



Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Andrew Mellon, gives his thoughts for the month

Rain or shine, come what May?

Well another strange year underway, very challenging in various ways for our members in different parts of the country. While hosepipe bans have been spreading throughout the country imposed as a result of very low water levels in most areas, the weather has turned a bit nasty in April, and the sunshine we had in March has all but disappeared. The impact is very varied across the country, some would be happier to see it drier (North), while some are happy to get some rain, given that they are prohibited from using mains water (South).

BIGGA will endeavour alongside the other golf bodies to represent your interests and ensure that the impact on our businesses is made clear to those in power that make these decisions.

Please feedback to HQ or myself any input on this matter, including any ideas or ways you have minimised the impact of little or no water for irrigation.

We can collate and share the information with all the members and the other golf bodies.

I attended my local Central Section Spring Outing at Crail, to help with the Prizegiving. My work schedule prevented me from playing, but the course looked fantastic and the feedback from all attending was excellent. Jim Croxton and Tracey Maddison were in Fife to interview for the Regional Administrator position, accompanied by Peter Boyd at his last public appearance in his role before his retirement.

The event was very well run, and all those present were a credit to the Association, commented on by the Club Captain, Richard Clifford and David Roy (CMAE) and Managing Secretary of Crail Golfing Society.

This month sees the retirement of Peter Larter, who has acted as Regional Administrator for our Northern and Midland regions and been with BIGGA on and off for 16 years. He has been a fantastic servant to the membership and we wish him well.

Work has been very busy as usual, as well as looking after the course we have opened a new pro-shop and been busy



Aldwark Manor GC

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sorting out our Driving Range and putting out new course signage.

I also organised a trip for a group of visiting Finnish greenkeepers, who were fortunate enough to see St Andrews, The Castle Course, Kingsbarns, Auchterarder, Gleneagles and Ladybank. I wish I'd had time to join them, but they were overflowing with praise on the condition of all the courses and the diversity of styles on offer. Thanks to Gordon Moir, Alan Patterson, Innes Knight, Archie Dunn, Scott Fenwick & Steve Chappell and Colin Powrie respectively for showcasing British Greenkeeping so well.

At HQ Jim Croxton and his team have been busy working on and implementing the business plan agreed by the Board.

This involves a period of consultation with the staff as we look at the structure and ensure that we have the best resources in place to support the delivery of the plan and ensure the success of the Association.

This has taken place while we are also in the process of recruiting two replacement Regional Administrators and also continuing with the day-to-day business. I'd like to thank the staff for their excellent teamwork in managing the workload during this time.

Going forward the Association has to ensure it harnesses the necessary resources to provide you with the best

support especially in the area of Learning and Development, which lies at the very heart of BIGGA's mission in serving its members.

The methods of communicating with members are becoming more diverse and modern social media and its role is increasing. We have to ensure that the Association is capable of delivering on all these fronts and we will be increasing support in these particular areas.

In order to do this we also need to ensure that the Association operates a sustainable business model, able to fully understand and operate successfully from a commercial perspective.

The consultation will ensure we best match existing skills, knowledge and experience and identify what skills or roles we need to develop within our staff.

This is a very important stage in this process, ensuring everyone understands what their roles are, how important a part they play and focussing in on the main objectives which will ensure the Association understands and meets the needs of you, its members. We will update you more fully on this as the situation progresses.

Remember if you have any questions or suggestions please feel free to contact me.

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