

# GI GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

*Celebrating 25 years of BIGGA*

£5.20 JANUARY 2012

Inside...

## MOVING ON UP

We visit Harrogate a month early to assess the town's Golf Club

## A-Z OF HARROGATE WEEK

Take an alphabetic journey through the greatest show in turf

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The rise of digital technologies in greenkeeping

# Processionary Moth

Dr Terry Mabbett looks at the impact the oak processionary moth has had on Richmond Golf Club

ALSO INSIDE... RAGWORT : GREENS MOWERS : SMS





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Jim Croxton

#### Head of Learning & Development

Sami Collins  
sami@bigga.co.uk

#### Head of Membership Department

Tracey Maddison  
traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

#### Contact Us

BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Ane, York,  
YO61 1UF  
info@bigga.co.uk  
www.bigga.org.uk  
Tel – 01347 833800 | Fax – 01347 833801

### GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL

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Association Limited.

#### Editorial

#### Communications Manager / Editor

Scott MacCallum  
Tel – 01347 833800 Fax – 01347 833801  
scott@bigga.co.uk



#### Design

**Design and  
Production Editor**  
Tom Campbell

Tel – 01347 833800  
Fax – 01347 833801  
tom@bigga.co.uk



#### Advertising

**Sales Executive**  
Jill Rodham

Tel – 01347 833800  
Fax – 01347 833802  
jill@bigga.co.uk

#### Printing

Warners Midlands Plc, The Maltings, Manor  
Lane, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH  
Tel – 01778 391000 | Fax – 01778 394269

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# Get yourself to Harrogate

**Happy New Year. We may be in the depths of a recession which is showing no signs of ending but 2012 does contain some highlights that should keep us all interested.**

Aside from the London Olympics and the European Football Championships, closer to home, BIGGA celebrates its 25th birthday – a quarter century of providing education and raising the professional profile of greenkeepers.

The Silver Anniversary, along with an Exhibition to mark 100 Years of Greenkeeping Associations, will be celebrated at Harrogate this year. Look out for our new Anniversary logo.

The Continue to Learn programme this year is exceptional and if you are still undecided on whether or not to attend I would urge you to get pre-registered and along there. I've never met anyone who has regretted going to Harrogate.

The phrase "Lifelong learning" is one which you hear increasingly these days, but there can be few people to whom it is more relevant than Paul Mitchell, Head Greenkeeper, at Harrogate Golf Club.

Paul was a junior member of the club, who began working as a greenkeeper when he left school. He became Deputy Head Greenkeeper in the mid 80s and made sure he was attending BIGGA training courses and keeping himself educated and up to date. When the Head Greenkeeper retired Paul wasn't automatically given the job but had to go through an intensive interview process. Not having had an interview since he was a 15 year old, it was the BIGGA training courses and the fact that he was in tune with current greenkeeping developments that gave him the skills and belief to do well and he was offered the job at the ripe old age of 50.

Having been given that vote of confidence Paul has gone from strength to strength and, as you can read this month, so has Harrogate Golf Club.

On the same theme, we have an article on how technology has impacted on the greenkeeping industry with smart phones being almost as vital a greenkeeping tool as a hole cutter. It goes to reinforce the need to keep up to date with the requirements of the job. Whereas an ability to mow a straight line would be enough for you to stand out as a young apprentice at the beginning of a career, dealing with Spreadsheets, computerised irrigation systems and Safety Management Systems – you can also see news of this in this month's issue – to mark you out as a top Course Manager.

There can be few jobs where the jump between initial requirements of the job and those later on in a career as quite so vast and that is where BIGGA offers so much help. The training courses that the Association can provide ensures any gap in education can be filled at a fraction of the cost of similar courses in other industries, thanks to the support that BIGGA receives from its industry partners in the Gold Key Learning and Development Fund.

I hope you do have a successful 2012 and that I will have the opportunity to see you in Harrogate

Best wishes  
Scott MacCallum  
**Editor**



## JANUARY 2012

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The updated Safety Management System is launched this month.

## The rise of digital technologies in greenkeeping

Jim Cook looks at how the greenkeeping industry has embraced new technology

In most areas of modern life, digital technology does seem to be king. Be it at home with the internet and also the recent digitising of television, travelling with the aid of satellite navigation systems or communicating with smartphones, it is high on impossible to spend a day without coming into contact with digital technologies in some form or another.

The internet has been used for greenkeeping. We have all kinds of digital devices from small digital timers which make scheduling machinery maintenance schedules easier through digital thermometers, to the big one: digital irrigation systems.

Another common use is greenkeepers using smartphones to make certain tasks less tedious. Some take pictures of broken machinery parts while out on the course and send an email or photo to the manufacturer and have a replacement part delivered as soon as possible. Some use them to book out such things as former replacement cutters and send to just have a glance at the website device.

It would be hard to deny that using such methods can be a real time-saver and the benefits with regards communication are obvious.

So then, the question could be asked: is digital technology on the golf course another fad, even just part of the modern day greenkeeper's armoury or is it the grand scheme of things, a fad as history tells us, that will pass quickly than some new phones' batteries?

One greenkeeper who makes full use of digital technologies is Karl

Parry, Course Manager at Denbigh Golf Club in North Wales. He says: "I use my technology and gadgets and try to incorporate this into my job as much as possible. It makes my life easier and helps everything run smoothly on the golf course. I use a tablet so that when I'm out of the office, in seminars or at home, I can do such things as updating the daily diary, upload pictures onto our Facebook page or communicate with our Chairman."

"One of the best uses I have for the tablet is going Green Connect for meetings. I can have captions and speeches on the wide-screen television, in our clubhouse. By playing on the tablet we can make it better. It brings a bit more life to the meetings and can make things close to people who may be unable to come along through the weather. I can have my notes on the screen in pictures, when we do a video we do it and how long it took us," he added.

Karl has developed a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet which allows him to manage other things, to make his club's NPK notes.

"It is a simple one which I export out as a report document, what NPK rate was coming out of the ground using various products from different companies. It makes it a lot easier to compare with what we are using and it just makes the application process easier with my notes."

Alongside his Excel spreadsheet, he also has a handy application calculator for free. If you haven't got a smartphone, Karl had a link to download both handy applications from [karparsparrygolf.com](http://karparsparrygolf.com) and he will send you the details.

Karl also had the forward thinking of installing QR codes in his clubhouse where the machinery is stored. Instead of the current

laborious method of writing down what machine was used and when, the code would be scanned each time a machine is used. This would send a message to an online database and Karl would know everything he needed to know about that machine. The idea of fitting barcodes and binary systems was one which Karl has developed and made more easily used for the use of digital technology.

On the golf course, Karl said his touch screen allows pictures of trees in a problem around the course.

It helps things run efficiently on the golf course. When I'm out of the office, in seminars or at home, I can update the diary, upload pics onto Facebook or talk with our Chairman.

Karl Parry, Denbigh Golf Club

Another digital tool utilised at Denbigh is the online two-tour booking system by Steve Giff.

"I've set up an administrator on the system so that every Monday morning, I can check my phone to see what times are booked in and if there are any cancellations. Then we can set our work schedule around that. It really helps me manage myself and my staff and there has never been a moment where we can't deal with a job," said Karl.

Steve Giff's GreenConnect phone application was featured by Karl. "It gives us the ability to open windows of opportunity and often helps things to give you the best timing possible for spraying fungicides. Because fungicides are so expensive, this helps us to save money as well as effort."

Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn continue to grow but how the internet will be used in every day situations and for professionals they use has an important method of communication.

"We have just set up a Denbigh Golf Club maintenance page on Facebook and all the jobs we do around the course will have pictures taken and sent. It's updated straight onto it. It's like a news bulletin page, so everyone knows what we're doing," Karl added.

He ended by saying that he was looking into getting a new irrigation system that can be controlled from a phone.

This deserves a closer look. Irrigation systems have come a long way. The beginning of the road to digital can be traced back to the 1960s. The first electrical control systems appeared on the market in the 1960s and allowed greenkeepers to control watering schedules electronically with an on-course handset. Even though how they now may seem, it was revolutionary in the industry at the time and paved the way for more sophisticated innovations through the following decades.

During the 70s hand held devices opened a system that could control up to several hundred sprinklers from a central base. What followed next was the shining light in irrigation technology and what is seen in a modernised form, the standard on many courses around the world, computer controlled irrigation systems.

Now a Mobile Internet (MI) controller by Rain Bird allows the user, on-the-fly ability to control and monitor your systems from anywhere, as long as you own a smartphone and there is a mobile phone or wireless signal. It can be set up so you can monitor your







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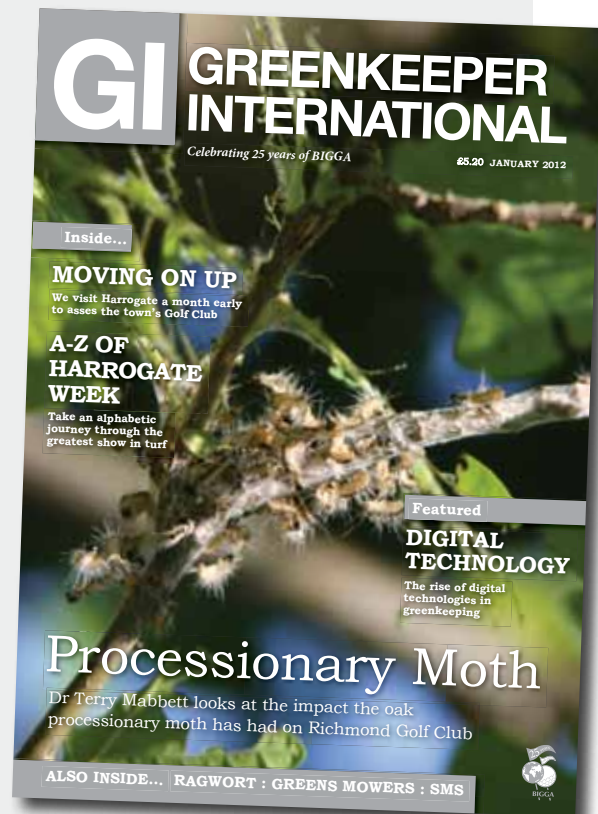
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The official monthly magazine of the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association Limited.



## Remember, Remember the Moustaches of Movember

The results of the moustache growing activity of staff at two clubs during Movember can be now assessed.

Staff at the Buchanan Castle Golf Club, near Glasgow, and the Roehampton Club, in London, put away the razors for the month and attempted to cultivate their best moustaches.

The Movember charity, which raises money for testicular cancer, is gaining in popularity hence the number of rugby players, growing moustaches, of varying qualities, through the month of November.

"I got the idea last year when I picked my daughter up from the child minder and her husband had a big Mexican moustache. He explained that he was growing it for charity and I thought that this would be a good idea for our greens staff to get involved with as we have quite a large membership who are potential sponsors," said Mark Cummine, First Assistant at Buchanan Castle.

"When I put the idea to the rest of the guys they were all up for it and were counting down to the following November! We also thought we could have a play on words and call it MOWvember!" said Mark, who added that, thanks to the Buchanan Castle members, they raised over £700.

A few hundred miles south, staff - including one lifeguard - at the Roehampton Club were also working away on their facial hair and they too raised a considerable sum for the charity.



ABOVE: Buchanan Castle GC after and INSET LEFT before Movember



ABOVE: the Roehampton Club

## JOHN DEERE LEAVES THE IRRIGATION MARKET

John Deere has announced that the company is withdrawing from the turf irrigation business, which has been developed over the past six years in partnership with US manufacturer Signature Control Systems Inc (SCS).

SCS will sell existing and new irrigation products through its own distribution network, which may include selected John Deere dealers worldwide.

Under the terms of the agreement, irrigation products will no longer be a part of the John Deere range, but the company will continue to support all customers who have installed its irrigation systems and parts.

This strategic realignment will enable both John Deere and SCS to focus on their core equipment competencies in the worldwide golf and turf markets.

"John Deere's existing irrigation customers will continue to receive our support," said Gregg Breningmeyer, John Deere's Global Golf Segment Manager.

"In addition, our European Parts Distribution Center in Bruchsal, Germany, will continue to stock and provide replacement parts across the region for the foreseeable future."





# Lifetime Achievement Award for Richard Campey

Richard Campey, Managing Director of Campey Turf Care Systems of Macclesfield, has won the Lifetime Achievement Award at the IOG Industry Awards at the Reebok Stadium, Bolton.

Richard has spent the past 25 years promoting a strategy of best practice in sports ground renovation and maintenance, which has not only enabled him to build a successful company but importantly also help ensure that young people especially have the best possible playing surfaces at their disposal.

In addition, Richard's 'natural instinct' for the turf care business has also earned him a reputation as someone who sets industry standards – he was, for example, the person who introduced, in 1997, the Koro machine to this country.

The impact this has had on the way sports pitches are managed today is profound – and koroing is now a recognised generic term in the industry.

The Award was presented, in Richard's absence, to Campey Turf Care Systems Sales Director, Simon Gumbrell, by Richard Walton from category sponsor Everris

and Richard responded via a video and skype link.

"I am surprised and delighted to receive this award and would like to thank the IOG and all those who voted for me." said Richard

"I have been in this industry for 35 years, 25 running my own business.

"I learned a lot in those early days but I owe thanks to two people in particular, both Head groundsmen at the time; Archie McTaggart, of

University of London Motspur Park and Bert Flack from Old Trafford.

"I have never forgotten how they taught me the importance of instilling your knowledge in the next generation.

"Educating the young in the methods of 'best practice' is as important today as it was back then, and this is integral to the way we operate at Campey Turf Care.

Thanks again to everyone for their recognition."



# James Snow Retires

**James T. Snow, National Director of the USGA Green Section since 1990, has announced his retirement effective at the end of this year.**

Jim began his career with the USGA Green Section in 1976. He served as an agronomist in the Northeast Region from 1977 to 1982, and then as director of the Northeast Region from 1982 to 1990.

In 1990 he assumed his current role as national director. During his tenure, his numerous responsibilities included overseeing the Turf Advisory Service and a staff of 18 agronomists, the Construction Education Program, the Turfgrass and Environmental Research Program, and the Green Section Education Program. A prolific writer, he also guided the Green Section Record magazine as its Editor.

One of Jim's strengths is fostering partnerships. In 1991, he vigorously supported the creation of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses. Under his direction, the USGA contributed more than \$1.5 million since the program's creation to assist its growth in becoming an award-winning education and certification program that helps golf courses protect the environment and the natural heritage of the game of golf.

He also secured a \$1 million grant from the USGA to help fund and support the Turfgrass Information File (TGIF) at Michigan State University, the largest turfgrass database in the world. He has been a longtime advocate of turfgrass research issues concerning golf turf. Thanks to Jim's leadership, since 1983 the USGA has provided more than \$31 million to fund turf and environmental research across the country, effectively impacting golf courses around the world.

## SCOTTISH REGION CONFERENCE

The 2012 BIGGA Scottish Conference will take place at the Carnegie Conference Centre, Carnegie College, Dunfermline on Tuesday, March 6.

Speakers include Grant Moir, Director-Rules of Golf, The R&A; Robert Smith, Souters Irrigation Services Ltd/Graeme Francis, Revaho UK, and Les Howkins MG, Course Manager, Richmond Golf Club.

Other speakers include Robert Patterson, Course Manager, Royal Aberdeen Golf Club, David Vrooman, The Anderson's, Turf &

Speciality Group, and John Philp, MBE, Course Superintendent, Carnoustie Links.

Tickets cost £35, which includes tea/coffee on arrival, coffee/pastry at the mid morning break and buffet lunch.

Full details and booking forms will be posted to all members in Scotland and further forms can be obtained by contacting Peter J.Boyd, Regional Administrator.

Tel 0141 616 3440  
or [pj.boyd@btinternet.com](mailto:pj.boyd@btinternet.com).

## Myerscough College Technical Seminars 2012

Next year's Myerscough's seminars start with a comprehensive programme of technical seminars aimed at professional greenkeepers and groundsmen.

With topics covering irrigation, root zone technology and soil science; there is plenty of opportunity for professional development and stretching your sports turf knowledge in 2012.

In January and February the regional seminars will cover the North East, South Yorkshire and the Midlands, and with guest speakers from RainBird, Irritech and Symbio there is certain to be excellent presentations on the latest research, technologies and biotechnologies from the sports turf industry.

These are opportunities for career development, in terms of networking with peers from across the world and accruing BIGGA CPD points, as all these seminars are a GTC Quality Assured.

For Myerscough College enrolled students all these events are free to attend. Non-students can attend for a fee of £15.00. If you are interested in attending any of the Technical Seminars please book online at [www.tinyurl.com/myform2011](http://www.tinyurl.com/myform2011)

A list of all events can be accessed at [www.tinyurl.com/myercal](http://www.tinyurl.com/myercal)

## Golf and Dinner Day for South East Region

The South East Region's Annual Golf and Dinner Day, at Walton Heath Golf Club, is being held on Friday March 9. It is one of greenkeeping's longest running events and is always well supported.

For more details please contact Clive Osgood, South East Regional Administrator [cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk) Phone 01737 819343 mob 07841 948410

## LONDON SECTION SEMINAR DATE SET

The London Section Seminar will be held on February 14, at Oaklands College.

The programme includes Chris Wood, English Cricket Board's Pitches Consultant; Charles Henderson, of the STRI; Gareth Roberts, Course Manager of Hankley Common GC, and Cameron McMillan, Course and Estates Manager at Queenwood GC.

Cost: £12 in advance (including VAT). Cost includes lunch & refreshments. Places are limited to 140.

Please make cheques payable to Oaklands College and send to Andrew Wight, Oaklands College Smallford Campus, Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL4 0JA.

For further information contact [andy.wight@oaklands.ac.uk](mailto:andy.wight@oaklands.ac.uk) or call 01727 737735



## ALBATROSS FOR ANDY

Northern Section Secretary, Andy Slingsby, looked to be just out of the running at a Stableford Competition at Baildon Golf Club when he came to the par-5 18th.

Two shots later and he'd pipped the clubhouse leader on countback with 41pts.

"I hit a great drive and had 230 yards to the hole. I then hit a 3-wood which pitched 10 feet from the hole and went in," said the 13 handicapper.

"It was an albatross 2 and with the shot I had on the hole it was a six pointer!" said Andy.

It is the second albatross scored by a BIGGA member this year with one made by Gary Burgess during the BIGGA National Championship, sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota, at West Lancs GC in October.



## Retirement

Arthur Bayfield has retired from Buchanan Castle Golf Club after 48 years at the club.

He started work in September 1963 aged 16 years 8 months and has completed 48 years and four months to date. He was his third apprentice under a new scheme brought in by the SGA.

He worked under Bill Bradford until he died in 1969. When Arthur's father became Head Greenkeeper, he then became his father's First Assistant. When his father became ill, Arthur worked as 'Acting' Head Greenkeeper until his father retired in 1979. Arthur then became Head Greenkeeper.

Son, Stuart, is now a third generation greenkeeper working at Loch Lomond Golf Club.

Despite retiring Arthur will continue to work at the club during the Summer months part-time to look after the Academy Course and to continue to assist Ronnie Myles and the Team.

## Volunteers wanted for BIGGA Support Team

Volunteers are once again required for the BIGGA Support Team for the BMW PGA Championship, The Wentworth Club, May 24-27.

Volunteers are wanted to help Chris Kennedy and his team at The Wentworth Club on the above dates. All or any one day would be greatly appreciated. Bunker raking duties on the last two days.

A great chance to see at close hand the Course preparation for the European Tour flagship event on the West Course at Wentworth.

For more information please contact:

Clive Osgood, South East Regional Administrator [cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk) Mobile 07841 948410 or 01737 819343.



## NEW GUIDE AIDS TURFGRASS CULTIVAR CHOICE

The new Turfgrass Seed 2012 guide, published later this month contains all the information needed to help professional users assess the suitability of different cultivars for a range of applications, and to determine which grasses best suit their particular needs.

The guide provides comparative information based on the results of comprehensive trials designed to test suitability in three key areas of application:

- *Winter sports pitches and municipal recreation areas*
- *Lawns, summer sports pitches, tennis courts, turf and general landscaping*
- *Intensive, close-mown surfaces such as golf and bowling greens*

A wide range of characteristics are assessed to test and score the performance of different species and cultivars, ranging from physical attributes such as colour, fineness of leaf and sward density to agronomic factors such as disease resistance,

re-growth rate and recovery from wear.

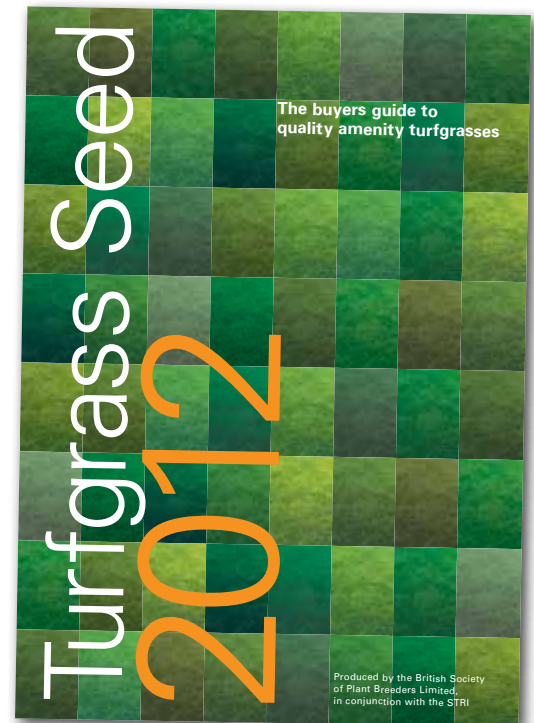
"Breeding new improved grass cultivars is a costly and time-consuming business, taking at least ten years of crossing, selection and pre-commercial trials to reach the market. For professional amenity users, making the most of the investment and innovation by plant breeders requires expert guidance and advice in cultivar selection.

"Turfgrass Seed is the best available source of reliable and impartial data on high quality amenity grasses, based on trials conducted by the UK's leading independent centre in turfgrass research," said Robert Jackson BSPB Trials Co-ordinator.

The new guide will be available online from 24th January 2012 at:

[www.bspb.co.uk/news.html](http://www.bspb.co.uk/news.html).

Alternatively place your order for a hard copy (priced at £4 per copy) via Robert Jackson at BSPB - [robert.jackson@bspb.co.uk](mailto:robert.jackson@bspb.co.uk) or tel. 01353 653202.



### BIGGA Director to be Club Captain

Vale of Llangollen Golf Club Course Manager and BIGGA Director, Jeremy Hughes has been elected Vice Captain, and will be the 2013 Club Captain.

