



Chairman's Word

National Chairman, Andrew Mellon, gives his thoughts for the month

Changing seasons

Well, winter is officially here, and already we have had a few frosts to contend with. When you read this, the clocks will have changed, and the daylight hours drastically reduced. Going to work in the dark, as usual, but coming home in it also, is not far away.

The changing seasons add variety to the job, and every year throws up something new for us to deal with. Last year was the prolonged snow and ice, what is it going to be this year? It's good at this time of year to reflect on the season past, and learn from what went well, and what didn't.

In some ways in the UK we are fortunate with the climate we have to operate in, with less of the pests, diseases, temperature and drought extremes which they suffer elsewhere in the world. But it is not without its disadvantages. We do, on the whole though, manage to produce decent playing surfaces for the majority of the year, some with more difficulty than others due to their soil types, drainage, resources, etc.

As the weather worsens the demand for play drops, thankfully, and there is a task to be done protecting the course from damage by spreading wear and protecting all the fragile and wetter areas. The skills demonstrated by our members in dealing with these challenging circumstances allow golfers to continue to enjoy golf in areas, which would normally resemble flood plains.

However, we are not miracle workers, and as many of you will no doubt experience, there is a limit to what can be done. Many courses will experience very wet conditions, and extreme difficulty in doing anything about it.

Hopefully your members/owners will understand that you are doing everything with the resources they provide. It's not easy, but communication to them at these times is crucial, backed up with evidence and information, so they understand what the limitations are. You can also propose solutions, again backed up with evidence, costs etc, which allow them to make the decision on whether investment is worthwhile for what they desire.

These challenges are not new, and Greenkeepers have always had to deal with this,

but it is becoming more difficult as golfers' expectations now are much higher, even while we face this difficult economic climate.

If you are uncertain about how to deal with such a situation, or need any help or advice, I'd encourage you to seek support from your fellow members. Use the bulletin boards on the website, talk to other Head Greenkeepers nearby, and share your experiences.

Congratulations to our new National Champion Jason Hunt, and to the other prize winners who took part in the National Championship at West Lincs.

I was unable to attend due to other commitments, but I'm reliably informed it was a closely fought contest on a great course, and enjoyed by all.

Many thanks to John Muir and his team for their efforts, to the club for hosting the event and to the sponsors, Kubota and Charterhouse. Also to our staff who helped organise the event so well.

As the weather worsens the demand for play drops, and there is a task to be done protecting the course from damage by spreading wear and protecting all the fragile and wetter areas

The CEO, Jim Croxton, has been working hard with the team on the Strategic Review, and is starting to share his findings with the Board. This review cannot be done alone and we require the co-operation and assistance of the section committees. We shall be contacting them to help in this process.

If you look back at how the Association formed, it was by like minded individual members seeking out help and advice from colleagues, understanding that collectively they could achieve and learn more than in isolation.

In a similar way, we would like to ask the sections to support us in learning more about the members we have and how the sections are functioning. You will be doing your Association a great service by helping in any way you can with this work.

As the Association has grown, and the workload increased, we have relied more



Photography by Adam Turner

heavily on the work of our employed staff. However, there are elements of being an Association which rely heavily upon you - the member - playing a part, which will make it stronger and of more benefit not only to you, but to every Greenkeeper.

Please, if asked, do what you can to

help. In my greenkeeping career I've been fortunate to say that I have never had a Greenkeeper refuse me help. Not many professions would be able to say that, and that is why we are such a strong Association.

I hope to see as many of you this year at Harrogate as possible.

The Chief Executive and the Board will be presenting some of the plans for the future of your Association, based on the findings of the Strategic Review. It would be good to hear your initial feedback and any further views at that time.

Meantime, please feel free to contact myself or any Board member if you wish to discuss these matters further.

My best regards,
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Greenkeepers Training Committee



David Golding, GTC Education Director, encourages you to attend Harrogate Week 2012

Following on from recent Chairman of Green workshops, I encourage all Course Managers and Greenkeepers to make their plans to attend Harrogate Week 2012 and to bring along their employers.

Once again the Continue to Learn programme at Harrogate Week 2012 has something for everybody, and for many involved in golf course maintenance and management, it is the one event where they can truly bring themselves up to speed with everything, ranging from education, to what is new in technology, machinery and product development.

The GTC, in recent months, has been encouraged by the support for greenkeeper education and training it has received for hosting four EMPLOYER focused workshops around the country.

