

# Trials and findings

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ly in the U.S.A.) on the subject of producing soil (or at any rate a satisfactory growing medium) of high hydraulic conductivity to facilitate rapid disposal of excess water and yet possessing a sufficient moisture retention capacity and suitable playing characteristics. At Bingley we have not been able to do as much research on this subject as we would have liked but the recent appointment of a soil physicist (and a laboratory assistant) is helping things along. For new golf greens and other areas we have devised laboratory tests aimed at producing satisfactory mixtures of soil, sand and peat. In the U.S.A. some people are working on a similar basis but others have abandoned soil and grow greens on carefully specified sand with a little peat added—there are even a couple of courses with greens like this in Britain.

The particle size of sands suitable for soil amelioration has attracted a

great deal of attention throughout the world. In Mr. Dawson's book "Practical Lawn Craft" he suggests that sharp sand should have at least 60% of its particles between 0.5 and 0.2 mm (avoiding coarse and fine particles). Though looking for sands with a narrow particle-size range, the Institute has tended to look to somewhat coarser sands having in mind availability of suitable sands and to avoid the fines. However, although there is some divergence of opinion (the U.S.G.A. supports 1.0—0.5 mm as the most important range) it now seems to be generally held that there should be even greater concentration on the 0.5—0.2 mm particle size. Important research at Aberystwyth and new work at Bingley, as far as we have gone, supports this view.

The relatively new technique of mechanical and slitting (related to the old French draining and to a common practice of practical men, making sand slits with a spade) was first used in this country at Bingley's suggestion at Twickenham in 1966, when sand was fed into a slit made by a modified sub-soiler. The operation was very successful and similar operations have been carried out at quite a number of places. Various contractors have produced their own equipment so that in recent years some kind of "research" has been taking place all the time.

**More on the work at Bingley in future issues of the Greenkeeper.**

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