

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2019

Issue 3



SAVE THE DATES

The Regional Match is being held on the 26th September 2019 at Pyecombe Golf Club in Sussex.

The next Golf and Dinner Day at Walton Heath Golf Club is on the 6th March 2020.

The Annual Conference will be held on the 14th November 2019 at the new Ingrebourne links Golf and Country Club.

<https://www.bigga.org.uk/eventlisting.html?region=south-east>

Hello All, welcome to another edition of the BIGGA South East Regional Newsletter.

Dare I mention the weather! It's the thing that keeps me wanting to do my job, pitching out skills against something that we cannot control certainly makes for a daily challenge and keeps you on your toes!

Some wonderful educational events have been held across the Region and Sections and I would encourage you to make the most of these opportunities. In my 30 years of being in the industry I will say that an open mind is key to learning and just because a certain company may be presenting the information, the key lies in, not the particular product, but the active ingredients, timing and modes of action. My point is that an open mind sees past a particular product name.

As always there are plenty of golf events, if that's your thing.

Please feel free to contact your section with suggestions and ideas, we can only get better if you tell us what you would like to see.

Best regards

Pete Smith, South East Regional Chairman.



BIGGA East Anglia Section

Representatives from 9 different golf clubs from across the East Anglia Section gathered together at Aldeburgh Golf Club on the 30th May for an ecology-focused course walk, by kind invitation of the club and Course

Manager, Mark Broughton. Aldeburgh Golf Club won Environmental Golf Course of the Year at the 2019 Golf Environment Awards (one of two Suffolk clubs to reach the finals; the other being Ipswich Golf Club) and Mark was keen to share their success and experiences with like-minded Greenkeepers from across the region.



After a most hearty breakfast was enjoyed by all that managed to get there on time (!), Mark introduced the day with a short talk, and a few things really came to the fore as key ideas to grasp. The first was that there should be no separation between Greenkeeping and Ecological practice. Ecological-mindedness is not a side-line or an afterthought, but something that should permeate through all of your thinking and planning when considering your course maintenance practices. The second was that communication (both to staff and the membership) is paramount when changing practices, or significantly altering the look/ playing characteristics of any given area of the course. Regular meetings, presentations, noticeboard updates, social media and the like should all be employed to explain what is happening, and also WHY it happening, keeping “on message” all the time. Aldeburgh made a conscious decision to change how they were going about things, especially with regards to their rough/ gorse management, and importantly this came about as a result of a comprehensive course review which agreed on the way forward for both course and ecology. This plan was ambitious and radical in many ways, but public and available to all. Lastly, you should be prepared to face criticism, but always refer back, and stick, to the agreed plan. Keep the end goal in mind and be unashamedly proud of what you are trying to achieve to further the ecological cause at your club.

BIGGA’s Ecology Guru (actual job title) James Hutchinson gave a short presentation covering ideas for how to get started with a more ecological approach, from composting to rough management via living walls and bug hotels. He also brought our attention to the new categories that have been introduced for the Golf Environment Awards 2020. The Home Unions National awards, supported by the governing bodies for amateur golf in the UK, are designed to encourage clubs, just starting their ecological and environmental journey, to enter the GEAs. The new categories join the existing GEA awards – Environmental Golf Course of the Year, Environmental Project of the Year, Conservation Greenkeeper of Year and Operation Pollinator. James encouraged us all to consider applying, whatever stage we were at as the application process itself can generate some good ideas and gain some great advice along the way.



Following the presentations, we headed out on the course to see the kind of things Aldeburgh had managed to achieve, and what they planned to do in the future. The idea was to have different “grades” or “ages” of habitat, like grassland, woodland or gorse. If everything is of the same height, age, species or the like then it is less diverse and less attractive for a wider range of animals and plant life. Gorse management was a key project coming out of the club’s course review, and the aim was to move away from ever-narrowing gorse-lined fairways. Serious amounts of work had been put in to

remove large stands of gorse, and also smaller sections crowding bunkers, blocking good shots and the like. The build-up of gorse litter underneath was also removed to get back to the original soil. Some area had heather brash spread which had taken well, whilst areas to the edges of fairways had been managed by cut-and-collect to impoverish the soil which had resulted in lovely areas of thin, wispy fescues with sorrel providing a wonderful touch of colour. Of particular interest was the practice ground, which was mown at fairway height but left unsprayed to allow



many low-growing native plants to thrive alongside the grass. This was a real demonstration of the “all weeds are plants” philosophy being put into practice in an area that simply did not demand being presented as 100% grass. The result looked great, showed remarkable ecological diversity compared to your average driving range, and provided a valuable source of food for pollinators, and all without a detrimental impact to the golfers or their practice facilities. We shouldn’t always be “tidying things up” where it is not needed. Context is obviously key here, but there are always areas that can be left alone, which is often beneficial for wildlife.

