

# Quality Steel Buildings



[www.westcountrybuildings.co.uk](http://www.westcountrybuildings.co.uk)



**Domestic  
Commercial  
Industrial  
Agricultural  
Horticultural**

West Country Steel Buildings is an authorised distributor of Capital Steel Buildings, the leading producer of cold rolled steel buildings in the UK and Ireland. Working together means that we are able to provide the very best, cost effective buildings designed specifically to suit your needs

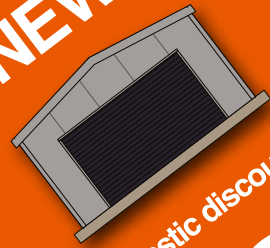
We offer a fantastic service and clever design solutions. Over the past twenty years we have built up a fantastic reputation of excellence and professionalism with a fine personal touch

Our expert team have a wealth of experience in both the design and construction processes and this comes with a proven track record

Mention that you saw us in Greenkeeper International magazine when you contact us

steel garages from as little as £1908.86

**NEW!**



fantastic discounts

**SPECIAL OFFER!**

visit [www.westcountrybuildings.com](http://www.westcountrybuildings.com) or email us at [sales@westcountrybuildings.com](mailto:sales@westcountrybuildings.com)



call us today

**01633 782 684  
07980 818 364**

# Back in time

## The Open at Royal Lytham & St Annes Special

Boasting ten Open Championships and two Ryder Cups, Royal Lytham and St Annes Golf Club, has a quite prestigious past. Paul Smith delves through the archives to offer us some memorable Open moments, historical accounts and anecdotes through the course's colourful ages

**In 1886, Royal Lytham and St. Annes Golf Club was founded and in 1897, the present course was built. Ten Open Championships have been played on the links, as well as two Ryder Cups.**

To run alongside our Open preview this month, Royal Lytham and St. Annes' Head Greenkeeper, Paul Smith, delves back through the archives to offer us some memorable Open moments, historical accounts and anecdotes through the course's colourful ages.

### Greenkeepers Past

It is a good thing if one can maintain a good sense of humour and have a good outlook on life; these attributes serve you well in greenkeeping which is likely to help you to achieve success in your chosen career. I am sure that we can all relate to some humorous account or incident in the line of our work.

In 1907 John Barnes was dismissed after 19 years of loyal service. He developed a habit of saying he was going down to the 9th hole, when in fact he nipped over to the Fairhaven Hotel across the railway. Back on the course one day he was found rather the worse for wear by a member.

Jim Marshall the Head Greenkeeper appointed in 1948, an outspoken and able Scot, moved a hole immediately before a member of the council played his difficult approach shot. The member complained that golf was hard enough without having a moving target, which Jim replied: "You shouldn't get up so b\*\*\*\*\* early in the morning". He almost resigned in 1949 when the senior club officials of the Bunker Committee had a running



battle building and removing drive bunker.

For the 1963 Open several members of the Open Championship Committee were out with Jim deciding where best to place the holes. At the 9th Jim said the gentlemen could mark where they pleased, but he knew the greens best and the holes would be placed where he chose.

Jim was succeeded by Leslie Beetham a man with his own mind. During a course inspection with the committee the captain mentioned that there were problems with various pests on the course. A man of few words Leslie replied the biggest pests were the members themselves. When he planted some trees on course they appeared to be in poor shape: in fact, a doctor pronounced them dead. Subsequently when they blossomed forth, Leslie



MAIN ABOVE: The halcyon days of greenkeeping, and a bloom of colour in the rough

AND INSET: Legend, Gary Player, helping the team out

said with a wry smile, he hoped he was more successful with his diagnosis of his patients.

Jimmy A. MacDonald MBE was my predecessor and worked as Head Greenkeeper for 26 years.

He was a charismatic, friendly and fun character always with a story to tell.

However, he landed himself in some serious trouble with Mrs





LEFT: Jimmy MacDonald: not a friend of the stimp meter!



MacDonald when he was quoted as saying that: "Lytham St. Annes was not the most beautiful of courses but it's not always the prettiest of woman that make the best wives".

He also had a hatred for the stimp meter and when an inquisitive member of the greenstaff sneaked one out on the course he was caught red handed and made to feel like Judas.

### A Historical Account

Hours of work have changed little since 1893. Lowe, the course architect, worked alongside eight men, starting at 7am, stopping for breakfast at 9-9:30 and dinner at 12-1. Knocking off time was 5:30pm for the men, and 5pm for the horses.

