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# Greenkeeper

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Inside the ropes at The 150th Open with the  
St Andrews Links and BIGGA Support teams



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course rebuilds**

With the team  
behind the Royal  
Norwich project

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BIGGA Photographic Calendar 2022: August's image was taken by David Ball, Thetford

# WELCOME

The 150th Open was extraordinary in so many ways; a great tournament on a wonderful golf course in front of huge, enthusiastic crowds of spectators.

All this against a backdrop of controversy, in light of the burgeoning LIV Golf series, made for a fascinating week.

I would like to congratulate the whole St Andrews Links team, led expertly by Sandy Reid and Gordon McKie, for providing a near perfect, fast and very firm links test for the historic tournament.

Beyond the talk of LIV, two hot topics during the week's discussions were definitely 'sustainability' and 'workforce'.

Sustainability has been on the agenda for many years, but it feels to me that there has been a significant acceleration in activity around this area recently. There were many initiatives on display at



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

St Andrews and much talk of stepping things up further. This is a brilliant opportunity for BIGGA and its members to be at the vanguard of the developments needed to keep our sport thriving.

The strong focus on golf industry workforce in practically all the discussions I had was, however, a definite step-change. The results of our recent survey, released to the industry just prior to the championship, acted as a great catalyst for conversation

and brought into sharp focus the clear and present crisis we face. Without strong action in the areas of governance, welfare and remuneration, we face a future with insufficient workforce to deliver the sport.

I genuinely believe those charged with the governance of the game are now aware of the scale of the challenge we face in this area and I expect suitable actions to follow.

The crux is that golf facilities must value staff more highly than has previously been the case if they are to compete in the current labour market. It is our responsibility to provide direction in terms of potential solutions and we had many positive discussions during The Open in this area.

Salaries are part of it, but there is a fundamental shift required in the way golf clubs engage with their workforce if we are to meet this challenge.

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# INSIDE THIS ISSUE

## Editor's Notes



Greenkeeper International editor, Karl Hansell

**When you're promoting something, there's a fine balance to be struck between getting your message across and just annoying everybody – and that's a situation that becomes even more difficult if the thing you're promoting is yourself.**

I recently saw a very good friend of mine become quite upset on social media because he'd been creating videos to explain to golfers about some of the things that were happening around the course. You could see he was really enthusiastic about what he was doing and most of the feedback was positive. It's usually the case that if you enjoy what you do, that excitement comes across and people appreciate it and reciprocate, making it easier to deliver your message.

I was disheartened, therefore, when my mate stuck a couple of posts up talking about the criticism he had received for his social media activity. I was disheartened, but sadly I was not surprised. Other greenkeepers had spoken up about how he was only bothered about self-promotion and making a name for himself.

Firstly, what a load of nonsense that is. If you think that someone else is going to promote you on your behalf, you've got a reality check on the horizon. The only person who can drive your career forward is you, yourself. If that's not for you, then that's OK too, but come on, let's not criticise those who are ambitious — we all witness that far too often on our various groups and it's so frustrating and unnecessary.

Secondly, this bloke was literally doing what we as an association have agreed to do and that is raise awareness of greenkeeping practices among a wider audience, so they appreciate what greenkeepers do and respect us more.

So to my friend I say, keep up the good work, you're doing brilliantly.

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## THE PEOPLE BEHIND YOUR MAGAZINE



**Phil Helmn MG**  
Master Greenkeeper number 30, Phil is a GCSAA member and leadership trainer. A golf course advisor,

he is also the author of The Power of People leadership manual.



**Mike Hyde**  
Now relocated to Northern Ireland, Mike is a previous employee of the GCMA who left the

association to combine a love for golf and photography to establish Carefree Golf Photography in 2020.



**James Hutchinson**  
Membership Services Manager for Ecology and Sustainability. James's expertise is available for members

who seek to improve the green credentials of their golf operations.



**Zach Nicoludis**  
Zach joined the USGA Green Section in the spring of 2016 as an agronomist in the Central Region,

based in Ohio. He was previously superintendent at Wilmington Country Club in Delaware.

# LOOK OUT FOR

## 06 Top 10 tips for golf course redevelopment

The team behind the construction of a new golf course at Royal Norwich offers advice on how to make your course redevelopment project a success – no matter the size or cost. Golf course architect Ross McMurray is joined by Royal Norwich's Peter Todd to discuss some of the success and key learnings gained during the completion of this £10m project.

## 38 Galgorm Castle: 'You just have to keep improving'

Galgorm Castle's long-serving course manager, Rodney McKay, discusses tournament preparation, management styles and current industry challenges. Galgorm Castle is one of Northern Ireland's leading parkland venues and during August will host the tri-sanctioned Handa World Invitational. It is also a former Irish Open and Northern Ireland venue.

## 44 The 150th Open at St Andrews

Greenkeeper International went behind-the-scenes of this historic championship to experience course set-up ahead of the first round at St Andrews. From the 4am briefing through to cutting the hole on the 18th, it's a rare look at what it takes to prepare a course for The Open. We also focus on the activities of the BIGGA volunteers who leant a helping hand.

## 52 Barnehurst: Injecting hope into this nine-holer

Barnehurst is a nine-hole course that closed its doors, seemingly for good, just before the pandemic in 2020. The Kent course was designed by James Braid in 1904 and was purchased by American Golf in February. BIGGA's James Hutchinson paid the course a visit as major investment was underway ahead of its reopening in June this year.



**TALKING POINTS**

# Top 10 tips for golf course redevelopment

The team behind the construction of a new golf course at Royal Norwich offers advice on how to make your course redevelopment project a success – no matter the size or cost.

Ross McMurray, golf course architect with European Golf Design and Peter Todd, director and estate manager of Royal Norwich. Additional reporting by Karl Hansell, BIGGA

Royal Norwich opened in 1893, making it over 120 years old when the club realised it needed to develop a new golf course.

The club had outgrown a site that was selected in the 19th Century when the city of Norwich was much smaller.

Over those 125 years the expansion of housing and industrial estates that surrounded the course meant it was no longer fit for purpose. There was insufficient land for car parking or for extending the course to accommodate longer holes. The club would also receive complaints from its neighbours about golf balls landing in properties that surrounded the course.

Another difficulty was an A-class road that ran through the site. At one time it had been a cart track for horses, but now it is a busy main thoroughfare into Norwich from the north-west. This

made it difficult for the club to build a junior section as parents weren't comfortable with their children crossing a main road to play golf.

There was an aging club membership and not enough new, younger members coming through to ensure the future of the golf club. The club realised that there was no choice but to find somewhere else to call home.

In 2016 Royal Norwich purchased a facility outside the city, formerly known as Weston Park Golf Club, and set about building a completely new course in a project costing an estimated £10m.

Here, course architect Ross McMurray and Royal Norwich's estate manager Peter Todd pass on 10 things they learned to others who may be considering undertaking renovation and redevelopment work, no matter the size or scale.

**1: Have a clear vision and strategy (in writing!)**

**Peter Todd:** Over the years, particularly in the 1970s through to the 1980s, Royal Norwich had an ageing, male-dominated membership. The atmosphere was formal and unwelcoming to young, aspiring players and the club recognised this didn't work culturally or financially in the modern era. A clear vision and strategy was implemented for the redevelopment to make it a more encompassing and welcoming place, a facility for families.

**Ross McMurray:** Royal Norwich's core statement was 'To always be recognised as a premier members' golf club and to ensure an exceptional golf and social experience for members, their families and our guests'. When I was designing the golf course, I kept that in mind because it made clear to me what the club was trying to achieve. All the decisions we made fell back on that statement.

**PT:** For example, we created a gender-free strategy in terms of both the golf course and the clubhouse building. Hence, the forward tees are known as 'forward tees', rather than ladies' tees. We decided to have no urinals in the men's changing room because if we had a ladies' tournament or event and needed a bigger locker room for the ladies, we could swap it around with the men's and just change the labels on the door.

We believed it was integral to lose some of the things you would normally see in a golf clubhouse, especially in areas where we wanted to attract the public. So there are no photographs of past captains or competition boards in the bar and restaurant area or when you enter the building.

**2: Keep the committee and decision-making group as small as possible**

**PT:** There was a group of four people who worked alongside the general manager. These people had good business experience in banking, legal, business and financial backgrounds. Together they formed a balanced group with different skills. Each looked after different aspects of the redevelopment plan.

There was one person in that group who was a devil's advocate and would always question decisions. It was quite important to have someone questioning things along the way and looking at the different options that were available.

**RM:** With a development of this scale, for the membership to allow a small committee to make the decisions on their behalf was quite a brave move. But it's difficult to see how we could have moved forward at all without having just a small number of people who are committed to making the job as good as possible. From



The Stables clubhouse at Royal Norwich

my point of view, it worked really well. We had one person who was responsible for the golf course — who I answered to — another was responsible for the clubhouse, another for golf management and another for finance. Between them, they made all the decisions.

**PT:** Alongside this, the golf club members voted to have a board of directors run the club, rather than a committee. There was an acceptance that would be a more professional and effective way of running the club.

**3: Carefully select your professional consultants**

**PT:** It was important to find a course architect who was in tune with the vision and strategy of what we were trying to achieve. But there are so many aspects to a project like this and you need people who are experts in various fields. Irrigation consultancy or securing abstraction licences are one-off processes and no one at the club will have done it before, so getting experts in key areas makes the whole process much smoother.

**RM:** In terms of the golf course development, there was a particular group of people who were important. It was essential to have an independent irrigation consultant, not just to do the irrigation design, but also to look at water sourcing, because that is vital. If you haven't got the water to irrigate the golf course, then the whole thing is a non-starter. He helped us learn how to work with the Environment Agency and how to negotiate with other water users in the district so the club would have rights to water sourcing they did not require. We also swapped the borehole licence from the old club to the new site. It's an awful lot of work, because of all the paperwork and dealing with statutory bodies.

We also recruited an arboricultural consultant because the site has a blanket tree preservation order across it. Every tree had to be carefully assessed before it could be removed.

**4: Do your research**

**RM:** Spend a lot of time researching all the elements of a golf course development. That includes looking at materials, products, seed mixes and agronomists. There's a myriad of different things that you need to do to make sure you're comfortable with the materials, products and advice you're being given.


**PT:** The key one for me was rootzone selection. There are plenty of people in the industry — superintendents and course managers — who are only too willing to share time and tell you about their experience. I travelled to Ireland and found a couple of projects that I was interested in. One was a golf course that had been built 10 years ago, to see how the rootzone had performed, and another which was being built while I was visiting. »



15th fairway Royal Norwich Picture by European Golf Design

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The 14th hole. Picture by European Golf Design

Grass seed selection isn't something you do frequently, so tapping into people who have been involved with it on other projects can be very useful.

**RM:** I would also emphasise the need to visit as many golf courses as possible

to look at products. Look at the work of contractors and architects that you're thinking of hiring and see irrigation systems in operation, while talking to the course managers who use it.

**PT:** You really have to consider the

sand that you're going to put in the bunker in conjunction with the bunker liner because the two work together. If you have very fine sand, how does that work with the bunker liner you're going to put in? We split a bunker in half and did two lining methods at either end. We put sand in and let people play test shots out of them, with the feedback being valuable.

**5: Plan for sustainability**

**RM:** Sustainability is playing a bigger part in all our lives, but particularly on golf courses. It was a major part of the development at Royal Norwich and our sustainable approach actually led to a fair bit of cost saving. One example was the fact that drainage from the hard surfaces around the clubhouse and maintenance area was going to go into large underground soak-aways, which is quite costly. We looked at it and asked whether there was a way to connect the drainage from the clubhouse into the golf course drainage and capture it for irrigation.



A bunker was split into sections to test various liners. Picture by European Golf Design



Wet conditions caused delays in the project. Picture by European Golf Design

“None of us go into golf construction or redevelopment without realising there will be setbacks

**6: Strictly control your budget**

**PT:** We allocated a percentage of the overall budget to each area of the project and tried to keep as near to that figure as possible, which meant that we couldn't overspend in one area and not have enough budget in another.

But what I would say is most people underestimate things like drainage. I've never known a new golf course project that didn't want to spend money on drainage afterwards, but it's much cheaper to put a network of pipework in at the construction stage.

**RM:** There's tremendous pressure on capital expenditure during construction and then towards the end, suddenly there's extra costs that are required. There's a myriad of other issues that require funding and that's why it's important to stick to those percentages. Otherwise, money gets dragged from one to pay for something else and you'll never get that back.

**7: Be realistic with your time programme and time scales**

**RM:** When a redevelopment requires planning permission, it can take some time. You need to be realistic with how long it takes to get planning permission and then get any permissions from statutory bodies like the Environment Agency.

**PT:** When you're dealing with authorities or energy suppliers, they have a fixed way of working and this is when you need your experts to guide you on how long the process will take. To get the extraction licence for the river took us over two years, so if you're banking on using that water for the grow-in period but you don't hit the deadline, what is your fallback option?

Equally, the weather can have a huge impact on what you can achieve. You've got to be realistic and there will be knock backs, so have some flexibility in your programme to accommodate those.

**RM:** One lesson I learned regarded archaeology, because the archaeologists went out and dug trenches all over the site. They were due to finish work in January and we were looking to start construction at the end of May. They didn't find anything initially, so they decided to dig more trenches! That meant we were working around each other for a few weeks.

It's very easy to underestimate the amount of studies and surveys that need to be carried out on a new development and the time it takes to complete them.

**8: Ensure trees and important features are protected**

**RM:** There are a large number of specimen trees at Royal Norwich and protecting them was essential during construction. When there is traffic movement and heavy machinery on the site and a lot of pipework going into the ground it's very easy for some of that construction to damage or even kill trees.

**PT:** Sometimes it's about educating people who are working on the site, because not all their sites will have 500-year-old veteran oaks on them. »



Completed 18th hole. Picture by European Golf Design

like we had. There were other features as well, such as a pair of gates at the entrance lodge. These were listed and rather than leave them in place, we removed them and stored them elsewhere because we knew lots of materials would be coming in on large lorries and the chances of them getting damaged was great.

**RM:** You can't take too many photographs prior to construction, to make sure you've got a record of the site before it was handed over to contractors.

**9: Keep your membership engaged**

**RM:** Ensure you engage the members and involve them in the work that's taking place. One of the things that worked really well at Royal Norwich were the course tours which the club organised. A couple of times each week, all the way through construction, a group of members were given the opportunity to look at the works. This drove interest, not just for the members, but also to encourage new members to join, because word of mouth got out and people who were interested in joining the club asked if they could come on the tours. It was a great promotional tool for the golf club and memberships were sold on the back of people seeing what was happening on site.

**PT:** We also hosted regular open evenings throughout the summer. This

meant that the small group of members who were driving the whole development didn't feel like they had hijacked the project and instead the whole membership was involved.

**RM:** The other good thing was organising work parties with members who came in and did work on the site. They did landscaping, tree planting and clearing the site of scrub and vegetation.

**PT:** That group of volunteer members did all the tree planting. It kept them engaged from day one and they still come in every Monday morning and carry on doing other jobs, so it has paid off.

**10: Perseverance**

**PT:** None of us go into golf construction or redevelopment without realising there will be setbacks, whether that be weather, equipment breaking down or authorities not replying to applications as quickly as you would like. If you are focused on the vision that you're trying to achieve, you will get through it. Keep persisting and chasing people. Better weather will come eventually. Be tenacious and persevere through the setbacks, because that will all pay off.



Testing irrigation prior to laying the playing surface. Picture by European Golf Design



# BIGGA PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION 2022

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Prize image courtesy of Insta 360



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**Individual Contributors:** Steven Tierney MG | Andrew Campbell MG CGCS  
Richard McGlynn | Jaey Goodchild | Frank Newberry | Greg Evans MG | Jon Kiger





# ACROSS THE BOARD

Gordon Moir | BIGGA President

Last month was special as it was the first Open at St Andrews since 1995 that I had been able to enjoy free from either working on the course or, from 2005, the responsibilities of preparing the course.

As BIGGA president, this year I had countless interesting conversations with BIGGA members on the support team as well as interested journalists and industry leaders. We discussed things such as working conditions and salaries, informed by the fascinating workforce survey that BIGGA recently undertook.

You may think that St Andrews has always been an affluent golf course and surely somewhere so famous, from where a global sport was born, can't have ever struggled for money? But in truth, when I came to St Andrews in 1991 the facilities and working conditions were poor as the links had no money. I remember the secretary going to an auction to buy a second-hand typewriter for the accounts department, that's how bad it was.

It wasn't until 1994 when a new structure was put in place that things began to improve. A professional management team were given responsibilities to run the organisation in place of the well-intentioned local members who had been carrying out that role on a voluntary basis, albeit these members continued to have an involvement. Previously, green fees were sold to tour operators at the basic rate and they would



Stuart Christen, George Watton, Gordon Moir, Simon Bone and Aidan Wright

**“** If clubs can't afford to increase their operating budgets to match rising costs, we greenkeepers must help them understand what that means on the course.

then mark them up significantly, to prices which tourists would gladly pay. The tour operators were getting rich and the links only received the basic green fee, which in the early 90s was a little over £30.

The new structure changed that and although it took a long time to generate any real money because we were so far behind and had loans to pay back, eventually things began to improve.

I see too many golf clubs that live hand-to-mouth. Their operating budget is dependent on what the members set the fees at, yet it should be the other way around. Clubs should work out their total operating costs for the year and then divide that by the number of members and that's

how you set your fees. Yet at AGMs members often vote down subscription increases because they don't want to pay an extra £20 a year. I believe that until that changes and a professional process is put in place, these clubs will continue to struggle.

One club I know of recently had a major windfall when a project involving external contractors caused major disruption to the course. The club was paid a set amount for the work, but was also paid £1,000 extra for every day the project was delayed - which turned out to be 50 days. Some members were asking "what are we going to do with this extra £50,000?" The captain sent out a letter saying that the price of diesel,

petrol, seeds and fertiliser had all gone through the roof, so that's what we're doing with the £50,000!

If clubs can't afford to increase their operating budgets to match the rising cost of purchasing resources, then we greenkeepers must help them understand what that will mean on the course.

The important thing to do is to prioritise by asking your clubs "what do you want?"

Give them a list of things and ask them what they want you to cut down on, because you can't do everything anymore. Do you want us to stop cutting greens or do you want us to stop cutting the rough? Do you want us to stop raking bunkers every day or can we do it every second day or once a week? Even at St Andrews, due to current staff shortages they aren't raking bunkers every day and sometimes, certain tee markers are left for two or three days in the same place if the areas aren't worn.

There are also a number of clubs in this part of the world who ask their members to get involved. I'm aware of quite a few clubs who have volunteer days where members come in and divot fairways or help with other tasks. That builds camaraderie and a closer relationship with the greenkeeping team and it's a way of turning a negative into a positive, with members then willing to support their greenkeepers through tougher times.

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Regional Diary

Tracey Walker SW&SW



During July I enjoyed an amazing week at The Open at St Andrews, where it was a real privilege to be involved from the very start of the process and see it through to a successful conclusion.

The BIGGA Support Team consisted of 55 members, 64% of whom were first timers to The Open support team, and we had representation from all our regions.

Thursday was an early start, with the first match teeing off at 6.35am. Naturally there were some nerves, but there was an overriding sense of excitement, which was so infectious. For many this was a bucket list opportunity, with the added bonus of it being The 150th Open at St Andrews. I'm so proud that we're able to make opportunities like this happen for our members.

As day one continued, play got slower, with the last few matches taking over six hours! We eventually left site at 10.45pm, but despite the long day — and without exception — everyone was up and ready for day two.

A bit of trivia: each day we ask the team to keep a note of the number of bunkers they raked. In total, St Andrews' 110 bunkers were visited 633 times by our team.

If you would like to be part of the support team at Royal Liverpool in 2023, applications will open on the BIGGA website in September. Applications are welcome from all Full members with two years' consecutive membership.

# Meet the FTMI Class of 2022

Next generation of turf managers revealed as BIGGA members earn a spot on the Future Turf Managers Initiative

**BIGGA has revealed the 20 ambitious greenkeepers who will participate in the Future Turf Managers Initiative 2022.**

Each year Jacobsen and BIGGA invite 20 up-and-coming association members to participate in the intensive training programme, which has been credited with developing some of the greenkeeping industry's most influential course managers and head greenkeepers. This year Jacobsen and BIGGA celebrated the first FTMI graduate to achieve the links superintendent position at an Open Championship venue in the form of Royal Liverpool's James Bledge.

BIGGA Learning & Development Executive Deb Burnett said: "As an increasing

number of FTMI graduates achieve success in their careers, we are reminded of what an incredible learning opportunity FTMI is for BIGGA members. When the 10th FTMI class convenes this year, we'll be welcoming some of those early delegates back as mentors and I look forward to seeing them inspire the 2022 class, who will then gain the knowledge they require to achieve similar greatness in their own careers."

FTMI was first hosted in 2013 as a two-day education event and since then has expanded around the world, with similar schemes being introduced in Spain, Portugal, Australia and New Zealand.

For 2022 the structure of FTMI has been adjusted

to become a hybrid event that combines workshops at Ransomes Jacobsen's headquarters in Ipswich, online education sessions and two days of education at BTME in January 2023. FTMI focuses on personal and professional development, rather than agronomy-based subjects, and utilises the expertise of leading course managers, dynamic trainers and industry experts to mentor and educate the next generation of industry leaders.