There was a chance to hug an ancient tree for those so inclined, and for the rest of us the opportunity to see how an old oak



had survived for hundreds of years and begun to hollow-out to form a strong cylinder that should last for many hundreds more. There was also discussion on how this type of tree can often be at some danger from the misplaced idea of removing trees that are “dying” when they are anything but.

Aldeburgh have installed a reed-bed system on their wash-down bay, and for many of us this was the first time we had seen one close up. It was surprising how compact reed-bed systems can be (they aren’t of Nature Reserve proportions!), and how effectively they work whilst providing yet another type of habitat on the golf course. The importance of removing self-setting saplings is very

important.

It is amazing how quickly habitats can change over time, and how wrong the “it’s always been like this” comments can be. Left unmanaged, grassland can rapidly become scrubland, which rapidly becomes woodland. Scrubland is important habitat, but active management is needed if you want to maintain a more open aspect to areas, and the regular use of tree-poppers or similar will be needed to remove saplings. Pioneer species such as Birch, Poplar, Blackthorn and Hawthorn are quick to colonise an area, and may be highly undesirable on more open golf course. Aldeburgh made good use of aerial photos during the whole process of their course review and change in management practices to illustrate the changes that had taken place and what was needed to rectify them.

Many bird boxes have been put up on the course, including several Barn Owl nest boxes which Mark, as a licensed Barn Owl nest box monitor, can keep an eye on himself, as part of the Suffolk Community Barn Owl Project which has seen a hugely positive impact on the Barn Owl population.

All in all the day was not only a wonderful walk around one of the finest heathland golf courses, but an encouragement to be proactive in making the case for a more ecological approach at our own golf clubs, with some genuinely helpful input on how to go about that process. It may be that some minor battles are lost along the way, and indeed this should be expected, but with the greater goal in mind steady progress can be made. Much help is available, not least from BIGGA in the form of advice or visits and reports from James Hutchinson, and several of us went home having requested such, and keen to get things in place at our own courses. Sincere thanks go to Mark Broughton, Aldeburgh Golf Club and James Hutchinson for facilitating the day.

As a Section we are always looking for ideas and suggestions for future events. Please email [eastangliasection@bigga.co.uk](mailto:angliasection@bigga.co.uk) if you have an idea or would like to contribute in some way.

Future events;

Summer Golf Day, Rushmere Golf Club – 4/07/19

Education and Golf Fayre, Diss Golf Club – 25/07/2019

Summer Golf Day 2, Thetford Golf Club – 14/08/2019

Turkey Trot and AGM, Wensum Valley Golf and Country Club – 4/12/2019

2018 saw the introduction of a 'Scholarship' scheme for the members of the East Anglia Section. The idea was to offer two greenkeepers £250 towards the cost of attending BTME 2019. All the applicants had to do was answer a few questions! The worthy winners were Nick Staff from Aldeburgh Golf Club and Steve Crabb from Sheringham Golf Club. We hope they enjoy their trip!

Also, a big thanks from the section to all the Regional Partners and Section sponsors in 2018, wishing you all a great Christmas and here's to a successful new year.

BIGGA Surrey Section

This year's Surrey BIGGA spring meeting was held at the beautifully presented West Byfleet Golf Club on Thursday 2nd May. A huge turnout for the first event of the year. A highly competitive field assembled which included ex open competitor Graham Homewood amongst the players looking to get their hands on the famous trophy.



The day was won by Wentworth's Peter Moore with 38 points winning on countback from Derek Cunliffe.

Results

1st place Peter Moore 38, 2nd place Derek Cunliffe 38, 3rd place James Osler 37, Longest Drive Scott Dunkerley, Nearest the pin, Ben Cameron.

Chipstead Golf Club was host to our Surrey Partners Educational Event. This event gave our members and partners a chance to meet for a day and discuss the products and services they offer alongside education about what they specialise in. As always, this event was also a great networking opportunity





We were fortunate, in June, to have Andy Ewence host a course walk at Woking Golf Club. Despite a very wet and miserable day we were delighted to see so many still make the walk where Andy showed us around the course with previous projects carried out, challenges they face and their upcoming plans to continue to raise the bar on course.



On July 1st, our next golf event, and one of the most popular on the Surrey Section Calendar is the McMillan Tankard held on the New Course at Sunningdale. Once again, we have a full subscription for people attending what will be a great day of golf followed by a well-enjoyed BBQ at the Artisans Clubhouse.

