Defying the odds, more people visited Harrogate Week 2011 than did in 2010, which is a huge tribute to the work that goes into ensuring that the week delivers what the customer wants and the attraction that the town of Harrogate holds for visitors. With 6018 coming through the doors over the three days of the Show it represented a 2.3% increase on the year before while the number who took part in a Continue to Learn Workshop or Seminar exceeded 2000 for the very first time.
The ultimate turf management exhibition in Europe

Jim Cook spent three days exploring Harrogate Week and found it to be time extremely well spent.

After a few days spent in the old spa town of Harrogate at this certain time of year, it is difficult not to feel that you have been part of something a bit special.

An exhibitor at the show told me his company return annually because it is the biggest ‘shop window’ in the industry, in Europe. This statement is certainly true, the opportunity for sales and promotion is huge, but it is also a fact that the week offers an experience outside of the capacious halls that is simply unrivalled throughout the continent.

Workshops and seminars with some of the biggest names in the business run throughout the week and newly-qualified greenkeepers have the chance to plot their way to becoming a Course Manager with the guidance of the Personal Development Zone. From welcoming old pubs tucked away below street level to the multitude of restaurants, coffee shops and modern, vibrant bars, all within a short stroll of each other, the networking opportunity that Harrogate town itself provides is truly tantalising.

It was with all this and the upcoming ‘Harrogate buzz’ in mind that I arrived at the exhibition entrance at 9am on Tuesday, January 18. If the eager throng of visitors that bustled outside Hall A was anything to go by, then this year’s Harrogate Week looked likely to be a resounding success.

BIGGA Chairman, Paul Worster, cut the green ribbon to start BTME and Clubhouse 2011. Previous to this, the Continue to Learn Education Programme, had begun on Sunday, with record numbers in attendance.

As the halls steadily began to fill, it was down to the Media Centre for the opening press conference with Top Green and Rigby Taylor who were launching their Euroflor flower seed mixes.

Brian Robinson, Seed Research Director, at Rigby Taylor, emphasised the biodiversity the flowers should encourage, due to long flowering periods from spring to autumn and this was the first of many positive environmental sentiments to be broadcast over the week.
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The announcement of Dennis acquiring SISIS was made by Managing Director of Dennis, Ian Howard. He emphasised how the two companies were metaphorical headlight’s, side by side, whilst parent company Howardson Ltd was the battery driving them.

Although I did not have the opportunity to see many of the seminars and workshops, I managed to catch the presentation given by Course Manager of the Old Course, St. Andrews, Gordon McKee and Gordon Moir, Director of Greenkeeping at St. Andrew’s Links, entitled ‘Preparing the Old Course for the 2010 Open Championship’.

This proved immensely interesting as they spoke about many things including how daily maintenance of the course continued around contractors setting up grandstands, and removing sprinklers in preparation for The Open. They talked about increasing Fescue stands, and removing sprinklers in preparation for The Open. They talked about increasing Fescue stands, and removing sprinklers in preparation for The Open.

and often, problems with Pearlwort and how fungicides have not been used on the course for 20 years. A fascinating insight into life at St. Andrews came when the laborious methods of a company developing a computer game about the course were explained, and how greenstaff worked around this.

The annual awards ceremony saw BIGGA members recognised for achievements in front of a crowded room.

STRI's Golf Environment Awards recognise the most environmentally proactive clubs in the UK and it was in the Queen's Suite where presentations were made for the 2010 winners.

Regional awards were given to David Cole, of Loch Lomond GC; Mearig Lumley, of Aberdeen GC; Brian Stoery, of Silloth on Solway GC and Mark Broughton MG, of Aldeburgh GC.

Overall winner was Colin Webber, of Portmore Golf Club, who was commended as being a fantastic exemplar of the greenkeeping industry. He thanked his family and colleagues and accepted the award on behalf of all the team. James Hutchinson, of Fairhaven GC, was the winner of the individual award.

Ben Warren, Director of Communications at the Golf Environment Organisation, presented GEO certificate to MacRury Hanley Dunes GC, on the Kintyre Peninsula, Scotland, and Auchenharvie GC, in Perthshire, Scotland, and said he looked forward to many more BIGGA members receiving this award next year.

