

# Greenkeeping

Keeping the industry on course

• January 2017

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## SAGE ADVICE

The course manager at Knowle Golf Club in Bristol, **Mike Sage**, gives tips on the products and techniques he uses that ensure his greens look so manicured





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## Club turns flooded bog into wildlife haven

A golf club in Leicestershire has received local praise for transforming a flooded bog on its course into a pond and wildlife haven.

The change at Hinckley Golf Club was thanks to the hard work of volunteers and has been reported in *The Hinckley Times*.

During the summer of 2014, an area of the course between the 11th and 12th holes flooded and spilled onto the fairway and green, making the playing surface almost unplayable.

The standing water soon became stagnant, algae-covered

and extremely pungent and wildlife deserted the area, reports the paper.

The cause of the flood was eventually traced to a 100-year-old blocked drain located half a mile from the club, but it could not be repaired due to problems accessing the land.

A group of club members and green staff got together and developed a plan to transform the boggy marsh into a natural pond feature which would attract insect, bird and plant life back to the area.

Work began in February 2015 when a large diesel water pump

was hired to drain the area. It took more than 10 days to get rid of the flood waters.

Once drained, volunteers used excavators and a dumper truck to carry out major ground works.

The team installed electricity to the area, which supplies a balance pump system to maintain a constant water level in the new pond to prevent future floods.

Aeration fountains were also added to keep the water oxygenated and healthy to allow wildlife to flourish.

Following advice from a

specialist pond nursery, the club planted a variety of native plants and reeds around the new pond.

Adrian Cooper, general manager, said: "After months of hard work and a lot of help from members, staff and not forgetting a big helping hand from mother nature, we feel that we have finally achieved our goal.

"The area now looks fantastic and the wildlife is moving back in day by day.

"The pond is now truly a wildlife haven and a lovely feature to have on our golf course, all achieved in the space of 18 months."

## This smartphone picture wins greenkeeping prize

This image taken on a smartphone has won first prize for a greenkeeper in a competition.

The spectacular dawn image of a greenkeeper preparing his course at a Welsh golf club claimed first prize in the annual 'BIGGA Photographic Competition'.

The judge's favourite 12 images have been selected for inclusion in the greenkeeping association's calendar for 2017. Almost 250 BIGGA members took part in an online vote to help determine the competition winner.

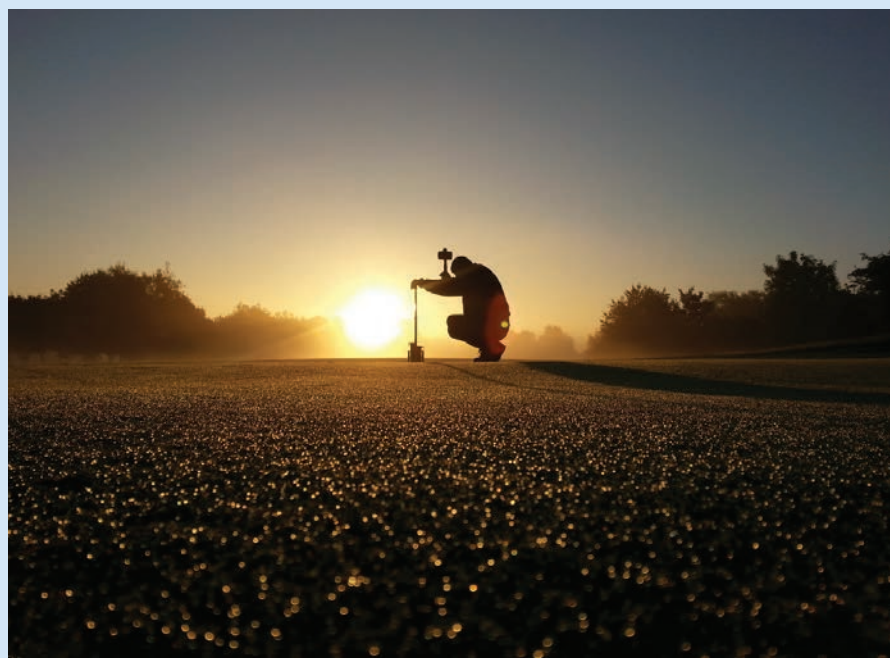
The theme for this year's competition was 'Life on the Course', with images focusing on the hard work and dedication of greenkeepers, most of which goes unseen by golfers.

There were spectacular sunrises and sunsets, beautiful wildlife and a whole load of mud, rain and snow, but in the end there could only be one winner.

Wrexham Golf Club's acting deputy head greenkeeper John Parry used his eye for a photograph to capture the winning image.

The photograph, taken on his Samsung Galaxy S2 smartphone, shows a silhouetted greenkeeper installing a hole on the club's 6th green at dawn one morning.

"I'm over the moon," said John. "There



were a lot of really good pictures entered into the competition, I can't believe it. It was a beautiful morning and I was out with my boss changing holes. I took hundreds of photos that morning, and I saw him on the 6th hole with the sunrise behind. He didn't know I was taking the photo and so it was very natural."

John scooped the top prize of an Apple watch. He will also be presented with a framed print of his photograph at BIGGA's annual trade exhibition, BTME.

The BIGGA Calendar 2017 has been sent out to each of the association's course manager and head greenkeeper members.



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## North Berwick GC gets sustainability recognition

North Berwick Golf Club in Scotland has been awarded golf's global eco-label, GEO certified, in recognition of its commitment to nature protection, resource efficiency and community value.

"We are stewards of the land," explained Stuart Greenwood, course manager. "We are lucky enough to look after this beautiful area, and we have a duty to do so in a way which protects it not only for now but for the future as well.

"We are very proud of becoming GEO certified and being counted amongst the leading clubs in sustainable golf. It is a credible and coveted recognition of the importance that we all at the club put into to maximise the positive impacts of our work on a daily basis."

Some of the club's achievements highlighted in the independent verifier's report include the course's role as an important buffer between designated natural areas, including a SSSI site, and the town of North Berwick; its close working relationship with environmental body SNH and the STRI; a highly efficient use



of irrigation water using a state of the art Toro sprinkler system; and its relationship with the local community, sourcing much of its clubhouse goods from local suppliers, working with local schools and running a popular caddy programing giving local youth work experience.

The club's new community fund was a particular highlight of the certification report. "We have many visitors from across the globe that play on our course here in North Berwick, and they are all welcomed by the fantastic local community that surrounds us. It's always one of the highlights of their visit," said Chris Spencer, managing secretary at the club. "This

year we introduced the community fund as a way to thank and support the important groups and charities that make North Berwick such a special place to live, work and visit."

The fund saw grants of up to £2,000 each being awarded to a dozen organisations and individuals based in the local area. A total of £10,000 was allocated in 2016, and following a hugely successful first year the fund is due to re-open again in July 2017.

Jonathan Smith, chief executive of GEO and editorial adviser to *Greenkeeping* magazine, said: "The North Berwick Golf Club is an exceptional example of the social and environmental value that clubs can bring. By managing land in a responsible manner and supporting the local community the club has shown true commitment and exhibited their position as a leader in sustainable golf. We are proud to share the same community and call it home and congratulate Stuart, Chris and the team on their achievement. We look forward to seeing what the future holds for them and our North Berwick community."



## Second golf club deals with picnickers on its course



Long Ashton Golf Club in Bristol has become the latest venue to bring in measures to deal with people picnicking on its course.

Last year North Berwick Golf Club in Scotland put up signage around its course because families were picnicking on greens and building sandcastles in bunkers.

Long Ashton has said it has experienced an 'alarming increase' in the number of walkers roaming across its course while members are trying to play.

The *Bristol Post* says that one group of people decided to have a picnic on the course's third hole while another family were spotted playing football on the fairway – all places where there is no public access.

The 220 acre golf course is privately owned but there are a number of public rights of way which run across it.

Many people use the footpaths but some have been straying from the dedicated routes, putting themselves at risk of being hit by golf balls.

The club has put in a series of measures to try and tackle the issue including installing new signs at entrances to the course, highlighting the footpaths and asking people to stick to them.

Club bosses have also held meetings with Long Ashton Parish Council to look at ways of

tackling the problem.

Club chairman Ken Trowbridge said: "Many villagers use the public rights of way across the course to gain access to places like Ashton Court as well as to exercise generally.

"Golfers are well aware of those rights of way and wait for path users before playing their shots.

"Unfortunately in recent times there has been an alarming trend for walkers to treat the golf course as common land and roam across the course, oblivious to the dangers that may face.

"However it is in fact private land owned by the golf club.

"Recently we have seen a group picnic on our third hole – a blind hole where golfers cannot see over the hill, a family playing football on the fairway and a family walking with a pushchair along our fifth hole.

"These are all places where there is no right of way for anyone other than golf club members.

"To ensure users follow the correct paths, the golf club has recently erected new signs showing the rights of way across the golf course. We will be adding more in the near future.

"This is not addressed to those walkers who regularly use the rights of way and who keep to them but to those people who regularly or periodically do not keep to the rights of way across and around edges of the golf course. I would urge everyone using the rights of way to keep to paths and not to put themselves in danger."

## Two golf clubs have administrators appointed

A leading golf club in Northumberland and a top venue in Hertfordshire have both had administrators appointed to them.

Both venues were built during the boom of new golf clubs in the early to mid 1990s.

Burgham Park Golf & Leisure Park in Northumberland is host of the PGA North Region Championship and was part-designed by former Ryder Cup captain Mark James.



The club, which opened in 1994, had been hoping to raise funds after getting planning permission to build 50 holiday homes, eight of which have already been built. It had also been working on plans for an executive housing development and had been talking about building a new pavilion with a world-class golfing academy.

The club has 300 members. Its administrators have said the golf course will continue to be maintained as they will work with professional advisers to maximise the returns to creditors. However, the clubhouse has been closed for the rest of winter.

Steven Ross of RSM Restructuring Advisory LLP said: "We have made a decision to close the clubhouse for the winter and we're hopeful that this position will quickly change.

"We continue to work with our advisers to progress development opportunities for the site, which includes planning permission to build 50 high-quality holiday homes adjacent to the course."

It has also emerged that Great Hadham Golf & Country Club in Hertfordshire was acquired out of administration in a pre-pack deal.

Kirstie Provan and Gary Shankland of Begbies Traynor were appointed as joint administrators.

Founded in 1992, Great Hadham has an 18-hole championship course and a nine-hole academy course. In addition to its golfing facilities, it also boasts an on-site gym, bar and function rooms for events including parties and weddings.

The appointment of administrators was made by the directors as a result of "significant cash flow pressures" which resulted in the failure of the previous company voluntary arrangement (CVA), which had been in place since 2014.

Prior to making the appointment, the directors sought additional investment from new lenders but were unable to procure enough funding.

The business and assets were marketed for sale by the joint administrators and immediately following the appointment, the business and certain assets of the company were sold as a pre-pack to Great Hadham Country Club Ltd for an undisclosed sum.

The business has continued to trade and no redundancies were made as part of the administration process.





