is in safe hands while these two insecticides are on the market but turf pesticides in general are largely at the mercy of what happens in the agricultural sector, where most pesticides approved for turf are additionally used in hugely greater amounts and for a wider range of applications.

Neither of these insecticides currently used in turf ever falls foul of EU regulatory authorities and/or becomes commercially less palatable it will be because of what has been done (or not been done) in the agricultural arena.

Chlorpyriphos, an organophosphate insecticide, stands accused of contaminating water resources from spray drift during broad-acre arable crop spraying including for orange wheat blastom midge control.

Clearly fearing for future approved uses of chlorpyriphos the agricultural industry has mounted a robust defence via product stewardship including a ‘Say NO to DRIFT’ campaign.

Imidacloprid is a neonicotinoid insecticide that has recently been accused of having an alleged impact on populations of pollinating bees, and which subsequently led to a two-year trial ban imposed by the EU for application to crops that attracts bees.

Managed turf is a different kettle of fish because short-interval low cut mowing inhibits the flowering of turf grasses and any broad leaf weeds. I often hear the word ‘never’ used to describe the incidence of flowering in managed turf but ‘never say never’ as that well-worn phrase goes.

By its very nature turf is composed of prostrate plants with low-positioned growing points that miss the mower’s blades and turf grass plants inherently so.

Broadleaf weed plants naturally suited to turf include dandelion, common daisy and white clover, but short-interval low cut mowing can actually assist these weeds by selecting out biotypes with the lowest positioned growing points. It is not unusual to see dandelions growing on golf tees despite short-interval low cut mowing.

Large patches of white clover flower across fairways despite mowing especially during drought conditions.

The single biggest danger to any pesticide used in turf is becoming a casualty of legislation aimed at the much bigger and wider-ranging uses of the same active ingredient in the agricultural arena. Imidacloprid is in a stronger position because the one and only commercial product used by UK greenkeepers is a dedicated turf insecticide formulated as a granule.

Chlorpyriphos products tend to be formulated as sprayable emulsifiable concentrates with label approval in managed turf alongside a large number of agricultural crops.

Dual chemical control of chafers and leatherjackets currently depends on the long-term availability of imidacloprid. Right or wrong imidacloprid is under scrutiny in the wider agricultural and horticultural arenas. Clearly there is need to develop additional actives for control of chafers and leatherjackets in professional turf.

Most of the so-called new pesticides coming onto the UK sports turf market will have already done the rounds in agriculture for years beforehand.

Approval for the use of imidacloprid as a turf insecticide in the UK was gained in 2006.

In 1992 I was writing about an exciting brand new insecticide used for the control of insect pests on paddy rice. Its name was imidacloprid.

North American sports turf suffers sustained attack by ‘white grubs’ the generic name for larvae of a range of beetles including chafers and leatherjackets.

Imidacloprid is just one of a number of modern insecticides approved for use against these soil born pests in North America.

“Everris gives me the confidence to present a golf course people want to play again and again.”

Iain Harrison, Golf Course Superintendent, Bangor Golf Club, Northern Ireland, pictured (centre) with Everris Country Manager Colman Warde and distributor John Lindsay.

Sierrablen® Plus
Greenmaster® Liquid
Sportsmaster® WSF
Praxys®

‘When golfing societies visit your club, it’s their big day and they want the course in top condition for their event. To attract repeat business, it needs to impress those visitors each and every day.’

‘I’ve used Everris, previously Scotts, products for as long as I can remember. Used alone or in combination as part of my iTurf integrated turf management programme, each product is independently tested and backed up by research data and technical assistance that’s second to none.’

‘I approach course maintenance with confidence because my decisions are based on facts, not theory. Their technologies never let me down.’

