with a hierarchical imbalance."

Whilst this is what England Golf state, they have no direct jurisdiction over the governance arrangements of an individual club – this is up to the members of each Club. Furthermore, England Golf do not state that they prefer either model – the choice of model is a matter for the membership.

Our current situation is in line with (1) as the Captain could be a man or a woman, although until the Nomination Committee was introduced recently, how members were nominated for election as Captain might have been considered somewhat unclear.

² [Club-Governance-Guide-1.pdf](#)



This year, for the first time, the Club has a female Vice-Captain demonstrating that the position of Captain is open to both male and female members.

(d) Why Might Women feel Disadvantaged Under the Current Structure?

Although the Articles do not specify that the Captain must be a man, the Club has historically appointed only male Captains. This can create a perception that the role is, in effect, a male position. The existence of a Ladies' Captain may also be interpreted by some that women's leadership is confined to the Ladies' Section rather than extending to the whole Club.

Some women may also feel that the Captain's role carries greater visibility and symbolic weight with the Ladies' Captain viewed as having a narrower remit or lower profile, even though both the Captain and Ladies' Captain sit on the Captain's Committee and contribute to decisions affecting all members.

It is important to note that these concerns relate to perception rather than to any formal restriction. The current Vice-Captain is a woman, and women currently hold 50% of the positions on the Captain's Committee and 29% of the positions on the Board. The Nominations Committee (40% women of whom one is the Chair) has strengthened transparency and access to leadership roles.

Some may feel that the representation of the interests of the lady members at the Club should not be solely relied on to be undertaken by the Ladies' Captain and Ladies' Vice-Captain but should include women taking on other leadership roles on the Captain's Committee and the Board.

(e) Why Might Men feel Disadvantaged Under the Current Structure?

Although the Club has a Ladies' Captain with a clearly defined remit for the Ladies' Section, there is no equivalent role titled "Men's Captain." The Captain as chair of the Captain's Committee is responsible for the golfing and social activities for all members, but because the role has historically been held by men, some male members may feel uncertainty about who is responsible for representing men's golf.

The existence of a Ladies' Captain may also create the impression that women have a dedicated advocate for their activities, while men do not have an equivalent figure for their activities. This may lead some men to feel that their activities lack the same level of visibility or structured support.

However, it is important to note that men continue to hold the majority of positions across the Club, including on the Board, the Nominations Committee and the Captain's Committee, and that the Captain's role is explicitly responsible for all members regardless of gender.

The review provides an opportunity to consider whether the current structure unintentionally contributes to perceptions that men's golf lacks a dedicated representative, and whether alternative models might address these concerns while maintaining fairness and balance for all members.

(f) Advantages and Disadvantages of the Current Structure

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Current Structure

Advantages	Disadvantages
Single person in charge of the Captain's Committee and responsible for golf and social for all members	Responsibility falls on a single individual although they have a full committee including the Ladies' Captain and a Vice-Captain available to support them



Advantages	Disadvantages
Needs little or no changes to implement	In the past the Club has only appointed men to this position, creating the perception that the role is not open to women. The Club now has a Vice-Captain who is a woman, and a Nominations Committee to increase the transparency and availability of roles to all.
Adheres to England Golf guidance	
Single point of contact at the Captain's Committee for the Board, members and the office	Lack of clarity on what, if anything, needs to change when a woman becomes Captain.
Reflects the heritage of the Club	
Presence of Ladies' Captain and Ladies' Vice Captain on the Captain's Committee enables the needs and wants of the Ladies' section to be voiced and considered.	Potential that there is a lack of focus on men's golf through no person being specifically nominated to such a role.
Ladies' can influence the running of the Club through standing for positions on the Captain's Committee and the Board. (The Nominations Committee has the objective of achieving a 30% female representation on the Board and Captains Committee)	The existence of a Ladies' Captain could lead to a divide between the men's and ladies' sections.

C. Alternative Structures

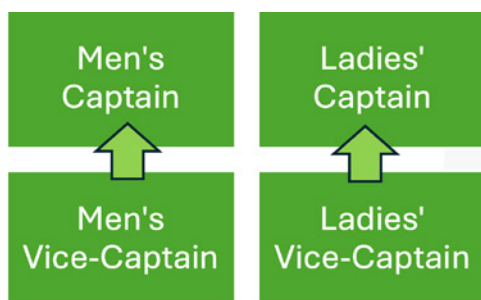
Note that whilst both options being considered were voted on at the AGM, there are variations to the structures proposed which may be more acceptable to the membership.

