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Greenkeeper

International



ROYAL CINQUE PORTS

How a culture of personal development is bringing the good times back to the Kent coast

IN THIS ISSUE:

Confessions of a greens chairman | BTME preview
Bunker renovations at Huddersfield | BIGGA merchandise
BIGGA Photographic Competition finalists | Employment law



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Welcome



The BIGGA team looks forward to seeing you at BTME in 2020

In November I was privileged to be asked to speak once again at the Golf Club Managers Association's excellent biennial conference.

I always jump at the chance to engage with golf club managers and officials, as the relationship between them and our members is absolutely critical for all parties and for the success of golf clubs. I have now attended five GCMA conferences and have seen both the delegates and the programme evolve significantly over the years. This year's event focussed heavily on governance and culture in the golf club, both key areas that have a huge impact on greenkeepers.

It was perhaps though a little surprising to see a keynote presentation from a golf club manager on mental health. In recent years we have discussed this topic a great deal in relation to greenkeepers but it was the first time I have seen it addressed so publicly by another section of the industry. Of real interest was just how similar the issues described were to those we hear from our own members; unreasonable expectations,



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

I am of course confident that our members will rise to the challenge.

weather concerns, work pressures etc. I took two key messages from the session; we're not alone in feeling pressure and more needs to continue to be done to reduce work related stress in the industry.

As mentioned before, golf club governance and culture are important to this, but so is greenkeeper education and development. In this month's magazine our 'Thought Leadership' piece expresses the strong view that greenkeepers also need to be informed of their rights under employment law. I couldn't

agree more; we now have legal and HR helplines for this very reason but unfortunately not every member takes advantage and also not every greenkeeper is a member of BIGGA. It's an interesting and perhaps controversial article but that is exactly what we want from this section of the magazine. The Excellence in Communication Awards sponsored by Campey Turf Care Systems are there to encourage more and more greenkeepers to express their views to their peers as well as to their customers and members. I'm really looking forward to seeing who emerges as the Award winners next month at BTME.

This decade may well go down as one of the most challenging our industry has faced and it's a reasonably safe bet that the 2020s will continue to challenge us all. I am of course confident that our members will rise to the challenge.

Finally on behalf of the whole BIGGA team may I wish all of our members, commercial partners and friends a very Happy Christmas and I look forward to seeing you all at BTME in Harrogate in the New Year.

WHAT'S INSIDE...

Editor's Notes



Greenkeeper International editor, Karl Hansell

Merry Christmas and welcome to December's Greenkeeper International.

At a time when we consume media in more ways than ever, I'd like to start my final editor's column of the year by thanking you for your continued support of this magazine. Each month we work hard to give you a magazine that is both informative and entertaining and as I enter my fourth year with the association, I'm struck at how quickly time is passing.

I'd like to think Greenkeeper International is in as good shape as it has ever been and that we're moving with the times, blurring the boundaries between our print and digital offerings. The feedback we receive is always welcome and, I'm pleased to say, usually positive.

But we're always looking for ways to utilise these pages better and if you do have ideas on how we can improve the magazine, please get in touch.

For the record, I once wrote a monthly magazine with articles written entirely to the tune of popular Christmas Carols, so believe me, this is a constant learning experience and we've all made mistakes that we later regret!

Christmas and the New Year are quickly forgotten in these parts as January sees the hosting of BTME. In this magazine we feature a conversation I had with James Bledge at Royal Cinque Ports about how he's encouraging a culture of personal development at the club. It's a timely message, given our proximity to the industry's largest programme of professional learning, Continue to Learn.

Competition for jobs is tougher than ever and, unlike Old Saint Nick, most of us aren't blessed with job security for life.

I recently saw a statistic that said 75% of all job postings are filled by candidates who were already known to the employer through networking. Whether it's BTME or another networking event organised by the association, make 2020 the year you invest in yourself.



Taking a closer look at the bunker at Huddersfield Golf Club on page 48

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What are your talking points?

Have you got a great idea or are you pushing the boundaries of what you can achieve through innovative thinking or methods? We're looking for your stories and have some incredible prizes on offer. To get involved, turn to page six.



With thanks to our contributors

Each month Greenkeeper International is put together with the help of our industry contributors. This month we have features from:



Andy Wight

The Oaklands College tutor asks whether your training structure needs developing to get the most out of your staff?



James Bledge

James discusses how mentors have helped his career and how he's passing on that wisdom to the next generation.



Seton Wakenshaw

How a positive relationship between the course manager and greens chairman helped Whitley Bay thrive.



William Swan

The golf course architect tells us the three roles of bunkers and how they're more than just an expensive hazard to maintain.

Don't forget you can download the regular and dyslexia-friendly digital versions of Greenkeeper International from the resources section of the BIGGA website.



Are we victims of employment naivety?

Why a lack of understanding about employment law is holding greenkeepers back

Richard Andrews



Do you have a topic that you'd like to discuss? Submit your article to commsawards@bigga.co.uk to be in with a chance of winning a week in Florida!

Every month my issue of *Greenkeeper International* falls through my letterbox and every month I read the pages so full of positivity, industry progress, achievements and success.

There are golf clubs all over the country where a balance has been found between the needs of the members and the management requirements of a 21st century golf course and at these enlightened clubs, both members and greenkeepers are happy. But there is a hidden problem which lurks near, or at, the surface of many greenkeepers' lives. It is a problem which is rarely mentioned and for which there seems no solution: that the professional status of greenkeepers is being undermined and that greenkeepers are not treated with professional respect.

In 1920 Walter Hagen, the flamboyant American golfer, arrived at The Open at Royal Cinque Ports to be told that he was not allowed in the clubhouse. Such was the lot of professional golfers who were at that time viewed as glorified caddies who

had no place where members trod. His solution was to hire a limousine, park it in the car park, and use it as his own personal clubhouse. When The Open went to Royal Troon in 1923, he was similarly barred from the clubhouse and so when he finished as runner-up he refused to attend the prize-giving ceremony — which was held in the clubhouse. He invited the organisers to the local pub where he had been staying and said he would be happy to receive his prize there. They declined.

Through his prominent position in the world of golf and by his refusal to be down-trodden, Walter Hagen almost single-handedly lifted the status of the professional golfer to a position worthy of great respect. This leads nicely into the central subject of this piece: the lack of respect for greenkeepers.

I visit many golf courses and speak to many greenkeepers and have concluded that there is a double-edged problem: that greenkeepers are not (in some cases) treated with respect by their course

managers; and that course managers and greenkeepers in general are not (in some cases) treated with respect by club managers or committees. And perhaps there is an underlying cause. Every time we see coverage of tournament golf, courses are maintained and finished to astonishingly high standards with barely a blade of grass or a grain of sand out of place, leading to ever-higher expectations from the club golfer. It's not quite Augusta Syndrome, but it is not far from it.

So the course manager or the general manager or the committee (or all of them) have to absorb the mutterings, or

Employees in any workplace will be more productive when they feel valued and part of the organisation

screams, of discontent from the members who demand their course looks like the one on television — and the inevitable result is that the greens need to be faster, the fairways need to be cut four times a week, the bunkers need to be edged again, the tees need to be divoted more often, the ditches need to be strimmed ad infinitum — but all with little, or no, extra resources. And who will do all this extra work? Yes, the greenkeepers at the bottom of the hierarchal triangle.

Consequently, standards are being driven ever-higher without, in some cases, an earnest commitment to improve resources. There are, we reluctantly and honestly have to admit, cases where course managers have taken their eye off the ball or where the greenkeeping team has become complacent. In these instances where an overhaul of working practices is required, standards should be raised easily. However, changes in management structure or personnel can lead to a wholly unnecessary revolution in a drive to raise standards: incoming »



ACROSS THE BOARD

Jaime Acton | Course Manager | Rushmore

This month feels like the end of an era for me personally as I will be stepping away from a formal role within the association after being involved with various BIGGA committees for the past 14 years or so.

BTME 2020 marks the completion of my three-year term as a member of the National Board and the time feels right to allow someone else the opportunity to make their mark upon the association. As I leave my role as representative for the South West & South Wales Region, I know I leave behind a strong board and that the association is in safe hands.

When deliberating about whether to take up a second term on the Board, I had to think long and hard about myself and the role moving forward.

Firstly, from a personal level, I've been involved at committee level with BIGGA for as long as I've had children and perhaps it was time to simplify my life.

Secondly, from a professional level, would BIGGA and its members honestly get the best of me if I stayed another three years? I felt they wouldn't.

Anyone that knows me, knows I have a strong opinion on what I believe to be right and wrong in life. I try hard to bring my children up to have the confidence to speak up for things they believe in and that's what I genuinely feel I have done in my time involved in BIGGA.

I sometimes read the opinions of the keyboard warriors, some of whom take great delight in slamming the association and the profession at every turn. It's so easy to be negative, in fact, that it feels more and more like negativity is becoming society's default setting!

But if you're genuinely passionate enough to make an argument, then really the only way you'll ever make a positive difference to that subject matter is by getting involved! It's easy to criticise others on social media; it's something entirely different to actually do



With some over-affectionate section members at The Open 2017

something about it and become more active within the association.

I've loved my time on committees, whether it was my stints with the South West Section and the South Coast Section, to my involvement on Regional Board, eventually leading to my time as a National Board member.

Ironically, it all started with me being negative and having a rant about the committee members not leading from the front when discussing attendance numbers at a Section AGM! It was at this point that someone politely asked if perhaps I would consider taking up a role if I felt that strongly about it, so I did!

I started greenkeeping when I left school in 1995 and in that time BIGGA has played a massive part in my career development, as well as my personal development. It's a little known fact about me that I am extremely introverted and have always had some anxiety issues around social situations. I've learnt, mainly through my involvement with BIGGA, to push myself and take myself out of my comfort zone.

I believe shyness is a curse as it is often misdiagnosed by others, who mistake it for arrogance!

I have found our industry to be a great

leveller and believe me, I never thought this introverted, normal greenkeeper from Somerset would ever find himself on the association's Board of Directors!

I've met some great friends through this industry and through my involvement with the association, whether that's through Open Volunteer Support Teams back in the early to mid-2000's to my selection on the BIGGA Delegation to the Golf Industry Show in 2012. And yes, I was one of those who used to negatively believe I was wasting my time in applying as I'd never purchased any grinders!

So, my parting message is this: please support the association wherever you can. If you really want to make a difference, then get involved. Nothing is a closed shop and the experiences you can have are truly rewarding.

There are a great many people who have given up their time over the years and I am just another one of those guys.

I did it because I feel passionately about many issues affecting our industry.

If you feel the same and want to make a difference, a good starting point is by getting involved with your Section committee.

Who knows where it can take you.

HELPING US TO HELP YOU



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BIGGA's Partner Programme aims to provide an array of career enhancing and defining opportunities for our members. Through their relationship with BIGGA, the leading companies in the industry are able to support our members through education, initiatives and awareness.

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The support we receive from our Partners is critical in providing the significant series of benefits open to our members. Head to www.bigga.org.uk to find out more and to get involved.



YOUNG GREENKEEPERS' COMMITTEE

Jack Hetherington and Stuart Imeson | Hosts | Young Greenkeepers' Conference

The Young Greenkeepers' Conference was started three years ago by the Young Greenkeepers' Committee (YGC) in the hope that it would be a good environment for those who are new to the industry to network, while receiving education specifically targeted to their needs.

For 2020, the YGC asked founding members Jack Hetherington and Stuart Imeson to host this Young Greenkeepers Conference at BTME. We spoke to Jack and Stuart to find out what they have planned.



It's a very daunting prospect, hosting the conference as it is a large part of the reason we both joined the YGC and therefore its continued success is important to us both. That's why we couldn't say no, but the thought of standing up in front of 100 people while pretending we know what we're doing, is certainly nerve racking!

Once we agreed, we sat down to plan the day, with three main focuses. Firstly, the content of education, secondly the environment and lastly how the education is delivered.

We want to create a relaxed, fun environment where people can get involved and ask a few questions. The content of education has been selected because both the speakers and ourselves have found it useful throughout our careers and will be delivered interactively to engage the audience.

The speakers have been selected because they are relatable and relevant to young greenkeepers. We will hear how different approaches can be used in the industry and cover some of the fundamentals of Integrated Pest Management. We'll also look at the process of applying for your next job and the never-ending risks and rewards of social media.

Having never done anything like this before, it will certainly be an interesting couple of hours; so it will hopefully be a success and certainly a learning experience for us.

We look forward to seeing you there.

The Young Greenkeepers' Conference is being hosted in the Main Auditorium of the Harrogate Convention Centre from 9.45am to 12.50pm on Wednesday 22 January 2020.

The presentations include:

The benefits of social media

James Bledge, course manager, Royal Cinque Ports; Adam Matthews, course manager, Moor Allerton; Matt Pledsted, course manager, Stoneham.

What is IPM?

Dr Paul Miller, lecturer in greenkeeping.

Applying for jobs

James Bledge, course manager, Royal Cinque Ports; Sam Evans MG, course manager, Fulwell; Matt Pledsted, course manager, Stoneham.

Greenkeeping is my career

Sam Evans MG, course manager, Fulwell; Paul Armour, course manager, Dunbar.

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LOOKING AHEAD

Join the BIGGA Open Support Team 2020

After the success of 2019 The Open returns to the familiar fairways of Royal St George's for the 149th Open Championship in 2020.

Once again BIGGA members have the opportunity to apply for a place on the BIGGA Volunteer Support team at this prestigious event.

The team will get an inside the ropes look at the world's top golfers and have the chance to join the greenkeeping team behind the hosting of the championship, while building an incredible network of contacts who may help push their careers to the next level.

Royal St George's became the first course outside Scotland to host golf's oldest championship in 1894 and 2020 will be the 15th time The Open has been contested on the Kent links.

With the R&A once again requesting the assistance of BIGGA members in the staging of the championship, we can't wait to return to Royal St George's either.

BIGGA support team members will assist with maintaining bunker presentation throughout the duration of the tournament and may also be called upon at short notice to help with early morning preparation

work and divoting duties.

Royal St George's Golf Club will host the 149th Open from the 16 to 19 July 2020. Full BIGGA members can apply for a place on the

support team by completing the application form that is available in the Member Opportunities section of the BIGGA website. Entries close on 24 January 2019.



Your chance to get involved with the BIGGA Volunteer Support Team 2020

Get involved with a BIGGA event near you

National

- 1 Continue to Learn 2020**
Date: 19 to 22 January
Location: Harrogate Convention Centre
- 2 BTME 2020**
Date: 21 to 23 January
Location: Harrogate Convention Centre

Scotland and Northern Ireland

- 1 BIGGA Scotland Awards Lunch**
Date: 11 December
Location: Royal Hotel, Bridge of Allan

Northern

- 1 North East AGM and Christmas Competition**
Date: 10 December
Location: Foxton GC (Alnmouth)

Central England

- 1 Mid Anglia Christmas Golf Day**
Date: 10 December
Location: Dunstable Downs GC

2 East Midlands Christmas Golf Day

Date: 11 December
Location: Radcliffe-on-Trent GC

3 Midland Christmas Golf Day

Date: 13 December
Location: Blackwell GC

4 East of England Christmas Golf Day

Date: 13 December
Location: Newark GC

South East

1 BIGGA Surrey Section Turkey Trot and AGM 2019

Date: 16 December
Location: Guildford GC

2 Sussex Section Turf Club

Date: 19 December
Location: West Sussex GC

South West & South Wales

1 South Wales Turkey Trot

Date: 10 December
Location: Pyle and Kenfig GC

2 Devon & Cornwall Turkey Trot

Date: 12 December
Location: Boringdon Park GC

BIGGA Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 21 January 2020, 2.15pm
Main Auditorium, Harrogate Convention Centre

The BIGGA AGM is open to all Members of BIGGA, however only Full Members are entitled to vote. A current membership card MUST be produced to gain entry.



Don't miss out

Look online to see a full list of the events that are happening near you



Welcome new members

Scotland & Northern Ireland

Ronald Atkin, Gleddoch, AGK; Ian Scott, Rigby Taylor, ED; Gareth Rogers, Symbio, ED; Lewis Gray, Gleddoch, GK; Craig Surgeon, Kirkcaldy, HGK; Diana Gonzalez-Carel, SRUC (Elmwood), S; Francisco Garcia Trinidad, SRUC (Elmwood), S; Ludwig Johansson, SRUC (Elmwood), S.

Northern

Keane Barson, Styrrup Hall, App; Alan Dunlop, Eaton, AGK; Chris Griffin, Thornhurst Park, AGK; Kevin McCarthy, Thirk & Northallerton, AGK; Matthew Ashbrook, Pryors Hayes, AGK; Max Graham, Heaton Moor, AGK; Nathan Plumtree, Lincoln, AGK; Ryan Jackson, Heaton Moor, AGK; Richard Barnes, Pryors Hayes, CM; Hamish McConchie, Pryors Hayes, DCM; Alec Hennis, The Dunnerholme, HGK; Philip Gardner, Sedburgh, HGK.

Central England

Nicholas Lawson, Sleaford, A; Jacob Bourne, Gaudet Luce, App; Kasey McAlarey, Berkshire, App; Robyn Smith, Windmill Village, App; Samuel Biggs, Stoneleigh Deer Park, App; Jack Carter, Sutton Coldfield, AGK; James Cope, Redditch, AGK; Michael Baines, Steaford, AGK; Sion Coleman, Royal St David's, AGK; Cameron Chamberlain, South Kyme, AGK; Daniel Smith, Stourbridge, AGK; Jonathan Fisher, Ruddington Grange, AGK; Ricky Stevens, Stourbridge, AGK; Samuel Bates, Lingdale, AGK; Steven Evans, Sunningdale, AGK; Daniel Orwin, DART Training, CA; Martin Soar, DART Training, CA; Sarah Johnson, DART Training, CA; Jeremy Hindle, DLF Seeds (Trifolium), ED; Nathan Scarff, GBR Technology, ED; Karl Milton, Staverton Park, FA; Ryan Thomson, Ely City, GK; Scott Williamson, Coventry, GK; Billy Farnsworth, Ruddington Grange, HGK; Sean McDonnell, Louth, HGK.

South East

Alec Wilcox, Thorndon Park, App; Cass McCarthy, The Shire London, App; Joe Kwaricany, Luton Hoo, App; Joseph Ramsey, Braxted Park, App; Jack Lansbury, Birch Grove House, AGK; Ben Preston, Sedlescombe, AGK; David Bird, Ham Manor, AGK; James Bennett, Army, AGK; Jamie Chapman, Ely City, AGK; Louis Hobbs, Sunningdale, AGK; Zachary Bond, Sunningdale, AGK; George Stillwell, The Shire London, CM; Shaun Kernaghan, Turfgrass Agronomy and Services, DCM; Steven Graeme, Sweetwoods, DCM; Josh Mitchell, New Zealand, GK; James Hearne, Hayes Leisure Parks, G.

South West & South Wales

Daniel Gordon, Waterlooville, App; Jack Leonard, Rushmore, App; James Allen, Sherdons, App; Peter Hambling, Cirencester, App; Charlie Collins, Southwick Park, AGK; Mark Haynes, St Mellion, AGK; Ian Wade, The Rolls of Monmouth, CM; Gary Padfield, Farrington Park, GK; James Lewis, Rushmore, GK; Joe Swift, Clevedon, GK; Simon Berry, The Goodwood, HGK.

