

ISSUE 3, JANUARY 2023

# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS GAZETTE

# THE GROUNDSMAN



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# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

Made by greenkeepers, for greenkeepers.

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# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## Daryl Davidson - My first trip overseas, Saltex, Arsenal F.C, Wimbledon and more!

What an amazing experience for my first ever time overseas.

It was awesome to meet so many passionate people in our industry in such a short time across the other side of the world. This trip was a great success and is just the start for International Greenkeepers with Bradley Tennant resigning from his Head Groundsman job at Crosfields School, to take the next step in helping our industry on a full-time basis. We have grown to the point where someone needs to be at the helm so we can continue to provide many free services for our members and the industry. This is a huge gamble for a young man with so much potential, but he has donated so many hours to get us where we are today from the very beginning, including building our website, which put us on the map. I ask all our members and friends of the industry to support Bradley in his next career move, as this young man has sacrificed so much for our industry. Huge thanks to Dennis Mowers SISIS Machinery for taking on the gold sponsorship to give Bradley the confidence to take a huge chance to find other sponsors.

**If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, please reach out to Bradley via email at [internationalgreenkeepers@gmail.com](mailto:internationalgreenkeepers@gmail.com)**

*The big week - Bradley Tennant*

Things all started like any other Saturday morning for me, early wake-up followed by at least an hour's worth of driving. But this week was different. I was about to collect Daryl Davidson from Heathrow airport.

It's been 3 years since we last met in person, due to Covid and having to leave Sydney to return back home to the UK. Crazy to think how fast that time went, but that's a story for another day! After parking at the wrong end of the airport and a slight flight delay, we finally got a chance to meet again - and what a week we had. Daryl decided not to sleep on the 26-hour flight over so you would imagine his first day would be mostly spent asleep... not on my watch! I'll give a little breakdown of the week and will follow with more information on the next page.

Day 1 - 18km walk around London, seeing all the typical sites from Oxford street, Piccadilly, Leicester Square, Downing Street, Southbank, and Buckingham Palace.

Day 2 - Tour of Crosfields School and a 16km walk while playing golf at The Caversham golf course.

Day 3 - Stoke City, Derby County, and the Dennis and Sisis factory.

Day 4 - University of Nottingham and setting up our stand at Saltex

Day 5 - Saltex! Followed by the GMA awards.

Day 6 - Saltex part 2!

Day 7 - Arsenal F.C

Day 8 - Wimbledon - All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club and Windsor Castle

Day 9 - The final day, fish and chips, antique shopping, and car boots!



# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## Crosfields School - Reading

After seeing the site of London, we set about getting down to some real work on Daryl's 2nd day in the UK. Starting with a tour of Crosfields School, my place of work, where I'm currently the Head of Grounds. Unfortunately, I will be leaving here at the end of January which I'm upset about, but it will allow me to focus my time solely on International Greenkeepers For Hire - something we've wanted since starting out back in April 2019.

I'm hoping by the time this is published we've managed to fill the position and have a successful handover because ultimately it's in my best interest for the school to continue to grow. I've been a part of some fantastic projects including a cut-and-fill construction of a new playing field to sports England level 5 status. As with most things in life, we must move on. and IGFH is the perfect place to do so.

Back to the tour... showing Daryl around our 40-acre site that's full of life. We've hosted summer concerts, firework displays, and weekly sports tournaments. A huge undertaking when you consider we have a team of 3 that looks after woodlands, 2 artificial pitches, 13 football pitches, 2 cricket squares, and the general grounds and gardens. It was great to show Daryl how a school operates in the UK as he has also worked at Sydney Grammar school so he could relate on many of the topics we had to discuss.



CROSFIELDS  
SCHOOL



# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## The Caversham Golf Course

The afternoon was met with our first week's rain, a feature that later trended. After the morning at Crosfields, we had planned to visit The Caversham - Home of Reading Golf Club, where Katy Castle had kindly organised for me, Daryl, and my friend Mike to play golf. Before Teeing off, we had a quick tour of the under-renovation clubhouse, with Katy and Deputy head greenkeeper James.

With the logistics of Daryl bringing a set of clubs over from Australia, the club kindly loaned Daryl a set for the day. Noon tee off on the 10th tee, followed by rain and quite a bit of time spent in the rough grass. Nobody can ever say we didn't play all of the course! An overall long technical course, with lots of variety and great scenery. We enjoyed playing here and hope we can return in the future, the team has done a fantastic job and the course is looking great.



The Caversham has changed a lot over the past few years and is currently undergoing renovations to improve the facilities and golfing experience. A planned housing development on Reading Golf Club's property brought about the club's merger with nearby Caversham Heath Golf Club in 2018, then the resulting renovation of the golf course at the latter in 2019/20. The original Caversham Heath course was a David Williams design that opened at the start of the new millennium, but Canadian Tom McBroom was the architect chosen by the new club's tender process to renovate the layout.

McBroom felt the course was long and lacking variety and interest, so his main objective was to reduce the walks from green to tee and transform it into a more playable and walkable layout, giving it the same variety of holes that Reading had. This involved several routing changes, starting with the 1st, which now doglegs right (rather than left) to a new green located on the highest point on the property. A new par three 2nd now follows, playing downhill to the old re-bunkered 1st green.



The uphill par three 13th was removed, and replaced with a new short par four that now plays in the opposite direction. This driveable hole, along with a similar one at the 4th, adds considerably to the variety of the new course. The old par four 16th has been converted to a par three and the closing hole was significantly altered, with the home green shifted to a new hillside location underneath the clubhouse. Overall, the changes are designed to make the course more fun and interesting. Ely Golf carried out the construction work, with Ecobunker installing Ecosward liners in all the re-shaped fairway and greenside bunkers. Course manager Jon Scoones covered the new putting surfaces in cores from the old greens, overseeding them with bent grass.

We plan to host a golf day for greenkeepers and groundstaff in 2023, it's quite possible that The Caversham could be the host course. Keep your eyes peeled for this one!



# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## Stoke City Football Club - With Andy Jackson

Day 3 saw us drive up to my motherland Stoke-On-Trent, where Dennis and Sisis had organised for us to have a tour of Stoke City Football Club with Head Groundsman Andy Jackson. After a walk around the stadium and a tour of the changing rooms, we headed out onto the pitch.

