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# Greenkeeper

International

## Thank you, Walter

**Walter Woods BEM**

**1935 - 2019**

BIGGA mourns the passing of its inaugural chairman



**IN THIS ISSUE:**

Inspiring future generations at the Solheim Cup | BMW PGA Wentworth  
Remembering Jimmy Neilson | Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards



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# Welcome



Jimmy Neilson and Walter Woods BEM

In October it is usually my job to point our readers to the future, as we launch BTME and Continue to Learn, but the sad loss of two giants of our industry means this page is appropriately reflective.

On taking up my role more than eight years ago I was fascinated to hear how the association came into being. Greenkeeping associations in the UK had been around for 100 years, but BIGGA was at that point only approaching it's first quarter-century.

I quickly learned how in the 1980s the leading greenkeepers of the day worked hard to bring together three separate organisations under one roof — in those early days that roof belonged to the STRI in Bingley.

Our younger members may not be aware that our current headquarters, BIGGA House, was funded by a members' 'buy a brick' campaign in order to raise the finance to create the excellent office facilities that our team of staff and I are privileged to work from.

It was strong-minded and committed greenkeepers who created and drove this association forwards and I'm proud to say that remains the



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

“For decades they put the needs of their industry ahead of their own

case to this day.

It was heart-breaking, therefore, to hear of the passing of life member Jimmy Neilson and our inaugural chairman, the legendary Walter Woods BEM. Our thoughts are with their extraordinary wives, Val and Caroline, and all their families and friends.

For decades they put the needs of their industry and peers ahead of their own; they were dedicated to improving the lives of greenkeepers and are an inspiration to us all.

One of their greatest

achievements was the instigation of BTME, our annual exhibition, conference and networking event in Harrogate. Included with this magazine is the brochure for the Continue to Learn at BTME programme. It's our most comprehensive and ambitious yet and I'm hugely proud of what our team has put together. It won't be the same without so many of our founding fathers, but I know it will provide us with some fantastic opportunities to toast their memory and reflect on what their efforts created.

Having mentioned the role STRI played in providing BIGGA with office space in those early days, it is poignant that we have unveiled an exciting new project with our friends at Bingley. The Golf Research Enterprise sees STRI committing significant resources to pursue research driven by the needs of greenkeepers. It places you, the greenkeeper, at the heart of the project; you can shape the agenda and hopefully play a part by hosting trials or user tests.

I urge you to embrace this opportunity to drive greenkeeping further forward.

# WHAT'S INSIDE...

## Editor's Notes



Greenkeeper International editor, Karl Hansell

September certainly came and went in a flash, as months that have plenty going on tend to do.

Whether it was the finals of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year, the Solheim Cup, the BMW PGA Championship, the Alfred Dunhill Links or the BIGGA National Championship, the greenkeeping season finished with a flourish. I'm pleased to say that we're able to bring you some of those incredible stories within this edition.

But it wasn't all good news and in among the achievements of BIGGA members all over the country, you'll be aware that we suffered some losses this month. I'm sad to admit that my path never crossed with Walter Woods or Jimmy Neilson during my time at BIGGA. But in the last few weeks I've spoken to many of their dear friends who have been emotionally affected by their loss and so I've left it to those to comment upon the tremendous impact they had upon the greenkeeping profession.

As the current steward of their magazine, my only hope is that the Greenkeeper International team does them proud on a monthly basis.

I hope they've enjoyed reading the magazine over the few years that I've been here and we'll continue to do our best to maintain the impeccably high standards that they set.

So on to this month's magazine, where I'm delighted that we're able to tell the story of the two talented members who were victorious at the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards. I'm always fascinated to hear about the journeys our members have undertaken to bring them to the greenkeeping industry and I think you'll find Jason and Tom's stories equally fascinating.

There's a host of other great features inside this month's magazine and I hope you enjoy the read. Don't forget to get in touch with any feedback you have.



Toro Student and Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year winners and runners-up. Left to right: James Dawson, Jason Norwood, Tom Bromfield and Josh Marshall

## With thanks to our contributors

Each month Greenkeeper International is put together with the help of our industry contributors. This month we have features from:



### James Bledge

James is the course manager at Royal Cinque Ports on the Kent coast and a former FTMI graduate and mentor



### Peter Moore

Raised on the Isle of Man, Peter's career has taken him across the globe, before taking up a senior role at Wentworth



### Tracey Maddison

BIGGA's head of membership services spent a week at Gleneagles as part of the Solheim Cup team



### Chris Mullett

The deputy head greenkeeper on the Brabazon, Chris talked us through water maintenance at The Belfry

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**Change someone's career forever...**  
Nominations for the BIGGA Awards are open!

Don't forget you can download the regular and dyslexia-friendly digital versions of Greenkeeper International from the resources section of the BIGGA website.



## TALKING POINTS

# Straight from the course's mouth

Putting together an action plan to enhance member communications and ensure everyone at the club is well informed

James Bledge, Royal Cinque Ports



Do you have a topic that you'd like to discuss? Submit your article to [commsawards@bigga.co.uk](mailto:commsawards@bigga.co.uk) to be in with a chance of winning a week in Florida!

**Over recent years the do's and don'ts of social media in the turf industry have been discussed at length.**

On the whole I'm sure the majority of us agree that social media helps us to communicate and share ideas with other like-minded greenkeepers. However, there is an area of communication that is just as important — communication to the members of our golf clubs and visitors!

Many golf club members see their course as more than a place to play golf and socialise.

They are proud of their piece of land. Many are avid gardeners and have a nice lawn at home and because of this they take interest in the turf or any project work that may be taking place at the golf course during the season or in winter. Some members live far away and only visit every so often, so the chance to see what's been happening on the golf course gives them a sense of enjoyment of ownership.

Is it our duty to keep them informed? Or is this the job of the general manager or secretary?

Have we got time to do this? And where do we even start?

This feature will cover some of the various forms of communication that may improve the relationships between greenkeepers and members.

### WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

Picture the scene: it's a cold Sunday afternoon in February in the bar at the club. Mr Smith is having post round drinks with Mr Jones and is perplexed at his putting

display after adding yet another 0.1 to his handicap.

"The greens were bumpy today, I have no idea why they get the greens half decent then dig them up. I heard they did it because they have a disease that is spiralling out of control!" he proclaims.

Mr Smith is referring to a 13mm solid tine that the greens received the previous Monday as part of a preventative cultural programme that enhances turf health and discourages disease. The discontentment is spread around any poor suspects who join Mr Smith's table.

This spreads like wildfire



A frosty morning at Royal Cinque Ports GC

### March 22nd 2019 – Pot Seeding Weaker Greens

There are a few greens that have a considerable amount more rogue grasses in them than others, in order to infiltrate and dilute these areas the Greenstaff pot seeded some fescue in to greens 6 and 18.



9mm tines were sawn off in order to create a shallow plant pot on the green where fescue would be dropped in. Usually a Vredo disk seeder would be used however with Summer approaching it is not the best idea to put slits in to the green due to drying out and the possibility ball roll would be sacrificed.

around the bar and within the hour the course manager is public enemy number one, until Mr Brown steps in. Mr Brown is computer savvy and has subscribed to the greenkeeper's blog and receives notifications. On Monday night he sat beside the fire with his tablet and watched an incredibly interesting video made by the course manager that showed the operation and detailed the reasons for doing so. The negativity see-saw soon started to change as Mr Brown was compelled to support the course manager and the reasons for carrying out such maintenance.

### CLUB BLOG

We want to spread facts and stop Chinese whispers and I have found that a course manager's blog is a good example of doing so.

#### Helpful tips to keeping a successful blog:

**Make sure grammar and spelling is correct.** Readers will notice and lose interest and respect if this is poor.

**Try and post fairly regularly.** This doesn't mean you should post every time you set up the course for a ladies medal, but keep it for interesting jobs and projects and try not to repeat yourself too much.

**A picture paints a thousand words** so make sure your pictures are top quality and do the course justice.

**Refrain from posting anything negative,** much like the number one social media rule. Remember, the entire internet can see your post and it is a representation of yourself.

your team and your club. If you are posting pictures of disease, that's fine, but remember to post the 'after' photos, along with an in depth explanation of how you cured it. With less fungicides available, educating members has never been more important.

**Welcome questions and comments** from members and evoke discussion that will further help eliminate whispers.

If you're confident in doing so, include well-edited videos (vlogs) that are far more interesting than words and pictures. They are a lot more personable and let the members get to know their greenstaff better as they can put a name to a face (and even a voice) for those brave enough to step in front of the camera.

### COURSE WALKS

As previously stated, many golfers love their gardens, so what better way to communicate than to do so out on the course? Again, much like the spread of positivity through the bar thanks to good old Mr Brown and the same can happen when members see what the course manager is trying to achieve first hand.

#### Helpful tips on hosting a successful course walk:

**Plan a route** and areas (stations) you wish to show members. Make sure you have

all the facts. If you are showing them a newly constructed green for example, make sure you know how many tons of each material was used, the grasses used, how much everything cost and the process the staff went through. Don't be caught out, you are the expert and you don't ever want them to think otherwise by being unprepared.

**Elevate yourself.** When addressing a crowd, make sure everyone can see you and you have a good physical presence. Make yourself heard, speak loudly and clearly address each individual.

**Give out handouts** if required. For example, if you have new facilities you may want to show architects' drawings or photos of the old facilities. This is often a good addition and it may also be good bedtime reading for those who take an exceptional interest.

**Make sure everyone sticks together.** Brief everyone at the start of the walk and wait until they all arrive at the next place of interest before starting to talk. Don't be afraid to hurry people along, even if it is the captain!

**Tours of the maintenance facilities** are a fantastic idea, no matter if you have an all singing, all dancing facility or an old rickety shed. It is great to let the members see what you work out of and where their money goes. 90% of »



Undertaking a course walk

members have no clue whatsoever about the technology that goes in to keeping our courses pristine and the expense that comes with the modern technology that helps keep up with the Jones's. Irrigation software is particularly interesting and with irrigation systems on some courses being the most expensive asset, it is good to show this to the membership. It is often overlooked, with the majority of the system being hidden underground.

### CLUBHOUSE PRESENTATIONS

For many members, the safety and comfort of the bar can be a more favourable option for an alternative to a course walk. Members evenings are common events at golf courses across the country. More often than not they are instigated by the committee or board. However, there is no reason why the course manager or head greenkeeper can't get the ball rolling.

#### Helpful tips on hosting a successful members' evening:

**Plan the evening** round a busy time at the club, such as a large members' tournament or a public holiday when members from further afield may be visiting.

**Entice members along** by offering food. A few trays of lasagne are fairly inexpensive to put together and food is always the way to a member's heart! This also helps to relax



A tanker off the coast of Royal Cinque Ports

Most importantly it will show everyone how much you love your job, your industry and your club

everyone and makes for a nicer atmosphere. You could even go as far as to have a quiz afterwards and make a proper evening of it. Hang about and answer questions, build a relationship with the membership and hopefully they are respectful enough to ask fair questions.

**Prepare a Powerpoint presentation.** A well put-together presentation can be extremely engaging and

even though it can be nerve wracking it will help your personal progression and enable you to use presentation skills elsewhere. Addressing your staff should become easier after mastering this skill. Make sure the screen is large and clear enough, especially for elderly members and if you use audio visual tools, always make sure it is working and can be heard.

**Provide facts and figures.** Many of your committee or board may work in business or finance and may relate to graphs, pie charts or spreadsheets. Show off your skills as a modern turf manager and show them how complex and interesting turf management can be!

**Try to be prepared for awkward questions,** but remember no one knows everything and it's quite acceptable to say you are not sure of the answer and will reply at a later date. The answer to this could easily be part of a review of the evening in the form of a blog entry.

It's sometimes not always smiles and handshakes, pleasantries and compliments. There will be members who will always be completely unreasonable (in your mind), no matter how well you carry out all of the above.

The important thing to

remember is that in communicating with members, you are doing the right thing.

By doing so I guarantee your relationship with your members will be enriched. You will be seen as a more competent turf manager who knows their course and their trade and most importantly it will show everyone how much you love your job, your industry and your club. Your members are your most important customers.

Must hurry along, I have a tee time with Mr Smith, Mr Jones and Mr Brown!



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# ACROSS THE BOARD

Scott Reeves | Chairman | Course Manager | Leyland

As greenkeepers we focus the vast majority of our time on the landscape; creating and nurturing our courses.

Sometimes we forget that golf is really about people — those of us that maintain the course and those we do it for.

Personally, the highlights of my career have been centred on the people I have met, my colleagues and friends. As such, when we lose some of the characters and leading figures of our industry, it can stop us in our tracks. I'm sure many of you knew Jimmy Nielson from the Open Support Team. For a long time he and Cecil George were stalwart figures. He was a source of anecdotes and wisdom, gleaned from an era when nearly everything was done with your own two hands. He will be missed by all who knew him and as a presence at BTME.

Although Walter Woods BEM had been ill for some time, it was still a terrible shock when Jim Croxton informed me of his passing. There are certain figures in life who you imagine will be around forever. They are statesmen of our association who brought BIGGA into existence through sheer determination and force of will.

Obviously, more will be said about his life and work than I can fit into this short column, but his death has focussed my mind to continue to do my utmost for our members in order to honour his memory.

Being your chairman is a great responsibility, especially given those who have come before, and reflecting on the life of our inaugural chairman in the days since his passing has reinforced that sense of duty.

The last few months have been extremely challenging at work, with a dry spring and early summer giving way to torrential rain in the North West. It seems hard to tally that up with the fact that many of our members in the south are struggling with drought!

From what we have heard, it does feel



I was proud to be part of the judging at the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards last month.

like many of you are in a better position than last year as, although it has been dry, temperatures have not been quite as extreme. Lessons have also been learned and a lot of hard work and extra preparation has gone into being ready for extreme conditions at your courses.

Naturally, we are all obsessed with the weather, but it does feel like the only thing predictable these days is unpredictability!

The Committee for Golf Club Salaries met in early September and I am confident that the work of this body has more relevance in today's economic climate than ever. Significant work has been carried out to provide tools for greenkeepers and golf club officials to reliably assess pay structures.

A salary calculator will soon be available for you to use on the CGCS website, which will be much more relevant than the previous recommendations.

More details will be made available in the November edition of Greenkeeper International, in addition to the

committee's recommendations for 2019.

I was honoured to be part of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year awards, held at BIGGA House early in September.

As always, the standard was extremely high, making it difficult for the judges to choose a winner. The industry is in good hands if those entrants are representative of our future and I'm delighted that BIGGA continues to be a must-join association for the brightest and most ambitious students and apprentices just embarking on their careers.

There are so many ways to get benefit from your BIGGA membership, but why not think about what you can give back to your colleagues within the industry?

There is a saying: "No one is as smart as everyone." Imagine what we can achieve together and think of what you can give.

Whether it's taking part in Section or Region events or getting involved with the various initiatives hosted by BIGGA and its partners throughout the year, I can't think of a better way to repay our debt to Jimmy, Walter and their peers.

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# YOUNG GREENKEEPER'S COMMITTEE

Lyle Davidson | Deputy Head Greenkeeper | The Carrick on Loch Lomond



Having the Solheim Cup at Gleneagles not only highlighted the stunning assets of golf in Scotland, but it was also a great opportunity to build on the legacy of a successful 2014 Ryder Cup.

It was an event that underlined how Scotland provides an excellent stage for major golf events. It also aimed to inspire a new generation of children to try the game that was invented in their home country at a time when we need more people taking up the sport.

Throughout the week the organisers ensured this was the most family-orientated and inclusive Solheim Cup ever staged, with a tented village that was all about engagement.

After seeing the Ryder Cup up close, I knew this was the type of event I wanted to be a part of at some point in my career. These intercontinental team events are so different to your normal European Tour event and with Gleneagles only an hour's drive away, it couldn't be missed.

The Solheim Cup was certainly a different experience for the 50 volunteers who supported the staff at Gleneagles as it hosted two events on different courses throughout the week. The PING Junior Solheim Cup on Gleneagles' King's Course took place on 10 and 11 September, before the Solheim Cup unfolded on the PGA Centenary Course from Friday 13th through to the Sunday. The Queen's course also remained

open throughout and the setup of all three golf courses meant flexibility from all involved was essential. Many of the volunteers were involved in the setup across all three golf courses.

Looking back a few days later and I am extremely grateful to have been involved in such an event. It is something I couldn't recommend highly enough and really showed me the benefits of volunteering.

The days started early at 4.45am, but they were a great chance to learn from the planning that Craig Haldane and his team had put in place. Craig spoke to us all about the course conditions and how the setup for the day's plans were being adjusted due to the weather in the lead up to the tournament. He ensured the course presentation would not be affected by utilising the numbers to carry out tasks, such as hand cutting fairways to reduce tyre marks when required.

Each day after our morning briefing we would split into our section groups and were given more specific instructions on the individual requirements of the task. Each of the courses were prepared differently to best display their individual characteristics.

The courses would be set up prior to 9am and there would then be some down time until 2pm, with some of us required to match rake, squeegee or complete other small jobs while golf was in play. We would then return to the course

for afternoon setup between 3 to 4pm, depending on speed of play.

The opportunity to match rake and see the golf from inside the ropes was something that I never really felt would be of huge interest to me, considering I'm not really a golfer. But I wanted to fully embrace every part of the Solheim Cup and it ended up being one of my favourite memories, having watched some of the tournament's defining moments and seeing the crowds and jubilation when Europe were able to secure the win on the final day. It certainly made for an exciting end to the week.

One of the great things about the event is the people you meet along the way, with seven or eight countries represented within the group. There were people of different experiences and backgrounds, all brought together to share the week.

Gleneagles provided a great facility for everyone to mingle during their down time with so much to do, from table tennis and cards to PS4s. But it's the people and moments of laughter that make the volunteering worthwhile.

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# LOOKING AHEAD

## BIGGA Golf Management Trophy finals

Hosted by BIGGA Golf Partner Rigby Taylor, qualifying events for the BIGGA Golf Management Trophy final have been taking place throughout the summer.

The Golf Management Trophy is an opportunity to build bonds with other members of your club's management structure as you join forces to play against teams from other golf clubs around the country.

The final will be held this month at Frilford Heath in Oxfordshire on 28 October.

Teams that have booked their place in the finals of the event include Rowlands

Castle, the Army Golf Club, Wakefield, Huyton & Prescott, Long Ashton, Gloucester, Filton and Perranporth. The Northern Region will be represented by teams from Wakefield and Huyton & Prescott, while Scotland will be represented by a team from St Michaels.

Last year's winner was the team from Rothley Park in the Central England Region.

Course Manager Nigel Colley said: "The Golf Management Trophy really helps as we try to break down the barrier where you are seen as just greenstaff and not important. The club was supportive of us and was

delighted when we won." In addition to the Golf Management Trophy and prize hampers, the winners will receive a 30-hour education bundle for Continue to Learn at BTME

2020 and eight nights' accommodation in Harrogate.

To see how the teams get on, follow BIGGA on Twitter or check out December's Greenkeeper International.



The team from Rowlands Castle has booked their place in the final

### Don't miss out

Look online to see a full list of the events that are happening near you



## Welcome new members

### Scotland & Northern Ireland

Brian Boyle, CAFRE, A; David Drummond, CAFRE, A; Fergal Greenan, CAFRE, A; Johnston Shaw, CAFRE, A; Stuart Nixon, CAFRE, A; Dane Taylor, Spey Valley, DHGK; John Brownlie, Spey Valley, GK; Mason Spence, Portlethen, GK; Matteo Bouhours, SRUC (Elmwood), S; Shawn McBride, Gleneagles, AGK.

### Northern

Rob Wiles, Cottingham Parks, CM; Michael Wade, Temple Newsam, DHGK; Anthony Richmond, Ryburn, GK; Chris Hague, Lindrick, GK; Jethro Wilson, Shipley, GK; John Knowles, Grange Park (St Helens), GK; Brett Hannah, Walmerley, HGK; Edward Eather, Brampton (Talkin Tarn), AGK; Jack Drury, Elsham, AGK; Joe Davies, Silkstone, AGK; Andrew Bate, Hesket, AGK; Keith Lownds, Brancepeth Castle, AGK; Roger Barrett, Aldwark Manor, AGK.

