



Weed Free Mini Profile

What is the nature of your business?

Contract spraying of all turf areas including golf courses, football pitches, racecourses, parks, private estates and any other expanse of amenity turf. The company provides the complete service incorporating the application and supply of pesticides and turf care products, the disposal of empty chemical containers and all paper work to comply with current spraying regulations. We also provide training courses on amenity spraying. F.E.P.A. modules PA1, PA2 and PA6 are available, plus others on request.

What Major Changes have you seen in your sector of the industry over the last 10 years?

The single most significant change has been the introduction of shrouded booms into the UK three years ago. The importance in terms of safety cannot be over estimated. Not only do the booms ensure that the chemical remains within the target area but the potential hazard of drift during high winds has been minimised. With the addition of Baby Mantis and Mini Mantis to join the Spraying Mantis, the company's spraying fleet all employ shrouded booms



How do you believe the industry as a whole has changed over the same period?

Compared with 10 years ago, there is now general recognition and compliance with health and safety requirements and legislation, spreading from the Golf Course Secretary downwards. Increased media coverage has resulted in greenkeepers losing their cloth cap image, and in 90% of cases they are now seen as professionals.

With greater sports sponsorship and television coverage, everyone now sees the condition of the turf as well as the game played.

Looking into your crystal ball what major developments do you envisage over the next 10 years in your sector?

As an ex groundsman, I can see an urgent need over the next ten years to educate the public on the importance of pesticides as a vital management tool. With more and more people playing, the pressures on greenstaff are enormous, and although I personally applaud the health and safety legislation to date, we must guard against measures from the EC in particular which could lower the standards of maintenance, currently achieved on our amenity turf. Pesticides used with moderation at the appropriate time by qualified operators should not be seen in the future as hazardous, but more as a cost effective and safe means of achieving the desired results.



And in the industry as a whole?

I can see fewer big companies at the top of the industry as the current trend towards large monopolies continues. I predict a greater demand for British greenkeepers abroad, as the popularity of golf grows worldwide and more control for those at home, as respect for the profession grows. The emergence of corporate owned golf clubs, look likely to point the way to the future development of the sport, with many more companies following suit.

What contribution do you believe BIGGA has made to the industry since the Association was formed?

By raising the profile of the greenkeeping profession and placing the emphasis on training, the industry has become more sophisticated. There is an ever increasing demand for higher quality products and services, as greens committees become more inclined to act on the recommendations of their Head Greenkeeper or Course Manager. Many Greenkeepers now have overall control of maintenance budgets, and some are almost treated as board members.

Why are you pleased to be associated with BIGGA?

I have seen BIGGA grow and improve over the years to reach a point where the Association is in a very strong position to represent greenkeepers. Weed Free's Silver Key membership shows our commitment to furthering the cause of greenkeeping.

What do you believe to have been your company's greatest contribution to the fine turf industry?

Weed Free was one of the first contract spraying companies to employ shrouded booms and the first to commission specialised spraying units to carry them. We have led the industry in the concept of applying pesticides safely in windy conditions. We are one of the few companies to pass on our knowledge through our training courses.



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