



FEATURE

BIGGA'S GOLDEN AND SILVER KEY SPONSORS TO A MILLION AND BEYOND

BIGGA's Golden and Silver Key programme will soon have generated £1 million and many many greenkeepers have benefited from the generosity of its contributors.

BIGGA's Golden and Silver Key Programme has become one of the Association's flagship initiatives since it was introduced in 1992 and it epitomises everything that is good about the greenkeeping industry - everyone working together and supporting each other for the benefit of the industry.

In which other industry would you find the companies which supply goods and machinery to the industry also contributing to the funding the training and development of the people who work within that industry?

Since 1992 BIGGA has received £977,898 from Golden and Silver Key supporters and in the next year current projections predict that the one million pound barrier will be breached - a remarkable feat and one which everyone in the greenkeeping industry should be incredibly proud.

Think about it for one minute. The people who supply the industry with the tools to do the job also provide the resources to train and develop the people who use those tools. But what is truly commendable is that it's not just practical training in using a particular piece of kit that is provided, it is much, much wider than that. Let's look at what BIGGA's Training and Development Fund has facilitated.



Videos/DVDs

Initially produced as videos but latterly DVDs with the videos transferred to DVD format.

- Golf Course Preparation
- Golf Course Ecology
- Golf Green Reconstruction
- Irrigation
- Raising the Standard in Mowing Management
- Raising the Standard in Spray Applications



Field Guides

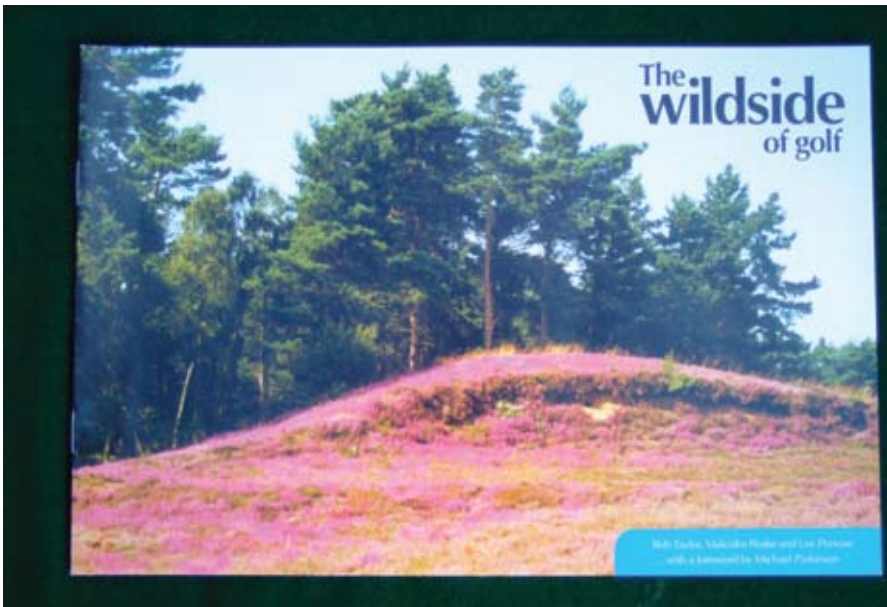
- Major Diseases and Pests for Fine Turf
- The Identification of Golf Course Grasses
- Trees and Shrubs on the Golf Course
- The Identification and Uses of the Main Grasses Found in Golf Course Rough
- The Identification and Damage Caused by Mammals and Birds





The BIGGA Library

- Currently standing at 905 books and constantly growing.



Booklets

- Wildside of Golf.



Regional Training

Over 800 greenkeepers have been trained in 24 different subjects

Refund of Fees Scheme

Set up in 1998 the Fund has given 112 BIGGA members financial assistance with education and training courses.

Education and Training Subsidies

This has provided BIGGA Regions and Sections with informal support for their seminars and training courses. Since last year this has been formalised and 26 events have received financial support.

In the Pipeline

There will be more field guides, the newest two covering Weeds and Ecology.