### Central England

Andrew Baker, Worcester, A; Wayne Price, The Gutter Guys, A; Bradley Evans, Hawkstone Park, App; Luke George, Hawkstone Park, App; Robbie Varnam, Scraftoft, App; Mathew Ball, Wokefield Park, DHGK; Ross Griffiths, Shrewsbury, DHGK; Tom Hopewell, Kedleston Park, FA; George Watton, Ludlow, GK; Michael Humphrey, Kedleston Park, GK; William Dobson, Longcliffe, GK.

### South East

Brittany Lennon, Beauport Park, App; Conor Garvey, Stoke-by-Nayland, App; Joe Healy, Goodwood, App; Josh Moore, Hankley Common, App; Joshua Whitmore, Beaconsfield, App; Justin Burke, The Grove, App; Lewis Reed, Nizels, App; Matthew Hobbs, Girton, App; Tobias Butler-Aggett, Sittingbourne & Milton Regis, App; Tyler Rook, Seaford Head, DHGK; Danny Geard, Royal Ashdown Forest, GK; David Brooks, Whitewebbs Park, GK; Edoardo Fauro, Walton Heath, GK; George Wyatt, Finchley, GK; Jack Lawrence, Clacton-on-Sea, GK; John Hart, Easthampstead Park, GK; Kevin Thorpe, Stowmarket, GK; Neil Erskine, Queenwood, GK; Connor Bradford, Hever Castle, AGK; Tyler Brittain, The Warren, AGK; Lee Pearman, Whitewebbs, AGK; Nathan Klyen, Moor Park, AGK.

### South West & South Wales

Andrew Johnson, Hunt Forest, A; George Kerr-Jones, Wincanton, App; Harrison Knight, Gloucester, App; Jamie Merrick, Mendip Spring, App; Leon Easeman, Wincanton, App; Max Tilley, Goodwood, App; Bradley Threse, Remedy Oak, GK; Martin Massey, Minchinhampton, AGK.

### International

Gaetan Lits, Golf D'Hulencourt.

## Get involved with a BIGGA event near you

### National

- 1 BIGGA Golf Management Trophy Final with Rigby Taylor**  
Date: 28 October  
Location: Frilford Heath, Oxfordshire

### Scotland and Northern Ireland

- 1 Learning and Development Day - Young Greenkeepers**  
Date: 30 October  
Location: Auchterarder GC
- 2 Learning and Development Day - Central Scotland**  
Date: 5 November  
Location: Drumoig H&GC
- 3 Learning and Development Day - West of Scotland**  
Date: 12 November  
Location: Haggs Castle GC
- 4 Learning and Development Day - South West of Scotland**  
Date: 13 November  
Location: CAFRE Greenmount Campus

### Northern

- 1 North East Autumn Tournament**  
Date: 9 October  
Location: Boldon GC
- 2 Sheffield Section Golf Day**  
Date: 17 October  
Location: Sherwood Forest GC
- 3 Cleveland Section Golf Day**  
Date: 22 October  
Location: Wynyard GC
- 4 Yorkshire Education Day**  
Date: 23 October  
Location: Oulton Hall Golf Resort

### Central England

- 1 East Midlands Autumn Golf Day**  
Date: 24 October  
Location: Market Harborough GC
- 2 Mid Anglia Autumn Golf & AGM**  
Date: 4 November  
Location: Berkhamsted GC
- 3 BIGGA Central England Region Conference**  
Date: 6 November  
Location: King's Norton GC

### 4 BIGGA East of England Autumn Seminar

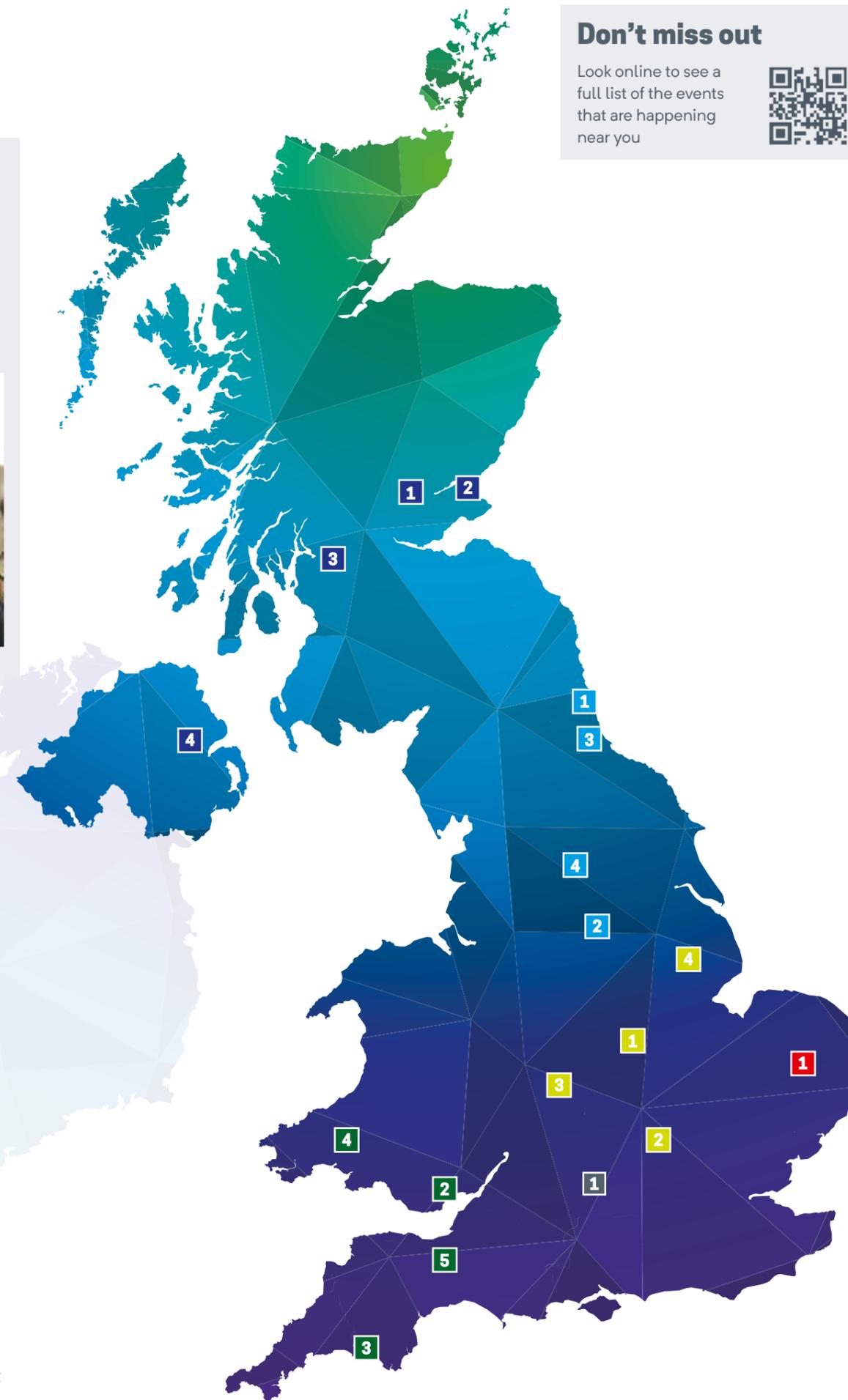
Date: 13 November  
Location: Woodhall Spa GC

### South East

- 1 East Anglia Golf Day**  
Date: 16 October  
Location: Diss GC

### South West & South Wales

- 1 BIGGA Education Seminar**  
Date: 9 October  
Location: St Clements GC, Jersey
- 2 South Wales Golf Day**  
Date: 10 October  
Location: St Mellons GC
- 3 Devon/Cornwall Section AGM**  
Date: 16 October  
Location: Plymouth Argyle FC
- 4 South Wales Education Seminar**  
Date: 23 October  
Location: Carmarthen GC
- 5 SW&SW Regional Conference**  
Date: 13 November  
Location: Somerset County Cricket Ground, Taunton



A	Affiliate Member	FA	First Assistant
AGK	Assistant Greenkeeper	GK	Greenkeeper
AHG	Assistant Head Groundsperson	G	Groundsperson
APP	Apprentice	HGK	Head Greenkeeper
CA	College Assessor	HG	Head Groundsperson
CM	Course Manager	I	International Member
DCM	Deputy Course Manager	L	Life Member
DHGK	Deputy Head Greenkeeper	M	Mechanic
ED	Partner & Education Supporters	S	Student Member
		R	Retired Member



Above: The BIGGA Open Support Team from 2019 at work

# JOIN THE BIGGA OPEN SUPPORT TEAM 2020

In 2019 almost half of the 52 BIGGA members who joined the support team were doing so for the very first time and we're always on the lookout for new members to take advantage of this fantastic opportunity.

As always, team members will get an inside the ropes look at the world's top golfers and have the opportunity to join the greenkeeping team behind the hosting of the championship, while building an incredible network of contacts who may help push

your career to the next level.

Royal St George's became the first course outside Scotland to host golf's oldest championship in 1894 and 2020 will be the 15th time The Open has been contested on the Kent links. Previous winners at Royal St George's include Harry Vardon, Walter Hagen, Henry Cotton, Bobby Locke, Sandy Lyle and Greg Norman.

The most recent staging of the championship at Royal St George's was in 2011, when Darren Clarke became

Champion Golfer of the Year.

"The Open is what it is all about for me as a golfer and it is the championship I always dreamt of winning when I first took up the game as a kid," said Darren. "I have so many wonderful memories from that week at Sandwich and I will be thrilled to go back there for The Open in 2020."

With the R&A once again requesting the assistance of BIGGA members in the staging of the championship, we can't wait to return to Royal St George's either.

BIGGA support team members will assist with maintaining bunker presentation throughout the duration of the tournament

and may also be called upon at short notice to help with early morning preparation work and divoting duties.

Full BIGGA members can apply for a place on the support team by completing the application form that is available on the BIGGA website. Entries close on 24 January 2019.

## After the success of 2019, The Open returns to familiar fairways in 2020.

Royal St George's in Kent will be staging the 149th Open Championship and once again BIGGA members are invited to apply for a place on the BIGGA Volunteer Support Team.



Royal St George's Head Greenkeeper Paul Larsen



Royal St George's 6th hole



**Tracey Maddison**  
Head of Membership Services  
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Membership Administrator  
gil@bigga.co.uk

To contact the Membership Team call 01347 833 800 and select (option 1)

**Full Members Personal Accident Helpline**  
0113 393 6808

**Greenkeepers Legal Assistance**  
0808 181 9194

**Lifestyle Counselling Helpline**  
0333 000 2082

**Human Resources (HR) Helpline**  
0330 332 2636  
BIGGAmembers@xactgroup.co.uk



# Continue to Learn 2020

This month BIGGA's Learning and Development team is delighted to launch the education programme for Continue to Learn 2020.

Head of Member Development Sami Strutt and the team have once again compiled an incredible range of learning opportunities for any BIGGA member at every stage of their career.

Each year, BIGGA looks for ways to enhance the programme, with the timetable compiled with the input of greenkeepers who took part in the Members' Choice survey.

The resulting schedule of more than 250 hours of education delivered by more than 90 speakers is the most comprehensive programme in the turf management industry anywhere in the world.

Continue to Learn runs from Sunday 19 January to Wednesday 22 January 2020 and bookings have opened, with places always quick to fill up. Your copy of the Continue to Learn Programme 2020 is included with your Greenkeeper International pack this month, so start planning your education experience for 2020 today and take your career to the next level!

## What's on in 2020?

### BTME Breakfast Club: Cock-ups, Disasters and Calamities

When things unexpectedly go wrong and no amount of planning helps, what happens next? Hosted by Naga Munchetty, this entertaining session is the perfect way to start your BTME day

Wednesday 22 January, 8.15am  
Main Auditorium

### Golf Course Architecture and Management Forum

Showcasing collaborations between architects, course managers and their greenkeeping teams.

Get a behind-the-scenes look at some of the largest projects in golf, including Royal Portrush, Royal Dornoch and the JCB.

Wednesday 22 January  
Main Auditorium

### Young Greenkeepers Conference

Hosted by Jack Hetherington, course manager at Boldon, and Stuart Imeson, Club and Courses Manager at Dunstanburgh Castle, this interactive conference is specifically designed for young greenkeepers at an early stage in their career

Wednesday 22 January 9.45am to 12.50pm  
Main Auditorium

### Deputies' Conference

The step up from a deputy's role to a senior management position can be a daunting one and this conference will give you some of the skills required to make that step, while preparing you to be an effective team leader

9.30am to 1pm, Tuesday 21 January  
Main Auditorium

### Turf Managers' Conference

Hosted by Gareth Jones, managing editor of Sporting Life, this conference is aimed at developing your abilities as a course manager or head greenkeeper, ensuring you continue to develop your own career and the abilities of those you manage.

9am to 5pm, Monday 20 January  
Main Auditorium



Key note speaker: Rebecca Jones

Rebecca Jones will be bringing her unique brand of 'stretchy thinking' to Continue to Learn for the first time in 2020.

Known as 'The Red Shoe Biz Woman', Rebecca seeks to inspire growth in team members through innovation and altering mindsets to enable organisational growth.

"Stretchy thinking is about taking on a different approach to overcoming barriers and achieving success," said Rebecca. "Stretching yourself past barriers, both personal and work-related, to achieve your aims shows stretchy thinking. Stretchy thinking is based on research around mindset and the psychology of success using innovation and creativity thinking tools."

Having struggled at school, Rebecca started her first business aged just 19. Twenty-six years and four businesses later, she now encourages others to step up and achieve.

#### Stretchy thinking is not about:

- / Forcing yourself through difficult and uncomfortable situations
- / Smashing through difficult problems
- / Taking advantage of others to overcome difficulties
- / Walking away because the barrier seems too hard
- / Cheating, lying or bending acceptable behaviour to achieve

#### Stretchy thinking is about:

- / Considering if there is a different, better or more suitable way of achieving your aim
- / Stepping outside your comfort zone to achieve without pushing yourself to breaking point
- / Altering your mindset to one of growth, possibilities and success
- / Working on stretching your brain each and every day

## You can hear from Rebecca here:

**'Implementing stretchy thinking to be the best boss you can be'**

Turf Managers' Conference

**'Should you really be the boss?'**

Deputies' Conference

**'How to develop, present and sell new ideas'**

Half Day Workshop  
9am to 12.30pm, Monday 20 January, Queen's Suite

**'Developing an innovative greenkeeping team'**

Focus On Session  
1.30 to 4.30pm, Tuesday 21 January, Queen's Suite

**Check out your copy of the Continue to Learn 2020 brochure this month and book early to avoid disappointment**



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/greenkeepers trainingcommittee

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# Continuing Professional Development



Congratulations to the following members who achieved CPD Approved status this month:

Peter Newton, Reesink Turfcare UK; Robert Clare, Brough Golf Club; Mattias Kolberg, St Andrews Links Trust; Shaun Humphrey, Park House Hotel and Spa; Gary Tonge, Tain Golf Club; William Simmonds, The Richmond Golf Club; Gregg Hood, St Andrews Links Trust.

## How to CPD

**Are you wondering what CPD is? Would you like to improve your career prospects, but aren't sure where to start?**

BIGGA members have access to a range of educational opportunities and almost every event we host enables you to bank CPD credits. You can claim credits for attending seminars, getting involved with schemes or even by reading Greenkeeper International each month.

To get started with your CPD journey, head to the Members' section of the BIGGA website and select Continuing Professional Development. There you'll find resources, the answers to frequently asked questions and details of how you can get CPD approved.

[www.bigga.org.uk/member-homepage/continuing-professional-development.html](http://www.bigga.org.uk/member-homepage/continuing-professional-development.html)



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Steve Bayliss changes a hole by torchlight

**Read this for:**  
 / Volunteering  
 / Tournament hosting  
 / Parkland maintenance

# Dark delights

How Wentworth's greenkeepers coped with the September shift

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

This year saw the BMW PGA Championship shift from its regular May timing to September. For the greenkeeping team it meant they were faced with a very different set of circumstances and growing conditions, with the same expectation for elite championship course preparation.

Peter Moore is head greenkeeper of the West Course at Wentworth and he spoke to GI about how the shift in dates had impacted course presentation for the European Tour's flagship event »



Usually the BMW PGA is a distant memory by this point in the year. Just how different is hosting the event in September, compared to May?

**Peter:** There's a couple of weather differences. Historically in May we found that spring would either be really cold and dry or it would be warm and wet, which isn't ideal for a tournament. It would always come good in the end, but there's always that little doubt in your mind. This year we've had a full summer to prepare. The

course hasn't had the stress of the tournament in May and so it's come through the summer months a lot healthier and we're in a much stronger position than we ever have been going into an event.

The dreaded worm casts on fairways have caused us a few problems over the last few weeks. It's an additional part of the labour that we've put in, to switch the fairways before we mow them so we're getting the best, most efficient cut and we're not ruining the mower reels every time we go out.

**Earthworm casting isn't a glamorous subject but it's an important one because there isn't much you can do to prevent them at the moment, other than clear them away, is there?**

**Peter:** We're just using switches to clear them off in the morning. Long-term we've

started a programme of topdressing on fairways and we're looking into products to try and increase the acidity of the soil to try and deter them. If we're going to have a September tournament each year, we can't just accept they're there, so we're looking at other options to try and deter them from coming to »

## THE VOLUNTEERS: CRAIG WOODMAN

Craig Woodman was runner-up at the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards in 2018. The 21-year-old is a greenkeeper at Bramshaw near Southampton and was volunteering at Wentworth for the third time.

"We feel like proper full-time members of the staff because we haven't been excluded from anything," said Craig. "This is my third time here and I wouldn't change it for the world. And now it's dark on a morning, there's something special about seeing all the greenstaff out and about with their lights on, it makes for a pretty special atmosphere."

"It's a different challenge in the dark. It's harder in the sense that the little attention-to-detail things are harder to spot. You can put lots of floodlights on, but it's still difficult to see everything at 4.30 in the morning."

"The days are long and we've had some late nights, even finishing at 9.30pm, but there was not a single frown. Everyone was happy, joking and laughing and it is that atmosphere and that camaraderie and banter that you can't quite put your finger on that makes it pretty special."



# Meet Peter Moore, head greenkeeper and motorbiking champion

From the Isle of Man TT to the BMW PGA, meet the head greenkeeper in charge of Wentworth's West Course

What do the Manx word for 'turnip', a lucky number 45 and the BMW PGA Championship have in common?

The answer is Peter Moore, head greenkeeper on Wentworth's famous West Course and ahead of the event we sat down with Peter to find out a little more about him.

**Yours may be a name that people haven't heard before. Tell us a little about yourself and your history.**

**Peter:** I've been greenkeeping since 2003, where I started off at a small course in the Isle of Man, where I grew up. From there I went out on the Ohio State Program to Washington DC at Robert Trent Jones Golf Club. I spent two summers there and then in the winter of 2007, I moved to Tiberon down in Florida. From there it was back to the UK and I spent a summer in Loch Lomond in 2009. Since 2010 I've been here at Wentworth.

I primarily look after the West Course. There are separate greenkeepers for the East and Edinburgh and on a day-to-day basis we report to Dan Clarke, who's the courses manager, and then Kenny

Mackay is the director of golf and greenkeeping.

**You've worked at a large variety of courses, from the tropics in Florida to one of the wettest places in the UK at Loch Lomond. It's a wide range of experience.**

**Peter:** I've been pretty lucky to see some of the things I've seen. I've worked with warm and cool season grasses, primarily at high end properties, so it's good to have a comparison between the likes of Loch Lomond and Wentworth. It's interesting to see how different people run tournaments and now, being in the position I'm in, I'm able to call on those experiences and implement them here.

**It's obviously a high-pressure job. What do you do to unwind?**

**Peter:** I race motorbikes. I've done the Isle of Man TT three times and raced all over the UK and in Belgium. I've won a few races and finished top 10 in the Manx Grand Prix.

**There's a big contrast between the noise and excitement of motorbike racing and golf greenkeeping. Is one a release from the other, and which way around is it?**

**Peter:** Funnily enough, when you're racing through villages on the Isle of Man at 150mph, you don't generally think about whether you've got fusarium on your 9th green!

Everyone within this industry is passionate, you can see that, and I work hard at what I do. But at some point, you need a release and for me that's racing my bike.

