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# Greenkeeper

International

# DROUGHT CONDITIONS

**After this year's record-breaking drought, should we start getting used to extremely dry summers and how will our golf courses cope?**

## Seaford Head

On the Sussex coast, Simon Lambert and his team have faced wildfires and drought

## Whitecraigs

Andrew Wilson found peace on the course after fighting his own personal battles

## Fraise mowing

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## Thatch control

The pros and cons of traditional methods of organic matter management

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BIGGA Photographic Calendar 2022: September's image was taken by Alex Lungu, Reigate Hill

# WELCOME

People come into the profession of greenkeeping for all manner of reasons.

For some, it's a family tradition. Others see it as a way of being involved in the sport they love. My father was a golf club owner, so I grew up on a golf course and have spent the majority of my professional life within the sport, first at the PGA and then with BIGGA.

For Andrew Wilson, whose article is a key part of this month's magazine, the greenkeeping profession acted as a form of salvation.

Greenkeeping helped him deal with some challenges in his personal life and I'm thankful to Andrew for being so open in the article he has written. I'm also incredibly proud to know that BIGGA and all of the opportunities we provide for greenkeepers have been a key part of his journey.



Chief Executive Jim Croxton

Through hard work and by embracing the opportunities available to him, Andrew is enjoying a wonderful purple patch in his career and as deputy head greenkeeper at Whitecraigs he has progressed to the point where he can support his family.

Elsewhere in the magazine — and on the cover — we focus on the drought that has impacted so many golf courses this summer. This is not the first edition of this magazine that has been

devoted to droughts and we've done this a number of times over the years.

I distinctly remember 2012 when the drought edition landed on doorsteps and it started to rain, seemingly not stopping for six months. I hope this month's magazine has something like as big an impact as I know many golf clubs desperately need some water, particularly in the southern part of England.

In these pages are a number of fascinating articles that will hopefully go some way towards helping golf courses deal with these current difficult conditions.

What the drought has done, once again, is put greenkeeping in the spotlight and showed once again to the wider golfing industry just how important skilled, professional greenkeepers are to the health of this sport.

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# INSIDE THIS ISSUE

## Editor's Notes



Greenkeeper International editor, Karl Hansell

### There are times when you have to throw out your plans and start again.

This month's magazine was due to include some really great features – our usual fare of telling you stories of greenkeepers and groundsman who are improving the fortunes of their clubs, achieving successes or overcoming challenges. But as the drought wore on through August and the rain didn't come, it became clear that we had to throw all that out (or at least save for another month) and address the issues that faced our members this summer.

So, my thanks go to Simon Lambert on the Sussex coast, for picking up the phone to me and having a chat about the drought and how they have grown used to working under extremely dry conditions. There's a really interesting story there and possibly an insight into the future for us all as the world continues to warm.

Likewise, Adrian Mortram and Dr Colin Mumford, both good friends of Greenkeeper International, have taken time out of their busy lives to contribute articles to this magazine on the topic of water shortages and what we can do about them. Kelly-Marie Clack has produced a timely story about the effectiveness of pesticide applications. There's also advice on how to mitigate the effects of drought conditions that was produced by the GCMA, Rain Bird, STRI Group and with support from BIGGA.

I hope that by the time you read this you'll have received some rain and the course is beginning to green up, although the prolonged effects may take months to subside. As I sat on my lawn yesterday and watched a crane fly emerge out of its burrow, I know there will be further challenges ahead, but rest assured that we and our good friends are here to support you every step of the way.

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## THE PEOPLE BEHIND YOUR MAGAZINE



**Andrew Wilson**  
The deputy head greenkeeper at Whitecraigs in Glasgow, Andrew came into

greenkeeping as a career change and has fully embraced the opportunities on offer.



**Kelly-Marie Clack**  
Kelly-Marie is agronomy and technical manager at Origin Amenity Solutions and an

expert sports turf agronomist. This month she discusses how water quality impacts the success of your pesticide programme.

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# LOOK OUT FOR

## 46 Navigating the dry spell at Seaford Head

With three major wildfires and counting this summer, life on the Sussex coast has been challenging for Simon Lambert and his team. He took time out to speak to Greenkeeper International about how extreme temperatures impact their normal daily activity and discussed how, living in one of the driest areas of the UK, they have grown used to water shortages and adapted their methods to keep the course healthy.

## 58 Fraise mowing as a solution to weed control

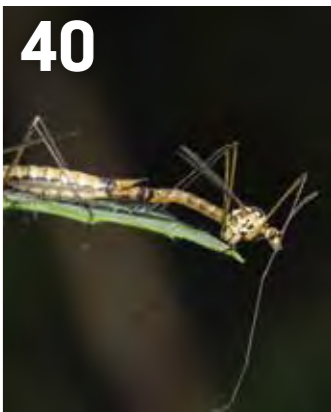
At Continue to Learn, Dr Frank Rossi of Cornell University proposed the use of fraise mowing as a method of removing weeds and even combatting thatch. Fraise mowing is a fairly drastic procedure where the entire top layer of soil is stripped off the surface, so it's not for the faint-hearted. But could it be a useful approach for greenkeepers?

## 52 Where are we going with water?

Revisiting a topic he first discussed in Greenkeeper International a decade ago, irrigation expert Adrian Mortram offers his thoughts on the future of water resources in the greenkeeping industry. What happens to turf when drought conditions are prevalent and how can you make sure you're making the most out of your applications of water?

## 64 Traditional organic matter management

Organic matter management is critical if greenkeepers are to provide firm, healthy and resilient fine turf surfaces. There are plenty of different techniques that can be implemented to keep thatch levels low, but in his Continue to Learn lecture USGA agronomist Paul Jacobs discussed the effectiveness and failings of the three most commonly-used methods.



# Every journey begins with a single step

(Or ‘The importance of leaving your comfort zone’)

Andrew Wilson, deputy course manager, Whitecraigs

Whitecraigs Golf Club in Glasgow

## How many of you when at school thought, I’m going to become a greenkeeper when I’m older?

Not too many I’d imagine. I wanted to be a train driver or in the Royal Navy, but it didn’t quite turn out that way.

However, I’m lucky as I have ended up doing a job I love in a fantastic industry. Karl, the editor of Greenkeeper International, described me as a late bloomer. I’m not sure I’d describe myself that way but I have fallen quite by accident into a greenkeeping career.

When I left school, I

decided I wanted to become a chartered surveyor. I graduated from university and began valuing properties for my local authority with visions of becoming a successful professional.

But life can throw you a curve ball every so often and this is what happened to me.

“You will face many defeats in life, but never let yourself be defeated

Maya Angelou, American poet and civil rights activist

This is not the place to go into my own personal struggles as that’s not the point of this article, but suffice to say mental health issues caused me to give up my chosen career and left me with no confidence, anxiety and a number of other struggles.

For those of you wondering,

I have obsessive compulsive disorder. Every day presents me with struggles, but with 20 years of support from family, health professionals and prescription medication I can now manage my issues.

I know it’s not easy but I’d urge anyone struggling with physical, mental health or personal problems to reach out. In this day and age there is all manner of help available but you have to be proactive as more often than not, the help won’t find you!

I found myself helping at my local golf club, where I

was offered a job with the greenkeepers. I jumped at the chance to work outdoors in a small team, where I could spend a lot of time working alone and hiding from my personal issues.

So why did Karl describe me as a late bloomer? Well, after 14 years of staying in my comfort zone — a place where I was safe but probably not realising my full potential — something changed.

I got married to Jude in 2010 and our kids, Mark and Rachel, followed in 2011 and 2013. All of a sudden, I had »



Andrew Wilson at FTM 2019



Andrew initially found peace on the golf course, but discovered it was more than just a good place to hide



Andrew (third from right) on stage at BTME with other members of the BIGGA Delegation 2022



Working on machinery at the club

responsibilities and people that were counting on me to support them. I wanted to do the best for my family and knew I had to face up to the things I'd been shying away from for so long.

When you've become accustomed to a routine and feel safe it's hard to change, but I now had the perfect catalyst. I decided I wanted to progress up the greenkeeping ladder and resolved to make the most of my BIGGA membership.

I attended a training day on grass species identification at Glasgow Golf Club that was

run by the STRI. Nothing remarkable there you may think, and you'd be right, but for me it was massive. I was confronting some of the things I found difficult, overcoming nerves, networking, being in a different environment, taking myself out of my comfort zone — it was almost a form of cognitive behavioural therapy.

Another big step for me was attending BTME in Harrogate. I'd been fortunate enough to attend in 2014 with my colleagues and was amazed at the size of the show and the opportunities on offer.

“ I didn't feel I belonged there and I felt I wasn't as good as these greenkeepers. Now I look forward to my visit to Harrogate each year.

I decided my CV needed to be improved to give me the best possible chance of career progression. Every year I now fund my own education package at Continue to Learn and spend a day at the show.

My trips to Harrogate seemed to get easier year on year. Initially, I had to push myself to travel down because I wasn't comfortable being around other people, I didn't feel I belonged there and I felt I wasn't as good as these greenkeepers. Now, I look forward to my visit to Harrogate each year. They have led to me becoming CPD approved and I have gotten to know other greenkeepers from all over the UK. Again, to most people this will sound pretty run of the mill but to me it was another huge step on the road to realising my potential.

In 2018, I took what was to

me the final step. I left my safe place, the golf club I'd worked at for 18 years and been a member of since I was a 9-year-old. I successfully applied for the position of deputy course manager at Whitecraigs Golf Club.

When I reflect on the phone call from the course manager offering me the position, I can still recall the nerves, trembling, my heart racing because I'd just accepted a position at another club! I couldn't thank him enough and promised not to let him down.

This was me taking a giant step as I didn't know the staff, members or course. I hadn't grown up at the club and wouldn't be surrounded by people that were aware of the issues I had and the journey I'd been on.

Since arriving at Whitecraigs, I haven't looked back. I have a great course manager and work within a brilliant team. »

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Moving to The Whitecraigs was a big step for Andrew as it meant he left his comfort zone

As I have become more self-assured, opportunities have opened up for me. I was lucky enough to be selected for FTMI in 2019 at the second attempt and couldn't believe it when I made the BIGGA Delegation with Bernhard and

Company to the GCSAA show in San Diego after two unsuccessful applications.

These were opportunities I'd read about but never dreamed that one day, I would be able to put my demons behind me and take

advantage of.

In my case, I had retreated into my comfort zone due to mental health issues, but there can be all manner of reasons why people stay in their comfort zone. After all, it's only natural to be content in familiar surroundings, doing a job you know well where you are in control and experience little pressure or stress.

There is plenty of information available online about this topic written by eminent psychologists who know far more than I do. I'm simply relaying the journey I had in the hope that it might encourage someone else to realise their potential.

In these pages I've turned a 20-year marathon into a short sprint and only highlighted a few of the more significant moments on my journey.

At times the self-doubt

and set backs seemed insurmountable. I had many lows and disappointments along the way but refused to let them send me back to my comfort zone.

I found that by taking small steps, learning from my mistakes and accepting that change is initially uncomfortable, I managed to gently ease myself out of my comfort zone. In my opinion, this is the first step in realising your true potential.

Not everyone is destined to become a course manager at a top venue and I think that's the case for me - I don't think that's where I'll end up. That might not be your goal and there is absolutely nothing wrong with being happy in the role you have. However, if you feel inclined, take that first small step out of your comfort zone because you never know where it may lead.



Andrew Wilson

**“** You don't lose if you get knocked down, you lose if you stay down

**Muhammad Ali — former heavy weight champion of the world**



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Richard McGlynn | Jaey Goodchild | Frank Newberry | Greg Evans MG | Jon Kiger





# ACROSS THE BOARD

Andrew Laing | Central England Region | Course and Estates Manager | Gaudet Luce

I'm quite looking forward to autumn, when we will start to get some recovery on the dry areas from this summer and we can present the course nicely.

The leaves change colour, which adds a beautiful element, and the temperature drops, so it is more pleasant being out on the course.

The hot, dry summer has given us plenty of challenges. Our irrigation is mains fed, but we've struggled to refill our tanks in time to get all the water we'd like on the course.

That led to us reducing our usage and trying to be a little creative, which isn't necessarily a bad thing.

At Gaudet Luce the move away from mains water isn't financially viable at the moment. We've spoken about it for a number of years, but with all the local brine springs, borehole provision may not be a reliable option and the construction of a reservoir is prohibitively expensive. Things may change in future, but until then we just have to manage our usage carefully by prioritising some areas and leaving others.

With the cooler temperatures and more rainfall bringing greener, more forgiving surfaces for the golfer, I expect we'll have a busy autumn. But I was also really interested to read about the new BIGGA Conferences, which will be held over the coming months.

Looking at the line-up of speakers, which you can view



Gaudet Luce in full bloom

“As leaders, it's our job to help guide the next generation and sometimes all they need is a little nudge in the right direction.

elsewhere in this magazine, there are some really interesting learning opportunities available. The conferences are also relatively inexpensive for a quality day of greenkeeper education and networking opportunities.

As much as I'd like to take my whole team to BTME, for us it is just not financially viable and so I always use the conferences as a chance to take all of my guys for a day out at the end of a long season. This gives them the chance to boost their CPD credits, socialise with a room full of like-minded people and it will hopefully inspire some of them to get engaged with the other initiatives and learning opportunities that

BIGGA provides.

I know how much hard work goes into organising these events and, like anything, their ongoing success is dependant on attendance levels, so please try to get behind your Regions and support your local event.

I've always been a big supporter of greenkeeper education and so I was pleased to see the recently-announced finalists for this year's FTMI Class and Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year. The finals of the student greenkeeper awards take place early in September so good luck to all of those who are taking part.

To everyone who is involved, I would say embrace

the opportunity and take from them as much as you can.

As a past mentor for FTMI, I have seen first hand what a brilliant kick start this can offer greenkeepers who would like to move into management roles. But remember, you will only get out what you put in, so give it your all!

As we approach winter, now is a good time to appraise our own teams and identify those who may benefit from next year's BIGGA member initiatives. There will be ambitious members of your team who are looking for guidance to help them take the next step.

As leaders, it's our job to help guide the next generation and sometimes all they need is a little nudge in the right direction to make them get their applications in.

## Apologies

The August 2022 edition of Across the Board featured a number of inaccuracies that were not amended at the production stage of the magazine.

Our apologies go to last month's column author Gordon Moir and to the teams at Moray Golf Club and St Andrews Links.

For more information contact Karl Hansell on karl@bigga.co.uk



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SCAN ME



Regional Diary

John Pearson  
South East



Hi everyone, by the time this hits your doorsteps I will be nearing a year with BIGGA. It has flown by, which I can only take to be a good thing.

I have to say, a real highlight was my trip to St Andrews to work at The Open in July. I didn't watch a lot of golf, but I did get to meet all of the BIGGA members who were lucky enough to be selected.

It was great to get to know some of the guys and girls from other regions.

A special mention must go to my fellow MSM, Tracey Walker, who did such a brilliant job of organising everyone in the lead up and throughout the week, which really is a mammoth task.

Looking ahead and it isn't long until a team of 24 BIGGA members will be heading to the Wentworth Club to be part of the course preparation team for the BMW PGA Championship. This will be a wonderful insight into the work that goes into presenting a course, ready for a world class golf tournament.

Within this magazine we are also launching the new BIGGA Conferences, which are learning opportunities held around the country. They will take place in November and in addition to having some spectacular venues, such as Villa Park, Elland Road and a return to Wentworth, we will also be joined by a fabulous line up of speakers. Please check out the BIGGA website for more information and book a spot early to avoid missing out.

# BIGGA National Championship 2022

## Have you booked your place?

**It's been a wonderful summer of golf, with spectacular playing conditions enabling BIGGA members to get out and enjoy the fairways after the hard work is done.**

But the season isn't over just yet and there's one final opportunity to get your hands on some major silverware as the BIGGA National Championship heads to the Midlands this October.

Taking place at the spectacular Enville Golf Club on 10 and 11 October, registration is still open for the BIGGA National Championship supported by Golf Partners Origin Amenity Solutions.

BIGGA National is a two-day event, with prizes on both days and both gross and

Stableford competitions, meaning there are plenty of opportunities to get your hands on some top prizes.

There are also no handicap limitations in place, meaning BIGGA members of any golfing standard are welcome to come along and take part.

With entry costing just £97.50, including two rounds at Enville, lunch on both days, an evening meal and great prizes, the event is an incredible value-for-money opportunity to sample one of the finest courses in the Midlands.

It's also a fantastic opportunity to catch up with old friends and colleagues in an informal social environment.

Registration is through the

GolfGenius app, where you'll find live scoring and tee times throughout the competition. Head to the BIGGA website and search for BIGGA National Championship or scan the QR code today to get involved.



**Continue the conversation**

If you'd like to know more about the BIGGA National Championship, contact BIGGA on Twitter using @BIGGALtd, on Facebook at @golfgreenkeepers or on WhatsApp using 07933 203645



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# WHAT'S ON

Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Awards

**When:** 7 to 8 September  
**Venue:** The Goodwood Estate



Keep an eye out on BIGGA's digital channels during the first week of September as The Goodwood Estate hosts the finals of the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year.

The line-up of finalists for this year's awards comprises talented greenkeepers from all over the UK and alongside awards sponsors Toro and Reesink, we're excited to find out what happens at the event.

**Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year finalists:**

- / Andrew Bate, Hesketh
- / Tom Bromfield, Trentham
- / James Gaskell, Ripon City
- / Abigail Lake, Frilford Heath
- / Andrew Ritchie, St Andrews Links
- / John Thornton, Hellidon Lakes

**Toro Young Student Greenkeeper of the Year finalists:**

- / Jake Beech, Newcastle-under-Lyme
- / Alfie Brooks, Gathurst
- / Luke Charnley, Royal Liverpool
- / Peter Pattenden, Carden Park
- / James Stratford, Broome Manor
- / Samuel Waite, Barton-on-Sea

## GET INVOLVED WITH GREAT EVENTS IN YOUR REGION

### Scotland and Northern Ireland

- 1 BIGGA Scotland 'St Mungo Trophy' - Qualifier**  
Date: 6 September  
Location: Crieff
- 2 BIGGA Scotland 'St Mungo Trophy' - Qualifier**  
Date: 22 September  
Location: Mortonhall
- 3 BIGGA Scotland 'St Mungo Trophy' - Qualifier**  
Date: 29 September  
Location: Grantown-on-Spey
- 4 BIGGA Scotland 'St Mungo Trophy' - Qualifier**  
Date: 6 October  
Location: Bothwell Castle
- 5 BIGGA Scotland 'St Mungo Trophy' - Final**  
Date: 19 October  
Location: Gleneagles Hotel
- 6 Northern Ireland Education Day**  
Date: 27 October  
Location: Belvoir Park
- 7 BIGGA Conference**  
Date: 15 November  
Location: Stirling Court Hotel
- 8 BIGGA Scotland 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**  
Date: 17 November  
Location: Elland Road (Leeds United Football Club)

