

#### THE GTC AT NUMBER TEN

Donald Steel reports on a greenkeeping visit to Downing Street

A penny off a pint of beer was not the only good news emanating from Downing Street recently. The week before the Chancellor issued his budget, greenkeeping history was made with an invitation to the GTC from the house next door.

As part of the government's new Apprenticeship trailblazer scheme, Ryan Bezzant, a current registered apprentice from Ealing GC, accompanied by David Croxton, proprietor of Cold Ashby GC, crossed the threshold of Number 10 for a ground-breaking cup of tea and cosy chat in company with other trailblazer companies or organisations committed to ensuring the Apprenticeship for their sector.

It was the notable culmination of twenty years of pioneering work spearheaded by David Golding in setting, improving and preserving the training of young greenkeepers from which everyone playing the game in Britain has benefited beyond measure.

The initiative is employer-led, the relevance being that the average golfer forms the band that pays the piper. Their education is largely funded by the private or proprietary Clubs, funding to which golfers contribute by way of a subscription to their county and national Union. Other valued contributors include the European Tour and the PGA whose members are equal beneficiaries of the important training.

What is more, the success of the scheme is that employers have the confidence to leave the experts to do the work. The fact that they like what they see is proof of the giant strides that the entire industry has taken over the last twenty years.

Condition and presentation of courses is a credit to all but it is a team exercise in which BIGGA, in particular, are crucial players. It is one thing for recruits or apprentices to receive a theoretical grounding from the Colleges and training providers with online learning becoming an increasingly popular option.

However, the really crucial cog in the wheel is turning theory into practice through the hands of their skilled elders, many of whom started their careers as apprentices themselves. The glittering array of machinery on display at BTME 2014 was just one example of the responsibility they bear.

It is all a reflection of the dramatic change of attitude from the days when head greenkeepers could be grudging in imparting their secrets. Nowadays, the greenkeeping fraternity trades on friendliness and co-operation, a process of better communication and understanding. Apprenticeship trailblazing is recognition of how the world of greenkeeping has come to terms with modern needs but it doesn't stop there. The message has to filter through to the playing ranks which are also keen to learn the whys and wherefores. Their willingness not to interfere shows they are increasingly trusting and appreciative of what is being done on their behalf but they will be even more receptive if they are kept better informed. That is not the least of the current challenges in order that the promise of greater stature and authoritative freedom for greenkeepers is to be achieved.

By way of a footnote, work is now underway, through the GTC, to ensure the new Greenkeeping Apprenticeship Standard will suit both employers and apprentices alike. Ending where I began, I commend it to the House!

Donald Steel

## BUYERS' GUIDE

# A day at the races for Polaris

The climax of the Jump racing season is the Cheltenham Gold Cup in mid-March and for many it is seen as the best day's racing of the year. Over two hundred thousand racegoers flocked to the Cotswold venue this year to enjoy the four terrific days of action. The concentration of such a crowd in one place over those days is a logistics challenge to the people responsible for ensuring the fastest response to emergencies, on and around the course.

Cheltenham has four Polaris ATVs/UTVs to provide the swiftest reaction to any emergency. A Sportsman 400 is used as a general purpose vehicle by groundscare staff and as a back-up vehicle. Tony Twiggs is the Race Course Medical Co-ordinator and he predominantly uses a Sportsman 550, as well as the 400.

"The Sportsman is such a versatile tool, very manoeuvrable and ideal when you're dealing with crowds." says Tony. "It's also small and compact to move around freely in all conditions. While the acceleration is quick, it's easy to drive slowly as well and comfortable for working the hours we do."

Race Horse Ambulance Ltd. is one of the organisations working with Cheltenham and director Sebastian Garner uses the course's Ranger 400 as a rapid response vehicle to treat horses on the course. "We have horse ambulances parked up in readiness but initially we use the Polaris as the fastest means of reaching a horse that may be injured or in distress."

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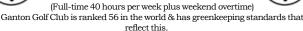
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#### Recruitment



#### Ganton Golf Club

Qualified Assistant Greenkeeper



The successful candidate will be able to meet the following key criteria: · NVQ level 2 as a minimum

· A minimum of three years full-time experience at Assistant Greenkeeper level with references available from employers recognised for their high quality standards

Proven history of: high working output, producing work of the highest quality standard with attention to detail, being a positive member of a professional maintenance team, flexible attitude and possessing a strong desire to be the best · PA1, PA2 and PA6a chemical application licenses & chainsaw qualifications desirable

CVs with a covering letter detailing how you meet the key criteria should be sent to the Secretary, Ganton Golf Club, Station Road, Ganton, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO12 4PA or by email to richard@gantongolfclub.com.

Closing date: Friday 25th April 13



#### Selsdon Park Hotel & Golf Club

We are currently looking for two ambitious and motivated individuals to join are already experienced team.

