

SPORTS TURF RESEARCH INSTITUTE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The eleventh Annual General Meeting of the Sports Turf Research Institute was held at St. Ives Research Station, Bingley, on Monday, 16th April under the chairmanship of Mr. Alan Sowden.

In the annual report, reference is made to the great honour done to the Institute by H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh who, in June, 1961, graciously gave his patronage to the Institute.

Reference is also made in the annual report to the research programme carried out during the year. This included further work on moss control, top dressing experiments and variety trials with grasses. New fungicides for use against diseases were investigated and, at the request of May & Baker, Ltd., trials were carried out with a view to evaluating two forms of urea formaldehyde resins in comparison with other nitrogenous fertilisers.

The Revenue Account for the year ended 31st December, 1961 showed an increase in general income of £2,266 to a total of £30,663, whilst expenditure rose by only £732 to £29,083. The surplus of £1,580 was capitalised in accordance with the provisions of the Articles and will be used to further the main objects of the Institute.

The Institute's advisory service continued to be in great demand throughout the British Isles and Europe and education was continued through courses at Bingley and by the giving of lectures.

Elections to office included the re-appointment of Lord Brabazon of Tara as Honorary President, Sir Bracewell Smith, Mr. Carl Bretherton and Sir William Worsley as Honorary Vice-Presidents, Mr. Alan Sowden as Chairman and Mr. Carl Bretherton as Vice-Chairman.

TALLY-HO IN THE HIGH STREET—*cont.*

With the growth and spread of our towns and cities into the surrounding countryside, it is not surprising that a breed of urban foxes has grown up.

Surroundings of this nature are usually extremely safe for foxes, providing plenty of shelter and bounteous feeding. The only hazard a town fox has to face is traffic—a menace that is also man's.

The fox is an extremely adaptable creature. When myxomatosis swept the land clear of rabbits, which were supposed to be their mainstay, foxes quickly accustomed themselves to an alternative diet.

Foxes have found it easy to adjust themselves to a city life. City dwelling for a fox can be comfortable. In the open country men with hounds will hunt them.

There is plenty of good sustenance too in these urban places. Mice, rats, unenclosed poultry, plenty of garbage and a plethora of unconsumed scraps put out for pets.

A fox is not an underground dweller in the same sense as the badger. Plenty of vixens have their cubs above ground. If they have them in an earth, they often shift them early to another habitation.

Townee vixens soon learn that there is no need to bother with a deep hole. In any case, such places are not easily found in and about human dwellings and the fox itself is not a good excavator.

Once they have established themselves as suburban dwellers, foxes are almost impossible to eliminate.

I know one breeding earth in an open space in the midst of suburbia in which the occupants were dealt with by gas, but it is the only one and I doubt whether the mass murder made much of a dent in the local vulpine population. Urban foxes are here to stay.

*With grateful acknowledgments to
The Farmers' Weekly*