International

Alejandro Reyes, Turfgrass Agronomy and Services; Daniel Clayton, Erlen; Hakan Blusi, Swedish Golf Federation; Nils Goeran Niva, Gothenburg; Pers Nyman, Vaxjo Golfklubb.

A	Affiliate Member	FA	First Assistant
AGK	Assistant Greenkeeper	GK	Greenkeeper
AHG	Assistant Head Groundsperson	G	Groundsperson
APP	Apprentice	HGK	Head Greenkeeper
CA	College Assessor	HG	Head Groundsperson
CM	Course Manager	I	International Member
DCM	Deputy Course Manager	L	Life Member
DHGK	Deputy Head Greenkeeper	M	Mechanic
ED	Partner & Education Supporters	S	Student Member
		R	Retired Member

Time for some Christmas topdressing



Looking for gift ideas for that special BIGGA member in your life?

Did you know that BIGGA has a range of exclusive merchandise available to members?

Whether taking part in a turf club, golf day or any number of events, you can show you're part of the BIGGA family by sporting high quality clothing and accessories designed by leading golf brands Glenmuir and Sunderland of Scotland.

The prices are well below the recommended retail price and a percentage of any profit is donated to the BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund.

Glenmuir's Matthew Eagle said: "We are proud to have been associated with BIGGA for more than 20 years and it's fantastic to be able to offer the association's members this range of exclusive branded merchandise at a low cost that also contributes to such a great cause as the Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund."

"Glenmuir's commitment remains in continuing to

deliver products of the highest quality with levels of service that are essential in this modern world of high expectation and quick response time. Glenmuir has been producing fine and stylish products for 128 years and although certain aspects of the game of golf have changed during this time, we recognise the need for consistency in quality, comfort and durability of the apparel we all wear."

In addition to the Glenmuir range, there is also a selection of BIGGA branded Sunderland of Scotland outdoor collection that delivers the tag line 'Never Weather Beaten'.

To see the range and order direct from Glenmuir, use the special members' link at

www.glenmuir.com/bigga

For more information, contact BIGGA's Roger Butler on roger@bigga.co.uk

BIGGA Ethan: Mens Herringbone tipped performance pique polo

£30

- / 100% performance polyester pique
- / Contrast herringbone stitch on anti-curl rib collar and cuffs
- / Embroidery on right sleeve



BIGGA Malabar: Thermal lined turn up rib merino golf beanie bobble hat

£15

- / 50% merino wool
- / 50% acrylic
- / Ribbed bobble hat
- / Thinsulate thermal fleece lining
- / Glenmuir branded tab

BIGGA Paloma: Ladies Performance pique polo

£26.25

- / 100% performance polyester pique
- / Ladies' performance polo shirt
- / Anti-curl rib collar
- / Self colour embroidery above right hem



BIGGA Ontario: Mens zip front padded performance golf jacket

£60

- / 100% nylon ripstop fabric with padded quilt
- / Four-way stretch performance brushed side panels and sleeves
- / Low profile branded zips with chin guard. Zipped chest and side pockets
- / Stretch binding around hem and armholes
- / Embroidered branding

BIGGA Wick: Mens Zip neck lightweight performance midlayer

£41.25

- / 90% performance polyester 10% elastane
- / Contrast zip placket and inner collar. Weaved tricot non-stick backing
- / Jersey cuffs and hem. YKK zip with lockdown zip puller and chin guard
- / Printed branding at back neck



BIGGA Nova: Ladies zip front lightweight water repellent fleece golf jacket

£60

- / 100% polyester stretch brushed polar fleece
- / Teflon coated water repellent finish
- / Low profile branded zips with chin guard. Zipped side pockets
- / Double layered neck collar
- / Embroidered branding

Andy Unwin, head greenkeeper, Birley Wood

"I bought some BIGGA merchandise for when I'm at section events as it lets people know who you are and anyone who's new to these events is able to find you more easily. I think they are smart, of good quality and come at a fair price and it's great to know that everything you buy contributes towards the Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund!"



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traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk



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Membership Administration Manager
elaine@bigga.co.uk



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To contact the Membership Team call 01347 833 800 and select (option 1)

Full Members Personal Accident Helpline
0113 393 6300

Greenkeepers Legal Assistance
0808 181 9194

Lifestyle Counselling Helpline
0333 000 2082

Human Resources (HR) Helpline
0330 332 2636
BIGGAmembers@xactgroup.co.uk

Meet the speaker

Michael Astrop, Principal, Coach the Mind



Michael with his companions Yorick, the Skull, and the monkey used in a selection of the sessions



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deb@bigga.co.uk



Jackie Sedgwick
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jackie@bigga.co.uk

To contact the Learning & Development Team call 01347 833 800 and select (option 3)

Hello, my name's Michael Astrop and I'm a speaker at Continue to Learn, as well as a trainer at FTMI each year. It's always exciting for me to come back, because it's great to see people developing over time.

I'd like to go through some of the props that we use in the learning delivery and why we choose them.

I must introduce my good friend Yorick [a human skull], which is a prop that we use in the presentation skills session. One of the key things about any opening is to give something that's very unexpected, different or quite strong and I find a human skull has that effect in any situation. It's also a focal point when it's just sitting on the table, because people in the audience are thinking 'what's that skull sitting on that table for?' It then becomes a talking point and you can use it in many ways. It can be the

customer that was forgotten, the client that didn't come back, all sorts of views. It's a good prop to start a discussion or presentation.

The other friend I use a lot is a monkey, and although he doesn't have a name, I use him fundamentally to talk about the fight and flight mechanism. We refer to The Chimp Paradox, which is a book written by Dr Steve Peters. He says that inside all

“ One of the key things about any opening is to give something that's very unexpected and I find a human skull has that effect.

of us there is a chimp and I use him in particular when I ask the group where they see their chimp most. The answer, of course, is in the car. I suspect that many of you drive a car and you'll see the chimp inside when someone cuts you up or moves in front of you unexpectedly, the chimp pops up and says 'show them all about it', so you tailgate them, shake your hand or flash your lights. However, the

chimp also arises when you're put in a high-pressure situation and your fight or flight response kicks in, so it's important to learn what's happening and why and then you can begin to control those natural, physical responses. I've been using him so many times at BTME that people often come in and ask whether I've brought the monkey with me, he's very famous at BIGGA. The other things I use in all my sessions are tactile toys. Part of the learning process is keeping people engaged and mentally in the room. Our minds all wander and we think four times as fast as people talk, so we have the ability to drift off and still be connected to the conversation. Of course, sometimes we wander off completely and so these things keep people connected. All the time they're fiddling with these, they're also listening.



Michael covers a variety of topics at FTMI and BTME

One of the things I also suggest is that to get over nerves, you use a stress ball or something like that to 'manage the monkey'. One of my delegates did his entire presentation holding a stress ball behind his back to control his nerves.

The other very popular one is the classic Slinky, which people absolutely love. There's no age on this and people often enter the training room and see these and they'll say 'my small daughter or son would enjoy this', but within minutes >>



Some of the props used by Michael at FTMI



Fiona Lyttle
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Emma Willis
Administrator
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www.the-gtc.co.uk

/greenkeepers trainingcommittee

@TheOfficialGTC

there they are playing with the toys. That keeps them mentally in the room. I know I have them still with me in the room if they're playing with the toys.

Older people, 50s plus are always very suspicious because learning to them was a classroom-based 'pay attention' process, so when they see this, they're shocked. Young people, anyone 30 or under, need no second invitation.

The one thing greenkeepers are not used to doing is sitting in a room like this for three hours. We'll do some exercises, but for someone who is fundamentally attuned to working outside, being in the fresh air, using their hands, this environment is difficult for them to take on information. These toys keep them mentally here and more comfortable with this alien, learning environment that we have.



What's on at Continue to Learn 2020?

DEPUTIES' CONFERENCE

How to Get Employees Engaged and Improve Performance

68% of employees are not engaged at work and of those, 17% are actively disengaged, which means a lot of time is being wasted in the workplace. This session will give you an insight as to why this happens and what practical steps can be taken to reverse attitudes and subsequently behaviours.

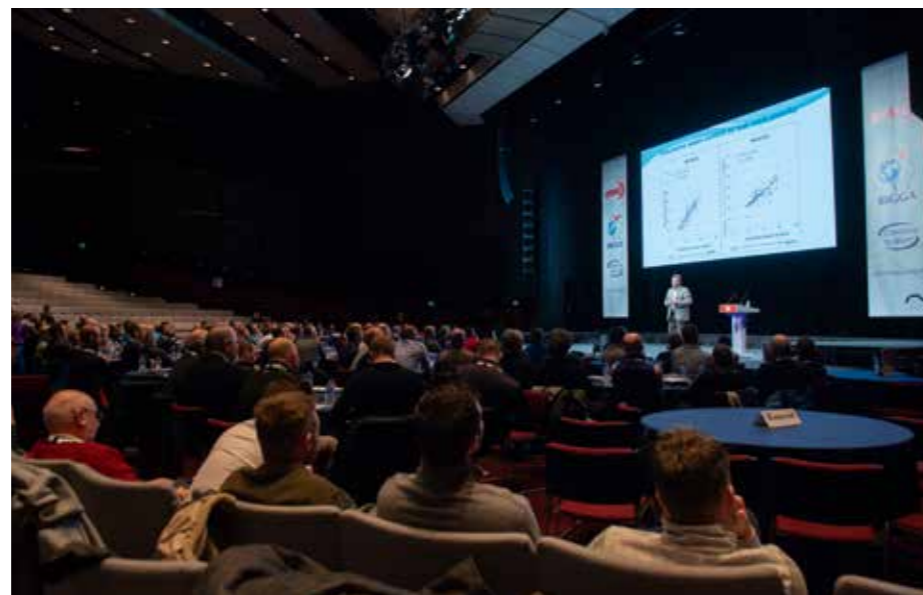
What will you learn?

- / Understand what employee engagement is and how it manifests itself
- / Create a climate for engagement
- / Recognise the different kinds of engagement
- / How to get the organisational culture right for positive engagement
- / The five powerful steps to improve employee engagement
- / How to embed the engagement mindset

The Deputies' Conference will also feature talks from Rebecca Jones asking 'Should you really be the boss?', Ben Davis on 'Using running to combat mental health', a panel discussion on how to be an effective deputy and Phil Helmn MG on 'Recognising personality types and using them to get what you want!'

When is it on?

The Deputies' Conference takes place in the Harrogate Convention Centre's Main Auditorium on Tuesday 21 January from 9.30am to 1pm.



Check out the Continue to Learn at BTME 2020 Education Programme for more information or head to the BIGGA website to find out more.

Contact the L&D team to book your place today.

WORKSHOPS

Writing Reports and Proposals that Deliver Results

All decisions today are based upon reports and proposals. The skill and ability to craft a persuasive document can often be the difference between the right decision or the wrong decision. This workshop will look at the four different stages that you will need to produce a convincing document.

What will you learn?

- / Plan and structure a document for a variety of objectives
- / Write a well-organised document that leads to a persuasive conclusion
- / Produce a readable document with recognition of correct punctuation and grammar
- / Edit and review a document to suit the designated objectives
- / Proof read the document in a precise way, taking into account the issues of the digital mindset
- / Manage the report writing process to deliver the completed document to the required time frame

When is it on?

Sunday 19 January from 9.30am to 5.30pm.

How to Develop, Present and Sell New Ideas

Learn how you can easily develop an innovative team to ensure the future success of your club.

Learning Outcomes:

- / Why you should be supporting innovation within your team
- / What we really mean by innovation and why it's not about taking risks or making huge changes in your club
- / Learn how you can lead innovation in your club - some simple activities you can add to your team meetings and planning sessions
- / Innovation options which might suit your club, members and team members
- / Develop a model for innovation in your club
- / Review how to sell new ideas to club members, committee members and your team

When is it on?

Monday 20 January from 9am to 12.30pm.

Putting the Praise into Appraisals

This workshop is ideal for managers, supervisors and team leaders who want

to make performance appraisals work to maintain and develop continuous high performance. It is designed to provide you with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to improve the performance of staff by conducting meaningful performance reviews.

What will you learn?

- / Examine the nature of performance management/appraisal and establish how to get the best from your team
- / The need for clear, realistic objectives and key result areas
- / Use a systematic approach when planning, preparing for and conducting the pre-interview meeting and one-to-ones
- / Know how to measure competencies
- / Develop and practice interviewing skills
- / Conduct appraisal interviews with confidence

When is it on?

Monday 20 January from 9am to 12.30pm.

FOCUS ON SESSION

Thinking on the Spot

We all 'think' every day of our lives, but it is often overlooked as a skill that can be improved. Don't get caught 'off-guard', prepare yourself to be able to think on the spot. In this Focus On session you will acquire skills of how to gather and articulate your thoughts concisely, clearly and convincingly. A wide range of techniques will be explored and rehearsed to help you make the most of your mind and thinking processes, so that you can eventually truly think on-the-spot.

What will you learn?

- / React confidently to unexpected questions
- / Know how to buy yourself thinking time
- / Have a structure for answering challenging questions
- / Three ways to add depth and engagement to your answers
- / Know the appropriate responses to obtain further information
- / Bring conversations to life and move them to a higher level

When is it on?

Tuesday 21 January from 2.45 to 4.45pm.



Congratulations to the following members who achieved CPD Approved status this month:

Anthony Kirwan, Romford; Jamie Wells, Romford; Wendy O'Brien, Jurmala; Peteris Sadovskis, St Andrews Links Trust; Daryn Curtis, Royal Mid-Surrey; Peter Dawson, South Essex Golf & CC; Jason Norwood, Rudding Park; Alan Fitzgerald, Ledgerock; Jeremy Ward, Rotherham; Chris Low, Olton; Callum Goodhind, Prestbury; Michael Budd, Woldingham; Sam Bethell, Chipstead; Adam McColl, Gerrards Cross; Sam Evans MG, Fulwell

Congratulations to the following members who achieved their CPD Milestone this month:

Peter Dawson, South Essex Golf & CC; Steven Tierney MG, Golfpark Zurichsee AG; Callum Goodhind, Prestbury; Simon Lambert, Seaford Head; George Pitts MG, Sunningdale; Adam McColl, Gerrards Cross



How to CPD

Are you wondering what CPD is? Would you like to improve your career prospects, but aren't sure where to start?

BIGGA members have access to a range of educational opportunities and almost every event we host enables you to bank CPD credits. You can claim credits for attending seminars, getting involved with schemes or even by reading Greenkeeper International each month.

To get started with your CPD journey, head to the Members' section of the BIGGA website and select Continuing Professional Development. There you'll find resources, the answers to frequently asked questions and details of how you can get CPD approved.

www.bigga.org.uk/member-homepage/continuing-professional-development.html

EDUCATE EXHIBIT EVOLVE

Continue to Learn 2020 | 19-22 January 2020
Harrogate Convention Centre | btme.org.uk

BIGGA's dynamic and world-leading education programme returns to Harrogate in January.

With 250 hours of education delivered by more than 60 of the industry's most engaging speakers, Continue to Learn 2020 will deliver the best opportunity for professional development anywhere in the turf management industry.



FUNDING YOUR FUTURE

BIGGA's Learning & Development Fund supports a vast array of educational opportunities for BIGGA members. From subsidies, scholarships and refunds of fees to seminars, workshops and conferences, the funds generated by BIGGA Education Supporters improve education in the greenkeeping industry every single day. We ask BIGGA members to continue to support those companies that are committed to supporting you on your career journey.



Individual Contributors: Steven Tierney MG | Chris Lomas MG | Andrew Campbell MG CGCS | Richard McGlynn
Jaey Goodchild | Frank Newberry | Greg Evans MG | Jon Kiger

Greenkeeper Training

BIGGA is actively involved in raising the standard of greenkeeper training. The association is a member of the Greenkeepers Training Committee and strives to enhance the level of education through various means, including section, regional and national workshops, seminars and conferences.

Alongside this, the range and quality of training available throughout the UK means there is a training course for every greenkeeper. Formal education will improve the quality of greenkeeping

and help produce better quality golf courses to the benefit of all within the industry. There is a clear link between education and training and economic success and all clubs should invest in the education of their staff.

For formal qualifications, this begins by selecting a training provider that meets the criteria laid down by the GTC. There are also a number of GTC Approved training providers, identifiable by the logo. In many cases, funding support is available.



Abingdon & Witney College



Common Leys Farm, Hailey, Witney, Oxfordshire OX29 9UU
Contact Name: Edward Collett
T: 01235 216 216 | E: apprenticeships@abingdon-witney.ac.uk

A career in golf greenkeeping or in horticulture can take you all over the world, and it all starts with getting the proper experience with the right employer. As a regional and national award-winning provider, we are experts in delivering high standards of training and guidance, helping to match hundreds of apprentices with purposeful and practical opportunities every year with a wide range of exciting employers.

Our Ofsted rated 'outstanding' apprenticeships in greenkeeping and horticulture are offered at Levels 2 and 3. At Common Leys Farm, a 60-acre site specialised for teaching land-based skills, we also provide RHS courses, NVQs and work-based diplomas to ensure an unrivalled offering in these industries.



Berkshire College of Agriculture



Hall Place, Burchetts Green, Maidenhead, SL6 6QR
Contact Name: Rob Phillips
T: 07491 963 572 | E: rphillips@bca.ac.uk

BCA offers both Level 2 and Level 3 Golf Greenkeeping, Sportsturf, Landscaping, Arboriculture and Horticulture courses as apprenticeships or work-based diplomas. Delivery is either class based or online/distance, through our industry experienced assessors.

The college can also offer a wide range of short courses including PA1, 2 and 6, chainsaw options and more, tractor driving, strimmers and brushcutters. Please enquire for full details.



Merrist Wood College



Worpleston, Guildford, Surrey GU3 3PE
T: 0800 612 6008 | E: enquiries@activatelearning.ac.uk

Merrist Wood College offers a wide range of part-time, full-time and online distance learning qualifications in Sports Turf, Horticulture, Landscaping and Golf Management. Our sports turf qualifications include Sports Turf Level 2 and 3 diplomas, Golf Greenkeeping (Level 2) Intermediate Apprenticeship Standards and Sports Turf Operative (Level 2) Intermediate Apprenticeship Standards. Our short courses include FEPA PA1, PA2 and PA6 Safe Use of Pesticides, Chainsaw Use and more. Funding is available for Level 2 and 3 Apprenticeship Standards, qualifications for 16 to 18 year olds (fully funded) and qualification for 19+ learners (partially funded) — subject to eligibility.



Myerscough College and University Centre



St Michaels Road, Bilsborrow, Preston, Lancashire PR3 0RY
Contact Name: Course Enquiries Team
T: 0800 652 5592 | E: enquiries@myerscough.ac.uk
W: www.myerscough.ac.uk | Facebook.com/groups/MyerscoughSportsturfAlumni

Myerscough College and University Centre is the pioneering centre for sports turf and golf course management education in Europe.

Courses are available at all levels – from introductory practical skills training to our post graduate Masters Degree in Sustainable Golf Course Management. There are options for full-time or part-time online study. Our foundation degree, honours degree and MA programmes are available online and have

students enrolled from across the globe. Students enrolled on our degree courses are eligible to apply for a prestigious R&A Scholarship. Our work-based training team also provide nationwide apprenticeship opportunities in greenkeeper training.



