

Introduction of minimum qualification for full greenkeeper membership

The BIGGA Board of Management reaffirmed its intention to introduce a minimum qualification for Full Greenkeeper Membership of the Association at its meeting held on 26 March 2002, at BIGGA House. After considering feedback from members who attended the Annual General Meeting, held in Harrogate, on 23 January 2002, together with inputs from the BIGGA Regions and Sections, the Board of Management decided to circulate their recommendations to all BIGGA members, asking for any feedback, before the recommendations are put to the 2003 Annual General Meeting.

Why introduce a minimum qualification?

The reasons for introducing a qualification for full greenkeeper membership are as follows:

- It is Government policy that all adult workers, in all industries, should hold or be working towards, at least, an N/SVQ Level 2, or equivalent, qualification
- The GTC is encouraging employers of greenkeepers to train all new entrants to N/SVQ Level 2 Sportsturf
- BIGGA aims to improve the qualifications and status of greenkeepers
- Greenkeepers want greater recognition and better pay
- Anyone working as a greenkeeper at a golfing establishment should be competent i.e. should be able to do the job without supervision
- Assessment of competence leads to qualification

Feedback from the BIGGA Market Research Study 2001, indicated that members felt that strengthening the link between qualifications and BIGGA membership would help to differentiate between members and non members, thus strengthening BIGGA's general standing as a genuinely professional organisation.

N/SVQ Level 2 Sportsturf comprises 7 Units which include basic greenkeeping tasks such as mowing, raking, brushing, scarifying, applying top dressing, fertilising, repairing divots, irrigation, applying pesticides, rolling, course preparation, machinery, construction, estate maintenance and plant identification. Therefore N/SVQ Level 2 Sportsturf shows that the holder can perform all basic greenkeeping tasks, without supervi-



sion, at work, to National Standards.

The proposal to introduce a minimum qualification for BIGGA membership would not bar anyone from becoming a member of the Association.

Being able to join a professional organisation should increase membership applications not reduce them.

Background Information

All current greenkeeper members of BIGGA would be given full qualified greenkeeper membership.

All new recruits to the Industry, not currently members, applying for full greenkeeper membership, from the date of approval by the AGM, eg. 1 February 2003, would need a minimum qualification of N/SVQ Level 2 Sportsturf or other relevant qualification eg. HND plus experience.

Anyone who does not hold a minimum qualification of N/SVQ Level 2 or equivalent, who is not currently a member of BIGGA, who applies for membership after 1 February 2003, would be offered Greenkeeper Assistant membership.

As the salary of Greenkeeper Assistants would, probably be lower, they should pay a reduced membership subscription of £10 less than the prevailing rates for Green Staff.

Greenkeeper Members and Greenkeeper Assistant Members would receive the same membership benefits.

Greenkeeper Assistant members could request to be upgraded to full greenkeeper membership once they become qualified.

Any full greenkeeper member who is unqualified and leaves the Association for five years or more would be offered Greenkeeper Assistant Membership on reapplying.

All full greenkeeper members, whether qualified or not, would be enrolled onto the BIGGA CPD Scheme.

All Greenkeeper Assistant members would have their membership

category reviewed after 5 years.

All full greenkeeper members should be granted continued membership if they continue to pay a subscription and work as a greenkeeper, golf course manager, estate manager or other related job, at a golfing establishment.

Those greenkeepers who have held full greenkeeper membership but are not currently working as a greenkeeper at a golfing establishment but remain connected with the Association, greenkeeping or the fine turf industry, should be granted continued full membership at the Board of Management's discretion.

Any person employed in the keeping of the green at a golfing establishment, who has ten years experience or greater should, on application for membership, be granted full greenkeeper membership at the discretion of the Board of Management.

Conclusion

The introduction of a minimum qualification for greenkeeper membership of BIGGA would not affect current members, unless they left the Association for more than five years and they were not qualified.

Introduction of a minimum qualification for greenkeeper membership should improve the status of members within the Industry and enhance the reputation of BIGGA. For example, Golf Professionals who are members of the PGA are all qualified. Full Greenkeeper Membership would show employers that the greenkeeper is qualified.

The Standing Committee on Greenkeepers Pay and Conditions of Service already recommends that new recruits to the Industry should be paid a 'training salary' until such time as they become qualified. Therefore, unqualified Greenkeeper Assistants would receive lower rates of pay until such time as they could 'do the job'.

Recruitment of trainee greenkeepers should improve if they could see a defined career path in a professional industry.

The term 'greenkeeper' currently includes anyone maintaining a golf course whether they can actually do the job or not. Greenkeeping is a skilled occupation and the term 'greenkeeper' should indicate that the person is skilled, competent and qualified to work on a golf course.



BIGGA welcomes...

Scottish Region

Alan Black, North
Stephen Brogan, West
Benjamin Brookes, North
Craig Drummond, West
Scott Frame, West
Colin Kearney, West
David Lawrence, North
Paul Marshall, North
Kenneth Morgan, Ayrshire

Northern Region

James Bunting, N West
Jonathan Evans, N Wales
Paul Hardy, N West
Mark Hillaby, N West
Karl Peak, N West
James Povey, Sheffield

Midland Region

Jamie Barden, Mid Anglia
David Bignell, Mid Anglia
Ross Carter, Midland
Kenneth Fletcher, E of England
Christopher Gould, Midland
Neil Green, E of England
Stuart Hall, Midland
Lawrence Ryan, Mid Anglia

South East Region

Dane Sandford, E Anglia
Nathan Kidd, E Anglia
Derek Lane, London
John Mackey, Surrey
Mark Pisani, Surrey
Matthew Winter, E Anglia
Darren Woodward, Surrey

S West & S Wales Region

Robin Collins, S Coast
Martyn Heath, S West
Luke Hill, S West
Paul Jenkins, S West
James Jones, S West
James Mcentee, S Coast
Ronald Mitchell, S Coast
Douglas Pringle, S Coast
Anthony Riddle, S West
Darren Saunders, S Coast

International

Erik Sjostrom, Norway
Kurt Sams, USA
Marty Rowe, Canada

Associate Members

Stephen Toon, N Scotland
Christopher Hill, Northern
Simon Banks, E Midland
Terry Humphries, Surrey
David Mathews, S Wales
Michael Delany, S Ireland
Peter Dunning, Midland
Tony Kvedaras, E of England
Robert Page, Midland
Alestair Rathbone, BB&O
Julie Wall, Midland
Martin Pisani, Surrey
Philip Armitage, Northern
Paul Newton, N West
Jane Whiting, E of England
Kenneth Draper, Dev & C'Wales
Gareth Duncie, S Wales

May's Membership Draw Winner



Just introduce one or more new greenkeeping members to BIGGA and your name will be placed into a draw to win a fantastic BIGGA Clock/calculator/calendar and alarm.

Our congratulations go to May's winner, Brian Hillen, of Drumpellier Golf Club.

TIME TO TALK
www.bigga.org.uk

Visit www.bigga.org.uk and check out the latest chat from the greenkeeping industry

FOR GREENKEEPERS BY GREENKEEPERS CHAT GREENKEEPERS

Contact Rachael Palmer, BIGGA's Membership Services Officer on 01347 833800 or via email: rachael_p@bigga.co.uk