Whilst originally only scheduled as a pilot programme of three Chairman of Green workshops, ably delivered by Laurence Pithie MG, Turf Master One, to assist the Chairman of Green understand the role of the employer, the role of the Course Manager and all aspects of golf course maintenance more dates and venues have now been added.

The GTC, with tremendous support from English Golf Union staff and volunteers from their Golf Services Committee, believe we have broken new ground in improving the relationship between the Course Manager and their employer.

We know there was some concern from certain greenkeepers regarding workshops for Chairman of Green, however, I can only report on the feedback from delegates and their Course Managers which has by far exceeded our expectations in terms of how beneficial the events have been to their relationship back at the club.

Not only are we hoping to add dates and venues for Chairman of Green and Green Convenors in Scotland and Wales but also add workshops aimed at the employers and their Course Managers in

other key areas such as Health & Safety and Communications using GTC Quality Assured Training Providers.

From the very first workshop we had requests for Secretary/Managers and Course Managers to attend and in some cases three representatives from one club have attended.

All credit goes to Laurence for tailoring the workshops to ensure there is something for all and no topic is "out of bounds".

Please visit the GTC website to view the latest workshops, dates, venues and subjects.

I won't embarrass the Course Managers or their Chairman of Green or Secretary- Managers who have benefited from the workshops but I am sure you will see them promoting their improved relationship and appreciation of each others responsibilities in the turf and golf press very soon.

All designed to help bring about a better maintained and managed golf course.

The stories over lunch at the workshops have been enlightening to say the least but I must share one with you:

David Golding to Chairman of Green: "Have you enjoyed the morning session?"

Chairman of Green: "Brilliant, I didn't know there was so much involved in greenkeeping, it has given me so much information already, I will be now able to support our Head Greenkeeper better at future Green meetings"

David: "How long have you been a Chairman of Green?"

Chairman of Green: "Well, I had played golf at my club for years and years and decided to give it a rest this year. I didn't renew my membership.

However one sunny day in April I was walking the dog alongside the course and from the patio of the clubhouse I was beckoned over by my old pals and six pints later, here I am, back playing golf and as a Chairman of Green!!"

At last, my years of suspicion had been confirmed in one chance,



The GTC is funded by:



honest, brief chat over a lunch!

For so many the Chairman of Green position at a golf club, is the one nobody wants and so often it is a matter of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

It is now time to give these willing or often unwilling volunteers the support, education and training they surely deserve and for one person it totally changed his perception of the work required to maintain good quality playing surfaces and the wider environment.

I know this might be an exceptional story but for many years the constant changing of Chairman of Green has been a big problem to Course Managers

STOP PRESS

Chairman of Green - Secretary Manager Workshop to be held during Harrogate Week
DATE: THURSDAY 26th JANUARY 2012
VENUE: OAKDALE GOLF CLUB, HARROGATE (CLOSE TO TOWN CENTRE)

CONTACT THE GTC FOR FURTHER DETAILS

and one highlighted in the R&A's discussion document circulated to all British golf clubs back in 1989.

Course Managers have nothing to fear from these employer focused workshops and I sincerely hope this initiative, long overdue you might suggest, is just the start of a partnership which will see more employers side by side with their Course Managers at events like Harrogate Week.

The GTC's Quality Assured Training Providers and Centres are all looking to provide workshops and courses to help clubs have skilled and knowledgeable greenstaff and now knowledgeable employers who together with a good communication structure can provide an excellent golfing experience at their club.

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Learning & Development

Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development,
with an update on education issues

Happy Halloween! I know that it's already a thing of the past but I do like to mark the year with these little highlights. Bonfire Night is also a favourite of mine, watching fireworks followed by a trip to the pub with good friends – oh and I do like a good sparkler! Speaking of sparklers, Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week promises to be full of sparkles...



Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week 2012

Since the launch of the Continue to Learn 2012 education programme places have been selling fast with a few workshops full or almost full. My advice would be that if there is a workshop that you are particularly interested in attending, get your booking in quickly to guarantee your place.

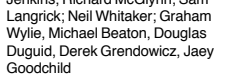
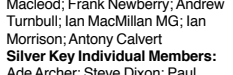
Feedback on the programme has been excellent and it is our intention to smash the record for the number of attendees through the education doors that was set in January 2011.