Pershore College



Avonbank, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 3JP
T: 01926 318261 | E: ccampling@warwickshire.ac.uk
W: www.wcg.ac.uk

Pershore College is a national land-based centre of excellence and WCG is the largest college provider of Apprenticeship Standards in the Midlands.

Our well-established land-based apprenticeships include: golf greenkeeping/sports turf operative/groundsperson, arborist operative, forestry operative, horticulture/landscape operative, crop technician, land-based service engineering, serviceengineers and technicians. We also offer short courses in arboriculture as well as pesticides training: PA1, PA2, PA6 and many more. WCG works with over 1,100 employers and more than 2,500 apprentices with outstanding success rates.



Sparsholt College Hampshire



Winchester, Hampshire SO21 2NF | T: 0845 850 0916
E: apprenticeships@sparsholt.ac.uk | W: www.Sparsholt.ac.uk

As a land-based specialist College, Sparsholt campus offers extensive practical training facilities and equipment to meet the needs of Employers and Apprentices. Our core business covers Hampshire (including the Isle of Wight), Dorset, Wiltshire, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey and West Sussex.

We offer the new Level 2 apprenticeship standards, Golf greenkeeper and Sport Turf Operative, designed by employers for employers. We deliver these programmes over a two year period including day release training covering off the job training, support visits throughout and focussed preparation for End Point Assessment.

The College also offers an extensive range of other apprenticeship standards and commercial short courses relevant to land-based requirements such as PA1, PA2, PA6 and Safe Use of Chainsaws.



YMCA Training

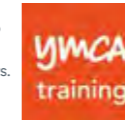


112 Great Russell Street, London, WC1B3NQ
Contact Name: Sallyann Smith
T: 07341 072519 | E: sallyann.smith@ymca.co.uk
W: www.ymca.co.uk

Apprenticeships are a cost-effective way for businesses to develop their new and existing staff and hire fresh talent, while giving someone a life-changing opportunity. As a leading national charity, we have a proven track record of successfully training thousands of apprentices every year who go on to build rewarding and fulfilling careers.

Among the portfolio of qualifications available at YMCA Training are Level 2 apprenticeships in Horticulture, Golf Greenkeeping and Sports Turf Operative. Having recently changed from 'frameworks'

to 'standards', these programmes are written by employers and academics within the sector, which means they're specifically designed to meet your needs as an employer. We are proud to recruit dedicated apprentices to golf clubs, nature industries and sports organisations all over the UK, including delivering sports turf apprentices to Manchester United Football Club for 29 years.



Gosta Training Ltd

Glasgow G40 2AB
Contact: Lesley Lowrie
T: 01415 563 999 | E: Learn@gostatraining.co.uk
W: www.gostatraining.co.uk

SVQ Level 2 (SCQF 5) and SVQ Level 3 (SCQF 6) and Modern Apprenticeship in Greenkeeping/Sports Turf and Landscaping. Also available SVQ Level 2 (SCQF 5) Modern Apprenticeship in Sports Turf Groundsman.

Attendance day release. SVQ Level 4 Management is available with flexible learning options. Lantra and NPTC Industry related short courses with certification include Pesticide courses, Chainsaw, full range of Machinery training, First Aid, Defibrillation training and more. Candidates may use their Individual Training Account to fund many of the courses. Training courses are available in the Glasgow and Edinburgh areas throughout the year.



Coleg Cambria

Llaneurgain, Northop CH7 6AA
Cyswllt: Tim Ymgysylltu â Chyflogwyr
Contact: Employer Engagement Team
T: 0300 30 30 006 | E: employers@cambria.ac.uk
W: www.cambria.ac.uk

Coleg Cambria offers a fantastic range of work-based qualifications in sports turf, horticulture and environmental conservation ranging from Level 2 to Level 3 providing you and your workforce with the skills required to support future progression in the industry. We also offer a vast range of accredited short courses including PA1 – PA6, chainsaw, brushcutting, hedge laying and wood chipper to help build skills in the team. Work-based qualifications are available throughout North Wales and the North West of England and assessed in your own place of work. Please contact us for more information on qualifications and accessing funding.

Mae Coleg Cambria yn cynnig ystod wych o gymwysterau yn y gwaith mewn Caeau Chwaraeon, Garddwriaeth a Chadwraeth Amgylcheddol, sy'n amrywio o Lefel 2 i Lefel 3, gan roi'r sgiliau angenrheidiol i chi a'ch gweithlu i gefnogi datblygiadau yn y diwydiant yn y dyfodol. Rydym hefyd yn cynnig ystod helaeth o gyrsiau byr achrededig, gan gynnwys PA1 – PA6. Llif gadwyn, torri prysgoed, torri gwrychoedd a sgloidiwr coed i helpu i feithrin sgiliau tim. Mae'r cymwysterau hyn ar gael ledled Gogledd Cymru a Gogledd Orllewin Lloegr a byddant yn cael eu hasesu yn eich gweithle chi eich hun. Cysylltwch â ni i gael mwy o wybodaeth am gymwysterau a chyllid.



SRUC Elmwood

Scotland's Rural College Cupar, Fife KY15 4JB
Contact: Mike Clark
T: 01334 658 969 | E: michael.clark@sruc.ac.uk
W: www.sruc.ac.uk/elmwood

Full-time National Certificate Greenkeeping, SVQ Sports Turf block release and work based options. HNC Golf Course Management and HND Golf Management full time and distance learning. Short courses in Chainsaw, Tree Climbing and Rescue Techniques.

Plant Operation, Pesticide courses, Lantra Training and certification in machinery and equipment safe use.



The Greenkeepers Training Committee Ltd.

Getting into greenkeeping?

The Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC) provides help, advice and key information to greenkeepers at all stages of their career and to golf clubs as employers. It is independent organisation promoting greenkeeping as a professional career. From greenkeeping apprenticeships to degree level courses, you can find information on this and more by visiting www.the-gtc.co.uk.

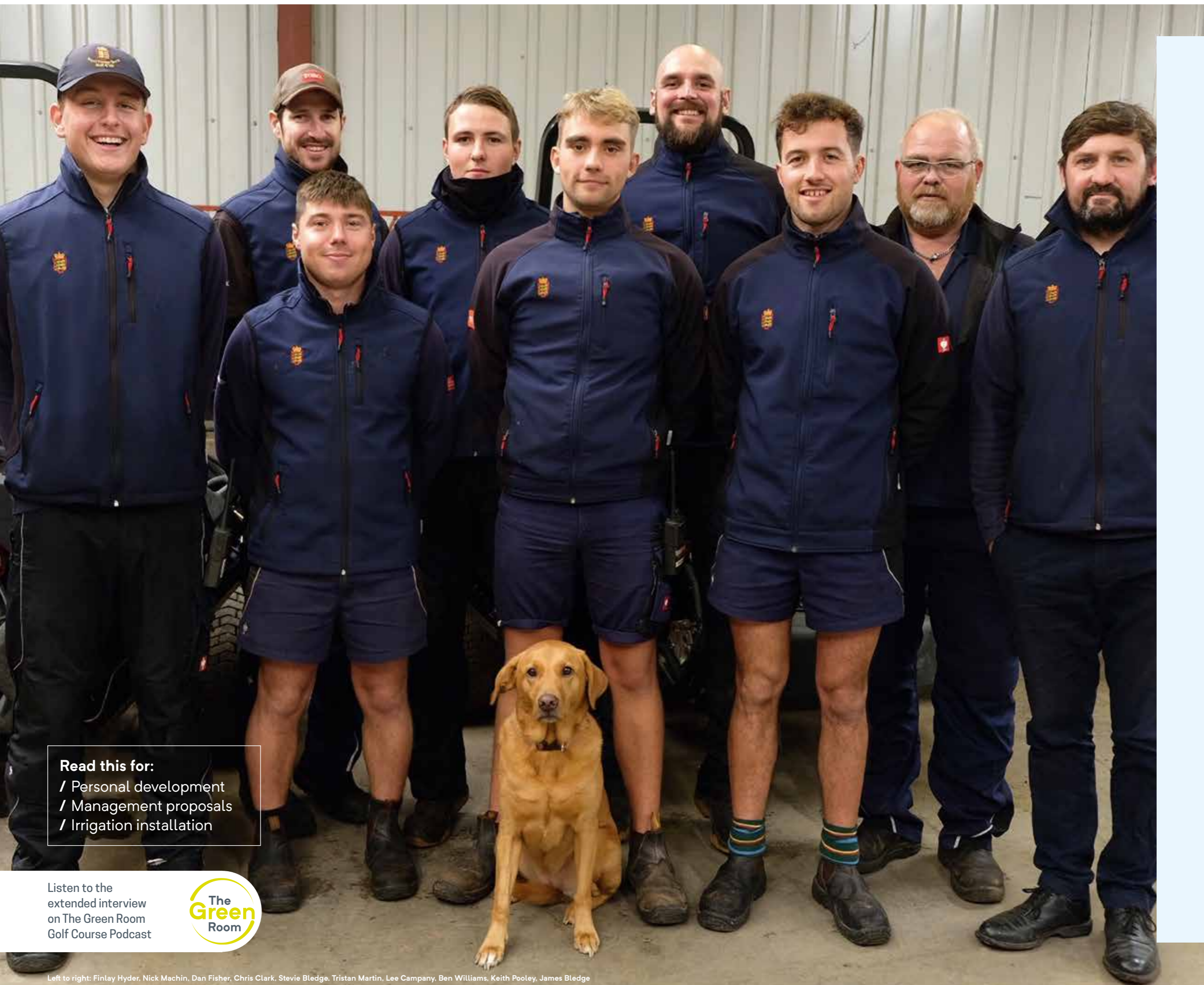
The Greenkeepers Training Committee Ltd. Aldwark Manor, Aldwark, Alne, York YO61 1UF

T: 01347 838 640

E: golf@the-gtc.co.uk

W: www.the-gtc.co.uk

f /greenkeeperstrainingcommittee



I'm not looking for the best greenkeeper in the world

Royal Cinque Ports, Kent

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

Royal Cinque Ports should have hosted The Open four times over its 127-year history.

Unfortunately, the 1938 and 1949 stagings were relocated to Royal St George's due to heavy flooding. While Royal St George's is preparing to host the championship once again in 2020, golf's oldest major has never been back to Deal, just a few short miles down the east Kent coast.

Working hard to push the course to future glories is Course Manager James Bledge, who has instilled a culture of professional development that is paying off for the greenkeeping team. There's a Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner, FTMI (The Future Turf Managers Initiative sponsored by Jacobsen) graduates and two staff moving on to Course Manager roles among its staff and the Royal Cinque Port members are seeing the benefits out on the course.

Karl Hansell stopped by to find out what drives James and his team to achieve such national recognition.

You're really big into the education and development of your staff and yourself. Where does that drive come from?

I see how competitive this industry is and what you've got to do to get ahead. There's always someone better than yourself, my father always told me that.

I'm close friends with Lee Strutt MG at the RAC, and he has always pushed and made me realise what you've got to do to stand out and be noticed, so I try to pass that on to my guys. »

Read this for:

- / Personal development
- / Management proposals
- / Irrigation installation

Listen to the extended interview on The Green Room Golf Course Podcast



Left to right: Finlay Hyder, Nick Machin, Dan Fisher, Chris Clark, Stevie Bledge, Tristan Martin, Lee Company, Ben Williams, Keith Pooley, James Bledge



Tee levelling

Is an appreciation of personal development something you always had or did it come later?

It came later. I loved my job and was always a grafter. I did college work early and got it out the way, but that was not necessarily for the best because I was just getting the qualification, rather than learning. I've learned a lot more since then by doing things at BTME and Continue to Learn, such as short courses, seminars and other training.

Is encouraging continued learning key to inspiring the next generation?

I'm a big believer in getting my guys to try everything. Not only because it helps if you're short staffed, but it also keeps them interested. How can you keep them motivated if they know that every day they're going to do the same job? Job variation is key and the guys like it.

Finlay and Ben cut fairways this week — it's Finlay's first week and I put him on a fairway mower. We'll make sure he's supervised so it won't matter if he makes a mistake. And if he does, he'll learn from it. We've got training sheets where they tick off the hours they've done, before they're allowed off on their own.

Some of the biggest things I've learnt are through shadowing people, such as Lee or Dan Lightfoot MG. When Dan was the course manager at Bearwood Lakes, he couldn't have been more accommodating. I shadowed him for three days and he had me in all his

meetings, wanting me to see exactly what it was to be a course manager. It really inspired me and I thought, I want to be just like that.

Do you think people take up their first job as managers without an idea of what it actually entails?

I think a lot of folk get a massive fright. We try to pass that message on at FTMI, to say this is a bigger deal than you think. I know a lot of guys who have panicked when they got the job, myself included. My first year was tough, the second year was harder, and you get there, but you need to have help from people. I'm not ashamed to say that I've had help from people, whether it's a phone call or a visit. I've a great friend in Sean McLean next door at Prince's. If ever I'm questioning what I'm doing, I'll ask Sean.



Royal Cinque Ports GC

We'll talk about it and we walk each other's courses all the time, offering advice if it's asked for.

What do you look for when you're interviewing for staff?

The main thing I look for is if they get on with the team. I'm looking for a personality, not someone who's going to be the best greenkeeper in the world. When we took Ben on I made sure we came in here at lunchtime and saw how he conversed with the rest of the team. When he left I asked them how they thought he'd get on and if they said he's the kind of guy we want to work with, we'd offer him a job.

CVs and cover letters mean a lot to me as well. It's the first instruction you're given as a potential employee so if you can't get that right, you might struggle. That's come through FTMI as well, looking at techniques of applying for jobs and answering the covering letter like it's an exam paper. Keep things short, sweet and punchy and stand out from the crowd, whether it's through different coloured paper or fonts. It's all these little things that get you ahead.

I don't have one-on-one interviews sitting in an office. Maybe there is a time and a place, but I think you get more out of people and they open up more when they're outside. We'll always walk the course and have something to eat with them. You don't get to meet the real person if you're sitting in an intense environment with them.

We're a team here of 10 huge personalities. I'll let them know if I'm not happy with something, but I treat them with masses of respect and we try to look after them. They get a lunch every day and I fought for that because it saves the staff a lot of money and it is good motivation. They get uniforms too. We're

“ I think you get more out of people and they open up more when they're outside.

trying to get them new working conditions with a new canteen next year and with our training budget we pay for them to go to BTME and Continue to Learn.

I've worked at golf courses where you had to buy your own uniform and steel toe-capped boots; I know which I'd prefer.

Does it help having the clubhouse so close to the maintenance shed, meaning you're very visible in the club?

Definitely, and I actively encourage the team to speak to the members. We try not to mix machinery and golf, but should one of the guys be standing at the side of a fairway and someone's playing out of a bunker, I'll encourage them to rake it for them and then have a quick chat. I've never bought into the idea that greenkeepers should be seen and not heard. Quite often, our members are really interested in the course. They made me a



James Bledge, Chris Clark and Nick Machin working on the sprayer equipment

full member of the club and they like to sit down in the bar and talk about the course, which I quite enjoy.

You've had a major irrigation project completed here this year. What was that experience like?

Work began with MJ Abbotts last September when we were building the new holes. Then from December we started closing a hole at a time. We mole ploughed in new cable everywhere and all the heads got swapped to Toro. We had four heads around every green, now

there's eight, back-to-back. In the past, if we wanted to water the green, we had to water the approach as well. You can end up wasting a lot of water that way, but we can control it a lot more now.

You've started using Toro's smartphone app to control the irrigation. Do you have to budget yourself, so you don't get trigger happy?

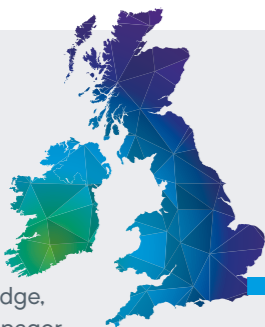
It's a big bit of software and you can be very precise. We had a grand opening ceremony, where everyone went up onto the clubhouse balcony. I set a »




**GKB MACHINES, TAKING OUR KNOWLEDGE OF CONTRACTING TO SUPPLY THE BEST POSSIBLE MACHINE SOLUTION.
BE IT A NATURAL, SYNTHETIC OR HYBRID PITCH.. WE HAVE A MACHINE TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS.**

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IN THE SHED

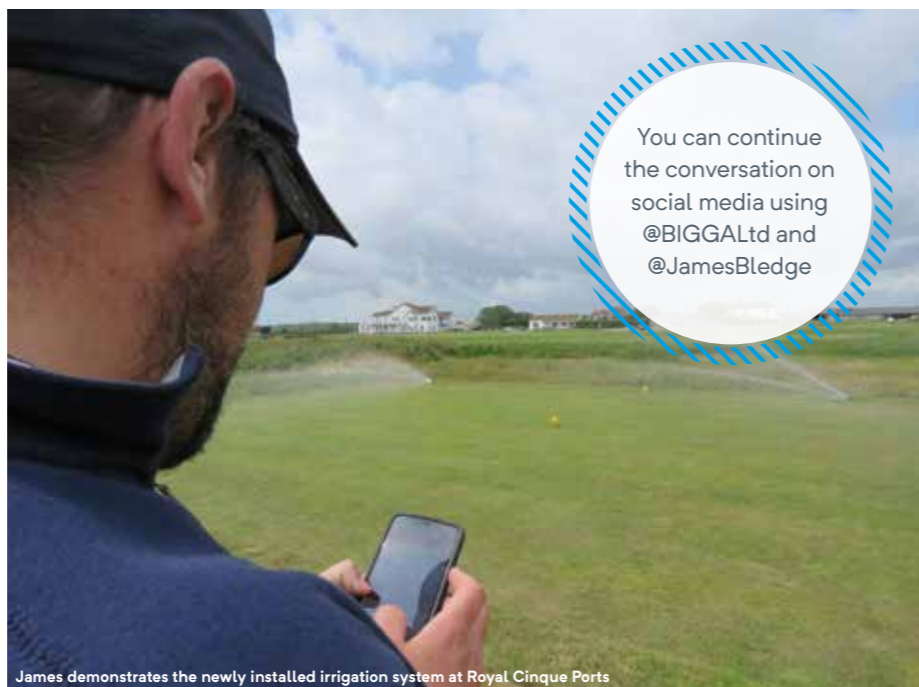


The Team

- / James Bledge, course manager
- / Lee Campy, deputy course manager
- / Ben Williams, greenkeeper
- / Chris Clark, greenkeeper
- / Daniel Fisher, greenkeeper
- / Keith Pooley, greenkeeper
- / Michael McDonnell, greenkeeper
- / Nick Machin, greenkeeper
- / Tristan Martin, greenkeeper
- / Finlay Hyder, apprentice greenkeeper
- / Stevie Bledge, team dog

The Equipment

- / Kubota 6060 tractor
- / 2 x Kubota 5040 tractors
- / Kubota UH48-4 excavator
- / 2 x Toro HDX utility vehicles
- / 3 x Toro GTX-e utility vehicles
- / Toro 5800 sprayer
- / Toro 4500 rough mower
- / 2 x Toro 5610 fairway mowers
- / Toro 3100 trim mower
- / 3 x Toro 3420
- / 3 x Toro 1000
- / 4 x Toro Flex 2120
- / Toro Procore
- / Salsco HP11 -III roller
- / Weidenmann Terra Brush
- / Weidenmann Super 500 flail
- / Weidenmann GX18
- / Verdo Supercompact
- / Charterhouse Rink DS 3800 topdresser
- / Toro Propass 200 topdresser
- / Toro 2500 trailed topdresser
- / Bernhard Express Dual 4000 grinder
- / Bernhard Anglemaster 4000 grinder
- / 3 x 5 ton trailers
- / Procore trailer
- / 3 x Toro Transpro trailers
- / Classen HSC18 turfcutter
- / Toro DPA verticut units



James demonstrates the newly installed irrigation system at Royal Cinque Ports

You can continue the conversation on social media using @BIGGALtd and @JamesBledge

programme where the sprinklers started at the 18th tee and worked all the way up the fairway and got one of the female members to press the button to officially launch it.