Full Time Greenkeeper (annualized hours, 39hr average per week over the year)

- Have a minimum of 3 years experience
   Hold a NVQ Level 2 in Sports Turf
- Have A flexible and positive attitude to work
   NPTC Chainsaw certificate preferred but not essential
- Current first aid certificate preferred but not essential

PA 1, 2, 6a Spray Certificates- preferred but not essential
 Casual Greenkeepers (Full time, April - Sep) 40 hours per week, Mon-Thu, Sat-

Sun (Part time, Oct-Mar) 20 hours per week, Mon, Tue, Fri. Previous experience is not essential but is an advantage. Applications for both positions should be made to steven.allchorne@principal-hayley.com Please send a covering letter along with your CV.



#### Malden Golf Club

Malden Golf Club is a friendly private member's club in Surrey with an outstanding traditional 18-hole parkland course designed and laid out in 1926. The course condition has been greatly improved over recent years thanks to the expertise of the Head Greenkeeper and his team, together with considerable investment from the club. We are now recruiting for this position due to our current HGK moving to another club. We are seeking an ambitious, highly motivated and experienced individual to manage the golf course and build on the improvements to the course in line with the club's long term development programme, which includes all playing surfaces and in-house bunker refurbishment.

This position is ideally suited to an experienced Head Greenkeeper who wishes to establish a reputation for creativity and excellence. We are, therefore, offering a very competitive salary and benefits package which is negotiable dependent on the experience, qualifications and circumstances of the right candidate. Malden Golf Club seeks someone who can offer the following skills and experience:

- · A hands on Manager who can motivate their team
- Five years golf course management with at least two years at senior level
  - · Qualified to NVQ 3 or equivalent
  - Spraying certificates PA1, 2 & 6 · Detailed knowledge of health and safety regulations
    - Understanding of ecological management
      - Computer literate
      - Excellent communication skills
- · Ability to supervise and motivate a team and plan work schedules effectively
  - Experience in managing costs within agreed budgets
  - A keen eye for detail with a desire to exceed members expectations.

Interested applicants please apply including a CV to: manager@maldengolfclub.com Or write to: Mr N. Coulson-Bence, Malden Golf Club, Traps Lane, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4RS Tel. 0208 942 0654



#### Greenkeeper

Closing: 10th April 2014

Location: Kingsdown Golf Club, Wiltshire Salary: Subject to experience and qualifications

Contract: 3 Months Fixed Term, Full time. Depending on the needs of the business, there is potential to extend this contract or make it permanent in due

As a Greenkeeper you will be required to assist the greenkeepers to maintain the golf courses by carrying out gardening and performing general duties such as machinery operation, general grass mowing, bunker raking and maintenance, divoting tees and fairways, moving of tee markers, tournament preparation and general golf course set up. You will also be exposed to cleaning and lawn maintenance chemicals and all weather conditions. Previous experience in this area would be preferred but not essential as full training is provided. Green keeping NVQ level 2 and spraying certificates would be an advantage. Due to Health and Safety requirements applicants must be aged 18 or over. The successful candidate must have a good positive work ethic, producing work to the highest standard and be able to work as part of our team as well as under his or her own initiative. The role comes with an attractive rate of pay which is negotiable and based on experience.

Shift details: March: 7.30am - 3.30am. April onwards: 6.00am to 2:00pm and alternate weekends 5:00am to 8:00am. (Some flexibility regarding hours will be required during busy times).

Start date: March/April End date: approx June 2014

If you have these qualities and wish to join our team please apply in writing or email including a full CV to: Neil Newman, Manager, Kingsdown Golf Club Limited, Kingsdown, Corsham, Wiltshire, SN13 8BS

Tel: 01225 743472

Email: secretary@kingsdowngclub.co.uk Website: www.kingsdowngolfclub.co.uk



#### St.Mellion International **Deputy Course Manager**

St. Mellion International is renowned as one of the finest 36-hole golf venues, being a regular in the Top 100 and having hosted 12 European Tour events. Recently voted 'Best in the West' for second year running and rated in the top 4 of Today's Golfer resort list.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the greenkeeping team. The successful applicant will need to be experienced, hard working, reliable and highly motivated.

They will need to demonstrate a professional and modern approach to green keeping, the ability to communicate, lead & develop a large team. Applicants will, as a minimum, be expected to demonstrate a proven track record of the following:

- NVQ Level 3 in Green keeping or higher in Sports Turf Management.
- · A minimum of 3 years supervisory experience with a proven ability to plan, organise and implement work programs.
- Proven ability to motivate, lead, develop and mentor others.
- Computer literate.
- To be able to prepare and implement budgets
- PA1, 2 and 6a spraying certificates
- · Equipped both technically and practically to undertake green keeping duties to the highest standard required at a Championship venue
- Knowledge of Health & Safety legislation.

It would be an advantage but not essential to have:

- · Irrigation experience including repair and maintenance
- NPTC Chainsaw license
- · Good working knowledge and maintenance of fine turf machinery
- Construction experience
- Current First Aid Certificate

Salary will depend on experience and qualifications

Due to the expected high level of applicants, only those successful for interview will be contacted.