Seminar Sessions

There are a number of 'Featured Sessions' in the 2012 programme:

Tuesday 24 January

- The Biology and Effects of Parasitic Nematodes in Sports Turf – Dr Colin Fleming, Plant Pathologist, Agri-food and Biosciences Institute
- Managing Winter Kill in West of Scotland? – David Cole, Golf Course/Estate Manager, Loch Lomond Golf Club
- Important Health, Safety and Pesticides Updates – Jon Allbutt, Principal Consultant, Jon Allbutt Associates
- LinkedIn a Masterclass – Lesley Wood, Principal Consultant, Targeting Innovation Ltd
- Redefining IPM; Reduced Chemical Management of Golf



The funding provided by Gold and Silver Key Sponsors is used to produce training and career aids, DVDs, CD Roms, field guides and provide refunds for training fees and subsidised learning and development courses. The funding also helps support seminars, workshops, courses, the lending library, careers advice, posters and manuals.



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Course Turf – Frank Rossi Ph.D,
Professor, Cornell University

Wednesday 25 January

- Being a Professional and Living It – Bruce Williams CGCS, Owner and Principal, Bruce Williams Golf Consulting
- The Control of Earthworms on Golf Courses – Dr David Jones, Research Scientist, The Natural History Museum.
- Let's Re-build 20 Greens in 10 Days – Mission Impossible – Cameron McMillan, Course Manager, Queenwood Golf Club
- From Grazing to Scottish Open Status in Five Years – Chris Haspell, course Manager, Castle Stuart Golf Links

There are many more Seminar Sessions being presented by companies exhibiting at BTME and additional sessions are regularly being added. For full up to date information of the Continue to Learn education programme visit www.harrogateweek.org.uk/education/seminars.



Microsoft Online Learning

Are your IT skills as good as they could be?

We are now able to offer the new Microsoft Online Learning 'Skills Collections'. Skills Collections include beginners, intermediate and advanced learning for the selected Microsoft application.

Skills Collections are available in either 2007 or 2010 versions in the following subjects:

Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access, Project

Each of the Skills Collections is available to BIGGA Members at a reduced cost of £18.00 (inc VAT) thanks to the support of the Gold and Silver Key contributors to the Learning and Development Fund.

Other applications are available, contact the L&D Department if you have a specific requirement.



Higher Education Scholarships

Supported by Ransomes Jacobsen

The most recent scholarships have been awarded to:

- Greg Fitzmaurice – HNC in Golf Course Management
- Gary Douglas - HNC in Golf Course Management
- Craig Morris – Foundation Degree in Sports Turf (online)
- Stephen Jack – NVQ Level 4 Sports Turf Management

Solheim Cup Success

The hard work which went into preparing Kileen Castle for the fantastic recent Solheim Cup Match can be seen with this post match picture showing the staff and equipment involved.

Superintendent, Mark Collins, is pictured centre with his Deputy, Robert Kane, together

with the full time and volunteer staff as well as the support staff from John Deere and local dealer, Dublin Grass Machinery.

Picture taken by John Deere's Irish Territory Manager, Philip Tong



SPEEDCUT KEEPS DRIVING RANGE ON FORM



Burgess Hill Golf Centre in West Sussex has just had its 28 bay two-hectare driving range sandbanded by Speedcut Contractors.

Sandbanding was installed across the range following sandslitting along the length which they carried out three years ago.

"The operations have greatly improved

drainage on the range," said Head Greenkeeper, Damon Roberts. "Speedcut have always carried out a very efficient service for us."

Speedcut Contracts Manager Kevin Smith said: "Burgess Hill Golf Centre is in a beautiful location and we have a very good working relationship with Damon and his team."

John Deere Listed in 100 Best Global Brands 2011

John Deere has been included in the list of the 100 Best Global Brands for the first time.

This annual ranking is compiled by the consulting firm Interbrand and covers all industries worldwide.

Interbrand recognised that John Deere is continuously strengthening its global presence.

"The brand is also widening its focus by going beyond equipment to provide farmers and landowners with expert advice on how to get the most out of their land," Interbrand noted in the ranking comments.

"Being recognised as one of the top 100 brands among thousands of corporations reflects our consistent approach to serving our customers, and is the result of our ongoing commitment to markets outside North America," said Mark von Pentz, President of John Deere's Agriculture & Turf Division.

More Responsibility for Lely UK

From next year Lely (UK) Limited will become responsible for the distribution, sales, service and technical support of all Toro-branded commercial turf maintenance products distributed in the UK and Eire, includes all Toro-branded commercial products manufactured by Hayter, in Spellbrook.

While Lely will have expanded responsibility for all commercial products, Hayter will continue to handle sales, marketing and service support of Toro-branded consumer and landscape contractor products, in addition to Hayter-branded equipment.