Master Greenkeeper awards followed with Greg Evans, of Ealing GC, becoming the 52nd person to achieve this status. Stuart Yardwood, of Lynn GC, and Alan Pierce, of Ham Manor GC, also received the accolade alongside Alan Hess, of Augusta Pines GC, in Texas, USA. Alan thanked Sami and Rachael for their support and made a moving speech thanking his father for encouraging him to become a Superintendent.

Gordon Child received the prestigious BIGGA Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by Jack McMillan MBE.

Gordon started out at Dove and Tredley and Royal Birkdale and went on to become Course Manager at such courses as St George’s Hill and Woburn Park, where he prepared the course for some top European Tour events. He became Course Manager at Churston Golf Club, in Devon, where he stayed until retirement.

Gordon also played in The Open Championship at St Andrews in 1965 and Royal Birkdale in 1965. Out on the course, he still regularly beats his age.

Tennison Hutchinson’s eighth Unsung Heroes were recognised at the Show. Joint Sponsors, the EGU, sponsored the Unsung Hero award for a Greenkeeper and presented a cheque along with Terrain Aeration to Jocelyn Carpenter, of Corhampton Golf Club.

Stevens Kennedy, of Sandgate Boys Football Club, won the Groundsman Award.

The BIGGA social night went down extremely well, literally, as this year’s entertainment was a beer festival held at the Old Swan Hotel. The night was a definite success with attendees enjoying a buffet, live band and a wide selection of real ales.

It was with thick heads that many of us approached Wednesday morning’s calendar of events.

In the Queen’s Suite above Hall C, Chris Kennedy, Director and Course Manager of Wentworth GC, gave an overview of major refurbishments of the West Course.

His working relationship with Ernie Els proved a source of amusement and interest to the massed onlookers.

Els had said that the point of making changes was not to alter the character of the course, that would have been a crime, but to bring it up to specifications needed to host the largest competitions.

Chris mentioned turf from their old greens, sold for charity, raised £27,000.

The vast amount of manpower and materials involved in the refurbishments was apparent from Chris’s presentation and he was keen to recognise the rest of the team responsible saying, “Everyone who has been involved from 2005 has done a fantastic job.”

Back to the press conferences where Vitax Amenity launched their new fertiliser, Enhance R Prime, which won EGU’s ‘Best New and Innovative Product’ award in the Fertiliser and Pesticides category.
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The introduction of an Envirozone was new to this year's exhibition and with environmentalism becoming such an importance for golf courses, it was encouraging to see the area lively with activity over the three days.

Stands from British Climate Services, Golf Environment Organisation, Envirosports Ltd, Solarwall Ltd, Vermigrand and British Wild Flower Plants sent out a clear message that the industry is working hard to dispel myths about golf courses not being environmentally friendly or offering bio diversity and sustainability.

In relation to this, BTME 2011 saw Syngenta launch Operation Pollinator, which is a project designed to create new habitats in out of play areas of golf courses, for bumblebees and pollinating insects.

It is well documented that bumblebee numbers have declined by 70% over the past 40 years and Syngenta's press conference on Wednesday afternoon made the very agreeable statement that the plight of the bumblebee should be reversed.

For the incentive, golf courses are being sought to join a national scheme in which they commit to establishing at least half a hectare of Operation Pollinator seed mix, which is designed to encourage bumblebees and pollinating insects by being rich in pollen and nectar food sources. Simon Elsworth, Turf and Landscape Manager at Syngenta, said that with the correct management, golf courses could provide the perfect habitat for bumblebees and other pollinating insects.

Late on Wednesday afternoon, BIGGA and the Golf Environment Organisation announced the establishment of a partnership between the two bodies. It will see them collaborating in promoting sustainability in golf facility management.

The partnership aims to make sustainability easier for greenkeepers and course managers to understand, and provide support for their improvement efforts.

Incoming Chairman at BIGGA, Andrew Mellon said the whole industry needs to pull together and collaboration with like-minded bodies brings more strength to golf's efforts.

On Thursday morning it was great to catch up with a new exhibitor at the show to get his view on the week. Richard Allen, Co-Director of Envirosports Ltd, was showcasing its riveted bunker system in the Envirozone and said: “Envirosports is a very new company and it’s our first time to Harrogate. We’ve really enjoyed the show, we’ve met a lot of people, especially in our target client list of golf courses and really enjoyed the whole experience of exchanging ideas with other people who have the same passion towards golf that we’ve got.”

