



GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

£5.50 | JUNE 2017

Adi Porter

How did a former
sheep farm become
Environmental Golf
Course of the Year?

Featured Inside

The ecology issue

Why sustainability is big business
for the UK's golf courses



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and Best International Photography
at the TOCA awards 2017



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Welcome



The GolfSixes event at Centurion Club brought a new format to the European Tour



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

Sustainability means different things to different people, but greenkeepers are predominantly concerned with the ecological side of things, focussing on minimising the depletion of natural resources while promoting flora and fauna.

Of course any activity on the course has to tie in to the needs of the golf club itself but, happily, there is increasing evidence that members' efforts to promote wildlife, increase habitats and reduce waste are contributing to more sustainable businesses. Take our cover star, Adi Porter, and his team at Greetham Valley. As the article in these pages explains, their environmental work is a key selling point of the club and is helping the business thrive.

It's great to see BIGGA's own sustainability expert, James Hutchinson, take such a prominent role in this edition. In the 18 months since he joined us, he has provided support to hundreds of BIGGA members. Generally James

advises on practices to manage wildlife and ecology, but crucially he is also able to assist our members in communicating the value of the work they do to their employers and their golfers. Practically every greenkeeper is environmentally conscious at heart, but not all are able to articulate the importance of sustainable activity within their club, James is only too willing to assist in this area.

He has also supported clubs in their ambitions to have their good work recognised. As a former winner of the Environmental Greenkeeper of the Year he is no stranger to this process and he has assisted a number of clubs to achieve GEO Certified status.

The GEO Certified eco-label is globally recognised as the highest standard in golf sustainability. Over the years BIGGA has engaged regularly with the Golf Environment Organization and the R&A and we intend to continue to work closely with them to ensure their programmes are fit for purpose and add value to the great work carried out by so many of our members.

As this magazine was being compiled the European Tour arrived on these shores, first with the innovative GolfSixes event at Centurion Club and more recently with the Tour's flagship event, the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth. Both events placed considerable challenges on the greenkeeping teams, but the Tour are to be applauded for investing so heavily in new formats in an attempt to broaden the appeal of our great game.

The extensively revamped West Course was simply immaculate. The world's best golfers seemed to really enjoy the challenge and it made for a great spectacle. Congratulations to Kenny Mackay and his excellent team at Wentworth on producing a spectacular test. Thanks also to the BIGGA volunteer support team for the part they played in supporting the home team.

Volunteering at tournaments is proven to make CV's stand out in the eyes of employers and the experiences gained at these events can be priceless.



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From the *Guest* Editor



An overview of this month's edition of Greenkeeper International, with guest editor James Hutchinson

Bringing the 'green' into greenkeeping

I joined BIGGA in January 2016 and since then I've had a fantastic time getting out, meeting members and learning all about the incredible conservation efforts many of you have been undertaking.

But for those of you who don't know much about me, you may be asking what exactly a sustainability executive does?

An answer to this question could take up the entire magazine, and although Karl has kindly invited me to be guest editor this month, I don't think he'd let that happen! Instead I'll tell you about some of the things I've been up to over the past year or so.

I have visited more than 150 courses and worked with greenkeeping teams to develop more than 20 environmental management plans. During these visits we walk around the course and I'm always happy to offer habitat development advice or assist with identifying fauna identification.

At conferences and regional events I have presented to approximately 1,000 greenkeepers, managers and course members. I hope you're also familiar by now with the regular blogs and features that we have produced for Greenkeeper International, which discuss the great work you guys are undertaking.

I work closely with the Environment Agency, R&A, England Golf, GEO and other such groups on behalf of BIGGA members, and keep members updated via social media on a regularly basis.

Greenkeeping is becoming more environmentally minded, more than it ever was, but you guys are not ecologists, wildlife experts or conservationists and that's where I come in. If you have an environmental issue you are struggling with then give me a call. Perhaps you want to get involved but don't know where to start? Or maybe your club members are not on board with the eco work you are doing? I'm here to help, so don't hesitate to give me a call.

Someone who doesn't need a lot of help from me is this month's cover star, Adi Porter, and the team at Greetham Valley. The club won Environmental Golf Course of the Year at the Golf Environment Awards this year and the work they do there is fantastic. You can read more on page 42.

But even Adi didn't realise that he had an ancient tree on his site. I have a bit of a soft spot for ancient and veteran trees and so was happy to help Adi discover how old this tree was. I also explained how these old course sentinels are important for a number of reasons, including providing habitats. I go into more detail on page 48.

BIGGA also has a wildlife camera, which has snapped a few fizzing shots of unsuspecting critters this past year. We have a line-up of 10 of the best on page 54.

I hope you enjoy this month's magazine, and if you find yourself inspired by anything you read, please don't hesitate to get in touch and we will see what we can do to get you started on the conservation trail.

In this Issue

Our Contributors

30 Stuart Taylor

Stuart is the course manager at Glasgow Golf Club, where he is keen to impress on his staff the importance of staying safe in the sun. This month the BIGGA board member gives a frank account of his own battles with skin conditions caused by a career spent working outdoors.



38 Eddie Ainsworth

The course at Avro sits on the boundaries of Woodford Aerodrome, but it is winged wonders of another kind that caught Eddie's eye. This month the 9-hole club's award-winning head greenkeeper talks to us about beekeeping and the other environmental practices he's undertaken at the club.



56 Sophie Vukelic

After studying Ecology and Environmental Biology at the University of Leeds and the University of Newcastle (Australia), Sophie graduated with a BSc Hons and took up a role at the STRI as Ecological Consultant. This month she talks to Greenkeeper International about the importance of pollinating insects.



60 Dr Terry Mabbett

GI contributor Terry is a pest, disease and weed control specialist with 40 years of international experience in subjects such as agriculture, horticulture and forestry. This month he explains how some less-desirable plant species are important to the survival of the nation's butterflies.



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John Deere flew five members out to Florida to volunteer at The Players Championship

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Continuing our focus on safety in the sun, we take a real-life look at the risk of outdoor work

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It's the biggest buzzword in the industry, but what exactly is sustainability?

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BIGGA Wildlife Camera

The top 10 animal sightings captured by BIGGA's camera during its first year in action

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The STRI's Sophie Vukelic offers simple tips to encourage pollinators around your club

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Butterflies can be a fantastic indicator of the health of a course, says Dr Terry Mabbett

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Enriching rough areas

New grass species are improving the playability and value of rough areas

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Sherriff Amenity Academy

Our latest education partner is providing a free online learning resource to members

Across the Board



Tom Smith
Colne Valley

Coming from Essex and listening to the rain come down hard tonight, my thoughts go to washed out bunkers and things such as whether I turned the irrigation off.

Obviously, all is OK, but it is the nature of the job to be conscientious, thorough and a perfectionist. I have found this to be the case across most in the industry.

During the more challenging times of the year, like the unusually dry period we had been experiencing, we are often criticised by committees and members who do not fully appreciate the intricacies and demands of the job. We also put ourselves under pressure by reading social media.

I have also read how sections, regions and even head office are getting things wrong. We all have opinions and should also be allowed to question things that are wrong, but should we make things

uncomfortable for those who are ultimately trying to achieve the same goal?

As I write this, I think of the team at Wentworth who worked all hours to produce a fantastic golf course for the BMW Championship.

I was lucky to be able to visit Wentworth in November and see its new look, and I truly believe that any golfer playing Wentworth now is in for a real treat.

My own team at Colne Valley has been working hard. The spring renovation work has been going well and we have seen some fantastic results. Although we won't be hosting any major championships this year, we will have a lot of golfers playing our course and wanting value for money while expecting our usual high standards.

In my relatively short time on the BIGGA Board of Management, I have been involved with some major changes. Jim and his team are trying to improve our member awareness and during the last year we have often discussed stress management among our teams.

BIGGA has become a member of the All-Party Parliamentary Golf Group, has a regular voice at The R&A and has become an association that is listened to across the industry.

Over the last few years, due to greater awareness of the condition, it has become evident that the greenkeeping profession has a high percentage of people with dyslexia.

I myself was diagnosed with this learning disability when I was younger and can say that school was tough. I'm now in my mid 40's, but back then we didn't have computers with Word, Google and other helpful software. But I got through it and moved into an industry that I enjoyed and found interesting.

Those with dyslexia who want to succeed find themselves working three to four times harder with paperwork than their colleagues. It's normal to have to read instructions more than once to understand the correct meaning. In my own experience,

this made me more determined to achieve and I learnt to ask questions about things I didn't understand and to ask for help when I needed it.

I would encourage others with dyslexia to be confident about using all the tools and forms of help that are now available, and to seize any opportunities that are presented, even if they are out of their normal comfort zone.

The computerised world can be a great help to those with dyslexia, enabling us to search for answers to problems in our own time and therefore feel less pressured. The board and BIGGA staff are also becoming more aware of the difficulties experienced by greenkeepers with this learning difficulty and are making more information available to download.

Being able to watch or read the task ahead, with articles presented in an easy to understand format, will undoubtedly help.

As a trial, this month's magazine will have a dyslexia-friendly version available to download from the BIGGA website and we are keen to see how many of you find this beneficial.

With the golf season now in full flow, I hope we all have a stress-free summer, where golf is the winner!



Funding your future

The Continuing Professional Development and world class education we provide would not be possible without the assistance of BIGGA Partners and BIGGA Education Supporters. Ensuring our members stay at the forefront of the turf management industry takes considerable investment, and we are hugely grateful to the following for their ongoing support.



Individual Contributors: Steven Tierney MG ■ Chris Lomas MG ■ Andrew Campbell MG CGCS
Richard McGlynn ■ Jaey Goodchild ■ Frank Newberry ■ Greg Evans MG

BIGGA Golf Management Trophy

Build bridges with management and win world-class education bundle

Do you find yourself wanting to spend more quality time with your club management?

Perhaps you want to get them away from the club so you can have a few hours to discuss ongoing matters, but you've never found a good enough reason?

Or maybe you're regular playing partners and want to get your hands on a great national trophy and an incredible first prize?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, the BIGGA Golf Management Trophy is for you.

Regional qualifiers are being held throughout the United Kingdom over the summer months in anticipation of the grand final, to be held at Frilford Heath, Oxfordshire in October.

The Golf Management Trophy began in the South West but has expanded to become a national competition. The event sees clubs enter a team comprising the course manager, head greenkeeper or member of green staff and the secretary or manager, chairman of the greens or member of the greens committee and the club captain or vice captain.

BIGGA Regional Administrator Roger Butler said: "The experience of playing in the trophy helps create a better relationship between the greenkeeper and club manager. You get to spend quality time together off site, at a different venue, and get to show them how other clubs do things."

Last year's winner was the Torquay GC team, comprised of Jason Brooks, Tim Aggett, Keith Thompson and Tony Brinkley.

In addition to the trophy, the winning team will also receive an education bundle for Continue to Learn and entry to the Golf Business & Industry Convention at BTME 2018.



The team from Torquay won in 2016

Roger added: "Another benefit of the competition is that it showcases BIGGA as a leading golf industry association and allows us to highlight to your colleagues the benefits of BIGGA membership and how it translates to a better course."

Invites to the regional qualifiers will soon be distributed to every BIGGA member, so get your team together and good luck!

Regional qualifiers

Scottish: Auchterarder, Thursday 27 July

Northern: Bingley St Ives, Wednesday 2 August

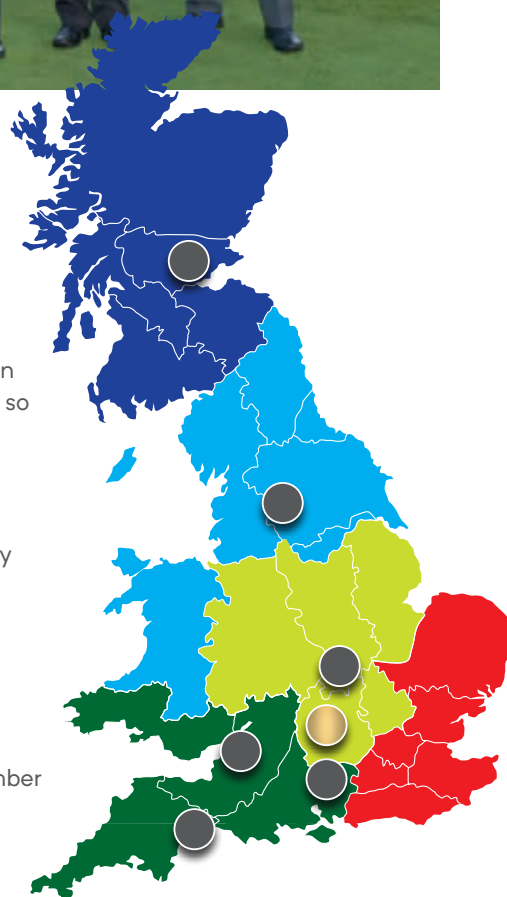
Central England: Market Harborough, Tuesday 1 August

South West: East Devon, Thursday 20 July; Hockley, Wednesday 23 August;

Bristol and Clifton, Thursday 28 September

Grand final

Frilford Heath, Monday 23 October





The Burnham Beeches team won this year

Has your boss nominated your team for a BIGGA Award yet?

The BIGGA Awards are a fantastic way for team leaders to give their staff the recognition they deserve for their hard work all year round.

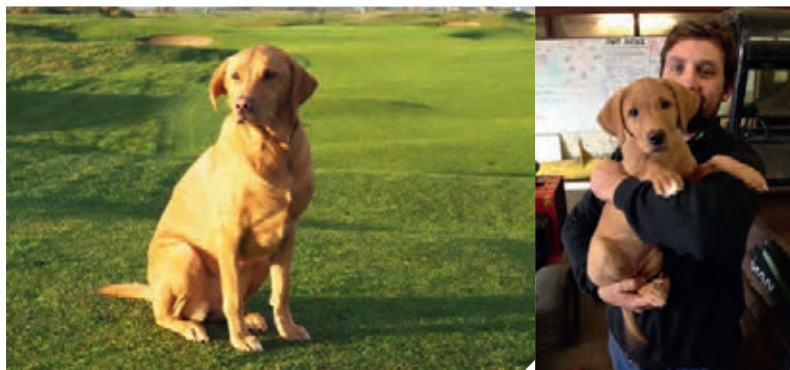
And this year we've made the nomination process even easier, meaning it now takes less than two minutes to get involved.

The awards are: Young Greenkeeper of the Year sponsored by Jacobsen; Greenkeeping Achievement of the Year; Championship Greenkeeping Performance of the Year.

To nominate someone for an award, scan the QR code and fill in the form.



GI Dogs On Course



Name: Stevie

Owner: James Bledge

Course: Royal Cinque Ports

Breed: Fox Red Labrador

Age: 3

Favourite treat: Sausages

Favourite spot on the course:
Halfway hut for a sausage

Naughtiest moment:

Sneaking under the covers in mummy and daddy's bed every morning at a ridiculous hour.

My dog is happiest when... Sitting in the passenger seat of the sprayer on the 9th fairway knowing that a halfway hut sausage is imminent.

If you know a dog we should feature, email karl@bigga.co.uk

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This Month @BIGGALtd



@GreenkeepersKGC

Thank you @BIGGALtd for a fantastic event at Wentworth. 1st class organisation as always @RachaelDuffy16



@GKdavid_s

Had a great week at the @BMWPGA on the early morning prep helping @striturf_paulw @striturf & @BIGGALtd as well as match raking!



@slater3ns

#BMWPGA complete, absolute pleasure working with these guys. Huge thanks Rachael & Kerry @BIGGALtd for their hard work



@tiffchaisson

Care package received from @BIGGALtd for @fairwaysfund fundraiser in Canada. Thanks for the support @Tracey_Maddison



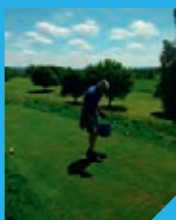
@EastKilbrideAFC

@BIGGALtd @farenzegg in full glory 🏌️🏌️🏌️



@LyleDavidson89

Great day @Gleneagleshotel with @BIGGALtd YGC Scotland for our first meeting. Thank you @fenwics for the course walk



@avrogreenkeeper

@BIGGALtd if @carlsberg did Chairmen of Greens. Our chairman of greens Victor Tarr divoting tees today.

Making Greenkeeper International more accessible

When it comes to education and building a community among BIGGA members, Greenkeeper International is one of the most important resources we have.

But if you are dyslexic, the written word can be something to fear, leading to a lack of confidence and a sense of isolation from your peers.

We don't think a disability such as this should prevent talented and passionate greenkeepers from achieving their professional goals.

So with that in mind, we're making a range of changes that are intended to make Greenkeeper International, and all the literature we circulate to members, more accessible to those with dyslexia.

Did you know that one in 10 people in the UK are estimated to suffer dyslexic symptoms, such as difficulty reading or writing?

Over a third of secondary school leavers did not achieve at least a C in English in 2014, and historically these students would go into manual jobs, such as greenkeeping.

For this reason, we know there are many BIGGA members out there who cope with varying levels of dyslexia. In the past these have largely suffered in silence, but we don't want anyone to miss out on all the great education and features included in Greenkeeper International each month.

So we've introduced a number of changes.

You'll notice there's a different font being used throughout the magazine this

month. We've done the research and believe it's clearer to read and with better line-spacing.

We'll be encouraging our contributors to keep their sentence structure short and sweet and to avoid difficult jargon – something we can all appreciate.

In addition, many of our members access Greenkeeper International via the homepage of our website, www.bigga.org.uk, and from this month you will also be able to download a dyslexia-friendly version of the magazine. This version of GI will have some of the design elements simplified, to make articles easier on the eye, and any difficult fonts will be replaced with our usual, easy-to-read types.

We've been told that white backgrounds can create a contrast that makes pieces difficult to read and so the background of this online version of the magazine will be changed to a softer cream colour.

This is an ongoing project and something we're really keen to have member engagement with. So if you have any ideas about how we can make the magazine more accessible, or perhaps you have some feedback about the changes we've made, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Contact karl@bigga.co.uk. We'd love to hear from you.



GI Around The Globe



Name: Stephen Monk

Club: Golf & Country Club Fleesensee, Germany

What is the most interesting thing you would tell other members about Germany?

When you think of holiday destinations, Germany maybe wouldn't be the first place that people would think of. But Germany has it all! Golf Club Fleesensee is in the picturesque Mecklenburg Lake District, which has the largest connected lake and canal region in Germany and is known as "the land of a thousand lakes".

How would you describe the style of course that you manage and what are its most defining features?

We are a 72-hole golf complex surrounded by four hotels. The resort offers a wide range of leisure pursuits with the largest golf training facility in Europe. Golfzeit Magazine has voted us in the Top 11 Golfing Venues in the world and the greenkeeping teams get constant recognition for their work out on the courses. We also have an organic department that supplies our hotels with fresh organic produce and the greenkeepers are given fresh

organic eggs for breakfast every morning in exchange for supplying a compost corner. I am charged with the overall management of 350 hectares at the 500 hectare resort.

How does greenkeeping in Germany vary from the UK?

We have extremely tight regulations with regard to chemical applications and some courses aren't allowed to apply any chemicals at all. We can only apply two fungicides and there is talk of herbicides being removed next year.

What is the best part of living in your country?

For me it is living and working in a different culture. Once you scratch the surface and begin to integrate, a whole new world opens up and I love that.

What is the worst?

I can't think of one!

How does the weather affect your work?

This is going to sound strange but it's great! We still get seasons here, which means we close the courses in winter for three months as they are normally covered in snow and ice. This allows us to carry out essential project work without interruption from golfers and because we can focus all of our resources on projects we can do so much more.

What types of wildlife do you get on the course that you wouldn't in the UK?

Wolves are being allowed to re-enter Germany through Eastern Europe and already



have a strong presence in this part. I've yet to see one myself but they are there. We also have North American raccoons on the courses. They are extremely intelligent animals who will pick their way through our rubbish bins searching for things to eat. Nice to see, but they don't belong here. Wild boar is certainly a big problem as we can lose fairways overnight as they look for grubs under the turf.

What is your club management structure like?

