# Council under fire as Caird Park golf closure exposes wider failures in Dundee



# Council's Closure of Caird Park Golf Courses Highlights a Broader Crisis in Dundee

As Dundee City Council grapples with mounting financial pressures, the recent decision to close Caird Park Golf Courses has sparked considerable controversy and public outcry. In a press release, the council described the closure as part of an effort to enhance Dundee’s greenspace and boost biodiversity, claiming it would support a nature network. However, this announcement has been met with scepticism, suggesting that behind the façade of environmental rhetoric lies a lack of coherent planning and genuine commitment to green initiatives.

Many observers have interpreted the council’s statements as little more than empty jargon—a view articulated in a recent opinion piece that condemned the council's approach as "twaddle." Critics argue that if the council truly aimed to create a haven for wildlife, it would be actively engaging in concrete measures such as introducing beehives, wetlands, and diverse plant life. Instead, the closure appears primarily motivated by financial difficulties, as Caird Park reportedly cost taxpayers £9.10 for every round played due to ongoing subsidies.

The proposal to close the golf courses is not an isolated issue; it reflects broader patterns of mismanagement within the local government. Opposition councillors have voiced concerns that the council is resorting to “cultural vandalism” by dismantling community resources without presenting a solid plan for the future. One alternative proposal has emerged from a golf management firm, which seeks to revamp the Caird Park facilities with a new clubhouse, a driving range, and enhanced golfing experiences, potentially funded through developments such as affordable housing. However, whether this initiative will receive the backing it needs from the council remains uncertain.

In recent weeks, the situation has deteriorated further, with reports of vandalism causing significant damage to the premises, highlighting the risk of leaving the area neglected. The lack of immediate plans for Caird Park raises serious questions about the council's long-term vision and competence in managing valuable local amenities.

Moreover, amidst these challenges, the council is simultaneously promoting other initiatives, such as the establishment of a Low Carbon District Energy Hub aimed at reducing carbon emissions. While this project may reflect an interest in sustainability, it questions the consistency of the council's priorities and whether it can effectively manage multiple large-scale projects while also addressing community needs.

As Caird Park faces an uncertain future, it stands as a stark reminder of the growing frustrations residents experience towards municipal governance. The combination of inadequate planning, financial mismanagement, and a lack of transparency suggests that Dundee City Council must reassess its strategies if it's to genuinely serve the interests of its community and restore trust. The closure of a beloved local golf course should prompt an urgent re-evaluation of priorities, ensuring that in the quest for financial sustainability, the voice of the people and the legacy of public spaces are not lost.

In moving forward, it is critical for council leaders to not only clarify their intentions regarding Caird Park but also to demonstrate a true commitment to fostering community involvement and transparency in decision-making processes. Only through genuine dialogue and robust planning can the council hope to restore faith among residents and provide a vision that balances environmental, social, and economic needs.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/opinion/5239936/steve-finan-caird-park-golf-dundee-council-spin/), [[2]](https://www.golfdundee.co.uk/course-update)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/opinion/5239936/steve-finan-caird-park-golf-dundee-council-spin/), [[4]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-49408565)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/dundee/5144136/hopes-plans-save-caird-park-golf-courses/), [[5]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/opinion/5239936/steve-finan-caird-park-golf-dundee-council-spin/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[6]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy795ey5r9jo), [[7]](https://www.smartestenergy.com/en_gb/info-hub/blog/a-spotlight-on-the-caird-park-low-carbon-district-energy-hub/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/opinion/5239936/steve-finan-caird-park-golf-dundee-council-spin/), [[5]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/opinion/5239936/steve-finan-caird-park-golf-dundee-council-spin/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/opinion/5239936/steve-finan-caird-park-golf-dundee-council-spin/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.golfdundee.co.uk/course-update> - Leisure & Culture Dundee announced the closure of Caird Park Golf Courses due to financial challenges, declining usage, and rising costs. The courses will remain open until April 30, 2025, after which the transition process will begin. The council emphasized that every round played at Caird Park was subsidized by taxpayers at a cost of £9.10. They are committed to assisting golfers and employees through this transition, ensuring no compulsory redundancies and offering redeployment opportunities.
3. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/dundee/5144136/hopes-plans-save-caird-park-golf-courses/> - An unnamed golf management firm is developing proposals to save Caird Park Golf Courses from closure. Plans include upgrading the existing 18-hole and nine-hole courses, constructing a driving range, creating an 18-hole mini golf course, and building a new clubhouse. Funding may come from building affordable housing in the area. Leisure and Culture Dundee would continue to operate the facilities, with the management firm acting as an advisor. The company approached Dundee City Council in October 2023 with these ideas.
4. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-49408565> - Dundee City Council voted to close Camperdown Golf Course to save nearly £400,000 in annual subsidies. The authority plans to develop a driving range and nine-hole course at Caird Park instead. Opposition councillor Charlie Malone criticized the decision as 'cultural vandalism,' highlighting the lack of plans for the future use of the closed course. Council leader John Alexander described the move as a 'sensible approach' to ensure sustainable public golf amid financial challenges.
5. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/opinion/5239936/steve-finan-caird-park-golf-dundee-council-spin/> - An opinion piece criticizes Dundee City Council's justification for closing Caird Park Golf Courses, suggesting that the council's environmental claims are a 'cynical attempt' to use environmental issues as a shield. The author argues that the council lacks a clear plan for the land's future and accuses them of incompetence and panic. The piece emphasizes the need for honesty and transparency from the council regarding the closure and its reasons.
6. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy795ey5r9jo> - Vandals on a quad bike and motorbikes caused an estimated £10,000 worth of damage to Caird Park Golf Course in Dundee. Greens and fairways on the 11th, 17th, and 18th holes were extensively damaged. Police are investigating the incident, with inquiries ongoing to trace those responsible. The damage occurred amid discussions about the course's future, as Dundee City Council plans to close the course to save on subsidies.
7. <https://www.smartestenergy.com/en_gb/info-hub/blog/a-spotlight-on-the-caird-park-low-carbon-district-energy-hub/> - Dundee City Council, in partnership with the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) and Balfour Beatty, implemented the Caird Park Low Carbon District Energy Hub. This project utilizes a hybrid ground source heat pump powered by renewable generation to reduce carbon emissions. The energy generated is fed into a district network that warms a significant amount of Dundee’s social housing. The initiative is part of a broader effort to redevelop Caird Park into a Regional Performance Centre for sports, aiming to provide 100% of the site's electricity needs and around 85% of its heating requirements, reducing a minimum of 536 tonnes of CO2 equivalent per annum.