Rachael and Gemma would like to welcome 32 new members to the Association and talk about the new benefit of membership.

Membership Update

BIGGA welcomes...

**SCOTTISH REGION**
- Gary Muir, East Scotland
- Christopher Myers, East Scotland
- Michael Peters, East Scotland
- Jody Wilson, Central Scotland

**NORTHERN REGION**
- Alan Evans, North Wales
- Matthew Lewis, North Wales
- Christopher Lumley, North East
- Benjamin Robertson, Northern
- Karl Smith, Northern
- Simon Wathall, Northern

**MIDLAND REGION**
- Liam Chapman, East of England
- Tomasz Fratczak, BB&O
- Bryan Paton, East Midlands
- Dean Perryman, Midland
- David Starkey, Midland
- Nathan Webb, Midland

**SOUTH EAST REGION**
- Toby Alexander, East Anglia
- Chris Guy, East Anglia
- Robert Wickham, East Anglia

**SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES REGION**
- Robert Cocknell, South West
- Marcus Gilbert, Devon & Cornwall
- Adam Jacobs, South West
- Scott Johnson, South West
- Christopher Waterton, South Wales

**INTERNATIONAL**
- Michael Habenstroh, Germany
- Aaron Huntley, USA
- Roger Robarge, USA

**CORPORATE MEMBERS**
- Mark Bowley, Essex
- John Heaphy, Central Scotland
- Roger Clark, BB&O

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER**
- Gary McAllister, East Midlands

**STUDENT MEMBER**
- Matthew Caple, South West

Mediation Cover is Added to the Legal Helpline

As launched at Harrogate Week we are pleased to announce that the legal helpline now includes provision for professional mediation services.

**But what is mediation, and how will it benefit BIGGA Members?**

A legal dispute, whether over employment, sales of goods or a claim for personal injury, can be extremely stressful and time-consuming. When a BIGGA Member is faced with a situation where legal action is required, the BIGGA Legal Protection Scheme provides a confidential, 24-hour legal helpline service, which means the member can quickly and easily find out their rights. In certain types of claim, the policy can cover legal fees to instruct a solicitor to represent the member.

However, the legal process is not always the only route available to members, and in some cases it may not even be the best process.

Redressing an issue, usually by claiming financial compensation, is not always the most important aspect. Members can be put off from making a claim for reasons that have little to do with money. In these situations, mediation can play a vital role, bringing potential benefit to both parties involved.

As an example, here are some the reasons why BIGGA Members may be hesitant about taking legal action, or continuing with a case that has already started:

- A preference to reach an agreement rather than go through the court process
- A need or desire or need to maintain a positive relationship with the other party after the dispute is resolved
- A need or desire for absolute confidentiality - taking a claim through the legal process means that details of the dispute are in the public domain
- A need or desire for an informal process - the legal process can seem daunting, formal and intimidating

These situations are particularly prevalent in employment disputes where the member wishes to maintain their existing employment. However, these situations can apply to any legal dispute.

For mediation services to be possible, both parties must agree to mediate, and the cost of the mediation is shared equally between the two parties, or in a member’s case, by the BIGGA Legal Protection scheme. In addition, the process has further conditions:

- Both must agree to the mediator to be appointed
- The mediator to be utilised must be professionally qualified
- The process is strictly confidential
- The outcome is not imposed on either party - both parties have control over the outcome
- The process is “without prejudice” - any matters disclosed cannot later be relied upon if the matter goes to court.

But does mediation work? “Statistically 80% of cases referred to mediation are successfully settled. And clients are able to seek other remedies not available within the court process, such as an apology or a recognition of wrongdoing,” said Jonathan Savitt, of Just Mediation,

Members wishing to enquire about the availability of the mediation service can do so by contacting BIGGA Legal Protection legal helpline on 0800 068 1893.

Harrogate Week Prize Draw

Our congratulations go to James Barley, of Trefloyne Golf Club, David Nelson, of Robert Trent Jones, and Steindor Ragnarsson, a student at Elmwood College, who all won a Highlander Waterproof Suit in the daily Membership prize draw at Harrogate Week.

FEBRUARY’S MEMBERSHIP DRAW WINNER

Just introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA and your name will be placed into a draw to win a Digital FM Scan Radio/Alarm. The radio can stand alone or can be clipped onto a belt with headphones for when your on the move.

Our congratulations go to David Gladwin, of Carmarthen GC.