This year we will once again be offering a BTME Scholarship for Surrey Section Members. Last year Tim Brewster was the recipient and we will be opening up applications for those interested in a chance to attend the biggest Education & Networking Event for Greenkeepers in the UK.

In preparation for the winter months we have once again secured the Merrist Wood lecture hall to host monthly educational talks. We currently have a couple of people booked that will cover topics relative to managing turf as well as other important aspects within our industry. If anybody has suggestions who people who would be good to host a seminar or comments in general about our education events, they are always welcomed.

Email; surreysection@bigga.co.uk



BIGGA Kent Section

Our next golf event is at Lamberhurst Golf Club on the 5th September. For more information contact kentsection@bigga.co.uk

Keep an eye on the BIGGA website for details of our winter education programme

<https://www.bigga.org.uk/event-listing.html?region=south-east>



BIGGA Essex Section

Our first golf day of the year was attended by 18 players at Braxted Park on 30th April. Thank you to Peter Keeble, the Secretary Manager for allowing us the use of the course and thank you to all the Greenkeeping team for all their hard work presenting the course.

The results were as follows:

1st John Tuffen 39pts, The Essex Golf & Country Club

2nd Mike Bartlett 38pts, Hartswood Golf Club

3rd Andy Harding 31pts CB, Boyce Hill Golf Club

Trade - Matt Wise 39pts

NP 3rd George Butters

NP 17th Kevin Myers

LD Callum Smith

Our next golf day is at Forrester Park on Thursday 18th July – 12 midday. The cost is £20. Numbers are limited to a maximum of 36 people so please get in touch with Andy Harding asap. The day includes a bacon roll & coffee/tea on arrival and a BBQ for after!

You probably have more details on this yourself but we have the Captains/Greenkeepers event at Romford Golf Club on 23rd July. 11.30am meet for a light lunch then tee off from 1pm. Golf will be followed by a Jacket and Tie dinner. £20 cost and entries need to be received by 15th July.

A big thank you to the South East Partners and our section sponsors Firstcall Corporation, Toro, Prime Irrigation, CMW Equipment, George Browns Groundcare, Aitkens, Collier Turfcare and Banks Amenity.

Andy Harding from Boyce Hill celebrates 25 years at Boyce Hill golf club on 20th June. Exceptional achievement!

Andy Harding Charity Ultra Marathon and other challenges:

“Following some personal life changing events and after losing a close personal friend at the age of 43, I took a good look at myself and made some fairly radical changes to my lifestyle. The result of which was becoming a fitness ‘nut’ and losing 3 stone in weight which inevitable led to some challenges to satisfy the want to better myself. My first challenge was London to Paris bike ride in 2017, which took four days and covered nearly 400 miles. Since that I’ve continued to improve my fitness and running and took part in the Brighton Marathon on the 14th of April this year and completed it in a respectable time of 3hrs 50mins, 17 secs. My next event is a little different! I’m running non-stop from London to Brighton in a 100km/62mile Ultra Marathon in aid of the charity ‘Mind’. I’ve chosen this charity as I feel this area of the NHS is hugely underfunded and mental health is impacting more and more people, particularly in our industry at

present. I'm also taking on Lands End to John O'Groats bike ride in September covering 969 miles in 9 days as a bucket list challenge, but not as a fund raiser!

So, if you can spare the price of a pint and sponsor me, I'd be ever so appreciative."

Well done to Jack Bully who is the new Course Manager at Wanstead Golf Club.

Liam Springett has celebrated the birth of his second child – a baby boy named Ted. Congratulations to him and his wife Lauren.

On a sunny but breezy day, 20+ people attended an Irrigation Workshop held at Boyce Hill Golf Club. The attendees were split into two groups, with one group working inside looking at the electrical side, while the other group concentrated on sprinklers outside. After an enjoyable lunch, groups swapped around in the afternoon. Feedback has been positive to what appears to have been a very informative day. A massive thank you must go to Alastair Higgs and Mat Gilks from Rainbird, Ian Nichols for his hard work and effort setting this up and Scott Clarke and Andy & his team from Boyce Hill for hosting the event.

Congratulations to Spencer Adams-Dunstan who is taking the new head greenkeepers role at Langdon Hills.

Email; essexsection@bigga.co.uk



BIGGA Sussex Section

The Sussex Section held its Summer golf day at the Dyke Golf Club. The team of John Cole, Larry Pearman, Ryan Hyder and Gavin Acklan were the winners, beating the Birch Grove team by one point with the teams from the

Dyke and Beauport finishing off the prize places.