I think it's very important that people have something to do outside of work. This week is very intense, it's very focused, but I'm looking forward to going out on my bike when it's all done. That's what keeps you focused at work because you can unwind and come back fresher.

**How can we spot you out on the racetrack?**

**Peter:** I ride with number 45. The first bike I bought had 45 on it and I had loads of success in my first year so I thought I'd keep that number.

**Motorbike racers always have cool nicknames, what's yours?**

**Peter:** It's a family nickname from the Isle of Man, the family nickname is 'Moot'. In Manx slang, a moot is a word for a turnip. As the story goes, my dad and my uncle were called Moot, because they had heads shaped like turnips. So, my race team is called Moot 45.



Peter Moore at work and play

A fleet of mowers prepares the 12th fairway



Hand mowing the putting green



Winner Danny Willett celebrates alongside members of the greenkeeping team

the surface this time of the year. At the moment we're fortunate that it's very dry and they're not really bad.

**Do you communicate with the players to explain why they may notice things like that on the course?**

**Peter:** We speak to the European Tour and they pass the message on. If they need to create a local rule or speak to the players about it then they will.

**With fewer daylight hours, how are your team adjusting to working in the dark to get the course ready?**

**Peter:** Daylight hours have been the biggest logistical

challenge for us. During the May tournament it's daylight until 9.30pm, whereas in September we're working under floodlights for the first four holes every morning and the past two evenings we've been here until 9.30pm fly-mowing bunkers and spraying greens. Those last two hours have been under floodlights. The pro-am on Wednesday was a shotgun start at 8am, so we were on the course from 4am and for the first 10 holes we were working under floodlights.

On Monday our sprayer technician was out spraying greens under the floodlights and that's something he's never done before, with the pressure of knowing that what he's spraying is going to be

seen by millions of people all over the world.

That's a big thing for the guys to get used to. Working under floodlights is great, but if you haven't got daylight

then you can't really see the detail. So, we mobilise people to go back to double check everything that we've done to make sure we haven't missed anything.

**With 4am starts, what time are the team finishing their morning preparation?**

**Peter:** When we're setting up for the tournament, we don't just want the greens guys to go and get done. We want to hold them back as long as possible so the time from the last green mowed to the last golfer playing it is as small as possible. If the first golf is at 7am, we anticipate their finishing time is at 11am, so we want to be mowing the green at 10.30am. Ideally, we want to be clearing the 18th green just as they get to 17.

If we finish mowing the 18th green at 7am, in May the last golf wouldn't be through until 9pm. That's 14 hours difference between fresh cut and the last golfer going through. We want to minimise that time to give all the golfers the most consistent surface over the day.

The only pinch point on the golf course is 11 and 6, so as long as we're through 11 before they reach 6, we can then hang back until they're through 9 and we can then mow 12, 13, 14 and 15.

We'll then hang back again and then do the final three.

We take our time, go nice and steady, check everything's good and mobilise people as we need to. My role this week is to choreograph people and make sure they go where they need to go. »

**THE VOLUNTEERS: ADAM BALDWIN**

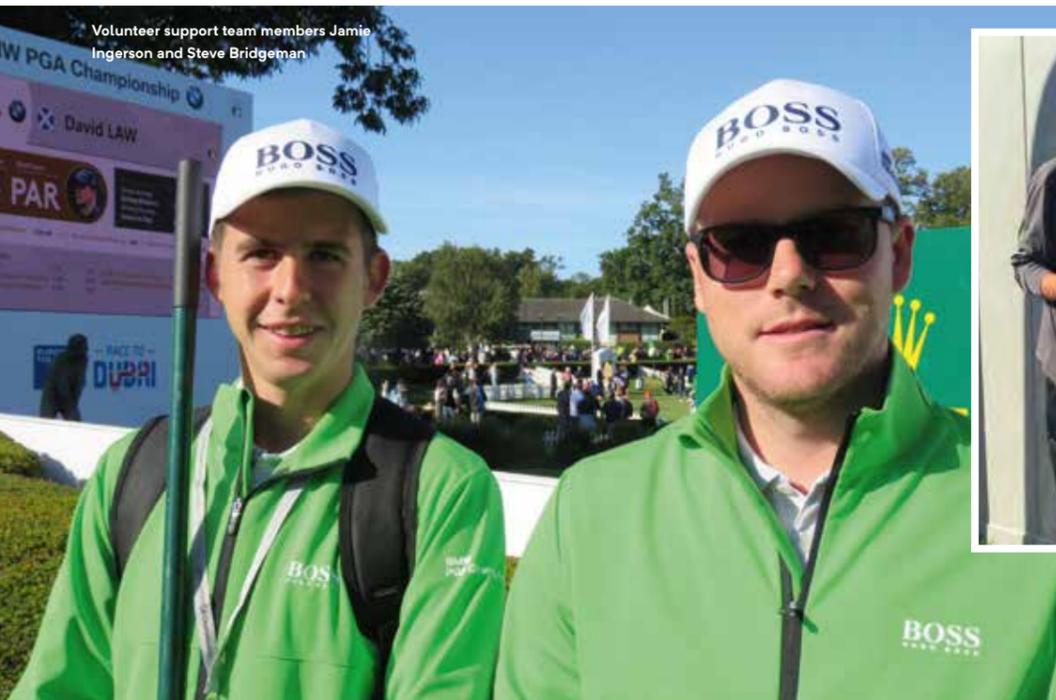
**Adam Baldwin, 25, is a greenkeeper at Lilley Brook in Gloucester. He was hand mowing tees for the duration of the tournament, having hand mowed the greens at the same event last year. He explained what it is that keeps him coming back to Wentworth.**

"It's a great tournament to be a part of," said Adam.

"From when you arrive on Sunday and they put on a BBQ for everyone, it's such a good buzz. It's a very tiring week but you learn so much. Peter talks about what he does on the course, what chemicals he uses, why he does different things, and you take everything you learn back to your home course.

"The more people you meet, if a job comes up then there's more chance that they'll know who you are, which puts you in a good position.

"While we're here, we take a lot of pride in what we're doing because you know it's going to be on the TV and you're representing Wentworth and BIGGA."



Volunteer support team members Jamie Ingerson and Steve Bridgeman



Craig Woodman celebrated his 21st birthday during the tournament

**What happens on a tournament morning to get the 18th green ready for play?**

**Peter:** A good thing is the team will be mowing that green in front of crowds, which is a nice little buzz for them. We'll send a couple of guys to clear off any debris and switch off any worm casts around the periphery. Then the greens mowers will come in, they'll mow a single cut at 3mm, then wait. We'll stimp the green to see what speed it's at. If we then aren't at the number we want to get to, we'll cut again. If we are, we'll

move them on to the next green and tell them to stand by. We'll hole change, paint the cup and then everything's put to bed and the green's ready to play.

We aren't rolling this year in the morning because we're finding there's a little puffiness and moisture in the surface.

We're only rolling in the evening because the greens have dried out through the day.

**What consistency can you achieve across all 18 holes?**

**Peter:** We had all the greens within five inches of

each other and we want a speed of 12 feet, as dictated by the European Tour.

**How have you been using the Sub-Air system under the greens this week?**

We've been using it in vacuum mode through the evenings to try and dry everything down and we're using it in pressure mode through the days, just at two to three hours at a time. That helps with air circulation in the rootzone and means we can purge some of the bad gas out of there to keep the plants as healthy as possible.

If you push fresh air into the rootzone then you push the bad gases out the top. It means we're able to aerate into the bottom of the rootzone without having to push holes in the surface.

**You mentioned spraying, what are you using to combat turf diseases?**

**Peter:** We're on creeping bentgrass greens and we've got fescue and bents in our approaches. Particularly on the greens in a newer rootzone, my biggest fear is take-all patch, so we spray monthly preventative for that.

We rotate the chemistries, mixed with wetting agents and seaweeds, as well as using manganese sulphates and copper products to bring our manganese levels up, to help control take-all. There's a lot of stuff going on in the background with that.

We sprayed fungicide for fusarium control at the start of September, but purely as a preventative.

**What's the greenkeeping team consist of during the event?**

**Peter:** We have 22 guys on the West Course regularly. For the first time we've had guys from the East and the Edinburgh come over and they've integrated into the team full-time. We've then got 24 volunteers, including 20 from BIGGA, plus we've got a casual staff who are on hand to help, which takes us up to a total of 60 for set up of the course.

**How do you celebrate at the end of the weekend?**

**Peter:** We have our picture taken with the winner on the 18th green and then the guys will go down the tented village. A lot of the team bring their family, because it's not just about the guys themselves but also the people who have supported them to get to that point.

**THE VOLUNTEERS: JOSH DUNN**

Josh Dunn, 27, is deputy head greenkeeper at Bramcote Waters. With two young children, he said that tournament experience is a fantastic way to gain different experience and make new contacts.

"It's fantastic," said Josh. "I love the buzz of doing tournaments. I don't mind doing early starts and I enjoy the buzz of watching it on TV when you've done your job."

"I do everything to promote my career, but I can't commit to educational courses because I look after the kids. Doing things like this keeps me in the game, that's the way I see it."

"Doing tournament set up is key and meeting new people, as soon as you can put a face to somebody, when you put a CV in somewhere that you want to work, they'll know who you are. I love the banter between the lads across the whole board. It started on Monday and it's not stopped since."

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Team Europe, female greenkeeping division (left to right)  
 Lise Spalding (Administrator, Gleneagles), Amanda Dorans, Bev Blair, Tiffany Mills, Gemma St John, Tracey Maddison (BIGGA), Laura Campbell (Gleneagles), Aurelie Morandin, Kimberley Yeldham and Sophie Bulpitt.

# ‘We’ll hopefully be an inspiration to girls in future’

The Solheim Cup 2019 at Gleneagles

Tracey Maddison, BIGGA

You’ll know that Europe won The Solheim Cup after an incredible finish to the final day singles, which ended with Suzann Pettersen holing the decisive putt on the 18th green to send thousands of fans wild with excitement as Europe captured its first win since 2013.

I can proudly say that I was there at Gleneagles. I was stood on the 17th green and as

the six-foot putt was holed we all went wild; I’ll admit I shed a few tears. I was so excited for them. The team showed true grit and determination and both teams played some amazing golf.

For me, the experience had begun back at The Solheim Cup 2017 at Des Moines in Ohio, USA. The superintendent, Rick Tegtmeier CGCS MG wanted

to involve as many ladies as he could in the event and after finding out I was visiting, he invited me to be a bunker raker for the final fourball match in the first day. What an experience that was! I loved every minute of being involved and just knew I wanted to be a part of it at Gleneagles.

I got to thinking, wouldn’t it be a great stage to showcase

ladies in greenkeeping and a meeting with Craig Haldane, Gleneagles’ golf courses manager, and Scott Fenwick, director of agronomy and estates, brought that idea to life. »

## TEAM EUROPE (FEMALE GREENKEEPERS DIVISION!)

Beverly Blair, greenkeeper, Southwick Park

“I’d like to say thanks to BIGGA and Mr Solheim for this occasion, it’s been awesome. They’ve gone the extra mile and even brought in birthday cakes when it’s been our birthdays. They’ve taught Tiff to hand mow and Kim how to use a sprayer. I’ve gained six new sisters and 40 new brothers who will always have each other’s back and you can’t ask for better than that. It’s an awesome experience.”



Back of first tee stand

## TEAM EUROPE

**Aurelia Morandin,**  
Golf Du Domaine Imperial,  
Switzerland

“There aren’t a lot of women in greenkeeping and it was important for me to show the guys that we can do the same as them, sometimes better than they can! Craig had the confidence to give us jobs all over the course. We weren’t just the girls in the bunkers, we were helping out everywhere. It’s not always easy to be a woman in the greenkeeping industry, but if you only hire one girl, it will change the whole team.”



Europe flag with greenkeepers in distance



Aurelie on fairway mower with flag



Laura Campbell and Amanda Dorans hand mow greens.



First green before daybreak



Ladies in the Bothy

## TEAM EUROPE

**Kimberley Yeldham, deputy head greenkeeper,**  
Barnham Broom

“I’d volunteered at the British Ladies’ Open and above that is this. I want to be able to take something back for the ladies at my golf club because they always seem to be the ones who are left out. I also wanted to meet the other ladies who are here because this industry can be very lonely and meeting everyone here, I don’t feel so lonely anymore.”

**“If you hire only one girl, it will change the whole team”**

Craig’s team of full-time greenkeepers had been working for months on the PGA Centenary course to make it something special for the 2019 Solheim Cup. Craig, appointed to his role in 2018, was instrumental in making important changes to the structure, centralising the entire maintenance facility and team into one place to embrace a core value of the organisation, namely the ‘One Team’ ethos.

Known as ‘The Bothy’, the turf maintenance facility had all the amenities seen in an office environment but too often missing from a greenkeepers’ facility. There was a fitted kitchen, changing rooms, showers and a drying

room. It’s sad that such facilities aren’t commonplace and perhaps the welfare of employees should be higher on the agenda of golf clubs?

It became evident to me that Craig had invested time and energy into his team, including the inspirational quotes posted on the walls of the Bothy. These included: “Some of the greatest greenkeepers pass through these doors daily”; “One Team”; “Spirit of Adventure”; “Warm and Thoughtful”; “Pride”; and “TEAM — Together Everyone Achieves More”.

As the volunteers arrived they were paired up with a member of the Gleneagles team, so nobody felt isolated.

Each morning, from

Monday to the final day of the tournament on Sunday, 5am briefings were held. These were usually followed by 3pm briefings, where tasks were handed out by Craig for course set up. Usually I’ll only

## TEAM EUROPE

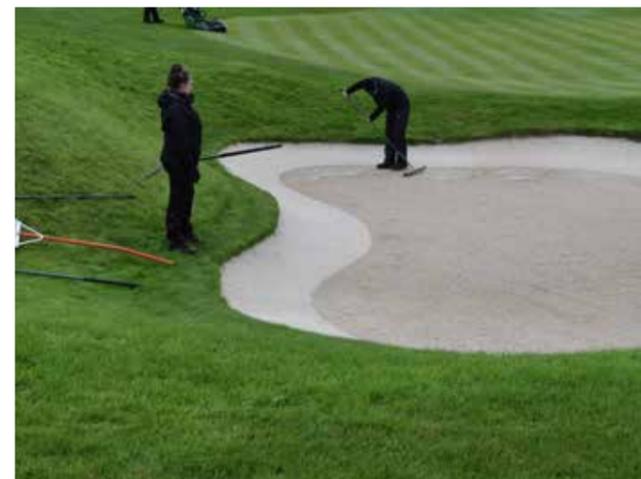
**Sophie Bulpitt,**  
greenkeeper, Berkshire

“It’s something to come and see such an outstanding course. I’ve never been anywhere like this. I’ve seen a wide range of places this year because I wanted to broaden my own knowledge in golf.”

be up at 4.15am if I’m heading to the airport on holiday or the odd morning at The Open, but I made every 5am briefing and it was an experience to see the marquee busy with chatter and excitement from the crew.

The weather early in the week gave the team some challenges. Around 15mm of

rain fell on the Tuesday, causing some concern. At least three of the fairways on the PGA were quite wet and so a decision was made to cut these by hand each day. The team were happy to do whatever it took to present the course to the best they could. The thing that struck me >>



## TEAM EUROPE

**Tiffany Mills, apprentice,**  
Ryston Park

“This is just a completely new experience for me. It’s out of my comfort zone and I wanted to push myself further. I’ve done a little bit of everything, including raking bunkers in different ways that I haven’t done before. I cut the fairways on the King’s course and learnt how to hand mow, which is the best thing I learned this week.”



**TEAM EUROPE**

**Gemma St John,**  
greenkeeper,  
Brokenhurst Manor

"I'm not usually a people person and I don't enjoy crowds. I wanted to test myself in front of a new team. You get yourself in a little bubble with your greenkeeping team that is easy and simple. Volunteering brings you out of that and the worry is always way worse than what actually happens. I'm proud of myself and we'll hopefully be an inspiration to girls in future."

**TEAM EUROPE**

**Amanda Dorans,**  
greenkeeper,  
Dundonald Links

"We've always had tournaments at our club but we've never had the opportunity to go anywhere else, so I wanted to walk in the footsteps of the volunteers and see how we can improve their experience for the next time we have a tournament. I've experienced what it's like to not know anything and how you can make people feel at home. I'm a person who avoids photographs usually, but I realised this week that having avoided that, I've nothing to look back on and share. I think I've changed my opinion because we're making history right now and I want to be able to share that in future with my kids and grandkids."

Gleneagles' Craig Haldane alongside the ladies who helped out at the event

throughout the whole week was the camaraderie among the entire team. During the week we celebrated three birthdays and a cake was presented to Paul Mackay, Beverley Blair and Aurelie Morandin to celebrate. Chatting with Tiffany Mills, Craig found out that Tiffany had never used a hand mower before, so he arranged for one of the Gleneagles team, Tommy Byrne, to take Tiffany out on the Wee Course for some training. So impressed was Craig that Tiffany got the

opportunity to hand mow tees on the PGA Centenary Course on the final day's play.

Eight female greenkeepers volunteered for the championship. Some had tournament experience and some hadn't, but each embraced the opportunity and made the most of learning and networking.

Working in an industry where you are in the minority occasionally does have its challenges, but not this week. We were just "One Team", as the Gleneagles motto states.

I can't begin to describe the roar of the fans when Suzann Pettersen holed her putt to win the Solheim Cup. In that moment I was aware of the long days, hard work and everything that had gone into making the golf course the showcase that it was.

Thank you to Craig, Scott, the Gleneagles greenkeeping team and to the volunteers. It was a pleasure to witness a professional team at work (and play). Finally, thank you to John Deere for their commitment to the team.



Tiffany Mills on fairway mower



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# OUTSIDE

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# Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards



The 31st hosting of the annual awards event took place at BIGGA House on 9 to 10 September.

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

**David Cole, managing director of Reesink Turfcare and award judge**



"The enduring pleasure of ours and Toro's long association and support of this educational award is the enthusiasm, career passion and commitment to personal development that we come across with every set of candidates and across every year of this career-enhancing award. The greenkeeping profession continues to be in bright and focused hands."

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards are one of the highlights of the calendar for the association, where we invite some of the industry's brightest talents to BIGGA House and recognise them for their dedication to greenkeeping.

With the kind support of machinery and irrigation manufacturer Toro and official UK distributor Reesink Turfcare, the 31st staging of the Toro Student Greenkeeper Awards was among the most hotly-contested ever.

Forty-six nominations were received for both the long-standing 'senior' award and the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award, now in its fourth year.

After an intense two days of testing that are designed to test industry knowledge and commitment to the profession, Jason Norwood of Ridding Park in Harrogate was named the UK's top student greenkeeper, while Tom Bromfield of Trentham earned the title of Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year.

Jason, 30, dedicated his victory to his sons Max, 4, Harvey, 1, and his wife Laura, who he has been with since he was just 16 years old.

"I'm absolutely shocked and shaking," said Jason after being announced as the



The Toro Student Greenkeeper and Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Finalists 2019

winner. "I haven't really any words to say as this is the pinnacle of my career and the biggest thing I've ever achieved."

As part of his prize, Jason wins a seven-week scholarship at the University of Massachusetts, as well as trips to the GCSAA's Golf Industry Show in Orlando and Toro's headquarters and R&D centre in Minneapolis.

The Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award is open to students under the age of 20. As winner, Tom receives a two-week work placement at the exclusive Vidauban Golf Club in France, as well as a trip to BTME in Harrogate.

Tom, 18 is an apprentice at Trentham in Stoke on Trent. He said: "I'm a bit shocked and I wasn't expecting to win!

"Reece, another apprentice at Trentham, was here last year and was a big help to me.

"I've a lot of respect for not only Reece but also Ed Stant and Jim Fox at Trentham as they've really helped me out and they've given me the chance to get this award, so I can't thank them enough."

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards will return in 2020.

**Jim Croxton, CEO, BIGGA**

"Greenkeeper education in the UK continues to take strides forward and it is more than matched by the enthusiasm of the student greenkeepers we meet as part of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year process. There is no doubt

that the nation's golf courses are being prepared to standards never seen before and the incredible finalists we met this year once again proved my belief that the greenkeeping industry will overcome any challenge that the future has in store.