Often highly rated within the sports turf community and previously winning awards for quality, we could safely say that the pitch was definitely up to standard when we visited. Andy and the team do an exceptional job at Stoke. To our surprise, they have been completely pesticide free for the past 5 years. Something we couldn't believe wasn't being screamed about more. So again, expect that article in 2023, It'll well be worth the read. Whilst speaking with Andy he explained his desire to create a new challenge within the job, something to keep the day-to-day interesting, maybe even something that would positively affect the environment. Pesticides came to mind.



"It was something I was thinking about for a long time before I made the decision to become pesticide and nematicide free at the stadium and the training ground," said Andy. "I'm really proud of how we have approached things, what we have achieved and how the staff has all embraced it. The last time we applied a chemical at the stadium was January 2016 and at the training ground, it was July 2017."

"I think that a lot of people are thinking of taking the same route, but they are 50/50 at the moment. If you really want to go ahead then I think you just have to be brave and jump straight in. There is no doubt that we still have some big challenges ahead, but it is up to us to have the support and the products to combat these challenges."

Andy was really keen on creating a more environmentally friendly pitch, but the demands of the presentation were making him reluctant. These guys are under so much pressure to have the pitch looking the best it can be - especially with all of the televised games. However, there has been a real change in the last five years with the quality of products that are coming to the market. Now, with the right products in place, Andy has been able to achieve that all-important presentation by working much more in harmony with nature. An incredible feat - Andy and the team have really excelled in the pesticide-free culture and more will follow. Lead by example.

# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## Dennis and Sisis HQ

The afternoon saw us head over to the Dennis and SISIS headquarters. We have formed a very good relationship with the team over the past few years, they have been exceptional with support to the point of now being the lead sponsor of IGFH. And if you're unsure who Dennis and Sisis are:

Dennis and SISIS offer a wide range of cylinder mowers and grounds maintenance equipment that enable groundsmen, greenkeepers, and gardeners to create their perfect surfaces. Dennis machines are used at high-profile International stadia around the world, many top football, cricket, golf, and bowling clubs as well as local authorities, schools, colleges, and universities. For over 80 years SISIS has been designing and manufacturing a range of professional groundcare equipment which is ideal for the maintenance of sports and amenity turf and artificial playing surfaces.

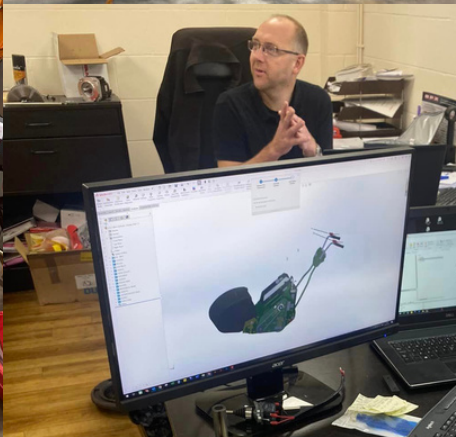


Built with 90 years experience

Dennis and Sisis actually manufacture and build up to 80 percent of their own components on-site in Derby. From their vast manufacturing experience and equipment, they can make almost any part for any machinery they produce.

Along with Dennis and Sisis, the Howardson company also owns All British Precision Ltd, which is responsible for the majority of machining and part production. The parts are then handed over to the relevant teams for paint and assembly.

Pictured below is a paint booth and giant oven where all machines now pass through before being built. It's crazy to think machines on the other side of the world were built in Derby! Not only does building all of your own machinery lower lead times and costs, it also allows the quality standards to always remain high. Knowing that each and every one of the staff has spent so long designing and building a machine they want to be perfect for the customer. Daryl and I were blown away by the facilities these guys have and you really can see this in the end products.





# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## Dennis and Sisis reveal BTME line-up



Dennis & SISIS have revealed which products they will be showcasing on Stand 104 at BTME, which will be taking place from 24-26 January 2023 at the Harrogate Convention Centre.

With a particular focus on golf course maintenance, visitors to the joint stand can look forward to finding out more about the following market-leading products:

### ES-22 Ultra

Quiet in operation with ultra-low hand-arm vibration, the ES-22 Ultra can help professionals enhance a playing surface. Very simple to control, with variable speeds and clip rates, forward speeds controlled by the operator, and easy pull back for accurate alignment of the next run. Using a 7 or 11-bladed cutting cylinder and groomer reel, this 560mm (22") battery mower provides an ultra-fine finish on golf greens and tees. The tungsten-tipped groomer can be in or out dependent on conditions.

### ES-510

This new mower is based on the Dennis FT510 – which is, historically, the company's most popular machine. With a choice of 12 interchangeable cassettes, the ES-510 is capable of scarifying down to -10mm. Ideal for fine turf it has the power to cut 4-5 bowling greens or approximately 10km on a single charge. The E-Series features a robust LCD keypad screen which provides the operator with a multitude of information options including speed, clip rate, service checks, lifetime running reports and battery information.

The mowers take just 2-3 hours for an ultra-fast full battery recharge, feature adjustable handlebars, are extremely easy to maintain, the battery pack is removable, maintaining the sharpness of the cutting cylinder blades is a simple process and they have very low lifetime costs and significant cost savings on fuel.

### SISIS Rotorake TM1000

The SISIS Rotorake TM1000 is a tractor-mounted heavy-duty scarifier and linear aerator and is un-rivaled when it comes to removing and controlling thatch. It includes a collector box and a floating unit to follow ground contours. Its contra-rotating reel throws debris forward ensuring a clean, consistent groove. With interchangeable blades and a quick, simple depth setting without tools, it's no wonder that so many turf managers have reaped the benefits of using the TM1000.

### Auto Rotorake Mk 5

The SISIS Auto Rotorake Mk.5 is a powerful self-propelled heavy-duty scarifier designed for the removal and control of thatch on fine turf. It features a contra-rotating reel with specially designed tipped blades for a clean, consistent cut and maximum thatch removal.

A variety of maintenance tasks can also be carried out due to a selection of seven different interchangeable reels.

### SISS Variseeder

The SISIS Variseeder is a versatile easy-to-use tractor-mounted seeder with a variable seeding rate ideal for golf course maintenance and for use on lawns and amenity areas. It has a fast work rate, is low maintenance with few wearing parts, and enables overseeding to be undertaken without taking the ground out of play.

Dennis and SISIS' experienced staff will be available throughout the two days to answer any queries and offer valuable advice.

# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## Derby County - with Paul Thompson

Before the 3rd day would close, we took a short trip down the road to see our old friend Paul Thompson, head groundsman at Derby County Football Club.

Paul really has seen it all over the past few years. With Derby currently sitting in the 3rd division (league one), the ex-premier league club has seen a change of hands and is beginning the rebuild into a top club. It's crazy to see the fantastic facilities Derby county has; Moor Farm was originally constructed in 2003, with many changes and developments coming in the later years.

Moor farm currently has 13 natural grass pitches, several training areas, and an artificial pitch. Meaning Derby county has category 1 training facilities: an accolade that any club would love to have and say proudly. Derby's facilities allow children from a young age to play on good quality natural grass pitches long before their counterparts, thus giving them a competitive edge. We've seen lists of quality footballing talent come through Derby's doors over the years and the pitches play a massive part in all of this.



This standard does not come lightly, though, and must be maintained. Due to implications over the past few years, Paul's team size and budget have taken a hit. Followed by relegation into League one, Paul has needed to rely on his team more than ever. With the ongoing price increases and inflation, some previously routine tasks have either been put on hold or held off until a future date.

We're really impressed with how Paul and the team have taken to this challenge, while still producing the best quality surfaces they can. Paul is a well-respected man within the turf community and this really shows in his work. We wish Paul, his team, and the club the best of luck.



# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## Uni of Nottingham - with Greg Smith

We started our tour at Highfields. Opened by England rugby legend and alumnus Brian Moore in 2010, the Vaughan Parry Williams pavilion honors the University's former Director of Sport for 33 years– Vaughan Williams. With the new facilities, there is also the old, purpose-built cricket building dating back to the 1800s. This is one of 5 sports complexes that the University has access to, with Sutton Bonnington, Jubilee Campus, and Riverside being the others. Unfortunately, our limited time meant that we could only visit Highfields and the main campus facilities.



University of  
Nottingham  
UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

### Highfields playing fields

8 grass football pitches  
3 rugby pitches  
1 hybrid cricket square  
4 beach volleyball courts  
Access to an international-standard water-based hockey pitch owned by the University next door at Nottingham Hockey Centre

### Jubilee Sports Centre

Full-sized 3G rubber crumb  
  
**David Ross Sports Village**  
Full-sized 3G rubber crumb  
Full-sized sand dressed pitch  
Outdoor viewing area  
3 netball courts  
3 tennis courts

### Sutton Bonington Sports Centre

Floodlit 3G rubber crumb pitch  
Grass training area  
Grass football pitch  
Grass rugby pitch  
Tennis courts  
Outdoor gym

### Riverside Sports Complex

Over 150 acres of playing pitches to accommodate:  
24 football pitches  
6 rugby pitches  
3 cricket squares



It's safe to say Greg most definitely has his hands full – and I know those are just some of the main facilities. There are many hidden-away tennis courts and bowling greens to keep the team busy. The usage typically equates to 15,000 pitch hours of sport to the student community and over 17,000 pitch hours of sport to the local, national, and international communities on outdoor sports pitches in five sites across three campuses.

Greg has been involved in sports ground maintenance since 1983 and has always enjoyed his roles. He started out working through the YTS scheme and learning from experienced Groundsmen at Boots Sports Ground, and studying for his City and Guilds and NVQ to level three. He then spent fifteen years as Head Groundsman/Stadium Manager, with a small team, where he produced the first team football pitch for Notts County FC and Nottingham Rugby Club. Supporting both sports to a high standard, he came 2nd to Twickenham at the GMA awards in 2012.

Currently, at Nottingham University, Greg works alongside the Director of Estates and of Sports. He describes himself as part of a team that delivers sport for the students and organises large events; held both nationwide and locally. Greg won a GMA award for best artificial surfaces and achieved a 'Highly commended' for the University and Colleges Grounds Team in 2018. The proudest achievement to date for Greg is; for the 2nd year, Nottingham University has hosted the BUCS Big Wednesday UK finals.

With teamwork, planning, and expert pitch maintenance as well as a customer-focused approach, Greg's team leaves no stone left unturned in its desire to provide the best pitches and player experience possible to a user base that includes an increasing number of high-profile, large-scale events.

These include the European Touch Rugby Tournament and the UK Ultimate Frisbee national tournament, as well as the National Association of Medical Students national finals and the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) national finals involving more than 100 universities.

# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## SALTEX 2022 - Turf Management Show

After our visit to the Uni of Nottingham, we headed down to the NEC, Birmingham, where Saltex 2022 was being held—arriving the day before the show opened to set up our Stand D220, which was located next to the GMA hub, Myerscough College, and City & Guilds. Daryl was taken aback by the sheer size of the show and how many exhibitors were in attendance. I could empathize with Daryl, here - while I was out in Australia, he took me out to see a few small regional shows and the Innovations Day held at Sydney University annually.

In a completely new world to us, we began to set up our stand, speaking to our counterparts in the neighboring stands. We had a very daunting few days ahead, but ones we were very much looking forward to. For us, Saltex 2022 was very much the start of a new beginning, with myself (Bradley) leaving my full-time position in January 2023 and taking on International Greenkeepers full-time. Here was an opportunity for us to meet directly with groundstaff directly, meet those who have spoken online, and catch up with previous colleagues. We could show that we are in fact real people, with genuine ambitions to help the industry.

After setting up and carrying what felt like the heaviest boxes in the world full of magazines into the venue, we decided to call it an evening and head back to our hotel.

This hotel was the only trip I allowed Daryl to book, and it won't be happening again... as you can see from the picture here, Harry Potter may have struggled in this room! After a trip to a local and a delivery pizza, we called it a day.



**SALTEX** | SPORTS TURF  
AMENITIES  
LANDSCAPING  
TRADE EXHIBITION



### What is Saltex?

**Sports turf, amenities, landscaping, trade exhibition**

SALTEX is the annual one-stop-shop for thousands of individuals working to install, manage and maintain the UK's outdoor leisure spaces – from sports grounds personnel to park & leisure amenity officers, to landscapers to greenkeepers, and foresters to estate managers.

In 1938, SALTEX was launched to unite the industry and offer educational and networking opportunities for those who managed green spaces. Since then, the show has continued to grow and has now established itself as Europe's largest annual turf management event. With its home at the NEC in Birmingham, SALTEX remains true to those within the industry, offering a world of limitless opportunities in which they can discover the latest trends and innovations, connect with colleagues, and learn from top industry professionals.

