



Organisational Changes At BIGGA House

Following the completion of a Strategic Review of BIGGA's activity and resources the Board of Management have approved a Business Plan designed to ensure the Association is best positioned to support its members over the coming years.

The Plan has at its heart a commitment to building on the excellent work done by the Learning and Development department whilst taking steps to make sure the Association is commercially sustainable.

Both of these aspects are vital as the Association works closely with the rest of the golf industry to promote the profession of greenkeeping and to continue to raise standards.

With the sport being strongly affected by economic pressures it is important that greenkeepers have a membership association that will work at all levels to ensure the importance of course management and maintenance to the future health of golf is recognised.

BIGGA has reached a new stage in its development and with the Business Plan approved the Chief Executive has been tasked with ensuring that the Association has the necessary staff and resources to implement it and achieve its objectives.

A staff consultation period has taken place with full professional advice and two positions have been made redundant.

As a result, after all redeployment options for the individuals affected were considered, Pauline Thompson and Scott MacCallum have left the Association by mutual agreement. Both were employed by the Association for in excess of 17 years and we wish them well in their future endeavours.

Over the next few weeks we will be recruiting people to fill the following roles: Learning and Development Executive, Commercial Manager, Communications Executive and Assistant Accountant.

Board Chairman, Andrew Mellon explained, "We have

examined very closely how we operate to best serve the needs of our members. In doing so, we have spent much time consulting with all our stakeholders before formulating our plans, and of course some difficult decisions have had to be made. This new business plan will enhance our Chief Executive and his team's ability to focus on developing the delivery of vital member support services, particularly our Learning and Development programme. The Board is totally confident that they will continue to engage the membership through efficient and effective communications."



Rogue Rider Wreaks Havoc for O'Hara

Leven GC Head Greenkeeper and BIGGA Member, Andy O'Hara, was left devastated last month when a motorbike-driving vandal ripped up greens on his course. It could take months to recover.

The damage was caused to the putting surfaces on the 1st and 18th holes at Leven Links Golf Club and further damage continued at the 18th of Scoonie Golf Club.

The damage to the greens is extensive with much of the turf dug out by the motorbike's tyres. Leven Links has had to carry out repairs to make them useable for the 900 members of Leven Golfing Society and Leven Thistle Golf Club, who both play on the course.

Mr O'Hara has ruled out fencing off the course despite this being the second time it has been attacked in the space of a month, saying, "We would like to appeal to whoever is doing it to stop. If anybody has any information then get in touch with us, or the police."

"Fencing the place off is not what we'd like to do. It would cost us a fortune and take away the natural beauty of the place."

Local Community Inspector Donald Jenks said: "Additional patrols will be operating in the area to deter further offences and gather information that will help identify those responsible."

Farewell from Peter Larter, BIGGA Regional Administrator

At the end of May 2012 I retire from the post of Regional Administrator for the Midland and Northern Regions of BIGGA.

In September 1996, after 35 years in the RAF, I took over the post of Regional Administrator for the Midland Region of BIGGA and, a few years later became full-time, also looking after the Northern Region.

During my 16 years with BIGGA I have worked with many members, BIGGA HQ staff and the Trade, and I am very grateful for the support and friendship I received from all I came into contact with.

I have had the great experience of working at BTME, and in recent years I have had the honour to work with our members at The Open Championship.

As I head into retirement I will miss the friends I have made during my time with BIGGA. However, I will be fully occupied with grand children, rugby, golf and, like Peter Boyd, my wife's "to do" list.

I wish BIGGA and all I have known throughout the last 16 years success in the future.

Good Luck,
Peter J Larter



BIGGA Appoints New Regional Administrators

The Association is pleased to announce the appointment of two new Regional Administrators



John Young

Following the retirement of Peter Boyd, John Young has been appointed on a full time contract, to cover Scotland.

John is a skilled administrator with a strong track record in event organisation and has been heavily involved with the management of Gourock Golf Club, where he is a full member with a handicap of 13, John will commence his post on Monday 28th May 2012.



Sandra Raper

Due to the retirement of Peter Larter, Sandra Raper has been appointed on a full time contract, to cover Northern and Midland Regions

Sandra was previously employed by BIGGA in an administrative role and has good experience in many aspects of Association business.

During her time with the Association she developed an excellent rapport with members and suppliers alike. Sandra will commence her post on Monday 18th June 2012.

BRAEMAR EXTENDS COMMITMENT

Braemar Golf, the international golf services provider, based in the home of golf, St Andrews, Scotland is delighted to announce a new commitment to sustainability across all development and operational projects within the Braemar Golf portfolio.