Your irrigation system is your biggest asset, but it's under the ground and you can't see it, so clubs sometimes wonder where their money's going. But here they were all 100% behind it.

I've worked at golf courses where they've said 'we can't dig that drainage ditch on the 16th because the members need new carpets in the locker room'. That's so common and it always will be, all over Britain. But your course is your biggest asset. People don't remember coming here for the shower they had. They remember coming here because our 16th approach is so awesome and they got to putt up it from 70 yards away. I think that's very important and a lot of clubs could do well to remember that.

How do you change that culture? Does the greenkeeper need to be more vocal?

I spend a lot of time doing proposals. I give them an example of what may happen if we don't do something, or what can happen positively if we invest in a piece of kit. For example, we bought a roller last year that was a little more expensive, but I thought it was worth the extra money. One of the things we struggle with is speed on our greens and I said, I can guarantee that we can up the speed by a foot if you buy me this roller.

I get Keith [Pooley], the mechanic, to record every time a machine goes down and how much it cost to fix it. When it came to renewing a couple of tractors a couple of years ago, I could tell them 'this

tractor is 30 years old, this is how much it cost us this year, this is how much it's projected to cost next year'.

Greenkeepers need to be on the ball when it comes to using equipment to justify things. The POGO for example, I can justify not chucking water on the greens by spending £1,000 on a POGO. I can save 5,000m³ of water by using this POGO because I'm going to hand water only where it needs it, rather than chucking the heads up every night and putting water all over. By saving that water, I can put it on my fairways instead, so they don't dry out.

It's data driven, but you've also got to have the communication skills to back it up.

It's all in the way you ask for things. I guess. Whether that would work at other clubs, I couldn't say. It's a hard job that we've got, and I know that people can say we're an affluent club, but with more money comes greater expectations. Golfers expect the course to be in top condition every single day. When we looked around, I was disappointed in a couple of areas of the course. It stresses you out a little but you have to be proactive.

Rather than the 5% who have a complaint, do greenkeepers need to listen to the 95% who enjoyed the course a little more?

I try not to be too harsh with the team, though I am my own worst critic. We strive so hard to be perfect. I always say to the members, tell me as much as you want about how good the course is, we can never hear it too much.



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Read this for:

- / Golf club politics
- / Building relationships
- / Communication



Seton Wakenshaw, greens chairman (left) and Simon Olver, course manager at Whitley Bay work side by side

Want to know more?
 You can find more great features like this in the latest edition of Your Course - available in your clubhouse and on the BIGGA website today

CONFESIONS OF A GREENS CHAIRMAN

How a positive working relationship is helping Whitley Bay thrive

Whatever the reasons, when greens chairmen go bad, it's usually the course and club that suffers.

But it doesn't have to be that way. At Whitley Bay, on the Tyneside coast, Seton Wakenshaw's two years at the helm could be reproduced as a manual on how you can work with your course manager to be a great chairman and how everyone can benefit.

A plus handicap golfer who plays for Northumberland county, he arrived in post during a crucial time for a club that was midway through a substantial redevelopment project. It was a four-year plan to renovate the 6th through 10th holes and new approaches, green complexes and bunkering were all part of the massive enterprise.

Seton could have taken an overbearing approach but, in a method that marked his tenure, he cultivated his relationship with course manager Simon Olver and educated the membership with regular and informative communication.

So, if you're struggling to build relationships with your committee or senior management, what can you learn from Seton's approach?

Here are his secrets...

What I wanted to achieve when I took on the role

I didn't want to do what people thought I would. The perception was that because I

was a low handicap I was going to set the course up to be difficult. My desire was to make it fair for everyone.

My only personal agenda was to learn more — to learn from Simon about course maintenance, agronomy and so on. And ultimately produce the best conditioned course possible.

I decided that, working alongside him, we needed to be confident in what we were

doing, that he was the expert at the club and that the members needed to listen to the course manager who was the qualified professional within the organisation.

Communication is key

I wrote a newsletter which went out to members each month. It was probably three or four pages and, because of my background in design, it »



Whitley Bay golf course



Maintenance work being completed

was professionally presented. I wanted to make it really clear to Simon that I was listening to what he had to say and equally he was listening to me.

We set up several forums — some on a weekend so more members could attend — but because of the information that went out in the newsletters very few came. So, we actually got to the point where there was very little comment, members knew everything that would be taking place in advance and this averted most questions.

We would try and inform them of things before they happened. You can't win everyone over but two-way communication was valued.

There's got to be trust

Simon and I are of a similar age and have a similar ethos regarding golf course set up, and we are good friends — that was the key to it.

He'd been at Whitley Bay about two years and there was a shared work ethic and agenda in terms of what we were going to do. There was a trust there and it was 100 per cent on both sides.

We spoke a lot — on a daily basis. If anything needed discussing he would ring or I would give him a call. He plays golf as well and we played a

reasonable amount leading up to my appointment. Then we played every two or three weeks when I became chairman of greens.

We worked out that we were on the same page in what we were trying to do and it clicked.

It was a fairly unique way of working and I'm not sure you would see it very often. But it was very natural.

How that relationship needs to work

Being employed in an industry that is primarily run by amateur boards or

committees is very challenging for employees. That was the biggest shock to me, partly because those committees change on a relatively regular basis and also because of the personal agendas people may have for being on that committee.

The really interesting thing is that people generally don't have any experience in the industry and that's really difficult.

So, the relationship between the chairman of greens and the course manager needs to be a close one. For me, it's just a lot of common sense. There needs



Simon Olver enjoying the course

to be full trust and buy-in to the 'project' and a good course manager is going to have a long-term view on things.

It has to be bought into from both parties, even if the chairman of greens has to fight for that at times at board or committee level. Both parties have to commit time and energy to a common goal — a plan that will drive decisions within the financial constraints of the business.

In my experience, a course manager wants a chairman of greens who they can relate to and work with. Because Simon and I worked well together, it was a massive positive as it pulled the communication together and it strengthened our positions.

Those two people lead by example and I believe that it's not just what you say, it's what you do.

Do your homework – and know your limits

We were working with architect Jonathan Gaunt on our construction project and there were a lot of site visits. I read quite a lot about golf course architecture at the time and this informed site visits.

That was one of the big reasons for our good relationship. I was interested and quite happy to ask questions. Questions are never stupid, no matter how naïve or simple they may seem. I would ask a huge number of questions to inform my knowledge and continued doing that throughout my two years — asking questions a member might ask when they don't have any background of knowledge through to much more advanced ideas.

Even when we'd had long discussions about why we were doing something — for turf health, or why the green surface performance was as it was at that point, or whether it was around disease or sustainability — I would ask more and more in depth



Whitley Bay

questions on the discussions we'd had. People would say 'you must know almost as much as Simon'. But I was quick to clarify that my knowledge was a very small fraction of his and wouldn't make any claim beyond that.

Greenkeeping is more of a science now than it ever has been and it is important to recognise that this has elevated the role and value of the course manager.

Where I could contribute was from the golf course design perspective. We did a lot with shaping fairways, rough approaches and so on, but what he liked from me was that I offered a fresh pair of eyes on things. We would often go out with a spray can and mark things out. If I was going out at the weekend, he was happy to say 'have a look and see if there is anything and message me'.

We had that similar attention to detail. Almost every day we would message back and forth.

How it all comes together

There has to be an absolute level of trust and the chairman of greens has to want to learn. That's really significant. If you've got a good course manager you can be confident with the decisions you are making.

Simon and I are of a similar age and a similar ethos, regarding golf course set up, and we are good friends – that was the key to it.

The more, within reason, you can instruct the members that this is what you're doing because you're sticking to a long-term plan, rather than asking their opinion on a short-term fix, the more you'll be able to achieve.

You've got to be prepared for a few questions. But we wouldn't operate just for today. You're trying to get the course as good as it can be today but with a view that,

over time, it's going to be even better, healthier and more sustainable because of the things that you are doing.

What would I do differently?

I've no regrets. We took a very systematic approach and had very rational ways of doing things. The working relationship with the course manager and greens team was a big deal and I thought it was

really important. We stuck to the plans we made and they were to produce a course for all members that could be enjoyed and provide true handicaps. That's what we did.

I can't say I would do anything differently. I'm a big believer in that if you don't have the golf course you don't have a golf club. You are trying to balance getting the clubhouse side of things and the course side of things right. The reason Whitley Bay is thriving at the minute is because of the course. And the course is in great condition because the club trusts its course manager and his team.

The dos and don'ts of effective greens chairmen

DO...

- / Be prepared and want to learn about greenkeeping and course management.
- / Trust your course manager and work with them - they are the expert.
- / Develop short, mid and long-term plans together with the course manager — and stick to them where you possibly can.
- / Have a thick skin and be prepared to justify the plans you are carrying out.

- / Recognise the need for clear and thorough communication.

DON'T...

- / Have a personal agenda — on bunkers, rough, green speed and so on. These should be driven by the restrictions that budget and style will impose upon what the greenkeepers can achieve.
- / Allow members to have too much influence on

- course set up. They are not the experts.
- / Be swayed by personal agendas on the committee. There should be an agreed mid- to long-term plan that can be implemented by the greens team.
- / Do it because you like the title or status of being chairman of greens. That's the worst reason for doing anything.

BIGGA TURF MANAGEMENT EXHIBITION 2020

Start the Roaring Twenties in style at the biggest party of the year

Building on the incredible success of BTME 2019, Europe's largest turf management exhibition returns to the Harrogate Convention Centre from Tuesday 21 to Thursday 23 January 2020.

BTME will feature more than 150 exhibiting companies spread across four zones at the Harrogate Convention Centre.

Alongside the exhibitors will be the Green Room Podcast Live Stage hosted by Curtis Tyrrell MG CGCS, a Sustainability Zone in association with the Golf Environment Organisation and the STRI Group will be showcasing science in action in a live turf laboratory. There'll also be the return of Golf Course Construction LIVE and



the New Products Area. After the first day of the exhibition all visitors are invited to join the BIGGA Welcome Celebration hosted by Naga Munchetty in the main auditorium. This event features two drinks receptions and will celebrate all the finest achievements and milestones from this year.

We're kicking off the second day of BTME in style, with the free-to-attend BTME Breakfast Club taking a look at "Cock-ups, Disasters and Calamities" out on the course, following the BTME Early Bird 5k Run sponsored by Syngenta helping to raise awareness of mental health.

As always, Continue to Learn will kick off the week, with the education programme evolving to better suit the needs of BIGGA members. Taking place from Sunday 19 to Wednesday 22

January, the association's Learning & Development team has put together its largest-ever package of education.

Continue to Learn features more than 250 hours of education delivered by over 90 speakers.

The Golf Course Architecture and Management Forum will showcase collaborations between architects, course managers and their greenkeeping teams at some of the biggest projects in golf, including Royal Portrush, Royal Dornoch and The JCB Golf & Country Club.

Regular favourites such as the Turf Managers' Conference, the Deputies' Conference and the Young Greenkeepers' Conference will also return.

Register now for BTME 2020 by heading to the BTME website.



Students identify types of turf at BTME 2019

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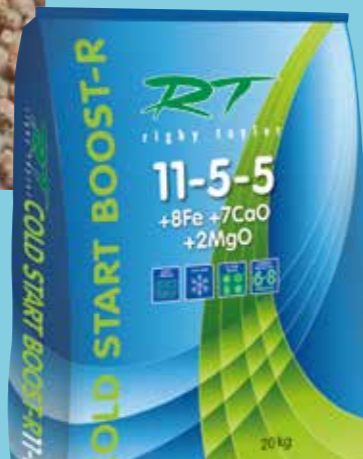
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Kick start your day and join Ben Davis, the Running Ambassador for CALM, and some of the BIGGA Staff for an early morning 5K run, sponsored by Syngenta.

Where: Harrogate Convention Centre main entrance - opposite the Crowne Plaza entrance

When: 6.30am, Wednesday 22 January 2020

Entries must be received by 13 December 2019 and runners will receive a complimentary souvenir T-Shirt. For more information and to register to run visit www.bigga.org.uk/btme/btme-early-bird-run.html or scan the QR code.



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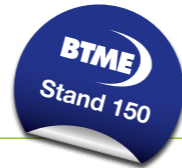
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Greenkeeper Pro



The Greenkeeper Pro

The Greenkeeper Pro features Pitchfix’s patented RepairTec pin technology, originally designed for the Pitchfix Fusion 2.5 divot repair tool, it has won the Golf Digest’s Editors’ Choice award for the last 3 years running.

The Greenkeeper Pro is 33” long, so no more bending down, and constructed with an ergonomic rubberised handle, a carbon fibre shaft and a spring-loaded CNC aluminium head with 4 stainless steel RepairTec pins. With a single push and pull action into the ball mark, the stainless-steel pins in the head pull up, creating a level finish and a perfectly repaired and aerated ball mark. With a dry-firm and wet-soft choice in a Greenkeeper Pro set, Pitchfix has ensured that any green condition can be repaired with ease. Watch the video here: youtu.be/90I4cRArhdg

“We’re very excited to introduce our new products to golf clubs and green keeping teams around the world,” said Bart Fokke, the CEO of Pitchfix. “We have designed these products to rectify probably the two biggest challenges on the course: the repairing of ball marks and the increased damage to holes since the rule change in 2019”

The PickCup

Mr Fokke went on to say, “The invention of PickCup is in large part a result of the

Greenkeeper Pro Green



Greenkeeper Pro Blue



new R&A and USGA rule that the flagstick can remain in the hole while putting. Many golfers, when removing the ball from the cup insert their hand, putter or ball retriever between the flag stick and the edge of the hole, creating more damage to the hole. This results in greater frequency moving the holes, creating extra repair and maintenance work for probably an already stretched greenkeeping team”

PickCup is easy to install onto any

flagstick and has a soft edge to protect the grass around the hole. PickCup improves speed of play, eliminates damage to the edge of the hole, reduces the need for new pin placements and eliminates the requirement to bend over to retrieve your ball. Watch the video here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=XD66I-OU1ms

Pitchfix has operational and manufacturing facilities in the Netherlands, Hong Kong, China, and the U.S. Pitchfix promises a customer service, second to none, with orders being fulfilled within three days. For further information go to www.pitchfix.com, or contact the European Sales and Marketing Manager direct, Simon Brown, simon.brown@pitchfix.com, Tel: 0031 628506991

Better greens with Pitchfix! Come and visit us at the BTME in January on stand 150!

Article brought to you by



Definition of ‘Flagstick’ from The Rules of Golf
“A movable pole provided by the Committee that is placed in the hole to show players where the hole is.

The flagstick includes the flag and any other material or objects attached to the pole.”

The #1 solution leaving the flagstick in

Easy to install and replace

No more hands and putters, less damage to hole edges

Less pin replacements by ground staff

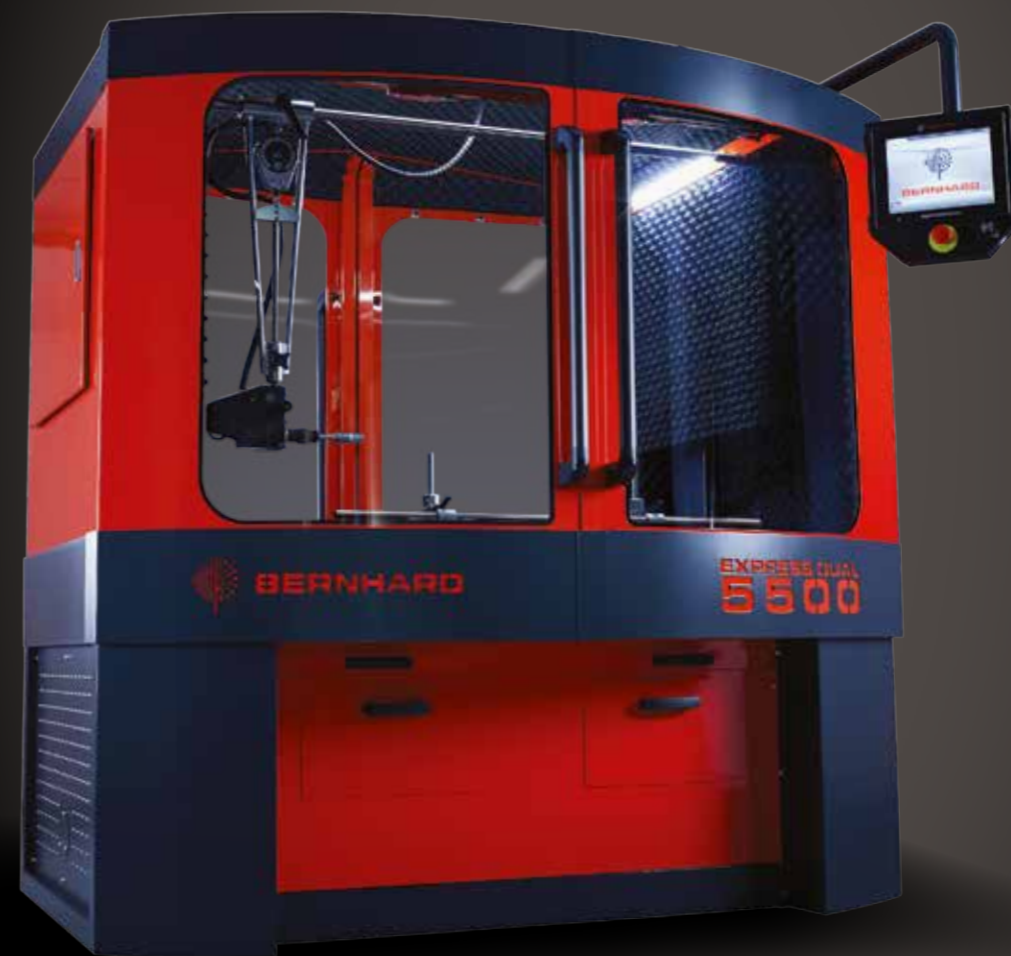
No need to bend over to retrieve ball

Soft edge to protect hole

Contributes to speed of play



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Disease population dynamics

Microdochium Patch can break out at any time over the winter months. Understanding how and why pathogen numbers can proliferate so quickly is crucial to avoid potentially disastrous effects on turf quality and playability, advocates Syngenta Technical Manager, Glenn Kirby.