Iain Harrison, Bangor Golf Club

To find out how your turf could benefit from an iTurf integrated turf management programme, contact your Everris Technical Area Sales Manager.

www.everris.com
Stepping up

Last month GI discovered how Andy Pullen has made the transition from Deputy to Course Manager at North Wilts Golf Club. This month we hear how Rob Sandilands has adjusted to making the same move in Cumbria and how the many opportunities BIGGA offer can help.
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Three years ago I stepped up to my first Head Greenkeeper’s post at Grange-over-Sands Golf Club, an 18-hole parkland course close to Ulverston in the Lake District. I had all the skills needed as I’d completed a string of qualifications and I had a good amount of greenkeeping and supervisory experience – it would be a breeze surely? I couldn’t have been more wrong!

Although my qualifications covered all sorts of technical greenkeeping topics from woodland environmental studies to health and safety and spraying, there turned out to be gaps in my knowledge I really needed to be a successful Head Greenkeeper. The role of a manager, which is what I had had become, required the majority of my skills to be based on people skills and communication – topics barely mentioned in greenkeeping qualifications and textbooks during my studies.

Meetings were a brand new experience, as was dealing with the personalities on committees and issues with members of staff. Then came the paperwork; course policy documents, risk assessments, budgets, meeting agendas – the list went on!

In short, I’d started a new job I’d worked towards for years and I felt as though I was starting from scratch when it came to these new skills that were essential to my role.

Fortunately for me, greenkeeping is an industry that is full of people who are unbelievably generous with their time despite the demands of their job, and I was never short of support and advice when I really needed it. Since then, the learning curve has been steep and I have made mistakes, but most importantly, I have learned a huge amount and have developed the all-important skills I need to succeed as a manager.

I was invited to present a seminar on this topic during Continue to Learn at BTME. The chance to pass on my experiences and viewpoint to the next generation of Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers was a great opportunity and something I got great feedback on. Here are some of the main pointers...

Preparing for your first head role

• Volunteer
  • Apply to be part of BIGGA’s Open Support Team or volunteer at the BMW PGA Championships. Arrange short visits to other courses to help with projects

  • BIGGA Delegation/Future Turf Managers Initiative/CPD Scheme
  • Free schemes and experiences that ‘fast forward’ many essential elements by condensing them into a short space of time and can be recorded on your CPD

• Preparation topics (not to be left until you are in the job)
  • Budget: get a template and build your own
  • Agronomy: ask to walk the course when the agronomist visits
  • Meetings: attend greens meetings to get a feel for their structure. You will meet dynamic, individual characters and encounter conflicts of interests
  • CPD: get accredited for all the effort!

• Health & Safety: learn what the documents are, how to construct them and how they tie in together

• Regional section: establish a local support network and keep your finger on the pulse for those job opportunities

• Mentors: would you benefit from a mentor to help you?

• Interviews
  • Interviews are a two-way process; is the opportunity suitable for you?
  • You are the course custodian and need to ensure it is properly looked after
  • Learn other people’s language. Different people have different agendas, e.g. finance v greenkeeping.
  • You must spell out the savings in time/money that will be made if you purchase a certain piece of equipment

• Greens Chair
  • A role of support and liaison to you
  • A link role not a management role

• Meetings and Committees
  • The course is maintained on behalf of the committee and you are their expert
  • Natural allies and adversaries will exist – again communication is key
  • The best outcome for the club is the key to any meeting
  • Set agendas and research your topics
  • Remain professional – be diplomatic but assertive and stand your ground where necessary

• Planning
  • Thinking in detail about all your tasks in advance – what could go right or wrong and planning for both outcomes
  • Always have a plan B
  • Use lists and whiteboards

• Politics
  • Communication is key
  • You are the course custodian and need to ensure it is properly looked after
  • Learn other people’s language. Different people have different agendas, e.g. finance v greenkeeping.
  • You must spell out the savings in time/money that will be made if you purchase a certain piece of equipment
  • Remain professional

• Golfer’s Comments
  • Greenkeepers can be defensive, but golfers are your customer. Try and show willing to respond to constructive comments and suggest improvements.
  • Do not let staff become victims of offensive comments, they are a soft target for certain types of people
  • You cannot please everybody!