Selecting the programmes and guidance provided by the Golf Environment Organization (GEO) as preferred solutions, Braemar has asked that all clients enrol in the GEO OnCourse™ programme to achieve the international ecolabel for golf, GEO Certified™. Additionally, Braemar will help new development projects integrate sustainability into planning, design and construction according to comprehensive new guidance developed by GEO in collaboration with a number of golf industry groups.

Braemar Golf has for many years been implementing environmental best practice

as part of their standard operating procedures but recognise the benefits of participating in such recognised and worthwhile programmes.

Jonathan Pendry, Golf Courses Director for Braemar Golf comments "Our project teams have driven this through their efforts and desire to manage their facilities in an environmentally sustainable manner.

"After discussions with our clients, both in development and operation, there is overwhelming support to ensure that with the guidance provided by GEO we can build and manage golf facilities to the highest environmental standards.

"We recognise not only the traditional environmental benefits but also the financial and efficiency savings that will be made and we are delighted to be involved to such an extensive level".

This commitment to GEO programmes as a practical and rewarding approach to sustainability underlines our conviction that sustainability is a valuable pursuit, for resource efficiencies, environmental and social benefits, and a strong reputation for individual clubs and the game.

GEO's Chief Executive, Jonathan Smith, added: "We are very pleased that our guidance and programming is providing a platform for Braemar Golf to re-affirm their commitment to sustainability and to support their clients efforts.

"It makes good business sense for every golf course and development to be a responsible, resource efficient business set in an ecologically rich landscape, and this leadership by Braemar Golf and the clubs and developments in their portfolio will bring tangible benefits and serve as a good example for others."

Kent take Challenge Crown at Home of The Hammers



At the ground of West Ham United, recently reinstated to the FA Premier League, Challengers, The Kent Section tasted victory at the hands of last year's winners, the Essex Section, in this challenge football match organised by Lely UK (Toro). A keenly contested match played in good spirit finished 3-2 to Kent.

On a damp but perfect pitch Essex made a bright start with Ben Scrivener firing just over the bar from long range and two minutes later had a shot well saved by Rob Holland in the Kent goal.

After some good football and missed shots by both teams Mark Todd beat the Essex offside trap on the left passing to Lee Austin to cross a great ball beating keeper Dan Crow and allowing Wayne Syres to score the first goal for Kent. Shortly after

this there was a mix up in the Essex defence allowing Kevin Morris to intervene and nod the ball on for Lee Austin put Kent two goals up. Early in the second half Kent had plenty of possession, but against the run of play and after an error by the keeper, Mark Turner scored for Essex to make it 1-2. Frequent substitutions were now being made by both sides to rest tired legs. After a succession of corners Stewart Rogers latched on to a shot from 30 yards to level the score 2-2.

Plenty of action followed with the Kent keeper tipping a shot over the bar and Adam Marrable having a good game in the Kent midfield.

The winner came from a powerful shot from just inside the box by the great 'Zaffa' to make the Score 3-2 to the Kent

Section. In the end after a hard fought and thoroughly entertaining game the Kent team held on to win the game.

Final Score Essex 2 v Kent 3. After the match players and supporters enjoyed the hospitality in the Billy Bonds Lounge where Larry Pearman of Lely presented the Trophy to the winning Kent Team and Roger Lupton from Toro Irrigation awarded the Man of the Match Trophy to Ben Adams from the London Club.

Special thanks to Larry Pearman helped by Richard Freeman for making all the arrangements and organising the day so well. All commented on the immaculate condition of the pitch, after a long hard season. Hopefully this event will take place again next year with more Sections being involved.

Calculate your savings from the Ultimate Fairway Programme

Greenkeepers and golf club managers can now find out exactly how much money they could save on their course from taking advantage of the Primo Maxx Ultimate Fairway Programme. A new interactive calculator on the GreenCast website enables them to enter their current costs and routine of fairway mowing, and gives an instant answer on the cost savings.

A recent independent survey

of fairways on a range of golf courses revealed the average area was 14 hectares - taking just under 11 hours for each cut. For courses cutting fairways three times a week, the use of Primo Maxx to eliminate one cut per week through the season would see a cost saving of over £3650 per year.