Candidates are selected based upon an anonymous judging criterion, with the panel gaining an insight into the achievements and ambitions of each applicant, who must be educationally active on a national and regional level.

Debs added: "Our youngest candidate this year is 22, while the oldest is 47 and that shows how FTMI is available to all BIGGA members. All you need is the desire to learn and progress your career and I'm delighted that among the Class of 2022 we have such a varied mix of people who can share ideas and experiences and who have all got through to this stage based upon their own merits."

**“** I feel honoured and privileged to be selected for the FTMI Class of 2022. This is a special opportunity to learn from the most distinguished people in our industry, which will help me progress my career. I cannot wait to get started and meet the rest of the class.

Aaron Allibon

## THE MEMBERS OF THE FTMI CLASS OF 2022 ARE:



Aaron Allibon, first assistant at Orsett



John Anderson, senior greenkeeper at Prestwick



Rhian Barton, assistant greenkeeper at Royal Liverpool



Andrew Barr, deputy head greenkeeper at Greencastle



Tom Bromfield, assistant greenkeeper at Trentham



Ray Cotgrave, deputy course manager at Pleasington



Marcus Davies, assistant greenkeeper at Wentworth Club



Michael Gibbons, first assistant at Dunham Forest



Sean Harvey, senior greenkeeper at Frilford Heath



Peter Lewis, senior greenkeeper/irrigation technician at Royal Liverpool



Darren McLoughlin, deputy head greenkeeper at Erskine



Matthew Milligan, first assistant at Rudding Park



Malcolm Mitchell, deputy head greenkeeper at Burghley Park



Wayne Mulrooney, deputy course manager at Great Barr



Robert Munro, assistant superintendent at Cabot Cliffs



Ryan Oliver, assistant greenkeeper at Hornsea



Adrian Parsons, assistant greenkeeper at Wenvoe Castle



Michael Russell, assistant greenkeeper at Ormskirk



Steven Thomas, deputy head greenkeeper at Prestonfield



Elliot Walters, deputy course manager at Robin Hood

### Your Local Membership Services Team

#### Scotland & Northern Ireland

**John Young**  
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#### Northern

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#### Central England

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#### South East

**John Pearson**  
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#### Ecology & Sustainability

**James Hutchinson**  
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### Meet your Membership Administration Team

**Elaine Jones**  
Membership & Administration Manager  
elaine@bigga.co.uk

**Gil Christon**  
Administrator  
gil@bigga.co.uk

**Janette Pascall**  
Administrator  
janette@bigga.co.uk



# WHAT'S ON

Legacy Club events get underway with Auchterarder launch

**When:** 23 June  
**Venue:** Auchterarder



The first Legacy Club Championship was played at Auchterarder at the end of June, with a field of 24 taking part in this new series of events intended for BIGGA Scotland & Northern Ireland stalwarts.

BIGGA Scotland's Legacy Club is intended to bring together members from around the country over the age of 55 who have been the forerunners of the association for many years. It is hoped that there will be at least three events each year, including the championship, with one event already planned for late September at Lochore Meadows.

Ronnie Myles, BIGGA Scotland & Northern Ireland President, said: "The hope is that old and new friends will get some benefit from getting together on a regular basis."

"I am proud to lead the Legacy Club as it takes its first steps into the future."

Kenny Alexander from Royal Burgess won the inaugural event and received the Cecil George Trophy for best gross score of 75.

Duncan Gray won the Jimmy Neilson Trophy for best Stableford score of 39 points.

## GET INVOLVED WITH GREAT EVENTS IN YOUR REGION

### Scotland and Northern Ireland

- 1 Northern Ireland Golf Event**  
Date: 19 August  
Location: Donaghadee
- 2 Scottish Golf Tour Championship**  
Date: 25 August  
Location: Royal Dornoch
- 3 BIGGA Scotland Greenkeeper Industry Career Day**  
Date: 5 October  
Location: Auchterarder
- 4 Northern Ireland Education Day**  
Date: 27 October  
Location: Belvoir Park
- 5 BIGGA Conference – Scotland**  
Date: 15 November  
Location: Stirling Court Hotel
- 6 Scotland & Northern Ireland Awards Lunch**  
Date: 7 December  
Location: Stirling

### Northern

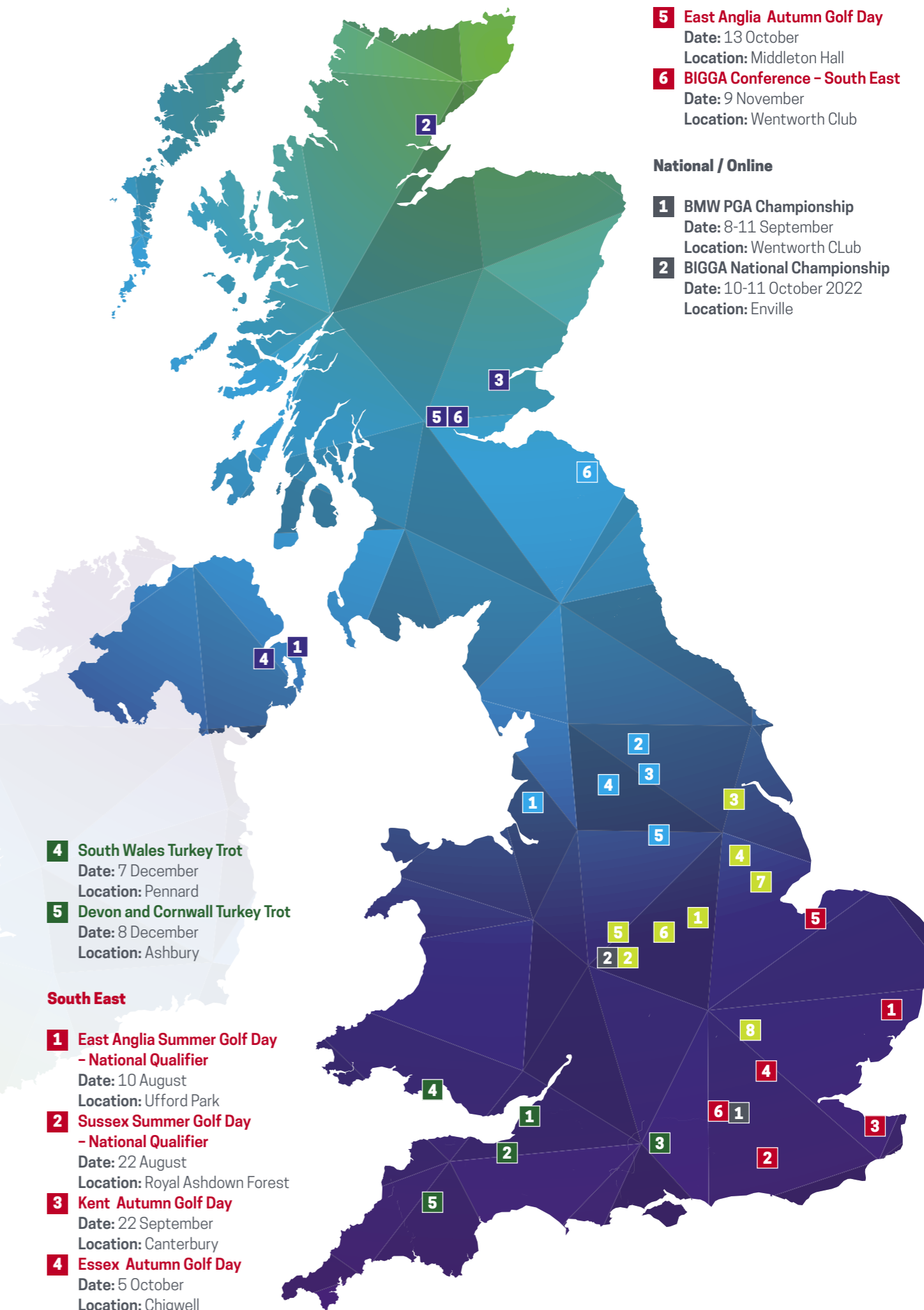
- 1 North West Summer Golf Day**  
Date: 7 September  
Location: Ormskirk
- 2 Sheffield Autumn Golf Day**  
Date: 22 September  
Location: Wortley
- 3 BIGGA Conference – Northern**  
Date: 17 November  
Location: Elland Road (Leeds United Football Club)
- 4 Yorkshire Christmas Golf Day**  
Date: 24 November  
Location: Huddersfield
- 5 Sheffield Christmas Golf Day**  
Date: 8 December  
Location: Coxmoor
- 6 North East Christmas Golf Day**  
Date: 14 December  
Location: Dunstanburgh Castle

### Central England

- 1 East Midlands Par 3 Completion**  
Date: 10 August  
Location: Beedles Lakes
- 2 BIGGA Midlands Golf Day**  
Date: 12 September  
Location: Robin Hood
- 3 BIGGA East of England Golf Day**  
Date: 15 September  
Location: Normanby Hall
- 4 BIGGA East of England Golf Day**  
Date: 12 October  
Location: Newark
- 5 BIGGA Conference – Central**  
Date: 10 November  
Location: Villa Park (Aston Villa Football Club)
- 6 BIGGA Midlands Golf Day**  
Date: 1 December  
Location: Longcliffe
- 7 BIGGA East of England Christmas Golf Day**  
Date: 8 December  
Location: Woodhall Spa
- 8 BIGGA Mid Anglia Christmas Golf Day**  
Date: 15 December  
Location: Woodhall Spa

### South West and South Wales

- 1 BIGGA South West Turf Club**  
Date: 5 October  
Location: Clevedon
- 2 BIGGA Conference – South West & South Wales**  
Date: 8 November  
Location: Somerset County Cricket Club
- 3 BIGGA South Coast Turkey Trot**  
Date: 28 November  
Location: Royal Winchester



- 5 East Anglia Autumn Golf Day**  
Date: 13 October  
Location: Middleton Hall
- 6 BIGGA Conference – South East**  
Date: 9 November  
Location: Wentworth Club

### National / Online

- 1 BMW PGA Championship**  
Date: 8-11 September  
Location: Wentworth Club
- 2 BIGGA National Championship**  
Date: 10-11 October 2022  
Location: Enville

**More events are listed on the BIGGA website**

Download the BIGGA App or scan the QR code to see all the latest events in your area



# AROUND THE GREEN

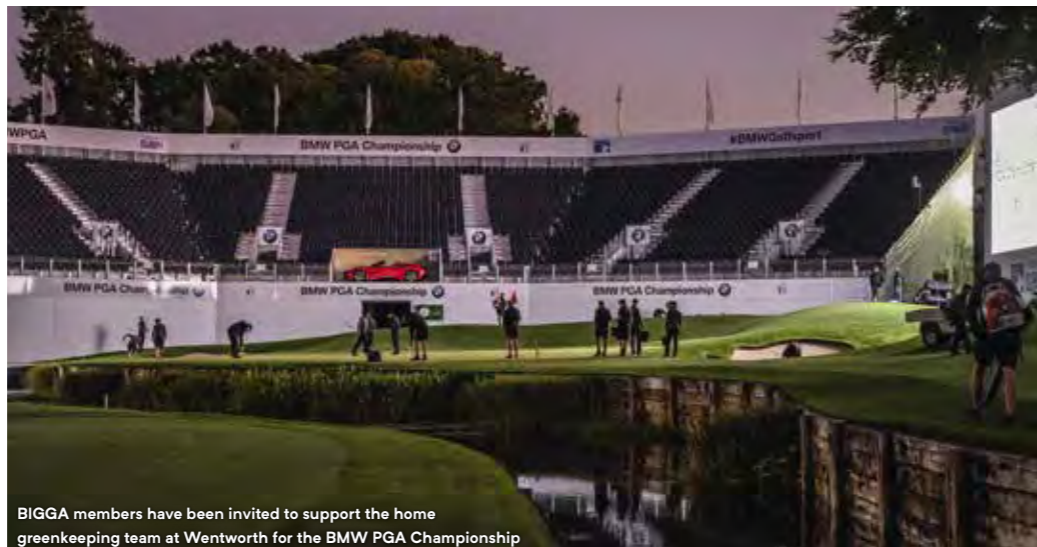
## Members selected for BMW experience

### South East Region - London

BIGGA members will gain an unrivalled behind-the-scenes look at preparations for the BMW PGA Championship this September after being selected to join the Wentworth Club's greenkeeping team for the duration of the event.

Supplementing the inhouse greenkeeping team will be 24 volunteers from across the association. The volunteer members will fully integrate with the Wentworth greenkeeping team and take on important maintenance tasks to help prepare the course for play each day.

Wentworth Club Course Manager Daniel Clarke said: "We value our relationship with BIGGA above all others and given every member of the Wentworth turf team is a part of the association and has access to the training and education it offers, we know how committed and capable these volunteers will be as we prepare the West Course for



BIGGA members have been invited to support the home greenkeeping team at Wentworth for the BMW PGA Championship

the DP World Tour's flagship event. Over the years the BMW PGA Volunteer Support Team has evolved from being a helping hand to now being an instrumental part of the in-house greenkeeping team and I'm excited to welcome them all to Wentworth Club."

The BIGGA members who have been invited to join the Wentworth team as volunteers for the duration of the BMW

PGA Championship are: Wayne Aris, Langley Park; Callum Atkinson, Prestbury; Tom Barnett, Drayton Park; Euan Bogle, Lanark; David Bruce, The Gleneagles Hotel; Martin Coe, China Fleet; Luke Fitzpatrick, The Buckinghamshire; Calum Forsyth, Carrbridge; Dean Franks, West Sussex; Jack Hall, Lutterworth; James Hook, The Bristol; Greg Jones, JCB; Ryan

Lindsay, East Sussex National; Daniel Long-Greatorex, JCB; Thibault Marcazzan, Le Touquet; Charlie Munn-Cocks, Camberley Heath; Stanley Murphy, Ealing; Scott Patrick, Prestwick St Cuthbert; Daniel Rigby, Chigwell; Matthew Shaul, Ashby Decoy; Tom Silcock, Prestbury; Ben Sixsmith, Ganton; Philip Slater, West Herts; Ross Traill, Kilmarnock (Barassie).

## McLean continues Kent's Open migration

### Northern - North West

Prince's Links Superintendent Sean McLean has become the latest to swap Kent for an Open venue after being appointed to the top role at Royal Birkdale.

Sean follows in the footsteps of James Bledge, who joined Royal Liverpool earlier this year, and will take over the position vacated by the retirement of BIGGA Life Member Chris Whittle.

Originally from Edinburgh, Sean started his career at Craigmillar Park, before serving apprenticeships at

Oak Hill and Southern Hills in America and Huntingdale and Avondale in Australia.

Returning to the UK, he worked at Archerfield, Turnberry and The Duke's in St Andrews, before moving to Prince's as project manager in 2009 before being promoted to superintendent in 2013.

A spokesperson for Royal Birkdale said: "Sean has been instrumental in the improvements made by Prince's. [He] is an extremely enthusiastic person with all the attributes the panel

considered important to take the course forward into the future."



Sean McLean is joining Royal Birkdale

## Hampstead day

### South East - London

The second London Section event of 2022 was held at Hampstead.

Course Manager Nick Roberts and his team prepared the course wonderfully for the 9-hole event in idyllic conditions, although it still proved a stern test for the golfers.

Winner was John Wells, course manager at South Herts, who won on countback from Ian Stow, with both having scored 18 points.

Nearest the pin was won by Nick Wilkins.



## New role for father Jack

### Northern - North East

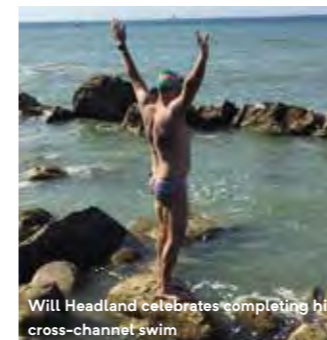
Jack Hetherington, head greenkeeper at Chester-Le-Street, and his wife Kirsty are the proud new parents of Oliver James Hetherington, born 21 June.

Jack, who is regional director for BIGGA's Northern

Region, said that Ollie is patient, inquisitive and strong. Jack added that although he looks identical to every other newborn baby, he's also gorgeous. Congratulations go to the entire family from everyone at BIGGA.

## Will channels his energy for charity

### Central England - BB&O



Will Headland celebrates completing his cross-channel swim

Bradfield College's Will Headland completed a cross-channel swim in July to raise money for the Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice.

Will, 35, had been in training for a year and swam 36km in 12 hours 50 minutes.

Will said: "After so long in training and so many nerves, the day flew by in a flash!"

Weather conditions were good on the day with a water temperature of 15 degrees and Will said the only problems he encountered were jellyfish, which stung him a few times.

Incredibly, the 600 tankers and 200 ferries that cross the route every day must give way for swimmers, with huge ships seen diverting to avoid Will.

## Dyke retires from Wyke

### Central England - Midland

Tony Dyke retires in August after a 29-year career as course manager at Wyke Green in Middlesex.

Tony will be moving to Stoke on Trent to be nearer family and said he is looking forward to having time to actually play golf and pursue his passion for fishing.

Stepping into Tony's shoes is Jimmy Butler, formerly head greenkeeper at Cherry Lodge in Kent.



Tony Dyke has retired from his role at Wyke Green in Middlesex

## Schofield's anniversary

### SW&SW - South Coast

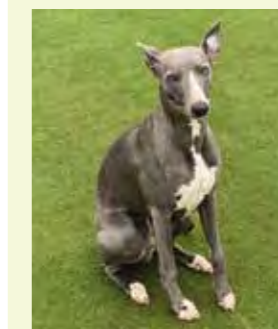
On 5 May 1992, Rob Schofield started his first day's work at North Hants.

This year marks the first assistant greenkeeper's 30th anniversary at the club and course manager Sam Evans MG said: "Many things have changed at the club in that time and Rob has become a vital and valued member of the team. Congratulations on reaching such an impressive milestone!"



Rob Schofield is celebrating 30 years at North Hants

## DOGS ON COURSE



**Name:** Leo (Leo the Whitley Whippet)

**Breed:** Whippet

**Owner:** Grant Burton

**Location:** Whitley Bay

**Favourite treat:** Anything Dad is eating

**Favourite place on site:** 12th hole 584 yards from the yellows a great hole to open up to top speed and chase his ball.