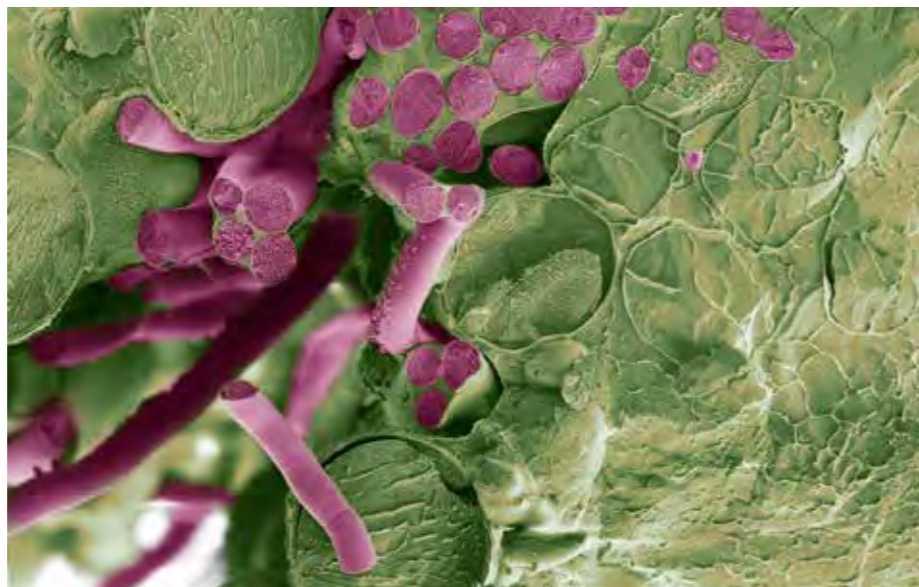
Trials have shown infection in untreated turf quickly reaching 30% or 40% of the surface affected — by which time player satisfaction would likely have plunged to non-existent. In reality, infection at 0.5% of the surface looks bad, and may be more than some clubs are prepared to tolerate.

Syngenta research with STRI this year has sought to qualify the impacts of low levels of *Microdochium nivale* infection. Outbreaks at 1% to 2% of surface area affected are often seen as the maximum acceptable; levels of 5% that might sound low, actually look visually extremely harsh.

Unacceptable damage

For a course with an average hectare of greens, 5% infection on one green would equate to 275,000cm², or over 27m². Most would consider 5.5m² of infected area on a green – just 1% of the surface area – as unacceptably high.

Research in Ireland this season



Disease can typically be extracted at a mix of spore, conidia and hyphae stages in the leaf and sward, further complicating control decisions.

demonstrated that only an assessed score of 0% – 0.25% disease infection, achieved by incorporating a new Syngenta development turf fungicide active into the programme, provided the necessary long-term control in a very high pressure situation.

The problem is that, in the right conditions for disease development, infection spread can be exponential. What starts as one spot; then two and four, etc, quickly escalates so infections that have been left uncontrolled could

multiply by hundreds of thousands overnight in the right conditions.

Integrated Turf Management (ITM) practices to make conditions inhospitable to disease and favourable for turf health, including grass species and cultivars more resistant to infection, is clearly the foundation to slowing disease development. But, when weather conditions and the management constraints of maintaining high quality playing surfaces all year round compromise turf health, fungicide

applications are essential to suppress disease and prevent infections breaking out.

Studies in Norway have shown that *Microdochium nivale* spores could be isolated in greens with no visible signs of infection throughout the year, with typically lower levels in autumn, compared to the spring.

The study also showed that pathogen populations were equally present on greens as well as surrounding areas, along with being found in similar numbers in sunny areas of greens, compared to shaded areas.

Infection precursor

This latter fact highlights that, with spore presence almost ubiquitous across the golf course, it is the prevailing conditions and health of the turf in localised areas that is the precursor to infection breaking out and the speed of development.

Disease can typically be extracted at a mix of spore, conidia and hyphae stages in the leaf and sward, further complicating control decisions.

When *M. nivale* has been isolated and grown in laboratory conditions, the radial growth rate indicating rate of disease development was measured at 1.3mm to 1.6mm (av. 1.4mm) per day at 2°C. But when incubated at 20°C grew around six times faster, at 7.5mm to 8.5mm per day.

Whilst the disease can develop faster at higher temperatures, in practice most problems actually occur in late autumn and winter. That is primarily since when turf is actively growing in warmer conditions it can withstand greater disease pressure and outgrow infections, but at cooler temperatures, when turf growth

is slower, it is more susceptible to the effects of infection. At cooler temperatures the *M. nivale* is also subject to less competition from other antagonistic microorganisms in the sward, and is therefore able to thrive in the niche conditions.

This work has clearly shown a close correlation between environmental conditions and the speed of disease development. The implication is that when conditions are favourable for *M. nivale*, the window of opportunity to take corrective action can be very limited.

The original source of the infection also has to be considered. If the spores arrive as wind-borne ascospores, the required conditions and development time would be slower, compared to if there is saprophytic mycelial growth in plant debris at a resting stage, poised for conducive conditions to develop. *M. nivale* has been reported to have strong saprophytic ability, hence the inoculum source could be conidia and hyphae already present in the sward.

These factors are particularly important for fungicide selection. With disease outbreaks starting with spore germination, the activity of fludioxonil — in Medallion TL and Instrata Elite — is especially valuable. It affects the osmotic balance of target pathogen spores, such

that they absorb water to the point that they explode and are rendered harmless.

For winter applications in slow growing conditions, the contact activity of Medallion TL also remains on the leaf surface without being mown off, and the longevity of protection is retained at cooler temperatures (See November issue of Greenkeeper International Insight — How long will your fungicide last?).

Preventative action

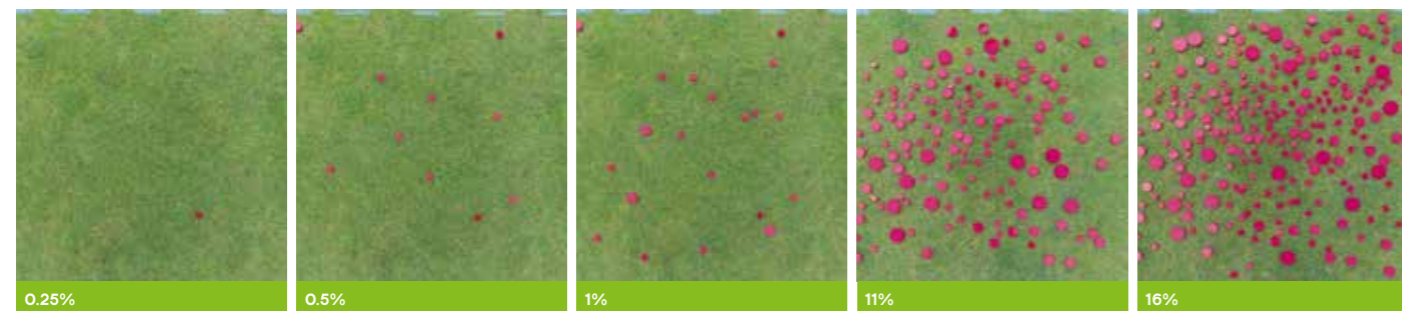
Fungicide activity of fludioxonil and difenoconazole (also in Instrata Elite) that will target and kill off mycelial growth when spores have germinated is also crucial in preventing disease from penetrating into the leaf or growing to affect turf health and break out into visible symptoms that will spread.

In both instances, the key is action to prevent initial disease infection.

ITM measures that will reduce disease pressure, as well as well-timed fungicide applications to lower the initial populations and the disease pressures, can maintain turf health and playing quality through to renewed spring growth.

Fig 1. Representation of surface area affected by different levels of disease scarring.

Source: STRI



Early morning mowing with thanks to Shaun Cunningham, Mortonhall

What makes a good bunker?

An architect's perspective

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

BIGGA recently caught up with course architect William Swan at the conclusion of a bunker restoration programme at Huddersfield Golf Club.

William was enlisted by the 128-year-old club to restore a consistent look to the bunkers that had been tweaked down the years by some of the best-known designers in golf history.

We took the opportunity to find out more about what a leading course architect considers when looking at ways to improve sand hazards around the course. »

Listen to the extended interview on The Green Room Golf Course Podcast





Bunkers act as signposts for how to play the golf course

“If you want to reduce maintenance on bunkers and you follow it through to its logical conclusion, you’ll end up playing golf on a football pitch

“I always say that bunkers have three main roles,” said the managing director of Swan Golf Designs. “Firstly, they are signposts for how to play the golf course. I’m not saying that every bunker has to be visible, but they play a role and it’s important that if the bunkers aren’t visible, that you have some sort of context to a golf hole so you can decide how to play it.

“Golf is two things: it’s the physical execution of a good golf shot, and the professionals will give you a lesson to do that; but it’s also about making a good decision about what shot you’re going to play. Whether they can execute that shot, that’s different, but you should give them some clues about how they should take on the challenge ahead. On inland

courses, bunkers are one of the most visual features, so use that to create sign posts and give the golfer a clue about what they’re supposed to be doing.

“Secondly, they’re a hazard to punish shots. Assuming they’ve made a good decision, but they’ve not executed the shot, bunkers are there as punishment. Bad golfers carry their hazards with them, so they don’t need bunkers. But if you’re a good player, you’ve made a good decision and you’re going to take an aggressive line and you don’t get it quite right, then the bunker is there as a hazard.

“The third thing is they’re a visual feature, setting up the aesthetic of the golf course. I’m not the kind of architect that’s about the high art side of design. We’re trying to create a landscape for people to enjoy the game and, particularly on inland courses, everything’s green, so bunkers give you an opportunity to provide a point of differentiation. They provide visual interest, particularly on inland courses where you don’t have the sea or dunes or anything like that.”

Therefore, the role of the course architect is to find a compromise between those three functions, while also considering the capabilities of

the greenkeeping team.

“The greenkeeper is coming at it from a different point of view,” said William. “They look at it from the maintenance perspective and in truth, bunkers aren’t easy to look after. I always say that per square metre, bunkers are the most expensive part of your

golf course to look after. But if you want to reduce maintenance on bunkers and you follow it through to its logical conclusion, you’ll end up playing golf on a football pitch with no features whatsoever. You have to find a compromise between the two that achieves everything you want from an architectural point of view, without making it impossible for the greenkeepers to maintain them.”

At Huddersfield, the course has been altered by famous architects including Sandy Herd, James Braid, Alister MacKenzie and Donald Steel, having originally been laid out by Tom Dunn. The original bunker styling took place in the early 1900s under the direction of Herbert Fowler. In attempting to restore the bunkers to that historic style, William is following a fashion that sees clubs attempt to return their courses to their ‘Golden Age’ origins.

“It’s known as the Golden

Age not only because of the fantastic courses they designed, but also the appearance of them,” said William. “Maybe we’re looking through rose-tinted glasses, but they did look great. I think that as technology in golf course maintenance improved, we tipped the balance towards managing a course to accommodate that technology. We’ve got to find the right balance between the maintenance and the design.

“It’s the same for construction. You look out at this course and many of these foundations were built by hand or with an old-fashioned horse drawn scraper. What we can do today with excavators and bulldozers is completely different and you saw that in the courses that were built. They got bigger because the machines got bigger so you could move more earth. More isn’t always better.”

With the requirements of the greenkeeping team understood as an important

aspect of the decision process, William stayed in close contact with Huddersfield’s Course Manager, Ben Turner, throughout the course of the redesign project. There was an important working relationship that helps to strike the balance between restoring Fowler’s original vision and what Ben and his team would be able to maintain.

“Each time I visited Huddersfield I would have a walk around,” said William. “Ben has to be happy with what he’s going to get in the

end. If he’s not happy, then in the end he’ll say ‘I can’t look after this’. That does happen, but it’s about managing personalities. Ben is easy to get along with and I’d talk to him about any changes he’d like me to make. The more the greenstaff can be part of the process, even if they’re not doing the construction themselves, they will feel an ownership of it and look after it better because it’s their course. Then, hopefully, at the end of the project they’ll love them as much as we do.”

Why did the bunkers need fixing at Fixby?

Ben Turner, course manager, Huddersfield



“The biggest issue we had was washout. We had some really wet summers and there was significant washout. We’ve got high sand faces that suit the character of this landscape and enable the golfer to see what’s in front of them. We wanted to retain that design but solve some of the issues. When the bunkers were washing out, the drains were getting clogged up. And when you throw the sand back up, the characteristics of the sand have changed and it doesn’t play for a week or so like it was. Some of them were extremely old bunkers, dating back to the 1920s, the drains had backfilled and weren’t serving a purpose.

“Because of the erosion we were suffering over the years, the sand was getting blown to the edges and the bunkers were slowly becoming bigger than they should have been. There was a desire at one time for everything to be cut short and playable, but now we’re asking a few more questions of the golfer. Not only is the sand a hazard, but the area

of the bunker is part of the hazard, with the long fescues.

“I would have four guys out there for six hours each, just fixing washout. Whereas now, if we do have any washout, it’s very minimal and I can send one guy out, he can use the back of a rake and it will take an hour and a half. That enables us to select jobs that are more worthwhile, rather than spending time on what is essentially a hazard.

“I’m very keen to invest the time we save into landscape management. Over time, the views from the golf course have been lost a little bit from self-set trees, particularly oak. Back in the 1980s the club planted a lot of pine trees to create a corridor effect. We’re looking to reduce that and encourage some of the native trees in the understorey. We were spending so much time on bunkers, but now we can find a time saving and spend that on landscape management.”



Bunkers also give a course context



William Swan

ECO BUNKER | Home of Stableford Invests in Sustainable Bunker Drainage

Water management is a hot topic, particularly for those involved in golf course management, as biblical rainfall events swamp large areas of the UK.

It's also a topic that has kept Civil Engineer and EcoBunker Ltd CEO Richard Allen very busy over the past 30 years. As Richard's involvement in golf course design and construction has increased over the past 10 years, he has realised that some of the skills learned on land development schemes have become very useful.

'Having supported hundreds of successful planning applications with drainage, flooding and water management strategies and designs, I appreciate how challenging it can be to deliver solutions that satisfy the constraints imposed by the developer on one hand and the regulatory authorities on the other. Space, or lack of it when maximising land value, is usually a major constraining factor for delivering the most cost effective, sustainable drainage solutions. Relatively speaking golf courses enjoy more space. This has been a liberating factor, enabling me to design more cost effective, sustainable and award-winning drainage solutions in that arena', said Richard.

Bunker construction specialist, EcoBunker Ltd is acutely aware of the potential for poor drainage and washouts in golf bunkers. When planning a construction project, which is often undertaken alongside a golf course architect, EcoBunker Ltd always thoroughly assesses drainage constraints and opportunities before finalising the bunker design solution. They have found that cost effective free draining bunker solutions are possible on almost all sites,



EcoBunker at Bromborough: Similar design style will be used at The Glamorganshire

including those that are very flat and on heavy soils. Their current, ongoing project at The Glamorganshire GC is a good case in point.

The home of the Stableford scoring system, Glamorganshire GC, near Penarth was founded in 1890. Like many quality parkland courses, the high presentation of greens, tees and fairways was not matched by their bunkers, and poor drainage was one of several issues. Following masterplan work by architect Jonathan Gaunt, EcoBunker Ltd won the tender for the complete re-design and construction of all 60 bunkers.

EcoBunker Ltd's successful approach promised four key areas for improvement:

1. Better strategy, for a fairer and more exciting challenge;
2. Improved aesthetics, re-creating a coherent, old style parkland theme;
3. Free draining, consistent playing conditions and;
4. Lower maintenance by design, careful product specification and installation.

Effective, maintainable drainage will be delivered by sustainable approach to

design; combining a cost effective liner with EcoBunker's exclusive patent pending advanced edge design to create a fully sealed tank. Also featured are subtle new contours to manage surface water flow, maximum use of upcycled materials and a novel approach to irrigation and maintainable drainage outlets.

Alongside EcoBunker Ltd and Richard Allen (Engineer), the delivery team comprises James Edwards (Architect), and Paul Davies of Shaperight (Earthworks). This project commenced with a free initial consultation, focussing on both drainage and bunker construction matters. EcoBunker Ltd offers the same services and expertise to other clubs who want to improve the quality of their golf bunkers. For more information visit www.ecobunker.co.uk

Article brought to you by



EcoBunker is compatible with all bunker liners, greatly reducing sand contamination

BRITISH SUGAR TOPSOIL | Selecting the right topsoil for bunker renovation



Where the partial renovation or complete reconstruction of a bunker is required, selecting the right topsoil for the foundation of the job is essential.

Regardless of whether a bunker has a turf or sand face, its form, once re-established, must hold its shape. Whilst the chosen topsoil should be free-draining, a certain amount of silt and clay is a key component if that shape is to be maintained; and this is particularly important for the 'lip' on a sand faced bunker. The silt and clay content is also important for moisture retention and healthy turf growth in the summer months and throughout periods of drought, particularly so if irrigation cannot be delivered to all areas of a golf course. Using a moisture-retaining topsoil for bunker reconstruction will help to maintain the turf sward and prevent the immediate area around the edge of the bunker from breaking down.

Greenkeepers are always under pressure to maintain their courses' playability, even when carrying out major renovation of tees and bunkers. Selecting a topsoil that has good nutrient content will promote growth and speed up turf establishment, which in turn will keep any bunker 'down time' to a minimum.

In addition to the above attributes, the chosen topsoil should comply, as a minimum, with British Standard 3882:2015 for topsoil. This standard requires that the topsoil is regularly and independently tested for contamination, nutrient content, and other key indicators, giving greenkeepers reassurance that the material is safe to use and fit for purpose.

British Sugar TOPSOIL's Landscape20 general purpose topsoil - the perfect blend of sand, silt and clay - is



BS3882:2015-compliant and is, in fact, tested above and beyond the minimum requirements of the British Standard. It is derived from the prime arable soils that are brought in on the sugar beet to British Sugar factories from across East Anglia, which are washed from the beet into settlement lagoons, dried and then screened to produce a contaminant-free, consistent product that has a low stone content, is free of pernicious weeds, and promotes healthy and sustained growth thanks to the nutrients provided by the additional organic matter.

Landscape20 is used widely by greenkeepers for bunker reconstruction and renovation. Ely City Golf Club has undertaken a comprehensive programme of bunker reconstruction using 560 tonnes of Landscape20 to reconstruct a total of 35 bunkers prior to turfing. The Ely club was particularly impressed with the workability of the topsoil and the speed of turf establishment:

"Landscape20's sandy loam texture makes for a soil that is easy to handle and consolidate into the shape needed. The establishment and subsequent growth of

the turf has been very impressive - the roots of the turf had anchored into the Landscape20 within one to two weeks of being laid."

Landscape20 is available for delivery in loose loads or bulk bags to locations in the Midlands, East Anglia and the South East. For every bulk bag purchased* until September 2020, £1 will be donated to Perennial, the charity for all horticulturists. www.bstopping.co.uk

* minimum order quantity applies



Article brought to you by



The greenkeepers who attended the bunker camp



Durabunker 'Bunker Camp' at Littlehampton Golf Club



Fully Sealed System Durabunker with Better Billy Bunker at Littlehampton

Littlehampton, Durabunker Ltd and Sparsholt College, recently collaborated to invite local greenkeepers who are also studying at the college, to attend a one-day 'Bunker Camp' focussing on the design and construction of typical links-style bunkers using Durabunker's patented synthetic bunker technology.