The calculation takes into account details of the individual club's costs

including mower operator and mechanic's wages, machinery repairs, fuel and depreciation, along with their replacement policy for fairway mowers. Fuel costs at the time of the survey averaged 74p/litre, but a 20% rise in the intervening time now equates to an additional £51 a year saving from Primo Maxx use on the fairways alone, reports Syngenta Business Manager, Rod Burke.

"We did notice a thicker

sward and better water utilisation during the dry periods, which I can only attribute to the Primo Maxx,"

Rod Burke believes that the turf quality enhancements that greenkeepers have seen will be equally as important as the cost savings. "Our survey identified that having their ball sit proud on a consistent fairway surface was the single most important factor that they want."



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Elmwood Go Digital

Elmwood College, Cupar, Scotland, through a licence agreement with The Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC), is extending its greenkeeper training provision by embracing the latest eportfolio technology.

The college will be offering students the opportunity to use the eportfolio recording option and this will include the highly acclaimed GTC Greenkeeping Training Manual.

Rick Bond, Head of Faculty, Golf, Land & Environment at the college says, "the eportfolio provision is already available for students studying for a management qualification and we see the new additions supporting learners such as apprentices and students across the world looking to be part of the Elmwood College Sports Turf learning experience."

Carol Borthwick, Director of Golf and International Affairs at Elmwood adds, "the college has for

many years been involved with the GTC and we see this agreement as an opportunity to expand our provision beyond our traditional methods of delivering greenkeeper and groundsmanship education and training."

David Golding, of the GTC, says, "Elmwood College, as a GTC Quality Assured Centre, has for many years been a major provider of sports turf education, training provision offering the range of qualifications from work based to Higher Education. The license agreement between Elmwood College and the GTC will certainly embrace the technology now available to allow employers and students to consider if this option may be better suited to their needs, while the traditional delivery of courses will still be available".

Elmwood College can be contacted via email: mclark@elmwood.ac.uk or phone: 01334 658969

BIGGA EVENT UPDATE

This year's BIGGA Midland and Northern Region Golf Management events, sponsored by Tacit Golf UK for the second year, will take place at the venues below:

MIDLAND REGION

North of the Region: Gay Hill Golf Club on Thursday 12th July; South of the Region: Verulam Golf Club on Thursday 9th August.

NORTHERN REGION

East of the Region: Bingley St Ives Golf Club on Wednesday 25th July; West of the Region: Birchwood Golf Club on Wednesday 22nd August 2012.

This 4-man team event must include a member of the Green Staff, who must be a member of BIGGA. The other team members may be chosen from the Golf Club Secretary or Manager, Club Captain or Vice-Captain, Chairman of Green or Golf Club Committee Member. Entry forms will be sent to golf clubs in the appropriate part of each Region.

If you wish to enter a team please contact: Until 31 May 2012 - the BIGGA Midland/Northern Regional Administrator Peter Larter on 01476 550115; 07866 366966 or email petelarter972@aol.com.

Thereafter, contact Rachael Duffy on 01347 833800 ext 522 or email rachael@bigga.co.uk

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The Primo Maxx Ultimate Fairway Programme offers the unrivalled opportunity to enhance the condition of your course - and make big cost savings.

Speak to your local supplier or advisor for more information about this fantastic new offer.



There are exciting times ahead for London Golf Club as it announced recently, that, together with its joint venture partner, The European Tour, has submitted plans to local authorities for the construction of a new European Tour Performance Institute (ETPI) complete with driving range and an innovative 9-hole Academy course.

Alongside the existing 36-holes of championship golf and 130-bedroom 5-star hotel and spa, for which planning permission has already been granted, these significant developments encapsulate the club's vision of becoming a world-class destination primed for hosting major golfing events.

The state-of-the-art European Tour Performance Institute (ETPI) complete with a fully-covered driving range and inventive short-game facility, will be the first of its kind in the UK and promises to raise the bar in golf coaching and sports science.

Commenting on the significant developments on the horizon, London Golf Club's General Manger, Austen Gravestock said, "I firmly believe the new ETPI, Academy and 9-hole golf course will elevate our status on the International golfing arena."

David MacLaren, Director of Property and Venue Development at The European Tour, added: "I am confident that the

creation of a state of the art practice and learning facility at London Golf Club will be of great benefit to club members, visitors and the wider community."

Designed to complement the club's Heritage and International courses, that have both hosted high-profile professional tournaments and events, including The European Open in 2008 & 2009 and Golf LIVE, the new 9-hole academy golf course will be located alongside the ETPI on the eastern side of South Ash Road.

