

# THE GOLF CLUB SECRETARY

Briefing and practical advice for golf club administrators

## Soil importation projects on golf courses

*Jonathan Gaunt, a golf course architect with a wide experience of such projects, runs through the essentials of soil importation so you can assess whether or not it might be something your club may wish to consider at some stage.*



*Golf course architect  
Jonathan Gaunt*

I've been building new facilities and features on golf courses using the soil importation method since 1988. This method of golf course construction has become increasingly popular over the years – but what's the reason for this? It offers golf clubs the opportunity to create new features and new facilities without having to spend any money... which sounds a bit unbelievable, but numerous golf clubs have benefited from this, resulting in new profit-generating facilities on their sites.

The way it works is that there are hundreds of development sites scattered throughout the UK, especially in close proximity to large cities and towns, and every one of these development sites generates excess soils from excavation works as part of their construction project. In every case, the contractor who is responsible for delivering the development has to remove the soil from site and find a suitable location – a receptor site – where this excess soil can be deposited. In some cases, there may be a designated area within the development site, set aside for this purpose.

It is often the case that residential and commercial development sites use as much of the 'developable' land within their site as possible. Today, planning authorities expect that every developer will provide flood attenuation controls within the confines of their site. This often means that this flood attenuation infrastructure takes up some of this 'developable' space, which would, in the past have been utilised to deposit excess soils. This is why you will often see high mounds and embankments of soil immediately surrounding residential or commercial developments.

Following latest government legislation, it has become more important for every site to be self-sustaining, which means either reducing flood risk to landowners downstream or, at the very least, not increasing flood risk. In addition to this, more recent legislation obliges developers to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), a minimum of +10% on development sites. This means that development sites will be more sustainable in the future and, in order to achieve a +10% credit rating, new development sites must include within them as many opportunities as possible for improved and diverse habitats.

## Quote OF THE MONTH

*"Like a lot of fellows on the Senior Tour, I have a furniture problem – my chest has fallen into my drawers"*

**BILLY CASPER**

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*Jonathan worked with Oakland Golf & Leisure on this new facility at Horsforth GC*

This means that peripheral areas of the sites outside of the main development area are now no longer available for the deposit of excavated soils so the developer has to find a suitable location for this soil to be sustainably deposited. In general, an expanded quarry would be a suitable receptor, or a landfill site. However, the problem with filling quarries and landfill sites with soil is that they have a limited capacity and, once they're full, they cannot be filled any more. There is a limit to the number of available quarries and landfill sites throughout the UK and when domestic waste needs to be prioritised to find a location to be deposited, it makes no sense to fill these voids with soil.

So, it appears that a golf course is a good location to deposit soil. When it comes to defining soil, it is excavated inert subsoils and topsoils from development sites. The projects we work on only use inert soils. These soils are considered waste soils, but they are not contaminated, neither do they contain any harmful or hazardous substances – these soils are considered to be safe, clean and non-hazardous. The inert soil is not chemically or biologically reactive and does not pose a threat to human health or the environment.

The Environment Agency (EA) is always a consultee and advises on every one of our planning applications. In this respect, within our planning applications (led by a team of professional planning consultants), we have to provide (as designers) details of where the soil has been sourced for us within the golf construction project, detailing all demolition and excavation activities. Explanation has also to be provided concerning how the soil will be reused or repurposed.

There are two ways in which a project using imported soils can gain a permit. The first method is through the EA waste soils permitting process. The second is using a method called the CL:AIRE protocol, which is a code of practice for development industry to use when assessing whether excavated materials are classified as waste or not and then determining, on a site-specific basis, where the excavated waste soils can cease to be considered a waste for a particular use. The Definition of Waste Code of Practice (DoWCoP) provides a clear, consistent and efficient process, which enables the re-use of excavated materials on-site or their movement between sites.

The EA method is the one that is used most in relation to golf course redevelopment. This involves applying to the EA for a permit to import soils onto a golf course site. However, this application can only be made following the successful granting of planning permission by the local planning authority, so there is some risk involved. However, as part of the planning process there is regular ongoing liaison and discussion with the EA.

This sounds complicated, especially for a golf club which is run by volunteers, irrespective of their business backgrounds. In fact, I wouldn't advise any golf club to undertake this process without teaming up with an experienced, specialist contractor. There are a number of good and reliable contractors in the UK and, over the last 37 years, I've had the opportunity to learn who are the best in the industry.