We have a very clear management structure, with no committee or board of management that I need to report to. The structure is based on trust and results. I report directly to my manager and the CEO and no one else.

What is the public perception of golf in Germany?

I think it is still viewed as an expensive sport that takes up a lot of time to play and is not very family friendly. As a holiday destination, our golf academy offers golf summer

camps. We also have a full-length 9-hole course that does not require a handicap to play and we pick up a lot of custom from people who are here on holiday.

Why do you choose to be a BIGGA member?

I have been a BIGGA member since I was 17. I remember reading through the magazine during my lunch breaks at work and each time learning something new.

What one tip would you give to British greenkeepers that you have learnt in Germany?

Be proactive in informing your membership when it comes to chemical restrictions. No one likes to apply chemicals and I'm sure it's safe to say that if given the choice most people would choose not to work with them. But the reality is in most cases we are dealing with monoculture, which does not marry well with Mother Nature. Players need to know that course conditions will be affected by chemical removal and we will need to approach things differently in future.



Young Greenkeepers' Committee

Representing the youth of the sports turf management industry



Hi, my name is Lyle Davidson, deputy head greenkeeper at The Carrick on Loch Lomond.

I started out in the industry about 10 years ago as a trainee greenkeeper at The Carrick and have worked my way up through the positions within the club, including a one-year opportunity to become the acting head greenkeeper at the Wee Demon, Cameron House's 9-hole course.

Throughout my career I have been fortunate to be part of the support teams at the 2009 Barclays Scottish Open at Loch Lomond and the PGA Seniors Championship at Sleafly Hall. Recently I was accepted to take part in the ICL Continue to Learn Scholarship in 2017, which in

conjunction with BIGGA provided me with a 15-hour education bundle and accommodation, making it possible to attend BTME for the first time.

I am delighted to have become part of the YGC and had the chance to represent Scotland. I was privileged to meet a group of young guys who are driven to give back to the industry that has served them well by creating a wide range of opportunities for other young greenkeepers to develop themselves.

I am writing this on returning from my first BIGGA Young Greenkeepers' Committee meeting at Ransomes Jacobsen in Ipswich. The day started with Steve Alabaster giving us an insight into the history of Textron, before guiding us on an eye-opening factory tour, which showed the vast size and complexity of the manufacturer's operation in creating and testing the machines that we all use everyday.

As part of the YGC's strategy to help give the next generation of up and coming greenkeepers the knowledge and skills to develop their

careers, the meeting was centred around creating a young greenkeepers' conference for BTME 2018. Our aim is to create a great networking opportunity and provide all attendees with a fantastic array of education sessions. I feel that as a result of the meeting there is a very exciting period ahead for the YGC in the lead up to the event.

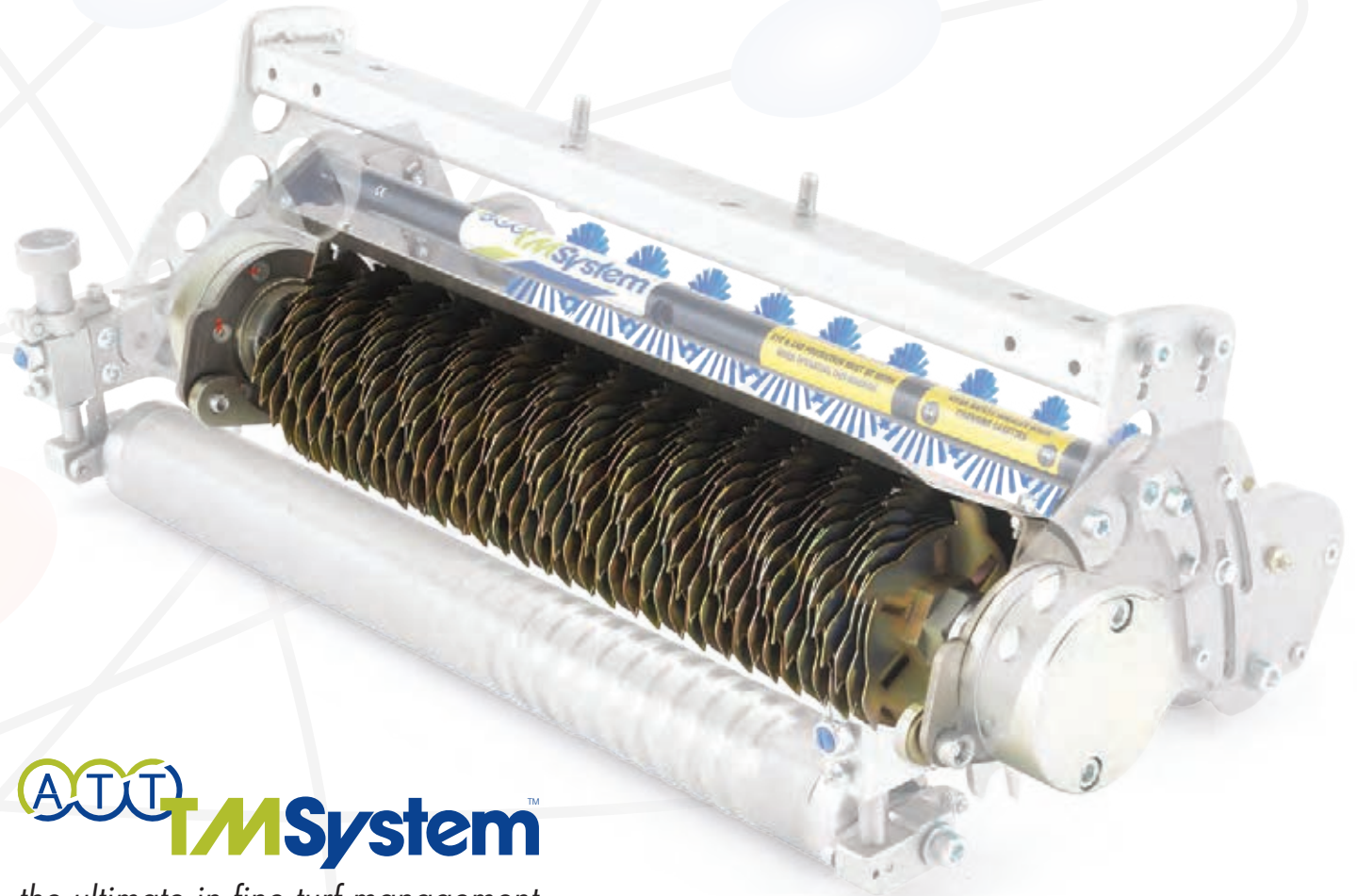
The day finished with the YGC being given the opportunity to play Ransomes Jacobsen National, a par 3 course. Although my standard of golf was never going to threaten the course record, we did see Crane Valley's course manager Andy Clarke equal the score.

Finally, I would like to encourage anyone interested in more information or how to get involved, to contact us on ygcbigga.co.uk.

The YGC visited Ransomes Jacobsen in Ipswich



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GI Ecology

By James
Hutchinson
BIGGA
Sustainability
Executive



Given the snaps that greenkeepers have sent in this month, it appears birds can nest just about anywhere. Take this picture of an open bag of seed Phil Dick of Barenbrug sent me. Or how about in between the walls of an on-course shelter, as in this picture by Tom from Woodbridge. These are conspicuous places to raise a family, but these parent blue tits have just about taken the biscuit when they built a nest in a cigarette ash tray at Green Drive GC.

Wherever our feathered friends choose to nest, it seems they won't go hungry with so many willing greenkeepers to help out, as at Greetham Valley.

It is never too late or early to erect a nest box because, even if a pair choose not to nest in it, the box will still be valuable in winter time as a roost site. But be aware that all birds' nests are protected by law.

Eddie Ainsworth at Avro GC had a nice surprise when a pair of tree sparrows took up residence in one of the club's boxes — fantastic stuff Eddie!

Elsewhere on golf courses, the orchids are out. Well, some are anyway. Green winged and early purple vars are making an appearance down south with a few reported sightings in the Midlands. I guess us up north and into Scotland will have to wait another week or so to see these beautiful floras in action. Stuart Broom of Honiton took this image of early purple orchids.

Send your sightings to @Ecology1BIGGA or james.hutchinson@bigga.co.uk

Background:
Stuart Broom's
early purple
orchids

Left: Eddie's
tree sparrow

Right: Bringing in the
bird seed at Greetham
Valley

Below: Phil Dicks'
grass seed nest

Right: Woodbridge's
bird nest

Below: Green
Drive's blue tits
have discovered an
unusual nesting
place

Ecology

GI Ecology sponsored by



Many greenkeepers recognise that far more emphasis should be placed on the ecological value of golf courses in providing a resource for wildlife within the wider landscape and, to enhance the golfing experience.

Euroflor was used by Bristol, Reading, Edinburgh and Leeds universities as part of a government-funded research

project to evaluate the contribution of urban meadows to pollinating insects. Based on this independent research, Euroflor breeders are developing an improved pollinator mix for spring 2018.

For more detailed information head to <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0158117>.

The 2017 Scottish Region's Patrons' Awards

The nomination period for the 2017 Scottish Region's Patrons' Awards is now open.

If you have a member of your team or you know a fellow greenkeeper who fits the award criteria, contact your section board or visit the Scottish Region website at www.biggascottishregion.com for full details of how to nominate them.

Scottish Region Chairman Stuart Ferguson MG said: "The Patrons' Awards are a fantastic way for our members to be recognised for their hard work. Each and every club must know someone who they think should be recognised for their hard work, and nominating them for a Patrons' Award is a great way to do that!"

Each Scottish Section will provide one winner of the award, who will receive a package that includes three nights' accommodation in Harrogate during BTME, travel expenses and a £250 Continue to Learn education bursary.

To achieve the award, a BIGGA member would need to meet three out of the six criteria below, as well as being active in the CPD system.

The candidate:

- Must be an association member of the association for a continuous two-year period
- Must not have been a recipient of the award within a 10-year period from their nomination



- Could be participating in education, either through attending industry events, college attendance or external pursuits
- Could be active in environmental or ecological projects on their course
- Could be active in their section, such as taking on a role for the section board
- Is restrained from attending BTME by financial constraints

Thanks to the following patrons: ACZ Solutions; Aitkens; Barenbrug UK; Bayer; Campey Turf Care Systems;

Charterhouse; Dennis SISIS; Double A; Fairways; Farmura; Fraser Robb; Germinal Seeds; Golf Finance; Greentech; Hamilton Bros; Headland Amenity; Hendersons; Hugh King; ICL; Indigrow; Inex Works; McNab Sports; MacGregors; MTS Group; Nairn Brown; Oakland Amenity; Reesink Turfcare; Rigby Taylor; SGM Contracts; Sheriff Amenity; Souters, Stewart Plant Sales; Symbio; Tacit UK; Terra Firma; Thomas Sheriff; Thorntrees; Turf Irrigation Services; Turf & Amenity Solutions; Turfitt Ltd.

WIN



A GOPRO HERO 5

Enter the BIGGA Photographic Competition and your image could also be featured in the annual BIGGA calendar.

Send your entries to karl@bigga.co.uk by Friday 25 August 2017.

Terms and conditions apply.





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0808 181 9194

Lifestyle Counselling
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0333 000 2082

Membership

Latest news and information from the BIGGA Membership Team



Associations such as BIGGA are largely successful thanks to the efforts of small bands of willing volunteers. More help is always needed, but what are the benefits you receive for giving up your free time and getting more involved with your association?

Learn a new skill

1. It is never too late to develop new skills
2. Try new things
3. Develop existing talents
4. Improve leadership skills
5. Enhance your personal life

Boost your career

1. Employers value volunteering over those who do not
2. Employers believe volunteering improves skillsets
3. Volunteers earn higher salaries and are promoted more

Be a part of your association

1. BIGGA depends on volunteer support to achieve its aims
2. Give back to the association
3. Bring your own individual skills and knowledge to the association
4. Take advantage of more member benefits
5. Earn a fantastic reputation in the industry

Explore new interests

1. Volunteering gives an escape from the everyday routine of life
2. Finding new interests is always fun
3. The enjoyment of volunteering will spill over into other areas of life

Feel good

1. Volunteers come away with a sense of achievement from the enthusiasm they brought to the task
2. Every volunteer makes a difference

Enjoy new experiences

1. Gain life experience
2. Meet new people
3. Network with your peers
4. Get inspired by other volunteers

To find out more about volunteering opportunities in your region, contact your regional administrator or section committee.

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NEW KUBOTA RTV X900 TW EQUIVALENT TO £77/WEEK!
*Two years interest-free finance over 2+22 monthly payments**



The Kubota RTV range features an independent suspension and ergonomic design, offering a smooth ride and excellent operator comfort. Capable of towing up to 1,000kg, these rugged and dependable off-road vehicles feature hydrostatic transmission to provide optimum safety and control on inclines and uneven ground. Wherever you want to go, whatever the terrain, trust the Kubota RTV range to rise to the challenge. For more information about Kubota's diverse range of world-class groundcare machines and aftersales support service, visit www.kubota.co.uk or call **01844 873190**.

For Earth, For Life
Kubota

www.kubota.co.uk   

*Finance is restricted to business users only. Advertised offer based on a new Kubota RTV – X900 TW at RRP £13,300. Weekly payment profile of £77/week is not available and is shown for illustration purposes only. Actual rental profile is 2+22 monthly payments of £332.50. Subject to acceptance and affordability checks. Promotion valid until 31st July 2017. The finance product offered under this promotion is hire purchase. Full VAT is due on signing. An option-to-purchase fee of £100 (including VAT) will be collected with the final payment. You will own the equipment when all payments have been made. Alternative finance options are available, terms apply. An annual administration fee of £40 (plus VAT) applies. A documentation fee of £100 will be collected with the first rental. The interest-free offer is based on a maximum balance to finance of 60% of RRP. Rates and payments may vary to reflect changes in tax and cost of funds. Images are for illustrative purposes only. Alternative finance products available, terms and conditions apply. Kubota Finance is a trading style of BNP Paribas. Leasing Solutions Limited. Finance is provided by BNP Paribas Leasing Solutions Limited, Northern Cross, Basingstoke RG21 4HL. Registered in England No. 901225. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.



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L&D News

Latest news and information from the BIGGA Learning and Development Team and the GTC

Your guide to who does what in the apprenticeship process

What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a genuine job with paid wages. The Greenkeeping Apprentice can be an existing or new employee at the Golf Club and through their apprenticeship they will gain wider skills and knowledge to progress within their chosen greenkeeping career. An Apprentice can be any age.

Recent reforms have been introduced to simplify the whole process and to increase the quality of apprenticeships. New changes ensure apprentices are fully competent in the complete range of skills, knowledge and behaviours required to be a qualified greenkeeper.

For employers it's a great way of ensuring their staff are engaged and committed to their careers, while also gaining the knowledge they need to become outstanding members of the team.

Who is the employer?

The **Employer** — depending on the type of club, may be:

- The Owner
- The Committee
- The General Manager

How do you find a prospective apprentice?

- Advertise locally - Contact local schools and colleges
- Advertise on-line, or through Job Centre Plus or Greenkeeper International
- Contact a Training Provider
- Government website www.gov.uk/guidance/employing-an-apprentice-technical-guide-for-employers
- Apprenticeship Service - www.getingofar.gov.uk/employers

Apprentice recruited — unsure what to do next?

Contact the GTC or BIGGA for more detailed advice or contact your local Training Provider.

What is the employer's role in the apprenticeship process?

- **Liaise** with Training Providers to see what options for training and education are available to the learner
- **NEGOTIATE** with the Training Provider, the cost and delivery of the training
- **Register** the trainee with their chosen Training Provider
- **Guide**, monitor and assess the trainee to the Standards with their mentor
- **Carry out** regular appraisals.

What funding is available?

If you're an Employer **with a pay bill over £3 million** each year, you must pay the **apprenticeship levy**.

- Visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work>
- Email Helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk or call 08000 150 600.

Non-levy paying employers will share the cost of training and assessing their apprentices with government - this is called 'co-investment'. From May 2017, the Employer will pay 10% towards the cost of apprenticeship training and the Government will pay the rest (90%), up to the funding band maximum which is £6000 for the Level 2 Certificate in Golf Greenkeeping.

Training providers (colleges)

Generally, the Training Provider — selected after negotiations by the Employer — will visit the Golf Club and meet with the Employer and Apprentice and explain the process from start to finish.

The Training Provider will:

- Carry out an initial assessment
- Sign a learning agreement with the Employer
- Carry out an induction and workplace assessment
- Liaise with the Head Greenkeeper/ Course Manager who carry out a lot of the training, and the Employer.

The programme of education and training (**The Journey**) will be carried out by the Training Provider and Employer who will probably appoint a **Mentor** — usually the Head Greenkeeper. It will consist of:

- On-the-job training
- Off-the-job training
- GTC Training Manual
- GTC Learning Materials
- Coaching, mentoring, formative assessments, regular appraisals and review feedback.

The Gateway

When the Apprentice, Training Provider and Employer agree that the Apprentice has completed their programme of education and training and is ready to be tested the Apprentice will enter **The Gateway**. The Training Provider will notify the **Awarding Body** who assign an **Independent Assessor** to carry out the **End-Point Assessments**.

- The Apprentice will submit their portfolio for marking.
- A Trainee Statement will be submitted, with a report from the **Employer** and the **Training Provider** for marking
- Complete an on-line test
- The Independent Assessor will spend a day at the Golf Club to carry out a series of practical end-point assessment tasks at the Apprentice's club.

These will be graded Pass, Merit, Distinction or Fail. On achievement, the Apprentice will be a fully competent Golf Greenkeeper and will be awarded the Level 2 Certificate in Golf Greenkeeping.



Congratulations to the following members who achieved CPD Approved status this month:

Andrew Clark, Crane Valley; Mark Thompson, Richmond; Gavin Kinsella MG, Royal Mid Surrey; Mark Fry, Worplesdon.

The journey

Employers/Students contact GTC/England Golf/BIGGA for advice on apprenticeships

Directed to City & Guilds (C&G)–GTC Quality Assured Centres (training providers) to discuss requirements

Quality Assured Centre (training provider) contacts employer to discuss induction, health & safety, individual learning plan, delivery, costs.

Learner registered with C&G. C&G informs the GTC of all new registrations.

Initial Assessment

Training provider delivers education and co-ordinates training and formative 'on the job' assessments in conjunction with employer. This programme is quality assured by the GTC.

The Journey

Training provider with employer takes the learner through to completion of the Training Manual and agrees with the learner when they are deemed ready for their final end assessments

The Gateway

The end of the learner journey and the start of the end point graded, independent assessments

Final End Point Assessment

C&G informed that the learner is ready for their final end assessments.

C&G administers end assessments with the independent assessor

Certification

C&G issues Certificate in Golf Greenkeeping

Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards (FISSS)



JOHN DEERE



Bayer CropScience



SILICA SAND



BERNHARD

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS, Richard McGlynn, Jaey Goodchild, Frank Newberry, Greg Evans MG

Learning & Development

Highspeed's longest serving agent retires

Paul Dyter, who joined Highspeed as an agent in June 1993, has retired from the company aged 82.

A BIGGA affiliate member, Paul joined what was then Highspeed Lubricants Ltd, selling specialist oils and greases to golf courses in his area of South West England. Waste management services, workwear and wash area solutions followed.

Highspeed's David Mears said: "Paul played an important part in developing business for the company over many years in his area. We would all like to give our thanks for his commitment and wish him well in his retirement."

Paul was instrumental in setting up the Course Care Cup in 1997 in the Wessex area, covering parts of Hampshire, Wiltshire and the whole of Dorset. The purpose was to bring together secretaries and greenkeepers in a social event, in the form of a match between the two groups.

The event has continued over the years with the support of Highspeed Group. Acumen Waste recently acquired Highspeed Group and Financial Director Kris Sutton said: "The Course Care Cup is a great tradition and something we are very proud to continue with. We would all like to wish Paul well."



Paul Dyter

Musselburgh Links restoration

An ambitious £10m plan has been unveiled to breathe fresh life into a six-time Open Championship venue and the oldest continuously-played course in the world.

The intention is to recapture the long-lost heritage of Musselburgh Links, taking the course back to its Victorian-era set up, when its importance and significance to the game of golf was at its peak.