Thirteen greenkeepers attended the day, all getting their hands dirty building bunkers, and experiencing first hand a live bunker renovation in full swing. The renovation itself involved the construction of 12 typically links-style bunkers, with significant re-design work including re-grading of run-offs and gathering areas, strategic re-positioning of some bunkers and the splitting of some larger single bunkers into multiple smaller bunkers.

Sparsholt College delivers Level 2 training and apprenticeships for greenkeepers, offering a

combination of work-and college-based learning and it is through their association with Micheal Mead, course manager at Littlehampton GC,

that the Bunker Camp was turned into a reality. Michael explained the back story of the project, "We worked with Durabunker Ltd

“...it occurred to me that there was a potential tie-in with the apprentice greenkeepers at Sparsholt College.

Michael Mead, course manager at Littlehampton



The greenkeepers had hands on experience in the construction of 'Durabunker' synthetic bunker revetment.

in 2017 to introduce synthetic bunker faces to the golf club. We had suffered with erosion and instability problems on our bunkers for a long time and trialling 'Durabunker' seemed an easy decision to make. On speaking with Rhydian Lewis, founder of Durabunker Ltd, and the co-inventor of the design patents associated with synthetic bunker edging, we realised that if we were to invest in our bunkers. By introducing their synthetic revetted system, it would also make sense to complete the job by using a bunker liner, ensuring that our investment in new sand would be protected and our issues with drainage in certain bunkers would also be addressed. We discussed a few liner options and decided on Better Billy Bunker Liner."

"We liked the idea of a perched water table and a highly permeable and durable liner to match our synthetic bunker faces, giving long term

guarantees to the whole system, so we commissioned Durabunker, as a licensed installer of Better Billy Bunker, to install the bunker liner and the synthetic faces. Both have performed fantastically for us giving a totally sealed system that has ticked all the boxes with regards performance and hugely reduced our bunker maintenance"

"When Rhydian explained that Durabunker Ltd had become a BIGGA Education Supporter it occurred to me that there was a potential tie-in with the apprentice greenkeepers at Sparsholt College. We currently have an apprentice greenkeeper, Peter Hampton, who attends the college and is studying for his Level 2 Greenkeeping qualification. When his tutor visited for an assessment I mentioned the project to him and the idea of having some greenkeepers attend for a day to get involved with a live bunker project. It was an idea he loved as did Rhydian,

Ben Homewood, one of the attendees on the Bunker Camp commented "It was fantastic to get such valuable 'hands on' experience rather than just reading it from a text book or the internet. To learn about the latest developments in bunker technology was really valuable, and to actually have an opportunity to work with the product was great. The staff on site were very knowledgeable and answered

all our questions and I think we all left with a bit of a spring in our step having seen what we helped achieve during the day" Rhydian added "Education is very much in my blood having spent 15 years of my career delivering training in further and higher education. It was a great opportunity to help the next generation of greenkeepers gain some valuable experience, involve

them in a live project and introduce them to bunker construction methods that are bringing benefits to the wider greenkeeping industry. The 'Fully Sealed Bunker System' is beginning to draw a lot of attention. We have seen demand for it grow significantly since we first introduced the concept and really believe it is the most complete bunker construction system on today's market. We are fortunate to be positioned to offer the installation of seamless liners such as Better Billy Bunker and Rubber Crumb Liner in conjunction with our synthetic edging system. Our approach in terms of educating young (and old) greenkeepers is to present options and information on our products and construction methods in an objective manner, enabling them to make informed decisions for the benefit of their golf course and maintenance practices. The greenkeepers that attended the Bunker Camp will hopefully feel they walked away with a lot more knowledge than they arrived with"

“Education is very much in my blood having spent 15 years of my career delivering training in Further and Higher Education.

Rhydian Lewis, director, Durabunker Ltd



Final stages of Durabunker construction at Littlehampton GC





Scott Duff, head greenkeeper at Bovey Castle

From Groundsman to Greenkeeper

How the former football groundsman is pushing Bovey Castle back to the Top 100 Golf Courses

Four years ago, Scott Duff made the decision to switch football groundsmanship for greenkeeping. Now as head greenkeeper at Bovey Castle in Devon, he is succeeding in his mission to help the club get back into the Top 100 Golf Courses.

Scott started his turf career in football at Torquay United FC before venturing into greenkeeping. He admits that it was a huge decision and

“When I was in football groundsmanship, I had always wanted to try greenkeeping but to be honest I was always worried that I would be out of my depth...

was quite rightly nervous about making the transition. “When I was in football

groundsman, I had always wanted to try greenkeeping but to be honest I was always

worried that I would be out of my depth,” he said. “I went from looking after just one surface which had a fairly consistent maintenance regime to suddenly looking after a multitude of different areas — each with their own requirements. It was daunting at first, but I quickly discovered that there isn’t too much of a difference.”

“The science behind football groundsman is no different to the science behind greenkeeping,” he continued. “Both are really fast moving and new products and technologies are coming out constantly. At the end of the day it is still turf and whether you are cutting it at 5mm or 35mm it is still all about the quality of surface you are providing — it doesn’t matter if you are passing a football or putting a golf ball.”

Designed in 1926 by J. F. Abercromby, one of the finest British golf course designers of the last century, Bovey Castle’s 18-hole championship golf course is challenging and surrounded by the natural beauty of the Dartmoor National Park. However, the course does not come without obstacles.

“Here on the Moors, we pretty much have two completely different courses. We’ve got the bottom nine holes which are situated down in the valley with lots of water around them and in cooler temperatures we experience a lot of frost. At the same time, on the top nine holes it will be completely frost free. In the summer when we are feeding the greens, we will get a completely different reaction to the top nine where it is at least three degrees warmer throughout the year.

“Even when we are cutting, at the top we can take two and a half boxes of grass clippings off the greens but on the bottom greens we are taking just one box off. It is also really hard to achieve a consistent green speed across all eighteen holes.

“Therefore, even though

we have USGA spec greens throughout the whole course, the bottom greens are always behind. They leach more and don’t seem to hold as many nutrients.”

With this in mind Scott is forced into always starting his renovation work on the bottom nine first to ensure that they have a head-start over the top nine.

“It can be challenging but I can confidently say that I love my job,” he said.

Scott’s passion and work ethic were rewarded two years ago when he was promoted to the position of head greenkeeper. Now, alongside Sean Bennett — course manager, the two of them have a very clear goal.

“We are a championship course which used to be in the top 100 but not anymore unfortunately. Quite simply our goal is to get back in there. I think with Sean’s knowledge of managing a course, his drive and his passion, along with the improvements he wants to make, I think it is very realistic.

“We are not a million miles away but we still have a lot of work to do and with people like David Chammings from Sherriff Amenity on-board then this will only boost our chances. David has really changed the way we approach our feed programmes and also some of the work we do out on the course because he draws up management plans which concentrate on what we should be doing throughout certain periods of the year.”

After consultation, David recommended a tank mixture consisting of iNTrench fertiliser 15.0.9 and GoGreen Energy bio-stimulant for the greens — two products which perfectly complement one another.

iNTrench is a controlled uptake nitrogen fertiliser designed specifically for the needs of professional sports turf. It gives up to ten weeks of improved blade colour and a higher quality turf with 66% the nitrogen rate of leading

“At the end of the day it is still turf and whether you are cutting it at 5mm or 35mm it is still all about the quality of surface you are providing...

competitors. Its tank-mix partner, GoGreen Energy, is a concentrated bio-stimulant, formulated to assist plant health and relieve stress symptoms.

“Every course is different and you have to work out what is best for your site,” said Scott. “With iNTrench and GoGreen, we find that if we go at half rate (20l/ha) every two weeks, then the greens seem to hold the nutrients a lot better. By applying it like this we notice healthier greens and also better longevity out of the products. This tank-mix has worked really well for us and there has been a big improvement in the greens.

“In fact, we also use this mix with the addition of seaweed on our tees if they need some instant colour-up.”

Scott also reported excellent results from Sherriff Amenity’s Aqua-Zorb 45 — a unique wetting agent, which

helped him through a somewhat difficult summer last year.

“Last year, Aqua-Zorb was a real saviour for us. I would say that at least 90% of courses in the UK would say that the disease period for golf was horrendous last year and a good wetting agent could have saved money on fungicides and relieved the drought stress.

“We had such intense heat last year and Aqua-Zorb still worked incredibly well considering we were frequently seeing temperatures of 30°C plus.

“I feel we have been going through a massive transition period and we will continue to see even more improvements to the course. The Sherriff Amenity products have played a big role in the success over the past couple of years and I can’t fault the service from David

whatsoever. Plus, it helps that the club really supports us.”

Scott claims that the club’s huge respect for its staff makes his job that much easier and he further believes that this is something that football clubs should take notice of.

“What I have noticed is that greenkeepers are treated far better and that there is a lot more respect for a greenkeeper than there is for a groundsman. In football, groundsman play an integral role and they should be recognised a lot more. Maybe at Premiership level there is a lot more respect but in the lower leagues, certainly from the Championship down, it is well known that groundsman are easily made scapegoats. They tend to get the blame if the pitch is slow or bobbly but generally that is because the players are made to train on the pitch on a Friday before a game. It is out of the groundsman’s control.

“In golf, the players, the staff — they all seem to be a bit more understanding. At the Castle greenkeepers are highly respected. Like everybody, we don’t always get it right, but you live by your decisions and sometimes you get it wrong. If there is any hesitation then that is when you tend to make really bad mistakes, but once you have decided to do something then that is when you need to commit. It just helps if you have the right level of support behind you.”

For further information, please contact Sherriff Amenity on 01638 721 888 or visit www.sherriffamenity.com



Bovey Castle is aiming to re-enter the Top 100 Golf Courses

Working in partnership with



Purley Downs Golf Club invests in Baroness



Richard Webber, course manager at Purley Downs

The mature downland course at Purley Downs Golf Club near Croydon in Surrey is renowned for its rolling fairways and magnificent views over London.

Designed over a century ago, its sweeping natural contours can be challenging for golfers — but the club's new Baroness LM2700 five-unit fairway mower takes the slopes and undulations in its stride, consistently delivering the quality of cut and finish that are so important to Course Manager, Richard Webber.

The course sits on free-draining chalk downland, so rarely closes except when there is snow. The 6,300-yard, par-70 course was designed by J.H. Taylor back in 1904 to make the most of the site's natural beauty. It's a tranquil setting, some 500 feet above sea level — a vantage point from which golfers can look out over the whole of London with the arch at Wembley Stadium, the London Eye, the Shard, the Gherkin and Canary Wharf all clearly visible.

Richard came to Purley Downs five years ago from Cophorne Golf Club in Sussex and has overseen a programme of investment to improve the course since his arrival. His team has grown from five to seven and, under the guidance of course architect, Alan Walker, extensive work has been carried out on the bunkers and greens. Work has also begun as part of a 20-year woodland management plan to remove some of the trees that have sprung up over the years on parts of the course, allowing it to revert to its original chalk downland profile.

The club has also made big investments in its machinery too. As well as the new Baroness LM2700 fairway mower the club also bought two Kubota tractors, all sourced from Lister Wilder.

When it came to replace the club's old fairway mower, Richard and his team left no stone unturned in determining the best machine for the job. "We looked at all the options available and tested a number of mowers to see how they performed on our fine downland turf and undulating terrain," says Richard. "Each machine we trialled went through a formal appraisal process and the Baroness LM2700 came out firmly on top."



"I hadn't seen a Baroness in action before but had heard many good things from other course managers, especially about the cutting units.

"High quality cut and finish were top of my list of requirements and the results we got with the Baroness were second to none. It was definitely a good decision."

The LM2700 features Baroness' signature reel and bedknife cutting units which are designed to stay sharper and last longer, reducing maintenance costs and downtime.

"We have found that the Baroness is straight on cut - you don't have to keep adjusting it. It is really productive too. It is quick over the ground, which saves us a lot of time, without losing the quality of the cut. It is also great at following the contours of our fairways, producing a quality finish without scalping," says Richard, who has also been impressed by how easy it is to operate and maintain the LM2700.

"Everyone enjoys driving the Baroness and it is comfortable to work on. It is also much simpler to maintain than other mowers we looked at, which is a big plus for us. We have only had the LM2700

for a few months, but we are confident that the ease of maintenance it offers will mean a lot less downtime and lower whole-life service costs for us going forward."

The course and surrounding land owned by the club has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to the wide variety of flora and fauna present on the site. "A day doesn't pass without seeing deer on the course," says Richard, "and we have badgers, foxes and many different birds and butterflies.

"While golf and maintaining the quality of our fairways and greens are certainly our priorities, Purley Downs is living proof that these objectives can be met while still protecting and encouraging wildlife."

Working in partnership with
BARONESS
 Quality on Demand

AROUND THE GREEN

2020 Golf Environment Awards finalists revealed

National



The shortlisted finalists for the 2020 Golf Environment Awards (GEAs) have been announced.

The GEAs celebrate 25 years in 2020, they recognise golf clubs and individuals that strive to undertake environmental best practice.

Ecology consultants from STRI spent August and September visiting qualifying clubs that applied for the awards before painstakingly whittling them down to 17 finalists and five Home Unions finalists.

Golf Environment Awards judge, Rowan Rumball, said: "This year was exceptionally difficult, and we have had some amazing and very worthy entrants. I have seen some superb projects and many clubs are now looking beyond the confines of their own club boundaries."

The winners will be announced at the Golf Environment Awards Ceremony on Wednesday 22 January 2020, at The Crown Hotel in Harrogate. Tickets for the awards, which includes a three-course meal and drinks, can be purchased, email enquiries@strigroup.com for further details.

Head of Ecology at STRI, Bob Taylor, said: "I cannot believe it's 25 years since we first set up the Golf Environment Awards. Moreover, the awards have

become the leading accolade for ecological and environmental excellence within the golf industry. Many golf greenkeepers tell me the awards represent something to aspire to, they provide an opportunity to market the good works they do.

"For me the awards represent a growing community that all come together at the awards celebrations discussing works and passing on ideas. Anyone is welcome to attend the awards, and one thing is certain you will leave inspired by the great work clubs are doing."

All finalists receive free entry into the Foundation Award in Amenity Horticulture course, recognised by BASIS, and managed by STRI, as well as CPD credits. The lucky winners of the GEAs will also be able to enjoy a European Golf & Environment Trip of a Lifetime to Portugal.

STRI would like to thank all the golf clubs that entered but didn't make the final shortlist along with Golf Environment Award partners and sponsors who continue to support and promote the awards year-on-year: The R&A, BIGGA, The Golf Club Manager, Tillers Turf, Ransomes Jacobsen, Wiedenmann, Aquatrols and Syngenta.

The 2020 finalists are

Environmental Golf Course of the Year

- / Warrington Golf Club
- / Kington Golf Club
- / Saunton Golf Club
- / Effingham Golf Club
- / Nairn Dunbar Golf Links

Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year

- / John Milne — Rothes Golf Club
- / Neil Sherman — Ipswich Golf Club (Purdis Heath)
- / Richard Mullen — Banchory Golf Club
- / Les Rae — Montrose Golf Club

Outstanding Environmental Project of the Year

- / Trevoze Golf & Country Club
- / Dundonald Links
- / Craignure Golf Club
- / Clitheroe Golf Club

Operation Pollinator

- / Cumberwell Park
- / Banchory Golf Club
- / Ufford Park Woodbridge
- / St Andrews Links Trust

Home Unions National Awards

- / Market Harborough Golf Club
- / Scotsraig Golf Club
- / Ashburnham Golf Club
- / Bingley St Ives Golf Club
- / Diss Golf Club

TPC Sawgrass

National



Final two members announced for Players Championship

The team of BIGGA members who, courtesy of John Deere, will travel to TPC Sawgrass in March to join the agronomy team for the 'Fifth Major' is complete.

The Players Championship is one of the iconic events in golf and taking their places on the volunteer team for it are Northern Region member

Peter Lewis, greenkeeper at Royal Liverpool Golf Club and Yannick Weber, Deputy Course Manager at the renowned Cape Kidnappers Golf Club in New Zealand who will represent BIGGA's International membership.

Yannick said "Events like these keep our industry buzzing, enhance camaraderie, professionalism and spread motivation and passion all over the turf managing community."

Thank you so much and I can't wait to get there!"

The six members are:

- / Alex Brougham — deputy head greenkeeper, Trentham Park GC
- / Peter Lewis — greenkeeper, Royal Liverpool GC
- / Edward Irvine — deputy head greenkeeper, Trump International Aberdeen
- / Ben Hunter — deputy course manager, The Richmond GC
- / Mark Tucker — head greenkeeper, Neath GC
- / Yannick Weber — deputy course manager, Cape Kidnappers GC, New Zealand



Regional Conference

South West & South Wales

Somerset County Cricket club was again the host venue for the South West & South Wales Region Conference.

Regional Chairman Steve Lloyd hosted a thought-provoking and informative day for around 120 local members. All the speakers were current and former course managers but the topics were incredibly diverse.

First up BIGGA Chairman, Scott Reeves, gave a brief introduction to the work of the National Board before Callum Wark, making his first presentation as course manager, gave attendees an insight into the concept, vision, design and build of the exciting JCB Golf and Country Club project.

Former National Board member Rob Welford then gave a brave and compelling talk on the subject of mental



The South West and South Wales Regional Conference was well attended

health which definitely connected with many in the audience. BIGGA Vice-President and owner of Portmore Golf Park, Colin Webber, revised and updated his 'From Milk to Members' presentation last seen a decade ago. Colin's story is inspiring and an exemplary case of what can be achieved

with determination and innovation. The final speaker was former Regional Chairman Steve Chappell who entertained delegates with the story of his new role at Royal Bled Golf Club in Slovenia.

A big thank you to all the Regional Patrons who supported the event superbly.

Get in touch with our local Membership Services team

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BIGGA Photo Competition 2019. The winner...

BIGGA is proud to reveal the winner of our annual photographic competition, with a spectacular image of early morning strimming at The Hesketh in Southport claiming the top prize.

Andrew Bate's image of course preparation at the links was praised by the judges for showing a realistic and beautiful look at greenkeeping, with dirt and debris caught in spectacular detail.

The image certainly captured the attention of the

BIGGA members who voted for their favourite image through social media, receiving 277 likes on the BIGGA Facebook page and another 77 on BIGGA's Instagram page.

As competition winner, greenkeeper Andrew will receive a brand new Apple iPad 32GB and a framed print of his winning photograph, to be presented at the BIGGA Welcome Celebration at BTME 2020.

Andrew told us a little more about winning:

"It's a fantastic feeling to have won such a tough and prestigious competition; all of the images were stunning and anyone of them could have won. After entering greenkeeping only nine months ago I wanted to approach the competition with a view to showing a greenkeeper going about one of the many daily tasks that go towards presenting a golf course.

"I was out with my colleague Dave Williams on the day I took the image and

was amazed at the attention to detail he was applying to strimming the bunkers. The low morning sun helped to back-light the subject and give it a real atmospheric feel. I only had my phone with me but it coped really well with the conditions."