**If you'd like your course mascot to be featured in GI, email Lorna Taylor on lorna@bigga.co.uk**

## Your Regional Representatives

### Scotland & Northern Ireland



Chairperson  
Gordon McKie



Region Director  
Stuart  
Ferguson MG

### Northern



Chairperson  
Jonny Roberts



Region Director  
Jack  
Hetherington

### Central England



Chairperson  
Andrew  
Smith



Region Director  
Andrew  
Laing

### South West & South Wales



Chairperson  
Dan Kendle



Region Director  
Lucy Sellick

### South East



Chairperson  
Andy Harding



Region Director  
Antony Kirwan

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

## Key to membership

- A** Affiliate Member
- AGK** Assistant Greenkeeper
- AHG** Assistant Head Groundsperson
- APP** Apprentice
- ATP** Approved Training Providers
- BA** Business Affiliate
- CA** College Assessor
- CM** Course Manager
- DCM** Deputy Course Manager
- DHKG** Deputy Head Greenkeeper
- FA** First Assistant
- GK** Greenkeeper
- G** Groundsperson
- HGK** Head Greenkeeper
- HG** Head Groundsperson
- I** International Member
- L** Life Member
- M** Mechanic
- S** Student Member
- SUP** Superintendent
- R** Retired Member

## SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND

**Angus McConnachie**, Machrihanish Dunes, FA; **Barry McDonald**, Carnoustie, GK; **Bradley Adams**, Kirkcudbright, FA; **Bradley Dewar**, St Michaels, GK; **Chris Paterson**, Carnoustie, AGK; **Dean Ratcliff**, Machrihanish Dunes, GK; **Euan Bogle**, Lanark, FA; **Gavin Morrison**, Portstewart, AGK; **Innes Mackenzie**, Lanark, GK; **Jack Donald**, Lanark, GK; **Jamie Swankie**, Carnoustie, GK; **Jon Burnett**, Carnoustie, GK; **Jordan Thompson**, Lanark, CM; **Keri Xu**, SRUC (Elmwood), A; **Kerr Westlake**, Carnoustie, AGK; **Liam Graham**, Lochmaben, AGK; **Mark Hodgson**, Southernness, GK; **Peter McKay**, Portstewart, AGK; **Philip Crocker**, Portstewart, AGK; **Ryan Barkley**, Shiskine, AGK; **Stephen Gorman**, Machrihanish Dunes, AGK; **Thomas Martin**, Machrihanish Dunes, AGK

## NORTHERN

**George Barker**, Wetherby, APP; **Daniel Binner**, Brandon & The Village, HGK; **Matthew Buckley**, Sandiway, AGK; **Jack Caden**, Ganton, APP; **Lewis Cassidy**, Halifax West End, HGK; **Luke Coats**, Centurion Park, AGK; **Martin Foster**, Malton & Norton, AGK; **Daniel Glass**, Sandiway, AGK; **Thomas Goodwin**, Durham City, AGK; **Joseph Harrison**, Malton & Norton, AGK; **Gary Higgins**, Withington, HGK; **Alex Lowes**, North Manchester, HGK; **Daniel Magill**, Forest of Galtres, APP; **Ross Mcleish**, Silloth-on-Solway, GK; **Henry McManus**, Southport & Ainsdale, AGK; **George Randall**, Burgham Park, CM; **Richard Sinker**, Sandiway, CM; **Matthew West**, Crosland Heath, DHGK; **Jack Whiteman**, Normanton, APP

## CENTRAL ENGLAND

**Stephen Baugh**, Lutterworth, GK; **Chris Bitten**, Longcliffe, GK; **William Byland**, Woodhall Spa, AGK; **Luke Casey**, Oxfordshire (The), AGK; **Steven Connolly**, Ansty Golf Centre, CM; **Dominic Dance**, Essendon, GK; **Samuel Davis**, Test Valley, AGK; **Keith Graham**, Essendon, GK; **George Howe**, Badgemore Park, GK; **Benjamin Osgood**, Essendon, GK; **Robert Phillips**, Whitehill, G; **Macaulay Poole**, Rothley Park, AGK; **Bradley Taylor**, Belfry (The), AGK; **Thomas Weaver**, Agrovista Amenity, BA

## SOUTH EAST

**Stuart Butler**, Royal St George's, GK; **Joshua Crabb**, Dartford, APP; **Nigel Dale**, Essendon, GK; **Joe Delve**, Cuddington, AGK; **Shaun Fastier**, Beaverbrook, AGK; **Ian Gadsby**, Royal Ascot, GK; **Samuel Gaster**, Sundridge Park, APP; **Adam Ivimey-Simmons**, Beaverbrook, AGK; **Charlotte Lee**, Knole Park, APP; **Jose Lema**, Essendon, FA; **Tobias Martin**, Pyecombe, GK; **Lewis Mullan**, Sunbury, AGK; **Jamie Rawlinson**, Essendon, GK; **Rohan Stephenson**, Beaverbrook, G; **Scott Wager-Norris**, London (The), APP; **Brandon Wilkie**, Royal Ascot, AGK; **Charlie Wilkinson**, Brookmans Park, GK

## SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

**Chris Back**, Ashbury, M; **David Bevan**, Agrovista Amenity, BA; **Jack Booth**, Chilworth, AGK; **Thomas Conlon**, Came Down, AGK; **Keiron Cook**, Wenvoe Castle, AGK; **Daniel Cornish**, Goodwood Club (The), DHGK; **Marc Culliford**, Wiltshire (The), AGK; **Dafydd Feeley**, Royal Porthcawl, AGK; **Ryan Gross**, Ashbury, DCM; **Samantha Holden**, New Milton Sand & Ballast, A; **David Openshaw**, Boringdon Park, AGK; **Gary Sismur**, Ashbury, DCM; **Kevin Weaver**, Royal Winchester, GK; **Steven Webb**, Wenvoe Castle, GK

## INTERNATIONAL

**Steven Johnson**, Al Mouj Golf; **Robert Munro**, Cabot Cliffs.

## THE SAVINGS SOON ADD UP

Check out the latest BIGGA Xtra Benefits savings on p25



# CHAMPIONSHIP PERFORMANCES

BIGGA has teamed up with Leaderboard Photography to celebrate the greenkeeping teams that are hosting England Golf events this summer



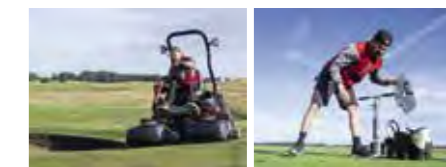
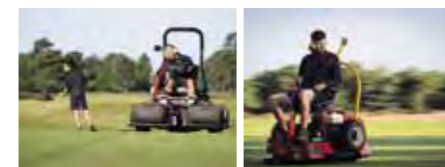
**ENGLISH U18S CHAMPIONSHIP AT WOODHALL SPA | 24-26 JUNE**



**LOGAN TROPHY AT LIPHOOK | 1-3 JULY**



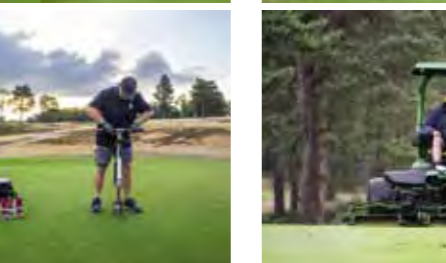
**EUROPEAN AMATEUR TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP AT ROYAL ST GEORGES | 4-9 JULY**



**MCGREGOR TROPHY AT SHERWOOD FOREST | 12-14 JULY**



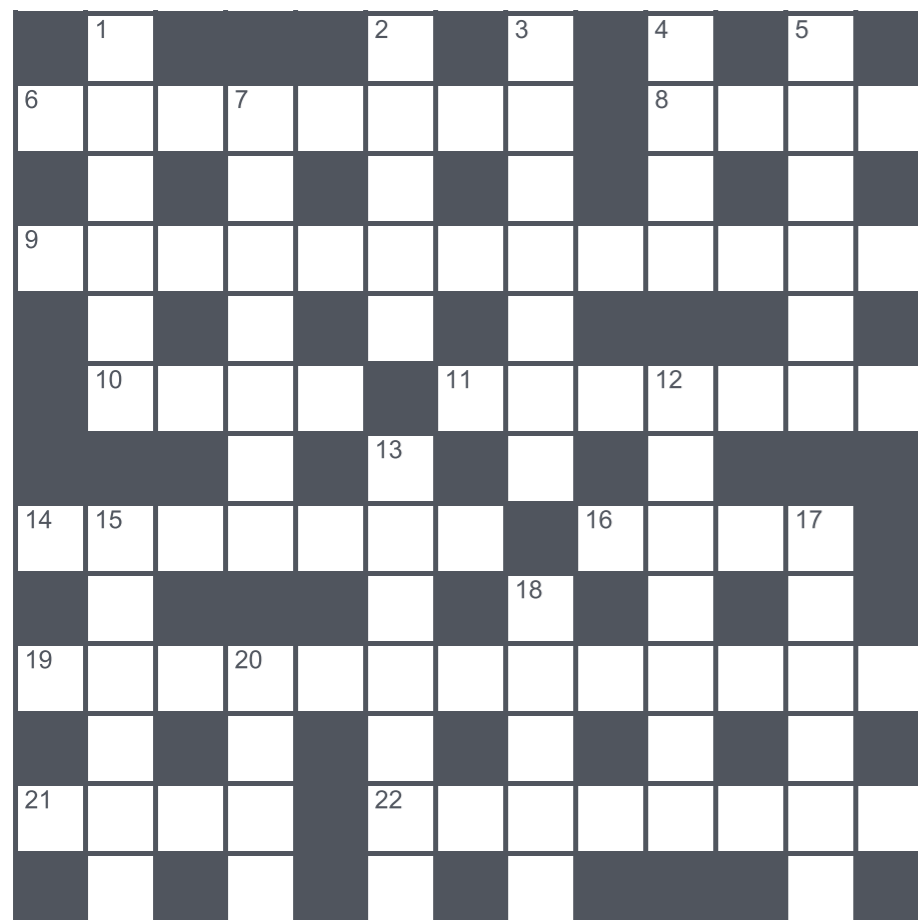
**ENGLISH U25'S CHAMPIONSHIP AT WOBURN | 12-14 JULY**





# TEE BREAK

**TEST YOUR MENTAL ABILITY IN THE TURFCARE FACILITY**



## CROSSWORD

Enter your answers on the grid to the left.

### Across

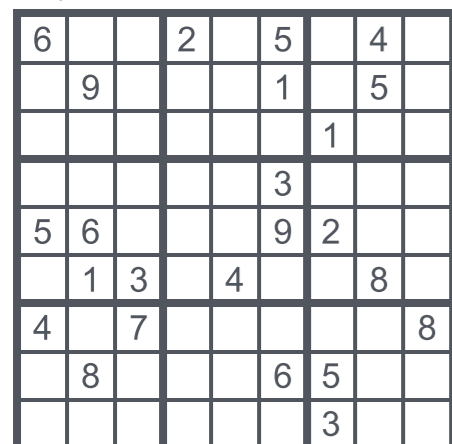
- 6 Rebellious Duke (8)
- 8 Mucho (1,3)
- 9 Endlessly (5,3,5)
- 10 Weld and woad (4)
- 11 They're stuffed in the kitchen (7)
- 14 Software release (7)
- 16 Yield (4)
- 19 Swirling spirits act shy for some doctors (13)
- 21 Baby beds (4)
- 22 Water (8)

### Down

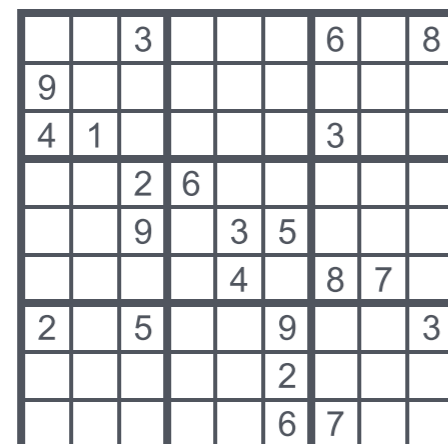
- 1 Ran in the park (6)
- 2 Middle Eastern spice (5)
- 3 Element emerges when humidior is smashed (7)
- 4 Chill out (4)
- 5 Inform (6)
- 7 Racehorses yet to win (7)
- 12 Storing (7)
- 13 Proposition (7)
- 15 Singer Sheena (6)
- 17 Living thing (6)
- 18 Tale (5)
- 20 Zodiacal divider (4)

## SUDOKU

Fill in each row, column and set of squares with all the digits from one to nine (Easy)



(Hard)



**FIND THE ANSWERS ON P82**

MEMBER BENEFIT



# THE SAVINGS SOON ADD UP

Small steps to save the planet with BIGGA Xtra Benefits



## Introducing BIGGA Xtra Benefits' new sustainable offers

As a BIGGA member you can access a range of new sustainable offers that provide environmental and social benefits, while also saving you money. From ethical snacks to sustainable travel options, we've got a range of offers designed to reduce your impact on the world.



## 20% discount on Virgin Experience Days

From beekeeping to foraging, Virgin Experience Days have chosen experiences committed to a greener future in their Sustainable Collection and BIGGA Xtra Benefits offer you a 20% discount\* — including special offers! So just what is a Virgin Experience Days voucher? It's a gift that goes the extra mile to offer something memorable, different and fun, while helping the planet.



## Discounts on travel to the Isle of Wight

As a member of BIGGA, you can save 15% on car travel and 20% off foot travel with Wightlink\*. Choose Wightlink's Victoria of Wight when you travel to the Isle of Wight and you'll be helping the environment. This £30 million ship has sustainability at her heart. She combines battery power with conventional engines to sail between Portsmouth and Fishbourne on the Isle of Wight. But that's not all. Wightlink's Green Solent Project promises to tackle plastic waste, reduce food miles, provide marine habitats and much, much more.



## Save 10% at Halfords

As a valued BIGGA member, you can get 10%\* in store and online at Halfords. Save on the latest driving accessories, bikes and camping supplies from the UK's leading provider of cycling and motoring services. Switching to cycling for more of our shorter journeys helps to protect biodiversity. It creates less noise and air pollution and results in fewer emissions that are warming the atmosphere.



**To take advantage of these and other fantastic deals log in to the BIGGA website and click on Xtra Benefits**

\*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice. Virgin Experience Days - Discount code cannot be used against their Excluded Range. Halfords - See website for exclusions. BIGGA Xtra Benefits is managed and run on behalf of BIGGA by Parliament Hill Ltd.

# THE FUTURE IS IN THEIR HANDS

Revealing the finalists of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards 2022

**BIGGA and sponsors Toro and Reesink Turfcare have revealed the finalists of their prestigious annual awards, which seek to uncover the UK's leading student greenkeepers.**

Each year the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards enable BIGGA, the UK's only membership association for golf greenkeepers, to work alongside Toro and distributor Reesink Turfcare to celebrate the next generation of talented and dedicated greenkeepers.

BIGGA Learning and Development Executive Deb Burnett said: "Each year the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards gain a little more prestige, as previous finalists go on to achieve wonderful things in their careers. I'm delighted that more student greenkeepers than ever before participated in the nomination process and

all should be proud of how they performed during the regional interview stage.

"Our 12 finalists are very worthy of their spot and I can't wait to watch them overcome the challenges set for them at glorious Goodwood this autumn. My thanks go to Toro and Reesink Turfcare for their continued support of this wonderful initiative."

A record 54 nominees from across the United Kingdom were put forward by educators, course managers and head greenkeepers and other mentors. From those candidates, a final 12 have been chosen to compete in the grand finals this September.

For the first time, the finals of Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year will take place at Goodwood, the historic sporting venue in West Sussex. The awards event will take place a week before the estate hosts Goodwood

Revival, the famous weekend of classic racing. Goodwood is also home to the Downs Course, described by Justin Rose as a "truly inspirational" place to play golf.

September's event will be the 33rd staging of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards and just the sixth time the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year, open to greenkeepers aged 21 or under, will take place. To be eligible to take part, candidates must be registered on a qualifying greenkeeping qualification and must be nominated by their course manager or college tutor.

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner will receive: enrolment in the 10-week University of Massachusetts Winter Turf School; a two-week expenses-paid placement at Adare Manor, venue of The 2027 Ryder Cup; an all-expenses-paid trip to the

GCSAA Conference and Show in Florida; and a visit to Toro Corporate HQ, R&D Centre and Equipment Operations in Wisconsin.

The Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year winner will receive: a two-week work placement at Vidauban Golf Club in France; a five-night trip to Continue to Learn at BTME including four days of education; and a gift voucher for Toro Training.

The runners-up and endorsers of the winners will also receive various prizes.



## MEET THE FINALISTS

### Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year



**Andrew Bate, Hesketh**

Greenkeeping has changed my life and I am thankful for that. At the age of 40, I decided I wanted a change and it was the best decision I ever made. Having played

golf at Hesketh since the age of 14, I asked the course manager if he would take a chance on me. I can honestly say that I have never been happier and the job is fantastic.



**Tom Bromfield, Trentham**

I was grateful that my tutor put me forward for the Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award in 2019. I worked hard to get through the

stages and eventually won the award. I worked at the JCB Golf and Country Club in 2020 as part of the Rose Series team and was chosen for the BIGGA Volunteer Support Team for The Open in 2021.



**James Gaskell, Ripon City**

I have been involved in greenkeeping for just over five years on a full-time basis. While at university I worked summers at Bedale and this turned into a passion. Once I graduated I applied for a greenkeeping role at Ripon City and my continued training has helped me take on the deputy course manager role as colleagues left or retired.



**Abigail Laker, Frilford Heath**

I graduated with a degree in creative media journalism on a four-year full golf scholarship from Arkansas State

University. I turned professional in 2018, playing on the LET Access Series for two years. When COVID hit I got a role at Frilford Heath. I joined the greenkeeping team and I have never looked back — I love it!



**Andrew Ritchie, St Andrews Links**

In 2015 I worked at Teen Ranch Scotland on grounds maintenance, which led me to pursue a career in greenkeeping. I gained employment at

Cawder and enrolled in the SVQ Level 2 Sports Turf Maintenance at GOSTA Training College. A year into my career, I secured employment at St Andrews Links and in 2022 I was awarded GOSTA Student of the Year.



**John Thornton, Hellidon Lakes**

My biggest achievement so far is being promoted to first assistant at Hellidon Lakes, with specific responsibility for our

9-hole course. Keen to continue my professional development, I approached the St Andrews Links team and was given the opportunity to spend a day with each of the four course managers, gaining an insight into elite golf course maintenance.



Meet your Learning and Development Team



**Sami Strutt**  
Chief Operating Officer  
sami@bigga.co.uk



**Deb Burnett**  
L&D Executive (BIGGA)  
deb@bigga.co.uk



**Fiona Lyttle**  
L&D Executive (GTC)  
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/greenkeepers trainingcommittee

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L&D  
Diary

Deb Burnett,  
Learning &  
Development  
Executive



**Greetings from L&D, where July has been another busy month!**

The Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards first stage interviews took place.

Interviews were held over two weeks and the panel consisted of a course manager, Reesink Turfcare representative and myself each day. With a record number of entries, it was a busy two weeks!

Thank you to all the students who took their time to complete their applications and also to those selected for interview for their time.

I love taking part in the regional interviews as it's great to meet so many engaged greenkeepers who are interested in furthering their careers.

Six finalists have been selected for each of the two award categories, with the finals take place in September at Goodwood.

The finalists will be put through their paces before a winner and runner up is selected by the judging panel for the Young and Main awards. I can't wait to see how everyone gets on!

Twenty lucky BIGGA members have also been selected to be the class of 2022 for the Future Turf Managers Initiative (FTMI).

We are having a hybrid event this year, starting at the Ransomes Jacobsen Factory, late September.

This will be followed by online education in October, November and December.

The delegates will then take part in an intense two day training course at BTME in January.

**Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year**



**Jake Beech, Newcastle-under-Lyme**

I work at an 18-hole parkland course, where my father, Ian Beech, is the course manager. My progress was halted until the winter of 2021, when

the team was brought back to do essential maintenance. I am a trained first aider and have various certificates in health and safety. I hope to one day become a course manager just like my father.



**Alfie Brookes, Gathurst**

I started off working for a sports turf company that looked after football, tennis and bowling. I then came to work at Gathurst where I am undertaking my PA1

and in future I hope to be an agronomist. To achieve this I need to work towards the foundation degree in sports turf management.



**Luke Charnley, Royal Liverpool**

I started working in greenkeeping about 16 months ago at Shaw Hill and recently I was lucky enough to start a new job at Royal Liverpool,

which will host The Open in 2023. In the future I intend to volunteer to ensure I am fully prepared for The Open, which will also help me progress my career as I aspire to eventually become a course manager.



**Peter Pattenden, Carden Park**

I recently passed my PA1, PA2 and PA6 spraying licences and I completed my chainsaw licence two years ago. I volunteered at JCB Golf

and Country Club for the Rose Series, while away from golf I have played rugby for North Wales and Scottish Exiles. One day I would like to be a course manager at an elite course.



**James Stratford, Broome Manor**

I am working towards my Level 2 Greenkeeping qualification at Sparsholt College and I am really enjoying the experience,

particularly soil science and plant biology, as it enables me to put the knowledge I gain at college into practice. I hope to have a long career in the industry and would love to venture into the architectural side, helping build sustainable courses.



**Freddie Williams, Dudsbury**

I began my apprenticeship at Dudsbury in 2022 after years of cutting the outfield at my local cricket and golf club,

where I gained a passion for the sports turf industry. After coming back from the Dutch Open, where I was a volunteer, my aspirations have become bigger than ever. I would now like to travel and learn about different countries' course types.



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**Matt Dobbs - Ringway Golf Club, Cheshire**



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

/ Craig MacEachen, Murcar Links	/ Jarno Ruscoe, Ingestre Park
/ Richard Johnstone MG, Nairn Dunbar	/ Aaron Sinclair, Wickham Park
/ Johnathan Peacock, Luffenham Heath	/ Paul Doran, Merrist Wood
/ Matthew Milligan, Rudding Park	

**Congratulations to the following members who achieved their CPD Milestone this month:**

/ Matthew Wharton MG, CGCS Carolina	/ Matthew Milligan, Rudding Park
-------------------------------------	----------------------------------

**Keep your CPD record up to date:** [www.bigga.org.uk/member-homepage/continuing-professional-development.html](http://www.bigga.org.uk/member-homepage/continuing-professional-development.html)

Apprentice Corner

Brought to you by the Greenkeepers Training Committee

# Measuring green speeds

The maintenance programme at your golf club should ensure that the best possible playing conditions are available for golfers.

In carrying out operations on the golf course, the greenkeeper needs to maintain the following aspects:

- / Speed
- / Surface response to the ball or player
- / Moisture content
- / Grass cover
- / Hardness or degree of consolidation
- / Trueness

This month we're going to focus on speed and surface response to the ball or player. Check back next month to find out how the other aspects impact playing surfaces.

## Green speeds

The internationally agreed standard of measuring golf green speed is by using a Stimpmeter.

A Stimpmeter is a tool that allows balls to be rolled over the green surface at a set pace. Three balls are rolled in two opposite directions and the average measurement is known as the green speed.

The Stimpmeter is very simply a metal bar with a groove machined out of the middle. The ball is held in a notch at the top of the bar and when it is raised to a certain angle, the ball rolls down the bar and across the green surface. Each ball is released at the same angle and therefore leaves the bar at the same speed. Three balls are rolled across the green and the average distance is measured.

- The speed of greens depends on:
- / Informed choice of the course manager in consultation with others
  - / Standard of play
  - / The time of year (greens will usually be at their fastest in the summer)
  - / Weather conditions (wet weather will slow greens



- and dry weather will make them faster)
- / Management — mechanical and chemical practices carried out on the green.
- / The speed of playing surfaces can be changed by the following practices:
  - / Height of cut (the lower the height of the grass, the less
  - resistance there is to the ball rolling across it)
  - / Topdressing (this smooths the surface so the ball rolls more easily across the surface)
  - / Rolling of the surface
  - / Amount of irrigation (the wetter the surface, the slower the roll of the ball will be)

- / Verti-cutting (this creates an upright sward that the ball rolls over easily).

