



BIGGA

British and International
Golf Greenkeepers Association

BIGGA

Strategy, Structure &
Member Code of Ethics



2024/25 Edition

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Photograph with thanks to Martin Smith, Gleneagles

INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been produced to provide BIGGA members with guidelines on the Association and their role within it as a member.

Now 36 years old, BIGGA has made outstanding progress to reach its position as a well-respected and integral part of the golf and turf industries. This progress is due to the dedication of very many members who have contributed voluntarily through committee work and support of BIGGA activity, as well as the team of staff based around the UK.

The Association was formed to support greenkeepers and greenkeeping and to provide a unified voice for the profession. BIGGA's formal strategy is contained within these pages in order that all members can fully understand our purpose and ambitions.

Also contained are details of our regional structure and the officers and staff of the Association who are responsible for delivering the strategy. For BIGGA to achieve its key ambition to improve the respect and appreciation of greenkeepers, it is vital that all members adhere to the Association's Code of Ethics. The code has been updated and is contained within this booklet along with the formal social media policy for members.

BIGGA 2020-2024 STRATEGY

OUR MISSION

To be an Association committed to the continual professional development of its members, working with the leading bodies in golf for the good of the game.

OUR VISION

Our Vision is to be recognised as leaders in golf course management. To have our members acknowledged as educated professionals, valued by the sport and for BIGGA to become a must join association.

OUR VALUES

Education

Leadership

Togetherness

Accountability

OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS

SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS

- › Grow the BIGGA membership
- › Promote the profession of greenkeeping to golfers and the golfing industry
- › Provide support and benefits to members
- › Grow and administrate the BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund

A STRONGER SPORT

- › Deliver a world-class education and CPD programme for our members
- › Clarify and deliver our role in supporting golf environmentally and economically
- › Deliver a comprehensive communication plan, raising awareness of Greenkeeping throughout the industry
- › Support major tournaments and industry initiatives

PROVIDING LEADERSHIP

- › Deliver the Greenkeeper Training Committee (GTC) strategy
- › Drive the sustainability agenda
- › Work with the Golf Governing Bodies in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to develop and deliver education for golf club managers and volunteers
- › Influence relevant regulators and policy makers

EXCELLENT ORGANISATION

- › Operate in accordance with the Nolan Principles in all that we do
- › Maximise non-subscription revenue to support member initiatives
- › Maintain suitable financial reserves to ensure sustainability
- › Deliver a learning & development programme for our staff and key volunteers

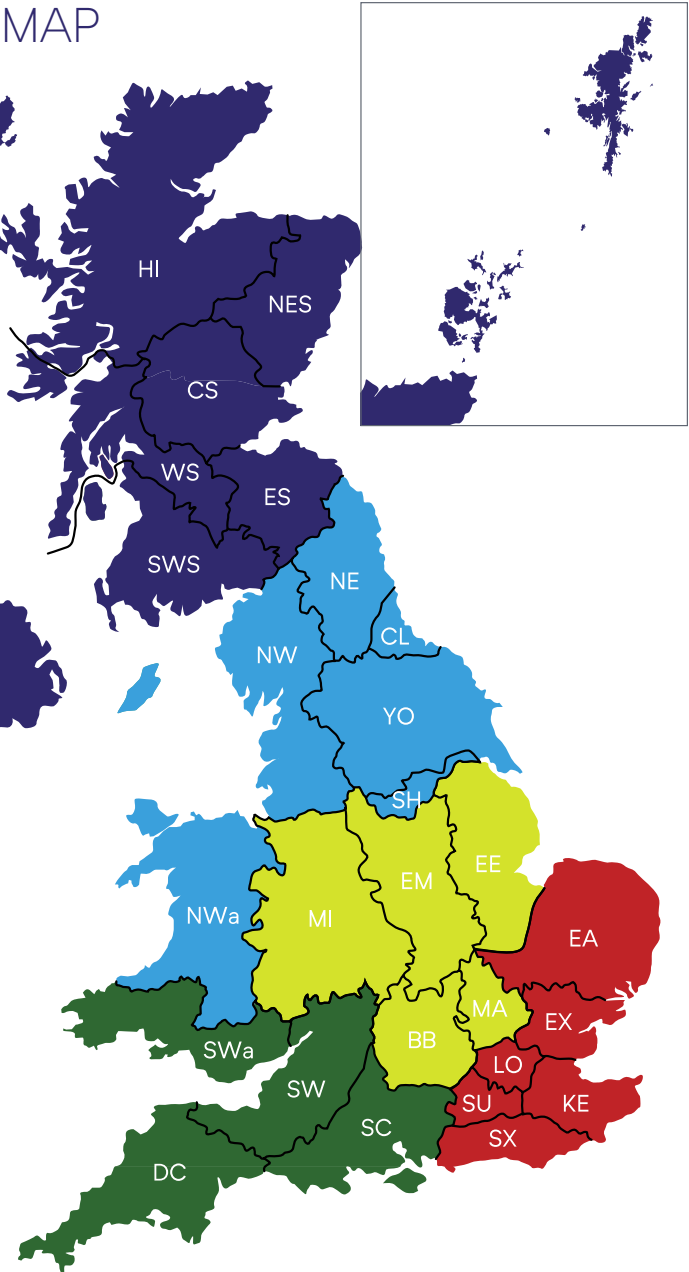
HOW WILL WE KNOW IF WE ARE WINNING?