"I was honoured to be approached by the Captain's Committee to become Vice Captain of the golf club firstly from the view that it shows that the club respects me as the Course Manager as an employee and as a member of the golf club," said Jeremy, who has been a member of the golf club for 31 years.

Jeremy was offered a job on the green staff in April 1987 and progressed to take over as Course Manager in 1995.

"I will be one of the youngest Captains to hold office at the club and it will be interesting wearing both hats on general day to day events and then sitting on the Board as greenkeeper and Captain.

## Kawasaki Expands Dealer Network



Kawasaki, is expanding its Power Products dealer network with the appointment of Northallerton-based Brian Robinson Machinery. The company will supply Kawasaki's full range of Power Products to professional customers located throughout Teesside, Durham and North Yorkshire.

"We are delighted to add the Kawasaki range to our portfolio of grounds care and estate management equipment. The products are renowned for their excellent build quality, legendary reliability and strong warranty back-up, just what our customers have been asking us for," said Sandy Ellis, General Manager of Brian Robinson Machinery:

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# Chairman's Word

**BIGGA National Chairman, Andrew Mellon, gives his thoughts for the new year**

## 25 more years to celebrate

**As you read this, I hope you have all had a good Christmas and are off to a good start in 2012.**

As I write this, my 12th column, I find myself trying to think ahead and plan for what will be happening and where we will be.

In these changing times this is something that is harder for everyone now, across every part of society. However we must learn to look for and exploit all the opportunities that such an environment creates. There is no point in dwelling on the difficulties. We need to be able to adapt, and sometimes think outside the box to find ways of dealing with what we face.

I believe that Greenkeepers are naturally good at this, as we are constantly managing an environment in which some of the aspects change rapidly, outwith our control, yet the standards demanded by our customers is ever higher. We have always been innovative in finding solutions to meet these demands.

That all sounds easy on paper doesn't it? The reality is a much more difficult situation, and one which is not easy to face alone. Many mistakes are made along the way, lessons learned, difficult consequences faced, but hopefully we get through those and come out stronger on the other side.

To me this has been the main benefit of my membership of BIGGA. I always have someone to turn to and will find someone who can shed some light on a problem I'm facing, has been there before, got the T-shirt and can help me find a solution, or at least the best way forward in dealing with any issue I have. In what can sometimes seem a lonely job, that extra support goes a long way!

I have spent some time reflecting on my time as Chairman over the last year, and it has not been without some significant challenges and major changes, as well as many highlights. I'm honoured to have had the privilege of serving the Association.

As we celebrate our 25th Anniversary this year at Harrogate we will reflect on the many successes of our members and supporters and the impact they have had on the Golf Industry in which we all work. We have learned a great deal together, all of which

will be put to good use by the Board, the CEO, and the Staff as they focus together on the future of the Association. We are engaging with the Sections and Regions to ensure we align our resources and efforts to the benefit of all Greenkeepers. I'd like to recognise and thank everyone for their commitment to this work.

It naturally impacts on wider stakeholders, the beneficiaries of your labours – the golfers, the clubs, proprietors, and their associations and professional bodies. We are communicating with them all, looking for ways to ensure we work together effectively in ways which are mutually beneficial. It has been reassuring to hear their recognition and respect for the significant part we play in the success of Golf, and I'd like to thank them all on behalf of the Association for their co-operation and support.

I'd also like to sincerely thank the team here at Elmwood who have been unstinting

innovations that the trade have brought to market, enabling me to make informed buying decisions on behalf of my employers. Every year I've learned something new, and been given ideas that have helped me do my job better. Socially, I've enjoyed the company of some of the finest people you will ever meet, who I am lucky to now call friends. It's re-charged my batteries and set me up each year, enthused, focussed, and ready for another year of challenges and opportunities. I can't recommend it highly enough.

My trip to China this month to teach Superintendants for a week was another great experience. I learned as much as the students, and it was great to see them interacting and learning from one another. It was not without incident, I locked myself out on my balcony one evening, and tested my powers of sign language to the limit trying to explain to security, (my Chinese

## **As we celebrate our 25th Anniversary this year at Harrogate we will reflect on the many successes of our members and supporters and the impact they have had on the Golf Industry in which we all work**

in their support during the year ensuring that my time spent on BIGGA matters has not resulted in a diminution of quality at my own facility.

We all need to reflect occasionally. We also need to rest and re-charge the batteries, and I hope you at least got a short holiday during the festive period to do just that. But we also as individuals need to re-energise and focus our forward direction also.

Every year, since I came into the Golf Industry, I have attended BTME at Harrogate. I can say with no hesitation it has had more impact on helping me than anything else.

My knowledge has grown due to all the education I've undertaken. I've made fantastic contacts who have shared so much experience and knowledge with me. I've kept abreast of all the developments and

is limited), why I was about to climb down some drainpipes. I nearly made the four minute mile, running between terminals at Guangzhou Airport, and narrowly avoided arrest after forcing my way to the front of check-in to catch my flight home. Cardiac arrest was on the cards at this point, but some help from a friendly Chinese couple smoothed the unrest and I was thankfully last on the plane and on my way home. Such are the joys!

I'll be at Harrogate Saturday 21st through to Friday 27th, and I hope to see many of you there.

My very best regards for 2012,

Andrew Mellon  
07780 995602  
amellon@elmwood.ac.uk

# Greenkeepers Training Committee

David Golding, GTC Education Director,  
with a monthly update



**Happy New Year everybody. Those of us lucky enough to be in employment and returning to work after the festive break, will no doubt face ongoing difficult times as the UK economy still seems to be stuck in a deep economic rut.**

We hear more and more golf clubs are struggling to stay afloat and some radical measures are having to be taken to keep the business going.

The GTC sincerely hopes that employers look to maintain and improve the standards offered at their clubs by investing in staff development.

At the majority of golf clubs, certainly in Europe, a small team of multi-skilled operatives, led by a qualified competent Course Manager has managed to work its way through previous recessions (showing my age now!).

The British greenkeeper education and training system supports those employers willing to invest in staff skills with Government funding being available through the Apprenticeship Scheme and other funding initiatives.

The Scottish and Welsh Governments have introduced schemes to support employers considering recruiting new apprentices and more recently the UK Government has proposed a Youth Contract, which again is designed to give employers funding to support the employment of apprentices.

Scotland has Employer Recruitment Incentives and Flexible Training Options available and while it is often difficult to keep track of new initiatives such as these and they are often subject to change at short notice we do encourage employers to contact their Quality Assured Centres for the most up to date information.

Greenkeepers themselves can also apply for funding for Scholarships and Bursaries available through organisations such as BIGGA and The R&A as well as individual funding initiatives such as the ILA in Scotland.

I hear more and more stories of

professionalism by Course Managers when developing their course maintenance and development budgets for their employer to consider.

"Making the case" for new equipment, materials and staff isn't easy at the best of times but all of these skills can be gained through training and a well presented case can engage an employer especially when they see the projected benefits from the proposals.

While we would always prefer golf club employers to recruit sufficient full time staff to maintain and managed the golf course to the highest possible standards we also have a tradition of using part-time and volunteers to aid the Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper.

The standards now expected at the majority of golf clubs are at levels which put demands on both employers and their employees have never been greater.

Why have standards been set so high? Clearly golf courses chosen for the televised tournaments ensure adequate resources are provided for their staff to present excellent playing surfaces for the leading golfers in the world to show off their skills, but without knowledgeable skilled greenkeepers, the game at all levels would undoubtedly suffer.

The GTC has maintained a career structure which can be used for apprentice greenkeepers to progress but also every other person employed or volunteering to play their part on and off the golf course.

I know many of today's top Course Managers have had to learn so many skills far beyond the apprenticeship and together, with helpful comments from those Course Managers who have stepped up to becoming General Managers, we must now ensure our Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers support the next generation, with quality education and training courses aligned to the National Occupational Standards recently agreed for the sector.

How can we ensure these training courses are available?

The National Occupational Stan-



The GTC is funded by:



## 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



You can follow the GTC on  
Twitter @TheOfficialGTC

dards cover craft, supervisory and management skills and the knowledge required and are written in a format which can be transferred into short training courses or full qualifications.

The GTC promotes both formal and informal education and training for both greenkeepers and golf club employers.

The National Occupational Standards are sometimes better explained as UNITS and all can be delivered through training courses but to date are mainly used to cluster Units together to make up the vocational and college based qualifications.

So whether you are an apprentice, assistant or deputy greenkeeper, Head Greenkeeper, Course Manager, volunteer or Chairman of Green, the GTC can assist you to have a meaningful contribution to supporting your golf clubs business aspirations.

The GTC Quality Assured Centres are available to assist employers access all of the new Government funding from Apprenticeships, Youth Contracts to other schemes as they become available to assist trainees develop their skills and knowledge and for employers to employ "more hands"

Check out the National Occupational Standards and the GTC's Quality Assured Centres and Training Provider network on the GTC's website [www.the-gtc.co.uk](http://www.the-gtc.co.uk).





# Learning & Development

Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development,  
with an update on education issues

**Happy New Year! I can't believe another year has passed – where did 2011 go? Rachael and I wish you all health, wealth and happiness for 2012.**

The focus this month is firmly on Harrogate Week and specifically, for the L&D department, the Continue to Learn education programme.



## Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week

Harrogate Week kicks off the year in grand style with the Continue to Learn education programme running from Sunday 22 to Thursday 26 January. For those of you that haven't booked yet – fear not, you can book up to Wednesday 11 January 2012.

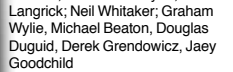
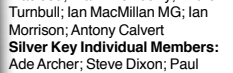
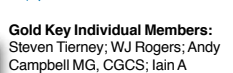


## NEW FEATURE for 2012

The Showfloor Theatre, located next to the BIGGA Stand, will be unveiled for the first time. Presentations and Awards will take place at the Showfloor Theatre, attendance is free of charge and open to all attendees. I hope you will take the time to attend some of the events that are taking place:

### Tuesday 24 January

Edwin Budding Award  
STRI Ecology Awards  
Want to be an R&A Greenkeeper



**Gold Key Individual Members:**  
Steven Tierney; WJ Rogers; Andy Campbell MG, CGCS; Iain A Macleod; Frank Newberry; Andrew Turnbull; Ian MacMillan MG; Ian Morrison; Antony Calvert  
**Silver Key Individual Members:**  
Ade Archer; Steve Dixon; Paul Jenkins; Richard McGlynn; Sam Langrick; Neil Whitaker; Graham Wylie, Michael Beaton, Douglas Duguid, Derek Grendowicz, Jaey Goodchild

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.



### Contact Details

Sami Collins  
Head of L&D  
sami@bigga.co.uk

Rachael Duffy  
L&D Administrator  
rachael@bigga.co.uk

01347 833800 (option 3)  
www.bigga.org.uk

### Scholar?

How to Write Your CV and Prepare a Cover Letter  
Presentation of CPD Diplomas and Master Greenkeeper Certificates  
Experiences of the Ohio State Internship Programme  
Proactive Job Search Tips for Greenkeepers

### Wednesday 25 January

Photographic Competition Awards  
Experiences from the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award  
Managing the Business of Sustainability  
GEO Certified™ - Making Your Sustainability Efforts Easier, More Credible and More Visible  
Practical Interview Skills for Greenkeepers  
Multifunctional Golf Courses – An Underutilised Resource  
How to Negotiate Your Salary Package

### Thursday 26 January

Experiences of the Ohio State Internship Programme



### Continue to Learn Seminars

An extensive range of Continue to Learn Seminars are being offered in the Queen's Suite. These seminars are free of charge and available to all visitors on a first come first serve basis:

### Tuesday 24 January

Suppression of Fusarium Patch By Phosphite in Cool-Season Amenity Turfgrasses  
The Biology and Effects of Parasitic Nematodes in Sports Turf  
Managing Winter Kill in West of Scotland?  
Understanding Cutting Unit Performance  
Activated Microbial Turf Man-

### agement

Use of Plant Growth Promoting Rhizobacteria for Healthy Turf  
Important Health, Safety and Pesticides Updates  
Use of Synthetic Turf in Golf  
LinkedIn – A Masterclass  
Organic Matter - Friend or Foe?  
Redefining IPM; Reduced Chemical Management of Golf Course Turf  
Perceptions in Greens Management – What's Most Important? You Decide  
Tier 4 – How Will it Affect You?

### Wednesday 25 January

Achieving Smooth Golf Greens  
Being a Professional and Living It  
The Ultimate Renovation Package  
BASIS Contribution for the Future of Amenity Industry  
Control of Earthworms on Golf Courses  
Let's Re-build 20 Greens in 10 Days - Mission Impossible  
A New Approach in Wetting Agent Technology for Enhanced Turf Health, Consistency and Playability  
From Grazing to Scottish Open Status in Five Years  
Sustainable Golf Course Management and the Impact of the Cutting Unit

### Thursday 26 January

Secrets from the Sandman  
Bunker Construction - The Way Forward  
Using an Integrated Management Approach to Eliminate Turf Disease on Fine Turf Surfaces  
The Rescue Club

### BIGGA Greenkeeper Training Listing

On page 66 the December 2011 issue of this magazine the advert for Oaklands College should have shown the Greenkeepers Training Committee Quality Assured logo. Oaklands College have been a GTC Quality Assured Centre since September 2011. We apologise for this error.



## John Deere Enhances European Parts Service

John Deere's European Parts Distribution Centre has inaugurated its new deconsolidation and packaging facility, a 23million euro investment, which will create additional employment for around 80 people.

The new operation was established within just ten months and will help to streamline parts logistics and further enhance the supply of parts to John Deere dealers and customers throughout

Europe, the CIS, Northern Africa and the Near and Middle East (EAME).

"In light of the rapidly growing range of John Deere machines in all equipment divisions, we must continue to improve our supply of parts and merchandise," said Fritz Rheindorf, Director Parts Operations.

The new 16,000 square metre deconsolidation and packaging complex in Bruchsal will serve as a hub

for incoming parts, which will either complement outgoing parts shipments or be forwarded to storage areas at E-PDC.

Due to logistics and handling improvements, the company expects to reduce delivery times even further, especially in peak harvesting seasons.

The Bruchsal E-PDC currently stores more than 200,000 part numbers in a 62,000 square meter area.

## Double Promotion

Rolawn has promoted Jonathan Hill to Sales and Marketing Director and Emily Kirkland to Customer Service Manager. Jonathan was previously National Sales Manager, has been with the company for over eight years.

"Jonathan's appointment as a Director is a key part in achieving the demanding objectives we have set as a company. We are all enthusiastic about the way the company is developing in these challenging times and Jonathan's experience and enthusiasm will be invaluable in achieving our objectives," said Paul Dawson, MD.

Emily worked as both a Sales Administrator and Customer Services Co-ordinator.

"Our policy of internal promotion for staff members who demonstrate outstanding skills and an excellent work ethic is perfectly summed up by Emily's promotion. We are delighted that she has taken on this important position, which is vital in the way we support our customers," said Jonathan Hill.

## Inturf Fullfills Green Promise

In 2009 Inturf signed up to 10:10 to signal its business commitment to doing something about climate change.

The business aimed to cut its use of energy by working more efficiently and so achieve a 10% cut in its carbon emissions in the process.

In fact, through dramatically reducing its use of electricity, heating oil and diesel Inturf

has cut emissions by 18% in the first year.

"We've taken a close look at how we use energy in every part of the business," says Alex Edwards, Joint MD.

"Every stage of turf production from sowing to harvesting has been made more efficient. We've redesigned our delivery systems too so diesel use – a substantial part of our costs – has been greatly reduced."





## Lone Britannia

Ecosol Turfcare was the only British exhibitor at GreenExpo, held in Bordeaux in November 2011.

Operator of the Drill n Fill/Deep Drill aerators and sportsturf maintenance and renovation systems, Ecosol has just returned from a highly successful visit to the French Greenkeepers' Association exhibition, taking place over three days at the city's lakeside venue. Ecosol MD, Bretton King was impressed by the quality of the visitors. "We've seen increasing numbers of European golf clubs booking us for Drill n Fill contract work and machine sales over the past few years," he said, "so a personal presence on the Continent was a no-brainer."

"We had a lot of informed interest in Drill n Fill from the major clubs, some of whom made definite bookings and there was evidence that smaller clubs were co-operating to book the system between them. In addition it was great to meet several satisfied customers, from management to greenkeeping staff."

## TURFCO iPad WINNER

Graeme Lorimer, Course Manager at Bishopsbrigg Golf Club on the north eastern outskirts of Glasgow, has won one of the six Apple iPads offered as prizes in Turfco's promotional campaign celebrating 50 years of topdressing.

Turfco, the Minnesota-based manufacturer and inventor of the first mechanised topdresser, have been running the competition since the February 2011.

At the end of the year, a Grand Prize Draw will be held with the winner receiving a Turfco WideSpin 1540 EC topdresser.

Graeme was presented with his prize by John Quinton, Ransomes Jacobsen's UK and Ireland sales manager,



during a visit to IOG Scotsturf early in November.

"I can't believe it, I'm not normally very lucky when I enter competitions, so when I was notified that I'd won, I was absolutely astounded," said Graeme.

## What's your number?

*Our regular and random profile of an industry figure continues with this month's lucky number...*

**Name:** John Coleman

**Company:** Advanced Turf Technology

**Position:** Owner

**How long have you been in the industry?**  
24 Years

**How did you get into it?**

I was a fairly keen golfer as a junior and thought that getting a job as a greenkeeper, because of the early starts, would allow me to play golf after work. After the first week however I thought my legs were about to fall off with all the walking I was doing! You could say Frank Scullion, my first boss saved me the ignominy of many a frustrating Saturday medal. Thanks Frank!

**What other jobs have you done?**

At the moment I'm almost exclusively working at ATT but in the past I've spent a lot of time with golf course construction, primarily with RTJ II in Scandinavia, although I still do some advisory work.

**What do you like about your current job?**

I enjoy the challenge of bringing new concepts through to actual usable products.

**What changes have you seen in the industry?**

In many ways the fundamentals of decent greenkeeping have stayed pretty much the same. There have been some significant improvements in the arsenal of chemicals that are now available such as PGR's.. The biggest change that I can see is golf itself. It appears that there are significantly fewer golfers and too many courses vying for the same business. I believe, it will end up with more management companies running multiple courses to lessen overheads.

**What do you like to do in your spare time?**

I try and take part in a few triathlons in a season and also a few open water swimming events of about a couple of miles in length. I enjoy a nice bottle of wine of course so it's not all nut case stuff!

**Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?**

That's an interesting question in these times of uncertainty. I'd like to have a sound solvent business obviously. I'm also hoping my knees hold out so I can keep on with the nut case stuff!

**Who do you consider best friends in the industry?**

With 24 Years in the business I'm lucky to have a lot of good friends. For fear of leaving anybody out I'll limit my list to one very good friend, Iain MacPherson

**What's your lucky number?** 8







# Moving on up

Scott MacCallum visits the golf club of a town synonymous with greenkeeping and meets a man who is relishing the opportunity to make an impact on the course









**When Harrogate Golf Club's Head Greenkeeper announced his intention to retire, the club started the process of looking for a successor. They advertised widely and pulled together a strong short list of candidates who were then put through an arduous interview process.**

The club was delighted with the final decision, they had appointed a man with vast experience with a vision to take the course forward.

That man was Paul Mitchell, but there was no need for a long induction programme, or introductions to the rest of the staff, as Paul had been a member of the club since 1972 and been Deputy Head Greenkeeper since 1985!

"I was really pleased that the club went through the interview process and that I wasn't just handed the job. It meant that I was able to demonstrate that I was going to move the club forward and that I got it on merit. If I'd said that I was happy just to keep it ticking over I certainly wouldn't have got the job," explained Paul, who was 50 when he took up the post.

"During the interview I high-

lighted some of the issues – woodland management, rye grass on the greens, bunker drainage and a thatch problem and explained what I would do to resolve it. I was also told at the time that the aim was to produce a higher quality golf course, but with a reduced budget and I was to operate with one member of staff fewer than before."

Paul had been attending BIGGA training courses over a number of years and felt ready to take the step up to be Head man.

"It felt less of a daunting prospect than when I became Deputy, because then there were guys on the team much older than me, who had been at the club for a long time, and I had to issue them with orders.

"Over the last four or five years I had had a major input on the projects we were doing, as well as in the day to day running of the course, so it wasn't so much of a jump when I got the job."

The first task Paul and the team tackled after he had been appointed was the bunker drainage.

"As with most clubs there was a complaint about the bunkers, and the fact that they were holding water. We checked them all, and if

new drainage was needed we put that in, as well as some upside down turf because we had a problem with stones coming up through the clay. Some of the members thought we bought sand with the stones already in it," joked Paul.

"We completed four holes in that first month which showed everyone what we were capable of," he said, adding that they also cleared some scrubland at the back of the 16th which opened the view up to the next hole.

"Straight away I heard people commenting on the fact that they could see Green staff working out the course. I've always wanted to finish any job we start, because there is nothing worse than a guy

**"As with most clubs there was a complaint about the bunkers holding water. If new drainage was needed we put that in, as well as some upside down turf because stones were coming up through the clay"**

Paul Mitchell

BELOW: Team is Keith Emery, Deputy Andrew Preston, Paul and Stuart Robertson. Ken Ward who was ill when the photograph was taken

ABOVE: The 4th green in splendid sunlight  
INSET RIGHT: Bunker work and TOP RIGHT: Reshaping the bunker on the 9th with new mounds  
FAR RIGHT: reshaping upside down turf on the 17th fairway







greens using pure water. Confident that he was applying at the correct rate, and happy in his own mind with the approach, he sprayed all 18 greens, the extra green which is used in the winter, and the putting green.

“At first I didn’t think anything was going to happen but then it kicked in and it has done a great job and it has got rid of 90% of the rye. I’ll look to do it again next September,” said Paul, who made sure the membership was kept informed of what was going to happen through the Green News which he introduced and the noticeboard.

Paul has also been using Primo Maxx on tees and greens and has been delighted with the results.

“We often have club matches in the evening and the player asked us to double cut as they were not playing until 5pm and the greens were a little slower but the Primo has meant that single cutting has been sufficient, again reducing the amount of hours required.

The organic matter issue had been something Paul had been aware of for some time – he could smell it – and he had hollow tined three times in the space of seven months but, by his own admission, only got rid of 5% of the problem at best.

“Henry had it analysed and found that the problem was in the

who plays on a Saturday morning coming back the following Saturday and not seeing any obvious progress having been made.”

Having made his initial splash Paul and his team of four set about the next phase, which was to improve the greens.

“We’d had a ryegrass problem in the greens for many years, while there was also an organic matter issue,” he explained.

