

Ransomes Jacobsen's three-hole golf course, located at their European headquarters on the outskirts of Ipswich, has been re-certified by the Golf Environment Organization (GEO).

With this latest accolade, the RJ National becomes the first golf course in the UK to be awarded GEO Certified™ status for excellence in environmental performance for a second time.

Following his recent assessment visit, Keith Duff, an independent verifier accredited by GEO said:

"The creation of this small golf course, built and managed to good sustainability standards, has hugely improved the environmental quality of the area. What was once covered in cement and scrub, as part of an industrial park, is now an ecological asset.

"Good areas of semi-natural habitat have been created and are developing well, and there are plans for further biodiversity initiatives.

"Record keeping is exemplary, regulatory compliance is unblemished, and there are very high quality innovative communications, including newsletters and video blogs, to show others how the work is being done and what the benefits are.

"The quality of the playing surfaces is also very high, demonstrating well how playing quality and sustainable management can go hand in hand. I have no hesitation in



RJ NATIONAL THREE-HOLE COURSE BREAKS NEW GROUND

recommending that this course should be re-certified."

The unique three-hole golf course was the brainchild of David Withers, then managing director at Ransomes Jacobsen and now president of parent company, Jacobsen.

"With the support of some of our industry partners, our parent company Textron, and a tremendous team effort by everyone at Ipswich - spearheaded by Matt Le Brun, our former greenkeeper, the RJ National has been a great success on many levels," he said. "The course is a great asset for testing machinery, showcasing the products we manufacture and is a

facility to demonstrate our environmental leadership to distributors and customers. Hopefully our example serves as an inspiration - showing that creating and maintaining a sustainable golf course can be good for golf and good for business."

GEO's Chief executive Jonathan Smith concluded by saying:

"We are delighted that the RJ National has been re-certified, representing as it does, sustainability throughout their golf environment through a continued commitment to protect and enhance nature, while using resources efficiently and carefully.

"The reduction of waste and other pollutants benefits the surrounding community. Re-certification is a vital point of credibility for all ecolabelling, affirming the important 'continued improvement' principle that makes sustainability a mindset and a journey, rather than a static level to achieve. We are delighted to note all the new activities undertaken in the last three years.

"This also demonstrates that GEO Certified™ can celebrate the achievements of all types of courses, from RJ National's innovative short course to high-profile, internationally recognised facilities."

GREENKEEPER INTERNATIONAL SURVEY

Thanks to everyone who took the time to take the Greenkeeper International survey which was emailed to members. It's vital that the magazine continues to evolve and improve to be another real benefit of BIGGA membership, and the survey has thrown up a range of suggestions, ideas and opinions.

We're still going through your feedback and you will start to notice some changes resulting from this in future editions. There was also some particularly useful constructive criticism and observations which we've taken on board.

To take the survey, follow the link from our news pages or visit the education and training forum on the bulletin boards.

It will only take five minutes of your time, and we'll publish some of the results in next month's issue.

