

Investing in the future

Smugness is not regarded as an attractive trait, but hopefully, you will forgive BIGGA's staff for feeling just a little bit smug at the moment.

The reason is that we've just achieved the Investor in People Standard. That means that independent assessors have come in, looked at the way we conduct BIGGA's business and gone away impressed.

So that's why we've been walking around wearing Cheshire Cat-sized grins.

Like most things worth having it involved some extremely hard work as we had to be prepared for anything and everything to be put under the microscope and examined. Not only that, with so many of the staff interviewed, everyone had to up to scratch and prepared.

Personally I believe that the achievement of reaching the required standard was merely the icing on the cake. The real benefit came from the process of preparing for it.

Instead of running to stand still - a physical pursuit in which so many of us indulge, but for which we never seem to see any benefit when we step on the scales - we forced ourselves to stop and make time to examine every aspect of BIGGA's work.

Often we were pleasantly surprised by what was in place, but occasionally we uncovered something which perhaps we'd taken for granted for too long. In those instances we were able to strip it down and come up with a new and improved system.

So, in effect, even if we had failed to reach the exacting standards imposed by Investors in People at the first attempt, we had improved our way of operating anyway.

It is a little like the Master Greenkeeper certification, and anyone who enters the three main BIGGA competitions - the Toro Award for Excellence in Greenkeeping; the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year and the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition, in association with Amazone and Grass Roots.

It is not just those people who smile - not necessarily as smugly as the BIGGA HOUSE staff - from the pages of Greenkeeper International who have won. Everyone who has entered, and put themselves up for actual or potential scrutiny, comes away with something.

This may come in the way of formal feedback following an inspection or, more informally, from talking with people involved. Or it may just come from examining your own work and devising a better, more efficient, method.

The bottom line is that, when you do anything that involves being judged, you start to look at yourself, and the way you do things, a little more closely. That is the best possible way to improve...even if at the end of the day you don't win anything this time round.

We feel that we've benefited from being involved in Investors in People. So could you by becoming involved in the various BIGGA programmes.

Entries for the three competitions close at the end of this month while information of Master Greenkeeper can be obtained from the Education Department.

Editor:
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Greenkeeper

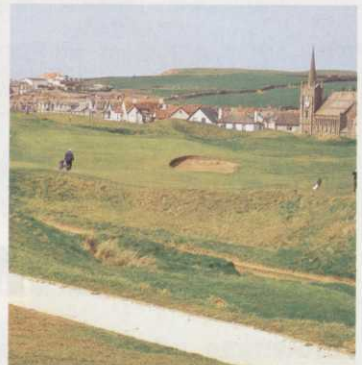
INTERNATIONAL

Features

- 23 Crime Stoppers**
Roland Taylor looks at some of the best ways to avoid theft and the modern methods of tracking down stolen property
- 29 Beautiful Bude**
Scott MacCallum travelled south to visit Bude and North Cornwall Golf Club
- 42 Nature Trek**
Arne van Amerongen gives some useful advice on making the most of the features nature gives you
- 47 Spray it with Confidence**
Bill Oliver advises on the new regulations regarding spraying
- 53 The Acid Theory**
Robert Laycock examines a theory which has been around greenkeeping for a very long time indeed
- 59 Growth Industry**
Scott MacCallum visits Amenity Technology, BIGGA's latest Golden Key supporter



47 Spray it with Confidence



29 Beautiful Bude