• Biogas & Social Media
  • Free means of communication
  • Enhance a professional image if done correctly

• Loans & Equipment
  • Always have a plan B
  • What works for one may not work for another

• People Management
  • You are a buffer between management and the greenkeeping team
  • You won’t have picked any of your team – remember you may not like or have anything in common

• Other tasks
  • Meetings and Committees
  • Walking the course
  • Interacting with the greenkeeping team

• Play your role

BIGGA Regional Section Benefits

About the author

Huw recognised a seminar entitled ‘The Changing Face of Golf’ at Head Greenkeeper of the Year in 2014, and as Head Greenkeeper of the Year 2015, he has continued to develop his greenkeeping skills by expanding his knowledge of new technology and CPD. Huw is a great believer in creating an open environment where new ideas can flourish and ideas can spread.

Huw has undertaken a number of roles within the BIGGA Regional section, including the position of Head Greenkeeper, Course Manager and Regional Secretary for Northern England and Scotland. Huw is a member of the northern-door which is responsible for promoting the BIGGA Regional section and running the northern section meetings.

Huw has an MSc in Sustainable Woodland & Environmental Management and has established his own consultancy business, Ecosystem Ltd, which is based in Cheshire, UK. Huw enjoys Certificates of Competence as well as biodiverse training and is a member of the British and Irish Golf Course Superintendents Association.
Three years ago I stepped up to my first Head Greenkeeper’s post at Grange-over-Sands Golf Club, an 18-hole parkland course close to Ulverston in the Lake District. I had all the skills needed as I’d completed a string of qualifications and I had a good amount of greener experience. Although my qualifications covered all sorts of technical greenkeeping topics from woodland and environment studies to health and safety and spraying, there turned out to be gaps in my knowledge. I really needed to be a successful Head Greenkeeper. The role of a manager, which is what I had had become, required the majority of my skills to be based on people skills and communication – topics barely mentioned in greener training and qualifications and textbooks during my studies.

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Fortunately for me, greenkeeping is an industry that is full of people who are unbelievably generous with their time despite the demands of their job, and I was never short of support and advice when I really needed it. Since then, the learning curve has been steep, and I have made mistakes, but the learning curve has been steep when it came to these new skills I needed for my new role. I’d worked towards for years and I went on!

Budget: get a template and understand the importance of budgets, meeting agendas – the list went on!

Preparation is key. You are the course manager and need to ensure it is properly looked after. Learn other people’s language. Different people have different agendas, e.g. finance v greenkeeping. You must spell out the savings in time/money that will be made if you purchase a certain piece of equipment.

Remain professional.

Greens Chair.

A role of support and liaison to the agronomist. You need to consider your family and personal circumstances. You need to find out about different aspects. Either write or call the course and make a plan with all the information you have acquired.

You’ve got the job! Now what?

You will make mistakes – this means you are learning.

People will question you, it’s human nature.

Check your plan is still on track and make changes if necessary – communicate at all times.

Take lots of early pictures to refer back to – continue doing this with work and projects.

Planning.

Thinking in detail about all your tasks in advance – what could go right or wrong and planning for both outcomes.

Mentorships would you benefit from a mentor to help you?

Interviews.

Interviews are a two-way process; is the opportunity suitable for you? You need to consider your family and personal circumstances.

You need to think about your potential new club’s resources – how many staff and what equipment they have. Try and find out as much information as you can.

Either walk or play the course and make a plan with all the information you have acquired.

Meetings and Committees.

The course is maintained on behalf of the committee and you are their expert.

Natural allies and adversaries will exist – again communication is key.

The best outcome for the club is the key to any meeting.

Set agendas and research your topic.

Remain professional – be diplomatic and assertive and stand your ground where necessary.

People Management.

You are a buffer between management and the greenkeeping team.

You won’t have picked any of your team – remember you may not like or have anything in common.

You can’t have a mentor.

Don’t worry about the things you can’t control, such as the British weather!

Mistakes are frustrating, but they mean you are learning.

Avoid stress wherever possible as it clouds judgment and affects your health and wellbeing.