We're currently involved in over 30 projects involving soil importation. Some are small-scale and some are considerable in size. For example, we are working on numerous projects where we are proposing to build new driving ranges with short-game areas in the form of an academy, for which some golf clubs have opened up separate memberships. Booth Golf & Leisure is my preferred supplier, and I collaborate with them on numerous existing and new projects. While they are a key partner, I also work with other contractors based throughout the country. In the south, we work with McGee's, Quattro, O'Malley's and Lockhams, while in the north, Oakland Golf & Leisure.

We recently completed a project at Manchester Golf Club with Booth Golf & Leisure and in 2023 it opened for play. This project comprises a fully drained 300-yard length driving range, a short-game practice area with a 500m<sup>2</sup> putting and chipping green with two bunkers, built to the same standard as the existing golf course, originally designed by Harry Colt. This project was fully funded using the revenue generated from the importation of soils onto site.

Larger projects we're working on include Pike Hills Golf Club, near York, where we have all permissions in place to build three new holes and a driving range, with changes to six holes on the existing golf course. At Pike Hills there is a Site of Special



*Manchester GC's new range and short-game are the fruits of a soil importation project with Booth Golf & Leisure*

Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the centre of the site, called Askham Bog. This is an extremely rare lowland bog habitat, which has been protected, to some extent in recent years, but is now at risk of being inundated following extreme rainfall. The golf course surrounds the bog and on its perimeter is a deep drainage ditch. As part of our proposals, we have successfully designed a new protective drainage system, which also provides long-term flood-risk protection for this nationally important SSSI. We've achieved this with cleverly designed hollows, swales, lagoons and flood attenuation devices on the golf course, which will ensure that the drainage of the bog will be unaffected, and in fact, is protected for the future.

These are just a few examples of the numerous ongoing projects, and others include one at Moor Allerton Golf Club in north Leeds, currently under construction, which involves a new driving range, short-game area and sympathetic modifications to three holes on the Robert Trent Jones Snr-designed course. At Selby Golf Club, we've almost completed a new driving range, short-game practice area and three-hole academy course. As previously mentioned, all of these projects are funded entirely by the revenue generated by soil importation.

So, who pays who? The developer of the residential or commercial site pays a fee to the owner of the golf club for every lorry load of soil that is driven through the property gates, which sounds really simple. However, projects such as those described above involve a lot of careful management and organisation. Plus, there is the cost of paying all the consultants involved in putting together the planning application, which includes a golf course architect, an ecologist, an arborist, a hydrologist, a traffic engineer, a planning consultant and a landscape architect.

Planning applications for soil importation projects can take upwards of 12 months to get permission. The ecological surveys need to be undertaken at the right time in the season, ideally in spring and summer, which has a direct impact upon the timing of the planning application submission. As with all

planning applications, all granted permits are accompanied by planning discharge conditions and these can sometimes take up to six months to satisfy. However, the project cannot start until all conditions have been satisfied with the local planning authority and, following full consent, a waste permit is required from the EA to start delivering and depositing soil on site.

It appears that there are many hurdles to overcome. However, if the project is put together sensibly and thoughtfully, by an experienced team of professionals, the process should take between 18 months and two years from conception to receiving full permits to start work on site.

And where can these projects be successful? Golf course sites provide ideal opportunities for soil importation projects unless the majority of the golf course site is within a floodplain. In this respect, if your golf course is in a floodplain, your project is unsuitable for a soil importation project. Conversely, we've been successful in achieving permits for soil importation projects in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and in historic landscape settings, even those designed by Capability Brown.

If a strong rationale is written to accompany the application, it can readily be supported by the local authority, because, in effect, the project is sustainable - using excess soils from development sites, sustainably, to improve important community sports facilities on golf course sites.

So how do you go about starting one of these projects? The first step is to make contact with a golf course architect with experience in this specific kind of project. In this respect, the project will always be design-led. There are also a number of specialist contractors in the UK who have successfully delivered many of these projects to a high standard, who are already working closely with experienced golf course architects.

If you feel that your golf club would benefit from new practice facilities and course improvements, all of which would be cost-neutral, the soil importation process is worth discussing.

You can contact **Jonathan** at Gaunt Golf Design on **07703 595441** or via email at [jonathan@gaunt-golf-design.com](mailto:jonathan@gaunt-golf-design.com)  
Manchester Golf Club photo courtesy of Booth Golf & Leisure. 