As always there has been a full education program organized by Joe Dormer.

We are always looking for suggestions of topics to cover, please contact

sussexsection@bigga.co.uk

Further fixtures 2019;

12th September, Autumn Golf Day, Cooden Beach Golf Club

6th December, Turkey Trot Golf Competition, East Brighton Golf Club.

Email; sussexsection@bigga.co.uk





BIGGA London Section

Keep an eye on the BIGGA website for details of future events.

Email; londonsection@bigga.co.uk

BIGGA
TURF
MANAGEMENT
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**Join us for BTME: 21-23 January 2020 &
Continue to Learn: 19-22 January 2020**

Harrogate Convention Centre | HG1 5LA
www.btme.org.uk | [@BIGGA_BTME](https://twitter.com/BIGGA_BTME)



BTME Scholarship Opportunities

Due to the new Sponsorship scheme run by the South East Region and the generosity and support we have received from our Partners, some of our Sections have been able to offer a member, or in one case two members, financial help towards a trip to BTME. These 'scholarships' were set up to help members, who may not have been able to go otherwise, the opportunity to attend the show, network and attend Continue to Learn. Feedback from the lucky winners have been extremely positive and we hope that similar schemes will be offered again this year.

Nicky Chaplin – Kent Section Winner

"Last year my husband, Mark and I spent the summer in St Andrews as seasonal greenkeepers, working on the Eden, Strathtyrum and Balgove Golf Courses. This work was completely new to us apart from some volunteer work at Marks home course Royal Cinque Ports. It was a big risk that we would hate it but we both loved it and I made the decision about halfway through our time there that I would carry on doing this in some form when we got back home.

As part of all this we had both joined BIGGA so that we could get any support that we needed during our time working with the Links Trust. In August an email was sent out asking if anyone would like a sponsored place to attend BTME 2019. All you had to do was write a brief email explaining why you thought you should be awarded this and what you would get from it. I thought 'what the heck' and wrote the email. I understood the importance of BTME in the greenkeeping world as our Course Manager at Royal Cinque Ports had gained an awful lot from their many and varied events over the years himself.

The emails were to be put forward to a panel of people anonymously, who would decide who was awarded this. I worked with Lee Sayers from The London Club, who was the contact for this, to ensure this was the case. All the panel knew about me was that I was new to greenkeeping, was working at St Andrews for the summer and that I wanted to carry on working as a greenkeeper longer term. They obviously thought I would gain a lot from the event as I was successful.

The event itself was an eye opener for me. A huge amount going on to see and learn with both the industry supplier's exhibition and the Continue to Learn seminars

The scholarship was great for me as at the time I was not employed so would have had to pay for the whole event myself. BIGGA Kent were offering to pay travel, accommodation and the costs of two full days of seminars. I made full use of this and chose to focus my learning around environmental and ecological subjects. There really is a whole host of seminars you can attend ranging from more technical subjects to personal development and management classes.



Harrogate really is taken over by the turf management world during this event and there is a great buzz about the town. I would encourage everyone to apply for this scholarship it really is a generous award and so much can be gained from it. If you think this is for you please apply, it only takes a little while to write a short email and it is worth it.

As a short addition, since attending BTME 2019 I have gone on to gain a full-time position as a greenkeeper in my local area and am loving it."

Tim Brewster, Surrey Section Winner

"To be chosen by the Surrey committee as the winner of the scholarship and being sent to BTME 2019, was a great honour.

This gave me the opportunity to attend some inspiring educational seminars, meet up with old friends and make new ones within the industry.

I hope this year's winner will enjoy and grab the opportunity with both hands, especially the younger/newer greenkeepers that haven't been before. Once you have been, you will want to go every year.



Stephen Crabb, East Anglia Winner

"I thoroughly enjoyed my experience at Harrogate. I attended the soil microbiology and basic microscopy course where I learnt about soil biology and how microbes' function within the golf green soil. I would highly recommend this to any greenkeeper as it gives you an insight into the scientific side which you would never normally get to see in your day to day work. After the workshop I attended the show which gave me a chance to look around many greenkeeping stands and see what the industry has to offer. I would highly recommend the BIGGA East Anglia scholarship to anyone who is training in level 2 or 3 in greenkeeping. You are awarded a certificate at the

end of the course. It was a great experience and I'm very grateful to BIGGA East Anglia for the opportunity to be a part of it. "

If you are interested in taking advantage of a 'scholarship' from your Section then please contact the relevant secretary; <https://www.bigga.org.uk/about/bigga-regions/south-east.html> to register your interest



Tom Kenny, Aftermarket Business Manager for Turf in the South East.