“I did some research on Rescue, reading about it and going on BIG-GA’s Bulletin Boards and decided to do a trial on our 4th, which is just

beside our sheds. That proved successful and following discussions with Simon Watson, of Syngenta; Simon Hardcastle, of Scotts; our agronomist, Henry Bechelet, and another local Course Manager, who’d carried out the same work the year before, we agree that we should go ahead. The feeling was that if we didn’t do it now all we’d achieve is putting it off for another year.”

To aid accuracy Paul borrowed a pedestrian sprayer, worked out that he needed 25 litres for 500 square metres and carried out tests on two





ABOVE: The 16th Green with the 5th Tee in the background

top 40mm. He recommended that we use the Graden, which I'd seen at the STRI's Turf Science Life the previous year with Keith Kensett. I'd also had a short demo of it here. I was very impressed."

Paul had changed the top dressing from a fine grain to a medium and the Graden's ability to insert this straight into the soil profile was another plus.

Prior to hiring the Graden in from Kensett Sport, Paul enrolled half a dozen members – including his brother-in-law – to help with the filling of the hopper.

"The whole process took two days including doing the 3rd green twice as it was particularly soft. It was extremely hard work but fortunately the members know me and were prepared to help. We vertidrain and pencil tined ahead of the Graden pass and it took an hour to do each green and followed up with a core harvester and drag matted each green three times. We put temporary greens in place but within two hours the greens were back in play."

And the work has paid off.

"The members have been saying that they have never seen the greens so good. Ideally we should do them again but that will come down to whether the club can afford it," explained Paul, who is also a three time Club Champion.

The club is currently waiting on a report carried out by architect, Jonathan Gaunt, specifically on bunker redesign, but also with a broader remit of creating a template

for the next five to 10 years.

"I said in the Course Policy Document that we should only carry out alterations to the golf course if we bring in a professional architect. Jonathan was here all day and was very positive about some of the things we've done here. I'm looking forward to reading his document."

Paul has been delighted with the support he has had since taking over as Head man.

"I would like to thank Green Chairman, Neil Ormondroyd, the club Council and the members for their encouragement and positive comments since I became Head Greenkeeper. I'd also express my thanks to the rest of the Green-keeping staff whose efforts I greatly appreciate," said Paul, who added that his daughter, Tori, had helped out by working 15 hours a week in the summer and a day a week during the autumn and winter.

Paul has been a BIGGA member since day one of the Association and has taken full advantage of what the Association has to offer.

"I've attended Management Courses and did the Design course at Harrogate about four years ago while, as I've said, I find the Bulletin Boards a great source of information. I posted about a soil moisture meter recently and got over 1000 views and 15 replies which I thought was really good.

"I also contacted Paul Worster about staff appraisals through the Forum and he very kindly sent me some information. It's very rare that I contribute but I do read it a lot."

While many people travel thousands of miles to attend BTME and the Continue to Learn Programme Paul has it much easier. He lives a 10 minute walk away and can always return to his own bed at night.

"The seminars and workshops are excellent and I enjoy nipping into see some of the free ones. The half hour ones can be very good. I'll take the lads for a curry and meet up with people there. You can learn so much just by sitting in a pub having a few beers."

"It comes at a good time of the year and it's the ideal place for it."

Paul may have had to wait to step up to Head man at Harrogate but he is making sure he makes the most of the opportunity.

BELOW: Deputy Andrew Preston clearing 1st green after The Graden





# UNSEEN INNOVATION



**Good design goes unnoticed.** Hunter Industries' TTS rotor keeps all the innovation unseen and below the green. Featuring Total Top Servicing, TTS is the no-dig solution for simple and quick maintenance, so golfers have more time to play on. With the world's first DIH- (Decoder-in-Head) capable rotor, you can forget about hundreds of unsightly decoder enclosures on your course. Out of sight, out of mind.

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GOLF

# A-Z

# of Harrogate Week

The ultimate turf management exhibition in Europe

## A

### Anniversary.

Harrogate Week 2012 marks the start of BIGGA's 25th anniversary celebrations. A quarter of a century during which time the status of the country's greenkeepers has risen at the same rate as the quality of course maintenance.



## D

### Directions.

There are many ways to get to Harrogate and we can help you find the best way to get there.



## E

### Exhibition Centre.

Harrogate's International Exhibition Centre has been home to Harrogate Week since it was launched and each of the Halls has its own character. Hall A and the traditional entrance; Hall B with the Café at the end; Hall C with its access to both the Queens Suite and Hall M itself – the modern entrance to the Show and the newest of the Halls.



## B

### BTME.

The exhibition is one of the principle attractions of Harrogate Week and provides a temporary "Shopping Mall" tailored to the needs of all visitors.



## F

### Free Entry.

There is no entrance charge to get into BTME while the Seminars are also free to attend.



## C

### Continue to Learn.

The world class education programme at Harrogate Week attracts people from all over the world to listen to speakers and tutors who are leaders in their fields.



## G

### Greenkeeping.

Slice open the vast proportion of the visitors and you'll find the word "Greenkeeping" etched through their core. Greenkeeping is the only way of life most visitors know and to them it is far more than a job or career – it is a vocation.





# H

## Harrogate.

The town most synonymous with the greenkeeping world. It is the industry's equivalent of Fleet Street, Billingsgate or Harley Street. You know what you are going to see or get when you arrive.



# O

## Old Swan.

The official Hotel for the week where the greenkeeping chat will go on long into the night.

# I

## International.

Harrogate Week attracts delegates and speakers from all over the world and the range of countries represented makes for a truly cosmopolitan week.

# L

## Learning.

There is nothing more important than to keep on learning and there is nowhere better to make it happen than Harrogate.



# P

## Personal Development Zone.

Come and meet people who can offer advice on your career., assistance with CV writing, interview techniques; working abroad and general greenkeeping issues.

# J

## Job Shop.

If you are looking to enhance your career prospects you could do much worse than take a look at the Job Shop.

# M

## Memorable!

No-one leaves Harrogate without a host of memories many of which will last a lifetime.



# K

## Knowledge.

So much can be acquired during a week at Harrogate whether it be in the formal setting of a Workshop or Seminar, on the floor of the Halls or at a bar or restaurant in the evening.

# N

## Networking.

One of the main benefits of attending Harrogate is the networking potential. Not only do you get a chance to mingle and meet people from all over the industry they get a chance to get to know you. Remember it's not always what you know – it's often who you know!



# Q

## Queuing.

Avoid the queues by pre-registering. It makes attending the Show so much more enjoyable

## R

### Register Now.

If you register now on-line you can avoid the queues (see above)



### Showfloor Theatre.

New for 2012 is the venue for all the presentations and awards that will be made during the three days. Go along and check it out.

## T

### Travel.

Make sure you take advantage of the Park and Ride Service. It is simple and effective and saves parking charges!



## V

### Volunteers.

The success of BIGGA is down to the time and devotion of many, many members who give up time to support BIGGA and Harrogate Week.

## Y

### Yorkshire.

The added benefit of attending Harrogate Week is the chance to experience the delights of England's largest county. It may often be cold – particularly in January, but the warmth of the people more than makes up for it.

## U

### Unity.

There can be no more united profession than that of greenkeeping. Everyone pulls for each other and if anyone has a problem there is always someone to share it with and nowhere is this more in evidence than Harrogate.

## W

### Workshop Programme.

There are many to choose from and each one give you the chance of experiencing hands-on education from a top tutor.

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# Las Vegas here we come



The latest group of BIGGA membes to be selected for the Bernhard & Co sponsored Delegation head for Nevada at the end of next month

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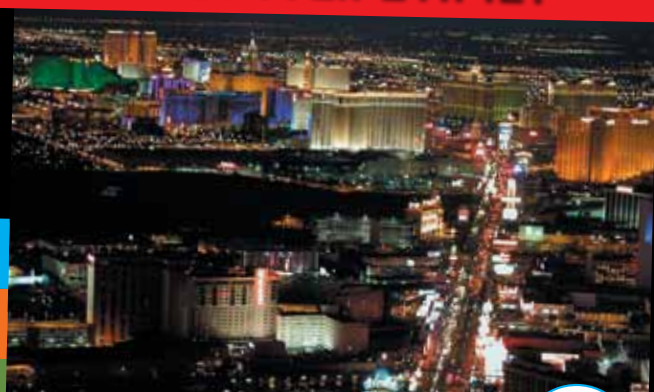
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# Meet the delegates....

**The BIGGA Delegation, sponsored by Bernhard, and reaches a significant milestone when it travels to Las Vegas for the Golf Industry Show next month.**

Included within the number will be the 100th delegate to have made the trip since the very first Delegation, and the only one to travel to the Canadian Superintendents' Conference and Show, did so in 2001. A total of 20 GCSAA Superintendents have also made the return trip to Harrogate..

Not one of the 90 BIGGA members who have already experienced the Delegation will ever forget the experience and the programme

that has been organised for the 2012 group is sure to leave the same impression.

The latest Delegates will fly out to Las Vegas at the end of February with a full week ahead of them. They will enjoy the full Conference Package including the Opening Session and the GCSAA President's Reception.

They will also be taken to two local golf courses to meet the Superintendent and inspect the golf course.

They will also have access to two full days of GCSAA Seminars and will be guests at a Bernhard Reception which will provide the opportunity to meet top 100 golf

course Superintendents, members of the GCSAA, members from BIGGA, international golf course Superintendents, and research agronomists from US universities.

"We are delighted that the Delegation is such a popular attraction for BIGGA members and that we had such a high quality group of applicants to select from.

The experiences that the successful ten will take from the week in Las Vegas will be truly memorable and I am sure that the friendships which will be formed and developed during the week will last a lifetime," said Bernhard's Managing Director, Bob Buckingham.



**Name: Neil Ballingall**  
**Age: 48**  
**Position: Superintendent**  
**Club: Fairmont, St Andrews**

Neil started out as an Assistant at Lundin Golf Club in 1987, before becoming Deputy Course Manager, at Muirfield, in 1993. In 1997 he was appointed Golf Courses Manager at Moray Golf Club and four years later he became Golf Course Superintendent, Fairmont, St Andrews.

He is married with two daughters, three step daughters and two dogs. He lists his hates as gardening and shopping and his loves, all things to do with golf, football and his team, East Fife, and family time.



**Name: Alan Pierce MG**  
**Age: 31**  
**Position: Course Manager**  
**Club: Ham Manor Golf Club**

Alan started greenkeeping in 1995 straight from school, and had the opportunity to gain experience at different clubs as well as a period working for John Shaw Machinery as a technician. He started at Wellshurst

GC in East Sussex, then moved to Chartham Park Golf Club in West Sussex and Royal Eastbourne GC in East Sussex before moving to Ham Manor GC as Deputy Course Manager in 2005. He took over as Course Manager in 2007. In 2005 he won the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award and studied at the University of Massachusetts as part of his prize. He enrolled on the Master Greenkeeper programme in 2010 and completed the certificate in November 2011 becoming the 54th Master Greenkeeper in the world.

In his spare time he likes to spend time with wife, Becky, and daughter Erin. He also ride motorcycles, an MV Agusta F4 and Suzuki TL1000, and he plays inline hockey for Brighton Blizzard. He loves music and enjoys playing the guitar and he plays golf, in his words, badly.



**Name: Daniel Norsworthy**  
**Age: 28**  
**Position: Deputy Course Manager**  
**Club: Richmond Golf Club**

Daniel started his greenkeeping career at Cranleigh Golf & Leisure, and after a few years training gained his Level 2. He was then offered a job at The Richmond Golf Club.

He continued his training and development gaining Level 3, and other relevant qualifications and after seven years at Richmond, he was offered the position as Deputy Golf Course Manager under the watchful eye of Master Greenkeeper Les Howkins.

He hopes ultimately to run his own golf course.

He enjoys most things, nice food, catching up with friends and hitting the gym and trying to play golf!



**Name: Stuart Yarwood MG**  
**Age: 36**  
**Position: Course Manager**  
**Club: Lymm Golf Club**

Stuart started his career in greenkeeping after undertaking HND in Golf Course Management in 1993. After graduation he spent two years in golf course construction. It was the appointment of Deputy Head

Greenkeeper at Delamere Golf Club that ignited his passion for the traditions of the game and sustainable greenkeeping. In 2000 at the age of 24, Stuart took on the position of Course Manager at Lymm Golf Club where he works today.

In 2006 he was involved in the conception of the 'Gingerbread Men' to promote sustainable greenkeeping and networking among greenkeepers, and in 2009 he qualified as a Master Greenkeeper. Stuart is a big man with a big heart, married to the ever understanding, Paula, with two beautiful children.





**Name: George Pitts**  
**Age: 38**  
**Position: Course Manager**  
**Club: Yelverton Golf Club**

George completed an HND in Golf Course Management and gained a distinction as well as receiving the BIGGA South West Cup for highest mark in dissertation.

He joined St Mellion International before moving to Sherfield Oaks as Deputy Course Manager and then worked as Deputy Course Manager at Bovey Castle.

He moved on to become Programme Manager for Sports Turf Courses at Cannington Centre, Bridgwater College, where he was responsible for the development and delivery of all Sports Turf Courses.

He then realised a career ambition when appointed Course Manager at Yelverton Golf Club where he has been for four years and is thoroughly enjoying all its challenges.

He became Section Secretary for BIGGA Devon and Cornwall in 2009.

George lives on Dartmoor with wife, Celia, and two children, Oliver, 4, and Lily, 1. He is a keen sportsman and enjoys running and walking on the moor.



**Name: Dan McGrath MG**  
**Age: 35**  
**Position: Course Manager**  
**Club: North Foreland GC**

Entered the industry straight from school and studied Sportsturf Management/Science full time for a year in his hometown of Cork, in Ireland.

From there he trained at Fota Island GC during which time they hosted the Irish Open. He then moved on to do the Grow In at the Old Head of Kinsale in Cork.

Following completion of the Old Head and with the appetite to do more Grow Ins, he applied and was successful in gaining a position at Kings Hill GC in Kent to carry out the construction in 1996. He stayed on following opening for play until 1999 where he then had a year out to travel with his wife. His position was kept open and he returned to the role of Head Greenkeeper.

In 2005, he became Course Manager at both Pyrford & Traditions Golf Clubs in Surrey before taking on his current role of Course Manager at North Foreland GC in 2005.

He is a strong advocate of education and obtained his Master Greenkeeper in 2011 with the help of his very supportive team and employers. He is married with two children, Tadhg, 5, and Mairead, 3.



**Name: David Gray**  
**Age: 30**  
**Position: First Assistant**  
**Club: Ladybank Golf Club**

David has been in the industry for over 15 years, and is qualified to SVQII and SVQIII in Greenkeeping and Greenkeeping management.

His hobbies include golf, which he plays to a 3 handicap, snooker, poker and going

to the gym. He also enjoys supporting local music, socialising with friends and eating out. He has been married to Fiona for four and a half years.

David is passionate about the industry and loves learning new methods and techniques.

He also really enjoys guiding, teaching and passing on his knowledge to others. He is excited and honoured to have been selected to represent BIGGA, and the industry at the show and believes that it will be very exciting and hugely beneficial for his career.



**Name: Stuart Hall**  
**Age: 40**  
**Position: Workshop Manager**  
**Club: John O'Gaunt**

Stuart joined John O'Gaunt in May 1987 as a trainee greenkeeper and studied horticulture and turf care at Milton College. At the same time the club had been looking for a trainee

mechanic, and subsequently was offered a three year agricultural engineering course at Shuttleworth College.

Once qualified in 1991, he continued working on the golf course as a greenkeeper and in the workshop until being promoted to Workshop Manager in March 1994. From that time until the present day he continued his education by attending manufacturer-based training courses, service schools and turf care seminars.

The highlight of his career to date has to be, being selected as a volunteer workshop technician at the 2010 Ryder Cup held at Celtic Manor Resort.



**Name: Pete Newton**  
**Age: 34**  
**Position: Head Greenkeeper**  
**Club: Rockcliffe Hall G&CC**

Pete started greenkeeping in 1996 and he attended Myerscough College where he was to complete an HND in Turf Science and Golf Course Management.

Deciding that he wanted to work at a tournament venue he was appointed

an Assistant at Marriott Forest of Arden, where he worked for five and a half years and worked on five European Tour events at the Forest of Arden and other events at other courses on a voluntary basis. During that time he was promoted to Senior Assistant and then First Assistant on the Arden Championship Course.

He moved to Marriott Worsley Park as First Assistant for 18 months before he was appointed Deputy Head Greenkeeper on the Brabazon at the Belfry, where he spent two years during which time he worked at the British Masters again.

He applied for and got the Head Greenkeepers job at Rockcliffe Hall, where he has been for almost four years helping oversee the build and grow in of the course to its opening.



**Name: Jaime Acton**  
**Age: 32**  
**Position: Head Greenkeeper**  
**Club: Worlebury GC**

Jaime has been greenkeeping since he left school at the age of 16 where he spent 11 years working at the links of Weston-super-Mare GC.

Although he really enjoyed his time at Weston he left in 2006 when he was offered the role of Head Greenkeeper at Worlebury GC.

Although looking after a clay based golf course built on a limestone ridge has had its challenges, he has very much enjoyed his time there.

Having gained an NVQ Level 3 he recently returned to education to do NVQ Level 4 and ILM in Sports Turf Management at Myerscough College.

He is married to Alex and they have two children, Elijah, 5, and Arabella, 3.

He enjoys playing golf and is a huge football fan, supporting Tottenham Hotspur.





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# Beware of the OPM

## on the golf course

Cast larval skins from an early instar stage of OPM and skeletonised oak leaves (Picture copyright RBG Kew)

Dr Terry Mabbett looks at the impact the oak processionary moth has had on Richmond Golf Club



**2006 saw Britain enter a new dimension in insect pest infestation with the discovery of oak processionary moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) on newly planted imported oak trees in the London Boroughs of Richmond and Ealing.**

For the first time the United Kingdom faced a dual-dimension insect pest (amenity and public health) affecting people as well as trees and with the capacity to kill either, as well as domestic pets and farm animals.

Oak processionary moth (OPM) had been spreading northwards in Europe for some years and was already endemic in Germany and the Benelux Countries.

The insect sneaked into England as plaques of eggs on semi-mature cypress (*fastigiata*) oak trees (*Quercus robur* f. *fastigiata*) imported from a nursery in southern Holland and subsequently planted on landscape projects in Richmond and Ealing.

At first the Forestry Commission (FC) claimed it could eradicate the pest but soon realised it 'had bitten off more than it could chew'. By 2011 OPM was well established in five contiguous London Boroughs (Richmond, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hounslow and Brent) in what became known as the 'core outbreak zone'.

In March 2011 FC stopped serving statutory enforcement notices for OPM nest removal and pest control in this 'core zone', leaving local authorities, private landowners and householders to take the initiative and to continue to pay for any control. FC said it would now serve notices within a 'buffer zone' of 10km radius around the 'core zone'. This 'buffer zone' was subsequently breached by OPM during the spring and summer of 2011 including eastwards onto Wimbledon Common.

Additional outbreaks almost certainly originating from new introductions on oak trees imported from the Netherlands subsequently occurred during 2010. At least one post-dated the necessity for oak trees imported into the UK from the Netherlands and other EU countries to be accompanied by an 'EU Plant Passport'. This became effective on March 31 2008. The outbreaks were found in North Surrey, Pangbourne in Berkshire and Sheffield in late summer 2010.

OPM is a poisonous pest

OPM attacks oaks of all ages and stages, and appears to favour trees growing in an open well-lit situation. In this context OPM could not

have chosen a better place to invade than the London Borough of Richmond which is exceptionally well blessed with large open spaces and places. Kew Gardens, Richmond Park (Royal Parks), land belonging to Richmond Borough Council and several high-prestige internationally acclaimed golf courses are all affected and now operating programmes of pest containment, control and eradication.

They employ specialist arboriculture companies with the equipment and expertise to deal with this now well-established pest carrying serious implications for public health and safety. Each third instar (growth stage) larva carries over 60,000 stinging hairs 'barbed' with an urticating (irritating) and allergic reaction histamine-releasing protein with potential lethal risk to people, pets and livestock.

One of the golf courses affected is The Richmond Golf Club at Sudbrook Park which is using Bartlett Tree Experts, headquartered at Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire. Bartlett Tree Experts has country-wide coverage through a series of regional offices and depots from where it carries out pest management programmes. I spent a day in May 2011 with a highly experienced two-man specialist spray application team (Adam Clarke and Chris Gill) from Bartlett Tree Experts on The Richmond golf course to learn first-hand how they are managing this dynamic pest problem. I later spoke at length with Course Manager Les Howkins MG to get his views on OPM, its control and the implications for golf courses in the UK.

### A spray day in May

Adam Clarke and Chris Gill, two highly skilled arborists, had started to spray and were well on their way to treating all 700+ oak trees on the course, including saplings and newly planted trees.

"Most are native English oak (*Quercus robur*) with significant numbers of Turkey oak (*Quercus cerris*) and a few red oaks (*Quercus rubra*), all of which will be sprayed," said Chris Gill.

The Richmond has a management plan comprising preventative spray application to all oak trees that were infested in the previous year with accompanying treatment of all adjacent susceptible oaks. However, it faces constant threats from adjacent infested sites not able to spray insecticide due to SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) status or not willing to implement



adequate control, or indeed any control, for financial or other reasons.

This presents the risk of re-infestation on a yearly basis from sites doing nothing or having inadequate programs in place. Golf courses in particular are in no position to 'mess around' with OPM (for safety reasons). The Richmond has opted for deltamethrin, a highly potent synthetic pyrethroid insecticide to provide a quick, efficient and cost effective kill of OPM larvae.

"There are no water courses on this site so the toxicity of deltamethrin to fish and other aquatic life does not arise," said Chris.

### No risk

The Richmond is clearly not prepared to take any chances from using less quick and complete-kill products like the insect growth regulator diflubenzuron or the bio-insecticide *Bacillus thuringiensis* (BT). Bottom line for The Richmond



**MAIN ABOVE:** With a height reach of 30m, covering the tops of the tallest English oak trees is no problem

**INSET ABOVE:** Successful end to another 'Spray Day'. Adam Clarke (left) and Chris Gill (right)

Photos courtesy Dr Terry Mabbett





**“We take all precautions when spraying. Bee hives are shut down and extra care is taken to ensure no spray droplet drift occurs across the course and onto adjacent land and properties”**

Adam Clarke

is protecting the health and safety of members and players from urticating (irritating) hairs on OPM larvae from the L3 (third instar) stage onwards.

“We take all precautions when spraying. Bee hives are shut down and extra care is taken to ensure no spray droplet drift occurs across the course and onto adjacent land and properties,” said Adam.

The situation and conditions prevailing on May 17 last year illustrated the problems posed and accompanying care which has to be taken during OPM spraying. Adam

and Chris had started at 6am when the wind was just right to avoid any drift onto adjacent sites. The Richmond and its adjacent sites had active OPM infestation among the hundreds of oak trees scattered across the respective areas.