Go home on time whenever you can.

Conclusion.

Being a Head Greenkeeper/ Course Manager is about creating a balance between all the elements in this article.

The balance between these will differ from person to person and club to club depending on resources and expectations and this is where your expertise comes in.

Your style is key.

The golfers are your customer. Try and show willing to respond to constructive comments and suggestions.

Do not let staff become victims of offensive comments, they are entitled to express their own feelings, but they still need to be their benchmark.

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The Mind Factor

It was a great pleasure to be asked to be a keynote speaker at BTME. I was tremendously impressed by the organisation of the event, the wide range of educational opportunities and above all the willingness to learn and the curiosity of the attendees.

When I first received the invitation to speak I wondered how much my work as a coach would be relevant to the audience and the challenges they currently face on a daily basis.

Yet the more I thought about it, the clearer the parallel became. Greenkeeping and sport are so similar in that they constantly throw challenges and setbacks at us and most of the time we are under pressure to perform and produce results.

Over the years I have been very fortunate to work with some of the world’s best golfers and time after time I have seen how the very best are prepared to respond well to setback and disappointment. They have a mental toughness and tenacity to keep going when results are less than ideal.

There is no doubt we are living in challenging times at the moment - much of which is beyond our control - but our future success or failure will be determined by our RESPONSE to those challenging times, just as our response to a dropped shot or missed putt will define our ability to score well at golf. It is our mindset that is often the key between success and failure, not just the situation we find ourselves in.

I remember once hearing somebody say “the quality of your life will be determined by the quality of your questions” and, from initially not understanding the gravity and importance of this statement, I am now convinced this single statement is possibly the most important concept you will ever hear. I don’t believe in positive thinking in the form the media currently peddles it and various mind gurus, but I do passionately believe in the power of quality questions.

Quality questions focus one of your most precious commodities, your attention. Your success or failure in your work, your golf and your life, will depend, to a very large degree, where you focus your attention.

In very simple terms, your attention will either be on something useful or useless. I am assuming as your eyes fall across these words, you are hoping your attention is currently on what you are reading. If it is, then you will more than likely gain something. However, your attention could be on what you need to do later, what you’re going to have for tea or even what other people in the room are thinking about you as you sit reading Greenkeeper International. After
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the last statement, you may have found how your attention has wandered. Sorry about that, but it does just highlight how fragile and temporary our attention can be.

So a major part of being successful is to understand and apply the principle of focused attention - and how quality questions can be one of your greatest assets in bringing your attention to the place you not only want it to be, but to a place which is useful and productive.

When you have the capability to direct your attention, you begin to take control of your world as opposed to the world controlling you. In the modern world, it would seem we constantly face a combination of factors and situations that are trying to steal our attention. This is shown in the incredible way people become addicted to social media, and in the constant stream of sound bites and calls to action which inhibit and restrict our capability to just be in the here and now.

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You will be in a different and more productive state because your attention is in a useful place. Most people ask habitually poor and unproductive questions, blissfully unaware how detrimental those questions are to their attention.

Many of the golfers I work with, I ensure they have sets of questions that serve them well both on and off the golf course. “What does a good shot look like here?” is a great question to ask when you are out on the course because it forces your brain to produce an image of the shot you want, as opposed to a shot you may fear. “What did you enjoy today?” and “What did you learn today?” are two questions I suggest may be useful to parents when their child, who is learning the game, comes off the course. It sends the young mind’s attention in the direction of learning and enjoyment, two priceless commodities if you are looking for future success.

Asking good questions is not about trying to be positive, it is about taking charge of how you use your brain in the most effective way and not falling into the trap of sending your attention habitually into areas that do not serve you well.