"Congratulations to Jason and Tom on joining

the ranks of Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winners and to all the finalists for making it to this stage of the competition. Our thanks once again go to Toro and Reesink Turfcare for their support in hosting these annual awards, which remain a real highlight of the greenkeeping calendar."



Listen to the extended interview on The Green Room Golf Course Podcast

# From lumber yard and rifle range to Rudding Park and awards success for Jason

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year has had a long and winding journey before finding his calling in greenkeeping

**Jason Norwood is as Harrogate as BTME. He was raised, met his wife and spent almost his entire working life in the North Yorkshire spa town.**

But with his victory in the 31st Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards, Jason is hoping that new opportunities will open up for him and his young family.

Jason, who turned 31 the week after the finals took place, was a regional finalist in the student greenkeeper awards in 2018.

"I'd only been doing my Level 2 for six months when I had my regional interview," he said. "Scott Reeves asked me some greenkeeping questions and I struggled because I hadn't learned them yet. I wanted to give the awards another go this year so I went to the STRI Research Day, thinking that even if I only took 1% of what I heard away, it would be of benefit. I attended course walks in the Northern Region, with the first

being at Fulford, and tried to maximise BTME. I did 10 seminars this year, just to try and build up my knowledge.

"I thought that I wouldn't have another chance to do the awards for a couple of years, until I began my Level 3, so let's really go for this."

Helping Jason achieve his ambitions has been his wife, Laura, who he has been with ever since they were washing dishes in a Mexican-themed restaurant in Harrogate, aged 16.

Jason recalled how the teenagers first got together: "Laura asked for my MSN details and she still has the slip of paper that I wrote it on," said Jason. "I had never been to Leeds, but she took me on the train, we went shopping and then came back and watched Charlie and the Chocolate Factory at the Odeon in Harrogate. And the rest is history."

In the 14 years since, Jason and Laura have spent just one

week apart when they first got together and another when he went to Wales for work training. The pair have two children — Max, aged four, and Harvey, aged one. It means that the eight weeks that Jason will spend in America as part of his prize for winning the contest will prove challenging.

Jason said: "I'm not going to lie, it'll be very difficult. But it's a short-term pain for hopefully a long-term gain. I know it's going to be tough for her, but both our families are

in Harrogate, so we have an incredible support network that will help and hopefully make it as bearable for her as it can be."

A true team, Laura actually helped Jason with his Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year efforts. A former graphic designer, she helped craft Jason's presentation that he delivered to the judges.

"She's been absolutely massive and without her help, this wouldn't have happened," Jason said. "We spent a lot of



Jason Norwood

## How have last year's winners got on?

**Dan Ashelby, greenkeeper, The Mere Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2018**



"The last year has been very busy, trying to do a lot of educational events. I was awarded an R&A Scholarship and I've been trying to take part in as many of their events as possible. They're great and you get to go up and down the country, seeing some great courses.

"I think people are really interested in hearing about Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards. It's in all the magazines and it looks a really great programme to win, so I had a lot of people asking me what they can do to be a part of the process and what they can do to stand out and be invited to the final.

"To Jason I would say keep pushing forwards now. You've a title on your shoulders and it isn't the time to let off the gears. It's time to push forwards and continue proving yourself even more. It's a nice stepping stone to say you've been recognised for all your work, so keep it up!"

**Danny Patten, first assistant, Huyton & Prescott Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2018**



"It's been a great year with a lot of change. I've moved to a new club now as first assistant, which has come off the back of the award. It's been good to be recognised as an award-winning greenkeeper.

"At all the events I've been to, I'm representing BIGGA as Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year. It's been a lot of fun and so many learning opportunities come about as a result of winning the award, so I couldn't recommend the awards enough.

"Tom has a once-in-a-lifetime year ahead of him in terms of going to France, going to BTME and having all those different experiences."

greenkeeper] and Dan [Millar, deputy head greenkeeper]," explained Jason. "They told me about the greenkeeping qualifications and said they'd help me through them, which really appealed to me. I'd never done any education since leaving school and I didn't really enjoy that at all because it was about subjects that I didn't find interesting.

"However, I came into the greenkeeping industry and found out that there was so much you could learn about and so I've really tried to make the most of it."

That commitment to learning has paid off and

Jason is now looking forwards to the opportunities that present themselves to winners of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year.

Having lived around Harrogate his entire life, Jason said the family is looking forward to new adventures, made possible through greenkeeping.

He explained: "I'd love to work up in Scotland. Myself and Laura have something about Scotland, it's one of our favourite places to go on holiday. It's where golf was born and I think working on a Scottish links would be the pinnacle of my career."

# Trentham's Tom goes one better

Advice from a finalist at last year's awards helps Tom to Toro Young Student Greenkeeper crown

**If you're looking to pursue an apprenticeship in greenkeeping, there can be few better places to do so than Trentham in Stoke-on-Trent.**

Course Manager Ed Stant has a proud track record of developing young talent and, armed with this knowledge, GI visited the club earlier this year during National Apprenticeship Week. During our time at Trentham we spoke to Reece Tomalin, who was a finalist at the 2018 Toro student greenkeeper awards, and another young trainee who was working hard to earn his Level 2 qualifications.

That second apprentice was Tom Bromfield, 18, who went one better than Reece by this year winning the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award.

"At Trentham we've got Reece, who's about a year qualified now and Jack, who's about halfway through his apprenticeship," explained

Tom. "Ed's very good at getting the apprentices to work with each other and help each other out. He's a great boss, along with Jim, the deputy. They've both been really helpful for me in my career so far."

The timing of the regional interviews and grand final were fortuitous for Tom as he has been working hard to complete his Level 2 this summer and so was able to impress the judges with his knowledge.

Tom joined Trentham as an apprentice the summer after leaving school. He'd played golf from an early age with his dad, who plays regularly at nearby clubs Trentham Park and Barlaston.

"After school, I had no idea what I wanted to do," said Tom. "I've been playing golf for a long time now and I've seen greenkeepers working on the course. The opportunity came up at Trentham and so I thought I'd

give it a go. Since then I've really enjoyed it.

"As a golfer you see the basics, but when you actually start greenkeeping, there's a far wider range of topics and things that you've got to learn, it's actually mind-blowing at first. The science and the thought processes behind certain things you do are quite amazing really and it's one of the most interesting parts of the job."

Like Jason Norwood, this

year's winner of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award, Tom studies with Myerscough College. He was nominated for the Young award by his tutor, Adam Shoesmith.

Tom thanked Adam for the support that he has offered throughout his apprenticeship, adding: "Adam's a former greenkeeper so he's done the same job and knows the tough parts that take a little longer to learn. He's been very supportive and

he's keeping not only myself but also Ed up to date on me and where I am on my course, how I can get better and push on to get a better grade.

"When he nominated me for the award, Adam told me that it's an opportunity you can't really turn down."

Having recently completed his Level 2 qualifications, Tom came to the finals equipped with the knowledge he needed to impress the judges.

"I've just finished my Level

2, so I've recently done an end point assessment and course walk. But the walk at Aldwark was very different because there are different trees and weeds as it's a different course. I thought it wasn't the best course walk I've ever done, but I gave it my best shot and that's all you can do at the end of the day.

"You have to make sure that the judges are aware that you know something, so it's good if you can identify things

and direct the conversation by saying 'I've found something, can I talk to you about this?' I felt like I did well on the test and the grass identification, so I gave it my best shot.

"When I told them I had won, Ed and Adam were really pleased. Adam put Reece forward last year and he's quite proud that I've won.

"Obviously, my mum and dad support me in everything I do, so they were really happy for me."



Tom Bromfield

## The runners-up

**James Dawson, greenkeeper, Oulton Hall**



"Relative to experience and where I am in my career, I'm happy to achieve what I did, knowing how many people applied and the work that I put into the awards. It was worth it and I'm looking forward to the experience at BTME and receiving the Toro training voucher.

"I'm disappointed not to have won, but the runners-up prize of five days at BTME will be really beneficial to my career in the long run."

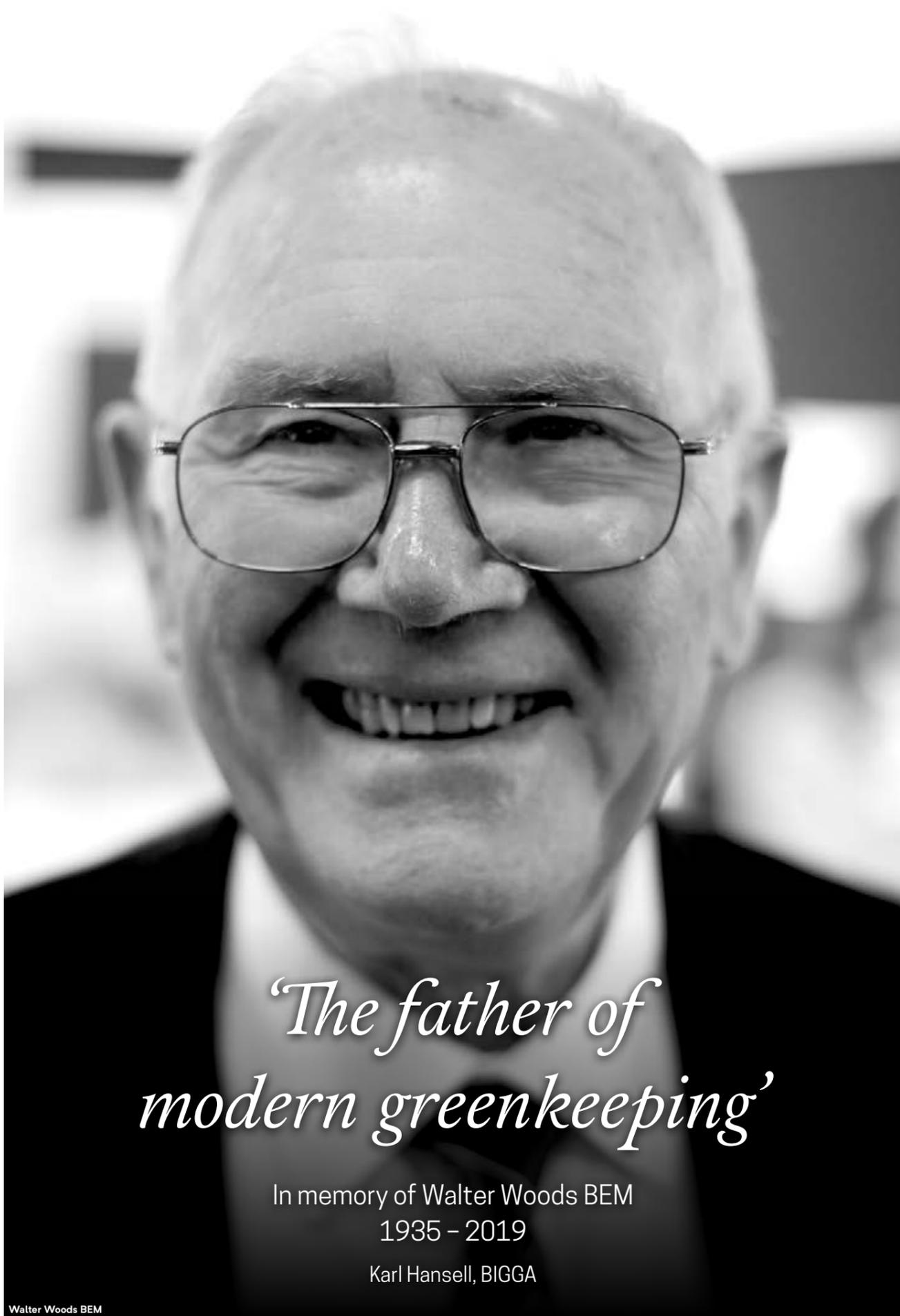
**Josh Marshall, apprentice, The Worcestershire**



"It was a great experience, once-in-a-lifetime. I'm a little disappointed I didn't win, but I didn't expect to even get this far. I'm sure in a couple of weeks I'll realise that it's an amazing thing to have on my CV when I'm going for jobs.

"It's a great thing to do and I'm glad I did it and I gave it my best shot."





*'The father of modern greenkeeping'*

In memory of Walter Woods BEM  
1935 - 2019

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

Walter Woods BEM



Walter and Caroline Woods pictured at BTME in 2018

Old Tom Morris may have laid out the golfing landscape of St Andrews as we know it, but it was Walter Woods BEM who brought the famous links into the modern age.

Walter Woods BEM, 84, was the former links superintendent at St Andrews Links until his retirement in 1995. He was instrumental in the formation of BIGGA and his efforts to modernise the industry and greenkeeper training have laid down the foundation for the profession as it is today.

Walter was BIGGA's inaugural chairman and acted as a mentor for many of the industry's leading figures, including John Philp MBE, who oversaw the return of Carnoustie to the Open rota.

"I learned a great deal from Walter," said John. "Coming back to Scotland in a multi-course system, he was very much a mentor for me. He had a strong work ethic and a passion for

**“**His influence and impact upon my life was profound

Eddie Adams, European Tour

greenkeeping. He was a strong and fair character and was a shining example of golf course management leadership and professionalism. Greenkeeping has lost one of its greatest ever ambassadors."

Born 13 February 1935 in

Tillicoultry, Walter was the first son of James, a worker for the council, and Edna Woods. He began his career at the town's nine-hole golf course and embarked upon his first role in greenkeeping after trying a number of jobs,

including being a grocer, a collier and textile maker, which bored him to "tears".

At Tillicoultry, greenkeeping was a fairly primitive art. The nine greens were cut with a 16-inch-wide Ransomes Certes push mower. When setting the height of cut, they would place three one-penny coins between the cutting blade and a thin steel bar. This, plus the thickness of the cutting blade, would provide a cutting height of 6.5mm.

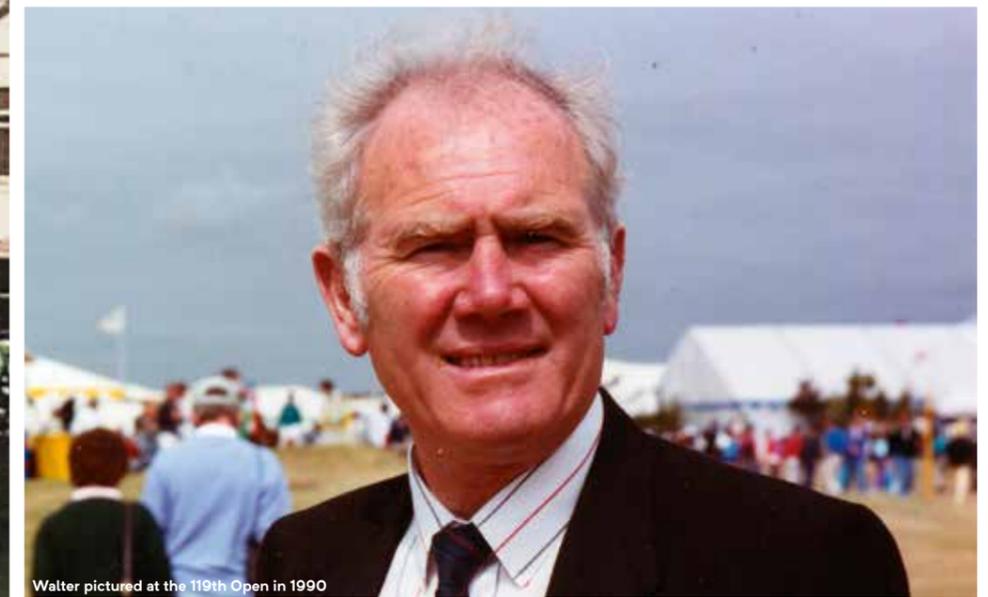
Writing in his memoirs, Walter said: "Working at this little golf course taught me a lot. Not only did I feel that I was achieving something on my own, but having the course prepared and presented with the playing surfaces in pristine condition provided me with a feeling of satisfaction and pride in my accomplishments. The work was hard and basic and the learning even harder, but I was prepared for this and >>



Rabbit catcher David Anderson alongside Walter sat on the Swilean Bridge



Brushing in topsoil on the Old Course using birch brooms



Walter pictured at the 119th Open in 1990

*“The work was hard and basic and the learning even harder, but I was prepared for this and willing to learn.”*

**‘More sand, Honeyman... more sand’: Memoirs of a greenkeeper in his own words**

BIGGA will have copies of Walter Woods’ memoirs available to give away at BTME with a small donation asked for the Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund.

willing to learn.”  
 Next up, in 1965, came the offer of the head greenkeeper’s position at Braehead in Alloa in the dual role of professional and greenkeeper, while his wife Caroline ran the clubhouse. The family stayed there just three years before moving south to England and Stanton-on-the-Wolds, where he first learned the benefits of joining a greenkeepers’ association. “Everything was different in England,” wrote Walter. “In Scotland, all I needed was a strong back. Now I required more knowledge. It was soon

evident to me that education was the only way that I would succeed if I was to improve my understanding of greenkeeping and management.”  
 A successful stint at Notts Golf Club (Hollinwell) followed, of which he was extremely proud. Of those days, one of his fondest memories was the drive to work down the narrow hedge-lined road that leads into the course, through pine trees and out into a scene of huge oaks, silver birch and giant Scots firs. Settled in Nottinghamshire, the family was about to be

uprooted again when Walter spotted an advertisement for the links supervisor position at St Andrews which, after a short period of agonising over whether it was the correct move, he resolved to apply for. Facing nine members of the selection committee in a board room within the walls of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, the intimidating interview incredibly lasted just an hour. A few weeks later and Walter received a letter stating that he had been successful. After the euphoria of gaining the most famous greenkeeping position in golf,

Walter was greeted with the reality of leaving behind a high-end members’ club in favour of a tourist attraction where golfers from all over the world came to play the famous links. “These famous golf courses struck me as chaotic!” Walter noted in his memoirs. The St Andrews Links Trust was in the process of changing to its current structure following local government reorganisation. Until then, the links had been managed by the town council of St Andrews and the R&A. There were only four courses — there are now seven — and the structure of the staff was

very different. Former St Andrews links superintendent Gordon Moir explained: “With the new organisation having to fund itself, there was very little money around to pay staff and invest in equipment and facilities, so Walter had to fight for everything he could get.” Green fees at the links had been kept to a minimum by the town council to keep housing taxes low and to attract tourists to the courses. That meant there was little budget available for the maintenance of the course. At that time the committee in charge of the links was

satisfied with these standards, if it kept costs down, but Walter worked hard to improve the condition of the links. He reordered the staff and introduced new methods of working — while striving to adhere to Jim Arthur’s principles of greenkeeping, such as a reduction in the use of fertilisers and the need for aeration. Walter would be a proponent of Arthur’s methods throughout his illustrious career and beyond. During his time as superintendent of the famous links, Walter oversaw four Open Championships, from 1978 until 1995. He was so respected that Jack Nicklaus would turn up early at St Andrews to play practice rounds with him prior to the tournament. Speaking to The Scotsman in 2005, Walter said: “My best memories are Jack Nicklaus holding the trophy or the excellence of Nick Faldo. But most satisfying is the relief when it is finished, without complaints.” The first Open hosted by Walter was the 1978

championship, won by his friend, Nicklaus. Ahead of the event, Walter had resolved to undertake a comprehensive work programme to raise standards all over the course. This included brushing topdressing material thoroughly into the turf using birch brooms, as technology had not yet caught up to Walter’s vision. One of his memories from that event was a younger member of staff falling from the top of a spectator stand adjacent to the 11th green. He “bounced off every steel pole on the way down” and was taken to Ninewells hospital while unconscious. Completely to Walter’s surprise, the youngster reported for work on the Tuesday morning, “bandaged from head to foot and looking like an Egyptian mummy”. Walter had a fond respect for such commitment from his team. Gordon added: “A very competent and competitive golfer, he was well known in all the golf clubs in the town and also the ones in the »

surrounding areas. He was always supportive of the neighbouring clubs and greenkeepers, whether giving advice or loaning equipment.

“He was a great advocate for education, using the benefit of his position in playing a major role in Elmwood and other colleges starting a recognised programme of education for greenkeepers.

It was while links superintendent at St Andrews and in his role as education director of the Scottish Greenkeeping Association, that Walter was invited to a discussion with the Professional Golfers Association at Haggs Castle, where they were invited to consider joining forces with the golfers. It was a proposal the greenkeepers turned down, but it was also the spark that led to Walter meeting with the secretary of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, BIGGA's patron Sir Michael Bonallack.