In addition, 12 photographs from among the 24 finalists were selected, based upon the social media voting from BIGGA members, and these will form the BIGGA Desktop Calendar 2020, supported by Syngenta.

The 12 photographs selected for the BIGGA Calendar 2020 are:

January

Charlie Lacey, Camberley Heath

May

Aidan Wright, Camberley Heath

September

Jake Austin, Hankley Common

February

Shaun Cunningham, Mortonhall

June

Andrew Bate, The Hesketh

October

James Breeze, Huddersfield

March

Joe Simpson, Ipswich

July

Graeme Roberts, Swinley Forest

November

Ryan Norman, Stowmarket

April

Alex Brougham, Trentham Park

August

Paul Connolly, Ralston

December

George Morley, The Dyke

“It’s a fantastic feeling to have won such a tough and prestigious competition; all of the images were stunning and anyone of them could have won

Andrew Bate, The Hesketh



Thank you to everyone who entered the BIGGA Photographic Competition 2020. We'll be launching the competition once again early in the New Year, so get snapping and good luck!



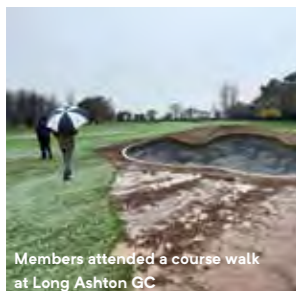
SHORT PUTTS

Residential Visit

South West



Visiting Bristol City FC



Members attended a course walk at Long Ashton GC

Several members from the South Coast Section who attended the Regional Conference incorporated a residential trip and visited Long Ashton GC and Bristol City FC to see all the amazing work going on at these sites.

Many thanks to James Braithwaite and Dan Sparks for showing us around and giving up your time.

Volunteers Wanted!

South West of Scotland

In 2020, Kilmarnock Barassie Golf Club are hosting the Women's Amateur Championships and are in need of some volunteers to help with morning course set up. If anyone is interested in volunteering then please contact Rob Tosh on either 07907300540 or roberttosh@btinternet.com

Scotland Region Education Days

Scotland Region

Brian Hillen talking at the West of Scotland event



November proved hugely successful for BIGGA in Scotland with the Learning & Development Programme creating a fantastic opportunity for greenkeepers to continue to develop their professionalism.

Working together, the region and sections provided six events around the country which, combined with the similar event in Northern Ireland recently, meant over 200 greenkeepers experienced the programme and enjoyed presentations from peers and round-table discussions with our partners. Events were held in all Scottish Sections with two taking place in the North Section. Two were held on consecutive days each week for three weeks with some speakers attending multiple events.

Industry partners such as The R&A and GEO Foundation provided presentations along with many from course managers and BIGGA members.

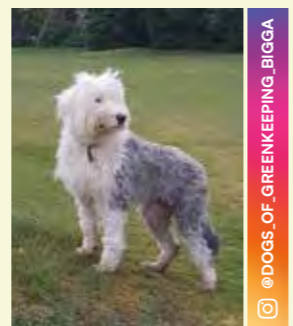
A new twist to the programme was to provide BIGGA members with their first opportunity to present to their peers, well done to Bob Meikle (Crail); Richard Jenkinson (Golf House Club - Elie); Jamie Martin (Gifford); Brian Hillen (Drumpellier); Scott Davidson (Cathcart Castle); Stewart Brown (Western Gailes); Richard Johnstone (Nairn Dunbar) and David Rumbles (Elgin) who provided exceptional talks.

The region's next key education event is the Scottish Golf Industry Conference at Dunblane Doubletree Hotel on Tuesday 3rd March 2020.



Richard Johnstone talking at the Highlands event

DOGS ON COURSE



@DOGS_OF_GREENKEEPING_BIGGA

Name: Klaxon

Breed: Old English Sheepdog

Owner: Dave Barnes

Course: Sunningdale Heath

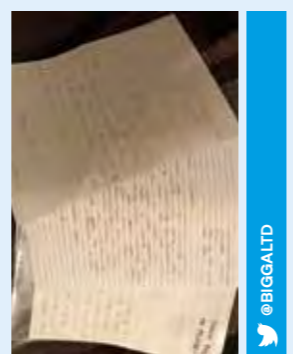
Favourite treat: Biscuits

Favourite spot on the course: Clubhouse

Naughtiest moment: Running around the course

TWEET OF THE MONTH

Richard Mullen
@BGCAGronomy



@BIGGALTD

Letters of thanks from Schoolchildren following my talk with them about the greenkeeping profession. Amazing to get a response and great feedback. If one considers it as an occupation then that's success!
@BIGGALtd @RandA @ScottishGolf

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AROUND THE GLOBE

Russell Andrew Anderson | The Scandinavian | Denmark

How would you describe the style of course you manage and what is your club's claim to fame?

At The Scandinavian, we have two golf courses that are very natural in their setting. Both courses wind their way through forests, grasslands and many natural ponds and wetlands. The wild natural feel of the land is complemented using the latest technology and modern course construction quality.

Our claim to fame would probably be that we are the only members' club in Continental Europe with both our golf courses consistently ranked in the top 40. Even our members can't agree which they like best.



The Scandinavian course

How does greenkeeping in Denmark vary from the UK?

I think that the greenkeepers in Denmark are incredibly skilled at utilising their resources and budgets effectively to operate at a high standard.

As a result of strict government regulations, Danish greenkeepers probably lead the way in Europe regarding non-chemical prevention and treatment of turf diseases. The regulation in this area is one of the most significant differences to greenkeeping in the UK. I only see this as a positive, and I have learned a lot from my Danish colleagues.

How does the weather affect your work?

Being in Scandinavia, our work is heavily influenced by the weather. In our area, we experience weather extremes ranging from freezing snow-covered winters to the four-month drought and high temperatures of last season. I must admit that it is never boring and it is always challenging and satisfying trying to grow and maintain our courses in this climate.

How does the availability of resources, such as chemicals or machinery, impact what you are able to achieve?

In Denmark there are governmental restrictions on the use of chemicals, but there is not a total ban, as some may believe. There are approved weed killers, fungicides, pesticides and growth retardants, but we are limited on the amount we can use and where we can use them.

Some courses do have total chemical bans, depending on local restrictions, and these greenkeepers are doing an amazing job.

For example, growth retardants are only allowed on greens, and with one of the weed killers we are only allowed enough product for one hectare. This means we must hand spray fairways, of which I have 36 hectares, but you get used to it and it means we use very little product, which can only be good.

All our chemical usage must be registered officially with the government, done through a green data website.

I am fortunate to have a very up-to-date fleet of mainly Toro

equipment, supplied by Reesink Denmark. On the machinery side, this gives us the best possible chance to achieve the standards we strive for.

What turfgrass species do you grow on your course and how are they impacted by your climate?

The courses were sown just over 10 years ago. The greens are a blend of Tee-2Green creeping bentgrass A4 G2 G6, a rye fescue blend on fairways and tees and fescue roughs.

We have developed this over the years, introducing more current bentgrasses — mainly the shade tolerant crystal blue links, which is working very well for us.

Since the drought of last season, working closely with Barenbrug we have increased the ryegrass content of our fairways, mainly with their RPR mix, which we find much more drought and disease tolerant for our site.

What is greenkeeper training like in Denmark and how does that impact recruitment?



The Scandinavian greenkeeping team

Greenkeeper training in Denmark is to a high standard, and, like training in the UK, students are normally in full-time employment, and attend blocks of education at an approved college for several weeks at a time.

Most of our team are educated greenkeepers or gardener equivalent. We give our unqualified team members the chance to get the qualifications if they wish, which only has a positive impact when we are recruiting. We have one apprentice in education and we actively support all our team where possible, if they wish to undertake further training and development activities.

What interaction do you have with golfers at your club and how are you perceived by them?

The Scandinavian is slightly different from a traditional golf club, in that I report directly to the company CEO and not to the golf club board or to a committee within the club. This means that my interaction with members is probably less formal than it would be in the UK.

On a day-to-day basis, I meet and interact with members and guests out on the golf courses, stopping to chat with them and answer any questions they may have. I am also a member of the golf club and meet many of our members this way.

On a more formal basis, we pro-actively communicate with members using short informational videos, written course updates and invite members to participate in course walks and tours of the greenkeeping facility. I think the members would perceive me as being very passionate about my work.

Why do you choose to be a BIGGA member?

I chose to be a BIGGA member 32 years ago as I was advised it would help me develop my career. This has certainly been true, and is the reason why I remain a member today.

What have you learnt through being a member of BIGGA?

BIGGA has been a big part of my working life, whether it was attending local section events or BTME.

Many of my longest and most

important friendships have been made through greenkeeping and BIGGA. Through these people, and they know who they are, I have learned the true meaning of friendship and support.

What tip would you give British greenkeepers that you have learnt?

The only tip I can give British greenkeepers is to stick together in the reduced chemical era that is the future. It will not be an easy transition, but I think the Danes have proved that the pain is less when shared and surprising solutions can always be found.



After the drought of last season

The drought

INDUSTRY NEWS

IOG spots skills 'time bomb'

Independent research by the Institute of Groundsmanship has identified a "skills and recruitment time bomb".

Research findings have highlighted a serious decline in the number of young people embarking on a career in groundsmanship. With over 40% of the workforce over the age of 50, IOG chief executive Geoff Webb said this is a worrying trend.

He added: "The report also highlights how recruitment, especially of young people, is a critical issue and it must be said that while the Young IOG initiative is increasingly spreading the word among schoolchildren about careers in groundcare – especially through its Schools into Stadia programme – it is clear that everyone in the industry must also do more to ensure we have a 'pipeline' of competent grounds staff to meet demands at every level."

According to the findings of the IOG's industry-wide survey, 'Groundsmanship – Sports Vital Profession', the UK sports turf groundscare sector employs more than 26,000 people, is supported by at least 37,000 volunteers and is worth more than a staggering £1 billion a year to the economy.

"Local authority austerity and budget cuts have had a damaging effect on grassroots pitches," said Geoff. "The steady deterioration in the quality and the overplay of many pitches is impacting



Geoff Webb, IOG chief executive

on the playing programmes of sports."

The research findings show that two of every five grounds professionals are over 50 years old and 20% of those could retire within five years.

Geoff added: "With less than one in five groundscare staff below the age of 30 and our discovery that some employers are choosing not to recruit new, replacement staff when an existing member leaves or retires, we have a crisis looming."

Conducted by Myriad Consulting and

Doran Consultancy, the comprehensive survey involved desktop research, in addition to an online survey and one-to-one interviews across sports played on grass and artificial surfaces, as well as horse racing.

Additionally, the research showed that almost a quarter of head grounds staff feel stressed or under pressure from inadequate budgets, increasing commercial pressures and an unmanageable workload.

Visit www.iog.org for more.

STRI forms alliance with Surface Performance



STRI Group has struck an alliance with turf testing house Surface Performance.

The partnership will enable the pair to provide sports surface design and testing services for artificial sports surfaces.

STRI head of business development, Andrew Brooker, said: "The agreement ensures our respective businesses can provide a well-rounded service to our existing and future clients. We are pleased to be working with Surface Performance to deliver both services to the global sports surface market."

Surface Performance has provided

accredited testing and certification for FIFA, World Rugby, FA and ITF standards.

The agreement will support the delivery of a range of innovative testing products and data-driven services, including STRI's new sports surface performance tracker, TurfSync.

Surface Performance director, Callum Reid, said: "This is an exciting opportunity for our team to work alongside STRI in the UK and globally. With more venues offering both natural turf and synthetic fields, having the two companies working together makes complete sense."

Toro launches all-electric greens mower



Toro Greensmaster eTriFlex 3360

Toro has unveiled the Greensmaster eTriFlex 3360, the machinery manufacturer's first all-electric greens mower.

The ride-on uses electric components for traction, steering, lifting and cutting and utilises a Lithium-ion battery and Kawasaki twin cylinder 14hp air-cooled engine with a reduced speed of 2400rpm.

Jeff Anguige, national

sales manager at Toro's UK distributor, Reesink Turfcare, said: "It's easy to see why Toro is calling the Greensmaster eTriFlex the most advanced ride-on greens mower ever."

"The technology presented in this machine, particularly the hybrid technology, is a prime example of Toro's ability to deliver products that meet customer needs perfectly."

"The reduced noise brings with it a host of benefits while

still maintaining what makes Toro machines so unique – a superior quality of cut."

Toro claim the electric battery reduces noise and minimises impact on the environment, while the lack of hydraulics removes the risk of any leakage.

The reduced noise levels is intended to allow greenstaff to circumvent noise regulations, allowing work to be completed earlier in the day.

Ernest Doe expands territory for Jacobsen

Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd. will now serve as the authorised distributor for Ransomes and Jacobsen turf equipment in Suffolk and Norfolk territories, expanding its relationship with the brands.

Ernest Doe will sell and service Ransomes and Jacobsen equipment from three branches in both Suffolk and Norfolk. Ernest Doe already represents the brands in Essex, Herts, Beds, Cambs, Kent, Surrey, East and West Sussex.

Ransomes and Jacobsen equipment is designed and manufactured by Ransomes Jacobsen Limited, a Textron Inc. (NYSE:TXT) company. Ransomes Jacobsen Limited operates as part of the Textron Specialized Vehicles Inc. business.

Ernest Doe recently showcased Ransomes Jacobsen's Ipswich factory to staff and customers, and

hosted a golf day at Ipswich Golf Club.

"During these two days, we wanted our local customers and Ernest Doe staff to see the full capability of the factory and what we do here," said William Carr, director of sales for Ransomes Jacobsen. "A lot of people who know of us don't always understand the scope of the operation, and by showing them around, we can give them a first-hand look into the manufacturing process."

"The golf day at Ipswich Golf Club was a great opportunity for everyone to play at a fantastic local club on a course which was excellently prepared by Graham Brumpton and his team, and was a great finish to a really successful two days."

For Ernest Doe, expanding their territory into Suffolk and Norfolk strengthens their already established relationship with the mower and machinery manufacturer.



Demonstrating

SPARE PARTS

Campey



Campey Turf Care Systems has brought in new product specialist, Jason Moody, to cover Wales, the Midlands and West Cheshire.

Jason brings almost three decades of experience to the Campey team, having started in the industry at 16-years-old as an apprentice at Royal St David's, where he stayed for seven years.

He also worked at Botley Park Hotel and spent five years as course manager at Canterbury GC. Jason also worked at Plassey Leisure Park, Wrexham.

ECHO blower



ECHO has launched the most powerful backpack blower in its class.

The PB-8010 is part of the ECHO X 'Best in Class' range and provides an industry-leading blowing force of 44N for better performance and productivity.

The 79.9cc two-stroke engine produces an air volume of 1,818m³/h and an airspeed of 211mph.

A lightweight carbon fibre frame and fan case are intended to make the blower easier to carry and use.

Green Room Podcast Live Stage

We are bringing the Green Room Podcast to life at BTME!



In the Blue Zone will be a live stage hosted by Curtis Tyrrell MG CGCS of the popular Course Reports video blog. Curtis was superintendent of Medinah Country Club during the 'Miracle of Medinah' Ryder Cup in 2012. We have lined up some fantastic guests to chat with Curtis and bring the Podcast feel to BTME. Topics include:

- Tuesday 21 Jan:**
- / The Solheim Cup
 - / Water and its effects on golf operations
 - / Meet the Presidents
 - / Automated Machinery and its Future in the Greenkeeping Industry
- Wednesday 22 Jan:**
- Look out for the finalised schedule on social media, the BTME App and BIGGA website.
 - / Working with the European Tour



The Green Room

On the podcast this month:

-  **Episode 25:** Royal Cinque Ports course manager James Bledge gives us an insight into life at the historic Kent Links.
-  **Episode 26:** Tamsin Williams and Francesca Bayliss, two young scientists who are shaping the direction of disease control in sportsturf.



Back to basics

This was the clear message emerging from a panel discussion on amenity management, held at SALTEX recently, and chaired by John Moverley from the Amenity Forum.

Whilst plant protection products continue to have a role in managing pests, weeds and diseases, the need to take an integrated approach to the management of amenity spaces is equally important. The emphasis must be on preventative actions, ensuring all aspects of soil management, seed selections, cultivations and appropriate on-going management routines are in place to minimise impact and ensure plant protection products, when applied, are targeted and have maximum impact.

The Amenity Forum has produced a guidance document to assist in producing integrated weed

management plans (IWMs) across all areas of amenity, together with a template to help in their construction. The Forum, subject to funding, is additionally hoping in the next year to produce similar guidance for integrated disease management approaches.

The Forum has also worked closely with the sector to develop the Amenity Standard. This will be fully launched at the start of 2020 and is seen as a game changer for the sector. Those operating in amenity management at the Standard will demonstrate their professionalism and re-assure all involved that practices undertaken on that amenity space follow an integrated approach and meet all requirements on safety and good practice.

The Amenity Standard is a bespoke quality management standard very much like the

Red Tractor standard in food and agriculture. Those operating to the Standard will be members of an approved and audited assurance scheme recognised by the Standard.

The Amenity Standard is designed to:

- / Provide an industry benchmark
- / Provide a basis for continuous improvement
- / Focus on quality as an objective
- / Provide assurances about the quality of the approved organisation and maintenance of the amenity space
- / Ensure that quality assurance scheme operators recognised under this Standard use auditors with technical knowledge and experience of the sector concerned
- / Promote confidence in

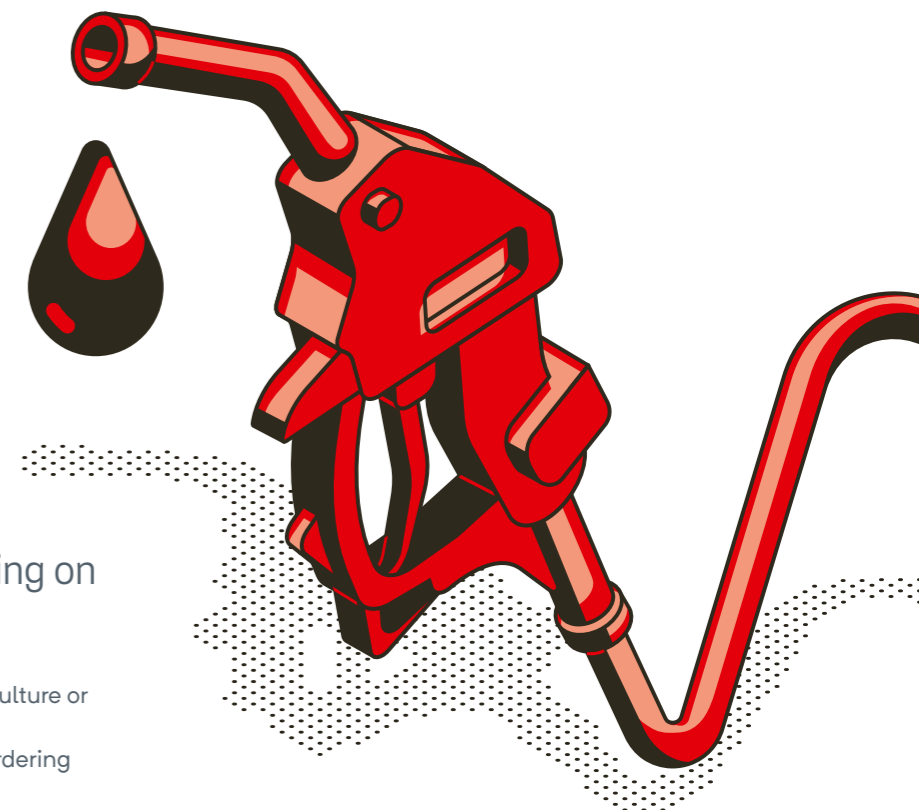
organisations operating and providing resources in the amenity sector by provision of a robust and transparent standard

John Moverley, Amenity Forum Chairman, said "the management of our amenity areas is essential and important and impacts on every UK citizen every day. The Amenity Forum promotes best practice and organisations who support this are committed to the highest professional standards seeking to produce safe, healthy spaces fit for purpose.