The show is organised by the Grounds Management Association - the leading not-for-profit membership organisation representing grounds managers, grounds personnel, grounds maintenance managers, greenkeepers, and all others involved in the management of sports pitches, landscapes, and amenity facilities in the UK. The show provides an excellent opportunity to meet industry colleagues and make new connections – building networks and knowledge, and learning about new innovations. With visitors and exhibitors from around the UK and overseas, it's free to enter and free to join the learning sessions.

# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## SALTEX 2022 - Turf Management Show

The next morning, we headed back over to the NEC to start our first day as exhibitors in the UK. Unfortunately, the first hour did get off to a slow start due to a traffic incident on a nearby motorway making access to the NEC difficult. Thankfully, man persevered, and the halls began to fill up quickly from around 10 am onwards. However, this gave Daryl and me an opportunity to speak with current sponsors and contact the likes of Geoff Webb, CEO of the GMA.

During the show, we couldn't believe how many people wanted to come and meet us, some of whom we had spoken to online, but also new friends that had been a part of our social media groups for some time and wanted to meet us in person. It was great to have these conversations, it validated that the work we had put in over the past few years was really being seen and used by fellow ground staff and greenkeepers alike.

During the first day, Daryl and I took part in one of the live learning seminars, covering the topic - International Opportunities. This turned out to be quite a fun and engaging chat. We housed an almost full theatre and had a fantastic audience that threw many questions at both of us. It was nice to talk about my international experiences, especially my time at Sydney University with Daryl. It was a very open and friendly feel to the chat and I'm glad we did it. Hopefully, the GMA will invite us back again next year for another. A lot of the questions we received were about how people can find these opportunities, to which we reply 'Speak to us!' We stayed behind after the seminar/chat to answer a few questions, at which time the free chocolates we had placed on our stand had been raided along with the copies of our magazine. A win-win in our eyes.

The first evening of the show was followed by the GMA awards ceremony. We had kindly been invited as guests of the GMA. The winners of the Grounds Management Association (GMA) Industry Awards 2022 were announced during a packed-out gala ceremony at the Vox, Birmingham NEC, hosted by BBC broadcaster Mark Clemmit. The prestigious awards ceremony recognised talent from across the grounds care industry, acknowledging the people making a huge difference in local communities, sports clubs, and educational establishments across the country.

The sell-out event made its long-awaited return, after a two-year pandemic-enforced hiatus, with more than 500 of the industry's leading grounds care experts from both the professional and volunteer sector, industry suppliers, and dignitaries from the governing bodies of sport and influential sports administrators in attendance to honour the expertise, the dedication, and the passion by exceptional grounds personnel. In total, eighteen awards were presented - celebrating a range of achievements, including Young Grounds Person of the Year, Best Environmental and Sustainability Impact, and International Impact Award, plus the esteemed Alex R Millar award as well as two new entries into the GMA Hall of Fame.

We sat next to Sean Clixby of Broughton Recreation Field, who won volunteer Sports Grounds Team / Individual of the Year (Sponsored by Kubota UK & Redexim)

Located in Lincolnshire, the Broughton Recreation Field, overseen by Sean Clixby, has seen great improvements over the last few years - thanks to expert GMA advice and funding from the Football Foundation's PitchPower programme. Volunteers at Broughton Rovers JFC, Broughton Cricket Club, Broughton Working Men's Club FC, Broughton Town Council, and North Lincolnshire Council all work together to achieve vital pitch improvement.

We were impressed by the amount Sean and the teams get done alongside their full-time careers, it really is a testimony to the resilience of the UK turf sector. We've since kept in contact with Sean and will hopefully be bringing you an article in the next magazine!



**SALTEX** | SPORTS TURF AMENITIES LANDSCAPING TRADE EXHIBITION

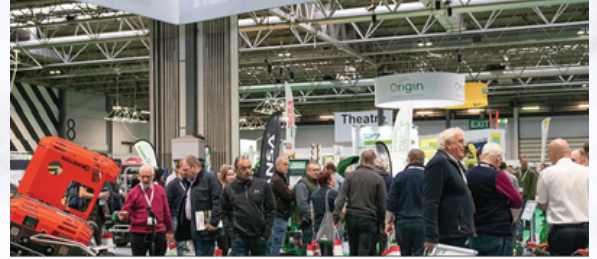


# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## SALTEX 2022 - Turf Management Show

After lots of interesting conversations about working overseas, education, and workplace issues such as staffing and salaries, the second day of the show came to a close. We felt that the show went really well, and we were pleased to have met so many peers and spread the word of International Greenkeepers For Hire.

Saltex 2022 exhibition was attended by almost 15% more attendees than its 2021 edition in a return of pre-pandemic confidence. Over 8,300 attendees from more than 50 countries attended the 76th iteration of the event, which ran from 2-3 November at Birmingham NEC. The show has stated that the increase in delegate numbers demonstrates a return of pre-pandemic confidence.



**SALTEX** | SPORTS TURF AMENITIES LANDSCAPING TRADE EXHIBITION



### Learning LIVE

The Learning LIVE schedule was extended to over 30 sessions, with additional papers attacking the key issues for the grounds care industry of pay, career development, recruitment, and retention, how to negotiate in the workplace, and how to find out about the millions of pounds of grant funding available from sports clubs. But what's at the heart of Learning LIVE and the show was sustainability and the environment.

Those managing and maintaining sports turf and green spaces are already having to deal with the impact of climate change and industry suppliers are doing their best to innovate and help grounds people minimise the impact of droughts and floods. The session on reducing the impact of future water restrictions on golf and sports turf, for example, with Owen Turpin from the Environment Agency, Tony Hanson from Environmental Solutions International, and Robin Price from Anglian Water, discussing the water charter and how to deal with it, will provide valuable practical advice.

### Eco Village

The whole concept of the Eco Village is to showcase sustainable and environmentally-friendly practices in grounds care and consider what is a sustainable piece of machinery – what's the impact on the environment and how does it help achieve neutrality? The Eco Village features a programme of daily demonstrations of cutting-edge sustainable technology, offering visitors an opportunity to see several products in action. Plus, industry experts offered advice on green technology and how it could benefit current working practices.