With the plans now submitted to the local authority for their consideration, Jeremy Slessor, European Golf Design's Managing Director, said: "It's been a

fascinating start to the project - combining the evolutionary approach to performance and training of the ETPI with an Academy facility that will support, without replicating, the two existing courses at The London Club. Trying to marry the requirements of the European Tour with the need to provide a bespoke training course, concentrating on game improvement, has been challenging - but we feel confident that this is what we've achieved. Added to this has been the desire to restore the terrain from an open agricultural field to one with a diverse environment, supporting diverse habitats resulting in a richer ecological landscape."





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Charterhouse and Kubota return to sponsor the 2012 BIGGA National Championship



We are delighted to announce that once again the 2012 BIGGA National Championship will be sponsored by Charterhouse and Kubota. This year, the event takes place at The Irvine Golf Club, Bogside, Ayrshire, on October 8-9, 2012. Please see page 58 for details on how to apply.

UKGCOA Publish Golf Facility Report

The UK Golf Course Owners Association (UKGCOA) has released its first Golf Facility Benchmarking Report, which shows member clubs have seen a dramatic rise in rounds played throughout 2011.

The report – conducted by Sports Marketing Surveys Inc – shows that UKGCOA members have seen a 20% increase in rounds played compared to the national average of just 8%. To download the report, please visit www.ukgcoa.com

SPORTS MARKETING SURVEYS INC.



UKGCOA GOLF FACILITY BENCHMARKING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY REPORT
MARCH 2012



JOHN DEERE
175
 SINCE 1837

175 Years of Progress

From the world's first self-scouring steel plough in 1837 to the world's largest manufacturer of agricultural and forestry equipment, and a leading manufacturer of turf and construction machinery – John Deere the company celebrates 175 years of progress worldwide in 2012.

John Deere, the man, moved from his home in Vermont to set up a small blacksmith shop in Grand Detour, Illinois; his invention revolutionised agriculture and made farming in the tough soil of the US Midwest a productive and profitable venture.

A decade later he moved the enterprise to Moline, where the company that bears his name still has its worldwide headquarters today.

Close by 'The Rusty Palace', as the headquarters is known because of its innovative steel frame design, is TPC Deere Run, an award-winning championship golf course that is open to the public. The John Deere Classic tournament has been held here annually since 2000, the week before our Open Championship.

It made its debut on the PGA Tour as the Quad Cities Open in 1971, since when the event has contributed \$43 million to charity. John Deere is the official golf course equipment, leasing and landscaping supplier to the PGA Tour.

In addition to its 175th anniversary, John Deere can look back upon almost 50 years of history as a supplier of turf equipment. Production of the company's first lawn and garden tractor began at Horicon, Wisconsin in 1963, when John Deere built 1000 units of the 110 model, while John Deere's golf business started in the US just 25 years ago, in 1987.

The company now offers the broadest range of lawn & garden, commercial and golf equipment in the world.



An original 110 lawn tractor, pictured here working in the grounds of the Deere & Company worldwide headquarters at Moline in the early 1960s, can be seen at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History in Washington, DC; a fully restored, working example of this pioneering lawn tractor is also on display in the foyer of John Deere's UK headquarters at Langar in Nottinghamshire.



The 'virtual reality' test lab for turf and utility equipment at John Deere's turf care factory in Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina



John Deere's 8000 E-Cut hybrid electric fairway mower comes off the production line at Fuquay-Varina

John Deere's five millionth lawn tractor, from the X700 Ultimate diesel range, rolled off the assembly line at Horicon in 2010, when the factory also manufactured its 500,000th Gator utility vehicle, following this popular machine's introduction in 1993.

The same factory produced a line of snowmobiles from 1971 to 1983; these were promoted with the new slogan 'Nothing runs like a Deere', which has lasted a lot longer than that product line!

In 2011, John Deere invested more than US\$1.2 billion in its worldwide research and development programmes, equivalent to nearly \$5 million dollars every working day.

As part of this ongoing new product investment, John Deere pioneered the use of hybrid electric technology on golf course mowers with the introduction of its 2500E greens mower in 2004, and then its fairway mower range in 2009.

A full range of walk-behind and ride-on greens and fairway mowers, including the

industry's broadest single brand range of hybrid machines, are now built at the company's turf care factory at Fuquay-Varina in North Carolina.

This factory also uses a state of the art 'virtual reality' test lab, designed to reduce the high costs of constant prototype building and subsequent field testing.

This advanced electronic tool also uses customer feedback during the 3D digital modelling process, to ensure the design is going to be practical, easily serviceable and user friendly when new machines eventually go into full production.