Work records included carting, lopping, scrub cutting (which we are still on with), thatching hay stacks, forking (now verti draining) and ploughing (now rotavating).

Making bunkers (which we are still on with today but have managed to reduce the numbers from 365 to 203), rolling (which from time to time we still do). Planting star grass, Lyme grass, making greens and tees, r兔biting, tree planting (many undesirable species we have removed), r兔biting riddling and unfortunately sweeping lime, "Oh dear".

### Memorable Open Moments

There was no easy round for Bobby Jones when he went onto win the 1926 Open.

He made a remarkable recovery shot with trouble all the way to the green, with a 175 yard carry at the 17th after he had pulled his drive into sandy wastes.

This moment of brilliance during the final round was the shot that won this legend the 1926 Open Championship.

Bernard Darwin was quoted as saying:

"A teaspoon more sand would have meant irretrievable ruin". Such are the margins between winning and losing in elite sport.

In 1969 Tony Jacklin's win was significant after so many years of overseas domination.

Ballesteros hooked left and sliced right; his ball dipped and detoured through sand and scrub venturing into unseen corners of the course including the occasional car park.

He executed some of the most memorable recovery shots in Open history and had the charisma that matched his style of play.

It is certainly true that he was the People's Champion and that his career was defined not only by what he won, but how he won.

## Royal Lytham & St Annes Inventory over the years

Here is an account of the materials and machinery itemised in the club's historical accounts

- W Woodcock Joiner: Making stable harness racks
- W Towler saddle and harness maker: Harnesses and mowing boots
- Nixon Bros: Shoeing the horses and repairing mowers
- T.O Richardson Veterinary surgeon - powders for horses and rasping teeth
- David Shaw & Co Manchester Sheep dip and manure manufacturers: 15 trucks of ground shoddy
- Phoenix Mill two tonne of basic slag phosphate manure
- Sheppey Glue and Chemical Works Sheerness slug destroyer
- T Braddell & Son Belfast 18 patent golf holes
- Dickson, Brown & Tait Finest mixture of the finest grasses and clover (and the odd bag or two I suspect of the coarse stuff!)
- W.Thompson, Seedman of Ipswich - Lotus Comiculatus Trifolium, Thymus, Serpyllium. These plants all have modest water requirements, tolerating dry conditions in poor soils and can survive harsh conditions. Some of which are low and prostrate in growth habit and can tolerate pedestrian traffic (perhaps these can be reintroduced?)

On the 9th December 1896 P.Sebire et Ses Fils, Horticulteurs-Pepinieristes of Ussy, (Calvados) France the following trees:

- 4,000 Canadian Poplar - 3 years
- 4,000 Italian Black Poplar - 3 years
- 1,000 Japanese Green Spindle trees - 3 years - none of these trees survived

Leech bros Manchester ironmonger's cricket roller and pump

- T Jackson Singleton Blacksmith new cart
- Alex Shanks & Son Arbroath 36" horse lawn mower
- J & H Keyworth Liverpool 20" Excelsior lawnmower
- J Bellamy Millwall 100 gallon cistern

Drainage was laid inland except from the 3rd and 4th fairways, where at the clubs expense, the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway constructed a drain under the line for an annual rental of 5/-

Grazing rights produced £30 p.a, while the sale of rabbits provided a further source of income £18.7s 4d in 1896

The Lancashire Steam Motor Company of Leyland sent a Sumner steam lawnmower with roller and fire pump combined, together with a man to work it, on a 14 day trial in September 1897

Amongst the advantages listed were:

- Costs only 1d per brake horse power per hour when at work, and no expense for grooming and keeping when not at work
- One man or youth can work a two man machine with steam power and do double the amount of work
- No damage to borders, no marks left by horses, no boots to buy
- No slipping of the rollers (a constant source of evil with horse machines)

The price of the mower was £75

The cost of laying out the links and buying the equipment was £2,500 of which £400 was for rental for 4 years and £1,000 for wages

During the war the ladies Links was ploughed up for crops and allotment holders were permitted to use



# Rain stops play...



## ...but not for long, thanks to the team at Slaley Hall

Jim Cook completes our series on the PGA Seniors Tour, as the De Vere Club Championship concludes at Slaley Hall

**“In all my years of greenkeeping, I’ve never squeegeed rough before.” So said Slaley Hall Golf Club’s Course Manager, Steve Cram, when talking about the inventive methods used to ensure play could continue at the ISPS Handa PGA Seniors Championship in June.**

When a deluge of rain caused play to be abandoned, tremendous work by the team at Slaley Hall led to the resumption of play and the eventual conclusion of the tournament.