Together they discussed the R&A supporting the amalgamation of the British Golf Greenkeepers Association, the English and International Golf Greenkeepers Association and the Scottish and International Golf Greenkeepers Association. Walter persuaded them of the benefits of one national organisation for greenkeepers, properly funded and providing education. BIGGA was born.

Gordon added: “In his 21 years at St Andrews, he moved the trust and the greenkeeping profession in general forwards a huge amount.”

Walter left St Andrews in 1995, but continued to consult the European Tour on agronomic matters. His final Open Championship took place in 1995, with John Daly winning the Claret Jug. However, one encounter on the Road Hole made it clear just who was boss of the links. Walter had the flag from the 18th hole in his possession had twice attempted to ask



John Daly gives his acceptance speech after winning The Open in 1995, with Walter stood to his left.

*“He was always supportive of the neighbouring clubs and greenkeepers, whether giving advice or loaning equipment.”*

Daly whether he could sign the piece of memorabilia. Not receiving a response, Walter tracked Daly and his companions down to the 17th hole, where he once again asked whether he could get an autograph. When Daly responded with a tirade of abusive language, Walter politely asked him and his entourage to remove themselves from the course, which they immediately did.

Eddie Adams, the European Tour's director of agronomy, worked under Walter for 10 years, culminating with his promotion to the role of head greenkeeper of the Old Course at St Andrews in 1993.

Speaking to the European Tour's website, Eddie said: “His influence and impact on my life — both professionally and on a personal level — was profound and I will always remember him as a straight talking, good humoured and fair man. He was my mentor who gave me the opportunity

to move my career forward to where it is now.”

Walter's passing on the eve of the European Tour's flagship event, the BMW PGA Championship, was poignant as it was through the efforts of figures such as Walter and the late Cecil George and Jimmy Neilson that education in greenkeeping progressed to the level that surfaces such as those at Wentworth could be prepared.

Walter also played a leading role in the formation of the BIGGA support team initiatives, which provide members the opportunity to volunteer at The Open and the BMW PGA Championship.

Former Wentworth Courses Manager Chris Kennedy was Walter's friend for more than half a century and said: “Walter was certainly one of the guys who was at the forefront of greenkeeping having the status that it does today. When you see the volunteers at The Open and the BMW

PGA, he was one of the few who worked hard and could see what the future would look like. He wanted to give guys at normal golf clubs the experience of the highs and lows of tournament golf, so they could go back to their clubs and take the experience and knowledge they had gained with them.

“He had this great drive within himself and he could see a vision for the future. He was the father figure of modern greenkeeping.”

Walter received the British Empire Medal in 1991 and was presented with the Tom Morris Award in 2002 by the US Golf Course Superintendents Association. Previous recipients of the award include Byron Nelson, Arnold Palmer and Bob Hope and the award is given to people who “through a continuing lifetime commitment to golf have helped to mould the welfare of the game in a manner and style exemplified by Old Tom Morris’.

Walter died on 18 September 2019, aged 84, following a long illness. He is survived by his wife Caroline, children James, Walter and Caroline and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Walter receiving his British Empire Medal from Lord Elgin in 1991

Jimmy and Valerie Neilson with Cecil George at BTME 2017



# Edinburgh's finest

Murrayfield course manager shaped the association and greenkeeper education for future generations

A founding member of BIGGA and former course manager at Murrayfield, Jimmy Neilson died on 5 September, aged 86.

Born 16 August 1933, Jimmy lived in Edinburgh throughout his life, but originally began his working life as an agricultural engineer. He worked in that occupation for 16 years but found that being involved with farming and harvesting meant he was required to work long hours in summer, severely limiting the amount of golf he was able to play.

In 1968 he started work at Swanston Golf Club on the south side of Edinburgh as both professional and greenkeeper. He was at the club for nine years and was assisted in keeping the grass short by sheep that grazed the course.

Then, in 1977 he became the course manager at Murrayfield and Ravelston Golf Clubs, a position he would hold for the remainder of his career. He was known as a firm but fair head greenkeeper, who's lasting legacy was the construction of several new tees on the course, which remain today.

Jimmy's daughter, Buffy, said: "He was a great boss and will be remembered by

*Constant change is not good for greenkeeping, is worse for the course and is a sad reflection of the way some clubs are run.*



Jimmy Neilson

all the lads who worked there. He was famous for his great New Year's parties in the sheds, when all were welcome, including members. He would make a huge batch of stovies, which were on offer to soak up the stiff drinks!"

Although hand mowing was insisted upon on the greens, Jimmy was eager to see the developments that were taking place in greenkeeping machinery. He was also a fan of long-term thinking, such as was instilled in the culture at Murrayfield, and lamented the short-termism of many golf clubs.

"Our continuity of policy does not give us any of the problems that some clubs have," he told Greenkeeper magazine in 1985. "Constant change is not good for greenkeeping, is worse for the course and is a sad reflection of the way some clubs are run."

Throughout his career, Jimmy was a loyal and enthusiastic member of the Scottish and International Golf Greenkeepers Association and then BIGGA, having first joined in 1970. He served a number of committee roles, including as president of SIGGA. In 1977

he took over as general secretary of the association, holding the position until 1981.

Jimmy was also involved with the formation of the Greenkeeper's Training Committee and helped organise the educational syllabus for Scottish trainees. Like his great friend Cecil George, Jimmy was a passionate believer in formal education as a means of furthering a greenkeeper's career. He worked alongside Oatridge College as they launched education for greenkeepers and he attended the first ever greenkeeping management course at SRUC Elmwood in 1981.

His friend, Elliott Small, said: "The GTC meeting in those days were held in London and Jimmy religiously made the long train journey there and back in the same day, arriving home late at night. He often told me that after having a meal in the dining car, he would use his charm and patter to get a seat in first class for the rest of the journey."

In 1984 Jimmy was elected chairman of SIGGA and was involved in meetings held with BGGGA and EIGGA in the lead up to the amalgamation of the three associations into the single organisation, BIGGA. Alongside Walter Woods, Jimmy Kidd and Cecil, the four sat on the first board meetings held by BIGGA.

Speaking to Greenkeeper in 1985, Jimmy said: "Let's put it this way, a greenkeeper won't become a millionaire through his job, but it's very satisfying to watch the golf course as it progresses through the seasons. Every year there is always a new challenge to be faced and

From the slopes of Corstorphine Hill, Murrayfield overlooks the city that Jimmy called home. Picture by Eduard Marmet



*He was a great boss and will be remembered by all the lads who worked there. He was famous for his great New Year's parties in the sheds, when all were welcome,*

new lessons to be learned. The work is never dull and you get to meet a lot of nice people and make many friends in the industry. You can command great respect if you are willing to work hard and diligently to achieve high standards."

Later on, he was proud to be asked by the East Section to stand as its nomination for BIGGA Scottish Region President for 1998-99.

Jimmy was involved with the volunteer support teams that assisted at the Open Championship from the very first one, at St Andrews in 1984.

Elliott said: "He carried out the duties, along with Cecil, as representative of BIGGA on the first tee until 2000, when I retired them. I don't think they ever forgave me and it was only my promise that there would always be a ticket for them at all future Opens softened the blow as they absolutely loved the atmosphere and banter with all the greenkeepers.

Jimmy retired from Murrayfield in 1998 and continued to enjoy playing golf. He was a member of Silverknowes for over 30 years and visited the club every Tuesday, right up until the week before he passed away.

Sadly his mobility stopped him from playing golf a few years ago, but he kept himself useful by marking the seniors section's scorecard.

Jimmy was the first recipient of BIGGA Scotland's highest honour, the Walter Woods Award, in 2017. This was awarded to him in recognition of his lifetime's achievement in the industry and his service to BIGGA and SIGGA over the years.

Elliott added: "A regular attendee of BTME from the start, many will remember him as sitting at a table in the café alongside Cecil, surrounded by a never-ending stream of old friends and young greenkeepers, who loved to sit and hear their stories."

Jimmy is survived by his wife, Valerie, son, James, and daughter, Janette.



Cecil and Jimmy at the BIGGA Welcome Celebration in 2017

# ARE YOU WATERWISE?

Tips on how to improve your water usage

Tony Hanson, ESi International

**BIGGA has teamed up with ESi International to offer members exclusive advice relating to water usage and other environmental matters.**

Members can access ESi's online resource files that offer advice on subjects including water security and availability or usage, pollution and spill

planning, fuel or chemical storage and a range of other topics.

ESi can also provide telephone and email support to BIGGA members.

For more information, visit [www.esinternational.co.uk](http://www.esinternational.co.uk)

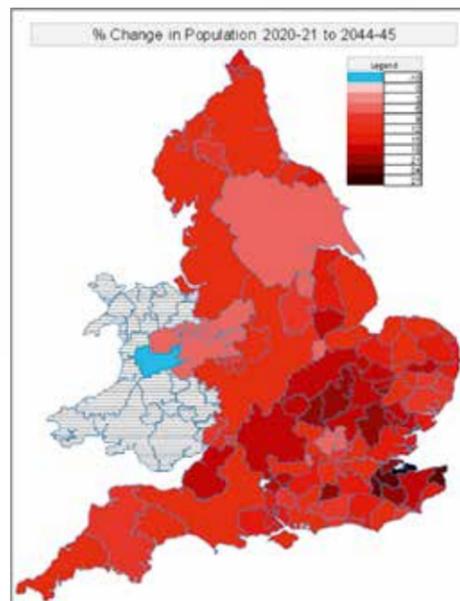
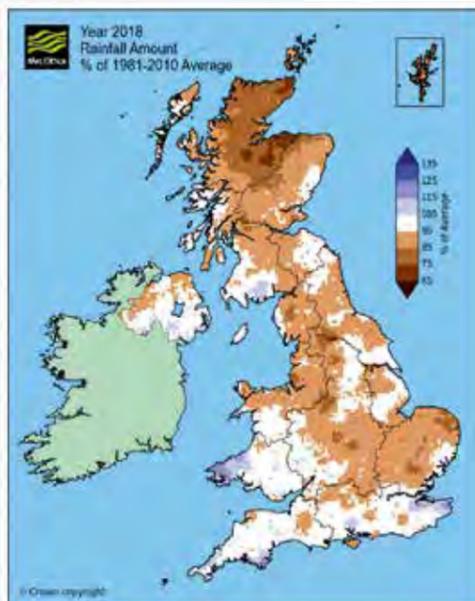


**The availability of water hasn't yet reached dangerous levels. But the time has certainly come for everyone to be more conscious about how it is being used around the golf course.**

- / Water is an increasingly precious and limited resource, especially during the summer
- / Temporary use bans and hands off flow constraints are likely to become more frequent for irrigators across the country during future dry summers
- / In 2018, England experienced the warmest summer on record, with temperatures reaching 35 degrees and some areas experiencing the driest summer since 1921.
- / Many irrigation systems could not deliver the peak demands required to keep plants hydrated
- / Is your business water resilient? Could you irrigate more efficiently to

reduce your water demand and your water bill?

**FACT: England's population is growing fastest in the regions that experience persistent below average rainfall, squeezing the water resources in these areas**



Left: Average rainfall from 1961 - 2020 Met Office Data (2019 [www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/climate/](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/climate/)). Right: Population growth from 2020/11 - 2044/45 Environment Agency (2019). Data sourced from the revised draft Water Resource Management Plans.



## Forward planning

**Develop a resilience plan for your business**

- / Does your business have a plan that considers water risks and how you might build resilience to cope with future droughts and water scarcity? How would your business cope if it was without mains water supply? How long until there were long-term impacts on your turf?
- / Consider rainwater harvesting
- / Do you have any buildings you could collect rainfall from during wetter periods? Using rainwater is a great, low carbon alternative to treated water. Having your own stores of rainwater will also increase your resilience to drought or interruption to supply
- / Alternative abstraction and storage
- / Do you have any on-site water storage capacity to help meet your summer irrigation demands if there was a mains water disruption, such as a temporary use ban?
- / Think about where your water comes from. You could investigate alternative sources of water, like abstracting your own and storing on site. See [www.gov.uk/guidance/](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/)

## Irrigation tips

- / Think about timing. Irrigate in the early evening or at night and when wind speeds are low, to improve irrigation uniformity and increase water infiltration into the soil
- / Use the most appropriate method of irrigation for your enterprise. No method is perfect. Spray irrigation is susceptible to wind drift; micro or trickle irrigation offers potential to reduce evaporation losses and
- achieve high water efficiency, but requires high levels of management
- / Have a look at your water meter and work out where and how much water you are using. Are there areas that you currently irrigate, which don't need it? What approaches are you using to help decide when to irrigate and how much?
- / Identify and repair leaks. Report and major leaks to your local water company as soon as possible.

Working in partnership with Cranfield University, the Environment Agency and Waterwise



**Read this for:**

- / Maintaining water hazards
- / Watercourse buffer zones
- / Drainage systems

# Maintaining Moxhull Pond

It's part of golfing folklore, but how do the team at The Belfry keep their most famous water hazard in pristine condition?

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

**It's considered one of the most iconic water hazards in golf.**

How many of us have stood on the 10th tee, considering whether to lay up or take this rare opportunity to replicate Seve by driving the 10th green? (Not to diminish your achievement, but he did it with a Persimmon driver and a balata ball.)

Or you've hit a half decent tee shot on the 18th only to suffer a moment of self-doubt when you ask yourself whether you can replicate Christy O'Connor Jr's 1989 heroics. You're unlikely to have a two-iron in your bag

and even less likely to have Tony Jacklin egging you on, but nonetheless, you'll eventually decide to go for it.

When the central attraction of your golf course is a water hazard that has played such a massive role in the history of the game as The Belfry's Moxhull Pond, you need to make sure it's maintained to the highest standards.

GI spoke to the Brabazon's deputy head greenkeeper, Chris Mullett, about how the team ensures the lake lives up to its reputation.

**It's been claimed that the Brabazon has more water on it than any other inland course in the UK. As a premium golfing venue, how do you keep those water features in pristine condition?**

**Chris:** We take a lot of pride in our water hazards, especially the iconic views around the hotel. In terms of presentation, we're doing something every week to the lakes and streams to keep them looking good.

The work that goes into maintaining our water hazards is often overlooked. The first thing to consider isn't even the water itself but around the edges and the banks. We have walls that comprise of steel girders with old railway sleepers dropped in that surround our ponds. They ensure that a clear definition is created between the course and the water hazard. They'll get fly-mowed and edged every other week during the growing season. This maintains the original structure so we don't get subsidence and weeds growing outwards into the water. If you don't keep on

Every step you take, you're treading on a golf ball!

top of it, the entire area can grow wild.

**You can strim the edges, but how do you keep reeds from growing at the centre of the lakes?**

**Chris:** The reeds give us a bit of a Catch-22 situation. They do filtrate the water and keep it cleaner, but they're a weed and if you don't maintain them, eventually they'll fill the whole pond.

At the end of the growing season we'll get in there in our waders and hack them right down. They do grow back the next year, but it helps us to keep on top of them. However, it's got to the point now where we're hoping to get the lake dug out with a digger to try and minimise the infestation, because the reeds are becoming quite wild.

**Do the ponds have any artificial lining?**

**Chris:** It's completely natural clay, which does maintain the body of water. Our lakes form a closed circuit, which is why we don't struggle with them drying out when it's hot. That cycle around the site also means we're getting a constant flow of water.

**What purpose do the fountains in the centre of your ponds serve, in addition to just appearances?**

**Chris:** They aren't actually intended for decoration. They do look very attractive, but their main purpose is to aerate the water. By keeping the water moving, they prevent any algae from growing and forming on the surface. That's another reason why we have a constant cycle flowing around the site as it prevents the water stagnating and allowing any bacteria grow.

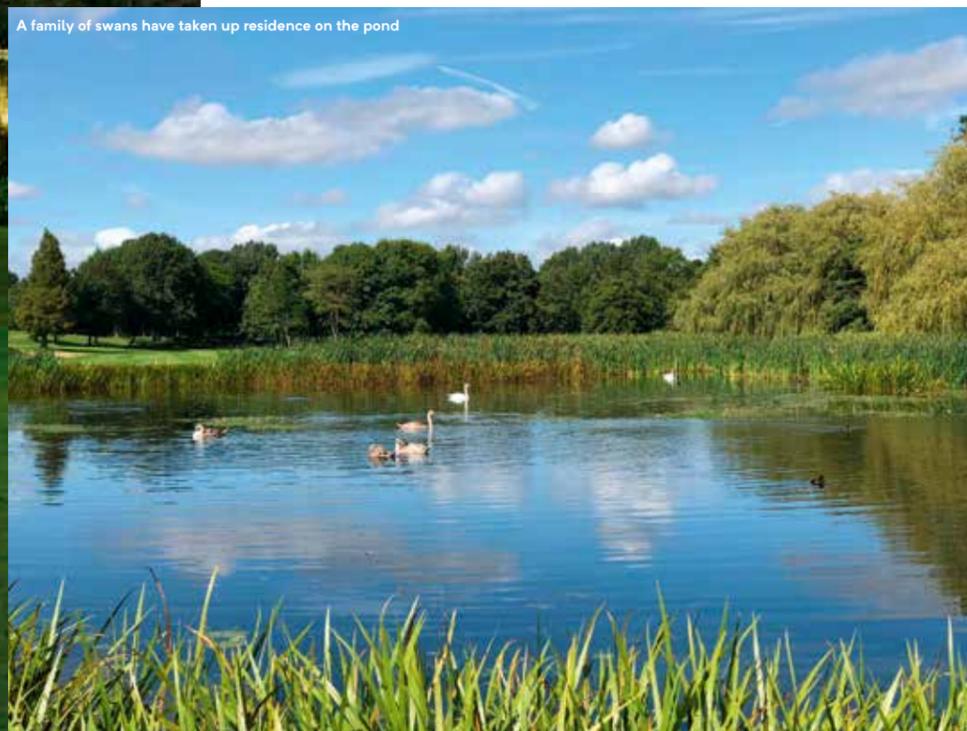
**What problems can a build-up of algae cause?**

**Chris:** It mainly impacts presentation as it is a bit of an eyesore. But it would also have negative effects on aquatic species. Because the water is so shallow — most of our lakes are only knee high — the sun can pass through to the bottom, which encourages bacteria and algae to grow.

This is not a method we use due to the fact we have flowing water, but one technique you can use is adding dye to the lakes. The process can stop the sunlight passing through the water and prevent bacteria and algae from developing.

We've got an abundance of fairly large carp in our lakes that are thriving because there is no fishing allowed in our lakes and ponds. We also have a large number of birds, including Canada geese — which aren't ideal, but we're »

A family of swans have taken up residence on the pond



## What is LERAP?

- / Local Environment Risk Assessment for Pesticides
- / Establishes a buffer zone next to watercourses to give additional protection to aquatic life
- / A buffer zone of 5m indicates a product poses a particular risk to aquatic plants or animals
- / LERAP offers practical benefits that may reduce the size of the buffer zone, while ensuring the environment is protected
- / Visit the DEFRA website for more information



Moxwell Pond flows past the famous 10th green

stuck with them — kingfishers and heron.

We also have two resident swans who come back every year. For the first time in the four years I've been here, they've recently had cygnets. Their nest is on the 18th lake and they aren't scared of anything. I've a little Border Collie who will chase them and bark at them from the side of the water but the swans aren't phased and they'll swim over to taunt her!

### What maintenance do your streams and drainage ditches require?

**Chris:** In the winter we'll dig out ditches to make sure the water flow isn't clogged up. The whole purpose of the ditches, such as on the 15th and 17th, is to aid our drainage system, so we need to keep those clear to allow our fairways to drain. When the silt gets to the level of the drainage outlay, you're going to struggle to get the draining away, so it will just sit wet. If the ditches are bad, we'll get in there with a digger and dig the bottoms out to make them deeper again. We probably spend a full week doing that in winter, doing as many as we can.

### When you're spraying on the fairways, do you adapt your practices to make sure there is little run off into the water?

**Chris:** We'll cover our drainage caps — we call them gully pots — to make sure any chemicals don't get into the drainage.

Our products in the stock room have different LERAP rules on them. We'll read those and take the buffer zones that each product requires into consideration. That's one of the benefits of using liquid feed. If we put a granular down, it can sit in the soil and then leach into the water, whereas a liquid feed is taken up through the foliage quicker and so damage to the environment is limited.