(a) A Men's Captain and Ladies' Captain with Equal Status

This is one of the alternative structures supported by England Golf and has been adopted by some clubs and retained as their preferred model, while some other clubs have considered and rejected it in favour of their current model.

The main features are as follows:

- Two captains of equal status
- Vice-Captains are anticipated to become respective Captain in the following year subject to election at the AGM
- Both Captains share the responsibilities of the current Captain, but no one Captain is overall responsible for everything



Under this structure there are now two individuals responsible for leading the golf and social activities of the Club. This could be seen as sharing the burden of responsibility, and



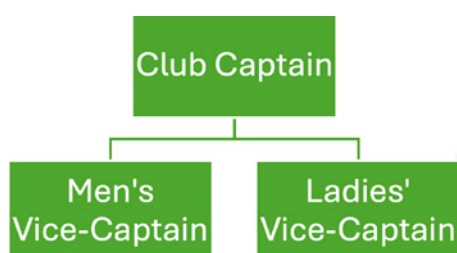
the two captains could have complementary skills making the division of the role easier. However it could lead to confusion to the members, Board and office who must decide which of the two leaders to approach. There could also be a loss of continuity in advancing the Captain's Committee agenda if the role of chair of the committee is alternated.

This structure relies heavily on a strong working relationship between the two captains. Having the Men's and Ladies' Captains working together may encourage a more integrated club, or it could be seen to create a distinction and divide between the men's and ladies' sections.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Two Captains of Equal Standing Structure

Advantages	Disadvantages
Responsibility is shared by two individuals who may have complementary skills	Lack of clarity over how the role is shared by two people, and who is responsible for what including who represents the Club at external events etc.
Adheres to England Golf guidance	Potential lack of continuity if chairing of committee meetings and attendance at Board meetings is alternated.
	One captain may be more dominant than the other resulting in an imbalance of influence, especially if each is over supporting their own section
May increase the unity of men's and women's sections	May create the feeling of separate sections within the club rather than increasing unity within the Club
Potential for increased focus on men's golf	Potential confusion/lack of clarity over point of contact for the office, Board and members
	Requires a vote of 75% of members who vote to pass a resolution to change the Articles of Association with associated legal costs of drafting revised articles
Some may see equal status as important regardless of membership proportions	Some may feel that given that women constitute less than 20% of the membership, having 50% of the overall responsibility is not appropriate

(b) A Single Club Captain with a Men's Vice-Captain and a Ladies' Vice-Captain



- A Club Captain who is responsible for all members, supported by a Men's Vice-Captain and a Ladies' Vice Captain who are responsible for their own sections
- The Club Captain could be one of the previous year's Vice-Captains or could be separately elected from eligible members. The Nominations Committee would have a role to play in this regard.
- Vice-Captains would be elected from eligible members
- Club Captain chairs the Captain's Committee and attends Board meetings.

Under this structure the Club Captain has overall responsibility for the Captain's Committee, with separate Ladies' and Men's Vice-Captains (or they could be termed



Captains?) responsible for women's and men's golf respectively. This means that there is equal focus on men's and ladies' golf, and a single point of contact where issues relate to the whole club.

There are several models for who becomes Club Captain for example:

- The previous years Vice-Captains alternate in becoming Club Captain
- The Nominations Committee (NC) recommends a candidate as per its terms of reference to the Captain's Committee for it to endorse and propose for election.

Note: There is no intention to remove the right of members under article 14.5 to propose and second a candidate for election as Captain or any other elected position.

(Some of these issues may lessen if the Vice-Captains are Captains of the relevant sections).

The Board is authorised to waive the membership fees of the Captain and Ladies' Captain, and has historically chosen to do so. Under this model there is the potential for 3 people to get such a benefit, with potentially 1 person benefiting for 2 years. If only the Club Captain receives this benefit, then Club will save money by only having to cover the fees of 1 person, but the Ladies' Vice Captain would lose out on a benefit that they would have got under the current structure.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Club Captain plus Two Vice-Captains Structure

Advantages	Disadvantages
Single person in charge of the Captain's Committee and responsible for golf and social for all members. Vice-Captains roles are shared by two individuals who may have complementary skills	Lack of clarity over how the 3 roles are shared and who is responsible for what
Single point of contact at the Captain's Committee for the office, Board and members	Further debate required on how to appoint the Club Captain from the Vice-Captains/ other members
Adheres to England Golf guidance	Further consideration required on how the duties of the current Vice-Captains (e.g. setting diary, arranging away days etc) would be undertaken under this structure
Potential for increased focus on men's golf	Requires a vote of 75% of members who vote to pass a resolution to change the Articles of Association with associated legal costs of drafting articles
Continuity of chairing Captains Committee and attendance at the Board meeting	Potential for 3 members to get free membership during a year, or for the Ladies' Vice Captain not to get a free membership year, and the potential for some to get 2 free years of membership.