Huge thanks to the Grounds Management Association for putting on a great show, we will definitely be back next year. It was amazing to finally meet people in person with whom we have only ever been in contact via text. Shout out to Anthony Asquith and the man Joël Cheng for dropping past and a special thanks to Geoff Webb from the GMA for making this all possible.



# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## Arsenal F.C - with Paul Ashcroft

Day 7 saw us head back down to London, on a tour that was organised by our friend Jerry Spenser of Gilba Solutions. We met up with Paul Ashcroft, Head of Horticulture & Playing Surface Operations at Arsenal Football Club. Paul has worked for Arsenal since 2000 and this can really be seen in his passion and the quality of the work the team produces. Paul is Arsenal through and through. Similar to other high-profile venues around the world, it's difficult to picture the stress and responsibilities that are put on these teams. Looking after the world's best pitches, to be seen week in and week out on a worldwide stage. Ensuring no mistakes are made, each practice or maintenance technique is done correctly to ensure the pitch looks in its absolute best condition for the game. Then also ensuring the playability standards are not compromised, it's an incredible job if you think about it.



Paul showed us around the equipment store, which is located inside the stadium within the ring road system within the stadium. This was followed by a tour of the director's box, changing rooms, and finally out onto the pitch.



Paul's team have been using their considerable skills and expertise to try to improve the sustainability of this iconic piece of north London. In 2016, electric cylinder mowers were introduced into the stadium. These mowers are used to ensure the grass is kept to the standard we have all grown accustomed to seeing. During the summer of 2020, the club purchased new electric rotary mowers. The cylinder mowers produce the laser-sharp lines on the pitch, whilst the rotary is the day-to-day workhorse. The new electric rotary mowers use 100 percent renewable power, instead of the petrol-driven previous equipment. They are also almost silent running and greatly reduce vibration.



Being in north London, the team is used to not having much sunlight. But the grass needs plenty of it to grow strong, and artificial grow lights are needed to supplement the natural sunlight. Pioneered at Highbury, these lights are essential for the grounds team. They do, unfortunately, use significant electricity, so Paul and his team have been trialing new LED technology to replace the existing sodium lights. As you may know, grass enjoys red and blue light. which can be created using LED, a light source that uses less power and is more efficient. The existing sodium bulbs produce the whole lighting spectrum, creating some light that the grass doesn't use. The only downside to LED lights in this application is that heat is not emitted. In our climate, supplementary heat needs to be added to speed up the recovery process and help grounds teams produce a surface of the highest standard. The sodium bulbs used in the pitch's current lights radiate heat, which the plant needs during the winter months. There are alternative solutions to this, and ones that are being worked on. The technology is still being developed but Paul will be making sure that his team are at the forefront.



If you live close by, occasionally you may have noticed a strong garlic smell coming from Emirates Stadium. This is actually garlic, which is a natural, organic way of killing nematodes, a parasite that loves to feed on juicy grassroots. As well as using garlic, the team has trialed a new system of steaming the pitch, which kills these unwelcome visitors, reducing the need to use products and chemicals. Arsenal was the first club to use this system on a stitched, hybrid pitch. The steaming also reduced the amount of pitch lighting needed as it helped the ground staff establish the pitch quicker following the summer renovations, giving them a much-needed head start on their preparations.



Pitch management is now very technological. The stadium pitch is constantly monitored and processes are increasingly data-driven. This technology includes an on-site weather station, temperature, and moisture probes providing constant information which is used to determine when the irrigation and undersoil heating systems are used. This technology ensures that the team only irrigates when necessary. To make the pitch slick and ready for a game, the grass is watered, but the drainage of the pitch is so good that it doesn't get slippery. The use of technology and data monitoring has also reduced the use of fertilisers. Less fertiliser use means fewer chemicals are washed into the drains.

Before we left, Paul recommended we take a short walk across town to see the old Highbury stadium, where parts of the East and West stands remain and have been turned into apartments. The pitch has been turned into a private garden for the residents- a pretty cool piece of history and something worth looking at if you're ever passing!

Parts of this article have been sourced from [www.arsenal.com](http://www.arsenal.com)

# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## Wimbledon - with Neil Stubbley

Our final day saw us head to The All England Lawn Tennis Club, Wimbledon, to meet Neil Stubbley - Head of Courts and Horticulture, AELTC. Neil started in Groundsmanship in 1993 at Norwood Hall College, obtaining his National Diploma in Sports turf. In 2011, he obtained his Foundation Degree in Sports Turf Management and his BASIS pesticide advisory license.

In 1995, Neil started working at The All England Lawn Tennis Club, Wimbledon, as a Groundsman, and was promoted to Senior Groundsman in 2002. In 2012, he took over from then Head Groundsman Eddie Seaward. His role now sees him consulting with ATP, WTA, and LTA on playing surfaces as part of the grass-court season in the UK and overseas. In 2014, AELTC took the Horticulture in-house and this is now also under Neil's control. Neil has seen Wimbledon evolve over the years. This year will mark Neils's 28th year at Wimbledon, an impressive accolade and one which we see often within the turf management industry.



Neil took us for a tour of the whole site, from the center court to the brand-new indoor members-only courts. What an incredible facility this is, our pictures don't do the place justice as they were mid-renovation. But you can be assured that this place is world-class. If you play tennis, the dream is to play here, that's for sure. Neil oversees all playing surfaces: 46 Grass (including 4 stadiums), 8 Clay, 6 Acrylic (3 indoor), 3 Supreme (indoor), 2 Capet (indoor), and 2 Croquet Lawns, plus 42 acres of landscaped grounds. Some of the most notable are the green walls that grow up and around the center court and member areas.



Similar to our previous tours during the week, we got a sneak insight into the maintenance machines, with battery-powered powers and the well-laid-out infrastructure that they require to operate at such a standard efficiently. The Wimbledon venue is in close proximity to housing, and the site itself is compact with lots of closed structures within it, so switching over to a mower that produces extremely low levels of noise has been welcomed by all.

### The Grounds

The Grounds are owned by The All England Lawn Tennis Ground Plc and consist of both the main site on Church Road, Wimbledon, and the All England Community Sports Ground (AECSG) in Raynes Park.



The main site comprises a total of 18 Championship Grass Courts (including Centre Court and No. 1 Court) and 14 Grass Practice Courts located in Aorangi Park. A further 6 Grass Practice Courts are available during The Championships which are located temporarily on the three Croquet Lawns to the North end of the site. There are also currently six American clay courts and two acrylic courts located at the Southern Apex of the Grounds. As a result of the ongoing Somerset Road project, a further 6 indoor acrylic courts and 6 outdoor American clay courts have been opened at the end of 2021.

