

ENGLAND

HADLOW COLLEGE

Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 0AL

Contact: Mike Dodd

Tel: 01732 850551

Email: enquiries@hadlow.ac.uk

Website: www.hadlow.ac.uk



Information: NVQs (Levels 2 and 3), Apprenticeships and work-based learning courses available in Greenkeeping, Landscaping and Groundsmanship. We also offer a range of short courses, for example, Health & Safety, COSHH, Chainsaw use, Welding and Pesticide Application. Additionally, full and part-time courses (post GCSE through to degree level) are available in horticulture and a variety of other land-based subjects.

PLUMPTON COLLEGE

Ditchling Road, Plumpton,
Lewes, East Sussex BN7 3AE

Contact: David Blackmur

Tel: 01273 890454 **Fax:** 01273 890071

Email: enquiries@plumpton.ac.uk **Web:** www.plumpton.ac.uk
Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE).



Information: Foundation degree in Horticulture and Garden Design, National Diploma in Amenity Horticulture, National Award, First Diploma in Horticulture

Part time courses: NVQ Level 1. NVQ Level 2 in Landscaping, Decorative and Sportsturf, NVQ Level 3: Sportsturf. NVQ level 4. Also RHS Certificate and RHS Advanced; IOG National Technical and Intermediate National Diploma. Short courses available: FEPA spraying and chainsaw. Bespoke training following training needs analysis, (TNA).

MERRIST WOOD CAMPUS OF GUILDFORD COLLEGE

Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey GU3 3PE.

Contact: Information, Guidance and Admissions on
01483 884040, **email:** mwinfo@guildford.ac.uk.

Website: www.guildford.ac.uk.



Information: Part-time courses: NVQ Level 2 Sportsturf college day release and workplace visits/assessments, New Level 2 Sportsturf in conjunction with IOG / NPTC, NVQ Level 3 Sportsturf on-line distance learning, Level 3 National Award college day release for those without qualified workplace assessors, Foundation Degree and BSc (Hons) in Horticulture (Sports Turf), plus various NPTC short courses including Irrigation Certificate Course, Turf Maintenance Equipment and Operation of Mowers throughout the year. Please contact us for up-to-date listings, qualifications and advice. Open evenings are held regularly at the Campus.

REASEHEATH COLLEGE

Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6DF

Contact: Gareth Phillips or Chard Spicer

Tel: 01270 613236 **Fax:** 01270 625665

Email: enquiries@reaseheath.ac.uk **Web:** www.reaseheath.ac.uk



Information: Foundation Degree and Higher National Certificate in Golf and Sports Turf Management; National Diploma in Amenity Horticulture with Sports Turf; NVQ levels 2 & 3 in Sports Turf; Apprenticeships; NPTC Qualifications. NVQ4

On-site facilities include a commercially operating golf course, football and rugby pitches, Crewe Alexandra training grounds

MYERSCOUGH COLLEGE

Bilsborrow, Preston, Lancashire, PR3 0RY

Contact: Stewart Brown

Tel: 01995 642305 **Web:** www.myerscough.ac.uk



Information: Myerscough College is a leading centre for Sportsturf education and training in Europe and has excellent facilities supported by industry. These include a golf course, winter games pitches, an artificial grass pitch, and extensive library, workshop and laboratory resources. Specialist machinery and equipment is used throughout the curriculum to support the development of student learning and understanding of the practical, technical and scientific aspects of their chosen course and career. Courses are available for all levels from Introductory Diploma to an Honours Degree in Turfgrass Science. Courses are available for full-time attendance, part-time or on Online basis. Our FdSc Sportsturf and BSc Turfgrass Science courses are uniquely available ONLINE and have students enrolled throughout the UK, Europe and the American continent. Our Work based Training group offer NVQ's in the workplace from levels 2-4.

RODBASTEN COLLEGE

Penkridge, Staffordshire, ST19 5 PH

Contact: Keith Ellis

Tel: 01785 712209 **Fax:** 01785 715701

E-mail: rodenquiries@rodbaston.ac.uk

Website: www.rodbaston.ac.uk



Information: Rodbaston College offers an extensive range of courses, full, part time and day release. Full time programmes include; NPTC Skills for Life, Level One, 1st Diploma, National Award, National Certificate and National Diploma. Higher Education programmes can be studied on a part time basis and include Foundation Degree and the Bsc in Horticulture. Work based learning is available at NVQ 1, NVQ 2 and NVQ 3 and Rodbaston offers very extensive Train2Gain provision. Sports turf and green keeping can be studied to NVQ 2 and NVQ 3 level on a day release basis. The college offers a wide transport network to its learners as well as residential accommodation on site.