We will set annual objectives aligned to these long-term goals and monitor our progress against these goals annually.

REGIONAL MAP

Sections

- HI Highlands and Islands
- CS Central Scotland
- ES East Scotland
- NES North Scotland
- WS West Scotland
- SWS South West of Scotland
- NI Northern Ireland
- NE North East
- NW North West
- YO Yorkshire
- CL Cleveland
- SH Sheffield
- NW_a North Wales
- EM East Midlands
- MI Midland
- EE East of England
- BB Berks, Bucks and Oxon
- MA Mid Anglia
- SU Surrey
- KE Kent
- SX Sussex
- LO London
- EA East Anglia
- EX Essex
- SW South West
- SC South Coast
- DC Devon and Cornwall
- SW_a South Wales



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BIGGA REGIONAL CONTACTS

Scan the QR code to visit your region's dedicated page on the BIGGA website.

SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND REGION

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David Cole MG, Chairperson | Gordon McKie, Region Director



NORTHERN REGION

Roger Butler | 07525 593 359 | roger@bigga.co.uk
Jeremy Ward, Chairperson | Jack Hetherington, Region Director



CENTRAL ENGLAND REGION

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Paul Fowkes, Chairperson | Andrew Laing, Region Director



SOUTH EAST REGION

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Andy Harding, Chairperson | Antony Kirwan, Region Director



SOUTH WEST AND SOUTH WALES REGION

Kris Parker | 07300 861 475 | kris@bigga.co.uk
Seb Cavilla, Chairperson | Lucy Sellick, Region Director



BIGGA STRUCTURE

OFFICERS

President
John Keenaghan

Chairperson
Steven Lloyd

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Scotland
Gordon McKie

South West & South Wales
Lucy Sellick

Northern
Jack Hetherington

Guardian
Iain Macleod

Central England
Andrew Laing

Guardian
Andrew Smith

South East
Antony Kirwan

REGIONAL CHAIRPERSONS

Scotland & Northern Ireland
David Cole MG

South East
Andrew Harding

Northern
Jeremy Ward

South West & South Wales
Seb Cavilla

Central England
Andrew Smith

BIGGA TEAM

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Chief Executive Officer
Jim Croxton

Chief Financial Officer
Steve Wragg

Laura Lincoln
Executive PA

FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT

Assistant Accountant
Josh Newton

MEMBERSHIP

Head of Membership
Scott Reeves

Scotland & Northern
Ireland
John Young

Northern
Roger Butler

Central England
Steve Dudley-Brown

South East
John Pearson

South West & South Wales
Kris Parker

Events & Initiatives
Tracey Walker

Membership
Administrator
Gil Christon

Membership
Administrator
Eleanor Watson

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Learning & Development
Manager
Deb Burnett

Learning & Development
Manager (Technical)
Rob Phillips

Workforce
Project Manager
Jenny Bledge

Learning & Development
Administrator
Janette Pascall

Learning & Development
Administrator
Joanne Millar

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Head of Business
Development
Lauren Frazer

Business Development
Manager
Gavin Rees

Business Development
Administrator
Tara Richardson

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Head of Marketing &
Communications
Karl Hansell

Marketing & Social Media
Executive
Zoë Wright

Editorial Assistant
Lorna Taylor

Digital Executive
Karen Hughes

Design & Brand Executive
Libbie Waddleton

MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

By joining BIGGA, all members, irrespective of membership category, agree to:

