

CASE STUDY HILLSIDE GOLF CLUB

Hillside is a thriving golf club, boasting a full membership together with a waiting list and is also much in demand from visiting players. In the words of Simon Newland, Club Secretary, its members are “*ordinary, working golfers*”.

Whilst some clubs offer Direct Debit payment facilities as part of their promotional package to attract new members, in the case of Hillside Golf Club the objective was primarily to provide a valuable additional benefit to existing members. The club wished to give them the option to spread the cost of membership at a time when the current economic climate can often place a strain on the finances.

When the need for a Direct Debit payment option to cover fees was first determined, the club initially considered running an in-house scheme. However, it quickly ascertained that the associated administrative burden would deflect from its core focus of delivering a quality sports and leisure service to its members, so Simon Newland looked to a specialist finance provider.

He says the club was attracted to Premium Credit because of its ability to offer a flexible finance scheme - Fairway Credit - to members. The company’s experience and leadership in this market, its long-standing support to the Golf Club Managers Association (GCMA) and the wider golf market, together with its financial strength, were also key factors.

For Simon, the decision paid off from the very beginning. *“Hillside Golf Club planned 6 months in advance to set up the scheme, so we were not under any time pressures. The support and guidance provided by Premium Credit throughout was excellent.”*

As a result of this planning, Hillside was able to advertise the Fairway Credit scheme to its members early on in the year, allowing them plenty of time to consider the benefits of paying their annual fees by monthly Direct Debit. As a result, the first year saw an uptake of 100 members with around £115,000 being financed and this increased to £129,000 in the second year.

The flexibility of the Fairway Credit scheme, which enables members to include extras such as joining fees and locker fees, has meant that members have even used the facility to pay for the club’s centenary events. What’s more, many members have commented how much they appreciate the opportunity to receive a little help in budgeting for their subscriptions each year.

The club has also found that Premium Credit takes good care of all ongoing administration. According to Simon, *“The online renewal process this year was straight-forward and the commission payment was very well received!”*



Indeed, when asked what he would say to other clubs who are considering offering a Direct Debit payment facility to members, Simon has no hesitation in recommending Premium Credit. *“I would recommend any club to use Premium Credit as they have all the systems in place. Their Fairway Credit scheme is easy to use and they provide all the support and guidance whenever it’s needed.”*