

# TALKING HEADS

Compiled by Malcolm Huntington MBE

## ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS



Name: Stuart Hogg  
Course: Fortrose and Rosemarkie Golf Club, Inverness  
Region: Scotland  
Course type: Links, 18 holes  
Staff: Course Manager, plus three

Does your club have an environmental/ecological management plan?

Yes, we are committed to Green and were the seventh club in Scotland and 16th in Europe to be recognised.



Name: Paul Eddlestone  
Course: Fishwick Hall Golf Club, near Preston  
Region: Northern  
Course type: Parkland, 18 holes  
Staff: Course Manager, plus three, plus casual labour

We are in the process of putting one together and are very keen to move forward on this.



Name: Phil Gates  
Course: Trentham Golf Club, Trentham, near Stoke  
Region: Midland  
Course type: Parkland, 18 holes  
Staff: Course Manager, plus seven

We do, backed up by English Nature and STRI. We are one of 70 clubs visited by an environmental official each year.



Name: Gary Johnstone  
Course: Southerdown Golf Club, Bridgend, South Wales  
Region: South West and South Wales  
Course type: Downland links, 18 holes  
Staff: Course Manager, plus five

Not at the moment, but with one of our members being chairman of the Glamorgan Wildlife Trust and arranging a visit from an ecologist, we are in the process of getting one. We tried to get some wild flowers growing but sheep on our common land soon got rid of those.



Name: Peter McMorran  
Course: Farnham Golf Club, Surrey  
Region: South East  
Course type: Heathland/parkland, 18 holes  
Staff: Head Greenkeeper, plus six

Not at the present moment, but we are working on recommendations from English Nature and STRI and have felled 300 trees so that we can establish heath grasses and heather on the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 11th holes.



Name: Jim Eager  
Course: Royal Belfast Golf Club, Holywood, Co Down  
Region: Northern Ireland  
Course type: Parkland, 18 holes  
Staff: Course Manager, plus seven

Not at present, but we are aware of the factors surrounding these issues. We have conservation volunteers, who make recommendations on the woodland etc.

# 1

# 2

**Are you aware of the variety of wildlife using the course?**

Very much so. We have a big population of skylarks and also starlings, linnets, greenfinches, thrushes and yellow hammers among others, in addition to some rabbits.

Yes, we certainly are. In fact we have identified and listed the wildlife which includes rabbits, deer, voles, birds, foxes and squirrels, We also have a badger sett.

Very much so. We have a wide range including rabbits, goshawks, buzzards, which are looking for nesting places in nearby woodland, green finches, nuthatches and goldcrest and many others. We work hard with nest boxes for owls and bats.

We have Dartford warblers, sparrowhawks, yellowhammers green woodpeckers, buzzards, jackdaws, skylarks, crows, foxes, rabbits voles shrews, stoats, adders and many more.

We had a report done by the local council and have a record of all wild life, examples being rabbits, roe deer, foxes, moles, birds, including kestrels and woodpeckers.

We are indeed. We have a lot of rabbits and some badgers and foxes, the odd pheasant and squirrel.

# 3

**Are the membership concerned with the ecological enhancement of the course?**

We have their full backing. Over the last six or seven years we have done course reports and the management plan for winter is always announced in September or October. We also have a page on our web site.

We are making our members more aware of this and are trying to educate them by highlighting issues and showing them the broad band of an ecological plan.

A certain percentage are aware of it. I let members know via the notice board about planned winter work.

They are and we are doing as much as possible, but members are well aware that we are very restricted because we are on common land We have 40 commoners who have the rights to graze anything from goats to sheep and horses, although only two of them are active, grazing sheep.

Our chairman has done seminars for our members, making them aware of work done on the course and explaining why we are taking trees down. This provides a better environment for the development of turf because shade has caused us problems.

Yes they certainly are. If we are planning work on the course we inform members via the club notice board and they are very quick to give us their views.

# 4

**Do you have an organic waste policy?**

Because we are a links course we have very little organic waste. What few clippings we have we feed back on to course pathways.

Not as yet, but we are trying to implement one.

We have just started to develop one with compost boxes on the cards at some point this winter.

We collect grass clippings, turn it constantly and use it for top dressing. We collect bottles, cans etc in containers and these are recycled.

We have discussed with English Nature and the STRI about recycling and the cutting and collection of grass. Also the areas we cut once or twice a year enabling us to develop plant life over a period of time.

Not as yet, although it has been discussed. There are bottle banks nearby.

# 5

**Is the current environmental legislation regarding waste management, chemical usage and protected species/habitats to be effective?**

I think it is effective. We make minimal use of chemicals and fertilisers. Some courses have to rely on them at the moment, but I believe everyone will need to alter their ways sometime in the not too distant future because of the changes that are taking place.

Very much so. Legislation and government bodies are helping us to become aware of ecological issues in general.

I do, very much so as far as greenkeepers are concerned, but then are a few niggles from other members of the public who can buy chemicals over the counter. There has been a good education promotion by BIGGA over the last five to ten years.

I don't think there are enough people going round golf course enforcing this. We don't use anything harmful to sheep and don't use fungicides. We haven't any disease problems and spray only once a year when the sheep are taken off the course.

Yes I do. This is very important because of the safety of individuals in chemicals and waste collection. We don't have any protected species on our course, but obviously we would look after them carefully if we did.

Yes, it certainly is in this neck of the woods. We have had a waste disposal company coming for the past two years. We have a skip and we shoot rabbits which cause us a few problems. We are keen to protect virtually everything else and don't allow people on to the course who may give us problems.