Learn while you earn?

David Golding addresses the ‘old chestnut’ of why clubs looking to save money within budgets do so by first by reducing or withdrawing any staff training.

To support its Quality Assured Centres, the GTC is updating its Learning Materials which will be launched and available at HTME 2013. The learning materials, based on best practices, have been reviewed through a special project which has been partly funded by The R&A and GTC and which will be available in hard copy, CD Rom and PDF format.

The learning materials are also circulated to all GTC QA Centres, with much of the information being compiled through specialist subject writers including Quality Assured Centre staff and Training Providers.

With so much access to good quality information on greenkeeping being freely available, and Centres and Training Providers offering everything from short courses to an Online Degree, it might be thought strange to hear that some golf clubs have actually stopped any staff training and now have no allocation of funds within their budget for training.

I find this puzzling but we have seen it all before.

When the economy crashed previously, it was those companies who invested in their staff that came out of the crisis strongest and quickest. It isn’t as if thousands of pounds are required for a greenkeeping staff development programme.

Course Managers now, as the norm, train their staff on the job often with the aim of work-based qualifications supported by their chosen Centre while the more senior staff can apply for a scholarship through BNGA or a Bursary from The R&A to gain higher level 4 and above qualifications. Initiative funding schemes for employers to train staff - including apprenticeships - all help as the GTC continues to work within the Government framework.

Many courses, offered by Centres, are, indeed, subsidised.

The GTC does not expect all education and training to be free.

“Some golf clubs have actually stopped staff training and now have no allocation of funds within their budget”

Employers acknowledge they should contribute but it is a false economy not to encourage any staff development at any level. It need not cost a fortune.

Training can be a tremendous morale booster for an individual and additional skills and knowledge will always contribute to a team’s performance thereby adding productivity to the business.

I still hear the cry, “we train them and then they leave”. Well, that is not the end of the world.

The message that needs emphasis is that everyone is a valuable member of the team.

So, look after them and, if some move on, there is comfort that they are going because they have been well trained and that their replacements are similarly well qualified.

The opportunity of recruiting a new apprentice is all part of the cycle of greenkeeping.

For all the latest information on greenkeeper training including Distance Learning and Online courses, Quality Assured and Training Providers visit www.greenkeepertraining.com or www.thegtc.co.uk.