We're excited to welcome Tom Kenny to the Burden Bros Turf team!

Originally from Sussex, Tom started working life as an assistant golf professional with an interest in golf course maintenance having worked on his uncles' course from the young age of 14. Since then, Tom has gained more than 20 years' experience in the industry, both in retail and course management. His most recent role as a Group Course Manager overseeing 16 Golf Courses for a charitable trust has given Tom a great understanding of working with different clients, whilst managing the agreed expectations. Having come from a farming family and being the only member of the family to be in the golf industry, Tom has a great understanding of grassland and machinery management.

Tom's passion for turf machinery and customer service led him to join us at Burden Bros Agri. With his industry knowledge and previously being a customer of Burden Bros, Tom's love for the John Deere brand made it an easy choice to join the company. "I have been exposed to other brands within the industry over the years, having used most if not all I felt I believed in the John Deere brand the most." Tom also felt that the service and backup support is the best given in the industry.



As Aftermarket Business Manager, Tom will be heading up the aftermarket area for Turf, supporting our current customers whilst gaining new business through growing the turf sector. He will also be making sure we deliver the service expected by our customers, "We supply a premium product to our customers so let's give them a premium service".

If you haven't met Tom and would like to discuss any Aftermarket products or support then please don't hesitate in contacting him on the details below.

Tom.kenny@burdenbros.co.uk 07818 190508



For more information please contact the TOPSOIL Sales Team on 0870 2402314 For more information contact;



As Headland Amenity approach the 25th anniversary since their entry into the UK turf and amenity market, the company has never been better placed to support its customers in their continual

search for quality and improvement.

Trading started in September 1994 as a part of Headland Agrochemicals, a UK supplier of Seaweeds, micronutrients, adjuvants and chemicals into agriculture. *“Headland Amenity’s early product range was not as large as it is today, but featured some well-known names such as Multigreen® and Seamac even then”* said Mark De Ath, Headland’s founder and current Operations Director. *“Our aim was to bring only good quality products to the market with a heavy emphasis on research and development.”*

A management buyout in 2002 secured the future of the business and subsequent growth has established Headland as a major force in the UK market.

Today, as part of the Origin Amenity structure, Headland is able to utilise the groups own fertiliser manufacturing facility based on Humberside and trades with customers the length and breadth of the UK as well as throughout Europe. *“The company has come a long way since its inception in 1994, but the original ethos has not changed”* says Mark. *“Providing effective products that give great results and backing that with excellent support and advice has served us well up until now and will, I’m sure, continue into the future.”*





To support their continued investment, growth and increase in sales, Headland Amenity have announced the appointment of Peter Blackaby. Peter joins the team as Regional Technical Manager for the Eastern counties, a role which will see him working closely with Turf Managers to deliver Headland's customer-focused, practical approach to nutritional management.

Peter has held a number of Greenkeeper and Course Manager positions throughout his career, building up a wealth of knowledge on the tools and techniques required to maintain top quality playing surfaces. More recently he has worked independently as a franchisee of a lawn care company, where he gained invaluable experience of conducting site visits and working together with clients on the structuring of a ground's improvement programme.

Upon joining Headland Amenity, Peter said, "When I saw the position come up, I just had to go for it – it presented a fantastic opportunity to join, in my opinion, one of the leading innovators in the fine and sports turf industry. I have used Headland products through the majority of my career and have always found them to achieve fantastic results. I am excited to be returning to the sector I enjoy the most and look forward to sharing my knowledge with faces old and new, helping them to achieve their objectives."

In his downtime, Peter is a keen golfer and can often be found out on the golf course. He also enjoys watching football and spending all-important quality time with his wife and two children.

Thank you to all the South East Partners for their ongoing support



The South East Region and Sections together, have contributed over £1000 to the Greenkeepers benevolent fund in 2018.

Thank you to all that contributed!

The fund exists to assist current or past members and their dependents, to provide financial support and practical help during difficult times.

Anyone wishing to apply for a grant please contact BIGGA HQ or your local Regional MSM. Forms can be downloaded from the members area under Member Services & Benefits. If you need any help please email benevolentfund@bigga.co.uk.



Want to know more about what BIGGA has to offer?

I am more than happy to visit you and/or your team at your golf club at a time that suits you, all you have to do is ask!

Kerry Phillips

Membership Services Manager, South East Region

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Facebook: Kerry Bigga Twitter: @BiggaKerry



An association committed to the continual professional development of it's members, working with the leading bodies in golf for the good of the game

BIGGA have reviewed the information contained within this newsletter and deem it to be of legitimate interest to members, you are therefore receiving this news as part of our commitment to your membership.