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# Repair the market

**The weather, animals and even golfers all cause headaches for greenkeepers. Agronomist Peter Jones looks at the most common reasons why golf clubs need to carry out repairs to their courses to see if they can be prevented, and how best to carry out the work**

*Phil Chiverton, course manager at The Grove, surveying crow damage and the ongoing chafer grub issue*



**W**ith a request from the editor to write an article headed 'Renovation and Repairs', I sit here just before Christmas thinking back over 2016 and what I have seen on courses that was of particular interest in relation to those topics, and which may stimulate the thoughts of other readers.

One highlight for me this year was to be involved with the course preparation at The Grove for The British Masters in September. There were 73 greenkeepers and volunteers who turned up at 4.30am each day in the dark to help set the stage for the high-profile televised tournament and didn't they do it proud?! There was hardly a blade of grass out of place or a worm cast in sight, and it was a testament to several months of planning and hard work from the resident team. But who would have thought that less than two weeks later as the inevitable 'post tournament blues'

had set in and the spectator stands had disappeared down the road, that a murder of crows would decent on the course and tear up the pristine fine fescue turf on tees, leaving an horrendous mess in their wake.

Repairs required? Yes of course! But how does one go about tackling this type of repair when the causes of the damage remains a persistent threat (that is, the food source)? Is it indeed even feasible to carry out repairs on a like-for-like basis when there is no longer a cost-effective pesticide treatment for the chafer grubs available? It would seem that for the first time in the recent history of fine turf management, this has become a more widespread issue and certainly a dilemma which turf managers have to come to terms with in the wake of pesticide bans.

Where chafer damage has occurred, caution needs to be exercised on fine turf

areas not to relay turf over soil which is harbouring chafer grubs which have burrowed deep for the winter, as this could be a false economy and not the solution it might first appear to be. Counting the overall cost of repair in these situations can therefore be surprising, with cost being in excess of £10k for the repair of two or three decent sized tees.

Badger damage to turf on a large scale is also becoming more commonplace as badger populations would seem to be on the increase, and their food-source on golf courses is becoming more plentiful.

The repeated cost of badger damage repair is now becoming so expensive that it has become a feasible and cost effective option for some clubs to fence or electrify the perimeter of the golf course to keep the badgers out.





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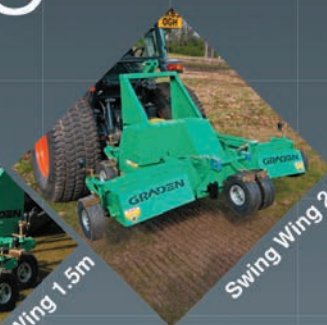
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## ► renovations and repairs

Where fine turf areas are to be repaired by patching, reseeding or returfing, it is certainly worthwhile investing additional money on a good quality grow-cover (preferably translucent, woven polypropylene) for protection against further damage through the winter months, both from pests and golfers alike.

Course renovation projects are typically planned months in advance, and are therefore easy to budget for. The key aim is generally to address problems and performance issues on the course by carrying out planned renovation work that will improve the quality and playing performance of the turf.

August has become a popular month for greens' renovation work such as hollow coring and deep scarification for good reason due to the quick recovery time, long hours of daylight, and firm ground conditions and the holiday period, however, additional care and attention should be focussed on irrigation requirements to keep the roots of the grass sufficiently moist at depth when extreme temperatures are experienced, otherwise, roots are weakened as the grass plants die from the bottom up, and root breaks can occur due to mechanical work.

Moisture meters may be the flavour of the month for some, but a more old-fashioned



*A problem bunker where a better specification was required*

pragmatic approach to water management in unusually hot conditions can make more sense.

Such was the case in July and again in August 2016 when temperatures in the south east exceeded 34 degrees Celsius (recorded in Faversham, Kent on August 24 – by comparison, a minimum temperature of -1.5 degrees Celsius was recorded at Kindrogan

(Perthshire) in the same month).

The effect of pure sand topdressings on hot, summer days also needs some forethought if scorching of the grass leaf blades is to be avoided. If a repeat of such high temperatures is to become more frequent (as can be expected with climate change in future) then cooling of the grass plant canopy (by syringing), and provision and retention of water for the grass roots should both be a key considerations to be taken into account, most especially around renovation time.

Whilst greens are the most obvious areas in need of annual renovation work, they only represent on average, one hectare on an 18-hole course, and therefore when looking at the other playing area of the course as a whole it should also be an aim to include additional renovation works on other selected areas of the course each year where a true 'value-for-money' gain can also be made.

For me, a good example of this is the use of the Earthquake / Imants Shockwave rotary-knife de-compaction machine, which has been a winner in 2016, and I'm sure I will be seeing a lot more opportunities for its use in 2017 to help with decompaction and also the revitalisation of existing drainage networks on golf course fairways and approaches as a cost-



*A well planned and executed bunker renovation job using a variety of specified products and materials (all tried and tested)*



effective method of improving large areas on the courses with virtually no disruption (if used at the appropriate time).

These machines are quite widely available from turf equipment hire companies, either with or without an operator.

My last tip for 2017 in terms of planning renovation projects would be to choose materials and products carefully, based on i) their compatibility, and ii) performance / specification.

Two examples come to mind of good and bad choices of materials for renovation work

which I have seen in recent weeks. The first was a poor example of a contractor's bunker renovation which subsequently needed to be re-renovated just recently because of problems with poor, sandy topsoil and fescue-based turf. The use of fine fescue turf and sandy topsoil can be problematic on heavily played inland sites and may not be appropriate due to drying out in summer, with insufficient moisture and nutrient retention to keep the turf healthy.

The second was a good example of some excellent quality work at Beaconsfield Golf Club, carried out In-house by a greenkeeping

team using appropriate, specified materials including appropriate, good quality topsoil and turf.

Wherever you are located, and whatever your plans are for the coming year, good luck to all of you with your repair and renovation projects in 2017.

*Peter Jones MSc, MBPR, RIPTA is a former course manager and a current course consultant and member of Greenkeeping magazine's editorial advisory panel. For more on his consultancy, visit [www.pja-golf.co.uk](http://www.pja-golf.co.uk)*

## Reesink Turfcare bringing realistic GeoLink Simulator to demo spraying accuracy at BTME

Reesink Turfcare will be bringing a GeoLink Precision Spray System simulator to BIGGA Turf Management Exhibition (BTME) 2017, Europe's leading showcase for turf professionals and buyers.

Complete with touchscreen and steering wheel, the simulator will allow stand visitors to realistically demonstrate and experience application rates, coverage maps, area and volume data, that the industry's first turf-based precision spray system is designed for.

Available for use with the Toro Multi Pro 5800 and 1750, GPS technology and a single nozzle level control means application is accurate to within 10mm. Neil Adams, training manager at Reesink Turfcare, says: "The simulator provides a realistic operational experience of this fantastic technology. The level of accuracy is something that needs to be seen to be believed and by bringing

the simulator to BTME we are giving visitors to the show that opportunity."

The simulator will be joined on the Reesink stand by a selection of Toro machinery favourites and latest launches, including the Reelmaster 3575-D, which launched in 2016, and the Workman GTX, which debuted at BTME 2016. The ever-popular greens mower TriFlex 3420 and the electric eFlex 2100 pedestrian mower will also be there as will the Groundsmaster 4500-D and the RM3575-D's stablemate, the Reelmaster 5010-H.

Representing Toro's irrigation range will be the new Stealth Kit, Lynx PC control system, the Flex series sprinkler and the B series sprinkler. Stealth, the latest addition to the ever-popular Infinity series golf sprinkler, with its innovative patent-pending design allows grass to grow directly on top of the sprinkler and eliminates not only turf disruption and damage, but the hard surface bounce should a golf ball land above it.

Robert Jackson, Reesink's irrigation manager, says: "By allowing turf growth on top of the sprinkler Toro has created a situation where irrigating the turf does not affect the cutting process. A seamless and continuous area for cutting is created and this is music for all turfcare professional's ears. The fact that the sprinkler includes the benefit of Smart Access technology, allowing for easy access to all adjustments and other internal components, is another big advantage."

Holly Jones marketing manager at Reesink Turfcare, says: "It will be a busy stand as usual and we're looking forward to welcoming turf professionals to join us in Hall M where we'll be ready to advise on products both new and well-known."

*Reesink Turfcare will be displaying Toro Turf Products and Tým Tractors At Btme 2017 in Hall M. Web: [reesinkturfcare.co.uk](http://reesinkturfcare.co.uk)*





**“W**e’ve never been busier with record numbers of golf clubs installing our Waste2Water Recycling Wash-Off Systems in 2016,” commented a delighted Tim Earley, managing director of Waste2Water.

The government’s confirmation it will enshrine all current environmental legislation in the new Brexit legislation has removed any hesitation in installing a system. After a momentary pause whilst everyone absorbed the ‘shock’ of Brexit it appears that the golf industry has regained its composure and decided life could be quite good after all with more ‘UK staycations’ and an increase in overseas visitors to the UK = more golf!

So, if you haven’t already done so the message remains the same that you’re overdue

to clean up your act, as it is a criminal offence (illegal) to allow substances including mineral oils, detergents and chemicals to enter surface drains, watercourses or soakaways, causing groundwater pollution.

Sunningdale Ladies Golf Club (in photo) is one of dozens of golf clubs which have recently installed a Waste2Water Recycling Wash System. Peter Tedder, head greenkeeper, commented: “I am delighted with our new wash facility, which has ensured we are environmentally compliant, is easy to maintain and has speeded up equipment washing as the wash hose pressure is superb!”

“With record numbers of clubs installing our Waste2Water Recycling Wash Systems during 2016 we are delighted so many clubs are taking their environmental responsibilities seriously,”

commented Tim Earley. “The upturn started in the middle of 2014 and enquiries continue to flood in, which is continuing after Brexit at an ever-increasing rate!”

### **Pollution Prevention Legislation**

Although the pollution prevention legislation has been well documented in the past, I take the opportunity of providing a brief overview in case you are not aware non-compliance is a criminal offence!

Criminal powers – penalties for non-compliance include:

- A criminal fine of up to £50,000 (previously £20,000).
- Up to three months imprisonment for the most serious pollution incidents.



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**If you haven't already upgraded your equipment wash facilities make sure you visit us at BTME Stand B46 to find out why we are the number one recycling wash system! We look forward to seeing you on our stand, or if you can't make it to BTME this year just give us a call!**

*Tim Earley is the managing director of ESD Waste2Water. If you would like further information on the Waste2Water System or a copy of the Pollution Prevention Guidelines please call. Tel 01782 373 878 / E-mail: [info@waste2water.com](mailto:info@waste2water.com)*

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## ► seeds, turf and fertilisers buyer's guide

### ICL

The use of ICL's new Vitalnova Stressbuster has significantly improved the overall health of the turf on the fairways and greens at Castle Stuart Golf Club, reports course manager Chris Haspell.