The initial infestation at The Richmond was discovered in June/July 2010 during a routine FC inspection and the club was duly served with a ‘statutory notice’ for OPM control. But this was after the time period for effective control by spraying had passed leaving a programme of nest removal as the only option for that year.

Nest removal is potentially dangerous for operators who run the risk of sustaining allergic reactions from contact with the urticating hairs and is proving ineffective because some nests are invariably missed. It is also very labour-intensive and therefore costly and in the case of The Richmond proved to more than twice as expensive as the following year’s (2011) spray programme.

Ideal spray timing is when OPM larvae are in L1 to L3 prior to the development of urticating hairs and when they are most susceptible to insecticides. When larvae reach L4 they are covered in toxic irritating hairs and the fall out of dead larvae from trees after spraying creates whole new management and safety problems.

Adam and Chris were on the lookout for clusters of early instar larvae.

“It is too early to see any results of feeding activity or damage although we would have started to find skeletonised leaves very soon,” said Adam.

Maintaining OPM populations as low as possible is the only realistic policy as far as this golf course is concerned.

“Unfortunately they can only approach and achieve it on an annual basis despite the near 100% control we will have achieved by spraying with deltamethrin. Re-infestation is likely to occur





**ABOVE:** The sprayed larvae were clearly dead, dislodged and hanging upside down from their webbing (Picture courtesy Dr Terry Mabbett)

**BELOW:** OPM pupae and nest; **RIGHT:** Plaques of OPM eggs laid on a small branch of an English oak tree (Courtesy Bartlett Tree Experts)



**RIGHT:** Cast larval skins from an early instar stage of OPM and skeletonised oak leaves (Picture copyright RBG Kew)

**BELOW:** (Courtesy Bartlett Tree Experts)



annually so long term eradication is not going to happen.”

Tony Bartram, Assistant at The Richmond and a qualified tree surgeon, monitored the course throughout summer 2011 and did not see any OPM nests following the spraying.

“However, residual OPM infestations from surrounding sites will migrate straight back onto the golf course every year which means the golf course management will be forced to review their control program and decide whether to spray every year from now on,” said Chris.

### The spray operation

The Richmond is a busy golf course and the 700+ oak trees are spread across the 18-hole course, some singularly, others in groups with many already at full grown size. You could gauge just how tricky it was for these guys to spray effectively and safely as Adam ‘tooled up’ to treat a group of 18 English oak trees. There was a fairway with players on both sides of the grove but Adam wasted no time in kiting up in full safety gear and protective clothing. This was the bigger of the two spray rigs used by Bartlett Tree Experts at this location and with a maximum spray reach of 30m would easily cover the very tops of

these trees.

I stood well back and upwind as the powerful spray stream shot into the canopy. It took Adam just three minutes to deliver the 300 litres of spray required to adequately cover these trees.

“This is the only option for fast effective control of OPM and safe spray delivery to tall oak trees that we have at the moment” said Adam. “Attempts to spray using portable knapsack sprayers from MEWP’s and the use of mistblowers is ineffective, time consuming and not cost effective,” he said.

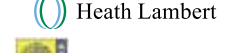
We walked across the fairway to another hole where oak trees with a sighting of 10+ nests were sprayed the day before. Looking up into the canopy of a 30-40 year old *Quercus robur* we saw how deltamethrin had done the job and quickly too. OPM larvae were hanging upside down in their webbing clearly dead and dislodged from a previously secure position on the underside of a scaffold branch some 10m up the tree.

OPM nest collection is not an economically viable control option. The process is time consuming and ineffective as nests are bound to be missed despite best efforts. And there is the strain and fatigue of working in full PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) in the

summer’s heat combined with the increased risk of exposure to OPM’s toxin. “We cleared this site last year through nest collection as the infestation was discovered too late in the season for effective control by spraying. This included one mature oak with 80+ nests.” said Chris.

“OPM larvae have hatched earlier than expected this year due to the early spring which means we have been spraying at different sites since the beginning of May and are faced with a much more dynamic and fast moving situation,” said Adam,

Some private parks, estates and local authorities opt for diflubenzuron, either straight away or after hitting OPM hard with deltamethrin in previous years. The selectivity of diflubenzuron means it is non-toxic to honey bees, lady bird beetles and other beneficial beetles, spiders and sucking insects. The disadvantage of diflubenzuron is that it is not as fast acting as deltamethrin ie. OPM takes 7-10 days to die following spraying, says Bartlett Tree Experts. Given their highly competitive commercial nature, golf clubs and courses are clearly not in a position to sacrifice fast and complete kill of OPM with deltamethrin in favour of environmental considerations, however laudable that may be.



This article comes to you courtesy of the BIGGA Learning and Development Fund.  
Thank you to all our key sponsors





**LEFT:** Les Howkins with one of more than 700 oak trees across the course at The Richmond

**ABOVE:** Typical small nest on the underside of an oak branch (Picture copyright RBG Kew)

**RIGHT:** Newly emerged adult moth exiting the nest (Courtesy Bartlett Tree Experts)



## “We’ve already budgeted for next year’s OPM control operations. We’ll spray with Deltamethrin next Spring, with the arrival of warmer weather and its influence on the timing of hatching of OPM larvae from the egg stage”

Les Howkins



### Richmond resigned to spraying

Les is resigned to spraying every year against OPM even though the cost represents a 25% increase on his existing budget for pest, disease and weed control across the course.

“We have already budgeted for next year’s OPM control operations. We will spray with deltamethrin next spring, the exact timing left to Bartlett and related to the arrival of warmer spring weather and its influence on the timing of hatching of OPM larvae from the egg stage,” said Les, in early December 2011

“We essentially have no choice but to use deltamethrin because it is the most potent and fast acting product available, If OPM ‘skeletonises’ oak canopies or even kills the

odd tree then it is not the end of the world, but harming and perhaps killing a club member is an entirely different matter, and we have many active members some of whom are well into their 80s.

“The Richmond has been entirely up front about OPM with its members who have reacted with interest and inquisitiveness, rather than anger or fear. They are pleased we dealt with the situation promptly as soon as the pest was identified,” said Les.

I asked Les how OPM, which is spreading rapidly and now beyond eradication from the UK, would affect golf courses in general.

“The amount of money involved will clearly present a ‘big hit’ and drain on those clubs which are not in such a stable and fortunate financial position as The Richmond.

“But in practice golf clubs have no option but to contain and control OPM with its serious public health and safety dimension.

“Golf clubs which fail to take precautions to protect the health and safety of their members could easily find themselves facing a lawsuit for damages if a player gets ‘stung’ by OPM,” he added.

The upside is that only oaks are affected and of course there are many other trees that golf courses can plant. And even though it would

be a drastic measure they could fell existing oaks where legislation allows. But as Les says “oaks, and especially English oaks, are ideal for golf courses because they live so long and the fallen leaves are easy to get rid of.”

### Poor prognosis for overall control

“Prognosis for the eradication of OPM from the UK is not good and is unlikely to be achieved,” say Adam and Chris. Bartlett Tree Experts along with other reputable tree contractors are looking at all the tools in their arsenal for the management of OPM, whether spraying with deltamethrin, insect growth regulators and BT or nest removal or a combination of any of the above.

“Further research projects both in the UK and in Europe are looking at other options for OPM control and continued cooperation with all involved parties is essential. Looking at experience with OPM in continental Europe the problem is only going to get worse.

We are all going to have to learn to live with OPM over the coming years,” said Richard Trippett Area Manager and Arborist for Bartlett Tree Experts based at the Beaconsfield Office.





# Your R&A services

**Hopefully, by now, you will all have visited the new course management section of The R&A website at [www.randa.org/thegolfcourse](http://www.randa.org/thegolfcourse)**

The look, feel and content of the site have been designed to appeal to the decision makers in golf facilities with the executive power to initiate and drive change – and that probably includes you! The site is all about how golf can make a positive contribution to the economy, the environment and communities; and how golf can benefit from being proactive. Today's world of financial troubles, environmental regulation and public scrutiny poses real challenges for golf. Many think that it takes significant additional costs to address these challenges. The reality can be very different and the website is intended to provide ideas, guidance and evidence as to how this can be achieved and how golf facilities can thrive by confronting these issues head on.

Over time, a library of news items, features and case studies will be built up on the site with the intention of providing you with a resource of real value as you work your way down the path towards greater sustainability. You and your course could be featured on the site, getting you on its 'Global Bulletin Map'. Get in touch with us at The R&A if you think your course should be featured.

**Course Health Check and Course Health Tracker**

The R&A will be demonstrating the website during Harrogate Week, at the Showfloor Theatre from 12 noon to 12.30 pm. In addition to the features mentioned above, we

will also be previewing two new services which are under development; the Course Health Check and the Course Health Tracker. These services are the subject of ongoing refinement, informed by market research. An Edinburgh-based company has been working with us to find out what web-based tools will interest, excite, inspire and be of real value to those involved in "managing the business of sustainability" at golf facilities.

The Course Health Check is a simple, six question, two minute tick box teaser to raise awareness of sustainability. Our market research suggests that users get much more out of it:

*"The CHC will remind the superintendent of places where they can improve, which usually could have been overlooked."*

*"Good spot check as to how the club was performing and a good argument for underpinning future policies."*

The Course Health Tracker provides an annual audit by which the net balance of revenue brought into the club by its primary asset, the golf course, is offset by what is spent on the course. It also offers the possibility to show where the greenkeeping teams' time is spent on the course over the year and what efforts are being made to enhance biodiversity. The service will enable sensible in-country comparisons, with pooled data that shows average percentage income, spend and time so that you are able to see where your programme sits in relation to others.

Comments from market research suggest that we are on the right track with the Tracker!

*"The tracker is simple to use and will be of great benefit to Course Managers at any type of club."*

*"It gives me a tool that will help me make green committee members understand what it takes to run a golf course."*

Data entry will be 100% confidential and totally anonymous when pooled. To ensure anonymity, pooling will only be available in a given country once an adequate number of facilities are using the service.

Downloadable charts and reports will provide the course manager with a great tool to help you:

- track performance year on year
- establish trends and changes
- produce a better course for customers, at less expense
- achieve a lighter environmental footprint
- keep a record for future continuity
- provide evidence of your success in becoming more sustainable.

**Recommended evidence fields**

The Course Health Tracker will be the means by which you can monitor and manage The R&A recommended evidence fields for the assessment of ongoing sustainability. These are outlined on our website and can be sourced through the 'Downloads and publications' area.

The R&A is working with the professionals who make the important, strategic decisions at golf facilities to provide tools that will make their life easier! Come and see your R&A services at Harrogate Week. We look forward to seeing you and, more importantly, to hearing your ideas as to how we might be of help to you.





# Volunteers wanted

## to work at The Open

The Open Championship, Lytham and St Anne's, July 19-22, 2012



**This is your opportunity to work at The Open Championship and assist the Lytham and St Anne's team with the preparation of the course and be a part of the on-course team which accompanies each match ensuring bunkers are raked in a correct and professional manner.**

It will be your responsibility to make your way to the team's base for the week – a hotel in the centre of Blackpool, - but after that transport

to and from the golf course, accommodation and meals will be provided for the duration of the Championship. Accommodation will be on a shared twin-room basis.

You will be expected to report for duty by 5pm on Wednesday, July 18, and be available until the close of play on Sunday – a meal and bed and breakfast will be supplied for the Sunday evening and Monday morning if required.

This opportunity is open to full BIGGA members only.

Younger members, relatively

new to the Association, will also be actively considered, as will a number of first-time applicants.

To apply please complete this application form and send to: Scott MacCallum, BIGGA HOUSE, Aldwark, Alne, York, YO61 1UF.

For further information contact Scott on: 01347 833800 or email: [scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)

Closing Date for applications for The Open Support Team is February 1, 2011, and you will be notified later in the month.



Name		Yes	No
Golf Club			
Position	I have been a BIGGA member for more than three years....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age.....	I serve, or have served in the last three years, on a Section/Region Committee.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BIGGA Mem Number	I am enrolled on BIGGA's CPD Scheme.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email Address	I have attended three of the last five Harrogate Weeks.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile Number	I am/have been a member of the PGA Championship Support Team.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have applied for/appeared on the team at:	Applied	Successful	
Royal St George's, 2011.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
St Andrews, 2010.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Turnberry, 2009.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Royal Birkdale 2008.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Carnoustie 2007.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	I am willing to be a mini bus driver (You must have held a full driving license for three years and be over 25 years of age.).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I am an overseas Member.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: A place on the team is open to all full BIGGA members but priority will be given to the more active members. Subject to the availability of sufficient numbers of experienced team members no regular team member will be selected for more than three teams in succession. A limited number of places will be made available to younger members and overseas members. Please ensure that you have spoken to your golf club or Course Manager prior to applying and have arranged the time off.

Should you be chosen you must send a passport picture of yourself to BIGGA HQ.



# The rise of digital technologies in greenkeeping

Jim Cook looks at how the greenkeeping industry has embraced new technology

**In most areas of modern life, digital technology does seem to be king. Be it at home with the internet and also the recent digitising of television, travelling with the aid of satellite navigation systems or communicating with Smartphones, it is nigh on impossible to spend a day without coming into contact with digital technologies in some form or another.**

The same must be said for greenkeeping.

We have all kinds of digital devices from small digital timers which make sticking to machinery maintenance schedules easier, through digital thermometers, to the big one: digitised irrigation systems.

Another common one is greenkeepers using Smartphones to make certain tasks less arduous. Some take pictures of broken machinery parts while out on the course and send an email off the phone to the manufacturer and have a replacement part despatched as soon as possible. Some use them to work out such things as fertiliser application calculations and some to just have a glance at the weather forecast.

It would be hard to deny that using such methods can be a real time-saver and the benefits with regards communication are obvious.

So then, the question could be asked: is digital technology on the golf course another useful, even vital, part of the modern day greenkeeper's armoury or is it, in the grand scheme of things, a fad or luxury likely to fade away more quickly than some new phones' batteries?

One greenkeeper who makes full use of digital technologies is Karl

Parry, Course Manager at Denbigh Golf Club, in North Wales.

He said: "I love my technology and gadgets and I try to incorporate this into my job as much as possible. It makes my life easier and helps everything run efficiently on the golf course. I use a tablet so that when I'm out of the office, in seminars or at home I can do such things as updating the daily diary, upload pictures onto our Facebook page or communicate with our Chairman," said Karl.

"One of the best uses I have for the tablet is giving Green Committee meetings. I can have captions and graphics on the wide-screen television, in our clubhouse, by plugging in the tablet via a HDMI cable. It brings a bit more life to the meetings and can make things clear to people who may be unsure. We can show things like verti draining on screen in pictures; when we did it where we did it and how long it took us," he added.

Karl has developed a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet which allows him, among other things, to calculate his total NPK input.

"It's a simple tool which I developed so I could determine what NPK rate was coming out on the greens after using various products from different companies. It makes sure I never overdose with fertiliser and it just makes the application process easier, with no mess-ups."

Alongside this article is a QR code, to scan with your Smartphone, which will take you to a link to download Karl's handy application calculator for free. If you haven't got a Smartphone email Karl at [karlpaulparry@gmail.com](mailto:karlpaulparry@gmail.com) and he will send you a free copy.

Karl also had the forward thinking idea of installing QR codes in his workshop where the machinery is stored. Instead of the current

laborious method of writing down what machine was used and when, the code would be scanned each time a machine is used. This would send a message to an online database and Karl would know everything he needed to know about that machine. The idea of fitting brushes onto fairway mowers was one which Karl has developed and made into a reality and did so with the aid of digital technology.

On the golf course, Karl and his team use Smartphones to keep in touch and also send pictures if there is a problem around the course.

**It helps things run efficiently on the golf course. When I'm out of the office, in seminars or at home, I can update the diary, upload pics onto Facebook or talk with our Chairman**

**Karl Parry, Denbigh Golf Club**

Another digital tool utilised at Denbigh is the online tee-time booking system by BRS Golf.

"I'm set up as an administrator on the system so that every Monday morning I can check my phone to see what times are booked in and if there are any competitions, then we can set our work schedule around that. It really helps me manage myself and my staff and there has never been a moment where we can't deal with a job," said Karl.

Syngenta's GreenCast phone application was favoured by Karl.

"It gives you the weather, spraying windows of opportunities and other helpful things to give you the best timing possible for spraying fungicides. Because fungicides are so expensive, this helps us to save money as well as effort."



Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn continue to alter the way we interact with each other in everyday situations and for professionals they can be an important method of communication.

"We have just set up a Denbigh Golf Club maintenance page on Facebook and all the jobs we do around the course will have pictures taken and will be uploaded straight onto it. It's like a news bulletin page, so members know what we are doing," Karl added.

He ended by saying that he was looking into getting a new irrigation system that can be controlled from a phone.

This deserves a closer look.

Irrigation systems have come a long way. The beginning of the road to digital can be traced back to the 1960s. The first electrical control systems appeared on the market in the 1960's and allowed greenkeepers to control watering schedules electronically with an on-course housing. Basic though how they now may seem, it was revolutionary in the industry at the time and paved the way for more sophisticated inventions through the following decades.

During the 70s Rain Bird developed a system that could control up to several hundred sprinklers from a central base. What followed next was the shining light in irrigation technology and what is still, in a modernised form, the standard on many courses around the world: computer controlled irrigation systems.

Now, a Mobile Internet (MI) controller by Rain Bird allows the instant, on-the-fly ability to control and monitor your sprinklers from anywhere, as long as you own a Smartphone and there is mobile phone or wireless signal. It can be set up so you can monitor your







pump station and adjust parameters if need be, so traditionally you had to go and visit these locations which sometimes can be very remote and make any adjustments and now these can then be dealt with from the phone. Not only that, but the pump station and control can have a virtual 'talk' together. If the pump station has more capacity it can tell control to turn on more sprinklers and conversely if it is struggling with low pressure, can tell it to turn some off.

Kneale Diamond, of Rain Bird, spoke about what has just been released with regard to digital technology in greenkeeping:

"Integrated Soil Sensors which take moisture, temperature and salinity readings from any soil types and feed them back to a central control through wireless communication and this is proving to be very popular. We are always looking at different ways to becoming as efficient and responsible as possible and these systems help with reducing water and especially power usage."

Kneale mentioned the advantages of digital technology: "One of the biggest benefit is the internet; being able to remotely access control systems. Whereas before if somebody rang with a problem

with a new control system, you'd jump in your car and drive to where the problem was and fix it in 10 minutes perhaps. Nowadays most manufacturers will have call centres with technicians who can access systems and computers, download and upload files, perform diagnostic tests and complete modifications."

### **"Digital technology saves time and is good for communication, learning and finding knowledge. It is so easy to find answers now with forums and sites dedicated to sharing knowledge"**

**Stewart Brown, Myerscough College**

Kneale went on to explain how Rain Bird's MI controller had been available on the market for just over two years, but in the last six to nine months sales of the product had dramatically increased. This can be attributed to the dramatic rise in popularity of Smartphones and especially, the iPhone becoming a household name.

Stewart Brown, Sportsturf Team Leader at Myerscough College, was enthusiastic about new digital technologies and said that as well

as being important for education and knowledge, were also a useful, if sometimes limited, tool to be used by greenkeepers out on the course.

"I think digital technology around the golf course is great. It helps save time and has been really good for enhancing communication, learning and finding knowledge. It is so easy to find answers now with forums and sites dedicated to sharing knowledge," he explained.

"Basically digital technology is another tool available to use to help you do your job from a diagnostic point of view, working with irrigation and various other things. I would say use the tools, but the tools are there to help you do your job and you've still got to know what the tool is telling you. That intuition and knowledge only comes from experience," added Stewart.

"There are occasions when you don't need the gizmo or gadget though. It wouldn't be clever to solely rely on a moisture sensor on the furthest part of the course without getting out there and seeing for yourself. It is the subtle things which can tell the most, such as slight colour changes in grass or a weed just emerging and these things need a person to see them with their own eyes. The day a greenkeeper doesn't walk out



Stewart Brown, of Myerscough College.





onto the course to look at it will be a disaster. You're never going to replace that experience and knowledge."

As an education tool, digital technology can really excel and Stewart spoke of how it is used at Myerscough for various greenkeeping courses and how far-reaching it can be: "We have a lot of provision online now particularly because you can do a BSc or foundation degree entirely online as distance learning. It's one of our biggest areas."

All the resources and materials are delivered online and you basically log onto the website, download the materials and there are videos, tests and interactive sessions. These students don't usually come anywhere near Myerscough and the first time we see them is when they arrive for graduation. Our furthest student at the moment is in Japan, but we have students all over the world including in Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, United Arab Emirates, in the USA and all over the UK and Ireland.

Also, because we do NVQ levels 2, 3 and 4 in the workplace, a lot of those students are supported by online materials. So they can download workbooks, submit work or can have a webcam chat to interact

with tutors."

Stewart spoke about a multitude of other digital methods used in learning such as video assessments and clips for portfolios and subscriptions to massive online turf databases. He also spoke about how practical skills could tie in with online learning.

"If you're studying online then you are also working in the industry and some of the modules revolve around the work that you are doing. One of these is called Work Skills Development where they create their own website and basically build their own online portfolio. It is something to show an employer as it will include such things as a CV, projects managed and courses worked at. It can also help people develop digital and computer skills if they aren't confident in that area."

We use industry resources to give students practical knowledge of such new technologies as mobile internet for irrigation. Most students coming in now already have Smartphones, iPods and knowledge in these areas, but we do consciously try."

Electric automatic mowers have been in development for some years and there are models out there on the market already, but Stewart was certain greenkeepers would

never be replaced by digitised robots in the future.

"I don't think you're ever going to remove the person from behind the mower. By the very nature of greenkeeping, it's a practical, outside, hands-on job. You need the visual, practical skills to say a green may be under stress or it has a certain disease."

All in all then, many digital technologies can not only make life easier for greenkeepers who choose to use them, but can also provide more efficient use of water, fertilisers and chemicals. Perhaps one of the greatest benefits digital technologies can offer greenkeepers is that of learning and shared knowledge. From online degrees to Smartphone applications which give practical advice, opportunities to learn are vast and expanding rapidly. Due to the practical nature of greenkeeping, digital technology will never replace greenkeepers, but as a support tool it can certainly make life easier, be used as a learning method and help with general efficiency. As Loretta Lynn sang, we've come a long way baby and it is just mind boggling to think where digital technology might take us in the coming years.

One thing is for sure: it is here to stay.