"John Deere instilled four core values in his company," says Samuel R Allen, chairman and chief executive officer of Deere & Company – only the company's ninth CEO in its 175 year history.

"Today John Deere employees and dealers still deliver on these important values of integrity, quality, commitment and innovation, and we believe these values have been the key to the longevity of our enterprise."

Sowing the seeds



Jayne Leyland recently joined Rigby Taylor as Seed Research and Development Manager. Jim Cook took the opportunity to be the first to throw a few questions her way

What attracted you to Rigby Taylor?

It is a very exciting opportunity to take trialling systems and development of mixtures to another level.

What will the trials involve?

The trials will be sowing out grasses and then treating them with identified management programmes and products to find solutions to whatever the constraints of that site or maintenance regime is. Each trial will be different according to the location.

Where is the first trial you will be involved with since joining Rigby Taylor?

It will be at Furness Golf Club, in Cumbria, and is an environmental stress trial. This is the first sowing of this particular programme.

How are new seeds bred?

Mainly through crossings of existing cultivars with new grasses which are gathered in the wild by the plant breeders. These are then cross-bred to search for the best characteristics.

You start off with maybe 15,000 crossings and going through the process to end up with just one new variety. This process takes between 12 and 15 years. You're always looking forward to improve in terms of characteristics.

What makes a good quality grass seed?

Several things. The characteristics of individual cultivars, the synergy of the mixture, the quality of purity and germination of seed mixture and most importantly choosing the right mixture for the intended purpose. There are some amazing developments now

in grasses and with Rigby Taylor there is the ESP treatment on the seed. What is very important to many greenkeepers is speed of establishment, so you need good quality seed with high viability and fast establishment capability.

What should a greenkeeper think about when buying grass seed?

They should think about individual characteristics that they might require, for example specific disease tolerance or cold weather or drought tolerance.

What is as important as individual cultivar characteristics is actually how the seed mixture has been formulated and put together, so there isn't too much competition between the cultivars in there and one doesn't dominate the other.

So the actual mixture synergy is extremely important.

Is there a correct way to store grass seed?

It should be stored in a cool, dry place and also be in a secure container to avoid attack from vermin.

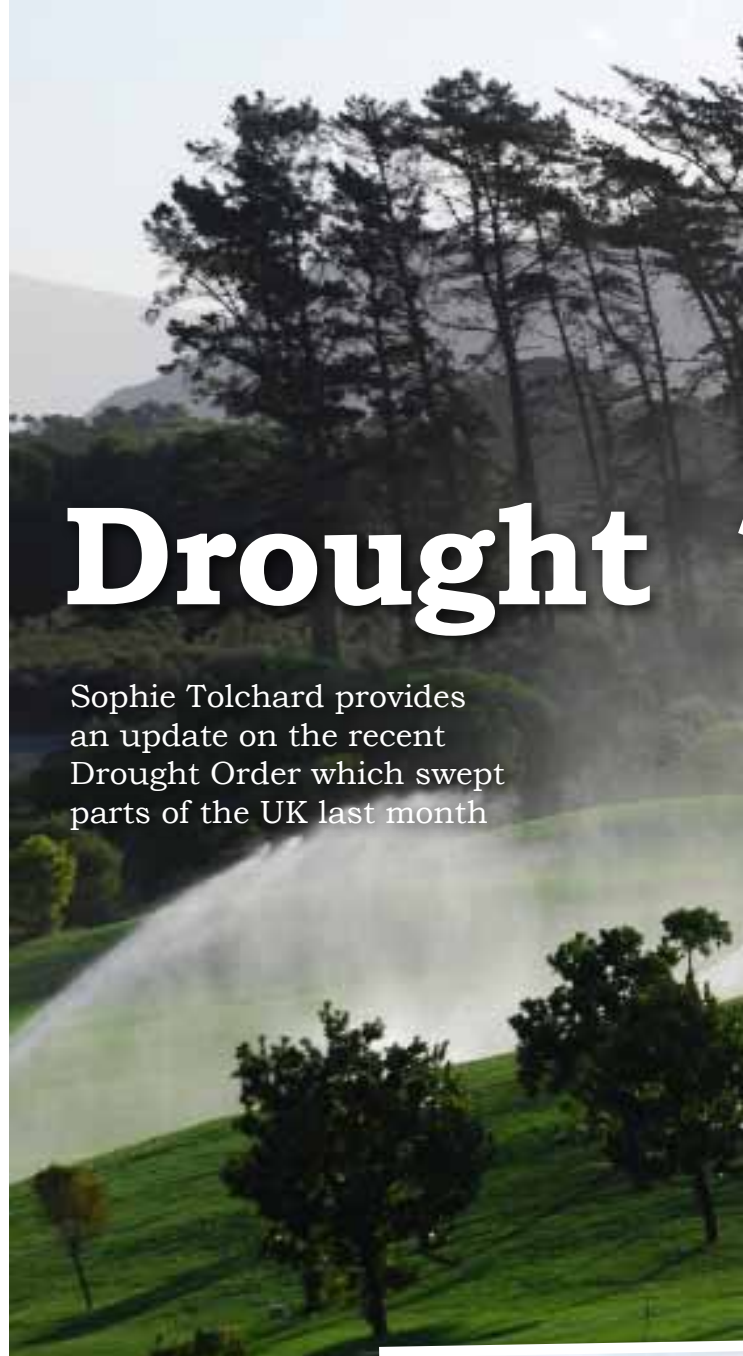
What is the future with regards grass seed?