For sustainability reasons, we tend to spot spray selective weed-killers, instead of blanket spraying. We only spray the weed directly. Due to time and lack of staff, other places may spray wall-to-wall, but then you find you're spraying areas that don't actually need the weed-killer. We have the luxury of having the required

labour available, so we don't need to do that.

### With everyone trying to replicate Seve and Christy on the 10th and 18th holes, how do you keep on top of the sheer number of balls that must drop into the water?

**Chris:** There's got to be billions in there! We have a contractor who'll come in to clear them. It's quite funny because you'll see a guy sat on his bum in the water, feeling around with his hands, trying to find golf balls. They'll retrieve loads of lake balls out and they refurbish them and sell them on. I was recently in the lake pulling some weeds from beside the sleeper walls, and every step you take, you're treading on a golf ball. You just feel them under your feet, there's thousands!

#### Want to know more?

You can contract Chris Mullett on Twitter using @greenkeepermull



View from the 6th green

## DIOFIX | Beneficial bacteria to clear ponds and lakes

Having a problem with algae in your pond or lake is obvious and irritating and how to reduce or halt the presence of algae is a problem to many.

Not only can algae block pumps and filters, but it also discolours the water, forming green scum on the surface and layers at the base. The algae can take masses of oxygen out of the water with fatal consequences for aquatic life

Dyofix has long supplied pond dyes, a successful solution to clearing algae.

Pond dyes reduce the amount of light (food source) entering the water, but for anyone with bad algal problems that have not applied any dyes yet, they have introduced Byofix, a safe, natural, beneficial bacteria; non-toxic and fully biodegradable.

Easy to dispense, Byofix is good bacteria contained within soluble sachets that improve water quality and clarity by decomposing organic pollutants. This biological purification process maintains good dissolved oxygen levels in ponds or lakes and reduces hydrogen sulphides, ammonia and other foul odours.

How does it work?

Byofix delivers millions of bacteria to



Bacteria, before and after images over three to four weeks

the lake or pond which, given reasonable conditions, replicates every few minutes.

By replicating so quickly, the bacteria spreads and starts to break down the excessive organic matter and nutrients and the water quality begins to improve, notably the water will become clearer and any odours from gases given off will reduce.

**BIGGA members receive 10% OFF all orders and an EXTRA 30% OFF orders over £300 by quoting 'BIGGA19' (offer ends 30 November 2019).**

For more information and to use the 'How much should I order?' calculator, visit [www.dyofix.co.uk](http://www.dyofix.co.uk). For any questions, contact 0113 256 4251 or [sales@dyes.co.uk](mailto:sales@dyes.co.uk)

Article brought to you by



## OTTERBINE | The greenkeeper's best friend

Pond and lake water management is no easy feat, with plenty of hazards to water health and quality.

If left alone, the quality of larger bodies of water can decrease hugely, if affected by thermal stratification.

The most extreme cases of thermal stratification take place in the summer, but it's an issue that can occur throughout the year, depending on the geographical location and depth of the lake.

Thermal stratification is where water separates into distinct thermal layers, with cold water sinking to the bottom and warmer water rising to the top. Without strong winds or running water to help move the water, the thermal layers don't mix. As such, the lower level of your lake will suffer with massively reduced dissolved oxygen levels.

When the natural process of anaerobic digestion occurs, whereby bacteria break down organic and biological waste into carbon dioxide, ammonia and methane, this further reduces the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water. This can be incredibly damaging to any aquatic or plant life and



result in stagnant water.

However, with Otterbine aerators you can easily prevent thermal stratification from happening or solve the issue if it already has. With the proven high oxygen transfer rates of Otterbine's comprehensive range of aerating fountains, you can easily increase the dissolved oxygen levels in your lake or pond, preventing or curing stagnant water, algae build up and bad smells for clean, clear, healthy water.

And with Otterbine's decorative range you can make your lake or pond an appealing beauty spot at the same time.

Article brought to you by



## ECOBUNKER | Aquaedge

“For nearly 30 years, I have been responsible for the design of civil engineering works that were structurally competent, safe to build, cost effective, easy to maintain and aesthetically pleasing,” writes EcoBunker CEO and founder, Richard Allen.

“I was also a keen golfer, fascinated by golf course design and construction, who became aware of the issue of bunker edge erosion, and my engineer’s response to that challenge was the invention of synthetic layered edging.”

Aquaedge delivers a low maintenance, sharp edged water margin, especially useful when water features closely abut fairways and greens. The system has been used to great effect on many high profile golf courses including Queenwood, Rancho San Lucas and Lignano near Venice, which is one of Europe’s most exciting golf course projects currently under construction.



Aquaedge on the 6th hole at Queenwood

Lignano 12th hole, Aquaedge construction nearing completion  
Inset picture: rotten wooden bulkhead



“We are currently using Aquaedge on numerous lake edges on one of our EGD projects in mainland Europe. The Aquaedge product has provided not only a structural solution to previous eroding lake edges, but has satisfied the aesthetic design intent by still providing the desired clean grass edge down to water level. EGD and the client have been delighted with how the product is performing.” — Dave Sampson, Designer, European Golf Design

“Our established synthetic revetting provides an attractive fascia, but the important part is the design of the foundation and backfill, said Richard.

“Lake edges throw up different challenges, such as the need to accommodate waterproof liners. Every solution is bespoke, designed in-house.”

Recent designs include a project led by MJ Abbott and EcoBunker’s second Aquaedge project in Germany, scheduled for early in 2020.

### AQUA EDGE SOLVES LIGNANO’S EROSION PROBLEMS

Director of golf Fabrizio Bertoli explained the decision to introduce the Aquaedge system at Lignano GC, Italy: “We had to find a solution to the rotting wooden piles on our lake edges. We were losing 20 to 30cm of ground to erosion each year.”

Fabrizio considered a range of options and was keen to avoid using stone or rock

solutions, when he saw an article about the Aquaedge solution in an industry magazine. “We needed something softer to suit our environment,” he said. “But I couldn’t find a solution until I saw photographs of Aquaedge. I thought it looked very beautiful, perfect for Lignano, so I got in touch with EcoBunker immediately.”

Richard the Aquaedge inventor and a civil engineer, travelled to Lignano to inspect the site and gather design data.

He said: “The underlying soils were weak, so I designed a bespoke solution that used rock-filled gabions for strength below the water line, and then Aquaedge wherever it would be visible.

“This gave us structural integrity whilst keeping within the client’s budget.”

Fabrizio added: “Richard’s design was

easy to install. My staff supported the EcoBunker team and installed 355m of wall in a month, despite the challenging weather. We did the work without using heavy machinery. Alternative, traditional stonewalls would have cost double the price of the Aquaedge solution. We are delighted with the outcome.”

For further information, visit [www.ecobunker.co.uk](http://www.ecobunker.co.uk) and for any enquiries or questions contact Richard on 02920 397 472 or [richard.allen@ecobunker.co.uk](mailto:richard.allen@ecobunker.co.uk)

Article brought to you by



## GENESIS BIOSCIENCES | The Power Of bacteria in pond maintenance

Genesis Biosciences is a global biosciences company that focuses on researching and utilising beneficial bacteria and micro-organisms to replace harsh chemical cleaners and make a positive environmental impact. Here, Emma Saunders, general manager at Genesis, discusses the benefits of using bacterial solutions to keep golf course ponds free from algae and contaminants.

In order to keep the grass at its greenest, fertilisers are often used to maintain the quality of the fairway and green, however, this can cause contamination in the water bodies. An increased level of both phosphorous and nitrogen within a pond or lake will cause the algae to grow, creating the perfect breeding ground for pests such as mosquitos, as well as generating an unpleasant odour.

This smell — often compared to rotten egg — is caused when water becomes stagnant and specialist microorganisms appear that breathe sulphate instead of oxygen and produce sulphide instead of carbon dioxide.

A common method of tackling odour issues is through aeration, whereby a



Dr Emma Saunders

fountain, for example, causes movement of the water that disturbs algae growth and turns off sulphate reduction.

Although effective, this method might not be able to adequately or cost effectively service an entire water body.

Genesis Biosciences’ biological products with our unique eco-benign chemistry, contain stable, environmentally-friendly and safe bacteria that aim to outcompete the problematic algae and sulphate reducing bacteria. This competition keeps the algae growth in check and enables the system to remain naturally balanced and oxygenated via photosynthesis.

To learn more about Evogen Pond Maintain or the rest of the range of products manufactured by Genesis Biosciences, visit [www.genesisbiosciences.co.uk](http://www.genesisbiosciences.co.uk)  
For any questions, call 02920 791 185 or email [info@genesisbiosciences.com](mailto:info@genesisbiosciences.com)

Article brought to you by



## CLEAR WATER | Revitalise and maintain your golf course water features

ClearWater - Inland Waterways and Reed Bed Management Services operate two Truxor machines with experienced operators undertaking projects including lake construction and maintenance, ditching in wetland areas, cutting and collecting aquatic weeds and reeds, de-silting lakes and golf course maintenance.

Truxors use biodegradable oil and have environmentally friendly features designed to access environmentally-sensitive areas with minimal impact. Our clients include RSPB, Natural England, Somerset Wildlife Trust, National Trust, Soho House and private clients.

We will view the site and discuss the work with you prior to giving you a written estimate for the work required. If you agree the estimate, we will arrange a suitable date to come and complete the work. We are able to call on specialist skills as required.

For any questions and to discuss your requirements Call Kevin on 07976 834 953 or visit [www.clearwater-management.co.uk](http://www.clearwater-management.co.uk)



Truxor machines

- / Using Truxor DM5000 amphibious vehicle
- / Cutting and collection of aquatic weeds and reeds
- / De-silting of lakes
- / Lake construction and maintenance
- / Ditching of wetland areas
- / Debris and flotsam removal from waterways



Article brought to you by





# Liquid gold

How Archie's wish for Auchterarder finally came true

Auchterarder GC 2018

Auchterarder GC 2019. Images by Shaun McNaughton

## Nothing transforms a golf course like water.

Too much or too little, its effects are clear for all to see. And like many clubs, water has played a big part in a transformative year for Auchterarder in Perth and Kinross.

For the past 40 years, the club's greenkeeping team has maintained its parkland course with a rudimentary system that was installed by a plumber. There were no irrigation heads, just one hydrant at each green. Everything was manually-operated and fed from a 1" mains supply.

It had been possible to operate up to six sprinklers with hoses, but deterioration of the pipework had reduced capacity to a single sprinkler. With almost complete reliance on the weather, trying to maintain a good golf course was virtually impossible, but relentless hand-watering had allowed them to get by.

"It was hard to achieve any consistency," explained Course Manager Archie Dunn. "Overseeding was too risky and applying products when the weather dictated, rather than when the turf needed them, meant we never felt in control of our maintenance."

Last year's unprecedented heatwave pushed them to the brink of closure. In May members were voicing discontent

and by August the course was tinder dry with soil moisture readings on greens and tee surfaces at 0%. In peak season, and despite the desperate efforts of Archie and his team who hand-watered around the clock, the course was unplayable with virtually no grass cover. They lost every green and tee and all their visitor income, which was 70% repeat business. Surviving another year in that situation simply wasn't viable.

During his 26-year tenure, Archie had presented proposals for an irrigation system on numerous occasions, so when



Image by Phil Langdon of 2ic

the club agreed to the investment, he was able to move quickly. Irrigation consultants 2ic were appointed in September 2018 to secure a sustainable water supply and design a new system to irrigate the greens, tees and approaches.

Following a competitive tender, Archie and the club selected a Rain Bird IC System with Stratus LT Central Control and secured the services of contractor MJ Abbott to break ground in the New Year.

"Our priority was to install a system that delivers everything we need now and in the future in order to minimise cost and disruption," Archie said.

## Client-centric solutions

MJ Abbott committed to having the system fully operational by the end of March, which required careful coordination by 2ic to bring each element of the project together.

A potential borehole location was identified years ago by the late Mike Cranfield. Using divining rods, Phil Langdon of 2ic was able to hone in, resulting in the availability of 32m<sup>3</sup> per hour of water. While no additional mains water is needed, the consultants added the pipe and cable for mains water backup into the same trench in case of borehole pump failure.



Image by Phil Langdon of 2ic

Power and water were re-routed around the course and the same trenches used to extend WiFi from the clubhouse to the greenkeepers' compound. A new pump station and water tanks were located to the south side of the course with Rain Bird's IC CONNECT sensor

input devices installed, enabling pump performance and water levels to be monitored from the central control. The IC System minimises cable joints reducing possible faults, and Rain Bird suggested conducting sprinkler trials on individual tees, while nozzles were

selected for certain areas of the course to ensure optimal uniformity of coverage.

"The difference is night and day," Archie said. "Finally, we're able to get the full benefit of the products and sand we apply and getting much quicker results. We began our autumn renovations the first week in August, when in previous years we'd have waited until late September or October. We've also received feedback about the improved playability and performance from our members and visitors, which is great for team morale."

"The Stratus LT central control allows us to monitor and manage the entire system in real-time from anywhere, and with our relatively modest budget I really didn't think that would be possible. I haven't had an automated system in my greenkeeping career so it has been a big change, but I've found it easier to use than I expected. The support and training we've received from Rain Bird and the installation team has been superb, and my deputy and I are looking forward to further fine-tuning over the winter."

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# MEET THE INVENTOR

## The man behind the machine

**Designed to relieve compaction, improve drainage and revitalise growth, the OxyShot was introduced into the Charterhouse Turf Machinery portfolio at BTME 2019.**

It was a long road to Harrogate for the machine's creator, Peter Knight, who spent 10 years converting the concept of the OxyShot into a reality.

Peter is a well-known name in the field of sports turf maintenance and construction. He established his company, Bury Turfcare, in 1988 and over the years has kept abreast with the tools and techniques required to keep playing surfaces first-rate.

"When it came to the spot-treatment of heavily compacted soil, the go-to machine was always a Robin Dagger," said Peter. "I was regularly out contracting with the Robin Dagger and it was a popular machine with groundsmen and greenkeepers across the industry.

"While everyone who used it agreed it was a brilliant machine, it wasn't without its problems! The noise of it deafened you, the emissions from the petrol-driven engine nearly choked you and the vibration of the unit nearly killed you! It therefore wasn't a massive shock when it was removed from the market for health

and safety reasons. However, a machine to conduct the same job never emerged into the market to fill the gap.

"I spoke to a number of people who agreed there was definitely a gap in the market for a new air-injection machine, so I used the concept of a product that worked but went back to the drawing board for a completely new design.

One of the main elements was to run the OxyShot purely off a large compressor, eliminating the need for electrics to reduce the risk of failures. The first version of the OxyShot was pieced together in Peter's shed, from various parts and components from other machines.

Peter said: "I took this from engineer to engineer before I found someone who could invest the time, taking it piece by piece, to create bespoke components that would go on to form the very first prototype. It was then that Charterhouse Turf Machinery and their parent company Redexim, became involved and suggested modifications that my engineer could work with.

"It was all a massive learning curve, from understanding how to make the machine perform as I wanted, to sourcing all the necessary certification. Ten years

of blood, sweat, and at times, tears. But the combination of my hands-on experience as a contractor, Redexim's manufacturing know-how and the expertise of the engineer proved to be the perfect mix."

The end result is a unit that uses a single 25mm probe to inject air into the soil in four directions, at a pressure of up to 110psi and to a maximum depth of 500mm (20"). It can also be fitted with an optional 14mm probe, to reduce the working depth to 250mm. It lifts, expands and de-compacts the ground, without the need for chemical applications.

At Ipswich Town Football Club, Grounds Manager Ben Connell has experienced first-hand the benefits of the OxyShot. He said: "Despite aerating with solid tines throughout the season and into the lead-up to the wet winter, we had some problems with waterlogging on one of our academy pitches. I called Peter in December, who deduced there was a pan layer at a depth of roughly 400mm causing these areas to hold water. As the OxyShot can work deeper than regular aeration work, he brought the unit in to shatter the pan layer and since then, this area has been free-draining."

So impressed with the results, Ben had the OxyShot back a few weeks later to carry out air injection on another problem area.

"We worked on an area roughly 10m<sup>2</sup> and the results were fantastic," said Ben. "We had some really significant rainfall throughout the winter and while some surrounding areas were very wet, the test patch was free-draining and clear of any puddling.

"Nine months later and we're still seeing the benefits of the work, with no compaction to report. As we now pre-empt the winter, we're looking to have the OxyShot back in to work on a couple of different areas that need a little extra attention."

As well as dealing with compaction on sports pitches, the highly manoeuvrable unit can be easily transported for spot treatments in a variety of situations on the golf course — from high footfall areas such as walkways, to improving the drainage on greens and in bunkers. It can also be used for arboricultural operations, to deliver aeration to tree roots growing in compacted, air-starved soils.

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**Charterhouse**  
TURF MACHINERY

OxyShot in action



# Get with the programme

STRI trials demonstrate the importance of 'programmed approach'

**With curative chemistry limited, Bayer has been looking at alternative solutions to control Microdochium Patch and trials have highlighted that a programmed approach is vital to see the best results.**

Colin Mumford, Bayer technical support manager, explained that the importance of researching alternative control solutions has been a priority for Bayer, as this is the last year curative products that can be applied in the later stages of disease development will be available.

## Plot trials

A fully replicated six-month trial was set-up by the STRI on a sandy loam golf green to assess preventative and curative treatments. Taking place during the winter months, when *Microdochium* patch is prevalent, the trial featured preventative and curative programmes, as well as untreated control plots.

Each of the preventative programmes included applications of Bayer fungicides formulated with Stressgard technology, which is intended to mitigate stress and improve plant health.

Colin said: "The treatment programme included preventative programmes, some of which had additional nutrition, and were compared

against curative, fungicide only programmes. Maintenance work to the plots was like-for-like to allow a direct comparison between programmes.

"The preventative programmes were mobilised before disease was visible and the curative programmes were implemented as and when the disease developed to an unacceptable level, to replicate the strategies greenkeepers would typically undertake."

## Results

When measuring the success of each programme, three elements were assessed: disease presence, turf quality and turf colour.

"When monitoring disease presence, the results showed that all treatment programmes controlled the spread of *Microdochium* Patch," said Colin. "However, preventative treatments applied prior to visible signs of turf disease were significantly more effective."

Colin explained that although the curative programmes did reduce the spread of *Microdochium* Patch to some extent, they were unable to eradicate it. He added: "When it came to a programmed approach, an integrated strategy was the most effective option. This can be attributed to the fact that

turf health was improved, leaving the plants less susceptible to disease, and the increased nutrition enabled plant growth and recovery to fill in disease scars and improve plant density."

It was found that turf quality had a direct correlation with disease severity and as *Microdochium* Patch increased, turf quality decreased.

"The best results were seen when a preventative treatment was applied," said Colin. "This highlights the importance of controlling outbreaks early, as this limits disease presence and helps maintain plant density."

The plots were also assessed for turf colour and scored from one to 10 with 'one' being a straw colour and '10' a dark green.

"All preventative treated plots saw a significant improvement in turf colour, which the untreated and curative did not see," said Colin. "Colour is an important part of visual quality and a key driver for golfer satisfaction."

## Practical tips

"Ultimately what these trials show is that a preventative approach is the way forward for greenkeepers and there are simple steps that can be taken to implement this approach and help control disease," said

Colin. "Application timing should be considered with any treatment, as it's important to nip diseases, such as *Microdochium* Patch, in the bud before it affects turf quality and playability.

"With a preventative approach, the application needs to be made ahead of the disease establishing, so it's important to monitor environmental conditions to pre-empt outbreaks."

Colin added that plant nutrition is also an important factor to consider, as good plant health can help reduce stress.

"Too much or too little nitrogen can encourage disease and so I'd recommend regular testing of nutrient levels to ensure the balance is correct," he said. "Diseases don't cope well with pH changes and can't survive in low pH conditions, so including nutrition

supplements that also help reduce pH will reduce the risk of disease occurring. But do not reduce pH so low that it becomes detrimental to plant health or the microbial communities in the soil.

"Ultimately the future of chemicals is changing, and an integrated approach is fundamental to future disease control. Implementing these simple techniques can help keep diseases at bay, allowing

greenkeepers to have a healthy golf course with high playability, without the use of curative chemistry."