Investor Robin McGregor said: "The Musselburgh Links course has an immensely important role in the history and development of the game Scotland gave to the world and it is our wish that it be recognised and returned to its former glory. Eventually, we wish to make Musselburgh great again."

Musselburgh was the venue for six Open Championships between 1874 and 1889.



Musselburgh Links Course

Ventrac dealer network

The UK Ventrac dealer network continues to grow with the appointment of SGM Contracts in Scotland, following a chance meeting at BTME.

Managing director of SGM, Steven McInroy, said: "We are always on the lookout for niche, quality products to add to our portfolio and we are delighted to be promoting the product."

"Having visited the Price Turfcare stand at BTME earlier this year, Ewan Peddie, our sales manager, and myself were very taken with the machine and its capabilities and quality and are delighted to have secured the franchise."



SGM

Mid Kent purchase

Mid Kent Course Manager Lee Sayers has opted for his fourth Wiedenmann Terra Spike purchase in a row.

The Gravesend club's Master Greenkeeper already has an XP8, the deepest aerator in the Wiedenmann range, at his disposal, and has previously purchased two others.

Lee said: "A demonstration we attended showed how the quality of the GXi8 HD's finish was exceptional so it wasn't a difficult decision. We know first-hand that Wiedenmann aerators are strong and reliable, but we wanted this one for its versatility."

The purchase of the equipment will enable the greenkeeping team to aerate all the club's greens. Three different sets of tines have been delivered, allowing for variety of use.



A new Wiedenmann Terra Spike has been delivered to Mid Kent

Instrata Elite

Syngenta has launched a fungicide active for turf disease control which gives a combination of curative and contact plus systemic properties, outside and in the plant.

Approved for Microdochium control in the UK, Instrata Elite combines the active ingredient difenoconazole with fludioxonil. The ingredients target various stages of disease life cycles.

Syngenta Technical Manager Marcela Munoz said: "The unique properties of Instrata Elite rapidly bind the actives onto the leaf wax layer. The fludioxonil component stays locked into the leaf wax to provide a protective contact coating that stops disease spores germinating and prevents infection of the plant. At the same time, the difenoconazole targets active diseases and provides curative activity to prevent symptoms breaking out."



Ask Dr Mumford

With Colin Mumford, Bayer Turf Solutions

Do you need advice with your turf problems?
Email info@bigga.co.uk

Question: What can I do to help prevent the early onset of disease this summer?

It's important to be on the lookout for anthracnose, dollar spot and red thread in the next few months, and one of the main factors that can lead to an outbreak is the lack of adequate nutrition. So, it's very important to monitor the nutritional status of your course's root zone.

An easy way to monitor the nutritional status through the growing season is to make note of the volume of grass clippings collected from a given area, such as one green. When the volume starts to decline, this indicates that the nutrient status, particularly the nitrogen, has diminished.

This is generally a good guide, but you should be aware that other factors such as drought stress or cool temperatures could play a part.

If your turf is nutrient deficient, you have two options. You can 'spoon feed' it, applying nutrients as and when required, or you can use a slow release product that releases the nutrients over time.

It's important to remember that applying nutrients in excess, nitrogen in particular, can have an adverse effect on grass growth and the wider environment.

Soil particles are negatively charged, and unlike most other nutrients, nitrogen is a negatively charged ion, which makes it difficult to bond with a soil particle. The nitrogen remains in suspension and if there's heavy rainfall or excessive irrigation, it's easily leached and lost. This can cause issues for wildlife habitats on the course, particularly ponds, lakes, ditches, rivers and streams.

Tweet us your turf questions @BIGGALtd using #AskDrMumford for your chance to win a hamper!

Greenkeeper International scoops American awards

Greenkeeper International has received critical acclaim after scooping a number of awards at the recent Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association's annual conference.

Held at Saddlebrook Resort in Tampa, Florida, the conference brought together more than 70 green industry communicators to share knowledge and improve standards within the turf industry.

GI editor Karl Hansell was invited to attend the conference, which featured two days of excellent education and concluded with an awards celebration, at which the efforts of Greenkeeper International over the previous year were among those acknowledged.

The magazine was awarded first place in the International Writing category for our feature looking at the unusual course management practices undertaken by Uphall Golf Club, near Edinburgh. The feature appeared in December's

edition of Greenkeeper International.

Editor Karl Hansell also received a Gardner Award for this piece. He said: "I was honoured to be a guest of TOCA and its members and found the education on offer invaluable – it was like Continue to Learn for journalists."

"It's fantastic that the dedication of the small team which creates Greenkeeper International each month was acknowledged with these fantastic awards. Thank you to everyone involved."

An image from November's edition of the magazine, which showed BIGGA National Championship winner Gary Burgess celebrating his victory with the trophy on top of his head, won first place in the International Photography category.

Greenkeeper International was also acknowledged for its overall design and layout.



TOCA Members



Our image of BIGGA National champion Gary Burgess scooped the top international photography prize

Gleneagles 'world's best'

Gleneagles has been voted 'Best Golf Resort in the World' for an unprecedented sixth successive year by readers of Ultratravel, the Telegraph's travel magazine, and visitors to the telegraph.co.uk website.

Readers were asked to vote for their favourite travel experience, with Gleneagles taking the top golf award ahead of Pebble

Beach Resorts and Bandon Dunes Golf Resort, USA; St Andrews Links, Scotland and La Manga Resort in Spain.

Bernard Murphy, Gleneagles' managing director, said: "We continually strive to offer guests an industry-leading experience and prestigious awards such as this underline the dedication of the whole team."



Bernard Murphy, Gleneagles' Managing Director (right), collects the 'Best Golf Resort in the World' award from Justin Rose

ICL ProTurf Analysis

ICL has announced the launch of ProTurf 15-5-15 + 2CaO + 2mgO, a new analysis to join the range of ProTurf fertilisers.

The ProTurf range was the first to utilise the mineral polyhalite, a naturally occurring form of potassium, calcium and magnesium, which is mined at ICL's mine in Cleveland. ProTurf fertilisers provide a strong immediate growth response and a deep green-up colour combined with a 2-3 month longevity.

The new analysis has been created as a result of customer feedback, after users reported they would like a product containing a slightly higher level of nitrogen to kick-start growth in the spring.

Technical Sales Manager Henry Bechelet said ICL has been "very excited" by how the product has performed during the trial period.





New machinery releases

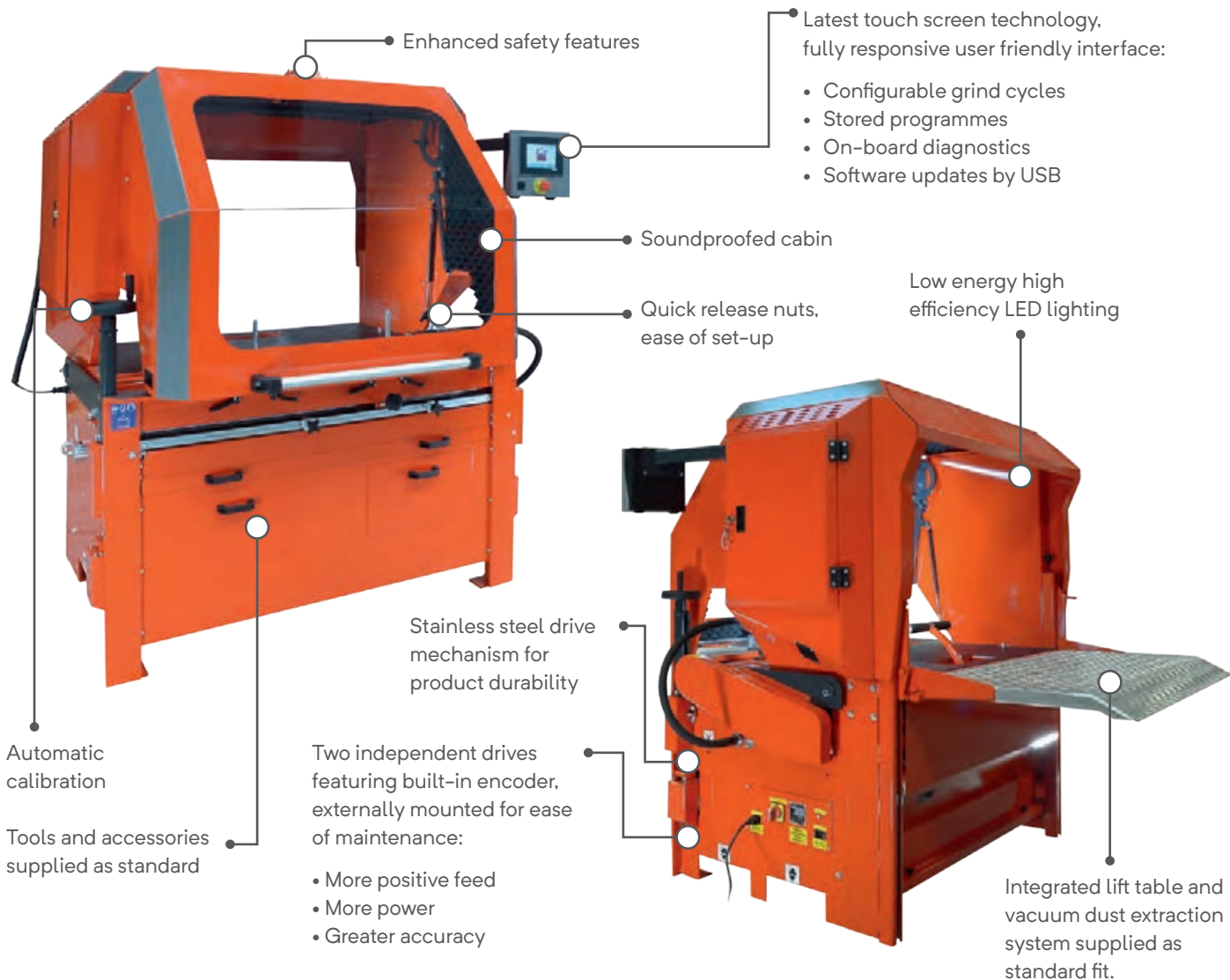
Innovation

Express Dual 4200

Introducing Bernhard's latest grinder, available later this year.



BERNHARD



Innovation

Etesia launches Bahia Joyride

Etesia UK has launched a ride-on mower controllable by either a joystick or via GPS for autonomous operation.

The Bahia Joyride is operated exclusively by a joystick, which can be installed on the right or left hand side, making it usable by people with reduced mobility, as well as experienced professionals.

Etesia UK's Les Malin said: "We

started from a standard Bahia on which we installed a joystick control and servomotors for the steering and the forwards drive.

"This enables users to control the machine using one joystick, with all the controls within easy reach."

Working in partnership with FeBroLift GmbH, all of the mower's features are controlled from the central joystick control unit.



Don't wait, pollinate

Bumblebees play a crucial role as one of nature's pollinators, but they are in serious decline and need our help, and that is why BIGGA is backing Syngenta's Operation Pollinator.

Reversing the plight of the bumblebee and other pollinating insects will help to prove that golf courses can be managed in harmony with the environment and provide valuable wildlife habitats, and Syngenta's popular Operation Pollinator scheme provides UK and Ireland greenkeepers with the tools and skills to successfully and cost effectively establish and manage attractive wildflower resources.

With the right management, designated areas can provide essential sanctuaries for an array of vital pollinating insects, as well as enhancing the visual appeal and overall enjoyment for players.

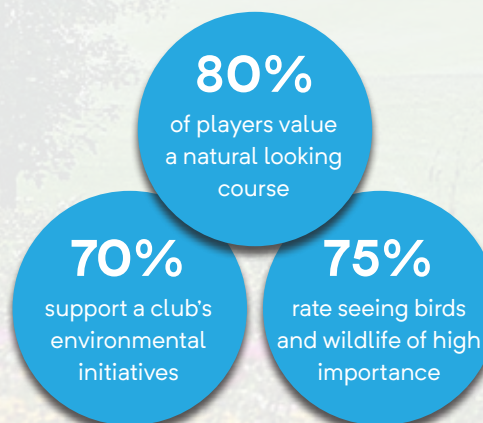
Bumblebee numbers have declined by 70% over the past 40 years, driven mainly by loss of habitat, with three species on the verge of extinction and some disappearing altogether.

Pollinating insects are a vital part of the natural ecosystem. They are responsible for the successful pollination of a wide range of plants that provide essential food sources for birds and animals, as well as the pollination of many fruit, vegetable and oilseed fruit crops.

The summer flowering Operation Pollinator seed mixes can be expected to attract up to 40 different bee species and 12 different bumbles, which is over half of all the species in the UK.

Operation Pollinator seed mixtures have been created by specialist ecologists and entomologists, in conjunction with course designers and agronomists.

The Syngenta Player Survey identified:



How do you get involved?

For more information on Operation Pollinator and how to get involved, visit www.operationpollinator.com

Guidelines for Operation Pollinator wildflower establishment

Timing: Late summer/early autumn

Action: Cut and remove existing vegetation to a height of 50mm and identify grass species

Reason: To assess impact of Rescue application on sward composition

Action: Apply Rescue

Reason: Rescue removes Ryegrass to open up sward and reduce competition, improving wildflower establishment

Action: Apply Primo Maxx five days prior to overseeding

Reason: Suppresses grass growth to reduce competition and allow wildflower seedlings to establish

Action: Scarify to remove 50-60% of surface vegetation

Reason: Creates bare earth surface for wildflower surfaces

Action: Overseed with appropriate Operation Pollinator wildflower mix

Reason: Wildflower seeds germinate from the surface





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Getting social at TPC Sawgrass

BIGGA membership doesn't just provide access to world-leading education, it also gives members the opportunity to volunteer for career-defining experiences you simply don't have access to elsewhere.

BIGGA Partner John Deere once again sponsored five members, joined by Johnny Ryan of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland, who were flown to Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, to help prepare TPC Sawgrass' Stadium Course for The Players Championship.

Ninety-two full-time staff and 75 volunteers from all over the world, representing 17 countries, came together to ensure the course was in pristine condition for the event, considered by many as men's golf's 'fifth' major.

With 4am shuttles taking the team to the course and a police escort for the afternoon shift, which often finished around midnight, the 12 days the volunteers were on site were a lot of hard work. But once again those selected to represent the association did us proud and have described the experience as life-changing, and something they will never forget.

The BIGGA delegation included: Sam Evans, head greenkeeper at Fulwell; Paul Walton, greenkeeper at Sharpley Springs; Harry Jones, head greenkeeper at Wrekin; Christopher Hale, deputy head greenkeeper at Woodbury Park; and Richard Johnstone, course manager at Nairn Durnbar.

Also joining the preparation team was Chris Sharp, of Hampstead, who made his own way to TPC Sawgrass.

Our thanks go once again to BIGGA Partner John Deere for making this opportunity possible.

Social media allowed those back home to keep up to date with some of the things the volunteers got up to. Now they're back home, we asked them to go into more detail, taking us behind the scenes of this once-in-a-lifetime experience.



Above: Gang mowing

Paul Walton:

I was pretty nervous the first day I pulled up to the greenkeeping sheds, seeing so many new faces and being in surroundings that I was not used to. But everyone probably had the same look on their faces as I did, that of amazement and excitement. The organisation of the whole place was impeccable. For example, we all had a booklet with relevant information such as health and safety, shift patterns, contact information and what is expected from all of the staff.

Lucas Andrews is the course superintendent at TPC Sawgrass. He came across as a professional, but also a very laid-back individual. He made the whole process relaxed and didn't want anyone to feel pressured by their tasks. We were all given a rucksack, kitted out with eight t-shirts — a different colour allocated for each day — and a waterproof top and trousers.

After the meeting everyone was allowed to roam around the huge greenkeeping sheds. There are three large buildings, for the mechanics, chemicals and a building for machinery, equipment and the staff mess room. Each building was immaculate, with not one thing looking out of place. Lined up neatly were row after row of John Deere grass cutting machinery, Gator and Pro Gator utility vehicles. There were so many you could only imagine the quantity of machines that was there, and every machine was spotless.



No blade of grass out of place. The true professionals.

Harry Jones:

For the evening shifts when going out onto the back nine holes, we had to get a police escort. This saw us driving through housing estates, main roads and compounds, all just to stay away from the golfers and public, which shocked me. This meant it took around 20 minutes from leaving the yard to get onto the 10th green.

After all the shifts we would come back in and have meals together as one big happy family. Before the evening meals there would always be a seminar that we could attend, which all the BIGGA lads always did. The speakers were all people with high status within their profession. They were brilliant, mostly talking about confidence and working together as a team, so mainly motivational speeches, but they really got the team going and this is definitely something I want to continue with back home.

‘Everyone probably had the same look on their faces as I did, that of amazement and excitement.’

Paul Walton



Above left: hand mowing greens

Above right: bunker preparation using bespoke 'double' rakes

Sam Evans:

On the first morning of the competition the briefing was a little more pumped up than before and music was being streamed out of the speakers to get everyone going. As we sat in the buggies, waiting to set off, it was one of those surreal moments trying to take it all in and live every minute. It was now competition time.

Richard Johnstone:

Our group was split into two front nine and back nine crews, and I felt really lucky to be part of the back nine bunker crew every morning, reaching the famous 17th hole as the sun was rising. Morning set-up normally finished at around 9am, followed by breakfast and some free time to watch golf before returning for some educational talks during lunch, ready to start back at 4.30pm. Evening work involved cutting all the surfaces, patching divots on fairways and cleaning up the practice ground facilities.

From the Thursday the work became very intense, to make sure everything was looking its best for the golfers and the worldwide audience. Although we were working in some fierce heat of around 35 degrees, the atmosphere every day was brilliant and it was great to see everybody get on so well.

Continued over



Paul Walton:

Simple things such as fitting different machines with brushes that sit in front of the cylinders on the fairway units and walk-behind greens mowers make such a difference. Even though we brush prior to cutting at Sharpley, it is always with a different machine, so adopting this new method will save man hours and fuel for us. Also when cutting the greens, there were 'turning boards' at either end of the stripe. These were plastic boards that were laid out to help stop wear created by the mowers when turning, so this may be a system I will adopt back at Sharpley.

Above: YPC Sawgrass' famous 17th hole on tournament day

Right: Harry on the 17th green

Far right top: Sam, Johnny and Chris



Chris Hale:

Being part of the BIGGA and John Deere volunteer programme was an amazing experience on one of the best courses in the world. I thoroughly enjoyed working at TPC Sawgrass with a great bunch of lads doing various tasks, helping to make a successful Players Championship. The organisation of the agronomy team there was very impressive and has encouraged me to go back to my club with the same perspective.

Above: Early morning divot replacement

Right: Relaxing at the course

Far right bottom: Richard won the nearest the pin competition

'Being part of the BIGGA and John Deere volunteer programme was an amazing experience on one of the best courses in the world.'

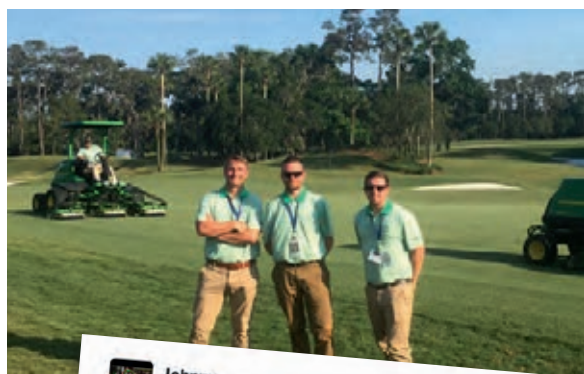
Chris Hale



Sam Evans:

Day seven — the day of the cut. This made our jobs a little easier, with one tee starts and not as many golfers. However, heavy rain was forecast today, so some of us stayed on call to push water if required. As the standby crew waited, we all fell asleep, only to be woken up by a Sky Sports Golf presenter asking if we would do a short interview. We did it live on television and social media and if you saw it, we had literally just woken up!





