"THE DEMAND FOR GOLF'
AND 'THE WAY FORWARD'

Two important publications released by The Royal and Ancient Golf Club "The Demand for Golf" and "The Way Forward" will form the basis of every debate, study and decision about the financing and administration of the game over the next ten years.

The present 2p levy towards Greenkeeping Training is derisory...the R & A is urging a realistic first target of 50p per club member rising to £1."

This section goes on to state that the club structure represents "a most serious obstacle to meaningful progress". The media rightly comes in for criticism.

Measured against the miles of popular column, golf course management has rated an infinitesimal lineage. Recent inaccuracies about BIGGA's aims and, more importantly, its achievements during the 1989 season have been justifiable criticism of the media generally.

In fact, it is "humble" greenkeepers who have taken matters by the scruff of the neck by publishing "Greenkeeping Management" which readers can be assured will present greenkeeping issues and BIGGA's plans and policies both factually and positively.

The Executive Director and the Board of Management are also singled out in "The Way Forward" for the tremendous work undertaken "to get BIGGA off the ground" with "considerable financial commitment from the R & A".

The R & A also quite clearly states that "British golf's historical attitude to greenkeeping (in marked contrast to America) has been - and still is in many cases - astonishingly disorganised, penny pinching and arrogant". With this Association members will heartily concur.

The R & A also admits that the Greenkeeper Training Committee (GTC) which consists of representatives of the four home golf unions, BIGGA, the PGA European Tour, the STRI, golf club secretaries and the colleges has done no more than mark time.

Outside of the golfing bodies, both central and local government need to be galvanised into action. In a recent local government expenditure survey the net cost to the tax payer of maintaining public parks and recreation areas exceeded £300 million per annum.

Local authorities and Bigga, slowly realising the very valuable contribution made by golf, now a widely accepted non political sport for all, should be a positive environmental factor and tend to be self financing. So why this relative inertia?

In many cities there are parks large enough to accommodate courses, driving ranges and beautiful gardens et al. Surely, it is both practical and politically expedient for an urgent and positive government review in these areas?

Greenkeeping Management can promise its readers that it will be active in pursuing greenkeeping interests and the enhancement of the profession and will lobby accordingly to these ends.

In terms of the immediate future, the Association will be preparing a considered response to "The Way Forward". Members are asked to submit their views and comments by December 31 to Headquarters Office whereupon the Executive Director will be preparing a report for the Board's consideration. Any member requiring a copy of the report should contact Headquarters Office.

Barry Poole