1. Abide by the organisational values that underpin all that BIGGA does;
2. Abide by local and national legislation, both in the execution of professional duties and in general;
3. Abide by regulations in place at any organisation or establishment hosting an event or activity in which the member is participating;
4. Establish contact with the senior member of the course management team at a facility prior to undertaking any consultancy work on behalf of the owner and/or operators of the facility, or seeking to learn from operations at the facility;
5. Apply for vacancies only where they exist and recruit greenkeepers only through recognised means;
6. Make all reasonable efforts to support the Association to improve public understanding and appreciation of the profession of golf greenkeeping;
7. Refrain from making any public, derogatory statements about another member, a facility or the Association, whether verbal, written or via electronic social media;
8. Refrain from providing any form of endorsement on behalf of the Association, without the prior written approval of the Association and only provide personal endorsements based on appropriate evidence of the benefits of the product or service being endorsed and in the absence of any real or perceived inducement;
9. Report any unspent criminal conviction (exceptions may apply) or violation of this Code of Ethics;
10. Be bound by this Code of Ethics and accept that a breach will be considered for disciplinary action in accordance with the Articles of the Association

BIGGA CODE OF ETHICS FOR MEMBERS

The following guidelines are intended to help Members and Board members interpret the Code of Ethics and provide examples of what is, and is not, acceptable under the Code.

1. Abide by the organisational values that underpin all that BIGGA does;

BIGGA has four Organisational Values.

They are:

- › Education: We see education as critical to our collective success
- › Leadership: We advocate, we strive to achieve, we develop and we influence others
- › Togetherness: We are an inclusive organisation, for our members and for golf
- › Accountability: We are responsible, ethical, professional and honest

Where a member is found to have behaved in contravention of these values and behaviours, he/she will be considered in breach of the Code. For example, if a member is found to have behaved violently or in a bullying way, in contradiction to the Accountability value, he/she will be considered in breach of the code.

2. Abide by local and national legislation, both in the execution of professional duties and in general;

It is really important that BIGGA members maintain an excellent knowledge of legislation affecting golf greenkeeping. A

member implementing practices or using substances that are prohibited by law will be considered in breach of the Code. Such practices include but are not limited to areas such as Equality, Data Protection, Environmental, Health & Safety and employment law.

It is also vitally important that colleagues, employers, facility owner/operators and the public see members as professional and trustworthy in general. Accordingly, a conviction for a criminal offence whilst in membership will be considered a breach of the Code. Spent convictions are generally not considered a breach of the Code.

3. Abide by regulations in place at any organisation or establishment hosting an event or activity in which the member is participating;

Members are often invited to participate in events, conferences or golf matches organised by other organisations.

It is vitally important that members observe and respect the regulations that these organisations might have in place, even if the member does not agree with them. This might include seeking a courtesy round of golf where the member must follow the procedure laid down at the facility.

4. Establish contact with the resident member at a facility prior to undertaking any consultancy work on behalf of the owner and/or operators of the facility; or seeking to learn from operations at the facility;

- › Consultancy: The Board recognises the expertise established over many years by some members and has no appetite to restrict the business opportunities that this might present. However, before agreeing to perform any form of consultancy work, paid or unpaid, a member MUST make contact with the most senior member of the course management team at the facility prior to agreeing to undertake any consultancy work on behalf of the owner/operator of the facility. A member proceeding to deliver consultancy services, against the wishes of the resident member or without prior engagement will be considered in breach of the code (exception: where the resident member has unreasonably objected to the consultancy work).
- › Good Practice: The Board actively encourages members to learn from other members. However, it is only courteous to see whether a member is willing to share their knowledge and expertise with another member before proceeding and to arrange a convenient time to do so. Members failing to follow these steps prior to visiting a facility will be considered in breach of the Code.
- › During Job Application process: It is common practice for greenkeepers to

inspect a course prior to or during a job application process. For confidentiality purposes a member is not prohibited from visiting a course in these circumstances without contacting the senior member of the course management team but must get the consent of the facility prior to any visit.

