

# The Ian Woosnam Golf Academy – Press Release

The Save Allestree Golf Course campaign are pleased to announce that **The Ian Woosnam Golf Academy** have publicly declared an interest in operating Allestree Golf Course.

The Ian Woosnam Golf Academy are committed to providing **free golf to 50,000+ Under 18's in the City of Derby**, alongside very attractive season ticket/pay & play rates.

Their proposal will be at zero cost to Derby City Council, saving the **£32,000 per year** that is currently being spent from public funds to maintain the abandoned course as parkland.

Ian Woosnam said, "I am really excited at the prospect of reviving this wonderful golf course, created by one of the greatest designers of all time, to provide affordable quality golf for the residents of Derby and beyond"



During the 1980s and 1990s, Ian 'Woosie' Woosnam was a name never far away from the top of the leader board.

A winner on both the European and PGA Tours, the highlight of his career was undoubtedly his Masters triumph in 1991. He is a former World Number 1 and was welcomed into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 2017.

As a player, he appeared in eight consecutive Ryder Cup teams, finishing with a winning record. In 2006, at The K Club in Ireland, he captained the Europeans to a record-equalling 18½ to 9½ victory over the United States.

Tony Minshall, managing director of parent company RM Estates Ltd, and a former European Tour player, said: "Our company policy is to make each of our courses a course for all. Ian actively wants young people to take up the game and try to emulate what he has achieved."

Allestree golf course was designed by Harry S. Colt who is creator of some of the greatest golf courses in the world. It is very valuable asset that has great historical significance to the City of Derby. Adam Lawrence, renowned golf course Architect and editor of Golf Course Architecture magazine, recently described it as "priceless".

Andy Picken, leader of the Save Allestree Golf Course campaign, said "We hope that Derby City Council see the potential of this offer for the people of Derby and consider re-opening the course. Ian Woosnam is a global golfing superstar, who is prepared to make Derby the first city in the Midlands to offer free golf for all Under 18's. Having one of his golf academies in Derby would have a positive impact on tourism with golfers visiting from far and wide to play this wonderful historic course"

Andy added, "We have unearthed the incredible history of this golf course, which its owners did not appreciate. One of its first junior golfers John Fallon, later became a professional golfer winning points in the 1955 Ryder Cup and went on to captain the side in America against Arnold Palmer in 1963.

Having the 2006 Ryder Cup Captain interested in revitalising this wonderful golf course and provide free golf to over 50,000 young people in the city has got to be an offer worthy of consideration by Derby City Council.

Could the next generation of Ryder Cup golfers come from this initiative? We sincerely hope so given all the health and well-being benefits playing golf offers."

## Note to Editors

Allestree Golf Course closed on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 as a process run by Derby City Council was unable to identify a suitable private sector operator.

It has been abandoned by the Council since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 to be absorbed into parkland. The site is already the largest local nature reserve in the county before the course closure, which simply adds a further 100 acres to the site and requires at least £32,000 per year from council taxpayers to maintain it for safe public use.

The course sits within a World Heritage Site Buffer zone so usual building development is highly unlikely.

Over 27,500 signed a pandemic e-petition against the course being closed. This was ignored by Derby City Council. <https://www.change.org/p/derby-city-council-save-allestree-park-golf-course>

Allestree Hall sits within the middle of the site and the golf course was designed and built to add value to its setting. This venue is planned for redevelopment as a wedding venue, which appears to have stalled with major delays against its scheduled plan of works and contracts of sale still not finalised.

Many issues have been discovered with the Council tender process and our campaign group simply wants the process to be revisited given the level of interest that proper advertising of the facility has now attracted.

No part of the original advertising illustrated the links between Harry S Colt and his design of this golf course. This massively limited the number of potential purchasers until it reached a Council declared preferred bidder. This is a valuable facility, but it is being disposed of by DCC as having no value, without proper asset valuations being made.

Stoke Park golf club sold in May 2021 for £57 million pounds.

- Its golf course was designed by Harry S Colt, like Allestree
- Its main building was designed by James Wyatt, like Allestree Hall.
- It was also a municipal facility sold by South Buckinghamshire Council for £2 million in 1958

More details about the campaign Allestree Golf Course and document are available at the website: [www.saveallestreegolfcourse.co.uk](http://www.saveallestreegolfcourse.co.uk)

The website includes documents relating to the bidding process that have been obtained via The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (<https://saveallestreegolfcourse.co.uk/documents/>)

The team can be contacted via their website, email [contact@saveallestreegolfcourse.co.uk](mailto:contact@saveallestreegolfcourse.co.uk) or by phone for further comment.

Andrew Picken – 07980 947298

Paul Tice – 07799 336227