

# GTC News



**As the GTC welcomes Nick Bisset to the Chair of its Technical Committee, David Golding, the GTC's Education Director, reflects on their long-term association in the sector and how they both feel effective communication is so vital, in today's competitive world of the golf business.**

My first dealings with Nick, were while he was working as a turf lecturer at Askham Bryan College, near York and in his spare time he was administering a GTC, without funding. I was a greenkeeper, having completed an apprenticeship which was achieved by working three years on a golf course and towards the end of the term, a week at Bingley, as we affectionately called the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI).

Oh how times have changed! Nick has now retired from full-time college work but I am pleased to say (with his wife Pat's permission), he is still involved with the sector and his experience will prove invaluable to the GTC and me.

The GTC enjoys funding from the English, Scottish, Welsh Golf Unions, BIGGA, R&A and PGA European Tour and this has allowed for full time administration, to make the progress that Nick was planning for back in the late 70's and early 80's.

As for me, yes, I am proud of the fact that from an apprentice, back in the days of walking behind that damn overgreen mower, at Buxton & High Peak Golf Club, I can now front the sector to ensure greenkeepers and golf club employers can all access education and training, guaranteeing a better working and playing environment.

Having spent enough time reminiscing, one thing I have learned through life, is that you are only as good as the team around you.

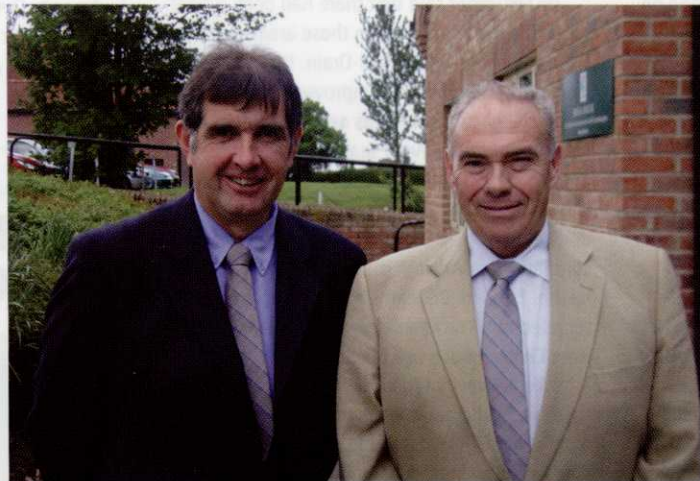
I firmly believe, that if golf clubs adopt a team spirit within the club from the owner or committee, then everybody stands to gain.

Throughout all greenkeeper qualifications, communication skills are featured, as well as the more technical aspects of the awards.

The R&A's now dated but still relevant "Way Forward" guidance document highlighted the importance of good communications throughout golf clubs and BIGGA are forever promoting the subject and arranging courses to help greenkeepers become more confident in communicating with colleagues and their employers.

The GTC through its Board and technical committees are always looking to how we can encourage golf clubs to adopt more of a team approach to the day to day running of the facility.

We know that there are more and more golf clubs looking to recruit competent Secretaries/General Managers, Professional Golfers, Catering Managers and



David Golding, left, and Nick Bisset

of course a Golf Course Manager, to ensure the services to the customers are to a standard that makes members content and not looking to move elsewhere and that visitors want to play their course and enjoy the facilities.

The GTC is aware of how the greenkeepers are very passionate about "their" golf course but we are also ensuring that they must be aware of the "bigger picture" and are actively promoting, through training, the importance of promoting the team approach, both within the greenkeeping team and also the club management personnel.

All the current discussions relating to sustainability in golf course maintenance and management, can only be achieved if there is a team commitment.

Yes, Course Managers can influence Course Policy Documents, Health & Safety and Environmental policies but it is for employers to promote a team culture within the whole facility.

The GTC will continue to raise this culture within greenkeeper education and training, however, everybody involved in the management of golf clubs has a duty to encourage an environment conducive to a pleasant, effective and efficient golf club.

Many greenkeepers who attended Askham Bryan College or the very early BIGGA Management Courses, when Nick presented his unique training session on communication skills, will ever forget just how much importance was put on presentation!

I for one, am looking forward to working closely with Nick and I know the GTC will benefit from his enthusiasm and experience.

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