In addition, the AECSG (a 20-acre site acquired by the AELTC in 1990) provides further opportunity for grass court practice with 16 grass courts available alongside 6 indoor acrylic courts and 3 outdoor acrylic courts.



Apart from the grass courts, the courts are used all year round by the Club members and LTA-sponsored players. The grass courts are in play from May to September (except Centre Court and other Show Courts which are used only for The Championships). The courts are lent to a number of clubs and organisations, mainly of a national character, for the staging of various events.

The area north of the Centre Court became known as Aorangi Park after the Club purchased the 11 acres from John Barker Ltd. of Kensington in 1967 and subsequently granted a lease to the New Zealand Sports and Social Club. Aorangi, meaning 'Cloud in the Sky', is the Maori name for Mount Cook.



# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## How to manage flooded turf? Gilba Solutions

### How to manage flooded turf?

Recent flooding has had a major impact on the turf production areas and sporting venues throughout NSW and VIC in Australia. This will hopefully help get your turf back as soon as possible.

The key to any management plan is planning. Things such as being isolated due to road damage will all have an indirect effect on recovery, so taking remedial action before flooding occurs can have a dramatic impact. Crucial to this is you need to know what happens when flooding on turf occurs as there are a lot of changes to the soil chemistry.

In its usual state, soil contains plenty of oxygen to enable microbial respiration and organic matter decomposition. When soils become flooded, oxygen diffuses from the water into the soil surface and forms a thin layer of oxidized soil. Underneath this is a thicker oxygen-deficient layer. Two byproducts of flooding and the subsequent oxygen deficiency are the production of methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O).

### Effects of flooding:

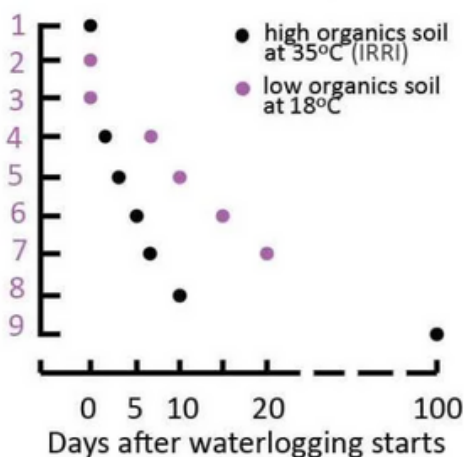
- Both facultative and true anaerobes become active in the absence of oxygen;
- Denitrification occurs and nitrate N is lost from the soil;
- Organic matter decomposition slows down;
- Iron and manganese become more readily available and in some cases can potentially become limiting to turf growth in flood-prone areas;
- Oxygen declines and root hairs begin to die
- Carbon dioxide increases

### Chemical changes in soil after waterlogging starts

1. O<sub>2</sub> decreases
2. CO<sub>2</sub> increases<sup>a</sup>
3. Ethylene increases<sup>a</sup>
4. O<sub>2</sub> disappears
5. Manganese (Mn<sup>2+</sup>) appears
6. Nitrate (NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>) disappears
7. Iron (Fe<sup>2+</sup>) appears
8. Hydrogen sulphide appears
9. Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) appears

<sup>a</sup>No data from IIRRI

### Time when chemical changes occur, in days after waterlogging starts



### Can flooding kill grass?

Once the turf is submerged, soil oxygen begins to decline and root hairs begin to die. Although no definitive data is available, testimonials for dormant turf indicate that most can survive considerably longer than 4 days when flooded. This can be far from the case with non-dormant turf.

As the water covering the turf increases in depth, the potential for turf injury increases. The good news is that if the leaf tissue is above the water line the turf will probably survive. In areas where the turf is completely covered, the situation isn't so good. Within a day of flooding, high organic matter soils become oxygen deficient. As a consequence of a lack of oxygen and sunlight, photosynthesis is reduced, respiration rates increase, and sideway rooting increases. It is worth noting that flood waters are inherently good at filtering out light which is required for photosynthesis. This is a direct result of dissolved organic material such as humic acids and particulate material such as silt.

### Water temperature

Grass will not survive as long at water temperatures above 16°C. Research shows that at cool water temperatures of 10°C or less, turfgrass can withstand being submerged for up to 60 days. In contrast, it can die within 24 hours at water temperatures of 30°C or higher. Hindsight is a wonderful thing, but if you have time, there are a number of options you can consider in order to prepare for flooding and give your turf areas a better chance of recovering.



# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## How to manage flooded turf? Gilba Solutions

### How to manage flooded turf – preparing for what's to come.

Here are a few tricks you can adopt to try and increase the chances of turf survival. The key is doing these before flooding occurs.

Firstly, Trinexapac-ethyl (Amigo® 120) can be applied at a high label rate before flooding. This significantly slows turf growth, respiration, and leaf etiolation.

Secondly, diseases such as pythium root rot on cool-season turf and ERI fungi on warm-season turf can thrive under waterlogged soil conditions. As the soil will be saturated after flooding, you won't be able to apply or water in any fungicide. Consequently, it's far easier and more effective to apply preventative applications before flooding, using, for example, Grenadier® (Fosetyl aluminum) or AzoForce® (azoxystrobin). Using chemicals such as these gives you around 21 days of protection. This is great for your peace of mind in a very stressful period and allows you to get on with other things without worrying about these diseases.

### Turf Selection

This can make a massive difference in the chances of any turf surviving. For example, creeping bentgrass is more tolerant of flooding than either tall fescue or Kentucky bluegrass. Poa annua, red fescue, Kentucky bluegrass, and perennial ryegrass are the least tolerant of flooding. For the warm season and C4 grasses, the champion performer is seashore paspalum. This is followed by Couch, zoysia. Australian buffalo grass varieties fall somewhere in the middle. Research shows that Couch can survive after 55 days of submersion, whilst in certain situations tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass can survive after 35 days of flooding. In fact, Kentucky bluegrass rhizomes have been shown to survive flooding events and contribute to 50% of field recovery.