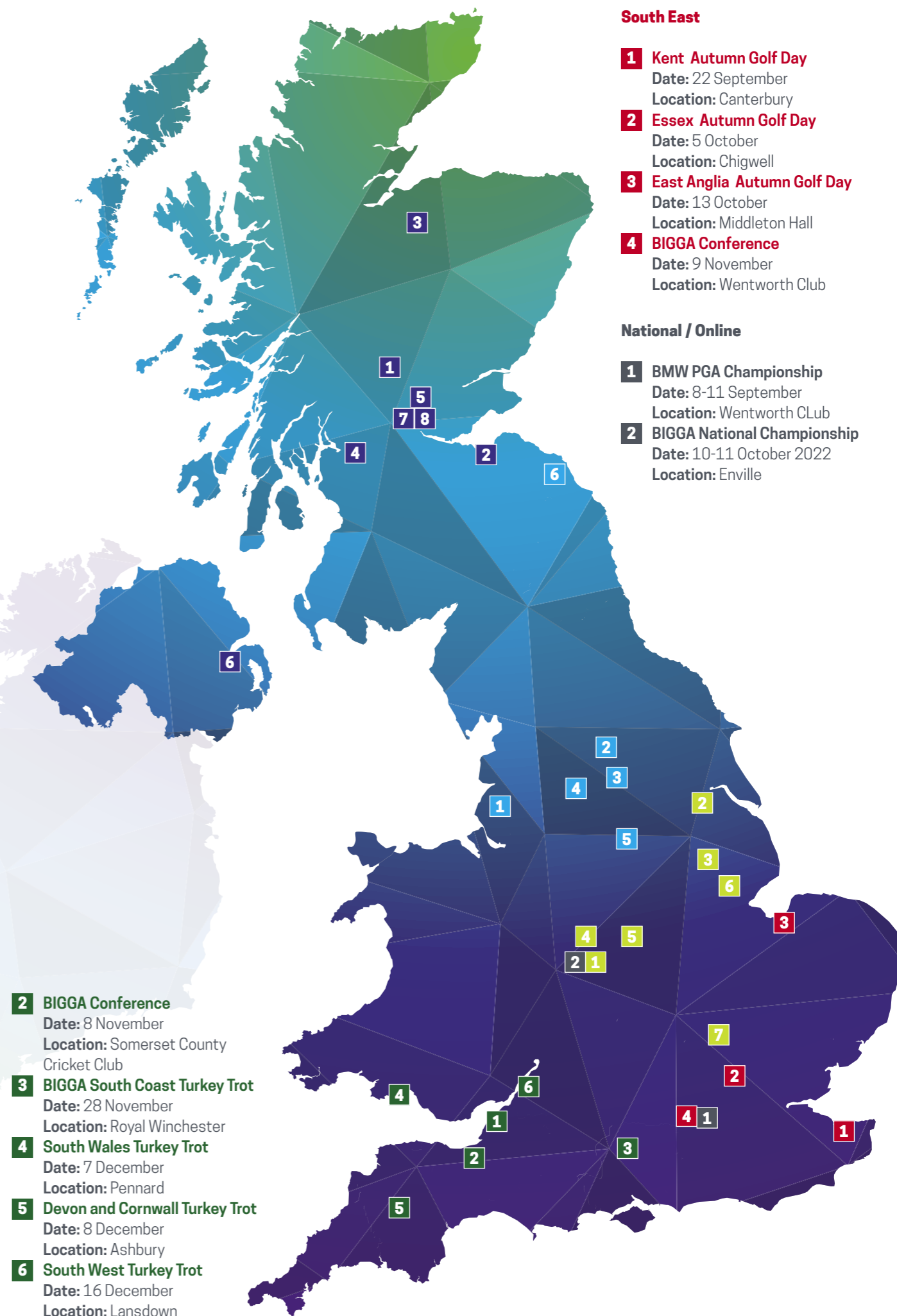
- 4 Yorkshire Christmas Golf Day**  
Date: 24 November  
Location: Huddersfield
- 5 Sheffield Christmas Golf Day**  
Date: 8 December  
Location: Coxmoor
- 6 North East Christmas Golf Day**  
Date: 14 December  
Location: Dunstanburgh Castle

### Central England

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

### South West and South Wales

- 1 BIGGA South West Turf Club**  
Date: 5 October  
Location: Clevedon



### South East

- 1 Kent Autumn Golf Day**  
Date: 22 September  
Location: Canterbury
- 2 Essex Autumn Golf Day**  
Date: 5 October  
Location: Chigwell
- 3 East Anglia Autumn Golf Day**  
Date: 13 October  
Location: Middleton Hall
- 4 BIGGA Conference**  
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

## International Thank a Greenkeeper Day

Celebrate with support on social media using #ThankAGreenkeeper

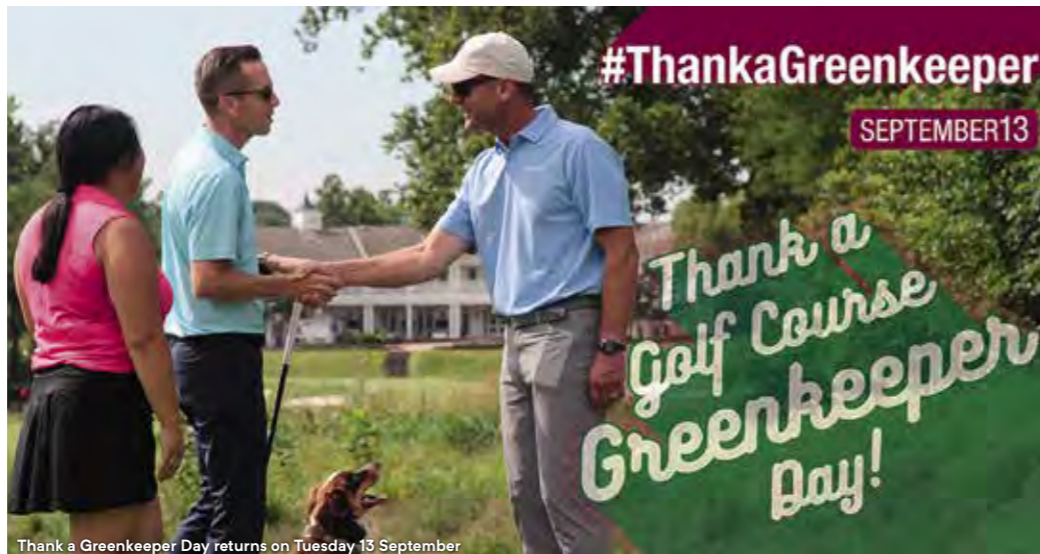
### National

In conjunction with other global greenkeeper and course superintendent groups, BIGGA is encouraging everyone associated with golf to recognise those who help keep golf courses enjoyable and sustainable with an international 'Thank a Greenkeeper Day'.

BIGGA, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and other partner associations are encouraging those who love golf to take a moment to thank their course's greenkeepers.

Thank a Greenkeeper Day will be celebrated on Tuesday 13 September, which also marks the GCSAA's 96th anniversary.

The celebration will include a commercial that will appear on the Golf Channel and other media outlets and social media messages touting the many ways that greenkeepers benefit the



Thank a Greenkeeper Day returns on Tuesday 13 September

game and their communities' golfers. Others are encouraged to join in the conversation on social media using the hashtags #ThankAGreenkeeper and #ThankASuper depending on their country's nomenclature.

In addition, golf courses and other groups are encouraged to provide special

recognition for their greenkeeping teams on 13 September.

During the 2021 Thank a Greenkeeper Day, social media messages reached more than 9 million followers around the world.

Other groups participating in the global event include the Australian Sports Turf

Managers Association (ASTMA), the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association (CGSA) and the Federation of European Golf Greenkeepers Associations (FEGGA). All together, the groups represent more than 31,000 golf course management professionals in 78 countries around the world.

## Centurion Park wins prize

### Northern - North West

Centurion Park, close to Newcastle, has accepted the prize of a new ClearWater system after winning a prize draw at BTME 2022.

The machinery cleansing system produced by Acumen Waste Services will contribute towards the success of the club, which is preparing to undertake expansion and renovation plans.

Course Manager John Grey said: "This is great news as the ClearWater system will fit in perfectly with the plans for for the course."



ClearWater's Matt Mears with Centurion Park's John Grey

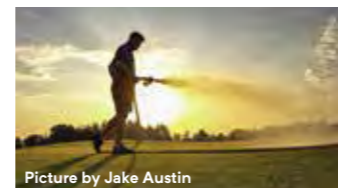
## Temporary hosepipe bans

### National

Following the driest July across the UK in over a century, several water authorities implemented temporary use bans on hosepipes.

With these restrictions due to be implemented, BIGGA undertook regular discussions with England Golf, the Golf Club Managers Association and the relevant water authorities to discuss whether golf facilities would be impacted.

Following these interactions, golf facilities



Picture by Jake Austin

were given permission to continue using water on playing surfaces. However, the water boards asked that golf clubs be considerate with water use and only use what is necessary to keep the plant alive, in areas of play that could be deemed a health and safety risk if left un-watered.



## Wendy leaving Latvia

### South East - Surrey

Wendy O'Brien, the course superintendent at Jurmala in Latvia, is heading back to the United Kingdom after accepting the course manager's role at Beaverbook.

Wendy was raised in the north west of England and her first full-time position was at De Vere Carden Park, before joining the Ohio State Program. In 2007 she was hired as superintendent at La Torre in Spain before taking up a role at Myerscough College as a tutor. She then returned to Carden Park for a year before heading to Jurmala in 2017.

## George becomes Burnham champ

### South East - Essex



George Grimes won the club championship at Burnham

Congratulations go to George Grimes, course manager at Garon Park, who has been a member at Burnham for 25 years and finally secured the club championship.

Having been runner-up four times, George finally secured the prize with rounds of 73 and 77.

Elsewhere in the section and congratulations go to Ross Surridge, the first assistant at Boyce Hill. During August his wife, Kelly, gave birth to a boy named Rainer Ross Surridge. The section's Ian Nichols said: "I'm sure as soon as he's old enough he'll have a golf club in his hands!"

## Sam wins Essex day

### South East - Essex

On 14 July Frinton hosted the Essex Cup Golf Day.

Local knowledge definitely helped as Frinton's course manager Sam Cook was the winner and new holder of the Essex Cup (although its whereabouts are unknown).

Second was Tony Rackley of Romford with 36 points.

Thanks were given to the Frinton team and to all those who supported the day.



Sam Cook won the Essex Cup at Frinton

## Ufford Park golf day

### South East - East Anglia

Ufford Park hosted the East Anglia Section for a golf day on a very hot 10 August.

Despite the challenging conditions, the course was very well presented by Adrian Hollins and his team.

Kevin Hilton reigned victorious with 37 points, beating Shane Stannard on count back, with Mike Virley finishing third.

Thanks go to event sponsor Ernest Doe.



Kevin Hilton (left) won the event

## DOGS ON COURSE



**Name:** Bella

**Breed:** Dogue de Bordeaux

**Owner:** Mark Wilshire

**Location:** Llanishen

**Favourite treat:**

Anything that will stay still for more than five seconds. This includes rabbit and sheep poop.

**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
- DH GK** 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

**Aiden Bell**, Moray, AGK; **Allan Colquhoun**, Lamlash, AGK; **Euan Findlay**, Bothwell Castle, GK; **Tom Hobbis**, TurfCare, BA; **Ross Lambie**, Kirkintilloch, AGK; **Daniel Robertson**, Drumpellier, GK; **Andrea Sozio**, The Carnegie Club at Skibo Castle, GK

## NORTHERN

**Ben Booth**, Waterton Park, AGK; **Kevin Brown**, Sale, GK; **Ian Foster**, Lobden, G; **Richard Gander**, Alnwick Castle, AGK; **James Hargreaves**, Penwortham, DHGK; **Kavan Heys**, Great Harwood, AGK; **Andrew Hill**, Alnwick Castle, A; **Thomas Leonard**, Grimsby, DHGK; **Paul Smith**, Gathurst, AGK; **Rory Straker**, Alnwick Castle, AGK; **Harry Thompson**, Alnwick Castle, AGK; **Owen Warwick**, Abergelge, AGK; **Philip Welsh**, Mellor & Townscliffe, GK; **Roy Whitby**, Sale, GK

## CENTRAL ENGLAND

**Danny Gallagher**, Swaffham, DHGK; **Kevin Goude**, Spalding, DHGK; **Mark Heath**, The Vale Golf and Country Club, CM; **Tom Musson**, Swinley Forest, APP; **Glenn Rayner**, The Bedfordshire, A; **Adam Wood**, Droitwich, GK; **Nigel Wright**, Castle Royle Golf and Country Club, AGK

## SOUTH EAST

**Reece Ayliffe**, Seaford, AGK; **Callum Cooper**, Royal Wimbledon, AGK; **Harry Dean**, Sunbury, AGK; **David Fosh**, Stockley Park, AGK; **Stuart Gower**, AFC Wimbledon Academy, HG; **Daniel Martin**, Knole Park, GK; **Mark McAvoy**, Thorpe Hall, DHGK; **Rondy Onezime**, Royal Wimbledon, AGK; **Ross Pollard**, North Foreland, AGK; **James Sheldrick**, Lydd, APP; **Daisy Starling**, Lydd, APP; **Ash Thorpe**, Seckford, APP; **Barrie Ungaretti**, Reigate Hill, AGK; **Joseph Wanjiku**, The Wisley, AGK; **Jarred Warren**, Royal Wimbledon, AGK; **Luke Weaver**, The Buckinghamshire, AGK; **Madeline Wright**, Lydd, APP

## SOUTH WEST & SOUTH WALES

**Nick Beedell**, Tall Pines, GK; **Ryan Betteridge**, Gloucester, AGK; **Dan Biddiscombe**, Tall Pines, GK; **Joe Hammond**, Minchinhampton, AGK; **Andrew Jeffery**, Axe Cliff, AGK; **Mark Lewthwaite**, Marlborough, CM; **Matthew Nethercott**, Royal Porthcawl, GK; **Jordan Parsonage**, Llanyrafon, AGK; **Dave Roberts**, Orchardleigh, HGK; **Liam Rowlands**, ICL, BA; **Barry Smith**, Tenby, FA; **Freddie Williams**, Dudsbury, AGK

# CHAMPIONSHIP PERFORMANCES

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



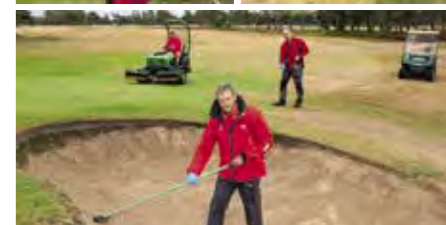
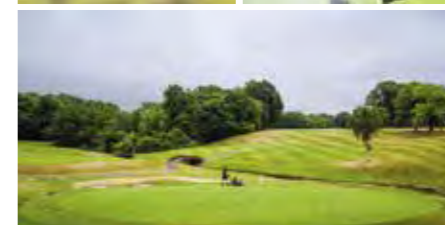
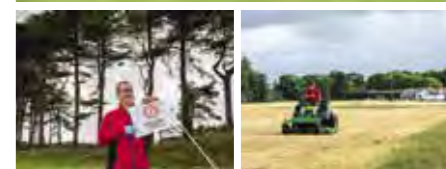
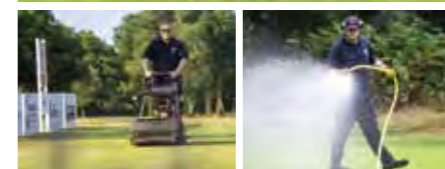
**CARRIS TROPHY AT SILLOTH ON SOLWAY 19-22ND JULY**



**ENGLISH GIRLS CHAMPIONSHIP AT THE WILMSLOW 19-21ST JULY**



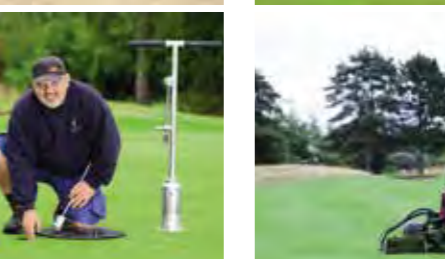
**ENGLISH GIRLS U16 U14 CHAMPIONSHIP AT FORMBY LADIES 26-28TH JULY**



**ENGLISH AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP AT WORKSOP & LINDRICK 26-31ST JULY**



**REID TROPHY AT LINCOLN 2-4TH AUGUST**



## SOMEBODY TO LISTEN

MEMBER BENEFIT: COUNSELLING HELPLINE

When times get tough, and you need someone to talk to — our confidential and independent, professional telephone service can support you.

The service provides immediate emotional support, advice and practical information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.



To speak to our professional counsellors call 0333 000 2082

# THE POSTAGE STAMP

## Is there a crisis in greenkeeping?

### In a nutshell: yes!

The question is, why are so many people leaving the industry? Why are there so many job adverts and very little applicants applying?

Your survey should have included greenkeepers who have left the industry as they are the people you should be asking.

Why are standards falling and who is responsible?

I took early retirement in December 2019 due to stress with my job, which affected my personal life. Three years on, still more and more people are leaving greenkeeping.

Being brutal, the positions of course manager and head greenkeeper are now very unpleasant to work in.

In the '70s and '80s, jobs were attractive and members were grateful for the effort you put in. Now that is all gone!

What are the answers? Nobody seems to know, I'm afraid.

**Alick Mackay, former head greenkeeper at Furness Golf Club, Cumbria**

## Should golf clubs take more responsibility for greenkeepers professional standards?

### I am reading with interest the "Is there a crisis in greenkeeping" article and survey.

The survey has little relevance for me to fill in, but I am still interested in contributing. The questions you are asking are the same questions that have been asked and not answered for maybe over 50 years. I have maybe three points (or more).

1. I have yet to meet a golf club member whose salary was less than a greenkeeper.
2. The car park allocation was always for Captain (Jaguar), Club Manager (Lexus), Secretary (Range Rover), Professional (BMW), Greenkeeper (Raleigh Pushbike or old pickup to collect from suppliers).
3. I believe it is up to golf club owners, members and committees to improve the professionalism of greenkeepers. Is that a strange thing to say? No, because

**Barrie Gregson, golf course designer**

greenkeeping organisations have been trying for so many years with little success.

In most multi-task professions, a worker will gain certification and qualification before entering the workplace. Golf clubs need a pair of hands to go out in the cold and then maybe they will send them to college one day a week.

Then, the 'qualified greenkeeper' will use deadly chemicals on a multi-million-pound facility and hopefully not kill the grass and themselves at the same time. I have seen and done this and I am very lucky to still be here, when I think back at the chemicals we used in the old days at a time when PPE was unheard of.

We need to make golf clubs realise that greenkeepers should be the highly-skilled protectors of their investment and greenkeepers can make that investment very costly with just one mistake. The golf clubs have the money and the

power, so we must make them realise the value of greenkeeping and put on more education, apprenticeships, scholarships and meaningful qualifications for aspiring new greenkeepers to attain.

In my part of the world where there are many new golf facilities being built at astronomical cost, they will open in the most amazing condition with the very best machinery and greenkeeping facilities. The principal staff (mainly British) will be very experienced (but not necessarily qualified) and very well rewarded. They will pass their knowledge and experience onto the staff they are responsible for.

Greenkeepers are the only teachers for greenkeepers. I'm 71 and I am still so passionate about this, but one side of my head is completely flat where I bang it against a brick wall!

I hope you get some success with your survey as greenkeepers deserve it.

We regularly pick a selection emails or social media to feature in the magazine, so if there is something you would like to highlight, please email [karl@bigga.co.uk](mailto:karl@bigga.co.uk)

## Ransomes golf watch

I am the proud owner of a Ransomes golf watch as described in your History of Greenkeepers Associations article (March 2022).

I won the Southern Region spring golf event at Croham Hurst Golf Club in 1979. I had an advantage as not only did I work there, but I had also previously been a junior member at the club.

**Roger Tydeman, Life Member**

I'll always remember the day as I had the pleasure of playing with Archie Creese, who was a Chelsea Pensioner and attended meetings in the famous red jacket.

Sadly, the watch is not in very good condition as I wore it to work for a while. I'm looking forward to subsequent articles as the history is approaching my era.



## Seeking previous greenkeepers

I am the historian for Hampstead Golf Club in London and I am gathering information about the club's dim and distant past for a book to celebrate our 130th anniversary.

Much of our early information was lost in a fire, so I am doing lots of investigating to find out whatever I can, using today's digital technology.


Some time after World War II and probably nearer to the 1960s, '70s or '80s, HGC employed two greenkeepers named Robin Macklin and Frank Ford, but I have zero knowledge about them. It's a long shot, but I wonder if any BIGGA members remember these two gentlemen and would be able to help with any information?


Many thanks in advance.


**Ross Biddicombe**


# Here to lend a helping hand


The official charity of BIGGA provides assistance to its members and their dependents, offering financial assistance and practical help during difficult times.

 **Help:** when you need it most

 **Support:** through tough times

 **Guidance:** on your welfare and development

 **Financial Assistance:** during difficult times

 **Care:** because YOU matter

For more information on how the BIGGA Greenkeepers Benevolent Fund can help please call 01347 833 800 or email [benevolentfund@bigga.co.uk](mailto:benevolentfund@bigga.co.uk)

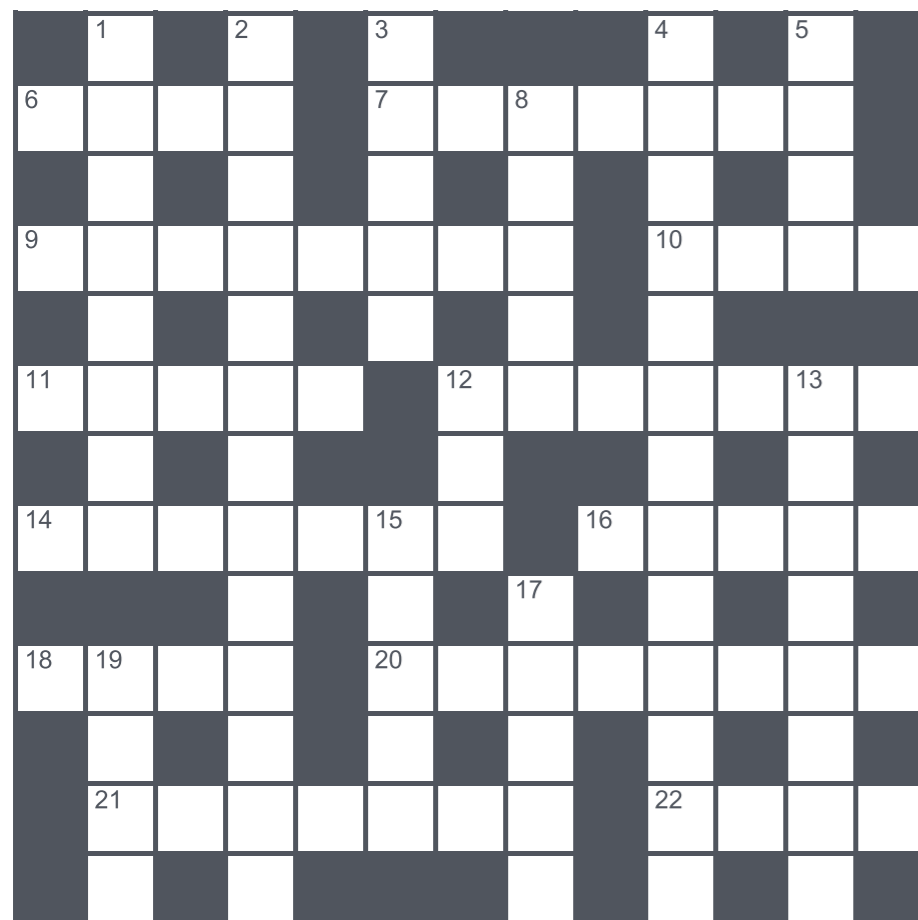


See more online: For more articles and conversation starters go to [www.bigga.org.uk](http://www.bigga.org.uk)



# TEE BREAK

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



## CROSSWORD

Enter your answers on the grid to the left.