OAKLANDS COLLEGE

St Albans Smallford Campus,
Hatfield Road, St Albans,
Hertfordshire, AL4 0JA

Contact: Andrew Wight

Telephone: 01727 737735

Email: andy.wight@oaklands.ac.uk

Web: www.oaklands.ac.uk



Information

Full time courses: National Certificate in Sports Turf Management and Horticulture. Part Time courses: NVQ L2/3 in Greenkeeping, Lantra work based Apprenticeship. Short courses: NPTC PA1/2/6 and Chainsaw CS30.1 and CS30.2

WARWICKSHIRE COLLEGE

Moreton Morrell Centre,
Warwick CV35 9BL

Contact: Pat Foster

Tel: 01926 318347 **Fax:** 01926 318300

Email: Pfoster@warkscol.ac.uk



Information: Greenkeeping courses include: Foundation Degree Sports Turf Management (2 yrs full-time, 3 yrs part-time), NVQ Level 2 & 3 day release and work-based options, NPTC level 2 National Certificate Sports & Amenity Turf Management (1 yr full-time, 2 years part-time). A full list of horticulture, landscape design, arboriculture and floristry courses available at all levels. Short Courses include: Chainsaw Operation and Maintenance, Pesticide Application, Fences/Wooden Structures, Landscape Design, Tractor Driving, Hedgelaying and more. Warwickshire College also offer a range of land-based courses, areas include: Animal Welfare, Equine and Agriculture.



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fine turf industry and the contact details of the major companies supplying those products and services. The Handbook also includes a comprehensive greenkeeper membership.



Harrogate Week

Entry to a world class trade event. The Trade Exhibition has over 200 exhibitors and 8,500 visitors. There can be no better place to 'Continue to Learn' than taking part in the education programme. Students will find much that will demand their attention including seminars of specific interest. On production of your Student membership card you can attend the seminars FREE of charge. Not to mention the fantastic networking opportunities available throughout the whole of this week, another valuable way of learning... from those already in the industry.

On Course Field Guides

To aid with your study further, Student members are entitled to receive a FREE copy of each of the field guides available in the series. Produced in

a handy to use and read format. Thanks to the contributors to the BIGGA Education and Development Fund there are five in the series: -

- Golf Course Grasses;
- Identification and uses of the main grasses found in golf course rough;
- Identification of trees and shrubs on the golf course;
- Identification of damage caused by mammals and birds;
- The major diseases and pests of fine turf.

BIGGA Lending Library

Can't find the book you require in your local library or College Resource Centre? Why not check our library listing to see if the BIGGA lending library stocks the title for which you are looking? The lending library is available to all BIGGA members, allowing them to borrow up to two books for up six weeks, the only cost is return postage.

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Drainage: an important element of any golf course

Drainage is the lifeblood of any golf course and while much of the work is ultimately unseen by the golfer without it many courses would be unplayable for much of the year.

And it will only remain so. With projections for the next 70 years warning of a 16% increase in rainfall, coupled, incidentally, with significantly higher temperatures, drainage of golf courses will become even more important.

Meiklem Drainage, which now operates out of purpose built premises in Kelly, Fife, is already busy and by all accounts will be busier still.

It has carried out drainage improvement work on five of the St Andrews Links Courses – the Old, the New, the Jubilee, the Castle and a complete drainage system on Strathtyrum as well as Kingsbarns while it has also carried out trenchless drainage at Duff House Royal in Banff and the new G4 Course, at Blackford, next door to Gleneagles.

Off the golf course, Meiklem has also carried out work at the new Queen Margaret University College in Musselburgh and HM Prisons at Saughton and Perth.

Drainage is near the top of most enlightened golf clubs list of expected expenditure and drainage companies will be well placed to keep their order books full.

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John Meiklem
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or Colin Hutchison 07808 897 312

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Please apply with C.V. and covering letter to Tracey Julius by e-mail:

t.julius@burhillgl.co.uk
Tel: 01932 220815

Closing date: 16th July 2009.

Head Greenkeeper



An exciting opportunity has arisen for the role of Head Greenkeeper at one of the Midlands' most prestigious clubs. Luffenham Heath is a renowned HS Colt/James Braid designed heathland course set in a SSSI site.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the continued development of the course with recent Hawtree modifications and for enhancing its nationwide reputation.

