



Greenkeepers Training Committee



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

For many years the role of Chairman of Green and Green Convener has been seen as the poisoned chalice at private members clubs and with few exceptions a short-term appointment or a "must do" position prior to moving on to be Club Captain.

Many readers will remember Jim Arthur, the wily Agronomist's thoughts on the Green Committee, when he constantly reminded clubs that "the best committees consist of an uneven number, and three is too many!"

He added:

a committee of one, gets things done

a committee of three, will wait and see

a committee of nine, wastes endless time

a committee of more, is an endless bore!

While there are nearly as many proprietary golf clubs in Britain as private members clubs, where often, it is a General Manager or the owner who will have direct contact with the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper, there are still hundreds of clubs where Chairman of Green and Green Conveners are elected as the direct link between the Directors, members and the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper.

The GTC is looking to work closer with the Golf Club Managers Association (GCMA) who we know have an element of "greenkeeping" in their training courses for Secretaries and Club Managers, however, the GTC believes it has a responsibility to support Chairmen of Green and Green Conveners to carry out their crucial role, hence the development of training courses.

I fully understand greenkeepers reading this will be thinking "what is the GTC is planning with Chairman of Green training courses" and I trust I can allay any fears by immediately stating the GTC does not intend to host courses to train our Course Managers.

Greenkeepers who, as volunteers, join committees to improve the busi-

ness, surely have to receive a level of training to ensure they are competent in the role they have been elected to carry out?

Donald Steel, the GTC Chairman, has just written an article and in the opening paragraph states:

"It has always been a strange anomaly that Golf Clubs appoint a highly qualified Head Greenkeeper to a specialist role and then tolerate highly unqualified members telling him where he is going wrong. Whereas, they are quite happy to accept a doctor's, solicitor's or stockbroker's view of things, golfers are quick to express themselves knowledgeably (so they think) on subjects as far ranging as fescues and fungi".

Clearly, the GTC through the Home Unions in association with BIGGA, are in a position to improved communications between employers and the Course Manager and the starting point has to be better guidance and courses designed and delivered by the GTC's Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers.

In previous GTC columns within GI, the GTC has promoted the SGU's 'Practical Guide for Green Conveners' and this booklet will form the basis for structured workshops to assist delegates to fully understand their role to liaise and work closely with the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper to maintain and develop the golf course to the satisfaction of the club membership.

The booklet can be viewed on the SGU's website www.scottishgolf.org/files/Green_Convener_2008.pdf or hard copies are available from the GTC or SGU.

The GTC is also aware that there have been courses available from various bodies in the past but clearly there is still much work to be done in this area and local provision appears to be the starting point.

The structure of the Home Unions lends itself to engaging the support of the County Unions to promote these types of workshops.

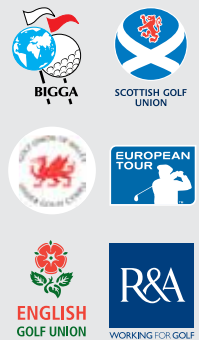
Another thorny subject is Health & Safety, which requires both

In Brief

David explains the GTC's thinking behind the development of training courses to help the much maligned individuals who truly want to understand more about what their Course Manager and Head Greenkeeper is proposing for the golf course based on their knowledge, experience and professional judgement.



The GTC is funded by:



employer and employee to take a level of responsibility to ensure the facility is a safe environment for members, visitors and staff. The GTC produced the H&S Guidance Booklet which, like the Green Convener booklet, sets out the guidelines, but workshops to compliment the guidance have proved so successful we are looking to promote workshops in this important area of golf course management.

An excellent example of this was a Health & Safety awareness workshop hosted in Durham by the Local Authority, attended by representatives from all but two clubs in the County. The feedback from the H&S workshop was excellent and again this needs to be rolled out throughout Britain.

There is a climate of golfing organisations working together more to share resources and experience which has to be a sensible approach and whilst the GTC's priority will always be to maintain the standards of greenkeeper education, training including qualifications and the apprenticeship scheme, the important roles and responsibilities of the employer must also be addressed.

Quality training provision for employers will also, as it is with greenkeeper training, be paramount on selecting trainers for these workshops and a current list of GTC's Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers can be found on the GTC's website. www.the-gtc.co.uk

Dates and venues for Chairman of Green – Green Convener workshops and Health and Safety awareness days will be circulated through the Unions and BIGGA as they are confirmed.

Contact Details

David Golding
GTC Education Director

01347 838640
david@the-gtc.co.uk

GTC
Aldwark Manor
Near York
YO61 1UF

www.the-gtc.co.uk