### Across

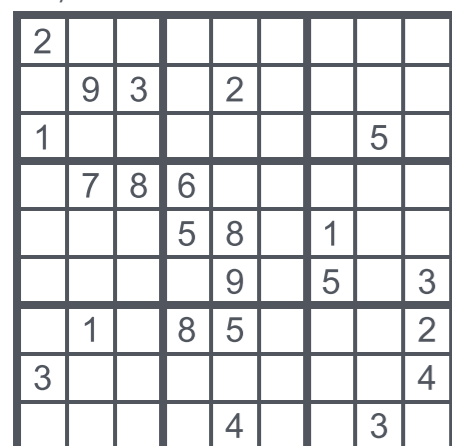
- 6 Legal instrument (4)
- 7 Get Lara out on the town (2,5)
- 9 Ratification (8)
- 10 Discover (4)
- 11 Arctic dweller (5)
- 12 Health check (7)
- 14 They need change on the street (7)
- 16 Soft fabric (5)
- 18 Horse's gait (4)
- 20 Legitimate target (4,4)
- 21 Bat oil (7)
- 22 Like some stories (4)

### Down

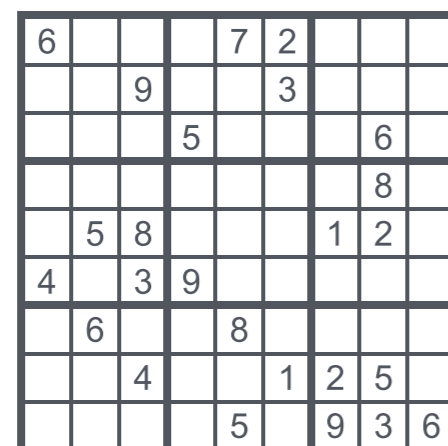
- 1 Faith (8)
- 2 Help crossing a stream (8,5)
- 3 Insuper (5)
- 4 Collapsing cliff straight over the road (7,6)
- 5 Playwright --- Racine (4)
- 8 Sudden forward thrust (5)
- 12 His other half (3)
- 13 Form a crowd (8)
- 15 Ransack (5)
- 17 Irish-born poet-playwright. (5)
- 19 Trundle (4)

## 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

BIGGA Xtra Benefits: Here to help you save time and money



### Save up to 30% on main dealership rates\*

Fixter offer a range of services like MOTs, servicing and repairs. Book a time slot that suits you and they will come and collect your car, take it to the garage (one of their carefully vetted partners) and return it once the work is done! You don't have to move a muscle.



### Save up to 40% on your will with BIGGA Xtra Benefits\*

Making a will may seem like a daunting task but WSL Will Writing's convenient home visit service makes the process easy. Their friendly consultants are available daytimes and evenings, seven days a week. They will take you through the process and explain everything in plain English, ensuring you make the best decisions for you and your family. As a BIGGA member, you will receive up to 40% off the cost of the service and 10% off additional services such as Will trusts. You will also receive a £25 voucher towards any Will trusts or Lasting Power of Attorney documents.



### Get 15% off Child-Safe SIM Cards

Introducing ParentShield, the only mobile network designed for children. BIGGA members can save 15% on 30-day rolling SIM-only contracts\*. With monitoring capabilities that are not available on any other network, you can teach responsible phone usage from day one.

In addition to the 15% discount, new customers get Super-Roaming for free (RRP £2.99 per month), meaning your child could never have issues with a mobile signal again.



### Save on your favourite retailers through Gift Card Savings

BIGGA members have the freedom to buy a range of gift cards and eGifts at discounted rates\*. It's a great way for you to save hundreds of pounds annually. From everyday essentials like your weekly supermarket shop to life's luxuries such as dining out.



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. ParentShield - Offer not available on Safe Stage 1 plan. Offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. BIGGA Xtra Benefits is managed and run on behalf of BIGGA by Parliament Hill Ltd.

# BIGGA CONFERENCES

This autumn BIGGA is presenting a series of education events around the UK, with BIGGA members and guests invited to participate in a full day of learning.

BIGGA's old Regional Conference scheme has been superseded by this new, improved programme, which enables members to attend any event of their choice, regardless of Regional boundaries. So, if you're based in Central England, but you fancy attending the event at Elland Road, home of Leeds United, there's nothing stopping you. Likewise, members from the South East may choose to attend the event at the Wentworth Club, but may instead choose to attend the event at Villa Park, home of Aston Villa or Somerset County Cricket Ground in Taunton.

Tickets cost just £35 + VAT for BIGGA members and £70 + VAT for non-members.

## Event hosts:



**Alison Walker**

Alison was the first female voice to be heard reporting on live football for the BBC in the 1990s. Since then she has been all over the world covering sport.



**Gareth Jones**

Gareth is managing editor of Sporting Life, a sports content website of over 1 million weekly views. He was also sports editor at BBC Radio Leeds.



**Phil Helmn MG**

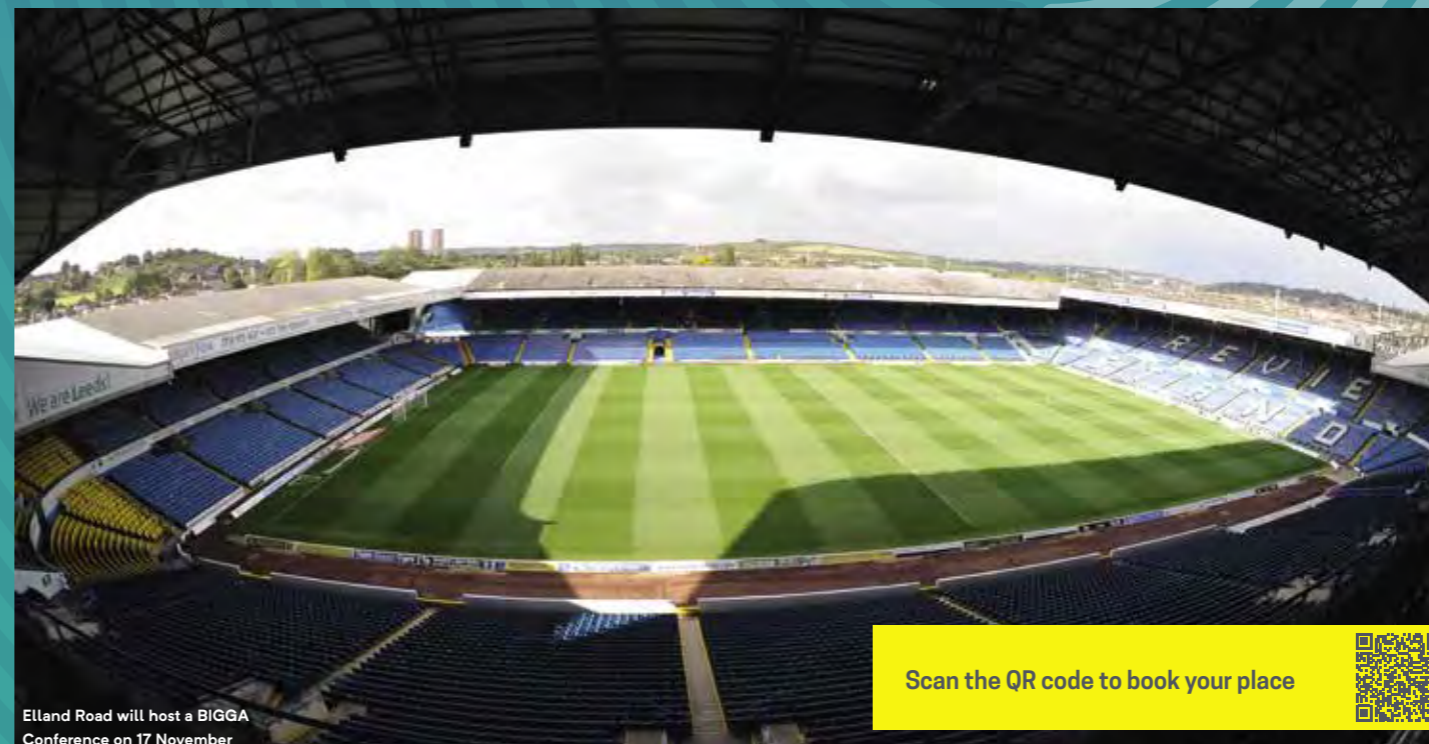
Master Greenkeeper number 30, Phil is a regular conference speaker and was previously general manager of sports turf and grounds at The Goodwood Group.

## Venues:

- / **Tuesday 8 November**  
Somerset County Cricket Ground, Taunton, TA1 1JT
- / **Tuesday 15 November**  
Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling, FK9 4LA
- / **Wednesday 9 November**  
The Wentworth Club, Surrey, GU25 4LS
- / **Thursday 17 November**  
Elland Road, Leeds, LS11 0ES
- / **Thursday 10 November**  
Villa Park, Birmingham, B6 6HE

## Conference schedule

Somerset CC	Wentworth	Villa Park	Elland Road	Stirling Court
John Kemp, project manager — Golf Course 2030, The R&A 'Using R&A Golf Course 2030 — actions and opportunities for greenkeepers'				
Richard Whyman, course manager, Burnham, & Berrow	Michael Sawicki, managing secretary, Royal Birkdale	Attendees will be given a tour of Villa Park	Darren Anderson MG, course manager, Bromborough	John Milne, head greenkeeper, Garmouth & Kingston
Dr Mark Hunt 'Weather patterns and effect on golf course maintenance'			Glenn Kirby, technical manager, Syngenta 'Leatherjackets — the ongoing battle'	
Dr Marie Athorn, business conservation advisor (R&A), RSPB 'RSPB work around the country'				
Sami Strutt, chief operating officer, BIGGA 'BIGGA - What's happening? An update on key projects'				
George Pitts MG, head greenkeeper, Sunningdale	Dan Clarke, golf courses manager, Wentworth Club	John McLoughlin, course manager, Wallasey	Craig Haldane, golf courses manager, The Gleneagles Hotel	David Cole MG, course manager, Loch Lomond



Elland Road will host a BIGGA Conference on 17 November

Scan the QR code to book your place



## 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)  
fiona@the-gtc.co.uk

L&D  
Diary

Deb Burnett,  
Learning &  
Development  
Executive



**August has been spent organising!**

Firstly, I have been organising the Toro Student Greenkeeper of the Year Award finals. The finals are being held at The Goodwood Estate and I have been booking activities, sorting out exams and lots of other things to put our 12 finalists through their paces.

The finalists must complete an exam, grass and seed identification tasks, an interview and the main awards students also do an essay. It's an intensive couple of days, but hopefully it is very enjoyable too!

Also being organised is the first event for the FTMI class of 2022, which happens in Ipswich towards the end of September. The 20 delegates will meet up for the first time, along with their mentors, the Jacobsen team, Sami Strutt and myself at the Ransomes Jacobsen factory. This will then be followed by a series of online education.

The Continue to Learn programme is nearly finalised and you will receive your brochure with your October magazine.

We have some fantastic speakers lined up and we will have something for everyone, from two-day classes to 45-minute free seminars. The programme covers management, agronomy, mental health, wellbeing, machinery and lots more, so we're looking forward to unveiling it in October ahead of the event taking place in January.

# Continue to Learn 2023 - Coming soon!

**Look out for your Continue to Learn brochure in the October edition of Greenkeeper International.**

Continue to Learn is the world's leading education programme for golf greenkeepers and it returns to BTME in January 2023 with an incredible line-up of speakers, sure to take your career to the next level.

Held the week of the BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME), Continue to Learn provides those working in the golf industry with access to outstanding career development opportunities, as well as providing practical skills to improve your operations at the golf course.

For more details, check out the BTME website from October and look out for your Continue to Learn Brochure within your October Greenkeeper International pack.



**CONFERENCE**

The two-day conference programme spans Monday and Tuesday. Topics are varied

and primarily aimed at course manager, head greenkeeper and deputy level, although all are welcome to attend.

Sessions are up to an hour in length and there will usually be two sessions taking place at the same time, so you can choose which you would like to attend.

**CLASSES**

Classes are held across full or half days and cover a wide range of subjects so greenkeepers at all stages of their career can find something useful.

Classes are often an opportunity for interactive learning, helping you develop practical or theoretical skills on topics that range from agronomy to people management. Places are limited, so don't hesitate to book a spot.

**SEMINARS**

Held on the opening two days of BTME, BIGGA offers free seminars for all attendees to the show.

Seminars are presented by

industry experts on behalf of our exhibitors and run hourly between 10am and 4pm.

There is no need to book and seats are allocated on a first come-first served basis, so make sure you arrive early to guarantee a spot.

**Already confirmed:**

- / Dr Frank Rossi, Cornell University
- / Paul MacCormack, general manager and superintendent, Fox Meadow Golf & Country Club
- / Lara Arias, superintendent and agronomist, Marco Simone Golf & Country Club
- / Alejandro Reyes, director of agronomy, TAS
- / Dr Stan Kostka, visiting scholar, Pennsylvania State University
- / Dr Mike Fidanza, professor plant and soil science, Pennsylvania State University
- / Shaun Anderson, golf sales specialist, Rain Bird Europe
- / Stuart Tate, European Golf Specification Manager, Rain Bird Europe



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

- / Ryan Leicester, Warrington
- / John Milne, Garmouth & Kingston
- / George Parsons, Royal Mid-Surrey
- / Jonathan Fisher, Ruddington Grange
- / Jordan Whitehouse, Walsall
- / Scott Robertson, Strathmore
- / Marcus Davies, Wentworth Club

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

- / Bill Whybrow, Lucerne
- / Ryan Leicester, Warrington
- / John Milne, Garmouth & Kingston
- / Mark Reid, Lethamhill
- / Marcus Davies, Wentworth Club

**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)

# Combating summer stresses



*Download available now!!*

Download our Summer Stress Trials and see how to reduce the effects of high temperatures and drought that summer brings on turfgrass.



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## Apprentice Corner

Brought to you by the Greenkeepers Training Committee

# What makes a good playing surface?

Taking a closer look at the anatomy of a good green



Image by Adam Barton

**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

Last month we focused on speed and surface response to the ball or player and this month we'll be taking a closer look at the other aspects.

### Smoothness and trueness

This relates to the way in which a ball moves across the surface — the smoothness of its roll. When rolling across a turf surface a ball should not be deflected off course by weeds, worm casts or other detritus.

The smoothness and trueness of a turf surface is controlled by:

- / Height, quality and direction of cut (the direction should always be opposite to that of the last cut)
- / Surface smoothness — is it free from pitch marks?
- / Topdressing
- / Quality of construction
- / Absence of weeds, pests, diseases and disorders of the turf surface
- / Verticutting will remove stolons, which are above ground creeping stems of grass and seed heads

### Moisture content

- This must be sufficient to:
- / Maintain good turf growth (and, to a limited extent, colour)
  - / Maintain a receptive surface

Moisture content can be controlled by:

- / Drainage, whether natural or provided

- / Amount of water applied, together with natural rainfall. Irrigation and hand watering of problem areas can provide this moisture. The use of wetting agents is sometimes required to keep certain areas, such as high spots, at the correct moisture content.

### Grass cover

For all turf sports, the optimum cover is 100%, although this will be almost impossible to maintain on a busy golf tee during the playing season. This is addressed by maintaining good turf health and ensuring damage is repaired as soon as possible. The height of grass cover is achieved by height of cut and for a golf green would typically range between 3mm to 6mm.

### Hardness (degree of consolidation)

This is important on areas such as greens as it relates to the way in which the ball is

received. The golf tee is also an area where hardness is important as if it is too hard, it may result in wrist injuries to players.

Hardness can be controlled by:

- / Soil moisture, which is in turn controlled by drainage, aeration, watering, rainfall.
  - / Rolling, although greens are rolled to help provide a truer surface and much of the equipment used in golf will not consolidate the turf
  - / Length of grass
  - / Degree of thatch in turf surface
  - / Aeration of compacted areas
- There are various tools produced to measure smoothness and trueness, moisture and hardness.

Smoothness and trueness meter

The trueness meter was developed by STRI in

conjunction with Sheffield Hallam University and funding from The R&A. It is used to measure smoothness and trueness of the ball roll across the putting surface by recording the deviation sideways and up and down.

Clegg Impact Tester

The Clegg Hammer is used to test the firmness of the surface. A metal probe is dropped from a standard height and the readings reflect the hardness and shock absorption of the surface.

Moisture meter

A moisture meter is used to test the moisture levels in the soil profile. The benefit of testing soil moisture is that it allows the greenkeeper to apply water in a more controlled manner. Therefore, areas of slope or where bunkers are situated may need more frequent irrigation than other parts of a green.




Taking moisture readings at Ipswich, image by Joe Simpson



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

- / Ben Brennan, Sandy Lodge
- / Matt Wright, Sandy Lodge
- / Ben Dennehy, Reddish Vale
- / Matt Chown, Woodbury Park Hotel & Golf Course
- / Thomas Anderson, Royal Blackheath
- / Luke Parker, Clandon Regis
- / Callum Rice, Cricket St. Thomas
- / Alexander Duncan, Scarborough South Cliff
- / Sean Chapman, Rochdale
- / Daniel Nally, Withington
- / Matt Ettridge, High Elms

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# ECOLOGY ROUNDUP

James Hutchinson | Membership Services Manager (Ecology & Sustainability)



I recently took part in a course walk at West Lincs, joined by members and Course Manager Stuart Hogg MG (far left)



Members evenings are a great way to introduce your golfers to what's happening out on the course

## Did you know BIGGA's eco section undertakes wildlife walks for golf course members and their guests?

We also carry out ecology presentations in the clubhouse for BIGGA members who wish to convey the great work they are doing to their golfers but aren't sure how to get the message over.

What's included in these walk and talks, I hear you ask?

On average, it takes about two hours to walk around a golf course, looking at woodland management, holistic grassland thinning, wildflower identification and all that kind of thing.

In terms of a presentation, they can vary from 20 minutes up to an hour — it largely depends on what the subject is. Sometimes we do both and will spend 30 minutes in the clubhouse

presenting and then a few hours out on the course to look first hand at what we've been discussing previously.

If this is something I could help you with, let me know as it's a fantastic way of raising awareness of what you're doing to support ecology around the course among your members and other interested parties.

West Lincs is a fine example of a course walk that I undertook as a good number of members showed up.

We started the evening with a brief chat outside the clubhouse and then headed out to talk about how the roughs and trees are managed for the benefit of wildflowers, particularly the plentiful orchids this beautiful course has. Course Manager Stuart Hogg MG has sent me 12 images of the walk, which the

interested members took — which shows you what a great idea this can be.

Wallasey, a little further along the North West coast, undertook a members evening in the clubhouse, which also was well attended.

Course Manager John McLoughlin and I spoke for an hour on all sorts of things such as SSSI's, TPO's and other associated legislation, which are things that need looking at from time to time.

As always, let me know if I can help — if you're a BIGGA member, that is!

Ecology Roundup is kindly sponsored by



## JAMES'S DIARY

### They've allowed me some time off!

The bosses at BIGGA HQ have OK'd my holiday request, therefore the diary is a little thin on the ground.

However, before going on annual leave I did manage an ecology report for Clevedon, which won the visit as a prize after coming first in the Championship Greenkeeping Performance of the Year category in the BIGGA Awards. The awards will be launched again in October and an eco report will again be up for grabs, in addition to some other great prizes, so it's well worth entering.

I've also recently visited Chris Low and his team at Walsall and Scott Rigby and the team at Gathurst.

Lytham Green Drive also took full advantage of our members evening service, where I spoke to 35 members, which made for a fantastic event.



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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: MACDONNELL

Alan MacDonnell | Superintendent | Adare Manor

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.