So, notice over the next few days the questions that you ask of yourself and of others and gain some insight as to whether they are serving you or not. Are your questions effective for yourself and what questions serve them well both on and off the golf course?” is a great question to ask when you are out on the course because it forces your brain to produce an image of the shot you want, as opposed to a shot you may fear. “What did you enjoy today?” and “What did you learn today?” are two questions I suggest may be useful to parents when their child, who is learning the game, comes off the course. It sends the young mind’s attention in the direction of learning and enjoyment, two priceless commodities if you are looking for future success. Asking good questions is not about trying to be positive, it is about taking charge of how you use your brain in the most effective way and not falling into the trap of sending your attention habitually into areas that do not serve you well.

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When you have the capability to direct your attention, you begin to take control of your world as opposed to the world controlling you. In the modern world, it would seem we constantly face a combination of factors and situations that are trying to steal our attention. This is shown in the incredible way people become addicted to social media, and in the constant stream of sound bites and calls to action which inhibit and restrict our capability to just be in the here and now, right here and now, in this moment, playing a unique shot going on, right here and now, in this moment, playing a unique shot now with our attention. Is it any wonder that golfers can struggle to play a game which positively insists on your greatest asset in bringing your attention to the place you not only want it to be, but to a place which is useful and productive.

At the start of this book, we asked a question that, if you are honest with yourself, you probably already know the answer to: “What is the best thing to do now?” is a great question to ask when you are out on the course because it forces your brain to produce an image of the shot you want, as opposed to a shot you may fear.

However, it is also a question that many golfers struggle to answer, and a major part of the book is to help us focus our attention in the most productive way to the challenges presented.

Often people ask dreadful questions focusing attention in a totally unproductive way. Think of a recent challenge you have had and ask yourself these three questions:

- “What is the best thing to do now?”
- “What is possible?”
- “Who is to blame?”

Run those three questions through your mind, I don’t need to be a psychic to know your current state is probably less than ideal to deal with the situation.

The questions have directed your previous attention in to areas that are fraudulently useless. However if you had the same challenge and you asked yourself questions like this:

- “What are my choices?”
- “What is possible?”
- “What is the best thing to do now?”

Run those questions through your mind in response to the same scenario and I guarantee that you will be in a different and more productive state because your attention is in a useful place. Most people ask habitually poor and unproductive questions, blissfully unaware how detrimental those questions are to their attention.

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So, notice over the next few days the questions that you ask of yourself and of others and gain some insight as to whether they are serving you or not. Are your questions effective in terms of persuading others? Above all, are your questions effective for yourself and what you want to achieve now and in the future?
Effective aeration improves drainage, reduces turf compaction, thatch build up and boosts the health of golf course greens and fairways.

Toby Clarke, Sales Manager for Dennis and SISIS, explains the basics of aeration, its advantages and which machinery you should look at...

Q What is aeration?
Put simply, aeration is a mechanical operation that creates more air space within the soil. This increases oxygen levels allowing for better percolation of water and nutrients thus promoting a healthier plant.

Q When should I use different methods of aeration?
All greenkeepers will have or should have an aeration programme in place. These will differ from club to club depending on soil structure, budgets, staffing levels, amount of traffic, climate etc. An example of a greens programme is shown inset right.

Varying the depths at which you aerate is important to avoid ‘panning’ - which is when a compacted layer forms below the aerate. This will reduce the amount of fresh air available to the root zone.

Q What is aeration important for the greenskeeper?
Low cut heights particularly on greens mean that regular aeration is vital. With cut heights as low as 3mm the plant needs a good well建立ed root structure to supply the oxygen and nutrients needed to survive. Regular aeration will allow the plant to flourish. Obviously, a golf course that is well aerated and has a proven aeration programme will be a delight to manage. Golfers should be appreciative and more will want to play. This will increase revenue within the club which is beneficial to all.

Q What are the advantages of mechanical aeration and air combined?
Using compressed air at relatively low pressures has two main benefits - the first being the fracturing of the soil causing many fissures within the soil structure. The second is a large increase in oxygen levels over conventional aeration. This has the obvious effect of allowing a better flow of water and nutrients throughout the growing season will cause little disruption to play and will increase air flow and water/nutrient ingress during the drier months.