Steve said: “We had the double shotgun pro-am on the Wednesday before the tournament and we had a lot of comments from the players that the course was looking as good as it has ever looked.

“We had the greens running at 11 feet and got the Thursday done, which was the first tournament round, then on the Friday we had 25mm of rain and they suspended play at 11am.

“Then on the Friday night into Saturday we had another 20mm, so we had 45mm of rain over about 24 hours.”

He continued: “So that was fun and on the Saturday we were using the squeegees on the greens and pushing water off the fairways, just to try and get play happening. It was a tough day.

“We had heavy showers all day and there were two or three greens that couldn’t take any more water so we had guys on those greens with squeegees all day, taking water off when the players were coming through.

“My staff and also the PGA and Senior Tour officials all mucked in, it was all hands to the pump. You’d get a radio message saying which green to go to and we were jumping around like that all day. It was a great team effort by all concerned; tremendous really.”

He added: “Our normal golf course set up routine for the tournament was gone on the Saturday and it was just a matter of making the course playable. The bunkers were big work because we had to get rid of every drop of water in them. We pumped it out and even used buckets to move the water. All through the tournament we started at 4am and we were finished at

about 8pm, with a little break in the middle, but on the Saturday we worked all the way through as there was so much extra to do with the squeegees.”

This was when he mentioned about having to use squeegees in parts of the rough. He said: “The water was right in the landing area and there was nowhere for them to drop so we had to push the puddles away.”

Another inventive method employed was to lift up the tines and use the roller off their verti-drain to move water away from



All images courtesy of Getty Images





landing areas. "I've never done that before either, so that was another new one. But it worked and that was the main thing," Steve said.

Previously they had used the verti-drain in its usual guise to help water drain from a few of the landing areas.

He spoke about how cutting became impossible: "Right up until the Thursday we cut everything every day, so greens were cut three times a day and rolled, fairways, tees and semi were cut every day, but when it got to Friday it was so wet that we couldn't cut anything except the greens.

On Saturday morning though, we couldn't even cut the greens because there were ball-markers everywhere from when play was suspended. Then on the Sunday we tried to cut as much as possible as the weather improved. So our schedule was severely impeded because whilst the course still looked good as we had put a lot of work into it beforehand, we couldn't present it how we would have ideally wanted to."

The tournament should have been 72 holes but was cut down to 54 holes.

Steve said that preparation over previous years had helped enable the tournament to be played: "If it had just been a general play day, the course would have been closed and a lot of the courses in the area were closed at the time. I think the big thing for me was that the work we have done over the last four years helped. Without some of the work we've done on fairways and especially greens, the tournament wouldn't have been completed. Whilst it wasn't great, it was still a success because we managed to get it played."

Their efforts were much appreciated by the players, as Steve highlighted: "The feedback we got was excellent. You always get good feedback from the player who wins, but all the way through the field people were positive and just happy that it could be played.

All the players had played either in the Wednesday pro-ams or had practiced on the Tuesday, so they saw what condition the golf courses were in before the rain.

The greens were running really well and true. I think they felt a bit of disappointment on our behalf, but just pleased that it could be played.

A lot of them were thanking us on their way around when we were using the squeegees. "Well done lads, you're doing a great job, keep it going", they would say."

He summed-up his thoughts



about how the tournament went overall: "There is a mixed feeling really. On one side a bit of disappointment that we couldn't present the golf course to how it should have been and how it was before the rain. On the other side though, there is that sense of achievement that we managed to get it played under adverse conditions."

The next big tournament at Slaley Hall will be the PGA Cup in September 2013 and Steve said they were now busy working on what might need to be done to the greens in preparation for future downpours.

At every level in greenkeeping there are constant occurrences of fortitude in the face of adversity, often in the form of Mother Nature! The efforts by the team at Celtic Manor in 2010 would be a fine example. The endeavours at Slaley Hall were another such accomplishment.



**"In all my years of greenkeeping, I've never squeegeed rough before"**  
Steve Cram  
Courses Manager



ABOVE: Paul Wesselingh and RIGHT: receiving the ISPS Handa PGA Seniors Championship trophy

(All images courtesy of Getty Images, except Steve Cram, courtesy of Slaley Hall)





# Wear and tear

Dr Terry Mabbett discusses the wider weed and disease implications of wear and tear on turf, a topic of interest to greenkeepers at all levels

**2012 was supposed to be the year when wear, tear and stress on UK sports turf would reach unprecedented levels from a population fuelled and fired up into frenzied sporting activity, inspired and encouraged by the Olympics being held on home grown turf for the first time in more than sixty years.**

In late March it looked almost certain that UK turf, having been well-trodden during a much heightened sporting season, would take an accompanying and related hammering from unprecedented hot and sunny weather and intensifying drought.

