

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

In relation to the staging of

**THE OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP**

in the

**NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND**

## **Memorandum of Understanding**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is between R&A Championships Limited ('R&A'), the Local Authorities in Fylde, Sefton, Wirral and Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Constabulary, Merseyside Police and Merseytravel plus the train operating companies Northern Rail and Merseyrail, (all collectively the 'parties') in relation to the staging of The Open Championship (The 'Open' or the 'event') in the North West of England.

## **Purpose of the MOU**

The purpose of this MOU is to establish consistent arrangements for engagement between the parties, towards the preparation and continued future delivery of The Open Championship in the North West, in a manner befitting this world-class sporting event.

## **Background**

The Open is an iconic championship in world golf, and with three of the current nine Open venues located in the North West, the event is held in the region on average three times in ten years. It is intended that representatives of the parties will commit to work together to ensure that the North West continues to successfully host The Open Championship on a regular basis in the future, and maximise the opportunities that this major event brings to all parties.

## **Objectives**

The parties recognise the importance of The Open as a world-class event attracting significant profile to the North West, as well as a contributor to the economy at a local and regional level. Collectively, The Open, Royal Birkdale, Royal Liverpool at Hoylake, Royal Lytham & St Annes and the destination marketing property 'England's Golf Coast' are key assets for golf tourism in the United Kingdom. The parties agree to work together to provide assistance and endeavor to allocate reasonable resources towards the preparation and delivery of the event when held in the North West based on the following principles:

1. That the North West is able to directly associate itself with The Open Championship, to promote the region and the individual local host areas in conjunction with the event.
2. That each Open venue and the surrounding area is well maintained and upgraded where reasonable and necessary to ensure that the local infrastructure is able to support the hosting of The Open.
3. Where works are required to upgrade such infrastructure, that joint planning takes place well in advance of the staging of The Open, and ideally in advance of the venue announcement.
4. That all parties will communicate and share working experiences and best practice across the North West in the implementation of this MOU, with the aim of achieving a consistent and improving delivery of the event each time it is held in the region.

5. The parties will maintain a dialogue with the United Kingdom Government to ensure that support from central government and its agencies is optimised for each occasion The Open is staged in the North West.
6. The parties endeavour to attain a consistent policy across all venues in the North West in relation to the policing and security requirements and the attributable costs for The Open.

For the avoidance of doubt, the engagement to be made by each Local Authority is only applicable in relation to The Open being held at a venue within the administrative area of that Local Authority.

### **Implementation**

To implement the objectives listed above, the following actions have been agreed to be taken forward:

1. A detailed audit of each venue and surrounding infrastructure will be jointly undertaken by The R&A in conjunction with the respective venue and Local Authority, with the support of Lancashire County Council if required. It is incumbent upon each respective Party to notify The R&A of any significant developments which may affect the organisation and staging of The Open.
2. The purpose of this audit will be to assess the ability of each venue and the local infrastructure to continue to host the Open Championship at the level commensurate with this world-class sporting event.
3. The parties will use their reasonable endeavours to commence this detailed audit work with The R&A approximately 5 years in advance of the next anticipated hosting of The Open in each respective area, to allow a reasonable timescale to agree a deliverable timetable of necessary works. The audit will also detail an agreed event template/footprint for the staging of The Open.
4. Following the audit process, the appropriate parties in respect of each venue will meet to discuss the findings of the report. From this point a schedule of works will be agreed by those parties to take forward the necessary reparations, improvements and other such works required to the venue and local infrastructure to be able to host the event, and which may additionally benefit the hosting of future R&A managed golf events, as well as any other golf events which may take place at any other time. The outcome of the audit process may also be used to inform a dialogue with the United Kingdom Government and relevant agencies seeking their support.
5. In addition, each Local Authority is asked to consider where council owned or managed facilities, as well as other council assets or resources might be provided to The R&A free of charge to support the staging of The Open (e.g. fields for park and ride services, transport planning, environmental health, waste management, trading standards, traffic management, access exemption orders, etc.). Developments that may impact on the established Open

Championship footprint will be considered fully at the earliest opportunity.

6. As is current best practice, a multi-agency working group will be established approximately 12 months in advance of each event taking place in the North West, chaired by the respective host authority and comprising representatives of the respective signatories and any other relevant bodies, to take forward the local planning and delivery of the event.
7. The R&A will continue to provide the parties free of charge with the ability to actively promote the North West and the respective local area with the event on an ongoing basis, specifically in the year of hosting The Open and the year immediately preceding hosting. This will include, but is not limited to, the provision of access to the event as well as coordinated exhibition facilities and marketing opportunities at the event itself.

In respect of the event the R&A will work with the parties to ensure that appropriate and consistent opportunities are made available to promote the North West both locally and nationally as a golf, business tourism and events destination.

**Signatories- Being the Chief Executive or equivalent officer**

July 2014