**Just 25 minutes from Shannon Airport, and perfectly placed on The Wild Atlantic Way, Adare Manor is set in the storybook village of Adare, Co. Limerick. Adare Manor is Ireland's most spellbinding 5-star hotel and golf course and host venue to the Ryder Cup 2027. Its superintendent, Alan MacDonnell, has worked in the industry for 23 years, but his only full-time paying job has been at Adare, where he has risen through the ranks from trainee to superintendent (and still has his first ever pay slip!)**

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

**Alan:** Work hard even when no one is watching. Hard work pays off and hard work doesn't go unnoticed.

**Phil:** You're so right Alan. I know it sounds 'old school,' but I was taught the same. Only ask someone to do something if you are prepared to do it yourself was a motto instilled into me!

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

**Alan:** 'It's nice to be important but more important to be nice.'

**Phil:** I like this one Alan, with the pressure of 'getting the job done' sometimes the

personal element is lost. People perform better and to a much higher standard if they are treated well.

**Who inspires you?**

**Alan:** My dad was always my inspiration. He got me into the game of golf at a very young age and gave me the encouragement to pursue greenkeeping. He is always a solid sounding board for advice when needed.

**What did you study?**

**Alan:** I studied Golf Course Management in Reaseheath College. It was a three-year course with a year on placement.

**What books should I be reading?**

**Alan:** I am reading a book given to me by the CEO of Adare Manor called Emotional Intelligence & Mindfulness.

Also, on my desk is John Kaminski's book, Turfgrass Management.

**Which has been more valuable in your career, your education or your experience?**

**Alan:** For me it's both. I went into further education with a proficient level of practical experience from the summer jobs that I had. I think without that practical experience my educational experience

would not have been as well rounded.

**Phil:** Totally agree with this Alan. Finding the right balance is crucial to progression. Formal qualifications, which can also be industry led certificates such as irrigation training, are essential to demonstrate to future employers your technical underpinning knowledge.

**What was your first job?**

**Alan:** Divot filling fairways in Kenmare Golf Club as a 14-year-old with a wheelbarrow! The treasurer at the time, Tom Healy, used to come out to me every Friday with a brown envelope with £50 for my 20 hours' work.

**Phil:** This is funny Alan! My first job as a 17-year-old was also with a wheelbarrow but pushing a hover mower around the golf course, cutting bunker banks (hence nickname in those early days, Flymo Phil!)

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

**Alan:** I think people skills are important and I would like to think that I treat everyone fairly. Having the ability to remain calm in pressurised situations is important. Agronomically, we must learn and adapt daily so the ability to move with the times we live in is important.

**Phil:** People skills are so important as labour makes up for between 60-65% of your annual budget! It's something that



Adare Manor

**“** It's nice to be important but more important to be nice.

has been massively overlooked in the past but is thankfully improving now.

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

**Alan:** We all make mistakes but the key is owning up to the mistake, learning from them and not repeating it.

**What would you do differently if you could go back in time?**

**Alan:** I would have loved to have

travelled more and completed more education in the USA. I have three small boys now, so the travelling is on hold, but education remains important, be that formal or informal.

**What are your professional daily habits?**

**Alan:** The first thing I do every morning is check the weather station, then I check the forecast for the day ahead to see if anything has changed from the night before. We in the greenkeeping trade obsess over the weather!!

The crew also know that I am partial to a Coca Cola!

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

**Alan:** If greenkeeping is your chosen profession, you should always have the willingness to learn, adapt and not to be afraid of a challenge. Have a willingness to move as movement will help build your resumé. I'd advocate education coupled with a good practical work ethic.

**Phil:** I agree. Sometimes as leaders we can become too defensive and stuck in our own mindset when it comes to challenges. It's always healthy to challenge and be challenged, which eventually improves our performance.

**Continue the conversation**

Continue the conversation with Alan using [@macdonnell74](#) or Phil on [@HelmnPhil](#)



The team at Adare Manor

# MEET THE MANAGERS



# CAN WE TALK ABOUT SUSTAINABLE GOLF?

**Sustainable Golf Week 2022 launches on 18 September**

Hosted by GEO Foundation for Sustainable Golf alongside friends and partners across the sport, Sustainable Golf Week is a focus for collective reflection, celebration and renewed commitments to sustainability and climate action in and through golf.

This year's event kicks off on 18 September, so read on to find out how you can get involved.

**Do you ever find yourself wondering why some golfers, and most of the non-golfing public, don't seem to understand that golf is good for nature and communities?**

Or that the sport is generally very responsible with natural resources and that it is not a major polluter?

Perhaps you even get frustrated at times that positive messages about golf are not getting out as strongly or as widely as they could? Or that we are not being as proactive as we could be?

All the while, others control the storylines and pick out points of weakness and use them to paint the entire sport in a bad light.

Maybe the antidote is to start talking more about sustainable golf. Proudly, credibly, factually, and in a balanced and transparent way.

The conversation needs to include industry

commitments, action plans and so on, but critically it needs to be led by grassroots action — the real and practical things that greenkeepers and their colleagues do at their clubs and courses week in, week out. These are the stories and this is the information that really matters. This could be the real gamechanger for golf.

Why? Because promoting our tangible positive actions and impacts is perhaps the single best way to change public opinion — in local communities, nationally and internationally.

At the same time, sharing real-life, real-time examples will guide and inspire others and help them deliver effective actions and achieve the best results with less guesswork or trial and error.

To help focus efforts and to accelerate the process of collective communications,

the GEO Foundation for Sustainable Golf, along with friends and partners from across golf, will be championing the cause during the forthcoming Sustainable Golf Week, which kicks off on 18 September and runs until the 24th.

The purpose of Sustainable Golf Week is to reflect on the sustainability issues and challenges that we all face, to celebrate existing leadership in fostering nature, conserving resources, strengthening communities and taking climate action, and to renew our commitments and refresh our thinking around what we can do next.

This is an opportunity and invitation for anyone with an interest in golf's future and the future health of the environment and the people and communities that depend upon it to join in.

There are simple things

you can do, starting now and during the week itself.

You can get involved by speaking up for sustainable golf. Ahead of the week, you can share your reflections, insights and stories on social media — and don't forget to use the hashtag #SustainableGolfWeek to connect with the wider community.

By creating even more Sustainable Golf Highlights and joining OnCourse for free, you'll get your club represented on the global Sustainable Golf Map and have your own dedicated sustainability landing page to share with members, sponsors and the general public.

During the week, get together to plan a conservation, education or communication project for the year ahead. This could be a tree planting or beach cleaning activity for kids and the local community.

It is becoming essential that we talk about sustainable golf. It is not just desirable and a useful thing to do, but it is a necessity for the future of the game. Let's do this well, let's do it together and let's help make golf proudly make a difference.

Are you sustainable golf?



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# MOVING TARGET FOR LEATHERJACKET CONTROL



Where leatherjackets are occurring in greater numbers and across wider areas, adapting agronomic practices could help entice the pests into a target zone for control on golf courses.

Sean Loakes, Syngenta Turf Technical Manager UK & Ireland

Report sightings of adult crane fly on Pest Tracker, to help better time control applications

**New research into the biology and activity of insect pests in soils could provide valuable insights into achieving more reliable results from integrated controls.**

Trials by Syngenta and the STRI have shown the implications of aeration practices at times when the pests are active, along with the optimum timing of treatments to achieve the best possible results.

The value of that work can be incorporated with soil moisture monitoring and the future potential to more effectively manage conditions in the target control zone.

The intention is for greenkeepers to help move and hold more of the pests

into an area of the soils where controls have been applied, using Acelepryn, nematodes or a combination of both that has been shown to increase consistency and overall reliability of control.

Scientific analysis of golf green profiles after application of Acelepryn has shown that it is very effectively bound onto soil particles in the upper profile — with 90% of the treatment applied remaining in the top four centimetres four months after application. That is hugely beneficial for the duration of control and minimising risk of environmental loss. However, it does mean that the pest has to be in that zone to come into contact with the product — and

the longer the grub remains in the zone the better the effect.

Also, when using nematodes intended to reduce leatherjacket populations, the sooner after application the beneficials come into contact with the pest and the closer to the surface where the

concentration of active nematodes is highest, the greater the chance of success.

Leatherjackets prefer to reside in moist soil during the heat of the day, emerging to the surface to feed on dewy nights. If soils are dry, the grubs can quickly move deeper into the profile, which

could place them below the zone of control for any treatments applied.

In light, sandy soils typical of golf greens, they move very quickly up and down, spending limited time in contact with any control measures put in place.

Trials have shown that could be further compounded by aeration practices that may provide channels for pest movement and further limit any interaction with controls — chemical or nematode.

Initial studies by STRI have shown the highest level of leatherjacket control with Acelepryn application when no aeration has taken place during the control period.

With hollow tine aeration

that punches and leaves holes in the surface, more leatherjackets remained in the soil profile after treatment, while the less intrusive slit tine was somewhere in the middle when assessed for pest numbers and turf surface quality. The highest populations were identified in

the hollow tined plots with no Acelepryn treatment (Fig 1).

This early insight indicates that wherever there is chance to shift aeration earlier in the season or with the trend to more open autumn conditions enabling later actions, for those courses seeking to absolutely maximise leatherjacket controls it is an option to consider.

The other cultural control to encourage leatherjackets to remain in contact with the controls could be through moisture management. The challenge could be that optimum control timing, in mid- to late-autumn, is historically when soils are being allowed to naturally dry down in preparation to manage winter rainfall.

Prolonging irrigation practices over the treatment period to hold soil volumetric moisture content at levels of around 25-30% at a depth of 10cm, could also prove more conducive to leatherjacket populations and bring them into contact with controls.

Maintaining soil moisture is beneficial for Acelepryn treatments and could also prove hugely important for improving results with nematodes — where moisture is essential for their survival and activity. Soil moisture has been identified as a key factor in successful research with the leatherjacket-specific NemaTrident nematodes, in combination with its associated NemaSpreader to optimise the utilisation of moisture in the soil profile.

Based on the trials research, a follow-up application of NemaTrident + NemaSpreader one week later, while the soils are still moist, would appear to best bolster the consistency and reliability of leatherjacket control.

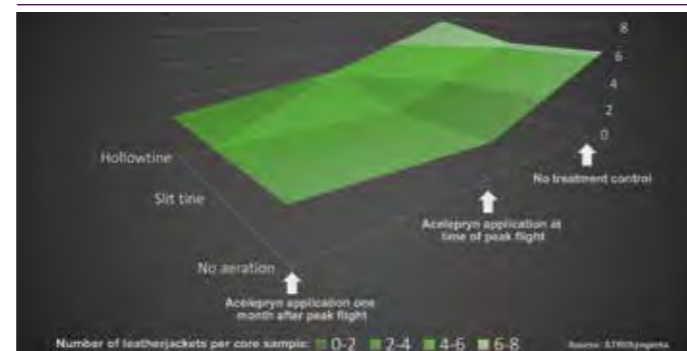
Lab studies have also shown the integrated approach using the dual treatment gave over 70% control of mature leatherjacket grubs two weeks after application, compared to 40-45% control with either of the products individually.

After four weeks overall control had increased to 92% under the optimal controlled conditions.

The STRI aeration trial has also confirmed the optimum timing for Acelepryn application should be one month after the peak flight of adult crane fly (daddy long legs) is identified around the course. That can also be aided by reports on the Pest Tracker website, as an indication of pest activity on a wider scale.

Previous research to assess results on over 100 golf course greens showed that those treated with Acelepryn to coincide with peak adult crane fly activity scored an average damage level of 29.3 points per m<sup>2</sup> (ranging from 0 to 190). However, those treated a month after peak flight recorded an average damage of 5.7 points per m<sup>2</sup> (range 0 to 22). An affected area of 10 points per m<sup>2</sup> would be deemed manageable.

Fig 1: Effect of aeration practices on efficacy of leatherjacket control



Leatherjackets will use aeration holes to travel up and down through the soil profile

### Continue the conversation

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



# Can biostimulants be used to optimise new turf establishment and overseeding?

Richard Salvage, School of Biological Sciences, The Queen's University of Belfast and Colin Fleming, Maxstim

The establishment of new turf or successful overseeding of an existing surface depends upon maximising seed germination and optimising subsequent seedling growth.

Germination is the first key step in the lifecycle of a plant and starts with the rapid uptake of water (such as the imbibition of water to rehydrate the dry seed) and the initiation of multiple biochemical processes. These include protein synthesis and plant hormone production. Germination is completed when the root emerges from the seed and the new plant starts to develop.

Good quality certified seed will have a high germination rate, but this can be significantly reduced if the growing conditions are adverse (through a lack of moisture or oxygen or cold temperatures). It is also important to quickly achieve uniform germination across seeded areas, so adopting methods to increase the percentage of seeds germinating, accelerate the germination process and enhance seedling growth can often be beneficial.

% Perennial ryegrass seed germination 5 days post treatment

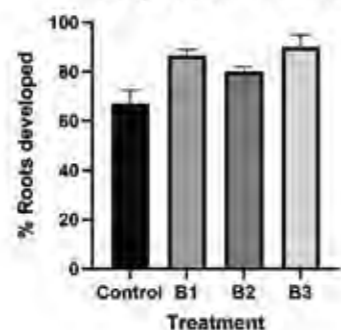


Figure 1: Percentage of *Lolium perenne* seeds germinated five days after treatment with water (control) and three biostimulants: B1, a complex biostimulants mix; B2, a seaweed extract; B3, a plant extract.

Research has demonstrated that the processes involved in germination and seedling development can be manipulated by extrinsic factors including the application of biostimulants.

Multiple studies across a wide range of plant types have shown that application of biostimulants, including amino acids, salicylic acid, plant extracts and humic acid can reduce germination time, increase percentage germination and

prime the developing seedlings to tolerate adverse conditions as they establish. Research at Queens University Belfast has confirmed that these benefits can also be achieved by the application of biostimulants to turf grass seeds (such as *Lolium perenne*, *Agrostis tenuis*, *Agrostis stolonifera*).

Figure 1 shows the increase in % germination achieved five days after spraying perennial ryegrass seeds with three different biostimulants.

If laboratory results can be repeated on the course, biostimulants should prove to be a valuable tool that can be deployed during critical phases of turf establishment and maintenance.

The research at Queens University and in the laboratories at Maxstim is adding to our understanding and development of a range of biostimulants that can influence germination, as well as soil and plant health. Critically, the development of a stronger, more efficient turf plant early in the plant's life cycle will help reduce the future fertiliser application rates required for turf maintenance.



Figure 2: Spraying *Lolium perenne* seeds with a silicon-based biostimulants (pots one and two) enhances the percentage of germination and seedling growth compared to seeds sprayed with water only (pots three and four).



Scan the QR code to access all the previous Continue to Learn Videos



## Did you know BIGGA members can now watch exclusive content from Continue to Learn 2022 on the BIGGA website?

We've selected the highlights from this year's education programme and uploaded them to our website for BIGGA members to view. Highlights include:

**How big should your course budget be? Using industry data to help your planning:** Kevin Fish CCM, Contemporary Club Leadership

**Putting green surface management:** Paul Jacobs, agronomist, USGA

**Reimagining Princes:** Sean McLean, course manager, Princes Golf Club

**Phosphite for turfgrass management:** Dr John Dempsey

**Leatherjacket management for the United Kingdom: what works and what is rubbish?:** Dr Ben McGraw, Department of Plant Science, Penn State University

**Drone technology to assess plant health:** Dr John Kaminski, Department of Plant Science, Penn State University

Grab the popcorn and catch up on the highlights from Continue to Learn 2022 and much more

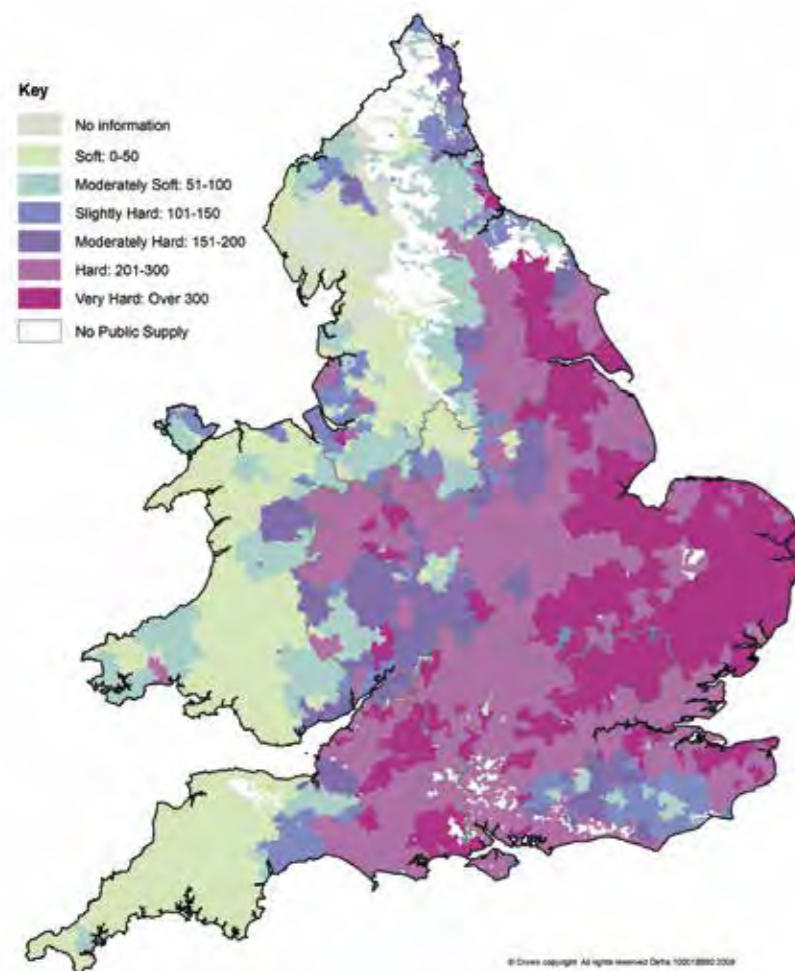


# The importance of water quality

Is your pesticide efficacy reduced before even leaving the sprayer?

Kelly-Marie Clack, agronomy and technical manager, Origin Amenity Solutions

## Water hardness in England



The sports turf industry is facing great challenges due to climate change, legislative requirements and a demand to have exceptional playing surfaces 365 days a year.

Material costs continue to rise or be in short supply due to the current economy and coupled with only marginal increases to budgetary spends, we really need to make every penny count. This means capitalising on everything we apply.

### Pay attention to the water quality

When applying a pesticide, it is commonplace to factor in the dose rate, weather conditions, growing conditions and efficacy of the pesticide. But how many can say they consider the water quality?

Water quality (hard water and pH) can severely affect the amount of active pesticide and some nutrients, such as phosphorus, in the spray solution.

Water quality can affect pesticide efficacy in two ways:

- / By forming salts or complexes that are less biologically active (hard water)
- / Physical degradation of the pesticide through hydrolysis (alkaline water)

Hard water has a high concentration of dissolved minerals (ions) that are gained as it percolates through the soil profile. If the ion carries a positive charge they are known as cations. It is cations of calcium (Ca<sup>2+</sup>) and magnesium (Mg<sup>2+</sup>) that contribute to water hardness. In the UK, water hardness is normally expressed in ppm as CaCO<sub>3</sub> (calcium carbonate.)

If you have hard water in your spray tank you run the risk of pesticides forming salts or complexes with cations. These salts or complexes will be less biologically active and will form insoluble salts on the leaf as they dry.

If your water has a pH more than 7.0 it is alkaline. As the pH increases, the hydroxyl ion concentration increases and it is these ions that are responsible for the degradation of susceptible pesticides, known as hydrolysis. Hydrolysis is a chemical reaction in which a molecule of water breaks one or more chemical bonds. It is irreversible and degrades 'active ingredients' into 'inactive degradation products' with no pesticidal activity.

### What can we do to ensure the best results?

A Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) meter will provide an indication of water hardness and a pH meter will give you a guide to the alkalinity of the water.

If the pH is high but the water hardness is less than 150ppm you simply need to add an acidifier.

If water hardness is above 150ppm then a water conditioner that addresses both water hardness and pH should be added to the spray tank. To use, add all the water required into the spray tank, then the water conditioner, followed by the pesticides. It is important to note that water conditioners do not directly enhance the performance of a pesticide, but by improving the properties of water they allow the active ingredient to perform as expected.

### What is the water conditioner doing?

The primary action of a water conditioner is to form irreversible complexes with cations in the water to negate their affect. The chelating agents will deal with a range of metal cations that may exist in different water sources.

Secondly, it buffers pH of the spray solution to around pH 5.0, depending on the rate applied.

A third function of a water conditioner is its humectant

properties. Humectant rich formulations reduce the rate of chemical crystallisation by slowing the drying process. This gives the plant more time to absorb the active chemical while a hydration sheath prevents surface run-off.