# Are these golf's 10 most misunderstood Rules?

Many managers have to deal with assorted Rules queries or disputes at some stage. There's a general view that the Rules are too complex for average golfers to fully understand, but while there is some truth in that, there are also a number of Rules they commonly get wrong or don't quite grasp. Here, Golf Club Secretary editor, **Jeremy Ellwood**, picks out what he considers the ten most common misunderstandings from his time working on the Rules for Golf Monthly... something to perhaps print out and post on the club noticeboard?

## Sprinkler head on line on the fringe

It's important to know that this is not an automatic relief scenario under the Rules of Golf. Yes, if your ball lies on the sprinkler head or it interferes with the area of your intended stance or swing, you would be entitled to free relief, but not just because it is on your line and you really want to putt. However, some courses will have a Local Rule allowing relief if your ball lies within two club-lengths of a sprinkler head on your line that is also within two club-lengths of the putting green. But if no such Local Rule exists, there is no free relief.

## Loose impediments in bunkers and penalty areas

This is an understandable misunderstanding, for the Rules did an about-turn on this in 2019. Prior to that, you weren't allowed to touch loose impediments in either bunkers or penalty areas. Now, you are. However, it's worth mentioning that it would still be inadvisable to touch them if things are a little precarious around your ball or your ball is clearly resting against a loose impediment on a slope. Why? Well, you will still be penalised under Rule 9.4b if you cause your ball at rest to move while attempting to remove a loose impediment.



*You are allowed to remove loose impediments from penalty areas and bunkers*

## White out of bounds posts

The problem with white out of bounds stakes is that physically they are invariably eminently movable, yet they are not classed as movable obstructions under the Rules. Rather, they are boundary objects and these are considered 'fixed' even if you could easily move them. So, if your ball is in bounds and a white

stake interferes with your lie or your area of intended stance or swing, there is no free relief and you are not allowed to move it. Any relief taken would be penalty relief under one of the unplayable ball options in Rule 19. However, if you remove a stake to facilitate your next shot, but realise your error before playing, you can escape penalty by replacing the white stake where it was (Rule 8.1c - 'restoring the conditions').

## Sand on the fringe

You may only remove sand and loose soil on the putting green and not in the general area of the course. This means that if you're off the green wanting to putt and there is sand on your line both on the green and on the fringe (part of the general area), you may wipe or brush the sand away on the green but may not touch any that is lying on the fringe (unless it arrived there after your ball had come to rest, perhaps via another player's bunker shot). Breaking this Rule will get you the general penalty of two strokes in stroke play or loss of hole in match play under Rule 8.1a for improving the conditions affecting the stroke (line of play).

## You can't tap in an unconceded putt in match play

If you knock it to two and a half feet and your opponent now lies further away but doesn't concede your putt, you can't go ahead and tap it in in match play as you would be able to in stroke play. While there is no penalty, you could be asked to replay the stroke in the correct order by your opponent under Rule 6.4a (especially if you went ahead and holed it!). You may feel aggrieved, but shouldn't do as the order, and the change in the psychological dynamics that come with it, are important elements of match play - three-footers are harder when you have to make them to save a half or win a hole!



*You can't just go ahead and tap this in in matchplay as it's no longer your turn*



*If the ball moves here there is a penalty even if it's accidental*

### You can't even putt from a 'wrong green'

A 'wrong green' is defined as "any green on the course other than the putting green for the hole you are playing". The definitions go on to say that "wrong greens are part of the general area" but no-one will thank you if you just wander on to a wrong green and swish your ball away as you would elsewhere in the general area. Thankfully, Rule 13.1f prohibits play from a wrong green and you must take free relief at the nearest point not nearer the hole where the wrong green doesn't interfere with the lie of your ball, or your area of intended stance or swing. This Rule is most commonly broken when two greens lie close together with only very short fringe grass between them. Putting would be a natural choice, but you are not allowed to play from a wrong green however close together they are and whatever club you are using. You can't even stand on a wrong green to putt, which is worth remembering on a narrow links course where certain front-nine and back-nine greens lie close together.