BIGGA is working with the Amenity Forum to ensure the golf greenkeeping part of the Amenity Sector can engage with the Standard.



RED DIESEL UPDATE



Use of Red Diesel in Tractors Driving on the Road in the Amenity Sector

Due to a recent number of inspections by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), it has been identified that a number of golf courses and landscape maintenance contracting companies use red diesel (Rebated fuel) in Tractors that are registered with the DVLA (Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency) taxed (Nil rated) and insured for use on the road, when they should only be using white diesel (Fully duty paid fuel).

Misinterpretation and lack of knowledge is apparent and in many cases the assumption is made that as it is an Agricultural tractor, it may use red diesel and if they are using it in a horticultural sector (Amenity) they are compliant. This is not the case.

Using the HMRC website and the Excise Notice 75: fuels for use in vehicles Updated 12 March 2019,

www.gov.uk/government/publications/excise-notice-75-fuel-for-road-vehicles/excise-notice-75-fuel-for-road-vehicles

In which it states under section "8.3 Tractors- to use red diesel, your tractor must be an agricultural tractor designed and constructed primarily for use otherwise than on roads. You must not use the tractor on public roads for activities other than for: / purposes relating to

- agriculture, horticulture or forestry
- / cutting verges bordering public roads
- / cutting hedges or trees bordering public roads or bordering verges which border public roads
- / gritting roads, including travel to and from where gritting takes place, and for the collection of equipment and material for gritting"

You may interpret that the terms agriculture, horticulture and forestry apply to the amenity sector, after all the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) regard the Amenity Sector within the Agricultural and Horticultural bracket, the Chemical Regulations Directorate (CRD) regard Amenity within the Horticulture sector under the Field of Use definition on pesticide labels, HMRC do not.

HMRC have within the excise notice addressed this with a questions and answers section in the appendix "Q3. What are purposes relating to horticulture?"

In their view horticulture is the cultivation and management of gardens (including vegetable plots, allotments and market gardens, but also flowerbeds, trees, shrubberies and ornamental lawns in public parks). By cultivation and management, they mean growing and

tending flowers, lawns, shrubs and trees, and harvesting flowers, fruits and vegetables for food (or animal fodder) and for ornament, as well as treating and enriching the soil and controlling weeds and pests.

However, they do not regard as horticulture the landscaping and maintenance of grassy recreational areas, such as playing fields and golf courses, or the grassed areas of parks that are made available for walks, picnics and general recreation"

If you fall in this work classification, you must not use red diesel and should only use

white diesel; there are caveats to this: if your vehicle is unlicensed according to the DVLA and or SORN (Statutory Off Road Notifications) where the vehicle is not kept or used on public roads, or it is a mowing machines (a complete vehicle) not an attachment you can use red diesel.

Please check the link to ensure you comply.

For further information you can contact HMRC by telephone: - 0300 200 3700 or email via an excise general enquiry form

www.tax.service.gov.uk/shortforms/form/CITEX_EGEF



Scan the QR code for further information from HMRC

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Drainage

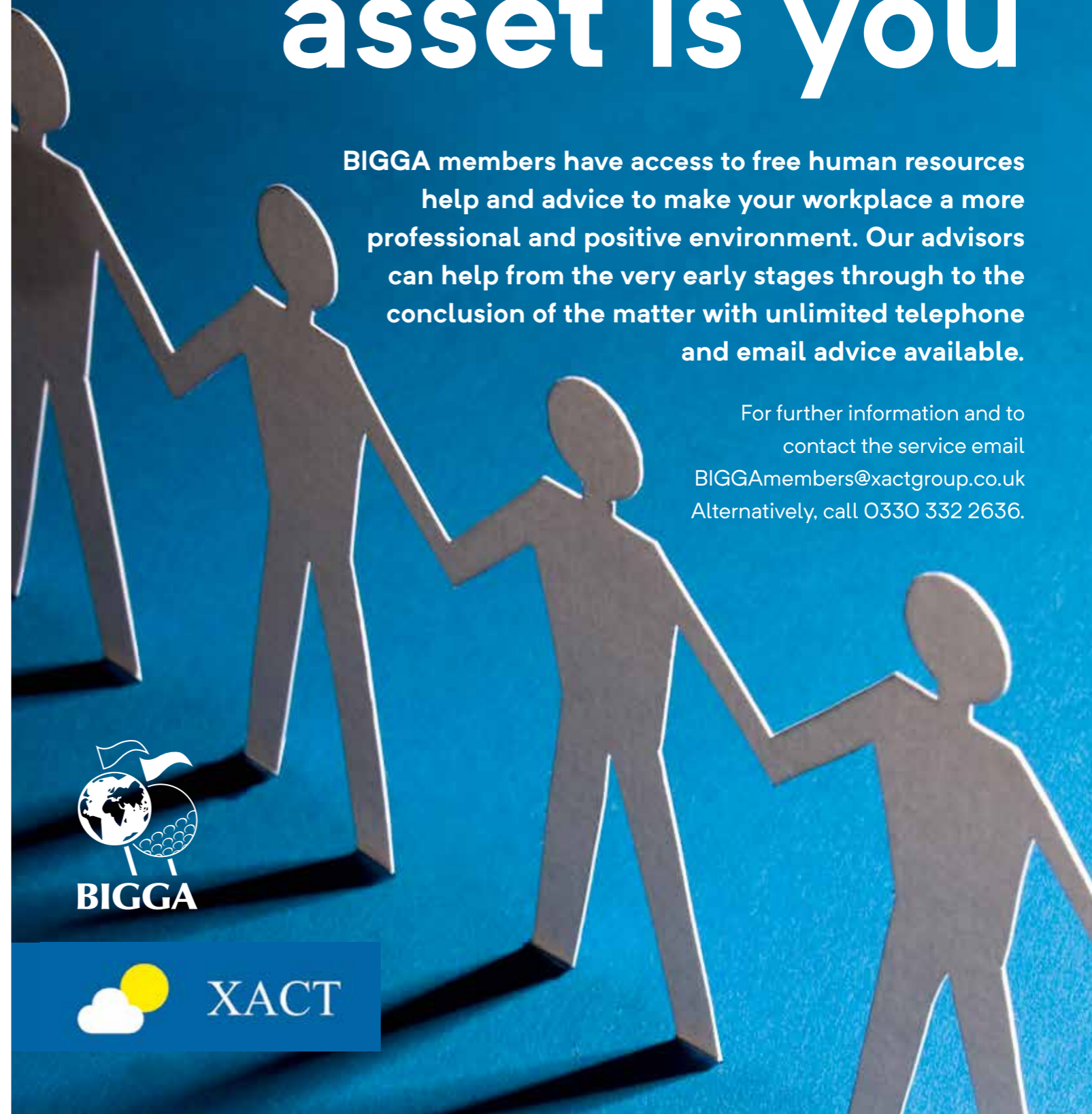
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For further information and to contact the service email BIGGAmembers@xactgroup.co.uk Alternatively, call 0330 332 2636.



USA - Quality trainee greenkeepers wanted for exciting experience in America

Quality trainee greenkeepers wanted for management training on the best golf courses in the USA. Must be enthusiastic and motivated and have at least NVQ 2 or one year of full-time turfgrass education. Good wages and plenty of experience on top courses with great managers / Programmes from 6 to 18 months. / Help with travel plans, visas and insurance. / Placement and accommodation arranged / PGA Tournament Experience / Optional turf classes available

For more information, please complete the initial enquiry below and include a clean-cut photo and CV: <https://top.osu.edu/internships/inbound-application> Check out this YouTube video about our programme <https://vimeo.com/320732596> using the password Syngenta Visit our website: www.top.osu.edu



Seasonal greenkeeping Sweden 2020

Interactive Management Agency Limited specialises in the placement of sports turf professionals. Our client, GML Sport manages an expanding portfolio of golf courses across the Stockholm and Gothenburg regions of southern Sweden.

- | | |
|---|--|
| What we're looking for | What we offer |
| / Greenkeepers of all levels of experience and positions | / Insight and experience of agronomics in a Scandinavian climate |
| / Formal qualifications in turf management are beneficial | / Competitive rates of pay aligned to experience |
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| | / 6 month contracts starting spring 2020 |

Send your CV to info@interactive-management.co.uk or visit www.interactive-management.co.uk



Ambitious?

From trainee vacancies to senior management roles, new greenkeeping job opportunities are added daily to BIGGA's online recruitment pages.

BIGGA's website receives 1.6 million page views per year and 55% of those are to our careers pages. Visit www.bigga.org.uk for our latest opportunities and find out more about advertising your position.

For more information call 01347 833 800 or email info@bigga.co.uk



Greenkeepers | Hollandsche Greenkeeping Maatschappij

Hollandsche Greenkeeping Maatschappij is looking for seasonal and full-time greenkeepers at various courses including The International, Haarlemmermeersche Golfcourse and Golfcourse Purmerend. These courses are located 10 minutes from Amsterdam.

- / Uniform included
- / Accommodation temporarily available or help with finding accommodation
- Please send your application with CV via email to Ingrid Martens: lonen@hgm.nl
- Start date between 1 March and 15 April 2020
- We are looking for highly motivated workers who have a passion for the industry and are looking to further develop their career.
- / Frequent job rotation
- / Wages dependant on qualifications and experience
- / Training on a wide range of machinery
- / The chance to join a fast-growing company and develop your career



Course Manager

Aldeburgh Golf Club's Championship Course (ranked in the top 100 in UK & Ireland by Golf Monthly) is an exemplar of maritime heathland golf providing firm and true surfaces all year round.

In recent years, Aldeburgh has hosted major amateur championships for England Golf and for The R&A and the club won STRI's Environmental Golf Course of the Year award in 2019.

Mark Broughton, the Course Manager, has announced his intention to retire in September 2020 after more than 20 years of outstanding service. This presents an opportunity for an ambitious greenkeeper to manage fescue-dominated turf at a highly-regarded and forward-looking club.

Requirements of the role:

- / Strong agronomy
- / Commitment to low input greenkeeping and the wider environment
- / Management and leadership of a team
- / Experience in setting and managing budgets
- / Project management and construction experience
- / Communication skills
- / Technical expertise

Remuneration will be in line with the role and based on the successful candidate's experience. Accommodation is available if required by the successful candidate.

Applicants to apply with a covering letter and CV to: David Wybar (Secretary, Aldeburgh Golf Club) david.wybar@aldeburghgolfclub.co.uk Closing date: Friday 31 January 2020 Website: www.aldeburghgolfclub.co.uk



Links Superintendent Waterville Golf Links

Waterville Golf Links, founded in 1889, is a world-renowned course located in County Kerry. The complex comprises an 18-hole links course, practice range and three practice putting greens, plus a practice range, short-game area, and putting green complex at our nearby 5-star accommodation, Waterville House.

Requirements:

- / High standards of greenkeeping, course management and presentation
- / Excellent management and organisational skills
- / Excellent communication skills
- / Project and budgetary control
- / Up-to-date knowledge of greenkeeping techniques including environmental, horticultural and safety requirements.

How to apply:

Previous experience as a links superintendent/head greenkeeper is desirable. Advantageous to have experience of working on a links course. Interested applicants should apply with cover letter and full CV to: michaelmurphy@watervillegolflinks.ie Closing date: 20 December 2019.



Assistant Greenkeeper Ingrebourne Links

Ingrebourne Links in Rainham, Essex are looking for a greenkeeper to assist in preparation and presentation of our golf courses. Duties include mowing, strimming, other tasks relating to golf course maintenance and preparation. Working average 40 hours a week, weekends on a rota basis. Opportunities to work paid overtime.

Ideal candidate would have:

- / Greenkeeping experience
- / NVQ level 2 or equivalent in Amenity Sports Turf
- / PA1 and PA6 spraying qualifications
- / Hard working, self-motivated, reliable team player
- / MUST have transport.
- / Educational opportunities
- / Use of golf course.
- Please apply by email to: benadams@ingrebournetlinks.co.uk
- Or: Ben Adams, Head Greenkeeper, Ingrebourne Golf Links, Rainham, Essex RM13 9FL

Benefits Include:

- / Competitive salary
- / Company pension

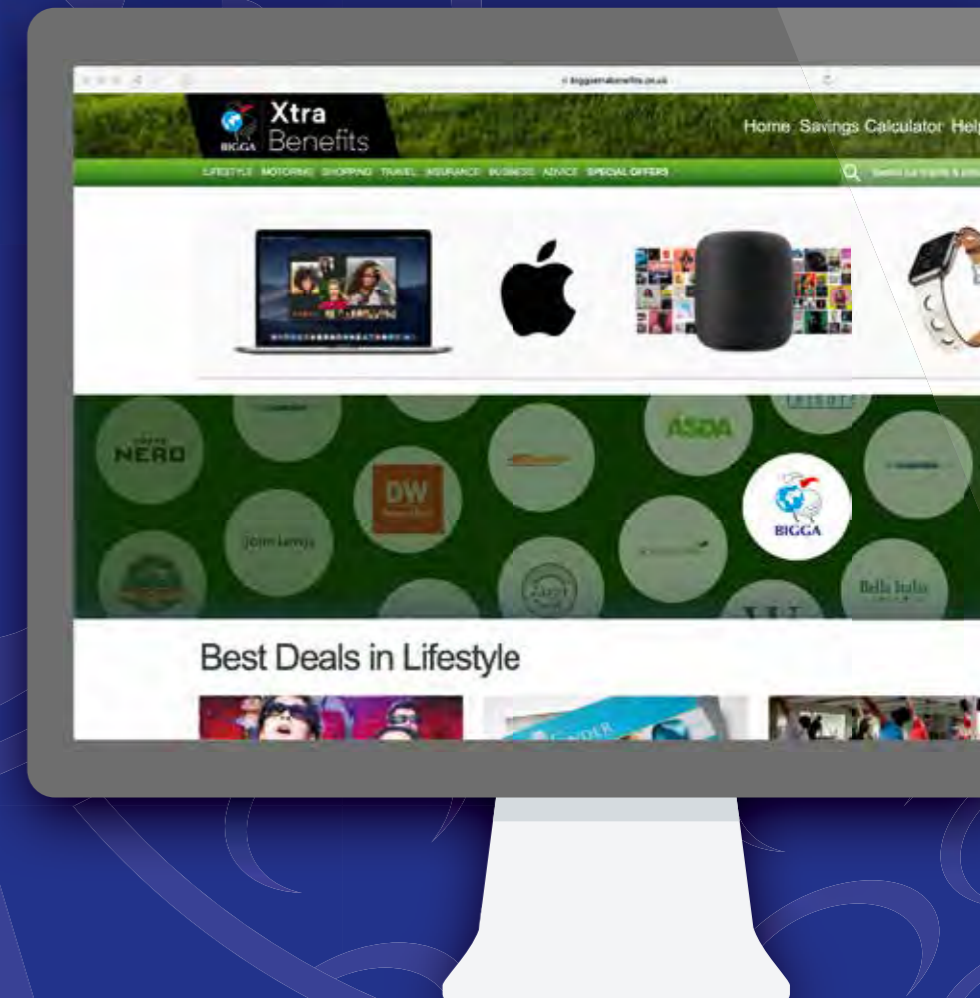


Aldeburgh Golf Club, Suffolk

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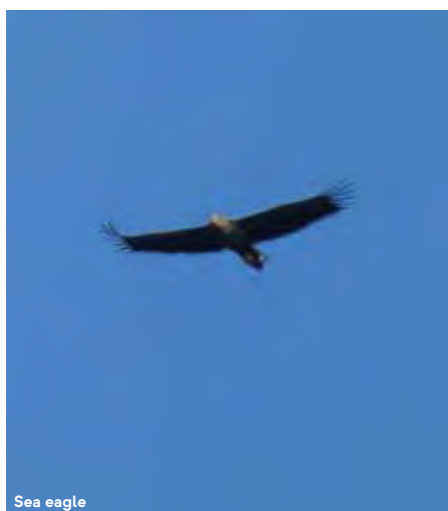
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ECOLOGY ROUNDUP

James Hutchinson | Membership Services Manager (Ecology & Sustainability)



Sea eagle



Deer



Egret

One of your resident MSM for Sustainability and Ecology's latest assignments was to head over to the Baltics to assist in creating an environmental report for one of the few golf courses in Latvia, and what a course it was too!

The UK's courses have such a variety of native wildlife to deal with, including moles, badgers and corvids (crows, rooks etc), but take a second to think of the trouble you'd have if beavers decided to cut your trees down and build dams with them! The beavers block the drains at Jurmala, where Wendy O'Brien is course superintendent, and reduce the water flowing through the course. To fix this, Wendy and the team must hire a 360-degree digger to sort it out!

Or how about moose? Have you seen the size of a full-grown male moose? I have. Or rather we have. Wendy and I nearly ran one over near to Jurmala, when it decided to amble across a four-lane highway. Cars, including ours, swerved all over the place to avoid it. After evasive action was undertaken and we made it back to the golf course safely, albeit shaken up, guess who was there waiting for us? Yep, the moose.

Deer are also commonplace. On

occasion, one will turn up in pieces, so who knows what else is mooching around when the sun goes down — I decided that an owl listening session was best held from the balcony of the hotel, rather than venturing out into the wilds.

There's a group of wild boars too – now they can dig up a golf course when the mood takes them.

Not all the critters on-site make a mess though. Take this stunning Egret happily fishing in one of the many lakes. Or how about a sea eagle?

Turns out, Latvia is the place to be for large wildlife. Jurmala really is a special course and thanks to Wendy for inviting me over to check it out!

Ecology Roundup is kindly sponsored by



Here for you

If you notice your mental or emotional state getting worse, or you're worried about someone you know – help is available. You're not alone, so talk to someone you trust as sharing a problem is often the first step to recovery. BIGGA may not be the first place you consider asking for help, but help is at hand when you need it.

BIGGA's Counselling Assistance Helpline

Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Completely confidential and provides you with support by telephone by specialist call handlers and counsellors — 0333 000 2082.

BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund

For the benefit of members when times get tough and need financial support by way of a grant, award or a payment. Details available through the members area of the BIGGA website at www.bigga.org.uk

Perennial

Perennial is the UK charity dedicated to helping people who work or have worked in horticulture including greenkeepers. BIGGA works very closely with Perennial to help any member who needs free and confidential advice, support and financial assistance on 0800 093 8543 (general advice) or 0800 093 8546 (debt advice).

Call BIGGA House

and speak to a member of the Membership Team on 01347 833 800, visiting www.bigga.org.uk or by contacting your local BIGGA Membership Services Manager.



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Perennial



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