Manufacturing of commercial and consumer products will also remain at Spellbrook.

As a result of this change, Toro's international division is working with Lely (UK) and Hayter to ensure that this does not affect their end-user customers. Through careful and thoughtful decision-making, Toro and Lely (UK) will be organising internal structures to meet the future sales and support needs of all its customers.

Lely has been a partner with the Toro Company for over 30 years and the move will strengthen the relationship of both companies.

INTERNATIONAL PLANT PROPAGATION SOCIETY

Linda Laxton, Managing Director and owner of British Wild Flower Plants, will become the new President of the Great Britain and Ireland region (which includes Europe) of the International Plant Propagation Society (IPPS) at the beginning of next year.

Linda, who has been an IPPS member for over 10 years and whose Norfolk nursery specialises in growing purely native plants from seed collected throughout the UK will be responsible for overseeing the running of this wing of the society, and liaising with the other IPPS regions world wide.



What's your number?

Our regular and random profile of an industry figure continues with this month's lucky number...

Name: Gary Mumby
Company: BLEC Global Ltd
Position: Managing Director



How long have you been in the industry?

Since I was 16 and I'm now 56. So that was back in 1971.

How did you get into it?

I was working for my father's landscaping company and carried on in the business before starting to develop and make my own specialist machines to help the job in about 1982. People started to buy the machines I made so I realised it was time to go into manufacturing full-time. I started BLEC in 1986 with my wife Sue, near Peterborough, where we have always been based.

What other jobs have you done?

Landscaping, sportsturf and manufacturing machinery have been my whole life. I had ideas to be an accountant before I left school – but luckily my father needed help in his business so I didn't get stuck in a desk job.

What do you like about your current job?

Meeting so many enthusiastic people in a very nice industry where everybody is friendly and keen to learn about new ways to tackle difficult jobs with new machines.

What changes have you seen during your time in the industry?

The introduction of so much good equipment for greenkeepers and groundsmen with new techniques and better education in turf maintenance and sportsturf construction techniques.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I don't have much spare time but a lot of my work involves travelling abroad to meet clients and distributors so I use the opportunity to visit the sights. Often at the weekends, when I'm home, I'm in the workshop working on new designs. I like watching football and support Arsenal.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

Still doing what I'm doing now, which I thoroughly enjoy. Inventing, making and demonstrating machines is a passion.

Who do you consider as best friends in the industry?

I have met so many people over the years – contractors, greenkeepers, groundsmen . . . and I can honestly say that they have all become friends, some of them very good friends.

What do you consider to be your lucky number?

7 - which happens to be my wife Sue's birthday in August and our wedding anniversary in June.

Spin and Relief... Bernhard launches the New Dual Master 3000iR

Driven by customer feedback, Bernhard has developed a double operation spin and relief grinder – the Dual Master 3000iR

Building on the technical foundations of the renowned Express Dual and Anglemaster system, the Dual Master 3000iR is the fastest, easiest and most accurate way to return your cutting units to manufacturer's specifications.

With the ability to change from spin to relief or relief to spin in under 60 seconds the Dual Master 3000iR can save time in the workshop so more time can be spent out on the course.

www.bernhards.co.uk



The Grass Group has unveiled the latest development from Advanced Turf Technology offering a progression for the INFiNiPower pedestrian drive unit which will now be available with an all new hybrid petrol/electric power unit. It incorporates a 1.5kw generator, coupled to a Honda GX-120 engine, to deliver a continuous 48V supply to both the traction drive and cutting cylinders' DC Brushless motors.

The INFiNiPower accepts ATT's versatile TMSsystem of interchangeable cassettes. This results in a walk behind mower and maintenance system to cut and maintain greens to the highest tournament standards.

Benefits of the hybrid design are reduced noise and better fuel efficiency.

This INFiNiPower offers variable clip rates based on forward travel speed. The unit also has a patent pending floating head mechanism which has no wear parts and offers a more consistent cut than any other mower on the market.

With a power requirement of 45hp, the S4 matches well with compact tractors but has a capacity of 4.0 cubic metres. The sweeping head with hydraulically driven brush has a 1.8m working width and the 250mm diameter suction hose scoops up material from kerbs, bins or inaccessible areas. A 4.5m² filter area gives 35 per cent more surface area for cleaner working.

www.thegrassgroup.com



Tidy Machine

Charterhouse Turf Machinery has launched a range of new machines both from lines such as the Verti-Drain and by extending into new groundcare areas.