**BELOW:** Linkfertiliser application tool by Karl Parry. [http://myfreefilehosting.com/f/96c8957a4c\\_0.03MB](http://myfreefilehosting.com/f/96c8957a4c_0.03MB)





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# Weed focus

# Ragwort

Graham Paul offers some practical advice on that most awkward of weeds – Ragwort and offers the opportunity of picking up some BASIS points



Rosette stage found in year 1



Common Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaeae*)



Ragwort belongs to the daisy family and along with the Groundsels is classified in the genus *Senecio*.

Common Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*), as the name implies, is the most frequently occurring species and is normally a biennial, having a rosette stage in the first year that overwinters and in the second year grows a hairless, leafy flowering stem that is divided at the top.

Yellow flowers 15 to 20mm across, are borne in dense, flat-topped clusters from June until November when the plant dies. However, in some instances, when the plant becomes damaged by grazing or cutting, changes in its physiology occur and it becomes a short-lived perennial, surviving for several years.

Most wild flower references list six species of ragwort found in the UK. The other five are; Hoary Ragwort (*S. erucifolius*), Oxford Ragwort (*S. squalidus*) – introduced from southern Italy and naturalised in Britain, Marsh Ragwort (*S. aquaticus*), Silver Ragwort (*S. cineraria*) – introduced from the Mediterranean and naturalised on coastal cliffs in southern England and Fen Ragwort (*S. paludosus*) a rare perennial growing to 2.0m tall in the fens in East Anglia.

Ragwort provides a source of food and nectar for around 200 invertebrate species in the UK; of these some 30 are totally dependent on the plant as their only food source, which makes ragwort an essential part of our native flora.

Ragwort contains many different alkaloids that are poisonous to animals. It is a particular problem to grazing animals such as horses, cattle and pigs, whose tolerance to these alkaloids is particularly low, causing irreversible cirrhosis of the liver when an appreciable quantity of fresh ragwort is consumed. Fortunately the plant has a very bitter taste so the fresh foliage is rarely eaten by horses and cattle but it becomes much more palatable once the plant dies.

Hay and silage contaminated with ragwort plants can be fatal to livestock as the toxic alkaloids in ragwort are not broken down by drying or by the silage process.

Spraying with herbicides to remove ragwort can also present a danger to grazing animals if they are released back into the pastures too soon after treatment. In this case it is not the herbicide residue that causes harm but the presence of dead ragwort plants that the animals will no longer avoid.

### Horses will avoid ragwort in pastures

When a horse has been poisoned by ragwort, the symptoms include; yellow mucus membranes, depression, and lack of coordination. Sheep and goats have a much greater tolerance to ragwort and will eat small quantities of the plant with relish. Although they do suffer damage to the liver from consuming ragwort, it is at a much reduced rate than horses, cattle and pigs. There are reports that the alkaloids kill parasitic worms in the sheep's stomach, so in small doses they can be beneficial.

Ragwort poses little risk to the health of humans since the bitter taste precludes its use as a food. However, alkaloids can be absorbed in small quantities through the skin when the plant is handled causing an allergic reaction in sensitive individuals. Among the alkaloids found in ragwort is a group known as the sesquiterpene lactones that can cause the condition 'compositae dermatitis'. These are different from the pyrrolizidine alkaloids that are responsible for the toxic effects to the liver that result from eating the foliage.

### Five Injurious Weeds

Common Ragwort is one of five injurious weeds cited in the Weed Control Act of 1959. The term injurious weed describes an invasive species that is injurious to; crops, natural habitats, ecosystems, humans and livestock such as horses and other grazing animals. Indeed, Common Ragwort is the only one of the listed species that is toxic; the others are included in the legislation because of their damaging effect on crops. They are; Spear Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), Creeping or Field Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Curled Dock (*Rumex crispus*) and Broad-Leaved Dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*)

Under the terms of the Weed Control Act of 1959, a land occupier can be required by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to take steps to prevent the spread of one or more of the five species. However, the growth of the plant is not made illegal by the act and there is no statutory obligation for control placed upon landowners in general. It is only when the potential spread of the weed to neighbouring landowners is deemed to be harmful that the powers of the legislation are used.

Three other pieces of legislation are relevant to ragwort:

1. The Ragwort Control Act of 2003, a private members bill

introduced by Mr John Greenway MP for Ryedale.

2. A direct result of Mr Greenway's bill was the publication of 'The Code of Practice for the Control of Ragwort' by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). This code defines the situations in which there is a likelihood of ragwort spreading to neighbouring land where it will present an identifiable risk of ingestions by vulnerable animals, and provides guidance on the most appropriate control measures. The Ragwort Control Act 2003 gives this Code 'evidential' status in any proceedings taken under the Weeds Control Act 1959. Failure to follow this Code is not an offence but non-compliance may be used as evidence in any legal action. Equally, owners/occupiers should be able to establish a defence if they can demonstrate that they have adopted control measures that comply with this Code's guidance.

**“The high visibility marking of the moth and caterpillars is a warning for predators to leave them alone. Survival is also helped by lack of competition for their main source of food”**

3. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 delegates the functions available to the Secretary of State under the Weed Control Act to Natural England, a DEFRA agency.

This delegation of functions enables Natural England to investigate complaints where there is a risk that injurious weeds might spread to neighbouring land. Natural England gives priority to investigating complaints where there is a risk of weeds spreading to land used for grazing horses or livestock, land used for forage production and other agricultural activities.

### Control Measures

The Code of Practice for the Control of Ragwort outlines various suggested methods that can be summarised under the general headings of; cultural, biological and chemical control.

### Cultural Control

Hand pulling is an ideal technique for use in areas such as grazing pastures, if there are only a few ragwort plants present. Regular removal, especially prior to



Insects feeding on the nectar





LEFT, BELOW LEFT and BELOW:  
Cinnabar moth: caterpillars and adult

flowering, may be all that is needed to keep pastures free of the potential hazard to livestock. Alternatively, the whole plant can be levered out of the soil using a special tool. Hand pulling and levering out the plants are best carried out in moist soils. Gloves must be worn when pulling and handling ragwort, which can be disposed of by drying the plant material, away from access by livestock, and then burning.

Cutting down the plants to prevent the seed-heads from maturing should be regarded as an emergency treatment to halt the spread of the weed and must be followed up by some other form of control.

One factor that encourages the proliferation of ragwort in pastures is over-grazing, which results in thinning of the grass sward, leaving room for this weed to establish. Good turf management practices coupled with a sensible rotation of grazing will help to crowd ragwort out.

#### Biological Control

The Cinnabar moth *Tyria jacobaeae* is an interesting species that can give some degree of control of ragwort. Both the adult and caterpillar feed on ragwort plants and are not affected by the toxic alkaloids they absorb through their digestive tracts. They assimilate the toxins into their bodies as a defence mechanism against birds and other predators, who would find them unpalatable.

#### Cinnabar moth

The high visibility marking of the moth and caterpillars is a warning for predators to leave them alone. Survival is also helped by lack of competition for their main source of food. However, distribution of the Cinnabar moth caterpillars tends to be patchy, making control unre-

liable. It is not uncommon to see a ragwort plant totally devastated by the caterpillars and one next to it untouched.

#### Chemical control

'Barrier H' is an herbicide based on a natural product (citronella oil) that can be used at all stages of growth and is marketed in a ready-to-use spot treatment pack. It produces a rapid, severe scorch on ragwort and certain other weeds and will also temporarily scorch the grass but this soon recovers.

Selective herbicides containing MCPA (e.g. 'Agritox 50') will give moderate control of the rosette stage of the weed. Products containing 2,4-D (e.g. 'Depitox') will give a moderate level of control at dose rates applying 1.65kg of the active ingredient per hectare (3.3L/ha of a 500g/L amine formulation). In some situations a repeat application may be required for complete control with 2,4-D.

Mixtures containing the active ingredients MCPA + mecoprop-P + dicamba, such as 'Relay Turf' or 'Longbow' will give reasonably effective control.

Glyphosate formulations can be used as spot treatments applied with a knapsack sprayer but these will also kill the grass in the immediate vicinity of the target plant. It is possible to use a weed-wiper applicator to apply the glyphosate without damaging the grass.

With all herbicide treatments, livestock must be excluded during treatment and kept out of treated areas for at least 4 to 6 weeks until all traces of the weed have rotted away or have been removed. Animals are unable to recognise dead or dying plants and in most cases the decaying plant tissues will contain higher levels of sugars making them more palatable.

## SELF ASSESSMENT

Use the questions below to check your understanding of this topic. Readers can claim BASIS points if the questions are answered correctly!

Circle the correct answer(s)

1) Which other species belongs to the same genus as Ragwort (*Senecio*)?

- a) Ground-ivy
- b) Ground-elder
- c) Groundsel
- d) Ground-pine

2) Which of the grazing animals mentioned have a much greater tolerance to the alkaloid toxins in Ragwort plants?

- a) Cattle
- b) Sheep
- c) Horses
- d) Pigs

3) Apart from Common Ragwort which other injurious weeds are cited in the Weed Control Act of 1959? More than one may apply

- a) Marsh Dock *Rumex palustris*
- b) Spear Thistle *Cirsium vulgare*
- c) Curled Dock *Rumex crispus*
- d) Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*

4) Which Government Agency has specific powers, delegated by act of parliament, to investigate complaints under the Weed Control Act 1959?

- a) Environment Agency
- b) Home Office
- c) Natural England
- d) Forestry Commission

5) Which species of moth provides a biological control for ragwort?

- a) Orange swift (*Hepialus sylvina*)
- b) Cinnabar moth (*Tyria jacobaeae*)
- c) Scarlet Tiger (*Callimorpha dominula*)
- d) Brown-tail moth (*Euproctis chrysorrhoea*)

**Acknowledgement of trademarks:** 'Agritox 50' and 'Depitox' are trademarks of NuFarm UK Ltd. 'Relay Turf' is a trademark of Headland Amenity 'Longbow' is a trademark of Bayer Environmental Science





# Greens mowers ...*more choice or more confusion?*

James de Havilland casts his net over the range of greens mowers and marvels at the technology involved



**Eclipse, eFlex and E-Cut. Jacobsen, John Deere and Toro. The 'big three' all have some electric trickery up their sleeves to help golf courses cut greens in a greener fashion. Or should you substitute greener for more efficient?**

There are several ways in which you can approach the adoption of all-battery and hybrid power for both walk behind and ride-on greens mowers. For some, the development of some form of hybrid or full electric power is just a knee jerk reaction by manufacturers to be seen to be making an effort to reduce the production of greenhouse gasses. For others, electric power is the future and marks the beginning of the end of hydraulic drives and internal combustion engines.

At this point, however, it is

perhaps best to relish the fact that there is a choice. The best way to look at any form of alternative drive and power is to skip straight to the ability of the mower to do its job. If a given model does what you want the next step is to work out if it does it in a cost effective fashion over its whole life.

At the moment, opting for an all-battery pedestrian mower over a petrol-powered alternative will cost more up front. Hybrid versus 'mechanical' pricing is not as clear cut as manufacturers have been known to adjust hybrid prices to make them more competitive in response to supply and demand. So you need to ask before just assuming 'hybrids are too expensive' or 'battery power is 'too left field'.

One issue that is difficult to address is the life span of lithium based battery packs. All batteries

have a finite number of charge cycles and all designs will lose their ability to hold a full charge as they age. So while lead acid battery technology is now well understood, lithium based package life for mowers is something of a 'known unknown'. That said, the way in which purpose developed lithium battery chargers work is fully automatic. There are no electrolyte levels to check and the charger will 'manage' how the battery is charged to enhance its lifespan.

#### **Power choice is nothing new**

Not so long ago, courses looking to buy a ride-on greens mower would have 'only' to choose between petrol or diesel power; cheaper to buy versus cheaper to run. Now you have to think of hybrids and full battery power. Again, cheaper

*It is all too easy to concentrate upon the latest greens mower developments, overlooking existing proven designs. The Baroness LM56 and LM66 pedestrian models from Kyo-eisha UK are tough 'conventional' mowers with independent gear drive to the split rear roller. Available in a contour hugging 18 inch and 22 or 26 inch cutting widths, these and other traditional designs of mower can deliver an exacting finish.*

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Of course, its superior cutting technology delivers the finest putting surface and playing experience you would expect from Toro; but added to this, the mower is clean, environmentally friendly and, crucially, incredibly quiet. All this, and more, make the eFlex the perfect choice for golf clubs looking for a green solution, especially those with hotels and guest accommodation.

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TRIFLEX 3400



partners in turfcare





*Drawing its power from a 58 volt, 35 amp-hour Lithium-Ion battery, the recently launched Toro Greensmaster eFlex offers a nominal nine-holes per overnight charge capacity. Offered in 18 and 21inch widths, the all-electric model shares its key mowing components with its petrol-powered Greensmaster Flex alternative. This means both petrol and battery powered variants can be specified with a brush or groomer and choice of cylinder.*

*Jacobsen offered an all-electric E-Plex back in 1997, with the company suggesting many of these original machines are still in service. Modern electronic control and improved motor and generator technology ensure current Eclipse models offer high levels of efficiency, with dependability to match.*



to buy and cheaper to run? The key is to look at costs to buy and run and to also try as many machines as you can. Moving towards hybrid or full electric power suits some but not all. It also pays to talk to those who have adopted alternatives to 'just' internal combustion power. Have they had to make changes to fit a hybrid or battery powered mower into their routine?

What is perhaps of greater interest is that electric drive to cutting units is now both well proven and 'familiar'. Because electric drive to the wheels of a ride-on calls upon a different type of drive, full electric power as per the Jacobsen Eclipse 322 is more adventurous but still based around proven technology. The same applies to Jacobsen fitting electrically powered units to raise and lower the units into work and of course electric power steering.

The upshot of this is that it may well be that some ride-on mowers will soon only be offered with a hybrid drive, doing away with hydraulic hose runs and reducing the chance of hot oil spills on precious greens. But a 'conventional' pedestrian mower still has a lot of life left in the concept and for many will still be the best choice.

One final point. It is possible for a golf course to generate electricity; it is difficult to create your own petrol diesel! Cover the greenkeeper's

shed with photovoltaic panels and use these to help cut the cost of charging up a fleet of electrically powered mowers and potentially you could cut your daily operating costs.

Not so long ago this would have been considered a pipedream but now there are hundreds of companies installing photovoltaic systems. Many of these are now looking for work following the sudden announcement that the feed in tariff has been cut from 43p/kW to around 21p/kW. Time to get your calculator out?



*(LEFT) Toro will offer its Greensmaster 3400 TriFlex in hybrid form. As with the walk-behind pedestrian models, a key design aim has been to reduce maintenance, using sealed bearings to cut the need for greasing. The mower also has a 'modular' design, with all the key components being shared between the various power options offered. This advanced thinking in mower design is critical in enabling manufacturers to offer a choice of power units and adapt to changes in demand.*





*(RIGHT) Because the electrical system powers the traction drive motors, cutting reels, steering and reel lift and lower, Jacobsen is able to offer its Eclipse 322 in both hybrid and full battery forms. Hybrid models are said to cut fuel consumption by up to 43%, the all-electric version returning claimed savings of up to 80% -based on annual operating costs. Features include programmable frequency of cut. A swing-out centre unit is carried over from existing Jacobsen greens mowers.*



*(LEFT) Because the electrical system powers the traction drive motors, cutting reels, steering and reel lift and lower, Jacobsen is able to offer its Eclipse 322 in both hybrid and full battery forms. Hybrid models are said to cut fuel consumption by up to 43%, the all-electric version returning claimed savings of up to 80% -based on annual operating costs. Features include programmable frequency of cut. A swing-out centre unit is carried over from existing Jacobsen greens mowers.*

*(BELOW) John Deere has offered its E-Cut hybrid 2500e ride-on greens mowers since 2005, with the company's commitment to hybrid power now extending to its 8000E three-wheeled ultra-light and 7500E and 8500E fairway models. A key claim for hybrids is their ability to offer a reduction in running costs. This is primarily down to the ability to run the engine at a lower speed than is needed with hydraulic drives.*



*Walk-behind pedestrian greens mowers like the John Deere 220 are offered in conventional and hybrid variants. As with a ride-on, it is the ability to work the mower at a reduced engine speed that will appeal to some. But it is the precision with which the cutting speed can be set that also appeals.*



# New SMS launching at Harrogate Week



**Welcome to the new the Safety Management System (SMS) sponsored by Ransomes Jacobsen. BIGGA and the GCMA have spent the last year updating and simplifying the SMS.**

Accessible through the members' area (BIGGA) or library area (GCMA) of each of the Associations' websites, the updated system allows users to download and save all of the relevant documents for using a Safety Management System.

Since golf clubs are not complex organisations the SMS is short but nevertheless robust.

Clubs need to manage health and Safety with the same degree of expertise and to the same standards as other core business activities if they are to reduce risks and prevent harm to people.

The key elements of the SMS are:

1. Policy
2. Organising
3. Planning and implementing
4. Measuring performance
5. Reviewing performance
6. Auditing occurs at each stage; and feeds back to improve performance

A new area has been added for Fire Safety.

This area includes a dedicated Fire Safety Policy downloadable from the Fire Safety home page.

The original SMS will be available until the end of April 2012 for users to have access and to download their stored Risk Profile information.

The new Safety Management System website has been made possible thanks to the continued support and sponsorship from Ransomes Jacobsen



**SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (Fire)**

It is the policy of ABC Golf Club to implement the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to ensure that all workplaces are safe for employees, visitors and Club members.

**ORGANISATION**

The ..... of the Club is the appointed 'responsible person'. The specific duties of the responsible person are contained in Articles 8 to 22 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.





# BIGGA/GCMA Safety Management System



## Membership Benefit

The BIGGA/GCMA Safety Management System (SMS) sponsored by Ransomes Jacobson has been developed to provide:

- All golf clubs with Golf Industry Standard Risk Assessments.
- All golf clubs with a SMS tailored to their needs.
- Golf Club Managers with practical help to meet their legal obligations.

**Why do you need a Safety Management System?**

- It is a key obligation of health and safety legislation.
- It is required by HSE guidance.
- It gives protection to employees and senior management.

**The Safety Management System contains help and guidance to enable golf clubs to:**

- Prevent avoidable accidents.
- Meet the best standards of the golf industry.
- Reduce the costs.

A safe and healthy working environment is a legal requirement in the UK. In 2007, BIGGA and the GCMA developed and launched an online Safety Management System (SMS) providing the tools required that helps golf clubs to establish their own SMS. A review of the system was undertaken in 2010, to develop a newer, easier to use system.

Besides a SMS Policy, there are seven key areas to be considered when developing a full SMS at a golf club:

1. Greenkeeping activities
2. Maintenance facility
3. Golf course
4. Clubhouse
5. Kitchen
6. Pro shop
7. Fire safety

Within each of these areas, users will be able to access the following downloadable documents:

- Risk Profile (available in word and excel formats)
- Risk Assessments relevant to that area of the golf club
- Hazards - information and weblinks

Every document is downloadable and there is no requirement to store any information online.

For further information contact:



**BIGGA**  
01347 833800  
[www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)



**GCMA**  
01934 641166  
[www.gcma.org.uk](http://www.gcma.org.uk)





## Section Notes

Please email your notes to  
[scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)  
by the 5th  
of the month

All the latest news from your Section

# Around The Green



## Scottish Region



### Central

Happy New Year to all our members and I hope it turns out a much better one than 2011 - weather wise at least. As I write this in early December, many of our courses are struggling from all the rain we have had recently, and with the mild November there has probably been more disease around than usual. Still, at this time in 2010 most of us were under a good blanket of snow or ice.

As mentioned in the December report, the Section plans to do all its correspondence by email, or via the website and facebook next year, therefore it's important that members provide their email addresses either to me, [gmoir@standrews.org.uk](mailto:gmoir@standrews.org.uk) or to BIGGA HQ, so we can add them to the database.

The presentation with Kenny Liddell on Nov 30 was well supported and we have a few other ideas in the pipeline, details on [www.biggacentralsection.org.uk](http://www.biggacentralsection.org.uk) Next up is an evening at Auchterarder GC on January 11, from 5pm until 8pm, specifically for the younger greenkeepers who are looking to move up the ladder into a Deputy or Head Greenkeeper position. Lee Strutt and Grant Frogley, from GWest, will describe in a workshop style with presentations on what the job entails, what employers look for and what skills you need to develop. Some light food will be available.

Finally, congratulations to Grant Stewart, who has left St Andrews Fairmont for a new position as Head Greenkeeper at Sunningdale  
Gordon Moir



### East

Well 'A GUID NEW YEAR TAE YE AW' Health and Happiness tae you and yours.

We had our AGM at Niddry Castle GC, in Winchburgh, on November 15.

The occasion was sponsored by Huxley Golf, so thanks again to Hugh for the excellent presentation - very informative!

There were 22 members at the meeting which proved to be successful with some good ideas coming from the floor.

Thanks to those of you who made the effort to attend. Indeed thanks goes to all of you who attended our outings throughout the past year.

We are pleased to announce that our committee has increased in numbers with a full list of names and duties to follow next month after we have our first Section meeting for the coming year.

Well done to Gary McCandless who was victorious in the nine hole competition, winning Jimmy Neilson's Claret Jug by an edge over Jamie Martin on the day.

I think the nett albatross during the round made the difference.

Gary, 'Well done'.

So Harrogate is almost upon us and I hope to meet many of you there both in a professional and social capacity.

Good luck to you all in 2012 and please phone or email if you have any queries or information you may wish to ask or pass on to our East Section Greenkeepers.

Yours in Golf  
Stewart Crawford  
07873464097  
[s.crawford@live.co.uk](mailto:s.crawford@live.co.uk)



### West

Happy New year to all and best wishes for the coming season, here's hoping it will be a good one with plenty of sunshine and only a few showers. I hope everybody enjoyed the festive season and didn't over indulge with the amber nectar, I guess the New Year's resolutions are already made they just need to be adhered to for a small time at least. As I sit here typing this up the snow is lying outside creating wonderful winter scene pictures, this is when it's a joy to work outdoors as some of the scenery is breathtaking. I hope to see plenty of entries for next year's photographic competition from the West Section.

At this time of year the tree surgery work is the priority for us, pruning, clearing, and felling damaged trees and branches, then thinning out heavy woodland areas creating stock piles for insects and removing diseased plants. Health and safety checks already completed after all the poor weather in late November and then the painting tasks started, it's amazing how things have changed in 25 years. Please be aware safety

officers are now completing on spot checks to ensure golf clubs are up to scratch with paperwork and equipment is in a safe condition.

Well guys all the general talk passed I don't have too much to mention other than the annual Scottish Conference, at Dunfermline, on March 6. As usual a fine collection of speakers will be there and definitely worth a visit.

The annual conference and trade show at Harrogate in late January will be coming up soon and I hope to bump into a few people there, although I will be tucked in my bed early each night, as I have to be on my best behaviour. The West Section intend running a small seminar with Everris in February and notification should be out in the new year, the venue being Renfrew golf club. The dates for the spring outing will be given shortly, and as soon as I hear, I will let you know.