### Meaning of 'unplayable'

Some golfers attribute a little too much literalism to the word 'unplayable'. This is perhaps understandable, as the word implies physical unplayability, but as far as the Rules of Golf are concerned, it's all about your options under penalty rather than the physical playability or otherwise of your ball. The ball does not have to be physically unplayable for you to deem it unplayable – you, as the player, are the sole judge as to whether or not it's unplayable. You could even declare it unplayable if it's perfectly placed in the middle of the fairway should you wish to do so for some unfathomable reason! The only place you can't declare your ball unplayable is in a penalty area.

### You cannot declare your ball lost

It's a common misconception that you can declare your ball lost, but the Rules of Golf don't allow this. Indeed, the Definitions section addresses this head-on, defining "lost" as: "The status of a ball that is not found in three minutes after the player or their caddie (or the player's partner or partner's caddie) begins to search for it. A ball does not become lost as a result of the player declaring it to be lost." So, if you hit your ball into a bad spot, turn to your fellow players and say, "I'm declaring that one lost," that holds no water. Even if you don't want to look for it,

your opponent or playing companions may still do so, and if they find it, or think they've found it, you can't just say "that ball is lost" and ignore it. If you really don't want to risk finding your original ball, you can just play another under stroke and distance without declaring it a provisional. But beware – it automatically becomes the ball in play even if you find your original in the middle of the fairway after an unseen ricochet.

### Accidental movement of your ball

The default position is that there is still a penalty if you move your ball at rest, even if accidentally. Many golfers appear to believe that there's no penalty if you accidentally move your ball in the general area, possibly because they have mistakenly read too much into certain exceptions that now exist – i.e., no penalty for accidental movement of your ball on the putting green (even on a practice stroke) or when searching for your ball. But in the general area, bunkers or penalty areas, there is still a one-stroke penalty for moving your ball at rest, even if accidentally. You must also remember to replace it back to where it was lying, too, before playing your next shot to avoid a two-shot penalty for playing from a wrong place (Rule 9.4).

### Nearest point of complete relief

When dropping from a path or other immovable obstruction, many golfers mistakenly believe they're entitled to a perfect lie and line because they don't really understand, or they forget, what it is they're taking relief from. You are only getting relief from that specific immovable obstruction or abnormal course condition, so if the relief area measured from your nearest point of complete relief takes you unavoidably into thick rough, a bush or behind a tree, that is where you have to drop if you elect to take free relief as there is no free relief from such elements in the general area. Many will say, "Oh, I can't drop there because I'll get a terrible lie, so I'll drop over here in this shorter grass." But you don't get free relief from thick rough, trees, bushes, dreadful lies etc in the general area so if that is where the relief area measured from your nearest point of complete relief takes you, that is where you must drop if you decide to take free relief. It's 'nearest' not 'nicest', and the location of that spot is not negotiable. You are not guaranteed a perfect lie or line!

*Adapted from a Golf Monthly article and reproduced with the magazine's kind permission. Photography: Kenny Smith* 

# New duty for employers to prevent sexual harassment: part II



Coming into force from October 26th, 2024, there is a new duty placed on employers to take 'reasonable steps' to prevent sexual harassment of its employees in the course of their employment. Following on from the first instalment in our September newsletter, **Alistair Smith**, CEO of the NGCAA, discusses more of what is known about the likely requirements of this imminent new duty...

## Engaging staff

Employers should:

- conduct regular one-to-ones, run staff surveys and exit interviews, and have 'open door' policies. They should use these to help them understand where any potential issues lie and whether the steps they are taking are working
- make sure that all workers are aware of how they can report sexual harassment, the sexual harassment policy and the consequences of breaching the policy

## Assessing and taking steps to reduce risks in the workplace

Employers should consider factors that might increase the likelihood of sexual harassment and the steps that can be taken to minimise them:

- where are the power imbalances?
- is there job insecurity for a particular group or role?
- are staff working alone?
- are customers drinking significant amounts of alcohol?
- do staff have customer-facing duties?
- is there a lack of diversity in the workforce?

## Reporting

Employers should:

- consider using a reporting system (an online or independent telephone-based service) that allows workers to raise an issue either anonymously or in name
- explain clearly to all workers what is considered acceptable behaviour, how to recognise sexual harassment, and what to do if they experience or witness it

## Training

Workers should be trained on:

- what sexual harassment in the workplace looks like
- what to do if they experience it, and
- how to handle any complaints of harassment

In industries where third-party harassment from customers is more likely, workers should also be trained on how to address these issues.