Q What type of machines should I look at?
There are many different types of aerator currently available and all are viable - if budgets allow of course (see box on right page).

In these tougher economic times we have seen a noticeable upturn in clubs returning to our Multitiner tractor mounted aerator. The SISIS Multitiner is available in 1.2m and 1.8m widths and is a drum-type aerator, which is ideally suited to a range of applications. It has three drums with independent rotation and interchangeable tines (hollow/solid and chisel) with a maximum depth of 300mm. It’s not only cost effective but also simple to use and maintain and is extremely reliable. Pedestrian slitters such as our Autoslit are also proving popular when poor drainage becomes an issue. Unfortunately, these are specially designed to use the maximum air available from the compressor and produce clean, fresh air at a constant rate of 75mm (3ins) with depth of penetration infinitely variable to a maximum of 127mm (5ins). These air injection tines have superior greens in the longer term. The simple rule is the larger the depth of penetration, the better. Varying the depth is important to avoid ‘panning’. Aeration is possible anywhere from 10mm to 400mm, depending on surface conditions. For example, a large slitter, such as the SISIS Megaslit, used on a fairway would have a maximum depth of 300mm or when hollow tine aerating a greens maximum depth would, in normal circumstances, be no more than 125mm.

Q Why is minimal surface disruption important in selecting the right equipment?
Minimal surface disruption is vitally important when selecting the right equipment. Getting your greens, tees and fairways back into play ASAP should be one of the first considerations on any greenskeeper’s mind. Timing is paramount as is choice and level of tine for example.

Hollow tine in late August will recover far quicker than hollow tining in late October. The golfers may complain more but they will have superior greens in the longer term. The simple rule is the larger the depth, the more disruption. When aerating, ask yourself: is the machine fitted with a light pressure roller? This will not only help maintain levels but you are doing two jobs in one pass.

Q What depth should I aerate to?
Varying the depth is important to avoid ‘panning’. Aeration is possible anywhere from 10mm to 400mm, depending on surface conditions. For example, a large slitter, such as the SISIS Megaslit, used on a fairway would have a maximum depth of 300mm or when hollow tine aerating a greens maximum depth would, in normal circumstances, be no more than 125mm.

Q In your opinion, what are the 4 most important topics/ aspects of aeration?
1. Maintaining or improving the circulation of oxygen within the soil structure.
2. Remove or controlling thatch build up.
3. Relieve compaction.
4. Improve drainage.

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A breath of fresh air

Effective aeriation improves drainage, reduces turf compaction, thatch build up and boosts the health of golf course greens and fairways.

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Minimal surface disruption is vitally important when selecting the right equipment. Getting your greens, tees and fairways back into play ASAP should be one of the first considerations on any greenskeeper’s mind. Timing is paramount as is choice and level of tine for example.

Hollow tine in late August will recover far quicker than hollow tining in late October. The golfers may complain more but they will have superior greens in the longer term. The simple rule is the larger the depth, the more disruption. When aerating, ask yourself: is the machine fitted with a light pressure roller? This will not only help maintain levels but you are doing two jobs in one pass.

Q What depth should I aerate to?
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Q In your opinion, what are the 4 most important topics/ aspects of aeration?
1. Maintaining or improving the circulation of oxygen within the soil structure.
2. Remove or controlling thatch build up.
3. Relieve compaction.
4. Improve drainage.

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A breath of fresh air

Effective aeriation improves drainage, reduces turf compaction, thatch build up and boosts the health of golf course greens and fairways.

Toby Clarke, Sales Manager for Dennis and SISIS, explains the basics of aeration, its advantages and which machinery you should look at...

Q What is aeration?
Put simply, aeration is a mechanical operation that creates more air space within the soil. This increases oxygen levels allowing for better percolation of water and nutrients thus promoting a healthier plant.

Q When should I use different methods of aeration?
All greenkeepers will have or should have an aeration programme in place. These will differ from club to club depending on soil structure, budgets, staffing levels, amount of traffic, climate etc. An example of a greens programme is shown inset right.

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