### Surface response to the ball or player (how the surface reacts on impact to the ball)

Shots played into the green must be received by the turf surface without:

1. Excessive pitch marking
  2. Bouncing off unpredictably
- This is known as the receptiveness of the green and is controlled by:
- / Moisture content (too little water means a hard surface, whereas too much water makes a soft surface)
  - / Degree of organic matter (the more thatch you have, the softer the surface)
  - / Soil type (a clay soil is soft and compressible by the ball if wet, but can be very hard and resistant if it is

The Stimpmeter is very simply a metal bar with a groove machined out of the middle. The ball is held in a notch at the top of the bar and when it is raised to a certain angle, the ball rolls down the bar and across the green surface.

- too dry)
- The surface response can be controlled by:
- / Drainage and irrigation
  - / Scarification and other thatch-reducing methods
  - / The construction materials or soil type of the surface and the topdressing materials that are used
  - / Routine aeration
  - / Grass type
  - / Fertiliser input
- The response of the ball as it rolls across the turf surface

- must also be considered. On a golf green, the ball should roll smoothly across the surface without any bumps interrupting the direction of roll. This can be achieved by the following maintenance operations:
1. Topdressing, which helps smooth the surface
  2. Correct mowing height and changing mowing direction to ensure the grass stands upright
  3. Controlling weeds, pests and diseases.

### Example table of green speeds

Speeds for normal membership play			Speeds for tournament play		
2.60m	8 feet 6 inches	Fast	3.20m	10 feet 6 inches	Fast
2.28m	7 feet 6 inches	Medium fast	2.89m	9 feet 6 inches	Medium fast
1.98m	6 feet 6 inches	Medium	2.60m	8 feet 6 inches	Medium
1.67m	5 feet 6 inches	Medium slow	2.28m	7 feet 6 inches	Medium slow
1.37m	4 feet 6 inches	Slow	1.98m	6 feet 6 inches	Slow

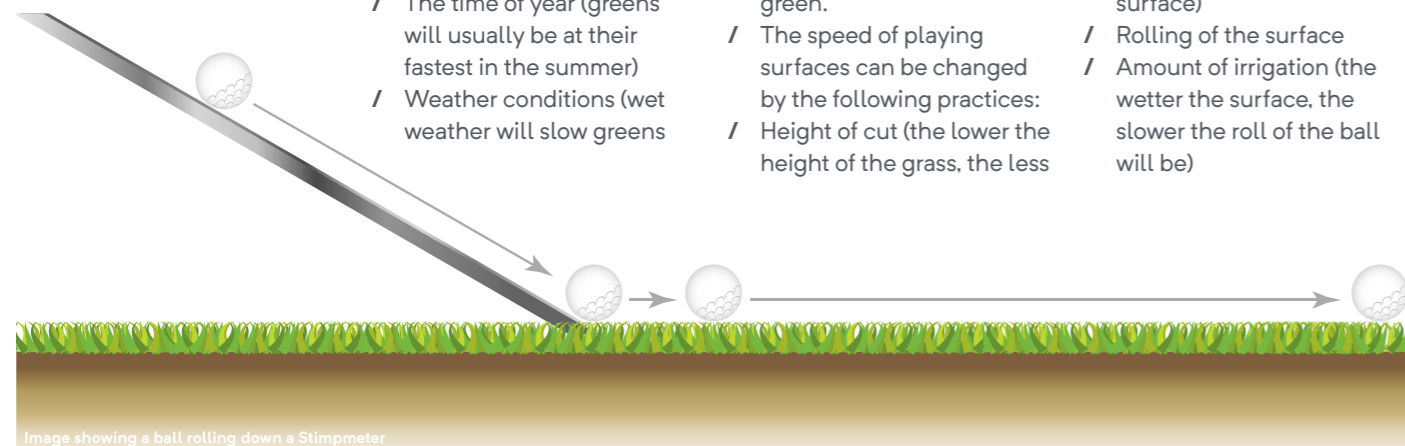


Image showing a ball rolling down a Stimpmeter



Congratulations to the following BIGGA members who have achieved their Level 2 Certificate in Golf Greenkeeping:

- / Rebecca Shubrook, Royal Norwich
- / George Ramage, Kirtlington

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# ECOLOGY ROUNDUP

James Hutchinson | Membership Services Manager (Ecology & Sustainability)



Dark Green Fritillary at Rowlands



Dark Green at Bamburgh

Once Rowlands Castle's ecology report was completed, Course Manager Kevin Hensman and I headed back out onto the course to see what else we could find.

Apparently, the course has many grass snakes with the occasional adder milling around and while we didn't get to see any of these slithering beauties, we did manage to see some equally impressive bits of wildlife.

I sometimes get questioned as to where all the butterflies have gone this year. A few days pass and then I'll receive a question as to why there are so many butterflies! In truth, it largely depends on where you are in the country. Up north has many of the brown types including the Scotch Argus, which, you guessed it, is Scottish, whereas in Norfolk (the Broads) you may find a swallowtail. If you're really lucky (and I mean really lucky) you might stumble across a

large blue in the more Southern parts. What I'm trying to get at is that certain butterflies can do well in certain areas in one year, but not so well the following year.

Back to Rowlands and we spotted many specimens of an impressive butterfly, the Dark Green Fritillary. This large butterfly is not particularly rare, but the Butterfly Conservation charity has them classed as a Medium Priority (and a Regional Priority in several England regions).

Trying to get a snap of these excitable splendours is no mean feat, but we managed to snap a few for your perusal.



Grayling at Bamburgh

On a similar note, Bamburgh Castle at the other end of England in Northumberland, is doing some excellent ecology work and the team are photographing Dark Green Fritillaries on a regular basis.

How about this fizzer taken by greenkeeper Mark Linsley (above)? Mark has been doing some fab eco work at a couple of courses over the past few years and it is super to see his work paying off! Not only that, but Mark also snapped this grayling butterfly too (below left). There are not many of those about so thanks for taking the time to send these in, Mark.

Ecology Roundup is kindly sponsored by



I am recovering from a bout of illness, so the diary has been a bit sparse of late.

However, Ganton, Rowlands Castle and Sleaford took full advantage of the eco section's services with full reports for each.

Knutsford, North Shore and Temple were recipients of a half day visit, but I was also privileged to spend a week at The Open. It was a real pleasure to spend time with the BIGGA members who gave up their time to help out and I'm delighted when you guys approach me to tell me what you've seen at your courses.

They take ecology really seriously at The Open and in 2015 I was part of a minor controversy when Bob Taylor, STRI ecologist at the time, spotted a meadow pipit nest in the line of a spectator pathway. The bird's nest took priority and the pathway was shifted!

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**Don't forget** You can read more from James on the BIGGA website. Visit [www.bigga.org.uk/about/green/ecology-bulletin.html](http://www.bigga.org.uk/about/green/ecology-bulletin.html) or scan the QR code



# MEET THE MANAGERS: LUCY SELLICK

head greenkeeper | Wenvoe Castle

In this regular feature, Phil Helmn MG sits down for a chat with the leading course managers working in the greenkeeping industry today to find out what makes them tick.

**Lucy is a true trailblazer in our industry. She became Wales's first female head greenkeeper when she was appointed to the top job at Wenvoe Castle just south of Cardiff back in May 2018. In 2022 she went on to become the first female member of BIGGA to be appointed to the national board of the association. Lucy's a firm believer in professional development and over the years has volunteered for many tournament support roles, last month she joined the BIGGA Volunteer Open Support team for the hosting of the 150th Open at St Andrews.**

**What books should I be reading?**

**Lucy Sellick:** I wish I had discovered Emotional Intelligence: Why It Matters More Than IQ by Daniel Goleman earlier in my career. Books on turf are a must, but this book changes how you see yourself and how you interact with others. It gives you the ability to respond rather than just react to situations.

**What advice do you have for someone who is new to the industry?**

**Lucy:** Add experiences to your CV along with education and tap into the knowledge of others. There are plenty of people in this industry who are happy to share.

**Is there a quote that motivates you?**

**Lucy:** I try to live by, "We don't know people's expectations so always do the best you can" and "Treat other as you would want to be treated". When times are tough, I turn to Finding Nemo when Dory says "Just keep swimming!"

**Phil Helmn:** I've heard both these motivational quotes many times and truly believe that having respect for others is a key factor in becoming a great leader. "Just keep swimming" shows strong inner strength, which again, is a fundamental leadership skill. It subliminally says to teammates "Follow me, we'll get there!"

**Who inspires you?**

**Lucy:** I would have a long list, but a few are: my mum and family for setting me up with an amazing work ethic and for providing me with all the support I need; a handful of amazing bosses and mentors who I will always owe a big thank you to; and greenkeepers in general who produce amazing golf courses with few resources and little manpower, showing how much passion and pride there is within the industry.

**What skills did you develop early in your career?**

**Lucy:** I'm not sure if it's a skill but I got over a fear of asking questions. Any contractors coming to the site would



Lucy at work at Wenvoe Castle

have to endure me standing over them, wanting to know everything! I'm still guilty of it now, so it must just be my inquisitive mind.

**Phil:** In this wonderful turf world we live in, asking questions has to be something everyone is encouraged to do. I know good leaders welcome this and feel better for being able to share their knowledge and experience.

**What skills have you found vital to your job?**

**Lucy:** Communication and people skills are both needed for great teamwork. I'll admit to being a shy introvert, so I have found these challenging in the past and I need to continually work on these areas. I set myself goals and take myself out of my comfort zone.

**What mistakes did you make early in your career?**

**Lucy:** I didn't seek help when I needed it. Being part of a tiny minority in the industry, I didn't want to look weak. I went through some tough times and kept them to myself, which was foolish.

I underestimated the understanding and support that my peers would have given me.

**“** I am always proving myself and setting an example

**Was there a career setback you faced, that you later realised was an advantage?**

**Lucy:** After getting knocked back for a few promotions, I lost heart in the industry and considered leaving. Instead, I changed my mindset, listened to feedback and advice and eventually got the promotions I was after.

**What should I be doing to improve my career prospects?**

**Lucy:** Grasp learning opportunities and when networking, leave a positive impression. Be curious and read greenkeeping magazines. Greenkeeping is always evolving, so stay up-to-date on the latest research and legislation changes. Ask for feedback and then listen to what you are told to ensure you understand what they are telling you and you can then learn something from it.

**Phil:** Staying at the forefront of industry developments and networking

helps to keep you relevant. Promoting a positive 'you' goes a long way to help open career opportunities.

**What has been your biggest success factor?**

**Lucy:** Resilience and diligence. It's been tough and as welcoming as this industry is, I've had to work hard to get where I am today. I am always proving myself and setting an example, not just for other women wanting to enter this industry, but to clubs that might be considering employing a female greenkeeper for the first time.

**What is on your mind regarding our industry?**

**Lucy:** I worry the cries of greenkeepers are not being heard by committees. Low wages, conditions, work-life balance, a negative working environment and a culture of complaints rather than compliments is making it unbearable for some. We need to sit around the table and make them listen.

**Phil:** You're so right on this one. I know a lot has been (and is being) done by our association to help with most of these issues at the higher levels. I wonder when the actual clubs will begin to take a positive stance for our colleagues, address these issues and start to do the right thing?

**Continue the conversation**

Continue the conversation by connecting with Lucy using [@Lucysellick](https://twitter.com/Lucysellick)



# MEET THE MANAGERS



# SUSTAINABILITY IS SHOWCASED AT THE OPEN

All-electric mowers were used to prepare the Old Course's greens as sustainability was showcased at The Open

**The firm fairways, vast greens and cavernous bunkers of the Old Course at St Andrews Links are a headline writer's dream and The 150th Open was no different.**

One of the headlines to emerge from the final major of the men's professional calendar year was the more sustainable agronomy practices on show before the golf even got underway.

It may not have dominated the back pages like Rory McIlroy or generated the buzz that Cameron Smith managed during a dramatic week in Fife, but the fact that the greenkeeping team at St Andrews replaced diesel mowers with fully electric mowers from Toro to prepare their greens throughout one of the largest golfing events ever is newsworthy and significant.

Based on studies at St Andrews Links, using the all-electric fleet for three hours per day during the week of The Open may have reduced operational carbon dioxide emissions by as much as 90% compared to conventional diesel units.

"We've used them for a couple of seasons now and we're blown away with the quality of them," said Sandy Reid, director of greenkeeping at St Andrews. "They really

help us maintain the turf to a first-class standard. We use them daily on the Old Course's greens."

The all-electric fleet brings other benefits too. Rising fuel costs are hitting the industry hard, so reducing the use of diesel-powered machinery can have a positive long-term impact on the bottom line.

"I've been in the industry for so long and I didn't think I'd ever be working at a time when we would be having fully electric machines," said Old Course Manager Gordon McKie "That,

to me, is a great thing."

While impressive, preparing their 2.5 hectares of greens with all-electric machinery is just one of many projects that the St Andrews greenkeeping team have embarked on as part of a wider sustainability drive that has seen the Old Course certified for their commitment and efforts for sustainable golf for the last eight years running. The Open simply provided a platform on which to help showcase how golf can lead the field when it comes to

sustainability and climate action in sport.

Other examples include their mix of browntop bent and fine fescue grasses that are resilient to pressures faced because of climate change and the management of nearby grassland to conserve ground-nesting birds that have declined sharply due to habitat loss.

"We obviously have a responsibility as custodians of this special place," St Andrews Links' head of engagement Laurie Watson said. "We're aware of the challenges we and many other golf courses around the world face in terms of climate change and coastal erosion.

"We take that really seriously and for the last 20 years Toro have been at the forefront of helping us in our efforts to make a real meaningful difference and to make sure we preserve this place for future generations."

It may not have made the back pages, but as golf continues to accelerate sustainability actions taken on and around the course, looking towards a net zero future, headlines like these could yet become even more commonplace.



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# ‘You just have to keep improving’

Galgorm Castle’s long-serving course manager, Rodney McKay, discusses tournament preparation, management styles and industry challenges

Mike Hyde

One of several greens at Galgorm Castle protected by stunning sleeper lined water hazards

**A true one-club man, Galgorm Castle’s course manager Rodney McKay has been preparing the championship venue in County Antrim in various roles for 22 years.**

Despite leaving school as a joiner, Rodney was enticed into the greenkeeping industry by his brother, who worked at the course.

A career that began in 2000 has seen some form of professional tournament every year since 2009, including three EuroPro events, seven Northern Ireland Opens, the Irish Open, and more recently the ISPS Handa World Invitational – an innovative tri-sanctioned event that will be played again this month.

Rodney obviously runs a fun ship, as Galgorm Castle hasn’t had to hire anyone for the greenkeeping team in four years. That hasn’t happened by accident and Rodney has built a workplace culture that has so far meant the club hasn’t fallen victim to the dreaded recruitment crisis.

“Five of the team were here when I joined 22 years ago, but I know not all courses are like this and the last time we recruited was very tough,” Rodney explained. “Very few people replied to the job listing and those who did had no background in greenkeeping and were just applying for any job. I can see plenty of local courses are looking for staff, and the jobs have been up for months.

“They’re obviously not filling them, so I think there is a major shortage in greenkeeping all over.”

Suggesting that clubs might have to be a bit more open minded when it comes to the recruitment process, Rodney elaborated: “I think you just have to find somebody who’s keen and willing to learn and listen. It’s not a bad idea to bring somebody in and try and train them up yourself.”

When Rodney does have to recruit, he is clear what he is looking for: “Reliability!

“Someone who is going to be here at work every day is key. I think you also have to have a keen interest in greenkeeping – you must want to be a greenkeeper to do well in this job.

“I want people to do their best and a willingness to listen and learn is key, obviously, but I think reliability is number one for me – someone who is going to be here and stick with it.”

Rodney’s passion for creating a positive team atmosphere is clear as he discusses his approach to managing his team: “I try to keep the job enjoyable for everybody. I think if you’re enjoying your work, then you produce better results and I would never have anybody doing anything that I wouldn’t ask myself to do.

“I like to get out and get my hands dirty and work among the boys. There are no jobs out there that I wouldn’t do, which I think is very important. It’s easy to shout orders sometimes and then the boys could say ‘he wouldn’t do that!’”

With the exception of specialist tasks, such as spraying, Rodney believes in making sure every member of his squad gets a chance to do every job and ensures everyone feels they can contribute ideas. He said: “We like to share the jobs about and I like everybody being able to do every job – then everybody feels valued.

“Some of the guys will come up with suggestions and ideas, and I’ll always thank them, take them on board and talk them over. Then we’ll either go ahead or I’ll give reasons why I don’t think it will work.”

Rodney appreciates that he’s not always the bearer of good news: “Sometimes there’s reasons for doing things that people don’t like, »



Galgorm Castle recently hosted the BIGGA Northern Ireland Championship

“I just ask everybody to do their job to the best of their ability, whatever part of the course they’re working on

but they have to be done. It’s a matter of just trying to keep it as enjoyable as possible.”

While not without its challenges, the target of an annual tournament is a great carrot for the Galgorm Castle team each season.

“It’s a couple of weeks out of their summer and it’s hard work, but I think that’s something to aim for every year,” said Rodney. “The guys do look forward to it because it shows off their hard work.”

This year, the team have been tasked with ensuring the course is in superb shape for both the Northern Ireland Open and the ISPS Handa. Balancing that preparation with a full tee sheet — which Rodney acknowledges is a good problem to have — is one of his biggest challenges at the moment.

“Since COVID, timesheet demand has soared – our membership is in a strong position and our members are very active,” he explained. “When I look at the timesheet,

trying to plan for the next day’s work, it’s generally full.

“It’s tricky as there’s less chance for us to get work done and then the course is also getting more heavily played. Ideally, we would be a bit quieter in the build-up to a tournament, so it’s a definite challenge.”

Fortunately, the additional resources at his disposal in the run up to big events help Rodney complete work despite the course often being at capacity. He said: “We keep the course to a high level all

year for our members and guests but obviously, whenever a tournament comes along we have more resources and it’s much easier to get the course to tournament-spec.”

Rodney points to the 2020 Irish Open as an example of the benefits of additional resources: “We tripled our squad with volunteers, plus all the extra machinery that goes with that. Normally we have eight men, so obviously the appearance of the course goes up whenever you get



Rodney tees it up

that amount of manpower and machinery on the ground.”

Outside of tournament run-ins, normal golfers are likely to be entirely unaware of the scale of the work that goes into the conditioning of the course. With tee times in such demand from members, hotel guests and visitors, a conventional maintenance week where heavy duty work can be done is out of the question.

Much of the work goes on before members or guests have even had breakfast and the rest is done to minimise disruption: “We obviously do a lot of early morning work — from 5am in the summer — and there’s a lot of micro-tining and other work that the golfer might not notice,” Rodney explained. “We don’t have the luxury of being able to close for a greens week, although to be fair, play is restricted to members-only with play from mats two weeks before a tournament, which helps with divots and gives us a week to repair the turf and let the course recover.

“Then one week before the tournament we’ll be closed completely. Having no golfers makes life much easier for us to really put the final touches to the course presentation.”

Tripling the team for tournaments offers obvious time efficiencies — Rodney estimates it reduces the mowing of fairways from all day to three hours — but also gives him flexibility with his approach to preparation to ensure the course is presented in superb shape.

“The main benefit is the speed at which we can do things – we can cut in the evenings when the grass is drier, rather than in the morning when there is a heavy dew and the quality of the cut is not so good,” said Rodney. “We do a lot of tournament cutting from 4pm, when it’s nice and dry, and the result is a lot better.”

Unfortunately, no amount



Galgorm Castle

of manpower could help with a recent bureaucratic challenge that Rodney faced. During past green rebuilding projects, Galgorm sourced turf from England, but since the UK’s departure from the EU, and the implementation of the infamous NI Protocol, soil hasn’t been allowed to cross the Irish Sea.

“I went to extend a green last year and phoned to place the order like the year before and they said, ‘sorry, we can’t send over the turf’. I can’t actually buy greens turf from the mainland now, which we weren’t anticipating and is obviously a big problem.

“We’re going to grow our own greens nursery to have our own turf available on site but that’s going to take a few years. As far as I’m aware, there is no greens turf available to buy in Northern Ireland. It’s actually easier to bring turf from Germany or Holland than from Great Britain, which is crazy to think.”

As a renowned »

## GREENKEEPERS’ TOOLBOX

### The Team

- / Rodney McKay, course manager
- / Richard McKay, deputy course manager
- / Mervyn McDowell, deputy course manager/mechanic
- / Luke Higgins, first assistant
- / Aidy Crowe, greenkeeper
- / Brian Hughes, greenkeeper
- / Brian McFall, greenkeeper
- / Kyle Mark, greenkeeper
- / Isaac McWilliams, trainee greenkeeper
- / George Surgenor, trainee greenkeeper
- / Towny Dowds, divoting team.