## Summary

Colin concluded: "The trials prove the best results are seen when a programmed approach is undertaken. Early fungicide treatments with Stressgard technology were the foundation of the

preventative programmes, minimising the outbreak of disease and improving turf quality. The result was consistent improvement in colour, density and overall health of the turf."

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# The challenges of weather changes

Glenn Kirby, Syngenta technical manager



The science of modern greenkeeping

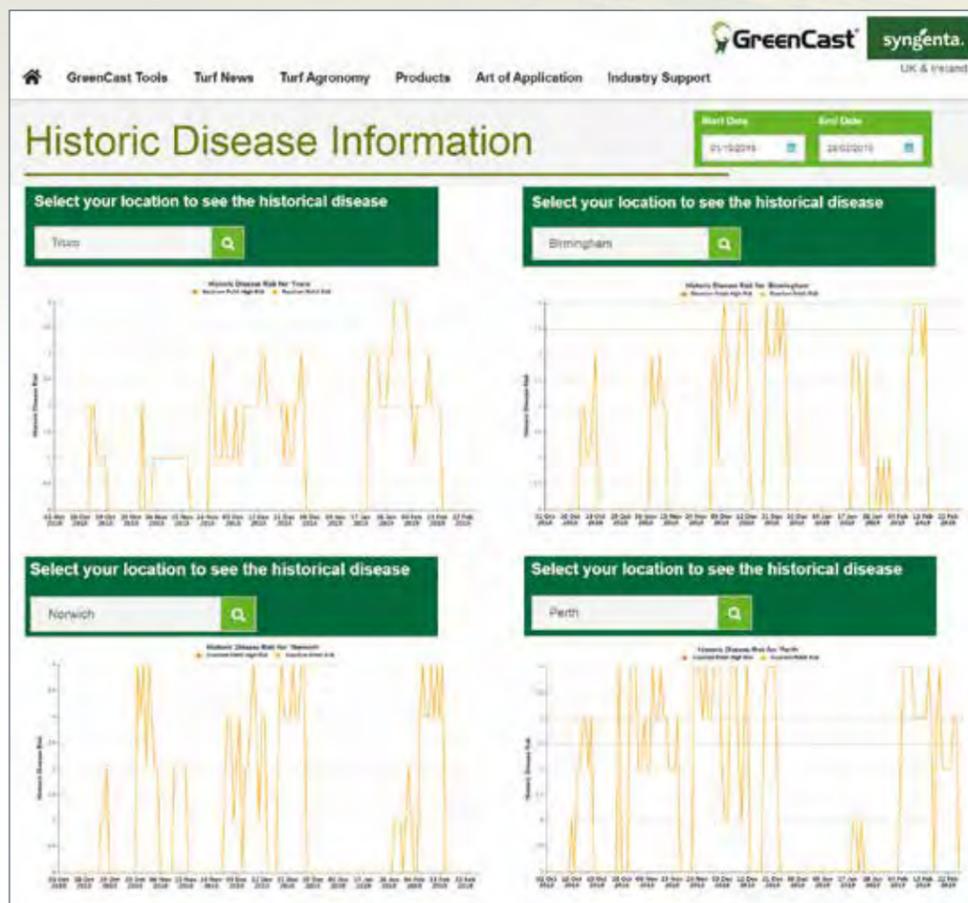
Changing climatic conditions are putting ever greater pressure on turf management all through the year and it is set to get worse within the working career of today's greenkeepers.

Meteorological science indicates the clear trend to warmer weather patterns, but possibly more significant for immediate turf management is the greater frequency and duration of extreme weather events.

While studies of weather records on GreenCast and other source data confirms the warming temperatures, in the short term that is unlikely to see wholesale shifts in management, such as introducing warm season grasses or Mediterranean turf management techniques, for example.

However, while overall temperatures are gradually rising, we have seen a distinct move towards significantly warmer autumn and early winter conditions, with a clear trend for minimum temperatures in this period lifting until January or February. That has really focused attention on actions to protect turf through the protracted high risk period in

Figure one: Regional differences in disease pressure - winter 2018-19



November and December, as seen in Figure one, above.

Turf managers are going to have to respond quickly to these changing trends and seasonal anomalies. Adopting new technologies and

Integrated Turf Management (ITM) techniques that are better designed and fully researched to reflect these changing conditions, will be more important than ever.

There is going to be no

let-up in ITM all year round.

The crucial importance of ITM has been demonstrated in STRI trials, with the results presented in Figure two on the adjacent page. Managed under good ITM practice over

the winter, a calculated nutrition programme was effective at suppressing low pressure disease levels at seven to 10% through the early part of the winter.

When disease pressure ramped up to 25%+ on untreated turf, however, the good practices needed to be augmented with fungicide application to cut disease level to less than 2% and maintain high surface quality.

With quickly changing weather conditions, greenkeepers are going to need to be more adept at predicting periods of risk, and using their experience to decide when to spray.

Independent trials have

consistently shown that today's fungicide chemistry is more effective when applied preventatively, compared to curative applications when disease has got into the plant.

Fortunately, short-term weather forecasting is getting ever more accurate and reliable at seeing events conducive to disease, along with the development of more sophisticated disease modelling programmes that can adaptively predict localised risks and recommend appropriate actions.

It does mean that when practices that impact on turf stress occur, such as renovation, the greater risk of an adverse weather event will require a

focussed pro-active ITM approach to prevent disease outbreaks and ensure faster recovery (See Greenkeeper Int. Insight — August 2019).

Furthermore, environmental abiotic stresses as a result of weather patterns will also need to be better evaluated through ITM research trials and their impacts on turf health fully understood.

It is increasingly apparent that you can no longer rely on a hard cold snap to reduce disease infection risk. And, as seen with this season's weather patterns and disease incidence, infections of microdochium patch that had hitherto been considered

primarily a winter issue, were breaking out right through the summer – creating a reservoir infection for the autumn.

Now, an increasingly important part of ITM disease management will be reducing the levels of pathogen in and around the turf, such that it is more resilient to infection during weather induced risk periods.

That will include thatch removal to reduce the initial source of the inoculum and removing the surface water layer conducive to disease, along with targeted

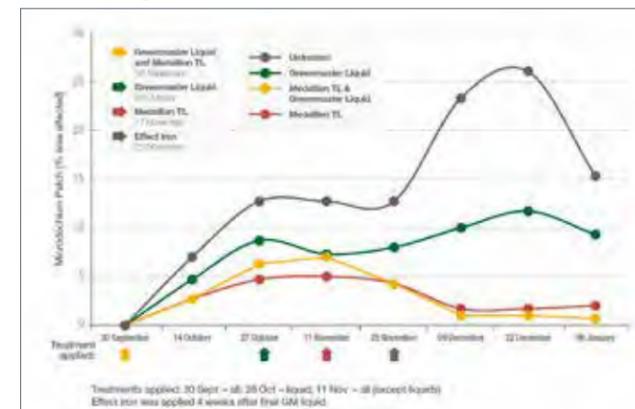
applications of Medallion TL. That has been shown to target spores in the crown and thatch area, as well as contact protection on the leaf to prevent spores initially getting into the plant.

The positive news is that STRI trials have shown that fungicides applied preventatively at periods of high risk according to disease risk models, can maintain cleaner and higher quality turf from fewer applications over the course of the season, compared to fire-brigade treatment at the first signs of infection or simply routine application.

Continued investment in new research and development will be required to continue to adapt existing techniques and to bring new tools for turf managers.

Equally important will be the skills and experience to recognise the changes happening, and to effectively adopt new solutions.

Figure two: STRI trial results for fungicide integration into ITM programmes



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# AROUND THE GREEN

## Leading education on the cards for ICL's scholars

### National

**BIGGA and ICL are pleased to announce the five successful recipients of the fourth ICL Continue to Learn Scholarship.**

- The successful BIGGA members are:
- / William Curran, greenkeeper, Beaverbrook;
  - / Phil Worth, head greenkeeper, Macclesfield;
  - / Thomas Tomlinson, assistant greenkeeper, Boldon;
  - / Joe Lamb, assistant greenkeeper, West Herts;
  - / Melissa Winkworth, assistant greenkeeper, Goring and Streatley.

The ICL Continue to Learn 2020 Scholars will receive three nights' hotel accommodation and 15 hours of training and personal development at the world-leading education programme, supported by BIGGA Partner and specialty fertiliser company ICL.

Ed Carter, ICL's UK sales and development manager, said: "ICL is delighted to sponsor such a worthwhile scheme. The calibre of recipients each year has been outstanding and we're delighted that these five ambitious BIGGA members will join our growing community of ICL Scholars."

"Each of the applicants were of a similarly high standard and the selection



The ICL Scholars from 2019 alongside ICL's Ed Carter

decision was extremely difficult, as is always the case."

The ICL Scholarship has proved a fantastic stepping stone for a number of BIGGA members, including Future Turf Managers Initiative 2019 graduates Michael Hughes and Simon Pyett and Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year 2018 Daniel Ashelby.

Sami Strutt, BIGGA's head of member

development, said: "This year we received 75 applications for this fantastic member opportunity. Whittling them down to five has been a real challenge!"

"The recipients of the scholarship will benefit from both attending great education and networking with their peers. We look forward to welcoming the ICL Scholars to BTME 2020 for what promises to be another great event."

### Trilby Tour

#### Central England Region - East Midlands

**When the hard work's done, even course managers need to let their hair down.**

After a busy morning helping the team at Gaudet Luce prepare the course for the Trilby Tour, The Worcestershire's course manager Steve Lloyd was given the opportunity to compete in the event.

Steve even enlisted Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year runner-up Josh Marshall as caddy.



Steve Lloyd and Josh Marshall

# BIGGA Photo Competition

The BIGGA Photo Competition once again attracted some incredible entries as members from all over the country headed out to snap images of their course.

The level of photography we saw was almost as good as the standard of greenkeeping being snapped, making the job of narrowing down the entries to 24 finalists extremely difficult for the judges!

Now we're turning the competition over to you, the

BIGGA members. On the BIGGA Facebook page (@golfgreenkeepers), we've set up a photo album entitled "BIGGA Photo Competition 2019".

In that album we've chosen our favourite 24 images and we need BIGGA members to help us narrow down the choice to 12 finalists — one for each month of the year. The 12 photographs that receive the most votes will be selected for inclusion in the BIGGA Photo Calendar 2020.

The judges will then take into consideration the number of votes received by the various finalists when choosing which entry should be crowned BIGGA Photographic Competition champion 2019!

Voting ends on Friday 1 November 2019 with the winner being announced in the December edition of Greenkeeper International. Have a look at the images below to see just some of the top 24.



Shaun Cunningham, Mortonhal



Paul Roberts, Holyhead



Stuart Griffiths, Blair Atholl



Joe Simpson, Ipswich



James Breeze, Huddersfield



Paul Connolly, Ralston



George Morley, The Dyke



Jake Austin, Hankley Common



Andrew Bate, The Hesketh



Aidan Wright, Camberley Heath



Mike Williams, Royal Mid-Surrey



Paul Brown, Ham Manor

Get in touch with our local Membership Services team

### Scotland & Northern Ireland



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John Young 07776 242 120 johnyoung@bigga.co.uk

### Northern



Chairman Jack Hetherington



Sandra Raper 07866 366 966 sandra@bigga.co.uk

### Central England



Chairman Andrew Smith



Roger Butler 07525 593 359 roger@bigga.co.uk

### South West & South Wales



Chairman Steve Lloyd



Tracey Walker 07841 948 110 tracey.walker@bigga.co.uk

### South East



Chairman Peter Smith



Clive Osgood 07841 948410 cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk



Kerry Phillips 07715 672568 kerry@bigga.co.uk

# SHORT PUTTS

## Scholarship

### SW & SW Region - South West

Lyme Regis greenkeeper Jamie Hughes is the latest recipient of a higher education scholarship, supported by Textron Golf.

Jamie, 29, is a greenkeeper at the Devon club and he is studying towards his HNC with Elmwood College.

## Cricket visit

### SW & SW Region - South West



The South West Section is hosting an education day at Bristol County Cricket Ground during October

Section scribe Seb Cavilla said: "Following the amazing success of the English cricket team in the World Cup and the war of attrition that was the Ashes, we felt it would be a great time to visit our sports turf colleagues and learn exactly what goes in to preparing a wicket for such events."

The visit takes place on Tuesday 29 October, with free lunch on arrival, and coincides with the section's AGM. Afterwards, the club's head groundsman will discuss renovations, maintenance and expectations and will be happy to field any questions.

## Golf Management Trophy qualifier

### South West & South Wales Region - South Coast

A qualifying event for the Golf Management Trophy sponsored by Rigby Taylor took place at Barton-on-Sea on 11 September.

Ten teams competed for a place in the final on a blustery day, with Rowlands Castle scoring 90 points to claim victory. In second place was

the team from Army Golf Club with 84 points.

BIGGA Membership Services Manager Tracey Walker said: "A big thanks to Barton-on-Sea for hosting the event and to Tony Gadd, Jon Worrall and the greenkeeping team for presenting such a superb course."



## Peter Biscoe

### South East Region - Kent

BIGGA was saddened to hear of the passing of Retired Member Peter Biscoe at the age of 84.

A keen golfer throughout his life, Peter took part in many Kent Section events, including winning the Kent Seniors Championship.

He also represented the association as part of the volunteer support teams at Wentworth for the PGA Championship and The Open for a number of years.

"Peter's son, Neale, said:

"He loved and enjoyed the camaraderie of his fellow greenkeepers and also the fact he met so many of his favourite professional golfers!"

"All in all, BIGGA gave him many happy memories."

A former RAF serviceman and keen birdwatcher, Peter worked at Cray Valley prior to his retirement and was a member at Eltham Warren, where in 1999 he won the club championship just weeks after a heart bypass operation.



Peter Biscoe



Peter volunteered at a number of events, including Open Championships as part of the volunteer support team

## Jim Caldwell retires

### Scotland Region - West

The West of Scotland Section has wished Jim Caldwell a happy retirement after he stepped down from his role at Sandyhills in Glasgow.

The section also took part in an autumn outing at Glasgow Golf Club, with

Course Manager Stuart Taylor hosting the event.

Section scribe Scott McTaggart said: "The course was in tremendous condition, absolutely amazing! It was a great day and thanks to everyone who supported it."



Picture by Sandhills Golf Club

## Essential poolside reading

### Northern Region - Sheffield



Chris Bates and Robert Grayson in Cape Verde

Birstall head greenkeeper Chris Bates travelled to Cape Verde off the African coast to escape work, only to run into a fellow greenkeeper reading a copy of Greenkeeper

International by the pool! Keeping up-to-date with the latest association news and features, even while on holiday, was Robert Grayson, head greenkeeper at

Stocksbridge. What's the most exotic place you've ever read your Greenkeeper International? Snap us a picture and we'll feature you in the magazine!

## DOGS ON COURSE



@DOGS\_OF\_GREENKEEPING\_BIGGA

**Name:** Maverick  
**Owner:** Clive Fisher  
**Course:** Drayton Park  
**Favourite treat:** Chasing squirrels  
**Favourite spot on the course:** In the woods when we're tree felling with a fire going  
**My dog is happiest when...** He's riding on the Toro Workman while I'm out changing holes

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# SHORT PUTTS

Praise for event hosts

**Northern Region - North Wales**



The teams at Royal Liverpool and Royal St David's have been praised after successfully hosting events at their clubs.

The Hoylake club hosted the Walker Cup, won by the team of amateurs from the USA, while Royal St David's in Harlech hosted the R&A Women's Senior Amateur Championship.

Section scribe Eifion Ellis said: "Both courses were superbly presented and Craig and Rhys would like to say thanks to both their teams and to all the volunteers who took the time out to help."

## Bearsted

**South East Region - Kent**

The Kent Section has offered its congratulations to Mark Bell after he became the course manager at Bearsted.

Mark, 36, was the former course manager at Birchwood Park and had overseen an 18-month bunker redevelopment programme at the venue, beginning in January 2018.

'Don't stop the mowing...'

**Scotland Region - Central**

Carnoustie links superintendent Craig Boath bumped into Justin Timberlake as the chart topper was preparing for the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship.

A scratch handicapper, Timberlake asked Craig a number of questions about the course, having not played at Carnoustie since 2007.



Craig Boath and Justin Timberlake

## Autumn golf day at Glenbervie

**Scotland Region - Central**



Douglas Melville, David Simpson and Kevin Friend

The Central Section held its autumn outing at Glenbervie, with 32 members taking part.

Winners on the day were: Best scratch, David Simpson of Crieff; Best Stableford, Douglas Melville of Falkirk; 1st class handicap, Paul Murphy of Fife Golf Trust; 2nd class

handicap, Kevin Friend of Thornton.

Congratulations also went to Paul Murphy for his hole-in-one on the 7th.

Section scribe Craig Boath said: "Thanks to course manager Paul Todd for producing a great course for

us to play and to all at Glenbervie for being so welcoming."

The section's pairs competition final will be played between Wes Saunders and Callum Gordon against James Naylor and David Grant.

## Cooden Beach

**South East Region - Sussex**

The Sussex Section hosted its autumn tournament on 12 September at Cooden Beach.

Twenty-four participants took part in the twoball betterball competition, with just two points separating the top six teams. The winners of the event were C Ahier and C Brown, scoring 46 points.

Section scribe Chris Humphrey said: "A big thank you to the club and our sponsors, Tacit, for ensuring we had a really great day."



Cooden Beach greenkeepers with Course Manager Jon Hill at centre

# Turf REWARDS



# New and improved Turf Rewards for 2019

Sign up to Turf Rewards and collect points to put towards rewards when you purchase ICL and Syngenta products. Use the best technologies on your turf and get the best rewards for your club.

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Benefit from better turf





# AROUND THE GLOBE

Brian Stiehler CGCS MG | Highlands Country Club | North Carolina

## How would you describe the style of course you manage and what is your club's claim to fame?

Highlands is a parkland course in the mountains of North Carolina.

The club was founded by Bobby Jones and his father, who spent summers in Highlands. At a 4,000ft elevation, our summers are much cooler than the surrounding southeast US.

The course was routed through forest land, so trees are plenty. The course was designed by Donald Ross and opened for play in 1928.

## How does greenkeeping in North Carolina vary from the UK?

I spent eight months working for Eddie Adams on the Old Course at St Andrews in 1999 as a student at Penn State University. Therefore, I have a tremendous appreciation for the history of the game and the art of greenkeeping.

In the UK, golfers and greenkeepers have their priorities straight. It's the way golf should be played and golf courses maintained. It's a much more natural and organic process than how we do it in the US. Member standards are often unrealistic, and the science of turf management is very unnatural.

I wish all golfers could be educated on how the game is approached in the UK.

## How does the weather affect your work?

In Highlands, we are considered a temperate rainforest. We receive on average 96 inches of rain per year. This makes my job very challenging.

We are constantly battling several disease pathogens, as well as improving drainage on several playing surfaces.

Dollar spot, Take-all patch and Pythium root rot are my three biggest disease challenges.

The rainfall also makes it very challenging to maintain firm putting greens and fairways. In 2018, we set a record and received 130 inches of rain!

## How does the availability of resources, such as chemicals or machinery, impact what you are able to achieve?

We are fortunate to have a great fleet of Toro equipment that the club leases or buys, based on several factors, like use and technology.

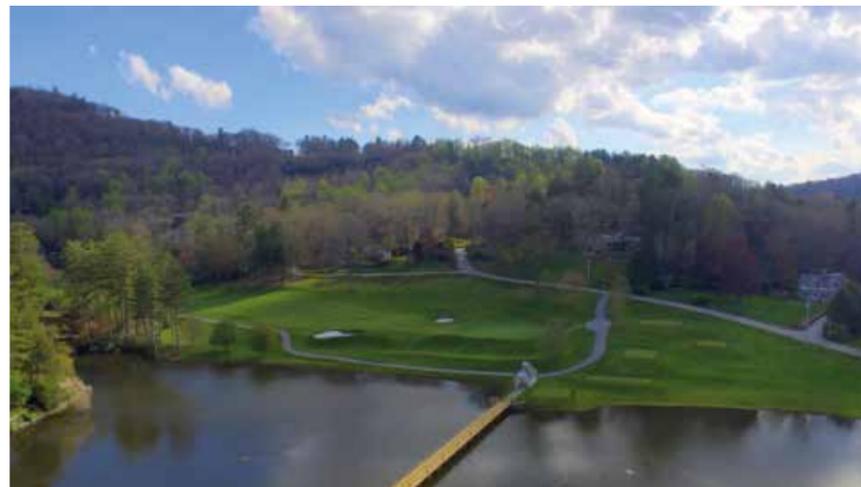
I have a wonderful tech team who are well versed in all our equipment.