Johnny
@Johnny92458245

Big shout out @JohnDeere for a life changing experience @TPCSawgrass @GCSAI15 @bigga@misterdeere @Fotalsland

Sam Evans:

On Saturday evening the back nine divot crew were doing the whole golf course, while the front nine divot crew were helping with 'Pink Out'. This was exchanging all the flowers for pink ones ready for Mother's Day on the Sunday. I was lucky enough to be part of this fantastic operation, which went on well into the night as I got back to the dorms at about midnight.

Then on Sunday TPC Sawgrass let us have an extra hour in bed to make up for the late evening the night before, so today the buses picked us up at 5am. We carried out normal bunker routines in the morning, but once we had finished we positioned ourselves behind the 17th green and watched the groups come through. Money can't buy an experience like that.

Richard Johnstone
@GVMaintenance

Fantastic end to the week, just won the nearest the pin contest and Sunday's 17th flag as the prize 🏆 #THEPLAYERS #tpcsawgrass @BIGGALtd



Richard Johnstone:

Monday morning was time for everyone to head home, but not before the remaining volunteers got the chance to play the 17th hole as the professionals played it on Sunday — 137 yards to a front right pin. A nearest the pin prize of the original flag used on the hole during the tournament was on offer to the winner. Aiming to just hold the ball on the green, I was surprised to have hit a perfect wedge shot right next to the hole. The volunteers went wild shouting, cheering and high fiving my shot, which ended up winning the competition and finishing off my 12 days in style.



R. Jeff Plotts @AZTurfDawg · May 14
It's difficult to express how grateful I am for a great team of volunteers and all the sponsors that make it possible. #THEPLAYERS

Final words from the guys

Chris Hale:

Massive thanks to John Deere and BIGGA for making this opportunity possible, which can only add to my career development, and I would encourage anyone to apply for this unique programme next year.

Harry Jones:

Can I thank BIGGA and John Deere for allowing me to represent them at such an awesome event. It truly was an amazing experience that I will never forget. Also I want to add what a fantastic job I thought John Deere's territory manager Marcus Morris did for us. Nothing we asked was too big for him — he made us all feel very comfortable.

Richard Johnstone:

The whole experience surpassed anything I had ever expected and I would like to say a massive thank you to BIGGA and John Deere for providing me with this opportunity to develop and progress as a golf course manager. I would highly recommend the programme to anyone who wants to be part of something very special.

Paul Walton:

I just want to add a big thank you to BIGGA and John Deere for giving me the opportunity to go out to America and experience such a high profile tournament. For any greenkeeper out there that may be put off by the video application part of the process, I would say to you: just give it a go. Get yourself out of your comfort zone and I promise it will be worth it, whether you get the place on the programme or not.

Sam Evans:

It truly was the experience of a lifetime, one that none of the volunteers will be able to replicate again. The TPC Sawgrass team was extremely hospitable and I could not have been made to feel any more welcome than I was. Yes it is hard work, yes they are long days, yes you don't get much sleep, but what you can take away is priceless. In future, when I watch this on the TV or the highlights, I can now say "I have raked that bunker, I have walked that green, I have been part of something amazing." So get applying!

To apply for the TPC Sawgrass volunteer programme 2018 with John Deere, head to the BIGGA website or scan this QR code.



'I will happily wear sun cream if it means I get to keep my skin'

Skincare

Stuart Taylor knows first hand the damage that prolonged exposure to the sun can cause.

After a lifetime spent out on the course, the 57-year-old said a skin cancer scare means he now takes protection from the sun's harmful rays extremely seriously, and is encouraging other BIGGA members to do the same.

"Ignoring this is foolhardy," said Stuart, the course manager at Glasgow Golf Club. "What will happen is one day you will discover you have got a growth and you will end up having treatment and will be scarred for life.

"Taking care of yourself is such a simple practice and I will happily take a few minutes to put sun cream on if it means I get to keep my skin."

A BIGGA board member, Stuart has been undergoing treatment for a skin condition named Actinic keratosis, which occurs due to prolonged exposure to the sun's harmful ultra-violet rays. Actinic keratoses are small crusty or scaly

bumps that can appear anywhere on your body that is regularly exposed to sunlight. Although they are usually benign, the scarring affects your appearance, especially as they often appear on the face. The lesions also reveal sustained sun damage, meaning sufferers are much more likely to develop skin cancer.

"Around nine years ago I went to the doctors as I had skin tags, and he referred me to the dermatologist,"

Stuart Taylor before his treatment



explained Stuart. "She looked at my forehead and said 'I don't like that, that's sun damage'. She asked me a variety of questions and I told her I played golf in my spare time and worked outside."

Sixty-five percent of melanoma cases are associated with exposure to the sun's UV rays, making golfers among the highest at risk. With the amount of time spent out on the course, during periods of the day when health advisors would have



people seek shade, greenkeepers are quite literally taking their lives into their own hands every time they head out on the course, unless they use sun protection.

Stuart was given a range of treatment that cleared up some, but not all, of the skin damage he had suffered. But it was only at BTME this year when he visited the stand operated by cancer charity Skcin, that he realised he needed to do more and wasn't out of the woods yet.

"I spoke to the girl on the stand and she said I was going to need stronger treatment. This coincided with the club master at Glasgow Golf Club noticing a mole on the back of his neck that was inflamed. He went to his doctor and it turned out it was cancer, so alarm bells started ringing for me. I realised I needed to go back to the doctor and chase up my skin problems."

A greenkeeper since 1979, Stuart said that until recently, those within the industry just didn't think about the dangers of the sun. And many have suffered as a result.

"It was not seen as being a threat," he said. "When you went on holiday you put sun cream on, but back home you didn't bother because you didn't think it was going to be an issue."

"But I'm into the habit now where every morning I put on a cream that's got factor 25 on it. Every time I play golf I put factor 30 on and it's something that I have just got used to doing."

Stuart also warned the younger generation that it's never too early to think about skin protection. We may expect cancer to occur later in life, but the seeds are sown during our younger years.

Stuart said: "My father is 99 years old and he was a professional golfer and had also served in the Army during the Second World War in Damascus, Syria. At that time you had no skin protection at all, but he has recently had a skin cancer removed from his face and they put the cause down to that sun damage he suffered all those years ago."

"There's also the added factor that not wearing protection increases



Stuart Taylor after his treatment



wrinkles and wear and tear, so if you want to keep your looks, put sun cream on."

Over the past couple of months, Greenkeeper International has featured a number of articles intended to increase awareness among our members about the importance of skin prevention. Course managers now have a duty to ensure staff are provided with the tools necessary to allow them to take this important step that will affect their long term health.

"I supply the guys with factor 30 or 40 and tell them on a regular basis to put it on," said Stuart.

"Because of the treatment I've had they are more aware of putting it on. But for many staff it isn't something they think about and so if there is a high UV risk or it's a sunny day, the course manager should give them the heads up. It's as important as reminding your team to wear ear defenders or glasses."

"Some course managers might think it's not their responsibility, but we have a duty of care to protect our staff and that means ensuring they are covered up and protected." ■

'When you went on holiday you put sun cream on, but back home you didn't bother because you didn't think it was going to be an issue.'



The charity Skcin had a stand at BTME 2017 where Stuart got help

What is Sustainability?

James Hutchinson, BIGGA



Small nest boxes

Reeds to remove
pollutants

Irrigation pond

Unmowed margins for
wading birds

Aquatic plants for
dragonflies



Solar Energy



Mature trees for
nesting raptors

Dense woodlands

Hedgerow avenue

What is Sustainability?

Managed turf for foraging
blackbirds, thrushes
and oystercatchers

What is sustainability? That's a good question and one I am often asked.

Economic constraints mean greenkeepers are increasingly looking for ways to lower the costs associated with maintaining a course, yet sustainability is a buzzword few people completely understand.

Continued over



James says

'Sustainable practices can actually reduce the amount of time and effort it takes to maintain your course'

What is Sustainability?

What many do not realise is that sustainability can affect all aspects of running a golf course. Take sand for instance. We need sand for bunkers, divoting and top dressing, but sand is a finite resource and one we may not have forever. As high quality sand becomes scarcer and global prices rise, eventually sand-based products will become unsustainable.

Many chemicals we rely on to produce the surfaces golfers expect are being removed from the market, meaning these practices are again not sustainable. Fossil

fuels will eventually run out so they are also unsustainable.

Putting it simply, anything that cannot be used indefinitely is not sustainable.

In terms of environmental sustainability, we are looking for processes that support long term ecological balance and don't deplete natural resources. Recycling grass clippings, leaves, bunker waste, cores and other organic matter are sustainable if you turn them into compost. The same can be said of



From solar panels to the way turf is managed, sustainability encompasses all aspects of golf club management

composting clubhouse waste such as potato peelings or carrots, if the vegetables are sourced from a farm that promotes environmental values to begin with.

Golf course sustainability can consequently be described as recycling, reusing, upcycling and reprocessing your green and brown waste.

Sometimes capital investment is required if we are to introduce larger projects such as solar panels and wind farms to our courses. But in the grand scheme of things,



'Putting it simply, anything that cannot be used indefinitely is not sustainable'

to help our members become extra shrewd with their limited water supply. Junier created a checklist to see if you are using your irrigation and water supply to the best of its ability. The checklists can be found on our website under Sustainability where you will find a Resources section. Scan the QR code to find out more.

A comment which has been doing the rounds for a while is that trying to control nature always leads to disaster and unnecessary costs. In my experience, this is perfectly true. I have been to many sites where the greenkeepers, or perhaps a golfer who 'knows someone where they can get it cheaper', has chosen the wrong species, whether it be wildflowers, grass or trees.

The consequences for cutting corners are often costly.

Wildflowers are a good example. For example, it is not a good idea to sow aquatic seeds into a sandy soil because, while they may flower

soon after, the flowers won't set seed for the following year and as a result will become unsustainable. Come the following year, you'll just have to buy some more.

Tree planting is no different and you don't need me to tell you about choosing the correct grasses for your site. This is all very self-explanatory, but it happens. So choose wisely to become florae sustainable.

I really wanted to develop this feature to be an in-depth and scientific piece but I changed my mind prior to writing. At this time of the year, who has the time to read and absorb thousands of words and then to act on them? Not many greenkeepers that's for sure. Therefore, if you would like further advice on how to become more sustainable at your site then let me know and I may be able to help out! ■



Scan the QR code to explore the resources section.

these take up little space and can be a wonderful way to make your golf club sustainable.

The returns on clean energy are impressive and I've had the pleasure of visiting golf clubs who are totally reliant on the energy they create via green methods. This means they pay nothing to the large electricity companies and in some instances the electric company actually pays them for returning energy back to the grid!

BIGGA recently teamed up with Junier Browne of JBel Consulting

Continued over

Water is our most valuable resource... let's not waste it!

Plants need water to grow. This seems a straightforward statement we all know to be true but the question is, how much and how is the water used?

Perhaps a surprising thought is that for a plant to grow it will transpire through its above ground vegetation over 90% of the water it takes up through its roots. This allows the plant to take in necessary nutrients and utilise them for growth, but also it means a lot of water is transported from the soil into the atmosphere as vapour.

This constant evaporation is instrumental in cooling the grass, when in summer radiation energy from the sun can do damage. This leads to constant and significant demands on the available soil moisture reserves.

Of course that transpiration rate will be affected by climatic conditions, so

with higher temperatures, and those areas exposed to wind, the evaporation from the turf surface will be increased. This puts more pressure on maintaining a water balance in the soil between the wilt point and field capacity. Making sure irrigation or rain is utilised optimally through the summer months is essential. Irrigation in the evening or morning is preferable to midday so full exposure to heat from the sun is minimised and will allow more water to enter the root zone ready to be utilised by the plant. Using a wetting agent with rapid penetrant properties will reduce the surface tension of water, reduce run-off and allow quicker and more comprehensive penetration into the soil. Such applications will also help to hydrate the soil and maintain the correct levels of moisture above the wilt point and up to field capacity.



Syngenta's sustainability mantra

Syngenta Business Manager Daniel Lightfoot highlighted that key agronomy decisions by greenkeepers could have a highly positive role in both the environmental and business sustainability of golf course management.

Golf courses can deliver an extremely positive environmental role. Even where greens and tees are intensively managed to provide the quality playing surfaces demanded by today's golfers, there is still plenty of room to actively manage habitats for ecological gain, as ably demonstrated by our enthusiastically supported Operation Pollinator.

Greenkeepers can also integrate turf management products into their programmes to optimise the use of inputs and long-term sustainability. With water a current hot topic, for example, the use of Qualibra wetting agent can help enhance the utilisation of irrigation.

Furthermore, Qualibra and Primo Maxx II have been shown to significantly enhance plant root structures, ensuring they can make more sustainable use of water and nutrient inputs.

The Syngenta mantra for all plant protection products is 'as little as possible, as much as necessary' and a genuine desire to develop sustainable best use practices.

Using tools such as GreenCast for disease risk prediction has demonstrated that it is possible to achieve consistently higher turf quality from fewer fungicide applications.

Ultimately, sustainability has to include business viability, which means ensuring player satisfaction that keeps them coming back. Attracting new players to the game, with initiatives such as Syngenta's love.golf, is also an essential element of building economically viable and sustainable clubs.





The drive for change

Sustainability in golf management is no longer a luxury, but has become a major factor in ensuring the future of golf against a background of environmental pressure and increasing water and pesticide regulation.

The sustainability agenda is driving change in many areas of life and needs to be embraced.

Manufacturers are part of that change and Aquatrols and Farmura, now an Aquatrols company, were promoting this approach long before the word sustainable became an industry driver.

Water management is increasingly important given the ever-rising cost and uncertainties about the availability of water. Added to this are the consequences of misapplication to the health of the plant.

The Aquatrols range has a history going back to the 1950s and we are

acknowledged leaders in the field with proven research backing the claims made for performance. The correct use of surfactants not only leads to optimal water use, but contributes to a better playing surface and healthier turf.

Farmura too has been a pioneer of sustainable management by integrating the use of organics into management programmes. The health of the soil rhizosphere is now seen as a part of good sustainable turf management and the use of organics provides not only essential nutrients but leads to a healthier soil profile with better utilisation of both applied and locked up nutrients

The adoption of a sustainable programme will provide the surfaces that are required, yet at the same time work with the environment and the natural world.

Sustainability and stewardship high on the agenda

With increased incidences of chemicals appearing in water courses and rising concerns about resistance, greenkeepers should always employ cultural practices before applying chemicals, and ensure that if a treatment is required, the product is used responsibly.

And in a bid to ensure best practice in product use is easier and more manageable for the greenkeeper, Bayer has developed two innovative, environmentally friendly solutions to compliment integrated turf management strategies.

Dr Colin Mumford, Bayer technical manager, explained that Bayer has developed a contamination-avoiding,

self-cleaning transfer system for liquid plant protection products, known as the easyFlow. He said: "It's designed to be secured onto any product bottle, for use when tank mixing or filling."

The system has been shown to improve operator health and safety by up to 96%, by reducing spillage and exposure, with its closed transfer and rinsing system. Colin added: "This will save money, because it reduces waste, which is better for the environment and is far quicker to rinse containers."

In order to ensure products are disposed of properly, Bayer has also designed a system for waste chemical disposal, called the Phytobac, and the blueprints for greenkeepers to build their own are available to download for free.

Colin said: "The Phytobac is similar to a bio-bed, and is used to dispose of chemicals and sprayer washings. The Phytobac



is filled with soil and barley straw that harbours bacteria, which feed on pesticides to dispose of them naturally, without harming the external environment."

To download the free blueprints for the Phytobac, or find out more about stewardship of any Bayer products, visit www.environmentalscience.bayer.co.uk.

Avro Zoo

How Eddie's insects put Avro on the map

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

Eddie Ainsworth is one of the most passionate greenkeepers in the industry when it comes to conservation.

The 42-year-old and his deputy, Wayne Atkinson, have put Avro Golf Club on the national map due to their incredible enthusiasm and their attempts to improve not only the wildlife at the course, but also the wider landscape.

"I have always been interested in conservation," said Eddie. "But you can only go off what the course manager would like to do and so it wasn't until I got my own place that I was really able to bring my ideas to the course."

Eddie began his greenkeeping career at Caldry in 1994, joining Avro 10 years later. He was appointed course manager in October 2014 and said: "At my first meeting as course manager I was asked by the committee to develop a five-year plan for the course. Part of that plan was the ecology of the course, which I felt had never really been assessed or developed in the past. All credit to the committee, this plan was accepted and implemented almost immediately, with many of the committee getting involved in the ecology work."

"There are just two greenkeeping staff at the course, so when it comes to the workload it's pretty hectic. We are on an extremely tight budget so we do things to save money. For example, we are using willow branches instead of paying for a fence, and that will have the added bonus of providing a habitat for wildlife and birds."

In 2015 Eddie won the inaugural BIGGA Greenkeeping Achievement of the Year award and in January 2017 was pronounced as Conservation Greenkeeper of the Year at the STRI's Golf Environment Awards.

"That was a total shock," said Eddie. "Even my assistant Wayne said he has never seen me speechless before. But it is so meaningful to know that you are thought well enough of that someone thought you deserved an award. The response I received from greenkeepers and others in the turf industry, up and down the country, was overwhelming."

Within the greenkeeping industry Eddie has earned a reputation as "the bee man". He has kept apiaries — artificial bee hives — at Avro for seven years, and said that as he learned more about them, he developed a knowledge of how even the smallest animals can have a major impact on our everyday lives.

Continued over





"Everything started with the bees," said Eddie. "I knew I had to get members involved first, so I pitched them the idea of collecting honey and using it in our cooking."

"You can learn so much about your course from honey bees. It's all well and good providing wildflowers, but you need to know what your golf course is doing all year round. When I brought the bees onto the estate I found they would go missing in spring, and that's when I learned about the 'June gap'. This is a period between your early spring and summer flowering. We were able to fill that gap, and now the bees stick around."

"I'm fascinated by bees because bees affect everybody in everyday life. Even the cotton that binds your clothes comes from plants that are pollinated by bees. They are just amazing animals and without them we would be in trouble."

Among the wildlife projects Eddie has undertaken is the creation of a small wetland area close to Avro's fourth hole, featuring a hibernaculum for amphibians to use. Throughout the winter a number of bat boxes were also erected in an attempt to encourage these animals.

"I'm on a small course on a tight budget, but providing habitats for wildlife actually saves the club money. By leaving some areas to grow wilder, there's less stress on machinery, manpower, fuel and other resources."

"You have got to find a balance between playability and wildlife as at the end of the day we are greenkeepers. You don't have to go in all guns blazing and sometimes ecology management is actually about doing less."

"There's no rulebook of what to do. But if you get the basics right and understand what you're trying to do, the world's your oyster."

As part of his prize for winning the Golf Environment Award, Eddie and representatives of the clubs who won the other two awards, Greetham Valley and Frilford Heath, were invited by the STRI on a fact finding trip to Portugal, to



learn more about conservation and sustainability at various courses.

"Portugal was an amazing trip," said Eddie. "Getting to see firsthand how Bob and Sophie work, it became very clear about why they are considered the best in the business. But the trip to Portugal also allowed me to realise just what we are trying to achieve when we talk about the environment of our golf courses. It's so easy to lose sight and get lost in the building of bird and bat boxes and creating log piles, while neglecting other aspects."

"My trip to Portugal with Bob and Sophie allowed me to speak to them about just what the Golf Environment Awards are about."



'Everything started with the bees, I knew I had to get members involved first, so I pitched them the idea of collecting honey and using it in our cooking.'



Top: Taking a close look at wildflowers

Bottom: Eddie and Wayne at the Golf Environment Awards this year

James says

'It is amazing what Eddie and Wayne have managed to achieve with such limited resources.'



It's about understanding biodiversity and ecosystems; understanding sustainability; and wildlife and habitat management.

"There is also water management; turf management; better use of chemicals; how to adapt your maintenance facilities and equipment; and planning, education and communication.

"But just as important, it's about passion. Passion is what drives us greenkeepers each and every day, despite the negativity we face, sometimes on a daily basis.

"The Golf Environmental Awards allows us to showcase our work, promote our golf courses in a positive way and educate others in the benefit golf course has on the environment and wildlife." ■

'You can learn so much about your course from honey bees. It's all well and good providing wildflowers, but you need to know what your golf course is doing all year round. When I brought the bees onto the estate I found they would go missing in spring, and that's when I learned about the 'June gap'. This is a period between your early spring and summer flowering.'

