is it a pity that Inspectors do not pay more attention to this important aspect of health and safety at work. A few well placed Improvement Notices might go a long way towards getting the message across.

I would appeal to all involved in the provision of yard buildings: make health and safety one of the first things you think about, don’t leave it to the end user, the employee, to worry about! Jon Allbut, Cherry Tree House, Sunnyingale Rd., Biggin Hill, Kent

Lost opportunity

It was with increasing dismay that I read the thinly veiled advertisement (article) “Lock It Up”. What a lost opportunity to address some important points to ensure yard buildings are not only secure but are compliant with the new EC/HSE legislative framework!

Employers reading the article will be tempted to think that the construction of doors and windows will be easy to get out in a hurry. Very often too the most obvious means of security only in mind (no doors or windows) is operating on or below the noise level. No – the machine is operating above the minimum level and ear protection must be provided, training given in its use and operators instructed to wear it.

Raymond Wigley, Cortessey Park GC, Norwich

Tree grants available

May I draw to the attention of readers the large grants that are now available from the Forestry Authority for tree planting? These grants are available to all land owners, including golf courses, and are paid out under a Woodland Grant Scheme over a period of ten years. There is also a supplement for planting improved grassland, which is paid out at the time of planting.

We recently prepared a budget for tree planting in 15 different areas on a golf course and over a ten year period the grants will cover the total cost of the tree planting and subsequent maintenance.

Eamonn Wall, Woodland Consultant, Dollar, Clackmannanshire

Course is right on target

I would like to thank all the staff at BIGGA and all the lecturers for a most interesting and enjoyable week on your Year One Management Course. I found it of great benefit and will be looking forward to coming back for Year Two. If any greenkeeper is thinking of going on the course, I would thoroughly recommend it. Thanks again for a great week.

Perry Smith, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Bramley Golf Club

Wrong hills

Your top photo caption (page 19, October issue, featuring Kingsknowe GC), indicates that the Braid Hills are shown in the background. Not so, these are the Pentland Hills.

Allen Wood, Braid Hills GC, Edinburgh

Bidding a fond farewell

My time on Greenkeeper International is finished, to my regret if not to yours. Looking back over the small mountain of issues it has been my pleasure to compile, I grined at one comment which appeared in my first editorial, recalling the pithy words of an unidentified but oh-so-observant wordsmith: “Writing a column is easy,” he declared, “All you have to do is sit at your typewriter until small drops of blood appear on your forehead.”

Thirty five issues have come and gone, some with more blood-letting than others, and though occasions were legion when “small drops of blood appeared on my forehead” it seemed, more often than not, that blood appeared on my fingertips as well, for the equivalent of something approaching two block-buster novels has been hummed out on the keyboard of my trusty old Apple Macintosh; far more than any trifling ‘bloody’ column and, in truth, much more fun.

Editorial guess-work is at best an imperfect science. In trying to discover where readers’ loyalties may lie, I’ve found no reliable way of discovering which elements in this magazine you’ve secretly pined to read – or those you’d be pleased to see the back of – while any ‘research’ I might have undertaken (in the main, listening to every greenkeeper I ever chanced to borrow from for more than a few moments) – served merely to offer guide-lines to those features you most enjoyed (without exception, the controversial ones), whilst failing to throw up any revolutionary or untried ideas.

Surviving always to present all sides of the greenkeeping conundrum, often at no small cost to my firm (some would say impudent) beliefs, in so doing I’ve held true to the doctrine of John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), whose words are writ large above my computer screen: “We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavouring to stifle is a false opinion; and if we are sure, stifling it would be an evil still.”

My departure should not alter your expectation of good things to come, for a tantalising array of delectables will I am sure continue to appear within these comfortable old pages, pages that I have come to regard as my own. There will be words that please and words that infuriate, words that inspire and words that are best read with a sharp instrument close at hand. If you think you are addressed in a condescending manner, or you suspect pontification, grasp the matter firmly: your letters page was never dull, make sure it stays that way.

So farewell. Be of good cheer, trusted friends – and be kind to your new editor. This old editor cum columnist cum photographer cum copy boy isn’t about to kick the bucket, he’s simply taking a well earned blood transfusion. The drip is deep in the artery, the bottle flowing with a translucent amber fluid that contains reputedly miraculous healing powers.

DAVID WHITE

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL. December 1993