### How to manage flooded turf – The aftermath

Removing all the rubbish and sediment off the surface is the first step to repairing a surface after a flood event. Not only is this important from a safety perspective it also helps get sunlight to the turf canopy. Be aware that any traffic over the surface at this stage is highly likely to damage the soil structure and create future issues. Waiting to mow until flooded areas dry also reduces the risk of damaging wet, muddy areas with mowers. Also, the weakened stressed turf is highly vulnerable at this stage to pest and disease activity.

### Management

As soon as waters recede, aim to apply nitrogen as this can dramatically reduce the impact of waterlogging. The correct timing of nitrogen application on waterlogged crops can also significantly increase recovery rates. If an ammonium-containing fertilizer (urea, or ammonium sulphate) or manure is applied shortly before a wet period, losses will be minimal because little nitrification to nitrate will have occurred (nitrification does not occur in saturated soils and will not resume until soils dry and become aerobic). Nitrogen fertiliser can be added as granules or liquid: Liquid fertilisers can supply nitrogen directly to the leaves and crop canopy to replace nitrogen normally supplied from the soil, and can therefore be applied at any time. Granular fertilisers are more effective if applied immediately after waterlogging has gone.

### Other options

As turf managers, there's a lot we can learn from horticultural and agricultural industries when it comes to flood mitigation strategies. All of the following have been shown to reduce damage. This doesn't mean that they will stop it, but in certain situations, they may help with recovery.

Foliar and root applications of salicylic acid have been shown to improve photosynthetic efficiency. As far as we know, Vertmax Duo has the highest SA loading on the market and can be safely used on turf. Salicylic acid has been shown to be very effective in reducing waterlogging stress and this has been shown in crops ranging from corn to tomatoes.

Research has shown that plants cope with oxygen starvation better when fed three amino acids: glycine, serine, and alanine. So using a product with high levels of these prior to flooding makes a lot of sense. As with most things, different products contain varying amounts of these amino acids, so only use labeled products showing their specific amino acid contents.

Consider applying ethephon. This has been shown to reduce waterlogging stress in soybeans. When turf is submerged, the etiolated growth that occurs is due to ethylene accumulation. When flood waters fall back, this leaf etiolation means the plant is less fit for photosynthesis. Applying ethephon increases the chances of turf being "match ready" to photosynthesise as soon as possible. Waterlogged plants often exhibit acute potassium deficiency.

**This article was produced and published by Gilba Solutions Ltd**



# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## How to Become a Greenkeeper? Golf-Jobs

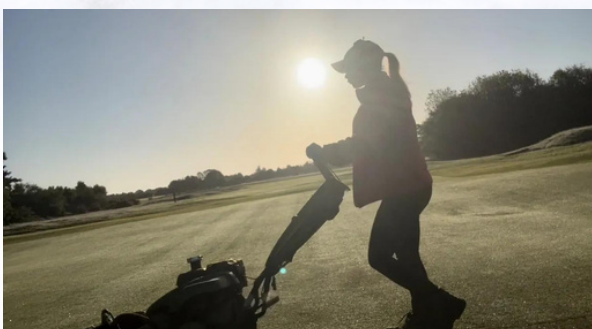
Love golf and the great outdoors? A career in greenkeeping could be perfect for you! Every golf club needs greenkeepers, so there are plenty of opportunities available around the country. Ultimately, there would be no golf without the fantastic work of greenkeepers.

### What is greenkeeping?

A golf course greenkeeper is a skilled professional whose job it is to maintain a high-quality playing surface for golfers all year round. There are four key areas on a golf course - tees, fairways, greens, and areas of rough - all of which require a different type of maintenance. A greenkeeper's main responsibilities include - operation of heavy machinery and specialist tools, applying irrigation, treating turf, controlling and identifying weeds and pests, repairing wear and tear on the course, attending to drainage problems, and renovating and maintaining bunkers to a high level.

A job in greenkeeping can be rewarding. It also has many different areas where your expertise can be applied, once you are qualified. Becoming a golf course greenkeeper in particular means that you can find a job in most countries if you fancy seeing other parts of the world. There are many golf courses and driving ranges located around the world with courses located on the coast, in the countryside, or just outside bustling towns.

Greenkeeping is a physically active job requiring long periods of standing, bending, and heavy lifting. The job is mostly spent outdoors and in all weather conditions. Some time may be spent indoors repairing machinery. Greenkeepers work longer in the spring and summer months. Particularly in summer, greenkeepers may start work at around 6.00 am to carry out a variety of essential tasks before the course is fully open to golfers. Golf courses are usually open seven days a week and weekend work is commonplace. Part-time work may also be accessible. Teamwork is vital in greenkeeping. Courses need greenkeepers of all levels to work together to maintain course conditions to the highest standard.



### Where to start:

There are different routes you can take to becoming a full-time greenkeeper. Apprenticeships and college courses are the best options. If you already have a background in landscaping or horticulture, this could be enough to get you started in a greenkeeping position, depending on a club's requirements.

### Apprenticeships:

An apprenticeship is the first step to a greenkeeping career. Apprenticeships include on and off-site structured learning and the application of practical skills to ensure you gain the abilities and knowledge you need to continue progressing with your career.

### Qualifications in the UK:

The Greenkeepers Training Committee (GTC) maintains a list of GTC Approved Training Providers. These colleges and training centers offer Government approved greenkeeping courses and qualifications that have been developed by the GTC, the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA), and other related organisations. If you need help and have questions about training, courses, or qualifications please contact BIGGA, the GMA, or the GTC for guided help.

### Career Progression:

There is plenty of room to grow within greenkeeping and progression can lead to roles such as Senior Greenkeeper, Deputy Head Greenkeeper, Head Greenkeeper, and Course Manager. Your experience as a greenkeeper will continue to grow throughout your career and no two days will ever be the same.

# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## Rollers won and run, our refurbished roller finds a home

After months of entries and interest in the Local Government Focus, International Greenkeepers competition, the refurbished \$10,000 cricket pitch roller has arrived at its new home. Darryl Davidson of International Greenkeepers delivered the roller to the Goulburn Mulwaree Council in late October.

The council was entered into the competition by Matt Lee of the Marulan Cricket Club. Goulburn Mulwaree Council Mayor Peter Walker said the win came as a pleasant surprise. "Council was extremely surprised to win this competition," Mayor Walker said.

He said as it was a Marulan member who entered. It will now be used at that club, where it replaces a worn-out roller.