You should be qualified to NVQ level 3, or equivalent, have spraying certificates (PA1, PA2 and PA6), and have experience in the management of bent/fescue greens, a high standard of course presentation as well as the ability to manage and motivate staff.

The position offers very good employment conditions: salary is negotiable along with a pension scheme. Please apply in writing to: The Secretary, The Luffenham Heath Golf Club, Ketton, Stamford, Lincs, PE9 3UU. Closing date 31st July 2009.



FORMAL MEETINGS - PART TWO: Grievance Hearings

In Part One of this series we covered the topic of formal disciplinary meetings. We now turn our attention to what happens when a formal grievance has been raised.

It may be the case while you are working that you have to raise a grievance or someone may raise a grievance against you.

Depending upon the nature of your grievance you may wish to attempt to resolve the issues informally. This may involve speaking to the person you have the issue with directly or alternatively seeking the assistance of someone more senior for advice regarding how you should approach the issue. In some cases this can be the most effective way of resolving workplace issues between staff. The informal approach can also be used when you are not happy about something that has been implemented by the Company.

It is entirely your decision, however, if you wish to approach the matter informally as detailed above or if you wish to take the matter onto a more formal setting by actually raising a formal grievance.

Formal Grievance Hearings - If you have raised a formal grievance you will be invited to discuss this in a formal grievance hearing. This letter should let you know the date, time and location of the meeting. It will also let you know you are entitled to be accompanied by a companion (the role of the companion will be covered in the final article in this series).

You may be asked to provide more infor-

mation regarding your grievance prior to attending a hearing if your employer feels that the information you have detailed does not provide them with enough information to understand what or who your grievance is about. Please note if a grievance is raised and it is found to be deliberately vexatious or malicious then the Company has the right to investigate this and take appropriate action against the person raising the grievance if they wish.

The meeting itself - At the hearing your employer will ask you details of your grievance. You need to be prepared to explain in detail the reasons for your grievance. This may mean you will have to provide information about specific incidents or events, specific dates, times. If someone has raised a grievance against you, your employer will present the allegations made against you, and you will have the chance to respond.

Investigations - It may be the case that your employer has to conduct various investigatory/informal meetings with other staff who are not directly related to the grievance. This will often be in order to gain clarity of what specifically happened at a particular point in time or on a particular occasion.

The decision from the meeting - It may take some time for your employer to reach a decision on a grievance raised. This may be because they have to investigate any findings from the meeting with the person raising the grievance or indeed from the person the grievance has been raised against. If you are

the person raising the grievance you will be informed of the decision/findings in writing. If your grievance is not upheld you will have the right of appeal against the decision.

It may be the case that your employer suggests some form of conciliation between yourself and the person the grievance has been raised against. This is often used when there are communication issues between two people and one person is not happy with how they feel and/or perceive they are being treated. This can often be very useful as it may be the case that you need to continue working with the person that you have raised the grievance about.

Appeal Meetings - A grievance procedure will also include a clause that allows a person dissatisfied with the original decision to appeal. If you have appealed a decision against a grievance you have raised then you will be invited to discuss this in an appeal hearing. This letter should let you know the date, time and location of the meeting and inform you you are entitled to be accompanied by a companion

The meeting itself - At an appeal meeting you will be asked to detail the specifics of why you are appealing. You will have written a letter prior to this, and your employer will want you to expand upon the information in your letter.

The decision from the meeting - Your employer will write to you with the decision/outcome of your appeal meeting and in most cases this decision will be final.



intheshed answers

QUICK 'NINE HOLE' QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. 7
2. 20
3. The Rolling Stone
4. Braiwaithe
5. Cricket
6. Kate Moss
7. Stereophonics
8. Richard Yates
9. Alec Guinness and Ewan McGregor

CROSSWORD

T	H	E	O	S	O	P	H	Y	T	O	P	U	P
U	A	T	L	O	H	O	O						
L	A	S	C	A	L	A	U	T	E	N	S	I	L
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I	T	A	L	Y	B	A	N	D	S	T	A	N	D

MONSTER SUDOKO

5	6	B	9	4	8	3	7	C	A	1	2
C	3	2	A	B	5	1	6	7	4	8	9
8	1	4	7	9	A	2	C	B	5	6	3
B	4	7	8	2	9	6	1	A	C	3	5
9	2	5	3	C	B	8	A	1	6	4	7
A	C	1	6	5	4	7	3	9	8	2	B
1	5	C	2	6	7	4	8	3	B	9	A
3	A	6	B	1	2	C	9	8	7	5	4
7	9	8	4	A	3	B	5	2	1	C	6
6	B	9	1	3	C	A	4	5	2	7	8
2	7	3	C	8	6	5	B	4	9	A	1
4	8	A	5	7	1	9	2	6	3	B	C

SQUIGGLY SUDOKO

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



On the Soapbox

A new vehicle for people within the industry to express their viewpoint

Greenkeepers are prone to complaints, this is a harsh fact. I have come to the conclusion that this is an occupational hazard and one that we have to accept as an inevitable fact.