The Castle Stuart Golf Club in Inverness, Scotland is a championship links course which overlooks the Moray Firth and other well-known Highland landmarks such as Kessock Bridge and Chanonry Lighthouse. A relatively new course, having been constructed in 2009, Castle Stuart has become one of the most popular golf courses in Europe and hosted the Scottish Open on four occasions, including most recently in 2016.

Chris, who spent over a decade working in Denmark as a course manager consultant, was brought in at the very start of this exciting project in 2006. He oversaw the development of the course before it was officially opened in 2009 and he has been maintaining it to an excellent standard ever since.

As part of his maintenance programme, Chris uses Vitalnova Stressbuster – a specially formulated liquid treatment to help condition turf against stress and also to aid recovery. The product was first suggested to him by Jamie Lees, ICL technical area sales manager for Scotland, after Chris outlined exactly what he was hoping to achieve.

"The course suffers a lot from Basidiomycetes and we were looking for a product that would help fight this off at certain times of the year – this was when Jamie suggested

Chris applies Vitalnova Stressbuster at 25 L/ha on the fairways and 20 L/ha on the greens. Although Chris does not have firmly fixed dates in the calendar for applying the product, he uses it frequently throughout the year.

"We use it as and when we feel it is necessary and there are multiple applications throughout the year.

"The results we have seen have been very good and the main benefit has been boosting the health of the turf. The fescue responds well to applications and with the iron and wetting agent we do see a nice colour-up too. We don't get much top growth from it but it keeps the plant healthy during periods of stress – which is exactly what we want."

Commenting on Castle Stuart's use of Vitalnova Stressbuster, Jamie Lees said: "We sat down with Chris and discussed various products and ideas, and ultimately what he was looking to achieve on the golf course. We suggested Stressbuster, which is new to the Vitalnova range and the results have been really impressive. Stressbuster is a multi-component formulation that promotes plant health during periods of high stress and we're delighted that the product has been such a success at Castle Stuart."

Web: [www.icl-sf.co.uk](http://www.icl-sf.co.uk)

### SISIS

Bloxham School, in Oxfordshire, has recently purchased three new SISIS tractor mounted turf maintenance machines – the Powaspred, the Variseeder and the Flexibrush.

With a plethora of synthetic and natural grass sports pitches at Bloxham School, grounds manager Glenn Davies and the rest of the grounds team have their work cut out. It is safe to say that their armoury is full to the brim with a range of market leading turf maintenance equipment – with one particular brand featuring prominently.

"The SISIS name has always been synonymous with quality and the striking orange colour makes it easily recognisable. We have got a good range of SISIS equipment in our lock up and the products are perfect for what we need."

After seeing excellent results from his ex-

isting SISIS products - the Auto Rotorake MK5, the Quadraplay, the SSS1000 Sweeper and the SISIS Twinplay implement frame – Glenn decided to increase his fleet of SISIS machinery even further when he purchased the Powaspred, the Variseeder and the Flexibrush.

The SISIS Flexibrush is a tractor mounted brush which is equally effective to disperse top dressing and remove excess material on natural turf and on synthetic surfaces, keep in-fill mobile to prevent surface compaction. The versatile Flexibrush performs all of these tasks, and can also be used for dew dispersal and striping for improved presentation. It has a 5.35 metre working width, its brush sections float to follow ground contours and the outer sections fold for transport and storage.

"The tractor mounted Flexibrush is a particularly good piece of kit for the rugby outfields," says Glenn. "We use most mornings before cutting to remove the early morning dew and stand the grass up. We also use it on the rugby pitches to get the stripes in for presentation."

For Bloxham's seeding requirements, Glenn and the team rely on the SISIS Variseeder, which is a versatile easy to use tractor mounted seeder with a variable seeding rate ideal for sports field maintenance. It is renowned for its extremely fast work rate and low maintenance – something which Glenn is particularly impressed with.



"We really like the Variseeder because it's easy to use and has very little maintenance requirements – there are no belts, no drives and there is simply no messing around with it. You just drop the seed in, set it from A to D, and off you go. You look through the window of the tractor and can tell when seed has gone out. Generally, we set it so two bags will do a rugby pitch but we'll have it set up for



ICL

the product. We do use an intensive wetting agent programme but we find that Vitalnova Stressbuster improves turf health and vigour, with the amino acid and carbohydrates helping to fight off unwanted stress and stimulating the good bacteria in the soil."



one bag per cricket square, depending on the size of the square."

"We will re-seed all of the rugby pitches with the Variseeder in spring after they come out of use and it will be done as the last job we do before putting the Powaspred on for the cricket squares."

Boasting infinitely variable spreading rates, accurate placement and an oscillating base plate to prevent bridging, the SISIS Powaspred is a unique top dresser which spreads a wide range of materials at the desired rate with an even and consistent spread.

"The Powaspred is easily manoeuvrable," says Glenn. "It's nice and light so we can use it no matter how wet it is and it does not mark the pitches with its weight ratio. You can get rid of a good three-quarters of a tonne in one go and it's easy for one person to do on their own."

"We top dress the cricket wickets with it and some fine aggregate sand on the rugby pitches which is done to break the ground. It just makes the surfaces more playable and much easier to put the divots back."

"Overall I would highly recommend all of our SISIS equipment because you know that it's not going to let you down. Anybody can use them - they're good quality machines but not too technical. A lot of the machinery you get today takes forever to set up but with SISIS machines you can get started straight away."

Web: [www.sisis.com](http://www.sisis.com)

## Etesia

Following the successful launch of the Pellenc Rasion Basic and Smart models in 2015, the company has announced the latest pedestrian rotary mower in the range – the Pellenc Rasion Easy.

The Rasion Easy is a combination of the previous two models launched last year as Etesia UK operations director Les Malin explains: "We found that the manual operation of the Rasion Basic has been more appropriate to commercial operators yet they also liked the self-propelled element of the Rasion Smart. For this reason, Pellenc has launched the Rasion Easy – a combination from both of the previous models."

The Rasion Easy has an IP54 water rating,



Etesia

which as time goes on will be the standard through the rest of the Pellenc tool range, and features a grass density detector - a patented feature exclusive to Pellenc which allows the mower to detect the height and density of the grass and change the engine speed accordingly. This saves power as operators do not have to run the machine under full-load unnecessarily.

A cutting width of 60cm with height of cut between 25-75mm, 70 litre grass box capacity and two front swivel wheels ensure the Rasion Easy is ultra-manoevrable. Weighing less than 30kgs and folding handlebars means that transportation between sites is effortless.

All Pellenc batteries and tools come complete with a three year commercial warranty as standard - the first manufacturer to offer this on battery-powered tools. Pellenc is exclusively distributed in the UK and Ireland by Etesia UK. Web: [www.etesia.co.uk](http://www.etesia.co.uk)

## Complete Weed Control

After heavily investing in new equipment, the London South East division of Complete Weed Control is entirely prepared for whatever this winter throws at them.

This significant investment signals promising times for the company – which covers central London, south east London and north east London. In fact, it is the second major investment in a matter of months as area manager Simon Akerman explains: "It's been an incredibly busy year for us and has been extremely successful. Earlier in the year we took on a new borough in London and therefore the decision was made to invest in further equipment for the weeding season. We are now responsible

for spraying four London boroughs – which is something I'm very proud of."

"With more contracts under our belt and winter looming we decided to take our business operations to the next level by investing even further in new specialist equipment."

While the warmer climate sees Simon and his team keeping weeds at bay, the colder months then see the Complete Group's Ice Control service spring into action. Providing gritting and snow removal, this all-encompassing service caters for every winter worry utilising the best tools and technology available.

This winter service typically runs from the start of November through to the end of March, and each site is guaranteed a professional service with unlimited visits and 24 hour management and backup. With more and more sites signing up Complete Ice Control, Simon decided to invest in equipment including a brand new, state of the art Meyer snow plough, a Ford Transit Flatbed and a unique POZI-FEED which controls the width and quantity of how much salt is put down.

The investment in the new equipment mirrors the Complete Group's philosophy in looking to the future and providing customer service of the highest calibre. The company has always gone that extra mile in meeting customer requirements and over the years has launched a range of new services such as Complete Grounds Maintenance, Complete Moss Control and Complete Invasives Control.

"Ultimately, this investment is going to help us provide a better service and to more clients," says Simon. "We've got more state of the art equipment and we're ready for winter – everything is looking great and we are hoping to be nice and busy."



Web: [www.completeweedcontrol.co.uk](http://www.completeweedcontrol.co.uk)

## Kubota UK

Kubota UK, leading groundcare and agricultural



## ► seeds, turf and fertilisers buyer's guide



machinery specialist, has launched an unmissable 'on-site' price for its Scraper tractor.

Available until February 28, 2017, customers looking to purchase the L4240 will receive it at the exclusive price of £16,640, whilst the L5040 will be available for £17,950.

Kubota's L40 tractors deliver economic performance and low maintenance for year round cost effective working and is a flexible choice for a multitude of tasks from small farm chores to commercial landscaping, available on both turf or AG tyres depending on customer requirements.

Boasting a spacious cab, air conditioning and 4WD, this mid-range tractor punches well above its weight, combining exceptional power with state-of-the-art transmission and PTO systems to deliver superior productivity and efficiency.

Buyers will also be eligible for Kubota Care, a unique five year extended warranty package that allows buyers to select the amount of hours they believe the tractor will be operational for, up to a maximum of 3,000 hours.

Offering complete peace of mind, Kubota Care customer's can safeguard their tractor against any unforeseen expensive repair costs during the first five years of ownership. By choosing Kubota Care, customers benefit from all major service and maintenance carried out by an authorised Kubota dealer, with only Kubota genuine parts and lubricants used, ensuring maximum reliability and performance.

Web: [www.kubota.co.uk](http://www.kubota.co.uk)

### Gripclad

#### Members come first

"It wasn't until I looked at *Greenkeeping* magazine that I discovered Gripclad. The article showed other courses that have used this



product, so I decided to investigate the product further. Because the Gripclad cleats were so easy to fit, it was a very quick counter-measure for our slip concerns. The members noticed the difference immediately, even at the point of installation. Overall the feedback has been excellent and the members have asked that this product is installed on our surrounding sleepers which edge the greens. I was thoroughly impressed to find that the grip performed just as well in the rain and hard frost' **Robert Preston, greenkeeper, The Manor House Golf Club, Wiltshire.**

#### Long term solution

"The feedback has been very positive. The overall wear tolerance is excellent. I would recommend Gripclad to any golf club with slippery surfaces issues and the customer service is top class." **Dan McGrath MG, course canager, North Foreland Golf Club, Kent.**

#### Where there is a claim!

"The price was within our budget but its real value comes from the reduced health and safety risk of slips on the golf course. The members think that the Gripclad cleats have worked brilliantly and from a club point of view the owners are happy that the probability of a claim resulting from someone slipping over has been reduced." **James Williams, course manager, Oake Manor Golf Club, Taunton.**

#### High quality

"The green committee at Lee Park Golf Club wanted to make sure we purchased the right material for the steps. We looked into many companies. Looking for a quality product that would last constant use, cost, fixings and a material the staff could fit themselves we found a company called Gripclad that was offering an excellent product" **Alan Penno, club secretary, Lee Park Golf Club, Liverpool.**

#### Sensible affordability

"Like many golf clubs our finances are not as robust as we would like and we have to cut our cloth accordingly. We had identified that we had 12 locations to be made safe. The overall dimensions of the Gripclad cleats and the various widths that can be selected allowed us to select exactly what we needed."