Just to mention a small thing, I was recently contacted by Graham Shearer, who used to work at Balmore and Loch Lomond, but is now based in Australia where he has worked on some prestigious courses, and he wanted me to pass on his best wishes to all in the West Section. Graham is married to a lovely Australian girl and has a young son with another child on the way but he said he reads the

## BIGGA Regional Conference

### Scotland

6 March 2012, Carnegie

Conference Centre, Dunfermline

Contact Peter Boyd, RA,

0141 616 3440

West section articles monthly which keeps him up to date on events. If anybody wishes to get in touch them please contact me.

Finally, I said I would report on the annual night out for the West Section, which started off at Lloyds Bar in Glasgow with 20 people turning up. Unfortunately a few committee guys weren't able to be there but those who turned up seemed to enjoy themselves. We started off at Lloyds, then the Maltman, then on to One Up. Well done those guys and please forget the Vaggermistars in future. That's youngsters for you.

Last but not least can I express my best wishes to Kenny Hunter, of Fairways, I hope he is recovering well from his recent illness and also to Jim Devlin, at Western Gables, who has been unwell, I hope you both get better soon.

Stuart Taylor



## North

On a positive note the weather been very kind to us in November and hopeful you will have made a good start to your winter programmes. I would like to mention the Patron Awards winners for 2011 which are Stuart Brown, from Royal Aberdeen Golf Club, and myself (Ross Macrae), from Newmachar Golf Club. We will look forward to meeting everybody down at Harrogate in January.

The two outings have been confirmed for next year and are at Royal Aberdeen Golf Club on April 26 for the Spring Outing and Grantown On Spey Golf Club on September 13 for the Autumn Outing. There will be a Phostoxin Course around the second week in February by Lantra which you might find useful for dealing with rabbits and moles. Anybody interested please get in touch with me. On a final note by the time you read this I hope you all have had a good Christmas and a good New Year.

Ross Macrae  
Mobile No 07588896635  
e.mail  
ross.macrae@hotmail.com

## Northern Region



### Northern

Hello everyone.

My first task as new Secretary is to give a big thank you to Frank Stewart who did a sterling job for the Section. I'm sitting looking out at the horrible weather today with a smug grin on my face (decided to stay in bed and not play in the Sunday morning comp) and hoping that it will be better for Selby and the Christmas day out.

Over the years like most of you, when you get this magazine it's a bee line to the job Section and then the Section notes (if any Adam!...tee hee). No seriously we read Scott's notes first and then on to the jobs!

I'm looking forward to filling Franks shoes and also glad to be back on the Committee, we have a great team, who put in a lot of time and effort so we can have fantastic golf days out on some wonderful courses, on that note I would love to see more new faces play in next year's events as well as seeing the old faces continue to support the Section.

To the young lads in our Section, please come along and see what a great day is had, where else can you play a fantastic golf course and enjoy a three course meal not forgetting a bacon sarnie before you start for £20, and to play with experienced Course Managers who you can chat and learn from and from whom one day you could be asking for a job! Or, you could be unlucky and get paired up with Ken Christie or Mel Guy...Only kidding boys.

These days could not be a success without the fantastic support of our sponsors, a big thank you to those guys and for your continued association with us.

OK, so I wish you all a great new year and look forward to seeing many of you at Harrogate and at some of our golf days.

Any news, gossip please ring me after 2pm or text or email at; 07506407867  
slingsbyfamily@virginmedia.com  
Andy Slingsby



### North Wales

Happy New Year, here we go into 2012, either a great year when the Olympic torch touches our shores and our hearts or as the Mayans have predicted the year the earth comes to an end, I don't think that the Olympics will make a massive difference to us here in North Wales and while I could be wrong, I'm also pretty sure the Mayans didn't use a Gregorian calendar, so how can it be they predicted the world would end on the 12th day of the 12th month of the 12th year?

The Christmas tournament and AGM took place on December 7, at Heswall Golf Club, as normal this column has gone to the printers before the day took place, so I will put a full write up in February's column.

Depending on interest the Section could be running a coach to Harrogate but this will only happen if enough seats have been booked to make it

viable, I do hope enough seats have been taken up as Harrogate is the Association's flagship event and we should make the effort to attend.

I think that's about it for this month not a massive amount for you to digest, I still look forward to hearing from members; let's make this year the one when you get in touch with me and share your news with the Section

All the best until next month.

Pete Maybury e-mail petemayb66@aol.com mobile 07756001187 or Facebook group North Wales bigga.



### North West

Happy New Year everyone in the North West Section! As I write this it is mid November! Seems strange to be writing notes for the January's edition, but a few things have happened building up to the turn of the year. Apart from what feels like a five-month autumn and a constant battle against Fusarium and Anthracnose.

## BUNKER EDGER CUTS YOUR TIME



The Atom Bunker Edger from DJ Turfcare is the smart way to keep on top of bunker work. Time-saving and cost-effective, this tough machine is easy to use and maintain. Trusted by golf greenkeepers throughout the UK. Ask the turfcare experts. Call us today.

DJ Turfcare: 01483 200976  
www.djturfcare.co.uk



# Around The Green

In October, we had our Autumn Tournament at a superbly presented Dunham Forest GC it was a beautiful day and Chris Gibson and his team deserved all the plaudits dished out at the presentation for the course condition!

The winner was Tim Johnston, from Wilmslow GC.

Then in November we had the Bert Cross Memorial Trophy, at Wilmslow GC, and yet again the course was in excellent condition thanks to the hard work of Steve Oultram and his team. One of which has just become a father for the first time so congratulations to Mark Hillaby.

The winner of the trophy was Steve (Bigfoot) McGuinness, from Dunham Forest, with a fine 41 points. So well done, Steve. This is the second victory for Dunham Forest GC as Chris Harding won the Spring Tournament at The Hesketh GC and they have won most of the Longest Drives and Nearest the Pins. Thank goodness for Billy Merritt winning at Grange Park GC in the Summer Tournament. A first win ever for Billy and, well, I will let Billy tell you how long he has been trying!

The AGM also took place at Wilmslow GC before the meal where the Chairmanship was passed across from Aide Holt, Birchwood GC, to Alec Davies, Denton GC. So thanks and well done to Aide for the last two years and good luck to Alec for the next two years.

The committee remained the same as nobody stepped down but there was an addition Dave Hooks, from Denton GC. Welcome Dave.

A couple of other things. Firstly, could I please encourage as many of the North West members Section to come along to these golf days? The standard of Golf Course we play is top class, as you can see from the list above, and it can only broaden your outlook to visit different courses and see how other green keepers go about their daily routines.

Also, if there are any Head Greenkeepers out there who are prepared to give their course up for what amounts to two hours maximum sometime next season please contact me via e-mail and I will pass on the details.

As you can see from below I am now writing the Section notes so please contact me if there is anything you think our

members may be interested in and can be put in the notes.

Last but not least please try and attend Harrogate, it is our show and it needs everyone's support especially in these trying times

Good luck in the New Year and always keep a fungicide on your shelf!!

Spencer Lloyd-Pye.  
spencer@lloyd-pye.freeserve.co.uk



## North East

Right here we go again this time last year we had several inches of snow at the moment we are clear but It has been trying this morning I just hope It doesn't come to anything I am getting to the point where I much prefer. It on a Christmas card must be a sign of getting old. Well there's not a lot to write about this month but I have managed to bring some news to the magazine. The first bit is did any of you members watch the programme The Cube on the last Sunday of November? And, if so, did you see Alan Morton, of TSL - Terry Charltons company - in the family enclosure where one of his family was a contestant. She was unlucky, just failing on that £50,000 prize. This isn't the first time he's been on TV in recent months as he was on local ITV channel before his wedding day crossing the river Tyne the hard way, meaning that he started from a high point then down using a pulley across the river. The things people do to get attention.

Bit of golf course news, Tyneside GC is having a bit of a change on the 1st hole. The course which was designed all those years ago by H.Colt is going back to that style so that means there is going to be alterations. This has been done by Frank Pont, a specialist in Colt courses. Work is expected to start soon I believe with a few bunkers added and in a different style to what they have. Good luck with that. Let's hope the snow keeps away.

Right not long to go until next year and I expect that we will have two new courses for Spring

and Autumn comps as I am only waiting for confirmation. One is near the coast in Tyne-and-Wear and the other is in North Northumberland. Soon as I hear we have the courses I will let you know.

And finally I hope to see you all at Harrogate at BTME in January. Call and see me as I am helping out on A13---A15 stand this Is the Centenary of Greenkeeping Associations. Lots of memorabilia will be on show from 1912-2012.

Jimmy Richardson



## Sheffield

Hi everyone and Happy New Year.

The festivities are over for another year and it is time for us all to knuckle down and focus on our courses and projects get the course in tip top shape for the upcoming season. If the weather plays nice for us.

I hope everyone had a good rest and a long break over Christmas and, as I say, you are prepared for the year ahead. We at Sheffield Section are focused once again to improve the Section in 2012 and improve the Section for all our members. We have many ideas for the new year and will be working hard to make sure they are all put in place.

I hope everyone had a good day at Christmas golf and AGM all information from this event will be posted on facebook and in next month's magazine.

I must at this point thank members for their support in 2011 and must thank all members of our Committee for their hard work once again.

Our first lecture working alongside Myerscough College will take place in February and details of this event will be sent to all members. This is a massive step for education events in Sheffield and with the support of Myerscough we will be attracting quality educational speakers. It is important that we support these events and we will all benefit in the long run. Every one of us can always learn something new and attending these days will improve us all

and help improve the industry on a whole that we work in. It will be good to see you all there.

Fixture lists for the upcoming season will be reaching you soon and any other information will be posted on facebook or will be updated in these notes.

Good luck for the year and I hope to see you all over the upcoming year

Jim Stevens

jimmy\_jams20@hotmail.com  
07738719614

facebook - Bigga sheffield section

## Midland Region



## BB&O

As we enter January and shake off the post Christmas blues and excesses, attention will turn from winter to thoughts of spring and what 2012 will hold.

With the excitement and expectation of the Olympics and European Championships sport is sure to take centre stage. No doubt golfers and members expectations will continue to push the boundaries as we rise to the challenge of producing decent playing surfaces and courses! Later this month sees the Association's flagship Harrogate Week, now in its 24th year. The event promises to provide yet another cracking line up of education and seminars while offering the chance to network and catch up with friends and colleagues. Hopefully many of you will get to attend and take advantage of what's on offer.

In other news from the Section, the Buckinghamshire Golf Club played host to the BB&O Turkey Trot back in November. A tremendous turn out saw 24 teams battling it out to be crowned champion. Following a mixture of chilly conditions, tricky pin positions and some terrific golf, Ellesborough GC returned as winner, shooting a gross score 66 / Net 57.7, second were Berkshire 1 with a gross 62 / Net 59.3, third were "We are only here for the Raffle" with a gross 64 / Net 59.7

The Longest Drive was won by Les Hawkins; Nearest the Pin on 14th, Stewart Clayton;

Nearest the Pin on the 3rd, Phil Ryder, Nearest the Pin on the 9th, Andy Thrift and Nearest the Pin in two on the 8th, Jim Lilitou. A special mention must be made to David Lyons, who recorded a hole-in-one on the 16th. The irony being it was the only par-3 without a Nearest the Pin! Full results can be viewed on the Section website.

A thank you must go to all of the staff at the Buckinghamshire who looked after everyone fantastically. In particular a big thank you and congratulations must go to newly-appointed Course Manager, Andy Ewance, and his team who presented a fantastic course which was both a challenge and pleasure to play. Andy brings a wealth of experience and knowledge which will continue to take the golf course forward. We wish him well with the new challenge.

Our thanks must go to the various sponsors, in particular Avoncrop, the main sponsors for the day. Without their generous support these events could not happen. It was fantastic to see the day so well supported by members and we look forward to seeing many of you again at this year's events.

The Section AGM was held before the dinner. The Committee were re-elected with Matt Nutter confirmed as Secretary. Fixtures for this year's events are also to be confirmed. The committee are organizing a photo competition where entries will be posted and viewed on the section's web site. Please send any worthy prize winning photos of your course to: [coursemanager@hdgc.co.uk](mailto:coursemanager@hdgc.co.uk).

If anyone has any news, views or ideas they would like to see for the BB&O section then please don't hesitate to get in touch: [bboscribe@gmail.com](mailto:bboscribe@gmail.com) or contact the committee or Matt Nutter: [bbosecretray@gmail.com](mailto:bbosecretray@gmail.com)

Alternatively keep up to date with what is happening in the BB&O Section by following us on Twitter, Facebook and the website: [www.bbogreenkeepers.co.uk](http://www.bbogreenkeepers.co.uk)



## East Midlands

Like Ross in Friends I am still carrying a little holiday weight as we enter another New Year. Congratulations to any Greenkeepers who appeared in the Queen's New Years Honours List....What? you mean there weren't any? What lies ahead?.....Another dry Spring giving little recovery from the Winter wear and tear and early season demands on irrigation systems and water supplies? Or will we have the perfect year...March winds... April showers etc? Only time will tell.

Looking back to the end of 2011, I would like to thank Andy McGreal and Danny Brown and their team at Lingdale Golf Club for hosting our Section Christmas Competition, which was a great success. Terry Walker and his Clubhouse team were excellent hosts and really looked after us all too. We managed to attract some new faces to the event and I sincerely hope this trend can continue throughout this year. I think the baseball cap and the Jelly Babies in the raffle are now becoming an integral part of the day!

After the Christmas and New Year celebrations we look ahead to wintry golf conditions, winter projects and of course Harrogate. Always a great week, whether in the show or catching up with old friends in the town in the evening. Incidentally if anyone sees the magician from 2010 who was impressing the ladies with his close up magic tricks could you tell him I've got his Ace of Spades so that's why his trick stopped working!

After Harrogate we enter the depressing month of February when the days seem so short and the sun has hardly any warmth in it and we stare at the calendar hoping for an early Spring.....just in time for The Masters to appear on our televisions. Which in turn leads to members asking 'Why isn't our course presented to that standard?' and 'The rhododendrons at Augusta always seem to bloom at the right time, don't they?...'I find a furrowed brow and silence often does the trick!!

So anyhow, here's to that perfect year for greenkeeping; just the right amount of rain

(at night of course), just the right amount of sunshine, no wind when spraying is planned and finally all golfers to repair/replace their divots, repair their pitchmarks and rake the bunkers properly as they always claim to do!

Happy New Year  
Greg Skinner



## Midland

Firstly, may I wish all a very happy new year on behalf of the Section's Committee. It also gives me great pleasure to inform you that Keith Swan, of Penn Golf Club, has been promoted to the position of Deputy. I hope that such gives you as much pleasure as it did me, well done Swaney.

As you maybe aware, our Toro service provider's are now Redtech owned and run by G. Hall. From personal experience I will vouch for Graham and his team's commitment to service. Our thanks to Redtech for sponsoring this month's calendar page. For all your Toro needs they can be contacted on: 07702 154 987, or [redtech@btinternet.com](mailto:redtech@btinternet.com).

Section Education Events booked for 2012;

Winter: Trip to John Deere UK, Langer, January 11, hosted by Farol's, through Kevin Pugh; Spring: Sherriff Amenity Road Show on March 14, hosted by Sherriff Amenity, through Nigel Tyler; Summer: Visit to Tillers Turf Farm on July 25, hosted by Rigby Taylor, through Tony Cheese; Autumn: Headland and STRI day. STRI to show the benefits of infiltration testing and Headland to look at winter greens management on October 24, through Mark Hunt, Headland Amenity, and Paul Woodham, STRI.

Golf Venues and dates for 2012: Spring: The Chase Golf Club, May 23; Summer: Oxley Park Golf Club, July 11;

Autumn: Druids Heath Golf Club, October 18; Winter: Sutton Coldfield Golf Club, December 2.

Please log onto the Midland Section website [www.midlandsection.co.uk](http://www.midlandsection.co.uk) <<http://>

## Assistant Profile

*Our monthly look into the life of an assistant greenkeeper...*

**Name:** Andy Slingsby

**Age:** 43  
**Position:** Assistant Greenkeeper

**Club:** West End Golf Club, Halifax

**Nickname....**none printable!



**1. How long have you been greenkeeping?** 12 years

**2. What was it about the career that attracted you?** I have always enjoyed working outdoors and if could not earn a living from playing golf, well working on a golf course is second best.

**3. If you weren't a greenkeeper what do you think you'd be?** A publican

**4. Which task do you most enjoy doing and why?** Handcutting the greens. If your lines are straight, the finish is great to see

**5. Which task do you least enjoy doing and why?** Digging. 'Cos I get my hands dirty and can't use my phone!

**6. What one thing - other than a pay rise - would improve the greenkeepers' lot?** The weather - longer sunny months

**7. Hobbies?** Golf, football, music and drinking beer!

**8. Favourite Band?** The Smiths

**9. Which team do you support (football or otherwise)?** Sheffield United

**10. What is your claim to fame?** I took part in Challenge Anneka, the BBC programme from the '80s and '90s!

Contact Scott at BIGGA on 01347833800 ext 510 to appear in as an Assistant Profile



# Around The Green

[www.midlandsection.co.uk](http://www.midlandsection.co.uk)> for further information on all upcoming events.

My thanks to our Chair, Ed Stant, for the above content, and well done to our Committee and others for organising such events.

Sean McDade.

## South East Region



### Mid Anglia

Hi all. I hope you've had a Happy Christmas and maybe a few well earned days off over the festive period.

Firstly, some info regarding the training mentioned last month, the First Aid At Work course is now fully subscribed, thanks and good luck to the 12 attending also there is one space available on the Fell And Process Small Trees course for more info on this, Email [gerald@berkhamstedgc.co.uk](mailto:gerald@berkhamstedgc.co.uk)

Secondly, results from the Christmas Texas Scramble will be in the next issue also I'll have details of venues, competition formats and, more importantly, revised entrance fees for 2012 golf meetings. Watch this space!

Finally may I wish you all a Happy and Prosperous new year.

Nigel Phelan



### Kent

Happy New Year!

Over the last few months it has been my privilege to work at by far, the most prestigious golf course I have ever been associated with. My short term tenure at Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Club has been an experience I shall never forget and I would like to offer sincere thanks to Gavin Kinsella, and the club officials, for the opportunity to add such a renowned venue to my portfolio.

The greenkeeping team there

certainly are an eclectic mix of characters who all contribute to making working there such a delight. I can't mention all 17 of you by name in this column but just a couple of individual 'stand outs' who do deserve a name check here are: Doug, Harry and Kev who are the greenkeeping stars of tomorrow, all round top bloke, Mikey, who I shall miss seeing fly past me on the south circular, John aka 'The oldest tea boy in the west', who cooked the crew a superb lunch every day and Dean, with his random noises and legendary mother who never failed to brighten up the mess room. Thanks guys.

On to matters in Kent. We recently played probably the best Turkey Trot we have ever staged on the fantastic course at Redlibbits.

A total of 35 golfers descended on Kev's masterpiece in Fawkham to again revel in the company of our ever-increasing group of incredible people and prodigious friends.

Having spent most of the week preparing for our event, Kev was able to ensure the mornings organisational duties went as smoothly as possible. A successful 'Movember' had resulted in our moustachioed Chairman looking like Colonel Sanders, from KFC, and sarcasm regarding his extreme facial hair was in abundance! Vic Maynard, from Ernest Doe's, expertly marshalled our troops off at the 1st having been suitably refreshed before taking on the challenge ahead. Rarely does my individual game do a course justice and today was no exception.

Im glad to say I wasn't the only one who struggled on a course which demanded a high degree of skill to negotiate. As always, however, the absolute fundamental premise to all of our events is that everybody is welcomed, catered for and hopefully inspired in some fashion to further their own greenkeeping careers. If we can't play great golf but achieve that then who cares!

Following the golf, a sumptuous Christmas dinner was served by the excellent catering staff at Redlibbits, which was appreciated by all after their arduous trek around Kev's picturesque course.

An extended prize giving included the presenting the days winner with the new Everris Shield. Chris White, of Knole

Park, was awarded the trophy by John Noyce, of Everris.

After shooting 44 points Kev saw fit to award him a five point cut on his handicap. Kent Section also decided to make an annual award of Golfer of the Year to the person who had accumulated the most points after attending all of our events this year.

The very deserving winner was our very own Trilby Tour Champion, Mr Darren Burton. Well done mate. Our Summer Pairs Knockout trophies were presented to Tim Maynard and Steve Gunner who defeated Darren Burton and Lee Campaney by 1 up in a final held at Royal Cinque Ports.

Following a raffle which included more prizes than attendees we swiftly moved onto our AGM. Moving through the agenda, Kev gave his 'State of the Union' address and various reports on how our Section had closed the year.

Happily, everything has gone swimmingly this year and we plan to continue doing much more of the same for 2012 after receiving the vote of confidence from the 40 or so assembled for the meeting. We gave out our fixture list for next year (please see webpage) before Mr John Millen sparked a lively education debate. John, as representative of Hadlow College, informed us about the full and comprehensive seminars which Hadlow is again hosting on our behalf this winter. Please do all you can to support these essential short evening sessions in order to aid your progression. Hadlow has been at the forefront of providing specialist education in the amenity sector for many years now and know exactly how to cater to our needs as greenkeepers. We never forget that our remit on the committee is to help you in your careers and Hadlow is providing an excellent service to that end. Please see our website for the list of monthly seminars and get there if you can.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our loyal sponsors for the very generous support they have provided us this year. Their contribution to this Section enables us to not only attend a number of golf courses every year at a subsidised rate, but also helps provide an education programme to be proud of. Thank you to all and I shall be writing to you all

again soon!

Don't forget that my golf support company is available for anyone requiring manpower or advice on your courses. Contact details are all on the website.

Wishing you all a successful 2012.

Best of British

Rob Holland

[www.kentgreenkeepers.com](http://www.kentgreenkeepers.com)



### Essex

May I take this opportunity to wish all the members of the section and out sponsors a very happy New Year.

As 2011 drew to a close we held our second AGM of the year, the first being in January, (that being the postponed AGM from 2010 due to snow). Our second was a lot more congenial, although a little windy and a slight frost before we commenced a finely fought Texas Scramble, where 67 players graced the fine turf of Open qualifying club, Orsett Golf Club.

Played at a good pace, most were round in four and a half hours, which is a good time for this type of game. The bandits were out in full force though with some incredible scores posted, well done to everyone who played. I for one enjoyed the day as I know everyone did, going by the banter that was rife in the clubhouse after play. Our thanks to the Chef who braved the elements on the 12th tee for a good three hours, serving up hot Coffee and Burgers. This was very much appreciated by all.