I have a great team of roughly 28 people who oversee the golf course, landscape department and practice facility operations.

Given our rainfall totals and frequency, we spend a considerable amount of money on fungicide applications during the season. Fairways and tees are treated on a 14-day interval and greens on a seven-day interval.

## What turfgrass species do you grow on your course and how are they impacted by your climate?

Our greens were reconstructed in



1998 and built to USGA specifications.

They were seeded with Penn A4 Bentgrass, but are slowly becoming inundated with Poa annua.

With our cooler temperatures and intense rain fall, Highlands is one of the rare areas in the country where it is possible to grow good Poa. Of course, Poa is adaptable to any environment, so it does better in shaded conditions compared to Creeping Bentgrass.

Our fairways are comprised of a 50/50 bent/poa mix, as are the tees. Our roughs are ideally Kentucky Bluegrass. However, bentgrass gets established in the roughs and becomes a battle.

Built in 1928, Highlands has never been altered (except the greens in 1998) and is essentially 90 years' worth of genetic mutations, so we have a nice stable mix of grasses on most of our playing surfaces.

## What is greenkeeper training like in the US and how does that impact recruitment?

To become a superintendent or head greenkeeper, a turf degree is required.

There are many great four-year bachelors degree programmes and



two-year certificate or associates degree programmes around the country. I have three assistants, who all have education.

In the US, the number of graduates is not enough to fill the jobs available. This is great if you're looking for an entry-level position but difficult for many facilities.

Recruitment of crew members is also very difficult. With unemployment at low levels, there just isn't a large labour pool for workers. On top of that, the physicality and nature of our job is enough to deter many of those that are available.

The Federal Government is always threatening to eliminate or cut back on

the H2B visa program that allows foreign workers to temporarily work in the US.

There are many clubs in rural areas who struggle to find good help.

## What interaction do you have with golfers at your club and how are you perceived by them?

I have a tremendous amount of involvement with the membership in several different ways. I report to a greens committee that is comprised of 10 members. It is critically important for a superintendent to understand their membership's expectations and desires.

Every day, I try to view the course and grounds from their perspective. My membership has a tremendous amount of respect for the position and as time progresses, it becomes a greater respect because they understand what we do.

In the US, superintendent salaries are climbing more than other department heads, including the head golf professional. In many instances, the superintendent is the highest paid club employee. I think as time goes on, this will only continue to improve.

## Why do you choose to be a BIGGA member?

Ever since my time at St Andrews, I knew I wanted to be a BIGGA member. It was also a goal to achieve my Master Greenkeeper certificate, which I did in 2017. BIGGA is a great organisation, has an excellent publication and offers great continuing education. I hope to return to Harrogate in the next year or two. My family loved the trip to England.

## What have you learnt through being a member of BIGGA?

I enjoy the networking and keeping an open mind and learning from my colleagues in other countries. I love the traditions of greenkeeping that you all are experts of. In the US, we tend to complicate things and make it more difficult than they need to be.

## What tip would you give British greenkeepers that you have learnt?

Don't change a thing. I admire my colleagues in the UK and you offer so much to the industry.

I think there is more that British greenkeepers could bring to the US, than we could bring to the UK. I am forever grateful for the time I spent there and working with the guys I did.

## Where will your ideas take you?

Do you use your passion for greenkeeping to inspire change, new media to engage with others or share your experience in the wider community? If so the BIGGA Excellence in Communication Awards with Campey Turf Care Systems are just for you.

BIGGA has teamed up with Campey Turf Care Systems to celebrate BIGGA members who make a positive impact on their working lives and the wider golfing industry through communication. With a trip to Florida available now is your chance to get involved.

**The Categories are:**

- Thought Leadership and Innovation
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# INDUSTRY NEWS

## Your chance to shape research

**Golf course managers and greenkeepers are being given the opportunity to determine the direction of an innovative new research programme led by STRI in association with BIGGA.**

The Golf Research Enterprise (GREEN) is aimed at identifying and developing solutions to the problems facing golf course managers now and in the future. The project is fully funded by the STRI as part of its commitment to supporting the industry. Results from the study will be made available to all.

Dr Ruth Mann, head of global research at STRI, said: "The Golf Research Enterprise will give all golf turf managers the opportunity to influence decisions on where research in the future should be focused. I'm really looking forward to working with greenkeepers to discover how we can address these challenges and further enhance golf course management. Through this initiative, alongside our efforts with the Golf Environment Awards and research days, STRI continues to support the greenkeeping industry with education, research and information."

Crucially, the decision as to what GREEN researches is down to greenkeepers. BIGGA members are being encouraged to tell the STRI about the burning issues on their golf course by logging onto and completing a short questionnaire survey at [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GREnterprise](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GREnterprise).

The results will be collated, with those of greatest concern prioritised. This list



STRI CEO Mark Godfrey, Global Head of Research Dr Ruth Mann and BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton

will then be discussed at BTME 2020.

Depending on the nature of the research programme that is instigated, BIGGA members may have the opportunity to be a part of the GREEN research programme by completing parts of the research objective on the golf course under the guidance of STRI. Anyone willing to be a part of this process should indicate so on the returned questionnaire.

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton said: "What makes the Golf Research Enterprise different from those initiatives that have come before it is that greenkeepers are being placed at the very heart of the project. BIGGA members have the

opportunity to help shape the direction of the research and they will also be able to play an active role in any trials and practical studies that arise.

"In such a rapidly-changing industry, it's vitally important that there's clarity in the advice being given to our members.

"If we are to meet the ever-rising challenges of golf course management, we need to have answers to the questions that are being asked and so this initiative from the STRI is very welcome."

Research results will be updated in seminars at BTME and STRI Research Days, online and via social media and through articles in Greenkeeper International and STRI's Bulletin.

## Swan Golf Designs completes bunker restoration at Huddersfield



A renovated bunker at Huddersfield

**William Swan has unveiled a complete renovation of the bunkers at the 128-year-old Huddersfield Golf Club, known as Fixby.**

The course has been tweaked down the years by some of the best-known names in golf course design, having originally been laid out by Tom Dunn.

William, the managing director of Swan Golf Design, said: "We went back to the early 1900s, when there was arguably the last significant bunker

project - under the direction of Herbert Fowler. We've been able to look at the archive photographs and plans, including some aerial images from 1926, around the time Fowler was on site. That showed how the course was laid out and how the bunkers looked at that time. And that's from where we took our inspiration."

Working alongside contractor ProFusion Environmental, the bunkers were restored to a style of bunker presentation seen in the 1920s and 30s.

## DLF becomes latest Education Supporter

**The world's leading breeder and producer of natural grass seed solutions for the sports turf industry has become the latest company to sign up as a BIGGA Education Supporter.**

DLF and Johnsons Sport Seed have struck up a partnership with BIGGA that will see them provide educational support to help develop the greenkeeping profession across the UK.

Derek Smith, amenity sales and marketing manager for DLF, said: "We are major supporters of the UK turf management industry, being lifelong exhibitors at BTME and major sponsors of the IOG Turf Management Awards.

"Education is critical in the modern turf industry and DLF is very much a science-based business, with 1 in 10 members working in research and development. Having worked closely with BIGGA at both local and national level, we

are very proud to be strengthening our relationship further and supporting education for greenkeepers by becoming a BIGGA Education supporter."

By focusing closely on customer demands, environmental sustainability and through significant investment in a global breeding programme, DLF ensures that both the Masterline and Johnsons sports seed brands are at the forefront of product development.

The introduction of 4turf tetraploid perennial ryegrasses helps greenkeepers deliver healthier turf, while reducing input costs and environmental impact. DLF are also a major producer of both native and non-native wildflower recreation seed mixtures, with a national team of regional technical managers available



DLF's Derek Smith

to offer advice.

Johnsons Sports Seed is the only dedicated sports turf seed brand in the UK.

Established in 1820, Johnsons Sports Seed mixtures have been helping to produce high quality sports turf with a reputation for technical excellence.

DLF are market leaders in seed coat technology, with many popular mixes available pre-coated.

## SPARE PARTS

### Brighton course sale

**Brighton's two council-owned golf courses have been placed up for sale with the local authority choosing to explore other uses for them.**

The Brighton & Hove News reported that due to a dwindling in golfer numbers on the Hollingbury and Waterhall courses, councillors have approved plans to advertise the leaseholds for golf or other potential leisure uses.

The two courses are currently managed externally by the charity, MyTime Active.

# EDUCATE EXHIBIT EVOLVE

**Continue to Learn 2020 | 19-22 January 2020**  
**Harrogate Convention Centre | [btme.org.uk](http://btme.org.uk)**

BIGGA's dynamic and world-leading education programme returns to Harrogate in January.

With 250 hours of education delivered by more than 60 of the industry's most engaging speakers, Continue to Learn 2020 will deliver the best opportunity for professional development anywhere in the turf management industry.

## Tandridge improvements



Members of Tandridge in Oxted, Surrey, have approved a budget for autumn and winter refurbishment work.

Work on the Harry Colt-designed course, under the auspices of golf course architect Tim Lobb, will see the removal and refurbishment of bunkers.

Run-off surrounds around the first green will also be improved, including the installation of irrigation.

The meeting to approve the works also saw the approval of the club's 'Course Design Policy' document that will form a blueprint for all future work on the course.

**The Green Room**

**On the podcast this month:**

**Episode 21:** Ian Jelley of the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust discusses how your course can become a 'living landscape'.

**Episode 22:** Meet Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winners Jason Norwood of Rudding Park and Tom Bromfield of Trentham

## Irrigation refit at Ganton

Ganton in North Yorkshire has upgraded its irrigation system with Toro Lynx central control and Infinity speakers on the greens and aprons.

The sandy course in the Vale of Pickering is counted among the top 80 golf courses in the world. Over the years, the original characteristics of the heathland and links course have changed and undulations have been lost due to woodland and heathland growth. As a result, the greenkeeping team has been restoring the more traditional aspects of the course. Some of the aprons have been made larger to widen the areas of play.

Deputy Head Greenkeeper Mathew Wormald explained this was what instigated the decision to replace the irrigation system: "The previous system was over 20 years old, so we were coming

up to the time to replace it, simply to take advantage of the technological improvements a new central control system, such as Toro Lynx, would offer. The upgrade was made urgent after the work to update the course. The old sprinklers didn't have the capabilities to throw water as far as we

needed with the changes we made to cover the bigger area of play on the green."

Mathew had a diverse CV before joining Ganton, with stints in Belgium and Hong Kong, all of which brought experience to one of the few clubs to have staged the Curtis Cup, Walker Cup and Ryder Cup.



Ganton's Mathew Wormald alongside Reesink's Peter Newton

## Jobs saved



Toft Country House

Thirty jobs have been saved at a hotel and golf course in Lincolnshire after a pre-pack administration sale was agreed.

Giri Golf has taken over Toft Country House Hotel and Golf Course in Bourne.

As well as retaining the entire workforce, Giri Golf has acquired the par 71 golf course, which has a club membership in excess of 300.

Begbie Traynor's Marco Piacquadio, who led the deal, said: "We are delighted to have achieved this sale."

# SALTEX 2019: What's happening?

Taking place at the NEC in Birmingham on 30 to 31 October, SALTEX 2019 will feature over 300 exhibitors, including some of the leading names in groundscape.

The two-day event will offer visitors the opportunity to experience the latest industry trends and innovations, enhance their education and learn from industry experts.

The exhibition is the longest-standing event of its kind in the world, having been held almost every year since 1938. Show features taking place this year include an Eco Village, where there will be live demonstrations dedicated to environmentally-friendly products. The SALTEX Innovation Award will

celebrate the best in new groundscape technology, while there will also be a job clinic, 'Ask the Expert' turfcare advice and a number of other exhibition features.

Learning LIVE is SALTEX's free-to-attend education programme and takes place in four dedicated seminar theatres spread across the show floor. The education programme will kickstart with 'Creating Champions' and a line-up of speakers including Neil Stubley of the All England Lawn Tennis Club and Karl McDermott of Lord's Cricket Club.

Registration is accessible through the SALTEX website and pre-booking is available.

Visit [www.iogsaltex.com](http://www.iogsaltex.com) for more information.



## Product launches will include:

**STIHL will be showcasing an array of new products.**

Taking centre stage will be a preview of STIHL's RMA 765 V PRO, a cordless mower with a 63cm twin blade cutting deck. Also on show will be the MSA 220 C-B, STIHL's most powerful cordless chainsaw.



**ECHO's latest and most powerful backpack blower, the PB-8010, will be launched at the show.**

The ergonomically-designed 79.9cc two-stroke engine will deliver the highest blower power available, with a top air speed of 94.5m/sec.



**King Feeders UK is launching a compact mobile screener.**

The Ecogreen screener can be legally towed behind a 4x4 pick-up or similar vehicle, with a 3.5tonne capacity.

The machine can be driven by the PTO of a small tractor.



## Agronomics



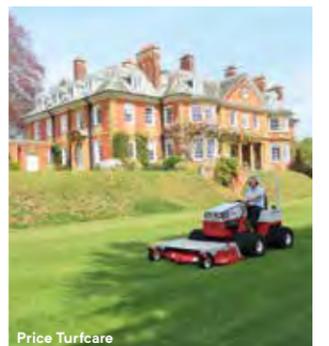
Agronomic Services

Agronomic Services will be highlighting its disease prevention packages, enabling turf managers to reduce fungicide applications and focus on turf health.

David Snowden of Agronomic Services said: "This is a win-win situation for the environment and for the customer's budgets, particularly with the restrictions on fungicides.

"We have been prescribing plant nutrition and preventative turf health for more than 20 years."

## Price Turfcare



Price Turfcare

Price Turfcare, the UK and Ireland distributor of the Ventrac compact tractor and Ryan turf maintenance equipment, will be returning to SALTEX with a larger stand and more products on display.

The company was founded in 2017 by Rupert Price, who said: "We've had a fantastic journey in a short space of time. It's been very hectic with demonstrations, roadshows and exhibitions to get the products in front of people and it has certainly produced excellent sales."

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Photo courtesy of Rullens Park, Rullens Golf Club, "Surrey Island Green"

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## Change someone's career forever...

The BIGGA Awards are back for 2020. Each year BIGGA provides the opportunity for its members to be recognised for their incredible hard work and dedication throughout the year.

Entries close on **31 October 2019**, and all you have to do is complete the nomination form that's located on the BIGGA website.

To nominate someone for an award visit [www.bigga.org.uk/the-bigga-awards-are-back](http://www.bigga.org.uk/the-bigga-awards-are-back) or scan the QR code



**SUNNINGDALE GOLF CLUB**

## Head Greenkeeper

Sunningdale Golf Club wishes to recruit a head greenkeeper for the New Course to manage the maintenance and development of the course, which is ranked 66 in the world (Golf Digest Magazine) and number nine in the UK and Ireland (Golf Monthly Magazine).

Reporting to the courses & estate manager, applicants should be self motivated, committed and hardworking as well as having the necessary experience and ability to lead a team in raising and maintaining the world class standards required at the club.

**The candidate should have:**

- / Minimum of 5 years' golf course management experience
- / Links or heathland experience preferred but not essential
- / Qualified to NVQ 3 or equivalent preferred
- / Spraying certificates PA1, 2 & 6
- / Strong supervisory and communication skills

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**Please apply in writing or email with full CV and covering letter to:**

Susan Naylor, administration & HR manager, Sunningdale Golf Club, Ridgemount Road, Sunningdale, Berks SL5 9RR

By email to [jobs@sunningdalegolfclub.co.uk](mailto:jobs@sunningdalegolfclub.co.uk)

**Closing date for applications:** 13 October 2019.

[www.sunningdale-golfclub.co.uk](http://www.sunningdale-golfclub.co.uk)



## Seasonal greenkeepers for 2020 Haga Golf, Norway

Haga Golf consists of an 18-hole course, 9-hole member only course, large practice area, chipping green and two practice putting greens.

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Positive attitudes and good communication skills are a must. Mechanical, irrigation, spraying or chainsaw competence are advantageous. We require at least 2 years' experience and Level 2 or equivalent qualification.

\*Included in the contract: Very competitive wages with on-site subsidised accommodation to rent, full membership privileges on the courses.

**For further information contact:**

Gavin Jagger, course manager  
Email: [gavin@hagagolf.no](mailto:gavin@hagagolf.no)  
Website: [www.hagagolf.no](http://www.hagagolf.no)



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**Ideally the candidate should have:**

- / Minimum of 3 to 5 years' golf course management or deputy management experience

- / Heathland or Links experience preferred but not essential
- / Qualified to NVQ 3 or equivalent preferred
- / Spraying certificates PA1, 2 & 6

**Please apply to:**

Tiffany Palmer, Head Of HR  
[careers@thehotelfolk.co.uk](mailto:careers@thehotelfolk.co.uk)  
Closing date: 31 October 2019

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# Here for you

If you notice your mental or emotional state getting worse, or you're worried about someone you know - help is available. You're not alone, so talk to someone you trust as sharing a problem is often the first step to recovery. BIGGA may not be the first place you consider asking for help, but help is at hand when you need it.

### BIGGA's Counselling Assistance Helpline

Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Completely confidential and provides you with support by telephone by specialist call handlers and counsellors — 0333 000 2082.

### BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund

For the benefit of members when times get tough and need financial support by way of a grant, award or a payment. Details available through the members area of the BIGGA website at [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)

### Perennial

Perennial is the UK charity dedicated to helping people who work or have worked in horticulture including greenkeepers. BIGGA works very closely with Perennial to help any member who needs free and confidential advice, support and financial assistance on 0800 093 8543 (general advice) or 0800 093 8546 (debt advice).

### Call BIGGA House

and speak to a member of the Membership Team on 01347 833 800, visiting [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk) or by contacting your local BIGGA Membership Services Manager.





# ECOLOGY ROUNDUP

James Hutchinson | Membership Services Manager (Ecology & Sustainability)



## You know those narrow channels you have on your golf course, the ones that take drainage water away?

Did you realise that they are a massively important habitat for wildlife?

Ditches, while often a pain to manage, can hold more interesting flora and fauna than anywhere else on your golf course due to a readily-available supply of water, vegetation to chomp on, flowers to take nectar from and also a place to navigate around the site in relative safety.

They may appear rough and wild for the large part, but in truth they do need managing.

The Department for Food and Rural Affairs suggests that parts of the ditch should be left so that some refuge habitat is kept. When I develop ecology plans for golf courses, I always advise that the ditch should be managed on a three-part rolling basis over the course of a year, divided into winter, early spring and autumn. That way minimal wildlife disturbance takes place during late spring and summer when the area will be busy with the comings and goings of various inhabitants. April and June should be avoided for all wetland work and ditch maintenance to avoid

disturbing breeding amphibians and invertebrates and the accidental destruction of spawn or larvae.

One tip I have learnt is that you should be sure to work upstream as it will enable the wildlife to easily return to a managed section downstream.

Additionally, any vegetation that you do remove from the area should ideally be left nearby for 24 hours. This will allow any amphibians that you have unknowingly displaced to find their way back to the water.

Rather than cutting away vegetation, you could use a herbicide, but I really would avoid those, for obvious reasons.

In fact, Scottish Golf advises that you should leave no spray zones of at least 3m around ponds and ditches. This increases the naturalness of the feature and protects it from disturbance and leeching or drift from the chemicals.

Some products actually have a requirement that you don't use them within a certain distance of a water hazard and you can learn more about that on the feature about the maintenance of water hazards on page 50.

Scottish Golf also advises that where you are required to mow close to the

edge of the ditch, avoid grass clippings and corings being spread into them. This can cause pollution through enrichment of the water, potentially leading to blooms of algae and de-oxygenation.

They're one of the most under-appreciated habitats around the golf course environment, but the next time you're around a ditch, look at all the wildflowers that are growing contently there. Take a minute to observe all that's going on around these often overlooked parts of your golf course.

Take a deep breath, slow everything down and... yeah right, like you have time to do that!

Images: These photographs from Blackpool Park show how varied a habitat a ditch system can be, including the presence of wildflowers such as woundwort

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