**Mr D Philips, Newburgh-on-Ythan Golf Club, Scotland.**

Web: [www.gripclad.co.uk/golf/](http://www.gripclad.co.uk/golf/)

Contact: Barry Eagle. Tel: 023 8040 6796

Mob: 07803 848819

### Whitemoss Eco Supplies



**You've recently installed PermE Trak, what were the reasons for this, where have you installed it and what coverage have you used?**

Andrew Pledger, course manager, Chelmsford Golf Club: "We needed to resurface an existing pathway that is at an extremely busy part of the course, so gets lots of wear. We had tried many types of path toppings in the past and all of them had failed due to either cracking or erosion, as the pathway has a very steep gradient. Members had taken to walking down the side, off of the existing pathway and had started to wear away the grass coverage, because the surface was uncomfortable to walk on and potentially dangerous due to the erosion. The surface area that required this covering was over 600m<sup>2</sup>."



**How did you go about making your selection and why did you finally choose Perme Trak?**

Andrew Pledger: "We needed a solid surface but the use of concrete and tarmac was ruled out because of the potential of these surfaces being slippery during cold conditions and also during heavy rainfall periods water would run off the surface and erode the edges. We had tried using a rubber / resin mix on other steep pathways around the course, but these slipped down the hill over time and have become a maintenance headache. I was introduced to Andy Law from Whitemoss through another trade colleague, and he explained the versatility of Perme Trak and the benefits of the grip and porous nature of the finished surface. We also had another issue, when we take deliveries of bulk aggregate, these vehicles have to cross a section of this pathway which gave us a concern that this activity might rip up the surface, however due to the



Whitemoss Eco Supplies

versatility of the product Andy was able to suggest a different mix ratio that was able to withstand the HGV traffic."

**What have been the benefits of installing Perme Trak at Chelmsford Golf Club?**

Andrew Pledger: "Due to the predictability of the Great British weather, since the pathway has been resurfaced with Perme Trak we have seen the benefits of the extra grip in frosty conditions as well as the benefits of having



Whitemoss Eco Supplies

no repairs to do after heavy rainfall, which saves a huge amount of time. The member comments have been very favourable because of the comfort aspect of the pathway so we are now able to keep grass coverage down either side, which aesthetically is a major plus. The finish of the surface looks great and the only maintenance that is required by us to carry out is to blow any debris off once a week."

Web: [www.WhitemossEco.org.uk](http://www.WhitemossEco.org.uk)  
[www.BunkerMat.com](http://www.BunkerMat.com)

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# Joyeux Knowle

**Knowle Golf Club in Bristol is known for its manicured greens. *Greenkeeping* spoke to its course manager, Mike Sage, to get some technical idea and product tips in order to find out how his team keeps the course in such a well-maintained condition**

**K**nowle Golf Club describes itself as 'a lush green oasis in the heart of Bristol'. The well-established members' club is renowned for having one of the finest mature parkland courses in the south of England. The club has played host to many county and professional events over the last 100 years.

*Greenkeeping* caught up with the club's golf course manager, Mike Sage, to find out more about him and the work involved at such a top venue.

**Greenkeeping:** Please can you give a brief description of your path to greenkeeping. Where did you study, what educational route did you follow, what qualifications do you have and how long have you now been at Knowle Golf Club?

**Mike Sage:** My first taste of greenkeeping came at 16 when I did a week's work experience from school at Stockwood Vale

and loved it. I was a keen golfer and liked the idea of working outdoors. I then worked thorough the summer at Stockwood and took the decision at the tender age of 16 to go away to Cannington College and do a national diploma in golf course management. Moving away from home at 16 was daunting at the time but looking back now I think having that independence early on has helped me in later life. Having completed my diploma I then worked at Woodspring GC as an assistant under Steve Chappell (now head greenkeeper at Gleneagles).

I wanted to move up the greenkeeping ladder so I decided to return to education and completed an HND in golf course management once again at Cannington. I then moved on to Shirehampton GC as deputy, before moving on to Knowle also as deputy and I took over as head greenkeeper when the previous head retired and have

been in that position now for the last eight years.

**Greenkeeping:** How big is your team, what are their names, how do you maximise the team resources to ensure best maintenance of the course?

**Mike Sage:** We have a team of five full time at present (including me). We will look to employ a summer casual for six months to take us to six throughout the growing season. As always we could do with another pair of hands but we manage to meet the high standards expected at the club with the staff we have. My deputy is Kevin Day who has 35 years service at Knowle (it's rumored he was born on site and raised by the deer). Kevin brings a wealth of site expertise and can turn his hand to anything. He repairs and services our fleet of equipment which means we can make a good saving for the club. Chris Payne



has been at the club for ten years and is also a very experienced member of the staff. Chris has a real passion for trees and along with Kevin has recently completed an aerial chainsaw tree course. The club used to use a local tree surgeon but have now decided to put the guys through the course as part of our long term woodland management plan. This will involve the removal of lots of established trees which over time have started to suffocate the course somewhat. Leigh Mordy has been with the club for six years having worked at two other courses in the Bristol area so again brings good experience to the team. Leigh plays off a three handicap and plays for the first team here at Knowle so gives us a good golfer's view of the course. Jack Trump has recently joined us full time having worked with us in the summer months; he showed great enthusiasm and passion for the course and has carried that on in to his full time position. Four of us were junior members here at the club and so know the course inside out and



have a real affinity with the course. I am real lucky to have such a dedicated team who I can trust to carry out any task to the highest standards

**Greenkeeping:** What would you both say are the biggest challenges you currently face and how does this impact on the daily maintenance?

**Mike Sage:** One of the main challenges we face is because of the nature of the soil at Knowle (we are on heavy clay) we do struggle if the weather isn't kind through the winter

months. All winter projects need to be completed early on in the autumn when ground conditions are suitable. Being an established course we have our fair share of mature trees and thorough the autumn period most of our time is taken up clearing leaves; this can be quite a demoralising time of the year as many a course manager of a parkland course will tell you. You spend all week clearing the course for the weekend and you return on Monday and it doesn't seem like you have cleared anywhere. Being on heavy clay we are a grass factory during the growing season. For part of the season our tees, aprons and fairways grow so quickly they could be cut on a daily basis. Primo Maxx has really helped in these areas (especially after a bank holiday weekend) to help us keep on top of the cutting and make sure other areas of the course are not neglected.

**Greenkeeping:** What aeration programmes do you choose to run across the course and

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## ► Greenkeeper profile

what equipment and processes do you use on the varying areas?

**Mike Sage:** We run a fairly intensive aeration programme at Knowle which is key to keeping our greens in top condition year round. As our greens are 100-year-old clay push ups, from my point of view the more holes you can get into the surface the better. We start in March with our spring maintenance which is normally a 12mm hollow tine. We then pencil tine every three to four weeks with 8mm solid tines. In August we carry out our main maintenance which for the last three years has been to Graden and sand inject the greens to a depth of 30mm. After this we carry on with our 8mm tines through autumn and when conditions allow through out the winter. Tees, approaches and fairways are all Vertidraind using 18mm tines twice a year in spring and autumn. All the work is carried out with our Wiedenmann GXi HD. An excellent piece of equipment on a variety of areas around the course. This autumn we also hired a GP air to deep air blast our greens to a depth of 20 inches. This has been very successful and has really helped after heavy rain to get the greens back into play quicker than other years

**Greenkeeping:** How often are you topdressing? What fertiliser programme do you run across the course?

**Mike Sage:** Topdressing is carried out after our spring maintenance and is then carried out every three weeks during the growing season (just a light dusting). We then Graden sand inject around 40 tonnes in August and carry on with our light dustings til the end of September. Fertiliser wise I use a mix of products but most are Headland. Again after our spring maintenance a 4-3-4 C-Complex is applied; this is a great product after aeration and for getting the greens moving in the spring which has been a problem in the past. From there I move onto liquids mixed with Primo Maxx (500ml) again Headland 10-0-10 Protec NK at different rates depending on conditions – usual rate is 40l applied every two weeks. During July I add TeMag HPE, TKO Phosphite 0-29-26 and Essential Plus to the mix just to help see the greens through a period which in the past has been tricky for outbreaks of



anthracnose. Elevate Fe is also added to the mix prior to any major tournaments we might be hosting. After our maintenance in August I apply 5-2-10 C-Complex again – a fantastic product for helping with recovery. I then carry on with the Primo Maxx 10-0-10 mix throughout to autumn. In the autumn I use the Rigby Taylor power packs which really help to strengthen the grass plant and protect against disease through periods of high disease pressure. Through the winter months I tend to just use Elevate Fe on a monthly basis to again help to strength the plant up.

**Greenkeeping:** You've opted to use AberMajesty on the greens, a UK-bred and selected browntop bentgrass blend. What criteria did you personally use to select this cultivar for the course?

**Mike Sage:** I wanted a cultivar which would not only give improved disease resistance, especially against key threats such as fusarium and red thread, but which would also improve the playing surface of the club's greens by delivering a better fineness of leaf. I also wanted to move away from using just one cultivar to make sure I didn't have all my eggs in one basket. AberMajesty is a mixture of two different browntop bentgrasses which hopefully means the greens are at less risk from the usual stresses and strains. The two varieties seem to work well together and have certainly given us an edge compared to cheaper varieties.

**Greenkeeping:** Have you seen an improved resistance to disease since using AberMajesty and how has it helped to maintain / increase the finegrass population on your greens?

**Mike Sage:** We're quite lucky really in that we don't tend to struggle too much in terms of

heavy disease problems. But that doesn't mean we are complacent about the potential threat. We use AberMajesty as an insurance policy and so far it is working well. The greens are really clean and we've even had a few positive comments from players who have noticed how much better the greens are running. I'm putting that down to the fineness of leaf that the AberRoyal brings to the equation.

**Greenkeeping:** Presentation across Knowle is outstanding and is delivered by hard work. In your experience and because of its improved disease resistance, how has AberMajesty helped you and your team deliver unrivalled and visually stunning greens all year round?

**Mike Sage:** We've always been proud of how well our greens have looked throughout the year. The course is a real credit to the hard work and dedication of the entire greenkeeping team. AberMajesty has helped us to take things one step further – the greens are greener all year round and we're less worried about the threat of disease infection. Using high quality cultivars which are drought tolerant as well as being less susceptible to diseases means there is one less thing for us to worry about when it comes to caring for a busy course.