We endure the unrealistic expectations placed upon us by members who see tournament standards on TV and expect the same at their home club. When those impossible expectations are not met, they criticise. But most of us put up with it; we work hard communicating and educating them. We do this because we love the job and we are realistic and educated enough to realise that those high expectations and nonsensical ramblings that happen at the bar are just that... nonsensical.

Speed of greens is the prime example; ask a golfer how to improve the speed of the greens and what would he say? Simple - CUT THEM LOWER! Well, if only it was that simple. If greenkeeping was that simple then why employ an experienced and educated greenkeeper at all? Why don't we all just do what members tell us to do, get the 13mm spanner out and hey presto... quick, TV tournament greens? Sadly some do get the spanner out, and throw a spanner in the works for everyone!

Cutting lower increases stress, this is a scientific fact, not rocket science, just simple plant science. We all know that the plant leaf is used to gain energy from the sun. We all know shade and a smaller leaf restricts the energy source to the plant. Yet some still advocate cutting at 2mm. This is a quick fix, and a quick fix attitude in greenkeeping is dangerous. Cutting our greens at ludicrously low heights to satisfy the moaning member is not only placing pressure on your grass, more disturbingly it places pressure on other greenkeepers. We place pressure on neighbouring golf clubs and their committee members, and who gets the brunt of the pressure? The poor greenkeeper who is thinking long-term. The quick fix answer may take the pressure off your shoulders short-term, but the long-term damage has been seen many times, a 13mm spanner is not the answer.

At the moment most greenkeepers and golf clubs don't cut at 2mm. They don't because they are educated to know better. We have all read, we have all seen and heard of the problems, some (like me) have even inherited the problems and are now working hard to rectify those problems. I now have 100% poa greens, thatch &

disease problems, Why? Because for the past 20 years or so we have been under so much pressure to achieve the unrealistic expectations set on us by members who know no better.

Why do we listen to those who know no better? Why do we not listen to our own expertise? Why do we stop listening to the experts? Sadly we still refrain from listening to those same experts saying the same thing. Those educated folks at the STRI, the R&A, the seed producers, and the college education system and, of course, the late great Jim Arthur. They are the educated guys, they have seen more, they have learnt more and know more about fine turf than those guys at the bar will ever know. Maybe it's time we listen to those educated guys instead!

Why employ an experienced and educated greenkeeper at all? Why don't we all just do what members tell us to do, get the 13mm spanner out and hey presto... quick, TV tournament greens

I suppose many would answer, those moaning members pay our wages. Yes, you are right; however, they don't pay for us to be submissive. They pay for our expertise; they send us to college, pay for seminars, books and publications. So how can they expect us to ignore all what we know, and all that they have paid for? They shouldn't. We are custodians of the club, we have a responsibility to safeguard our club's future and communicate our methods back to them.

We, as an industry can bang on about poa being a good grass until we are blue in the face, but if we are claiming that it is only good at 2mm and as long as there is a reliable water supply, a reliable chemical and fertiliser supply and our budget will sustain the extra cost, then quite frankly it can't be that good. I work on poa greens and it can produce a good surface, but at what cost? Are we confident that the reliable water supply will still be with us in the future, are we confident that chemical and fertiliser will be freely available. Are we confident that the expectations from our members won't increase?

My belief is simple; members' expectations will increase. I believe no matter what standard your greens are

now, the expectations will still increase. If you are cutting at 2mm now, you may have reached your Utopia. Can you sustain that? Can you improve on that? In the future your members will demand more, then what? Can we ever truly fulfil the high expectations placed upon us? I believe you can't. I believe we need to steadily improve, year on year.

Let's benchmark our courses now, let's collect data, let's be honest with our results and let's have those results for future greenkeepers to use as scientific backup. For years we have tried to defy science and fight Mother Nature, and during those years I have never seen this being done with any long term success. When are we going to learn? Maybe we won't. But maybe it's time for change... finally.



Course Manager at Bromborough Golf Club in Cheshire, and a Gingerbread Man!

Paul Lowe

The views expressed within On The Soapbox are not necessarily those of Greenkeeper International