

# TALKING

This month, Greenkeeper International's bi-monthly series featuring Course Managers and Head Greenkeepers from every Region profiles Maintenance Facilities

## Maintenance Facilities

Compiled by Malcolm Huntington MBE



**Paul Seago**  
Course: Gullane GC,  
Region: Scottish Region  
Course type: Links  
Number of Holes: 54  
Staff: Course Manager, mechanic and 14 greenkeepers



**Paul Hobden**  
Course: Chart Hills GC  
Region: South East  
Course type: Mixture of woodland and parkland  
Number of holes: 18  
Staff: Course Manager, Mechanic and seven greenkeepers



**Marcus Phelps**  
Club: Marlborough GC  
Region: S West & S Wales  
Course type: Mixture of heathland and parkland with downland grasses  
Number of holes: 18  
Staff: Head Greenkeeper plus four greenkeepers



**Kevin Hodges**  
Course: Ryston Park GC  
Region: Midland  
Course type: Parkland  
Number of holes: 9 (hoping for 18)  
Staff: Head Greenkeeper plus one (we run most of the time!)



**John Waite**  
Course: Scarthingwell GC  
Region: Northern  
Type of course: Parkland  
Number of holes: 18  
Staff: Head Greenkeeper plus three greenkeepers

1. What difference have you seen in the quality of maintenance facilities over the past ten years?

A vast improvement, with the staff looked after a lot better. We have locker rooms, heating, shower, and proper washing facilities. We have spent because of Health and Safety regulations. There are new concrete floors with wash bays and a workshop. I think we also need to convince many clubs about the importance of Health and Safety.

Facilities have improved with us but I have seen some which are very poor. The course has been open for six years and we originally had agricultural buildings. These have been redesigned with a storage area with a place to wash of machinery. We have two toilets and a shower.

A big improvement. We used to have sheds, but now we have a new brick building with washing facilities, toilets, tea room and storage space for every item of machinery. There is room for seed inside, but we have to keep top dressing outside. It's getting better everywhere due to the Health and Safety regulations.

Not to many here but ranging from good to poor at the three courses I have worked on. We have three up and over garages (all locked) but no shower or toilet. We have a work bench. We've spent £43,000 on a Jacobsen greens mower and a John Deere fairway mower and other items.

Facilities have had to change for the better because of Health and Safety regulations. At one of my previous clubs there was no electric light and we had to wait each day for daylight before we could see anything in the maintenance facility! We have a toilet but no showers and a Portakabin for eating lunch etc. We are trying to improve all the time.



# HEADS

2. When did your maintenance facility last have a major make-over?

About eight years ago when wooden sheds were knocked down and we put up a prefabricated steel girder construction with steel cladding. We are looking to extend at the moment in three phases 1. A workshop and fertiliser store 2. Pesticide store and 3. A staff building.

As we are only six years old there hasn't been a lot of time for improvements, but there have been some small ones and we have excellent storage facilities.

A year ago when I believe something in the order of £80,000 to £100,000 was spent on an update.

About four years ago I believe, before I joined the staff. I understand one shed was rebuilt and a concrete bay added.

We have had no major overhaul since the club was opened in 1993, but a few minor improvements including better machinery.

3. Is your facility close to the clubhouse, or out on the golf course?

Out on the golf course. It's about three quarters of a mile from the clubhouse, but ideally situated as it is bang in the middle of the three courses.

Our maintenance facility is 300-400 yards from the clubhouse and just before you go into the club car park.

It is away from the clubhouse, about a quarter of a mile and with easy access to the course near the 9th green.

Close to the club, about 30 yards away in fact. They may change the Secretary's office into an office for me when they rebuild the clubhouse.

It used to be next to the clubhouse but was moved three years ago to about 200 yards away. It is now next to the 18th fairway.

4. What would you like to see in your maintenance facility that isn't there at the moment?

Better facilities for staff. We have improved but there is still room for further improvements. Greenkeepers do the work out there in all weathers and need a place to clean up, be able to prepare something hot to eat, dry clothes, shower and change. This should happen at every club.

We would certainly like some more storage in the sense of a covered area for top dressing and sand, but having said that we are quite happy with most things and you might say we are more fortunate than some.

We could do with some lifting equipment for servicing machinery and a covered area for top dressing inside. I would also like to have showers in the building.

An awful lot! We could do with a complete range of John Deere equipment, which I think is the best. Also a big building with ample storage space, a place to wash down machinery, changing accommodation, drying room, shower, toilet and somewhere to eat.

I would have better catering facilities for the staff, showers and improved toilet facilities... and perhaps a computer link-up as I am now learning computer skills at night school. I would also like to be able to use the best pieces of machinery for the various jobs from all the different manufacturers and have improved storage and maintenance sections.

5. Outside of your own, whose maintenance facilities do you admire the most?

Undoubtedly St Andrews. They have state-of-the-art facilities and have got the lot. We have three courses and they have five and a half so our complexes work in similar ways. I have been to St Andrews three times now and have taken my staff there as well. They are an example to a lot of places.

London Golf Club at Brands Hatch. They are purpose built and a lot of thought and consideration has gone into the building with proper eating facilities etc. Many clubs could do to copy this sort of complex.

East Sussex National. They have a purpose built complex which is almost as big as an aircraft hanger rather than a shed. It's superb.

St Andrews, without a doubt. I was told they spent £600,000 on a maintenance facility just for the Old and New Courses. I go there each year while taking an HNC course at Elmwood College.

Gleneagles where everything was set up properly. There was a place for the mechanic to do his stuff and there was plenty of space. Alwoodley is also very good if we are looking for a place nearer home.