

A building that really is fit for its purpose

Although keen not to hold up work on the new Eden Greenkeeping Centre, the two Head Greenkeepers responsible for the Eden, Balgove and Strathtyrum courses at St Andrews were delighted to be asked for their comments on the internal design of the new facility long before its completion in February 1996.

"One thing we noticed immediately on the plans was a shortage of power points," commented Gordon Moir, who has day to day responsibility for the complex in addition to his duties as Head Greenkeeper on the Eden and Balgove courses. Sharing the Head Greenkeepers' office is Roddy Barron, who looks after the Strathtyrum course, the golf practice centre and the turf nursery.

"One can never have too many electrical sockets," pointed out Gordon. "The architect took our advice and virtually doubled the number throughout the building, with particular emphasis on the machinery and handtools store."

Another aspect examined closely was the internal layout of the building, specifically the separation between the three different elements which would be using the facility. In addition to providing suitable areas for staff changing, washing and messing, and the storage and daily servicing of course equipment, the Eden Greenkeeping Centre facility also houses buggies used by the Course Rangers and orderlies and by golfers.

"The original layout had been altered early in the design stage to provide the optimum flow of machinery into and out of the building," commented Gordon. "With that done, the principal concern was that the facility should be big enough to accommodate present needs and future expansion. This involved sitting down and working out how much room was needed for all the machines while still allowing space to walk about and for additions to the equipment fleet."

With a total floor area of 1,000 sq metres (10,760 sq ft), Gordon Moir says that the building has more than sufficient room for today's and tomorrow's needs. "This has to be a plus point," he commented. "Furthermore, we



The staff changing room has individual secure lockers with adjacent toilet and shower areas

also have completely separate covered areas for the storage and preparation of top dressings and for fuel, oil and chemicals, as well as a dedicated wash bay. I believe this is essential in any new greenkeeping facility."

Good lighting was also considered most important. "We start work in complete or semi-darkness throughout the year," pointed out Gordon. "The interior of the building has excellent lights and there are also plenty of high output floodlights outside which come on automatically

when it gets dark. This is also helpful for security."

With up to 30 different people using the centre during the day, building security was a point of particular concern. This has been answered by the use of electronic key cards with coded entry for the main personnel door into the building and the two internal doors leading into the principal equipment storage areas. The three powered roller-shutter doorways used by tractors, mowers and buggies can only be opened from the inside.

PLANNING A NEW GREENKEEPING FACILITY?

Ten important features recommended for any new greenkeeping facility by the greenkeeping staff at St Andrews:

- Ensure that the building is big enough for present and future staff and machinery requirements.
- Provide good vehicle movement to and from the facility as well into and out of the building itself.
- Ensure that there is plenty of lighting inside the building and around its perimeter.
- Provide good ventilation through roof and wall vents, supported by extractor fans if machinery will be run inside for extended periods.
- Install a suitably-sized wash-down area for course machinery, ensuring that water can drain away quickly and all

drains have suitable oil/fuel traps and grass/sediment filters.

- Provide proper changing rooms, wash and toilet facilities for staff, supported by a good-sized canteen area.
- Ensure that the facility can be well secured at night or whenever it is unattended. Fire/smoke and intruder alarms are recommended.
- Provide sufficient space for staff cars as well as for visitors. Room for turning will also be required by lorries and trailers.
- A good electricity supply is essential. Insist on three phase if it is available and plenty of wall sockets.
- Provide separate lockable areas for fuel, chemicals, handtools and other items which require checking in and out for safety, security or record-keeping purposes.

In addition to coded access, the complete building is secured by individual door and room sensors. There are also smoke alarms linked to the local fire station. The whole system is monitored by one security company which additionally responds to the opening of any alarmed door outside pre-agreed hours. "The alarm has been set off by someone working late, but this is most unusual," commented Gordon.

Fire drills are carried out regularly as are health and safety updates for all the staff. The latter cover every aspect of operations on the Links and are provided by Elmwood College lecturer and consultant to St Andrews Links Trust, Douglas Shearer.

Of the 15 greenstaff working out of the Eden complex, around half are qualified first aiders although just one person is responsible for maintaining the first aid kit.

Within the building, the superb facilities have produced greater motivation and responsibility among the staff, "without any prompting from ourselves or the management," stressed Gordon Moir.

"There has been a certain amount of envy from the greenkeepers looking after the Old, New and Jubilee courses, but they will have a first-class new building from next spring."

In addition to a well-equipped canteen with microwave, the greenkeepers have separate clothes drying and changing rooms, the latter with individual lockers and adjacent toilets and showers. Although no female greenkeepers are employed yet at St Andrews, future provision has been made with a separate changing room, toilet and shower area.

After discussions with staff, a no smoking policy has been put in place throughout the building. "This helps to maintain cleanliness and tidiness which are most important in a close working environment," said Gordon. "In the mess room, dishes and cutlery are washed and put away immediately by the person who has used them, a policy which extends right through to the course machinery and the wash-down area."

Record keeping has always



A check list is maintained for every machine. Note the security cage for storage of hand tools

been an important element of the management of St Andrews Links and this has been carried through to the new building and its daily operation.

Although required principally by the course rangers and orderlies for the buggies, petrol usage is logged by every person refuelling a vehicle or piece of equipment. Keys for the fuel store are held only by the two head greenkeepers and must be returned to them immediately for their safe-keeping.

A log sheet is also kept for every machine used on the

course, with each operator responsible for daily maintenance checks and noting service requirements and any problems. Regular services are carried out within the Eden Greenkeeping Centre by one of the mechanics based at the Jubilee Sheds. If there is a major service need or breakdown, the machine will be taken across to the main Jubilee workshop for attention.

"The new centre has instilled a strong feeling of pride among the staff and this is evident in their work output," pointed out Gordon Moir. "It is also pleasing to note that the greenkeepers genuinely want to keep the place clean and tidy. Little prompting is needed if mud or grass need sweeping up and the wash bay is always cleaned and the filters checked after use.

"As a place of work and rest for greenkeepers, there can be very few equals to the new Eden Centre anywhere in the world. We are all delighted with the facility - it's a credit to St Andrews."

Electronic key entry cards are used for the main personnel door into the building



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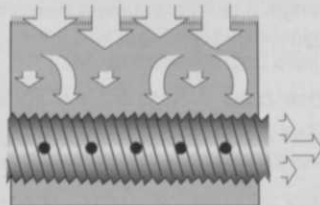
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