The future is a combination of new cultivars which are coming through breeding programmes with improved characteristics. New sub-species or species which have got significantly different characteristics from cultivars within that same species.

Also adaptations of species with unique characteristics, for example, temperature tolerance or creeping growth habit. It's a combination of the breeding programmes producing the right material and then the good work of greenkeepers being able to have the product in their armoury to get the maximum out of it.

Drought

Sophie Tolchard provides an update on the recent Drought Order which swept parts of the UK last month



On 5 April a Temporary Use Ban (Hosepipe Ban) came into force in parts of the country covered by seven water companies in the south of England and East Anglia.

When two and a half times the normal amount of rain fell in April and frequent showers continued throughout May, many were left wondering why we are still in a drought.

After the driest two years since records began, groundwater, which feeds the flows of rivers throughout the year and is our most important source of water, remains exceptionally low.

On 29 April, Thames Water announced that it was to exempt golf clubs under its jurisdiction from two major aspects of the hosepipe ban. Golf clubs that have water supplied by Thames Water can now use permanent sprinkler systems underneath their greens.

"The announcement, which is



The initial cost of a reservoir can be recouped over a period of time and they provide an additional protective measure against drought orders
Courtesy of MJ Abbott Limited

The Situation Now

similar to one made recently by Anglian Water... should clear up some of the confusion surrounding conflicting advice given to clubs over the past few weeks," writes Thames Water.

Nonetheless, some clubs were left confused by the conflicting advice that they received from their water board.

"For example, some GCMA members report that their supplier has determined a total ban for the use of sprinkler systems. Others have received less penal reactions when they have approached them, including a scale of allowances for special events and a fixed number of cubic meters to be used per day. And some have been told 'you're a business, so carry on as normal,'" said Keith Lloyd, CEO of the GCMA.

Some relief followed Caroline Spelman's announcement on 11 May that the Environment Agency had decided to move 19 counties out of drought status, including

South Yorkshire, East Yorkshire, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Bristol, parts of Gloucestershire, parts of Hampshire, most of Wiltshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands, Warwickshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire.

Although this indicates that there's no threat to the public water supply in these areas this summer, clubs are still subject to some environmental pressures and could move back in to drought if there is another prolonged dry period. DEFRA is working closely with the Environment Agency to continuously monitor and review the situation.

There was better news for other users of turf this month when all seven water companies announced a 28-day exemption for the establishment of newly laid turf, when laid by a landscaper or gardening business, from the 21 May 2012.

Landscaping, turf and gardening businesses were made exempt from the 'hosepipe ban' after it was confirmed that record rainfall had reduced the severity of the on-going water shortage.

There are agreed Codes of Practice with the Turfgrass Growers Association (TGA), the Association of Professional Landscapers (APL) and other landscape trade bodies to ensure that the minimum amount of water is used, and as wisely as possible. The TGA's Code of Practice for the watering of newly laid turf is now available on its website at www.turfgrass.co.uk

While gardening businesses are now exempt, the hosepipe ban remains in force in all seven water company areas, those being Thames Water, Anglian Water, South East Water, Southern Water in Kent and Sussex, Veolia Central and South East, which covers much of London and the home-counties, and Sutton and East Surrey Water.

Main image supplied by Revaho UK. Please see Page 63 for more drought news



Some clubs have found the Environment Agency more receptive to borehole applications where an investment is being made in winter storage
Courtesy of MJ Abott Limited