Our thanks to Orsett's Course Manager, Don Clark and his team, for presenting the course in such a fine condition. Also to Orsett Golf Club for allowing us courtesy of the course and for the fine meal that we received on our return.

The AGM held before the fine feast was chaired by Neil Peachey. Our 2011 chairman Mark Stopps had had to stand down from the position earlier in the year due to ill health.

Mark is now back and has been re-appointed as our Chairman for next year, unanimously voted in by the membership.

The other members of the 2011 committee; Tom Smith, Andy Cracknell, Ian Wood and Arnold Phipps-Jones were also returned to office for the next two years.

Dominic Rodgers 2011 committee member, decided to stand down from the committee mid term and has now been replaced by Antony Kirwan, Antony returns to the committee after a two year absence. Welcome back Antz.

The committee proposed that they would like a new position within the Section committee, that of a President. This was accepted by the assembled members and a proposal that Martin Forrester be asked to accept the position was accepted with a majority vote. We welcome Martin back into the fold, (Martin was our long standing Secretary, from the inception of the Essex Section), this position is a non-executive role, but knowing Martin he will always be willing to lend a hand when needed and help when we seek guidance.

Our new President then presented the trophies for the year, to the following. Summer Trophy: Liam Springlett, Stoke By Nayland; Essex Trophy: Ray Clark, Channels; Autumn Trophy: Liam Springlett, Stoke By Nayland; Essex Knockout: Stewart Rogers & Steve Cousins. Orsett; Trade Golfer of the Year: Steve Bush, Ernest Doe and Golfer of the Year: Malcolm Smith, Channels).

The following awards for the day's golf were presented but Orsett's Course Manager, Don Clark.

Nearest the Pins on all the par 3s and these were won by the following: 3rd Tom Smith, 8th Jeff Taylor, 12th Jamie Hughes, 15th Antony Kirwan. The following are the results of the Texas Scramble. 1. Liam Springlett, Liam Close, Jamie Hughes, Campbell Murdoch; 2. Simon Banks, Antony Kirwan, Martin Guy, Richard Lewis; 3. Lee Stephens, Neil Peachey, Melvin Wright, Mick Sandel.

A nice raffle table followed the prize presentation; our thanks to those who generously helped support it. Once again our thanks to all at Orsett Golf Club - we all thoroughly enjoyed the day and the hospitality.

Our 2011 season was sponsored by the following companies: Amenity Technology; Bai-

ley's of Norfolk; Banks Amenity Products; Blade Amenity; CMW Equipment Ltd; Collier Turf Care; Ernest Doe & Sons; GM Amenity; Golf Mats UK; Headland Amenity Products; Irrigation & Water; Limagrain UK; Old Forge Mowers; Otley College; Paynes Turf; Philip Liverton Ltd; P Tuckwell Ltd; Premier Plan; Prime Irrigation, Rainbird Europe; Rigby Taylor Ltd; Everris (Scotts Professional); Sheriff Amenity; Town & Country Turf Ltd; Sea Nymph Chaingreen; Tey Farm Systems; WJ Green Ltd; Writtle College.

I would like to thank all of the above, for without their help and support we would not have managed to put on as many things for the members throughout this past season.

If you have anything for inclusion in Greenkeeper International or on the Section's Website [www.essexbigga.co.uk](http://www.essexbigga.co.uk) please contact me on 07764-862.337 or at [essexbigga@talktalk.net](mailto:essexbigga@talktalk.net)

Arnold Phipps-Jones



## Surrey

Thursday December 8. A Happy New Year to you all. I and her indoors will spend this Christmas on the mainland but New Year will be, a short cruise with coffee and cake followed by a tenuous drive across the wild lands of Wight to Ventnor. Full and unexpurgated details will appear in February's edition of this eminent monthly publication.

Wayne Sewell has been appointed Head Greenkeeper at Worplesdon GC and Mark Fry will be his Deputy. Congratulations to both and also to Russell Abernethy who takes control of Malden GC when Alec Bradshaw retires in February 2012. Alec has been on the BIGGA Surrey Section Committee and has served as both Chairman and President and hopefully with receive honorary membership in his retirement. Alec, who is moving to Worksop, will be a near neighbour of Lee Westwood and hopes that with his coaching skills, Lee, will once again, be the world's number one. Alec will welcome guests who can share the delights of his large



**Jim Croxton**  
Chief Executive

**I feel very privileged to have the opportunity to serve this great Association as it celebrates its 25th Anniversary and as Greenkeeping Associations as a whole reach a century of achievement and progress.**

2012 is a landmark year for BIGGA and presents the chance to reflect warmly on what has been achieved by the greenkeeping profession while focussing our attention on driving it forward to meet the challenges of the golf industry, our volatile economy and the ever changing pressures of government legislation.

When I took up this role in May, January 2012 seemed a long way away but it has arrived in a rush bringing with it not just our Anniversary Celebrations but of course BTME in Harrogate. At the time of writing sales of exhibition space are strong with continued interest in the last few stands available. Visitor registration numbers are also excellent and I have been receiving very positive feedback from exhibitors who feel that the vibes for this year's Exhibition are good.

## 2012 is a landmark year for BIGGA and presents the chance to reflect warmly on what has been achieved by the greenkeeping profession

We have worked very hard over the last few months to promote attendance at the event because we genuinely believe, and have the evidence of many members to support this, that the combination of Exhibition, education, sharing of good practice, networking and camaraderie make a visit to Harrogate Week one that leaves every visitor better equipped to fulfil the needs of their employer and their customers.

As an Association it also provides a fantastic platform for us to interact with members. Please take the time to visit the BIGGA stand in Hall B and give us your feedback on how we can better serve your needs in the future. We know you are focussed on continuing to provide golfers with courses in better condition to ensure they enjoy playing the game and we work closely with all of the other governing bodies in golf to make sure they recognise the key part you play in the overall success of the sport.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank all of the companies who have chosen to exhibit at BTME. In doing so they place great faith in BIGGA and its membership, we are grateful for that trust and are always open to any discussion with them that can lead to mutual gain. I hope to speak with each one of them personally during the exhibition to back up these words but there's a lot of them so wish me luck!

Finally ticket sales are going well for our 25th Anniversary Celebration at The Old Swan hotel on Tuesday 24th January, it will be a great chance to celebrate all that has been achieved in wonderful company, please make every effort to join us.

See you in Harrogate.

**Jim Croxton**  
Chief Executive



hot tub. Have a Happy retirement from all Surrey members.

Hankley Common GC was the venue for the Surrey Turkey Trot on December 6 and thanks to Gareth for organising the fine weather, cool but dry and with little wind. The course, as always, was in excellent condition and the turkey roast dinner that followed was delicious. Messrs Guy, Marney, Hall and Folds, whom by their hat design, were representing a golf club from Mexico and in true buccaneering fashion took first prize for the 3rd year running. Messrs Bremer, Freeman, Sellers and Harvey came 2nd with Messrs Durrant, Pavey, Pavey and Reeves at the rear of the prizes. Nearest the pin was Neil Davey and longest drive Kevin Hagen. One of my playing partners, Mr Paul Weston, seeing the marker on the 18th fairway commented that he did not go that far on his holiday, while Mr Mike Kirkham, another of our illustrious team, could not remember where he goes and I just broke wind.

The meal was followed by the Surrey AGM. The present committee were re-elected en bloc and our Chairman, Les Howkins, reported that the education day at Epsom GC, although a success, the attendance was disappointing and he hoped that in future events more course managers would encourage their staff to attend. He thanked the committee for the work they had done over the past year and looked forward to another successful year in 2012. The Treasurer's report was concise and acceptance of its content was proposed and seconded. Thanks to all those who contributed to the raffle prizes and the profit of £350 will go into the sections funds.

Brian Willmott

## South West and South Wales Region



### South Coast

As I sit writing this report the rain has finally arrived after such

a lovely October, and the leaves have turned and are coming down 24/7, so the majority of us will be clearing on a daily basis except Tony at Barton-on-Sea who probably doesn't even own a blower!

Since the clocks have turned it's now the start of a depressing four months of dark mornings and evenings and looking back I wonder how quick the season has gone. Those lovely early mornings with the sun coming up and not a golfer in sight to now trying to get to the 1st green before the golfers appear down the fairway in their droves same groups, same shots, same remarks can't beat it!

Our final golf competition was held at High Post GC, on December 6, played as a Texas Scramble for the first time in teams of three.

The course was in excellent condition for the time of year so thanks to Lauchlan Morrison and his team for all their efforts. A special thank you to High Post GC for allowing us courtesy and to the caterers for a great meal afterwards. Results: 1. K. Glass, D. Lee, D. Harfield, 60;

2. R. Hogarth, E. Cary, A. Magee, 60.2; 3. P. Wentworth, J. Pender and D. Cunliffe, 61.5. Nearest the Pin. D. Harfield.

A big thank you as always to our sponsors New Forest Farm Machinery and Blade who sponsor this event year in year out.

On a sad note our thoughts go out to the family and friends of Lewis Andrews, who was a member of the greenkeeping team at High Post whose life was cut short in an accident near his place of work. Lewis was a serious athlete who would have competed in the Beijing World Championships at triathlon.

Our Section Seminar will take place at Milton Abbey School on February 15 with Jim McKenzie MBE and Cameron McMillan as our main speakers, so please put this in your diary for a good day out.

As you read this Christmas and New Year have passed so that means only one thing - Harrogate the place to be for Education, Exhibition and Indulgence. Contact Jane Jones on 01454 270850 for details of accommodation.

Any one with any thing to report please contact your committee so it may be included in our reports.

Philip Wentworth



### South West

Hi all, I have apologise to you all this month...I really don't have that much to report. I know, shocking to believe, I have no exciting tales to tell you all (maybe you could share some of yours with us)

As for the Section, 2012 fixtures will be with you all very shortly, we will send them out by email again, I feel that this method is working very well. If you are not receiving emails from me regarding the Section, please drop me a line and you will then be receiving all the e-mails you could ever wish for!

With regards to training, Paul Worster and myself are working hard to ensure we target what you guys are asking for (trust me, we are spending many hours on this!). Some workshops have already taken place and many more are in the pipeline, if there is anything you should want please feel free to contact either one of us.

As I finish (I did say this would be a short one this time.) I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas and on behalf of the whole Section we would like to wish you all a Happy New Year!

We also have a new facebook page for the South West Section, one that will make it much more convenient for you all to use, you don't having to do anything, just enjoy this amazing feature you have at your finger tips.

I would like to thank our patronage partners for all of their support for 2011, Ecosol; Irritech Ltd; Countrywide; British Seed Houses; Headland; Avoncrop; Martyn Lane Golf Signs. Your support is very much appreciated by the whole Section.

adam.l.matthews@hotmail.co.uk  
07732503855



### South Wales

Hello Section Happy New Year, hope all of you guys have had a 2011 to remember and we all can make 2012 an even better year. As you know the committee has been changed and we are asking for as many of you as possible to contact myself, Gareth Knight (07595988512), or any of the other committee members with ideas thoughts or any information you wish to share. I would love for all of us to pull together as a Section let's talk more to each other and keep South Wales Greenkeeping a fantastic place to work.

Mike Stokes, Head Greenkeeper of Whitchurch, is putting a morning meeting together for neighbouring greenkeepers - something similar to the Links Forum meeting some of you guys are involved in. Mike's details are Tel: 07709241629 email thecoursemanager@aol.com please drop him an email or a call so some dates can be arranged.

The Winter Golf Tournament has taken place at Royal Porthcawl GC. Results will follow in next month's magazine.

Our Autumn Regional Seminar has taken place at the Oak Tree Centre. As many of us drove into the venue we probably thought "Where have we come to?" but it was an absolutely perfect location and venue thanks Jane and Steve for finding the venue and I'm sure we would love to return next year.

The day itself was a huge success all speakers we're fantastic and the event was attended by over 140 greenkeepers plus trade members I hope many of us have made new friends and contacts and have taken valuable information back to our day jobs and it was very pleasing to meet, greet and openly question the new CEO of BIGGA. Thank you for your honesty and you time to come and speak to us.

Harrogate is here I hope the cars are full and many of us are heading up. Not many places left - about 2 weeks left to book a place so give Jane Jones a call to book a last minute place.

Happy New Year guys.  
Peter Holmstrom.

## Section Notes

Please email your notes to  
[scott@bigga.co.uk](mailto:scott@bigga.co.uk)  
by the 5th of the month



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# Membership

**Tracey Maddison, Head of Membership, provides a departmental update**

## Welcome 2012

**I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to a new year and to thank all the many BIGGA members who currently volunteer in one role or another to help the team at BIGGA Headquarters.**

Without their valuable help, advice and countless hours of volunteer work your Association would not be what it is today.

By working closely with your Section committee the membership team are looking forward to a successful and prosperous new year. But the best people to promote any membership professional body are the members themselves.

Please encourage your fellow greenkeepers to take a look at the benefits of joining BIGGA, all information is available on the BIGGA website including membership forms.

Save money if you pay for your own BIGGA membership!

Are you one of the 31% of BIGGA members who pay for their own membership subscriptions? If the answer is 'yes', then you can claim tax relief on your annual membership subscription.

When you can get tax relief for professional fees and subscriptions

The HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) website states that if an employee pays for their own professional fees and subscriptions then they may be able to reduce their tax bill by getting tax relief on any professional fees and subscriptions they pay.

If you are working as a

- greenkeeper, a groundsman, or are involved in the fine turf industry, and
- you are a member of BIGGA and
- pay for your own annual membership subscription

Then you may be able to deduct the cost of the membership subscription from your taxable income and reduce the amount of tax you pay.

The HMRC recognise that

membership of BIGGA is helpful to your job and BIGGA's activities are relevant to your work.

BIGGA has been approved by the HM Customs and Excise and we appear on their approved list <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/list3/list3.htm>

It is possible for a person to go back several years to get tax relief.

## How to get tax relief

BIGGA produces an easy to complete 'Tax Relief Claim Form' for members to fill in and send to their local tax office, instructions are clearly given on the form but your membership team are always here to help if you have any queries.

Download a form from the BIGGA website, [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk) select 'Membership' from the options across the top, select 'Tax Relief Forms' from the menu on the left, here you can download the form.

Or contact a member of the Membership Team at BIGGA HQ to send you a copy.

## Increased Pressure at Work

During my travels around the Sections I've become increasingly concerned to hear how many

members are under increased pressure at work. Apparently, one in five of us are stressed at work, with workload, management style and relationships at work as the top three causes of work-related stress.

Stress is the feeling of being under too much mental or emotional pressure.

Pressure turns into stress when you feel unable to cope. People have different ways of reacting to stress, so a situation that feels stressful to one person may in fact be motivating to another.

Many of life's demands can cause stress, especially work, relationships and money problems, and when you feel stressed, it can affect everything you do.

Stress can affect how you feel, how you think, how you behave and how your body works.

Sleeping problems, sweating, loss of appetite and difficulty concentrating are common signs of stress.

If you are a full member of BIGGA you are entitled to access to a CONFIDENTIAL

Helpline where you can speak to, in complete confidence, a trained counsellor 24 hours a day 7 days a week, your details will never be passed on to any third parties.



## Contact Details

Tracey Maddison  
[traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk](mailto:traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk)

Tel: 01347 833800  
(option 1 for Membership)

## Regional Offices

### Scotland & Northern Ireland

Peter Boyd  
Tel: 0141 616 3440  
Mobile: 07776 242120  
[pj.boyd@btinternet.com](mailto:pj.boyd@btinternet.com)

### Northern & Midland

Peter Larter  
Tel: 01476 550115  
Mobile: 07866 366966  
[petelarter972@aol.com](mailto:petelarter972@aol.com)

### South East

Clive Osgood  
Tel: 01737 819343  
Mobile: 07841 948410  
[cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk)

### South West & Wales

Jane Jones  
Tel: 01454 270850  
Mobile: 07841 948110  
[jane@bigga.co.uk](mailto:jane@bigga.co.uk)



Peter Boyd Peter Larter



Clive Osgood Jane Jones

## OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

Personal Accident Helpline  
02075 603013  
Greenkeepers Legal Assistance  
0800 177 7891  
Greenkeepers Support Services  
0800 174 319  
Debt Counselling Helpline  
0800 174319



# Diary of Events

Details of your Section's forthcoming events in 2012 can be found here...

Date	Event	Venue	Contact
<b>JANUARY 2012</b>			
January 9th	First Aid at Work	Berkhamsted Golf Club	Gerald Bruce Tel:07774 921606 or email: gerald@berkhampstedgc.co.uk
January 10th	3 day PA1/2/6A Pesticide	Kingswood Golf Club, Surrey	Jane Glassett at Jon Allbutt Associates Tel: 01959 575575 or email: jane@jonallbutt.co.uk
January 12th	Devon & Cornwall Section Event	Trevoise Golf Club	George Pitts Tel: 07929 754401 or email: gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com
January 22nd – January 26th	Continue to Learn	Harrogate International Centre	BIGGA HQ Tel:01347 833800 or email: info@bigga.co.uk
January 24th – January 26th	BTME	Harrogate International Centre	BIGGA HQ Tel:01347 833800 or email: info@bigga.co.uk
January 30th	5 Day Chainsaw Course CS30/CS31	Dedswell Manor Farm, Guildford	Jane Glassett at Jon Allbutt Associates Tel: 01959 575575 or email: jane@jonallbutt.co.uk
<b>FEBRUARY 2012</b>			
February 1st	Evening Greenkeeping Workshops – Pests & Diseases	Hadlow College, Canterbury Campus	John Millen on Mobile: 07967 092285
February 8th	Evening Greenkeeping Workshops – Golf course presentation	Hadlow College, Canterbury Campus	John Millen on Mobile: 07967 092285
February 8th	Devon & Cornwall Section Event	Bigbury Golf Club	George Pitts Tel: 07929 754401 or email: gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com
February 15th	Evening Greenkeeping Workshops – Turf Renovation	Hadlow College, Canterbury Campus	John Millen on Mobile: 07967 092285
February 21st	Symbio – Bringing Life Back To Your Soil Seminar	Reaseheath College, Nantwich, Cheshire	Polly on Tel: 01428 685762
February 22nd	Evening Greenkeeping Workshops – Environment & Sustainability	Hadlow College	John Millen on Mobile: 07967 092285
February 29th	Devon & Cornwall Section	St Mellion Golf & Country Club	George Pitts Tel: 07929 754401 or email: gpitts.yelverton@gmail.com
February 29th	Evening Greenkeeping Workshops – Outing (All Day Visit)	Hadlow College	John Millen on Mobile: 07967 092285

## BIGGA welcomes the following new members

### Scotland

Michael Clark, Affiliate Member, Central  
Christopher Gallagher, Student, Central  
Jono Hunter, Assistant Greenkeeper, East  
Steven Christie, Greenkeeper, North

### Northern Region

Shaun Bradbury, Student, North West  
Alex Clark, Student, North West  
James Dobie, Student, North West  
Ben Dringle, Student, North West  
Daniel Hiney, Student, North West  
Ryan Holmes, Student, North West  
Ben Hudson, Student, North West  
Alec Miles, Student, North West  
Jonathan Moorcroft, Student, North West  
Robert Ollerenshaw, Student, North West  
Ryan Rainsforth, Student, North West  
Liam Scott-Ratray, Student, North West  
Ben Simpkins, Student, North West  
Connor Walsh, Student, North West  
Lee Warwick, Student, North West  
Gary Fearon, Assistant Greenkeeper, Northern  
Andrew Horner, Greenkeeper, Northern  
Adam Scott, Greenkeeper, Northern  
Robert Wood, Assistant Greenkeeper, Northern

### Midland Region

Adam Bartle, Greenkeeper, East Midland  
Stephen Baugh, Greenkeeper, East Midland  
Bradley Meek, Course Manager, East Midland  
Neil Miller, Assistant Greenkeeper, East Midland  
Danny Ingman, Assistant Greenkeeper, Midland  
Tod Wright, Assistant Greenkeeper, Midland  
Christopher Davies, Assistant Greenkeeper, East of England  
Richard Kane, Assistant Greenkeeper, Berks/Bucks & Oxon  
Stephen Curley, Course Manager, Mid Anglia  
Joe Leadbeater, Assistant Greenkeeper, Mid Anglia  
Steven Rowett, Groundsman, Mid Anglia

### South East Region

Charlie Burrage, Assistant Greenkeeper, Surrey  
Jonathan Bartlett, Mechanic, Kent  
Aaron Launchbury, Assistant Greenkeeper, Kent  
Oliver Berkley, Greenkeeper, Sussex  
Ross Garcia, Greenkeeper, London  
Jack Slade, Assistant Greenkeeper, London  
Alan Crowder, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, East Anglia

### South West/South Wales Region

Simon Sperring, Greenkeeper, South West  
Jordan Taylor, Greenkeeper, South West  
Edward Michael, Greenkeeper, South Coast  
Martin Coe, Greenkeeper, Devon & Cornwall

### Northern Ireland

Gordon Ennis, Course Manager, Northern Ireland  
Arnold Ennis, Head Greenkeeper, Northern Ireland  
Alexander Meharg, Greenkeeper, Northern Ireland  
Aaron Bell, Assistant Greenkeeper, Northern Ireland

### Overseas

Niels Sorensen, International Member, Denmark





# Get the experts involved

David Figgins-Barrett looks at how bringing in a contractor can be the best way to get a project completed

**On a daily basis it can seem that we are bombarded with adverts in golf magazines for golf products that will improve a golfer's game - clubs that strike better, balls that fly further and putters that are more accurate.**

Over the years this has inevitably made golf courses less challenging than the original architects intended them to be, yet all players still want to play on challenging and entertaining courses. This means that all clubs are under pressure to constantly, or at least regularly, improve courses while retaining their original character.

"As a Top 100 golf club in England, it is essential for us to ensure that our course remains an exciting and interesting challenge for all that play it. This is why we have adopted a programme of continuous improvements," said BIGGA Member, Steve Mucklow, Course Manager, at Beau Desert Golf Club.

It can be difficult for clubs of all sizes to fund this kind of programme but the alternative is to allow the club to stagnate, which is a very daunting prospect. Whether your main competition is from the club next door or other Top 100 clubs around the UK, the problem is the same. The club and the course need to be better than that of the competition to ensure that they achieve the required footfall to make them profitable. In the current financial

climate it can be difficult for clubs to allocate suitable funding for course improvements and renovations.

"Most Course Managers around the UK are now expected by the clubs to do more with less. This means that we will have to be smart with our budgets, and with some of the improvement projects, outsourcing is the best solution," said Steve.

When these types of projects are undertaken in-house, weather and ground conditions can play a big part in whether the project comes in on budget as it only takes a small amount of adverse conditions for the job to drag on, costing more every day.