## Dealing with a harassment complaint

When a harassment complaint is made, the employer should:

- act immediately to resolve the complaint, taking into account how the worker wants it to be resolved
- respect the confidentiality of all parties
- protect the complainant from ongoing harassment or being victimised during an investigation or complaint, e.g., move the alleged harasser to another team or site
- protect witnesses to the sexual harassment
- speak to the individual, if a worker makes a complaint of harassment that may be a criminal offence, about whether they want to report the matter to the police and support them with this if they go ahead
- only use Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) or gagging clauses where it is lawful, necessary and appropriate to do so
- communicate the outcome of the complaint to the complainant in a timely manner

## Dealing with third parties

According to the Equality and Human Rights Commission's (EHRC) technical guidance:

- harassment by a third party, such as a customer, client, patient, or supplier, should be treated just as seriously as that by a colleague [this would include golf club members]
- employers should take steps to prevent this type of harassment, including putting reporting mechanisms in place or assessing high-risk workplaces where staff might be left alone with customers

## Duty to prevent sexual harassment - liability and remedies

It is important to understand that an employee cannot bring a standalone claim:

- against an employer for breaching their duty to prevent sexual harassment, or
- against another person for instructing, causing or inducing the employer to breach the duty

Instead, each of these breaches is enforceable only as an unlawful act in the following ways:

- where the employee brings a successful claim for sexual harassment, the employment tribunal can make an uplift to compensation

- the EHRC can take enforcement action in respect of the breach. Note that a complaint relating to third-party harassment can only be dealt with through enforcement action by the EHRC

### Compensation uplift

Where an employment tribunal has upheld a harassment claim brought by an employee under Equality Act 2010, which involved, to any extent, sexual harassment, and has ordered the respondent to pay compensation to the claimant, the tribunal must consider if, and to what extent, the respondent has also breached the employer's duty to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment.

If the tribunal considers that to be the case, the tribunal may order the respondent to pay a compensation uplift, reflecting the extent to which, in its opinion, the respondent has breached the duty. The maximum uplift is 25% of the compensation it has awarded.

Given that the only financial remedy available to an employee for an employer's breach of the preventative duty is an uplift to the (separate) award of compensation, there would appear to be two sets of circumstances in which the employee will have no remedy:

- where an employee experiences sexual harassment by a third party, they will be unable to bring a claim against the employer for vicarious liability. There will therefore be no claim in the employment tribunal where the respondent will have breached the employer's preventative duty and no compensation to which the uplift can be applied
- in the (possibly rare) case of harassment by other employees or agents where the employer is found vicariously liable, but no compensation is awarded; in such a case there will be no compensation to which the uplift can be applied

In those circumstances, the only possible sanction will be enforcement by the EHRC.

For further advice on this subject or any other legal matter affecting your golf club, please contact **Alistair Smith**, CEO of the NGCAA on [office@ngcaa.co.uk](mailto:office@ngcaa.co.uk) or **0188 6812943**. 

# NOTICEBOARD



The 2024-25 Hillier Hopkins survey is now live

### The Hillier Hopkins Golf Club benchmarking survey 2024/25

The annual Hillier Hopkins Golf Club Survey for 2024/25 has just been launched. While it requires just a little effort and time to complete, we all know from previous years that the resulting information and data will be extremely useful to ALL of us and our committees/boards. The more who put in the effort to take part, the better and more valuable the results will be.

You can even take your time and fill in the survey small sections at a time to spread the load if that's easier for you.

You can find the survey by visiting <https://hillierhopkins.co.uk/golf-club-survey/> and scrolling down to the 'take the survey' button.

We hope you will be able to contribute. The closing date is October 31st, 2024.

### BIGGA teams up with The R&A to enhance annual Continue to Learn education programme

BIGGA'S Continue to Learn education programme, which takes place each January alongside BTME in Harrogate, has received the support of The R&A as part of its commitment to a sustainable future for golf and golf courses.

Continue to Learn provides more than 140 hours of learning opportunities for greenkeepers and groundspeople, and The R&A, a long-time supporter of BIGGA and its members, has demonstrated its commitment to BTME and Continue to Learn by hosting presentations that offer guidance based on expert research and experience of staging major events.

For the first time, in 2025, The R&A will be recognised as formally supporting the Continue to Learn Conference programme, which comprises a major two-day learning event and a separate New Greenkeeper conference. Additionally, R&A representatives will participate in various classes and contribute towards cost-free learning opportunities such as the seminars and the BTME breakfast session.