After 4pm when the doors closed to visitors, the cleanup began and it was time for assessments of a hectic few days.

Any fears of inclement weather, such as the recent early December freeze, affecting Harrogate Week were quickly appeased as it became apparent we were in for cold but rain and snow free skies for the duration. This, combined with the unquestionable lure of so many industry names under one roof, led the exhibition halls to be crowded with enthusiastic visitors.

The attendance figure of 6019 for the week is higher than in 2010 and shows that despite budget pressures, people are willing to make the effort for something which is worthwhile. The Continue to Learn Education Programme in the Queen’s Suite provided a catalogue of informative, educational seminars and workshops throughout the entire week, while the exhibition halls bustled throughout.

With the success of this year’s show still ringing in their ears, the BIGGA team has already begun preparing for Harrogate Week 2012, which will undoubtedly prove once again to be the ultimate turf management exhibition in Europe.
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The latest products on show at Harrogate Week 2011

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**BLINDER BUNKER LINING SYSTEM LAUNCHED AT BTME**

Blinder Bunker Liner Ltd launched a new patented bunker lining system, Blinder, at BTME.

The new system is environmentally sound and uses rubber crumb made from recycled tyres mixed with a binding agent to produce a bunker lining that provides a solution to many of the problems associated with maintaining bunkers.

Blinder was developed by Course Manager, Murray Long, who was looking for a viable option to reduce bunker maintenance hours.

Rubber crumb is mixed with a binding agent and then spread onto a sub-base at a depth of 25mm. It is then smoothed by hand to provide the perfect base for the bunker sand. It can then be sprayed to match the colour of the sand, if required.

The liner is resistant to club strikes and burrowing animals and drains at a rate up to 2,400 ml per hour. It also minimises contamination to the sand, which can create substantial savings in sand replacement and reduces the possibility of stones on the fine turf areas surrounding the bunkers. It also offers protection to the drainage system, extending the timeframe for drainage replacement programmes.

The new system can be easily installed when renovating existing bunkers or constructing new bunkers.

Technical Director, Murray Long, added: “Blinder is suited to all types of bunkers and can be extremely useful in areas of heavy wear such as practice bunkers. It is also very effective in chalk and flint soils, especially stopping contamination of stones and other particles into the sand. Bunker maintenance is an issue I’ve been battling with for many years, and I’m confident that I’ve found a solution, not only for me, but also for my peers.”

+ [01344 621654](tel:01344621654)
+ [www.thblerder.com](http://www.thblerder.com)

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**PRO-PRUNER**

The PRO-Pruner range developed in New Zealand by Lakewood Products, offers simple, robust, well engineered pruning tools capable of pruning branches up to 60mm in diameter. The advanced design features of the PRO-Pruner include:

- A unique curved blade: the shape of the curved blade pulls the pruner into the branch and holds it tight, helping to avoid collateral damage, blade crossover and slip. This means that hold bigger branches and easier scarfing are major benefits.
- PRO-Lock thread on threaded handles, fitted with specially-designed PRO-Lock bolts, has eliminated nut and bolt failure. The easy adjust PRO-Lock bolts prevent lifting when the lock-nut is tightened. This system reduces the number of working parts ensuring the pruners perform better.
- Strength and durability: reducing the bolt holes in the handles to 7mm and using microbeads to the thin trunk, the thin trunk, multiarmed steel arms further strengthens the handles.
- Operator comfort: ergonomically designed grips and the offset handle in the handle to head have helped in reducing shock to the operator’s arms and hands.
- Lakewood Products has now made the PRO-Pruner available in the UK through Baxter Baye Limited.

+ [www.propruner.co.uk](http://www.propruner.co.uk)

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**NEW SCOTTS LAUNCH**

Greenmaster Topdress Z is a fine particle-sized topdressing based on Scotts’ Pro-Lite zeolite technology. This gives a particle count of 1,100-2,000 granules per gram. It has an open caged structure with a very high nutrient holding capacity, making it ideal for use as an amendment to new courses or in topdressing. The high Cation Exchange Capacity of Topdress Z helps turf managers with their nutrient management by enabling the soil to hold onto more nutrients.

