

All-Party Parliamentary Group for Golf Concedes Golf will be in lockdown from Thursday

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Golf has conceded that there is no more that can be done to persuade the Government to alter its position to allow golf to continue during the upcoming lockdown and the Government position will remain.

The Group's Chair, North Warwickshire MP Craig Tracey, made the following statement ahead of legislation being introduced in the House of Commons to implement the month-long second lockdown:

"I am grateful to the industry bodies involved in the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Golf who have been as united in their pragmatic approach to this second lockdown as they were the first. Unfortunately, unlike the lockdown earlier this year, the Government has decided to take a different approach despite golf having demonstrated it can meet the necessary requirements of the upcoming lockdown to continue to be participated in safely.

"By playing in pairs, closing clubhouses and maintaining the socially distancing rule changes already implemented, the sport could continue to be enjoyed by the 3m participants across the country. When you look at the facts, it actual poses less risk than, say, walking with a friend, which is something people will be allowed to do, in closer proximity without the oversight that golf clubs provide.

"Obviously the Government has difficult decisions to make at this time but when you consider significant mental and physical health benefits of golf, and that it is a sport that is enjoyed by such a wide range of people, we are naturally disappointed they have taken the position that it has. There is still time for this to change and we remain available to all Ministers and Officials to explain how golf can be played under the upcoming Bill or to answer any questions they may have.

"I would also like to thank the golfers who signed the petition that will now be debated in Parliament, and those who contacted their Member of Parliament making clear the case for golf. Colleagues from across the political spectrum spoke to me about the volume of correspondence they received; it was a quite a monumental movement of people in a very short space of time, and it provided Members of Parliament, myself included, with necessary groundswell of support to make the case we did.

"As was made clear in our letter to the Prime Minister, the golf industry is convinced that golf can be played safely in these times, and all involved in the All-Party Parliamentary Group reiterate our pledge to work with government to provide it with the evidence it requires to allow golf to return.

"Industry members involved in the APPG met this morning to discuss what the steps the sports should take over the coming weeks to ensure it comes back in an even stronger position once it gets the green light to return. So, we look forward to welcoming golfers, old and new, back to the fairways once the measures are lifted, so they can all enjoy the significant benefits that playing golf brings"