**No Penalty for Moving a Ball on the Putting Green**

**Current Rule:** Under Rule 18-2, if a player (or opponent) accidentally causes the player’s ball to move anywhere on the course, there is a one-stroke penalty (unless one of several exceptions applies).

**Proposed Rule:** Under new Rule 13.1, there would no longer be a penalty if a player (or opponent) accidentally causes the player’s ball to move on the putting green.

The substance of this Rule change has already been implemented as of 1 January 2017 by authorising Committees to adopt a Local Rule that eliminates the penalty for accidentally moving a ball on the putting green

**Reasons for Change:**

* The shape, slope and condition of many putting greens today increase the chances that a ball at rest on the putting green might move, and it can be difficult to determine whether a player caused the ball to move or whether the ball was moved by wind or other natural causes
* When a ball moves while the player is doing nothing more than taking normal actions to prepare for a stroke, it can seem unfair for the player to be penalised.
* Most “ball moved” situations occur on the putting green, involve minimal movement of the ball, frequently occur when the player is taking reasonable actions to prepare for a stroke and the ball can be easily replaced.
* These considerations are not the same when the ball lies off the putting green, and so the penalty would continue to apply (with exceptions, such as accidentally moving a ball during search) to a player or opponent in those circumstances to reinforce the principle that the ball should be played as it lies and that players should continue to exercise care when near to a ball in play.