Avro Golf Club

Wetting Agents

Hydrozone and Aquazone STRI tested in 2016



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Email: info@gbrotech.co.uk
www.gbrotech.co.uk/amenity



The great and good at Greetham

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

Not all great ideas start out that way.

Some start small, slowly expanding over time until one day the realisation dawns that something special has been achieved.

Thirty years ago Greetham Valley was a sheep farm, just a few miles outside of Oakham in the East Midlands, and unremarkable in every way.

But the farmer chose to diversify, and significant investment over the past three decades has seen the estate transformed as first a nine-hole pitch and putt, then a championship course were constructed. Over the years Greetham Valley has grown to become a 45-hole golf resort complete with eco-lodges and a 35-bedroom hotel.

For Course Manager Adi Porter, his realisation of greatness came in January 2017 when Greetham Valley was proclaimed Environmental Golf Club of the Year at the Golf Environment Awards.

"The ironic thing is when it was first unveiled there was uproar about the environmental damage the course might cause," said Adi, as he gave BIGGA Sustainability Executive James Hutchinson a tour of the course.

Adi confessed that the focus on sustainability happened by accident but once it was underway, the entire team caught the conservation bug. He explained:

"I wanted to enhance the aesthetics of the course by not having everything cut and I wanted to make the layout more challenging because the trees hadn't yet matured.

"We had some spots that Natural England had designated natural areas and we enhanced and increased those. The other bits, like bird hides, came later on and were to encourage other people that weren't golfers on to the site."

Construction at Greetham Valley started in 1990, with the club opening as a driving range and par 3 course while the 18-hole layout was still being built.

Constructed on a former sheep farm, it has just eight or nine inches of topsoil sitting on top of limestone bedrock across the 276-acre site.

However, just 50 acres of that is tightly-managed, and the rest comprises maturing woodland, meadowland and wildflower banks.

To tightly-manage it all would take resources and manpower the team doesn't have access to, and Adi explained how a drive towards environmental stewardship first arose out of a desire to make savings on the course.

"It was never really our plan to enhance the wildlife," said Adi, who has been at the club for 23 years. "It was our intention to improve the aesthetics and to save time spent mowing. Then we saw wildlife thriving and thought, let's help them out."

'It was never really our plan to enhance the wildlife, It was our intention to improve the aesthetics and to save time spent mowing.'



A sign at the entrance to the club proclaim's Greetham Valley's success

One of the areas they chose to intentionally neglect was the banking behind the 15th hole. The bank was difficult to mow from a health and safety aspect and Adi said: "We left it alone and then all of a sudden there was an abundance of wildflowers. It looks fantastic in summer and when we started to see that happen, we thought well let's create that in other areas."

Strimming and raking just once a year prevents the wildflower areas getting out of control. But this light management tactic has also allowed the team to make savings in terms of fuel and time, allowing greenstaff to concentrate on in-play areas.

"We have encouraged wildlife, enhanced the general area, and still made savings on the way," said Adi.

In a post-recession world, golfers are once again looking beyond just the course when choosing which golf club to sign up to, and environmental responsibility is high on their list of desirable features.

So not only does better sustainability save costs at the course, but it also helps to attract new members. Therefore Greetham Valley isn't shy about shouting about its success. At the entrance to the estate is a large sign, which proclaims Greetham Valley; Environmental Golf Course of the Year 2017.

"We wanted that to be the first impression people got when they arrived at the course," said Adi, whose first club manager role was at Crockett Manor. "People are looking for venues that are environmentally friendly. This is a nationwide award and little old Greetham Valley in Rutland has won it. It's crazy."

Wildflowers and bird boxes (there are 38 around the estate) are a major feature, but the sustainability drive doesn't end there.

Continued over



Course Manager
Adi Porter

One of the many
bird boxes on the
course



Greetham Valley



James says

'Golf course sustainability
at its best! Worthy winners of
the STRI's enviro awards.'





Greetham Valley Golf Club

Greens Staff

Adi Porter, course manager
Alex Porter, deputy
Mark Chapman, 1st assistant
Rob Welsh, greenkeeper
Gareth Watkin, greenkeeper
Alex Wren, greenkeeper
Simon Dexter, greenkeeper
Dan Rawsthorne, greenkeeper
Luke Saunders, greenkeeper
Martin Gibbons, mechanic
Ed Sarsby, gardener

Machinery

Five Toro 1000	Toro Bunker Rake
Three Toro 3400 Triflex	Greenmech Chipper
Toro 5610,	Stump Grinder
Toro 5010H,	JCB
Toro 4500,	Telehandler
Toro 4700	Two Travelling Irrigators
Three Toro Workman HDX	Two Greens Irons
Toro 5800	Toro Propass Topdresser
Kubota STV32	Blec Multiseeder
Kubota ST30	Toro Procore 648
TYM 390	Blec Groundbreaker
TYM 431	2.5m and 1.45m Vertidrain
New Holland TN65	
Kubota Mini-digger	
Zero Turn Grasshopper	
Amazone Groundkeeper	Sisi TM1000 rotor rake

From top to bottom, the attention to detail at Greetham Valley is profound.

As the site is built on porous limestone, when they previously had a leak in their water pipes the team wouldn't realise until a massive bill arrived through the post. Meters have been fitted and are read monthly to prevent this, and staff members are encouraged to use water economically.

Inputs such as fertiliser and pesticides are used sparsely, while rainwater is collected off roofs and the car parks and diverted into the irrigation lakes. A reed bed removes pollutants, and the water is ready to use.

Up on the roof, 40 kilowatts of solar panels provide electricity and heating for the site, supported by two biomass boilers. The solar panel system will pay for itself within five years. The club will then make money by selling its electricity to the national grid.

But the journey wasn't faultless, and there were setbacks along the way, as Adi explained: "These ideas were almost self taught, planning as we went along. We took advice from people and we would try something to see if it works. If the idea was successful we would stick to it, but if not we would stop and try something else."

One high profile example was an attempt to change the greens turf to fescue from the existing bent and poa mix. The fescue was



Bird Hide



Bee hive within a dead tree stump

seeded and nurtured throughout the summer, but at the end of the year it had completely died off, and so the club returned to its previous grass species.

Another ongoing process of trial and error has been working out just how much they can allow rough to encroach on in-play areas.

Adi, who worked in a local authority's parks department before moving into golf, said: "We soon got to know from members if we started to encroach on play. We started to get a few niggles and I asked them to bear with us.

"The members now realise why it happens. Rather than cut rough

areas, we are thinning them out more, so if the ball goes in there you can find it. They can see that these areas are improving and thinning out."

With the birdwatching hotspot of Rutland Water so close, and a number of public footpaths running across the course, it's unsurprising that so much of the club's success has centred around birdlife.

"We are always full of birdwatchers, so we thought let's create something for them," said Adi. "In fact, it was one of the girls in the sales office who had the idea to put in bird hides to create something for people who visit the estate but don't want to play golf."

Four owl boxes were put up, with guidance from the Hawk and Owl Trust, and one breeding pair managed to raise a brood.

Another high profile visitor to the club is Rutland Water's star attraction, an osprey. With only 250 breeding pairs in the country and the population in Rutland

The award-winning team at Greetham Valley



'These ideas were almost self taught, planning as we went along. We took advice from people and we would try something to see if it works. If the idea was successful we would stick to it, but if not we would stop and try something else.'

Continued over

Greetham Valley



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being the UK's most southerly, the casual presence of it fishing in Greetham's irrigation ponds, beside the clubhouse, is a major topic of conversation among golfers.

It is enough to give anyone the conservation bug, and next up for Adi and the team is the construction of a habitat for sand martins, to hopefully be constructed this winter.

The club is also now GEO registered, while the maintenance facility is being relocated to allow Greetham Valley's hotel to double in size. It is the latest expansion for the club, which could soon become a major force in the UK golf industry due to its ambition and proximity to transport links.

Being proclaimed Environmental Golf Course of the Year has certainly got the club on the map, despite Adi's initial reservations about even entering.

He said: "My initial thought was that we don't do enough, until we completed the entry form and saw we were already doing a huge amount without realising."

The awards, administered by the STRI, aren't judged on quantity though. Rather it's the commitment and effort of the entire team that the judges take into account, ensuring size doesn't matter.

"We never imagined we would win the whole thing," said Adi.

"When you think of the size and quality of courses we were up against, we thought we didn't have a chance. But what struck them is that the entire team is in this together. The staff is fully aware of what we are trying to do and they have really embraced it.

"We went on a journey and you couldn't believe the apprehension as we waited to hear whether we had made the next stage.

"If you aren't sure about entering the competition I'd like to invite anyone to visit Greetham Valley to show them what we have done, and to see what the awards have done for us already.

"It's been phenomenal." ■



Badger set



Greetham's bug hotel



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Distributed by



The ancient giants

who rule Britain's courses

James Hutchinson, BIGGA

Patshull Park



Golf courses hold some of the most interesting and valuable plant life to be found anywhere in the UK.

Rare mosses and liverworts live in the damp areas, fungi makes its way through the decaying organic matter, and rare wildflowers live happily among grasses. Indeed, one of the rarest plants in the UK, the lady's slipper orchid, lives happily on a golf course.

But what about the giants of the natural world? Those that go unnoticed by the greenkeeper and golfer, unless a golf ball rebounds off them. The ones that have been living on your site since way before the Old Course at St Andrews was born and probably before modern golf was first played in the 15th Century. I am, of course, talking about the country's ancient trees. Those beautiful, gnarly old wardens of the course, who tower over you when you are hard at work.

I first thought about developing a feature on old trees on golf courses when I started at BIGGA a year and a half ago and I asked if anyone knew of any oldies which I could take a look at. The feedback was astounding, but the sheer number of people who contacted me meant I wouldn't be able to visit them all. So I concentrated on veteran and ancient trees which were older than 400 years or were of significant age or interest for the species in question.

Patshull's giants



What is a veteran or ancient tree?

The Ancient Tree Forum, which is funded by The Woodland Trust and has a website where you can record old trees on an interactive map, suggests the exact age at which you'd call a tree 'ancient' depends on the species and factors, including the type of site where it's growing.

A birch tree could be considered ancient at 150 years old, an age one of the examples at Ellesmere, near Manchester, isn't far from achieving. But an oak tree would not be thought of as ancient until it's at least 400 years old.

Yew trees can live for thousands of years, so are not defined as ancient until they are 800 years old.

At Moor Allerton, near Leeds, Course Manager Adam Matthew and the team had cleared an area of scrubland close to a tee when they uncovered one of the most interesting trees you are ever likely to see; a cracked, twisted, broken and gnarled ancient sweet chestnut. Sweet chestnuts are not native to the UK and were thought to have been brought over by the Romans some time ago, although it is unclear exactly when. Having been here for a few thousand years now, experts call sweet chestnuts an adopted native.

After extensive research and professional ageing by Ged M Collins of Global Tree Vision, we discovered the tree in question is approximately 450 years old, making it a true veteran of the golf course tree world.

At Edgbaston GC in Birmingham they have a massive collection of sweet chestnuts. There are about twenty onsite and most are in play! The course was laid out in 1936, so these trees have seen some golf in their time and do not appear to have been affected by golf balls bouncing off their trunks.

Continued over

Course Manager Eddie Mills kindly gave me a few hours of his time to show me around the course and the sweet chestnuts in question. It is rare that you find so many ancients on a course as indiscriminate designing has been partly to blame for cutting a route through old woodlands and ancient forests. This wasn't the case at Edgbaston though, where the designer, the world-renowned Harry Colt, used these trees to his advantage and negotiated holes around them. At Edgbaston their beautiful trees are up to 700 years old.

If it is sheer size you are after then look no further than the humongous oak at Hexham GC, Northumberland. The tree is called the Leper Oak and was named after a colony of lepers who lived where the clubhouse now stands. According to legend, the townspeople of Hexham, not wanting direct contact with the afflicted, used to leave food for them beneath the shade of this tree. Records of this piece of history date back 400 years, which is incredible.



After a measurement of the girth was carried out, the oak was found to be 880cm in circumference, suggesting the Leper tree could be anywhere up to 750 years old. This tree could have been growing while Robin Hood was — according to legend — running around Sherwood Forest, and so it is an incredible piece of local history.



Cumberwell Park's oak

Edgbaston's chestnut



Why are veteran trees important?

Fungi, invertebrates, epiphytes (another organism living on the tree), saprophytic organisms (which feed on the dead parts of the tree), birds, mammals and reptiles are all known to live in old trees. Many will only cohabit a tree



James says

'Record your oldies on the Ancient Tree Forum's website — www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk'



of significant age. For instance, the purple hairstreak butterfly has a habit of using tall old oaks to feed and lay their eggs. Many bat types are believed to mainly use rot-holes in the larger boughs high in the canopy, whereas the rare barbastelle bat appears to be more at home in the cavities behind loose bark on ancient and veteran trees.

I mentioned indiscriminate designing earlier on in this article, but the good news is that certain designers are viewing old trees as features rather than obstacles in need of removing. Take Cumberwell Park in Wiltshire for instance. The original course was built in 1994 and laid out by Adrian Stiff and has an enormous old oak tree, approximately 350 years old and jam packed with wildlife, on one of its holes. The new par three course, which was recently designed by James Edwards, has two juvenile oaks, aged around 250 years old, that have remained intact. These will mature nicely over the course of the next 500 years.

Continued over

Greetham's ash



Ancient Trees

The BIGGA Awards 2018

Who will you nominate?

The BIGGA Awards will be returning to BTME 2018, providing an incredible opportunity for the country's hardworking greenkeepers to be recognised for their efforts.

For your chance to nominate our winners visit www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SVSC9JK and fill in the short questionnaire.



When I visited Greetham Valley in Leicester during April we unearthed a whopper of an ash that the team hadn't realised was quite such an impressive specimen. The girth on this behemoth is 600cm, making it a true rarity. Ash trees are not long lived, with lifespans of around 450 years old. This is compared to oaks or yews, which can reach 1,100 and 5,000 years respectively here in the UK. However Greetham's, which has been coppiced at some point in its life, is full of character and provides habitat for the course's birds to roost and feed.

Not strictly ancient, but worth a mention nonetheless, is the perennially stunning Patshull Park, Wolverhampton. History states that the famous 18th Century landscape designer Capability Brown designed the environment on which the course rests on. He was well known for planting large and fast growing trees such as cedars, sequoias and redwoods and this is evident by the number of colossal specimens which can be found onsite. Redwoods can reach 3,500 years of age and can grow to 379-feet-tall, and so the course winds its way through some of the tallest trees you are ever likely to see in the UK. Mal Mitchell, course manager, was kind enough to show me these gigantic trees and it is a sight I am unlikely to forget anytime soon.

Medieval deer parks can be found scattered across the UK, with most having some kind of historic value to the botanical world. But how often can you find a golf course on one? However, Stoneleigh GC in Warwickshire is set in the most scenic and ancient land around and is slap bang in the middle of a medieval deer park.

The course, history and surrounding areas will be reported on in further detail later in a future issue of Greenkeeper International, but for now I wanted to introduce you to some of the trees which have been growing there for 1,000 years. The seeds that grew into these trees took root a millennium ago, when King Canute sat on the throne of England and Vikings raided the coast.



I ran out of superlatives for these antiques about 10 minutes into the visit and as a confessed tree hugger I went away with my jumper covered in twigs, leaves and moss. I was honoured to be escorted around the site by Course Manager Richard Biggs and to hear some of the stories he has regarding the history of the place. I shall give you further insights in a later edition of the GI magazine so keep a look out for it.

If you wish to know more about veteran and ancient trees on your golf course then don't hesitate to contact me on james.hutchinson@bigga.co.uk.



Top left: Moor Allerton's chestnut

Top right: Stoneleigh's oak

Bottom: Hexham's massive Leper Oak

Otherwise there are many websites and books on offer. The Ancient Tree Forum and the Woodland Trust are great places to start with plenty of advice and information. They can be found at www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk and www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

There are also easy-to-follow guides regarding ageing trees and these can be found by typing 'how to age a tree UK' into your browser. But be aware that most of these are general and not precise as there is no accurate way of ageing a tree other than to cut it down and count the age rings. But we're not going to do that are we. ■

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Top 10 wildlife sightings

BIGGA has a wildlife camera for those hard-to-spot critters which mooch around your golf course when nobody's looking.

Over the past year, we have snapped unsuspecting animals in their natural environment, some of which the greenkeepers did not even know they had!

The camera is a great tool for helping greenkeepers discover whether their efforts to encourage wildlife on the course is proving successful.

Here are James' favourite 10 sightings so far! ■

BIGGA's Wildlife Camera



10

Ashton & Lea's heron legs

James says

'Get in touch if you'd like BIGGA's wildlife camera to visit your course!'



9

Skipton's grey wagtail

5

Gainsborough's siskin

Muntjac deer at Lingfield

4

A fox at North Shore



Is it a stoat or a weasel at Pike Hills?


Red squirrels make their home at Formby

A pair of jays feeding at Fairhaven

St Cuthbert's fox stops by

A deer at Heysham captured on night vision





Why should you get your course **Buzzing!**

Sophie Vukelic, STRI ecological consultant

With over 3,000 golf courses throughout the UK, occupying hundreds of thousands of acres, there is no doubt golf plays a very important role in linking the landscape and providing pockets of well-needed sanctuary for wildlife.

Amongst all of our wildlife in the UK, pollinating insects have been under the spotlight over the last few years, due to the severe decline in what were once abundant species. Since WWII we have lost a whopping 90% of our wildflower meadows due to the intensification of agriculture and increasing urbanisation and there are now massive voids in available nectar and pollen-rich habitats.

Luckily, in golf we are very well placed to do something about this. Golf courses can act as excellent stepping stones, linking adjacent greenspaces such as Ministry of Defence, Forestry Commission, Wildlife Trust and RSPB reserves and other areas designated for their conservation value. Not forgetting the hundreds of pollinator-friendly gardens and other ecologically valuable habitats in between.

With golf courses in almost every corner of the land, almost all habitat types are very well represented, with everything from calcareous grassland to dune slack and coastal heath. Indeed, all habitats, with a few exceptions, provide resources for pollinating insects, whether that be food, perching, hibernating or basking habitat. Even seemingly uninteresting grass-dominated rough is important, providing an abundance of larval foodplants for brown butterflies such as Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown and Wall, among other lesser-known invertebrates.

When you consider that up to 60% of a golf course is 'out-of-play', we have a lot of land to work with to help the future of the UK's pollinators. Add to that the extensive swathes of well-managed rough and richly diverse carries, and golf courses can be regarded as pollinator havens.

Continued over

So, what can you do to enhance your golf course for pollinators, and the wildlife further up the food chain that relies on healthy populations of insects?

1. Survey

Understand the ecology of your course and the plants and wildlife that already reside there. Engage a local natural history group to conduct a BioBlitz of your course to identify who and what lives in among the wild areas of the course.

2. Plan

Do you already have habitats in favourable condition that just need a little extra care? Or is there opportunity to completely transform spaces of little golfing value into refuges for bees, butterflies and more? Come up with a feasible plan of action and double check with an ecologist to ensure good habitats for other wildlife aren't being compromised.

3. Engage

Can you encourage members of the club or local community to come and lend a hand? It's a great way to get people thinking differently about the value of golf courses in the wider landscape. Also, think about letting your local Wildlife Trust know about the great work you are doing, as extra help may be available if you ask nicely. Could you engage other local clubs to do the same to create a nectar rich corridor like the successful Irvine to Girvan Nectar Network?

4. Promote

Could you write an article for the local press to show off your hard work? Think about signing up to Operation Pollinator to receive free promotional materials for your club and to be entered in to the annual awards. Don't be shy about going one step further by submitting your project to The Golf Environment Awards.

5. Monitor and Take Care

Don't forget about your new eco areas once the work has been done. Make sure they are being managed properly and take time to note down the wildlife you encounter. Consider making a sightings book for members to record what they have seen while playing.



