Greenkeepers Training Committee

David Golding, GTC Education Director, updates us on his work with the European Greenkeeping Education Unit (EGEU)...

As we celebrated 25 years of BIGGA and the recent Harrogate Week, it was very rewarding to see how far the greenkeeping industry of golf has progressed since those days when there was no professional body, only a small number of former greenkeeping volunteers and honorary members.

The European Golf Association (EGA), the Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations (FEGGA), BIGGA, EIGGA and SIGGA, have all contributed to the success of the EGTU.

I hesitate to go even further back into the history of greenkeeping, as I feel old during Harrogate, when those involved in the pre-BIGGA days kept reminding me of days and events past.

Volunteers are still very much a part of the heart of any successful Association but it's clear that the day to day dedicated professional administrators, coupled with the efforts of the volunteers, make a brilliant cocktail for success.

The EGTU now offers training and certification to national grassland professionals, coupled with Marketing the GTC's products.

Without looking to impose the standards on countries outside of Britain and there is no doubt there will be further opportunities to export their expertise, training programmes and products over the coming weeks, months and years throughout the world.

It is the experience of the GTC and its advisory network that is acknowledged through the project and we hope that the EGTU over the next few years, becomes recognised and established to promote best practice in all matters greenkeeping throughout Europe.

Visit the EGTU website www.egtu.org.uk to see how Standards and Advice are the focal points of the organisation.

Wow, that was quite a Harrogate Week! The cost of the L&D teams energy was taken up doing a little jig following the launch of the successful education event that BIGGA has ever presented.

We have 2359.5 hours through the doors of the Queen's Suite, representing a 17.4% increase on last year's Conference attendance. Working on the attendance figures and multiplying it by the number of hours we scheduled (152.25 hours) we delivered 3,894.50 hours of education over five days.

It's not surprising that Rachel, Jane Jones, BIGGA's South West and South Wales Regional Administrator, Simon Staples, Events and Education Manager from the Australian Association - AGCSA, and I were all exhausted by the end of the week.

With many sold out workshops and seminars full to capacity - and beyond on several occasions! I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the speakers and companies who delivered workshops and training to the BIGGA members, and those who provided the support and expertise.

The initial planning for Continue to Learn in 2013 is now underway. If you have any suggestions please email them to sami@bigga.co.uk.

New Field Guide Additions

At Harrogate Week we launched additions to two of our existing field guides:

- Trees & Shrubs
- Grasses

The additional pages for the Grasses field guide includes:

- Meadow Fruit
- Small-Leaved Timothy, Quaking Grass, Marram, Purple Moor-grass, Brittle-Leaved Bent, Upright Bromes, Yorkshire Fog, Sweet Vernal Grass, Cockfoot, Red Pea, Sheep's Fescue and Bentgrasses.

The additional pages for Trees & Shrubs now includes:

- Sea-Buckthorn, Beech, Elm, Birch, Hornbeam, Guelder Rose, Sycamore, Dogwood, Sweet Chestnut, Spindle, Wasp-gr vending, Blackthorn, Horse Chestnut, Ivy and Heathers.

The additional pages are available to members, free of charge. To get a copy of the new pages, please email rachael@bigga.co.uk or telephone the Learning and Development Department on 01347 833800 (option 3).

Safety Management System

Last month we launched the new Safety Management System. BIGGA and the GCMA have spent several months updating the system to make it much simpler to use. Available through the Members' area of the BIGGA website, the updated system allows users to download and save to their own computers, Risk Profiles, Risk Assessments and access to Hazard information for seven areas of the golf club: Greenkeeping Activities, Maintenance Facility, Golf Course, Clubhouse, Kitchen, Pro Shop, F10 Safety.

The original SMS will remain available for several months and users will be contacted with information on downloading and updating their Risk Profiles.

Golf Industry Show

For those of you attending the Golf Industry Show in Las Vegas at the end of the month, don't forget to drop by and say hello. The BIGGA stand number is 2707 located near the International Resource Centre.