The Turf Tidy incorporates de-thatching, flail cutting and sweeping using quick change rotors on a fully floating head that follows ground contours for a clean and even pick-up. The Turf Tidy lifts cores, leaves, pine needles, paper, and grass clippings. The three cubic metre hopper means less time emptying and its high lift allows greater clearance when tipping to 2.17m.

www.charterhouseturfmachinery.co.uk



Mighty Mechron

RECO-Kioti has unveiled its brand-new homologated version of the Kioti Mechron Utility Vehicle.

The homologated version of the Mechron is different to any other currently on the market as it includes a combination of both bucket and bench seats. This combination means that you can safely transport a driver plus two passengers when travelling by road.

Introduced two years ago the Kioti Mechron has been well received by RECO's dealers and the new homologated version will increase the usability of the machine further. The Mechron 2210 will have a RRP from £10,995.

www.recokiotti.co.uk



Spider Mower

The Ransomes Spider Mini, the latest addition to the range of radio controlled slope mowers, also includes the proven Spider 1 and Spider 2.

Compact in size at only 1040 mm x 900 mm with a 56 cm width of cut, the Spider Mini can access smaller and more difficult areas on wooded slopes, riverbanks and other constricted areas. At only 130kg its light weight ensures low fuel consumption and emissions, a turf friendly foot-print

and easy transportation.

Power comes from a 6.5hp Briggs and Stratton petrol engine with hydrostatic transmission and it is capable of speeds up to 4 km/h. The single rotary blade has a cutting width of 56 cm with a height of cut ranging from 40mm to 90mm.

The industrial quality remote control unit allows the operator to control the drive, steering, engine start and, if required, emergency shutdown.

The height of cut and blade engagement is controlled manually on the machine.

It will climb 25 degree slopes and with productivity up to 1500 sq metres per hour on a single litre of fuel, the Spider Mini is the ideal, cost-effective mower for difficult to access areas that require a maintained finish, such as lakes, dams, pastures and sloping lawns.

www.ransomesjacobsen.com

Harrogate Week 2012

Make it happen

You can only make full use of the Continue to Learn programme and, Harrogate Week as a whole, if you attend. That can often be down to persuading the people who ultimately make the decision that your being there would be a valuable use of both time and money.

So how do you go about making a strong, irrefutable, case for your attendance next January?

There are four main boxes which you must tick when putting forward your wish to be in Harrogate.



1. Understand Motivation

The person or people who make the decision on your attendance will be looking for clearly defined benefits; that expenses are reasonable and that the time out of the office is well spent.

You can assist this process by identifying reasonably priced hotel, B&B price via Reservation Highway www.reservation-highway.co.uk/conference_info.php. Another option is to consider sharing an apartment with friends or colleagues for the week, which can bring costs down.

Identify which workshops would be most beneficial to you and your employer, or who you are particularly keen to take in on the Education Conference or Seminar Sessions. Doing so can strengthen your case and increase your chances of being given the ok ahead to book up.

2. Understanding the Benefits that Impress

The two principle benefits of attending Harrogate Week are education and networking. The latter is a very important benefit but it is more difficult to quantify when building a case. You can outline who you spoke with, and any solutions you were able to identify, from networking during the week.

However, it is often speculative and difficult to quantify these

undoubted benefits. It is much easier to concentrate on the educational side where you can point to a specific course and how your attendance could have a direct benefit to the golf club.

The best way to do this is to link specific Workshops or topics on a Conference or Seminar session, as well as what you will be researching in the Exhibition Halls, to specific issues at work and then highlight what it is you will take from Harrogate and be able to implement back at work.

3. Quantifying the Benefits

It may well be worth breaking down and simplifying what it is you hope to achieve from your visit.

It would be wrong to assume that those making the final decision understand just how valuable the benefits of your attendance could be to the club. To assist, you should bring the Continue to Learn brochure with you when you attend the meeting, with the relevant elements highlighted.

4. Time Well Spent

Your decision makers need to appreciate that you are not seeking time off for a jolly but that attending Workshops, Education Conferences and carrying out research in the Exhibition is hard work.

Make sure you make them aware that you will be working through

lunch intervals and maximising the opportunity attending Harrogate has given you. Also make them aware that any social events take place outside of the regular Workshop, Conference or Show hours.

Once you have returned home ensure that you produce a report on what you have taken away from the week and what it will enable you to do. It will prove that not only has it been time well spent but money well spent as well.

