What are your thoughts on bunker reviews? Rob Fear, Bridgwater
I am all for this for several reasons. One, to give developers and turfing over redundant bunkers or those that are proving too costly to maintain. Similarly, although it can be very expensive, I am all for new or revised bunkering to cater for modern equipment and tastes. Not all bunkers need to be purely related to strategy – some can be visual.

Do we have too many golf courses?
Alan Davison, London
Sadly, we do. The massive boom in the game in the 1970s and ’80s led to too many new-builds, some of which had little architectural merit and suffered from tight budgets. We know there are far more courses closing than opening, but hopefully the knock-on effect is the remaining clubs will absorb those golfers and be better placed to survive.

Q&A

Chris Todt
President, European Institute of Golf Course Architects

What challenges do modern driving distances present to course architects?
They are not the only reason drivers have become such a dominating factor. While many golfers may enjoy the thrill of the drive, shorter courses, while offering a more leisurely pace of play, can lead to frustration for the long hitter.

What are the best solutions you have?
Restricting the landing zone of the long hitters by bunkers, ponds, trees, deep rough, etc. in such a way that it appears on a scorecard that the longer hitter is at a disadvantage. This is an example of how technology and architecture can work together to create an even playing field.

Are developers now more open to the idea of shorter courses?
The realisation that the problems of stagnating participation and increased playing times can be countered by shorter, more fun-to-play courses requires a radical reversal of the previous striving for long, difficult ‘championship’ courses. On the basis of numerous successfully completed projects, we are on the right track.