**Greenkeeping:** You and the team undertake renovation in August, what exactly does this entail?

**Mike Sage:** Our August maintenance for the last three years has been to deep scarify the greens using a Graden CSI machine which allows us to inject dry kiln sand straight into the greens and remove thatch all in one process. We scarified to a depth of 30mm and injected approximately 40 tonnes of sand. It's quite a labour intensive operation but the results are well worth the effort. Each year we have carried it out we have had several volunteer members to help out, clearing the greens which makes a big difference in getting the greens back into play. We carry out the work in August as we have found that the recovery time is very quick compared to doing the work in September. To aid with recovery I use C-Complex 5-2-10 fertiliser. I have used this product after August





maintenance for several years and it has always given outstanding results.

**Greenkeeping:** What is the history of the course woodland, how is it maintained and in what ways has it contributed to the development of the course?

**Mike Sage:** Being over 100 years old, Knowle has many beautiful mature trees. Most holes are tree lined and very tight. Premium is on straight driving. During the problems with Dutch elm disease many trees were lost and the club took the decision to plant over 10,000 trees (this took place about 20 years ago) as replacements, lots of these were planted far too close to one another with the thinking that a parentage would not survive. Unfortunately only a very small amount actually died so when I took over the course these plantations had become not only unplayable from a golfer's point of view but also from a maintenance standpoint it was almost impossible to get a mower around them. So a plan was put in place to remove half the trees in these areas to allow the remaining trees to thrive.

Over the coming years we thinned these areas down to a more manageable level. Many of the mature trees on the course also needed work carried out on them. The club used to use a tree surgeon for this but last year a decision was made to put two of our guys through an aerial chainsaw course so all the work could be carried out in-house. As any manager of a parkland course will tell you tree management is an ongoing project and we

could easily spend the next ten winters working on the trees at Knowle and still think there is more to do.

**Greenkeeping:** What machinery fleet are you currently using, are there any pieces that you are impressed with or make life a good deal easier at this time of year?

**Mike Sage:** We have a mix of equipment in our shed but we have predominately Jacobsen mowers. We use a GP400 on our greens which gives a wonderful quality of cut. This is backed up by a Toro 3200D which we also use after topdressing for a few cuts. Aprons are cut with a G-Plex, tees and approaches are cut with a TR-3. Fairways we use a LF 3800. First cut of rough we use a Toro Sidewinder and the semi rough is cut with a HR-6010. The Sidewinder in particular is an impressive piece of equipment and has saved lots of man hours of Flymowing around our bunkers due to the side shifting units. We also have a Whisper Twister blower, Amazone Groundkeeper and an Iseki SXG for the autumn time when the leaves are falling. For aeration we use our Wiedenmann GXi HD on the back of our Iseki TK38 tractor. The topdresser we run is a Turfco WideSpin 1540 which is ideal for our little and often policy of topdressing through the season. We have a set of GreenTek vibratory rollers. The sprayer we have is a Hardi Maxx 600l which fits on to a Cushman. In the winter months we switch to hand mowing on the greens for this we have three Jacobsen 522 mowers. I do prefer the look of hand mowing and would love to carry on all through the

season but we don't have the staff for it. We also have a bunker bike which we generally only use after we have had heavy rain just to help break the sand back up before a hand rake. The Graden that was mentioned is also owned by the club. This has been possibly the best purchase the club has made allowing us to carry out the sand injection when it suits the club, also giving us the flexibility to move the work to different days as apposed to when you hire a machine in. We operate a rolling machinery replacement plan at Knowle. All the main mowing equipment is replaced every seven years and the rest of the equipment we trade in on a 10-year basis. The club has always been very supportive of this plan and seen the importance of replacing old machinery and indeed adding any equipment that we feel will improve the course.

**Greenkeeping:** There are 70 bunkers across the course and you've undertaken some reconstruction. Please can you explain what the problems are, what you are looking to do and what schedule you will be working to.

**Mike Sage:** Bunkers on any course are always an area which receive loads of man hours on which is in reality is a hazard. Here at Knowle it is no different. The amount of time taken not only raking but Flymowing, strimming, shovelling up after rain and clearing out leaves takes up a tremendous amount of time. One of the main problems we suffer with is soil contamination after large rain events. Especially with us being on a heavy clay site, so we are currently trialling a rubber crumb sub-base for



## ► Greenkeeper profile

our bunkers on the two practice bunkers. So far this has been very successful, these bunkers will be monitored throughout this winter and a decision will be taken in the spring as to whether we will roll out this process on the course, possibility on greenside bunkers to start, as to rubber crumb all 70 and replace with fresh sand would probably cost us up to £100,000. I do think this is an area where members see the perfect conditions created on the golf courses on the TV and don't understand the amount of labour that has gone into producing 'perfect bunkers'. In the real world it is very difficult to produce consistent bunkers with limited staff.

**Greenkeeping:** What do you think are the strengths that have carried you through your career at Knowle Golf Club and how do you keep the course evolving?

**Mike Sage:** I have worked under several course managers, some good and some bad, and I have tried to take the best attributes of each of them to make myself the best I can be at my job. I am certainly not one of these guys that likes to shout and scream at their staff to try and get the best out of them. I like to think that I am a very approachable guy and always take on board ideas from the team. We all have a lot of experience of not only working at Knowle but also playing the course as well. I always try to encourage the guys to take responsibility for the course and I am very fortunate to have such a good team working under me. They make it very easy to manage them to produce the quality of course that we do. To keep the course evolving it's important to not slip into a comfort zone and start thinking that what you produced last year will be good enough next year. It's important to always look at ways to improve the course, not only through winter project improvements, but also new products, equipment and techniques that could take your course to the next level and stay in front of your competitors.

**Greenkeeping:** What height of cut do you use across the course?

**Mike Sage:** Greens' height varies from 3mm in the summer up to 5mm in the winter. Tees and aprons 9mm in summer and 12mm in

winter. Fairways 14mm in summer, 16mm in winter. First cut of rough is set at 65mm and the semi rough is set at 100mm year round. Knowle being on heavy clay is a grass factory during the growing season. This is where Primo Maxx really saves us man hours. We tend to apply it to all fine cut areas (not greens) including tee banks and bunker faces on a monthly basis – this really helps us stay on top of these areas and also spend more time on the presentation of the course. Greens are cut daily. Tees, aprons and fairways two times a week. Semi rough is cut once a week (sometimes twice if we get time).

**Greenkeeping:** 1Communication is the key to success and you have a good working relationship with Ryan, the club manager. How

often do you both communicate and how do you work to ensure you both deliver the best for the members and players?

**Mike Sage:** Both Ryan and I were junior members of the club so I have known him for many years. It's very important that you have a good working relationship with your club manager. Ryan is very supportive of all the greens' staff and understands the importance of aeration / maintenance on the golf course, something that some club managers can overlook. We normally meet a couple of times a week and talk on the phone most days. I try and keep him up to date with the tasks we are carrying out and he informs me of anything that members have passed on to him about the course. I also have a very good working relationship with Rodney, the chairman of



Mike Sage



greens. Both Rodney and Ryan have great trust in us as a greenkeeping team and let us get on with our jobs and I think the results on the course speak for themselves. Too many private members' clubs try to get to involved and tell the course manager what to do instead of trusting the guy with the experience and education to do the job.

**Greenkeeping:** What irrigation system does the course have and what areas are covered?

**Mike Sage:** We have an Aquarius irrigation system which is very reliable. We use mains water so we do only use the system when absolutely necessary to try and keep costs down. With the greens being clay push up construction not a great deal of water is required to keep them in top condition. We have irrigation to the greens and tees. On the greens we run Hunter g800 valves in head units and on the tees we use Hunter i20 heads; both give excellent coverage to all areas.

**Greenkeeping:** Knowle is a beautiful course that gives and will continue to give joy to those fortunate to play or visit. Under your management how have you worked with the course to ensure you get the best from it for the members and what are your plans looking ahead to keep delivering?

**Mike Sage:** When I first took over as course manager I felt that given how beautiful the course was it wasn't fulfilling its full potential. The course had lost a lot of its character, the fairways and approaches to greens were just cut out with little thought to the playability of the hole, so one of the first jobs was to reintroduce some shape to the fairways which straight away improved the look of the course and drew praise from members. The greens in particular were also poor, aeration was only carried out sporadically which had allowed thatch to develop. So I set about putting in place a regular aeration and topdressing schedule, communicating this to the members and educating them on the importance of the work to be carried out. Over time this has improved the quality of the greens not only in the summer but also thorough the autumn / winter months as well. We pride ourselves at Knowle on producing some of the best

surfaces around in the area. Indeed many of the teams that play matches at Knowle are always very complementary about the condition of the course. It's important to always strive to keep improving and the club are very supportive of us as greenkeepers. Each autumn / winter I put together a programme of work to be carried out. Over the past few years we have targeted the pathways at the club and have installed several rubber crumb surfaces. Although expensive there is no better finished surface for a path in my opinion. Going forward we will be continuing the path improvements along with tee re-construction and the ongoing tree management programme that we have in place.

**Greenkeeping:** What gives you the greatest satisfaction from your job?

**Mike Sage:** I find the greatest satisfaction comes from seeing the course on a Friday afternoon after a hard week's work, seeing what has been produced, all the areas cut and prepared for the weekend. I also take satisfaction from hearing all the positive comments from our members and also all the visitors that play at Knowle about the condition of the course. Each year the club hosts the 'Knowle Gold Medal' in which the best amateurs in the area play. It's our premier event, and important that the course is in top notch condition. It always gives me great satisfaction to hear the best golfers in the area describing the greens as the best they have played on all year. It makes all the hard work in preparing for these types of events worth it.

**Greenkeeping:** With your experience, what

advice would you give to youngsters starting out and wanting to pursue a career in the profession?

**Mike Sage:** Try to move around to different golf courses and even countries early on in your career to try and gain as much experience on different sites and under different course managers.

This will give you valuable experience not only seeing how different courses managers work but also to see how the various sites (links, parkland and so on) are managed at different times of the year. Also don't be afraid to ask your course manager why they are doing what they are doing. It might seem obvious but it's the sort of thing that makes you stand out and shows your boss you're interested in the course and what goes into to producing it.

**Greenkeeping:** What changes do you think need to be made to benefit the industry sector and profession of the greenkeeper?

**Mike Sage:** Education of members / owners is a massive area that I think needs improving on. For too long we as greenkeepers have been seen as just grasscutters. Where as we all know there's a lot more to our job then just turning up and cutting the grass. I am very lucky to have an understanding secretary manager and membership but a lot of this understanding has come through talking to members and just explaining why we do what we do, however there are golf courses that expect perfection on a shoestring budget (especially around Augusta time) and if these are not met then it is the course manager that gets the chop.



## **Bayer**

**Stand: A46**

**Email: [turfsolutions@bayer.com](mailto:turfsolutions@bayer.com)**

Greenkeepers looking for the latest product advances to aid integrated pest and disease management shouldn't miss the new innovative product launches from Bayer at BTME.

Conscious of the need to find new solutions, Bayer will be officially launching a new fungicide to the market at the event. This product will offer the first new chemistry to be developed in ten years, giving greenkeepers more tools in their armoury and helping to mitigate the threat of disease resistance.