Swollen-thighed beetle



Bluebells



Harebell

Some lesser known pollinators to look out for while monitoring:

Large bee-fly

A curious looking fly, which is one of many bee-flies in the Bombyliidae family. Bee-flies are among some of the most specialised flower feeders among the flies and can often be seen drinking nectar from early flowering plants with tubular corollas, such as cowslip and honesty.

Fact: Without flies, we wouldn't have chocolate!

Swollen-thighed beetle

Often disregarded, beetles also have an important role to play in pollination, particularly of the many open structured flowers throughout the British countryside, such as cow parsley and ox-eye daisy.

Fact: Beetles were among the first flower pollinators, transferring pollen when dinosaurs still roamed the land.

Common wasp

Not a lesser-known species, but perhaps one that we do not think of as being a pollinator. Common wasps pollinate common figwort (and other figwort species), giving the plant an advantage over others due to less competition. The putrid smell of figwort fools wasps into thinking there is a tasty dead insect or two inside for them to feed on, much to their disappointment. ■

Links for tips and tricks:

www.greencast.co.uk/operation-pollinator

www.nectarnetwork.org

www.golfenvironmentawards.com

James says

'Can you get involved? Wildflowers are a welcome addition to a golf course's out-of-play areas.'



'Crossing the tees', for the butterflies on golf courses

Dr Terry Mabbett




Butterflies

Biodiversity is firmly entrenched in the golf arena with increasingly higher priority given by greenkeepers and course managers to environmental protection and habitat creation.

By its very nature biodiversity is a broad-based, integrated web of wildlife. However, few would dispute that butterflies are one of the highest profile components. So what are the requirements for establishing and sustaining butterfly populations?

A site's capacity to support and sustain a population depends on basic factors such as climate, topography and environment. For instance, a coastal course in north-east Scotland may be unable to support a specific butterfly because the location is beyond the natural northern limit of the species, or the site may just be too exposed to the elements. But where the environment is more favourable to a certain species, course management can go a long way to establish and encourage particular butterflies through habitat creation and manipulation.

Butterflies are dependent on wild plants and usually specific ones at that. The main categories of direct plant dependency are:

-  1. Eggs are laid on or close to the plant species, which the caterpillar can then eat when it hatches. This is also often the site where the chrysalis 'hangs on' until the adult butterfly emerges
-  2. Nectar plants provide food sources for the adult insect
-  3. Overwintering sites for the egg, larva (caterpillar), pupa (chrysalis) or adult (imago) stages depending on the butterfly species.

Other vegetation can have indirect benefits for butterflies, such as protecting food plants. For example, bracken stands can protect wild violets, which provide food for fritillary butterflies on open and exposed hillside sites.

Success with butterflies may require the toleration of plants not generally regarded as desirable on golf courses, as the snapshot of three species of butterfly on the following pages shows.

By its very nature biodiversity is a broad-based, integrated web of wildlife. However, few would dispute that butterflies are one of the highest profile components. So what are the requirements for establishing and sustaining butterfly populations?

James says

'Identify the butterflies you have then plant their favourite foodstuff in the clubhouse gardens'



Continued over



Peacock (*Aglais io*)



Peacock (*Aglais io*)

Aglais io is a good species to start with because its countrywide presence from Cornwall to Scotland, ubiquitous larval food plants and a healthy taste in nectar plants means this butterfly can be 'everyone's friend'. It overwinters as the adult butterfly in cavities offered by trees, woodpiles and equipment sheds. So make a point of keeping old cavity-filled ancient and veteran trees alive and standing.

Peacock butterflies are already on the wing in March when they start to use early nectar plants such as ground ivy. Blackthorn blossom is another early spring favourite, but the tree is generally not encouraged by course managers due to its wicked thorns.

The next plant requirement is even less welcome, but if you want peacock butterflies you have to learn to tolerate nettles. They lay their eggs on stinging nettles and it is on this plant that the black hairy larvae feed and the chrysalis hangs on until the adult butterfly is ready to emerge. But the presence of a few nettles will be forgiven in late summer when large numbers of beautiful peacock butterflies drink the nectar of flowering plants, with bramble and buddleia two clear favourites.



The gatekeeper (*Pyronia tithonus*)

The gatekeeper presents an ideal opportunity for some innovative habitat creation and manipulation. The common name of this attractive brown and orange butterfly originates from the traditional favoured habitat of the common fleabane, a favourite nectar plant for the gatekeeper butterfly.

Common fleabane was often found growing around farm gates in favoured soil conditions created by dairy herds 'poaching' wet ground. To encourage the gatekeeper butterfly, it could therefore be an idea to install gates across public rights of way. This will force walkers to 'stir up' the wet ground and create conditions favoured by the common fleabane and therefore the gatekeeper butterfly. The gatekeeper also uses a range of other nectar plants including wild marjoram and bramble and creeping thistle.

Food plants for the larvae should not present a problem because they include grasses such as annual meadowgrass, cocksfoot, perennial ryegrass and couch grass. So if you want to encourage the gatekeeper butterfly, all you have to do is not be too 'rough' on your 'rough grasses'.

The gatekeeper can be confused with other closely related brown butterflies, such as the meadow brown, but is ultimately distinguished by the black spot towards the tip of the forewings and enclosing two white dots. The hedge brown is traditionally widespread in southern England and Wales, but has been spreading northwards in recent years.



Holly blue (*Celastrina argiolus*)

This small, sky-blue coloured butterfly has an incomplete name. The holly blue has two larva broods per year, but only one feeds on English holly. The spring generation of holly blue butterflies emerging from overwintering pupae lays eggs on holly so the hatching larvae can feed on flower buds. However, the early autumn generation of butterflies lays eggs on common ivy so hatching larvae have a ready source of food in common ivy's highly unseasonal flower buds.

In late summer and early autumn, when most self-respecting wild plants have done with sexual reproduction for another year, common ivy is just coming into flower. Holly blues favour tall, stand-alone holly trees and ivy-bound hedges and ivy-clad walls.

Biodiversity is all about building tiers. By starting near to the top with butterflies, a rich array of plant life automatically falls into place, as the profiles of these three common and easy-to-encourage butterflies show. ■

Top left: Peacock; bottom left: The gatekeeper; top right: Holly blue

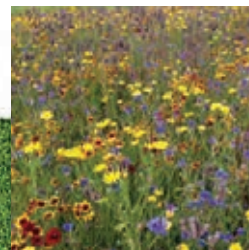


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Enhancing golf course ecology through enriched rough areas

Germinal's latest grass seed mixture gives greenkeepers and course designers the opportunity to enhance the ecological value of semi-rough areas by creating a thin, easy to manage grassland habitat.

Designed specifically for use along the border between fairways and rough areas, Germinal's new A32 Ecological Rough seed mixture is made up of five different grass species, all of which have been selected to produce a sward which not only also offers ecological benefits, but enables greenkeepers to create fairway margins which adhere to the R&A's guidelines regarding pace and play.

These guidelines state: "Much time can be lost during a round as a result of searching for balls in the rough; it is also a source of much frustration for golfers.

"Time spent searching for balls can be reduced by reducing the severity of rough so that, while the rough still provides a challenge, it is less likely to conceal a ball."

The mixture comprises 60% of the strong creeping red fescue Corail, 15% sweet vernal grass, 15% of the small leaved Timothy Teno, 5% of the browntop bentgrass Aber Royal, and 5% crested dogstail. As a result, A32 produces a sward with very thin growth habits and wispy seed heads that don't usually exceed 30-60cm in height. These species also offer an attractive and diverse display of foliage

throughout the summer, and create a valuable habitat for many species of native wildlife.

"A32 provides the perfect buffer between fairways and more off-line areas of play," explained Richard Brown, Germinal's amenity sales manager. "It creates an easy to manage sward which can be maintained via infrequent cutting to create a thin, semi-rough environment that enables rapid ball retrieval and onward play. A32 also creates an ecologically valuable, natural grassland habitat, acting as an extension to wildlife-rich areas of thicker rough."

Sophie Vukelic, ecology and environment consultant at the STRI explained the ecological value of creating enhanced semi-rough environments. She said grasses are vitally important from an ecological viewpoint and provide diverse habitats, from machair in the north to chalk downlands in the south, adding: "These habitats provide food, shelter and vantage for a range of wildlife communities and are particularly valuable for molluscs through to invertebrates, bryophytes and small mammals. Often unappreciated are the secondary benefits of grasslands,

which, by their presence, provide important food resources for bats and birds."

Additional flower and heather species from Germinal's portfolio of wildflower seeds can be added to the standard A32 mixture, giving head greenkeepers and course managers the option to create a bespoke seed mixture.

Richard said: "All our wildflower mixtures have been deemed 'Perfect for Pollinators' by the Royal Horticultural Society. That enables greenkeepers to create an enhanced ecological habitat, while at the same time giving their courses a definitive visual appearance."

A33 Habitat Mixture

Germinal has also added a new wildlife-specific seed mixture to its 2017 seed offering. A33 Habitat Mixture contains 35% Corail, 30% of the slender creeping red fescue Aber-Charm, 5% red clover, 10% sweet vernal grass, 15% small leaved Timothy and 5% quaking grass.

Richard said: "This blend creates the perfect mixture of grass seeds to create an enhanced habitat for bees, bats and butterflies within semi-rough areas and along the edges of fairways. Additional species such as Tufted hairgrass, Wavy hairgrass, Meadow foxtail and Golden oatgrass are also available, allowing greenkeepers to create their own bespoke mixture, each with its own unique aesthetic appeal and environmental benefit." ■

Scan here
for more
information





The future of sports turf education

Taking a closer look at the latest education resource to be made available to BIGGA members.

The Sherriff Amenity Academy has become the latest learning resource to support BIGGA's commitment to education, ensuring members can complete online courses and examinations, in-turn earning valuable Continued Professional Development (CPD) credits.

As a key supplier of market leading turf care and amenity products, BIGGA members have been reaping the benefits of Sherriff Amenity's products since the company was formed in 1994. Sherriff's extensive product portfolio, containing the likes of fertilisers, grass seed, bio-stimulants, fungicides and herbicides, has become an integral part in many a greenkeeper's maintenance programme.

In addition to the products, each customer is supported by a BASIS qualified Amenity Specialist who provides professional on-site technical advice based on the site's specific requirements.

The online Sherriff Amenity Academy provides a platform for education not only on Sherriff's products but also on a wide range of areas in turf management. Recognised as the Knowledge Courses, these modules focus on developing skills and understanding of how to manage a sports turf surface. Throughout the Knowledge Courses, users

will gain a greater insight into the methods and operations of certain tasks such as Turf Disease, Product Application, Seed and Turf Pests.

The completion time for the Knowledge Courses vary from 45 minutes up to two hours and more modules are added on a monthly basis. In addition, if there is a specific topic you would like to learn more about, which could perhaps be tailored to your own site or requirements, then Sherriff Amenity welcome all suggestions.

BIGGA members also have the opportunity to further enhance their knowledge on the company's products through the academy, which provides the latest, most up to date information as well as educational material specific to each product.

With product courses being added on a fortnightly basis, academy students are guaranteed to have a wide variety to choose from.

Product Courses currently available are:

Fungicides

- Headway
- Scorpio
- MP3
- MP1

Wetting Agents & Bio — Stimulants

- Aquazorb
- Amino Turf
- Rapid Root
- HumiK Pro

Fertilisers

- Marathon Sport
- E2 Pro Soluble
- Evolution 5
- E2 Pro Liquid
- Evolution 2 Micro
- Evolution 2 Mini
- Evolution Controlled
- Evolution Xtra

Soil Conditioners

- Seavolution
- Ferromel 20

Herbicides

- T2 Green Pro
- Trafalgar

Seeds

- TECHNI TURF
- Cleen Cut



Each course should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. They consist of videos, case studies and study the MSDS label and technical specifications. Once the student has been through the various modules, the course will end with a multiple choice test. The courses have been designed so the greenkeeper can fully understand and get maximum benefits from the products they purchase. This will, in turn, lead to healthier, better performing turf.

Both the product and the knowledge courses begin with an introductory video and the modules contain helpful step-by-step lesson notes, to make for an extremely user-friendly experience.

The academy offers a unique opportunity for all students to significantly grow their CPD points as BIGGA is allocating four points for all successfully completed knowledge courses and one point for the product courses.

Upon completion of a module, students receive an email which contains the grade and a breakdown of every question — enabling you to see which questions you got right and which ones you got wrong. The pass mark is set at 70% and successful students will receive a pass certificate, which can be kept for proof of personal development. Not only will the pass certificate show their current employer that they understand more technical



based information, but the certificates are also great to show potential future employers your experience and knowledge. If you are unsuccessful the first time fear not, because students can take the test as many times as they want.

Once a student has completed studying their required courses, they also have the option to top-up their knowledge through the Academy's Refresher Courses due to the fact that Sherriff Amenity recognises that it is vitally important to always be kept up to date with the latest products, legislations and developments.

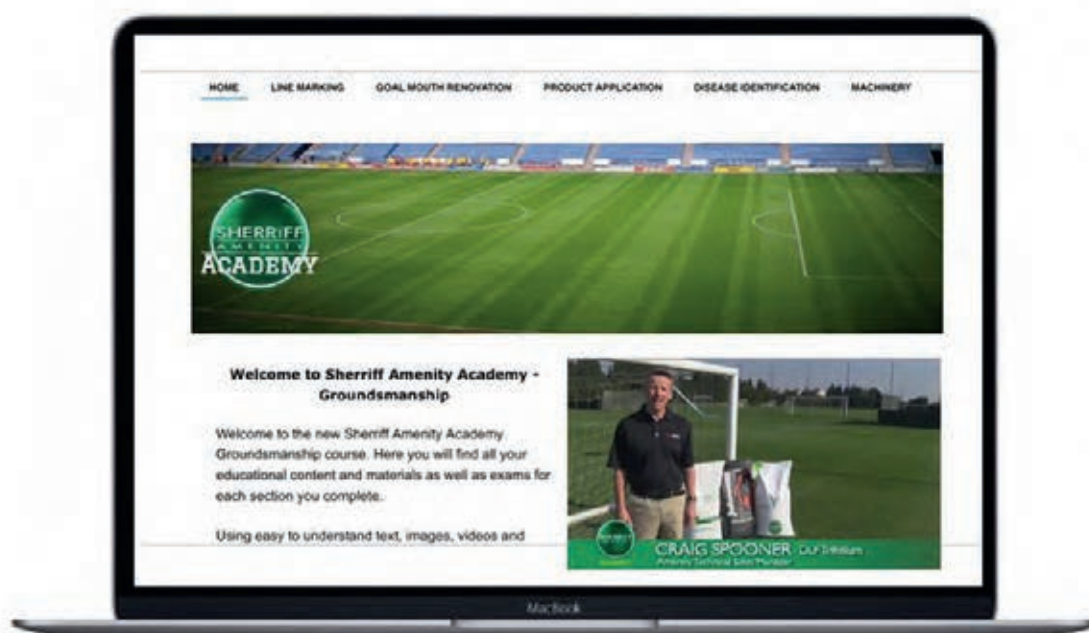
These Refresher Courses are available for all of the Product and Knowledge modules and are shorter in length, concentrating on a few key test questions.

There are a number of Refresher Courses planned to take place at BTME 2018 — so keep your eyes peeled!

Sherriff Amenity Academy is absolutely FREE for the first 12 months, giving you access to every course on the platform. In addition, you can register as many of your staff as you want — which is all included in the one fee.

The academy offers a unique opportunity for all students to significantly grow their CPD points as BIGGA is allocating four points for all successfully completed knowledge courses and one point for the product courses.

For further information can the QR code



Around the Green

Scotland & N. Ireland



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Regional Administrator

John Young
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Elie House hosted the Central Section's spring outing

Around the Green

Central



Craig Boath

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cboath@carnoustie
golfinks.co.uk

We had a great day at a blustery Elie House for the Central Section's spring outing. The course was in excellent condition thanks to Richard Jenkinson and his team.

Results: Scratch, Sandy Reid, Carnoustie, 72pts; Greentech Cup (Stableford), Paul Murphy, Fife Golf Trust, 36pts; Toro Cup (1st class), Archie Dunn, Auchterarder, 35pts; BIGGA Cup (2nd class), Graeme Bolton, gWest, 32pts; Stewarts Quaich (best two scores from same club); Dunfermline, 66pts; trade winner, Steven McInroy, SGM; nearest the pin, Davie Simpson, Creiff, and John Bowers, Craik.

The autumn outing is on Wednesday 6 September at Pitreavie.

No plans for any educational events in the next wee while but keep an eye on emails or the Facebook page for any last-minute seminars.



East Section runners up Blair Shearer and Ross Glendinning



Robert Hogarth and Stuart Ferguson MG won the East Section spring outing

East



Alan Campbell

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First of all this month the weather must have a mention. Its been horrible for greenkeepers and course managers over large parts of the East Section. With cold temperatures and strong drying winds for a large part of April and the beginning of May, rainfall figures as low as 3.6mm for the month of April in Edinburgh have been widely reported. Some reports of under 2mm have been received, so lets hope summer is kinder.

The East Section held the Willie Woods tournament at Peebles on a sunny day at a beautifully presented course. Runners up were Blair Shearer and Ross Glendinning, winners were Stuart Ferguson MG and Robert Hogarth. Nearest the pin was Daryl Burdet and longest drive was Alan Thomson. Everyone enjoyed their day. Many thanks to the greenstaff.



Charlie Vesco celebrated his retirement



The North Section's spring outing at Cruden Bay



The North Section's course walk at Deeside

clubhouse staff and the captain and committee at Peebles for a great day.

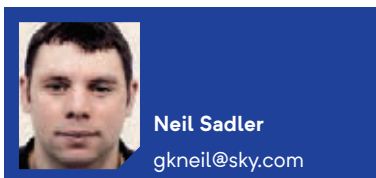
Many congratulations to Peter Avent on his appointment to the head greenkeeper's post at Torwoodlee and welcome to the East Section.

Charlie Vesco recently retired from his post at Mortonhall after 21 years. Enjoy a well-deserved retirement.

Congratulations also go to East Section members Phil Butler and Graeme Davidson on the completion of their HNC's in Golf Course Management at SRUC Elmwood.

Remember, it is your magazine and section, get in touch!

North



Neil Sadler
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The section held its first golf event of 2017 at Cruden Bay. It was more like a winter meeting, with very strong northerly winds and heavy wintry showers. Nevertheless the show did go on, the course was presented perfectly and was a great test of golf for us all. Despite the poor weather we had 34 golfers and four non-golfers. There was about 10 call offs on the day, which is disappointing as catering had been sorted for a higher number, so I am afraid the section had to bridge the shortfall. For those that did play everybody was full of praise for the course and the catering. Winners: nearest the pin, Dino Becci, Portlethen, and Andy Stewart, Brora; trade winner, Ryan Beck; committee winner, Paul Sharp, Peterculter; guest, Andy Stewart; veteran, Derek Green, Inverurie; handicap class 3, Billy Craig, Kirriemuir; handicap class 2, Richard Sharp, Maverston; handicap class 1, John Urquhart, Strathlene; best scratch, John Urquhart, Buckpool, 78.



Richard Sharp collecting his prize

John beat Neil Sadler, Portlethen, on countback but this was two very good scores in very tough conditions.

The 200 club was also drawn and the winners are Eoin Riddel (£30), Paul Sharp (£50), Bill McKechnie (£30), Stewart McBain (£100).

The section also held an education seminar. This was held at Deeside, where course manager Neil McLoughlin gave a fantastic presentation on the damage caused by Storm Frank. They also gave a course walk to get a feel for the damage and the recovery that has taken place. Also speaking at the event was Rob Hogarth, who was talking about Remedy Oak and the work undertaken to rebuild it. Twenty guys turned up for the event, and after speaking to a few of them they all said it was excellent and very informative. So thank you to Deeside, Neil and Rob.

We would like to welcome George Patterson back into greenkeeping. He has taken over from Mark Campbell at Fortrose and Rosemarkie. Mark has moved over to Germany and by all accounts is doing well.

There are a couple of new members to the section. Alan Dykes and Ross Gill are both at Newmachar, so welcome to the section, lads.