Jim Croxton, BIGGA CEO, said: "We're proud that for many years The R&A has recognised just how valuable BTME and Continue to Learn have become to the entire golfing industry. We thank everyone at The R&A for investing in our members and the wider turf management industry in this way as it will only enhance the BTME experience for everyone involved and help ensure the game is still thriving in 50 years' time."

### The R&A announces further growth in golf participation

The R&A has announced that new participation figures have revealed an increase of more than three million adults playing golf in the countries it governs (outside the USA and Mexico). Research undertaken for the governing body for 2023 showed that there are now 42.7 million on-course golfers, an increase of 3.1 million on 2022's figures. The growth trend began before the onset of Covid-19 and is now accelerating faster than the 2020-2022 pandemic period, when there was an average of 2.5 million new on-course golfers per annum. The growth since 2016, when there were 29.6 million on-course players, now stands at 44%. 

## Renovation work: the dangers of delay

*Paul Woodham, Head of Sustainable Agronomy - Europe at The R&A, stresses the need for the correct timing when it comes to aeration.*

Last month's *Postage Stamp* briefly discussed the timing of greens renovation work, offering a view that many clubs favour a main-season period, say August to September, which should optimise the effectiveness of the operations and rate of recovery. Some would plan work at the end of the main season on the basis of completing fixtures without a break while the recovery was underway, but I ended with a note of caution, writing that pushing the renovation back too far into the autumn, with the shortening day lengths, increased shade, and cooling temperatures, could be detrimental to recovery. I want to drill down a little further into the primary reasons for renovation and discuss the whys and wherefores of what we are generally seeing this year.

### 1. Dealing with organic matter (thatch)

Thatch is perhaps the number one issue which has a negative influence on green health, performance and grass species management. Excess organic matter holds on to soil moisture, slows surface drainage and causes a softening of surface firmness in addition to being the perfect environment for the harbouring of turf disease pathogens. There are researched targets for managing the percentage of organic matter. All clubs should be annually monitoring their trend against these targets and use the information to adjust the management programmes accordingly to keep control of organic matter.

Organic matter can accumulate at higher rates during extended periods of strong growth and wet conditions, as the rate of its production via the accumulation of dead and decaying plant matter outpaces the rate of natural digestion by microbial organisms and its dilution through top dressing. These microbes function less effectively in wet and less aerobic environments, therefore increasing the risk of adding organic matter to the upper profile. The period from 2023 to 2024 has, for most, been one in which organic matter has been harder to control because of the environmental conditions and the havoc caused by the weather, which interrupted many of the usual pre-season renovation operations. My current estimate is that clubs reporting organic matter results during July to September have seen, by average, a 1% increase in the top 20mm or remained at their current levels compared to analysis reported 12 months prior.



*Timely aeration is vital to prevent organic matter build-up*

My important point here is that there should be a plan in place to deal with this. I have seen situations where, because of the poor weather and enforced interruption to golf during the last year, clubs have erred on the side of the golfer and feared any further interruption caused by renovation, mini-maintenance or top-dressing applications. This is coming at a cost down the line though, with some courses seeing organic matter increases of 2-3% (>30% increase by volume). Failure to act on this could lead to disruptions if green performance deteriorates because of organic matter.

### 2. Dealing with soil compaction

It is important that we understand the causes of organic matter build-up, not just the need to reduce it via removal such as coring or scarification operations. Poor drainage and a lack of aeration is one of the key causes. Renovation is therefore an opportunity for major aeration to depth to alleviate soil compaction, which may be causing an issue linked to organic matter build-up. Deep aeration most commonly involves deep solid tine aeration such as vertidrainage. I have frequently written about the importance of this work when and where required. It is important for root development and drainage. Again, the dilemma for the club is the cost of not acting with the correct timing and method of operation.

### 3. Planning and effective management

The R&A Sustainable Agronomy Service continues to support clubs, especially where the service is engaged to help with the agronomic management and core messaging for the club and its members. Our work with club secretaries and managers is vitally important as they are one of the driving forces that guides the club's decision-making process, especially when it comes to forming a plan and enacting it. Undervaluing the need for maintenance and course renovations will cause more problems and the work of the manager in supporting the need for it is arguably as important as ours. **GCS**

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*COMING SOON*

Another manager takes to our 'Out of the Rough' Q&A chair to tell us about their work and career