5. Apply for vacancies and recruit Greenkeepers only through recognised means;

- › Applying for vacancies: The Board recognises that sometimes, things don't work out and the relationship between a member and his/her employer can deteriorate, possibly resulting in a vacancy arising. However, this is a situation and a decision for the incumbent member and/or his/her employers. Any other member seeking to capitalise on such a situation by approaching the facility owner/operator either to criticise the resident member and/or to offer their services will be considered in breach of the Code. Exceptions: a) where the employer has formally advertised the vacancy, a member may apply formally as prescribed; and b) where the member was 'head-hunted'/approached by the employer without solicitation.
- › Recruiting: Where a member has the authority to recruit Greenkeeping staff, he/she must recruit in a proper manner, either by making a direct approach or by laying out the nature of the vacancy in a job description, detailing basic terms & conditions and inviting applications from all suitably qualified and experienced candidates.

irrespective of any characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010 (Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy & Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex, Sexual orientation).

6. Make all reasonable efforts to support the Association to improve public understanding and appreciation of the profession of Golf Greenkeeping;

Greenkeepers are the most qualified operators in the golf industry in the UK but this is not widely known, especially within golf clubs.

To maintain this position, it is vital that the Association provides leading edge educational opportunities and that members embrace them enthusiastically. As a minimum, members should be aware of the educational framework that is in place (www.bigga.org.uk/education/) and notwithstanding their own personal commitment to CPD, use every endeavour to promote the profession and the Association's members

7. Refrain from making any public derogatory statements about another member, a facility or the Association, whether verbal, written or via electronic social media;

Just like in most professions, reputation is everything in golf greenkeeping. If a member has cause for complaint with another member and has failed to resolve it informally, he/she should write a letter of complaint to their Membership Services Manager at BIGGA, detailing the substance of the complaint. Similarly, if a member has

cause for complaint with a facility and has failed to resolve it informally, he/she should write to the owner/Chair/Captain of the facility, detailing the substance of the complaint. If a member has cause for complaint with the Association, he/she should write a letter of complaint to the Membership Services Manager at BIGGA.

Particular attention should be paid to social media and the Association's Social Media Policy for members.

A member making a public, derogatory statement by any means about another member, a facility or the Association will be considered in breach of the Code.

8. Refrain from providing any form of endorsement on behalf of the Association, without the prior written approval of the Association and only provide personal endorsements based on appropriate evidence of the benefits of the product or service being endorsed and in the absence of any real or perceived inducement;

Providing an endorsement on behalf of the Association without the written approval of the Association will be considered a breach of the Code.

As detailed above, the reputation of the Association and its members is of paramount importance. Holding membership of the Association is an honour and carries great responsibility. Accordingly, members should think very carefully before endorsing a product or service as their endorsement can be exploited significantly. Members shown to be endorsing a product or service that does

not justify that endorsement will be considered in breach of the Code.

9. Report any unspent criminal conviction (exceptions may apply) or violation of this Code of Ethics;

No matter how difficult to do, all members must report any criminal conviction (where a member is convicted whilst in BIGGA membership and not including spent convictions (NB some exceptions may apply, e.g. working with children. If a member is in any doubt, they should seek advice from their Membership Services Manager)) or known or suspected breach of

this Code by themselves or by another member to the CEO without delay. To knowingly conceal such a breach will be considered a breach of the Code.

10. Be bound by this Code of Ethics and accept that a breach will be considered for disciplinary action in accordance with the Articles of the Association;

All Members are bound by the Articles of the Association and all suspected breaches of the Code will be dealt with in accordance with clause 32 of the Articles.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The widespread availability and use of any social networking forum brings opportunities to understand, engage and communicate in new ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly.

The Association realises that social media and networking websites have become a regular part of everyday life and that many people enjoy membership of such sites. However, we are also aware that these sites can become negative and care must be taken not to breach our Code of Ethics when using these services.

For the purposes of this Policy, social media is any type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public

forum. This includes online social forums such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Social media also covers blogs and video-and-image-sharing websites such as YouTube and Flickr. Members should be aware that there are many more examples of social media than can be listed here and this is a constantly changing area. Members should follow these guidelines in relation to any social media that they use.

The absence of, or lack of, explicit reference to a specific website or service does not limit the extent of the application of this Policy. Where no Policy or guidelines exist, members must use their judgment as to what is and what is not appropriate use or comment on such sites. Consult with the BIGGA office if you are uncertain.

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AT WORK

Members should check their employers Social Media Policy to check whether; as employees,

They are allowed to make reasonable and appropriate use of social media websites from the employer's or their own computers or devices whilst they are at work provided that this does not interfere with their duties.

OR

They must limit their use of social media on their own equipment to their official rest breaks only.

OR

They are not permitted to use Employer computers for the use of social media or personal purposes during their official rest breaks and/or during your working day.