### A key part of an integrated turf management plan

With the loss of active ingredients and new formulations having much tighter restrictions, it is more important than ever to achieve full efficacy from the pesticides we apply. Don't just

dismiss water quality, it is a key part of an integrated turf management plan.

### Continue the conversation

Continue the conversation by connecting with Kelly using [@Kelly\\_origin](#)

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### TDS Meter



**Read this for:**

- / Drought
- / Reducing turf stress
- / Boreholes

# Navigating the dry spell

At Seaford Head in Sussex, the team is used to working in extremely dry conditions

Karl Hansell, BIGGA

One green at Seaford Head is under threat from cliff-top erosion

**For a chalk downland course on England's south coast, dry summers are just part of daily life and so when hot weather hit this year, Simon Lambert and his team didn't panic.**

Seaford Head is a municipal venue that is owned by the town council. The club is famous for its views of the famous Seven Sisters white cliffs and for the tee shot on the 18th, which is hit from 300 feet above sea level and drops 150 feet to the fairway below.

But even here the extended dry spell has had

an impact and, like many venues around the UK, golfers have had to get used to playing on brown fairways. This year Seaford Head has also been hit by three wildfires made worse by the baking weather.

At the end of another long, hot week, Simon sat down for a chat with Greenkeeper International about the challenges they have overcome, in addition to sharing some advice on how to manage extremely dry conditions, gained through more than 20 years of experience at the club.

**GI: How do extreme temperatures impact your normal daily activity at Seaford Head?**

**Simon Lambert:** Irrigation and water are constantly on

my mind. The first thing I'll do in the morning is check the irrigation has gone off at night when it should have. I check the tank is filling and if it is, that's a good sign.

At the moment, we are



The cliff-top course at Seaford Head as it normally looks

hand watering on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, which takes three or four hours to complete in front of the golf.

We're quite a windy site so although we can adjust which side of the green we water using our sprinklers, the wind really does affect where it gets to. Rather than wasting water, hand watering allows us to ensure the entire green is covered.

We're lucky that we have a borehole, so we're not using mains water for any of the course. We had a new pumphouse, borehole and tank installed a couple of years ago but without an extraction

licence we can only take 20 cubic metres a day.

We don't water every day and I'd rather let it dry out. In everything we do here, we try to be sustainable. We don't use any chemicals other than Revolution, a wetting agent. Our approach to watering is about specifically targeting where we want it and it's nice to see on our drone pictures that it is working.

“Being proactive has really helped us and there is good grass coverage in most areas”



Drought conditions have created fast running surfaces with fairways harder than greens

We are a SSSI for chalk grassland so on half of the course we can't use weed killers or any products. Rather than fighting against that, we've adopted that strategy all over to keep it consistent.

**There is an exemption to the hosepipe ban that allows sports venues, including golf clubs, to continue watering their surfaces. If that wasn't the case, how difficult would life become for you?**

**SL:** That depends on the temperatures, but it would become rather difficult. We're lucky in that our approach to maintenance has enabled us to get fine grasses into the greens. Some of the greens would fare better than others, certainly at the top of the course where it is chalk

downland and the grasses are naturally finer. They would survive longer than down the other end of the course where we have a lot more poa about.

We would raise the height of cut further and reduce the frequency of cuts. It would be noticeable to the golfer that we've done that, but it would keep consistency throughout the course and prevent excessive damage from drying out.

**With fuel prices so high, what savings are you making from not having to cut as much?**

**SL:** We're saving a lot of fuel, which is nice because we're paying a lot of money for it. A year ago, I paid 70p a litre for red diesel. Our last order was in July and I paid £1.20 a litre, so not far off double. I'm writing a report for our quarterly meetings and even with this drought, we're looking like we'll go over on fuel costs.

We have not cut the rough or the fairways in four weeks.

We've also opened up a few other areas purely with the fire risks that we've had. We've made little gaps and firebreaks and the golfers are pleased because they're finding their balls more often!

We try to skip our daily cutting of the greens at least once or twice a week, but because of the water we're putting down, we're still getting good growth on them. We left them today, knowing that we're getting 33°C heat and we weren't going to get a lot of growth. We gave them a roll instead and I don't think the golfers will notice.

**How did you react when you learned there was that first wildfire on the course?**

**SL:** We've called them wildfires, because although there may have been a human aspect, there has been no proof of that. I've worked at Seaford Head for 22 years »





The aftermath of wildfires, which came close to damaging greens

and I live in the town, so a lot of people know I'm here and I think I got nine phone calls on the first occasion, from people telling me the course was on fire. Obviously, the first thing you do is panic and the second is think right, I'll go have a look.

The first time, the roads were closed below the golf course and there were two fire engines on the road and two 4x4 engines that worked hard,

shuttling water up and down. The second time they took a different approach and decided where they didn't want the fire to go and let the rest of it burn. Because there were no buildings or people in danger, they didn't put themselves in danger by trying to fight a wildfire. They were respectful of the course and they did a great job so I can't thank them enough.

**Have you banned smoking on the course?**

**SL:** We've been talking about it for a while and after the first incident we did ban smoking. We have also got a few public footpaths, so the council put out on their social media pages about the risks and we put up no smoking and no disposable barbecue signs.

The risk is always going to be there, but it's about making people aware of the dangers.

**What else can you do to protect the course?**

**SL:** We're controlling the traffic and have asked buggies to stay off the fairways as much as possible. I'm in a good position in that I don't have a committee to answer to and so I was able to make the decision early to raise the height of cut on the fairways and in the semi-rough to pre-empt the situation. Being proactive has really helped us and there's good grass coverage in most areas. The main areas that we

will give attention to are some of the wear areas or traffic areas that have thinned out a bit and we've put out white lines, ropes and stakes, which are normally confined to winter use.

Fingers crossed, when we get a bit of rain it will bounce back. Being a well-drained course, the water will get in pretty quickly. It must be difficult for the clay courses that aren't used to it and it will probably take them a while to get the water in, so they may have to rely on a few more products, but fingers crossed I won't need to do that.

**How does the dry weather impact cliff-top erosion?**

**SL:** The dry spells do appear to speed up erosion. In 2020 we had a huge cliff fall right next to the green and that did coincide with dry weather. We see on the footpath a lot of cracks opening. One of our irrigation boxes is near to the footpath and that's wobbling now, because you can see where

the ground has expanded and the cracks have opened. I think dry weather certainly has a big impact and if we were to get a huge amount of rain in a short period of time, it could really finish off anything that's loose.

We're in the planning stage of moving one green and we're in discussion with all the parties involved to make that happen. That will be in a year or two's time, but it's good to have a plan in place because if an emergency happens and we needed to close that green, the processes are already in place and we're ready.

**How do you keep your team safe when they're working in hot weather?**

**SL:** They're all supplied with sunscreen and we've all got hats. We have extra breaks and we're lucky enough to have a mains water cooler in our mess room. We utilise that a lot and we bought an air



Fire services were able to manage where the fire spread to

conditioning unit so we have a nice, cool space to go to. So, we drink plenty of fluid and take lots of breaks.

Unlike some courses, we take a lot of annual leave during the summer because we know we're drying out and so we're not doing as much.

We look at the weather and book time off, so we're quite flexible. If people want to start early and finish early, we don't have a problem with that.

**How can golfers help protect the course during a drought?**

**SL:** I'm sure there are some places where the expectation is probably still as high as it always was in terms of green speeds and shortness of the grass. I can raise the height of cut without many problems, but I dare say some places will struggle to convince their committee that they need to put an extra half a millimetre

**GREENKEEPERS' TOOLBOX**

**The Team**

- / Simon Lambert, head greenkeeper
- / Tyler Rook, deputy head greenkeeper
- / Nathan Sutliff, greenkeeper
- / Craig Ward, greenkeeper

height of cut on the greens. So, golfers should be aware that raising the height of cut and being more careful on the greens is an option that will help with consistency and save a lot of problems leading into autumn.

**Continue the conversation**

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# Here's how you can mitigate the extreme weather conditions

Throughout August, as areas of England were declared to be in drought and water companies announced hosepipe bans, Rain Bird and STRI Group offered practical advice to golf facilities.

In a joint statement, BIGGA CEO Jim Croxton and GCMA Chief Executive Tom Brooke issued a statement calling on the golf industry to ensure that 'we as a sport are doing our bit to limit water damage'.

The pair said: "As a sport and an industry, we have a social responsibility to consider and therefore must all work together to ensure that golf clubs are working within the current restrictions and that we as a sport are doing our bit to limit water usage as much as is reasonably practical at the time. Golf provides physical exercise and social interaction to more than 5 million people in the UK and as a business generates an estimated turnover in excess of £10 billion, while also providing employment for around 100,000 individuals.

"The golf course is the central element to any golf facility and well managed and maintained surfaces are essential to the playing of the game. In order for this to continue in warm or hot weather, irrigation is critical to ensure the grass plant survives.

"With that in mind, we must carefully consider the ongoing and sustainable management of our golf courses, while focussing on priority playing areas and ensuring that we are not exceeding licensed water usage or infringing on any legally enforced restrictions.

"Management of golf expectations is, of course, going to be a challenge. Golf club members and visitors are used to seeing green playing surfaces and it is important that we develop an understanding that under the current circumstances this is quite simply not possible and we need to ask our members and visiting golfers to be considerate of this."

## When irrigating

### Balance irrigation requirements against the available water supply

Understand your abstraction rates or inflow available to refill your day tank and ensure licences are not exceeded. Record irrigation usage and demonstrate sound

stewardship. Take care not to infringe any temporary restrictions or advisory notices (such as when watering isn't permitted) as required by your regional water authority.

### Prioritise greens

Aim to maintain turf health and avoid turfgrass diseases and disorders in the wetter or average areas

of your greens. Do not irrigate to serve dry or high spots and hand water dry areas.

### Irrigate at the optimal time

This is generally the early hours of the morning. Wind speeds are usually lower and you avoid creating humid turf

conditions by keeping turf too wet overnight and losing water through evapotranspiration.

### Make full use of your system's water efficiency features

Ensure every drop applied benefits the turf. If you need any assistance setting these up, contact your irrigation contractor or system manufacturer.

### Carry out a visual check using H-A-P-N-A

- / **Height** — are your rotors (sprinklers) at the correct height to achieve the intended range of throw?
- / **Angle** — are your rotors level? Unevenness can affect water distribution efficiency.
- / **Pressure** — is there sufficient pressure to operate your rotors effectively? Low pressure will affect overall coverage and prevent head-to-head coverage. Pressure that is too high may cause the

- water to atomise, offering little benefit to the turf.
- / **Nozzle** — is the correct nozzle being used in the rotor to achieve the required coverage?
- / **Arc** — have arcs been adjusted to ensure only the required area is irrigated?

## On the course

### Spread the wear

Ensure physical stress isn't confined to one area by moving pin locations.

### Make use of appropriately selected turf surfactants (wetting agents)

These aid the infiltration of applied water and improve soil's ability to maintain uniform moisture balance. Ensure you follow the manufacturer's application instructions.

### Spot check moisture readings

Use an accurate soil moisture probe if available. Measure moisture content during the morning and the afternoon to better

understand the dry down and rewetting to ensure the correct amount of water is being applied.

### Reduce turfgrass stress pressures

Avoid undertaking work, including mowing, if temperatures exceed 30°C, particularly in irrigated areas.

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- / Water management
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# Where are we going with water?

Thoughts on the future of water resources in the greenkeeping industry

Adrian Mortram, managing director, Adrian Mortram Associates

As I look out of my office window over the local recreation ground, all I can see is an area of light brown, bleached-coloured turfgrass.

With the high temperatures of this summer, turfgrasses have endured very high evapotranspiration rates. This meant turfgrass plants,

unless they were irrigated with enough water, are likely to be in a state of dormancy.

When the water available in the soil is very low there comes a point when grass plants can no longer extract any remaining water in the soil. If there is zero water uptake, the wilting point is

reached. This is why it is so important to aim for good agronomy and a deeper rooting with dense root biomass, so more water within the soil profile becomes available to the grass plant and it is therefore less prone to drought.

In terms of irrigation, I know

that many golf courses and sporting facilities will be concerned about availability of water for irrigation.

Unfortunately, in times like these there is a need to work with what is available to you and ensure sufficient planning and water budgeting is in place so that critical surfaces (greens, for example) can be irrigated with less critical surfaces receiving little or even no water.

During drought periods, it is inevitable that there are those who criticise golf facilities for using water to irrigate their course. But did you know that 400 households, flushing toilets and showering daily, use a similar amount of water as an average greens and tees irrigation system for an 18-hole golf course?

In 2012 I wrote an article detailing how water will be increasingly in demand in the future and this has proved

true. Water is a finite resource and golf courses must make provision for the future.

The way forward must be through a better understanding of the use of our precious resource. Golf courses in Britain, Europe and further afield have had success with continued use of summer abstraction rights when they have been able to demonstrate they are being proactive in their effective and efficient use of water. The use of water meters to monitor and record specific water use for irrigation purposes are today essential to protect your rights to this water, as this provides information which can be presented as hard evidence.

Although potentially expensive, in a time when cash is tight, water collection or water farming must also be considered. If collected, 25mm (1inch) of rainfall falling on roofs and car parks over one hectare (2.5 acres) could yield 250m<sup>3</sup>. Of course, it is



Seaford Head during the drought

not as simple as that and the 'grey' water would need to be treated through reed beds, ultraviolet (UV) light or similar and pumped to a storage facility. New developments could also make use of non-soiled water resources (baths, showers and kitchens).

Irrigation design must rank high in the efficiency of any irrigation system and will save

water when coupled with a detailed knowledge and understanding of the equipment available in the marketplace.

Careful and diligent identification of areas to be irrigated is a necessary principal choice. A tees and greens-only system will use considerably less water than a wall-to-wall fairway design.

Indeed, there is little use in aspiring for a wall-to-wall fairway design if the water source is limited to supply only sufficient water to manage tees and greens, unless storage and alternative sources are considered.

Sprinkler arc settings set to 180 degrees rather than 360 degrees will reduce water application volumes. >>



Seaford Head during the drought



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The most important functions of sugars in soil is to maintain and stimulate microbial activities in the rhizosphere and leading to mobilization of nutrients by accelerated soil organic matter decomposition.

This breakdown of the thatch layer also releases nutrients which become available to the plant, a process called nutrient recycling.

**Penetrant Wetting Agent – Co-formulated blend of polyethylene glycols**

Excess moisture retained in the thatch layer of the soil profile produces anaerobic conditions, which can limit the activity of thatch reduction microbes, as these microbes require oxygen.

The penetrant wetting agent removes the excess water within the upper thatch layer, whilst maintaining the correct air to water ratio within the rootzone.

The wetting agent within TurfXtra Accelerate will aid the solubilisation of any nutrients released as part of the thatch breakdown.

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TurfXtra Accelerate contains Calcium (0.175%), Magnesium (0.125%), Phosphorous (0.025%), Potassium (0.875%) Cobalt, Copper, Iron, Manganese, Zinc. (All Approx. 0.01%)

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

TurfXtra Accelerate can be used at any time of the year. Watering in after application is optional but not required.

Use	TurfXtra Accelerate	Water Volume	Area	Frequency and Guidance
Maintenance Programme	Initial Application 20lts Repeat application 10-20lts	500	1 Ha	Monthly Basis
Heavy Thatch Layer Blacklayer Present Liquid Aeration	Initial Application 20lts Repeat Application 20lts	500	1 Ha	First two applications at 14-day intervals, following applications monthly intervals
Tank Mixing	10lts	500	1 Ha	When Required

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Seaford Head in normal times

providing the sprinkler run times are adjusted accordingly. Deciding the priorities and parameters of your irrigation requirements is a matter of individual choice.

Areas can be targeted accurately for specific irrigation needs and one only needs to witness the accuracy of targeted areas demonstrated on desert courses in both America and the Middle East.

Accurate monitoring and recording of soil moisture deficit conditions will allow the irrigation manager to balance and modify the daily application rate. After a period of natural precipitation, it is not only pointless but profligate to apply irrigation which takes the soil moisture level above field capacity. The days of 10 minutes per night to all areas of the course are over. Water balance sheets were the standard instrument to calculate the amount of water required daily, but have now

been superseded by weather stations and soil moisture monitors that can even be directly linked to the irrigation central computer controller.

Too often, when making a return site visit to a golf club where an irrigation system has been installed, the initial programme has not been altered or modified to suit the needs of the individual venue.

Workshops on irrigation design and maintenance are available at BTME on a very regular basis.

The moves toward improved sustainability within our industry are something which, quite rightly, are here to stay. The advancement in irrigation design, irrigation central control and sprinkler technologies are a vital piece of the jigsaw and irrigation manufacturers are constantly striving to ensure the efficient use of water by their products.

One area in which advancements are rarely mentioned is turf grass

species. We irrigate to ensure the survival of the grasses that make up our playing surfaces and it is their requirement for water that ultimately determines how much we apply. The use of improved cultivars of grasses that have a lower water use rate and those with deeper, denser rooting to ensure water availability in the soil is maximised, is a must.

The composition of the rootzone is also an important factor and how this is managed an even more important factor, so best practice should be observed.

Undoubtedly there is going to be more pressure on our most precious resource, water, in future. Water will become the new 'oil' and the water framework directive is forming the basis of the UK Government's mandate moving forward to ensure we use it wisely.

As an industry, our practices are often more efficient than other industries

whose use of water is far greater than ours. Perhaps our voice is sometimes least heard or dare I say least recognised, even though we provide pleasure and enjoyment for so many of the population.

In conclusion, we need to communicate that our need for water is only to sustain, not promote growth, to ensure a consistent and quality playing surface. Communicate with your membership and explain the principles of water management; audit (and where necessary upgrade) your irrigation system to ensure you have an efficient system design; look objectively at water farming; identify your priorities for irrigation in a worst-case scenario; but above all, be proactive in your water management policy.

[Continue the conversation](#)

Adrian is on Twitter at [@AdrianMortram](#)



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# The extreme weather and what it means for turf

By Colin Mumford, Technical Support Manager, Bayer Environmental Science

**In recent times many areas in the UK have experienced a dry, hot period. In fact the UK temperature record was broken on the 19 July at Coningsby in Lincolnshire with a recorded 40.3°C as England had its driest July since 1935.**

For most non-irrigated turf during this hot dry weather, it means we are left with brown, crusty grass. This isn't dead, it's just the grass has shut down and gone dormant as a

survival technique while the environmental conditions are hostile to it. When rainfall eventually comes, the grass will spring into life. Only with the most severe prolonged drought would the grass die.

Brown, crusty grass and the harder surfaces that ensue can create a dangerous surface to play on for some sports, such as contact sports like football, whereas in other sports it can be argued that brown grass can enhance the

game, for example the bump and run game on a golf course.

For irrigated turf it's important to monitor the turf during this period for the early signs of stress. Look for signs such as a loss of colour and wilting or footprinting, which can be indicative of heat or drought stress in your turf. Use the tools available to you, such as weather data, moisture meters, and evapotranspiration rates to

better determine the water requirements for your turf.

### What else can you do?

A couple of simple things like raising the height of cut, especially on fine turf, will help the grass plant to a degree. If greenspeed is important you can roll to maintain good speed, although you will have to offset any effects rolling has on your soil structure, such as compaction near to the surface, when it is safe to do so. Moderate fertiliser applications, as you don't want to encourage too much growth in an already stressed turf. And use products that help the turf through these periods, such as wetting agents, growth regulators, UV protection and products that guard against stress.

You can also minimise the stress you place on the turf by delaying aeration or topdressing, where possible, until the worst of the hot dry weather is over. Sand dressings are like grinding paste on the leaf tissue when

they are brushed or dragged in. It's an added stress your turf could do without during this kind of weather.

### Are there any benefits to having a hot dry period?

It depends and if you suffer with chafer grubs feeding on your root systems, the dry spell could be just what you need. When chafer beetles lay their eggs, the eggs depend on moisture in the soil to keep them viable. Dry soils will lead to a proportion of the eggs desiccating and becoming unviable, reducing the population of chafer grubs. Avoid irrigating areas where you have chafer grubs (as much as you dare), to maximise the percentage of eggs that dry out. If the dry period extends into the autumn months, the same will apply to crane fly eggs.

If your facility is on a clay

soil, you are likely to experience some soil shrinkage that will lead to cracks appearing. These cracks and the fissures that surround them can interfere with the play of sport, but can improve the soil structure, resulting in improved drainage characteristics in the wetter months later in the year.

### A word of caution

Where surface cracks become an issue, don't just throw bucket loads of water at them, as the water will just disappear down the crack — a crack is in essence a long continuous soil pore — as all you will get is preferential flow down the crack, bypassing the soil you want to wet up. It is better to apply water little and

often to cracks in soils that exhibit shrink/swell properties as the soil will swell and close the crack at the surface but maintain the advantages that it provides for improved drainage below the surface.

Remember, the hot, dry period is drying up your soil and stressing out your turf, but if you don't take appropriate precautions then the same will happen to you.

