

# TALKING HEADS

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Compiled by Malcolm Huntington MBE

# 1

### Does your club have a Health and Safety Policy?



Name: Ian Bell  
Course: Glencorse Golf Club, Penicuik  
Region: Scotland  
Course type: Parkland, 18 holes  
Staff: Head Greenkeeper, plus five

Yes. We have had one for about five years.



Name: Andrew Boyd  
Course: Bridlington Golf Club, East Yorkshire  
Region: Northern  
Course type: Parkland  
Staff: Head Greenkeeper, plus three

We have had a Health and Safety policy for four years.



Name: Robert Rees  
Course: Aldwickbury Park, Harpenden, Herts  
Region: Midland  
Course type: Parkland, 27 holes  
Staff: Course Manager, plus four

We do. One has been in operation since the course was opened nine years ago.



Name: Gareth Roberts  
Course: Hankley Common, near Farnham, Surrey  
Region: South East  
Course type: Heathland, nine holes  
Staff: Course Manager, plus five, plus part-timer

We do now. A company came in last year to advise us on H&S matters and we did some ourselves before that.



Name: Paul Knight  
Course: Shanklin and Sandown Golf Club, Isle of Wight  
Region: South West and South Wales  
Course type: Heathland and parkland, 18 holes  
Staff: Course Manager, plus six

Yes, we have had a policy for about five years.



Name: Jim Eager  
Course: Royal Belfast Golf Club  
Region: Northern Ireland  
Course type: Parkland, 18 holes, plus four grass tennis courts  
Staff: Course Manager, plus seven

Yes, we have had one for six years.

# 2

**Are you in favour of the more stringent H&S legislation which is now in place?**

To a certain extent, yes. I think we go a bit overboard on risk assessment at times and we should rely more on common sense. At the same time there can't be too much care when it comes to applying pesticides.

It very much depends on what the legislation is aimed at. Some of it is over the top in my view, but I am a big believer in H&S.

Yes. So far as H&S are concerned I don't think you can be too safe. Maybe one or two things are over the top and it is getting more difficult to carry out certain activities.

Yes to a large extent, but common sense must prevail in some areas.

Most certainly. We have to keep up to date on machinery and all the bits and pieces in the greenkeeper's shed.

Yes, as long as it is sensible. Some of the H&S goes a bit too far in my opinion, an example being a restriction of cutting tee banks over a certain number of degrees.

# 3

**How often are you visited by the Health and Safety Executive?**

I have been in this post for eight years and in that time we have had only two visits.

I have had a visit in recent months and I receive a visit twice a year from a Health and Safety advisor. I am the H&S co-ordinator for our club and try to meet with the committee on a monthly basis.

We had a visit late last year and we would normally receive someone on an annual basis.

Nobody has visited us for the last seven years or so.

Only once a year.

We have a visit once per year and sit down to discuss anything we are not happy with to try to sort out any problems.

# 4

**How much time do you devote to carrying out Risk Assessments and form filling compared to 10 years ago?**

Ten years ago it was virtually nil. Now I would think that I spend two to three days a month filling in forms and talking about risk assessments with the latest machinery etc.

I would say 200 per cent more now compared with ten years ago. There is a fair amount of form filling and I update risk assessment once a year.

Ten years ago it was practically nil, though I wasn't a Head Greenkeeper then. I now spend a day a week on a combination of staff appraisal, form filling etc. I am keen on training as it brings more professionalism into the job eventually.

Hardly any time was devoted to this ten years ago, but now I would say I do three times as much including perhaps a couple of days each month.

Much more time. I spend several hours over the course of a month sitting down and talking to staff. We discuss the risks involved and talk it through together.

Ten years ago virtually nothing. We now have an annual risk assessment and keep everything up to date. I spend at least a day a month filling in forms. We also have thorough training sessions from manufacturers' representatives when we buy new machinery.

# 5

**How do you ensure that your staff comply with H&S regulations?**

We keep a very close watch on this. I have two deputies and we always impress on the younger members of staff in particular the need to be wary. We constantly keep an eye on personal protective equipment.

We write everything down and all staff have a copy. Updates are also done on any new machinery which comes out.

My staff go through appraisals about H&S and other aspects with regard to their abilities and this is done on a three-monthly basis to see how they progress. I am very training minded.

We have documents which are given to each member of staff and they sign to say that they understand them. I also watch what is happening.

I keep a close watch on them. We all know about the risks and I make sure, for example, that they have their hard hats, which are combined with ear defenders, on for certain jobs on the course.

By training them. Everything is written down and each member of staff has a copy of the H&S regulations.