Grass plants were already struggling to grow and sports turf faced the looming possibility of being 'hung out to dry' to a degree not seen in living memory even during the summer of 1976. A clutch of water authorities covering southern and eastern England and parts of The Midlands completed the deteriorating picture by introducing severe water-use restrictions, including hosepipe bans, on all and sundry including the sports and amenity sectors.

## Hosepipe bans and monsoons

Having reached this 'high and dry' point everything promptly started to go wrong or right whichever way you care to look at it, and in classic British style. Temperatures plunged in April so that sports and amenity turf along with every other growing system, including flowering shrubs and bedding plants, were placed in 'suspended animation' for at least one month. Consequently what appeared in March to be one of the very earliest springs on record was transformed into one of the latest.

Repercussions from this truly 'upside down' and 'inside out' weather pattern subsequently spread far and wide not least there being hardly any May Blossom (hawthorn flowers) to celebrate May Day and garland 'The Queen of the May' and something that very rarely happens. To crown it all rain started to fall within hours of the hosepipe bans coming into effect and rain it did. Apart from a pre-Jubilee week of very warm weather it feels like the rain hasn't stopped since April and for me brings back memories of trying to work in the



The 'seeds' of diseases like Fusarium Patch and Anthracnose are established on turf stressed out during mid to late summer (Photograph 2) from drought and heavy traffic. But the symptoms invariably do not show until the long shadows and fallen leaves of autumn

rainy season in Trinidad where it buckets down for days if not weeks on end.

As I pen this piece just after the Queen's Jubilee it is not so much 'Flaming June' but 'June Monsoon' but without temperatures in the 75 to 85°F range that accompany the monsoon in the hot and humid tropics. Wear and tear on turf appears to be no problem and is the last thing on most people's minds, simply because the weather is just too bad and playing surfaces too inundated to play sport. Indeed the grass looks lusher and greener



than I can ever remember for mid-June. Major and iconic sporting and amenity events including cricket matches and county shows are being cancelled.

However, there is still time. Turf and sports turf in particular is the most reactive of all terrestrial green plant surfaces. Not only does it rebound and recover growth, colour and quality quickly, even after receiving the most severe hammering from intense traffic and high-temperature low-moisture conditions, but will just as quickly regress when such conditions return.

Weather forecasters are predicting unsettled and very wet weather for the rest of June but the promise of a 'proper' summer from July onwards is on the cards. If this turns out to be true it won't take long for today's soaked and sodden turf to dry out. Following two hot dry months all this water and green grass could be a distant memory by early September.

What's more I suspect a lot of ground is still compacted, in spite of near record rainfall levels, from the prolonged winter and early spring drought. At the same time appalling weather conditions experienced since April will have disrupted a lot of 'bread and butter' turf management work designed to alleviate ground compaction and to promote grass growth.

**Wider implications**

The immediate implications of heavy wear and tear on turf are heightened physical damage and physiological stress, accompanied by soil compaction and the formation of hard-pan soil surfaces which simply add onto and aggravate grass plant stress. Heavy traffic and higher wear and tear is invariably accompanied by high-temperature, low-rainfall conditions for the very good reason that sunny dry weather brings out sportsmen and sportswomen in their droves.

Tunnel vision and vertical thinking has no place in the long term management of turf. Turf managers are required to understand and appreciate the bigger picture and wider implications of turf stress from wear and tear and heat and drought, and not least when it comes to turf disease and weed growth in professional sports and amenity turf.

Specific turf weeds and diseases which become prevalent during periods of summer stress are relatively easy to understand and appreciate. However, there will be



Sports turf is a highly reactive surface. Golf tee shown here (photograph 1) during the hot dry April and May of 2011 and just weeks later in June 2011 (Photograph 1A) after substantial rain

other and often more serious long term problems, the 'seeds' of which are sown during summer stress but which do not show until autumn.

**For turf weeds**

As wear and tear builds up and turf progressively dries out the ability fine grasses as a sward to compete with broad leaf weeds changes. Balance will be progressively and often violently tipped in favour of the clovers, tap-rooted rosette weeds that can penetrate and withstand the hard compacted upper layer, and inherently drought resistant weeds like yarrow.