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## GREENKEEPERS' TOOLBOX

### Main Equipment

- / **Greens:** John Deere 2750e; Toro 3250; Toro 1000 Handmowers (x4)
- / **Tees/approaches:** Jacobsen GP400 (x2); John Deere 220a (x2)
- / **Fairways:** John Deere 6700a; Jacobsen LF570; Toro 6500
- / **Semi rough:** Jacobsen AR3
- / **Rough:** Jacobsen HR500
- / **Tractors:** Kubota 9540; Kubota ST35; John Deere 2036R; JCB Streetmaster
- / **Utility vehicles:** Toro MDX-D; Kubota Rtv 1140; Jacobsen Cushman; Jacobsen Truckster (x2)
- / **Other:** Toro Procore 640; Toro Multipro 1750; Smithco greens roller; Truturf greens roller; Smithco bunker rake; Turfco tri wave seeder; Turfco topdresser; Ultra Plant topdressers (x2); Greentech rake brush

Rodney alongside BIGGA Scotland & NI Membership Services Manager John Young

tournament venue, how does the Galgorm Castle team ensure the conditioning of the course matches the luxury surroundings?

Rodney said: "I just ask everybody to do their job to the best of their ability. Whatever part of the course they're working on, just produce it to the highest level possible — it's all about attention to detail."

"In terms of specific touches, we divot daily on the fairways and the tees and we use the green dye mix for divoting — some courses maybe only use that for tournaments."

Despite its tournament heritage, it's clear Galgorm Castle has no intention of resting on its laurels, with significant course improvements planned, in addition to substantial work already undertaken.

"We have a three-year plan and this was the end of the second year," said Rodney. "In the first year we added a water feature at our 18th

green, changing it from three bunkers to a big sleepered lake, so that was a big job.

"This year we've added six bunkers and several new

tournament tees, as well as substantial reshaping of the lake on the ninth hole to make it bigger and more in play.

"Over the next 12 months



Galgorm Castle hosts the ISPS Handa World Invitational in August

we're going to do some bunkering on holes 11 and 13 plus build a new tee on 13 right out on the river, and the 14th is also going to get a new tee.

"Finally, the 14th green is going to be extended out towards the river to make it more like an island green."

As a championship course, some of the changes are driven by maintaining the length to keep up with the professionals' driving distances, but the changes to the 14th, in particular, are for everyone's benefit. The green extension will make the putting surface larger, giving more pin positions over towards the water.

While some contractors have been brought in for things like earth moving, most of the work has been undertaken in-house. Rodney said: "It's always us that finishes the turf and that side of it. The majority of stuff we do is all in-house, which keeps us busy in the winter."

Rodney reflects positively on his three experiences on the BIGGA Open Volunteer Support Team at St Andrews, Hoylake and, closer to home, Royal Portrush. He said:

"They've all been very enjoyable, but Portrush was a bit different because it's just up the road and I visited the town every Sunday growing up, so that was very special."

Acknowledging the differences in preparing links and parkland courses, Rodney is clear on what he took away from his time on the ground at golf's oldest championship: "Just the attention to detail — everything's perfect! There are usually eight or 10 guys from over here, but it's always good to meet the guys from Scotland, England, Wales, and all over the world. It's just a great event to be part of."

Networking with his peers is also the key driver for Rodney attending BTME whenever he can: "I try to go every year, so it was good to

get back in March and see all the different machinery and products and everything that's changed in the last couple of years in the industry. It was great that it went ahead and I think it's good to get things back up and rolling again."

Finally, Rodney is emphatic about his ongoing passion for the industry and motivation for the job: "Having a tournament every year, along with the changes that we're making, you don't get a year to sit still."

"There are plans for the next couple of years already and I just don't get time to sit and think — we're always moving forward. The tournaments force you to go one step better each year — you just have to keep improving."

### Continue the conversation

Continue the conversation by connecting with Rodney using [@RJM198](https://twitter.com/RJM198)

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# ‘GOOD MORNING FROM THE LINKS’

Here’s what happens before play begins at The Open

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

## A full moon sets behind the Old Course Hotel.

It’s dark on the links, but it soon won’t be. It’s quiet on the links, but it soon won’t be.

Days are long in Fife at this time of year and when your golf course is hours away from hosting The 150th Open, they get even longer.

In the Jubilee maintenance facility at St Andrews Links there’s a set of stairs that come up out of the ground, like the players’ tunnel at a sports stadium or a trapdoor on a stage. One by one, out of this access point ventures a key cog in the hosting of the championship. Dressed head to toe in black, they move with a quiet efficiency and purpose. The greenkeeping team at St Andrews Links are ready for the biggest day of their working lives.

In his office, Gordon McKie pulls on a jumper and coat.

“Right, let’s get to it,” he says. It’s 4am and time for the team’s morning briefing.

Heading out of the sheds, Gordon makes his way to a marquee set up to cater for the 45-or-so greenkeepers who are responsible for preparing the course for this most historic of events.

Most are drawn from across St Andrews’ seven courses, but some are experienced greenkeepers brought in from elsewhere to supplement the team.

“Right, let’s get to it,” it’s 4am and time for the team’s morning briefing.

Microphone in hand, Gordon addresses the team: “We’ve finally arrived, day one of the 150th Open Championship and the 30th playing of The Open at St Andrews. It’s a huge privilege for us all to be here, so let’s embrace that history and put on a show for the world over the next few days.”

There’s praise for everything the team has achieved over the seven years since St Andrews last hosted this event, which includes developments such as the rebuilding of bunkers and alterations to various greens and tees.

“The feedback we’re getting on golf course condition is phenomenal,” Gordon continues. “Day one is a very special day for us all. Nobody else is going to have the honour of doing a 150th Open and there’s not going to be many people here in the room who will be here for the 175th, so it is an honour to be here and do this. Let’s go out there and deliver as we know we can.” »

## FACTS & FIGURES

### Course maintenance

- / **Thursday 14 July:** Greens single cut at 3.5mm. Speed was 10.2, 1 inch up from previous day. Greens firmness was 159 gravities, 11 gravities firmer than previous day.
- / **Friday 15 July:** Greens double cut at 3.5mm. Speed was 10.3, 1 inch up from yesterday. Firmness was 159 gravities.
- / **Saturday 16 July:** Greens double cut at 3.5mm. Speed was 10.6, 3 inches up from yesterday. Firmness was 153 gravities, 6 gravities less than yesterday.
- / **Sunday 17 July:** Greens single cut at 3.5mm. Speed was 10.6, same as yesterday. Firmness was 161 gravities, 8 gravities firmer than yesterday.
- / **Tees:** Cut at 7.5mm
- / **Fairways:** Cut at 8.5mm
- / **First cut rough (approximate width 2m):** Cut at 60mm



The instructions for the team this morning are fairly simple: suppress the excitement, retain your professionalism and take your time — but not too much time as Paul Lawrie is first out in around two hours.

Out on the course and it's already getting light. St Andrews is in the early stages of a drought and that means the grass is dry and brown. Just like us, when it is under high stress it doesn't take much to break out in an illness or blemish of some sort so, for those using the electric ride-on mowers, there are to be no sharp turns and you must treat every inch of the links with care.

I don't know how they make tartan, but you can imagine that were you to attach a tracer to each of the mowers weaving in and out of each other on the historic fairways, it might just resemble the famous patterned cloth.

The plan for the greens was just a single cut, although the cutters may be asked to run over them once again if the speed isn't quite what the organisers are looking for. For the first time at an Open, the greens are being cut with completely electric ride-on mowers, allowing eight people to do a job completed in previous years by 24. This



An evening view from the Old Course's 1st hole grandstand towards the 17th Road hole

morning, the average ball roll is 10 feet 2 inches, with ambitions for a differential across the Old Course's 2.5 hectares of greens of less than four inches.

Sandy Reid is director of greenkeeping at St Andrews Links and is an Open veteran, having previously filled the role of links superintendent at Carnoustie. He explained: "We have four pairs of greens cutters who cut greens and then they will wait until one of the guys on the stimpmeter, from The R&A agronomy team, will take the readings. That reading

will be chatted through with The R&A's director of rules, the agronomy team and the course manager and there'll be a decision made whether to stick with that speed or cut the green a second time, which might just add another 4 inches or so."

Greens out the far end of the course are more exposed, so the first time they are cut, the team will take a cautious approach and see what numbers come out. The cutting height across the greens is set at 3.5mm.

Moisture and hardness readings are also taken on every green each morning. It will come as no surprise, given the aforementioned drought, that the 30-40 readings taken on every green report the putting surfaces to be incredibly dry, while the Clegg Impact Hammer reports the hardness to be 159 gravities. A hard links course usually measures around 150 gravities, while a decent parkland course will be around 90.

Sandy said: "150 is as firm as you'd find on any golf course. That provides a good test and you will need to be striking the ball very well to control it, which these players can do from tight fairways. They'll be able to impact a bit of spin, but even if it's a well-struck shot,

the ball will take a couple of hops before it gets any control on the green.

"In conjunction with that, the greens are very dry yet healthy, which is great because it allows us to have firm greens but keep the speeds at a reasonable level so they don't get out of control."

The final task on the greens, before they are signed off for the day's play, is the placement of the pin position. Hole locations are generally decided weeks in advance, but a specific spot is selected within the week. The course closed three weeks ago, but prior to that the greenkeeping team were sure to keep hole locations well away from where they would be during championship — a task made easier by the Old Course's vast putting surfaces.

The task of hole changing for the championship falls to Gavin Neill, deputy course manager on the New and Jubilee courses and former St Andrews employee Craig Berry, now course manager at Leven Links. The job is sweat inducing at the best of times, but on the 18th hole at St Andrews on the opening day of The Open, there's no greater pressure for a greenkeeper.

The precision is exquisite,

from the cutting through the hard ground to the spray painting around the rim to give that crisp white image that shows up so well on the television cameras. The flag must stand up perfectly vertically and there can be no stray blades of grass impacting the circle. The hole, quite simply, must be perfect.

"This is the most stressful role this week," said Sandy. "I painted holes at the 2007 Open, so I know the pressure they are under just now."

After a long, almost silent, 10 minutes, the job is done. The St Andrews greenkeepers and The R&A team are happy and it's on to the next hole, where the hard work of preparing the first green is already well underway.

There's a lot of work to do, but the greenkeepers know that these ancient links won't let them down.

"We having a saying," said Gordon. "The course knows when it needs to be ready."

## WHAT DID YOU LEARN AT THE OPEN?

### Richard Windows, R&A agronomist

I learnt how important correct nutrition, species composition and soil profile management (organic matter and root development) are to enable a consistent and controlled dry down that provides the optimum surface firmness (>150 gravities) to challenge the best players in the world.

Twice daily measurements of soil moisture (1,000 measurements per day) using the POGO accurately informed green specific irrigation and location specific hand watering, enabling the team to both optimise performance and minimise water use.

### James Bledge, links superintendent at Royal Liverpool, host venue in 2023

I was invited up to St Andrews by Director of Greenkeeping Sandy Reid to see the ins and outs of hosting an Open. I have worked at many tournaments as a volunteer, but this time was altogether different. In the weeks running up to the event I had been making bullet points of all the questions I

had for Sandy, such as work planning, infrastructure and agronomy. St Andrews has some of the best surfaces on the planet and the data recorded that week was as close to perfection as you could realistically achieve. I was keen to find out the process of achieving those results from a year out through to the weeks before.

Sandy is one of the industry's good guys and he could not have been more helpful. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity and things like this are what makes our industry so special as you would not get this in any other line of work.

The highlight for me was observing what I affectionally called the 'COBRA meeting'. This was a daily meeting where the heads of the agronomy team and St Andrews would meet with The R&A's Grant Moir and Martin Slumbers to discuss the course and talk about the next steps. That was a bit of a 'pinch yourself' moment, as was standing in the Valley of Sin at 5am, watching the greenstaff working away. St Andrews really is the greatest place on Earth and I was so privileged to watch from afar.




Gavin Neill checks the pin is perfectly located



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## BUNKER FACTS & FIGURES

There are 110 bunkers around the Old Course and many were found by the competitors throughout the championship – in fact, the BIGGA support team was called into action 633 times. Not bad, considering there are no bunkers on the famous 1st and 18th holes!

BIGGA statman John Pearson has drawn up some interesting tidbits from The 150th Open at St Andrews Links

**Average number of bunker rakes per match per day**

- / Thursday — 3.7
- / Friday — 3.8
- / Saturday — 2.8
- / Sunday — 2.9

**Which holes were BIGGA volunteers called into action on each day?**

- / **Thursday** — Hole 5, which features the Seven Sisters fairway complex and the Spectacles up at the green (24)
- / **Friday** — Hole 16, where the Principle's Nose group of traps present a hazard off the tee and the Deacon Sime pot is completely hidden from the tee (30)
- / **Saturday** — Hole 14 features one of golf's most notorious hazards in the form of Hell Bunker, which sits 100 yards short of the green (14)
- / **Sunday** — Hole 17 and the world's

most famous bunker. Road, has ended many a challenge for the Claret Jug, which is probably why Cam Smith opted to putt around it on the final day (25)

- / **Busiest hole all week** — Hole 14 (62)
- / **Biggest increase from Thursday to Friday** — Hole 16 (7 to 30)
- / **Biggest increase from Friday to Saturday** — Hole 7 (2 to 12)
- / **Biggest increase from Saturday to Sunday** — Hole 17 (11 to 25)
- / **The best bunker shot of the championship?** Rory McIlroy on the 10th hole in round three — and this was his only bunker shot of the entire tournament!

# SUPPORTING THE ST ANDREWS TEAM

### Scott Rigby, Gathurst

"I had the winning game and I raked no bunkers which was good, but I'd have liked to have raked a bunker. It was mental coming up 18 and I really enjoyed it."

### James Bonfield was in Rory McIlroy's group walking down 1st as Tiger was coming up the 18th

"That was incredible. You're never going get that again with the crowd and all the players stopped, it was brilliant. "Where else are you going to get this kind of stuff? It's open to everyone so just

apply, get up here and you'll get your own experiences like this."

### Aidan Wright, Camberley Heath

"How do you even describe this week?"

“If you're thinking of applying next year, don't even question it. Apply and you will gain so much experience

Coming to St Andrews for The 150th Open is a pretty special occasion itself. It's something that's worth doing because you get to meet so many new people in the industry and it's just a surreal experience — walking inside the ropes with some of the best players in the world. If you haven't applied or haven't even thought about it, it's well worth sticking your name in the hat. It was the first time I had applied and I managed to get in, so if you're thinking about it then just do it."

### George Watton, Ludlow, raked for Tiger Woods in potentially his last Open round at St Andrews

"It was unbelievable. The number of people cheering Tiger's name the whole way around, was incredible. The reception at the last was out of this world and I was shaking. We shook hands and he thanked me afterwards."

### Niels Sorensen, Randers Golf Klub in Denmark

"The week has been unlike anything I've ever experienced before. So many people, such a nice crowd and so many good colleagues, it has really been a thrill. It's the experience of a lifetime."

### Daniel Ashelby, Reddish Vale

"I've been very fortunate with my draw — I've had three Masters champions, an Open champion and a US Open champion. It's luck of the draw but it's been very rewarding. If you like golf in any way or if you're part of the greenkeeping community and enjoy that

aspect, it's a wonderful week for bonding with other likeminded guys. It's not just raking bunkers, it's the whole experience.

"It's a surreal week, away from the real world, but it's something special."



Scott Rigby (left) attended to the final round grouping of Cameron Smith and Cameron Young

### Stevie-Jon Hood, Ljunghusens in Sweden

"I'm originally from York and I've been a BIGGA member for eight years. I applied for the Open Support Team three years in a row and this is the first year I got selected. Obviously there's many guys who want to do this because it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and it's been a great week. There's so much enthusiasm and passion for the industry, it's great to be among the guys and girls that are here. I'd love to do it again and would highly recommend anyone to do it."

### Jack Fairbairn, Shipton

"Shipton is a nine-hole golf course so being here has been an amazing experience. I wasn't expecting anything like this. It's just another level. I've done the BMW PGA and that was good, but this is even better again. The atmosphere and the course is unbelievable, I've never seen anything like it. If you're



Stuart Christon walks up the 18th hole



George Watton was chosen for Tiger Woods's second round, which was potentially his last at St Andrews during an Open



Niels Sorensen beside the Swilcan Bridge



Chris Sheehan, Jim Gilchrist, Rick Tegtmeier MG and Ronnie Myles

thinking of applying next year, don't even question it. Apply and you will gain so much experience by meeting other greenkeepers, chatting with them and learning stuff and you'll never regret it."

**Joshua Raper, Golf Club Hosel in Germany**

"I've had a great week raking bunkers here, I've met a load of guys and it's been a great experience — definitely worth it. I was in Shane Lowry's group when he shot back to back eagles on 9 and 10 and I got goosebumps!

"From the experience itself to seeing everything behind the scenes and meeting the guys, I would 100% encourage anyone to do this."

**Sean Tully, The Meadow Club in California**

"I find myself enjoying every minute. Today I just finished with Willett and Connors' group and I got into the Road Hole bunker, which was everything I was hoping for! My week has been made.

"The BIGGA Support Team opportunity is something I've really

“The opportunity to walk inside the ropes at St Andrews this week has been amazing and something I'm going to cherish for the rest of my life.

enjoyed — this is my second time doing it after Portrush — and I would tell you to give it some thought. It's a wonderful opportunity to work at some amazing golf courses and to work alongside some really good guys who have all taken time off from their work to do the same.

"There's a lot of good energy and the opportunity to walk inside the ropes at St Andrews this week has been amazing and something I'm going to cherish for the rest of my life."



Members of the BIGGA Support Team

**OPEN EXTRAS**

Former St Andrews Open winner Zach Johnson sent a message of support to our team. Thanks to Rick Tegtmeier CGCS MG for making this possible.

"I just want to extend a massive thank you to all the greenkeepers, maintenance crew, everybody that has come from all across the world to be here, to share in this experience. To all of you that are looking after this beautiful piece of property — the bunkers, the turf (is there much turf there? I don't know, there's a lot of dirt!). All kidding aside, as an Open champion and as a player this year I'm grateful and I appreciate all your hard work. It doesn't go unnoticed and I hope you enjoy it too because it's a special place, the Home of Golf. Have fun, rake properly — especially those who are following me, make sure it's just nice and flat, maybe a little uphill as I need some help in those bunkers. We appreciate you, Rick Tegtmeier you're the man, be good, be safe and enjoy The Open!"

When Michael Budd's flight was cancelled on the day he was due to fly to Scotland, he feared his Open experience was over. However, the members of the BIGGA team offered to chip in to help him get to the event and although he would be refunded the cost of the flight and was able to catch a train, he was still blown away by the community of BIGGA members.

"The response from the rest of the team was unbelievable and I describe it as greenkeeping at its best. We're a family in a really positive industry and there were cries of 'get up here' and 'we'll fund your trip' and it was great.

"I must have had 20 or 30 messages to help fund my train up here and it was amazing. I got really choked. I was at home in a bit of a sulk but once the messages came in I got really emotional, it was unbelievable.

"The experience has been phenomenal. It's my first time on a links course and doing a tournament. It's a really fantastic atmosphere."



Jez Ward shakes hands with Cameron Smith, eventual Open winner



James Bonfield shaking hands with Rory McIlroy



Joshua Raper and Sean Tully

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Unmanaged bunker at Barnehurst

# LEAVING THE BARNE DOOR OPEN

Injecting hope into this once-closed nine-hole course

James Hutchinson, BIGGA

**Barnehurst Golf Course closed its doors just before the start of the pandemic, in 2020.**

That's a shame, because having been to the site and walked the holes, I can safely say that this nine-holed beauty should really be awakened from its slumber.

With first-class fescue dominated roughs, wildlife galore, aesthetic golf holes that look like they've been there forever and an opening hole that wouldn't look out of place anywhere, Barnehurst has got the lot! It's just a shame it's quickly disappearing into the ether.

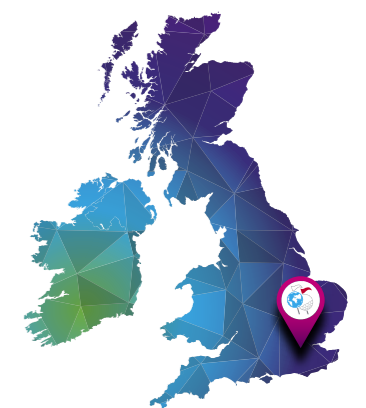
“ Barnehurst has got the lot! Just a shame it's quickly disappearing into the ether.

I visited the site in spring 2022, but even after two years of being closed, you could quite easily see the outlines of the holes. That being said, I doubt whether it would take long to polish the old girl back into some sort of shape. The hard part would be the greens and bunkers, the rest would fall into place in no time given the correct attention, and that's where your author enters the story.

But first, there's great news on the horizon, and that is a juggernaut of golfing attire and accessories has stepped in and taken over the operating lease from the local authority! American Golf, famed for their work in the golfing sector, are the new owners with the intentions of turning this gem of a venue into a family-oriented golf haven.

I asked American Golf's sales and operations >>

**Location: Bexleyheath**





Unmaged tees and fairway at Barnehurst



Ant Hills at Barnehurst

manager, Martin Robinson, about the way forward at Barnehurst. He explained that the retailer chose the venue not only because it was closed and out of a desire to reenergise the site, but because they wanted to provide an all-inclusive family golf club to get more people into golf from all walks of life.