Please send a full CV with a detailed covering letter to; Mike Bush MG

St.Mellion International, St.Mellion, Saltash, Cornwall, PL12 6SD Email; stmellion-greens@crown-golf.co.uk

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Applications are invited from people who wish to be part of a dynamic, innovative and rapidly growing business, and can contribute to our existing close team of Technical Area Managers as well as acting on their own initiative.

well as acting on their own initiative.

Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. The position offers a quality company car and other benefits after a successful qualifying period. Applications by post or email should include a full C.V and be sent to;

Check out www.bigga.org.uk/careers for more detailed information

Paul Vipond, Headland Amenity Ltd, 1010 Cambourne Bus. Pk., Cambourne, Cambs CB23 6DP Email: info@headlandamenity.com Telephone: 01223 597834 Closing date: 23rd April 2014

#### Selby Golf Club

Selby Golf Club is a private members club situated in North Yorkshire. Founded in 1907 the Club enjoys a beautiful par 71 course built on sand and is looking to the replace the Head Green Keeper who has moved abroad.

We are looking to recruit a dynamic individual who has the drive and passion to reach new standards of excellence in the management and presentation of our golf course. The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate high levels of management skills, communication and leadership within the role and will hold relevant greenkeeping and / or agronomy qualifications. Previous experience as a Head Greenkeeper is desirable but not essential.

Interested applicants should apply in writing enclosing a full CV and covering letter no later than Monday 21st April 2014 to the Secretary / Manager, Selby Golf Club, Mill Lane, Brayton, Selby, North Yorkshire, YO8 9LD.

For more information about the club please call 01757 228622 or visit www.selbygolfclub.co.uk



#### COURSE MANAGER ROYAL PORTRUSH GOLF CLUB

Royal Portrush Golf Club is a traditional Private Members' Club located on the magnificent North Antrim coast in Portrush, Northern Ireland. The Club complex comprises two Championship courses, the world renowned Dunluce Links and the Valley Links, plus a nine hole Par 3 Course. The Dunluce Links has played host to The Open Championship, The Irish Open, The Senior British Open and The Amateur Championship and is consistently voted as one of the Top 20 Courses in the World. Due to the forthcoming retirement of our Head Greenkeeper, the Club wishes to recruit a dynamic individual to fill what will be the newly-created position of Course Manager. The remit of the new position will be to develop new standards of excellence in the management and presentation of the Royal Portrush Golf Club courses.

Applicants will, as a minimum, be expected to demonstrate a proven track record of the following:

- High standards of greenkeeping, course management and course presentation;
- Excellent management and organisational skills;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Project and budgetary control;
- Up to date knowledge of greenkeeping techniques including, but not limited to, environmental, horticultural and safety requirements.

The successful applicant will be responsible for a staff of twenty, a modern greenkeeping complex and associated machinery.

Previous experience as a Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager is desirable, but not essential, and it would be advantageous to have experience of links courses.

Applicants should apply in writing, enclosing a full CV, no later than **Friday, 25th April, 2014** to: The Secretary/Manager, Royal Portrush Golf Club, Dunluce Road, Portrush, BT56 8JQ, Co. Antrim



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#### The Scope

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Candidates will be highly motivated professionals with a pro-active approach and enjoy working as part of a team.

You will need to display good oral and written communication skills and be able to create and maintain strong working relationships at all levels including good time management, presentation and reporting skills.

Please apply in writing or email providing a full CV including current earnings to;

Jayne Ambler, HR Manager, Lely (UK) Ltd, 1 Station Road, St Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 1QH Jambler@lely.com

Closing date for applications is 30th April 2014



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A new page featuring the best Tweets from the industry – don't forget to tag @BIGGALtd to give yourself a chance of being featured!

#### @BIGGALtd

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@Hillside\_GC
Our majestic & beautiful 17th
from the Tee #Golf

#### @HartCommonGC

Soil profile from top changer demo. @BIGGALtd@the\_iog members in attendance. @ CampeyTurfCare @ SherriffAmenity

#### @bobbymcd81

Yours truly @BIGGALtd scottish education conference @indigrowuk

#### @BenjaminDollery

Like what @BIGGALtd have done to this months issue with favourite tweets at the back of greenkeeper international

#### @modwyerWGC

Great seminar today thanks to @BIGGALtd and @MerristWood #knowledgeispower

#### @DPSGOLF

@BIGGALtd Just to say a big thank you to all the BIGGA members and BIGGA team who attended the seminars, the feedback has been fantastic.

#### @WestSuffolkGC

Calling all golfers! Please get this right, makes a BIG difference to your greens. Sure @BIGGALtd will agree?

#### @top100golf

It's spring-time at Wentworth...view from the 1st tee on the West this morning



@Tracey\_Maddison
Just saved £30 off some
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@RIGGAL to Ytra Reposits and

@BIGGALtd Xtra Benefits and downloaded a voucher. Check it out BIGGA Members!

#### @Sammy3334

Fantastically busy week this week. @BIGGALtd FTMI '14 Tues - Thur. Followed by @ChippyNews Chipping Norton Sports Awards Thurs eve. #excited







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