Neil Thomas reports on how the event planning for BTME2002 is going, and urges prospective exhibitors to book their stand space fast!

**BTME2002: Planning to be even BIGGA and better!**

BTME each year evolves through a twelve month cycle. No sooner have we returned to BIGGA HOUSE from Harrogate than the planning process for the next BTME is well and truly underway. There is a comprehensive review of what has been and changes as necessary are put in place for the following year. The freshness and appeal of the week in Harrogate are essential ingredients to its success and there is never any sense of complacency as we reflect on one event and plan for the next. There are many considerations to be undertaken in the planning process and decisions to be made.

Through the pages of 'Greenkeeper International' we plan to keep readers informed with key announcements in the months ahead. We hope that this will ensure a great sense of anticipation for BTME 2002 which no doubt will come around again in quick time.

**Record bookings**

As I write in mid May, 127 stands have confirmed bookings while 40 other exhibitors are currently seeking relocation. Such is the level of booking and enquiry that the remaining portion of Hall B which was the utilised for BTME 2001 will now be used to accommodate new exhibitors and those who require more space.

The GCSSA Conference and Show in Dallas last February proved to be a fruitful source of enquiry in relation to the BTME and will surely enhance the ever-growing international presence in Harrogate.

The decision to allow breakdown from 5.00pm on the Thursday has been widely welcomed particularly amongst smaller exhibitors who have subsequently confirmed their stand bookings.

So, for companies who are seriously contemplating exhibiting at BTME 2002, there is no time to waste. Meredith is your contact at BIGGA HOUSE - speak to her soon!

**Automatic pre-registration**

One significant development at BTME 2001 was the advent of far longer queues than previously on the Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Luckily the sun shone and to an extent this alleviated the obvious frustration experienced by those stranded outside. As I have said there is no sense of complacency on our part and this problem will be tackled for next January's show. Visitor badges will be sent automatically to all visitors and we believe that 2001 show while pre-registration will be streamlined through direct on-line and telephone bookings. Life is so much easier for those arriving with a badge! It would be foolish to claim that queues will be a thing of the past as growth of the show is a primary aim year on year.

We will do our best to cater for that growth and this will include speedier access through the on site registration process where we will attempt to anticipate the growth factor to the best of our ability.

**Education, training and entertainment**

We are well advanced in preparation of the conference, seminar and workshop programmes (see page 10) whilst decisions will soon be made on a keynote speaker and the entertainment programme for the BTME banquet.

We will be aiming to produce packages to suit all tastes and pockets and the focus will very much be on making BTME 2002 once again the premier event in the greenkeeping calendar and one which greengrazers and companies alike cannot afford to miss.

For the very latest BTME2002 news and event information visit: www.bigga.org.uk