- A Greenkeeper Accreditation Scheme which will enable BIGGA members to attain an accredited status
- Develop training courses for Bite Sized Learning based on NVQ Standards and in line with the National and European Qualification Frameworks
- Develop an Individual on-line Continuing Professional Development (CPD) system

Quotes from donors, recipients and training providers...



Ronnie Bunting, Ballochmyle Golf Club

"I received financial assistance from the Learning and Development Fund for my SVQ Level 4 course and was among the first in Scotland to sit with GOSTA Training."

"I wouldn't have been able to take the course without a subsidy from the Learning and Development Fund. It wouldn't have happened."

"It is difficult for smaller members' clubs to justify funding such courses as the training budget tends to concentrate on the younger staff, so I am delighted that companies within the Golden and Silver Key Supporters provide money for people like me to advance our knowledge and careers."

Murray Mannall, Slaley Hall H&GC

"I really wanted to develop my education but had to fund my own training. As I wasn't earning much I contacted BIGGA to ask for financial support. Through the refund of fees scheme I have received up to 80% of my course fees and this has enabled me to complete my Chainsaw Maintenance and Cross Cutting, Felling of Small Trees and my PA6 Spraying Certificates. I really do appreciate what BIGGA, with the support of the Golden and Silver Key companies, has done for my career."

Dave Steward, Marketing Manager, Scotts Professional

"Advances in technology require all of us to adapt the way we work and the products we use. Because Scotts' products are at the forefront of fertiliser technology, we're committed to the ongoing education of end-users and are proud to support BIGGA's education and development provision for greenkeepers through our continued Golden Key membership."

Peter Mansfield, General Manager, Toro Turf Products, Lely UK

"Our Golden Key sponsorship is a great way for us to support greenkeepers at all levels in their professional development. It's vital that they get the best training aids and learning opportunities to progress. These are delivered effectively through BIGGA's funding programme and we are happy that Toro and Lely UK's contributions are helping ensure that this important initiative is such a big success."

Dave Roberts, National Sales Manager, Kubota UK

"Kubota see the Golden and Silver Key programme as a great way of putting something back into the industry at grass roots level and because it does support learning and development it was all the more important that we became involved."

Chris Bothwell, Training Manager at COSTA Training, Glasgow

"The funding from the Golden and Silver Key Learning and Development Fund was a huge boost to the industry."

"We market all our students each year tell them which courses we are putting on and letting them know where there may be funding assistance. BIGGA's support is a large part of that."

"We tend to find that younger greenkeepers can receive funding from other sources like the Independent Learning Accounts which offer subsidy for people earning less than £18,000 per annum and for things like Chainsaw and Spraying courses the clubs are often happy to put their staff on the course and pay the difference."

"For Course Managers seeking to take N/SVQ Level 4 or HNC or HND there is not generally funding available and the Golden and Silver Key Development fund often helps people who would otherwise be unable to fund the courses totally themselves."

David Withers Managing Director Ransomes Jacobsen.

"As we look back over recent years it is clear how much work BIGGA have done in raising the profile of greenkeeping in general and the role of greenkeepers in particular."

"One of the successes of this has been in the increase in greenkeepers wanting to further their careers in terms of continued professional development. This can only be good for the game of golf and the status of the profession as a whole."

"The Golden and Silver Key programmes are a vital component in helping to fund ambitious greenkeepers in fulfilling their aspirations. As such we at Ransomes Jacobsen are delighted to commit funding to support BIGGA's members."

David Hart, Commercial & Consumer Equipment Division Sales, John Deere UK

"It's great to be able to support the golf industry and in some way to give something back to our largest groundcare customer segment, and to help raise the profile of the industry. We are especially pleased that our financial support is used for BIGGA's training and education activities, as we believe that training is the key to the success of any professional business."

Golden Key Supporters

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www.scottspromotional.com
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www.europeantour.com
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www.ransomesjacobsen.com

Golden Key Individual Members

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

Silver Key Supporters

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Silver Key Individual Members

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