An advantage of outsourcing these projects is that you can manage the project budget more effectively as you have a clear project price that a contractor has agreed to meaning that there will be little opportunity for the project cost to increase, and you get better value for money.

When planning your annual improvement programme and the associated budget it is wise to involve your preferred construction partner in the preliminary pricing. This way, when you go to the Green Committee you can be confident in giving them a clear picture of what can be achieved and at what price.

Steve feels that having a professional contractor involved in your improvement projects is invaluable,

as their experience, knowledge and ability to share in your project vision is key to making projects a success."

Beau Desert chose Senior Golf Construction, for whom Stephen Senior, added: "We understand the pressures that golf clubs face, and are happy to work with them to help maximise their budgets and develop a project that will be of great benefit to both the club and everyone that plays the course.

"Having the assistance of a construction company that you can trust to act in your best interests ensures that the club and the members get great value from the work. Year after year, the club, committee and members are happy to approve projects because they know that the budgets won't overrun and they'll get great results," added Steve.

Senior Golf Construction started at Beau Desert Golf Club in 2008 undertaking Laser Grading projects and has completed several successful projects since.

This year the Club's continuing improvement programme will involve lengthening some of the holes to maintain the challenge for all players. To do this seven new tees are being constructed on key holes.

This project indicates the start of the next phase of improvements to our course, and our preferred contractors will continue to be an important part of the further development of our course," said Steve.



David Figgins-Barrett is Business Manager of the SGC Group [www.sgcgroup.co.uk](http://www.sgcgroup.co.uk)



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# Back in time to this month in... 1987

Do you have any old artifacts from days gone-by?

Perhaps your grandad was a greenkeeper and has something stored away in the loft? Maybe a Greenkeeping Association tie, or a journal? If so we would love to hear from you. We are particularly interested in the early part of the last century, but anything you have would be worth considering for future editions of this article.

Please contact us on 01347 833800 or email Elliott Edna Small, BIGGA Past Chairman, [elliott.edna@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:elliott.edna@hotmail.co.uk)

*Back in time* looks back at cuttings of greenkeeping news from days gone-by. 2012 is a landmark year, being the centenary of Greenkeeping Associations, as well as 25 years since BIGGA was formed. Each month we will look back at the current month, but in a different year, from over the last hundred. This month we travel back to January/February 1987, to look at the magazine which was produced, as BIGGA was in the initial stages of its formation...

The magazine provides a BIGGA update included in which was information on the appointment of a General Administrator (the magazine also contained an advert for the job); where the offices would be located; the Sections; Subscriptions; National Competitions and the magazine.

The magazine also contained articles by Jim Arthur on moss; Jack McMillan on aeration "Aeration is not a passing fad but a constant necessity", and a piece by John Campbell on Laurence Pithie, who was Course Manager at Minchinhampton at the time.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1987

## Greenkeeper



- OUT ON THE COURSE VISITS MINCHINHAMPTON (PICTURED)
- NEW PESTICIDE LAWS EXPLAINED
- JACK McMILLAN ON AERATION
- PLUS ... ALL OUR REGULAR FEATURES



Jack gets to grips with a Sunningdale green.

... long as we are allowed to aerate, compensating for the additional traffic. Somehow we must find a way to carry out aeration programmes without disturbing the golfer. A very experienced greenkeeper knows that a well-aerated soil aerates well with little evidence of the work having been carried out. The real problem lies in very compacted soils where aerators

leave obvious tracks. They have been face plucking unacceptable surfaces. I know of golfers whose lives are made out of sense programmes. I know others who become ill with worry. This problem has been a measure of stress that





# This issue

JAN/FEB 1987

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<b>AERATION IS NOT A PASSING FAD BUT NOW A CONSTANT NECESSITY</b> Jack McMillan, 40 years a greenkeeper, dwells on a modern-day dilemma	20
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**Publisher:** Fore Golf Publications Ltd  
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**Editor:** Robin Stewart  
**Contributors:** Jim Arthur, John Campbell, David Jones, Jack McMillan, Eddie Park, Donald Steel, Peter Wisbey and Walter Woods

All advertising matter, editorial copy and correspondence should be sent to: Greenkeeper, 121-123 High Street, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex CO13 3AP. Tel: 0285 807536

BACK IN TIME

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TOYO

## BIGGA UPDATE...

At the meeting of the board of management held in York on January 13, it was agreed that a short report should be circulated to members with an accompanying letter from the chairman.

### Appointment of General Administrator

As it was not finally known until late last year that a single association of greenkeepers would be formed, it was not possible to take any action until December to engage a general administrator. At the December board of management meeting, consultants were engaged to obtain a short-list of applicants and, at the meeting held in January, a job specification and advertisement were approved. The ad has subsequently appeared in the January/February issue of *Amateur Golf* and appears on page 31 of this *Greenkeeper*. It has also been run in other selected publications.

### Office Location

The BIGGA office is to be located at the Sports Turf Research Institute at Bingley and the general administrator's first responsibility will be to set up that office and appoint a secretary. Until this time, the Sports Turf Research Institute is assisting the association. However, until the association has its own employees, members are requested not to communicate with the STRI, but with regional board of management representatives.

### Association Sections

The new association's constitution provides that association regions be divided into areas. It is likely that they will be similar to the old sections. Board of management representatives have been asked to report upon this issue at a meeting to be held on March 2. It is being recommended that all section funds shall, subject to the approval of those sections, be handed over to the constituted new area.

### Annual Subscriptions

As stated in the letter from the chairman, subscriptions will not be demanded until the association has its own office.

## Notabook

### As A Result Of Legislation...



The Supaturf safety pack.

Supaturf has introduced a safety pack for spray operators. It contains protective gloves, goggles and mask, all conforming to British Safety Standards, and retails at £21.99.

First-time purchasers will also be able to obtain a free pair of hearing protectors.

For further information, contact Supaturf Products, Ousey Road, Peterborough PE1 5YZ. Tel: 0233 88394.

growth regulators, enabling the spray operator to choose easily the right nozzle to suit each chemical.

Tests have shown that these nozzles, made of Kevlar, are stable and durable.

As nozzles wear, so the flow rate increases. In the case of Kevlar nozzles, an increase of only five per cent extra spray in the flow rate was detected after 90 hours continual use, whereas stainless steel nozzles led to 16.1 per cent extra spray and brass gave a 30.4 per cent increase.

A Sarmach nozzle with spray pattern uniformity.



### Jola Good Show!

AF Tranchers has launched a new Jola fertilizer spreader. Following the company's appointment to market the Jola range in the UK.

The new type 119 has been designed for accuracy of spread control and can be adjusted to provide spread widths from 12 to 24 metres.

The spreader features double stainless steel rotors, enabling it to handle fertilizers of any chemical constitution. A new wheel drive system provides efficient and quiet operation. Its spread control is obtained by adjustments to the discharge helix, rather than by varying the rotation speed, and the efficient spread pattern eliminates the danger of

pollution to water courses and adjacent areas, resulting from a fertilizer application.

The type 119 is a row machine and the standard includes lid, screen and a dual cabin for spread control from both sides.

Two sizes of machine are listed - 950 litres or 1,390 litres and filling can be achieved in front loader, tip-wagon or 10 bags.

Full technical specifications for the type 119, as well as the standard types 116 and 99, are available from AF Tranchers, Greenbeck Road, Colchester, Essex CO1 9JL. Tel: 0206 44411.



A worn nozzle, resulting in incorrect spray applications.

A study carried out by May & Baker highlights the significance of nozzle matching on spray pattern uniformity. To improve the performance of spray application, May & Baker



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there before and the greenkeeper is the whipping boy. The work has to be done and I would suggest it is tackled early in the week and as early in the morning as possible. What the golfer does not see, etc... I would also suggest that greenkeepers...



Members of the McMillans - Jack with son Billy, one of five sons in the

Jack McMillan is the course manager at Sunningdale Golf Club and vice chairman of the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association.

## JACOBSEN

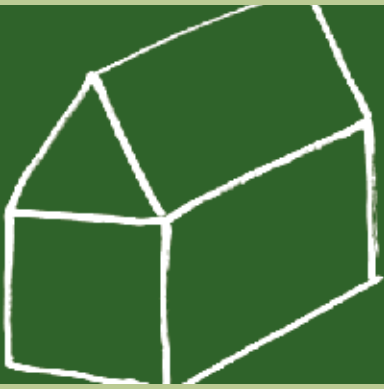
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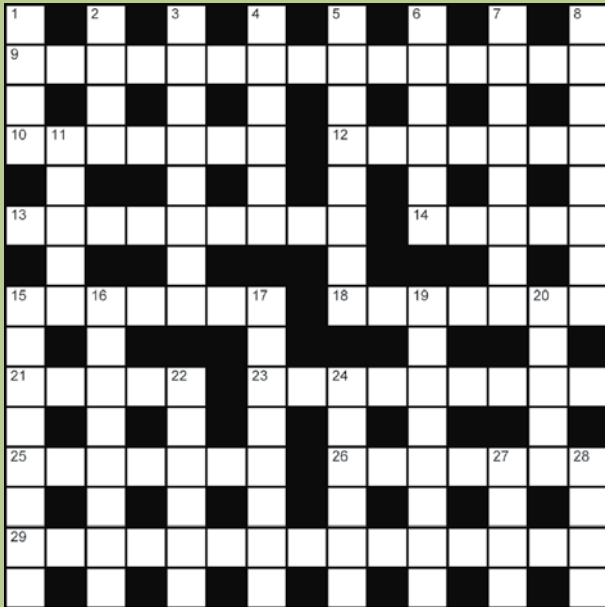




# intheshed

Our monthly puzzle page to keep you entertained when you're forced indoors...

## CROSSWORD



### Across

- 9 Bill Watterson comic strip about a boy and his tiger (6,3,6)
- 10 Decorative garment, designed to be tightened around the throat (7)
- 12 Cool (7)
- 13 Tactical (9)
- 14 Deal with (3,2)
- 15 Counterfeit (4,3)
- 18 "Poor is the \_\_\_ who does not surpass his master" - Da Vinci (7)
- 21 Arm joint located between the shoulder and wrist (5)
- 23 Say please (3,6)
- 25 American breed of owl (7)
- 26 Wheeling and dealing (7)
- 29 Rarely, if ever (4,2,1,4,4)

### Down

- 1 Run over (4)
- 2 Alliance (4)
- 3 Number of cards in a pack, excluding jokers (5-3)
- 4 Rotten apple (3,3)
- 5 Goes through to the next round (8)
- 6 Hull Kingston \_\_\_\_, East Hull rugby league team (6)
- 7 Old hat (8)
- 8 Escort exitwards (5,3)
- 11 Run in cricket not scored by a batsman (5)
- 15 Channel 4 sitcom featuring Super Hans, Johnson and Dobby (4,4)
- 16 Take away (8)
- 17 Tom Brown's Schooldays bully (8)
- 19 Weed (8)
- 20 Synthetic polymer originally manufactured by DuPont (5)
- 22 Tearjerker (6)
- 24 The pot's target for abuse (6)
- 27 Billy \_\_\_\_, Rebel Yell singer (4)
- 28 Group of likeminded people (4)

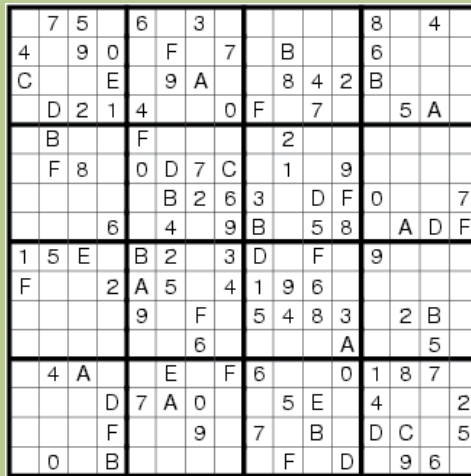
## QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ

**The much awaited 2012 has now arrived and the Olympics are only a few months rather than years away. In tribute, this month's quiz is Test your Olympic knowledge**

1. How many Olympic Gold Medals did Sir Steve Redgrave win?
2. In which years were the previous London Olympics held?
3. How many sports are represented in the 2012 Olympics?
4. In which two events did Dame Kelly Holmes win Gold?
5. Indoor bowls are an Olympic event. True or False
6. Two British Athletes have won the Blue Ribbon 100 metres since 1980. Name them.
7. Ben Ainslie is a three time Olympic Gold Medalist. In which sport does he compete?
8. How many Olympic Medals has Sir Chris Hoy won?
9. How many Gold Medals did Michael Phelps win in Seoul?

## MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 4x4 box contains the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



## SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 9 box shape contains the numbers 1 to 9.



Puzzle Answers on page 73



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Recently, the company re-designed its website to produce an even more informative and customer friendly interface. This effectively showcases their range of products and services and allows for instant purchases to be made via its "buy online" facility.

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# DEALER OF THE MONTH

The series aimed at celebrating the great work done by dealerships up and down the country

## LLOYD LTD

### *Location and size:*

Carlisle, Newcastle, Bishop Auckland, Penrith, Dumfries, Alnwick, Kelso (not Toro).

### *Employees and size of premises:*

20 to 25 on groundcare.  
Total combined depot size is 120,000sq ft.

### *Number of service vans:*

10

### *Brief history of company:*

Founded in 1964 as a single tractor dealership in Carlisle, the Lloyd Group has now grown to over 25 sites across the north of England and the borders for Lloyd Limited and Lloyd Motor Group.

At Lloyd Limited we specialise in agricultural, construction, materials handling and groundcare equipment while Lloyd Motor Group represents leading automotive manufacturers for car sales, servicing and repairs. Lloyd Group is still a family run business with Barry Lloyd as managing director of Lloyd Limited and Bryan Lloyd managing director of Lloyd Motors.

The main groundcare depots are Carlisle, Newcastle and Bishop Auckland, with the remaining depots all offering parts and service back up. The groundcare business has flourished since 1997 when Lloyd Limited was given the Kubota franchise followed shortly after by Toro and many other market-leading brands.



### *Key services offered:*

Machinery sales, parts sales and a full service support, including cylinder grinding.

### *Specialist services offered:*

Machine demonstrations and short-term and long-term machine hire.

### *How has the dealership changed over the years?*

In the past agriculture was the majority of our business, but now groundcare and construction also contribute heavily to our overall business. We have invested heavily in these sectors to ensure we give a first-class service to our customers.

### *What would you like to see changed?*

We would still like to see one major annual groundcare show so that all the manufacturers can attend every year.

### *Do you support customers who have in-house service facilities (ie, OEM parts supply)?*

Yes, we offer parts impress stock to fleet users as well as a delivery service. We also organise service training with our suppliers for these customers.

### *Major customers:*

I don't really want to answer this as all of our customers are important.

### Franchises

- Toro, Kubota, New Holland, Graden, Amazone Groundcare, Groundsman

and many more too numerous to mention

To nominate a GI Dealer of the Month contact Scott MacCallum with your reasons why the dealer of your choice should be featured...

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- Superior Eaton 11 transmission to cope with extreme operating conditions
- Spiker roller operates up to 30mm deep to relieve any compaction

**THE BENEFITS**

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- Improved consistency between greens
- Increased mow height while maintaining green speed
- Improved turf health by reducing sward stress



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## in the shed answers

**QUICK 'NINE HOLE'  
QUIZ ANSWERS:**

1. Five
2. 1908 and 1948
3. 26
4. 800 metres and 1500 metres
5. False
6. Allan Wells (Moscow 1980)  
Linford Christie (Barcelona 1992)
7. Sailing
8. Five. Four Golds and a Silver
9. Eight

**CROSSWORD**

S	B	F	B	A	R	O	U							
C	A	L	V	I	N	A	N	D	H	O	B	B	E	S
A	O	F	D	V	V	S	H							
N	E	C	K	T	I	E	A	W	E	S	O	M	E	
X	Y	G	N	R	L	R								
S	T	R	A	T	E	G	I	C	S	E	E	T	O	
R	W	E	T	U										
P	A	S	S	O	F	F	S	T	U	D	E	N	T	
E	U	L	R	Y										
E	L	B	O	W	A	S	K	N	I	C	E	L	Y	
P	T	E	S	E	N	O								
S	C	R	E	E	C	H	T	R	A	D	I	N	G	
H	A	P	M	T	T	D	A							
O	N	C	E	I	N	A	B	L	U	E	M	O	O	N
W	T	E	N	E	D	L	G							

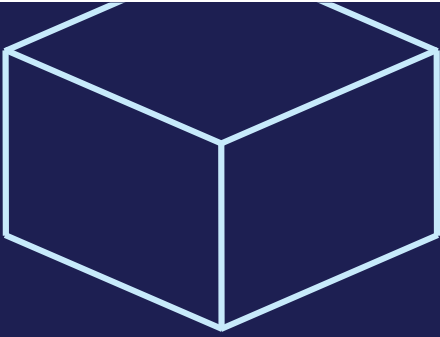
**MONSTER SUDOKO**

B	7	5	A	6	C	3	2	9	D	1	E	8	F	4	0
4	8	9	0	E	F	1	7	A	B	3	5	6	D	2	C
C	6	F	E	5	9	A	D	0	8	4	2	B	7	1	3
3	D	2	1	4	8	B	0	F	6	7	C	E	5	A	9
D	B	7	9	F	1	5	A	E	2	0	6	3	4	C	8
2	F	8	3	0	D	7	C	4	1	A	9	5	B	E	6
A	E	4	5	8	B	2	6	3	C	D	F	0	1	9	7
0	1	C	6	3	4	E	9	B	7	5	8	2	A	D	F
1	5	E	4	B	2	C	3	D	0	F	7	9	6	8	A
F	C	0	2	A	5	8	4	1	9	6	B	7	E	3	D
6	A	D	7	9	0	F	E	5	4	8	3	C	2	B	1
9	3	B	8	D	7	6	1	2	E	C	A	F	0	5	4
5	4	A	C	2	E	D	F	6	3	9	0	1	8	7	B
8	9	6	D	7	A	0	B	C	5	E	1	4	3	F	2
E	2	3	F	1	6	9	8	7	A	B	4	D	C	0	5
7	0	1	B	C	3	4	5	8	F	2	D	A	9	6	E

**SQUIGGLY SUDOKO**

4	7	9	2	5	6	3	8	1
1	6	2	3	8	9	7	4	5
5	3	8	1	4	7	6	9	2
3	5	7	8	6	2	9	1	4
9	8	1	5	7	4	2	3	6
6	2	4	9	1	3	8	5	7
7	9	3	4	2	1	5	6	8
2	4	5	6	9	8	1	7	3
8	1	6	7	3	5	4	2	9





# On the Soapbox

Past Chairman Paul Worster speaks from the heart when it comes to the correct use of PPE

**The correct use of PPE to prevent health related issues such as occupational deafness, is a pet subject of mine.**

**The importance of looking after ourselves at work as professional people cannot be overstated.**

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 was not designed to cripple industry with unnecessary rules and regulations.

It was designed to save us all from injury, from work-related disorders such as sight or hearing impairment, and to make sure that we work in safe environments.

It is of course up to us to cooperate at all times.

In fairness, the Act was also introduced to save the Government money – e.g.

lost tax revenues from people who became unfit for work due to work-related accidents and injuries.

For example, take deafness, from which I suffer.

This is not something particularly great to put up with on a daily basis, nor easily reversible.

And yet the temptation is always there not to bother with PPE – earmuffs are uncomfortable, but, hey, if you stuff in a pair of Sony Walkman buds you can't hear the machine (quite as much).

Decibel ratings are clearly displayed on all machines these days.

If in doubt – use those ear-defenders!!

Likewise, always put safety boots on – even just to pop out into the yard.

I knew a greenkeeper in our area who did just that – popped out of the office to help a colleague hitch on a trailer – and the trailer dropped off its hitch onto this guy's foot.

The trainers he was wearing gave no protection whatsoever and caused six months off work with zero compensation.

Put the eye protection on if there's any risk (I once got a face-full of sawdust splinters from a bowsaw cut and had to have them taken out of my eye under anaesthetic).

I was minded to put pen to paper a few days ago, not as the result of watching a greenkeeper acting with total disregard to his occupational health, but actually as the result of watching a contractor working at my home.

We had arranged to have cavity wall insulation put into our three-bed semi.

The company, who were strongly endorsed by our local council, sent two operatives in a lorry.

They knocked on the door and very politely explained who they were, what they were going to do, gave the property a quick once-over, mainly as a disclaimer for hitting pipes or gas mains etc., jointly signed some paperwork so I could claim my green discount, and then commenced work.

I was very impressed at this stage, as had we perhaps been elderly people, we would have fully understood the process.

I was a lot less impressed when I saw the work in progress.

First of all a hefty electric masonry drill was plugged in to my outside power socket.

This drill, which looked like it weighed a ton, produced vibrations fit to shake the foundations of the house and enough noise to wake the dead.

I was therefore horrified to see the guy, who had been so polite and professional only moments before, shinning up an unsupported ladder with this monster drill slung over his shoulder.

After a spell of ear-splitting noise he emerged at the top in a huge cloud of dust (which by now coated the windows, the lawn and Next Door's Mercedes!) and not wearing

system was going through.

People are still dying from exposure to asbestos dust 40 years previously (incredibly over 3000 people a year) – who knows what the dust from my 1920's house bricks contained, but I bet it wasn't anything good for lungs! Dust should be in your COSHH assessment – always use a throwaway mask.

To cut a long story short – don't be tempted.

If you haven't got the right gear (PPE) don't do the job, no matter how small or insignificant it may seem.

Sounds obvious; but above everything else our health has to be our primary concern.

If our health fails our quality of life fails also and that's permanent – so what's with the temptation to take the short-cuts?

As a footnote, on the feedback form I let the Cavity Wall company know exactly what I thought about their service – excellent paperwork, but unbelievably poor attention to Health & Safety detail.

Funnily enough I've yet to receive a response!

## “Mind that greenkeeper” – he may be deaf

any PPE at all – e.g. no dust mask, no anti-vibration gloves, and no ear defenders.

“Well,” I asked – in a polite sort of way when he'd finished, “So, hey, that drill works well – went through the wall like butter – exactly what is the dba output?”

“The what? Oh no-one's ever asked before – it says somewhere – here it is – 105”.

“Right...” I said carefully “...and what about the vibrations, they must be enough to take most of the enamel off your teeth I should think – what's the hand-arm exposure limit?” “Pardon? Oh – I don't know, but we don't use it for long so it's alright”.

I skimmed over the lack of dust mask and the unsupported ladder – (although I'd had to look away when he was dangling over my conservatory roof!)

As for the dust – there's yet another major occupational hazard.

I inhaled some of the dust just watching my cavity-wallers from a safe distance – heaven knows what this guy's respiratory



BIGGA Past Chairman, Paul Worster

Paul Worster

The views expressed within On The Soapbox are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International

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