Stay hydrated, wear some protection from the sun (a hat), keep applying the sun cream, and most importantly, enjoy this great weather while we have it.

### Continue the conversation

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“ This isn't dead, it's just the grass has shut down and gone dormant as a survival technique



**Read this for:**

- / Weed control
- / Fraise mowing
- / Rough management

# Fraise the roots

Should you consider fraise mowing as a solution to thatch or weed control?

Dr Frank Rossi, Cornell University, with Karl Hansell, BIGGA

**When it comes to getting rid of undesirable grass species and weeds across the golf course, the loss of synthetic products is leading to turf managers experimenting with new and unusual methods.**

At Continue to Learn 2021 Dr Frank Rossi proposed the use of fraise mowing as a method of removing weeds and even combatting thatch.

Fraise mowing is a fairly dramatic procedure whereby the entire top layer of soil is stripped off the surface and so it is not for the faint-hearted. But done correctly, Frank and his team at Cornell University in the United States believe it can be a useful tool for greenkeepers.

We're one of the few research organisations that is actually looking at this application on golf courses. Much of the use of fraise mowers has been consigned to renovating athletic fields or the removal of annual bluegrass that is becoming resistant to Roundup in the South.

I work with Vineyard Golf Club in New England. The Vineyard has been restricted from using chemical pesticides and so they have never used synthetic herbicides or fungicides, making it almost an organic course — aside from about seven acres where they use insecticides for some serious soil insect problems.

In my work with them over the last 20 years and through a rebuild of the course with Gil Hanse, the question kept coming up about how we could produce beautiful fescue rough areas with fewer chemicals. At Vineyard it was very difficult to manage a fescue area that »



Koro Field Top Makers are fraise mowers widely available in the UK

Dr Frank Rossi was speaking at Continue to Learn 2021. Frank will be joining us again for Continue to Learn 2023, so look out for further details of the programme with your October edition of Greenkeeper International.



Watch the full webinar by scanning the QR code

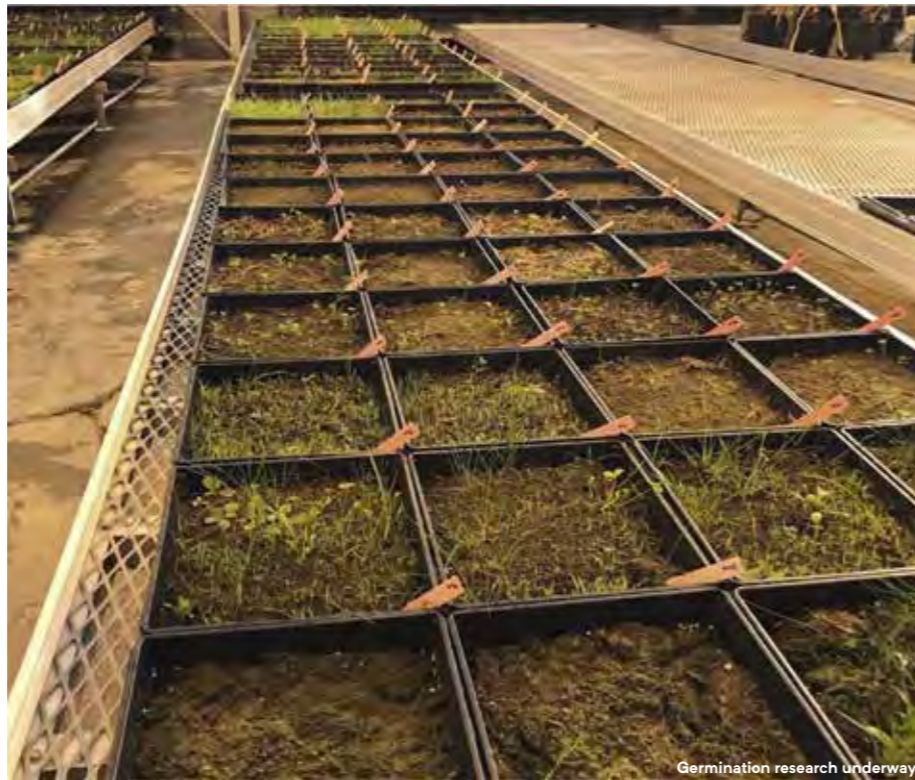


was thin and wispy, that you could find your ball in and that doesn't have weeds, without using some form of chemicals.

Elsewhere in America, these rough areas have become some of the most intensively chemically managed areas on our golf courses. It's not uncommon for courses to apply two or three post-emergent applications and one or two pre-emergent applications per year. Sometimes they're also making multiple growth regulator applications per year. Across the course, you're looking at up to 80 acres and that amount of chemical use is alarming. I always make the joke that you wouldn't believe the trouble we go to, to make it look like we do nothing.

This is the dilemma we face. Chemical weed control is so effective and inexpensive that there is virtually no reason to study alternatives to it. The only reason this has come under scrutiny in the United States of America is because we've been spraying chemicals so intensely and for so long that we're seeing widespread resistance.

When we embarked upon this work, the first thing we noticed was that most studies on weed control are conducted with chemicals. But the preponderance

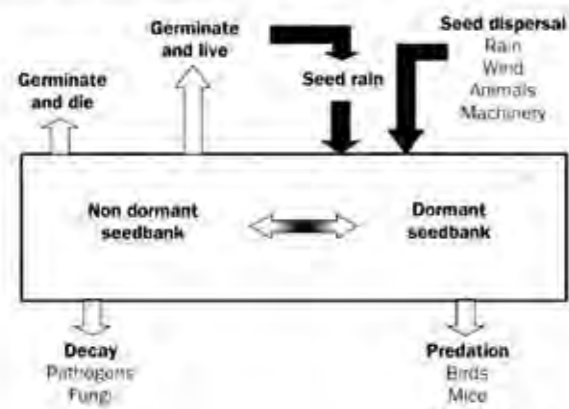


Germination research underway

of herbicide-resistant weeds is making research into alternatives more interesting and they are producing interesting results.

So, how do weeds get into your turf?

### Seedbank Management



Source: Menalled, 2008

Estimated number of germinating seeds of naturalized fine fescue rough experimental site at VGC from harvested soil cores.

Weed Species	Common Name	Life Cycle*	Emerging seedlings / 1000cm <sup>2</sup> at three soil layers		
			0 - 1.2 cm	1.3 - 2.5 cm	2.6 - 5.0 cm
<i>Digitaria ischaemum</i>	Smooth crabgrass	SA	491	18	6.3
<i>Euphorbia maculata</i>	Prostrate spurge	SA	10	<1	---
<i>Lamium amplexicaule</i>	Henbit	WA	4.7	---	---
<i>Conyza canadensis</i>	Horseweed	SA	4.3	---	<1
<i>Digitaria sanguinalis</i>	Large crabgrass	SA	3.7	<1	---
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White clover	P	3.7	<1	<1
<i>Juncus tenuis</i>	Slender rush	P	2.7	1.7	1.3
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	Common catsear	P	2	---	<1
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	Ground ivy	P	1.3	---	---
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	Common dandelion	P	1.3	---	---
<i>Oxalis stricta</i>	Yellow woodsorrel	P	1	---	---
<i>Trifolium arvense</i>	Rabbit foot clover	SA	<1	---	<1
<i>Cirsium bursa-pastoris</i>	Shepherd's purse	WA	<1	<1	---
<i>Mollugo verticillata</i>	Carpetweed	A	<1	<1	---
<i>Veronica arvensis</i>	Corn speedwell	WA	<1	---	---
<i>Spergularia marina</i>	Saltmarsh sand spurry	A	---	<1	---
<i>Arenaria serpyllifolia</i> L.	Thyme-leaf sandwort	WA	---	<1	<1
<i>Veronica peregrina</i>	Purslane speedwell	WA	---	<1	---
<i>Solidago rugosa</i>	Wrinkleleaf goldenrod	P	---	---	<1
<i>Cyperus esculentus</i>	Yellow nutsedge	P	---	---	<1
Unidentified		N/A	---	---	<1

\* Respective life cycles of observed species. A, Annual; SA, Summer Annual; WA, Winter Annual; P, Perennial.

Weeds are transported by the wind or birds and every year you will get a fair amount of seed raining down on your system.

Once in the soil, these form the 'seed bank'. When we look at how the seed bank works, there is a dormant and a non-dormant element to it. There are those that will germinate rapidly when you get disruption and those that will stay there for a while before sprouting. The dormancy mechanisms of weed seeds is very complex and trying to manage this is a daunting task. My graduate student, Chris Sitko, coined the phrase 'after chemicals, nothing is practical', because everything is harder if you're not using chemicals.

The management of a golf course is very similar to no till agriculture, whereby you're not ploughing or mixing the soil on a regular basis. When you don't till, the majority of seeds remain at the surface, so we asked, would it be possible — with different depths of fraise mower — to remove a significant portion of the weed seed bank?

Essentially, this is a story about crabgrass control. When you look at the seed bank of the northeastern United States, the primary weed that we struggle with are annual grassy weeds and smooth and large crabgrass. So that is the weed we will focus on, although you can translate this to refer to any weed that you struggle with at your particular course.

When you learn how to control weeds at college, they tell you healthy turf resists weeds, so get good density and you won't have a problem. Make the grass

competitive and fertilise it and the weeds can't grow. But when you get into the deep rough and you purposely want a thin, wispy turf, those rules don't apply and it is going to make weed control even more difficult. If you can't get the turf thick, you've got to get the weeds out of there. If there's bare ground, they're simply going to regrow.

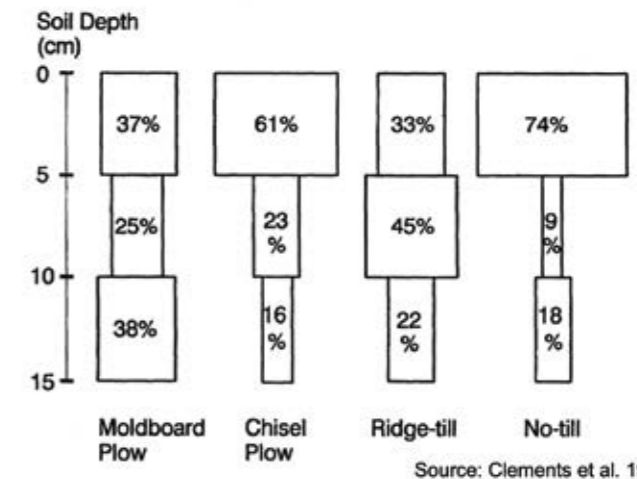
One potential solution in future is the selection of fescues that have a higher percentage of allelopathy, which is when they release chemicals that affect the germination of other plants, as clover does.

In autumn 2017 Chris went out and collected debris samples from Vineyard Golf Club and divided them up into three separate depths: 0-1.2cm; 1.3-2.5cm; and 2.6-5cm.

We collected them and stored them at cooling temperatures to recreate winter conditions and then germinated them in the spring. Chris planted out the various samples in a greenhouse and sat there for weeks and weeks, counting the seedlings that germinated, identifying them and removing them.

After a period of time, germination would stop. Once there had been no germination for a week we put the samples back in the freezer to simulate >>

### Seedbank Vertical Distribution by Soil Disturbance



Source: Clements et al. 1996



Most viable poa seeds are within 1 inch of the surface

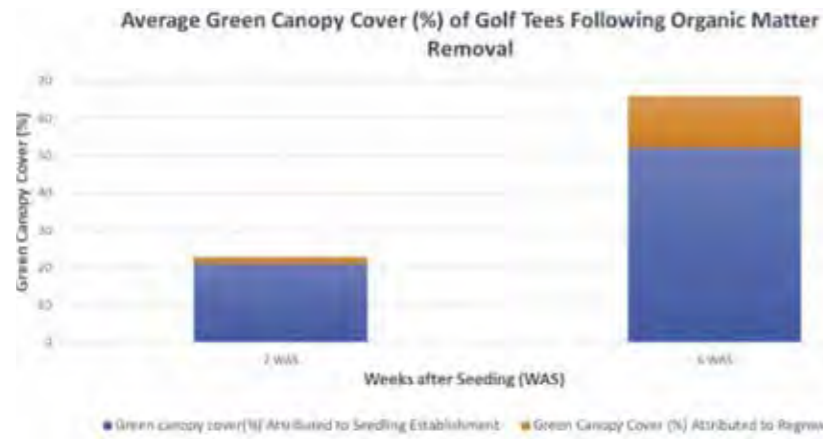
### DEMAND QUALITY, WHY COMPROMISE?



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 Rob Spaven, Head Greenkeeper, Richmond (Yorks) Golf Club



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another winter. We then stirred them a little bit and brought them out to see what else germinated. This was critical to our understanding of how much seed was in the sample and when it was going to germinate — the ratio of non-dormant and dormant.

We found that 95% of weed seeds were in the top inch of the soil, with the vast majority in the top half inch.

This is critical because anybody who has ever fraise mowed knows that the deeper you go, the more debris and spoil you create. Being able to do it at a shallower depth is therefore important logistically.

At Vineyard, after we fraise mowed we then reseeded with fescues. The results were pretty good and we got about 40% turf cover, so it looked how we wanted the rough to look. We still had more than 15% weeds, but that number was closer to what we were looking for, so it was moving in the right direction.

After the research was conducted, where the crabgrass returned we planted clover as a cover crop because we noticed it would keep the crabgrass out. We don't understand this entirely yet, but by removing the seed bank and then planting the clover into it, we were able to keep the crabgrass to a minimum. We could then either harvest the clover and replant the fescue seed or leave the clover underneath the fescue so it could suppress the crabgrass seed bank.

Another technique we investigated was the application of high rates of iron chelate as an early post-emergent weed control. By hitting the crabgrass with two applications of iron chelate when it first emerges, we essentially got season-long control. The key is to get the crabgrass when it is emerging early, so that it doesn't have a chance to get so big that the iron won't offer any control.

Another potential use of fraise mowing

is thatch management on tees. For most of us, very few people use the back tees and yet these get fertilised at the same rate as the other teeing areas and so they become very thatchy. Tees that don't get a lot of use should get less fertiliser than those that are heavily used, such as on par threes, because otherwise you will create thatch problems and have to aerate. Aeration is a long, laborious and disruptive process and golfers don't like it.

So when it comes to tees or other confined areas where you have thatch accumulation, is it better to cultivate and topdress or remove and start over?

Another benefit from fraise mowing is that you can put in new grass species. Maybe you've got a bentgrass or ryegrass you don't like and by removing the top layer, you can reseed effectively? They do this annually at Wimbledon and on football pitches. You may also choose to use a sod cutter if that's what you have access to.

We worked with Joe Lucas, the golf course superintendent at Saratoga National outside Albany, New York. It's a Robert Trent Jones Jr course and there's a lot of teeing ground and bentgrass. Joe has had success in keeping annual bluegrass out, but he was struggling with his tees. I asked if he could let us give the fraise mower a try and he gave us some land to do it.

Our goal was to strip the turf and then get the tee re-established by the following golfing season. We conducted

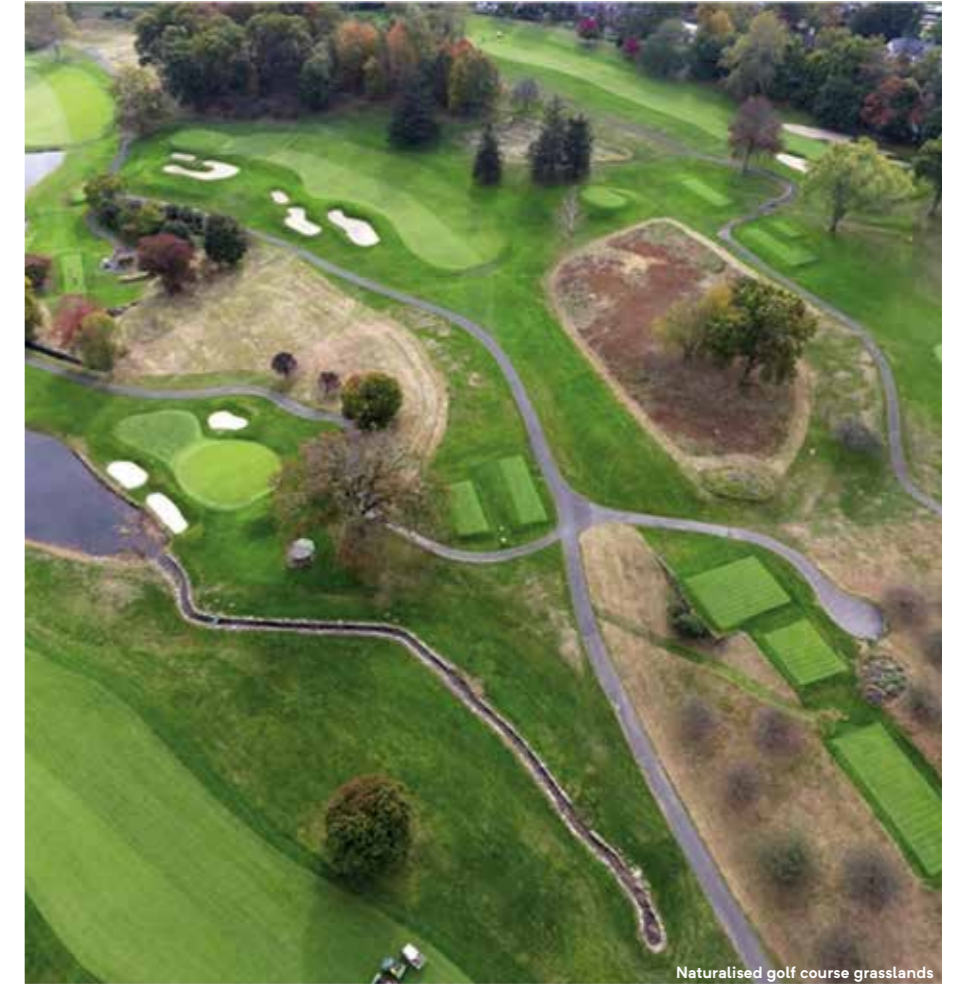
the work in mid-October, when it's nice and cool and within six weeks we were already back to 65% cover. Because of the depth we went, we were able to get growth from the existing bentgrass seed bank in the soil and the new seeds that we laid down.

These tees were ready to play by the beginning of the golfing season, despite virtually doing nothing else to them. We seeded them, gave them a starter fertiliser and that was it, they were ready to play on by the following spring.

We believe there are plenty of applications for fraise mowers to eliminate the need for coring and sanding on teeing grounds or other areas around the golf course where organic matter has gotten away from you.

Simply removing the surface and replanting it may seem drastic, but it could quickly remove thatch or weed problems and give you a blank slate to work on.

I believe that with more research, this could become a routine part of golf course management.



Naturalised golf course grasslands

**Continue the conversation**

Dr Frank Rossi is on Twitter at [@FrankSpeaks3](https://twitter.com/FrankSpeaks3)



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**Read this for:**

- / Organic matter management
- / Topdressing
- / Playing surfaces



# The three pillars of organic matter management

The pros and cons of hollow core aeration, verticutting and topdressing

Paul Jacobs, USGA agronomist, with Karl Hansell, BIGGA

**Organic matter management is critical if we are to provide firm, healthy and resilient fine turf surfaces.**

Whenever we talk about organic matter management, there are a number of options for greenkeepers to employ, including:

- / Hollow core aeration
- / Solid tine aeration
- / Topdressing
- / Verticutting
- / Aggressive verticutting
- / Sand injection
- / Drill and fill
- / Brushing
- / Grooming

For the sake of this article, we are just going to focus on what I consider to be traditional, conventional forms of managing organic matter. These are hollow core aeration, topdressing and verticutting. Whenever we look back at historic turfgrass management, I would say these are the three practices that have been used for many years because they are well tested and they work.

We'll talk about how effective they are and the scenarios in which you may select them ahead of the newer methods that are coming onto the market and which we will discuss in a future article.

**Arguments against hollow core aeration**

It's no surprise that the major downside to all these traditional methods is golfer inconvenience. They are all disruptive to the putting surface and we also don't really enjoy performing any of them either because they are labour intensive.