John Urquhart receiving one of his many prizes

One of our committee members, Richard Johnstone, has been helping out Sawgrass for The Players Championship. We are hoping to get an exclusive interview with him when he returns.

Just a quick reminder to update your email address if you have not done so lately, you never know what you are missing out on.

Please can you send me any news or stories to keep this article fresh and interesting.

SW Scotland



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West



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Section News

We want to hear what's been going on in your section

Email your news to Karl @bigga.co.uk

Around the Green Northern



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North East



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While the hail at the start of the day no doubt affected attendance at our spring outing, those who attended enjoyed a great round of golf on a fantastic course. Thanks go to the team at Bamburgh Castle for the quality of the course and for their warm welcome. Results: 1st, Stuart Imeson, 33pts; 2nd, Geoff Brown, 30pts; 3rd, Jimmy Richardson, 29pts; trade prize, Glen Baxter, 31pts.

In a post round interview Glen said he felt his new swing is working well, he hopes to further improve it to ensure trade domination throughout the year.

The dates for the 2017 Bunker Camp are 13-24 November. For more information contact Stuart Imeson at s.imeson.dunstanburgh@live.co.uk

North West



Steve Hemsley

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It's lashing it down outside and I'm sure we all have members saying "well, the course needed it!" I certainly didn't need it this week when trying to complete greens renovations, especially in such a busy competitions calendar. But with higher temperatures at night, at least we should see some movement.

Talking of movement, Aaron Watkinson has moved to Pleasington as deputy head and Phillip Cork has joined Bolton Old Links as deputy head. We wish them both well in their new roles.

The North West spring tournament was held at Hesketh and the result were: 1st, Dave Weir, 35pts; 2nd, Andy Riley,



The North West's spring golf day was held at Hesketh and supported by Turner Groundcare



North West: David Weir with the trophy at Hesketh



Two generations of head greenkeeper at Brampton: Brendan Kelly, left, with his father, Austin



Brendan Kelly has spent 40 years at Brampton

33pts; 3rd, Tom Smith, 32pts; Veterans' prize, Dave Macavoy, 31pts; longest drive, Gary Burgess; nearest the pin, Tracey Maddison. Thanks go to Peter McVicar and all the team at Hesketh and to Turner Groundcare for supporting the event.

Congratulations to Lee Burton who completed the Prague Marathon in as many hours as it would take me days. Well done Lee!

Brampton head greenkeeper Brendan Kelly is celebrating 40 years at the club, where he first began helping out aged just 12 years old.

Brendan's father, Austin Kelly, was head greenkeeper at the Cumbrian club from 1973 until 1992. Brendan then took up the reigns at the James Braid club, a role he has fulfilled ever since. Regional Administrator Sandra Raper said: "Everyone at BIGGA congratulates Brendan on 40 years' service to Brampton."

When asked what has changed most over the four decades, Brendan was emphatic in stating it was the development of machinery.

Cleveland



Anthony McGeough

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All hands to the pumps, we are burning up! The driest and windiest spring I can remember has made keeping the last 400m² of turf which we laid alive a challenge. I'm glad I'm not paying the water bill and I hope my poor old irrigation system holds up as it's not used to being worked so hard!

James Taylor of Dinsdale is leaving the trade to take up a position with English Heritage. James was one of the new breed of head greenkeepers taking over at a youngish age (under 30) and he will be a loss to the trade. He had made great strides improving an already established course. Good luck in your new career and keep in touch.

The spring tournament was played at Cleveland GC. Due to maintenance commitments, our usual numbers were down slightly from previous years. However it was great to meet Ian Pemberton's son Sam. Needless to say he takes after his father in being a bit of a golfing bandit!

Results: 1st, Ian Pemberton, Ian Holoran and John Warlow, 104 points (on countback); 2nd, Tom Smith, Marc Kerr and Alan Reed, 104 pts; 3rd, Sam Pemberton, Anthony McGeough and Nic Blesic, 94 pts; nearest the pin, Anthony McGeough; longest drive, Marc Kerr.

I would like to thank Lloyds for sponsoring the day and providing an excellent prize table and Cleveland GC for allowing the use of the course. Catering was spot on as usual.

Northern



Rob Gee

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I can't believe the dry, warm weather we have been experiencing. Each month seems to break some kind of previous weather statistic!

Section News

We want to hear what's been going on in your section

Email your news to Karl @bigga.co.uk

On to Sandburn Hall and what a fantastic turn out. The weather was beautiful with wall to wall sunshine and the course was in fantastic condition. Thanks to Sandburn Hall for allowing us to host the event.

Results: 1st (amazingly), R Gee, 39pts; 2nd, R Illsley, 38pts; 3rd, R Smith, 4th, N Coultash; 5th, D Collins; 6th, M Widdop; trade, T Smith (Tacit); nearest the pin, R Gee.

Our next event is at Howley Hall on 13 July, 1pm tee off. It's invitation day so please bring a committee member or guys in the trade. Why not bring a greenkeeper along?

Sheffield



Wayne Lazenby

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On 15 May we had our spring competition at Sickleholme. The conditions were far from ideal, but we all battled through — some better than others. Matt Holden and his team had the course looking fantastic. Neil Peters played outstanding and won with 37pts. Sickleholme's Ollie Smith was 2nd with 33pts, then Rob Acheson, Shane Williams and Steve Pickering all had 32.

We owe big thanks to Russell Groundcare for its continued support of our section. Thanks also to all other trade members for bringing raffle prizes.

Our summer competition is at Rotherham GC on 3 July and our autumn competition is at Coxmoor on 6 October.

North Wales



Craig Wheeler

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It was a pretty wet start to our day at Prestatyn, as the photos from the first tee clearly show, but by the end of play it was t-shirt weather — typical May! Ben Hall won best net with 36pts and James Hampson won best gross with 33pts. Both qualify for the 30th anniversary BIGGA National Championship in October. Third place at Prestatyn went to Paul Davies with 32pts and the nearest the pins provided by Thorntrees Amenity were won by James Hampson and Owain Aeron. Our thanks go to the club for hosting the event and to Ken Williams and his team for preparing a fantastic course in extremely testing conditions.

Our next outing is at Prenton on Wednesday 23 August. Contact John Mooney to book your place.

It is very sad news to hear that Jonathan Wood has left Aberdovey and we all wish Jonathan well in the future.



Cleveland's spring tournament



Prize winners at the Cleveland spring tournament



Northern: Rob Gee receives his prizes from Mel Guy and Sandra Raper



Sheffield: Rob Athorn, president of Sicklehome GC presents the winner's trophy to Neil Peters



A chilly first tee at the North Wales spring outing



North Wales: Best gross score was James Hampson (left)

Around the Green Central England



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BB&O



Craig Earnshaw

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Our first educational event of the year was set at the lovely Sand Martins GC. As I walked into the function room I immediately noticed something was missing. After panning around the room several times I noticed it was Lord Kebby's beard had vanished. But be assured that was the only thing missing from the day. With some great speakers, including Syngenta's Dan Lightfoot discussing fungicide and Andrew Ewence, from the Buckinghamshire, talking about the massive project he is overseeing. There was also a great insight into Baroness machines and some good data from the STRI regarding the use of the Sisis Javelin aer-aid. Thanks to Lister Wilder for sponsoring the day.

BB&O's first golf day of the year was an away day, venturing into Surrey to the beautiful Camberley Heath. The course presentation was top class, the surfaces were second to none, it's just a shame my golf didn't mirror the course conditions. BIGGA's Tracey Maddison and Roger Butler did not go unnoticed as they cleaned up on second and third places, both with 38 points. But Paul Hedger pipped them to the top spot with 40 points. Thanks to Tacit for sponsoring the nearest the pin, won by Nick Ashman. The longest drive was smashed up the fairway by Richard Dives from the Berkshire. An extra special thanks to Larry Pearman from Toro for sponsoring the day.

To all in the BB&O section, I will be looking for stories and updates for our Around the Green column each month. Anyone moving positions, apprentices passing their NVQ, or anything you might think would be interesting in our area, please drop me a line.



The Centurion Golf Club brought the European Tour to Mid Anglia

Mid Anglia



Darren Mugford

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rigbytaylor.com

On 6-7 May, Centurion GC hosted a European Tour event. The Golf 6's went down a storm as the Tour looks at new formats for the game we love. The Mid Anglia section would like to thank Andrew Garland, course manager, and his team for all their hard work in preparing the course for this great event. We are proud to hold such a huge event in our region.

Keep 4 July free for our summer event at the Bedfordshire, which will be a par 3 competition and will be a more relaxed, fun event.

On 10 May around 35 golfers played in our opening event of the golf season at Mid Herts and as the sun always shines on the righteous we were treated to a stunning day's weather, which really highlighted a great course. Our thanks go to Jody Wilson and his team for preparing the course and for providing all with a quality test of golf. As ever, thanks to all sponsors and to Ernest Doe's Mark House, who provided much appreciated drinks and snacks at the halfway house.

Results: 1st, Nigel Broadwith, 36pts; 2nd, Ricky Moggridge & Caddie, 36pts; 3rd, Richard Saunders, 35pts; nearest the pin, Ricky Moggridge and Kevin Armstrong.

Congratulations to Nigel and Ricky who will go on to represent the section at the BIGGA National tournament at Verulam in October.

The Mid Anglia section would like to wish Frank Scullion, course manager at Dunstable Downs, all the best for the future as he retires from the club, where he has worked for 30 years.

Midland



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East of England



Ian Collett

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rigbytaylor.com

We held our spring stableford at Ashby Decoy Golf Club on Thursday 18 May. Our thanks go to Ashby Decoy, Gary

**What's
on near
you**

**See our
events page
for details
of what's
happening in
your region**

Email your news to
Karl @bigga.co.uk

Chafer and his team for giving us a well presented course to play, the catering staff for an excellent meal and our sponsors GKB Machines.

Results: 1st, Freddie Moiser, Waltham Windmill; 2nd, Rob Bemment, Immingham; 3rd, Connor Brogan, Immingham; 4th, Graham McDonald, Newark; trade, Chris Scott, Ashby Decoy; nearest the pin, Rob Bemment, Immingham. Well done to you all.

The rest of the year's golf events have also now been finalised. They are:

Wednesday 19 July – BIGGA v GCMA Newark

Thursday 27 July, summer cup, Belton Park, sponsored by Burdens

Thursday 12 October, seminar/AGM/ golf, Pottergate, sponsored by Amenity Technology

Friday 15 December, Christmas am-am, Lincoln, sponsored by Rigby Taylor and Mansfield Sands.

Please check the section website, GI magazine and social media for any further details on the above, if anyone would like to attend any of the above events please contact Bruce Hicks on 07931714922 or bthicks@gmail.com.

The section would also like a current email address of all members so we can get in touch about upcoming events. Please contact Bruce Hicks if you would like to receive information in this way. We would also like to hear from any clubs interested in holding a BIGGA golf day at their club.

Finally the section would like to welcome Sven Livesey, formerly of St Nom Le Breteche in France. Sven is the new head greenkeeper at Kenwick Park and we wish him and his family every success in his new venture.

East Midlands



Matt Gilks
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 gilksmatt@farol.co.uk

This will be my last post for the East Midlands as Paul Fowkes is taking over as the contact for the East Midlands. Paul is from Rothley GC and im sure you will join me in welcoming him to the section. I have enjoyed my time serving the section and still plan to sit on the committee so you don't get rid of me that easily!

This month saw the first golf event of the year held at Morley Hayes. Our good friend and old committee member Chris Taylor and his team produced a stunning course that received compliments from all that attended. Farol Ltd and Campey Turf Care were the day's sponsors. Both myself from Farol and Simon from Campey enjoyed the day and the weather did not disappoint either. Category 1 (11 and under) results: 1st, Shaun Bullin; 2nd, John Chamberlin; 3rd, Scott Krokoszynski. Category 2 results: 1st, Asa English; 2nd, Chris Taylor; 3rd, Paul French; nearest the pin, Carl Chamberlin; longest drive, Jordan Baker. Thank you to John Chamberlin from Tacit for sponsoring these two prizes.

Last month we saw an education day at Hinckley with the Koro and Vredo on display. There was also an ecology talk from James Hutchinson.

The draw for the Countrywide Pairs took place at Morley Hayes and the draw is posted on Facebook.



GKB Machines sponsored the East of England spring stableford



Connor Brogan came in third



Rob Bemment is presented with his prizes



Fred Moiser won the East of England spring stableford



Simon Holland, Matt Gilks and category 1 winner Shaun Bullin



Simon Holland, Matt Gilks and category 2 winner Asa English

Around the Green

South West & S. Wales



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coursemanager@theworcestershire
golfclub.co.uk



Regional Administrator

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South West



Seb Cavilla

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googlemail.com

I hope all those that wished for rain are happy now! No end of it in sight, and the grass is going mad!!

We are pleased to announce that we have secured Minchinhampton for our summer golf tournament, with a spot at the BIGGA National tournament up for grabs. This will be held on Tuesday 15 August. This promises to be a great day at a great course, so save the date and the entry forms will be available soon.

There seems to be a lot of movement in the job market at the moment. Good luck to all of those that have or are about to start in their new roles.

A special mention this month goes to Tom Freeman at Kingsdown, who lead a project to encourage the next generation of greenkeepers and golfers to learn about ecology on the golf course through a wild flower seed sowing and planting workshop with a local primary school. This was followed by a taster golf session with the club professional and was a fantastic way to inspire younger people to actively get involved. The day was well received and the children had a great day.

As always, if anyone has any new projects or initiatives please do get in touch. If you feel it's something your fellow greenkeepers could learn from, we are always looking for interesting places to visit.

**South West
section summer
golf tournament is
being held at
Minchinhampton
Golf Club**

South Coast



Mike Cartwright

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As I write this we are days away from the turf club visit to Boundary Lakes. There will be 40 attending so it should be a great day. I will be armed with my trusty camera and jotter pad so will hopefully make a small report for next month's magazine.

We also have the annual Greenkeepers v Secretaries match, to be held at Stoneham, on the near horizon. Yours truly has been tasked with captaining the side this year, so hopefully next month there'll be plenty to write about. If we lose then I may dedicate one line to it!

The committee had its first meeting of the year recently. Glen Kirby, Hockley, has taken the helm as section chairman. Andy Clark of Crane Valley, Simon Justice of Wellow, Kevin Tigg of South Winchester and Mike Cartwright of Highcliffe Castle are the other committee members. Jaime Acton of Rushmore is our regional and national board representative. Tracey Walker

Look out for Devon and Cornwall's workshop on employment law.

Wednesday 5 July 2017, 1.00pm at Boringdon Park, Plympton.

Contact Tracey Walker if you wish to attend

is our regional administrator. Working together we hope to make a valuable contribution to our section.

Well that's all for this month, if anyone has any news they'd like to share then please get in touch.

South Wales



Andrew Hatcher

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What's on

See our
events page
for details
of what's
happening in
your region

Email your news to
Karl@bigga.co.uk

By the time you're reading this it will be June and hopefully the start of summer, but what a start to the season we've had. Day time temperatures of around 16-18 degrees, night time very



South West: Tom Freeman held an education day for local schoolchildren



low, sometimes -2 with frost, and also easterly winds. Some of us over the last six weeks have had dry ground conditions, with irrigation systems in use, to keep greens happy, resulting in challenging conditions for us all.

This year's location for the Golf Management Trophy Qualifier for our region is East Devon GC on 20 July. Please contact Tracey Walker to submit a team. More information and an application form will be sent soon.

This year's Rigby Taylor team challenge will be held at Ross-on-Wye on 10 August. Contact Darryl Jones to help him put the winning team together.

Our summer competition will be played at Pennard on 24 August.

I'm sure you would all like to join me in wishing Mark Young all the best for his future after 22 years in greenkeeping, moving on to a new career.

Thanks again to all the patrons for supporting the section, we look forward to catching up with you at events during the year.

Devon & Cornwall



Neil Rogers

Twitter: @buckaroo14

Email: nrogers@country-widefarmers.co.uk

We had our section championship at the beautiful Bovey Castle. The course was presented immaculately by Darren Ellis and his team. There were 30 golfers taking part, due to the fact annual winner Anthony James

was on holiday, which give everyone else a chance! The competition was won by John Fear from Elfordleigh. Second was Nathan O'Sullivan from China Fleet and third George Stephens from Tiverton. Nearest the pin was Gordon Tamblyn and David Timms. Representing our section in the national championship will be Nathan and Pat Hobbs from Staddon Heights. After the golf we had an informative talk from Richard Owens of Tillers Turf.

We have decided to organise a workshop on the tricky subject of employment law and what your rights are within the work place. I know this may sound like a dull subject, but personally I think it is well worth investing a small amount of time. You never know when you may need this information.

The workshop is open to all BIGGA members and will take place on Wednesday 5 July at Boringdon Park, Plympton. We will meet at 1.00pm for a light lunch and the presentation will start around 1.30pm with a finish time of approximately 4pm. There will plenty of opportunity to ask questions, so come prepared.

The presenter is a lady called Carolyne Wahlen, of HR Golf. Carolyne specialises in HR issues within the golf industry and has been giving advice for many years. Please contact Tracey if you wish to attend.

This month we say goodbye to a great supporter of the section who is moving on to pastures new. Nick Dash has worked at Perranporth for many years and is taking a role in Norway. We all wish him luck with his new role.

Scotland & Northern Ireland

Andrew Hogg	GK — Berwick-upon-Tweed
James McAllister	GK — Malone
Paul Harrington	GK — Harburn
Andrew Donley	HGK — Brighthouse Bay
Robert Johnston	HGK — Rowallan Castle
Steven Bissett	Student — SRUC (Elmwood)
Jack Philip	AGK — Cardrona Hotel G&CC
Neil Cochran	AGK — Dumfries & Galloway

Northern

Hazel Frith	Affiliate — All Turf Limited
Ash Youd	GK — The Mere
Marek Ignasiak	GK — The Mere
Matthew Cooper	GK — The Mere
Ellis Harker	AGK — Nelson
Josh Rogerson	AGK — The Mere
Lachlan Scott	AGK — Blackwell Grange
Alex Johnson	AGK — Chester
Christopher Cobb	AGK — Alwoodley
Danny Collins	AGK — Beacon Park
Danny O'Neil	AGK — Chester
Reece Hindle	AGK — Blackwell Grange

Central England

Alex Forrister	GK — Swinley Forest
George Nock	GK — Enville
Reece Dabbs	GK — Enville
Rhys Rowe	GK — Thorpe Wood
Andrew Blake	Groundsman — Finchampstead
James Raines	HGK — Middleton Hall
Thomas Evison	AGK — Louth
Melissa Winkworth	AGK — Goring & Streatley

South East

Michael Budd	DHKG — Westerham
Aidan Wright	GK — Sand Martins
Jack McMillan	GK — East Berkshire
Jonathan Owen	GK — Harleyford
Luke Scuri	GK — Thetford
Simon Pyett	GK — Halesworth
Stephen Leighton	GK — The London
Stuart Mackey	Groundsman — Reading FC
Matthew Bowles	AGK — Kings Hill
Ross McCarthy	AGK — Crews Hill
Sam Hibbins	AGK — Hever Castle
Dean Massey	AGK — West Hove
Graeme Onslow-Rush	AGK — Seaford
Paul Searles	AGK — Crews Hill
Richard Clack	AGK — The Hertfordshire
Tom Sherreard	AGK — The London
William Curran	AGK — Hever Castle

South West and South Wales

Jake Stevens	GK — Cirencester
Max Lucas	GK — Wellow
Craig Renwick	GK — Wellow
Jason Bryant	GK — The Kendleshire
Nathan Tomkins	GK — Carswell
Patrick O'Sullivan	GK — Exminster
Stephen Trickey	HGK — Maesteg
Stuart Simmonds	AGK — Boundary Lakes
Toby Richens	AGK — Carswell

International

Hakan Nilsson	Landskrona Golfklubb
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salabaster@tip.
textron.com

We had a very well supported Surrey Section seminar with Adam Lawrence, editor of Golf Course Architecture magazine, entitled "The Cradle of Golf Course Architecture". Spaces for this were at a premium and we would like to thank Jamie Wilson and all at Sunningdale for hosting us.