American Golf will have invested around £725,000 into Barnehurst by the time it reopens and the process of recruiting a greenkeeping team is underway, with plans to reopen this summer.

## “ American golf will have invested around £725,000 into Barnehurst by the time it reopens

Martin contacted me to ask if I would like to be involved with the site and create an eco-management report. Having known Martin for many years and knowing his

proactive approach to this kind of thing, I jumped at the chance. To cut a long story short, here are a few of the goodies I found, and ant hills feature quite high on the list.

believe it or not.

I noted a good number of green woodpeckers flitting around, which caught me off guard a little given the course's location, with housing on three sides and farmland on the remainder. It soon became apparent that the reason they were there was the large number of ant hills that had moved

in when the rough was not being mowed. Ants take time to build their hills and if you have them on your course then the area has an air of antiquity about it — with that in mind, retain as many ant hills as possible on your golf course! The main diet of green woodpeckers is ants, so doing so will retain these ornithological curiosities for your members to appreciate.

Similar to the ant hills, natural succession was taking a foothold in places, and this is what you would expect to find in an environment that has been left to its own devices. In golf terms, 'natural succession' means scrub starts to creep into areas that were previously managed as cut rough — this only takes a few months during the growing season. Shortly after that, pioneer trees, such as birch and pine, begin to grow and that's when you lose the fine grasses you've worked so hard to encourage. Leaf drop

acts as fertiliser for fat grasses and over time, meadow and fog start to creep in. As with everything in life, it's finding a balance and natural succession is no different.

I mentioned fine fescue roughs and I know of many parkland courses who would pay handsomely for roughs like Barnehurst's. Was it because of past management or was it just because they have been left to their own devices for years? Whichever it is, and with careful holistic management, the roughs will continue to be of the desired kind.

Barnehurst's golf course is laid out on old land that hasn't been disturbed for many years. I know this as there are a number of veteran trees dotted about, with some on the tops of banks. Trees on the tops of banks were potentially part of an ancient hedgerow or parish boundary and so were managed differently in years gone by. »





Redwoods at Barnehurst

### GREENKEEPERS' TOOLBOX

#### The Team

- / Harry James, greenkeeper
- / Raymond Ward, greenkeeper





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Parakeets at Barnehurst

grow to well over 350 feet tall. I am pleased they are there, nonetheless.

Another interesting feature is the old icehouse, located adjacent to the third green. Icehouses were once commonplace within the UK's halls and fine country homes and this particular one appears to be of a considerable age.

After a few hours research on historic refrigeration, I can say that these buildings were here in the 1600's and that they worked a treat! Built just below the ground and lined with straw, barley and other organic materials, the ice would stay frozen for the whole summer season, thus the land manager and cook could have access to refrigerated meat, fruit and veg throughout the year.

Along with the green woodpeckers, another green bird has made its home at Barnehurst and there are hundreds of ring-necked parakeets! I am aware that

in certain places where the parakeets have moved in, numbers of songbirds have declined rapidly. While I do not know the small bird population numbers prior to my visit, I can safely say that small bird numbers seem to be high with blackbird, mistle thrush, pied wagtail, starling, oystercatcher and many other grassland birds being noted. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) states that it is not in favour of a cull of parakeets at this time, but believes it is important that the spread of the ring-necked parakeet is monitored and its potential for negative impacts on our native bird species assessed.

Ring-necked parakeets, like all birds living in the wild in the UK, are protected by law and although they can be controlled under licence in England, this is only in isolated cases where the birds pose a serious threat to conservation of a native species, are causing



Ice House at Barnehurst

Some of the horse chestnuts are of considerable age and potentially reaching ancient status given their gnarliness and decay. Scots pines are

aplenty and one of the old oaks has decayed so much that it now looks like two sister trees — it's only after many, many years that this happens.

But the most impressive trees are unquestionably the two redwoods on the first hole. I'm sure whoever planted these were aware that they

serious damage to crops or for air safety purposes. Now we know this, the chances of gaining a licence to reduce the numbers on your course are mighty slim.

I often think it sad that golf

courses are dying, built on or turned to some other use, however, with businesses like American Golf potentially injecting life back to the game, the future looks bright — and that goes for the

wildlife too!

[Continue the conversation](#)

Continue the conversation by connecting with James using [@Ecology1BIGGA](#)



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# RENOVATION RISKS



Turf surfaces have been under intense pressure in many areas - with record high temperatures, extreme sunlight and soil

moisture issues. Late summer renovation could prove even more challenging this season.

Sean Loakes, Syngenta Turf Technical Manager

**Renovation will ultimately improve playing surface quality, however some of the actions involved create risks for turf plant health.**

The additional stress imposed can make them more susceptible to disease - at a time when spores are being brought to the surface and leaf tissue damage provides a gateway for infection.

Renovation practices that increase the risk of disease outbreak include:

- / Leaf surface damage from aeration
- / Disturbance of spore-laden thatch
- / Soft growth promoted by additional nutrition
- / Extended periods of moisture
- / Poor cut quality after sand topdressing
- / Extra water applied for seed germination

### Leaf wetness

Extreme hot dry conditions through July for many areas resulted in high risk of stress induced infections of anthracnose, dollar spot and take all - which have all been more widely reported. While healthy turf has better chance to outgrow the worst effects, further outbreaks could be triggered by renovation actions - particularly in humid conditions.

Furthermore, heavy irrigation to initiate seedling growth during renovation, or providing additional nutrition to stimulate recovery, can produce a flush of soft growth that is more susceptible to microdochium patch infection. Where outbreaks

### Application of FR321 through the renovation timing period can secure microdochium free surfaces going into the winter



occur so early in the season, it creates an ultimate challenge for disease prevention over the rest of the year.

One of the key factors here is leaf moisture, which by the time of August or September renovations can begin to become a real issue. As day length reduces, leaves will remain wetter for longer overnight, at temperatures still highly conducive to disease development. Pre-renovation planning with appropriate nutrition, wetting agent and PGR programmes, along with dew removal, can reduce the risk by promoting stronger turf. But when the pressure rises, pre-emptive fungicide treatment gives the best chance to keep surfaces clean and enable recovery with new growth.

Recent STRI trials to identify the most appropriate renovation fungicide strategy has seen the combination of systemic Heritage, together with the spore knockdown activity of Medallion TL, providing reliable results.

With growth potential still strong at the earlier renovation timings, the systemic activity ensures new growth continues to be protected. And with essential

aeration and renovation practices disturbing the thatch layer, the limiting of spore initiation can reduce the risk of infection.

The research showed that where turf was protected by FR321 through the renovation period, from August to October, there was no microdochium patch visible going into the winter period. That compared to an increasing incidence of disease in the untreated control plots, reaching an unsustainable 12% of surface area affected so early in the season.

Application of FR321 as close as possible to renovation should be targeted at the leaf and crown, for optimum uptake and movement through the leaf. Application research has shown spraying with a red O4 XC Nozzle, at a water volume of around 400l/ha, will give effective coverage of the existing leaf surface, along with the required movement down to the thatch to target spores.

### Seedling moisture

Even where there is good overnight irrigation available, seedlings and plant recovery can still be adversely affected

with dry down during the day, especially in hot conditions and with the renovation process. STRI research has shown significant benefits from a Qualibra wetting agent programme, for all turf species.

In STRI trials Qualibra programmes at full rate prior to sowing achieved the best results, but even half rate applications achieved a significant boost in seedling establishment. Results showed a 200% increase in bent grass germination after 19 days with treatment of 20l/ha five days before sowing, for example.

Seedling vigour, measured as growth, along with all important surface coverage after 40 plus days, were also enhanced with the wetting agent programmes.

### Light recovery

Research using Ryder pigment has shown it acts as a sunscreen to filter out harmful excess UV light. That can be especially useful during renovation in August and September.

The other aspect with the use of Ryder has been the instant green-up from application during renovation. Where a heavy topdressing

has been applied as part of the process, for example, a treatment with Ryder can effectively mask the colour and eliminate subjective player perceptions of the effect of sand on surfaces - which will typically play faster and truer after sand top dressing.

### Action timing

SyngentaTurf website historic disease and weather records show where infection risk can be high through typical renovation timing in mid to late August. Armed with this knowledge of where and when risks of specific diseases have been highest could prove valuable to influence when renovation weeks should be scheduled in the club calendar.

Furthermore, new WeatherPro forecasting reports on the website can be particularly useful around renovation timing. Getting a picture of soil moisture, temperature and evapotranspiration that are all crucial for successful seedling establishment can help influence timing or intensity of actions, where any flexibility in the renovation week permits.

If conditions are good for recovery and all the other preparations are in place, then it's a real opportunity to get as much work done as possible and still achieve rapid recovery to leave your turf in a better place.


### Continue the conversation

Read the full feature at [www.syngentaturf.co.uk](http://www.syngentaturf.co.uk)



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# Time to slow things down

How to best utilise plant growth regulators to optimise turf health and performance

Zach Nicoludis, agronomist, USGA, with Karl Hansell, BIGGA



**Read this for:**

- / Plant growth regulators
- / Turf health
- / Research

**When looking to develop a plant growth regulator (PGR) programme, it is important to give consideration to the options that are available and have a clear understanding of your ultimate goal.**

Depending upon where you are located, different countries have different options that are available. As far as growth regulators, there are quite a few options in the United States, whereas in Canada the superintendents primarily have to rely on Trinexapac-ethyl. There is the possibility that other PGRs will get approval in the United Kingdom in future, but that is still to be determined. »

**Don't forget to log your CPD points**

A PGR programme could help reduce fairway mowing frequency by up to 30%. Image courtesy of Syngenta

Research shows active ingredients, effectiveness and ideal growing degree day

Credit: Bill Kreuser

Active Ingredient	Common Name	Growth Suppression	Duration of Effect	Ideal GDD
Trinexapac-ethyl	Primo Maxx	20%	800GDD	230 GDD
Paclobutrazol	Trimmit	30-50%*	850-950 GDD*	280-310 GDD*
Flurprimidol	Cutless	20-30%*	600-800 GDD*	210 - 270 GDD*
Anuew	Prohexadione-Ca	25%	840 GDD*	280 GDD
Flurprimidol + Trinexapac-ethyl	Legacy	20-35%*	810 - 910 GDD	270 - 300 GDD*
Flurprimidol + Paclobutrazol + Trinexapac-ethyl	Musketeer	25-40%*	880 GDD	290 GDD

What plant growth regulators are on the market?

PGR Class A features trinexapac-ethyl (Primo Maxx, Syngenta) and prohexadione-Ca (Anuew, Nufarm). Prohexadione-Ca is a relatively new plant growth regulator that is seeing increased use, whereas trinexapac-ethyl has been around for a while and is popularly used.

Class B plant growth regulators include flurprimidol (Cutless MEC, SePro) and paclobutrazol (Trimmit 2SC, Syngenta). These are PGRs that are used to suppress poa annua and give a competitive advantage to creeping bentgrass. When using both of these PGRs, you must be honest about the level of poa annua on your playing surfaces, because you will undoubtedly see a reaction to applications of these products.

Class C includes Meftuidide (Embark, PBI/Gordon). This product is no longer being produced, but we do still see some usage of it in the United States for the control of poa annua seedheads. Eventually the supply will run out and although superintendents were able to stockpile some, the reality is it will not be an option moving forward.

In Class D there is Methiozolin (PoaCure, Moghu Research Center), which was

“If you’re starting to get a drop of 12 to 20 inches, the turf probably isn’t being regulated enough

labelled in the United States in 2020. Based on research plots, we have seen that it is very effective at reducing poa annua populations. The two courses I work with in South Korea have been using Methiozolin for a few years and have had a lot of success with it. But we won’t touch too much on it in this feature.

Class E is Ethephon (Proxy, Bayer), which is another product that is going to be used for seed head control.

The research that has been done at Virginia Tech around making a late autumn and then spring application of Ethephon has seen a

drastic improvement in seed head control. With Embark no longer being produced, Ethephon is going to be the main way of controlling seedheads.

When looking at all these products, we can consider which should be used to achieve our goals?

Is our ambition to manage growth and produce a more consistent putting condition? For example, we don’t want to see a significant drop in speed through the day, because those playing in the afternoon will be essentially playing in different conditions.

Are we looking to promote

turf health by conserving carbohydrates, so the turf isn’t burning through its food reserves? Or are we looking to suppress poa annua to promote creeping bentgrass, for example? These are just three of the common goals we see from those undertaking plant growth regulator programmes and you’re likely to want a combination of these, if not all three.

How are PGR applications scheduled?

When it comes to planning a successful PGR programme, how applications are scheduled is very important. When I started in the industry, we applied PGRs every two weeks, whether it was spring, summer or autumn. But we would often be dealing with rebound growth, when the

product subsided and the plant bounced back, causing a tonne of clippings on every green. You would get them back regulated, but eventually they would bounce out again. It was a constant struggle back and forth.

With the research that’s been conducted by Bill Kreuser and the team at the University of Nebraska, we have begun to understand how you can use growing degree days to time applications. As a result, a number of superintendents now use growing degree day calculators.

Figure 1 is taken from Bill Kreuser’s research and you can see how the turf is responding to applications of different plant growth regulators. You can see that when the initial application is made, there is a significant drop in the clipping yield. Then, as the lines start to curve back up, we seen an increase in clipping yields,

which is that rebound growth.

The horizontal axis represents growing degree days, so we see that if we can reapply before the upswing begins, we may be able to avoid that rebound and keep more consistent growth. The research that Bill did confirmed this, while the success we’ve seen at golf courses throughout the United States from superintendents who are using growing degree day calculators is impressive.

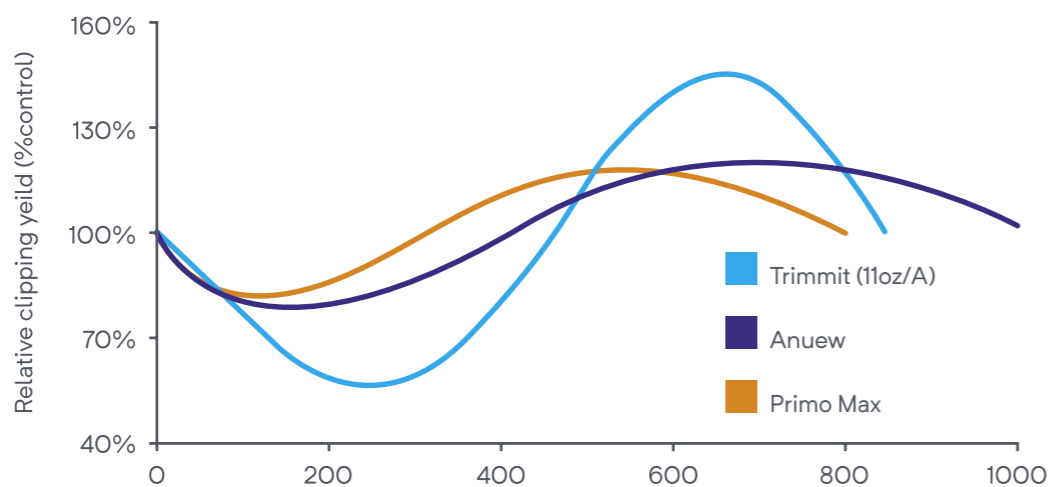
To explain why this information is useful: as warmer temperatures are experienced, more growing degree days are accumulated and application intervals would be shorter. On the flip side, if cooler temperatures are experienced then less growing degree days are accumulated and application intervals would be longer. It is not uncommon in the middle of summer for golf course superintendents to be >>



PGRs act to divert the turf plant’s photosynthesised energy from vertical leaf growth into generating greater root mass — further helping plants to cope with the challenges of stress factors. Image courtesy of Syngenta

Figure 1

Credit: Bill Kreuser



“We wanted a high quality creeping bent to overseed into our fairways & approaches as part of a transition program over to full CB coverage. After speaking with Dan at TurfCare & Lew at Tee2Green, we settled on Crystal BlueLinks due to its suitability to our climate and requirements. 2 years in & we are seeing great results to the point where we are now introducing it into our collars & clean up laps on greens.”

**Steve Chappell - Golf Course Superintendent - Royal Bled Golf Club.**

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isn't being regulated enough.

We are also seeing more superintendents measuring clipping yield. To measure every green would be very time consuming, so some superintendents collect clippings from the same putting green every day and monitor those.

I have even seen one quick and dirty way to check consistency is to have employees dump all their clippings on a small plastic tarp behind every green. By going around, the superintendent can monitor the amount of clippings being taken off each green. Although they weren't actually monitoring them, it was a quick way to determine how effective the PGR programme was being. In the end, it is all about what works at your facility.

Once all that data is gathered, the Surface Management tool in the USGA Facility App provides somewhere where all that information can be inputted, stored and compared. You can find more information about that on the USGA website.

Always remember that the label is the law, so make sure that whatever product you use, you follow the application rates listed on the label.

**Continue the conversation**

Continue the conversation by connecting with Zach via email using [Znicoludis@usga.org](mailto:Znicoludis@usga.org)

it is delivering the intended results. One way to do this is to monitor green speeds a couple of times a day — once in the morning, another an hour or so after the greens are mowed and rolled and then again mid-afternoon to see what the drop in the green speed is. Putting greens that are regulated will probably see a drop in speed of six to eight inches, but if you're starting to get a drop of 12 to 20 inches, the turf probably

**Zach is based in Columbus, Ohio and he travels primarily throughout the Midwest and Upper Midwest of the United States, central and eastern Canada. He has also had the opportunity to go overseas and work with a few golf courses in South Korea.**

Zach's territory gives him the opportunity to see a wide range of golf courses in just about every growing environment. He gets to see courses in Canada that deal with extreme winters, as well as work with golf courses in the transition zone where you can grow both warm and cool season grasses or some combination of the two across the golf course.

looking at applications every five to seven days, depending on the heat and humidity that is experienced. Then in spring and autumn, the interval would probably extend to 10 to 14 days. Without a doubt, we are seeing more consistent growth regulation with this type of programme.

Naturally, every PGR programme must be tailored to your specific facility. It is also common to see different plant growth regulators being used at different times of the year. Superintendents with high populations of creeping bentgrass may go with a paclobutrazol or flurprimidol during the spring and autumn, but they'll go with a trinexapac-ethyl during the

heat of the summer, just to use something that is not quite as aggressive on the bentgrass.

We see all different kinds of strategies used here, but I wanted to float the idea that you don't have to use the same product all the time. We do see success if course managers use just one product, but we also see success with spraying in combination or using different products at different times of the year.

**Is the PGR programme delivering the intended results?**

Once the programme is in place and applications are being made, it will need to be monitored to determine if

**“** We do see success if course managers use just one product, but we also see success with spraying in combination



PGRs can ensure more consistency and reduce issues of putting surfaces slowing later in the day. Image courtesy of Syngenta



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# CREEPING BENTGRASSES

## Time to convert

Lew Sharpe & Scott Nightingale

### About the author - Lew Sharpe

Lew has served as a worldwide agronomist and consultant for course designers, architects, and superintendents.

During his prolific career, Lew has built more than 200 courses for such great architects as Pete Dye.

He also advises the Tee-2-Green growers on how to produce the most trusted bentgrass in the world.

Lew attended Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana, where he earned a BS in Agronomy and Civil Engineering. He also holds an A.S. in Architecture and is a 28-year member of the GCSAA.



Crystal BlueLinks at Ashridge

### Ever changing climatic conditions has affected how we need to manage putting surfaces into the future.

Each season we see record heat, floods, winter storms, and other substantial weather events that our older turf cultivars of C3 (cool season) and C4 (warm season) grasses cannot withstand.

Poa annua is one such cultivar that will not stand up to such changes. Over the last 10 years alone, we have seen record widespread winter kill on poa based greens in temperate and sub-tropical zones of North and South America, along with droughts across cool season areas of the temperate zones of the UK and European countries.

When planning for future



golf green sward composition, we need to look at which cultivars will help us through these times. Whether it is interseeding or total renovation, the introduction of these cultivars is paramount for a sustainable future.

### Let's take a closer look at poa annua.

A poa putting surface can be bumpy throughout the growing season, unless

mown at low heights. This is compounded with seedhead production in spring and is unsightly in appearance. In some cases, mowing or rolling may be required twice a day for desirable putting surface. This is very costly to a budget but is also objectionable to golfers playing that day.

Shallow rooting with onset of summer stress is a major issue. Poa dries out quickly and requires hand watering and monitoring throughout stressful times. During this hand watering, irrigation water will build elevated levels of pH (sodium) and bicarbonates in the root zone that are detrimental to turf health.

With the onset of afternoon heat, light and frequent watering is required to cool down the surface and prevent wilt stress. Golfers will notice that the top 6mm to 12mm will become soft with the watering, leaving the greens pitted with ball marks.

Poa will not tolerate heavy foot traffic or wear from mowers and aeration equipment, thus leading to thin or open turf areas.

Poa requires more

applications of fungicide compared to the newer, fifth generation creeping bentgrasses (such as Pure Distinction, Pure Select and Crystal BlueLinks). This issue is compounded with both their high cost and de-registration in the UK and Europe, which adds exponentially to the cost of maintaining poa. Fungicides, labour, irrigation cost and equipment maintenance are all elevated with the species.

Fertiliser inputs are also increased with poa.