New advances for golf courses are vital, as greenkeepers battle issues such as the threat of pesticide resistance, the continued pressure of loss of actives to the market and



unpredictable weather patterns. And Bayer has found that greenkeepers would value a device that helps with best practice management, to help calculate applications accurately, according to the area being treated.

The latest update to the TurfXpert app now helps users to calculate product requirements by mapping out a specific area, using GPS technology to accurately calculate the exact amount of product required to treat the chosen area. On top of this, any applications that have been made can be recorded in the sprayer log section with the option to forward on the details via email.

Bayer has also added a new weather feature to the updated TurfXpert app, which not only provides the user with the most accurate local weather forecasts, but also advises on dew formation, frost incidence, and soil surface temperature.

The current version of the TurfXpert app is available from the App Store and Google Play.

## **ICL**

**Stand: B54**

**Web: [www.icl-sf.co.uk](http://www.icl-sf.co.uk)**

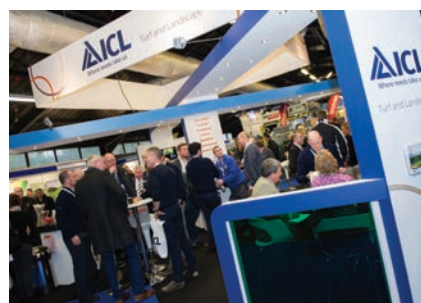
ICL will be launching a number of exciting new products and showcasing an increased portfolio of qualifying products and new rewards in its Turf Rewards loyalty scheme for 2017 on stand B54 at BTME.

A new range of H2Pro performance led wetting agents designed specifically to meet the needs of the modern turf manager will be of particular interest to visitors. Utilising advanced polymer and surfactant technology, the new range of three specialist wetting agents; TriSmart, FlowSmart and AquaSmart have been carefully formulated and tested to achieve better control of moisture management. Supported by research and backed by end-user testimonials, the new range will be on view for the first time at BTME.

ICL will also be showcasing the new Vitalnova range of biostimulants and turf conditioners:

Vitalnova Stressbuster is a unique liquid formulation pre-conditions turf against stress and helps generate quick recovery. Featuring iron which provides an instant colour, Stressbuster also contains a unique combination of macro and micro nutrients, wetting agents, bio-stimulants and amino acids.

Vitalnova Amino Boost is a liquid fertiliser which has been specifically designed to enhance turf quality and support a healthy plant. It is the ideal product for the early part of the summer to stimulate growth or to



maintain turf quality through periods of plant stress. Another great benefit of Amino Boost is that it is a perfect tank-mix partner for Primo Maxx and other liquid and water soluble products from the ICL range.

Vitalnova SILK is a specially formulated liquid fertiliser containing high levels of potassium silicate which rapidly increases leaf and stem strength and also helps to produce a cleaner cut.

It will also be an exciting time for customers who make the most of the Turf Rewards loyalty scheme, as a number of new products and rewards have been added for 2017. The scheme, from ICL and Syngenta, provides the chance to earn points from purchases and convert them into a range of valuable agronomic or educational items.

Henry Bechelet, ICL technical sales manager UK & Ireland and Dr Andy Owen, ICL international technical manager, will be passing on their invaluable knowledge in a 'Continue to Learn' seminar entitled 'Getting Greens Good in the Spring' on Tuesday 17th January at 3:45pm. Henry and Andy will be looking in detail at an analysis of the results of the '2016 ICL Spring Fertiliser Trial' which compared different approaches to early spring nutrition and the influence of top dressing, plant growth regulation and wetting agent applications.

The ICL barista team will be on hand to provide refreshments on the stand, so please come along and have a chat and enjoy a complimentary coffee.

## **Delta-T Devices**

**Stand: B30**

**Web: [www.delta-t.co.uk](http://www.delta-t.co.uk)**

Used by many leading golf courses and sports venues, the ThetaKit enables fast, easy, precise soil moisture measurement. It enables turf moisture to be accurately monitored and potential irrigation problems to be addressed before deterioration of the playing surface has occurred.

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soil moisture sensor takes the guesswork out of turf management and gives turf professionals the information they need to confidently make correct irrigation decisions all year round.

Small, rugged and portable, the ThetaKit works straight from the case, and is exceptionally easy to use. A key element of the kit is the ThetaProbe Soil Moisture Sensor, renowned worldwide for its research-grade  $\pm 1\%$  accuracy and impressive build quality.

As an alternative to the portable ThetaKit approach to moisture monitoring, Delta-T Devices also offers a combination of the SM150 Soil Moisture Sensor and the GP1 Data Logger. For measurements at fixed locations a buried SM150 Sensor on the practice green will provide accurate readings of soil moisture and soil temperature which are stored on the GP1 Data Logger for later retrieval. Plots showing fluctuations in moisture between irrigation and rain events can be used to guide decision-making across the entire course.

For those interested in learning more about the benefits of measuring soil moisture, Delta-T Devices and the STRI (Sports Turf Research Institute) have co-authored the ThetaKit User Guide. This eight page guide makes extensive use of photos and diagrams to help greenkeepers make the most of their ThetaKit. The guide is free and can be downloaded from the ML3 ThetaKit page at [www.delta-t.co.uk](http://www.delta-t.co.uk). Alternatively you can email [sales@delta-t.co.uk](mailto:sales@delta-t.co.uk) to request a printed copy.

**ATT**

**Stand: M7**

**Web: [www.advancedtt.com](http://www.advancedtt.com)**

Advanced Turf Technology (ATT) can be found

in Hall M, stand M7, under its own name for the first time at BTME 2017. The company has become recognised as one of the foremost innovators in the turf industry, with agronomic based product designs that continue to push the boundaries.

The unique TMSystem™ is universally regarded as one of the best engineered products on the market and unlocks the full potential of all main-stream makes of triplex greens mowers and lightweight fairway mowers. The range of SMART cassettes available offers the greenkeeper a solution based approach to managing fine turf surfaces - whatever type of grass is present, and at all times of the year. One such cassette, the SmartUltraGroomer™, is worth particular mention with its unique design being able to reduce the onset of puffiness, grain issues and a general reduction in organic matter



accumulation. This can all be achieved without undue stress to the plant, or negatively affecting putt quality and the players overall enjoyment.

Rapidly becoming the company's flagship product is the all new electric INFiNiCut™. The maxim here is "simply advanced" because the design of this pedestrian machine cleverly combines simplicity with modern mechanical and electronic engineering. It comes in several guises, 21" and 22" for use primarily on golf greens, bowling greens, cricket wickets and tennis courts. The bigger 26" version is happily employed on tee boxes, collars and approaches. The 30" and 34" versions are sports-field mowers and are the industry benchmark for higher heights of cut seen on football and rugby pitches. The entire INFiNiCut™ range uses lithium power and are programmable (via a laptop or tablet) to change parameters to suit the needs of the

discerning sports-turf manager. In addition the INFiNiCut™ 21" and 22" models are fully compatible with the TMSystem™ range of cassettes that can aerate, brush, de-thatch, scarify, top-dress, groom, level and mow, bringing further scope to an already impressive machine.

**DLF**

**Stand: A20**

**Web: [www.dlf.co.uk](http://www.dlf.co.uk)**

Golf clubs looking for high quality turf surfaces need look no further than the 2017 Johnsons Sports Seed line-up. At BTME 2017 DLF will be launching Siskin, the new top rated chewings fescue cultivar on the latest independent Turfgrass seed trial list. Siskin, along with a number of other new cultivars, feature in the latest line up of revised mixtures from Johnsons – which visitors to stand A20 will have the opportunity to acquaint themselves with.

In the new STRI guide, Siskin followed by Humboldt topped the chewings fescue table, while DLF cultivars Manor and Arrowtown lead the bent grass table, and Nigella and Beudin slender creeping red fescue came out on top in their category.

Siskin is a new, versatile cultivar developed in response to greenkeeper requests. It combines top visual merit; the highest disease resistance score listed, with incredible shoot



**DLF**





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density – all of which correlate to improved turf quality and reduced maintenance budgets in terms of fertiliser, fungicides and poa control. It also has exceptional salt tolerance making it ideal for use on links courses where salt spray can be an issue. Siskin is included in the new formulations of J Green, J Fescue, J Links and J Premier Fairway.

The golf offering from Johnsons Sports Seed is further enhanced with the opportunity to purchase leading mixtures with the ProNitro coating. Since its launch at BTME 2016 ProNitro has proven itself to deliver significantly stronger establishment while reducing input costs – a combination popular with greenkeepers looking to balance budgets with improved turf quality.

Another DLF fine fescue launching at BTME is Archibal, a slender creeping red fescue incorporated in the Masterline formulations. Delivering excellent summer colour and strong disease resistance, Archibal features in an upgraded Pro Master 13 renovation mixture, Pro Master 35 for tees and Pro Master 40 fairway mixture.

### **Sherriff Amenity**

**Stand: B34**

**Web: [www.sherriffamenity.com](http://www.sherriffamenity.com)**

Not only will Sherriff Amenity be launching two new innovative products on stand B34 at BTME 2017 but it will also be offering 12 months free education and be showcasing a live working demonstration.

BTME 2017 will see the launch of two new products in the Evolution fertiliser range – Xtra and Controlled. Evolution Xtra is a slow-release outfield fertiliser which provides up to three months release and helps avoid volatilisation of nitrogen.

Evolution Controlled is a premium coated

fertiliser with a range of granulation sizes and analysis to suit a wide range of application requirements. The Evolution Controlled range offers different prill sizes and release patterns allowing the product to be used on various turf heights in golf, football, sport grounds and racecourses.

Also featuring on the stand will be the latest offering of SeaVolution – a cold processed seaweed and bio-stimulant range. SeaVolution consists of a range of liquids and granules manufactured from unique, cold processed seaweed extract from fresh, hand-picked *Ascophyllum nodosum*. SeaVolution is high in micronutrients, plant hormones and alginates, which work together to stimulate the biological defences of the grass, while its rich amino acid content aids plant recovery and stimulates growth in grass under stress.

Sherriff Amenity has always been a big advocate of education within the turf and amenity industry and many have benefited from being a part of the Sherriff Academy. This online platform is ideal for learning more about the amenity business as users can participate in courses to enhance knowledge on a wide range of topics such as disease and the correct products to use. Visitors to the Sherriff Amenity stand will receive an exclusive offer of 12 months free education with the Sherriff Academy.

Visitors to Stand B34 will also have the opportunity of seeing a live working demonstration of the Bayer easyFlow - the first closed transfer system for crop protection products in canisters. This unique product enhances operator safety by preventing spillages during the preparation process – thus significantly reducing waste and protecting the environment. It is also easy to install on the tanks of spraying and premixing equipment.

### **Rigby Taylor**

**Stand: B60**

**Web: [www.rigbytaylor.com](http://www.rigbytaylor.com)**

Exciting times on the RT stand for 2017.