Hollow core aeration is obviously

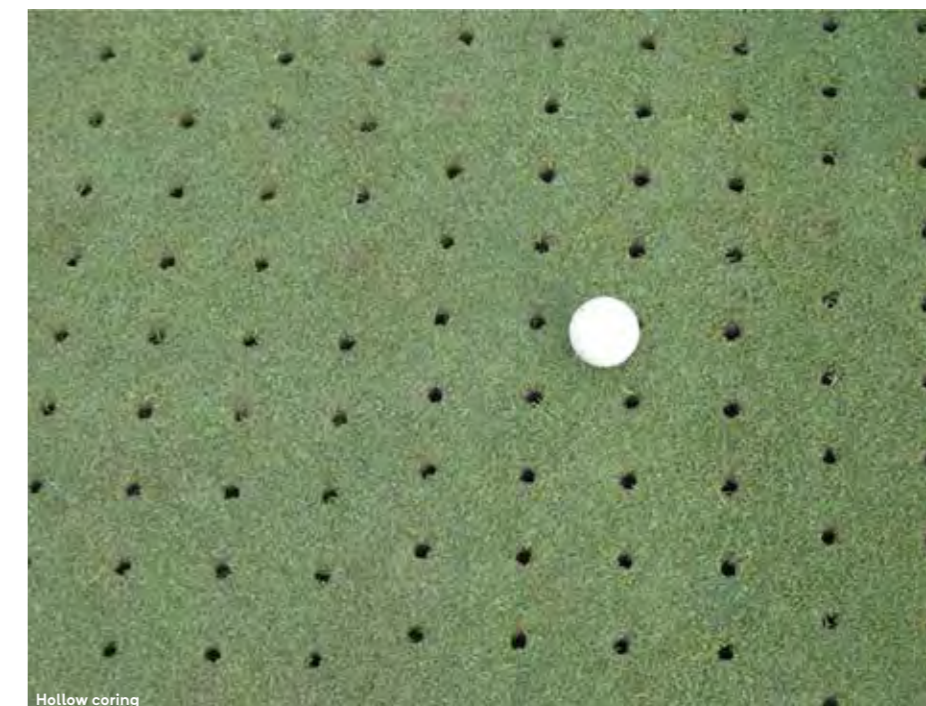
extremely disruptive to the putting surface, particularly when referring to larger diameter tines of 12-13mm in size. Most courses will close a hole or even the entire course if aeration is underway.

Golfers see it as highly disruptive and don't appreciate the evidence of aeration that you can see on the course after the work has taken place. If you do the math then the area that is affected is only around 5-6% of the entire playing surface, but that doesn't matter to golfers as perception is reality and their perception is that the golf course has been destroyed.

Another negative of hollow coring is that it is quite the process: aerating; cleaning; clowing; topdressing; dragging; fertilising and watering. It's labour intensive and it takes time, when holes must be closed, so its not easy.

The timing also makes it difficult. In the UK, the traditional timing to undertake this work is in the spring and autumn because we need weather that's ideal for turf growth. You can't aerate before turf is growing because it will encourage poa annua contamination or, if golfers are playing on it, you can really set yourself up for some turf damage. Even winter traffic can result in turf damage if you aerate, topdress and brush without any turf growth, so it's a recipe for disaster.

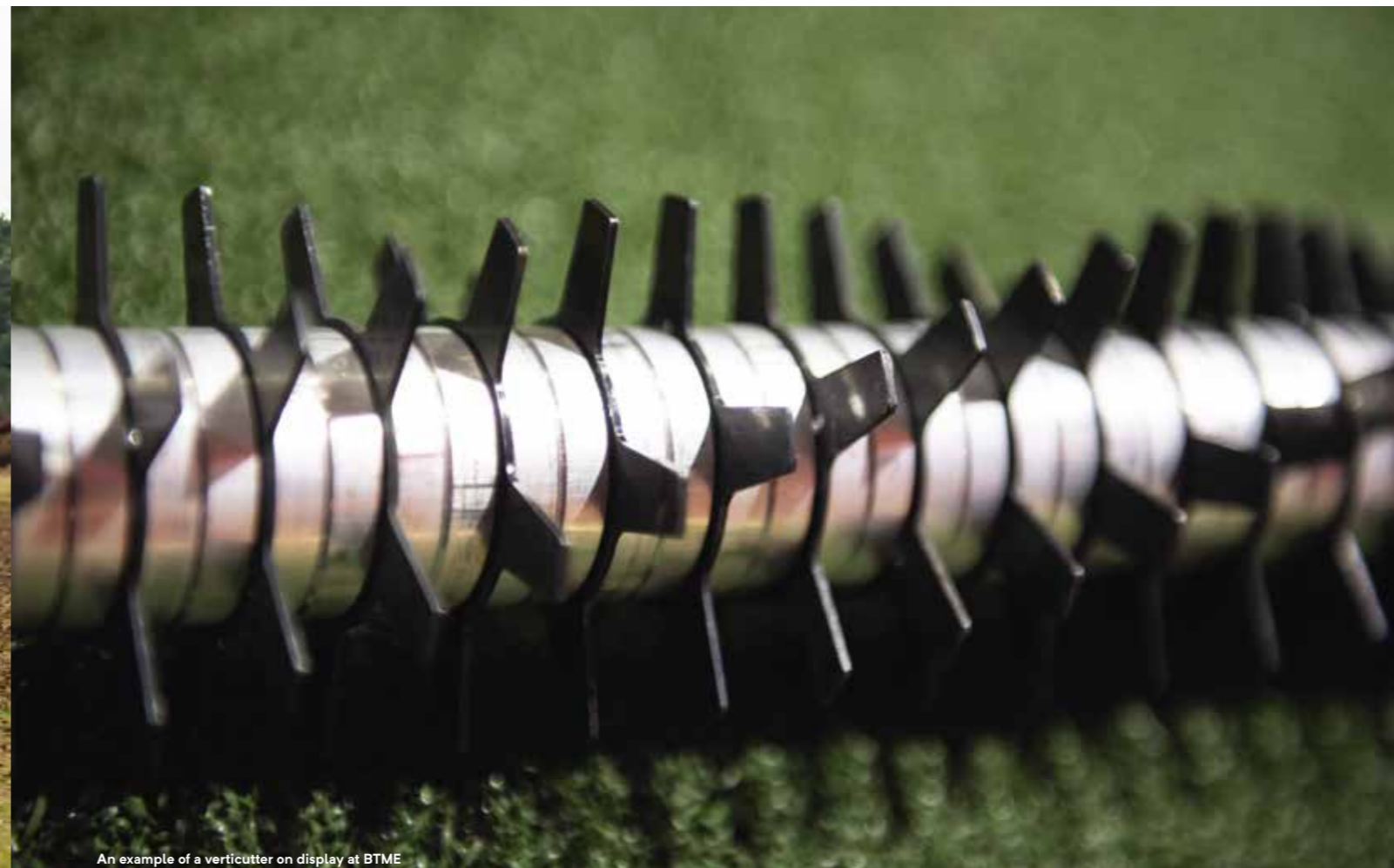
Unfortunately, spring and autumn are ideal, but they are also the time when weather is ideal for golf. So we are always at a crossroads of wanting to do what's best for the golf course, but at the same time we're under pressure to be open and to get golfers out playing. »



Hollow coring



Hollow coring at Ipswich. Image by Joe Simpson



An example of a verticutter on display at BTME

**Arguments for hollow core aeration**

The positives of conventional hollow core aeration are that you only need one or two events per year. So, while the downside is that there will be times in the year when people are going to want to play golf, the good thing is that we only have to do this once or twice a year, depending upon our situation. There is never a one-size-fits-all programme for aeration, but once or twice should be enough to manage organic matter content.

Hollow core aeration is also good at removing layers of organic matter up to four inches deep (8-10cm), which is deeper than some other methods.

It also creates those channels that can be backfilled with sand, so you get the benefit of removing some organic matter and you're also creating the channel that enables topdressing into the soil. So you're removing and diluting at the same time.

When it comes to how successful hollow core aeration may be, there are a number of factors to consider such as fertility, growth regulation, growing environment, topdressing rates, pre-existing conditions, soil profile and the soil management programme.

But in general, if you have excessive organic matter content, you want to

“ It’s no surprise that the major downside to all these traditional methods is golfer inconvenience

target around 20% of the total surface area annually via core aeration or verticutting if you want to catch up.

If you're trying to maintain your current organic matter content levels, you'll be



Left, what we're trying to avoid, and right, the ideal situation

looking at closer to 15% of the surface area annually.

The best way to make these decisions is by testing organic matter regularly. To get a good idea of what you need to be doing in regards to aeration, intensity, topdressing frequency and quantities, you really should be doing regular testing on all your fine turf surfaces.

**Arguments against verticutting**

Verticutting has similar pros and cons as hollow core aeration in that the timing, because it is aggressive, should be performed in spring or autumn, when



conditions are ideal for turf growth and the turf isn't under stress. Again, the downside to that is it is when people want to come out and play golf. If you have had a bad winter, golfers will be queueing up on the first tee as soon as we get some warm temperatures and the grass begins to grow, so it becomes challenging to time disruptive events like verticutting.

Verticutting is also labour intensive as you need someone running the machine and then another group managing the clean-up, with perhaps others running buckets of sand to put into the machine. Like hollow core aeration, it is a very labour intensive process that requires you to at least shut down the golf hole you are working on, if not the entire course.

However, it's main Achilles heel is that you can't get the same depth as you can with conventional aeration, so it does depend on your individual situation. If you have soil issues deeper in the profile, traditional core aeration is the direction you will want to go.

**Arguments for verticutting**

Verticutting will remove a lot of material in the upper inch or 2.5cm of the soil profile. Aggressive verticutting is a great way of getting a lot of material out

of that upper layer.

If you are going to go with verticutting, I highly recommend the sand injection options. These are great at killing two birds with one stone. You are doing the verticutting and then immediately backfilling those channels, so all you have to do is clean off the debris from the surface. That means very little topdressing is necessary once the surface is clean, because those channels have already been filled.

Typically, 2mm blades are what most people will use, although some will go up to 3mm. Beyond that point it gets dicey and you have to be careful because if you go over mounds or the machine gets a little sideways when you're operating it, those 2mm blades can turn into 4 or 5mm blades really quickly and cause some turf damage. So you have got to be careful and choose a good operator who can steer the machine in a straight line to minimise the potential for turf damage. »



Large particles when topdressing can impact ball roll



Early morning topdressing at Flempton, picture by Chris Gurton

### Arguments against topdressing

Sand topdressing can be difficult to accomplish with a busy tee sheet, but it is fundamental to maintaining firm and healthy putting surfaces.

One downside is that when large particles remain on the surface after topdressing, they can deflect the roll of the ball or cause damage to mower blades, so quality of material is key to ensuring it is fully integrated into the soil.

Grooming brushes attached to the cutting unit will also help keep large particles away from the delicate blades.

### Arguments for topdressing

Sand topdressing is something that I strongly recommend. If you undertake it regularly, you are constantly diluting new organic matter as it is being produced. Because of this, it can reduce the frequency or intensity required for hollow

core aeration. If you're constantly diluting the organic matter, you won't have a thick layer accumulating and so you don't have to be as aggressive with your aeration or verticutting.

Topdressing is also great at smoothing the surface and providing firmer surfaces.

It is one of those fundamental things that you should do well, as getting sand on the greens regularly is well worth it.



Simultaneous aeration and verticutting

### In summary

#### Hollow core aeration

- / **Pros:** Versatile, only needs to occur around twice per year
- / **Cons:** Timing, labour, disruption

#### Verticutting

- / **Pros:** Aggressive, useful for particular scenarios
- / **Cons:** Timing, labour, disruption

#### Topdressing

- / **Pros:** Dilutes new organic matter, produces smooth and firm surfaces
- / **Cons:** Timing, disruption to mowers and golfers.

If you look at hollow core aeration, verticutting and topdressing, the negative aspect of them all is the amount of disruption they cause to the playing surface. Newer methods of organic matter management that people are implementing may need to be performed more frequently, but they are much less invasive and disruptive to the surface. Using them, we are not disrupting the golf calendar and are still accomplishing what we need to in regards to organic matter management and so we will explore these further in an upcoming edition of Greenkeeper International.

There is really no reason not to get

“ It is a key foundational component of sound agronomic practices so you have to make sure you're getting some sand out there

your topdressing out regularly. It is a key foundational component of sound agronomic practices so you have to make sure you're getting some sand out there to provide firm and true putting surfaces.

One method to consider is combining hollow core aeration and verticutting, if organic matter has become excessive. Perhaps things are out of hand or you are a new greenkeeper at a facility and there is a serious accumulation of organic matter near the surface and you want to catch up quickly, one option is to combine aeration and verticutting at the same time.

What works well for some facilities is they will aerate first with, say, 15mm tines with relatively close spacing. They will harvest the cores, backfill the holes with sand and then go back out with an aggressive verticutting machine with 1mm tight blades set to about a half an inch dispersal. If you have the sand inject then great, but if not then immediately topdress afterwards. From a recovery standpoint, it doesn't take much longer to recover than if you were just aerating or verticutting individually, but if you're trying to play catch up then this is an option that I would strongly recommend.

Lastly, although I can't make recommendations as to how often you should be verticutting or aerating, I do highly recommend performing some organic matter testing annually to help guide those decisions so you know how often and how aggressive you need to be with any or all of these practices.

### Continue the conversation

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# TOPDRESSING

## WHY, WHEN AND HOW

Like a lot of turf maintenance activities, topdressing techniques have evolved over the years as thoughts around the benefits of lighter, more frequent dressings have resulted in enhanced surface health and playability. Redexim UK explores the 'why, when and how' of topdressing to help you ensure optimum results from every operation.

### WHY?

The application of sand will bring multiple benefits to a surface. Looking at golf greens in particular, topdressing will modify the soil structure by adding a medium that will improve the porosity, meaning infiltration rates, oxygen movement and nutrient retention within the soil are all increased.

A good soil structure is the backbone for many successful maintenance activities, not least overseeding, where topdressing provides a high quality medium for new roots to grow. Not only does the dressing introduce new minerals to stimulate growth,

but the loose particles provide a tilth for the roots and shoots to get a foothold in the early stages of establishment and germination. It also plays a key role in stabilising a surface, particularly when conducted in conjunction with aeration programmes.

Topdressing following tining or hollow coring can speed up recovery and provide a level, truer surface for golfers to play on. This ability to smooth a playing surface means it can also be utilised during the recovery and repair of divots, pitch marks or other damage.

Topdressing should also be

employed for the control and prevention of the issues associated with excessive levels of organic matter. Along with mechanical intervention in the form of scarification and verticutting, topdressing can effectively dilute thatch accumulations to improve the growing environment.

Topdressing is also proving an effective tool in the battle with worm casts, now the majority of effective chemical controls have been removed. Sand irritates the worm's skin, thereby reducing worm populations, while making any casts that do appear drier and easier to disperse.



Continue the conversation:

Contact Redexim UK on Twitter at @RedeximUK

“ A good soil structure is the backbone for many successful maintenance activities

### WHEN?

Topdressing can generally be conducted at any time during the season, when the plant is actively growing and is strong enough to recover from any associated mechanical intervention.

A heavier dressing can be applied in the spring when the plant growth should be vigorous, allowing for swift recovery and repair from any damage sustained over the winter. Dressing can then carry on at regular intervals, getting lighter as the season

progresses to ensure that, come autumn, the grass plant is not smothered — leaving it vulnerable to fungal diseases such as fusarium.

Disease can occur during warmer conditions, due to applications creating a microclimate in the upper profile. Pathogens can quite quickly germinate if the dressing isn't effectively worked into the surface so thought should be given to the amount of dressing applied and, for heavier applications,

consider brushing after the topdressing is complete to speed up dispersal.

The quality, trueness and type of grass dominant in a green will dictate how frequently turf managers will need to topdress. For example, creeping bentgrass would benefit from light and frequent dressings where greens that are predominately fescue can successfully manage with fewer applications over the course of a season.



### HOW?

There are two main options available when it comes to the choice of dresser — disc dressers (sometimes known as spinner spreaders) or brush spreaders.

For those following the 'little and often' approach, the preference will tend to be disc dressing. Disc dressers such as the Rink DS800 offer a range of adjustable parameters to allow for optimum versatility as the season progresses.

Spreading width and thickness can be adjusted, along with changing the speed of the spinner to suit the amount of dressing required. The Rink DS800 model can accommodate spreading widths of between 2m and 12m and spreading

thicknesses of 0.5 to 15mm, meaning the dressing of a green will be complete in just two or three passes.

Conversely, heavier applications and carpet dressings may be more suited to using a brush dresser. Units such as the Rink 1010 work via a rotating brush on the rear of the unit which will distribute material in one even stripe. Because spread is limited to the width of the dresser, more passes will be required, which is not ideal if the surface is already vulnerable.

To optimise efficiency from topdressing, bring the surfaces back into play quicker and to minimise those conditions favourable to disease pathogens, one should consider utilising a

brush to work the dressing into the surface.

For smaller areas such as greens, the 1.4m wide Redexim Speedbrush features two brushes that rotate against the direction of travel to quickly and effectively sweep the dressed material into the surface.

Meanwhile, a wide-area brush such as the 6m Top Brush is well suited to the incorporation of dressing on denser grasses or larger areas such as fairways.

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# KUBOTA'S TEAM PLAYERS

**A fleet of Kubota RTV X-1110 utility vehicles is proving to be an essential part of the team at Pleasington Golf Club.**

Course manager Darron Mather explained: "We were looking to change from our previous brand of vehicle and have found that the Kubota RTV is not only competitive, but also offers more load capacity, greater comfort and additional towing capacity.

"The RTV also requires less maintenance due to its VHT-X drive, so we're not wearing out brake pads, saving cost and time."

Based near Blackburn in Lancashire, the club was founded in 1891 and is undergoing a redevelopment programme dubbed 'Good to Great' on its heathland course.

Each year three holes are being upgraded in conjunction with course architect Ken Moodie.

Work includes replacing

tee beds, updating irrigation, improving bunkers, fairways and greens, removing trees and restoring the heathland.

"It's a big project," admitted Darron. "In 2021 we did holes seven, eight and nine and relevelled three tee beds, one of which needed 600 tonnes of material. This year it's six, 10 and 11."

He added that the club is keen to invest in its future, from redesigning bunkers to installing greens drainage that will allow members to play 12 months of the year. A borehole makes the club self-sufficient for water, key in a region that is known for its rain, yet it has seen a dry start this year and more recently recorded its hottest ever temperature of 35.9 degrees.

Darron said: "We're lucky that we not only have the support of our committee but also the members, some of whom have even volunteered

out on the course."

With a busy workload, the Kubotas are constantly out and about, loaded via a big bag lifter to transport fertiliser and cart sand, rootzone and stone. The 25hp Kubota three-cylinder engine and heavy duty transmission provide rapid acceleration and powerful dynamic braking, with two speed ranges and single pedal operation. The hydraulic tipping bed has a capacity of 500kg and the RTV X-1110 can tow up to 590kg.

"We try not to use tractors and trailers on the course too much, so we need good workhorses with useful load capacity. We've costed them over six years and GGM, the dealer, has looked after us very well during the delivery and installation period — the RTVs look very well built and we expect them to last," said Darron.

The first RTV, in Kubota's

own orange livery, was followed by a pair of camo models, the spec adding glass screens front and rear to the doorless cabs.

"We've got 11 staff — seven-full time, two seasonal and two from the government's Kickstart scheme and they are all constantly in and out of the machines. There's lots of room and the comfort in the cab is a step up from others we tried."

One unit has also been road homologated, allowing it to be used to collect petrol for hand tools and mowers. Adjustable, independent wheel suspension not only gives exceptional off-road capability, but also makes for safe, comfortable road transport even when fully laden.

"We need 60-80 litres of fuel every 10 days and it's more convenient than using a truck to transport the jerry cans," explained Darron. "The

RTV has a good road speed, while its suspension handles the weight well."

Club Manager Mark Bleasdale said that the work put into the course since 2020 has seen membership increase and retention improve across the board, with the competitive members relishing the improved standards. He added: "We've been able to reintroduce joining fees and we can charge sufficient green fees that the course doesn't have to be constantly at capacity, which is in turn better for the playing surface. Our aim is to be in the top 100 courses and continue to improve quality even further."

Working in partnership with





# BE PREPARED

## WITH TOUGH TURF FROM AQUATROLS

**Without doubt it has been a demanding summer for turf managers throughout the UK and Europe.**

The cold, dry spring was followed by record-breaking heat in conjunction with continued drought conditions.

Maintaining high quality turf surfaces under these environmental pressures has been extremely challenging. Closely monitoring moisture levels and reducing mechanical stresses has been an effective greens management strategy for many, but as thoughts turn to autumn we need to recognise that turf has been under higher-than-usual stresses and so will be more vulnerable to disease pressures in these next few months.

As we move towards the end of September, daylight hours reduce, soil

temperatures fall, growth slows and all the factors that promote conditions for fusarium patch disease come into play.

The impact of summer drought and heat stress on fine turf surfaces means this autumn we should be prepared for higher than usual levels of fusarium patch disease activity.

Predicted climatic changes mean we face hotter, drier conditions more often but also warmer, wetter winter months. These mild, wet winter conditions favour fusarium patch disease activity and so the window of disease pressure for most turf managers has lengthened by at least several weeks, compared to a decade or so ago.

At the same time, pesticide legislation has tightened and products we previously had at our disposal are no longer

available. Consequently, a longer period of high disease pressure combined with fewer fungicides means the chemical approach does not typically give the level of disease control we could previously have expected. We are no longer able to turn to a bottle of fungicide to check and control disease as it occurs.

Integrated turf management (ITM) policies are therefore increasingly important, bringing together several different techniques to reduce the impact of turf problems — unfortunately there is no longer one solution to deal with an outbreak of disease.