D. Comparison of Structures

This table sets out an alternative comparison of the three models by feature rather than pros and cons.

Table 5: Comparison of Features of the Three Captaincy Models

Feature	Current Model	Alternative 1: Two Captains of Equal Standing	Alternative 2: Club Captain and two Vice-Captains
Ease of Implementation	Simple – no governance changes required to Articles or Bye-Laws	Requires changes to Articles and Bye-Laws	Requires changes to Articles and Bye-Laws
Clarity of Selection Process	Historic process not clear. Now clearer due to Nominations Committee ensuring Captain's role is open to all members	Clear – Nominations Committee responsible for finding appropriate candidates	Clear – Nominations Committee responsible for finding appropriate candidates once certainty over how Club Captain is selected
Ability of a Women to become Club Captain	Position is open to men and women. Nomination Committee will consider all eligible members when identifying candidates to recommend to the board.	No single Club Captain	Pathway is clear once decision as to who becomes Club Captain is determined (e.g. promotion of a VC or separate election)
Adherence with England Golf Guidance	Adheres as the Captain's position is open to men and women (EG option 1)	Adheres (EG option 2)	Adheres as the Captain's position is open to men and women (EG option 1)
Promotion of Equality and Inclusion	Nominations Committee will consider all eligible members who express an interest in standing for the position of Captain	Male and female Captains of equal standing promotes Equality and Inclusion, although some may question why a minority section has such a prominent Captain	Ability of the Club Captain to be male or female, and vice captains of both genders promotes Equality and Inclusion
Demands of the Club Captain	Role is more demanding in this structure as undertaken by one person, although some elements delegated to the Ladies' Captain/ rest of the Captain's Committee.	Responsibilities of the current Club Captain can be shared between the two captains, making the role less demanding although potential for confusion for who is responsible for what, and who people should approach. The 2 captains may have complementary skills bringing different strengths to the roles	Responsibilities shared between 3 people, although potential for confusion for who is responsible for what, and who people should approach The Club Captain and 2 vice captains may have complementary skills bringing different strengths to the roles



Feature	Current Model	Alternative 1: Two Captains of Equal Standing	Alternative 2: Club Captain and two Vice-Captains
Clarity that responsibility of Club Captain is to all members of the golf club	Not explicit but could be made clearer in the Articles and / or the Captain's role description	No single Club Captain, but separate Captains have responsibilities for men and women's golf. No-one has overall responsibility for golf for all members	Clear that the Club Captain is responsible for golf of all members, whilst the Vice Captains can be responsible for men's and women's golf respectively
Governance Processes	Captain provides continuity and communication between the Board and the Captain's Committee	Board meetings would be attended by each Captain in turn, so less continuity between Board meetings. Alternatively, both attend Board meetings increasing the numbers in attendance at such meetings.	Club Captain provides continuity and communication between the Board and the Captain's Committee
Enhancement of Club Unity	A single Captain responsible for golf for all members, and a CC committed to the same, may enhance the club unity especially if there is a 30% representation of women on the CC and Board which is the target of the NC	Separate men's and women's captain may enhance club unity, or may create or increase the divide between the two sections	Separate men's and women's vice captains may enhance club unity, or may create a divide between the two sections, but the Club Captain has overall responsibility for promoting unity rather than division
Women can influence the running of the Club	Women can stand for Ordinary Membership of the Captains Committee or any position on the Board as well as standing as Ladies' Captain or the Captain of the Club.	Whilst women can stand for the positions on the CC and Board, having a Ladies' Captain may cause women to be less likely to stand for other positions if they feel the Ladies' Captain is sufficient to influence matters	Whilst women can stand for the positions on the CC and Board, having a Ladies' Captain may cause women to be less likely to stand for other positions if they feel the Ladies' Captain is sufficient to influence matters