Innovative products, new techniques and maybe a major product launch are promised by Rigby Taylor. Also on display will be the new Tetraploid Technology and 'R' range grass



seed mixtures, Germin-8 liquid seed dressing and innovative fertiliser formulations, including a new low sulphur range.

New top performing cultivars feature in 'R' range mixtures R9 for cricket and tennis and R14, R14CR and R140 for sports pitches and racecourses, all with Germin-8 seed treatment for faster germination and establishment.

For cold temperature repairs, R314 Rye, R140 and R25CRT germinate from just four degrees Celsius to help keep surfaces in play this winter.

Notable success was had at Wembley with the mixtures of R140 and R14CR producing exceptional early germination and establishment.

The same mixtures were used to produce superb playing surfaces at England's training complex for Euro 2016.

Germin-8 seed treatment is a potent liquid coating that stimulates and supports accelerated germination and emergence. At germination stage, the emerging seedling has immediate access to a highly beneficial package of targeted nutrients, sugars and micronized mycorrhizae. As a liquid coating, each individual seed is coated, there is no shedding of powder residues, no requirement to increase seeding rate due to extra weight of the bag.

The amazing ground water Dynamics surface drainage system will be showcased at BTME as will Impact Pure, the first totally biodegradable line marking paint. Visitors to the stand will be able pick up a series of independently compiled cost saving Case Studies and participate in interactive on-screen presentations and talk with the company's technical and commercial teams





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#### **Waste2Water**

**Stand: B46**

**Email: [info@waste2water.com](mailto:info@waste2water.com)**



"We've never been busier with record numbers of golf clubs installing our Waste2Water Recycling Wash-Off Systems in 2016," commented a delighted Tim Earley, managing director. The government's confirmation it will enshrine all current environmental legislation in any new Brexit legislation has removed any hesitation in installing a system. If you've not already done so, upgrading your wash facility should now be an urgent priority to ensure compliance with the environmental legislation. If you are planning to upgrade your wash facility Waste2Water will be delighted to invite you to stand B46 to view its system on show and see why it is the number one choice in the UK. The Waste2Water Recycling Wash-Off System ensures full compliance with the new environmental legislation and reduces water usage by around 90 per cent too! The above-ground system allows easy maintenance and the innovative design enables the system to be installed outside and used all year-round without the risk of freezing. There is no need to install the systems in a building or a container and there are no underground tanks to empty and maintain either. Installation could not be easier, often retro-fitting into an existing area to minimise the budget. And don't forget, the Waste2Water Recycling Wash-Off System is approved on the Water Technology List (WTL), which allows a 100 per cent first year Enhanced Capital Allowance (ECA) to be

claimed. It sounds a bit complicated but rest assured your accountant will be delighted!

Waste2Water's installation team will be delighted to arrange a free site survey and supply all the knowledge, expertise and equipment you need. It can provide everything up to a complete 'turnkey' package including wash pad modification / construction and with a range of systems available from one to four hoses, it's got the system for you!

"We look forward to seeing you on our stand," said a spokesman, "or if you can't make it to BTME this year just give us a call!"

#### **Highspeed Group**

**Stand: C12**

**Web: [www.highspeed.co.uk](http://www.highspeed.co.uk)**

Highspeed Group is focusing on its number one product ClearWater and sees BTME 2017 as the ideal platform to build on the last 12 months' success.



Highspeed Group's joint managing director David Mears commented: "BTME is always an excellent show for us and 2016 exceeded expectations with us taking a record number of ClearWater enquiries. For BTME 2017 we have made ClearWater even better with some specification changes, free upgrades and an exceptionally attractive price! The time to buy and comply could not be better, particularly for those that have been fortunate enough to receive VAT refunds!"

Highspeed's stand (C12) will feature a mini ClearWater display unit to demonstrate some of the new features and, yes, there will be a show pffer and an even better prize draw! If you are interested in bringing your washpad up to legal requirements, do make sure you visit the stand; it may not be as expensive as you thought and you could be a winner!

Highspeed Group's show offers not only cover ClearWater but also a superb deal on diesel refueling tanks and an attractive waste

management package; WasteAway.

Call Matt Mears on 07912 981103 for more information or to make a show appointment.

#### **Ecosol Turfcare**

**Stand: A10**

**Web: [www.ecosolve.co.uk](http://www.ecosolve.co.uk)**

Autumn 2015 saw a flurry of activity with Ecosol Turfcare's Drill n Fill operation.

The company travelled to new Scottish customer, Western Gables, near Glasgow to drill the whole course, as well as many others countrywide. Teams also went to Grand Ducal, Luxembourg, Krefelde, Germany, and to Paris and the company has forthcoming bookings for Europe in spring 2017.

Golf greens treated by this unique aerator, which can gently fold back turf and drill down to 31 cm, replacing soil with sand or sand / soil amendment, are better able to deal with winter weather that has become increasingly wet. The percolation ducts created by the machine remain open for many months, allowing surface water to drain away easily and the backfill ameliorates the rootzone, encouraging better grass growth and uptake of fertiliser. The process relieves compaction and cuts through layers of thatch and black layer which other aeration methods cannot reach.

A pass of Drill n Fill on a one-off or rolling programme usually means that winter greens closures are a thing of the past and the process has a well-proven track record. West Midlands golf club, Enville, has recently employed 'DnF' on three greens for the first time. Enville has 900 members and is a heathland site. The soil is mainly sand but can be heavy in places and the drill n filled greens were mainly old push-ups. Says course manager, Rob Jones: "The construction on these greens was done to a budget, so contaminated soil was mixed in and





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# BUNKER EDGING REDEFINED

I consider myself a traditionalist, and with over 60 trips to the UK, I know revetted wall bunkers! You simply cannot spot that our bunker faces are not natural turf - even close up.

Mike Harmon, Director Golf Operations, Secession Golf Club



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had given us a very undesirable soil profile." The management at Enville is very traditional, he added, supporting best practices and encouraging the finer grasses, bents / fescues.

The employment of Drill n Fill became the obvious choice to improve greens' drainage. And following some heavy autumn downpours, the reports are already positive. "The Drill n Fill has given us fantastic results, turning previously unplayable greens into consistent all-year-round surfaces, which is our primary target at Enville Golf Club," concluded Rob Jones.

Ecosol Turfcare is now taking bookings for 2017, with spring and autumn being the most popular and effective periods. See the company at BTME, Harrogate on Stand 10, Hall A, where you can see its machines and working videos, collect literature and talk to knowledgeable staff about your drainage problems – the company will be delighted to take your orders too!

#### **Gambetti**

**Stand: A61**

**Web: [gambettiuk.co.uk](http://gambettiuk.co.uk)**



Gambetti's PRO Dedicated will be on display with the all new totally enclosed Windfoil boom, at 5.5m working width. This boom is fully ground following in both positive and negative undulations just like the GF open boom (see the video on the website). Also the company will be displaying for the first time its new auto steering system which can be fitted to its PRO Dedicated sprayer. Working in conjunction with the BRAVO 400s navigation system, the operator marks his first run and the area to be sprayed, turns the sprayer to line up with the computer display, presses a button and the auto steer takes

over and the sprayer steers itself exactly along the edge of the previous sprayed run along the fairway or green, until the operator takes back control. The BRAVO 400s even takes control of the switching on and off of the spray jets automatically, applying spray where it's needed and switching off when the sprayer drives over an already treated area. The Gambetti PRO Dedicated has four wheel steer, is 4wd, has a 750lt or 950lt tank, a clean water rinse system and auto rate controller all fitted as standard.

#### **EcoBunker**

**Stand: M11**

**Web: [www.ecobunker.co.uk](http://www.ecobunker.co.uk)**

Fleesensee's Schloss Course (one of five at this major resort) is on a fast track to complete the re-styling of all its 70 bunkers by the end of March 2017, using the EcoBunker construction method. Introduced to the club in late 2014, three trial EcoBunkers, installed during the spring of 2015, demonstrated to the owners, managers and greenkeeping team that there was a sustainable, cost effective and aesthetically pleasing alternative to their existing bunkers.

So why the need for change? With extensive experience of preparing courses for European Tour events, course manager Stephen Monk explains: "The Schloss course, which can be described as an 'inland links', was always intended as a venue for major tournaments, however the European Tour prefers to host their Qualifying School on the sister Schloss Torgelow course. Following new investment by Kai Richter and Joerg Lindner, and discussions with the new directors of golf and business development, Alex White and Michael Hayes, there is now a clear strategy in place with the aim of re-introducing the Schloss course as a tournament venue. A bunker re-style is one of the most important elements of that strategy."

The existing bunkers are all very deep, including fairway bunkers (many over two metres deep) with a rolled-in turf design and flat sand surfaces. Over time, three main issues have emerged which triggered recent re-styling decisions: Firstly, many visiting golfers find that recovery is beyond their



ability; Secondly, the bunkers are set deep among subtle mounds and are very difficult to discern, especially from the tee; and thirdly the maintenance of the steep grass banks is difficult, unnecessarily hazardous and expensive involving many man hours of fly-mowing.

A change was needed, but why select EcoBunker's synthetic revetted system? "We looked at many options but two in great detail," answers Monk, "the revetted option with EcoBunker (for reasons of cost natural turf revetments were impossible), and a sand faced, irregular edged option described to us by the promotor as '1920s style'. It was a big decision; we considered our paying customers, European Tour aspirations, short term installation costs and very importantly the longer term maintenance liabilities. We wanted to do the work just once and not have to be coming back every five years or so and reconstruct the bunkers time and time again which is the case when using natural turf. EcoBunker finally became our preferred option after they demonstrated how they could successfully deliver fast track projects of a comparable scale (nine full lorry loads of eco-turf) on time and within budget such as Medalist and Secession in the US and Haningstrand in Sweden. The fact that the three trial bunkers had performed superbly was also an important factor."

"This is a very special project for me," added EcoBunker's owner, Richard Allen. "Bunker styling is of great interest to me. I'm a big fan of both formal revetted and more intricate sand faced designs: there is room in golf for both, but I've never been inspired by the rolled-in turf style. In fact the original inspiration behind my synthetic turf layering invention can be traced back to a golf course where sand-faced Colt bunkers were, to my disappointment, replaced with rolled-in turf designs. It's a great honour to be entrusted with re-styling a course of the stature of The Schloss and I can't wait to see the finished results next spring."





