

Learning & Development

Key Sponsorship:

UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF GREENKEEPERS

The funding provided by Gold and Silver Key Sponsors is used to produce training and career aids, DVDs, CD Roms, field guides and provide refunds for training fees and subsidised learning and development courses. The funding also helps support seminars, workshops, courses, the lending library, careers advice, posters and manuals.

Many young greenkeepers owe their career progression to the assistance they've had from the Learning and Development Fund. An equal number of established greenkeepers have also been able to access the fund to continue their professional development thanks to the donations of the Gold and Silver Key Sponsors.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING KEY SPONSORS



GOLDEN KEY



Golden Key Individual Members

JH Greasley; WJ Rogers; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Iain A Macleod; Tom Smith; Frank Newberry; Christopher Lomas MG, Lee Strutt MG.



SILVER KEY



Silver Key Individual Members

Ade Archer; Steven Tierney; Paul Jenkins; Iain Barr; Richard McGlynn; Steve Dixon; Sam Langrick.

Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development provides a departmental update...



Aged 16 & 17
£3.53 per hour
Aged 18 to 21
£4.77 per hour
Aged 22 and over
£5.73 per hour

There may be other deductions that have to be taken into consideration, for further information call the national minimum wage helpline on 0845 6000 678 or go to www.businesslink.gov.uk/employment.

So much for the summer - here in the North we've had nothing but rain, even the ducks are wearing wellies! By the time you read this, Rachael will have hopefully survived her week at The Open (not drowned!) and have returned to us fit and well.

Toro Student of the Year 2008



The whistle-stop tour of the country is complete and eight finalists have been selected to go forward for the National Final at BIGGA HOUSE on Monday, September 15. My thanks go to the other judges, George MacDonald, Trevor Chard and John Pike from Toro and Iain Macleod, Tony Smith and Les Howkins MG who acted on behalf of BIGGA as the greenkeeping representative. The calibre of the candidates was outstanding this year and we had a difficult job selecting the finalists, but we did in the end! This year's finalists are:

James Canham – Myerscough College
Paul Carella – GOSTA Training Ltd
David Jones – Warwickshire College
Barrie Lewis – Oatridge College
George Pendrich – Elmwood College
Graeme Roberts – Merrist Wood College
Greg Wellings – Reaseheath College
Mathew Wormald – Brooksby College

Full details of the finalists will be featured in next month's magazine.

The R&A Benchmarking Service



Take a look at The R&A benchmarking service, a useful on-line tool that has been developed to help those managing golf courses to assess their level of sustainability, costs, playability and maintenance practices.

The service allows you to track your course's progress from year to year and establish trends or changes that occur, it also allows you to reference your course against similar courses. The information held in the system is completely anonymous. The service is free of charge and can be accessed via www.bestcourseforgolf.org.

National Minimum Wage

The national minimum wage rate is due to increase from 1 October 2008. The new rates will be:

Learning & Development Updates

Lee Strutt MG has passed his examinations with the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association to become an 'Accredited Golf Superintendent'. Lee, who became a Master Greenkeeper in 2001, will soon have more letters after his name than are actually in his name! Congratulations Lee!

BIGGA Library

Several new books have been added to the BIGGA library since last month:

Making Room for Native Pollinators – Matthew Shepard
Building the USGA Green. Tips for Success – James F Moore
2007 Turfgrass and Environmental Research Summary – Jeff L Nus Ph.D
Wildlife Links – Improving Golf's Environmental Game – USGA
Water Quality and Quantity Issues for Turfgrass in Urban Landscapers – James Beard and Michael P. Kenna (donated to the BIGGA Library by James Beard)

Useful Website

You may have seen the adverts on television that the government have produced to promote the opportunities open to adult learners. I scribbled down the website following the last advert I saw and checked it out at www.lsc.gov.uk/inourhands. This site gives information for, and access to a wide range of education opportunities and available funding that is of use for employees and employers. It doesn't only look at key skills such as Maths and English, but also at improving skills related to your career to help you move up the career ladder. If you can't get online, there is a telephone hotline number 0800 011 30 30. It's all there for the taking, so go and get it!