MONITORING THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA DURING WORK TIME

Members should check their employers Social Media Policy to see whether the Club asserts the right to monitor employee's internet usage.

If the employer does reserve the right to monitor employees' internet usage, it should endeavour to inform an affected employee when this is to happen and the reasons for it.

The employer might consider that valid reasons for checking an employee's internet usage include suspicions that the employee has:

- a. Been using social media websites when he/she should be working; or
- b. Acted in a way that is in breach of the rules set out in this Policy

Access to particular social media websites may be withdrawn in any case of misuse.

SOCIAL MEDIA OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE

BIGGA recognises that members may make use of social media in a personal capacity. While they are not acting on behalf of the Association or their employer, members must be aware that they can damage the Association and/or their employer and/or another member if they are recognised as being a BIGGA member / Club employee.

Members are allowed to say that they are a BIGGA member and BIGGA recognises that it is natural for its employees to discuss their work on social media sites.

If members do discuss their work on social media (for example, giving opinions on their specialism or the sector in which their employer operates), they must be honest about who they are and who they work for, whilst remembering to be careful about disclosing any confidential information and must include wording on their profile (i.e. a statement) along the following lines:

“The views I express here are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of BIGGA or my employer.”

Any communications that members make in a personal capacity through social media must not:

- a. Bring the Association, Employer and/or another member into disrepute, for example by:
 - › Criticising or arguing with members, visitors, suppliers, distributors, colleagues or competitors
 - › Making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups; or
 - › Posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content

BIGGA Employees have also been advised of their responsibility not to make derogatory comments about members, facilities and other organisations via social media.

- b. Breach confidentiality, for example by:
 - › Revealing trade secrets or information owned by the Association, employer or another member
 - › Giving away confidential information about an individual (such as a colleague or supplier/distributor or member/visitor contact) or Facility (such as a rival business);

OR

- › Any information in relation to members of your employer/facility details such as but not limited, personal details, membership fees
- › Discussing your Employer/Facility's internal workings (such as deals that it is doing with a member/visitor or its future business plans that are not public knowledge)

c. Breach copyright, for example by:

- › Using someone else's images or written content without permission;

OR

- › Failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce something

d. Do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example, by:

- › Making offensive or derogatory comments or discriminating or inciting others to discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- › Using social media to bully another individual (such as another member, an employee of the Employer/Facility or a supplier, distributor or customer/client);

OR

- › Posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

If you have your own personal profile on a social media website, you should make sure that others cannot access any content, media or information from that profile that (a) you are not happy for them to have access to; and (b) which would undermine your position as a professional, trusted and responsible person.

As a basic rule, if you are not happy for others you work with to see particular comments, media or information simply do not post it in a public forum online.

All members should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces are still subject to copyright, data protection and freedom of information and other legislation. All employees should also operate in line with their employer's equality opportunities Policy and/or bullying and harassment Policy.

Failure to comply with this may lead to disciplinary action being taken by your employer.

ENSURE YOU ARE ALWAYS RESPECTFUL TOWARDS:

- a. The Association, its staff and its members
- b. Your Employer and your work colleagues

c. Other facilities and their employees

d. Suppliers and distributors

Members should be aware that any disrespectful comments to the above might be seen as a breach of the Code of Ethics.

The Association's logos and trademarks may not be used without written consent.

At all times, in or out of working hours, you are an ambassador for the Association and your employer. Be aware that your actions captured via images, posts or comments online can reflect on the Association and your employer. If you have posted content to the web your mistakes have become a matter of public record. There's no point trying to cover it up so the quicker you stand corrected the better perceived it will be by the people who are reading what you have to say.

OFFENSIVE DEFAMATORY COMMENTS

Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend themselves.

Where you are making comments/statements on social media sites you must ensure that you apply a "good judgement" test for every activity. Activity showing good judgement would include statements of fact about the Association, its members and/or a facility and their products/services.

It can be very upsetting to get abusive e-mails, instant messages, comments on social media sites etc, and if the Association

discovers that you have sent abusive messages/comments about another member, fellow employee, about a club member, visitor and/or your Employer/Facility then you will be considered in breach of the Code of Ethics.

All employees must also operate in line with their Employer's equality opportunities Policy and/or bullying and harassment Policy.