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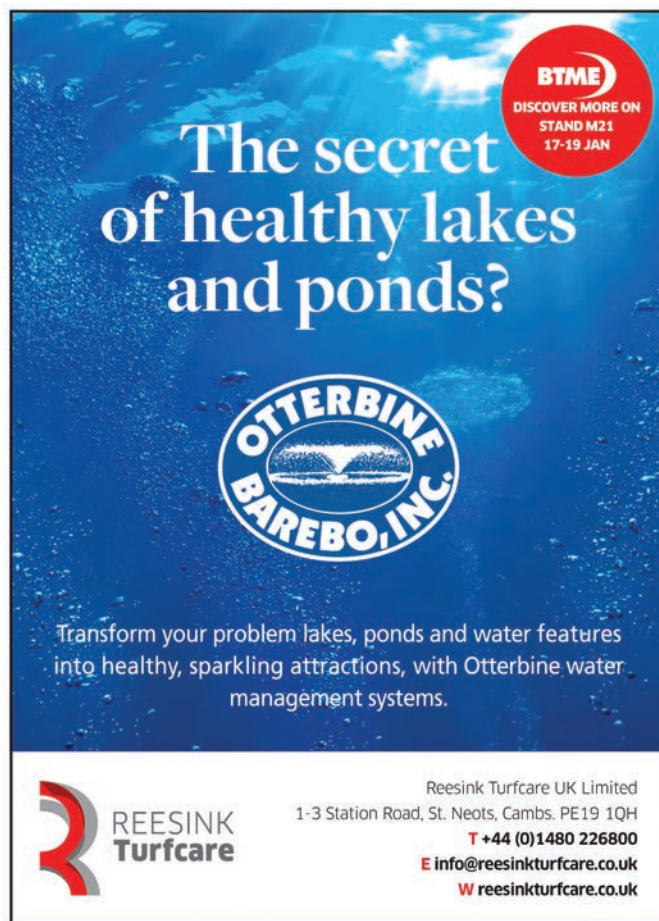
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*Kubota UK*

**Kubota UK**

**Stand: M22**

**Web: [www.kubota.co.uk](http://www.kubota.co.uk)**

Kubota UK will be showcasing its extensive range of high performance groundcare solutions to the industry's leading turf professionals at BTME 2017.

Visitors to Kubota's stand will have the opportunity to see a wide range of the company's market leading machinery and also find out how these are backed up with first class aftersales service, including Kubota Finance and Kubota Care. Kubota's expert dealer managers will also be on hand to give visitors advice on the right machines to meet their groundcare needs.

Featured on stand will be a host of machines, including Kubota's popular GL40 Series of 35-59HP mid range tractors, the rugged and versatile RTV-X900 utility vehicle and a number of the company's mower solutions, from its out front F Series, the ride-on G26-II (High Dump version) and two walk-behind mowers (W821 and W819). The company will also be showcasing one of its zero turn mowers, the ZD326.

At the show, visitors will be able to discuss the innovative extended warranty programme through Kubota Care, which offers complete support. Kubota customers can now safeguard their GL Series tractor against any unforeseen expensive repair costs during the first five years of ownership. Customers simply decide the service hour usage at the time of purchase, so they only pay for the hours they

use. By choosing Kubota Care, customers benefit from all major service and maintenance carried out by an authorised Kubota dealer, with only Kubota genuine parts and lubricants used, ensuring maximum reliability and performance.

Kubota's aftersales support staff will also be at the show for visitors to meet.

Kubota Finance provides customers with a range of straightforward and simple purchasing options.

Adrian Langmead, Kubota UK's Groundcare Business Development Manager, commented: "The 2017 show creates the ideal opportunity for existing and potential Kubota customers to get close to all of our machinery and view their quality, durability and versatility. We're also looking forward to discussing our industry leading aftersales support and improved finance options that, combined with our machines, offer a first class proposition to the market."

**Double A / Tru-Turf**

**Stand: C56**

**Web: [www.doublea.co.uk](http://www.doublea.co.uk)**

Tru-Turf will launch a new turf roller at this year's BTME show with the unveiling of the model R50-11.

Building on the success of the Tru-Turf R48 and R52 turf rollers, which are in service at many of the greatest golf clubs and sports facilities around the world, the R50-11 takes greens' rolling to an even higher standard with a number of new and unique features including self-cleaning roller heads by way of a patented rubber nodule cleaning system and a range of quick fit attachments including slitter, spiker and brush which can be fitted and removed in seconds with no tools required.

For more information visit the Double A / Tru-Turf at Stand 56 in Hall C where the R50-11 will be on display alongside the best-selling Tru-Turf R48-11A and Sweep N Fill 3 top dressing brush.



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# Rallying Rayleigh

**The Rayleigh Club has been transformed in recent years – from a struggling venue to a thriving golf club. At the heart of the change has been the way the facility has solved a major drainage issue, as Andy Waple details**

**F**ew members end up buying their own golf club, but Jamie Saitch did when The Rayleigh Club in Essex went into administration in 2013.

Determined to reverse the sad decline he witnessed during his 10 years playing there, Jamie went about transforming the club with the long-term ambition of making it the best in the county if not in the entire south-east.

A major investment programme commenced immediately. The range and pro shop were refurbished, an old farm house was converted into accommodation featuring a stunning bridal suite and the clubhouse was brought up to high standard.

Yet it was the courses themselves that demanded the greatest attention. The two 18-hole layouts, known as the South and East courses, complemented by a nine-hole par three academy course, were not up to scratch in Jamie's eyes.

The greatest challenge Rayleigh faced was severe waterlogging of the fairways, which caused course closures for up to three months of the year. As well as annoying golfers, the issue led to a substantial loss of income for the club.

After considering proposals from various drainage companies, he was impressed by Turfdry's enthusiasm and professionalism, as well as its unique Hydraway Sportsdrain drainage system. This product drains water three times faster than a conventional plastic pipe, and can

be installed in trenches only 50mm wide, thereby combining maximum drainage efficiency with minimum disruption to the existing turf.

Jamie therefore employed Turfdry to remedy the problem and carry out a number of other improvements. Turfdry set about changing holes, introducing new tees, water features and making the course longer and more difficult as well as solving the drainage issues.

In 2014 Turfdry installed its Hydraway Sportsdrain at four or five metre centres across the whole of the championship South course, a process that balanced best technical efficiency with cost effectiveness.

Temporary closures were largely limited to one or two holes at a time and the members' response to the works was overwhelmingly positive.

Turfdry also constructed ponds and modified existing water features to maintain a uniformly quality aesthetic across the course.

Delighted with the effectiveness of the new drainage demonstrated over the winter of 2014-15, The Rayleigh Club re-engaged Turfdry the following spring to design and implement drainage improvements to the East Course, and expand the earthworks elements on the South Course.

The Rayleigh Club has been transformed into a year-round destination for quality golf and is

attracting new members. Jamie said: "As the owner of The Rayleigh Club and having had Turfdry install drainage to both our championship members' course and our pay-and-play course, I can honestly say that both courses have gone from being only playable eight to nine months per year to 12 months a year. In fact the only closure we have had since the drainage had been installed has been due to frost. The product works and works well. The planning and the services given are exceptional and I would recommend both to anyone looking to make their golf course an all-round better playing surface. We have found that not only are the fairways much drier the growth we are experiencing since the drainage has been installed is also much thicker and healthier.

"To me the ultimate proof is that we now have over 50 people waiting to join the members' course as they are aware that they are pretty much guaranteed all-year-round golf and I'm certain there cannot be many golf clubs that can boast those facts."

Turfdry is the sole UK approved installer of the revolutionary Hydraway Sportsdrain, a quality-engineered product from the US that combines maximum drainage efficiency with minimum disruption.

The Hydraway Sportsdrain is a columnar construction fusion-bonded to a non-woven needle-punched geotextile with proven clog resistance, whilst maintaining optimal filtration. It has been used successfully in a wide range of UK sports turf applications for over 20 years.

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Unlike conventional plastic pipe drains – which must be laid at a minimum gradient of one in 200 to prevent blockage through silt build-up – Hydraway Sportsdrain is effective even at zero gradient.

Installation results in minimum disruption to the ground, and its speedy application prevents costly loss of play.







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## ► A day in the life

### Derek Metcalfe

is a volunteer greenkeeper at **Isles of Scilly Golf Club**.  
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#### • What time do you arrive at the club?

As a volunteer greenkeeper it can vary – I try to fit the work in around the weather and the people playing.

#### • Can you describe your morning routine?

As my main area of responsibility is the greens, my morning usually sees me cutting, Sarel rolling or changing holes but it can also involve working on machines or equipment.

#### • How many people are there in your team and is it a fair number for your collective workload?

Apart from myself and two other volunteers who are responsible for greens, fairways, roughs and tees and so on, we do have some members who have taken over working on the bunkers. We also have one member who walks his dog at night and while he's walking he hand waters some of the greens! When we have to topdress, we call on a few extra hands to help.

#### • Do you share tasks?

We do tend to stick to our own tasks but if someone is ill or on holiday we will muck in to make sure everything gets done.

#### • How do you motivate your colleagues?

Luckily we're all self-motivated. We are all golfers so if you want a nice golf course to play on, you get out and do it!

#### • What's your favourite season of the year and why?

Summer time I think – the light on the course in the evenings is stunning and the views we get are hard to beat.

#### • What aspects / functions of your job gives you the greatest satisfaction?

In the last year the most satisfying moment was fitting our mower with new blades and all of a sudden the greens looked 100 per cent better.

#### • And what part of it gives you the least satisfaction?

We had a very dry summer a couple of years ago and I had to watch the greens disappear before my eyes – they get so dry you think you're never going to get them back.

#### • Have you attended any courses recently?

I haven't attended any courses but we have a couple of course advisors in the form of Richard Shapland of Headland Amenity and Dave Manley, former greenkeeper at Cape Cornwall Golf Course, who are always on the end of the phone. When they pay us a visit, I try to get as much guidance and advice from them that I can.

#### • Do you have a feeding programme for your fairways? How do you ensure your greens have good colour?

We have an annual work programme that was created for us by Dave Manley which is tweaked by Dave or Richard of Headland when they visit. Richard took some cores from our greens and from these results made some changes to our feeding programme. We currently use a range of Headland products starting with Caldicomplex which we apply at the start of the year followed by Greentec 6-5-18 in March and C-Complex 7-0-7 in May, with the addition of some liquid feed and colour through the summer. We then use the Caldicomplex again in October which is followed by slow-release Multigreen Mini 12-0-43 to last through the winter. We also spray a soluble iron in the winter when the weather allows. We are now starting a feeding programme on the fairways which consists of XTEND 46-0-0, applied in spring and summer and a spring time harrow to help control the heather that has become a problem on two fairways.

#### • How would you improve the greenkeeping industry?

Not sure about this one, perhaps cloning Richard Shapland and Dave Manley would help?!

#### • Has a golfer ever deliberately directed a ball at you?

I don't think so but there have been some close calls without a warning shout!

#### • Have you ever had any mishaps with lakes on the course or had to undertake a rescue of a daft golfer?

We don't have any lakes on the course but we did have to rescue our John Deere from a hedge after it slid down a slope!

#### • What is the most interesting animal you have seen on your course and how do you do support wildlife?

We get lots of migratory birds in the spring and autumn which means at times there are more bird watchers than golfers on the course.

#### • Are you seeing any evidence of climate change?

The last two winters have been very wet but I think it's a case of wait and see...

#### • What advice would you give to a young greenkeeper starting out today?

Enjoy it – I hope anybody starting out will get at much satisfaction from the job as I have over the last three years.

#### • How do you spend your leisure time?

I enjoy playing and building guitars, drinking wine in between throwing the latest disaster build in the bin! I also like to get out and play golf, when I get the time!





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