It is important that you stress the value of attending educational events with the top quality speakers who are there, as the opportunity to tap into their knowledge may not come around too often. Harrogate Week is a once a year opportunity and if you miss out next year you will have to wait for another 12 months for the opportunity to come around again. It may be that your neighbouring clubs are taking advantage of everything and stealing a march on you.

**Harrogate Week 2012
January 22-26**

Information for the article was drawn from a Guide produced by the Club Managers of America Association.



The ultimate turf management exhibition in Europe

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www.harrogateweek.org.uk

Organised by the British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association



Industry Trade Shows: The debate

Established by BIGGA, the IOG and AEA, under the independent Chairmanship of David Gwyther of the Horticultural Trades Association, the Grounds and Turf Care Industry Forum set out to look into not only the current issues facing industry trade shows but also into how the industry could collaborate on wider issues. Following an extensive review of trade events in the sector – specifically BTME and IOG SALTEX – the Forum issued a statement recently reinforcing the view that there are significant differences between the two events and that they are not directly comparable. Market forces will continue to dictate the demand and make up of these types of event. David Gwyther provides some background to the Forum and its actions

1. What was the purpose of the Forum and why was it established?

It was originally established to review the most cost-effective routes for delivering trade shows to the sports turf sector, following questioning from within the industry as to whether running separate shows was the best way forward. I was very impressed at the integrity and openness of this approach, and the commitment that BIGGA, IOG and AEA brought to the process. So I was not surprised that the positive discussions we had on shows led on, in due course, to agreement to work together on a number of other areas.

2. Did the Forum evolve or change during the process?

The Group focussed firmly on the shows' issue initially, with a series of regular meetings backed by objective data analysis to inform them. This analysis had to be done independently and confidentially of course, not least because of the commercially sensitive nature of the data to both IOG and BIGGA. I am pleased that the composition of the forum continues to evolve positively, with the inclusion of BAGMA at our last meeting. It may be that other relevant bodies or individuals are brought on board over time.

3. You were appointed as independent Chairman with no commercial/membership interests in either show? What is your background?

I've been Director General of the Horticultural Trades Association (HTA) for many years. It's a large trade association, founded in 1899 and with a current turnover of around £27 million, so we have plenty of resources. They include political lobbying, training, and market research, but we're particu-

larly good at running events and have successfully established the National Plant Show recently following the demise of the old style GLEE show. So we've plenty of expertise to analyse the show scene and good experience of successfully evolving it.

4. How did you decide on what information you needed to start the process? What/whose data was analysed? Are you comfortable that the data presented to you was sufficient to enable the Forum to arrive at justifiable conclusions?

Because of our experience of these situations, we knew we needed robust visitor and exhibitor data from the existing shows. This data existed, but had never before been compared and analysed. We were therefore in a unique position of being able to do this – and it was therefore relatively easy to see a way forward for the immediate future. Clearly, though, performance output for the shows will need to be analysed in the future, and perhaps more targeted follow up research with exhibitors and visitors done, so that the situation is kept under constant review. This is a "work in progress" situation, not a final solution.

5. What was the process which resulted in the Forum reaching the conclusions which were announced last month?

As I said before, the initial focus of the forum's work was on the immediate future of the existing spread of shows. With the resolution of this, we were able to expand discussions to include new topics where common ground exists. These include training, policy lobbying, and market research, as well as bringing informed debate to

issues like pesticide use. However, the issue of the future composition of trade shows will be kept under review, to make sure that sensible responses to market forces are not missed.

6. How vital was it that EVERY aspect of the industry was considered?

Our focus has been very much on shows and methods of bringing suppliers and potential customers together. Other aspects of the industry can, though, now be considered by the Group not least to share best practice and ensure the most cost-efficient delivery of initiatives is developed on behalf of members. We're all very much focussed on serving the evolving needs of members, not maintaining a status quo.

7. Is the Forum adopting an open door policy going forwards?

Indeed – though I think membership has to be restricted to a small number of robust organisations who can properly represent their members' interests objectively. This obviously means that those members' views will come to the table and be properly considered. We'll also need to make sure that commercial sensitivities are handled confidentially and with care.

8. How important is it – to exhibitors as well as visitors – that trade shows continue to evolve and proactively adapt to market forces?

Absolutely fundamental. The forum was set up to ensure that market forces were properly taken into account in considering how best trade shows should evolve. There is total commitment to a process of constant review, and not seeking one off quick fixes.

