



# Greenkeepers Training Committee



David Golding, Education Director,  
with a monthly update from the GTC

## Happy New Year – Is it?

**Never has this term been spoken with so much hope rather than just a passing annual obligatory greeting!**

So what shall we do? Wait and see if something happens to make it a happy new year or actually think positively and contribute to making it a happy new year!

At the time of writing this article pre the festive season, the GTC has no official presence at Harrogate Week, no sponsorship of the Continue to Learn programme, no exhibition stand; all decisions made by the Board, following a savage reduction in funding support from various sources.

Cuts have been made to the GTC's budget and only a few are mentioned above, however, the GTC's work to have a range of nationally recognised qualifications including an apprenticeship scheme, which has benefited many golf clubs and greenkeepers over many years continues and hopefully "new income" is at last on the horizon.

The GTC, since the R&A's decision to phase out its core funding to the GTC over a three-year period from 2005, has explored many avenues to make up over £100,000 per annum in lost income.

We all read John Pemberton's Editorial in the December magazine regarding the golfing industry having to realise that more funding is required for greenkeeping and John, Donald Steel, the GTC Chairman, and fellow GTC Directors (representatives from the Home Unions) are also asking the same question, how do we raise more funds especially from the increasing number of nomad golfers to help provide a better service to golf club employers, employees and give golfers, the customer, better conditions to enjoy their game of golf?

It has taken years for the GTC to establish the structure for greenkeeper education and training in the UK with a set of qualifications, which are the envy of many coun-

tries. However, it wouldn't take it long for it all to collapse.

So, at last a breakthrough for the GTC! All formal education and training courses and the various schemes leading to a recognised qualification attract government funding and this is where employers as well as greenkeepers really benefit from the routine core work of the GTC.

It is Further Education Colleges and private training Centres who access government funding to provide courses relating to the various approved formal qualifications and schemes at a much reduced cost.

The GTC is involved at every stage of qualification development and review from the new 14-19 Environmental and Land based Diploma, through the changes in NVQ's to Work Based Diplomas and Higher Education college based courses/qualifications.

We have to ensure we continue to attract youngsters into the career of greenkeeping and continue to maintain and improve access to the various qualifications including the apprenticeship scheme.

## Confused?

I am pleased to report that despite the ongoing changes the Government keeps proposing for qualifications the GTC has, with the support of individuals working in colleges and Centres, maintained the national occupational standards for apprentices to Degree students.

The three skill sets are also maintained for greenkeeper, golf course supervisor and golf course manager.

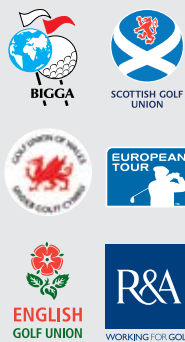
## Now for the breaking news:

City & Guilds – NPTC, as the traditional leading Awarding Body for the Land base sector in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, will during 2010 be including the GTC logo on all its Work Based Diplomas for greenkeepers and part of every registration fee will be paid to the GTC.

## In Brief

Awarding body agreement gives industry due reward after many years of developing greenkeeping standards - David explains this landmark partnership.

The GTC is funded by:



This fee, to be paid annually, is "new money" for the GTC and while very welcome this proposal has greater benefits to the education and training system.

The GTC training manual will be the only document that approved centres will use and the learning materials will be made available to every learner on the greenkeeper and golf course supervisor training courses.

This is "new income" for the GTC, but I certainly hope readers see this as recognition for the sector after nearly 50 years of determination to establish the sector's own branded qualifications, not only as a financial reward but it also confirms it is in control of its own standards.

There are other Awarding Bodies that will be looking to offer similar Diplomas but the C&G - NPTC - GTC partnership will be the only Diploma that has the industry's full endorsement.

Discussions are also underway with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) to mirror the C&G-NPTC - GTC agreement. In principle the branding of the SVQ's has been agreed but a further meeting is planned to finalise the detail of an agreement.

Having attended so many meetings in recent years fighting the greenkeeping sectors corner and finally gaining recognition at the highest level for the standards we all seek, I can finally start to believe in Father Christmas and just hope that 2010 is a very HAPPY NEW YEAR for all of us!

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## BREAKING NEWS:

The GTC's Training Manual and Learning Materials to be adapted for use by Groundsmen and women at all NPTC Centres offering the new Work Based Diplomas in Groundsmanship! More to follow...