Grass effectively stops growing being unable to access sufficient water and therefore soluble nitrate for leaf growth. The clovers including white clover, yellow suckling clover, black medic and bird's foot trefoil do not have this problem. They can fix their own nitrogen via bacteria in the root nodules and therefore carry on growing, flowering and setting seed at the expense of turf grass.

During periods of mid to late summer drought it is not unusual to see huge patches of these patch forming weeds in full flower. These clover biotypes are well adapted to turf by presenting a ground hugging prostrate habitat that allows flowering stems to escape the mower blades, and adding to the weed seed load that finds plenty of germination sites in the now threadbare turf.



Under drought conditions it is not unusual to encounter huge patches of white clover which is a typical matt forming weed of turf





Bird's foot trefoil has the added advantage of a sturdy and deep seated tap root enabling it to access water from a deeper position within the soil profile and to withstand the physical forces and physiological disadvantages (compressed spaces between soil particles unable to hold water) of an increasingly resistant compacted soil. Other weeds with tap roots and indicative of dry compacted soils include the plantains and a range of weeds from the plant family

Compositae (Asteraceae) including dandelion and cat's ear, and even ragwort and sowthistles where unrepaired divots provide prime germination sites.

Other weeds which thrive under these conditions include creeping cinquefoil and yarrow, the latter perhaps the ultimate drought resistant weed due largely to finely divided leaves and a thick leaf cuticle that massively restricts water loss by transpiration.

Yarrow is perhaps the summer inspired weed problem with the greatest long term effect. During

exceptionally hot and dry summers it is not unusual to see a completely dried out and 'browned off' turf grass sward with increasingly large rosettes of yarrow still green and in flower.

Come autumn, with rain and a dose of fertiliser for good measure, the highly reactive turf grass sward will bounce back, but not as fast as yarrow with its head start because the yarrow plants never stopped growing. For this reason September and October are invariably the months when yarrow is seen at its highest incidence in turf.

**For turf diseases**

Much has been written about climate change and how this will change the spectrum and incidence of diseases on UK turf. Given the popular scenario for hotter and drier summers followed by milder and much wetter winters, dollar spot, red thread and brown patch, which are more commonly associated with hot spells and summer conditions, would appear be among

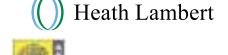


the most likely candidates.

However, after several consecutive years of cold dry winters and exceptionally cool and very wet summers these particular climate change predictions appear to have gone astray. Best that can be said is that our current climate is 'changeable' under the influence of what has recently been dubbed 'global wierding'.

As such hot and dry, high traffic spells putting turf under stress will continue to benefit the two most important classic diseases of UK turf (Fusarium patch and anthracnose). The pathogens causing these diseases are essentially put 'on their marks' in summer but don't explode off 'the blocks' until autumn.

Return of rain in September, often accompanied by heavy dews and mists, and the subsequent appearance of soft, succulent fertiliser-promoted grass growth by an inherently weakened sward provides ideal conditions for these thatch residing fungi to move up through the gears and into a full parasitic disease-causing mode.



This article comes to you courtesy of the BIGGA L&D Fund. Thank you to all our key sponsors



**TOP LEFT:** The strong and deep seated tap root on bird's foot trefoil allows this 'clover' to ride out drought

**TOP RIGHT:** Completely dried out turf with yarrow (white flowers) and creeping cinquefoil (yellow flowers) still green and in flower

**BOTTOM LEFT:** Tap rooted weeds of the Asteraceae (Compositae) like ragwort shown here will exploit drought stressed turf especially with unrepaired divot damage

**INSET RIGHT:** Yarrow is inherently drought resistant thanks mainly to its finely divided (fern-like) leaves with a thick waxy cuticle characters that minimise water loss through transpiration

**INSET BOTTOM RIGHT:** Heaviest infestations by yarrow invariably occur in autumn, the weed having a head start over drought stresses grass when wet weather sets in during autumn and the sward receives fertilizer.





vitax  
**Enhance R**

vitax  
**Enhance F**

## Complete Nutrition For Fine Turf

### Bio-active fine turf fertilisers with **Amino-Sorb®**

The Enhance range of fine turf fertilisers deliver a unique package of nutrients including:

- Organic N & P
- Bacillus Subtillis - the microbial component
- Complete Trace Element Package
- Vitamins

Plus **Amino-Sorb®** - the biostimulant that creates a stress-free environment

Now available in a range of formulations to meet every need:

**Enhance R** - micro-granular fertilisers suitable for golf greens, bowling greens and quality sport pitches

**Enhance F** - rapid response liquid fertiliser for foliar and root zone feeding (Available in Spring/Summer, Autumn/Winter and Zero phosphate formulations)

**And now:** Enhance R Outfield (Spring/Summer) suitable for sports pitches, fairways and longer-mown sports and amenity pitches

Maximum utilisation by plants effectively reduces fertiliser use by up to 20%



For more information visit [www.vitaxamenity.co.uk](http://www.vitaxamenity.co.uk) Call on 01530 510060 and email [sales@vitaxamenity.co.uk](mailto:sales@vitaxamenity.co.uk)

# Bioliift®

## Turf Treatment

**Bioliift** Turf Treatment is extracted from Vermicompost which is well known as an effective and economical Biological turf treatment.

**Bioliift** Turf Treatment is simple to use, safe for you and your customers and will allow you to reduce the amount of expensive pesticides and fertilisers you use.



**Bioliift** can

- Suppress parasitic nematodes, fusarium, dollar spot, fairy ring and dry patch
- Enhance germination
- Promote quicker root development
- Release plant nutrients naturally
- Aid in active efficient uptake of nutrients
- Improve stress resistance
- Assist in foliar and root disease suppression
- Effective for regeneration on oil and other pollution spills
- Safe with other biological controls

Ready to use - diluted - straight out of the can

**As every good Groundsman knows  
it's all about the ROOTS**



Bioliift® and ReVITEALised Compost Tea are registered trade names of XL Horticulture's Pro Bio division

Ottery St. Mary, Devon. EX11 1JZ Tel 01404 823044. Email [info@xlhorticulture.co.uk](mailto:info@xlhorticulture.co.uk)





# Managing greens performance

Sid Arrowsmith MG (left) enjoyed a visit from Laurence Pithie, of Turf Master One Ltd, at Frilford Heath GC in Oxfordshire. The challenges faced and the work involved in implementing a measured greens improvement program, were on the agenda



**Frilford Heath GC, formed in 1908 lies seven miles south of Oxford and is one of a handful of clubs to offer three courses of genuine championship quality.**

The site encompasses an area of some 500 acres (about 75% of which is designated SSSI) and is an oasis of light sandy soil overlying sandstone in an area surrounded by Oxfordshire clay.

Land that was deemed of little use for agriculture over a century ago was found to be ideal in the pursuit of golf by Frilford's founding generation.

The original Red course was laid out by JH Taylor. Soon after the end of WW2, the Green course was added, first as 9 holes then eventually 18 by JH Turner and CK Cotton respectively and more recently Simon Gidman produced the Blue course which opened for play in 1994.

The club is a popular venue for tournaments and is regularly stages national championships and international matches. The English Amateur championship makes a return visit in 2013 and each year, the club plays host to the first of the year's PGA EuroPro Tour

events; an acknowledgement of the course being in excellent playing condition early in the year.

## SHARED OBJECTIVES

A board of directors has been appointed to run the club's affairs and to ensure its future viability. Recent changes to the board have brought about the desire for a strategic review and, following the appointment of 'Jimmy' James as General Manager, a process of change has been instigated. Course Manager Sid Arrowsmith, one of only 61 BIGGA Master Greenkeepers, takes up the story.

"Until recent times, the aim has always been to produce courses which are of good quality and offer enjoyment to members and visitors alike, while carrying out as little disturbance to the playing surfaces as possible.

Over a prolonged period of time though, trees encroach upon playing areas, the level of scrub increases and the build-up of thatch and fibre continue on greens and fairways. No club is immune from having to carry out work which is often deemed unpopular and disruptive and although a

discreet balance was successfully maintained, the issues facing the club never disappeared."

Sid, who has been at the helm of Frilford Heath since 1993 after spells in Paris and at Royal Portrush, continues, "Although the club was previously aware of many of these issues, it wasn't until 2010 that plans were drawn up and a more concerted effort made to enhance the quality and reputation of the club.

"As part of the review process, the club sought external expertise to produce environmental reports which included trees, other vegetation and rare plants. This together with a more recent irrigation appraisal and bunker review has given the club the background information it requires in order to move forward and further develop the courses within their natural environment.

"In order to achieve the all-important requirement of excellent putting green performance, which would meet the necessary criteria for the forthcoming English Amateur, the STRI were invited to assist with this process.

The main objectives were to provide putting surfaces that were