"Goulburn Mulwaree Council is a local government area located in the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales, encompassing Goulburn, Marulan, Tarago, Towrang, and other villages," the Mayor explained. "The council was formed in 2004 as the Greater Argyle Council as an amalgamation of Goulburn City and parts of the former Mulwaree Shire. It was renamed in 2005 to Goulburn Mulwaree Council.

"Goulburn Mulwaree Council encompasses a land area of 3223 square kilometers and has a current population of 30,852 people. Council is responsible for the provision of water, sewer, and waste services along with maintenance of the region's road networks and construction. Some of the council's most recent exciting capital works programs are the redeveloped Goulburn Aquatic and Leisure Centre, and the new Goulburn Performing Arts Centre (GPAC)."

Congratulations go to Matt Lee of Goulburn Mulwaree Council who has won the roller by subscribing to receive a digital copy of the Local Government Focus monthly publication. We were extremely pleased with just under a hundred entries all vying to win the roller. Keep an eye out both in the paper and online as we are looking to run more competitions.



**The Marulan Cricket Club welcome their new roller thanks to our recent competition.**



Local Government Focus joined with International Greenkeepers For Hire, Strathfield, Sports Club, and Sydney University to find a new home for the refurbished cricket roller, launching the competition at the ALGA National Convention in Canberra earlier in the year. The roller came courtesy of International Greenkeepers' Darryl Davidson. "The roller was donated to International Greenkeepers by Strathfield Sports Club - they didn't need it anymore and we thought, let's clean it up and give it to someone that needs it," Darryl explained when the competition was launched.

"So, I approached my work, Sydney University, and they helped out in getting it mechanically up to standard, giving it a service and all of those kinds of things. We took all the old paint off and gave it a fresh paint job. Then, speaking to Phill from LG Focus, he said we should give it away to someone."

Darryl was not involved in drawing the winner and admitted he had a few sleepless nights thinking of ways to deliver it to Western Australia or Tasmania if councils from more distant states from his Sydney base had won. Instead, his trip is a short one and he delivered the roller to Goulburn Mulwaree Council.

"It's great to see it going to a new home, they didn't even exist a few years ago and we actually helped them out. They found a cricket wicket in the middle of their field that had been neglected they hadn't had a club playing there for years. It will hopefully be used for many years and help them grow," Darryl said.

He said this wouldn't be the last collaboration between International Greenkeepers and LG Focus. "Phill has already asked if we can find something else to give away," he laughed. "He said, how about something anyone can use, what about a mower? Phill, I will deliver this one first!"

Local Government Focus

# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## Turf Summit 2022 - Barcelona

The fourth Turf Business Summit was held in Barcelona. Influential turf care professionals spent 3 days discussing key issues, opportunities, and challenges facing the industry.

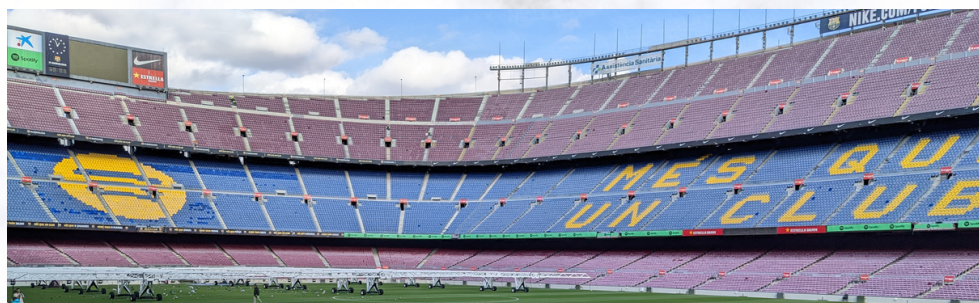
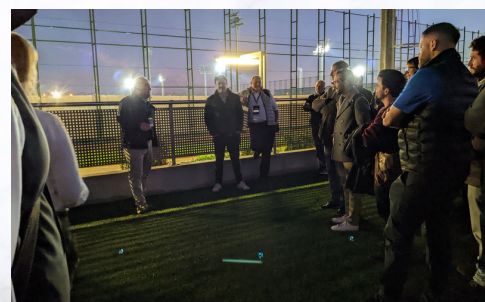
In November 2022, the fourth Turf Business Summit was held in Barcelona. 80 influential turf care professionals from FC Barcelona, Real Madrid FC, Wembley, West Ham United, Aston Villa FC, Leicester FC, The Danish Football Association, Royal St. George golf club, International Greenkeepers For Hire, etc. spent 3 days discussing key issues, opportunities, and challenges facing the industry as a whole. It was three inspiring days, with lots of networking. Sponsors for the event included Campey Turf Care Systems, Consolidate Turf, Dennis & SISIS, DLE, Natural Grass, Precision Microbes, White Horse Contractors, Turf Lighting Solutions (TLS), and Sports Turf Data Solutions. Each sponsor nominated candidates that would be proactive in developing the industry further. International Greenkeepers was nominated by Dennis and SISIS.

The venue was PGA Catalunya – one of Europe's top 5 golf courses and a possible host of the Ryder Cup in 2031. It was a busy three days, with discussions and working groups designed to help influence the future of our industry. This type of event gives us a unique insight into the demands and challenges of our top professional end-users and builds strong relationships.

This year, my group's topic was mental health. We spoke for many hours in depth. We overran our sessions and had one session where we talked about industry issues and possible answers for over 5 hours. It was a very productive conversation, I was grouped with Karl Stanley - Wembley Grounds manager, and Geoff Webb - CEO of the GMA, along with 6 or so others. Hopefully, that gives you an idea of the caliber of professionals attending this event. Due to our sensitive topic and only being relatively newly looked at within our industry, we decided the action for 2023 is to raise awareness, encourage people to engage in conversations, create local support groups, and most importantly, talk - whether to your partner, kids, peers, or a specialist, to find help.

Here is a link to some useful resources [put together by the GMA](#)

During the event, we also had the opportunity to visit Camp Nou – the legendary stadium and home of FC Barcelona and their training facility to learn about turf maintenance at a world-class turf venue.



# INTERNATIONAL GREENKEEPERS FOR HIRE

## A thanks from us

We'd like to say a huge thank you to all our members, associates, and sponsors. Once again, none of what we have done would have been possible without you all. We've grown into a real force within the industry and are really looking forward to 2023. Be ready, we have a lot to come! Here are our best pictures from 2022.



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