With everchanging environmental issues, along with ever-rising chemical costs, a change is long overdue.

### Time to change our mindset of creeping bentgrasses.

Thousands of hours each year are dedicated to Tee2Green research and development. Turfgrass is transgenerational, meaning with each generation of development, we make bigger and better strides at a sustainable turf. This means our turf will be ready for whatever Mother Nature throws at us.

Advantages of fifth generation creeping bentgrasses are:

- / Super-smooth putting surfaces that will impress players of all abilities. Denser canopy, super-fine texture and tillering of new cultivars provide a cushion for the ball to roll smoothly across.
- / Deeper rooting, more drought, shade and disease tolerant, the creeping bentgrass will withstand the heat and drought



Lew Sharpe and Jim McKenzie MBE at Celtic Manor Resort



Crystal BlueLinks at Centurion GC



stress. Hand watering is reduced, meaning savings in labour and irrigation.

- / Creeping bentgrass is a perennial and does not produce a seedhead unless it is left un-mown.
- / New creeping bents can withstand traffic, equipment wear and aeration. Recovery is so much faster.
- / If it wilts and goes dormant under dry soil conditions, it recovers quickly when moisture is provided.
- / High salt tolerance and ability to germinate in elevated pH and high bicarbonates.
- / Faster establishment and green up sooner at lower temperatures.
- / Superior winter tolerance of all grasses to the cold.

### Creeping bentgrass advantages over brown top, (Colonial) and velvet.

Creeping bentgrass has the ability to maintain a dense turf canopy under low mowing heights. This arises from the very short lower internodes. Creeping bentgrass is the superior species in this regard where mowing heights of 4mm or less are required.

Colonial / brown top is less tolerant to low mowing and tends to eventually form a mottled appearance due to segregation into off-type clones. Colonial bent also has thatch accumulation problems, requiring more frequent topdressing than Tee2Green bentgrasses.

Velvet is less desirable for



use at lower mowing situations due to heavy thatch formation and will result in scalping. This is due to a slower rate of decomposition of root and stolon material.

Creeping bent has the most vigorous stolon system, hence the most rapid recovery for pitch marks, divots, traffic, and other injury. A major disadvantage when using velvet and brown top is they are slow to spread or recover.

### Summary.

- A grass species which:
    - / Has gone through rigorous R&D for approx 15 years.
    - / Was bred for UK and European climate.
    - / Has been used on golf courses for many years in UK & Europe.
    - / Is the most tolerant to disease, cooler temperatures, shade, and drought.
    - / Requires less inputs.
    - / Is naturally deeper rooting.
    - / Has faster colonisation of a sward.
- Why wouldn't you convert?

### Continue the conversation

Continue the conversation on twitter by connecting with TurfCare using @T2GTurfGuy, @T2GBentgrass, @TurfCare\_IRL\_UK or @turfcarescott

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# BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN SOIL-BASED ROOTZONES AND TOPDRESSINGS

## PART 1

**If there's one overriding requirement for greenkeepers when selecting soil-based rootzone and topdressing products, it must surely be to have total confidence in those products.**

We must have confidence they are free of chemical, biological (pathogens) and physical contaminants and so safe to use; confidence that the soil component is healthy and beneficial; and confidence that they are consistent and environmentally sustainable.

BIGGA Education Supporter British Sugar TOPSOIL believes that by giving greenkeepers and other grounds professionals as much independent scientific evidence as possible on its soil-based products, only then can those professionals make informed choices with confidence.

Over the past 25 years TOPSOIL has developed soil-based products for the sports and amenity sector.

Understanding that user confidence is critical for greenkeepers and other turf maintenance professionals, TOPSOIL first set about devising a comprehensive

suite of tests with soil scientists that go much further than those required by the relevant British Standards. These tests are particularly crucial to evidence that the soil used in TOPSOIL products is free of potentially harmful chemical contaminants such as polyaromatic hydrocarbons or arsenic and free of physical contaminants such as 'sharps'.

The tests also record the soil's physical structure, pH, nutrient-holding capacity, filtration rate and other key aspects of relevance to turf care professionals.

Having developed the topsoil industry's most stringent regular testing and analysis, TOPSOIL instigated a series of scientific trials in conjunction with the STRI to evidence its products' performance when compared with other materials used by greenkeepers.

Under the auspices of the STRI's Dr Christian Spring, the most recent trials, previously reported upon in Greenkeeper International, provided evidence of TOPSOIL's products' growing properties and their ability to deliver a good supply of nutrients to sustain healthy turf,

while also delivering the drainage rates required.

Always looking for information that will give his customers confidence, National TOPSOIL Manager Andy Spetch commissioned work with soil scientists Tim O'Hare Associates to measure and monitor the carbon content and carbon storage abilities of its Landscape20 general purpose topsoil. This product is sampled every six months and the total carbon measured, providing important environmental information on its ability to sequester carbon.

Most recently, Dr Mark Pawlett, senior research fellow of soil biology at Cranfield University, is overseeing a year-long study into the amount of soil microbiology in TOPSOIL products. Commencing in November 2021, samples of Sports&Turf topdressing, Landscape20 general purpose topsoil, and HortLoam planting soil are taken at three-monthly intervals. Three sets of samples have already been analysed and the fourth and final samples will be taken and analysed in August 2022. By measuring the total microbial biomass of TOPSOIL's products, Andy hopes the study will show that the processes critical for nutrient cycling and resilience are supported by active soil microorganisms. In other words, that the topsoil component in TOPSOIL products is a healthy, living organism making an entirely positive contribution to turf establishment and maintenance.

The study findings will be published this coming autumn/winter. Look out for study results in an upcoming issue of GI.

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**Sports&Turf**



TOC-L Analyser



Sampling TOPSOIL product

# Demystifying the costs of electric turfcare machinery

**With the world quickly moving away from fossil fuels and into more sustainable alternatives like electric power, greenkeeping professionals face one of the most important questions this transition will bring to their business: how much will it cost?**

Lee Rowbotham is service manager at Reesink UK, the UK distributor of Toro Commercial products. Toro has pioneered the development of battery-powered machinery and Lee talks us through this rapidly-changing subject.

There will always be a role for both petrol and diesel machinery, that goes without saying, but what we're seeing is a spearheading in the journey of electric-powered machinery.

We're at a stage in the evolution of its technology that the cost of buying electric equipment is much more achievable and with the recent economic downturn and the

cost of fossil fuels hitting an all-time high, they're reaching a peak.

Electric turfcare equipment is powered by rechargeable lithium-ion batteries and the electricity required to charge them is less than what people think. It's easy to track how much energy is consumed from the batteries via the information centre on the machine and knowing how much you pay for a unit of kWh will enable you to work out how much it costs to charge.

If we look at an electric-powered greens mower with a fully charged battery pack (10.77kWh) that uses 70 percent of its energy to cut all 18 greens, then around 7.5kWh is taken from the batteries. Most chargers are 90 percent efficient, so to charge the battery back to full capacity means it will take around 8.29kWh from a mains supply — 8.29kWh times £0.28 per kWh equals £2.32 per charge. If we take this amount and divide it by the hours taken to cut the greens (let's say, three hours), we get an hourly running cost of £0.77 per hour. A diesel engine cutting 18 greens using approximately 5.25

litres of red diesel at £1.09 per litre would cost around £1.91 per hour.

When it comes to efficiency, there are also significant differences: a petrol engine is around 40 percent efficient and diesel 60 percent efficient at converting fuel into mechanical energy, whereas an electric motor can be over 85 percent efficient at converting electrical energy into mechanical energy.

Some of the cost savings are down to how the energy is used: an electric machine only uses energy when one of the systems is doing work. However, on a combustion engine/hydraulic machine, the hydraulic pumps are always pushing oil around the machine's circuits as long as the engine is running.

When it comes to maintenance costs, electric machines don't have motor oil, spark plugs or filters to change — all they require is cutting unit maintenance to keep the machine in optimal condition.

Diesel mowers, on the other hand, have a lot more moving parts and therefore require more maintenance, servicing and repairs.

Of course, in time the

battery in the electric mower will need replacing but with a lifetime of approximately seven years (depending on operating conditions), this is little bother.

Taking all of this into account, the upshot is that electric machinery, although usually more expensive to buy upfront, boasts lower running and maintenance costs that will even out some of the cost of ownership in the end.

Also worth considering is that the purchase price will likely come down as these units and their components become more and more common.

With increased demand and technological advancements, there will

soon come a time where this cost will rival those of current diesel machines, making that initial investment no longer a problem.

Toro launched its first hybrid option back in 2011 with the Toro Greensmaster TriFlex Hybrid 3420 riding greensmower but its breakthrough happened in 2020 with the Greensmaster eTriFlex 3370: the industry's first lithium-ion battery powered ride-on greensmower.

Being one of the quietest ride-on greensmowers on the market, it allows customers to respond to business demands for increased revenue by cutting earlier and therefore

delivering earlier surface availability to customers. It has become a fan favourite and will likely continue to be a staple in many greenkeeping businesses all over the world.

Since then, Toro has made other electric turfcare machinery and vehicle options available and will continue to invest in research and development to produce more, all of which will not only make your business more sustainable but also more productive.

## Continue the conversation

To talk to someone about Toro technology and how the Toro range could suit your course, call 01480 226 800.



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# MIKLAGARD GOLF

Smart irrigation for a short season

**Close to Oslo Airport and 25 minutes from Oslo itself, Miklagard Golf is an 18-hole, Robert Trent Jones Junior-designed championship course that opened in 2001.**

An inland, parkland landscape with elevated greens protected by deep bunkers, Miklagard is rated one of the top 100 golf courses in Europe and has hosted the European Challenge Tour, the Canon Pro Series and the Turkish Airlines World Golf Series.

Miklagard means 'great city' and was the Viking name for Constantinople (later Istanbul). In keeping with its Nordic heritage, all the club's holes are named after Norse monarchs or deities.

Following construction of a new five-star hotel, which began in 2018, a Rain Bird irrigation system was installed by contractor Nelson & Vecchio as part of a course remodelling by (re)GOLF and the Robert Trent Jones design team in 2019 to relocate the driving range, 18th hole and five new holes. Groundworks took a while longer to complete than planned given the COVID-19 pandemic, which restricted travel in and out of Norway, but finally, in January 2022, Golf Course Manager Duncan Bruce took over the course and its new irrigation system.

The hybrid system now in place combines decoders in block formation on the old course, with a new Rain Bird IC System on the six new holes, all controlled by one Rain Bird Central Control with a Rain Bird GSP plan providing back up.

As the season in Norway is short and intense, Duncan explained that it's been a steep learning curve since the start of the year; getting to know the holes, levelling heads where winter frosts had moved the

ground as well as putting the finishing touches in place and fine tuning the way the system performs in a short season.

Having had a dedicated irrigation technician previously at Losby Golf & Country Club, Duncan created a new position and recruited a new member of staff to his team. Rudolfs Vaivods is solely dedicated to irrigation and has considerable irrigation experience.

Rudolfs's appointment brings expertise that will help Duncan's wider team to realise the ambitions of the new general manager and club to improve the course and playing experience.

"The new system is more accurate," said Duncan. "On the old holes, you had to have three heads on at the same time.

"What we have now, for example, are 64 sprinklers (rotors) on the 18th fairway alone, giving us the ability to fine-tune the irrigation down to a single sprinkler, which makes our water use more efficient.

"We've really noticed how the climate is shifting. Things are intense anyway in Norway given the brief season, but in summer it can be very hot — 30 degrees in the shade and with 21 hours of sunlight. We begin to winterise the system in mid-October, to shut it down for the long Norwegian winter and even then, it can vary wildly, from minus 10 to

plus 10 degrees. In the winter here, there is no sunlight and where we used to have snow, in recent years there has been more ice than snow, which can actually be more damaging.

"Coming from the UK, that stark difference was a real eye opener for me to begin with. In the UK, managing the course is a continuous process and you're able to build on what you've done the previous season. Here, it's completely different and you have to start afresh every year. Winters can be bad in the UK of course, but not in quite the same way.

"The challenge is squeezing everything into a shorter season where there's very little leeway anyway. Golfers can play here right through till 11.30pm with the long, light evenings and play starts again at 8am.

"One of the challenges that all courses are facing now is the rising cost of electricity. There is a lake at Miklagard but although the water is free, running the pumps uses power, which is becoming more expensive. Having an efficient irrigation system that limits unnecessary water use and corresponding pump activity will play an increasingly important role in our cost management. That's where the mobile interface has also proved to be very helpful when it comes to managing irrigation and our time. What we're dealing with at Miklagard is two courses in one — so the Rain Bird hybrid system allows us to manage the new and the old technologies together in a smarter, more efficient way".



Rudolfs Vaivods (left) with Duncan Bruce on the course

Working in partnership with



Miklagard Golf's 10th hole



Miklagard irrigation system in action



Hotel beside Miklagard Golf's 18th hole

# AERATE TO KEEP THE ANAEROBIC CONDITIONS – AND BLACK LAYER – AT BAY

The importance of aeration and other cultural practices that improve airflow and the downward movement of moisture have long been documented and understood as a critical part of any greens maintenance programme.

Together with creating an environment conducive to strong root growth and development, the prevention of anaerobic conditions will also inhibit the activity of bacteria that thrive in compacted rootzones, which can lead to the formation of black layer. GKB Machines explore.



Black layer can either be found in 'streaks' or a continuous layer just below the turf and can be easily identified via a visual inspection of a core sample or from the smell, which is akin to 'rotten eggs' and caused by the hydrogen sulphide gas produced by the activity of the anaerobic bacteria. When this gas bonds with minerals, metal sulphide precipitate is formed and a blackening of the subsoil layer occurs.

The conditions in which these bacteria thrive are those where oxygen is restricted or where profile sub-layers become saturated or waterlogged. This could be caused by a lack of porous space within the profile due to inefficient or inadequate levels of aeration, heavy rainfall or the over utilisation of irrigation.

The presence of excess organic matter will also further exacerbate the issue, restricting water movement and airflow and providing a food source for bad bacteria.

Nutritional programmes will also impact on a surface's susceptibility to

black layer, with excess applications of non-organic fertilisers and high inputs of Iron (Fe) contributing to those conditions that lend themselves to a rise in the activity of anaerobic bacteria.

Some research suggests that alkaline pH soils are slightly more susceptible and, while annual meadowgrass in these conditions, all turf types can be affected. The presence of black layer will lead to a decline in grass plant quality — with reduced root respiration and growth, yellowing of the leaves and a surface that is weak to wear and vulnerable to disease.

Combatting the anaerobic conditions is the most effective way of controlling black layer and is quickly achieved through mechanical maintenance and in particular

via aeration. Aeration will swiftly break through compaction, increasing oxygen flow and improving water percolation. Aeration will also help to reduce organic matter levels, with hollow coring an option to remove larger quantities of material if an aggressive approach is required.

Aeration could take the form of slitting, solid or hollow tining and should be conducted to depths that suit the conditions on the given day. Consider the greens construction, the weather and the type of machine you utilise for such operations to avoid causing further problems with compaction.

Precision engineered and built for durability and strength, the GKB Deep Tine Aerator (DTA) is available in four working widths from 1.2m

to 2.6m, meaning there's a model suited to most fine turf and sports turf applications.

Smaller models like the DTA 120 and DTA 160 are suited to the aeration of golf greens, offering a maximum working depth of 250mm and a heave angle of up to 25 degrees is also quick and easy to adjust.

A wide variety of tine options are available, with a range of different diameters to suit applications throughout the maintenance calendar.

The DTA's tine mounting system, exclusive to GKB, allows for more tines per head and optimises the efficiency of the operation, while also reducing downtime by improving the speed of changing between sets. In addition, when compared to more traditional 'tine holder' set-ups, the wear imposed on

parts when changing tines is significantly reduced.

Once remedial action has taken place, sand can then be introduced to keep control of organic matter levels and help to retain an aerobic profile, thereby creating an environment less suited to sulphur-reducing bacteria. For most courses, thatch content of around 5-7% is considered the be 'ideal' in the top 20mm of the surface. When levels are higher than this, mechanical methods of thatch removal should be employed in the form of scarification or applications of sand to dilute organic matter accumulations.

The GKB Sandfiller scarifies the surface down to depths of up to 40mm, removing organic matter and creating channels that are simultaneously filled with

sand or a combination of sand and seed — maximising efficiency and improving permeability and ground firmness in one pass. The unit features a 400L hopper to collect the removed material, leaving a clean and tidy finish and allowing the surface to be back in play almost instantly.

It is important to identify the cause of the black layer and keep up with the mechanical maintenance, and any adaptations to the nutritional regime, in order to prevent re-occurrence. With it being an issue that only affects anaerobic soil, aeration

and scarification will be the greenkeepers main weapon in keeping the problem at bay.

## Continue the conversation

Continue the conversation by connecting with GKB Machines using  
[@GKBmachines](https://twitter.com/GKBmachines)  
[@gkbmachines](https://www.instagram.com/gkbmachines)  
[@GKBMachines](https://www.facebook.com/GKBMachines)

Working in partnership with



# ORGANIC MATTERS

Dr Deidre Charleston, research and technical manager, Symbio

## So, you got your soil test back and it states that your organic matter is high.

What now?  
Organic matter tests often suggest that there is a maximum measurement of organic matter in rootzones, which should not be exceeded if we want to achieve good playing surfaces. Unfortunately, the tests that are often used to

determine organic matter are a simple measure of carbon in the soil and cannot distinguish between thatch, roots, humus, and microbes. If test results show high levels of organic matter, but it is all roots and humus, then do you really need to worry? Perhaps not, but in contrast, excessive thatch is always likely to result in stress.

Thatch accumulation is often linked with disease, dry patch, fairy rings, water retention, black layer, poa annua ingress and slow playing

surfaces that seem to 'eat' fertiliser, water, fungicides and topdressing.

Thatch becomes more of a problem in sterile environments where there is no biology to degrade it. However, if new grass is formed at the same rate that old grass dies and degrades, then thatch tends not to accumulate. In fact, the nutrient holding capacity of sandy root zones is almost entirely down to organic matter and thatch provides the initial source.

Organic matter is composed of active and passive fractions. As the name suggests, the active portion is biologically active and serves as a food source for soil biology, providing energy for growth and supplying carbon for the formation of new cells.

The passive fraction of organic matter, commonly referred to as humus, is not biologically active but it is chemically reactive and contributes to soil cation exchange capacity (CEC), making nutrients available for plant uptake and

preventing leaching. This stable fraction also enhances soil aggregation, improving soil friability, which improves surface drainage in times of flooding and water retention in times of drought. All these factors result in better playing surfaces.

Organisms in the soil food web directly contribute to organic matter decomposition and nutrient cycling. They produce enzymes to degrade and mineralise thatch, create humus to increase CEC and improve soil structure and solubilise locked up nutrients and make them available to plants. Fungi and bacteria degrade organic matter differently and have different roles in the recycling of nutrients. Fungi are generally much more efficient at assimilating and storing nutrients than bacteria. Due to their structure, fungi need a large amount of carbon to grow and reproduce.

Thatch is composed primarily from more complex molecules such as cellulose and lignin. These molecules have a high carbon content, making them an ideal food source for fungi.

In comparison, bacteria have higher nitrogen requirements and need food

sources rich in nitrogen. Encouraging microbial diversity is key to improving thatch degradation and enhancing sward health. One way this can be achieved is through regular application of Symbio compost tea.

Symbio has been working with the soil food web for over 30 years to develop products that help greenkeepers manage thatch and improve turf health. Symbio DegrAID is a soluble sachet designed with ease of application in mind, to specifically promote biological activity in rootzones.

This product adds high numbers of fungi that are efficient in breaking down the lignin and cellulose in thatch and introduces beneficial bacteria that enhance nitrogen availability and mobilise phosphorus and potassium. For tough areas where thatch is a significant problem, Symbio ThatchEater is a biofixed granular solution, containing a mixture of thatch degrading fungi and nutrient cycling bacteria that is guaranteed to reduce thatch and improve plant and soil health.

Soil organic matter exerts numerous positive effects

on the physical, chemical and biological properties of soil. Management practices that use a more a sustainable biological approach provide several practical and cost saving benefits. As thatch levels are reduced through biological activity the friability of the rootzone improves, which means less physical disruption through aggressive

aeration, requiring less labour and less days of course closure. In addition, the improved drainage and increased air space further

promotes biological activity and increases nutrient recycling, reducing fertiliser requirements and saving money. By working with the soil food web and promoting a microbially rich and biologically diverse rootzone is it possible to balance the need for excellent playing surfaces with more sustainable management practices and perhaps change your perspective on organic matter?