If you believe that there has been an offensive comment made about the Association, another member, or a facility then you must escalate this to BIGGA HQ immediately. If you think that you are being bullied or another member of the Association has posted a comment that offends/upsets you then you must inform BIGGA HQ as soon as possible and the matter will be investigated.

If you make a complaint that you know to be untrue, or giving evidence that you know to be untrue, this may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you in accordance with the Association's Articles.

WHEN USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN YOUR SOCIAL LIFE, EMPLOYEES SHOULD

- a. Ensure the privacy settings on your profiles are set so that only people you have accepted as friends can see your content
- b. Review who is on your 'friends list' on your personal profile. In most situations you should not accept friend requests on your personal profile from members/visitors or suppliers/distributors you work with

- c. Ensure personal blogs have clear disclaimers to the effect that the views expressed by the author are theirs alone and do not represent the views of the Association or your employer
- d. Make your writing clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the Association or employer
- e. Ensure information published on the Internet complies with your employer's confidentiality and data protection policies

Breach of confidentiality could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from your employed role and you may be in breach of the Association's Code of Ethics.

WHEN USING BUSINESS NETWORKING SITES, EMPLOYEES SHOULD

- a. Follow the same guidelines for business networking sites as you would for personal and or social networking sites
- b. Participate online in a respectful, relevant way that protects the Association's and your employer's reputation and follows the letter and spirit of the law
- c. If you are writing about the Association or employer/facility use your real name, identify that you are a BIGGA member and who you work for, and be clear about your role. If you have a vested interest in what you are discussing, be the first to say so

- d. Never represent yourself, the Association or your employer in a false or misleading way. All statements must be true and not misleading; all claims must be substantiated
- e. Post meaningful, respectful comments – in other words, no spam and no remarks that are off-topic or offensive
- f. Use common sense and common courtesy: for example, it is best to ask permission to publish or report on conversations that are meant to be private or internal. Make sure your efforts to be transparent don't violate the Association's or Employer's privacy, confidentiality, and legal guidelines for external commercial speech
- g. Stick to your area of expertise and do not feel free to provide unique, individual perspectives on non-confidential activities
- h. When disagreeing with others' opinions, keep it appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation online that looks as if it's becoming antagonistic, do not get overly defensive and do not disengage from the conversation abruptly; feel free to ask the senior Managers at BIGGA for advice and/or to disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner that reflects well on the Association and your employer
- i. If you wish to write about the competition, make sure you behave diplomatically, have the facts straight and that you have the appropriate permissions
- j. Never comment on anything related to legal matters, legal action, or any parties the Association and/or your employer may be in legal proceedings with
- k. Never participate in Social Media when the topic being discussed may be considered a crisis situation. Even anonymous comments may be traced back to your or the Employer's IP address. Refer all Social Media activity around crisis topics to the Committee at your facility or to BIGGA HQ as appropriate
- l. Be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy, your employer and Association confidential information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully
- m. Change the privacy settings on your profile so that your contacts are not open for everyone to access
- n. Contributors/suppliers you add as contacts during your employment belong to the Employer and upon termination of your employment (howsoever caused) the Employer will ask to see your whole list of contacts and advise which (if any) you should delete
- o. Upon leaving the Employer update any social media site to reflect you are no longer an employee of the Employer

USE OF OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS

The Association operates a number of accounts on social media websites for the

promotion of activities and events, and as a communication method.

THE FOLLOWING OUTLINES THE LIMITS OF THEIR USE:

- a. An official account on any social media website may only be set-up with written consent from BIGGA HQ
- b. Only authorised individuals may use these accounts to post online and access to the account should be strictly limited
- c. All information published on the Internet must comply with the Association's confidentiality and data protection policies
- d. Copyright laws must be respected, with references or sources cited appropriately
- e. Any Member who becomes aware of social networking activity that would be deemed distasteful should make BIGGA HQ aware as soon as possible

Any member using official accounts must adhere to the above guidelines; breach of this Policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Associations Articles.

NOTE: Any media enquiries must be referred to the BIGGA HQ.

Any breach of this Policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Associations Articles.

ON TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

On termination of membership, howsoever caused, if you had access to any social media account on behalf of the Association, you must give up all paperwork and passwords relevant to the site and agree not to make any further posts or comment in respect of any matter pertaining either to your personal situation or to the running of the Association.

This policy was developed using a template kindly provided by Xact Group. For further information about services provided by the Xact Group for the Golf Greenkeeping industry, go to bigga.xactassist.co.uk

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