Increasingly, turf managers are looking to adopt a range of preventative strategies that reduce the potential for

disease activity, especially in autumn when fusarium patch disease can be aggressive and surface scars can take many months to fully recover.

At Aquatrols we believe that an essential element of any integrated autumn disease management strategy is to harden and strengthen the leaf, stem and root cell walls, thereby providing increased plant rigidity, alongside improving overall plant health to assist in the fight against and recovery from any disease outbreaks. To achieve this, research-led product development resulted in the launch of the Tough Turf package, a winter turf programme that consists of Ferrosol, Premium K and CalSea Xtra; all products from the Aquatrols liquid nutritional range. This package has a reduced nitrogen loading and a reduced salt index to provide a rapid green up and hardening of the turf without excessive top-growth.

### Ferrosol

Ferrosol has been in the marketplace for over 30 years. It was the first chelated iron introduced into the UK and its iron-nitrogen bonded complex formulation provides a rapid green up of turf without blackening. It acidifies the leaf and does not affect soil pH.

### Premium K

Liquid potassium contains potassium acetate, which has various benefits compared to other potassium sources. The formulation ensures it can be absorbed and translocated by the grass plant up to five times quicker than other conventional sources of K. It has the lowest salt indexed form of potassium available and is therefore

the most soil and plant friendly formulation.

### CalSea Xtra

This low salt indexed calcium formulation has the added benefits of seaweed, providing a balanced supply of nitrogen, calcium and magnesium that strengthen cell walls in leaves, stems and roots. The use of calcium in strengthening plants to assist in the fight against disease is well documented and calcium plays a major part in ensuring plant health is maintained. The added benefits of seaweed are also well documented in turf management, with improvements in soil texture, overall plant health, increased and deeper rooting and enhanced photosynthesis.

### Tough Turf Package

The Tough Turf Package involves making three to four weekly applications between October and December. Applications should be made as a tank mix with 10 litres each of Ferrosol, Premium K and CalSea Xtra in a minimum of 400-600 litres of water per hectare. This provides a balance of N, K, Ca, Mg and Fe and has an overall analysis of 2-O-4 + seaweed (N:P:K). The formulation has a synergistic effect that increases mycorrhizal populations and enhances microbial activity. By increasing uptake, absorption and availability of applied nutrients, plant health is increased and plant stresses are mitigated.



# The Worcestershire Golf Club trials the latest product launch from Husqvarna

The Worcestershire Golf Club is one of the oldest clubs in England, having been established in 1879, but has been putting new robotic technology to the test in the shape of Husqvarna's CEORA, coupled with its new low-cut deck coming soon in 2023.

The parkland golf course in the picturesque Malvern Hills was hand-picked to trial the pioneering robotic innovation over a two-month period in late spring and early summer.

The golf industry has faced multiple challenges over the past year, with the whole market facing increasing material and operational running costs that make it more important than ever to make sure all operations are as cost and time effective as possible.

As a 700-strong members' club, The Worcestershire has invested a significant amount

into the course over the last eight years to ensure its golfers are able to enjoy the location and playing experience.

The Husqvarna CEORA trial is the second The Worcestershire has undertaken, with the club trialling the Husqvarna Automower 450 on the course four years ago.

Speaking on this previous trial, Course Manager Steve Lloyd said: "When we were given a trial of the Automower 450, we knew this was a great opportunity to dip our toes in and try out a smaller residential robot in a commercial environment and put its features to the test.

"We instantly saw the benefits that robotic mowing technology could provide by having our Automower operating on a nightly basis.

"In no time at all the

density of our grass was improved and was growing at a much higher quality."

Since then, Husqvarna has developed a wider portfolio of robotics specifically designed for professional use, so when the golf club was offered a trial of the Husqvarna CEORA and its low-cut deck four years later, it was a "no brainer", added Steve.

He said: "When it comes to robotic mowing, for us it's not about lowering staff costs, but about alleviating the workload of our staff to allow for more skilled and rewarding labour tasks to be completed.

"The CEORA is fantastic for timesaving and the technology has definitely proved itself and its benefits.

"This is the first machine we have used with EPOS technology so it was a learning curve for us to learn about the navigation of the machinery, but we are pleased we took on the challenge.

"We set up the CEORA on two adjacent fairways. First we alternated nightly cuts and second we mowed on the same night to compare results.

"The whole team agrees that the robotic mower passed with flying colours.

"We have complicated terrain on our fairways so faced a few challenges, but we are working closely with Husqvarna to find ways

around this to make the cutting results of CEORA and the low-cut deck even better, which is great.

"Overall, the Husqvarna CEORA has been invaluable in managing our workload at the golf course and has provided us with not only brilliant cutting results but more time to spend focused on our members and our unrivalled services."

The Husqvarna CEORA is available to order now from selected authorised dealerships across the UK.

The Razor 43L Cutting Deck will become available in 2023, and will have a 10-60mm cutting height.

## Continue the conversation

To learn more about Husqvarna and CEORA, visit [www.husqvarna.com/uk](http://www.husqvarna.com/uk)

Continue the conversation by connecting with Husqvarna using

- [@UK\\_Husqvarna](#)
- [@husqvarnauk](#)
- [@HusqvarnaUK](#)

Working in partnership with



# INDUSTRY NEWS

## Arsenal mourns groundsman Steve

**Arsenal Head Groundsmen Steve Braddock has died aged 58 following a long illness.**

A lifelong Arsenal fan, Steve joined the club in 1987 following a chance meeting with then-manager George Graham, who informed him the club was looking for someone to lead the maintenance of the pitch at Highbury.

A statement from Arsenal read: "Under Steve, Arsenal's pitch became the game's gold standard.

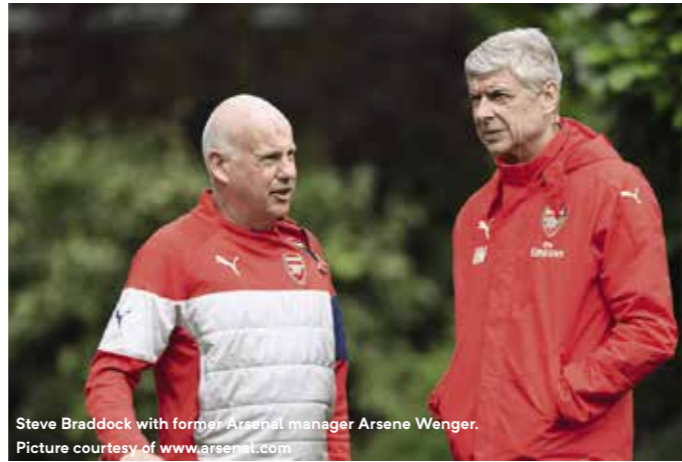
"He understood the art of preparing a pitch better than anyone in the game."

Throughout his career Steve won multiple Premier

League Pitch of the Season awards. 'Turf's Top Influencer' in 2019 and in 2020 he became only the second person in history to enter the Grounds Management Association's Hall of Fame.

The Arsenal statement continued: "Always keen to discuss ideas with grounds teams from a whole range of sports, he knew that researching and embracing the latest technology and methodology could be beneficial to his playing surfaces and to those who worked alongside him.

"He was also passionate about finding sustainable solutions through groundskeeping, showing a



Steve Braddock with former Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger. Picture courtesy of www.arsenal.com

great interest in biofuels.

"Not only was Steve a truly great groundsman, he was also a wonderful teacher and mentor. Many groundskeepers Steve has developed at the club over 30 years have

progressed to the very pinnacle of their profession – all educated and still inspired by the best in the business."

Steve is survived by his wife Shuk and their daughters Jasmine and Lily.

## STRI Group launches rebrand

**STRI Group, a global design, engineering and management consultancy, has launched a new brand following a period of growth and diversification.**

The group's skills were founded within the design, management and maintenance of sports surfaces and it continues to deliver strategies for sports facilities, as well as working within residential, corporate and commercial spaces.

Since setting up a construction company, Carrick Sports Construction, and adding the Environmental Protection Group to the organisation, as well as investing in their already established planning, design, maintenance, and research services, the breadth of in-house expertise has positioned STRI Group to handle a wide variety of sports and urban projects.



The group is well-renowned for its expertise in scientific research and analysis, monitoring and compliance services, which continue to operate from independent laboratory facilities across the world, with a research facility at the headquarters in Yorkshire and sites in Australia.

A number of joint ventures and partnerships adds a strong presence for the group in the Middle East, with STRI delivering the first ever turf racetrack in Saudi Arabia for the Saudi Cup in 2020. More recently, through its joint venture Aspire Sports Turf

based in Qatar, STRI is delivering the design, construction and maintenance supervision of all pitches for the Qatar 2022 World Cup on behalf of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy.

The group's website, strigroup.com, showcases its completed projects. This spans local government sports facilities such as the Blackpool Enterprise Zone through to elite tournaments including World Cups and the Wimbledon Championships, as well as urban greening and sustainable water management initiatives.

## Global support for SALTEX

**SALTEX returns this November and organisers Grounds Management Association (GMA) say registrations are going well for the exhibition.**

International exhibitors and visitors from over 40 countries have already signed up to attend the show, which is in its 76th year.

Geoff Webb, GMA CEO, said: "There promises to be a diverse visitor profile this year and we know there are visitors from over 26 countries already. We had a good show last year and our post-show visitor survey showed that 83 per cent of attendees rated SALTEX 2021 overall as excellent, very good or good."

SALTEX 2022 takes place at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham on 2 to 3 November. For more information visit saltex.org.uk

## Product supplier TurfCare appoints well-travelled greenkeepers to support roles in Scotland

**Sports turf product supplier TurfCare has appointed two former greenkeepers to support the company's activities in Scotland.**

Derek Downie was previously head greenkeeper at Thornton in Fife and said: "I'm really excited to be starting as a technical sales representative in Scotland. TurfCare's portfolio is truly world class, with incredibly innovative technologies, ever evolving product lines and support to match. I can't wait to get started."

Derek began his greenkeeping career at Ladybank. He then relocated to Portmarnock in Dublin, where he spent five years.

In 2006 Derek took up the assistant head greenkeeper position at Sutton, where he spent 10 years before joining Kirkistown Castle Links as



Derek Downie

course manager.

Tom Hobbis started greenkeeping at a young age and initially spent four years at Gullane. He then moved to Glen where he spent a further three years while studying for both his HNC and HND in greenkeeping.

As Tom's career developed, he moved to Muirfield where he continued his training.



Tom Hobbis

Upon joining the team at TurfCare, Tom said: "It's such an exciting move across to TurfCare with them having such a strong product portfolio. The level of support and training from TurfCare and their suppliers really is second to none.

"The team are close knit, ambitious and have similar goals to my own."

## New executive officer takes charge at EIGCA

**The European Institute for Golf Course Architects (EIGCA) has appointed Lindsey Collumbell as executive officer, replacing Julia Green after 22 years in the role.**

Lindsey previously spent seven years as the institute's PR and marketing consultant.

She said: "It is an honour to be appointed as executive officer and to continue my involvement with EIGCA.

"I want to ensure the institute and its members are highly regarded in the world of golf and am making collaboration with the wider golf industry a priority. Course architects are key players in the successful future of golf.

"I relish the opportunity to build on the strong foundations laid by Julia."

## Redexim appoints director



Paul Langford

**Paul Langford has joined the team at Redexim to support their continued growth and spearhead the UK's commercial activities.**

As director of commercial operations, Paul will be leading the team of regional sales managers.

He will also be in charge of the development of Redexim's overall sales and marketing strategies.

## GCSAA's Bob Randquist to retire



Bob Randquist CGCS

**Bob Randquist CGCS, the chief operating officer for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), has announced he will retire on 15 October.**

Randquist joined the GCSAA staff in May 2018 after 20 years as director of golf course and grounds at Boca Rio Golf Club in Florida. Prior to that he worked at Southern Hills in Oklahoma.

## SPRAY STAR 1200



The Spray Star 1200 features industry leading options such as the TeeJet™ Radion Auto-Rate Controller, Radion with Dyna-Jet™ Pulse Width Modulation, or Smithco's Star Command II providing consistently less than 1in/2.5cm corrections, turn compensation, and featuring industry-leading 10in/25cm nozzle spacing offering a 100% greater accuracy than our competitors.

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**↓ STRENGTH**  
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For a demo, call **John Moore** on **07512 909792**

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## Assistant Greenkeeper Limpsfield Chart Golf Club

Limpsfield Chart Golf Club in Oxted, Surrey is looking to recruit a full time assistant greenkeeper.

We are looking for an enthusiastic Level 2-qualified greenkeeper with at least 5 years' experience. This is a challenging role as part of a small team on our lovely heathland 9-hole course.

Reporting to the head greenkeeper, the role includes all normal greenkeeping tasks with some lone working.

Salary is negotiable depending on qualifications and experience but circa £24,500.

### How to apply

To apply — Please send your CV with a covering letter to [helene@limpsfieldchartgolf.co.uk](mailto:helene@limpsfieldchartgolf.co.uk)



## Greenkeepers North Berwick Golf Club

Our historic links is a living and breathing course being played by modern golfers in a modern era. It also has an extraordinary heritage, which brings people from all across the golfing globe. Like a fine old painting, it needs to be managed with great care.

Our vision for the links involves producing and maintaining the highest standards of links golf for the primary benefit of its members their guests and visitors. We are delighted to announce that we are recruiting for two greenkeepers to join the team on our historic links.

### How to apply

Send your CV and covering letter (include current salary to Deputy Course Manager, The North Berwick Golf Club, New Club House, Beach Road, North Berwick, East Lothian EH39 4BB  
Or [deputycoursemanager@northberwickgolfclub.com](mailto:deputycoursemanager@northberwickgolfclub.com)



## Course Manager Lundin Golf Club

Lundin Golf Club is a links golf course located on the Forth estuary in Fife, Scotland. Founded in 1868, the course has held Open Championship final qualifying on seven occasions and is ranked at 51st in the Golf World Top 100 Courses in Scotland.

We are looking for an ambitious and motivated course manager to lead our hardworking team and push the course to the next level. You will be significantly involved in the future strategy of the golf course and its development.

### To apply or for more information

Email CV and covering letter to General Manager Martin Ball at [manager@lundinolfclub.co.uk](mailto:manager@lundinolfclub.co.uk)

Mark the subject of the email as 'Course Manager Application'  
Closing Date for applications is Thursday 15 September 2022



## Course Manager Rushmore Golf Club

We are looking to recruit a highly motivated, ambitious, and driven course manager to lead our hardworking team by continuing the improvements made on the course over the past few years. Reporting to and working closely with the general manager you will be pivotal in the future strategy of the course and its development and a key member of the senior management team.

With an exceptional eye for detail, the right candidate will be able to present an excellently manicured golf course while always looking to improve the product. You will be an outstanding leader and work in a hands-on manner with the team, motivating and developing as you go.

### How to apply

Please send your CV and a covering letter to [golfmanager@rushmoreuk.com](mailto:golfmanager@rushmoreuk.com).



## Course Manager North Berwick Golf Club

Our historic links is a living and breathing course being played by modern golfers in a modern era. It also has an extraordinary heritage, which brings people from all across the golfing globe. Like a fine old painting, it needs to be managed with great care.

Our vision for the links involves producing and maintaining the highest standards of links golf for the primary benefit of its members their guests and visitors. Through its unique location and evolved traditions, the links has established standards of excellence recognised in the universal golf world.

The key objective of this role is to ensure the course is effectively managed in a manner that is befitting of a world class golfing experience, by presenting the course and associated facilities in first class condition.

### How to apply

Please apply to: [generalmanager@northberwickgolfclub.com](mailto:generalmanager@northberwickgolfclub.com)



## Assistant Greenkeeper Royal Porthcawl Golf Club

Situated on the South Wales coast between Cardiff and Swansea, Royal Porthcawl Golf Club is a world-renowned classic links course and will be host venue for the 2023 Senior Open and 2025 Women's British Open.

### The ideal candidate will have/be:

- / Minimum 3 years' greenkeeping experience
- / NVQ Level 2 or equivalent
- / Spraying certificates PA1, PA2 & PA6
- / Enthusiastic with the ability to work as part of a successful team
- / Good communication skills
- / An understanding of the game of golf

Reporting to the course manager, you will be part of the team responsible for delivering a golf course to the highest standards.

### How to apply

Applicants should send a full CV and covering letter by email to: [ian.kinley@royalporthcawl.com](mailto:ian.kinley@royalporthcawl.com)  
[www.royalporthcawl.com](http://www.royalporthcawl.com)  
Closing date: 18 September 2022



## Deputy Course Manager

A fantastic opportunity has become available for an experienced, highly motivated individual to join our team as deputy course manager. This is a pivotal role and the successful candidate will work closely with management and assist in supervising the greenkeeping team involving the preparation, maintenance and development of the golf course and its estate to the highest standards.

We have a great team and finding someone that will integrate well, while enhancing the team is essential.

You'll be a natural leader, able to work well under pressure and have the ability to motivate your colleagues, leading by example.

The club has a very proactive approach towards training and education of its staff and we are proud to say that the last two deputy course managers have moved on to become course managers at quality golf clubs.

### Main responsibilities and position requirements:

Please see the BIGGA website

### Benefits:

This post carries a salary range of £32-40,000, plus weekend overtime, pension and uniform.

### How to apply

Please apply via email or post with your CV and covering letter explaining your suitability for the role.

Adam McColl, Course Manager, Gerrards Cross Golf Club, Chalfont Park, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire SL9 0QA  
Email: [coursemanager@gxgolf.co.uk](mailto:coursemanager@gxgolf.co.uk)  
Closing date: Friday 30 September



GERRARDS CROSS GOLF CLUB



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1968-69



# HISTORY OF GREENKEEPERS' ASSOCIATIONS

1981

In this year the PGA made an informal approach to the Scottish & International Golf Greenkeepers Association (SIGGA) and the Golf Club Stewards' Association (GCSA) suggesting a possible tie up.

This was intended to counteract moves being made by the Secretaries' Association for their members to be in complete control of all aspects of a golf club.

The meeting took place on Wednesday 14 January at The Belfry and was attended by representatives of the PGA, British Golf Greenkeepers Association (BGGGA), SIGGA and GCSA. It was felt by SIGGA that the PGA was suggesting that the professional would become the golf club manager, whereas SIGGA wanted a management team of greenkeeper, professional and secretary, who were all on the same level. Talks petered out.

At this time SIGGA was struggling to keep a

reasonable newsletter going in Scotland and when the publishers of the Greenkeeper magazine offered to fit a four-page centre section supplement for SIGGA at a cost of £150 per issue, it was decided to go ahead with this.

During the year SIGGA was approached by Bill Beveridge of Ransomes who was speaking on behalf of the trade and asking the association to support the Institute of Groundsmanship (Scotland)'s trade show. The lack of support in recent years meant it would probably cease to exist otherwise.

After discussion, SIGGA went back to IOG to agree to include the show in its winter programme for each section and to encourage as many greenkeepers to attend as possible. In the first years, the Ayrshire and North sections even ran buses to the show.

A meeting was held on 1 December at Turnhouse Golf Club between SIGGA and 17 trade companies, where SIGGA proposed a patronage scheme. In return for SIGGA

advertising those patrons at every SIGGA event during the year, patrons would not be asked to donate prizes at all golf events, rather the prizes would come out of the SIGGA central fund. Instead, the patrons would pay one sum at the start of the year, which would help them to budget for events. The trade agreed to

this and a sum of £150 per company per year was agreed upon. This turned out to be an excellent proposal that suited all parties and the scheme was replicated by regions and sections all over the UK.

BIGGA has this month reintroduced a similar scheme with the intention of achieving the same objectives.

## TEE THE ANSWERS BREAK

1	C	2	S	3	V	4	T	5	J						
6	W	R	I	T	7	A	T	8	L	A	R	G	E		
	E	E	P	U	A	A									
9	A	D	O	P	T	I	O	N	10	F	I	N	D		
	E	P	D	G	F										
11	I	N	U	I	T	12	M	E	D	I	C	13	A	L	
	C	N	R		C	S									
14	B	E	G	A	R	S	16	P	L	U	S	H			
	S	I	W	I	E										
18	T	R	O	T	20	F	A	I	R	G	A	M	E		
	O	O	L	L	H	B									
	L	I	N	S	E	E	D	22	T	A	L	L			
	L	E			E	S	E								

- Across:** 6 Writ, 7 At large, 9 Adoption, 10 Find, 11 Inuit, 12 Medical, 14 Beggars, 16 Plush, 18 Trot, 20 Fair game, 21 Linseed, 22 Tall.
- Down:** 1 Credence, 2 Stepping stone, 3 Vapid, 4 Traffic lights, 5 Jean, 8 Lunge, 12 Mrs, 13 Assemble, 15 Rifle, 17 Wilde, 19 Roll.

Easy

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

Hard

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

Read Elliot Small's History of Greenkeepers' Associations on the BIGGA website



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