THE BACKGROUND
The first course was opened in 1923 by Edward, Prince of Wales and was one of a number of sports facilities in the park, granted by the British monarchy. It was intended to provide golf to “local artisans”, unable to afford membership of private clubs. A second course was added in 1925.

Glendale Golf took over the management in 2004 and continues to champion the principle of golf courses which are open to the public and available to people who can’t afford, or don’t want, private golf membership.

REDEVELOPMENT
The redevelopment project, including a new clubhouse and improved access, means golf use is booming and membership of the Richmond Park Golf Association has more than doubled in four years.

‘Richmond Park Golf Course has a fascinating history. But it’s the future that matters and that’s looking very bright.’
THE CHALLENGE

Before the redevelopment began in 2011, golf use of the two courses had dropped below 50,000. This was partly due to general participation trends in golf and partly to the standard of local competition.

DESIGNING A SOLUTION

Glendale Golf, which has a 25-year management agreement with the Royal Parks, funded a redevelopment project between 2011 and 2014. It included a new £2.5m clubhouse in a new location, providing direct access from the A3 just south of Wimbledon.

THE CLUBHOUSE

The clubhouse is open plan and offers the customer panoramic views of the golf courses on arrival. They’re also immediately brought into the clubhouse with the catering area and golf reception set out in a shared space.

The layout provides a great atmosphere and gives opportunity for staff savings at off peak times. However, a limitation is that there’s no opportunity to offer separated, private space to groups.

THE RESULT

Glendale Golf’s three tiered, flexible memberships, which include a pay and play option, a monthly, no contract option and the traditional 12 month subscription, has helped increase usage at the centre.

The customers are from a wide demographic range. Traditional, older golfers favour the mid-week day times; later afternoons, early evenings and peak times at weekends attract younger players from in and around London.

THE FUTURE

One important aim is to attract more families. Family Fun Days, offering junior lessons and entertainment, have proved popular with potential new players, but have deterred regular golfers. It’s recognised that the driving range is not big enough to cater for the overall demand. Plans being considered include extending the driving range and adding an indoor caching studio; making the academy course more appealing to juniors and beginners; adding adventure golf, with a café.