## Continue the conversation

To find out more about the advantages of working with healthy living soil contact a Symbio representative or visit [www.symbio.co.uk](http://www.symbio.co.uk)



A brand of Origin Amenity Solutions Ltd



Grass core showing thatch profile

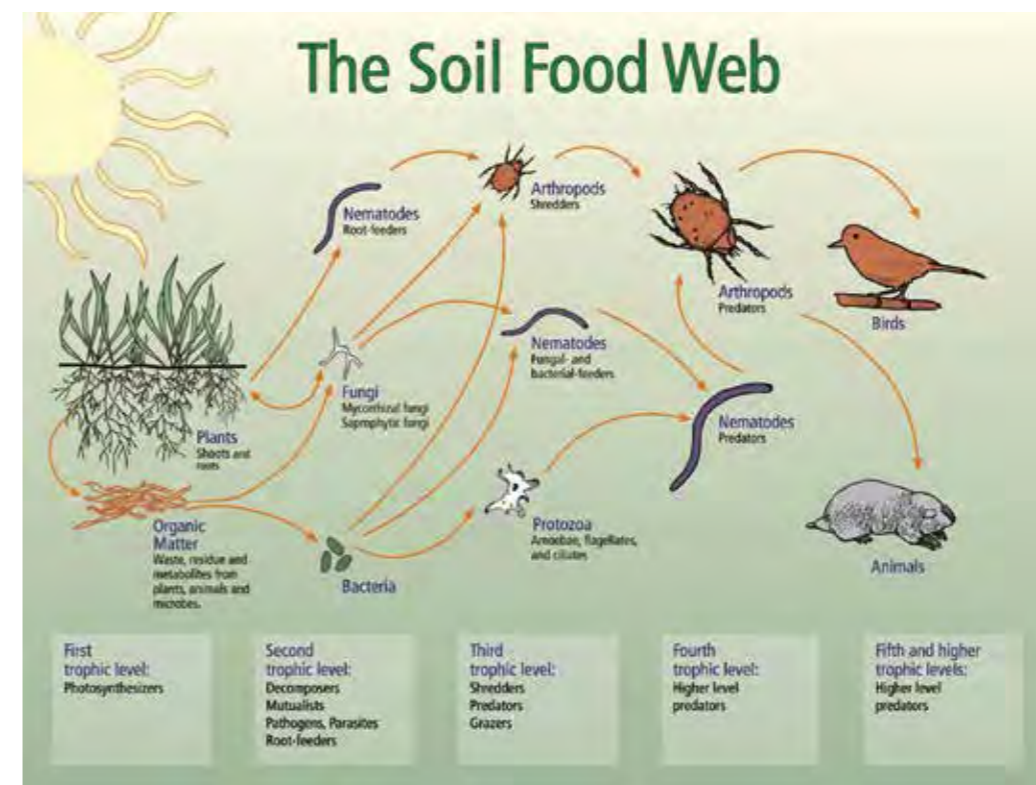


Diagram showing relationships between the soil food web, plants and organic matter. Image courtesy of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Dry patch is often linked with the occurrence of thatch accumulation

# INDUSTRY NEWS

## Association mourns Lady Bonallack

Everyone at BIGGA was saddened to hear of the death of Lady Angela Bonallack on 2 July, aged 85.

Lady Angela was considered among the finest amateur golfers ever produced in Great Britain and Ireland. She played in six consecutive Curtis Cup matches from 1956 to 1966 and among her prestigious sporting accolades were the English Women's Amateur Championship in 1958 and 1963 and both the Swedish and German Ladies Amateur championships in 1955.

Lady Angela was also the wife of Sir Michael Bonallack, BIGGA Patron and former Secretary and Captain of The

Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews.

BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton said: "We are deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Lady Angela, whose incredible career did so much to further the cause of women and girls within the sport of golf.

"On behalf of BIGGA, our heartfelt condolences go out to Sir Michael and the Bonallack family."

Following her playing career, Lady Angela continued to support Great Britain and Ireland's golfers, often seen walking the fairways and supporting players representing both England and GB&I.



Lady Angela Bonallack had a prestigious amateur career

In 2015 she made history as one of the first lady members admitted to The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews and won the first monthly medal she

played in with a net 71.

Lady Angela is survived by Sir Michael, her children Glenna, Jane, Sara and Robert and her 10 grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

## OAS becomes official BIGGA Golf Partner



Origin Amenity Solutions have become BIGGA Golf Partners

Origin Amenity Solutions (OAS) has announced a major sponsorship with BIGGA.

OAS has entered into a two-year arrangement that sees the company become BIGGA's official Golf Partner.

Richard Fry, marketing director for OAS, said: "Origin Amenity Solutions may be a new name in the industry, but its four branded business – Headland Amenity, Rigby

Taylor, Symbio and TurfKeeper, need no introduction. These operations have a long history of supporting those who work in the golf industry and have from the very early beginnings supported BIGGA's commercial and education initiatives and activities."

The deal includes headline sponsorship of BIGGA's prestigious National

Championship, taking place this September at Enville Golf Club, in addition to various other activities the Association hosts throughout the year.

Jim Croxton, BIGGA CEO, said: "I'm thrilled that Origin Amenity Solutions is supporting BIGGA in its golf activities for the next two years. Our golf events are an opportunity to not only have

some fun but they also help greenkeeping's golfing community build stronger relationships within golf facilities. Our golf events provide a platform upon which our members can develop channels of communication with their peers, colleagues and customers and this is incredibly important to our overarching ambitions as an association."

The BIGGA National Championship takes place on 10-11 October at the wonderful Enville Golf Club, which is one of the finest 36-hole venues in the UK.

Founded in 1935, Enville is one of the UK's most spectacular heathland venues and has hosted multiple R&A championships including Regional Open qualifying.

Sign up on the BIGGA website.

## Industry stalwart Fry steps down from Origin Amenity Solutions marketing role

Longtime marketing director for Rigby Taylor and Origin Amenity Solutions, Richard Fry, stepped down from the position at the end of July.

Richard has been a firm supporter of BIGGA and its members throughout his career, providing commercial backing for many of BIGGA's activities and helping provide opportunities for members to develop their careers.

BIGGA Head of Business Development Lauren Frazer said: "Richard has been a key supporter of BIGGA throughout his career, working quietly behind the scenes to provide sponsorship opportunities for many of the various initiatives that the association undertakes throughout the year. His faith in the association and its ultimate ambition of improving working conditions



Richard Fry

for greenkeepers is unwavering and we owe him a tremendous debt of thanks."

Richard established GreenLink International and worked with ICI, Toro, Jacobsen, Hardie, Farmura, Vitax, Supaturf, Aquatrols, Norsk Hydro, BSF, Milliken & Co, Top Green, BIGGA, STRI and others.

He quickly formed a close association with the newly-formed BIGGA, which

provided the opportunity to gain for the association sponsorship opportunities and provide technical videos for the membership on spraying and mowing.

One of the businesses Richard undertook a consultancy role for was Rigby Taylor. When the company was acquired by Origin Enterprises he became embedded within the business as marketing director and undertook a complete rebranding of the business.

With the formation of Origin Amenity Solutions in 2021, Richard was asked to undertake the implementation and integration of four leading industry brands under a single banner, bringing together Rigby Taylor, Headland Amenity, Symbio and TurfKeeper.com.

## Beeston Fields appoints Ryun Holden

Beeston Fields in Nottingham has appointed Ryun Holden MG as course manager.

Ryun was formerly at Wyllyhof Golf Club in Switzerland, from where he won a BIGGA Excellence in Communications Award in 2020 for an article published in Greenkeeper International

His 31 years' experience in greenkeeping began at Myerscough College before moving to Nottingham's Oakmere Park as course manager. In 2009 he moved to Limpachtal Golf Club, where his father is a golf professional.

At Beeston Fields Ryun steps into the role vacated by Steven Dudley-Brown, who has joined BIGGA as Membership Services Manager for Central England.

## Wales pilots health campaign



An animated health campaign has been launched in Wales to encourage people to play golf to improve their health and lifestyle.

'Golf is Good' is a new global project by The R&A that is being piloted in partnership with Wales Golf. The project builds on recent scientific research to promote the health and wellbeing benefits of playing the sport through creative storytelling.

Phil Anderton, chief

development officer at The R&A, said: "We need to position golf as a leisure pursuit that can be accessed and enjoyed by everyone and encourage advocacy for the sport as a moderate intensity physical activity by government agencies, public health bodies and health professionals."

Using animated video, the campaign tells the story of three characters who are inspired into golf.

## MAXIMISE THE EFFECT OF YOUR WATERING

SAREL-ROLLER

FREE BRUSH OFFER WITH SAREL-ROLLER PURCHASES



Open up sealed turf to allow water to effectively reach the turf root zone with our Sarel Roller

- Suitable for use on greens as well as other turfed areas
- Reduce the need for wetting agents and increase aeration and germination after overseeding
- 1.5m working width creates thousands of small holes
- Multi-use tool suitable for use throughout the year

For details on the free brush offer and to see the Sarel Roller and brush in action, visit [www.greentek.uk.com/free-sarel-roller-brush/](http://www.greentek.uk.com/free-sarel-roller-brush/) or scan the QR code



GreenTek

0113 267 7000

www.greentek.uk.com



## Assistant Greenkeeper Bath Golf Club

Bath Golf Club is looking for an assistant greenkeeper to join our existing team of 5. We're looking for a hard working and self-motivated individual to join our close-knit team.

- The successful applicant will ideally need to possess the following qualifications, experience, and skills:
- / Two years' minimum greenkeeping experience
- / Level 2 in Amenity Sportsturf or equivalent
- / A good working knowledge of health and safety procedures in greenkeeping
- / Ability to operate modern greenkeeping equipment and achieve high standards of course presentation

A competitive salary based upon the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate will be offered.

### How to apply

Please apply by sending a covering letter and CV to Tom Hayward, course manager, at [coursemanager@bathgolfclub.org.uk](mailto:coursemanager@bathgolfclub.org.uk) or by post to Tom Hayward, Course Manager, Bath Golf Club, Golf Course Road, Bath BA2 6JG



## Qualified Assistant Greenkeeper Denham Golf Club

Qualified assistant greenkeeper (full-time 40 hours per week plus weekend overtime)

- The successful candidate will be able to meet the following key criteria:
- / NVQ level 2 as a minimum
- / Ideally a minimum of three years' full-time experience at assistant greenkeeper level with references available from employers recognised for their high quality standards
- / PA1, PA2 and PA6a chemical application licenses and chainsaw qualifications desirable.
- CGCS recommended salaries will be offered based on age, experience and qualifications.

### How to apply

CVs with a covering letter detailing how you meet the key criteria should be sent to the General Manager, Denham Golf Club, Tilehouse Lane, Denham, Buckinghamshire, UB9 5DE or by email to [richard@denhamgolfclub.co.uk](mailto:richard@denhamgolfclub.co.uk).

### Closing date

When position is filled.



## Qualified Assistant Greenkeeper The Mendip Golf Club

The Mendip Golf Club is seeking a qualified assistant greenkeeper.

### Main responsibilities

- / Have a varied and extensive knowledge in all aspects of course maintenance
- / To use and maintain all machinery in a professional manner
- / To ensure all health and safety procedures are adhered to at all times

### Knowledge, skills and experience required

- / NVQ Level 2 as a minimum
- / Ideally 3 years' experience as assistant greenkeeper level
- / Knowledge of irrigation systems

/ PA1, PA2 and PA6a chemical application licenses and chainsaw qualifications are desirable

### How to apply

Please send a covering letter and CV for the attention of Stuart Disney, to [enquiries@mendipgolfclub.com](mailto:enquiries@mendipgolfclub.com) or post to: Stuart Disney, PGA Fellow Professional & Golf Club Manager, The Mendip Golf Club, Gurney Slade, Somerset BA3 4UT.

### Closing date

When position is filled.



## Greenkeeper Strawberry Hill Golf Club

A 9-hole (27 acre) golf course near Twickenham in Southwest London, originally designed by J H Taylor.

We have a strong membership base and are looking to develop the course further. Some of this new work will be involving bunkers, tees, and greens improvements. A recent STRI report has formed the basis for these improvements. Working with a head greenkeeper and another member of staff, the position has sufficient breadth to develop your skills further as a greenkeeper in all the above stated areas.

### How to apply

Please respond with CV and covering letter, including your salary expectations to [secretary@shgolf.co.uk](mailto:secretary@shgolf.co.uk). Salary commensurate with experience.

### Closing date

Friday 26 August 2022



## Assistant Greenkeeper Sunningdale Golf Club

Sunningdale Golf Club is recruiting for an assistant greenkeeper.

The successful candidate will be working as part of a world class team benefiting from ongoing training and support. On a day to day basis you will contribute to the maintenance and development of the golf course, its practice facilities and the surrounding estate and be part of our tournament teams.

Sunningdale Golf Club is widely regarded as having two of the best and most beautiful courses in the British Isles, both ranked in the world top 100. The club has a proud history of hosting tournament golf, having recently held the Seniors Open 2021, with several major events scheduled including the Curtis Cup in 2024.

### How to apply

Email [jobs@sunningdalegolfclub.co.uk](mailto:jobs@sunningdalegolfclub.co.uk) or visit [www.sunningdalegolfclub.co.uk/careers](http://www.sunningdalegolfclub.co.uk/careers)



## Greenkeeper/Mechanic Pannal Golf Club

Pannal Golf Club invites applications for the position of greenkeeper/mechanic.

### Candidate requirements

- / Qualified to NVQ Level 2/3 in Sports Turf.
- / Minimum 3 to 5 years' experience within the turf industry in a similar role.
- / Spraying and chainsaw licenses desirable but not essential.
- / Proven ability in preparing and implementing a programme of routine maintenance for a large fleet of machinery and equipment to the manufacturer's specifications and guidelines.
- / A comprehensive understanding of health and safety and related procedures.

/ A good understanding of and competency in the use of modern golf course machinery.

### How to apply

Please apply with a covering letter outlining the reason you wish to work at Pannal Golf Club and current CV to: [neil@pannalgc.co.uk](mailto:neil@pannalgc.co.uk) or by letter to: Neil Horton, Course Manager, Pannal Golf Club, Follifoot Road, Harrogate HG3 1ES



## Gardener Mill Hill School

The estates department is looking for an experienced and self-motivated, fast working and efficient gardener. This is a varied role which will involve assisting with the maintenance and development of the gardens and grounds on all school sites.

### Key accountabilities:

- / Prepare grounds for the planting of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants.
- / Periodically assist with non-gardener tasks within the school.

### Essential requirement:

/ Practical experience in maintaining large gardens

- / Flexible approach to working hours
- / Be willing to undertake tasks to given time constraints
- / Must have a full driving license

### How to apply

If you would like to apply for this role, please download the application form from the School website (<https://www.millhill.org.uk/>) Your application form should be completed in full and returned to [applications@millhill.org.uk](mailto:applications@millhill.org.uk) by 9am on Wednesday 31 August 2022.



## Mechanic/Groundsperson Mill Hill School

The estates department is looking for an experienced, self-motivated, fast working and efficient mechanic/groundsperson. This is a dual role that will involve the full maintenance of the foundation's vans, minibuses and the estate's machinery, along with the development of gardens and grounds (when required) across all school sites.

### Skills, experience and personal attributes:

- / Minimum 2 years' mechanical experience, ideally in a sports turf environment
- / The successful applicant will need to demonstrate that they have the appropriate NVQ level 2 qualification in mechanics
- / Fabrication skills

### How to apply

If you would like to apply for this role, please download the application form from the school website ([www.millhill.org.uk](http://www.millhill.org.uk)) Your application form should be completed in full and returned to [applications@millhill.org.uk](mailto:applications@millhill.org.uk) by 9am on Wednesday 31 August 2022.



## Assistant Greenkeeper Horsley Lodge



Horsley Lodge is seeking to appoint an experienced greenkeeper to join our friendly and enthusiastic team.

### Key skills:

- / A proven ability in greenkeeping and extensive knowledge in course maintenance
- / The ability to work both unsupervised and within a team environment
- / A positive attitude with excellent communication and interpersonal skills

### Qualifications and experience:

- / A minimum of 2 years' greenkeeping experience is required

/ NVQ Level 2 in amenity sports turf or equivalent  
Closing date: 30 August 2022 or when the position is filled.

### How to apply:

Please send a covering letter and CV for the attention of Rachael Gillott, Finance & HR Manager by email to [accounts@horsleylodge.co.uk](mailto:accounts@horsleylodge.co.uk) or post to: Rachael Gillott, Finance & HR Manager, Horsley Lodge Golf Club, Smalley Mill Road, Horsley, Derbyshire DE21 5BL  
Tel: 01332 780838

## Greenkeeper Lansdown Golf Club



Lansdown Golf Club seeks an enthusiastic full time greenkeeper who will report to the course manager or his deputy and play a major role in maintaining and presenting in first-class condition.

### Qualifications and experience:

- / Previous greenkeeping experience
- / Passionate about greenkeeping and high self-motivated
- / Good communication skills
- / Team player
- / Spraying and chainsaw certification is desirable
- / Knowledge of machinery care and maintenance is an advantage

/ Knowledge of golf

### Benefits

- / Full uniform and PPE provided
- / Training/education opportunities
- / Staff discounts on food and drink
- / Holiday allowance of 28 days
- / Staff social events
- / BIGGA membership
- / Free membership of Lansdown GC
- / Pension scheme
- Salary is dependent upon experience and qualifications
- To apply please send a covering letter and your CV to [paulgarland@lansdowngolfclub.co.uk](mailto:paulgarland@lansdowngolfclub.co.uk)

WREXHAM GOLF CLUB

## Assistant Greenkeeper



Wrexham Golf Club in North Wales is recruiting for an assistant greenkeeper

### Candidates will be required to have:

- / Spraying certificates PA1, PA2 and PA6
- / Chainsaw certificates CS30/31
- / NVQ Level 2
- / Relevant work experience of over three years

### Benefits:

- / Employer pension contribution
- / Staff golf privileges
- / 50% discount for meals on duty
- / Uniform
- / Free parking on site
- / Training and personal development
- / 25 days holiday plus bank holidays
- Salary negotiable in line with experience and qualifications.

### How to apply

If you would like to become part of our team, please apply in writing or email with full CV and covering letter to: Denise Wilson, Secretary/Manager, Wrexham Golf Club, Holt Road, Wrexham, North Wales LL13 9SB  
Email: [denise@wrexhamgolfclub.co.uk](mailto:denise@wrexhamgolfclub.co.uk)  
Website: [www.wrexhamgolfclub.co.uk](http://www.wrexhamgolfclub.co.uk)  
Social: @wrexhamgolfclub



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Advertise your position in Greenkeeper International and online:

### The package includes:

- Four week BIGGA recruitment advert
- Four weeks display on BIGGA Jobs page
- A complimentary 1/8 page advert in Greenkeeper International.

- Your advert with a photograph of your choice shared on our BIGGA Facebook page and @BIGGALtd
- Your logo with a direct link to your website

All for £595 + VAT



1979-80



# HISTORY OF GREENKEEPERS' ASSOCIATIONS

meeting was held at Stirling Golf Club on 20 November and attended by 39 people and the Central Section was formed. The first chairman was Joe Oliver and the secretary was Elliott Small.

The brief was that the

section would cover an area between the Tay and Forth rivers from Cumbernauld to the Fife coast, but that members from just over both rivers would have the option of joining the Central or the East or North sections.

1979

In February the last issue of the BGGGA magazine was published in its existing format and title.

From the March issue, the title was changed to Golf Greenkeeping and Course Maintenance. Even then it wasn't smooth sailing as the magazine would change publishers three times in three years before settling down.

1980

In 1980 an interesting comparison was made in an editorial, comparing subscription rates against wages between the 1940s and the present time.

When a head greenkeeper's wage was £5 to £6 a week, subs to the British Golf Greenkeepers' Association (BGGGA) were £1 plus an entry fee of 2/6d.

Relating that to a head greenkeeper's wage in 1980, the subs should be £15 plus a £2 entry fee. If subscriptions were at that level, the association could employ a full-time administrator.

Education and training were a topical discussion in meetings and letters sent to the association regarding the lack of training and competent teachers were often aired.

At a Scottish & International Golf Greenkeepers Association (SIGGA) meeting, Elliott Small proposed that a new section be formed, called the Central Section. Elliott had moved to Scotland's central belt in 1977 and had spoken with fellow greenkeepers in the area.

This proposal was agreed upon and in April a meeting was held with Elliott, Chris Kennedy, Jimmy Kidd and other interested greenkeepers. No decision was made, but after further work by Elliott, a

## TEE THE ANSWERS BREAK

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	N	P			T	Y								

- Across:** 6 Monmouth, 8 A ton, 9 Again and again, 10 Dyes, 11 Turkeys, 14 Version, 16 Cede, 19 Psychiatrists, 21 Cots, 22 Irrigate.
- Down:** 1 Jogged, 2 Sumac, 3 Rhodium, 4 Hang, 5 Notify, 7 Maidens, 12 Keeping, 13 Solicit, 15 Easton, 17 Entity, 18 Story, 20 Cusp.

Easy

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Hard

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3	5	6	2	4	1	8	7	9
2	7	5	1	8	9	4	6	3
6	3	1	4	7	2	9	8	5
8	9	4	3	5	6	7	2	1



OUR MISSION IS HELPING YOU  
**GET THE JOB DONE**



*"Without the support of Jacobsen and our local distributor, who is supporting us with equipment, we would not be able to accomplish what we need to."*

Ian McQueen, Golf Course and Property Manager, St. George's Golf and Country Club, Toronto

For information and support:  
[www.jacobsen.com](http://www.jacobsen.com)



# Vitalnova<sup>®</sup> Stressbuster



## Beat turf stress

Vitalnova Stressbuster is a specially formulated liquid treatment to help condition turf against stress and also aid recovery from stress.