

Chairman's Word

Chairman Paul Worster addresses an open letter of thanks to all the clubs and individuals that support BIGGA.

To: Golf Club Owners and Operators, Secretary/Managers,
Cc - Course Managers and Greenkeepers.
From: Paul Worster, BIGGA Chairman
Subject: My personal thanks

**Dear Colleagues,
I am writing to express my personal thanks to you for supporting the Association and to let you know how BIGGA can help your club. I would like a few moments to outline how we can help your greenkeepers to be the very best.**

If you pay for your greenkeepers to be members of this Association you are providing for them:

- Access to the best professional skills training and development available in Europe
- Personal Accident Cover
- Access to professionally developed, custom designed 'best practice' tools and techniques
- A modern CPD Scheme designed to promote full engagement in the Association
- Legal, Stress, and Debt Counselling Helplines for them and their families to use

In short if you pay for your greenkeepers to be members of the Association you are providing for your club a Greens Team that has the potential to be the best informed and the best educated in Europe.

Having a well trained, motivated greenkeeping team will produce for you a high standard of course maintenance and will help your golf club to achieve a reputation for fine conditioning and excellent presentation. I believe that this will make your club a more attractive option not only for potential members but also those golfers looking to play different golf courses.

BIGGA is also keen to support every club in the UK regardless of location or status

The Association is not just for Course Managers. It places exactly the same importance on every greenkeeper. BIGGA is also keen to support every club in the UK regardless of location or status.

BIGGA cannot help you to control the weather, but it can help you to react and respond to rapidly chang-

ing conditions and circumstances.

For the future, BIGGA is taking strides towards becoming the very best membership Association it can, so that your greenkeepers can also become the very best.

BIGGA's Mission Statement compels it to be at the forefront of efforts to advance the greenkeeping profession. It reads: 'BIGGA is dedicated to the continuing professional development of its members and in serving their needs will strive through education and training for standards of excellence in golf course management throughout the greenkeeping profession.'

You should be able to check or validate the standards you expect of the people you employ

The Association is keen to help employers by enhancing its Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme. BIGGA is keen to establish a CPD accreditation scheme that will enable you to recruit and select greenkeepers whose professional standards have been tested and recognised. Just as you personally can choose to hire a qualified and accredited gas fitter or electrician you should be able to check or validate the standards you expect of the people you employ.

Greenkeeping has always been a profession that has to be up to date, responsive and qualified. The ever changing and developing UK and European Legislation on things like pesticides; health and safety and the search for 'Best Practice' are just a few examples that clearly indicate the need for continuous professional improvement.

Lawyers, doctors and people in other professions have long been expected to have to undertake a certain number of days training and development each year to make sure their skills and knowledge stay up to date. Greenkeepers are no different.

You will be able to compare Greenkeepers' qualifications with confidence

BIGGA can and will use its leverage in the golf industry and in the 'game of golf' to help institute protocols and guidelines that will enable employers to recruit and select people with confidence at all levels in the profession from Assistant Greenkeeper to Course Manager.

In short you will be able to compare Greenkeepers qualifications with confidence because those qualifications and the status that they bring to each individual will be upgraded and updated every year.

The game of golf needs to utilise BIGGA's services like never before

In this way BIGGA will enhance its services to employers. In these recent difficult times – both economic and climatic – the game of golf has suffered badly and may continue to do so for the foreseeable future. More than ever the game needs to respond, and that response must be to provide better services to the golfing customer. To do this clubs need better and more highly skilled people. The success of the Course Manager and his team are integral to the success of the facility.

This Association wants every club in the UK to be ready to face the future with the best possible chance of expansion or consolidation, of improved courses and facilities, offered at the best possible price. BIGGA wants every club in the UK to be able to say to its immediate neighbouring population – "We belong here. We are a resource to this community. The community is welcome here. All ages, all fitness levels. Come in and be a part of it."

On behalf of the Association I again say 'Thank you'. If you want to know more about how BIGGA can help you and your club I say 'Come and join us'. Come along to a BIGGA Regional Open Day. One will be coming to a venue close by in the near future.

If you prefer to write you can contact me direct on talktopaul@hotmail.co.uk. I look forward to telling you how BIGGA can serve you better by advancing the greenkeeping profession.

***Yours faithfully,
Paul Worster.***