Stuart Staples, International Technical Manager, said that turf managers can save time and money while improving the health of their turf by using controlled-release fertilisers. “Controlled-release fertilisers deliver their nutrients over a specified period in a consistent and reliable way, so losses are minimised and nutrient use efficiency is greatly improved. While the price per kilogram is greater than conventional fertilisers, the long-lasting effects of the product, reduced nutrient losses and the saving in labour costs compared to repeated applications of a conventional fertilizer, mean that multiple savings can be made over the course of a season.”

In addition, providing a steady supply of nutrients rather than a ‘feast or famine’ approach has been proven to improve turf health and resilience,” he added.

+ [www.scottsprofessional.co.uk](http://www.scottsprofessional.co.uk)

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A unique chassis design with quick hook-up rear attachment system turns the Multivator into a multi-use machine carrying out a wide range of tasks achieved with only one drive unit.

Decompacting, soil recyling and topdressing all in one pass, the Multivator has quick hook-on rear attachments, easy change blade systems and heavy duty reversible drive systems. There are five models available in different widths – three for mid-range tractors and two for high HP tractors. All units are equipped with overload cam clutch and the heavy duty models also feature long life side gear drive with forward and reverse rotation.

The heavy duty units also feature a heavy duty gearbox with four shafts to give two-speed drive and reverse rotation – mounted on a swivel base for easy drive change. On the heavy duty models a PRO shaft drive is fitted for rear attachments and an extreme duty overload clutch (pre-set).

+ [www.blec.co.uk](http://www.blec.co.uk)

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**EUROFLOR INTRODUCED BY RIGBY TAYLOR**

Following extensive trials at golf clubs in the UK, Rigby Taylor, in partnership with seed breeder Top Green, launched EUROFLOR urban flower seed mixtures at BTME. Brightening up the golf course, natural floral cultivars are suited with wild flower species to provide horticultural excellence.

These mixes help to provide areas which will give back to nature what has often been taken away by the destruction of natural habitats.

Attracting wildlife throughout their long-flowering period from late spring well into the autumn they offer animals and insects cover and an extended food source.

Through trials and tests at 18 UK sites, Euroflor has been found to be highly successful on varying ‘normal’ soil types – including loam, sand, clay, stoney and slightly acidic to alkaline soils with a pH of 6 to 8. These colourful mixtures have also performed well on steep slopes but here the sowing rate needs to be increased to 5g per square metre to allow for run off.

Virtually no maintenance is required on the 14 hand-selected mixtures being introduced which can include mixtures which replicate a club’s corporate image.

+ [www.rigbytaylor.com](http://www.rigbytaylor.com)

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**MORE PRODUCTS NEXT MONTH...**

Blinder Bunker Liner Ltd.

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Rubber crumb is mixed with a binding agent and then spread onto a sub-base at a depth of 25mm. It is then smoothed by hand to provide the perfect base for the bunker sand. It can then be sprayed to match the colour of the sand, if required.

The liner is resistant to club strikes and burrowing animals and drains at a rate up to 2,400 ml per hour. It also minimises contamination to the sand, which can create substantial savings in sand replacement and reduces the possibility of stones on the fine turf areas surrounding the bunkers. It also offers protection to the drainage system, extending the timeframe for drainage replacement programmes.

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Technical Director, Murray Long, added: “Blinder is suited to all types of bunkers and can be extremely useful in areas of heavy wear such as practice bunkers. It is also very effective in chalk and flint soils, especially stopping contamination of stones and other particles into the sand. Bunker maintenance is an issue I’ve been battling with for many years, and I’m confident that I’ve found a solution, not only for me, but also for my peers.”

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The ultimate turf management exhibition in Europe

HARROGATE WEEK 2011

FEBRUARY 2011

Bio-Links

It's Evolution not revolution!

The ‘Breaker’ family of turf water management products continues to evolve. Breaker BioLinks is confirmed in independent trials. Breaker BioLinks is the proven solution specially developed to solve Dry Patch and water related problems on all turf surfaces. Particularly effective on links golf courses and other sand based venues.

Prevents and cures Dry Patch
- Eases soil moisture content
- Balances soil moisture content
- Improves turf health and colour

Innovative & Curative effectiveness confirmed independently by STRI

Bio-Links

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