There has been some Surrey Bowl activity and I know of a few games that have been played. Please make sure you get your games in on time and let Roger know the results. After writing this I will be going straight down the range to hit a few balls in preparation for our match between Roger and John Ross v Joe Sexton and myself. If we win expect a full write up! If we lose there will be nothing...

In other news Ben Abbott, working at The London GC has been offered an R&A Scholarship to run alongside his HNC in golf course management. Many congratulations to him.

East Anglia



Mick Lathrope
@BIGGAEastAnglia
lil.lathrope@
ntlworld.com

On 27 April Ely City hosted the first greenkeeper golf day of the year. Even though April was incredibly dry, we managed to pick a day that brought in showers for most of the round. The main sponsor for the day was Reesink Turfcare, with over 50 golfers and 12 pairs playing for the Toro Greenkeeper/Official Trophy. Big thanks to Andy and his team for a course presented in fantastic condition. Luke Hunt from Barenbrug had to call off last minute. Congratulations to him and his wife on the safe arrival of their new son, Edward, born on 28 April. Winners: Toro Trophy, David Driver and Bob Tawell, 70 points; 0-9 handicap, George Butters, 36; 10-18 handicap: David Farmer 33; 19-28 handicap: David Driver 33; Tom Griffin 31; trade and guest: Bob Tawell 37; nearest the pin: Hamish Fleming; longest drive, Darren Abbs. Thanks to all our other sponsors on the day including: Aitkins, Bartram Mowers, Ernest Doe, Tacit, DLF Seed.

Essex



Ian Wood
@essexbigga
ian.wood@
romfordgolfclub.co.uk

Our next section golf day will be at Gosfield Lakes on Wednesday 7 June. Tee times will be from 12noon. There will be plenty of spot prizes to keep the interest going throughout, however

your round is going. Please refer to the essexbigga website for details.

The chaps from Rivenhall Oaks would love to join us for the day but will be hard at work laying around 6,500sqm of turf — hope it goes well guys.

This shall be closely followed by the Essex Captains and Greenkeepers day at Romford Golf Club on Tuesday 12 June. This invitational event, which has become an established tradition in the area, is provided by the Essex Captains Society to show their appreciation of all the hard work that goes into preparing courses for members across the county.

London



Kevin O'Neill
@kevodale76
londonsection@bigga.
co.uk

Sussex



Chris Humphrey
@CtoChris
chris@collier-
turf-care.co.uk

On 25 April the section held its spring competition at the stunning Littlehampton. There was a field of 40 greenkeepers that braved the chilling sea breeze. The course was wonderfully presented and our thanks go to Michael and his team. Results. Div 1: 1st, Danny Birchall; 2nd, Mick Fance. Div 2: 1st, Matt Hutchinson; 2nd, Pete Smith. Div 3: 1st, Rob Wallis; 2nd, Ciaran Brown. Nearest the pin: Phil Beany, Chris Achier and Paul Oliver. Longest drive: Luke Green. The section would like to thank Littlehampton, Michael and his team, George and Pete for organising the day and to all of the section's sponsors.

The section will be holding its next turf club, Fungicides and Fertilisers, on 14 June at West Hove, start time 3pm.

What's on

See our
events page
for details
of what's
happening in
your region

Email your news to
Karl @bigga.co.uk

Kent



Ben Adams
@BIGGAKent
ben.adams@
talktalk.net

Our next golf event will be on Thursday 29 June at Royal Cinque Ports. This event is a great opportunity for BIGGA members to learn about what is involved in preparing a course for tournament play, as the final qualifying round for The Open is taking place there. The agenda will be to meet at 1pm for lunch, followed by a presentation from the course manager James Bledge about the clubs history and how to prepare for a tournament. From there we will have a look at the greenkeepers compound and then onto the course. Finishing with a questions and answer session, the finish time will be around 3.45pm. If you would like to attend this free event contact Anthony.Stockwell@hadlow.ac.uk

Upcoming Events

Contact your section secretary to book a place

Scotland

Central: 6 September, Pitreavie, autumn outing

Northern

Sheffield: 3 July, Rotherham, summer competition

North West: 11 July, Northenden, summer tournament

Northern: 13 July, Howley Hall, 1pm tee off, £20

North Wales: 23 August, Prenton

Northern: 14 September, Pontefract, 1pm tee off, £20

Sheffield: 6 October, Coxmoor, autumn competition

North East: 13–24 November, Dunstanburgh, Bunker Camp

Central England

Mid Anglia: 4 July, Bedfordshire, Par 3 competition

BB&O: 12 July, Winter Hill, summer golf day, 10am tee off

East of England: 19 July, Newark, BIGGA vs GCMA

East of England: 27 July, Belton Park, summer cup sponsored by Burdens

East of England: 12 October, Pottergate, seminar/AGM/golf sponsored by Amenity Technology

East of England: 15 December, Lincoln, winter am-am

South East

Essex: 12 June, Romford, Essex Captains and Greenkeepers day

Sussex: 14 June, West Hove, Fungicides and Fertilisers turf club

East Anglia: 21 June, Heacham Manor, section golf day

Kent: 29 June, Royal Cinque Ports, Seminar on preparing the course for Open Championship qualifying

Sussex: 29 June, Haywards Heath, 12 noon tee off

Surrey: 17 July, Sunningdale, McMillan Trophy

East Anglia: 16 August, RAF Lakenheath, section golf day

South West & South Wales

Devon & Cornwall: 5 July, Boringdon Park, Plimpton, employment law workshop, 1pm

South Wales: 20 July, East Devon, Golf Management Trophy qualifier

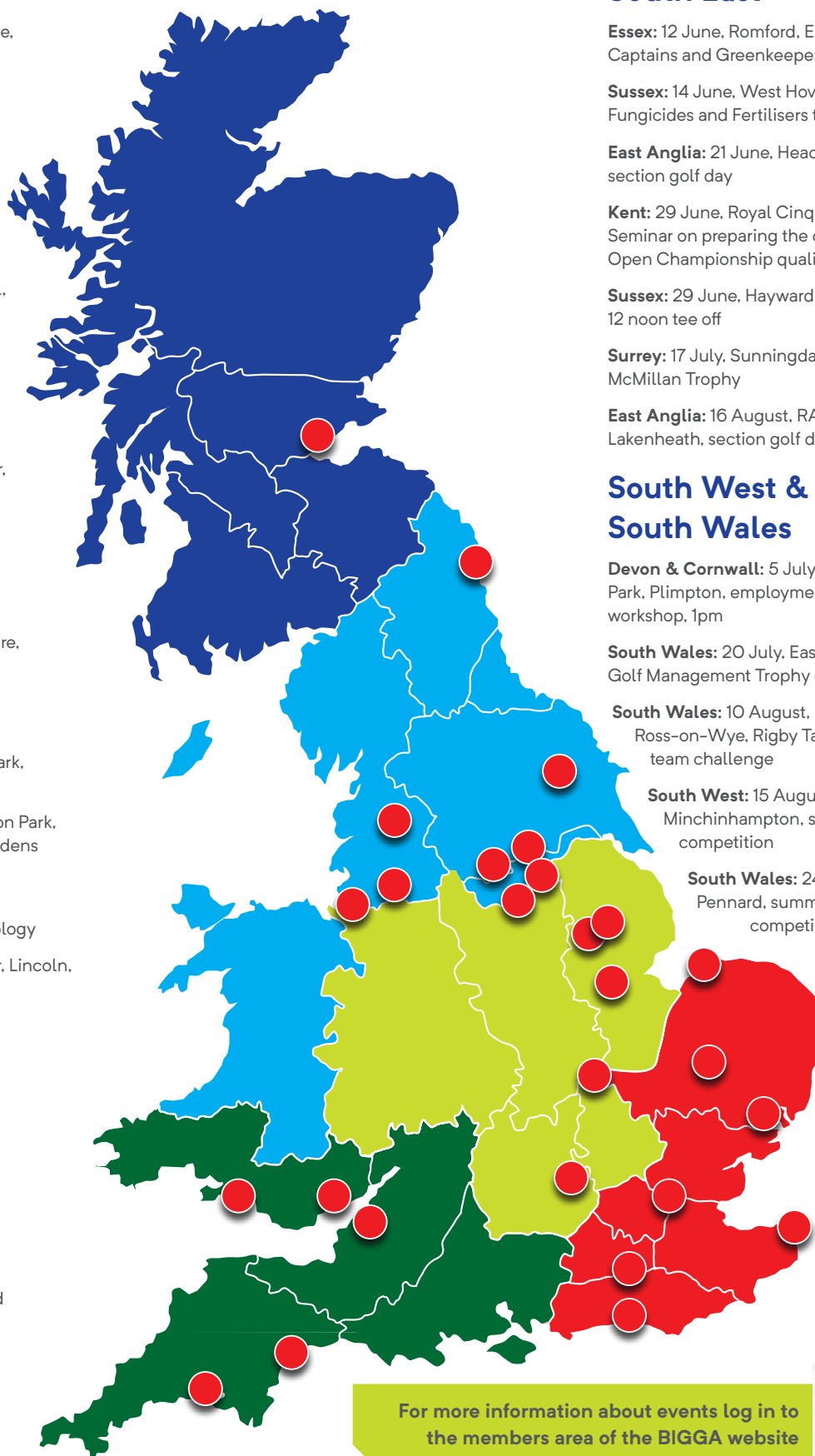
South Wales: 10 August, Ross-on-Wye, Rigby Taylor team challenge

South West: 15 August, Minchinhampton, summer competition

South Wales: 24 August, Pennard, summer competition

Regions

- Scotland/Northern Ireland
- Northern
- Central England
- South West/South Wales
- South East



For more information about events log in to the members area of the BIGGA website





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HEAD GREENKEEPER

Dunstable Downs Golf Club

Dunstable Downs Golf Club is a friendly member's club in Bedfordshire with an outstanding traditional 18 hole Downland course designed by James Braid and laid out in 1906. We are currently recruiting to fill the position of Head Green Keeper due to retirement.

We are seeking an ambitious, highly motivated and experienced individual to manage the golf course and build on improvements to the course. This will be in line with the club's long term development programme.

We are, therefore, offering a benefits package that includes a competitive salary and accommodation. Salary is negotiable dependent on experience, qualifications and circumstances of the right candidate.

Interested applicants please apply including a CV to: secretary@dunstabledownsgolf.co.uk or write to:

Mr D Mutton,
Dunstable Downs Golf Club,
Whipsnade Rd, Bedfordshire,
LU6 2NB
Tel: 01582 604472



COURSE MANAGER HIGH POST GOLF CLUB

A past venue for the prestigious Carris and McGregor Trophies our member-owned, free-draining course provides excellent year-round golf. With the club's Centenary in 2022, the club is looking to rise to the next level.

We need a person with the skills to deliver a consistently excellent golf course through inspirational leadership of our professional green-keeping team, ensuring exceptional performance, conduct and service standards.

The package offered will be commensurate with the position. On-site accommodation is available. Please apply by email enclosing a covering letter and CV - demonstrating your suitability for this role and including details of your commitment to continuing professional development to:

Peter Hickling at
manager@highpostgolfclub.co.uk by
Friday 25 June 2017



GREENKEEPER CHIPPING SODBURY GOLF CLUB

The Club is seeking a full-time experienced Greenkeeper with the passion and drive to help deliver excellence in the presentation of the golf course at Chipping Sodbury. The right candidate will therefore be able to demonstrate the ability to work well under pressure and respond proactively to the varied requirements of the role.

The successful candidate will:

- Have a strong and committed work ethic, with high standards of work and attention to detail
- Be qualified to NVQ level 2 or higher
- Be able to work well within a team environment or alone as required
- Be flexible in working hours as some

weekend work is required

- Chainsaw or Spraying qualifications would be desirable but not essential

Competitive salary depending on experience and qualifications. To apply please send your CV together with a covering letter to info@chippingsodburygolfclub.co.uk by 23 June 2017.

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER HOLLYWOOD GOLF CLUB

An exciting opportunity has arisen for an ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER to assist and maintain our golf course to a high standard at Hollywood Golf Club, Birmingham.

Applicants should be able to meet the following minimum criteria:

- Level 2 NVQ or equivalent in Sports Turf Maintenance
- Minimum 3 years relevant greenkeeping experience
- Holds a valid UK driving licence
- Possess a 'can do' attitude

To follow our recent progress visit our website or social media channels on: Twitter @GHGCGreens or Facebook Hollywood

Golf Club. In return the candidate will receive a competitive salary, support in training, BIGGA membership, Uniform. Remuneration dependant on experience.

Interested candidates should send a CV and covering letter to: greens@hollywoodgolfclub.co.uk or in writing to Dale Housden, Course Manager, Hollywood Golf Club, Hollywood Lane, Birmingham, B47 5PP.

EXPERIENCED GREENKEEPERS GLENEAGLES GOLF CLUB

Gleneagles - Be part of 'Our Glorious Playground'... We are currently looking for experienced Greenkeepers to join our Golf team. Working within the Golf team over our three championship golf courses, the opportunities will suit either experienced Greenkeepers or individuals passionate about Golf and looking to make a career in Green keeping, gaining experience on championship courses.

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Please forward your CV to Stephen.hamilton@gleneagles.com

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER LAMBERHURST GOLF CLUB

Lamberhurst Golf Club is situated within easy travelling distance of Tunbridge Wells.

An exciting opportunity for an assistant greenkeeper to work alongside our experienced, successful team. Applicants must be able to undertake all basic greenkeeping tasks, NVQ Level 2 would be an advantage.

The Club has an excellent reputation and is maintained to a very high standard. Works on the course cover a wide range of duties so requires an individual who can apply their skills to all aspects of course maintenance.

Salary is negotiable dependant on experience.

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To apply email your CV to secretary@lamberhurstgolfclub.com

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HEAD GREENKEEPER PERRANPORTH GOLF CLUB

Perranporth Golf Club is a members' club on the north coast of Cornwall - traditional 18-hole links course (James Braid) and opened in 1927. Remuneration will be competitive and is negotiable dependent on experience and qualifications.

The successful applicant should have the following experience:

- Excellent communication skills
- Supervisory & motivational skills
- NVQ3 or equivalent
- Spraying certificates PA1,2 & 6
- Knowledge of H&S regulations
- Ability to manage costs within an approved budget
- Ability to plan team work schedules
- Technical knowledge to support the team in machinery maintenance
- Flexibility with regard to working hours
- An eye for detail

Applicants should forward a CV giving reasons for their suitability for the role to: secretary@perranporthgolfclub.co.uk
Website: www.perranporthgolfclub.co.uk
Closing: 30 June 2017

ASSISTANT GREENKEEPER MOOR PARK GOLF CLUB

Moor Park Golf Club is looking to recruit an Assistant Greenkeeper to join our team to assist in maintaining our 36 Hole Championship Courses to the highest standard.

The candidate should preferably have:

- NVQ Level 2 or equivalent
- Ability to work individually and as part of a team
- PA1, PA2A and PA6 preferred, but not essential

Salary is dependent on experience and will be based on a 38 hour week. Please apply by email with a covering letter and CV to human.resources@moorparkgc.co.uk

MARKET RASEN GOLF CLUB

Market Rasen Golf Club, a top 5 club in Lincolnshire and top 18 club in East Midlands, is seeking an ambitious, highly motivated and experienced individual to manage our Heathland Golf Course and build on improvements to the course taking us to the next level and beyond in line with the club's long term Strategic Plan.

The position is ideally suited to an experienced Head Green Keeper or Senior Deputy who wishes to establish a reputation for creativity and excellence with a keen eye for detail. Salary will be dependent upon experience and qualifications.

For further details and a copy of the Job Description please contact Mark Davis, Business Manager, by email at secretary@marketrasengolfclub.co.uk

Closing Date 24th June 2017.

SEASONAL GREENKEEPERS ROEHAMPTON GOLF CLUB

Seasonal Greenkeepers Immediate start (Fixed Term Appointment with the possibility of extension or permanency)

Roehampton Club are looking to appoint two enthusiastic greenkeepers wishing to advance their career prospects. The successful applicants will be given full training during the season and experience the preparation of parkland course for tournament play through the year. Relevant skills and previous experience on similar courses advantageous but not essential.

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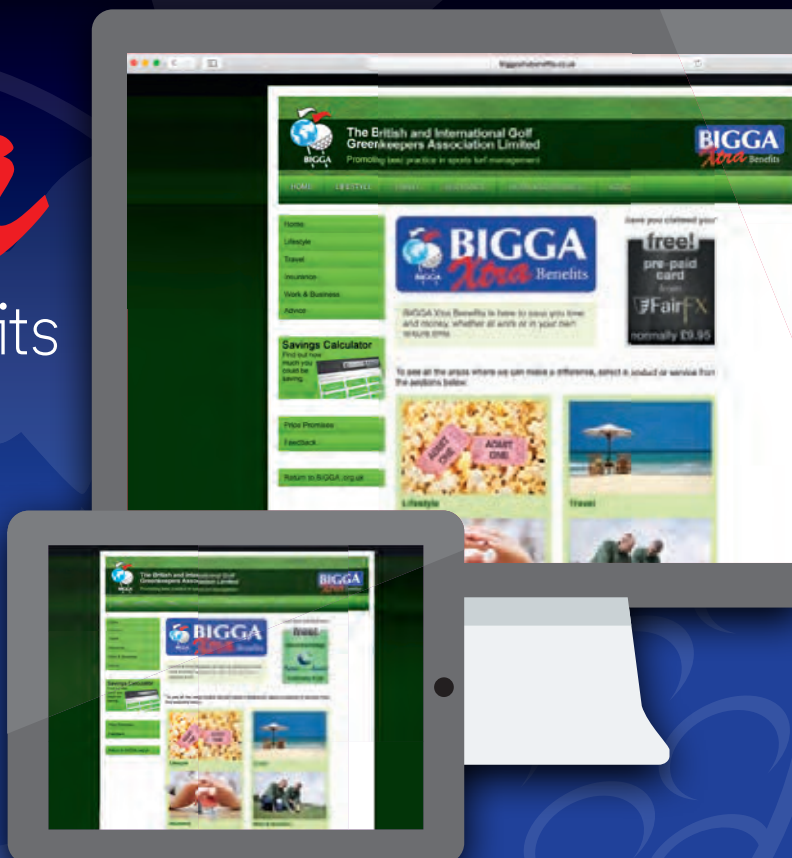
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Please send a covering letter detailing your suitability for the role, along with salary expectations and full CV to: peter.bradburn@roehamptonclub.co.uk Closing date 23rd June 2017

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& Finally...

Bringing the community to the course

& Finally

The team at Kingsdown is in the process of introducing wildflowers to its wonderful course, writes James Hutchinson.

The downland course in Wiltshire has many habitats which are of interest to fauna including bees, hoverflies and butterflies. However, Deputy Head Greenkeeper Tom Freeman has organised an excellent initiative which includes the local community.

Tom said: "On 5 May I hosted an environmental golf day at Kingsdown with the children of year three from Corsham Primary School. The aim was to introduce the children to environmental stewardship from a young age. We also learned about greenkeeping, golf and how all three are positively linked. An area in the long rough on the academy course was used.

"In preparation for the event I used the amazon profihopper to cut and collect existing grass in a 400m² area. I then used the same machine to scarify to a depth of 2mm several

times, thinning the sward and creating bare areas ready to accept seed, all material was removed.

"The site is made up of landfill, so a damp loamy mix was selected, with additional cornfield annuals to give a splash of colour in the first year, both supplied by DLF.

"I divided the area into plots, where the children sowed wildflower in three separate groups. This was followed by a short talk by myself on the benefits of pollinating insects and wildflowers on the course. With help from the assistant pro and club captain, the groups were also introduced to chipping and putting on the academy course, promoting golf.

"The day was a great success with many of the children asking questions about wildflower, greenkeeping and golf. One mentioned 'it was the best school trip they have ever been on'. This plot is also tied in with the arrival of four beehives, which are maintained by a local beekeeper."



Top: Tom Freeman

Above: Preparing the conservation area



The wildflower area was divided into various plots

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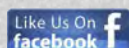
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